

**PINCHED, DITCHED OR JINXED?
THE MANTRA OF AFRICAN
SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS**

*An inaugural lecture delivered
at the University of Ibadan*

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By

ISAAC OLAWALE ALBERT
*Professor of African History/Peace Studies
Institute of African Studies
University of Ibadan
Ibadan, Nigeria.*

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The Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Registrar, Librarian, Provost of the College of Medicine, Director of the Institute of African Studies, Dean of the Postgraduate School, Deans of other Faculties, and of Students, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I stand before you this afternoon with a heart of gratitude to the almighty God for enabling me to deliver this lecture. I thank the University for giving me the platform. I also appreciate all of you who have decided to grace the occasion with your physical presence from far and wide. In the course of my career in this great University, I helped to start the first Peace and Conflict Studies Programme in the West African sub-region. This lecture will address the issue of the founding and running of that programme after an initial discussion of some of the African problems that led me to the project.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, this is the very first inaugural lecture in your administration. It is necessary that I start by congratulating you on the appointment. I wish you the best as you steer the University to greater heights. It is hoped that you would pick some lessons for your administration in the issues raised in the second part of this lecture. The first part is for such African leaders as may have listening ears. It is also for students of Peace and Conflict Studies, which I consider all of us here present to be. My lecture focuses on "African solutions to African problems". The takeoff point of my analysis is the visit of President Barrack Obama to Ghana (Africa) in July 2009. In a thought-provoking speech he delivered before the Ghanaian Parliament in Accra on July 11, 2009, regarding the trajectories of African development, he noted *inter alia* that "Africa's future is up to Africans".¹ A Nigerian who wants to repackage that statement in local parlance would say: "Africa – you are on your own". Obama's loaded statement reminded me at the time of the phrase "African solutions to African problems" which has now become a cliché in African political discourse. My

inaugural lecture will critically engage this thought-provoking political mantra.

However, it must be stated from the outset that the American President does not hold a copyright to that phrase. He was merely rehearsing the whole essence of African Studies which is to prepare Africans for dealing with African problems. In the book, *I speak of Freedom*, Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) the first leader of Ghana, observed that “we must find an African solution to our problems”, and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world”.² In 1967, Professor Ali Mazrui called for a “Pax Africana that is protected and maintained by Africa herself”.³ In a paper published in the *Harvard International Review*, Professor George Ayittey, a distinguished Ghanaian Economist at American University and the President of Free Africa Foundation in Washington, DC, problematizes “African solutions to African problems” to capture two key challenges to African development. Now this is how Ayittey summarizes the two key challenges:

“The first is the unnerving propensity of African leaders to seek foreign solutions to every crisis rather than look inside Africa for them. Second, though noble and well-intentioned, foreign solutions often do not fit Africa’s unique political and socio-cultural topography and have thus failed. Furthermore, foreign solutions often prove financially costly and take a great deal of time to implement”.⁴

In other words, the “African solution to African problems” mantra has always been there but I would rather want to add here that since the end of the Cold War, it has become a cliché in African political discourse, whether in the hallowed halls of university lectures and conferences or in the cosy chambers of policy-making boardrooms or in the streets and among people who hold political discussions at newsvendors’

stands and in barrooms. Several members of the international community (including the most recent economic power now throwing its weight about—China) base their engagement with Africa on the fashionable phrase, though it is clear that they give it diverse constructions to suit their own different foreign policy interests. Many African leaders, too, talk about and hide behind the phrase. Sometimes, it is a line of attack, most times a defensive strategy or a retreat. It may seem that we are attaching importance to the phrase in this lecture not because we are hearing it for the first time but largely because it was coming from Obama. The Yoruba would say “*Atiwona*”? (And you too?)

“*Atiwona*”? because Obama is different from any past American leaders. He was Africans’ “consensus candidate” for the November 2008 presidential election in the United States of America. I attended a Church service in Abuja where some Christians prayed for his electoral victory. I also inadvertently overheard a piece of “street” analysis where some people presented Obama after his election as the “Anti-Christ” that the Bible predicted. The commentators said he was going to create a global government that would herald the much-awaited end of the world. Hence, Obama’s visit to Ghana (Africa) meant different things to different people. To say the least, it was the much-expected divine intervention when the US President would announce the strategies for eliminating all of African problems as a “son of the soil”. Until recently when the Chinese came to teach Africans how to disrespect donors who are in the habit of attaching harsh political conditionalities to the “handouts” they provide, Africans went before American leaders on their knees, caps off their head and shoes off their feet, to beg for assistance. Now that the son of Africa, Obama, was in power things were expected to be easier. But the story was different on July 9, 2009.

Obama proved himself not to be an African who engages in capricious distribution of his nation’s wealth as African leaders are wont to do; he is an American. He was not coming from a patrimonial continent that condones impunity but a

society where accountability is taken seriously. He told Africa in a very clear language: “Your future is up to you.” That was the bulk of the largesse he gave us on that visit. Africa must look for help from itself, and not expect it from others. What actually is the meaning of this statement? That the continent is pinched, ditched or jinxed (by the international community)? An array of data will be presented in this lecture to answer this question and map the way forward. At the tail end of the lecture, our discussions will focus on how the University of Ibadan is helping to provide an actionable “African solution” through the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme that I established.

Nature and Sources of African Problems

What are these African problems that Obama was referring to in his Accra speech? They include gross human rights violations, inability to organize free and fair elections, perennial violent wars, armed conflicts and small-scale insurgencies, perpetual political instability, unrelenting economic crises, financial corruption, wasteful spending, famine, diseases and poverty, all of which have become trademarks of the African continent.⁶

Obama was calling attention to what the Yoruba alliteratively conceptualize as “*jija fafa ninu aise dede*” (being regular in irregularities). He was simply condemning African leaders’ waywardness. For example, the Fund for Peace Failed States index ranking for 2007 showed that eight out of the top ten most unstable countries in the world came from Africa while the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for same year listed seven African states amongst the most corrupt in the world.⁷ The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) ranking from 1990 to 2007 consistently listed two African countries—Niger and Sierra Leone—as the “worst place to live in the world”. The other African countries in the same bracket but that demonstrated epileptic levels of growth within the same period are Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Ethiopia, Burundi, and Guinea-Bissau.⁸ Though the situation has started to show dramatic signs of

improvement, it is a fact that Africa has the highest number of armed conflicts in the post-Cold War world with 69% of the deaths resulting from these wars from 1994 to 2006 coming from Sub-Saharan Africa alone.⁹

All of the above have given Africa the image of a hopeless and tragic continent that is once again being perceived as a liability to human race.¹⁰ Some of the publications that try to discuss this issue include Bayart, Ellis and Hibou's *Criminalization of the State in Africa*,¹¹ William Reno's *Warlord politics and African States*,¹² and Tunde Zack-Williams, Diane Frost and Alex Thomson's *Africa in Crisis: New Challenges and Possibilities*¹³ to name just a few. Several films have also been produced in the developed world to depict the shameful evidence of Africans' lack of discretion and direction. These include the *Dogs of War* (1980), *Black Hawk Down* (2001), and *Blood Diamond* (2006). Just like the film-makers have done, the news media in these countries have also helped to advertise and sometimes exaggerate these African problems to the extent that the Western public and politicians now view Africans with trepidation.¹⁴ The number of Africans in jail in the developed world and the number of illegal African migrants streaming into the developed world on a daily basis suggest that these ugly sentiments about Africans are not unfounded. Some of the illegal immigrants we are referring to in this lecture literally trek across the desert of North Africa and then swim across the Mediterranean to get to any tiny islands in Southern Europe from where they can make their way to mainland Europe. Many die in the process: killed by fellow Africans, eaten up by wild animals or destroyed by the elements or exhaustion.¹⁵ Some educated Africans flee the continent in what is popularly called "brain drain". This was the Africa that Obama came to address in 2009.

Who is to blame for these African problems? Two possible answers can be provided here: outsiders (the developed world) and Africans themselves. Any attempt to blame outsiders for contemporary African problems must start with a reference to Walter Rodney's *How Europe*

Underdeveloped Africa. He blamed Africa's problems on two main factors. The first argument is that the operation of the imperialist system caused Africa's economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible for Africans to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent. Rodney's second factor is that those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system create further havoc. The main point made by Rodney is that Europe and the capitalist economic system exploited and still exploits Africa. He, therefore, recommended a total repudiation of European capitalism as he considered Europeans to be the benefactors of the institution of slavery, and the phenomenon of colonialism to have been a further means of continued European economic exploitation of the African continent. He argued that for the first three decades of colonialism, hardly anything was done that could remotely be termed a service to African peoples¹⁶. In the bitterness of his claims, Rodney argued that the only positive development in colonialism was when it ended¹⁷.

Ladies and gentlemen, one may repackage what Rodney argued in layman's language by saying that he literally sought to present Africa to us as a tin of condensed milk. The white man perforated the tin of milk, sucked it and threw away the empty can. In other words, post-colonial Africa is nothing but an empty tin of milk: a piece of trash in the global environment. He blamed Europe and the capitalist economic system for this situation. Arising from this kind of analysis, Rodney argued that the problems of Africa can only be solved by shutting the door against Europeans and Western capitalism. And he presented socialism as a better course for African development.

The attempt to blame Africa's problems on outsiders alone and not Africans themselves, as Rodney did, amounts to a monocausal explanation, if not an over-simplification, of a complex problem. Rodney's book was published in 1973: long enough for him to have studied and understood the

political rascality of some post-independence African leaders. Taking the dastardly acts of those (mis)leaders into consideration would have given Rodney a more balanced appraisal of the situation. Rodney got into his monocausal explanation largely because his work was produced within the framework of the Marxist tradition which pathologically does not see anything good in capitalism but considers the socialist mode of production as the cure-all for the evils produced by the capitalist order.

A Special Report published in the May 11, 2000 edition of *The Economist* tried to engage some of the issues raised above. It observed that the new millennium has brought more disaster than hope to Africa and that the few candles of hope in the continent are flickering weakly. The Report concludes that "Africa's biggest problems stem from its present leaders". In addition to being corrupt, African leaders are embroiled in different kinds of wars and sometimes with one another. Consequently, all the bottom places in the world league tables are filled by African countries, and the gap between them and the rest of the world is ever widening. The Report called attention to how some analysts have tried to blame Africa's problems on outsiders citing exploitation going back to the slave trade and European colonial rule. The Cold-War rivalry is blamed for propping up greedy dictators in the first 30 years of African independence. This led to the continent's debt crisis, exploitative trading relations and by implications, politically destabilizing demands for economic reform from the IMF and the World Bank. This interesting Report disagreed with this attempt to blame Africa's problems on "outsiders". It observed thus:

Those who see the continent as the victim of external forces must accept that parts of Asia, too, were subject to rapacious colonialists and have, within a generation after independence, established viable states and successful economies. Even where they fail, Asian countries

do not blame their past imperial masters. Those, on the other hand, who think Africa is self-destructing, must accept that its failings are not unique. There is tribalism in Bosnia and Ireland, dictatorship in North Korea, corruption almost everywhere. In short, Africa's troubles are not exclusive to Africa. But their combination is.¹⁸

In the reactions that trailed the above report, Africa's problem was said to be lack of confidence in engaging the rest of the world. Official corruption was said to be a means for siphoning off money intended for the development of Africa but the developed world is implicated in this problem largely because they are responsible for safekeeping the stolen money for African leaders. They make a lot of profit on the interest on investments accruing from the stolen money and when same African leaders come round to beg for it, the stolen money is loaned to their countries at exorbitant rates. Many African states are trapped in the repayment of the interest on such loans (not on the debt itself). On the other hand, it is often difficult to see the projects on which the loans were actually spent. This is a major African problem.

In his own work, Ayyitey argued that what outsiders did to Africa is not as weighty as what post colonial African rulers did and still do to Africans. Because of their lack of altruism and penchants for neopatrimonialism and clientelism, many Africans were left out of governance and this motivated many to turn away from the state which has betrayed them and return to their traditional roots of consensual democracy, within smaller communities.¹⁹ This requires the fanning of the embers of ethnicity and other parochial sentiments: all of which explains contemporary political violence and several evidences of "inbetweenities" in the African continent. Cheru²⁰ came to almost the same conclusion but wonders why these marginalized African people find it difficult to organize against the forces that oppress them but instead fight among themselves. He

recommends stronger civil society as a way out of the present African problems.

Equally standing as the polar opposite to the work of Rodney was that of Professor Peter T. Bauer, of the London School of Economics, who argued that the allegations that Europe undeveloped third-world countries is without a firm foundation.²¹ His own position was that, in fact, poverty and backwardness are greatest in those Third World nations that have been least touched by Western imperialism, trade, or multinational corporations. He named Liberia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Tibet and Nepal as some of the nations of the world that were never under European colonialism but whose conditions today are worse than those who underwent that tutelage. He argued that it is in fact more reasonable to talk of how contact with the developed world brought material prosperity to third-world countries. He argued particularly that the coastal states with which the Europeans had contacts are the most developed today and that the level of material achievement in third-world countries usually diminishes as one moves away from the foci of Western impact which are usually the coastal states. Among the contributions of the Western world to African development, he claimed, are wheeled traffic and mechanical transport. The colonial masters built roads, railways and man-made ports. They inaugurated the rigorous application of science and technology to economic activity. They created towns with substantial buildings, clean water and sewerage facilities. They contributed modern public healthcare, hospitals and the control of endemic and epidemic diseases. They brought formal education. He equally argued that slavery existed in Africa before the Western world established contact with this part of the world and that without the intervention of Europeans this obnoxious practice would have continued up to the present.

However, Bauer acknowledges that the West contributes to Third World poverty in two significant ways: Western activities, particularly since World War II, have done much to

politicize economic life in the Third World, paving the way for state-controlled economies and totalitarian states. Secondly, Western influence has helped to bring about the sharp decline in morality in the Third World. I may not be able to speak on how the economic system in Africa in particular was politicized by Europeans; economists are better suited to do so. But I can speak about the sharp decline in morality spurred by the contact with Europe. This immorality is more at the level of the state than civil society. It revolves around issues of lack of political altruism, the proclivity of African leaders for troublemaking and political brinksmanship, as well as their kleptocratic tendencies (being light fingered).

As regards public ethics, the scorecard of African leaders in the post-independence era has been rather dismal. Numerous research works attest to the weakness, the flaw, and the failure of many an African state. In his seminal work on this issue, Mahmood Mamdani notes that there is a variation in state systems in Africa. He means that most of these states were variations on the same theme taken from the colonial legacy. These variations are what he terms: 'Varieties of despotism as state reform'; and he demonstrates how there was little to choose between the conservative regimes and the radical ones on the continent. Mamdani argues thus: "The antidote to a decentralized despotism turned out to be a centralized despotism. In the back-and-forth movement between a decentralized and centralized despotism, each regime claimed to be reforming the negative features of its predecessor. This, we will see, is best illustrated by the seesaw movement between civilian and military regimes in Nigeria."²²

But corruption and despotic governance aside, violent conflict is today the number-one problem facing the African continent. The other problems of the continent either caused it or resulted from it. When we consider the shambles of existence in quite a number of African countries, we will find that violent conflict is at the core of a nexus of causes and

effects. It is therefore argued here that all the other problems facing the continent would fizzle out once the continent is able to deal with its conflict issues and embrace peace. The lesson of Botswana for peace in Africa is instructive. Though the country has one of the most challenging structural circumstances in Africa, it is one of the most stable in the continent in terms of economic and political security. When Botswana gained its independence from Britain in September 1966, doomsayers predicted that the country (formerly Bechuanaland) would implode and evaporate in less than five years. The warning signs for this prediction included the fact that about 75 percent of the country's 592,000 square kilometres is in the Kalahari Desert. This is a geographic constraint that cannot be overlooked and, indeed, Botswana's economic security is constantly threatened by drought. So scarce is water in the country that Botswana named its currency the *pula* (rain). The period from 1981 to 1988 presented the people with the worst-case scenario they have faced yet. The rate of illiteracy in the country was 80 percent at the time of its gaining independence; and the population of the country, made up of nine ethnic groups, seemed, to the doomsayers, capable of providing ethnic armies that would be engaged in interminable violent strife in the post-independence period.

A landlocked country, Botswana was dependent on hostile neighbours (Namibia, South Africa, and Rhodesia) for the transshipment of its exports and imports. The country was a target of economic blackmail, intimidation, and sabotage by apartheid South Africa. For example, South Africa accused Botswana in 1985 of harbouring guerrillas of the then-banned African National Congress and launched a series of raids and destructive destabilization campaigns against the country's capital, Gaborone. In spite of these problems, Botswana recorded an impressive economic and political growth. The four leading factors for this are absence of civil and political strife, the readiness of the country's leadership to promote multiparty democracy and hold regular consultation with

people at the grassroots, the pursuit of strikingly prudent economic policies, and the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems in the running of the nation. What Botswana has, many African countries lack. This is a major African problem.

As I said above, African leaders have been ruling badly since the colonial masters took their exit from the continent in the 1960s. They block democratic change in their respective countries. This is what has made it possible for Robert Mugabe who came to power in 1980 to still be in office in 2011. That frail-looking African leader, now 87 years old, still has a deathly grip on his country. He is most likely to die in office. However, Mugabe is not the longest-serving African head of state. Muammar Ghadafi of Libya came to office in 1969. In a statement that suggests that he might die in office, he once boasted thus: "I am an international leader, the dean of Arab rulers, the king of kings of Africa and the imam of Muslims, and my international status does not allow me to descend to a lower level".²³ He was reported in the 2010 African Presidents' Index to have "caused a scene at the African Heads of State Summit in Speke, Munyonyo, near Kampala when he slapped one of his aides for taking him to a wrong venue of the meeting".²⁴

Omar Bongo of Gabon would have been Ghadafi's senior in terms of "length of service" to Africa but for death that snatched him away in 2009. He actually came to power in 1967 and this particular African head of state is reputed to have shaken the hands of several American Presidents: from Richard Nixon to Bush Junior. In 2003, he had to change the constitution of his country to enable him to get another seven-year term in office. This kind of long-distance rulership is not a rarity on the continent. Until quite recently, it was the norm in many countries in Africa. The short regimes were the ones that were forcibly brought to an end by other would-be potentates whose eyes were usually trained on the prospects of a long reign. Hosni Mubarak has been in power in Egypt since 1981 and Paul Biya of Cameroun became President in

1982.²⁵ Each of these leaders prevents those with fresh ideas from moving their nations forward. The latter are sent to jail, killed or exiled. This is an African problem that cannot be blamed on outsiders.

The other problem is that of “dynastic rule”. This is a system whereby a leader rules for as long as he lives and then, is succeeded by a member of his immediate family when he dies, as if the country is a family estate, and the seat of power an heirloom to be bequeathed to the next generation in the family tree. This kind of privilege was enjoyed in the past by traditional rulers, and makes it difficult for us to quarrel with Mohammed VI, the King of Morocco and King Mswati III of Swaziland who have their respective countries in their pockets. But what do we say of the others. Let me cite three egregious examples of this syndrome in post-independence Africa. One, President Faure Eyadéma “succeeded” his father Gnassingbé Eyadéma who ruled Togo for thirty-eight years and was the longest-serving president in Africa by the time of his death on his way to France for medical treatment of the heart attack he suffered in 2005. The second example is from Gabon whose former President Omar Bongo Ondimba came to power in 1967 and had his third re-election in November 2005, and was in power until he died in June 2009. He too was “succeeded” by his son Ali Bongo Ondimba. Joseph Kabilla succeeded his father as the President of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In the three cases, protesters against this unholy retention of power in Togo, Gabon and DRC were massacred by the military who usually owe their allegiance not to the countries concerned but to African leaders who have constituted themselves and their families into royalties or an aristocracy of sorts.

The emerging pictures in Libya and Egypt suggest readily that both Ghadafi and Mubarak will be succeeded by their sons when they die. These “heirs apparent” have started to play leading roles in the political affairs of their respective countries. President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti who

took over power on May 8, 1999 was equally groomed to succeed his uncle Hassan Gouled Aptidon. He “won” his second term election with 100% of the votes²⁶. This practice has three implications. First and foremost, it enables the privileged family to control state resources and institutions and to use them for advancing family interests. Secondly, it enables the family to cover their “dirty tracks” as there is really no outside form of checks and balances, no monitoring. And thirdly, it prevents others from being enlisted among the “ruling elite”, and thus shrinks the pool of personnel that provide leadership for the country.

It is not as if these problems are easily surmounted by the “coming” of democracy to Africa. In countries where change of power was inevitable after elections, defeated incumbent political leaders contest the results of these elections and use that as the basis for remaining in power. The actual winner of the election is then turned into a junior partner in an emergent form of democracy that is in reality an aberrant kind of “power sharing formula” on the continent. This new fad in African politics now exists in Zimbabwe and Kenya. President Laurent Gbagbo of Cote d’Ivoire was working towards using this strategy to retain power when he was defeated by Alassane Ouattara, leader of the opposition alliance, at the election held in the country in November 2010.²⁷ It is good that the international community has decided not to allow him to get away with this criminality. As has been experienced in Gabon, Togo, Zimbabwe and Kenya, those who tried to protest against this abuse of the democratic process were massacred by the Ivorian military.

While the self-appointed political leaders in Africa create armed conflicts in their society by the questionable ways they come into office and use power, the rebels who wage war against these African leaders, alleging the *casus belli* of bad, inept and corrupt leadership, have acquired the reputation of what Richards calls *Schadenfreude*²⁸ (“lust for destruction”).²⁹ The amount of destruction done to Somalia, Sierra Leone and Liberia does not suggest at all that the

rebels actually gave any consideration to the fact that they would have to rule over a people even if they won the respective wars. The warped rule of thumb known to a typical African rebel is to bring down anything standing rather than target a clearly defined enemy. The regular armies that fight against these rebels also use the occasion to commit "mission creeps": they too misuse their powers. For example, when the Nigerian army attacked Odi in 1999,³⁰ everything standing was brought down, but for a small Church probably where the funerals of those killed were expected to be conducted by their relatives when the latter returned from the diaspora. The same was witnessed in Zaki Biam. One of the most unpardonable instances was how some members of the Boko Haram were treated recently. In what would go down in the history of Nigeria as an open violation of the laws of armed conflict, "members" of the Boko Haram were brought out of their homes by Nigerian security agencies and executed in the glare of television cameras. The point we are trying to make here is that when Africans fight they recognize no point of return and where African leaders choose to check insurgents they "fight to the finish" with little or no respect for human lives. This is an African problem.

There are several other African problems that cannot be covered in the space of this lecture. The most relevant to this lecture include the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in different regions of the continent. The quantum and calibres of arms surrendered by Niger Delta militants in 2009 during the amnesty programme in the region show that all is not well with Africa. They include HMG (High machine guns), MG, GP MG, Brandy, AK 47, K2, AR, LAR, G3, FNC, Sterling SMG, Sterling Model 12, Special single barrels, Mark IV rifles and pump-action guns, Brownie, Beretta, Signal, and locally made pistols. The other weapons included dynamites, nitrocellulose, AGL (automatic grenade launchers), bombs and improvised explosive devices, gunboats, anti-personnel rockets, rocket launchers, electric and non-electric detectors. These militants handed in

camouflage uniforms and camouflage bullet-proof jackets, as well as a plethora of live ammunition of different calibres and categories.³¹ Such weapons are only found in a country undergoing large-scale war. The paradox is that they were provided to these armed groups by African leaders: the same people we expect to solve African problems.

Most of these arms-bearers, whether in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire or Nigeria are children and youths. So problematic was this issue of child-soldiering and other related problems of children and youth that a 2005 publication by Honwana and Boeck was titled *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa*. The publication was jointly published by James Currey, CODESRIA and the Africa World Press.³² Let us note that children do not come into these things just by themselves. They are taught and trained under adult tutelage and toughened by harsh social situations created by adults. And what they learn, they keep. As noted by Frank Faulkner,

Removal of basic necessities and protective mechanisms ensures that children are particularly vulnerable to all manner of influences, most notably where the family unit has been fragmented or destroyed completely in the chaos and confusion of war. In certain instances, the military unit can act in loco parentis, thereby assuming the traditional position of guidance usually provided by parents. However, given the exigencies of warfare, this role will be characterised by violence, brutality, deprivation, death, sexual exploitation and callous indifference to others. The end product is a person capable of gratuitous acts of barbarity, often perpetrated with some enthusiasm, who is bereft of normal character traits and who when peace or demobilisation takes effect, is difficult to rehabilitate to the requirements of normal life.³³

An African child that learns to kill at the age of 10 and rape women as old as his grandmother would take a long time to be rehabilitated, if ever there comes the chance of rehabilitation. The post-conflict reconstruction projects usually put in place by African leaders to retrieve arms from these young people, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society, are usually questionable in terms of their procedure and ultimate goals. These processes, we are admonished by Murphy in the context of the Mano River Basin conflicts, "raises questions about the cultural (including spiritual) and organizational resources necessary for rehabilitating and reintegrating child soldiers in any regional conflict".³⁴ But when we set up rehabilitation centres, do we pay attention to the question of cultural distortion suffered by child soldiers and, indeed, by adult belligerents alike? Guns are retrieved and some lectures are perfunctorily given to ex-rebels and some skills taught them within the space of some months, sometimes only a few weeks. What has been made and unmade in decades is thought capable of being remade in days; and then the ex-rebels are released into society: to do what?

The ongoing "amnesty" programme in the Niger Delta provides one of the most laughable dimensions of the problem in this regard. It does not come anywhere near the process and procedure of rehabilitation and reintegration. The programme seems to be in a hurry to unleash the ex-militants back on society. All it is after is the return of arms and ammunitions. There is little or no effort to come to terms with the ex-militants in relation to their perceptions of the problems of the Niger Delta. Nobody seems to be thinking of getting their testimonies and engaging with them on that score. And it is not as if the originating issues of the conflict are being meaningfully tackled. This is why some analysts of the situation say that from the things observable now, it is clear that African problems would continue to mount. There

is no evidence of seriousness in actually engaging these problems.

The Western World's Insistence on "African Solutions"

During the Cold War, Africa was the darling of both the Western and Eastern blocs. None of them could afford to isolate Africa. Their development experts devised various schemes based on either the capitalist or socialist model as being best suited for Africa's advancement into economic prosperity. Africans were not left to fend for themselves or, for that matter, to even fight their wars by themselves. Russian and American military experts were usually on hand to help either government or rebel forces as the case may be. Sometimes they even swapped sides. The "African solutions to African problems" mantra could therefore be said to be a product of the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. Africa was now no longer of strategic importance to any of the former world powers. As the countries of Eastern Europe nursed the wounds sustained during years of Soviet hegemony and in the immediate period of transition, the US now assumed the leadership of what was initially assumed to have become a unipolar world. To encourage the East which had now turned to the path of the capitalist mode of development, the West had to start providing some development assistance which drastically reduced what could be given to Africa and other third-world countries. It was at this moment that Africa started getting challenged by the international community to look inward to solve its problems.

The situation in which Africa now found itself, with its benefactor nations and international agencies proving to be irritated by African demands and backwardness, was exacerbated by the fact that the post-Cold War years in African history were marked by a proliferation of wars and armed conflicts largely resulting from old ethnic and religious conflicts that were kept in check in the past by the Cold War politics. Attempts to provide assistance to manage some of these conflicts drained a lot of the financial resources that the

developed Western world would have used to sustain their own development and to provide aid for their newfound friends from the defunct Eastern bloc. Resentment against Africa, in the West grew when the latter began to lose soldiers to some of the conflicts in Africa.

Somalia provided the world with the most dramatic scenario in this connection. The UN had sent a mission to Somalia to provide relief and order following the fratricidal clan wars that had erupted in the country immediately the Siad Barre government was toppled in 1991. (Nigeria played a now familiar hand in this affair. Nigeria provided the tired Barre with political asylum, and he died in Lagos in 1995 of a heart attack, and maybe, a broken heart, to boot.) Clashes between UN troops and Somali clan fighters became very frequent in no time. Matters came to a head when American and European forces suffered at the hands of the Somali clan fighters a series of heavy casualties. These Western troops had been sent to provide succour and hope, albeit by military means, to a society that was sinking into the quagmire of anomie by the day; and the Somali had replied with the ingratitude so memorably realized in the film *Black Hawk Down*. Perhaps, there was also some loss of face, too, for these were elite marines and they had not been able to curtail the depredations of fighters in ragtag clan militias. It was at this stage that the Western world stopped contributing troops for military peacekeeping in Africa. Africans were challenged to shed their blood in ending their bloody conflicts.

The Western world which had always being a close ally of Africa also had its own internal problems of vision. Much of it had to do with a certain form of narcissism. In his book *The End of History and the Last Man* published in 1992,³⁵ Francis Fukuyama interpreted the end of the Cold War as inaugurating the ascendancy of Western liberal democracy, the endpoint of humanity's sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government. He argued that since the French Revolution, democracy has not been successfully rivalled by any fundamentally better system (ethically,

politically, economically), and that the demise of communism would lead to global peace. Fukuyama's precise and straightforward logic could not envisage that any power or formation would arise to challenge American and Western hegemony in the golden age that had been established. Rather, as he saw it, the rest of the world had no other option but to follow the US and the West into the millennium of liberal political bliss. Implicit in this millenary dream was that the promise of liberal democratic bliss to the rest of the world would compensate for whatever had had to be done by the US and the West to bring all of us to the ultimate teleology of history.

Sadly enough, some of us were yet to read the last pages of Fukuyama's great dream when political Islamism presented itself as a more formidable rival to Western social and political civilization than the communism which the Western world had just subdued. Trying to address this reality in contemporary global politics, Samuel P. Huntington responded to *Fukuyama's End of History* in 1993 in an essay entitled "The Clash of Civilizations". He expanded the essay in 1996 into a book: *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. In both works, he argued that the erstwhile modern conflict between ideologies is being replaced by the ancient conflict between civilizations and that these civilizations would decide forms of government, which though would not be constant. Huntington defined a civilization in terms of its culture, and equated a civilization's culture with its religion. The three main contending cultures in the coming era, Huntington argued, would be the Christian West, the Islamic civilization primarily concentrated in the Middle East, and Chinese Confucianism (a system of social and political ethics that Huntington took as the functional equivalent of a religion). He especially singled out Islam as a religion to watch more carefully as it has "bloody borders".

Huntington's world constitutes a great problem for Africa, a continent that is, incidentally, not the fountainhead of any of the three contending civilizations or cultures identified by

Huntington as being the big players in world affairs; a continent that seems, therefore, doomed to be not just a spectator but, indeed, a battlefield for the forces of these civilizations. But more immediate is the situation in which the Western world, Africa's biggest benefactor, now has a formidable war to fight. Hence, it prefers to devote its resources to checkmating what has become known either as "political Islam" or "Islamic fundamentalism" rather than targeting the resolution of African problems that it used to impose on itself. The battle line was finally drawn on September 11, 2001 when some terrorists believed to be led by Osama bin Laden, hijacked four aeroplanes and flew them into various targets in the United States. This incident challenged the logic and the bliss of *The End of History*. Hence in the weeks after the attacks, Fareed Zakaria called the events "the end of the end of history",³⁶ while George Will presented the situation as evidence that history had "returned from vacation".³⁷ Whatever the US and its allies spend in the Middle East fighting the terrorists is a minus for Africa. Obama said Africa is on its own partly for this reason.

Yet it is clear that even in the midst of the political and economic problems in which the developed nations are now enmeshed, some of them would have been willing to do more for Africa. They, however, curtail the springs of their altruism largely because their past efforts in this direction did not lead Africa to the path of sustainable development. At the EU meeting I attended in Brussels in 2006, an Ambassador bemoaned the common scenarios in which African (middle cadre) administrators use the money provided them for developing their countries to fly "first class" with the entire members of their family, while ministers from the countries that provided the resources travel in lower classes of intercontinental flights. This fact of the incorrigibility of African leaders has discouraged many from assisting the continent.

To illustrate the foregoing, I will use a medical term: "triage". This important term was coined by French doctors

during World War I. Confronted with too many wounded people requiring treatment during the war, French doctors decided to establish a model for determining who to be given immediate treatment. Whether performed by a paramedic or anyone else, triage was more of a matter of the “best guess”, as opposed to any real or meaningful assessment.³⁸ At its primitive manifestation, triage had to do with how those responsible for the removal of the wounded from a battlefield distinguished the casualties for immediate or later attention. The categories were:

- Those who are likely to live, regardless of what care they receive;
- Those who are likely to die, regardless of what care they receive;
- Those for whom immediate care might make a positive difference in outcome.³⁹

By the early 1990s, the developed world drew extensively from the logic of battlefield medical science to come to the conclusion that Africa was most likely to die regardless of whatever international assistance it was provided. The continent was therefore triaged (the term is derived from the French *trier*, meaning to “sift out”) while “medical attention” was given to the other parts of the world showing that immediate care might make a positive difference in them.

For those of us in security studies, the experience of the western world in Somalia was probably the last straw that broke the camel’s back. The UN Security Council’s response was encapsulated in Resolution 751 which authorized the establishment of the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM). However, there was a delayed arrival of the UN peacekeepers and this provided the opportunity for armed looting of relief food supplies. The US rose to the occasion with the deployment of 30,000 troops to oversee and protect international humanitarian operations under the code name Operation Restore Hope. The US Marines and Rangers

landed on Mogadishu beaches on December 9, 1992. Sooner than later, the mission, costing over US\$3.5 billion, went awry. The warlords in the country started to target the US peacekeepers. Following the killing of 18 US Rangers, with some of them tied to Landrover Jeeps and driven round Mogadishu, the United States pulled out of Somalia in 1993, the Canadians followed, and the United Nations followed a year later. Since this shameful experience, the US has been wary of shedding the blood of any of its soldiers on African soil and would rather provide logistics to Africans to solve their problems. As the Yoruba say “Ai bani tan ka fani nitan ya.” (You do not rupture your thigh to sustain a friendship.)

“African Solutions” as an African Problem

Perhaps some people in the West and in Africa as well had expected every African leader to appeal to the developed world for a change of heart over their seeming abandonment of Africa. Surprisingly, some African leaders have made and are making a similar call: they too want “African solutions to African problems”. Majority of these contemporary African leaders are not like Kwame Nkrumah who spent his entire life working towards empowering Africans to solve their problems. What these African leaders want is to keep the international community off their tracks as they inflict all manner of financial and political pains on their peoples. The Ivorian story, which is the most recent, is worth telling here to illustrate the point being made for the records and for those who have not been following it in the international media.

On November 28, 2010, the country held a presidential run-off election which was expected to unite the nation after a civil war that started in 2002. In the results officially announced by the country’s electoral commission, the opposition candidate, Alassane Outtara, won the election by 54.1% as against the 45.9% of votes obtained by Laurent Gbagbo, the incumbent President. Before the opposition could celebrate its victory, the country’s constitutional council headed by Paul N’Dre, an ally of Gbagbo, upturned

the election results within 48 hours even though the constitution of Cote d'Ivoire only provides for such an action when there is a dispute that could not be resolved within 72 hours. All efforts by the international community to make Gbagbo back down from his unconstitutional posture proved abortive. He swore himself into office at his presidential palace while Ouattara did the same thing at the Gulf Hotel in Abidjan where he was provided with security by the UN Force. The country ended up with two governments.

It was at this stage that Gbagbo and his aides started to lay claims to "African solution to African problem". First and foremost, Ouattara who had started to attract the support of the UN, AU, ECOWAS was described by Gbagbo as "a puppet in the hands of foreign powers". Pascal Affi N'Guessan, the immediate past Prime Minister of Cote d'Ivoire and President of Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), Gbagbo's party, and chief spokesperson to Gbagbo, said:

The way to quickly resolve the crisis is for everybody to know and respect the sovereignty of Ivory Coast and its independence. This is because the choice of a President is not the business of the international community it is the affair of the population of Ivory Coast and its national institutions. What the international community should do is to recognize the decision of the national institutions and the sovereignty of Ivory Coast... there is one President and that is Laurent Gbagbo... Ouattara knows that it is foreign powers that elected him... If you trust in Ouattara and you give him this country, our independence will make no meaning and he will give all the resources of the country to the foreign powers.⁴⁰

This statement represents the Ivorian twist of the phrase "African solutions to African problems". The entire scenario has become a common occurrence in Africa, most especially

when an incumbent reluctant to relinquish power finds himself voted out of office in an election he had, not being aware of popular disenchantment with his rule, agreed to hold in a bid to “fulfil all righteousness” and present himself as some kind of democrat to the international community. When reality dawns on such potentates after voting day, they begin to chant the mantra of “African solutions”. What they demonstrate, however, is that the “African solution” they purport to offer is in reality an African problem in the hands of African leaders. Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan chant this mantra when abusing the rights of the people they claim to be governing. Rebel and government forces, once they sense their command of the upper hand in a conflict situation, chant the mantra of “African solutions” to cast a somnolent spell on the people and the international community alike while they inflict war crimes of the most savage sort on enemy forces, saboteurs, internal voices of reason and caution, rivals within their own formations, and the general body of innocents. It is in this respect that the so-called “African solutions” is today a problem in a number of circumstances. Whenever we hear it, we must become alert and pinch ourselves so that we do not fall asleep under the spell of people who would rather have us subjugated under their iron rule or, indeed, have us dead.

African Union’s Approach to “African Solutions”

But lest I make myself open to the charge of being an alarmist or pessimist, let me present a series of pictures of what “African solutions” may be taken to mean. As a regional quest, the phrase “African solutions to African problems” calls attention to the responsibility of African regional bodies under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter to craft “local” solutions to their security problems. Article 53 (1) of the Chapter specifies that:

The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for

enforcement action under its authority. But no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council, with the exception of measures against any enemy state, as defined in paragraph 2 of this Article, provided for pursuant to Article 107 or in regional arrangements directed against renewal of aggressive policy on the part of any such state, until such time as the Organization may, on request of the Governments concerned, be charged with the responsibility for preventing further aggression by such a state.

The military operations of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone mounted by the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) is believed to have taken its legitimacy from this chapter though it has been argued in some quarters that the operations were illegal to the extent that they were not preceded by any formal permission from the Security Council.

The African Union (AU) has learnt several lessons from ECOWAS and has been engaged in some legitimate peace support operations in Africa. In 2003, it deployed peacekeeping troops in Burundi and later successfully handed over the mission to the UN. In 2005, it supported the enthronement of democracy in Togo. However, the efforts of the Union to bring peace to Darfur in Sudan reveal its shortcomings and limitations as a nascent organization; the AU needs strong international support, which is the main thing that is now lacking. Its mission in Sudan lacked the necessary troop strength, the mandate and the logistical capacity to enforce the ceasefire and protect civilians in Darfur. Even with the passage of Security Council Resolution 1769 which created the mandate for a UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping force to replace the AU force in Darfur, some problems still persisted. The government of Sudan failed to

provide the needed cooperation while UNAMID could only raise 15,531 out of the 19,555 troops needed for the operation. The peace support operation was also not adequately funded.⁴¹

The AU can also be said to be committed to “African solutions to African problems” through the Responsibility to Respond (R2P) principle.⁴² The UN adopted this principle in 2005 to encourage the anticipation and prevention of a repetition of the genocide witnessed in Rwanda and a few other places in the world in the 1990s. R2P sanctions international military action where national authorities strikingly fail to protect their populations from crimes against humanity. Many African leaders claim to be committed to this principle. The African Union is also committed to it. The commitment of African leaders to the principle was in fact reiterated by an Algerian diplomat Mohamed Sahnoun,⁴³ a former top UN official and one of the co-chairs of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), the organization that popularized the concept in 2001.⁴⁴ He observed that “unlike other regions, our [i.e., African] legal systems have long acknowledged that in addition to individuals, groups and leaders having rights, they also have reciprocal duties. So the responsibility to protect is in many ways an African contribution to human rights.”

It is therefore not surprising that the principles of R2P-like intervention were reflected in the African Union Constitutive Act (2002). Article 4(h) of the Act affirms the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.⁴⁵ Commenting further on this, Siebert has observed:

To give greater effect to its commitments and provide a means for “African solutions to African problems,” the AU is establishing a peace and security architecture, whose centrepiece is the African Standby Force (ASF). Targeted to be ready for deployment by 2010, the ASF is to

cooperate with the UN and subregional African organizations in conducting peace operations. The ASF plan is to have five subregional brigades in the standby force, working with the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the Arab Maghreb Union. In addition to the ASF, other planned parts of the AU peace and security architecture are an early warning system, as well as a Panel of the Wise to assist with preventing the outbreak or escalation of conflict.⁴⁶

That human rights violations continue to take place in several parts of Africa suggests that the architecture of peace and security in the continent still rests on shaky platforms. Lack of will and capacity makes the commitment of the continent to R2P meaningless. As Mwanasali observed “The notion that the AU constitutes a regional security community may strike some with incredulity, considering all the challenges facing the continental organization and its (sometimes unfair) reputation of inefficiency.”⁴⁷ The level of political, and financial corruption in Africa today does not present African leaders as a group interested in forging any serious African solution to African problems. For in the final analysis, these leaders are responsible for undermining the lofty security architecture goals of the AU and for derailing its commitment to the principles of R2P.

In the midst of this lack of firm commitment to solving African problems, some African leaders are working on another version of “African solutions to African problems”. This has to do with the agenda of creating a “United States of Africa” (USoAfrica) which would make the continent have one flag, one army and one monetary policy. This would give the continent EU-type of social, economic, political, security

structures. One wonders if this kind of mega-African state is ever going to come into existence given the kind of controversial leaders that the continent always produces. For now, the USoAfrica project appears more like an exercise in self-delusion embarked upon by African leaders. Indeed, many of them know it is not workable; but they like to talk the talk and sound big and idealistic. Mutual suspicion and one-upmanship will ensure that the project never takes off. It all looks like a scene from the past before the OAU was founded: the Casablanca Group versus the Monrovia Group.

In their own circles, these African leaders know one another too well, and none of them is willing to subordinate his own megalomania to the megalomania of the others. One wonders if the same Ghadafi who is championing the project truly believes that Africa can have one central government and army, placed under the command of any other person but himself. One knows for sure that none of his fellow African leaders truly believes him given the regularity with which his name is associated with various kinds of African problems. It is an open secret that Ghadafi sponsors cross-border armed rebellion in the continent. The high number of illegal West African immigrants that have been jailed, killed or expelled under horrendous conditions by the government of Libya in the last ten years or thereabout does not show that Ghadafi really believes in what he preaches. He recently called for the disintegration of the Nigerian state and his past activities show clearly that he spent the past two decades fruitlessly working towards achieving this objective. If he failed in his designs on Nigeria, he succeeded, and with telling effect on the entire West African subregion, in the Mano River Basin, fuelling and sponsoring wars that became landmark examples of what "African solutions" can come to mean in certain circumstances.

What is the situation elsewhere in Africa? Eritrea and Ethiopia are not the best of friends. Ethiopia was recently involved in a military operation in Somalia. Cote d'Ivoire has never shown any love for Nigeria. The Togolese are always

suspicious of the Ghanaians. Those who bombed Uganda recently claimed to be domiciled in Somalia. The Lord Resistance Army warring against Uganda has friends in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo), South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR), where they prey on civilians. How can all these countries be brought together to form a "United States"? What would be the objective of such a union?

As the AU eternally awaits the USoAfrica, it is working unilaterally, bilaterally and multilaterally on several other projects in the direction of generating African solutions to African problems. The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) is woven around this idea and several partnership agreements such as the Joint AU-EU Africa Strategy are all about this method of approach. The position of Romain Esmenjaud and Benedikt Franke is that when all these activities that are considered to be "African solutions" are carefully considered, they are seen not to be African in the true sense. They are dictations from outside the continent or uncoordinated responses to things happening in the other parts of the world.⁴⁸

For now most African states are not functioning and these fragile or failed states give support to each other against the people. South Africa's response to the 2007 election in Nigeria can be used to illustrate the point that we are trying to make in this respect. In that year, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo conducted what was popularly rated to be the worst election in the history of Nigeria. Shawn Hattingh's piece on how South Africa supported the fraudulent 2007 election in Nigeria is quite interesting. He observed that the ballot papers for the election, which were printed in South Africa, contained no counterfoils or serial numbers which would have made vote rigging difficult. Though 65 million Nigerians were registered to vote during the election, INEC printed only 40 million ballot papers. To worsen the situation, only 30% of these ballot papers were ever sent to Nigeria from South Africa where they were printed. The rest were

still lying in South Africa when Alhaji Umar Yar'Adua was pronounced the winner of the 2007 election. Rather than adopt silence as his own humble variation on the mantra of "African solutions to African problems", President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa who knew more than any other person about the structural nature of the 2007 electoral fraud in Nigeria and who indeed had spent the best of his time as an African leader talking about the "African Renaissance", was the very first person to congratulate Obasanjo and Yar'Adua on a job well done.

Worldwide condemnation of the election and Yar'Adua's admission in his inauguration speech that the process that brought him into office was deeply flawed did not deter the South African leader. He still invited Yar'Adua to Tshwane (Pretoria) to have a personal congratulatory meeting with him. Why this obvious indiscretion? Hattingh, a labour analyst, observed that the South African President had to protect the economic interest of his country, seeing that Nigeria's leaders had chosen to deceive the Nigerian people. As he said:

The answer to this question lies in South Africa's policy towards Africa, in the form of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the relationship that it has with the ruling party in Nigeria, and the expansionist agenda that South African corporations and parastatals have in Nigeria... Despite what the ANC government claims, South Africa's foreign policy towards Africa is not based on Pan-Africanism or anti-imperialism; it is rather based on promoting South Africa's expanding business interests on the continent. In reality, the South African state's interests, in both the domestic and African arena, have become fused with those of South Africa's capitalist elite.⁴⁹

In other words, South Africa felt more committed to protecting its investments in Nigeria (which include MTN, DSTV, Standard Bank, First Rand, Imperial, Johncom, Massmart, Nampak, and Sun International, Tsogo, Broll, etc.) than to stand on the side of social justice with the Nigerian people and the international community that widely condemned the elections and called for electoral reforms. This is an indication that in a very serious sense R2P is a mere pipe dream for Africa. How many African leaders have ever spoken out against Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe or President Bashir of Sudan? African leaders are speaking out against Gbagbo largely because the US government and France want them to do so but not because they themselves have the moral fibre to speak the truth to him. If Gbagbo had actually wanted to behave like his peers, he would have seen to it that the election result was simply declared in his favour. Torrents of congratulatory messages would have followed from all corners of the continent!

The foregoing does not suggest that the African continent is totally lacking in the capacity to prevent and manage conflicts. It is on record that several "African elder statesmen" helped to prevent some African conflicts from becoming crises. The list of such African leaders includes Thabo Mbeki who served as the President of South Africa from 1999 to 2008. In his capacity as Deputy President and later President, Mbeki helped to successfully resolve the conflicts in Burundi, DRC, the Ivory Coast, and Zimbabwe. He was the EU peace envoy to Sudan. President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi in 2008 led peace missions to Sudan and Chad. He also led delegations to monitor elections or promote dialogue in Guinea Bissau, Central African Republic, Mauritania, DRC, and Niger. The AU mediator in the election that took place in Kenya in 2008 was John Kufuor of Ghana. The peace process in that particular crisis was, completed by the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. Another important key envoy in the continent is General Abdulsalami Abubakar, a former Nigerian head of state. He was in August

2000, appointed as U.N. Secretary's General's Special Envoy to the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was Chairman of the Military Sub-Committee for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in 2002, and in May 2003 was appointed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as Facilitator for the Liberia Peace Talks. In 2004, he was appointed as Special Envoy of the AU Chairperson to Sudan and Chad. After serving as the Commonwealth Secretary General's Special Envoy to the Gambia, he later became the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the country. Mbeki, Buyoya, Kufuor and Abubakar are members of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD). Olusegun Obasanjo, another experienced peace envoy, is the ECOWAS special envoy to the ongoing crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. Both Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and General Abdulsalami Abubakar of Nigeria were commended twice in 2003 by the UN for bringing lasting peace to Liberia. All these are very good examples of how African "elders" can contribute to conflict prevention and management in Africa.

International Support for "African Solutions"

The UN and the US take the lead in providing support for African peace processes. However, since its forced exit from Somalia in 1993, the US approach to supporting peace processes in Africa has been that of indirect engagement. Rather than send in troops for peacekeeping, peace enforcement or even relief work, the US prefers to invest on diplomatic efforts, arming and training African armed forces to be able to prevent and manage African conflicts. Hence, the US has not been involved in any multilateral peacekeeping operations in the continent since the 1990s. This "hands off" approach seems to have slowed down international peacekeeping operations and hinders African initiatives in conflict resolution. On the other hand, with the September 11 bombing of the US and the consequent military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the country has maintained an increased military presence in the Horn of

Africa which is a border post by means of which al-Qaeda is able to cross into Africa. By June 2005, the US introduced a programme known as the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative under which government military forces in Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Nigeria, Morocco and Tunisia are trained and provided technical assistance to protect their borders against international terrorists. More military attachés have also been assigned to US embassies in these countries to increase cooperation in anti-terrorism efforts.

In October 2007, a unified US-Africa Command (AFRICOM) aimed at centralizing continental operations was established to "conduct sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of US foreign policy".⁵⁰ In other words, the focus of the US in Africa now is more in the direction of detecting and deterring international terrorism as a major foreign policy objective of the US rather than dealing with real African conflict issues.

The frustrating part of this new engagement is that any nation that refuses to accept this kind of assistance to detect and deter international terrorism in Africa is tagged a "rogue state" or an enemy nation. Hence, Hilary Clinton said on September 13, 2001: "Every nation has to either be with us, or against us."⁵¹ President George W. Bush, in an address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001 equally said, "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."⁵² In other words, for the Americans, there are no longer bystanders in international politics. In one of his speeches, Bush described the nature of the anti-terror war thus:

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and

covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make... From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

The positions of Clinton and Bush, as expressed above, negate the whole essence of the "African solutions to African problems". It shows that Africans like other developing nations of the world are not afforded the luxury of neutrality in the global war against terrorism. Whereas during the Cold War, it was possible for African states to join the so-called "Non-aligned nations", this is not possible under the present global anti-terror war.⁵³ This situation is explainable by the nature of the bipolarity of the post-Cold War world which is totally different from what Americans were familiar with under the Cold War. The latter involved proxy wars in which the superpowers never came into direct confrontation. They sent arms, finance, technology, intelligence and other assistance to their satellites and favourites around the globe, but the US and the USSR did not unleash fire on each other. This is why the conflict was referred to as a Cold War.

But the war with the terrorists in the post-Cold War era is a "Hot War", too hot in point of fact, and everything is hurled by belligerents on either side against each other—from propaganda and verbal abuse to anthrax; from explosives sewn into shoes and underwear to cluster bombs designed to look like gift items and to explode like confetti showered on a wide radius of territory; from the humiliation and weatherboarding of POWs to the beheading of journalists and relief workers. The terrorists hit at Western targets in any part of the world. The latter too chased the terrorists to the

remotest corners of the world, as Bush promised them above. They both have carried the fight to Africa, thus making the anti-terror war, which is supposed to be a “solution”, an addition to Africa’s problems. I will cite some examples.

The coming of the “hot war” to Africa has made it possible for any African nation to be listed by the US as being among the countries of the world that produce terrorists. This was the experience of Nigeria in 2009. On December 25, 2009, a 23-year-old Nigerian, Farouk Abdul-Mutallab, tutored in the United Kingdom and trained at al-Qaeda terrorist camp in Yemen, was involved in a failed attempt to detonate a parcel bomb aboard Delta-Northwest Airline flight 235 billed to land in Detroit in the US. With that singular sinful act by one individual, coming from a country only known for internal religious unrest and, in fact, with no evidence that Mutallab was linked to any individual or group in his home country, Nigeria was tagged a terrorist country. Nigerians travelling abroad were consequently subjected to all kinds of humiliating treatments. The country was let off the hook in 2010 only after it was publicly established that what happened was simply a personal misdemeanour rather than a state crime. It was established that the father of the culprit, Alhaji Umar Mutallab, had officially informed the US Embassy in Abuja about the suspicious activities of his son. That the US could not successfully police such a suspect only to blame his activities on Nigeria is to suggest that the war against terrorism is not foolproof.

The “war” has also made it possible for terrorists to attack African countries in their quest for Western targets to hit. This was the experience in 1998 when the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed by al-Qaeda. This incident, which was linked to local members of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, brought Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri to the attention of the US public for the first time, and resulted in the US Federal Bureau of Investigation placing Osama bin Laden on its Ten Most Wanted list. Following the bombing of Kenya and Tanzania, the Al-Shifa

Pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, North Sudan, which was constructed between 1992 and 1996 with components imported from the United States, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, India, and Thailand was bombed by the US in 1998 leading to the death of one employee and the wounding of eleven others. Three reasons were provided by the US for the attack on this factory which was engaged in producing anti-malaria medicines: (i) Retaliation for previous attacks on US embassies in several African countries (ii) alleged use of the factory for the processing of VX nerve agent, and (iii) alleged ties between the owners of the plant and al-Qaeda.

Whereas in the Sudan case an organization that was initially having friendly relations with the US became its enemy, the anti-terror war also made it possible for a former American enemy in Africa to become its friend. This was the experience of Muammar Ghadafi's Libya—a country George Bush and his advisers once listed as “beyond the axis of evil”.⁵⁴ Before now, relations between Libya and the US had been anything but cordial most especially since Libya was implicated in the downing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. The US had to place severe sanctions on the North African country. In September 2004, President Bush signed an executive order lifting the US commercial sanctions against Libya after determining the African nation has met all of the US requirements for eliminating its programmes on weapons of mass destruction. In addition, Libya offered to help the Western world (most especially the US and UK) to police North Africa against the infiltration of al-Qaeda.⁵⁵ Found to have delivered on several of his security “pledges”, Ghadafi was compensated in August 2009 with the release of Abdel Basset Ali Mohamed al Megrahi, the man convicted of murdering 270 people in the Lockerbie terror attack. He was said by the Scottish Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill to have been released on compassionate grounds and that he was “going home to die”. The man who was expected to have passed on weeks after arriving Libya is still alive.

Another strategy adopted by the Western world for supporting Africa peace processes is to place economic and military embargoes on African leaders perceived to be openly violating the principles of R2P. Such countries include Zimbabwe, Sudan and Guinea. China which pursues a policy of “non-interference” in the affairs of the countries in which it does business also happens to choose its friends among such African leaders and countries who are having problems with the western world. And because China has veto powers in the Security Council, it has worked as the protector of these African states against Security Council resolutions initiated by Western powers.

Notwithstanding the complicated state-centric positions in the West as regards the peace–conflict situation in African countries, many Western mediators and peacemakers still participate in African peace processes. But some problems are faced in this sector. The major one is that most of these mediation projects on African armed conflicts by external actors are based on centralist, “top-down” notions that assume that one is dealing with more or less well-organized armies,⁵⁶ with clear lines of command and awareness of the laws of armed conflicts. The fact is that the rag-tag African rebels recognize no authority beyond their own and, after fighting for a few months, they focus less on the conflict issues and more on how to seize the occasion to pilfer the resources of society. This was the experience in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo and even the Niger Delta.⁵⁷ Such individuals are difficult to negotiate with as their interests in a conflict are hardly political. The political only serves as a veil for the economic. For example, the peace process in Sierra Leone made Foday Sankoh, a former Corporal and Cameraman in the army, the Deputy President. Some members of this rag-tag rebel movement were appointed ministers. Yet, he continued to deal in the “blood diamond” trade until the people forcefully ejected him. He died in detention later.

A criticism of the top-down foreign intervention is to suggest that the bottom-up approach is a better alternative. This is not the case. This approach of local or traditional methods of conflict management has its own shortcomings. In one of his works in this area, P. Loizos, an anthropologist, tries to demonstrate the possibility of utilizing such local frames of mediation and resolution in the management of modern warfare, drawing on how Greek and Turk inhabitants in one Cypriot village were able to use "home-made rules of village political life" to ensure a local truce.⁵⁸ The important factor here is that the problem could easily be solved largely because it was two legitimate communities that were fighting and they were fighting over concrete issues. With many African rebel movements, things are quite different. They start off by articulating the demands of the people they claim to represent and they base their fight on these broad demands. But, as I have said above, after some time, they forget their original, people-oriented demands and start to minister to personal needs. It is therefore difficult for them to apply local solutions to their problems as these problems are dictated from the faraway countries where they sell the stolen mineral resources that now become the main reasons for fighting. Even where the conflict issues are clear as witnessed in Jos, Nigeria, "spoilers" ensure that the conflict parties do not have the opportunity to engage in any genuine negotiation as this would take food from the table of these conflict entrepreneurs.

However, Farah and Lewis⁵⁹ have shown that local approaches can in fact work though their jurisdiction might not be broad enough to cover the extensive areas often affected by typical African armed conflicts. They provide a lucid description of how in the wake of the war that started in 1991 some lineage elders in northern Somalia initiated a cycle of local, regional and eventually national conferences that led to the secession of their area from the larger Somalia and formed a modern government, backed by the writing of a constitution. This helped in creating an oasis of relative

tranquillity throughout the Somali civil war. However, this initiative was not recognized by the UN and could not, therefore be strengthened because the UN perceives its role as promoting national governments rather than supporting what looks like a fragmented “state system”.⁶⁰ Our own work in the management of the Ife-Modakeke crisis involved an excellent combination of local and modern methods of conflict resolution. Last year, I also called attention to the viability of this integrated framework for dealing with African conflicts while delivering the 2010 J.F. Ogunjo Lecture.⁶¹ To realize “African solutions to African problems” would require that these kinds of initiatives are supported by governments and the global community. A major African problem is that many African leaders are “too busy” to know what works and what fails to produce any results at the local level and would find it difficult to understand the issues we are trying to raise here.

Track Five Diplomacy: UI and an “African Solution”

So far our discussion has focused largely on the role of the state in managing African problems. This is technically known in peace studies as “Track One” diplomacy. Where the state is unable to deal with the kind of conflict issues being discussed in this lecture, solutions can be sought from any of the other nine tracks in the model known to us as “Multi-Track Diplomacy”. The role of academic institutions in this model of conflict management is known as “Track Five Diplomacy”. Its components are research, training and education, carried out to ameliorate a conflict situation and to defuse tensions and belligerence on the basis of sound knowledge of the conflict issues as well as astute pedagogic methods for imparting non-violence strategies to the parties and stakeholders involved in a given conflict situation. This track enables me to switch to the discussion of how the University of Ibadan tries to contribute to African solutions through the award of MA and PhD degrees in Peace and Conflict Studies.

The motive of this kind of intervention is to enable the University to produce qualified personnel to deal with diverse conflict issues on the continent. Our programme goes beyond the “academic”; that adjective is often used to disparage the work that is done in universities, as in the statement: “The questions you have raised are only of academic relevance.” “Academic” in such contexts means a loss of touch with the reality outside the walls of the university. In our discipline, nothing could be further from the truth, and it is in recognition of this that scholars and researchers in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies are assigned a special role in Multi-Track Diplomacy.

Let me say that I realize that at this point many people would expect me to explain how I moved from the field of historical scholarship to the establishment of the Ibadan Peace and Conflict Studies Programme which is a skills-based discipline. That story will make this lecture too long. I will rather address the issue at another lecture likely to be hosted by the Postgraduate School and limit myself here to merely shedding light on the general orientation of my scholarship, and then move from there to state how the Ibadan Peace Studies Programme started.

The contents of my publications and the outlets where they have been published, and also the kind of practical peace work I do, make many people think that my PhD was in Security Studies. No, it was in African History. History is my main discipline but Security Studies is my first love. I would have probably done Security Studies if I had had the opportunity when I entered the University to do my first degree. I did not have the opportunity, and had to train myself in the field. As my curriculum vitae shows, I spent a lot of time trying to manage this split identity between being a professional historian and a specialist in Security Studies (which I generically refer to as Peace and Conflict Studies). In order to satisfy the two urges in my academic personality, I needed to prove my mettle — through publication — as a historian⁶² as well as a scholar in Security Studies (or Peace

and Conflict Studies).⁶³ This challenge of having to run from the pillar of History to the post of Peace and Conflict Studies became so burdensome at a stage that I started to introduce myself at international meetings as a “Security historian”. Surprisingly, many western scholars were interested in what I was saying. They challenged me to share my ideas on this with them in several book projects and this was how my arguments and opinions began to be accepted internationally on security-related issues. For now, I am better known in the field of Security Studies than in History though I have contributed to the two fields equally.

I joined the University in 1993 as a Junior Research Fellow and started the project leading to Ibadan’s Peace and Conflict Studies Programme in 1994 as a Research Fellow II following the completion of my PhD. It all started with the “African solution to African problems” mantra. I was motivated to start the project by the political stance of General Sani Abacha in 1994. The former Nigerian dictator may have lacked many things but not self-assertiveness. He exported to Liberia and Sierra Leone what his regime was lacking—democracy—and imported from the rest of the world what Nigeria was blessed with—oil. As he ruled Nigeria with an iron fist, he warned the rest of the world to steer clear of the country and that his regime had the capacity to deal with the aftermath of the June 12 (1993) crisis he inherited. We all knew that Abacha did not have the kind of capacity that he was talking about. I knew that many other African leaders like him did not mean what they were saying to the rest of the world in terms of having the capacity to solve the problems besetting their respective countries. It was under this belief that I started to write a proposal for an Africa-wide research project on “Violence in Africa” for submission to the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal. If accepted, the proposal would be turned to what CODESRIA called a “Green Book” to be sent to different parts of Africa for constituting a research team under my coordination. My

main goal was to use the project to call attention to the physical, psychological and structural violence done to Africa by African leaders.

But I had a supposed moral problem to deal with. While doing my MA degree at the Institute of African Studies in 1991, I won the continental thesis-writing award administered by CODESRIA. My PhD dissertation won the same award in 1994. Some colleagues then nicknamed me "CODESRIA boy". This was pejorative and not complimentary as one would ordinarily think. In an era where it was something sinister to be referred to as an "Abacha boy", a "Mafia boy", and the like, it was not something good to be called anybody's boys. Another colleague came to me and asked to be formally introduced to CODESRIA. I explained to him how to have access to CODESRIA's programme announcements. He said that was not what he was referring to. He described CODESRIA as a cult, and said he would want to become a "cult member" so that he too could get grants and awards. The insinuation in both cases was that there was someone close to me at faraway Dakar, Senegal who "dashed" me the two awards I got as well as places in the CODESRIA conferences I applied for and attended. So, I said to myself: "If I send this proposal to CODESRIA and a Green Book is produced from it, colleagues would swear by God that I was a fraud." This was what motivated me to ask the then Dr. Eghosa Osaghae to join me on the "Violence in Africa" proposal.

That was 1994 shortly after defending my PhD. Osaghae is a specialist on ethnicity. Our common ground was the study of ethnic violence. But in addition to that, I was interested in the study of criminal violence (trans-border organized crime and gender-based violence) and political violence (military coups, political assassinations, forms of civil unrest and terrorism). Osaghae in turn invited Dr. Jinmi Adisa, a well established expert in military science, to join us. The three of us sat together and produced a powerful research proposal that eventually took us round all parts of the world.

This was the root of my own scholarship and forage into peace practice.

As we were trying to rush the proposal to CODESRIA in Dakar as I originally planned, it occurred to us that the Institute Francais de Recherche en Africa (IFRA) that had just established an office at the Institute of African Studies was looking for such a big project. So we decided to try our luck with IFRA. We decided to test-run the project with an international conference to be held in Ibadan. But we understood that the Abacha regime could come after us if the focus of the conference was strictly on political violence. It was under this atmosphere that Professor Tunde Agbola of the Centre for Urban and Regional Planning came on board with his interest in urbanization. The collaboration gave us an "International Conference on Urban Management and Urban Violence in Africa". As expected the Nigerian military and the National Television Authority (NTA) took an interest in the project and later invited Dr. Adisa and me for a live discussion of the issues in Lagos.

With the support of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat) in Nairobi, the French Embassy, the British Council and a few other donors, the "International Conference on Urban Management and Urban Violence in Africa" held at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, in November 1994 with participants drawn to Ibadan from different parts of Europe and Africa. It was declared open by Professor Jerry Gana who was the Minister for Works. General Oladipo Diya, Abacha's Deputy, was represented at the meeting by Professor Femi Odekunle, a professor of criminology who was one of his advisers. The then French Ambassador to Nigeria was also in attendance. It was this meeting that launched me into the limelight.

I was later approached by Dr. David Hawkins, the then Director (West Africa) of the British Council. He expressed his interest to provide assistance in taking some of the issues raised at the IITA conference forward. He offered to sponsor

me to some UK universities that might be interested in joining our proposed project on the study of violence. By November 1995, the British Council appointed me a Visiting Scholar to some UK universities and centres of excellence in security studies. The most prominent were (i) the Centre for the Study of Conflicts, University of Ulster, Coleraine, Northern Ireland; (ii) the Joint International Programme on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity (INCORE) and the Peace Programme, Magee College Londonderry, Northern Ireland; (iii) International Alert, London; (iv) Centre for Defence Studies, King's College, University of London; and (v) Rutherford College, Centre for International Conflict Analysis, University of Kent in Canterbury. I returned to Nigeria with a proposal for the British Council to support the University of Ibadan in establishing an academic link programme in Peace and Conflict Studies with INCORE, University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. The link agreement was signed by Professor Oladosu Ojengbode in his capacity as the Acting Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan in 1996. The link was expected to be of mutual benefit to the two universities. Hence the agreement signed by Professor Ojengbode had two key terms of reference:

- That the University of Ulster will provide technical support to the University of Ibadan to start MA and PhD degree programmes in Peace and Conflict Studies;
- That the University of Ibadan will provide technical support for injecting African issues to the research agenda of INCORE, University of Ulster.

While Professor Valerie Morgan, the Director of Research for INCORE, served as the UK coordinator of the project, I served as the Nigerian coordinator. Within one year of its take-off, the project worked so well that the British Council decided to establish the second link programme in Peace Studies. It was between the Universities of Jos in Nigeria and

Bradford in the UK. This led to the third link programme: between Bradford and the University of Sierra Leone. While the Ibadan programme led to the establishment of MA and PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies, that of Jos led to the establishment of a Centre for Peace Studies and Conflict Management which runs a postgraduate (and now undergraduate) course in Peace Studies. That of the University of Sierra Leone led to the commencement of an undergraduate Diploma in Peace Studies.

The Ibadan/Ulster link brought about the exchange of staff between the two universities. Those that travelled to Ulster from Ibadan to audit the teaching of Peace and Conflict Studies or conduct research were Drs. Jinmi Adisa, Eghosa Osaghae, Kunle Amuwo, and Professor 'Bayo Adekanye of the Political Science Department; Dr. Bola Udegbe of Psychology; Dr. G.A. Akinola of History; Dr. Demola Yakubu and Mrs. Folake Okediran of Law; Dr. Ayo Ahmed of Guidance and Counselling; Dr. Ifeanyi Onyeonoru of Sociology and Professor Akintayo of Adult Education. Each of them was expected to provide support for the teaching of Peace and Conflict Studies when we came back to Nigeria. All of us were later encouraged by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Omoniyi Adewoye, to constitute ourselves into a body known as the "Ibadan Peace and Conflict Studies Fellows" to enable us consolidate on the gains of the Ibadan/Ulster link.

Those who visited Ibadan from Ulster included Professor Robert Gavin with whom I designed the Peace and Conflict Studies courses; Dr. Alan Smith, an international curriculum reviewer who came to provide quality assurance for the curriculum; Mr. James King who was interested in working with the Theatre Arts Department to promote peace theatre; Mr. M.J. McCool and Ms. Cathy Gormley who were expected to provide IT backup for the course.

Professor Osaghae (coming from South Africa to Northern Ireland) and I worked with our INCORE colleagues to produce two books as proposed in the memorandum of

understanding (MOU) signed with the University of Ibadan. The first was published in 2000 by the United Nations University in Tokyo (Japan) and Pluto Press in London⁶⁴ while the second was published in 2005 by the United Nations University.⁶⁵ These two publications which helped to direct the attention of INCORE towards African issues in peace and conflict are today used by universities all over the world. The issues raised in the two chapters I contributed to the books got me other international projects.

However, the Ibadan end of the MOU was difficult for me to achieve. It took me over five years to get the MA, and PhD courses in Peace and Conflict Studies approved.

No sooner had the project taken off than it ran into the stormy waters of UI politics. My problem started with some colleagues asking me to include their names in the list of those expected to visit Northern Ireland from the University of Ibadan as part of the Ibadan/Ulster links project. But the MOU that Professor Ojengbade signed with the British Council on the project was watertight. The British would want the objectives of the project to be achieved on their own terms. The number of people to be involved in the project was predetermined; the departments from where they had to be taken were not determined by me but by the expected outcomes of the academic engagement. My own role was limited to ensuring that the University of Ibadan strictly adhered to the terms of the agreement. I was expected to write an annual report on the project for the consideration of the British Council headquarters not only in Lagos but also in the United Kingdom. Hence, those that I could not "help" on the matter enlisted the support of those seeking to "own" the project. The former proved not to be as destructive and powerful as the latter. First and foremost, I was said to be doing "secret service" work for the British Government. I was later said to be operating for the SSS. The rumours expanded in other dimensions later.

I had four major problems. The first had to do with my being a person who believes that it is individuals that make

institutions and not institutions that make individuals. When I embark on any project, I commit extra time to it as if someone is paying me specially to carry out the work. I bother less about ownership. This misled many people to think that the British Government was paying me a special allowance for what I was doing. My problem was compounded by the fact that as I was managing the Ibadan/Ulster project, CODESRIA released the award for my PhD dissertation and I used the money to buy a flashy Datsun Laurel car. A Professor stood in front of the Registry where he swore to be privy to how I was given the car by the British government and that it was fitted with gadgets for espionage work. Those who wanted to inherit these “benefits” put more efforts into getting me to relinquish the leadership of the project to them. Little did they know that I was actually spending my money in doing some of these things and that it was interest that was driving me and not money. The expectation of the British Council, not just for Ibadan but for all other link projects it was sponsoring (including the one managed at the time by the current Vice-Chancellor of the Obafemi Awolowo University), was that the University would support me if I had to attend any meeting within Nigeria in respect of the link. But Professor Ojengbede who signed the link agreement with the British was not on the ground to educate my senior colleagues on the conditions for the project.

This issue of having to spend my money emanated from a second problem. I had no institutional base from which I could initiate any financial request from the University to sponsor my trips. It was just not possible to get money directly from the office of the Vice-Chancellor. The Institute of African Studies to which I belong found it difficult to understand what I meant by “Peace and Conflict Studies” and wondered why it should be its business to give me the needed support for seeing the project through. Up to the present, the Institute’s programmes are largely “Cultural Studies” and not the integrated African Studies found elsewhere in which

social sciences and humanities excellently mix. We are just beginning to address this issue through curriculum review.

As I tried to go outside the Institute to get the needed support in the highly challenging “political environment” in which I had to realize the terms of the British Council MOU, I encountered the third problem. I was just an unconfirmed Research Fellow II in the University and so had no “voice” at all in the system. I was just leaving the rank of a Junior Research Fellow (an Assistant Lecturer). It was difficult to get the Vice-Chancellor to give me what I needed for effectively running the programme. Anytime I was summoned by the Links Board of the University, I was literally interrogated rather than listened to. I was just too junior for the Ibadan system to treat with any respect.

The fourth problem had to do with the fact that shortly after I turned the “Urban Violence” project to a Peace and Conflict Studies Link Programme with the support of the British Council, my initial partners – Drs. Eghosa Osaghae and Jinmi Adisa – left Nigeria for greener pastures. The then Dr. Osaghae was appointed a Professor and Head of Political Science Department at the University of Umtata in South Africa. In fact, he was in South Africa when we held the November 1994 conference. He joined me for the two book projects from South Africa. Dr. Adisa went to the UN Centre in Nairobi and later joined the Organization of African Unity (now African Union). He stayed back in Addis Ababa.

My lack of institutional base, my junior academic status and the absence of both Drs. Osaghae and Adisa who would otherwise have provided on-the-ground support for the PCS initiative, made me an easy prey of those interested in scuttling the project.

I got some respite when Professor Bade Onimode became the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) of the University. I was not sure of what he was told and by whom. He sent for me immediately he assumed office and in his characteristic manner said he would not want to listen to any story. He would like the Peace Studies Programme to be taken to a

logical conclusion and he was ready to invest some resources in it. He introduced me to the management of the University Bookshop and asked them to give me any stationery I needed for processing the PCS papers and have the money charged to his office. So, I started to operate from his office and this was how the MA and PhD curriculum of the Institute of African Studies in Peace and Conflict Studies were processed and sent to the Postgraduate School for approval. We were supported in this process by the then Deans of the Postgraduate School (Professors Lucas and Fagbemi). But by this time, all the funding agencies that initially indicated interest to help the University of Ibadan develop the project to maturity had disappeared. They would not want to be drawn into "Ibadan problems that required Ibadan solutions". The most lamentable was an oil company that had wanted to support the University with two hundred and fifty thousand British pounds. The British Council was the last to take its exit and it did not look back in the direction of the University of Ibadan after then. The Council tarried for so long because of the contract it had already signed with the University which must come to maturity in order not to get the Nigerian office into trouble in the UK.

By the time the Peace and Conflict Studies started in 2000, I became relieved a bit as colleagues from different Departments came to the Institute to help us teach the course. I now had a group of people that could bear the shock with me. But the battle was not over. Whereas the focus of the attack on me before this time was on ensuring that the course did not take off, the new challenge of my attackers was that of ensuring that I did not remain in the University of Ibadan to take credit for it. People hid under different guises to be part of this plot. I was severally reported to the security systems under the Abacha regime by colleagues with access to these institutions. There were several other issues but the lesson of it all is that the more I was exposed to the security sector, the more the people in the system were better educated about what I was doing, but wanted to involve me in the

Abacha administration. Such moves were humbly rebuffed. At a stage, Professor Onimode and I were formally invited to appear before the leadership of the Abacha Foundation for Peace and National Unity in Abuja. A lengthy and windy meeting was held where a juicy financial assistance was offered to the University of Ibadan (which the Abacha administration hated with passion) if we could help to expand the “programmes” of the Foundation. Beyond the film “Not in our character” which the Foundation produced there was actually nothing on ground at the Foundation to expand. But we had to tread carefully. The Foundation was scrapped when General Abubakar succeeded Abacha in 1998 and was later turned to the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution when Chief Obasanjo took over power in 1999.

In the midst of all of these problems, I saw leadership and sincerity of purpose in a few senior colleagues in this University and this explains the special respect I have for them today. These people include Professors Lucas (PG School), Fagbemi (PG School), Olayinka (PG School), Omolewa (Adult Education), Agbaje (Political Science), Aken’Ova (Agric Biology), Fr. Kenny (Religious Studies), Gboyega (Political Science), Osaghae and Nwolise (Political Science), Agbola (Urban and Regional Planning), Egbokhare (Linguistics) and Laray Denzer (History). I was a toddler in the University at that time but nobody sees more clearly than a “child”. A child knows its friends and enemies. I saw the good and bad side of the University of Ibadan in the course of trying to bring Peace Studies to the University and this memory has remained with me because it is part of the history of my life. But this strengthened my professionalism and brought me to where I am today. The more Ibadan rejected me, the more I drew sympathy from outside the University and was given opportunities of better training abroad. I was encouraged to believe that a PhD is a universalizing degree. Once you have it, start building your capacity to be able to survive outside your immediate environment. I took this advice and it explains my resolve to

publish all over the world and get known across the globe. It is a fact that I am better known outside Nigeria today than within the country. People know and respect me outside the University of Ibadan than within it.

The problem with the Ibadan Peace and Conflict Studies Programme is that the University did not ask for it or pay anything to get the programme started. The Institute of African Studies did not pay anything for it and never appreciated the programme until recently when it started to generate revenue. In Ilorin, where the University had to invest millions of naira to establish its Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies (CPSS), the programme is given better treatment. I established the Centre in Ilorin and have been monitoring its progress since then. For example, at the last count, the University of Ilorin had committed over ten million naira to building one of the biggest security studies libraries in the whole of Africa for its CPSS programme. Our students in Ibadan travel down to Ilorin from time to time to use this resource centre. In addition, the University of Ilorin has established a better (official) relationship with the security sector today than the University of Ibadan has ever done.

The foregoing does not suggest that one has any firm regrets over playing a leading role in establishing the Ibadan Peace and Conflict Studies Programme. My lamentation is that the programme would have grown faster than it is doing if internal efforts were not made to frustrate it and if the University had developed a contingency plan for it. The little efforts I made were appreciated by members of the international community that saw it as a major contribution to "African solutions to African problems". My capacity was built by several international agencies that sympathized with my isolation in Ibadan: the INCORE School for Ethnic Conflict Training, Londonderry; the Centre for Conflict Resolution, University of Cape Town, South Africa; International Alert, London; Responding to Conflict in Birmingham; UNDESA, New York; and The World Peace Fund, Washington, DC. Within three years of my debut in the

field of Peace Studies and Practice, I was given different types of consultancies some of which had to do with designing peace processes from the scratch and seeing them through to the level of final evaluation. The international organizations that gave me such opportunities include DFID, USAID, USAID/OTI, UNED, UNDP, The World Bank, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Heinrich Boll Foundation, UNDP, the World Bank, EU, IDASA, WANEP, etc. I also worked with several Nigerian agencies. In the process of working with these agencies, I came in direct contact with several Nigerian leaders whose personal relationship with me today is solely based on the respect they have for my professional work. I also respect them for the encouragement I got from them.

On April 29, 2000 I stood before a large international audience at the California State University, Sacramento in the US to receive the "Africa Peace Education Award" for being able to kick-start the Ibadan Peace and Conflict Studies Programme off the ground. The plaque brought back from that award ceremony also sits majestically in my living room today as evidence of my contributions to global peace education. I have been so honoured at several other places most especially by the United Nations which gave me three wonderful opportunities: (i) in 1999, I was sponsored to the United Nations International Leadership Academy at Amman, Jordan (with field trips to Israel, Palestine, Egypt) to be trained in peacekeeping and conflict resolution; (ii) In 2005, I was invited to the UN Headquarters in New York to deliver a paper on "global peace education" along with several other leading scholars in the field; in 2007, I was invited by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) in Pretoria to serve as its Country Director in Nigeria (Abuja), and (iii) in 2007, I was invited by UNDP to help build the capacity of some Ghanaian universities to start Peace Studies programmes. The Peace and Development Studies Programme of the University of Cape Coast came out of this effort.

From 3-21 March 2008, I was the Convenor of the SEPHIS/CODESRIA South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development which took place at St. Louis, Senegal on “Historicizing Migrations”. The project involved twenty-one scholars from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. In 2003, Professor Alex Gboyega and I were invited to the United Kingdom to participate in the establishment of the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) at Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. The grant for the project came from DFID. My photograph and CV is still there on the website of CRISE today in appreciation of the modest contributions we made to that global peace project.

I have been involved in several other high profile projects and meetings across the globe. One of the most appreciated in recent years was in November 2009 when I was invited by the US Department of State, Washington, DC, to Garmisch in Germany to contribute to a frank discussion on “The future of armed groups in Africa” organized for the US Marines in the US Africa Command stationed at Stuttgart in Germany. This visit to Germany to interact with the US Marines was the civilian equivalent of an earlier one undertaken to Stuttgart by the Director of Operations at Nigeria’s Defence Headquarters, General Ishaku Pennap (*fspsp*). Present at the Garmisch meeting was the Defence Attaché to the US embassy in Abuja. There were several other defence attachés. The US government had given me several opportunities in the past but this was the first time that I was being given such a high profile professional assignment and I was told later that I was recommended for the meeting by an Ambassador working directly with US Assistant Secretary of State. I first met him in Ghana in 2004 and lost contact with him thereafter. The letter of commendation sent to me by Vice Admiral Robert T. Moeller (US Navy), the Deputy to the Commander for Military Operations US Africa Command, after the meeting was dated November 20, 2009. It sits majestically like a trophy in my living room today.

But none of these honours and opportunities excites me as much as the number of students we have produced so far on the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme. Where are some of these students of ours today? Dr. Ade Abolurin is the Commandant General of the Nigerian Security and Defence Corps. Two of his immediate juniors were also produced by the PCS Programme. Mr. Ekpoudom retired recently as a Deputy Inspector General of Police; Mr. Toyin Akanle retired recently as the Director of the Institute of Security Studies in Abuja. Before this last appointment, he served as the Director of SSS to eight different states; Doyin Idowu is with the Institute for Multitrack Diplomacy in Washington DC; Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo (PhD) is a Senior Peace and Development Advisor to the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and Chief Peace Building and Conflict Prevention in Nairobi, Kenya; Omolara Balogun is with the West Africa Civil Society Institute in Accra, Ghana; General Ishaku Pennap retired recently as the Director of Operations at the Defence Headquarters in Abuja; General Peter Boro is the current Director of International Peacekeeping Training at the Staff and Command College, Jaji. Mr. Olayinka Balogun is the current Commissioner of Police, Ekiti State. Most of the universities in Nigeria running the NUC-compelled Peace and Conflict Studies GES course rely on our graduates. Our PhD graduates teach at various universities in the West African subregion.

In 2004 or thereabout, the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme took the second step in establishing the name of the University of Ibadan in peace education in the world by establishing the "Society for Peace Studies and Practice" (SPSP). The main goal of the Society, which is now located in the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution at the Presidency, Abuja, is to promote synergic relationships between peace studies scholars and practitioners. Fellows of the Society can be found in different parts of the world: one former Nigerian head of state, four Nigerian state governors, colleagues from the University of London, African Union,

and WANEP. The immediate past and present Directors General of the Nigerian Television Authority are Fellows of the Society. So also are the past two Chiefs of Army Staff in Nigeria, a former Commander of the UN Hybrid Operations in Sudan; the immediate past Inspector General of Police, a serving Commissioner of Police, two Vice-Chancellors, a former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and several other eminent Africans that cannot be listed here.

Other universities seek our collaboration and support. For example, the UNDP office in Accra, Ghana asked me to design the MA course of the University of Cape Coast in Peace and Development Studies in 2007. When the Peace Studies Programme of the Makerere University in Kampala Uganda was to be assessed for upgrading to a doctoral level in 2006, I was one of the international assessors invited to Kampala for the exercise by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). When the Nelson Mandela Foundation (South Africa) and School of Government of the University of Western Cape, South Africa were to discuss the framework for peace education in Africa in 2007, I was invited to Cape Town. The MA and PhD courses at the University of Ilorin in Peace and Development Studies was a joint initiative of the University of Ibadan and SPSP. The Center for Conflict Management of the Kennesaw State University in the US is currently discussing with us the possibility of staff and student exchange in respect of the PhD programme they run in Conflict management. The leadership of the Africa Programme of the UN-Mandated University for Peace (Costa Rica) based in Addis Ababa visited this University in 2010 with a view to signing an MOU with the University of Ibadan on Peace Studies. It would be recalled that the Director of the Programme, Professor Jean-Bosco Butera, gave an Ibadan Links Lecture in this hall during his visit. Since then, two of our PhD students in the University have been provided with a generous grant and three of our staff and students have been invited to Addis Ababa for various capacity building

programmes. The point we are trying to make is that there is enough to show for our efforts but more can be achieved.

Conclusion

To conclude, I must return to the main questions posed at the beginning, in the very title of this lecture. Does the mantra of “African solutions to African problems” suggest that the continent has been ditched by the developed world which has always assisted the people of the continent to solve their problems? I do not think so. Africa cannot be ditched; it has merely been pinched to become more alive to its responsibility in keeping its environment safe from security problems. But why do I say that Africa cannot be ditched? Part of the answer would be found in some of the conclusions reached in Obama’s Accra speech. After observing that the people of the continent are responsible for their problems, Obama still called attention to what the US was willing to do for the continent. This shows that Africa has not been totally abandoned.

But inklings from Obama’s speech cannot suffice. I must present better answers than to merely say: “Obama said it.” Africa cannot be ditched because the Western world needs Africa. The coming of China into global economic prominence in the twenty-first century has seen that country spreading its wings into regions like Africa in its quest for resources and markets. The entry of political Islam into Africa has made our continent one of the battlefronts in the “end of the end of history”. These trends place Africa in the nexus of topical issues in global affairs. America and the West as a whole know this. It is brought home only too well to them by events in such places as Sudan, where an Arab government protected at the Security Council by China and associated with terrorist groups like the Janjaweed, for so long stymied the efforts of Africa and world bodies to bring succour to the people of Darfur in the south of that country.

If Africa is ditched by the West in such places as Darfur, the repercussions will affect the West as well. It would mean,

for instance, loss of face for the West in the realm of international politics if China should carry the day in Sudan and give the Bashir government an eternal lease of life. It could mean the West having to lose sleep over the prospect of Sudan becoming a safe haven for the militant Islamists that are committed to destroying what those fundamentalists term the "Great Satan". And where would America and the West find the moral high ground they so badly need in order to lay claims to the task of being the "police of the world" if they looked the other way while genocide took place in South Sudan? The recent referendum in South Sudan, negotiated through international mechanisms, is proof of the fact that Africa has not been abandoned by the West. The Obama government has made overtures to Bashir and his cohorts to respect the outcome of the referendum, with the promise that the US will assist the rest of Sudan under Bashir with aids. This does not look like abandonment to me.

Moreover, so long as the main avenue for peaceful global politics remains the UN, whose resolutions are made operant by a voting mechanism, Africa represents a bloc that will always be of relevance in world affairs. The idea of a unipolar world following the evaporation of the Cold War seemed to have made the UN redundant at the beginning of the 1990s. As I have explained above, many people were hasty to declare the US the sole remaining superpower, and its liberal democracy and economics the only option available to countries of the world. That superpower title has been dismembered into many pieces today, so much so that the so-called superpower lives its daily existence and goes to sleep more in fear than in confidence. Many countries in the world today, both the well-fed and the hungry, are nuclear powers. Their capacity for destruction has been greatly enhanced by their possession of nuclear technology. America and the West now live in trepidation of the hungry and/or angry nuclear states. They must not be provoked to war; otherwise none of us will live to witness the aftermath. Thankfully, these hungry/angry nuclear states are not in Africa. But they have

friends here. They can reach out to African countries with nuclear raw materials and help such countries to develop nuclear capacity. The West knows this. The West also knows that moral suasion against what it sometimes terms “nuclear rogue states” would require the backing of African votes at the level of the UN. Can the West decide to abandon Africa in this kind of situation? Would the West want Africa to abandon it in return?

In terms of resources, Africa remains an indispensable pool for the West. Let us take the example of our country. It is known today that the most volatile sector of the Nigerian economy is the oil sector. This is the sector that is beset by the problems of armed militancy in the Niger Delta. This is a sector that accounts for untold destruction of the environment in Nigeria. This is the sector where kickbacks are the norm and the first principle of business. It is also this sector that has afflicted Nigeria with what is known as the Dutch disease and a very dangerous monocultural dependency that threatens the country with instant economic failure should world prices in oil drop overnight—something that can happen one of these days. The oil industry is the worst industry reputation-wise in Nigeria today. But it is this dangerous and bad industry that oils and fuels Nigeria’s relationship with the West and the rest of the world powers. They need our resources, so they cannot do without us. We are a friend that causes them heartache, but we save them from stomach trouble.

And just as they need our oil and other resources to keep the wheels of their industry moving, they also need our markets to buy the goods from their production lines. Violent conflicts are bad for commerce. They convert goods that could have been sold at a profit into reliefs that might be received without thanks, as happened in Somalia in the episode recounted above. Africa has a huge and young population—the market prospects in Africa for the future would look good to any Western producer and trader, but for the problem of violent conflicts. Since the logic of capitalist production will not permit Western production lines to rest

for one second, markets must be perpetually sought for their goods. Dousing the fires in Africa means creating markets for the goods that must be produced by Western industry. I could go on and on to present reasons why Africa cannot be abandoned. But I think I have done enough.

My next task is to argue that it is not the West that is abandoning us. We are the ones jettisoning our own future progress. I would like to give an African touch to what Obama was trying to say. A popular Yoruba adage says that "*Tidi ba baje tonidi ni'nda*". This may seem a risqué proverb, but it is of a very pragmatic import. I will hazard a translation thus: "The consequences of one's damaged genitalia are personally borne by one." This is more or less an approximate translation but the metaphoric direction of this proverb is clear to all of us. Why the metaphor of sex? The psychologist will tell us that the sexual urge is an inner and unmistakable urge that we all bear and that we are all driven to fulfil or sublimate. It is an urge whose fruition satisfies the individual and preserves the species. Sex is used in this proverb as a metaphor for our capacity to satisfy ourselves by exercising our creative faculties. It is used as a metaphor for productivity. When we destroy this capacity of self-satisfaction and damage our faculty for creativity, we are the ones to bear the consequences in the final analysis.

This, to my mind, is the point that Obama was trying to make. And it can also be expressed in another way, this time a short narrative. A man has a wayward child who is in the habit of performing a certain dangerous acrobatic stunt (*ere egele*). The man tries his best to advise the boy to rethink his lust for danger by telling him each time he does this stunt: "*Omo yi ma pa mi.*" The idea is that the man knows his daredevil son feels no danger, even though the danger of the stunt is clearly felt by the man. When the nuisance value of the boy gets to a boiling point and he adds even more dangerous stunts to his repertoire, his father tells him: "*Omo yi ma pa ra re!*" What Obama was saying to Africa is simply "*Africa ma para re!!*". As a patriotic Nigerian I also want to

say: “*Nigeria ma pa ra re!!*”. As a resident of Ibadan I want to say to the politicians killing each other at the level of a ward congress election even before we approach the real election: “*Oloseru, olojelu ma para re!!!*” I meant to say “*Oloسلu*”.

The days of self-pity and self-exoneration are over for us. We cannot blame others for the consequences of the dangerous games we play. We cannot expect others to feel the pains on our behalf; after all we are the ones bearing the loss of our creative faculties to years of mindless violence. Even though everybody today lives in a world where we have to take things from others, learn from them and adapt what they have innovated to suit our own purposes, it is also true that we cannot be borrowers and imitators alone. Foreign aids in ideas and other wherewithal will not suffice unless they are supplementary to a main menu of approaches developed in the context of our immediate predicament. In ensuring that Africa develops in the non-negotiable context of peaceful social and political existence, there are gaps that Africans too must fill; there are important roles for us to play as principal protagonists in the dramas of our lives. The AU and the sub-regional organizations on the continent must make their member states more committed to R2P, first and foremost by promoting democracy in African countries and by being willing to speak out against bad African leaders. Also the people of Africa must be the focus of development in Africa. It is a shame that one still has to say these things years after the “trickle-down” model was abandoned because it was discovered that the elite of Africa are watertight containers; nothing percolates to the lower orders once it is captured in the containers of the elite. So the point bears repeating: development is for the people.

Still on the bottom-up issue, we have come to realize in our discipline that the use of local mechanisms of conflict resolution must be promoted, most especially at the grassroots level so that many of the small local problems that, unattended, explode into national issues like the Jos crisis in

Nigeria, can be nipped in the bud. It will not do for us to wait until a matter becomes a national security issue before we begin to act. At that point, the experts called in may overlook the local problems that are the source of the violence, only to wake up the next day after reconciliation, rehabilitation and reintegration to find that “the whole thing has started again”. But, of course, I am not disparaging expertise. Expertise is required in the kind of work we do: expertise at all the levels of experience and approaches, methodologies and theoretical perspectives, skills and toolkits. To this end, I want to use this platform to make the case that more academic institutions in Nigeria must start to teach Peace Studies so that more people can get educated on how to make and build peace in their immediate communities and on the continent.

How does Africa get out of its present predicament? Obama, in his Accra speech, called attention to the imperative of collective responsibility on the continent. African leaders and their people have to be responsible for what happens to Africa, he argued. Obama did not abandon Africa. As I have tried to clarify, he was asking Africa not to abandon itself. As regards the role of the United States and the West, Obama argued that US commitment to Africa must now be greater than its annual allocations on foreign aids; it must involve partnerships to build the capacity for transformational change. The president outlined four areas critical to the future of Africa: democratic governance, economic opportunity, strengthening public health, and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Focusing on governance issues, he observed that: “In the 21st century, capable, reliable and transparent institutions are the key to success — strong parliaments, honest police forces, independent judges, independent press, a vibrant private sector, a civil society. Those are the things that give life to democracy, because that is what matters in people’s everyday lives.” On conflict, he observed that “It is still far too easy for those without conscience to manipulate whole communities into fighting among faiths and tribes. These conflicts are a millstone around Africa’s neck.”

This a fine outline of the African predicament and the way forward. It is not the first time such things will be said to us. The significance of that occasion was that a son that Africa produced with the West, having risen to the most prominent office in the Western world, came back and told us the same thing all over again. We have been pinched into awareness of our predicament over and over again. Now we must wake since we are not dead. We always fear being ditched, but that has not happened yet, and will never happen.

What remains is to prove that we are not jinxed. The only way to do that is to work to arrest the wave of violent conflicts on the African continent. And I want to use this occasion to invite you, all friends and colleagues, to contribute sincerely to the solution of the problem of violent conflicts in Africa. Peace and Conflict Studies is a field that has a very porous disciplinary membrane. It is not a field for the historian and social scientist alone. People from diverse backgrounds in academia make useful contributions to Track Five Diplomacy. They help us understand the problems of conflict situations better and they even provide the solutions. Scientists are involved in the work to conquer some of the causes and consequences of severe and protracted violence in different sub-regions on the continent, for instance, famine and drought. Need I cite the case of Norman Ernest Borlaug who laid the foundation of what came to be known as the Green Revolution? Borlaug was a plant pathologist who developed a strain of wheat characterized by high yield and high protein content. He was central in the achievement of food self-sufficiency by many developing countries. In 1970, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. He in turn set up in 1986 the World Food Prize, also known as the "Farmer's Nobel" for research that can help the people of the world solve the problem of hunger. Today, any self-respecting Peace and Conflict Studies programme must have lessons from practical inputs such as this as part of the curriculum it offers.

Ladies and gentlemen, I once again invite you to join us in looking for solutions to our problems, from hunger to greed, from resource-cum-environmental scarcity to ethno-religious intolerance, from bureaucratic laziness to dictatorial elitism, from the institutionalization of violence to the diminution of consultation and dialogue, from electoral fraud to falling standards in education, and so on and so forth.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, ladies and gentlemen, let me use this opportunity to warn against the use of military force to eject President Gbagbo from Cote d'Ivoire as the US, UN and France are asking for. This is an important "African solution" dilemma. It is true that the R2P principle requires that when we have the Cote d'Ivoire kind of situation where a political leader defeated in an election fails to surrender power, force could be used against him. But the doctrine did not indicate who should carry out the military operation. If we revert to the UN Charter, both Chapters VII and VIII operations are possible in this case. A Chapter VII mission, which is a full combat operation, is usually multilateral in nature. It involves troops from several countries under the UN while a Chapter VIII mission is a support operation by a regional organization. What the UN and the developed world are pushing for now is for Nigeria to lead a Chapter VIII operation under ECOWAS to eject Gbagbo and install Alassane Ouattara. This is dangerous for Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia and could end up destabilizing the West African sub-region more than we have ever experienced in the past. First and foremost, the military operation would last longer than anybody could easily predict. The so called "ex-combatants" in Liberia and Sierra Leone are standing by to be employed by Gbagbo. They would fight side by side with the Ivorian military that is combat ready. Hence, Gbagbo's removal is not going to be easy. Secondly, the operation will lead to the massacre and displacement of the over two million Nigerians living in Cote d'Ivoire. This problem might be too big for Nigeria to handle. Thirdly, it would lead to the influx of refugees and rebel forces into both Ghana and Liberia more

than the two countries could handle. Past experiences across the African continent suggest that the UN lacks the capacity to effectively manage this kind of problem. Hence, this could become the beginning of another major "African problem". My advice is that peaceful solutions to the problem should continue to be sought by African leaders. It is only in this respect that it could be said that we are truly providing African solutions to African problems.

Acknowledgements

I cannot end this lecture without paying special tribute to a number of people who helped to make my scholarship. I started this lecture by acknowledging the support of almighty God who made me even before my parents ever got to meet and know each other. What God gave me is what I have dedicated myself to use for the betterment of my society and humanity. Professor Bolanle Awe could be said to be the person that "head-hunted" me to become a member of staff of this University. I thank Professor Tekena Tamuno whose scholarship shaped mine. I must thank Professor Biodun Adediran who was invited from the Obafemi Awolowo University to supervise my PhD dissertation. He gave me the best attention one could ever think of. I thank CODESRIA for the two grants it gave me in 1992 and 1994. General Ishola Williams introduced me to conflict analysis and through him I came in contact with General Abdusalami Abubakar who turned out to be one of my strongest mentors.

I must also thank Dr. David Hawkins for making it possible for me to get the support of the British Council and the academic link programme that eventually led to the establishment of the Ibadan PCS Programme. Ms. Victoria Okojie, the Manager of the Ibadan office of the British Council, gave me all the support needed for running the link. I also need to appreciate my colleagues at the University of Ulster: Professor Valerie Morgan, the Director of Research of INCORE who doubled as the first UK coordinator of the Ibadan/Ulster Link and Professor Gillian Robinson who

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As noted above, I played a significant role in establishing the Peace Studies Programme at the University of Cape Coast (Ghana) and the University of Ilorin (Nigeria). The UNDP Office in Ghana (most especially Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo) and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Professor Is-haq Olanrewaju Oloyede (*fspsp*) made this possible respectively. I thank them for the opportunity to make me realize my professional dreams.

A number of people provided support for the establishment of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice which has now become an arm of the Ibadan Peace Studies Programme. These include Major General Ishaku Pennap (*fspsp*), Colonel Uwadia, Mr. Yinka Balogun (the present Commissioner of Police, Ekiti State), Brigadier Gen. Boro (the Commander, International Peacekeeping Training at Staff and Command College, Jaji), and Dr. Nurudeen Olarinde (*fspsp*) who later became the first President of the Society. The following persons provided financial and logistical support when the Society was to be formally registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC): the late Major General Nuhu Bamali (former GOC 2 Div.), Mallam Yusuf Ali (*fspsp*, SAN), Governor Ibrahim Shekarau (*fspsp*), Professor Nuhu Yaqub (*fspsp*) (who became the first Board Chairman of the Society), Mr. Derrick Marco (*fspsp*) (South Africa), and Mr. Ledum Mitee (*fspsp*) (President of MOSOP). The Governor of Niger State, Dr. Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu (*fspsp*), is another strong supporter of the Society. He is now a member of our Board. I use this occasion to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of them for making their own contributions to this peace project.

I must also thank the present President of the Society, Dr. Willie Eselebor, for keeping the flag flying. I must thank my darling wife, Dr. (Mrs.) Remi Albert, who is in a better position to tell the story of my career in Ibadan. She knows how people wish me well in the daytime and go underground to plan evil for me at night. She saw it all and she stood by me and I will never forget her support. I thank my children, Biola, Mayowa, Ibukun and Damilola, for their respect and love for me; they were born and brought up under the tensile conditions I have described above. Last but not the least, I thank my colleagues at the Institute of African Studies for their support. May the good Lord reward each of them accordingly.

Notes

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¹⁷Rodney, *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*, p. 261

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- ²³Folashade Adebayo, "Africa's big daddies", *Tell*, December 27, 2010 p. 24.
- ²⁴*The East African Magazine*, "The African Presidents' Index: The good, the bad and the ugly..." December 27, 2010 - January 2, 2011 p. 29
- ²⁵Folashade Adebayo, "Africa's big daddies", p. 24.
- ²⁶*The East African Magazine*, "The African Presidents' Index: The good, the bad and the ugly..." December 27, 2010 - January 2, 2011 p. 40.
- ²⁷Adejuwon Soyinka, "The Africa tragedy", *Tell*, December 27, 2010 p. 20-26.
- ²⁸This German expression, according to the *Merriam Webster's Dictionary*, means "enjoyment obtained from the troubles of others".
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⁴⁶John Siebert, "Africa & the Roots of Responsibility to Protect", *The Ploughshares Monitor*, volume 30, no. 4, Winter 2009, p. 3.

⁴⁷Musifiky Mwanasali, Emerging security architecture in Africa. Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg, February, 2004 p. 26; Also see Musifiky Mwanasali, "Africa's Responsibility to Protect", in Adekeye Adebajo and Helen Scanlon (eds.) *A Dialogue of the Deaf: Essays on Africa and the United Nations*. The Centre for Conflict Resolution, South Africa, 2006.

⁴⁸Romain Esmenjaud and Benedikt Franke, "Who owns African ownership? The Africanisation of security and its limits", *Working Papers in International History and Politics, Department of International History and Politics*, No. 1, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. Case postale 136 – 1211 Genève 21, February 2009, p. 3.

⁴⁹Shawn Hattingh, "South Africa's Role in Nigeria and the Nigerian Elections", <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2007/hattingh260607.html>.

⁵⁰Africa Action, "Conflict Resolution", June 2009, <http://apic.igc.org/resources/issues/conflictres.php>.

⁵¹Senator Hillary Clinton (Democrat, New York), during an interview on CBS Evening News with Dan Rather, September 13, 2001.

⁵²George Bush, "Address to a joint session of Congress and American People", US Capital, Washington DC, September 20, 2001, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>.

⁵³Why does the anti-terror movement have to spread its net this wide? Fukuyama argued that "The War on Terror is, in other words, a classic counter-insurgency war, except that it is being played out on a global scale. There are genuine bad guys out there who are much more bitter ideological enemies than the Soviets ever were, but their success depends on the attitudes of the broader population around them who can be alternatively supportive, hostile, or indifferent — depending on how we play our cards." "The Neoconservative Moment," *National Interest* (Summer 2004).

⁵⁴The other two countries in this category were Cuba and Syria. On the other hand those tagged as the "axis of evil" in the US security system were Iran, Iraq and North Korea.

⁵⁵I.O. Albert, "Col. Muammar Ghaddafi of Libya as an International Conflict Actor", *UNILAG Journal of Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2005, pp. 5-26.

⁵⁶Bernhard Helander, "Some Problems in African Conflict Resolution: Reflections on Alternative Reconciliation Work and Research", *Somalia Watch*, October 5, 2000, <http://www.somaliawatch.org/archiveoct00/001005603.htm>; W.L. Ury, J. M. Brett and S. B. Goldberg, *Getting Disputes Resolved: Designing Systems to Cut the Costs of Conflict*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1989; R. Vayrynen, "To Settle or to Transform?" *New*

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⁵⁷I.O. Albert, "Where the Gun Rules: Criminal Gangs, Ethnic Militias and Niger Delta Militants in Nigeria", Paper presented at the conference on "The future of armed groups in Africa" organized by the US Department of State and US Africa Command at Mercure Hotel, Garmisch, Germany, November 13 and 14, 2009.

⁵⁸P. Loizos, *The Heart Grown Bitter. A Chronicle of Cypriot War Refugees*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 54.

⁵⁹A. Y. Farah. with I. M. Lewis, *Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation. Peace Making Endeavours of Contemporary Lineage Leaders: A Survey of Grassroots Peace Conferences in "Somaliland."* London: Action Aid, 1993.

⁶⁰M. Bradbury, "The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace", *Oxfam Research Paper*, No. 9, 1993.

⁶¹Isaac Olawale Albert, "Peace, Justice, Truth and Reconciliation: The Yoruba Experience In Comparative Perspective", The 14th J.F. Odunjo Memorial Lecture, Conference Centre, University Of Ibadan, Tuesday, May 4, 2010.

⁶²For example, the following papers strictly adopted historical methodology as distinct from those that combined both historical and social science methods: I.O. Albert, "Hausa Women Migrants in Ibadan: Continuity and Change in Socio-Economic Orientation", *Odu: A Journal of West African Studies*, No.40, July 1992; Albert, I.O. "The Growth of a Migrant Community in Nigeria: The Hausa Settlements in Ibadan, c.1830-1979", *Ife: Annals of the Institute of Cultural Studies*, No.4,1993 pp.2-17; Awe, B. and Albert, I.O.; "Historical Background", in C.O. Adepegba (ed.), *Osogbo: Model of growing African Towns*, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan 1995; Albert, I.O. "Ethnic residential segregation in Kano, Nigeria and its antecedents", *African Study Monographs*, vol.17 no. 2 October 1996 pp.27-42; Albert, I.O. "A case study of the historic interface between western biomedicine and Yoruba traditional medicine", in Frank Fairfax III, et al. (eds.), *Alafia: Studies of Yoruba concepts*

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⁶³All of these books (and several unlisted journal/book articles) were published in security studies traditions: Albert, I.O., Adisa, J.,

Agbola, T., and Herault, G.(eds.), *Urban Management and Urban Violence in Africa*, Ibadan: IFRA, 1994. 2 volumes; Osaghae, E.E., Toure, I., Kouame, N., Albert, I.O. and Adisa, J. *Urban Violence in Africa: Pilot Studies (South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria)*, Ibadan:IFRA,1994; Albert, I.O., T. Awe, G. Herault and W. Omitoogun, *Informal channels for conflict resolution in Ibadan, Nigeria*, Ibadan: IFRA, 1995; Albert, I.O. *Women and urban violence in Kano, Nigeria* Ibadan: Spectrum Books,1996; Uwazie, E. U., Albert, I.O and Uzogwe,G.N. (eds.), *Inter-Ethnic and Religious Conflict Resolution in Nigeria*, Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 1999; 6. Otite, O and Albert, I.O. (eds), *Community Conflicts in Nigeria: Management, Resolution and Transformation*, Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1999; 7. Albert, I.O. *Introduction to Third Party Intervention in Community Conflicts*, Ibadan: PETRAF/John Archers Books, 2001; Albert, I.O. (ed.), *Building Peace, Advancing Democracy: Third Party Intervention in Nigeria's Conflicts*, Ibadan: PETRAF/John Archers Books, 2001; Fourchard, L. and Albert, I.O. Eds. (2003), *Security, Crime and Segregation in West African Cities since the 19th Century*, Paris: Editions Karthala; Albert, I.O. (ed. 2005), *Perspectives on Peace and Conflict in Africa: Essays in Honour of General (Dr.) Abdulsalami Abubakar*, Ibadan: Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, University of Ibadan; Albert, I.O. and D. Marco (eds. 2007), *Animus and Apologia: Campaign Advertorials and the Gamble for Power in the 2003 and 2007 Elections in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd.; Albert, I.O, D. Marco and V. Adetula (2007), *Perspectives on the 2003 Elections in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd.; Albert, I.O (ed. 2007), *Local Approaches to Conflict Transformation*, Ibadan: CEPACS, University of Ibadan; Albert, I.O. (ed. 2009), *Praxis of political concepts and clichés: Essays in honour of Dr. Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu*, Ibadan: Bookcraft Publishers Limited; Albert, I.O. and I. O. Oloyede (eds. 2010), *Dynamics of Peace Process*, Ilorin: Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ilorin; Albert, I.O. and N. Olarinde (eds. 2010), *Trends and Tensions in Managing Conflicts*, Abuja: Society for Peace Studies and Practice.

⁶⁴M. Smyth and G. Robinson (eds.), *Researching Violently Divided Societies*, Tokyo and London: United Nations University Press and Pluto Press, 2000

⁶⁵Elizabeth Porter et al (eds.), *Researching Conflict in Africa: Insights and Experiences*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005.

BIODATA OF PROFESSOR ISAAC OLAWALE ALBERT

The first in the series of the University Inaugural Lectures for the 2010/2011 academic session will be delivered by Professor Isaac Olawale Albert (*fspsp*) of the Institute of African Studies on behalf of the Faculty of Arts and the Institute of African Studies.

Isaac Olawale Albert (*fspsp*) was born on August 5, 1959 to Pa Albert Babatunde Ogunkeye and Mrs. Comfort Olayemi Ogunkeye of Ijamo Street in Ilesa. He started his primary school education at Methodist Primary School, Ogudu, Ilesa in 1966 and completed it at Christ African Church Primary School Wadata, Makurdi. He completed his secondary education at Tilley Gyado College Makurdi in 1977 and had his Higher School Certificate from Ilesa Grammar School Ilesa in 1982. He bagged his BA (Hons) degree in History at the University of Ibadan in 1985. He did his MA and PhD degrees in African History at the Institute of African Studies in 1991 and 1994 respectively. His MA project won the Africa-wide thesis writing award administered by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal in 1992. In 1994, his PhD thesis won the same continental award. It is needless to say here that these two awards brought a great deal of credibility to the African Studies Programme of the University of Ibadan.

In 1996, Professor Albert initiated the academic link between the University of Ibadan and University of Ulster, Northern Ireland in Peace and Conflict Studies which led to the commencement of Peace Studies in Ibadan in 2000. In 1999, he was invited by the United Nations International Leadership Academy (Amman, Jordan) for a Certificate course in peacekeeping and conflict resolution and subsequently trained in peace processes in the US, UK, Germany, France, Belgium, Finland, Israel, Palestine, Egypt, South Africa and several other parts of Africa.

Professor Albert specializes in African History/Peace and Conflict Studies. He was contracted by the UNDP (Accra, Ghana) in 2006 to establish the MA course of the University of Gold Coast, Ghana, in Peace and Development Studies. He was at the University of Ilorin during the 2008/2009 academic session to establish the University's Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies which currently runs MA and PhD courses in Peace and Development Studies. He was a co-founder of and a Research Associate to the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE), Oxford University, UK. In 2006, he won the Africa Peace Education Prize of the California State University, Sacramento (USA). He was the convener of the 2008 Extended Workshop on Social History jointly sponsored by SEPHIS (Netherlands) and CODESRIA (Dakar) on "Historicizing Migration". This project involved scholars from different parts of Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Latin America. In 2007, he served as the country's Director of the Nigeria Office of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA-Nigeria) in Abuja.

Professor Albert excellently combines knowledge of conflict management scholarship and practice. Hence, he is a Fellow and the current Board Chairman of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP); a Regional Board Member of the West African Network for Peacebuilding (Accra, Ghana) and an Associate Member of the Finnish Folklore Fellows (Helsinki). He became a Professor in 2006 and has published 18 books, 93 articles in learned journals and books, and 13 monographs.