

majority.<sup>30</sup> Similarly in the Sudan, violence has broken out between rebels associated with the Nuer and the Dinka ethnic communities in addition to the larger conflict between Muslim north and Christian south. The significance of this type of conflict is that confidence building measures which require disputants to disarm are virtually impossible to complete. In such multi-dimensional conflicts one cannot be certain that, even if a reconciliation process begins between two of the parties, they will not become vulnerable to attacks from the third. Disarmament is essentially precluded in such conflicts unless it is part of a, perhaps unattainable, comprehensive and all-inclusive agreement.

Alternatively, there can also be gaps between a civil society determined to bring about peace and the leadership of the respective disputants. In the case of Angola, for example, fabulous diamond and oil wealth has insulated elites from what most assume to be a desire on the part of ordinary citizens for peace. Not only have such vast resources raised the stakes and helped fuel the conflict, but they have also led to the creation of an elite which has been able to disregard societal pressures for peace virtually at will.<sup>31</sup> To avoid these problems during the 1993-94 UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), there were frequent calls for peacemakers to deal with Somali clan elders rather than the armed warlords. Such an approach seems justified. In the case of northern Somaliland, for example, elders have been essential to facilitating peace between armed factions. But other factors, such as a colonial history which circumvented traditional leaders, may erode these important relationships. Indeed, others have argued that in southern Somalia the links between elders and civil society were tenuous and that the image of wise, uncorruptible clan leaders was seductive but ill-founded.<sup>32</sup>

A group's willingness to consider CBMs and its sincerity in implementing them also depend in large measure on the respective relative power positions of the adversaries and, more importantly, whether their relative military power is on the increase or the decrease. The constant breakdown and rebuilding of coalitions and the relative ease with which weapons can be acquired in contemporary civil wars means that power relations between groups can be extremely dynamic. Building trust in an environment of constant flux and change is difficult. Elites may accept confidence building measures only as a means of buying time when they are threatened by the possibility of losing total power. In other words, by accepting CBMs for the short run, when they have little intention of implementing them, the long term objective of building reputations and trust is undermined.

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<sup>30</sup> The Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) was the armed wing of ZANU, the Zimbabwe African National Union; the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) was the armed wing of ZAPU, the Zimbabwe African People's Union. Zimbabwean guerrillas were also referred to collectively as PF, or Patriotic Front.

<sup>31</sup> See Ian S. Spears, "Angola's Elusive Peace," *International Journal* LIV(4) (Autumn 1999), pp. 572-76.

<sup>32</sup> William Finnegan, "A World of Dust," *The New Yorker* (March 20, 1995), p. 70.