SECURITY BUILDING MEASURES IN AFRICA

Security-building measures are neither fully verifiable nor irreversible. They are also difficult to reciprocate. While they can indeed improve the security of a people and improve their sense of autonomy, their implementation relies on the on-going goodwill of those offering them. They are not, then, CBMs in the strictest sense. In Ethiopia, the failure to honour pledges to allow Eritrean autonomy made by both Haile Selassie and Mengistu Haile Mariam eventually led rebel movements not to accept anything less than independence in the years following Mengistu's fall in 1991. Similarly, in Mali, pledges were also made to allow a significant degree of autonomy and even special status for the north in the 1992 *Pacte Nationale*. The fact that this agreement was not fulfilled led to a renewal of violent conflict. Security-building measures such as powersharing, decentralization, economic development and *micro*-disarmament are also long-term processes that can take years to evolve. Still it is worth considering some of these measures given that their use is frequently proposed by academics and members of the international community.

Democracy and Power-Sharing

Opening up the political process to democratic governance and decentralization is an important means of developing greater government accountability. Decentralization is a key component of security-building strategy because it lessens the stakes (and thus the motivation) for violent struggle and because it deflects potential confrontations away from the capital city. Democratization usually encourages those operating underground to come into the open and organize themselves politically. But if authorities use this opportunity to identify adversaries or to expose individuals they could not previously locate, such measures obviously have a deleterious effects on confidence building. Recent experiences in East Timor and Angola are examples of what can go wrong. In the case of Angola, much of UNITA's senior-most leadership was killed by government militias following the elections of 1992 – an outcome that almost certainly led to Savimbi's subsequent refusal to return to Luanda. In East Timor, the rampages of government militias in September of 1999 undermined any goodwill that the government had previously inspired in its initiative on Timorese autonomy.

Relatedly, power-sharing is a tempting and frequently advocated means of building peace.[93] Indeed, offering ever-larger slices of power may be a means of signaling to an adversary that one is willing to make important political and economic concessions. While there is an obvious desire to avoid winner-takes-all elections, it should also be kept in mind that formalized power-sharing agreements have yet to live up to expectations. While there is evidence that inclusivity can mitigate conflict, power-sharing agreements are difficult to arrive at, even more difficult to implement, and

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[93] See for example, I. William Zartman, "Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts," in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, I. William Zartman ed. (Washington: Brookings, 1995), pp 22-23; Marina Ottaway, "Democratization in Collapsed States," *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, I. William Zartman ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p 248.