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KAS INTERNATIONAL REPORTS

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN TRANSITION

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

KAS
INTERNATIONAL REPORTS
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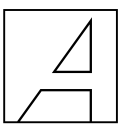

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Content

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

2014 marks the 30th anniversary of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's publication of the KAS International Reports. We have been actively involved in international development cooperation for over 50 years. During this time, the global world order has undergone considerable change, and subsequently development policy.

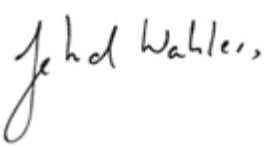
The division of the world's states into donors and recipients, into North and South, is outdated. Newly industrialised countries are performing confidently as new actors in the development arena, networking with each other, and pressing for the implementation of their own ideas – not only in the area of development policy but also where foreign affairs and economic policy are concerned.

While classic aid projects aimed at developing social structures may still serve a purpose under certain circumstances, they only play a minor role in development cooperation today. Instead, our current era of multipolarity does not only involve many different actors but also systems that compete with ours and are not based on the Western value system. It is hardly realistic to think that Germany can put forward its model of progress, development and social security to the confident developing countries and emerging economies and expect them to simply adopt it wholesale. "To remain up-to-date", writes Sebastian Fuchs in this issue, "the design of development policy must take greater consideration of the complexity, rapid mutability and new diverse patterns of cooperation in international relations".

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung would like to bring the international political developments taking place in this changed environment into the German debate, not least through this publication. The Foundation sees itself as a seismograph of international events. We aim to perform this role not only in

the areas of development and security policy but also with respect to matters from other policy areas. The Foundation's representatives abroad are finding themselves increasingly analysing topics that no longer have a purely bilateral character, but need to be regarded in a regional context. A case in point is the dialogue with the Islamic World – an area of activity where the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung combines the experiences gained in different regions of the world and in different sectors to establish and complement its wealth of expertise. The case of the Middle East Region, part of which is in our immediate neighbourhood, shows most clearly that encouraging stability, security and development in the world is not only a humanitarian necessity and an obligation dictated by decency, but also affects Germany and Europe directly. It also, however, clearly illustrates the limits of our ability to exert influence.

We can be sure that when the 60th anniversary of the KAS International Reports comes around, international development cooperation will look completely different. Although it may be a difficult undertaking, Wolfgang Maier ventures a prognosis in this issue. He asks: "Will development policy even still exist in 2030?" And: "Who will actually be developing whom?" It remains to be seen what the KAS International Reports will be reporting by then.



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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN 2030

Wolfgang Maier

In ancient Athens, the Oracle of Delphi sought to see the future; in the Middle Ages, fortune telling boomed. Today we take our advice from institutions that track, analyse and predict developments and trends with scientific methodology. A variety of policy advisory institutes and think tanks engage in this. The analysis and evaluation of achieved objectives and the impacts of developmental programs and projects has become a business. Again, answers to the question of the best methods, of effectiveness and efficiency are sought. Sophisticated instruments are available to us today to do this, globally recognised standards are in place and hardly any projects escape evaluation. The proposals developed for additional project work therefore usually only have a short to medium-term perspective.

In evaluating programs, projects and the achievements of development policy as a whole, a retrospective element prevails, which is little wonder after more than 60 years of development policy efforts. Although looking back does not necessarily provide a flattering view, it is nevertheless difficult to imagine a world without development cooperation. Now development politicians are beginning to direct their gaze somewhat further in the future.

Today, there are a whole series of articles that deal with future challenges for development policy;[1] some espouse a medium-term perspective, update straightforward developments and, in doing so, come to verifiable conclusions. Others describe a world “beyond aid” and provide plenty

1 | E.g. Michael Bohnet, “Überlegungen zur Zukunft der Entwicklungspolitik”, in: Reinhold E. Thiel (ed.), *Neue Ansätze zur Entwicklungstheorie*, Bonn, 2001; in various articles Dirk Messner, German Development Institute (GDI); Heiner Janus, ▸

of material for discussion. Some articles question just how useful development policies are in isolation; when one takes into consideration the level of global entanglement, this no longer makes any sense. In any case, discussion on the future of this policy area has since been initiated .

The previous traditional understanding of development assistance, development cooperation and development policy predominantly shaped by the North and West has already changed in the last few decades of development. "Networked thinking" has long been an issue in development policy, and we know that the old relationships, patterns of interpretation (North and South, donors and recipients, etc.) and simple cause-and-effect assumptions have decreased in significance. For several years, there has also been the sense that we must now deal with changes that exceed the amount of predictable, somewhat regular change. We see the increasing mutual interdependence in the era of globalisation and the increasing dynamics of many processes, and we realise all this cannot remain the same without consequences for us. The recent developments in the financial markets should have conveyed this knowledge sufficiently.

For a long time now, we, the established donors, have no longer been the only players on the developmental stage; new "stakeholders" have come along, and today's development policy is no longer conceivable without the inclusion of environment, climate, energy and foreign and security policy elements. New challenges and new risks have emerged, and "simply continuing business as usual" is no longer a development policy that appears realistic.

Projections and forecasts abound, as a simple Google search for "megatrends" will show. The Overseas Development Institute's prognosis[2] on development cooperation

Stephan Klingebiel and Sebastian Paulo, *Beyond Aid. Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Wandel der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, Discussion Paper, DIE, Bonn, No. 18, 2013, http://die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_18.2013.pdf (accessed 19 Feb 2014).

2 | Homi Kharas and Andrew Rogerson, *Horizon 2025: creative destruction in the aid industry*, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2012, http://odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7723.pdf (accessed 19 Feb 0213).

in 2025 makes for interesting reading on this topic. And finally, the National Intelligence Council's report, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, is worth mentioning (and cited here).[3] How could the trends touched upon in these articles affect the field of development policy in 2030?

This article presents a collection of assumptions that are neither complete nor verifiable. In any case, these are not statements about the future, but then again, 2,500 years ago, Confucius said: "He who does not think of the future is certain to have immediate worries." However, he also said: "He who believes everything he reads would be better off not reading."

IN THE YEAR 2030: "... SO VERY FAR AWAY: MAYBE IT'S ONLY YESTERDAY..."[4]

In 2030, the population make-up of all European societies will be different: The youth of the world will agglomerate to a much greater degree than is already the case today in other regions, but then mainly in urban centers; the total world population will increase (from 7.2 billion today to 8.4 billion) and strong middle class growth is expected: the relative and absolute number of poor people will decline. Against this backdrop, we Europeans will have become slightly less significant. In the NIC's report, among other things, the trends and scenarios are listed in the following table.

From a strategic standpoint, all this has been under discussion for some time, and for some policy and research areas such as foreign and security policy or demography research, extensive literature has been available for a long time. However, less focus is given to longer-term strategic thinking in development policy. Will development policy even exist in 2030? Who will actually be developing what, what will development mean (for whom), what role will development policy even still play, and what can we draw from these prognoses on the future for our actions today?

Will development policy even exist in 2030? Who will actually be developing what, and what will development mean?

3 | *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, National Intelligence Council (NIC), http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Global Trends_2030.pdf (accessed 19 Feb 2014).

4 | From the lyrics of "In the year 2525" by Zager & Evans, a folk-rock duo from Nebraska, 1969.

Fig. 1

Prognosis, "2030 Global Trends"

Megatrends	
Individual empowerment	Individual empowerment will accelerate owing to poverty reduction, growth of the global middle class, greater educational attainment, widespread use of new communications and manufacturing technologies, and health-care advances.
Diffusion of power	There will not be any hegemonic power. Power will shift to networks and coalitions in a multipolar world.
Demographic patterns	The demographic arc of instability will narrow. Economic growth might decline in "aging" countries. Sixty per cent of the world's population will live in urbanised areas; migration will increase.
Food, water, energy nexus	Demand for these resources will grow substantially owing to an increase in the global population. Tackling problems pertaining to one commodity will be linked to supply and demand for the others.
Game changers	
Crisis-prone global economy	Will global volatility and imbalances among players with different economic interests result in collapse? Or will greater multipolarity lead to increased resiliency in the global economic order?
Governance gap	Will governments and institutions be able to adapt fast enough to harness change instead of being overwhelmed by it?
Potential for increased conflict	Will rapid changes and shifts in power lead to more intrastate and interstate conflicts?
Wider scope of regional instability	Will regional instability, especially in the Middle east and south Asia, spill over and create global insecurity?
Impact of new technologies	Will technological breakthroughs be developed in time to boost economic productivity and solve the problems caused by a growing world population, rapid urbanisation, and climate change?
Potential worlds	
Stalled engines	In the most plausible worst-case scenario, the risks of interstate conflict increase. The U.S. draws inward and globalisation stalls.
Fusion	In the most plausible best-case outcome, China and the U.S. collaborate on a range of issues, leading to broader global cooperation.
Gini-out-of-the-bottle	Inequalities explode as some countries become big winners and others fail. Inequalities within countries increase social tensions. Without completely disengaging, the U.S. is no longer the "global policeman".
Nonstate world	Driven by new technologies, nonstate actors take the lead in confronting global challenges.

Source: NIC, n. 3.

To begin with, the fact that many of the statements and the answers to these questions in this text are vague is a function of the subject and the time frame selected here. The year 2030 was chosen as a reference point because it seems far enough in the future and is therefore out of reach for short and medium-term approaches. However, we all still remember the fall of the Berlin Wall (20 years have passed already): *Maybe it's only yesterday…*?

DEVELOPMENT 2030 IS… POLITICS

For the time being, we understand "development" to be the sum of all the processes through which different views regarding desirable social, political and economic change are organised within a society.

Development policy in 2030 will have a different capacity than it does today. For the time being, we understand "development" to be the sum of all the processes through which different views regarding desirable social, political and economic change are organised within a society. The formulation of goals and the establishment of priorities for this change will happen in a state of permanent dissent and it depends on the type of organisation itself: ultimately, democracy is "technically" nothing more than the successful management of social dissent processes with the aim of temporarily agreeing upon solutions, naturally taking into account the appropriate values and rights to which the respective society is committed. A second pillar of development will be international dialogue: The internal social processes described will be highly intertwined in supranational processes. Thirdly, non-state actors will play an even greater role locally, regionally, nationally and internationally than they do today.

Development in 2030 will no longer be a nationally or bilaterally administered project. "Ownership" of development will change: development in 2030 will have become a key modernisation project for all societies, regardless of whether that society is located in the South or in the North. These decision-making processes and discussions will be conducted differently in 2030 than they are today: they will be more decentralised, participatory and digital (e-democracy, e-governance, etc.). Governance will become "more difficult". The decades-long search for coherence will not lead to a "development policy from one cast", either: development in and of itself is diversity, competition, trial and error. For (development) policy in 2030, this means

it will play a role in moderating the permanent processes of social dissent. Other new players will have appeared on the scene: civil society will have changed and continued to increase in significance, while the developmental importance of national governments will tend to become weaker in formulating development goals. However, there will continue to be differences between individual countries and regions; this will work better for some governments, worse for others.

The old poles will no longer exist: the North and the South, the industrial, emerging and developing countries, donors and recipients.

In 2030, the decades of development *aid* and development *cooperation* will be forgotten and the old poles will no longer exist: the North and the South, the industrial, emerging and developing countries, donors and recipients. This "aid motive" and the mainly "technical" tools of the past decades will at best play a role in emergency situations: ultimately, by 2030, developing countries themselves will be able to export engineers. Also, hunger will no longer be a problem with agricultural production but rather a structural problem of distribution and therefore primarily a political one. Development will consequently finally become a political project that extends beyond the old conceptual and spatial boundaries.

(DEVELOPMENT) POLICY ALSO AFFECTS US

In addition to new actors, new topics will make an appearance, and our view of development will become even more comprehensive. The problems in the former North and South will largely be the same, and the interdependencies of these subject areas will be recognised: energy-environment-climate-economic-migration, for example. All this relates to the extent to which the lines between us all are blurred. This requires a systematic way of thinking, i.e. a thought process that takes interdependencies into account and is ready to accept change and effects on itself at any time.

This new (development) policy will be seen as a link between the interests of different policy areas: economic policy, the environment, climate and energy policy, foreign and domestic and international security policy. Even the lines of domestic and social policy will be blurred: for

example, an increasing number of migrants will also challenge the social systems of the EU Member States. In the process, development policy will become a new category requiring a different way of thinking. What happens in Bulgaria or West Africa will also be of concern. Today, this is still relatively recent knowledge, but in 2030 it will be common knowledge. Development policy issues are likely to play a very different and particularly a larger role in both European and Bundestag elections than they do today.

Landing in Lampedusa: An increasing number of migrants challenges the social systems of the EU Member States. | Source: Sara Prestianni, noborder network, flickr CC BY.

DEVELOPMENT BEGINS IN THE MIND

Just as development policy will be practically coupled with the implementation of other policies in 2030, it will then follow other theoretical approaches. The naive belief in the explicability of the world using Newtonian physics, to which generations of development politicians have clung, will only generate smiles in 2030. Societies are not simply machines where a drop of oil will prevent the pistons from jamming: the causes and effects of this will continue, but the complex relationships between political, economic, social and environmental factors are not as easy to map as some people – amazingly – still believe today. A change in thinking has already begun with regard to this, but it will not be mainstream thinking until 2030.[5]

5 | See also: Ben Ramalingam, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, 360 et seq.

This change in thinking will also take place in partner countries (previously also referred to as "recipient countries"). They will no longer permit themselves to define the goals of their social, economic and foreign policy – the influence of international bodies and institutions described above will be relatively case-dependent and country-dependent: the self-confidence of the partner countries and their governments will have increased. This is already suggested today. At the least, civil society is already experiencing the effects of their increasing self-confidence in the form of a wave of NGO legislation, with whose help the influence of civil society will be controlled or coordinated – or both.

INTERESTS AND VALUES CONTINUE TO DIVERGE

By 2030, the age of "hidden agendas" will be past. The assumption that donors could pursue hidden interests through their charitable projects has accompanied development policy from the start. The fact that actors pursue their own agenda will no longer be objectionable in 2030 and, in any case, this would no longer be kept secret. Just as with interests, values will have a competitive relationship with other values. This can and will be discussed more openly. The degree of transparency will increase, if only because there will be other legal – and technical – opportunities. This may mean, of course, that in some situations, no common values can be found and there will be no cooperation. In 2030, multi-polarity will be a feature of the world order and it will not just be a case of more poles of political power, but also economic or cultural policy. This means that not only states or organisations, but also other (cultural, religious, etc.) institutions will participate in the search for ideas and notions on how the world should look. This search process will be conducted entirely ideologically, and (development) policy will play a mediating role whether it wants it or not.

In 2030, multi-polarity will be a feature of the world order and it will not just be a case of more poles of political power, but also economic or cultural policy.

The Western understanding of democracy will only face stronger competition with other conceptions of democracy. However, competitions may be ignited with any other conflicts of interest: on regional hegemony, in religious disputes, access to resources, etc. A peaceful world is not something (development) policy can produce. It would be

a great achievement, however, if it could help to moderate the resulting conflicts and largely organise things so that they run their course non-violently.

THE CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR 2030: INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Information is the basic prerequisite for decisions of all kinds – in politics, in business, in everything. There are no longer areas that are free from information: information of all kinds is available worldwide anywhere, any time and in "real time" to everyone. It is available selectively and non-selectively; anyone can retrieve information anywhere and information reaches people everywhere, even when it is not requested. This focuses attention on the processes of information production, information analysis, processing and recording; this has become a central issue politically (including with development).

A classroom in Yangshuo, China: Education will remain a crucial aspect of development. | Source: The Society for Environmental Exploration (Frontier), flickr CC BY.

Information and communication are the foundation of knowledge. With changing information and communication attitudes changes are bound to happen in the acquisition and procurement of knowledge: education will play a crucial role and e-learning will be a key issue for a development policy that is increasingly focused on education.

Questions of the increasing digitalisation associated with this will not yet be definitively answered in 2030, but equally important (development) policy issues will remain:

- To whom does digital space belong, how should it be organised, who has jurisdiction?

- What will privacy look like in the future and will human rights extend to privacy of informational participation? How credible is information and how free is communication; will there be internet censorship? What are the consequences for political participation and competition of political ideas? Will there be an "informational divide" ("information elites" and "information lower classes")?

- Will better access to information/communication lead to educational equity? And finally, what threats will the internet present us with?

Interest in transparency will increase and the question of dealing with this will come to a head. What is new is that this is of global interest and thus is also relevant to (development) policy.

It is evident that there will be a great need for discussion and regulation at the global level: these issues can no longer be resolved at the national level. Interest in transparency will increase and the question of dealing with this will come to a head. What is new is that this is of global interest and thus is also relevant to (development) policy. However, it should be clear to us that we will no longer be alone in setting standards. The number of young "users" in other countries and regions, which will be much larger in 2030, will play a crucial role in setting standards. The creative power of our Western standards, however, will lose influence as well, especially in the digital sphere.

INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, DECREASING IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

In 2030, national, bilateral development policy will only play a role on the margins of international development dialogues that will predominantly take place between supranational institutions and in which a large number of civil society initiatives will participate. This process will include participatory elements that will be advanced by developments in digital technologies.

If development policy objectives are no longer being formulated by the major donor countries and it is not northern organisations implementing them, their influence will decline. Although the latter may remain for a while as acting suppliers, they will later remain active in very specific areas, though they will not "donate" their services, but rather sell them. In the long run they will become less important, though it will still be a while before this happens.

Development experts from the North will become dispensable and will only be in demand for certain individual areas.

To the extent that the level of education, enhanced by improved access to information and knowledge, improves worldwide, local capacities will also improve, including self-confidence. In the process, the "experts" will also change: development experts from the North will become dispensable and will only be in demand for certain individual areas. Local agencies will take over the business sector, and where the required expertise is not available locally, it can easily be obtained elsewhere.

INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE, CAPITAL, PEOPLE: EVERYTHING FLOWS

Just as information and knowledge flow, so do finance and capital. The management of these flows is far removed from the opportunities for intervention national institutions have, giving rise to a need for international regulations that will be in force in 2030. Participating in the processes of decision-making and control will present an exciting challenge for (development) policy. It is already well-known today that the technical possibilities presented by digitalisation are nearly unlimited. The movement patterns of people have also changed. In no way do people wander aimlessly; they follow rational patterns and do so with confidence. Development policy will have to address this: it will have to give up its local ties and work on "flow management". It will be a matter of steering these flows to avoid environmentally and economically infeasible clusters.

Even these migration movements will no longer be constrained by "firewalls". It has become necessary to find solutions in the form of new and innovative ideas, particularly between Europe and Africa; this will also be the

case in 2030. This includes novel use of instruments at European level, for example in the area of financing a controlled migration of labour in combination with remittances to start businesses in the countries of origin.

THE ECONOMY REMAINS A CENTRAL FOCAL POINT FOR DEVELOPMENT

In 2030, economic development will be a key factor for any development effort. Participating political systems will even – and especially – need to "deliver": food riots, for example, can be organised with very little effort today. However, the approach in 2030 will no longer be one of more passive poverty reduction, but rather of motivating and supportive incentive. In doing so, the debate on the best way forward will stay current: Does economic development succeed best in a market economy, social market economy or a planned economic policy framework? This will remain up for debate in 2030 and on no account can it be assumed that one model that fits everywhere exists.

Our regulatory localisation in Germany is well-known, but, depending on the situation, it too will always require fine adjustment. Therefore, in 2030, the social market economy will not be a good fit in all countries and cultures and will have to be adapted. However, things will not be the same for us, either.

The potential that lies in the rapidly growing digital networking of many people in developing and emerging countries has already been mentioned: information, communication and above all knowledge are central resources for all economic development – perhaps especially in developing countries. Even today, we are already seeing what the creative applications of new technologies are in Africa, where many banking transactions are carried out using basic mobile phones (e.g. "M-Pesa" in Kenya). Cooperation projects (e.g. between the middle class from "the North" and entrepreneurs in "the South") will become more common, but will require a certain set of rules, for example on the legal protection of investments.

We are already seeing what the creative applications of new technologies are in Africa, where many banking transactions are carried out using basic mobile phones.

Folk Festival in Darfur: Even today, mobile phones in Africa are used for communication, information and banking. | Source: Albany Associates, flickr CC BY ND.

CLEAR SOCIAL GROUPS WILL BE REDISCOVERED

Even if several cross-border similarities come to light in the course of globalisation efforts, there will always be limits. Local and regional supply will not lose its significance. In spite of increasing networking and long-range communication, people will still live in families, clans and clear cultural units. And in 2030, this will not have changed; it is more likely that this picture will become even more colourful given the rising global population. For development, these smallest units will continue to hold interest: a culture of education is not only developed in schools – the foundations are laid in the family. In addition, the formation of values in 2030 will not take place online, but in manageable, local groups. Even in 15 years' time, trust and responsibility should grow in spatial and social proximity rather than in the anonymity of the online world.

The fact that this is certainly also a matter of (development) policy services that will be provided locally will be commonplace by 2030. These are expected to include the need to propagate networked thinking at the local level: our villages will still be plagued with fear in 2030, and the desire to seal themselves off from others will still prevail. All in all, cultural elements will play a more significant role in (development) policy in 2030 than they do today: they

will by no means be unified or relativised on a global level through the non-binding nature of digital networking.

"IN THE YEAR 2030…"

Of course, a lot will happen in the next 15 years, including things that are unpredictable: At this point, we have not committed to anything exhaustive in terms of the wide range of technological innovations on which we are still unable to base our prior knowledge. The fact that technological innovations (e.g. the mobile phone and the smart phone) are increasingly shaping information behaviour and communication style (e.g. social networks) around the world has only been observed over the past few years and has quickly become a worldwide phenomenon. The idea that it is thereby possible to directly influence policy (e.g. via "flash mobs") is still relatively new, but by no means is it the end of this story.

If there are no longer "donors" in 2030, there will no longer be "recipients", either. In the process, the social and psychological sensibilities of the actors will change. Communication will proceed less vertically, but more horizontally and symmetrically: people will communicate better with each other and more frequently. This in no way means people will be better understood and that there will therefore be fewer conflicts; in fact, just the opposite could be the case.

One thing is certain: development policy will change more over the next decade than it did in previous decades. It will be less "development" and more "policy"; it will have a broader base and will become more complex; it will be more culturally sensitive and will include clearer strategic elements; and ultimately, it will no longer be "made by us".

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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN TIMES OF GLOBAL POWER SHIFTS

THOUGHTS ON A SHIFT IN THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

Sebastian Barnet Fuchs

If the world could ever have been classified as being divided into northern donors and southern recipients, the last decade has done much to disprove this. The number of extremely poor countries is clearly in decline.[1] In 2013, for the first time since 150 years, the combined economic performance of China, India and Brazil reached the level of the leading western industrialized nations. They themselves have become donors for development cooperation (DC) and are expanding their fields of influence in other countries through specific aid projects. Although two-thirds of the global poor still live in these emerging countries, prosperity in these countries is significantly increasing. In contrast, in the "North", states must be supported by massive aid packages to get their economies back on track. Portuguese nationals are emigrating to Brazil to find work and also Spaniards are attracted to their former colonies for the same reason.

The new diffusion of rich and poor, the altered balance of power in international relations and the ease and rapidity with which events in one country influence another have a dramatic impact on the development of countries. These changes in development cooperation are most noticeable in five areas:

1 | See Jörg Faust and Dirk Messner, "Schluss mit Arroganz und Almosen", *Die Zeit*, 10 Oct 2013, http://www.zeit.de/2013/42/faust-messner-ministerium-globale-entwicklung (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

1. Development policy as part of foreign policy and the debate on values and interests;
2. the need for development cooperation reform due to flawed incentives and increased complexity;
3. the influence of new actors and their significance for the "traditional" donors;
4. the struggle for the protection and supply of global public goods and
5. reform processes for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and their impact on the ownership and policies of the states involved.

DEVELOPMENT POLICY AS AN ASPECT OF FOREIGN POLICY: THE DEBATE OVER VALUES AND INTERESTS

A state's foreign trade will require closer coordination between foreign, economic, security, environmental and development interests.

In the era of globalisation, the boundaries of individual policy areas are becoming increasingly blurred. In the future, a state's foreign policy will therefore require closer coordination between foreign, economic, security, environmental and development interests. On the one hand, there are many areas in which values and interests are exactly the same: Germany, for example, can promote renewable energy in developing countries to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and to create new and better jobs. At the same time, German companies are leaders in this field and have an interest in the promotion of foreign markets. Ultimately, promoting this combats climate change.[2] In this case, the aims of the actors involved are largely congruent with foreign, economic, environmental and development policies. On the other hand, there are areas of trade policy (for example, agricultural subsidies), security policy (for example, arms exports) and domestic policy (dealing with refugees) that are not always in complete alignment with development and humanitarian interests.

2 | Dirk Messner and Imme Scholz, "Entwicklungspolitik als Beitrag zur globalen Zukunftssicherung", in: Jörg Faust and Susanne Neubert (eds.), *Wirksame Entwicklungspolitik: Befunde, Reformen, Instrumente*, Baden Baden, Nomos, 2010, 73.

At the international level, the traditional donor countries sometimes use double standards with their conditions for aid payments and economic cooperation with certain countries. Although they generally require the observance of human rights, this is not always a necessary condition for cooperation in cases of great economic interest. Sometimes trade relations take priority and human rights come second. The insistence on "development policy coherence", or the requirement for external action to focus on development policy criteria thus raises the question of whether other policy fields, such as economics or security, could justifiably demand their own coherence. In addition, the work of the individual ministries has become more international in recent years. The German government's rising ODA funding[3] is increasingly being spent in partner countries by other ministries, such as the environment, education or economic ministries. This is mainly due to the fact that in many emerging and aspiring developing countries in particular, more targeted expertise is required than previously in areas that go beyond the classic fight against poverty. Due to the rising wealth of these countries, entirely new questions of the legitimacy of unilateral aid projects with "donors" and "recipients" are being raised with the changing patterns of cooperation: "Traditional development policies are becoming less important", writes Dirk Messner, Director of the German Development Institute, together with Jörg Faust. "Many of these countries [the emerging countries] are actually partners in German foreign, security, climate and economic policy, and they are members of the G20, the group of major industrialised and emerging countries."[4]

The German government's rising ODA funding is increasingly being spent in partner countries by other ministries, such as the environment, education or economic ministries.

3 | Official Development Assistance (ODA) is defined by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD as benefits that include a grant element of at least 25 per cent, are comprised of contributions from the public sector with the promotion of the economic and social development of developing countries to developing countries and their citizens or to international organisations for the benefit of developing countries, see German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), "Leitfaden 'Was ist Official Development Assistance (ODA)?'", http://bmz.de/de/ministerium/zahlen_fakten/Leitfaden_Was_ist_ODA.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

4 | Faust and Messner, n. 1.

Development policy as part of foreign policy is neither altruistic aid nor the enforcement of unilateral national interests "against" other states. Rather it should be based on an "enlightened self-interest"[5] that does not see international negotiations as a short-term zero-sum game between divergent national interests but addresses common challenges in the long term, which, if neglected, would eventually damage all countries in a globalised world.

As an industrial nation, Germany has an interest in democracy, growth and development, even beyond their established partners. It has an interest in stable and secure states that are not plagued by violence, collapse and mass exodus. It has an interest in integrating a greater number of growing and confident developing and emerging countries and fostering greater involvement in international institutions and into the negotiation of global frameworks such as on climate change or the Post-2015 Agenda, the agenda that will succeed the MDGs. Otherwise, the acceptance and performance in these arenas for international cooperation will be lost. These negotiation forums will be increasingly accepted the more the actors involved are democratically legitimised. In addition, democratic societies are generally more successful and stable in the long term. Not least, developmental spending is a "soft power" instrument that builds trust, networks and partnerships. This, in turn, can spark collaborations in many other policy areas and promote support for international arenas of negotiation or inter-state alliances.

Since many traditional development policy "recipient countries" have developed into more powerful partners, the question of the proper balance between values and interests has come up again in many cases.

Development policy is an ethical necessity. Not every place where there is conflict and hunger does this directly impact German citizens. Nevertheless, Germany and other states provide aid to mitigate people's suffering. This is a value in itself and needs no further strategic justification. However, since development policy has become more diverse and complex and many traditional "recipient countries" are gaining in confidence and have developed into more powerful partners with strategic ambitions, the question of the proper balance between values and interests has come up again in many cases. Development policies have now become a more

5 | Messner and Scholz, n. 2, 73.

strategically significant part of foreign policy, allowing for cooperation between states as well as between NGOs and between individuals in many areas. Eckhard Deutscher, former Chairman of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee, writes that the development policy of the future should be "based on strategic criteria derived from Germany's and Europe's security policy, financial policy, environmental policy and energy policy interests. They should also be anchored in the basic values of the social market economy: social justice, human rights and economic sustainability".[6] To remain up-to-date, the design of development policy must take greater note of the complexity, rapid mutability and new diverse patterns of cooperation in international relations.

THE NEED FOR REFORM IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION DUE TO FLAWED INCENTIVES AND INCREASED COMPLEXITY

In 2011 alone, OECD countries spent over 134 billion U.S. dollars on development cooperation, 12.5 billion U.S. dollars on humanitarian aid and another 4.6 billion U.S. dollars came from private donors. Additionally, countries such as India, China, Brazil and Russia are financing development projects in other states to a greater extent. Whereas aid payments were previously made almost exclusively by governments and international organisations, the variety of actors today is much more multi-faceted and complex (Fig. 1 and 2).[7]

The increased number of actors makes coherence impossible and coordination extremely difficult.[8] Complaints by politicians and officials from developing countries who consult with countless delegations from donor countries

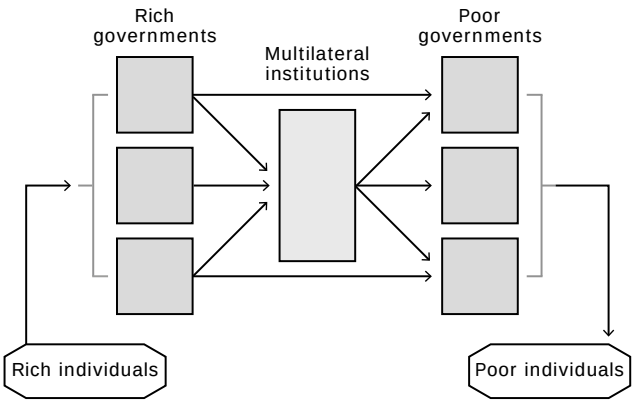
6 | Eckhard Deutscher, "Die Entwicklungspolitik der Zukunft", *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 28 Oct 2013, http://fr-online.de/1472602,24808304.html (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

7 | Wolfgang Fengler and Homi Kharas, "Delivering Aid Differently – Lessons from the Field", *Economic Premise*, No. 49, Feb 2011, The World Bank, 3, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2011/02/13757218/delivering-aid-differently-lessons-field (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

8 | At the High Level Forum in Busan in 2011, the OECD-DAC member states tried to establish common standards for all actors. Although, these standards are in the outcome document, their implementation proves to be long lasting and difficult.

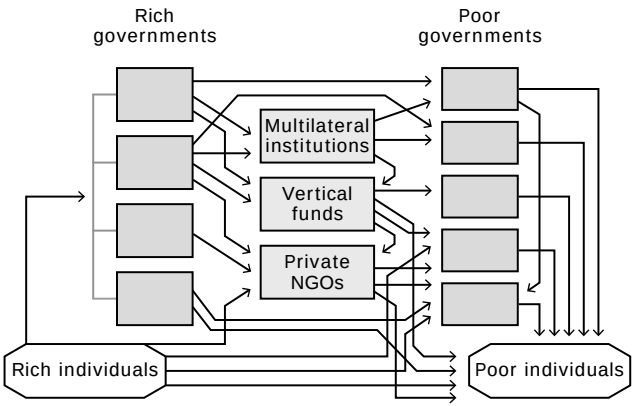
and who are confronted with providing an infinite number of indicators and reporting requirements only show the remnants of a faulty system, that is often rightly criticised. Research shows growing scepticism toward development cooperation;[9] demands for its abolition have a firm place in the discourse on development policy. Where are DC's weak points and which reform proposals are promising?

Fig. 1
Old forms of development cooperation



Source: Fengler and Kharas, n. 7.

Fig. 2
New forms of development cooperation



Source: Fengler and Kharas, n. 7.

9 | The most prominent are Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is Another Way For Africa*, London, Penguin, 2009; William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little: Good*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

To realistically assess the contribution development cooperation can actually make towards development, one should recall some donors' excessively euphoric ideas for planning and change: external solutions are only the second-best choice for developing countries. The benefit of development projects for a country's overall situation is rather limited. Many states that have rapidly developed economically over the past 15 years have done so without significant assistance from development funds, especially China. In general, the proportion of aid funds in the budget of many developing countries is declining. Other factors such as trade, foreign direct investment and the transfer of private assets from abroad are becoming increasingly important for development. But even in places where 40 per cent of the state budget is financed by donors, the impact of DC does not rise in proportion to the use of resources. A number of macroeconomic studies have measured only a slightly positive effect at best on a country's development from ODA transfers. Though in recent years, more rigorous evaluations and stronger performance reviews have found their way into the development policies of OECD states. But there are two fundamental problems that cannot be resolved by evaluations alone:

Many states that have rapidly developed economically over the past 15 years have done so without significant assistance from development funds, especially China.

First, development projects only fall on fertile ground if they are met with a strong political will from the actors in the partner country. If political interests run contrary to the donors' reform efforts due to power plays or other reasons, then studies, recommendations and evaluations are ignored. This political context is often and willingly hidden because it is difficult for the development organisations to make predictions, throws the success of their projects into question and the consequences of fading out are rarely sanctioned. For too long only the input factors have been examined in development cooperation, i.e. what donors have provided. But the real contribution this makes for the development of the people can only be identified through a close look at the outcome: A school built or mosquito nets distributed, when taken by themselves, change just as little as a seminar held on decentralisation (input). Only the reduction of the illiteracy rate, the decline of malaria and decentralised policy (outcome) can create development.

But the incentives used in development cooperation to measure the individual outcomes are often not ideal. Because in most cases aid projects hardly generate real costs for recipients, a critical review for the recipient is often left out. This undermines personal responsibility and may tremendously reduce the interest of the recipient in the success of the projects.

Indeed, donors have the best intentions to help with their development programs. But what costs the partner countries nothing is then of little worth to them in many cases. The global vaccination alliance GAVI[10] has recipients pay a low share of the aid projects that increases over time. Essentially it goes without saying that partners take greater care in considering whether a project makes sense for them and is worthy of their esteem if they have to invest something in it. However, since this mechanism, which rests on the laws of the market, is mostly missing, any attempt at credible control is often surrendered to the donors. And even here there are plenty of disincentives as the publicly funded development organisations are generally more interested in expanding their budgets and in the growth of their projects. Admitting to and learning from the inevitable mistakes made in DC, the determined need for strategy corrections and thus the necessary adaptability to the ever more quickly changing circumstances are not always conducive to this impulse for growth. Helmut Asche, Director of the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), refers here to the "iron law of development success": according to this, over the years the success rates for all development organisations always lay somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters. This is implausible.[11]

Second, development organisations often diminish complex relationships in partner countries and provide them with ready-made solutions that do not sufficiently take into account local relationships. At their headquarters, they formulate strategies that simply cannot be applied in the field. Often best practices cannot be trans-

Often best practices cannot be transferred to a different context at the same time, official "mission statements" and organisational patterns of behaviour are often questioned too little.

10 | See GAVI Alliance, http://gavialliance.org (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

11 | See Interview with Helmut Asche, "Es ist eine Menge Unfug passiert", *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 Nov 2013.

ferred to a different context at the same time, official "mission statements" and organisational patterns of behaviour are often questioned too little.[12] Since development organisations usually have few clearly defined goals and appropriate expertise in this area, they tend to reduce complex issues to problems that can be solved within their means: "[They] edit their understanding of reality to suit narrow purposes."[13] The result: "The available solution becomes the solution."[14] Thus uncertainty, doubt, questioning and the related impulse for flexibility, adaptation and change are not sufficiently rewarded: "Certainty in a development context is first and foremost a matter of bureaucratic convenience rather than scientific accuracy."[15]

With these incentive problems and the underestimation of the complexity involved, development cooperation does not meet its own standards. Above all, the concept of development in the future requires an honest culture of learning and should reward scrutiny, change and adaptation. The belief in predictability and planning has too often proved to be an illusion in DC. Donors and development organisations should admit mistakes and misjudgements more openly, share and communicate knowledge of this, adapt their strategies, seek solutions locally, experiment more and more rigorously scientifically test things where this is expedient.[16] These are crucial steps to increasing acceptance of DC in donor and partner countries, and in fact can make a significant contribution to development.

THE INFLUENCE OF NEW ACTORS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE "TRADITIONAL" DONORS

The OECD faces serious competition as the norm and standard-setting institution in Western development cooperation. China, India, Brazil, Russia and numerous other countries that have lifted many of their own people out of poverty in recent decades are increasingly pursuing

12 | Ben Ramalingam, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, 38 et sqq.
13 | Ibid., 38.
14 | Ibid., 39.
15 | Ibid., 26.
16 | Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics – A radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*, New York, PublicAffairs, 2010.

their own strategic interests with their own combination of promoting foreign trade and development cooperation. Like some OECD states, they often accompany their direct investments with aid projects, thus expanding their spheres of influence in a targeted manner. Although development aid projects are welcome in principle, the standards, however, to which OECD countries have agreed do not apply to these new players. Attempts by the OECD to align emerging countries such as China, India and Brazil to the principles adopted in Paris in 2005 of "ownership", "harmonisation", "alignment", "managing for results" and "mutual accountability",[17] have in fact amounted to little. The South-South cooperation does not submit to the rules, reporting requirements and principles to which traditional donors have agreed. China in particular does not see why it should present facts and figures on its development projects to Western states, let alone align them with the ideas of the OECD. This means that DC principles in accordance with OECD standards are increasingly being undermined in many countries by new actors and DC conditionality in particular is losing its effectiveness. Because governments in developing nations are increasingly faced with the choice between aid projects from the West, which are often linked to minimum standards in the areas of governance and human rights, and the efforts of new donors, which are mostly supplied without such conditions.

African nations that receive funds from China are usually successfully pressured to reject the recognition of Taiwan if they have not done so already.

While the link between ODA and human rights in DC could have fostered a positive incentive for reforms in partner countries until now, at least in individual cases, this ceases to exist with new actors. However, particularly with China, there are different types of conditions: African nations that receive funds from the People's Republic are usually successfully pressured to reject the recognition of Taiwan if they have not done so already. Furthermore, China provides loans in the billions, possibly presenting a new debt risk. Their long life spans can create incentives that are rashly claimed by governments because their benefit has a direct impact, but the costs must then be borne by future generations. China's interest in Africa's natural resources had led to a targeted

17 | See "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness", OECD, 2005, http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/35023537.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

development policy, which often promotes infrastructure in regions with high mineral deposits and, as in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to one-sided contracts that discriminate against the African side and chisel out a large portion of the population's possible resource revenues. Even if China's investments in the economy, trade and aid projects may benefit economic development in developing nations, they regularly violate environmental and social standards, often only employ Chinese workers and do not do enough for the creation of value and local processing. Anti-Chinese protests in southern Africa and, most recently, the expulsion of Chinese workers in Ghana[18] show that the commitment of the strongest of all the new donors brings with it a potential for conflict that should not be underestimated.

Jacob Zuma (l.) and Xi Jinping in April 2013: China provides loans in the billions, possibly presenting a new debt risk. | Source: Siyabulela Duda, Government Communications (GCIS), Republic of South Africa CC BY ND.

The lesson from the emergence of new donors for the future of development cooperation should be that capacity, participation and the rule of law must be strengthened in developing countries. Only then can partner countries confidently formulate and enforce their interests to new partners. Conditionality from the West will become less important. However, many developing countries have an

18 | Yiting Sun, "Nach dem Goldrausch", *Deutschlandfunk*, 13 Jul 2013, http://deutschlandfunk.de/nach-dem-goldrausch.799.de.html?dram:article_id=253953 (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

increasingly critical and strong civil society. They face the new actors with reasonable scepticism and wish to defend and expand the political participation they have obtained partly through Western aid. South Africa's President Jacob Zuma indicated in a speech at the 2012 China-Africa Summit that Africa must learn from the mistakes of the past and that unequal trade relations with China were not sustainable.[19] Behind the investment of new actors lie external economic and political strategies that partner countries should use for their development. Indeed, these new actors' strategies also target new alliances with developing countries that are trying to enforce their common interests to the West through multilateral negotiations. However, in terms of enlightened self-interest, it is better to conduct these negotiations with confident, economically strong partners because they can thus play a greater role in finding a joint solution for global problems.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUPPLY OF GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS

Because the supply of global public goods[20] can only be resolved through the combined efforts of all countries, development cooperation today means making use of all states to achieve a greater degree of climate protection, security and financial stability. Not all of these public goods can be adequately protected through traditional development policies, with their donor-recipient pattern. Because just as their protection and supply are a transnational effort and makes use of many other states, a lack of these goods in some countries has a slight transfer effect in many other countries. Geographical boundaries only play a minor role in wars, climate change and financial crises. In all these areas, vulnerability to transnational occurrences has

19 | Jane Perlez, "With $20 Billion Loan Pledge, China Strengthens Its Ties to African Nations", *The New York Times*, 19 Jul 2012, http://nytimes.com/2012/07/20/world/asia/china-pledges-20-billion-in-loans-to-african-nations.html (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

20 | Global public goods are defined here as goods whose positive and negative effects quickly spread across national borders. Because their supply is associated with high costs but they are barely geographically restricted, "windfall gains" arise. Although many benefit from the goods, there is little incentive to pay for them because the hope is to "take" these cross-border benefits, but pass on the costs to other "providers".

dramatically intensified over the past 20 years. Consequently, as described by Messner and Faust, states are pitted against each other through their own interests and their common interests. "Rich, poor, and emerging countries all depend on one other."[21] This is particularly evident in the areas of security and climate change: Wars are less often being fought between individual countries, rather they increasingly arise between groups within a country or across national boundaries.[22] In addition, fragile or failed states, such as Afghanistan or Somalia, are proving to be safe havens and training grounds for terrorists. Through this asymmetry and the increase of violent non-state actors and terrorist attacks in third countries, conflicts are thus rapidly adopting a regional or even global dimension.

Through the increase of violent non-state actors and terrorist attacks in third countries, conflicts are rapidly adopting a regional or even global dimension.

The close relationship between conflict and development issues have also been underscored by the August 2012 interdepartmental guidelines for the German Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Ministry of Defence (BMVg).[23] These stipulate intensive coordination on Germany's engagement in fragile states. However, in the future, development cooperation and conflict handling in fragile states must be coordinated more strongly not only in Germany but also internationally. Fragile states are lagging furthest behind on achieving the MDGs. Without an end to conflict, their populations will hardly have a chance of developing.

In recent years, climate protection has become enormously important in international relations. The scientific evidence of climate change has triggered a never-before-seen dynamic of sustainability and ecological limits to growth in development policy. The process of agreeing on

21 | Faust and Messner, n. 1.

22 | Cf. the Tuareg in Libya and the destabilisation in Mali after their return, as well as the Rwandan soldiers in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

23 | Federal Foreign Office, Federal Ministry of Defence and Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Für eine kohärente Politik der Bundesregierung gegenüber fragilen Staaten – Ressortübergreifende Leitlinien*, Aug 2012, http://bmz.de/de/zentrales_downloadarchiv/Presse/leitlinien_fragile_staaten.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

binding targets has been – sometimes bitterly – debated in several international negotiation forums, such as the UN climate conferences or Rio+20. The consequences of climate change are being felt dramatically, particularly in developing countries. At the same time, all states must do their part to achieve a reduction in CO_2 emissions, greener economies and careful use of resources. The core issue of the current debate is how big a contribution should be made and who should pay what amount. While many developing and emerging countries do not accept that they should raise relatively large sums of money for climate change because the North was responsible for a large part of the earth's pollution, the developed nations are already demanding more individual efforts. Despite the many declarations of intent, the current pledges on climate financing continue to fall far short of expectations. Climate protection, a central global public good, is the focus of the international cooperation conflict. Climate protection requires massive investments that will pay off only in the long term. All states are therefore called upon to think long-term and to design development in such a way that they do not exhaust the livelihoods of future generations.

Rebuilding Haiti: The consequences of climate change are being felt dramatically, particularly in developing countries. | Source: Colin Crowley, flickr ⓒⓘ.

REFORM PROCESSES FOR THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND WITHIN THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE OWNERSHIP AND POLICIES OF THE STATES INVOLVED

The new focus of development policy on global public goods, particularly climate and security, and the need for developed countries to reform their own economies is also reflected in the negotiations on the Post-2015 Agenda. It should replace the Millennium Development Goals, take on any of its unfulfilled targets and add important development tasks. The proposals submitted so far (the report by the High Level Panel is particularly prominent[24]) reflect the reorientation of the concept of development: the goals are intended to apply to all countries and it is no longer a matter of simply providing aid but of cooperating to tackle the most pressing global issues. Goals of promoting peace and security are being discussed as extensively as targets for expanding renewable energy and on climate and environmental protection. Traditional goals, such as education, have been expanded so that the output (decrease in illiteracy rate) is what is measured rather than the input (enrolment rate). Another goal of good governance and political participation is being discussed after being excluded from the MDGs in 2000 for political reasons.

What remains of it is uncertain: there are strong indications that some emerging and developing countries are dismissive of targets for political participation and good governance. As with the MDGs, states are therefore faced with the choice of giving in to political sensitivities and in return gaining more approval from key states for the Agenda. However, this comes at the expense of credibility. Good governance and the resolute development focus of countries are such urgent issues for global targets because, without their implementation, many relief efforts will collapse and they establish the conditions for the successful application of the central principles on which the Western actors in development cooperation have agreed to make development

24 | *A new Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and transform Economies through Sustainable Development*, United Nations, 2013, http://post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

cooperation more effective: "ownership", "harmonisation", "alignment", "results-based management" and "mutual accountability", the principles of the Paris Declaration by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD. "Ownership" and "alignment" refer to using the systems of partner countries as often as possible to achieve a high degree of personal responsibility and development. But to automatically conclude that by using these country systems, that is their own development plans and budgetary structures, greater ownership and more effective development follows, would be erroneous.[25] Governments that are not adequately controlled by parliament, civil society, the courts or the media have incentives not to invest the money in long-term developmental sectors, such as health or education. They often face problems of collective action.[26] This means that instead of supporting development that would make many people slightly better off in the long term, they have a great incentive to disburse the aid money and other state revenues for political patronage that makes only a few people rich in the short term, but ensures that the government retains power by supporting these individuals. In addition, foreign aid money greatly increases the risk of other state revenues being spent elsewhere and not on promoting development.[27] Instead of taking ownership and a focus on development for granted, these must first be strengthened. Two things lend themselves to this: first, a greater focus on non-ODA-related policy areas with partner countries, i.e. trade and economic investment. The WTO agreement in Bali is a sign that things are going in the right direction.[28] Second, the promotion of structures that

Foreign aid money greatly increases the risk of other state revenues being spent elsewhere and not on promoting development.

25 | David Booth, *Aid effectiveness: Bringing country ownership (and politics) back in*, ODI Working Paper 336, Aug 2011, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), http://odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6028.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

26 | Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Cambridge, Harvard Economics Studies, 1974.

27 | Howard Pack and Kaner Rothenberg Pack, "Foreign Aid and the Question of Fungibility", *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 75, 1993, 258.

28 | In early December, the member states agreed on far-reaching deal on world trade. See "WTO einigt sich auf Welthandelsabkommen", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 Dec 2013, http://faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/wirtschaftspolitik/bali-12699482.html (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

achieve a greater degree of ownership and development focus for the government, i.e. strengthening parliament, civil society, the media and the rule of law. After 50 years of modern development cooperation, this is more visible than ever before: without the political will of governments in partner countries, most of the donors' aid projects help little. At best, this will can be demanded by a strong counterbalance within the country itself, whereas external donors can only do this to a very limited extent. A new concept of development must recognise this and, together with local actors, expand on partner governments' incentives for real ownership in a targeted manner.

A MODIFIED CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

The number of people living in absolute poverty worldwide has fallen from 47 per cent in 1990 to 22 per cent in 2010.[29] While two-thirds of those are still currently living below the poverty line in emerging markets, in 20 years time this will mainly pose a problem in the fragile and least developed countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Fewer and fewer countries will therefore require classic DC in terms of poverty reduction for their actual development. Certain countries, however, will need it all the more. For development cooperation, this means three things: first, it must be more strategically targeted; second, it must be more honest and open to learning from mistakes; Third, it must be understood as a part of a foreign policy and international cooperation that are increasingly committed to the protection and supply of global public goods.

Fewer and fewer countries will therefore require classic DC in terms of poverty reduction for their actual development. Certain countries, however, will need it all the more.

A contemporary concept of development should therefore be based on the knowledge that more public and private actors are engaging in their own interests in partner countries. This reinforces the need to critically question the foundations of one's own development policies and to look at them not as isolated but rather more strongly in light of the new actors. Cooperation with many now better developed countries, veering away from traditional poverty

29 | See United Nations, "We Can End Poverty. Millennium Development Goals and beyond 2015. Goal 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", Fact Sheet, Sep 2013, http://un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_1_fs.pdf (accessed 10 Feb 2014).

reduction, must lead to greater cooperation in strategic policy areas, such as economic, security and environmental policy. There are no simple solutions and inevitable failures must be communicated openly within organisations; this should be honoured more. In terms of a state's foreign relations, an enlightened, long-term self-interest should take the place of a narrowly defined national interest on the one hand, or purely altruistic motives on the other. Principles, plans and Post-2015 Agendas will only bring more development if the political will exists in the partner countries. And this can best be designed and promoted by democratic forces that can control the government and reduce their incentives to engage in patronage and short-term policies that benefit the few in favour of development-oriented policies for the benefit of all.

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THE VALUE-BASED APPROACH OF EU DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Andrea E. Ostheimer

Despite the financial and economic difficulties that have hit Europe over the past years, the European Union together with its member states remain the world's largest donor. In 2012, collective EU official development assistance (ODA by the EU and EU Member States) amounted to 55.07 billion euros (0.43 per cent of GNI).[1] However, in order to reach the self-committed goal of 0.7 per cent by 2015 an EU ODA increase of 46.57 billion euros would be necessary. As the achievement of this goal until 2015 becomes increasingly unrealistic, the main aim now is to make European development assistance more effective by increasing its complementarity and impact.

Under the new Multiannual Financial Framework a total amount of 51.42 billion euros (current prices) has been agreed for the EU's external relations package over the period from 2014 to 2020.[2] But besides being more effective in development assistance, the overall aim is also that EU external instruments will take greater account of human rights, democracy and good governance when it comes to allocating external assistance to partner countries. This commitment to democratic governance highlights the value-based approach of EU development assistance, which is not only enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty but has also received enhanced emphasis by EU member states over the last years.

On first sight it seems that a paradigm shift within EU development policy has taken place. The present analysis seeks to explore the main elements of it and provides an

1 | European Commission, "Publication of preliminary data on Official Development Assistance", Memo/13/299_EN, 3 Apr 2013, 2.
2 | European Commission, "The Multiannual Financial Framework", The External Action Financing Instruments, Memo, 11 Dec 2013.

overview of key strategic frameworks shaping EU development assistance in the new Multiannual Financial Framework (2014 to 2020).

EU AGENDA FOR ACTION ON DEMOCRACY SUPPORT IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS (2009)

Main drivers for an increased effectiveness of EU democracy support have been the EU Presidencies of the Czech Republic, Sweden (both 2009) and Poland (2011). In addition to a strong discourse on the EU's moral obligation, its historic roots as well as its own transition experiences in its Southern and Eastern Member States, questions on the effectiveness of EU democracy support were raised for the first time. In a pain-staking exercise conducted jointly in 2009 by the Directorate-General for External Relations and the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation, the highly fragmented approach of EU democracy support became visible.

In November 2009 the Council passed the Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations and the EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support in EU External Relations 2009.

There was an immediate political reaction. Already in November the Council passed the Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations (17 November 2009) and the EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support in EU External Relations 2009.[3] The Council agreed that there is a need for a broader and more coherent approach to democracy support in EU external relations. And although the Agenda for Action in Democracy Support still strongly emphasised Human Rights, it mentioned for the first time that EU democracy support should include a particular focus on the role of elected representatives, political parties, institutions, independent media and civil society.

Taking up the criticism related to an ad-hoc election support focusing mainly on the electoral period, the Agenda for Action in Democracy Support demanded a comprehensive approach taking into account the full electoral cycle. The need for a more country-specific approach was addressed

3 | Council of the European Union, "Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations", 16081/09, 17 Nov 2009 http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&f=ST%2016081%202009%20INIT (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

in a mapping exercise of democracy support assessment in pilot countries on EU delegation level,[4] but also by the development of human rights strategies for partner countries. Particularly the latter has received much criticism due to its non-transparent character. The European Parliament has been at the forefront asking the EU to ensure that the human rights dialogues and consultations are diligent and accompanied by clear public benchmarks in order to measure their success objectively. In cases where these dialogues are not constructive, clear political conclusions should be drawn. The EP demands more transparency regarding the contents of the country strategies and calls for public disclosure of at least their key priorities.[5] From the perspective of a political foundation, these points of criticism can be shared as so far neither consultations of European actors on the results nor involvement in the assessment process has formally taken place. This in a way contradicts the commitment of the EU to inclusive democratic processes enshrined in its communication regarding the role of civil society in EU external relations – "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations (COM(2012) 492 final)".[6] Albeit focusing primarily on support for local civil society in partner countries, the communication nevertheless explicitly states, "At the EU level, particular attention is given to CSOs dialogue with European institutions".[7]

Neither consultations of European actors on the results nor involvement in the assessment process of country strategies has formally taken place. This contradicts the commitment of the EU to inclusive democratic processes.

4 | In the nine pilot countries (Benin, Bolivia, Ghana, Lebanon, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mongolia and the Solomon Islands) EU delegations were asked to identify democracy support activities, stakeholders (government, democratic institutions and civil and political society), donors active in the field of democracy support, and ongoing cooperation and its impact. On the basis of this mapping exercise a democracy profile of each country was to be established, including a "gap" analysis of areas in need of improvement.

5 | European Parliament, "Human rights must be upheld in EU ties with partners, say MEPs", Plenary Session Press release, 11 Dec 2013, http://europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20131206IPR30028 (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

6 | European Commission, "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations", COM(2012) 492 final, 19 Sep 2012, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0492:FIN:EN:PDF (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

7 | Ibid., 10.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY[8]

Complementing the above mentioned Agenda for Action on Democracy Support, the EU presented for the first time in 2012 a unified Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy and an Action Plan that is not only wide-ranging but already allocates roles and responsibilities to various stakeholders. In order to emphasize the importance of Human Rights within EU external action, the High Representative and Vice-President (HRVP), Catherine Ashton, also established the position of an EU Special Representative for Human Rights with a broad and flexible mandate. The "Human Rights Strategy", in short, underscores the aim of the HRVP to set Human rights as one of her top priorities and to have a silver thread running through everything that is done in external relations.[9]

Established the position of an EU Special Representative for Human Rights with a broad and flexible mandate: High Representative Catherine Ashton meeting the President of Somalia Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. | Source: © Julien Warnand, dpa, picture alliance.

8 | Council of the European Union,"EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy", 11855/12, 25 Jun 2012, http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf (accessed 13 Mar 2014).

9 | Catherine Ashton gave her speech to the European Parliament on 13 December 2011, "the EU works to have human rights running as a silver thread through a truly integrated range of external policies". EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, "Speech on the Annual Human Rights Report, Speech 11/885", 13 Dec 2011, http://europa.eu/rapid/press release_SPEECH-11-885_en.htm (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

Apart from these underpinning aspects in internal and external policies of the European Union, the strategy also attributes a universal character not only to human rights as a universal legal norm concept but also to democracy as a universal aspiration. In particular, the specific Action Plan that runs until 2014 can be an excellent tool to ensure policy coherence in support of human rights in EU external action. However, as with all other policy frameworks, their implementation will ultimately decide upon the certainty of the EU's renewed commitment to democratic principles in external action.

EU DEMOCRACY SUPPORT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Despite these very positive developments in favour of a coherent approach fostering democratic governance and inclusive participation processes, the real paradigm shift in EU democracy support came with the "Arab Spring". It then became evident that the EU's priority in foreign relations with countries of the Southern Neighbourhood (incl. development assistance) had mainly aimed for stability in the region, thus implicating cooperation with autocratic regimes. The paradigm shift in favour of more direct democracy building became evident in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and the HRVP "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood".[10]

With the "Arab Spring" it became evident that the EU's priority in foreign relations with countries of the Southern Neighbourhood had mainly aimed for stability in the region, thus implicating cooperation with autocratic regimes.

The Communication emphasises that its approach must be based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The new approach accentuated particularly EU support to partners engaged in building deep democracy. In addition, it spelled out very directly the value-based support by the EU. Increased EU assistance for its neighbours became conditional – depending "on progress in

10 | Besides building and consolidating democracies, further objectives were defined as pursuing sustainable economic growth and managing cross-border links in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood. Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood", COM(2011) 303.

building and consolidating democracy and respect for the rule of law".[11] The idea was, the more and the faster a country progresses in its internal reforms, the more support it would get from the EU. The "more-for-more principle" would offer greater incentives to countries that make more progress towards democratic reform – free and fair elections, freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, judicial independence, fight against corruption and democratic control over the armed forces. This enhanced support would come in various forms, including increased funding for social and economic development, larger programs for comprehensive institution-building (CIB), greater market access, increased European Investment Bank (EIB) financing in support of investments; and greater facilitation of mobility. The approach particularly opted to take the track record of reforms in partner countries during the period from 2010 to 2012 (based on the annual progress reports) into account when deciding on country financial allocations for 2014 and beyond. However, for countries where reform has not taken place, the EU would reconsider or even reduce funding.

The case of Egypt, for example, indicates clearly the difficulties of the EU in finding the right balance between stimulating reforms and supporting transition processes on the one hand, and remaining committed to its own principles and values on the other. During the EU-Egypt Task Force meeting in November 2012, approximately five billion euros were pledged by the EU and its financial institutions, EIB and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). These five billion euros came in addition to the traditional cooperation assistance by the European Commission. In the financial period from 2007 to 2013 the EU had made available over one billion euros for Egypt. These funds came from the EU's European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and included project based assistance as well as sector budget support, with the latter accounting for more than half of the on-going programs. However, since 2012 no new budget support programs have been approved for Egypt due to the lack of reform implementation; and by

During the EU-Egypt Task Force meeting in November 2012, approximately five billion euros were pledged by the EU for Reconstruction and Development.

11 | Ibid., 3.

mid-2013 only 16 million euros had been disbursed due to the on-going instability in the country and the non-compliance with agreed conditions.[12]

In order to provide enhanced support to democratic transition processes, the EU in 2011 also began rethinking its catalogue of mechanisms and instruments dedicated to democracy support. With the argument that one needs to be more flexible, un-bureaucratic and non-risk-averse in the area of democracy support, an additional institution was created outside the existing instruments – the European Endowment for Democracy (EED). Based in Brussels, and mainly funded by EU member states but also Switzerland, the EED aims to "foster and encourage democratisation and deep and sustainable democracy in countries in political transition and in societies struggling for democratisation, with initial, although not exclusive focus, on the European Neighbourhood".[13] Having taken up its operations only in mid-2013, it still has to prove its added-value as a complementary instrument which allows for synergies with other instruments and actors (on EU and Member State level). From the perspective of a political foundation operating in transition countries for decades and also implementing projects financed by the established financial instruments, it would have made better sense to first reform the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Instead of creating parallel structures with additional overhead costs a first step should have been to make more funds available for this already established instrument in general but particularly in the area of democracy support. However, whether the approaches of the EED will be so much more effective and most of all sustainable will be subject of future evaluations. The discussion around the effectiveness of EU democracy support by the EIDHR and geographic instruments has at least led to a revised approach in the MFF 2014-2020 where at least 15 to 20 per cent of the available funds of 1.249 billion will be made available for

Having taken up its operations only in mid-2013, the European Endowment for Democracy still has to prove its added-value as a complementary instrument which allows for synergies with other instruments and actors.

12 | European Commission, "EU-Egypt Relations", Memo/13/751, 21 Aug 2013.

13 | European Endowment for Democracy, "Statutes", Article 2, https://democracyendowment.eu/upload/2013/03/Statute_EED.pdf (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

democracy support (objective 3 of the Multiannual Indicative Programme EIDHR 2014-2020).[14]

INCREASING THE IMPACT OF EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY: AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

In addition to its modified approach for the EU Neighborhood – and here demonstrating consistency – the new policy framework and strategic orientation for EU development policy followed the principle of conditionality and places an enhanced emphasis on democratic governance. In 2011, EU Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs presented its new impact oriented development policy, the EU Agenda for Change.[15] The strategy underscores the parameters established in the Lisbon Treaty by striving for a consistent, consolidated and effective EU external action.[16] By focusing on poverty eradication, including the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and by actively shaping the post-2015 agenda, it also follows the tradition of the European Consensus on Development (2005).[17] Until the "Agenda for Change" the European Consensus on Development had been *the* guiding document for European development assistance. Particularly its principle of policy coherence for development constitutes one

14 | European Commission, "Concept Note for Multiannual Indicative Programme EIDHR 2014-2020", 12 Apr 2013, http://www.eidhr.eu/files/dmfile/2013-12-02EIDHRdraftConceptNoteMIP.pdf (accessed 10 Mar 2014).

15 | "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change", COM(2011) 637 final.

16 | Article 26 (2), Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 Dec 2007; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:EN:HTML (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

17 | Very much guided by the spirit of the "Paris declaration on aid effectiveness", the European Consensus for Development defined as key principles guiding Europe's relations with developing countries, ownership of development strategies by the partner countries and in-depth political dialogue. It also highlighted the need for civil society participation, an aspect later on elaborated more profoundly in the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) that defined civil society as an actor on its own right. Addressing state fragility featured equally on the agenda of the European Consensus for Development and has since then become one of the priority areas for EU assistance. See for example the study commissioned by the Policy Directorate of the European Parliament, "EU development cooperation in fragile states: challenges and opportunities", 2013.

of the overarching elements in order to enhance the impact of EU assistance to partner countries. According to this principle, "the EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries, and that these policies support development objectives". In the context of discussions on Europe's migration policies, but also, for example, in the framework of negotiations of Economic Partnership Agreements with ACP-countries, the principle of policy coherence for development remains ever more significant and annual reports by the EC but also by the European Parliament analyse the progress not only made within the EU but also allude to efforts for more coherence in EU member states.[18]

Previous policy frameworks for EU development assistance had mainly followed the general narrative on global level although the Treaties had clearly defined the EU as a community of values.

The "Agenda for Change" certainly has to be seen as a new milestone in EU Development Policy as it explicitly marks a shift towards a more principled, value-oriented and definitely also a more differentiated approach in European development assistance. Previous policy frameworks for EU development assistance had mainly followed the general narrative on global level although the Treaties (starting with the Maastricht treaty in 1993) had clearly defined the EU as a community of values and article 27a (1) of the Nice Treaty had already demanded that "enhanced cooperation in any of the areas referred to in this title shall be aimed at safeguarding the values and serving the interests of the Union as a whole by asserting its identity as a coherent force on the international scene".[19] In the Treaty of Lisbon (2007/C306/01) the Union has again reiterated in article 2 its commitment and foundation on the values of "respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and respect for human rights". Article 21 notes that the Union's action on the international scene "shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule

18 | Policy Coherence for Development covers all relevant policy areas such as trade and finance, food security (agriculture and fisheries), climate change, migration, security. For more information see also, for example: "EU 2013 Report on Policy Coherence for Development", SWD(2013) 456 final.

19 | Treaty of Nice (2001/C80/01), decisive articles: 6, 27a and 177.

of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law".

The Agenda for Change takes up this spirit of the Lisbon Treaty and stipulates the normative bases of European external action. As key pillars for the Agenda are explicitly mentioned

1. human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance; as well as
2. inclusive and sustainable growth for human development.

Whereas in the past democratic systems were mainly seen as conducive frameworks for development assistance, the Agenda sets forth the interdependence of democratic governance (albeit speaking of good governance) and inclusive and sustainable development. It aims to support governance by highlighting it prominently in all partnerships, and through incentives for results-oriented reform. The Agenda clearly stresses that partner commitments to human rights, democracy and the rule of law are a baseline. Should a country neglect its commitment to Human Rights and democracy, the EU does not exclude – in specific cases – to apply a stricter conditionality. In such a case, the EU would keep up the dialogue with governments and non-state actors but would channel aid to those who most need it via NGOs and local authorities. The Agenda's commitment to democratic values is clearly driven by a results orientated approach and calls on mutual responsibility.

In addition to the clear commitment to democratic values and rights, the Agenda for Change also aims to stimulate growth and seeks particularly to find new ways to engage the private sector. The favoured modality here is blending grant finance with loans and guarantees in order to attract private sector finance. A differentiated approach to development partnerships which clearly distinguishes between middle- and low-income countries also pays tribute to the need to better adapt EU development policy to the varying levels of development of partner countries. In consequence

this means that some 19 countries do not qualify any longer for bilateral aid allocations by geographic programs. This becomes reality for the so-called BRIC states[20] but will also affect countries such as Thailand or Peru.

No more EU financial aid from bilateral geographic programs: The BRICS countries' foreign ministers, here at a meeting in New York then Heads of State on a BRIC summit in 2010. I Source: Gustavo Ferreira, Brazilian Ministry of External Relations, flickr CC BY SA.

Having identified the need of the EU for a foreign policy financial instrument of global scope that would allow the financing of measures that might not qualify as ODA,[21] the Partnership instrument has been created for the financial period 2014 to 2020.[22] This instrument serves to deepen and to consolidate EU relations with partner countries on issues related to global governance, foreign policy, international economy, multilateral fora and bodies such as the G8 and the G20. However, priority regions for continued assistance remain the EU-Neighbourhood and Sub-Sahara Africa. These two regions are of particular interest as

20 | Brazil, Russia, India, China.

21 | Military Aid, peacekeeping missions, civil policing, as well as social and cultural programmes are not considered Official Development Aid (ODA). Cf. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Is it ODA?", Factsheet, 11/2008, http://www.oecd.org/investment/stats/34086975.pdf (accessed 14 Mar 2014).

22 | "Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries", COM(2011) 843, C7 – 0495/2011 – 2011/0411 (COD), http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/detail_dossier_real.cfm?CL=en&DosId=201172 (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

development cooperation of both is shaped by policy frameworks complementing the Agenda for Change. In both regions, support to democracy and human rights features high on the agenda.

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND HUMAN RIGHTS FEATURING IN EU RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

The key strategic policy frameworks for EU relations with Africa are the Cotonou Agreement as well as the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). Under the Cotonou-Agreement the concept of transparent and accountable governance as a "fundamental element" was introduced in ACP-EU relations (article 9).[23] The Cotonou-Agreement also granted civil society a role in development assistance in particular of being informed and consulted on development strategies (articles 4 to 7). It also foresees the instrument of political dialogue (article 8) and the instrument of last resort, article 96. The latter foresees the suspension of development assistance in the case of severe breach of democratic principles and human rights but can also take the form of more severe reactions such as arms embargoes, travel restrictions, as well as financial sanctions. Particularly in the beginning of the Cotonou Agreement, the introduction of conditionality and parameters such as "good governance", and the articles 8 and 96 were largely contested by African partners. They feared that only their own shortcomings would be addressed in the dialogue and that article 8 would introduce additional conditionality but in disguise.[24]

All assistance provided to ACP countries under the Cotonou Agreement is funded by the European Development Fund which remains outside of the EU budget and becomes alimented by EU member states. For the current EU budget period (2014 to 2020) EU member states proposed a

23 | For a consolidated version of the Cotonou Agreement with its revisions in 2005 and 2010, see: European Commission, *The Cotonou Agreement*, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/documents/devco-cotonou-consol-europe-aid-2012_en.pdf (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

24 | Hadewych Hazelet, "Suspension of Development Cooperation: An Instrument to Promote Human Rights and Democracy?", ECDPM Discussion Paper No 64b, 2005.

seven-year budget of 30,506 billion euros for the EDF.[25] Irrespective of the fact that the EDF is an intergovernmental fund outside the general EU budget, and no EP consent is needed, the Members of the Parliament felt obliged in 2013 to pass a resolution on their own initiative where they were not only supporting the Commission's proposal for increased funding of the EDF in the period 2014 to 2020, but also underscored their demands regarding enhanced democratic ownership and development effectiveness; as well as increased democratic scrutiny by national parliaments and civil society for the implementation of EDF funds in their countries.[26]

Filling the Cotonou Agreement as well as the Joint Africa-EU Strategy with life: EU-Africa meeting in Brussels in 2013. | Source: Fred Guerdin, European Commission, flickr ⓒⓘⓢ.

Apart from the Cotonou Agreement, the second key policy framework in Africa-EU relations is provided by the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). When the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was defined in 2007, the promotion of democratic

25 | European Commission, "The Multiannual Financial Framework: The External Action Financing Instruments", Memo, 11 Dec 2013.

26 | European Parliament, "European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2013 on the preparation of the multiannual financial framework regarding the financing of EU cooperation for African, Caribbean and Pacific States and Overseas Countries and Territories for the 2014-2020 period (11th European Development Fund)", 2012/2222(INI), 12 Mar 2013, http://europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2013-76 (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

governance and human rights constituted a central feature of the Africa-EU dialogue and partnership.[27] The vision provided was ample and comprehensive. Both continents aimed for the promotion of the values of democracy, rule of law and human rights. The Africa-EU partnership on Governance and Human Rights was tasked to "facilitate an open, intensive and comprehensive dialogue on all aspects and concepts of governance, including human rights, children's rights, gender equality, democratic principles, the rule of law, local governance, the management of natural resources, the transparent and accountable management of public funds, institutional development and reform, human security, security sector reform, the fight against corruption, corporate social responsibility, and institution building and development. This dialogue should help both parties to define the issues at stake, agree on common positions on issues of common concern and jointly undertake specific initiatives and actions".[28]

In its first Action Plan, the partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights defined three objectives:

1. to enhance dialogue at global level and international fora (e.g. UN Human Rights Council; support to the International Criminal Court (ICC); Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI));

2. to support the new Pan-African Governance Architecture and to promote the African Peer Review Mechanism as well as the African Charta on Democracy, Elections and Governance;

3. to strengthen the fight against the illicit trade of cultural goods and to fight together on corruption, counterfeiting, money-laundering, tax fraud.

27 | See also: Andrea E. Ostheimer, "The JAES partnership on Democracy, Governance and Human Rights", *ENoP Policy Paper*, forthcoming 2014.

28 | "The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. A Joint Africa-EU Strategy", 7. To be found inter alia: http://europafrica.files.wordpress.com/2006/10/africa-eu-strategic-partnership.pdf (accessed 28 Feb 2014).

The second Action Plan called for the establishment of a strategic dialogue on Democratic Governance and Human Rights between Africa and Europe.

In the second Action Plan, the priorities remained the same as it concerned the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the cooperation of Africa and the EU in the area of cultural goods. But the second Action Plan also called for the establishment of a strategic dialogue on Democratic Governance and Human Rights between Africa and Europe, and highlighted the need for enhanced synergies with other thematic partnerships and in particular with the one on peace and security. Despite the comprehensive vision and a concrete Action Plan, the Partnership and joint actions in the area of Democratic Governance and Human Rights took off slowly. On the African side, priorities were clearly set on the establishment of an institutional governance structure for the continent (AGA) before addressing other issues.

In the partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights where participation of civil society should be the most natural thing to do, the weaknesses are adamant. CSO representatives are associated once in a while and on a random base. The role the JAES ascribes to civil society in terms of ensuring transparency and accountability in the governance sector cannot be upheld with regard to the JAES partnership activities as such, due to lack of access to Joint Expert Groups and information sharing. The aim of the JAES that "ongoing dialogue with civil society, the private sector and local stakeholders on issues covered by this Strategy will be a key component to ensure its implementation"[29] has not materialised so far. At best, Civil Society plays a side-role at the official AU-EU Human Rights Dialogues which are supposed to take place twice a year and so far are kept separate from the JAES. Once a year, CSOs meet in this context back-to-back or ahead of the official dialogue in order to feed discussion results into the official process. However, in these dialogues – CSO HR Dialogue and AU-EU HR Dialogue – thematic agendas have not always been harmonised and thus the effectiveness of civil society involvement has been curtailed. Certainly, the upcoming Africa-EU summit (2/3 April 2014) that will also dedicate itself to a revision of the JAES will need to strengthen its commitment to democratic principles and

29 | Ibid., 3.

human rights and has to provide strong signals for implementers in order to move from vision to operation.

THE RE-ORIENTATION OF EU BUDGET SUPPORT

A good example for the orientation of EU assistance on democratic values and principles is the new EU approach to budget support and its embedded accountability mechanisms.

General EU Budget Support

In the context of its renewed emphasis on democratic values, human rights and good governance, the European Union readjusted its budget support strategy in 2011.[30] It remains the preferred aid modality with two objectives

1. poverty reduction;
2. support to democratic reform processes.

Currently, 25 per cent of the EU development assistance is channelled via budget support, in countries such as Ghana it mounts up to 70 per cent. The European Commission stresses the usefulness of EU budget support as a means of delivering better aid and achieving sustainable development objectives by fostering partner countries ownership of development policies and reforms.[31] Core elements of budget support involve policy dialogue, financial transfers to the national treasury account of the partner country, performance assessment and capacity-building, based on partnership and mutual accountability. In programming EU budget support, the Commission intends to place stronger emphasis on domestic revenue mobilisation, including from natural

Core elements of budget support involve policy dialogue, financial transfers to the national treasury account of the partner country, performance assessment and capacity-building, based on partnership and mutual accountability.

30 | "The Future Approach to EU Budget Support to Third Countries", Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2011) 638 final, 13 Oct 2011.

31 | Budget support is also seen as an appropriate instrument for implementing the aid effectiveness agenda and commitments set out in the Monterrey Consensus (2002), the European Consensus on Development (2005), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

resources. Fair and transparent tax systems are considered central to fostering citizenship and state-building, and lead to enhanced domestic accountability and political participation. The Commission also aims to strengthen its risk management framework for EU budget support in line with the Court of Auditors' recommendations. This includes a close monitoring progress in the fight against corruption and fraud.[32]

With the new funding period, General Budget Support will receive a new label. It will become "Good Governance and Development Contracts". It should be used to strengthen core government systems, such as public finance management and public administration. It should promote macroeconomic stability and fiscal sustainability, making the systems more effective and accountable and lead to a comprehensive and transparent budgetary allocation process. When providing EU general budget support, the Commission aims at fostering domestic accountability and strengthening national control mechanisms as a basis for improving governance and adherence to fundamental values.

In cases where the partner country's commitment to fundamental values shows a significantly deteriorating trend an adequate and coordinated response strategy at EU and member states level needs to be defined and implemented. The aim remains to speak with a unified voice. Unless there is a clear-cut situation where EU financial interests and reputation need to be protected, in which case general budget support can be suspended immediately, the response to deterioration should be progressive and proportionate. In its communication the EC continues to stress the need for predictability. In cases where budget support needs to be withdrawn, the EC wishes to have appropriate measures in place to limit the impact on poor people. These should be designed jointly by the EU and member states, in cooperation with other non-EU donors. This could include making adjustments to the size of any fixed tranche and/or reallocating funds to sector programs, channelling funds to target groups via

The European Commission wishes to have appropriate measures to limit the impact on poor people in place. These should be designed jointly by the EU and member states, in cooperation with other non-EU donors.

32 | Cf. n. 30.

non-governmental organisations or reinforcing other aid modalities such as projects.

Particularly in the past, it proofed to be very complicated to speak with one voice as EU and EU Member States applied different standards. Due to its concerns over UN expert reports documenting Rwandan involvement with the M23 rebel movement in Eastern DR Congo, the EU and member states such as Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden had frozen their budget support to the Rwandan government in 2012. The United Kingdom who had also first suspended budget assistance to the government of Paul Kagame, however, surprised fellow EU Member States with a sharp u-turn after peace talks had shown some engagement by the Rwandese side. Thus, giving signals that could not only be read as inconsistency on EU-level but also giving the impression that the mere readiness for dialogue should be honoured substantially.

At least a more coherent approach had been found in the case of Uganda where reports about massive public corruption forced donors to cut all budget support until 2015. This included bilateral donors but also the EU and multilaterals such as the World Bank. For the government of President Museveni this meant a loss of 300 Million U.S. dollars per year, and also it did not affect running projects it certainly impacted heavily on the lives of Ugandan citizens.

Sector Budget Support

As regards EU sector budget support, the Commission tends to focus on sectors where policies and reforms are more promising to promote development and poverty alleviation; the drivers of change are stronger and aiming at addressing the basic needs of populations (e.g. basic services such as health, education, and water and sanitation). Promoting service delivery or reforms in a specific sector (or a set of interlinked sectors) has to take place on the basis of a partner government's sector strategy, only in this way the provision of sector budget support can be decisive in enhancing the government's capacity to perform its functions and deliver sector objectives. Since 2007 the EC has placed an emphasis on sector budget support and also

seeks to increase this modality under the new framework, where it is labelled "Sector Reform Contracts".[33]

State-building in Fragile States

Budget support is also foreseen for situations of fragility in order to help partner countries ensure vital state functions, to support the transition towards development, to promote governance, human rights and democracy and to deliver basic services to the populations. These situations require a global, coherent and coordinated response for which budget support can be instrumental. Together with other aid modalities (humanitarian aid, pooled funds, project aid, technical assistance etc), it has to be accompanied by reinforced political and policy dialogue.

The decision to provide EU budget support will be taken on a case by case basis and supported by an assessment of the expected benefits and potential risks. Budget support to fragile states will be referred to in future as "State Building Contracts" to better reflect these elements. The primary objective of an EU coordinated approach to budget support will be to increase the effectiveness of this modality in contributing to development and reform policies, and to provide coherent and consistent responses to challenges encountered. In this regard, the EU has to work more than ever with member states in particular towards a "Single EU Good Governance and Development Contract". Acting together would increase leverage on political and policy dialogue, as well as the impact of EU and member states' bilateral budget support on partner countries' development.

However, already in the formulation of the ambitious objectives of EU budget support – as presented above, a latent tension becomes visible. And the key question arises: how can the leverage of conditionality best be applied? Where are the incentives for good governance and most of all, will it be possible to find agreement over sanction mechanisms for cases of non-compliance? But one also must ask the question: How effective can conditioned budget support be in regions where emerging donors grant unconditional assistance?

33 | Cf. n. 30.

Besides, one evident shortcoming of all types of budget support remains the lack of, or overall weakness of monitoring by civil society but also by national parliaments. Little information is made available to the public but also to those institutions which constitute the checks-and-balances in the political system. Therefore, it should be the aim of donors such as the EU not only to strengthen the capacities of civil society and parliamentarians as such and on technical level, but to enhance as well their knowledge and space for oversight.

A PARADIGM SHIFT IN EU DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE?

Taking into consideration the strategic policy frameworks elaborated on above, and their enhanced commitment to democratic values and principles, it can be – without any doubt, noted that a paradigm shift within EU development policy has taken place. On policy level we see a more nuanced accentuation and emphasis on democratic governance and support to democratisation processes as well as a general striving toward policy coherence for human rights and democracy.

However, whether the European Union can truly be characterised as a normative power in its external relations and whether democratic governance has indeed been moved to the center of EU development cooperation, depends on the final implementation. The regulations defining the instruments within the new MFF 2014 to 2020, as well as the programming of the instruments are key indicators whether Europe's value commitment remains superficial and restricted to the policy level.

Due to the late adoption of the EU budget, the institutions are currently still engaged in the programming of old and new instruments, and will be in the years to come. Once the multiannual indicative programs for instruments of democracy support are finalised, it will become essential to revisit the ambitions of the European Union and to analyse again the implementation of its value-based approach in development assistance.

PROSPECTS FOR GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

The current public discourse on questions of international politics in Germany is not commensurate with the colossal challenges that the country is facing. What do developments in the Middle East, in Africa as well as in Asia and in the Americas mean for Germany and Europe? In what areas should German foreign politics become engaged more strongly – which topics should the German public be exposed to more intensely?

GLOBAL MEGATRENDS (I):

GLOBAL POWER SHIFTS

GLOBAL MEGATRENDS (II):

DEMO-GRAPHIC CHANGE

SECURITY AND DEVEL-OPMENT IN THE SAHEL

GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY AND THE "ENER-GIEWENDE" – ACTION AREAS AND APPROACHES

ECONOMY AS AN ENGINE FOR CHANGE: OPPORTUNITIES OF INCREASED ENGAGEMENT IN THE MAGHREB

THE FIGHT AGAINST PIRACY:

ONE ASPECT OF GERMANY'S MARITIME SECURITY

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COLOMBIA: FROM PEACE PROCESS TO BUILDING A COUNTRY

Hubert Gehring / Margarita Cuervo

"Why", asked the Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez, "is the originality that is readily granted us in literature so mistrustfully denied us in our difficult attempts at social change?" Even 20 years on from his acceptance speech on the occasion of receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982, when he posed this question, Colombia is a country of great paradoxes and contradictions, which is still awaiting the social and political changes that are urgently required. When viewed from a positive perspective, it is an up-and-coming power in the international arena and one of the best investment locations in the world. At the same time, it is the country with the greatest inequalities in the region. The 1991 constitution is considered one of the best legal frameworks in the world. However, over 90 per cent of crime still escapes jurisdiction. The country has entered into various strategic alliances and contracts to intensify its integration into international commerce. However, it is notoriously difficult for people to make use of these opportunities due to considerable deficiencies in the infrastructure. Transporting a container from the capital to Cartagena costs three times the amount required to ship it from this Caribbean port to Shanghai.

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Margarita Cuervo is a Project Coordinator at the KAS Field Office Colombia.

Contrary to popular belief, three quarters of its municipalities, which constitute 94 per cent of its surface area in which 32 per cent of Colombians reside, are predominantly rural in character.[1] In rural areas, poverty and inequality are particularly pronounced. An agricultural labourer earns an average of eight euros a day – food not included – and

1 | "Colombia rural. Razones para la esperanza", Informe Nacional de desarrollo Humano 2011 (National Human Development Report 2011), Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD) (United Nations Development Programme), 19.10.2011.

is covered neither by social insurance nor a pension entitlement. At a regional level, the contrasts are even clearer. Ten major cities benefit from economic growth and act as drivers of the country's development. In 70 per cent of Colombian municipalities, however, the poverty rate is 66 per cent.

"Colombia is Magic Realism" is the new slogan of the international campaign of a government agency for the promotion of tourism, investment activity and exports, which is meant to call attention to the country's cultural attractions and enticing landscape. But it is precisely in this landscape that state security forces and various guerrilla groups have been battling against each other for 50 years. While these hostilities are continuing, the Colombian government is conducting peace negotiations with the commanders of one guerrilla group in Havana, a situation that is reminiscent of "Macondo", the imaginary place from Gabriel García Márquez's novel. It is only possible for these contradictions to exist because there is not one Colombia but many, which co-exist in parallel worlds.

The country's fragmentation and particularly the lack of efficient state action at national, regional and local level are at the root of the armed conflict (among other reasons). The violent confrontation with its various actors and nuances reflects diverse conflicts resulting, among other things, from the inability to provide political answers to questions relating to social and regional discrimination. This is why neither an exclusively military option nor a peace agreement negotiated with the illegal organisations, which is rumoured to contain numerous declarations of intent, will provide a conclusive solution to the structural problems that are afflicting the country and fuelling this conflict. The armed conflict is merely one of many symptoms of a serious deficiency of governability in Colombia, which dates back to the colonial era and has not been resolved to date. The answers and approaches to finding a solution will only have an effect if one fundamental question is addressed: gradual decentralisation, combined with a strengthening of the state and genuine inclusion of the regions in the country's governmental system.

The armed conflict is merely one of many symptoms of a serious deficiency of governability in Colombia, which dates back to the colonial era and has not been resolved to date.

Consequently, the conclusion of a peace agreement in Havana may represent a necessary and possibly the easiest step along a long and difficult road, which will call for structural and fundamental changes if it is to culminate in an enduring peace. All Colombians will have to join together in an effort to find solutions for building their country. There is a need for creative and specific solutions that will measure up to the country of magic realism.

THE ARMED CONFLICT – ALSO A SYMPTOM OF DEEPER PROBLEMS AFFECTING COLOMBIA

There is one constant in the country's history that experts consider the cause of the armed conflict: a system of indirect government, in which the central power cedes governmental power to local elites.

There are a number of different factors that can be identified as the causes of the armed conflict in Colombia. That said, there is one constant in the country's history that various experts consider the underlying cause of the armed conflict: a system of indirect government, in which the central power cedes governmental power to local elites in peripheral areas.[2] The failure of the state to establish a truly balanced and efficient democratic system of government involving the central government and the regions has produced two phenomena, which are correlated and reinforce one another.

On the one hand, it is the regional elites who hold the true power – while not necessarily being members of the local or departmental governments – and not the central government. This widens the gulf between the center and the periphery and hinders the execution of state authority.[3] In this scenario, the elites – local and national, liberal and conservative – divide the political and economic powers among themselves in a manner that secures their hold on power. On the other hand, the armed illegal actors have made violence a common tool to further their agenda. It is a means to hinder or prevent social change; it also serves to enforce or maintain power in a certain area; and finally,

2 | James Robinson, "Colombia: Another 100 Years of Solitude?", *Current History*, Feb 2013, http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/jrobinson/files/robinson-current_history.pdf (accessed 13 Feb 2014).

3 | Gustavo Duncan, "Una visión alternativa del conflicto colombiano", *Razón Pública*, 9 Mar 2009, http://razonpublica.com/index.php/conflicto-drogas-y-paz-temas-30/368-una-visilternativa-del-conflicto-colombiano.html (accessed 13 Feb 2014).

it helps to repel the supremacy of the state or to neutralise it.[4] A brief look at the development of the armed conflict in Colombia shows the historic link with unresolved issues of land and power distribution, which have existed since colonial times.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURE AND THE PHENOMENON OF THE POWER OF REGIONAL ELITES

During the colonial era, allocation of land was realised by means of various types of private property acquisition. Exercising a form of indirect government, the Crown granted Spanish settlers land and gave them power over the indigenous population and slaves. Ever since, two aspects have been resurfacing in Colombia's history: precarious administrative conditions and a deficient state system on the one hand and the use of violence as a means of acquiring and utilising land on the other.[5]

The search for new land to occupy resulted in the establishment of small agricultural businesses at the periphery of the highlands and the Andes in the south and east of the country.

Added to this are two further developments: The first was the population growth due to the immigration of people from Spain and Africa. The search for new land to occupy resulted in the establishment of small agricultural businesses at the periphery of the highlands and the Andes in the south and east of the country. The second was the proliferation of haciendas on the Caribbean Coast and in the Andes Valleys through land grabbing and the development of extensive cattle breeding.

The hacienda system explains the correlation between political power and economic power linked to landownership and thereby power over land and people. This intimate relationship between landownership and political power has produced the figure of the big landowner, referred to as *gamonal* or *señor*, and forms the framework for the distribution of political power in the regions. This structure, which developed from the 19th century and has been a constant in Colombian history ever since, represents the key to understanding the state's lack of power in the

4 | Alejandro Reyes, "Guerreros y campesinos, el despojo en la tierra en Colombia", *Editorial Norma*, 2009.

5 | Alejandro Reyes, "La violencia y el problema agrario en Colombia", *Revista Análisis Político*, 2004.

regions. The relationship of servitude produced "split" loyalties throughout the country and created a type of feudal society. In this system, the landowner provides his workers with food and security – in return for their services as well as their political allegiance and their support in war.

In many places, the wars of independence fought against the Spanish motherland were led by the big landowners, and in the civil wars of the 19th century, the haciendas were at the core of the conflict between local elites and the central power.[6] It was also precisely during this era that the state transferred landownership to deserving military figures. Violence had thereby become a means of land acquisition and encouraged the concentration of landownership. At the same time, this phenomenon produced tensions, which escalated into violent conflicts because of the instances of exclusion intrinsic to them.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY: LAND DISTRIBUTION BATTLES AND SOCIAL ISSUES

As the country entered into a process of modernisation based on industrial development, the hacienda system began to change in the first decades of the 20th century and to follow a course of greater development and productivity. Simultaneously, a number of events inside the country and abroad had an impact on the agricultural conflicts of that time. Initially, booming coffee exports caused foreign exchange earnings to multiply and became the most important basis for a countrywide proliferation and consolidation of capitalism.[7]

The growth centers were pervaded by an atmosphere of modernisation, which resulted in accelerated change. This upsurge of industry and commerce entailed a high demand for labour the urban population could not satisfy. Consequently, there was a rural exodus as workers could earn more in the city than in the country.[8]

6 | Ibid.
7 | Jesús A. Bejarano, "El despegue cafetero", in: José Antonio Ocampo (ed.), *Historia Económica de Colombia*, Editorial Planeta, Fedesarrollo, 2007.
8 | Ibid.

Granted land to peasants who farmed it, but did not own it: President Alfonso López Pumarejo governed Columbia from 1934 till 1938. | Source: Banrep Cultural, flickr ☺ⓘ.

The development of a capitalist economy was one factor in the legitimisation crisis of the hacienda system, which came under strong pressure – not least from the global economic crisis of 1929. The old-established hacienda owners began to lose their grip on their economic and political leadership role; that migrated to a large extent to the sections of the economy involved in the coffee business. In the course of these changes, there were protests, strikes and land occupations by peasants and indigenous people. Their demands were as follows: a right to land ownership, better working conditions, and a right to grow export products and share in the economic upturn. At a local level, the government responded to the unrest with repression in some instances. At a national level, however, President Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934 to 1938) came to power with a progressive campaign entitled "Revolution in Progress", which sought answers to the social questions of the times.[9]

9 | Álvaro Albán, "Reforma y contrarreforma agraria en Colombia", *Revista de Economía Institucional*, No. 24, Vol. 13, 2011.

In 1936, Law No. 200 was passed, which, among other things, envisaged the granting of land to peasants who farmed land that did not belong to them, in line with the principle that private property entailed a social function. López Pumarejo thereby found an answer to the peasants' demand for landownership; but he did not change the social structures, which continued to be characterised by inequality regarding land distribution.[10] During Pumarejo's second term in office (1942 to 1945), opponents of Law No. 200 – including both elites and landowners – succeeded in having a new law passed which restored some of the former conditions. It prevented peasants from becoming owners of the land they farmed, for instance. Due to opposition from the national and local elites, the first opportunity to realise an essential structural change towards greater social participation and equality was thereby squandered.

LA VIOLENCIA AND THE NATIONAL FRONT IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY

A violent period of Colombian history began with the assassination of political radical Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948. He aimed for major changes in Colombia's political, social and economic system.

After the failure of this first agricultural reform, the state did not respond to the social disaffection in certain areas for years. The subsequent, violent period of Colombian history began with the assassination of political radical Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948. As a dissident from the ranks of the Liberal Party, Gaitán aimed for major changes in Colombia's political, social and economic system. His assassination in Bogotá led to a number of public protests and riots that became known as "El Bogotazo". Even before that time, parallel the social protests, a phase referred to as *La Violencia* (Violence) had been impending, which was to last at least a decade. It was characterised by serious confrontation between the two traditional political parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. It would ultimately cost 200,000 people their lives. There was unrest and persecution, resulting in over a million peasants being driven from their homes.

10 | Absalón Machado Cartagena, "Reforma agraria: una ilusión que resultó un fracaso", *Revista Credencial Historia*, No. 119, Nov 1999.

Various historians have described how the battle between Liberals and Conservatives was utilised by armed groups to take possession of vast swathes of land.[11] The expulsion of the rural population and the land grabbing increased the concentration of landownership.[12] In addition, (liberal and communist) guerrilla fighters fled into remote areas of the country during this period, where there was no military presence. They would subsequently go on to found the FARC.

Memorial at the site of crime: The assassination of political radical Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948 in Bogotá marked the beginning of a violent period of Colombian history. | Source: momentcaptured1, flickr CC BY.

In 1953, the political leadership made efforts to put an end to the violence by establishing a military regime under General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. However, pressure from some sections of the economy, which feared the dictatorial repression would damage their interests, as well as from political circles excluded from the government resulted in the general stepping down in 1957. Then came the period of the National Front (Frente Nacional) from 1958 to 1974, during which the elites of the two large parties agreed to share power in order to protect the old patrimonial system and the profits from international trade, relying on support from the emerging middle classes and the established big landowners.

11 | Reyes, n. 5.

12 | Absalón Machado Cartagena, "Tenencia de tierras, problema agrario y conflicto", in: *Desplazamiento forzado: dinámicas de guerra, exclusión y desarraigo*, ACNUR, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2004.

The National Front did not strive for any far-reaching changes beyond consolidation of the two-party system and subordination of the military, but aimed at restoring political control of society to the traditional elites. This did not prove adequate for addressing the social problems. Telling proof of this is the fact that the period during which Conservatives and Liberals alternated in power and shared it equally saw the emergence of various guerrilla groups and the phenomenon of the self-defence organisations – which would subsequently develop into paramilitary associations – as well as the development of the drug trade in the country.

During the term of Conservative President Misael Pastrana a counter-reform resulted in an arrangement under which the expropriation of land was not carried out if it was considered to be "well managed".

The only major attempt to realise structural change towards greater equity came in the term of Alberto Lleras Camargo (1958 to 1962), but failed due to the central government's inability to motivate the local elites to cooperate.[13] One of the provisions of Law No. 135 of 1961 envisaged the purchase of land by the state and its distribution among the peasants. During the term of Conservative President Misael Pastrana (1970 to 1974), however, a counter-reform of sorts took place at the instigation of the big landowners, which resulted in an arrangement under which the expropriation of land was not carried out if it was considered to be "well managed".

Consequently, the conflicts between the peasants and the big landowners as well as the increasing inequality in urban and rural areas continued into the second half of the 20th century. Parallel to this and with new ideologies emerging in Latin America in the 1960s, the political system curtailed the possibilities of engaging in political activities for certain actors – including those of the Left. It was to a large part this context in conjunction with the fatal lack of a state presence in some areas of the country that encouraged the emergence of the guerrilla movements.[14]

13 | Absalón Machado Cartagena, "La reforma agraria en la Alianza para el Progreso". Article in *Seminario Internacional 50 Años de la Alianza para el Progreso en Colombia: Lecciones para el presente*, 2011, http://ceecolombia.org/print.php?id=2807 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

14 | Cf. Reyes, n. 4.

GUERRILLAS, PARAMILITARIES AND THE DRUG TRADE: COEXISTING PARALLEL STATES?

There is ample literature on the history and development of the guerrilla movements that emerged in the second half of the 20th century as an expression of resistance by peasants and labourers as well as of a revolutionary battle to take over state power. This also applies to the paramilitary associations which emerged as "self-defence" organisations against the guerrillas, as well as to the organisations of drug dealers towards the end of the 20th century.[15] There were two decisive factors: the existence of illegal organisations as "para-governmental" actors, who took over the role of providing social order in areas where the state did not have a sufficient presence, and their coexistence and interrelations with the political elites at local level. During the course of the 1960s, guerrilla groups with a leftist ideology emerged: first the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC, 1964), then the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN, 1965) and the Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación, EPL, 1967).

During the course of the 1960s, guerrilla groups with a leftist ideology emerged: first the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, then the National Liberation Army and the Popular Liberation Army.

From the late 1950s, armed groups of peasants, who had fled due to violent clashes between the parties, began to organise in remote areas of the country. A stronger civil presence of the state was called for. The government referred to these areas as "independent republics", thereby giving the impression that there was a separatist agenda involved. In one case, the army conducted a military operation to quell an impending uprising. Not only did they fail to destroy the structure of this peasant army, it also established the FARC's strongest foundation myth: the survivors fled, crossed the mountains and reformed in the lowlands of eastern Colombia.[16] Although the 1980s and 1990s saw the disarming and reintegration of some of these groups, the FARC and the ELN are still in existence five decades after they were founded. Two other phenomena

15 | Fernán E. González, Ingrid J. Bolívar and Teófilo Vásquez, *Violencia política en Colombia. De la nación fragmentada a la construcción del Estado*, Bogotá, Cinep, 2003.

16 | Cf. Reyes, n. 4.

are exacerbating the problem further: the drug trade and paramilitary organisations.

In the mid-1970s, the first coca plantations to supply the drug trade appeared in Colombia. It was in that decade that the drug dealer gangs, who would later be known as the Cali Cartel – headed by Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela – and the Medellín Cartel headed by Pablo Escobar appeared. During the 1980s, coca cultivation grew as much as eight-fold and the production of cocaine tripled.[17] In this period, both cartels consolidated, without stopping to fight each other.

These two organisations also permeated Colombian politics, economy and society. In the early 1990s, the drug trade had consolidated and the drug barons controlled the production, processing and marketing. But in addition, they succeeded in controlling and directing broad sectors of political activities at local and national level. One notorious case was the so-called Process 8,000, in the course of which President Ernesto Samper (1994 to 1998) was accused of having received money from the drug trade for his presidential election campaign. With the support of the USA in its "War on Drugs", the Colombian government took up the fight against the cartels. In 1993, during an operation conducted by the Colombian police, Escobar died in Medellín while trying to escape. In 1995, Rodríguez Orejuela was captured together with other leading figures of the Cali Cartel and extradited to the USA.[18]

The business of the drug cartels soon restructured. Smaller units were formed, which transferred from the city to the countryside.

With the death and, respectively, the extradition of the drug bosses, the large drug cartels in Colombia disbanded. However, the business soon restructured. Other cartel members as well as paramilitary groups that were being established took over from the bosses and formed smaller units, which transferred from the city to the countryside. Furthermore, the guerrillas became involved in the business from as early as 1987 to finance their war. The drug

17 | 75 per cent of the cocaine that reached the USA originated in Colombia and produced revenues equivalent to three billion euros for the drug dealers.

18 | Bruce Bagley, "Narcotráfico, violencia política y política exterior de Estados Unidos hacia Colombia en los noventa", *Revista Colombia Internacional*, No. 49-50, 2000.

trade thereby became a catalyst for conflict in Colombia. It is the most important funding source of the armed groups, and the groups also compete for control of the growing areas and trading channels. The paramilitary units underwent a similar process; they initially had support from the army, from landowners and even from peasants, who were fighting the guerrillas, and in turn the guerrillas then also attacked those peasants. This phenomenon began in different regions and culminated in the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, AUC), an organisation that was deeply embroiled in the drug trade.[19]

And as others took over the management of the drug trade after the bosses' demise, something similar would happen following the demobilisation of the paramilitary groups (under the Uribe government): the reformation of disbanded groups in the form of different illegal organisations, subsequently referred to as "criminal gangs". In reference to the difficulty of solving the problem of the drug trade, expert Gustavo Duncan remarked: "The state cannot make agreements with the drug dealers, which would cause the business to disappear because other heads would replace them."[20] Furthermore, although the heads of the drug dealer rings, guerrilla and paramilitary groups are considered mafiosi and criminals by central government, they are regarded as the state in the regions. It is they who regulate social order, everyday life, the payment of dues; they make the rules, build schools and realise infrastructure projects. The obligations of subservience towards the local elites extend to these illegal actors as well, who, after all, offer protection and the basis for people's livelihood: namely coca.

The heads of the drug dealer rings, guerrilla and paramilitary groups are considered criminals by central government, but they are regarded as the state in the regions.

Ultimately, the reason for the existence of these "parallel states"[21] is the fact that the idea of the "señores" as owners of political and economic power still persists in the regions, in spite of the country having undergone great change. In

19 | Gustavo Duncan, *Los Señores de la Guerra*, Editorial Planeta, 2006.

20 | Duncan, n. 3.

21 | Carlo Nasi, "Instituciones políticas para el post-conflicto", in: *Construcción de paz en Colombia*, Angelika Rettberg (ed.), Ediciones Uniandes, 2012, 74.

2011, a Colombian journalist interviewed “Enrique”, southern commander-in-chief of the AUC in Putumayo, where the largest volume of coca in the world was being grown at that time. The journalist reported how, when he had just arrived at the hotel, he gave the receptionist a telephone number and requested to be connected to the Comandante. The receptionist replied: “Everybody around here knows this telephone number. If there is an emergency, that’s the number to call.”[22]

For this reason some authors[23] speak of “señores de la guerra”, i.e. warlords, as the concept by which the illegal armed groups operate, survive and replace one another. They represent the de facto powers in the areas they control militarily and politically and where the population shows loyalty to them rather than the state. Many of these “señores” have succeeded in corrupting and infiltrating state institutions, as their criminal activities do not appear to represent a direct threat to state authority.[24] Only when the national elite perceives them as a threat, does the central power take steps to combat them. This “warlord” concept also provides an explanation for the Process 8,000 in the 1990s and explains the current indications for close links between regional politicians and illegal armed groups: “parapolitics”, “FARC politics” and most recently “BACRIM politics”.[25]

Only when the national elite perceives the warlords as a threat, does the central power take steps to combat them.

22 | Álvaro Sierra, “Los señores de la guerra”, *El Tiempo*, 23 Sep 2001, http://eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-658571 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

23 | Duncan, n. 19; Salomón Kalmanovitz, “La república de los señores de la guerra”, *El Espectador*, 7 Apr 2013, http://elespectador.com/opinion/columna-414577-republica-de-los-senores-de-guerra (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

24 | Gustavo Duncan, “El enigma de Víctor Carranza”, *Razón Pública*, 15 Apr 2013, http://razonpublica.com/index.php/politica-y-gobierno-temas-27/3674-el-enigma-de-victor-carranza-.html (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

25 | *Parapolítica* is a term that was coined by public opinion for the 2006 scandal, where the strong links between the paramilitaries – already disarmed at that point – and political representatives, particularly the local elites, were exposed. There has also been talk of similar dealings with the FARC, although this was not investigated, and of some links existing already between local politicians and criminal gangs (*bandas criminales*, BACRIM), which came into existence after the AUC was disbanded.

Demonstration against FARC in Madrid: On 2 February 2008 thousands of people gathered in different places around the world to protest against the leftist Columbian guerilla. | Source: Camilo Rueda López, flickr CC BY SA.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN EL CAGUÁN AND THE COLOMBIA PLAN: CARROT AND STICK

In the mid-1990s, two thirds of the global cocaine supply came from Colombia, and by the end of the decade the growing area had increased by 57 per cent. The FARC held considerable power and proceeded from guerrilla warfare to open war. In addition, the AUC had consolidated on Colombian territory. It was against this backdrop that the presidency of Andrés Pastrana began (1998 to 2002). He had already proposed to conduct peace talks with the guerrillas during his election campaign and included a project in his government program that would subsequently be referred to as the "Plan Colombia": a program to end the armed conflict and eradicate the drug trade.

The period under the Pastrana government saw the beginning of the ultimately failed peace process of El Caguán[26] involving the FARC, which brought considerable benefits for the guerrilla group. This process produced several lessons for future negotiations with the guerrillas. Many

26 | This is the term by which the negotiations with FARC under the Pastrana government became known; they were held in the town of San Vicente del Caguán in Caquetá Department in eastern Colombia.

experts therefore considered Pastrana's decision to make a demilitarised zone available to the FARC as a negotiation venue a strategic mistake. The FARC took control of the zone and its population, and the coca plantations and illegal trade proliferated considerably. Another criticism was that the President wanted to include too many topics and partners in the negotiations. This had the effect that the talks did not have a clear agenda and were not limited in time or subject matter, which is why they did not proceed very efficiently and ultimately failed.

That said, Pastrana, with the support from the U.S. government, was one of the fathers of the so-called Plan Colombia. Under Pastrana, the Colombian armed forces were modernised and strengthened. This meant that the illegal groups could be combatted much more effectively. But ultimately this was not sufficient to end the armed conflict. In spite of the five billion euros the USA has invested in this endeavour – and the Colombian contribution which amounted to twice that – it has not been possible to resolve the issue sustainably; although the FARC has been weakened militarily, the "War on Drugs" has so far not been very effective because of the failure to get to the root of the problem and strengthen the civil presence of the state in the regions.[27]

The "War on Drugs" has so far not been very effective because of the failure to get to the root of the problem and strengthen the civil presence of the state in the regions.

FROM FIRM HAND TO DOVE OF PEACE: STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS PERSIST

The governments of President Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002 to 2006 and 2006 to 2010) and the actions of Juan Manuel Santos (2010 to 2014) in his role of president to date have yielded significant progress in terms of security, strengthening of state institutions and macroeconomic figures. In spite of this, the structural problems persist. Even worse, Colombia might not gain peace in the short or medium term either through the "firm hand" policy conducted by Uribe – the military option – or by negotiations – Santos' way of the "dove of peace".

27 | Alejandro Gaviria and Daniel Mejía, "Políticas antidroga en Colombia: éxitos, fracasos y extravíos", Ediciones Uniandes, 2012.

In other words: even if the Colombian army succeeded in eradicating all illegal armed groups, new ones would take their place. And if it were possible, on the other hand, to negotiate a genuine peace agreement with the FARC and maybe the ELN, that would not necessarily mean an end to the armed conflict either. The restoration of public order and security as well as the negotiations within the framework of the peace process are both necessary, yet ultimately not sufficient, to resolve the conflict. There have been no efforts made so far to address the structural problems, and that is the task that needs to be completed to avoid Colombia suffering armed confrontation and an even greater weakening of the state for many decades to come.

Negotiating with the FARC rebels in Havanna: President Juan Manuel Santos, here visiting a school in Suba in September 2013. | Source: Ministerio de Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones de Colombia CC BY.

URIBE AND SECURING DEMOCRACY: FIRM HAND, BIG HEART

As a presidential candidate, Uribe voiced the widespread resentment against peace negotiations with the FARC and against the deterioration of the security situation in the country after the failure of El Caguán. His idea about the way to secure democracy can be condensed into one sentence: once we have restored security, the country

will progress. He was convinced that security would boost investor confidence, and that the subsequent economic growth would bring more jobs, better healthcare and education systems as well as opportunities for all.

Uribe was elected President for the first time in 2002 and proceeded to implement his "Democratic Security" project. He increased the defence budget consistently and strengthened the police presence.

His motto "Firm hand, big heart" was a clear and unequivocal message. The government would fight the terrorists, but it would also be magnanimous and conciliatory towards those who laid down their arms and returned to legality. Uribe was elected President of Colombia for the first time in 2002 and proceeded to implement his "Democratic Security" project. He increased the defence budget consistently and strengthened the police presence in all communities of the country. In addition, and thanks to the modernisation of the armed forces initiated under Pastrana, he was able to take intensive military action against the FARC and the ELN, which undoubtedly weakened these groups.

Parallel to his strategy of offensive action against the guerrilla groups, he also negotiated a collective demobilisation campaign with the AUC paramilitary self-defence groups and their submission to the justice system. This produced the most extensive demobilisation to date in sections of the illegal armed groups. According to the Colombian Agency for Reintegration (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, ACR), 54,317 fighters laid down their arms between 2002 and 2010. Over 32,000 of them did so in the course of the peace negotiations with the AUC; the remainder were individual deserters from the ranks of the FARC and the ELN.[28] Those concerned could subsequently take part in measures for reintegration into civil society as soon as their legal situation had been clarified. Many relapsed, however, or even worse: there were mid-ranking members of the AUC who reformed and established new gangs of criminals and drug dealers.

Despite the progress made under Uribe and the continuing prominence given to his plan for "Democratic Security", one step along the way was missing, namely efforts to enforce changes that would address the problems at their root.

28 | Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, http://www.reintegracion.gov.co (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

This may be down to the fact that the prevailing opinion is that all the country's problems are due to the armed conflict and more specifically to the existence of illegal armed groups. Consequently, people have the expectation that the day when the last criminal organisation is squelched and its members returned to legality the country's problems will be resolved. The strength of the message lies in its simplicity; but the political measures relying on it do not take into account the structural aspects that should be considered.

UNDER SANTOS: NEGOTIATIONS IN HAVANA, FAILURE TO IMPLEMENT REFORMS, AND CONTINUING ARMED CONFLICT

After his second term in office, Uribe was succeeded by his Defence Minister Juan Manuel Santos. His government program basically envisaged a continuation of Uribe's course of securing democracy, complemented by an ambitious agenda of political measures and reforms aimed at raising the level of prosperity in the country.

Good Intentions, Hesitant Implementation

Although the results of the implementation and impact of the laws are outstanding, several of these projects are already producing some achievements.

To this end, the government had drawn up a number of bills based on the need for stronger social and regional participation and intended to increase prosperity in Colombia through "engines" of development. Although the results of the implementation and impact of the laws are outstanding, several of these projects (law regulating matters relating to the victims of the internal armed conflict and restoration of landownership; a legal framework for peace; law of first employment) are already producing some achievements. Others were modified on their way through Parliament and are heading in a different direction from what was originally envisaged (reform of the system of "regalías"; tax reform). And some simply did not make it through, as Parliament denied its approval, above all due to strong resistance against far-reaching changes to further the country's development. The affected areas include education, the healthcare system, the legal system and the general law on land use.

It is important to mention that two laws, which had originally aimed at achieving greater social justice, have failed to fulfil their purpose. According to the 2012 tax reform, income tax was supposed to increase proportionally with pay, but this provision does not apply to the taxation of the dividends received by the employers, in whose hands most of the country's capital is concentrated. Another reform dating from 2012 regulates the access of departments and municipalities to the revenues from natural resources, whether they are extracted in their region or not. However, this is where you see major challenges to local development and regional integration, as the reform has so far hardly been implemented at all due to the incapability of the local authorities to take effective action. On the one hand, this illustrates the reluctance on the part of the elites to implement structural change and to finance it (for example tax reform and tax payments by the Colombian population) and, on the other hand, the inability of the central power to enforce the changes conceived in Bogotá in the regions. To quote an observer of regional politics: "They can pass as many laws in Bogotá as they want. It doesn't affect us here; we do what we want." Or as people in some of Colombia's regions like to say: "This law hasn't made its way here so far, and it probably never will."

To quote an observer of regional politics: "They can pass as many laws in Bogotá as they want. It doesn't affect us here; we do what we want."

Negotiations in Havana: Progress and Problems

One of Santos' main goals is peace in Colombia. He demonstrated that by initiating peace talks with the FARC, which he announced in August 2012. It also appears that a door is opening for dialogue with the ELN. The process has, however, not gone entirely smoothly, and in a potential post-conflict scenario, the country's structural problems – many of which appear in the negotiating agenda with the FARC – must be dealt with at the root.

Once the Santos government had agreed to hold exploratory talks with the FARC in August 2012, it lost no time in setting an ultimate deadline by which an agreement was to be reached: November 2013. This deadline was not kept, although the government continues to insist on coming to a speedy agreement. This intention was confirmed by a joint statement of the government and the FARC, which

included a roadmap for the dialogue with the guerrilla force. According to the principle "nothing is decided until everything is decided", it mentions five points to be negotiated at Havana to achieve an "end to the armed conflict", in other words to end the armed confrontation and begin constructing sustainable peace. The negotiations are to cover the following points:

1. Rural development,
2. Political participation,
3. Ending the conflict (demobilisation and reintegration of the former fighters)
4. Resolution of the problem of illegal drugs and
5. Victims.

By January 2014, the government and the FARC had only succeeded in making progress on rural development and political participation. The subject currently under discussion is the drug trade.

The time factor was a considerable problem at these talks from the onset By January 2014, the government and the FARC had only succeeded in making progress on the first two points of the agenda: rural development and political participation. The subject currently under discussion is the drug trade. There is a further problem in that presidential and parliamentary elections are coming up while the negotiations are going on. It was for that reason that Santos had already asked the parties making up the governing coalition whether the negotiations should be suspended, broken off altogether or continued as before for the duration of the election campaign. Although public opinion is divided on this point, Santos knows his entire political capital is at stake in these negotiations. In November 2013, Santos announced his presidential candidacy and decided to continue the negotiations in Havana. This was considered to be problematic. The fear is that the President will make too many concessions to the guerrillas to gain an advantage for his own campaign while the FARC seems to be under no time pressure whatsoever.

There are people opposed to this course of action in all camps. Particularly former President Uribe and some of the landowners from the coffee growing and cattle breeding sectors have voiced their opposition to the way in which the negotiations are being conducted. And there are also indications from within the FARC that the organisation is split. There are sections among the guerrillas – those who

gain the greatest financial benefit from the drug trade – who are not party to the truce the FARC called unilaterally at the end of 2012. Although the great majority of Colombians want peace, 63 respondents in a survey conducted by the polling institute DATEXCO stated they do not agree with the way President Santos is conducting the negotiations. Only 27 believe a peace agreement will be signed, and only 21 per cent believe the FARC is seriously interested in such an agreement.

The Armed Conflict Continues

Subsequently, the armed conflict in Colombia continues parallel to the events in Havana. So far, key subjects such as the drug trade and the issues of victims have not yet been discussed. However, the talks are no doubt an essential prerequisite to prepare the ground for the real peace process, which is already frequently referred to as "post-conflict".

There have also been a number of instances of social mobilisation and tensions during 2013 indicating that the armed conflict is not the only problem in Colombia. During the first quarter, there were demonstrations and demands expressed to the government from the agricultural sector, which has been affected by the negative impact of the free trade agreement that recently came into force. Some sectors of Colombian agriculture are simply not (yet) competitive. Due to the belated and not entirely satisfactory response by central government to the various concerns raised, the protests spread to other regions and sectors of industry. The situation culminated in a large-scale countrywide strike being called for on 19 August, which was no longer restricted to the rural population and lasted 21 days.

Although the roots of these problems go back to the time before Santos took office, they have become even more obvious since then. The fact that the President and his cabinet have failed to answer many of the strikers' questions has led to increasing resistance and outrage on the part of those affected. The demonstrators' demands are as follows: improvement of the socio-economic conditions, stronger inclusion in the country's development and, above

all, the presence of the state. One local newspaper published a report entitled "The Country of the Forgotten" and quoted farmers who were blocking the country's transport routes to make sure their demands were heard: "The state has forgotten us. We find ourselves totally abandoned."

VARIOUS PROBLEMS IN DIVERSE REGIONS

Besides the inability of the state to exercise its power efficiently at the different governmental levels, the problems afflicting Colombia manifest mainly in the regions. Even if an agreement were to be reached in Havana, the individual points of the negotiating agenda would still have to be implemented in each region. Without adequate land regulation, without a system of power sharing and coordinated administration between central government and local administrative units based on an efficient normative framework, which is also applied in practice, and without genuine involvement of all regions and social sectors in the country's development, sustainable peace will not be possible.

Deficits of Social and Regional Inclusion in Colombia

With gross domestic product rising at over four per cent over the last three years, Colombia is one of the five largest economies in South America.

The Colombian economy has grown substantially over the last few years. Investments have risen, unemployment has fallen, and there has also been a noticeable and significant reduction in poverty. With gross domestic product rising at over four per cent over the last three years, oil production exceeding one million barrels a day and record figures for foreign direct investments, Colombia is one of the five largest economies in South America. However, when one examines these indicators from a regional and local perspective, it is noticeable that the fruits of this development do not benefit the whole of society, at least not equitably.

First of all, Colombia is still one of the most unequal countries in the world and in Latin America.[29] Furthermore, it still has a high concentration of landownership, which

29 | According to the Colombian Office of Statistics (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística de Colombia, DANE) the country's Gini index is 0.54.

has even increased over the last decade.[30] According to a recent UN Habitat report, Colombia is the country with the greatest level of inequality in urban areas within Latin America.[31] Amongst other things, the study shows that economic growth in particular does not automatically result in a decrease in inequality. In fact, Medellín – Colombia's economic capital, where many important Colombian and foreign companies are based – is the city with the strongest imbalance. Although the different governments have reduced poverty overall, inequality has remained.

Colombia also has major deficits in the education system. Although 90 per cent of school-age children attend primary or secondary school in the capital Bogotá, there are serious problems in the pre-school sector (50 per cent) and with institutions of higher education. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that 80 per cent of the members of more prosperous classes have a university qualification, while this is only the case for 20 per cent of those who come from poorer backgrounds. Apart from the problems with the availability of educational opportunities throughout the country, there are also qualitative deficits, as the PISA study by the OECD[32] documents, according to which Colombia ranks third from the bottom in matters of education.

Apart from the problems with educational opportunities throughout the country, there are also qualitative deficits, as the PISA study by the OECD documents, according to which Colombia ranks third from the bottom.

In the regions, the inequality of opportunity is even worse. A new report by the Colombian Administrative Department of Statistics DANE about material poverty and inequality of opportunity, which shows figures for 2012 subdivided by department, speaks volumes. The average income of a resident of Bogotá is six times that of an inhabitant of the poorest department Chocó, for example. The report also gives the national per capita income for 2012 as approximately 196 euros, while it was 336 euros in Bogotá – 1.7

30 | The Gini index of landownership is 0.88. Cf. "Así es la Colombia rural", *Revista Semana*, 2012, http://semana.com/especiales/pilares-tierra/asi-es-la-colombia-rural.html (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

31 | Verónica Téllez Oliveros, "Ciudades colombianas: más desiguales", *El Espectador*, 8 Oct 2013, http://elespectador.com/noticias/nacional/ciudades-colombianas-mas-desiguales-articulo-451323 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

32 | Colombia opted to take part in the PISA study although it is not an OECD state.

times the national average – and only 89 euros in Chocó, i.e. 55 per cent less than the national average. This illustrates the vast discrepancies between the regions.

Decentralisation in Colombia: There Still Remains Much to Do after 25 Years

The first steps towards political decentralisation in Colombia were taken over 25 years ago. The period of the National Front – with its "political barrier" that did not permit any alternatives to the existing two-party system – was followed by a wave of strikes and vociferous protests, where demands for improvements to public services were put forward. The decentralisation efforts faced great challenges. There was a need to strengthen local institutions, empower civil society, reallocate responsibilities and funds, and create a new framework for the relationship between central government and local administration.[33]

From 1986 onwards, some progress was made through the direct election of mayors and governors. The model of a unitary state with autonomous territorial units was enshrined in the 1991 constitution. A comprehensive regulatory framework gave form to this model, which enhanced participatory democracy and made provisions for funding as well as emphasising the social dimension of decentralisation. In the regions in particular, the state must ensure the provision of healthcare, education and drinking water amongst other things. And with the direct election of the governors, the first step was taken towards strengthening the middle administrative level.[34]

However, problems soon arose within the system. The functions of the departments were not clearly defined. At the end of the 1990s, the government attempted to

33 | Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, Viviana Barberena, Luis Jorge Garay and Juan Manuel Ospina, "25 años de la descentralización en Colombia", Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Colombia, Apr 2010, http://kas.de/kolumbien/es/publications/19274 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

34 | Viviana Barberena Nisimblat, "Descentralización en Colombia: 25 años preparando el territorio para la paz", *Razón Pública*, 3 Jun 2013, http://razonpublica.com/index.php/politica-y-gobierno-temas-27/6871-descentralizacion-en-colombia-25-anos-preparando-el-territorio-para-la-paz.html (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

revise the funding laid down in the constitution in view of the financial crisis. A trend towards "recentralisation" emerged, the impact of which can still be felt today. The distribution of the "regalías", the revenues from the extraction of natural resources, had been regulated by a law that came into force in 1994. But an imbalance remained as it placed 80 per cent of the resources in the hands of a mere 17 per cent of the population, and just five of the country's 32 departments possessed 64 per cent of the resources.

The Santos government reformed the system of *regalías*, which provided for all regions to have access to resources and not just those where fossil resources were being extracted.

Under the Santos government, two important steps were taken in this area. One was the reform of the system of *regalías*, which provided for all regions to have access to resources and not just those where fossil resources were being extracted. The complex rules are still impeding the disbursement of funds, which means it is too early to take stock. A further step in addressing the structural problems in the administration was an amendment to the basic law on land use. This has, however, produced considerable disillusionment.

Perhaps the point in history the country currently finds itself in – with a peace process that necessitates the long-desired changes and could actually facilitate them – provides a good basis for addressing these subjects effectively. There is a need at both regional and local level not only for the peace agreements to be implemented, but also for issues of social and regional inclusion to be resolved.

FROM THE SYMPTOMS TO THE CAUSES: APPROACHES TO DECENTRALISATION[35]

Colombia is a fragmented nation, on account of the high levels of inequality – between center and periphery, city and country, rich and poor – as well as the fact that the process of building the state and distributing power in the regions has not yet been completed. The armed conflict

35 | A KAS program in Colombia is currently collaborating with experts from the Network of Initiatives for Governability, Democracy and Land Development (RINDE) in an investigation into the subjects of decentralisation and peace. The authors would like to thank Viviana Barberena, who coordinates the RINDE network and the study, for providing the academic sources used to devise this chapter.

and the continuing presence of armed illegal groups are symptoms of the problems and exacerbate them at the same time. For this reason, an efficient strategy for a comprehensive resolution of these problems must, on the one hand, include the restoration of the state monopoly on power across the entire state territory and a strengthened security policy, and, on the other hand, the civil presence of the state, i.e. its efficient operation in the areas of administration, jurisdiction, education and infrastructure.

To this end and to initiate the changes that will lead to greater social and regional inclusion, the following principles will need to be applied in the work to devise potential approaches and in the decision-making:

- An efficient and effective system of administration at local and department level in all regions of Colombia. In many areas, there is no state presence; in others, the state does have a presence, but does not operate effectively. Corruption and exploitation for personal gain, putting private interests above public ones, play a role in this, as does a lack of skills at local and department levels.

- The aim of achieving justice in the sense of equality of opportunity should be borne in mind throughout; this includes aspects such as access to public services, education and employment.

- Even if, as described above, minimum guarantees were to exist for all citizens in all regions so that true territorial cohesion is achieved, the special features and diverse problems of the individual areas should be taken into account. Solutions reflecting this diversity must be found to address various problems in the different regions. Programs and measures to improve infrastructure and education, for instance, must be adapted to the special circumstances of the respective region.

Solutions must be found to address various problems in the different regions. Programs and measures to improve education, for instance, must be adapted to the special circumstances of the respective region.

- The most important areas and topics should be addressed first. In view of the ambitious goal and unresolved questions in so many regions, existing funds will likely not be sufficient to address every problem in every part of

the country immediately. However, focusing on the most badly affected and most backward areas would preclude the risk of creating even larger discrepancies between the regions and making excessive demands on the capabilities of the institutions and the funding.

Even though it is impossible to examine every potential approach in detail here, the following fundamental courses of action are essential for decision-makers in their efforts to continue building the country:

1. State Efficiency and Decentralisation

For this aspect, the definition of functions and their delegation to the local and intermediate levels are of prime importance. The intermediate level (of the departments) in particular needs to be strengthened, as it is of great significance in a potential post-conflict scenario for two reasons. Firstly, any agreement arrived at in negotiations will have practical repercussions at the level of the local communities. Secondly, large parts of the programs and political measures involving the provision of goods and services necessary to fulfil basic needs are and will continue to be devised at national level. The intermediate level has the remit to coordinate the decisions made at national level and their practical implementation at local level.

In Colombia, there is something that could be described as legislative inflation: many laws, little implementation. This has produced a complex web of interrelationships between institutions.

A further starting point is the operational capability of the legislature. In Colombia, there is something that could be described as legislative inflation: many laws, little implementation. This has produced a complex web of interrelationships between institutions, producing conflicts of interest and tensions between different authorities that are meant to implement the policies. For this reason, it is necessary to create an institutional and legal framework that clearly allocates the responsibilities between the state, department and local levels. This will require a number of central, general directives that will produce clarity in this area.

Initiating these measures and strengthening the capability of the regional and local authorities to implement them will require progress to be made regarding the use of resources

at department and local levels. Particular attention must be paid to the funds for investment expenditure, as this is the means whereby funds flow from the center to the regions. Although the amounts involved have decreased from the 1990s to 2010,[36] the Santos government is now making efforts to raise the investment budget to 5.7 per cent of 2013 GDP – representing a historic high in Colombian history at over 40 trillion pesos.[37] Supporting and boosting this investment with funds that will flow into infrastructure, the social sphere as well as into support for the economy is of central importance for improving production capacity and productivity in the country.

Another important point is equality of opportunity regarding access to resources by the individual regional or local authorities. The most recent reform of the general system of *regalías* in 2012 was to ensure that all departments – and not only those in whose territory natural resources are located – should in principle have access to these resources. Another main objective is to ensure legal security and efficient administration. A graduated state presence is not only measured by the existence or lack of state institutions; the quality of public administration in the different regions is also of great importance. To ensure efficient and professionally operating public services in all regions requires a certain level of human resources and material infrastructure. And all public employees and public service institutions must be subjected to the principles of competitiveness. One central aspect here is a sensible distribution of qualified personnel across the regions. A further aspect is the need to achieve better skills and

To ensure efficient and professionally operating public services all public employees and public service institutions must be subjected to the principles of competitiveness.

36 | "¿Hacia dónde se dirigen los recursos de Inversión del Presupuesto General de la Nación?", Colombian Central Bank, Aug 2006, http://banrep.gov.co/docum/ftp/borra405.pdf (accessed 14 Feb 2014); cf. "Proyecto de Presupuesto General de la Nación 2010" (Draft for the general budget 2010), Colombian Ministry of Finance, 29 Jul 2009, http://www.minhacienda.gov.co/portal/page/portal/MinHacienda1/MinistryFinance/elministerio/prensa/Presentaciones/2009/PRESENTACION%20PROYECTO%20DE%20PRESUPUESTO%202010_0.pdf (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

37 | "Presupuesto de 2013 será de $185,5 billones", *Dinero*, 27 Jul 2012, http://www.dinero.com/actualidad/economia/articulo/presupuesto-2013-sera-1855-billones/156065 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

higher qualifications among the employees in the public sector at local and department levels.

Progress in guaranteeing certainty of the law constitutes a further point. A recent survey conducted by the Ministry of Justice showed that seven out of ten Colombians thought the country's judicial system worked very slowly; and four out of ten said legal officials were "corrupt".[38] There is a need to strengthen the legal institutions to speed up legal processes – and this requires more and better trained officials.

Finally, any endeavour to increase the efficiency of the state must achieve progress where transparency and accountability are concerned. Despite measures such as the creation of the Secretariat for Transparency, which reports to the President, Colombia is still one of the most corrupt states in the world.[39] The understanding that public resources should be regarded as such and not as items available for private enrichment must be brought home to both officials as well as people at the base, the citizens, in an intensive learning process.

Despite measures such as the creation of the Secretariat for Transparency, which reports to the President, Colombia is still one of the most corrupt states in the world.

2. Strengthening Representative Democracy

In 2013, a number of social demands led to public protests, which exposed the inability of the political parties – and other representative bodies of democracy – to channel the issues concerning citizens and to address them effectively. For this reason, the political parties should make efforts to strengthen democracy within their organisations. In this context, it is worthwhile to contemplate structures of a more horizontal character, which would allow citizens

38 | Rodrigo Uprimny, Miguel Emilio La Rota, Sebastián Lalinde and Diego Eduardo López, "Encuesta nacional de necesidades jurídicas y acceso a la justicia. Marco conceptual y metodológico", 2013, http://dejusticia.org/admin/file.php?table=documentos_publicacion&field=archivo&id=323 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

39 | "Índice de Percepción de Corrupción 2013: A pesar de avances normativos, Colombia mantiene altos niveles de percepción de corrupción", Transparencia por Colombia, 2013, http://transparenciacolombia.org.co/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=441&Itemid=490 (accessed 14 Feb 2014).

greater participation both within the party structure and in the selection of candidates and representative bodies. Citizens and members should look upon the parties as bodies beyond clientelist interests, as a democratic mouthpiece for voicing their concerns and interests – which is their raison d'être, after all.

3. Overcoming Inequality

Although there is no lack of other political topics in the country, overcoming inequality – or at least creating a set of instruments to gradually decrease it – is one of its most important tasks. One crucial aspect in this context is education as the basis for social mobility and for access to greater and better employment opportunities for all, but also as an important component of the country's socio-economic development. It is not only wide availability that is important here but quality as well. Not only will it be necessary to build more education centers – particularly in areas where they have been absent in the past – but access to them must be secured as well. Where availability is concerned, it is important to expand the offering of vocational and professional education in the regions, as the majority of institutions for technical, technological and professional education are currently concentrated in the large cities. The qualification of teachers is also of great importance, as are the improvement of their working conditions and terms of employment as well as the application of quality standards to allow strengths and improvement potentials to be identified and measured.

It is important to expand the offering of vocational and professional education in the regions, as the majority of institutions for professional education are currently concentrated in the large cities.

Developing the labour market is another task the decision-makers need to fulfil. This indicator not only demands an increase in the general income level but also an increase in labour quality. The quality issue also arises in connection with the healthcare and pension systems – neither of which is secured as yet in Colombia. There is also a need to reduce the gap between higher and lower earners – the latter forming the majority, particularly among those working in the informal sector. There is further a great need to improve working conditions in areas such as agriculture,

manufacturing, construction, retail as well as services for private households.

There is further a need for improvement regarding the facilities for negotiation and cooperation between employers and employees with the involvement of the trade unions. One example of the deficits in this area is the determination of the annual increase in the minimum wage, which has previously always been fixed by the government because the two sides of industry could not come to an agreement. Colombia also remains one of the most dangerous countries for trade unionists, although there has been some progress in this area.[40]

Finally, the political agenda must prioritise the expansion of infrastructure and communication facilities, both for the country's competitiveness and for regional integration. Expanding and improving infrastructure will also entail a mechanism of state presence. One key role in this is played by the channels of communication between the center and the periphery as well as between the east and the west of the country. The Santos government is making concerted efforts in this area, but it is too early to take stock as there are no demonstrable results to date.

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK: "WITHOUT THE STATE, THERE WILL BE NEITHER PEACE NOR DEMOCRACY."[41]

Colombia is a country with a great deal of potential and many resources that can help it realise its goals, which may appear ambitious, but which are essential to the country's development.

Having taken stock and examined the current panorama of Colombia's social and political development, one clearly sees that there is still a long way to go. However, Colombia is a country with a great deal of potential and many resources that can help it realise its goals, which may appear ambitious, but which are essential to the country's development. Colombia is experiencing a phase in its history when opportunities must not remain untapped: enduring peace as well as the building of a nation based on greater participation are on the agenda. This could be the right moment to contemplate not only a post-conflict

40 | In 1996, the murders of 282 trade unionists were registered; in 2010, the figure was 51, in 2011 30 and in 2012 20.

41 | Marco Palacios, "Violencia y paz: sin Estado no habrá paz ni democracia", *Revista Credencial Historia*, No. 119, 1999.

scenario but also the building of a country which is facing problems that fuelled and exacerbated the armed confrontation in the past.

The measures taken by the various governments were important and necessary but insufficient, as they ultimately did not address the structural aspects of the conflict. There is a need for a more fundamental change, which will exact a high economic and political price – and it will not be a speedy process but one extending over the medium and long term. Guerrillas, paramilitaries and drug dealers may have changed their names and adapted to the prevailing conditions, but they still represent a threat to the state and create rival "para-states". Efforts for sustainable peace must therefore include political and economic measures that will provide an effective answer to the tasks facing the country. Ultimately, the peace process will not be sustainable unless it involves the genuine inclusion of all regions and areas of society in a new system in the post-conflict era.

This will not only necessitate a government program addressing these issues in its tenor and through concrete measures. It will also require politicians to change their attitudes, because recent unrest and protests have shown that Colombians are tired of the lack of concrete solutions for the society's enduring problems. The country appears to be immune to the ideas of "21st Century Socialism" in Latin America, but in actual fact it is not. Colombia is not invulnerable to the emergence of right-wing or left-wing populism in the medium or long term, which could take advantage of the feeling of political powerlessness that is prevalent in parts of this society. There is an urgent need in Colombia for flatter hierarchies in politics, stronger interconnections and decentralisation combined with a strengthening of the state and genuine integration of the regions into the country's governmental system.

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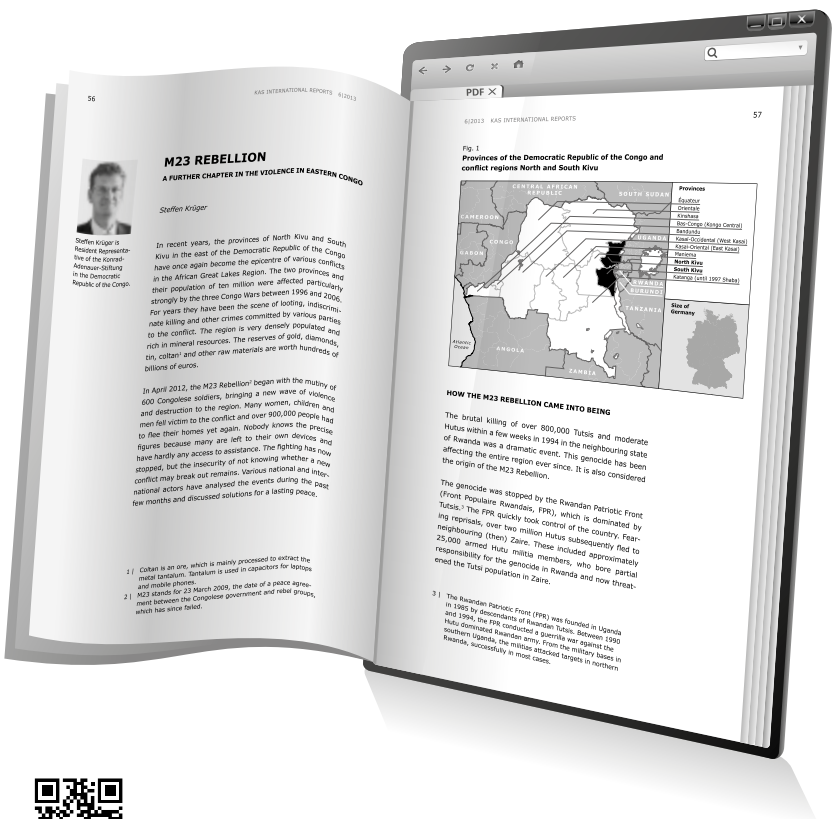

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SMALL STATES AND REGIONAL COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA

WHAT IS THE LEGACY OF BENIN'S PRESIDENCY OF THE AFRICAN UNION?[1]

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At the 18th summit of the African Union in January 2012, Benin's head of state and government Boni Yayi took over the presidency of the African regional organisation. Yayi's AU presidency ended a heated disagreement, which had provided telling insight into the situation within the AU ahead of the election. Benin's goals for this presidency were ambitious. In his inaugural address, Yayi promised to concentrate above all on deepening peace and security on the continent – a formidable challenge in view of the decades of civil war in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as disintegration processes taking place in half a dozen other African states. However, Benin did not limit itself to these goals, but also declared a deepening of economic integration, the political unification of the continent, and progress in the area of good governance objectives of the presidency, which was just one year in duration. Measured against Benin's administrative capabilities, the President of the small West African nation promised a great deal with these pronouncements.

One thing that boded well for Benin's ambitions was that the African Union is in a much better state than its reputation suggests. Since its foundation in 2002, the Union has proved to be far more capable of taking action than its predecessor organisation, the Organisation for African Unity

1 | This article arose from a symposium in Cotonou from 17 to 21 July 2013 organised by the Regional Programme Political Dialogue West Africa of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. The authors would like to thank Resident Representative Elke Erlecke and her trainee Franziska Porst for their invitation to the symposium.

(OAU). In fact, all international organisations demonstrate the same problem. Announcements are frequently followed by halting, patchy implementation. That is precisely why it is worth taking a closer look at the ambivalent legacy of Benin's AU presidency.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF BENIN'S AU PRESIDENCY

Benin's AU presidency stood under the ubiquitous motto "African solutions for African problems". This reflects the realisation that the "African sickness" (*le mal africain*)[2] – that vicious circle of dependency and underdevelopment – may have historic roots, but is now no longer predominantly exogenous, i.e. induced by the industrialised states of the north, but has to be understood as arising partly as the result of endogenous developments, above all problems of political and democratic dysfunction. African regional organisations destined to fulfil a number of generally accepted functions are to provide an answer. Pan-continental organisations such as the African Union and subregional integration mechanisms such as the Economic Community of West African States ECOWAS are intended to facilitate democratic oversight through a type of vertical division of powers, to help overcome obstacles to development in its member countries through exchange and sharing, and to make available resources for conflict resolution.

The foreign policy objectives of Boni Yayi's chairmanship at the strategic level were therefore first and foremost to encourage regional cooperation and a policy of good neighbourliness. The most important instrument was his international role as host and temporary spokesperson for Africa, which the function of AU Chairperson entails. Boni Yayi's foreign policy during Benin's AU presidency was intended to enhance the country's international profile, to find new partners and explore new regions for Benin political activities as well as producing greater visibility of the West African state in regional and international relations.

The general goals for the AU chairmanship defined by Benin were derived from the integration goals defined by the African Union itself: greater socioeconomic integration,

2 | Garga Haman Adji, *Le Mal Africain: Diagnostic et thérapie*, Harmattan, Cameroun, 2009.

strengthening of post-conflict reconstruction efforts, rationalisation of the administration of the African Union, and greater responsibility of the member states for pan-continental matters. In addition, other small African states had hoped that their wishes would find greater consideration within the AU under Benin's presidency. Within these general goals, Benin concentrated its activities on specific objectives during its AU chairmanship. The first prominent action was the promotion of an African presence at the G20 and G8. Here, Benin succeeded in the Chairperson of the African Union receiving regular invites to attend as an observer. Secondly, Benin was keen to secure a larger role for the regional organisations in post-conflict reconstruction activities. Thirdly, Benin sought a constructive relationship with the donor nations, for instance in the case of Mali. Fourthly and finally, Benin advocated automatic sanctions against member states in the event of violations of democratic principles, up to and including expulsion from the African Union; in this Benin followed the example of the preceding presidencies. The efforts in the first of these areas of activity resulted at least in a symbolic upgrading of Africa at two of the world's most important economic summits and in an improvement in the atmosphere in the relationship with the industrialised states. To what extent the new observer status at the G20 and G8 will produce tangible improvements for the AU and for African states remains to be seen. The last three objectives are of immediate relevance to the systemic stability of the African continent.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIVIDENDS

Enforcement of Anti-Coup Principles

During the first decades after decolonisation, Africa in no way experienced the political and economic surge forward that the states that had gained their independence had hoped for. Instead, independence was followed by repeated phases of authoritarian government. Most heads of state did not lose their office through elections but through coups d'état. These were not always successful, but they were always numerous. Between 1956 and 2001, some

forty per cent of the coup attempts were successful,[3] and between 1960 and 1979 alone, no fewer than 59 heads of government were deposed or assassinated whilst in office.[4] Since the end of the Cold War, however, the number of successful coups has decreased. This is partly due to the fact that coup attempts frequently take a different form these days. While it used to be predominantly well organised overthrows conducted by leading military figures during the Cold War era, coups now tend to be conducted by lower ranks. However, particularly lower-ranking officers and NCOs mostly lack the capability to restore the command hierarchy following a coup, which causes further instability. Furthermore, unlike in former times, coups are predominantly a West African phenomenon, which hardly affects the African Union any more as a whole.[5]

When some African states embarked on the route towards democratisation in the 1990, while others did not, the African Union sought and found a solution to dealing with the diverse political circumstances, which was both pragmatic and face-saving. It did not demand that all states had to immediately engage in a process of democratisation but instead laid down the rule that all transfers of power had to be conducted in a democratic manner. It thereby accepted the status quo but ensured that democracy would gradually take root on the continent in the best case scenario. This does mean, however, that it is important to insist on adherence to this principle when there is a dictator heading the AU; even more than that: the dictator himself must do so. These principles were enforced in a number of cases over recent years in spite of difficult circumstances.

Under Benin's leadership, the African Union remained true to its principles. The coup in Guinea-Bissau in April 2012 resulted in the country's membership in the African Union being suspended, as was Mali's after the coup in 2012 there. When the Central African Republic was also

3 | Patrick J. McGowan, "African Military Coups d'etat, 1956-2001: Frequency, Trends and Distribution", *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 41, No. 3, 2003, 339-370; idem, "Coups and Conflict in West Africa, 1995-2004", *Armed Forces and Society* 32, No. 2, 2006, 234-253.

4 | Goran Hyden, *African Politics in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, 19.

5 | Jimmy Kandeh, *Coups from Below. Armed Subalterns and State Power in West Africa*, Houndsmills, 2004.

suspended, it was on account of serious political conflicts. The fact that such suspensions no longer cause any controversy is a good indication of a norm having been established – and that was a foundation that could be built on in 2013. On 5 July 2013, two days after the coup in Egypt, that country was suspended as well.

British Foreign Secretary William Hague visiting Ghanaian AFISMA troops in 2013: The AU mission in Mali is highly dependant on foreign aid. | Source: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), flickr ⓒⓘⓒ.

The Mali Crisis: a Test for the African Union

The fact that adhering to the principle of non-acceptance of coups occasionally has costly consequences became particularly clear during the crisis in Mali. Since the 1990s, Mali had been considered a state where democratic standards had become well-established despite widespread poverty. However, Mali had been under threat from a conflict between the government in Bamako and the Tuareg in the northeast of the country, which flared up in January 2012 when the Tuareg rebels took up arms against the government once again. The military was instructed to quash the rebellion, but felt that it had to a large extent been denied support in the fighting by the country's political elite. A few weeks before the presidential elections, the situation finally culminated in a coup in March 2012, during which President Amadou Toumani Touré was deposed by a small group of low-ranking officers led by Captain Amadou Sanogo.

The coup in Mali also demonstrated that coup attempts by lower-ranking officers fundamentally weaken the affected military. Not every colonel will easily accept the idea that he is supposed to execute the orders of a captain, as was the case in Mali.[6]

The coup was immediately followed by the suspension of the African Union membership as well as international sanctions. Although the African Union and the international community were thereby following a binding rule, this conduct produced a military vacuum in north-eastern Mali. Because of the international isolation, the army suddenly found itself without international assistance. In addition, it was no longer an efficient force acting in unity because of the takeover in Bamako. The vacuum was then filled not only by the Tuareg rebels but also, above all, by fundamentalist militias of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The coup and the subsequent sanctions thereby accelerated the disintegration process of the Malian state. It was against this backdrop that ECOWAS planned military intervention. However, in spite of the increasingly threatening situation in Mali, the planning of this West African intervention proceeded ever more sluggishly which meant that it took an intervention by the French to save the country from disintegration or victory on the part of AQIM.

The crisis in Mali therefore posed several simultaneous problems to Benin's AU presidency. Firstly, it demonstrated that the intervention capability particularly in West Africa was still rather poor. Secondly, Boni Yayi found himself in the thankless position of having to defend France's intervention, which was ultimately the only alternative, but which many African elites viewed and still view as a neo-colonial action. And there ultimately remained the task of securing Mali militarily even after the French withdrawal. Even though there was some pan-African involvement, this task fell to ECOWAS, which sought to fulfil it with the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). It became clear once again in this context that the Community of West African States itself is only capable of action when regional power Nigeria becomes involved, as it is the only country with significant military

The task of securing Mali militarily even after the French withdrawal fell to ECOWAS, which sought to fulfil it with the African-led International Support Mission to Mali.

6 | Ibid., 2.

capabilities without which no ECOWAS intervention would be sustainable. Notwithstanding these difficult circumstances, Boni Yayi succeeded in creating an astonishing degree of political unity on the continent.

Placing Benin onto the International Political Map and the Role Played by Boni Yayi

Especially in view of the rotating presidency of the AU, which, by its very nature, is not conducive to continuity of action, the gap between rhetoric and reality becomes particularly obvious.

Benin managed to upgrade the chairmanship of the African Union diplomatically and thereby endow it with a symbolic power that went beyond the purely ceremonial. However, especially in view of the rotating presidency of the AU, which, by its very nature, is not conducive to continuity of action, the gap between rhetoric and reality becomes particularly obvious. The office holders are tempted to make lofty declarations of intent, which are unlikely to be followed by political action due to the brevity of the term in office. What remains is the ephemeral memory of an ambitious presidency, which has to promise a great deal, but can in fact achieve little. Regardless of this, Boni Yayi's commitment has no doubt earned enhanced prestige for his country as well as for himself.

The foreign policy options of a small state are naturally limited. Particularly in a region such as West Africa with several major powers competing with each other and neighbouring conflicts that are conducted more or less openly, it is impossible for a stable regional hierarchy to develop, which would assign small states a position ensuring security and predictability for their foreign policy planning. As a subregional integration mechanism, ECOWAS has shown an astonishing institutional resilience. Nonetheless, the integration endeavours within ECOWAS regularly fall short of the expectations of its member states and of its own declarations of intent. In actual fact, particularly the small states such as Benin and Togo would benefit from better integration in West Africa.

It becomes apparent in this context that it is the other small states that one should compare Benin to within the African Union, disregarding its temporarily increased international presence. Benin wanted to rise into the

group of up-and-coming nations at least symbolically.[7] The President's model for this is the foreign policy strategy of Rwanda, a country that has completed a speedy development from country in crisis to tiger state in the eyes of the international community since the 1990s. In Benin's case, there have been clear indications of attempts being made under Boni Yayi to construct such a success narrative. Benin has indeed become a regional economic and infrastructure hub thanks to its efficient port and its strategic location, acting in a distributor function to serve the hinterland (particularly Niger and Mali) and as a provider of reserve capacities for Nigerian ports, which are suffering from the effects of the difficult security situation.

Travelling diplomacy and personalisation of foreign policy: Benin's President Boni Yayi (r.), with his South African colleague Jacob Zuma in 2012. | Source: Siyabulela Duda, Government Communications (GCIS), Republic of South Africa CC BY ND.

Regional foreign policy can benefit small states both politically and economically. However, as the long-term nature of the impact of diplomatic initiatives hinders political

7 | The growth rate for the last three years was 2.6 per cent (2010), 3.5 per cent (2011) and 3.8 per cent (2012). Cf. "Benin", *The World Factbook*, CIA, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bn.html (accessed 18 Feb 2014). In direct comparison to Rwanda, which enjoyed growth rates of over seven per cent during this period, this initially appears too low to construct a solid "tiger state narrative". One has to remember, however, that Benin achieved this stable growth while the international financial crisis was still taking place and in an economically unstable region.

personalities being linked with the concrete achievements of such initiatives, i.e. the attribution of political achievements is very difficult, small states in particular rarely pursue regional foreign policy projects. In this respect, Benin's AU presidency made efforts to stand out from the regional norm.

Boni Yayi's ambitions in the area of foreign policy did result in increasing the visibility of Benin on the international stage. It also led to a stronger personalisation of foreign policy in the position of the Chairperson.

While Boni Yayi's efforts to fill the AU chairmanship with concrete projects indicate that he took his official duties seriously, they also reflect his personal ambition to qualify for higher posts at continental and global level. The ambitions in the area of foreign policy did result in increasing the visibility of both Benin and of its President on the international stage, but it also led to a stronger personalisation of foreign policy in the position of the Chairperson. However, such personalisation is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is a response to the lack of resources and the cumbersome nature of the administration; on the other hand, it makes the definition of national interests for the long term more difficult by encouraging the mixing of personal and national interests. It was not least for this reason that Boni Yayi's AU presidency with its continental and global ambitions was controversial at home, as it was not always clear to the population and the opposition where the borderline between the two was. There were therefore doubts about the purpose of Boni Yayi's travelling diplomacy involving trips to the Gulf and to the Far East, as those were not areas from which any new major direct investments or development aid were to be expected.[8]

It was therefore not least a president's personal conceit that foisted a foreign policy marathon on a small state, which directed valuable political attention away from domestic problems – particularly because it was in his personal interest to divert people from domestic failures. In part, Yayi pursued personal goals with the AU presidency that did not necessarily coincide with the country's interests. Having said that, examples of other small states show that

8 | There are some direct investments coming from China and on a smaller scale also from Japan. Japan is also one of the most important donor nations for Benin. But whether Benin's costly travelling diplomacy was really capable of providing new impulses here is doubtful.

foreign policy needs a certain degree of personalisation and can have implications for practical politics. The statesmanlike appearance of a cosmopolitan president can serve to build the brand of a state and enhance the reputation of the country in the international arena.[9] Of course it is questionable whether a small state such as Benin should in fact play a prominent regional role if no vital interests are affected. These would be affected in the case of regional conflicts, for instance, which is why Boni Yayi's role during the conflict in Mali was acknowledged at home. However, for foreign policy to serve national interests and not exclusively those of the political elite a democratic basis and a dialogue with civil society is required. In a country that is still poorly developed such as Benin, the level of organisation in civil society is low in areas that are as far removed from the daily lives of large swathes of the population as foreign policy. Strong personalisation and concentration of power in this policy area are further hampering such civil society development.

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Outstanding Institutionalisation in Security Policy

The African Union's security policy problems in the face of the military conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa are rooted in the continuing lack of proper institutions within the African security architecture. The African Union has nonetheless been able to record some remarkable achievements in creating peace and security. This applies particularly to the current mission of the African Union in Somalia, where years of efforts by the peace mission have resulted in stabilising the security situation.[10]

However, there remain some unresolved issues in this area of the African Union activities as well. Since its foundation, the AU has set itself very ambitious goals and founded the

9 | Uruguay could be a case in point, as its President Mujica is helping to enhance its reputation as an economic and tourism location. This effect is even more obvious in the case of Singapore, where the state founder Lee Kuan Yew enhances his country's reputation through his role of elder statesman, positively influencing Singapore's role in ASEAN and not least producing implications for economic policy.

10 | Dustin Dehez, "Neue Perspektiven für Somalia?", *Europäische Sicherheit und Technik* 62, No. 4, 2013, 102-104.

African security architecture on four pillars: there was to be a panel of experts (Panel of the Wise) to advise the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, a continental early warning system was intended to make crises and potential conflicts predictable and therefore manageable, a joint fund for deployments was to be created, and finally an African Intervention Force was to be set up.[11]

However, there has been hardly any progress to speak of, particularly with respect to the creation of regional intervention capacities for the so-called African Standby Force (ASF), which were supposed to be set up in the different regions of the continent by the respective regional organisations, each contributing a brigade-size force.[12] Shortly after its foundation, the African Union decided that this intervention force should be ready for deployment by 2010, capable of preventing genocide and ending civil wars.[13] The reality, however, is disillusioning. The current peace missions were mostly put together on an ad hoc basis; the ASF structures are rarely involved in the action, and if they are, as in the case of Sudan, then only thanks to cooperation with the United Nations. The fact that specifically the situation in Mali could not be stabilised until the French intervened also gave Yayi cause to critically assess the situation: "How can we understand that when danger threatened its very basis, Africa, which has the means to organise its own defence, continued to wait?"[14]

Shortly after its foundation, the African Union decided that the African Standby Force should be ready for deployment by 2010, capable of preventing genocide and ending civil wars.

As justified as this criticism might be, the African Union has not had the funds that would be required to address all the conflicts in Africa. However, the model of externally funded African peace missions is not sustainable in the medium term because it does not provide adequate planning

11 | Nelson Alusala, "African Standby Force. East Africa Moves On", *African Security Review* 13, No. 2, Vol. 13, 2004, 113-121.
12 | Jakkie Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An update on progress", *ISS Paper* 160, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Mar 2008.
13 | Theo Neethling, "Realizing the African Standby Force as a Pan-African Ideal: Progress, Prospects and Challenges", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8, No. 1, 2005, 1-25.
14 | Quoted from: Jason Patinkin, "Can the AU Deliver Pax Africana?", in: *ThinkAfricaProgress*, 6 Feb 2013, http://thinkafricapress.com/politics/pax-africana-au-security-development-mali-drc-car-somalia-darfur-sudan (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

reliability, which is absolutely necessary for the pacification of areas involved in lengthy civil wars in particular. The AFISMA mission in Mali is the first mission that is partly financed directly from funds of the African Union – but even in this instance the African Union does not contribute more than ten per cent of the total costs of the mission, and the composition of the troops was once again determined on an ad hoc basis. Since then, the African Union has been able to agree on a new target date for the full deployment capability of the African Standby Force. 2015 is the new deadline, but this schedule is still highly ambitious – it could be considered an achievement if just two or three of the regional brigades could be set up by then.[15] The current mission in Somalia is drawing attention to two other problems, which even a fully operational ASF would need to address. Numbering almost 18,000, the AMISOM force has reached a size that the ASF could never make available itself, let alone sustain. Secondly, even if they were to become fully operational, there would still be the question whether the regional intervention brigades should also be deployed in their own regions. This would create problems because most of the states within the regions are involved in disputes with each other.

A similar lack of progress can be attested to the continental early warning system for potential conflict (Continental Early Warning System, CEWARN), which was initiated many years ago with great fanfare and hope.[16] This system too should be firmly established in the respective regions. It represents a large step forward at least in terms of concept: CEWARN is intended to not only analyse political developments, but also include other sources, from climate data to insights gained by non-government organisations. However, CEWARN never truly came to life. And Benin's presidency did not do much to revive this dormant piece of African security architecture.

15 | Judith Vorrath, "Schieflagen in der Afrikanischen Friedens- und Sicherheitsarchitektur", *SWP-Aktuell* 51, Aug 2012, http://swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/2012A51_vrr.pdf (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

16 | Makumi Mwagiru, "The Legal Framework for CEWARN", in: Cirû Mwaûra and Susanne Schmeidl (eds.), *Early Warning and Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa*, Red Sea Press, 2002, 69-97.

Consequences of the Election Campaign for the Position of AU Commission Chairperson

Boni Yayi's consensual election as Chairperson of the AU Assembly in January 2012 was overshadowed by a duel for the position of Chairperson of the AU Commission, which was in stark contrast to the normal culture of consensus of that institution. This is all the more astonishing as Commission-related elections are usually characterised by apathy and a lack of candidates.[17] South Africa nominated its Interior Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma against the incumbent Jean Ping from Gabon, who sought a further four-year term. South Africa justified its opposition to a second term for Ping mainly with his failure to enforce the influence and the primacy of the African Union against the Western powers during the crises in Libya and Ivory Coast.[18]

Dlamini-Zuma's nomination and the subsequent failure of either candidate to gain the required two-thirds majority resulted in the election being postponed to the AU summit in July, which led to a continuous six-month election campaign within the institution. Boni Yayi's urgent warning of a split and of the credibility loss that this would entail for the AU was not able to put a stop to it. With its nomination of Dlamini-Zuma, South Africa made few friends outside the regional South African Development Community (SADC) grouping, to which the country belongs, nor did it make many among the members of ECOWAS, which supported Jean Ping. Her candidature was generally received with mixed feelings. The objections were directed less against the person of Dlamini-Zuma than against the fact that a large African country violated the unwritten rule to allow this leadership position to go to one of the smaller African states. Another objection involved Kenia's support for a candidate of its own for the post of Deputy Chairperson. As there is another unwritten rule according to which the posts of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson should be shared

With its nomination of Dlamini-Zuma, South Africa made few friends outside the regional SADC grouping, nor did it make many among the members of ECOWAS, which supported Jean Ping.

17 | Mehari Taddele Maru, "Rethinking and reforming the African Union Commission elections", *African Security Review* 21, No. 4, Dec 2012, 64-78, here: 64.

18 | Farhiya Ali Ahmed, "AU Commission: Dlamini and Ping fight to a standstill", *African Business* 384, Mar 2012, 49.

between the francophone and anglophone camps, there was also concern in the English-speaking camp.[19] Another thing that aroused misgivings was the euphoric reaction of the South African delegation to Ping's first defeat and the subsequent smear campaign by South Africa, which sought to present Ping as a selfish lackey of France.[20]

The election campaign had consequences for the relationship between the two African giants Nigeria and South Africa. Nigeria had supported and initiated many decisions taken by Ping.

The six-month election campaign emphasised the gulf between the anglophone and francophone countries in Africa, probably a calculated decision on South Africa's part.[21] But besides the language differences, the election campaign also had consequences for the relationship between the two African giants Nigeria and South Africa. Nigeria had supported and initiated many decisions taken by Ping. In Ivory Coast, Nigeria supported the elected challenger Ouattara, and in Libya, it ensured the speedy recognition of the National Transition Council, both against South Africa's will.[22] With the election of its candidate, South Africa has asserted itself against the other large states in the region and won a symbolic victory on points. However, the high political cost of South Africa's chequebook diplomacy and the annoyance of the other dominant regional leading powers have cast a shadow over this achievement.

When Dlamini-Zuma was finally elected in July 2012 in the fourth round, she quickly asserted that she was standing as an individual and not as a South African delegate. Also, with the election of the Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn as Chairperson of the Assembly this year, the post went to a country that had opposed Dlamini-Zuma's candidature while its capital Addis Abeba furthermore serves as the base for the African Union. This can

19 | Svenja Ehinger, "Südafrikanerin führt künftig Afrikanische Union an", Country Report, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Jul 2012, 1, http://kas.de/wf/doc/kas_31739-1522-1-30.pdf (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

20 | Thomas Scheen, "Das ist ja der afrikanische Gipfel", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 Jul 2012, http://faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/-11819306.html (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

21 | Cameron Duodu, "Is the AU fit for purpose?", *New African*, Aug-Sep 2012, 47.

22 | "The crucial election for the chair of the African Union", *The Pretoria News*, 30 Jan 2012.

probably be seen as a first attempt to limit the scope of the Commission Chairperson's action but also as an attempt by South Africa and Dlamini-Zuma to include former opponents and prevent a further split of the AU.

The battle for the post of Commission Chairperson illustrates the institutional dynamics of the African Union. On the one hand, major regional powers are the strong actors within an organisation that is formally based on equality between its member states. On the other hand, the administration is the real center of power in the AU – and not the AU presidency, which has a more ceremonial function. Accordingly, Boni Yayi could only look on while this battle was being fought out, not least because being a small state Benin only has limited symbolic and actual power within the circle of AU members.

African Union's Influence Increasing, ECOWAS' Influence Decreasing

The capacities of small states in the area of foreign policy are very limited. Their foreign ministries are generally poorly equipped both in terms of human resources and funding, not least because they do not contribute directly to the solving of domestic problems and are therefore not considered a spending priority. In a presidential system, they are also in competition with the presidential office. The problem of coherence is exacerbated by the fact that states are (and probably have to be) active at several "diplomatic levels" today.[23] In the case of Benin, this involves the regional integration associations at subregional level (mainly ECOWAS) and at continental level (mainly the AU), which require constant attention and which overlap in many subject areas, but in most cases do not complement one another. The increased activism and gains in influence at continental level therefore initially worked to the detriment of Benin's role in its own region. In fact, West Africa's integration mechanisms are in crisis and are in dire need of attention from its member states.[24] Small

23 | Slaughter calls this "networked power". Anne-Marie Slaughter, "America's Edge: Power in the Networked Century", *Foreign Affairs*, No. 1, Vol. 88, 2009, 94-113.

24 | Besides the frequently reported democratic setbacks, which still suggest a fragile democratic consensus in West Africa even a quarter of a century after the end of the Cold War and in ▸

states are therefore overtaxed by the need to engage in regional multi-level diplomacy by the above-mentioned lack in capacity and the high expectations placed in them. While they could attempt to utilise regional organisations for their own concerns, bureaucratic inertia within the AU apparatus and path dependences influencing regional policy mean that regional organisations such as the AU cannot easily change their course. Regional initiatives in the area of development also require large funds, most of which the great powers among the AU members would have to provide. This is why policies in the AU are also devised to a very large extent by the leading regional powers, which can bolster their ambitions by hosting special summits

or establishing special funds, for instance.[25] When there is no expectation of a substantial contribution from the Chairperson's own country such as Benin, setting the priorities therefore remains in the hands of the leading regional powers – unless these can be persuaded in bilateral negotiations to assist in solving specific problems in the small states. An AU chairmanship can produce visibility and sympathy in this context, but it can also be to the detriment of this bilateral level. Having said that, Benin's presidency still has a place in a "policy of attracting the major powers" devised for the long term.

Concentration on the continental level in foreign policy does not necessarily bring greater benefits for small states. On the one hand, continental integration theoretically promises more significant economies of scale in the economy and a larger political arena. On the other hand, subsidiarity considerations produce greater scope for action at a subregional level. In the case of West Africa, there are already regional mechanisms in place for developing the infrastructure, deepening economic integration and financial policy as well as for (robust) conflict resolution. This all points to Benin's interests clearly lying at the subregional level.

In West Africa, there are already regional mechanisms in place for developing the infrastructure, deepening economic integration and financial policy as well as for (robust) conflict resolution.

spite of development progress, ECOWAS still falls short of its own goals and hopes in terms of economic integration and infrastructure as well.

25 | On such regional hierarchies cf. David Lake, "Regional Hierarchy: authority and local international order", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 35, Feb 2009, Supplement 1, 35-58.

What motivates Benin to change to the continental level in its foreign policy in this scenario is mainly based on considerations about "strategic sidestepping". Such a strategy is pursued by politicians in the hope that a change in diplomatic level will produce an improvement in their own national position.[26] They accept the uncertainty of gaining benefits from their foreign policy activities at the alternative level if the originally preferred level falls short of its efficiency potential. Following this logic, Benin's strengthened presence at the AU level is a signal indicating that it does not see its interests sufficiently realised at the ECOWAS level. Accordingly, the problem for Benin lies at the subregional level, in the partial paralysis of ECOWAS, which is wearing itself out through the competition between the major subregional powers, which means that small states can no longer get a hearing. Due to the fragility of most ECOWAS member states, West Africa has become identified as a "crisis region" to such an extent both in African and global public opinion that even relatively stable states such as Benin are having an image problem – with negative consequences for their economies. On a stage such as that provided by the AU presidency, Benin is able to counter this ruinous development – enveloped by the institutional and symbolic mantle of an integration project that still conveys a positive message.

Ministerial Bureaucracy: What Achievements Did the African Union Produce?

While Benin's AU chairmanship is generally celebrated as a great achievement, there are some voices particularly in Benin complaining that it costs the small country too many resources and that Yayi above all had benefited personally from the presidency. They maintain that the Benin Foreign Ministry in particular was simply too small for such an active role and had therefore neglected other matters, at regional level for instance. This overtaxing of Benin's capacities initially appears surprising, as the role of Chairperson of the Assembly was, after all, earmarked for smaller countries. However, the occasional overtaxing of the structures indicates that in fulfilling his AU presidency,

The occasional overtaxing of the structures indicates that in fulfilling his AU presidency, Boni Yayi took on tasks that had not been intended for him.

26 | Christian E. Rieck, "Balancing Brazil: Foreign Policy Strategies of Secondary Powers", unpublished manuscript.

Boni Yayi took on tasks that had not been intended for him – particularly as the position does not come with supporting staff, unlike the temporary Chairman of the European Council.

The role of Chairperson of the Assembly is devised as a ceremonial role, with some procedural functions during Assembly sessions. Beyond that, the role of the post derives from the personality of the incumbent.[27] Are we therefore dealing with an internationalist whim of Yayi's or even with a desire for personal advantage?

Ultimately, we are dealing above all with a very special situation, where Boni Yayi used the political importance that the chairmanship entails to gain a reputation as an international statesman.[28] This exceptional situation was due to the fact that the chairmanship of the Commission was deadlocked by an election campaign and a subsequent determination phase during the first half of his term in office. It was therefore left to Boni Yayi alone to undertake extensive diplomatic efforts to manage disagreements in the Assembly and to address problems at numerous trouble spots around the continent. At the same time, the lack of a strong and visible counterpart within the AU also allowed him larger political scope.

Particularly in questions of regional security, the role of the Chairperson ultimately remains undefined and dependent on circumstances and personalities. Boni Yayi picked up on this issue in his farewell speech, when he demanded a clearer role allocation between the chair of the AU Assembly, the chair of the AU Commission or the commissioner for peace and security.[29] According to Article 3, Paragraph 2 of the statutes of the AU Commission, the Commission

27 | Babatunde Fagbayibo, "The (Ir)relevance of the Office of the Chair of the African Union Commission: Analysing the Prospects for Change", *Journal of African Law* 56, No. 1, 2012, 15-28, here: 30.

28 | Simon Allison, "Business as usual at the AU (and it's a good thing too)", *Daily Maverick*, 28 Jan 2013, http://dailymaverick.co.za/article/2013-01-28-business-as-usual-at-the-au-and-its-a-good-thing-too (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

29 | "A Timbuktu Moment for the African Union", *The Africa Report*, 8 Mar 2013, http://theafricareport.com/News-Analysis/a-timbuktu-moment-for-the-african-union.html (accessed 18 Feb 2014).

shall represent the Union and defend its interests (under the guidance of and as mandated by the Assembly and the Executive Council).[30] It became clear even before Boni Yayi's presidency that the AU Chairperson is sometimes better placed to fulfil this role due the intergovernmental character of the post. However, this would require dedicated staff so that the AU Chairperson does not have to tie up the minimal resources of their own (usually smaller) country.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

What is the legacy of the AU presidency within Benin? Firstly, there are the costs of the foreign policy marathon in terms of finances and domestic policy. It was not clear to everybody what the President actually wanted on the global stage. Secondly, the perception of Benin on the continent and globally has improved in spite of this and has resulted in greater visibility of the country and an upgrading of its "foreign policy brand". Thirdly, the administration and politicians have gained valuable experiences in international dealings, with a positive impact on the professionalisation of the state apparatus. Fourthly, there remains the two-sided impact of the role played by Boni Yayi. The illustrious legacy of his AU presidency entails an enhanced degree of personalisation and concentration of power in the area of foreign policy, which resulted in a further loss of support at home. There is no doubt, however, that he has also personally gained in stature internationally.

Benin's presidency suffered from a sprawling agenda. During a term lasting just one year, it is hardly possible to achieve substantial progress in all areas, and Boni Yayi also succumbed to the temptation to define as many objectives as possible, mostly of a nebulous nature, during his term in office. At least, Benin succeeded in strengthening essential principles of the African Union and, in particular, in establishing the anti-coup principle more firmly. There is in fact a regional norm beginning to emerge in this respect. In order to effectively enhance the security provisions for Africa, the planning for an African Stand-By Force must be pursued purposefully, particularly

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30 | Fagbayibo, n. 27, 17.

with respect to a common funding basis and stable structures. High priority must be given specifically to securing solid commitments from donor countries and from nations providing troops in this connection.

However, the AU presidency has also shown the difficulties facing poorly developed small states such as Benin in exercising the role of continental spokesperson. The regional and global duties divert valuable political attention away from addressing domestic problems – regardless of whether this was a desired side effect as in the case of Benin. A lack of capacities in the area of foreign policy also means that when activities are transferred to the continental level, the subregional level (which was more important in the case of Benin) suffers neglect. It should be possible to at least ameliorate this administrative bottleneck through support with training and with reducing bureaucracy. And up-skilling at the Foreign Ministry could counter the concentration of power in the office of President. The same ultimate goal would be served by measures taken by donors to strengthen civil society actors as well as the dialogue between them and politicians (in this case for the purpose of monitoring and providing guidance for national foreign policy), which is still very poorly developed in Benin. No doubt there are more important development priorities (focusing on domestic policy) in Benin, but a foreign policy firmly rooted in civil society and the rule of law would strengthen the function of a stable democracy as a model for a region of the world where democratic consensus remains very fragile. Benin's AU presidency has shown that even small states can render valuable services to their region through their actions.

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