

- *the impact of relief and peacekeeping operations on the RPA*

Relief and peacekeeping operations either in the RPA or in regions nearby, can create and aggravate security problems in RPAs by changing the economic relations and security context. The deployment of international forces in Somalia in Operation Restore Hope (subsequently UNOSOM) may have had the effect of driving armed Somalians into the border areas of northeastern Kenya, where they are referred to as 'bandits'. The economic and social impacts of prior or longstanding relief (and development?) programs on RPAs, should also be noted. These programs could have created particular expectations or resentment among local populations and refugees.

- *The relationship between the host government (both at the national and local level) and various aid agencies, particularly UNHCR.*

Whether a host government has a longstanding, cooperative relationship with UNHCR and the NGOs is a factor likely to affect policy decisions about refugee security. The experiences of the host government, UNHCR and NGOs with refugee influxes in a particular RPA can also affect subsequent responses. All actors are capable of feeling lingering guilt or regret or embarrassment over how certain events were handled. For example, some observers thought the Tanzanian government regretted its handling of the Ngara repatriation in 1996. The desire to avoid future problems can be a motivator of government and other agencies, including NGOs and UNHCR.

4) The interests of and roles played by donors, regional powers, and international organizations in the region.

The Realpolitik concerns of external political actors like key donors, ex-colonial powers, the United States, the EU, and regional organizations, like the OAU must inform any political analysis. These concerns include strategic interests, historical commitments, competition for influence, and reluctance to interfere in the affairs of a member state. For example, an understanding of the Rwanda crisis and the consequences for refugee flows in the Great Lakes region could not be properly understood without addressing the interests of and role played by France in Zaire and Rwanda.

II. RPAs as Special Arenas

When a refugee influx occurs, the RPA, already characterized by the four sets of variables just discussed, becomes a special arena of action and change that can lead to security problems. The following intersecting categories of change can be identified in a RPA:

1) Settlement patterns

How refugees settle (or are settled) is important for understanding the security and socioeconomic context in which threats occur. The first and most common form of settlement is often referred to as 'spontaneous settlement', which occurs when refugees find accommodation and assistance within the local community. Families take refugees in, or provide them with some form of housing or land. Soon after an influx, relief agencies and the host government make their appearance, policy decisions about the refugees are made, and in many cases some or all the refugees are moved (or efforts are made to move them) into more organized settlements, such as camps or agricultural settlements.

In most cases, not all refugees enter camps or other kinds of organized settlements, even where governments are determined they should do so. Exact figures are impossible to come by, but estimates