DEFENSIVE RESTRUCTURING OF THE MILITARY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

for Geoff Harris (ed.): ***Demilitarising sub-Saharan Africa***

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1 OFFENCE-DEFENCE THEORY

"Offence-defence theory" as we may call it, for lack of a better term, claims that international relations may be stabilised via a strengthening of the defensive at the expense of the offensive (Jervis 1978; Lynn-Jones 1995; Van Evera; Glaser & Kaufmann 1998). This is also the contention of the (mainly European) proponents of "non-offensive defence" (NOD) according to whom every country should, ideally, be able to defend itself against any other with the implication that none should be able to defeat any other through aggression. This would presumably make war less likely and arms races unlikely (Møller 1991; 1992; 1995; Wiseman 2002).

The theory presupposes that offence and defence are distinguishable and that the latter may be strengthened at the expense of the former, e.g. by capitalising on the "inherent supremacy of the defence" (Clausewitz 1984, 358). Distinctions may, in principle, by made at various levels of analyses, but not all make sense. To distinguish between offensive and defensive ***weapons*** is thus meaningless, as weapons are inherently "dual-use" and because genuine synergies matter. For instance, the possession of a shield (or its modern counterpart) allows for wielding the sword (or other offensive instruments) more efficiently.

To distinguish between total force postures, however, makes a lot of sense, requiring an assessment of whether the composition and deployment of the armed forces ***as a whole*** makes them most suitable for offensive or for defensive operations. Indeed, there was neither any doubt in the minds of western military analysts that the Soviet armed forces were mainly suitable for offensive operations, nor about what kind of changes in their composition and deployment would be required to make them significantly less offensive. This was actually accomplished with the CFE Treaty, which limited the holdings of tanks, armoured personnel carriers, artillery, combat aircraft and armed helicopters (Falkenrath 1994).

For all the merits of NOD theory as a possible contribution to solving the East-West conflict, when transposed to the Third World it may appear far too eurocentric and status quo oriented. It could thus be criticized for exhibiting several "blind spots", including the following.

- First of all, "traditional" NOD theory was conceived as a means to stabilise relations among states and has next to nothing to say about intra-state conflict. This raises questions about its relevance

for the future, as most armed conflicts, not least in Africa, today take place within rather than between states (Wallensteen & Sollenberg 2001). A possible and partial solution to this deficiency might be to treat part-states such as secessionist provinces or even stateless ethnic groups as "quasi-states", as was suggested by "reformed Realists" such as Barry Posen (1993; Walters and Snyder 1999, Rosen 2000). Such quasi-states tend to face a "security dilemma of ethnic conflict", closely resembling the traditional state-versus-state security dilemma (Collins 1997), as one group's security all too easily produces insecurity for the others.

- Secondly, Africa and the rest of the Third World has seen far too many instances of severe (sometimes even genocidal) human rights violations perpetrated by the regimes in power. In such instances, it may ***not*** be a good thing that states can defend themselves, as this would shield them against humanitarian interventions. This, in turn, would allow the regime in power to proceed with impunity, protected by the international norm of non-interference in domestic affairs. As a corrective to this norm, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty in 2001 proposed a "responsibility to protect" (ICISS 2001: 11-18) which seems eminently sensible, provided that it is not abused by simply pinning the label "humanitarian" on military attacks launched for other reasons. That humanitarian intervention may indeed be called for in extreme cases has even been acknowledged by the African Union. While upholding in its Constitutive Act the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs, it also established the right of the Union to intervene in cases of "war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (***Constitutive Act of the African Union 2001,*** art. 4h***).***

Finally, most of the concrete "models" for non-offensive defence were designed for a very specific setting, namely Europe, and to simply transpose this to a setting as radically different as Africa would be meaningless. Neither would African states need the same kind of weaponry as European states, nor would they be able to afford the kind of high technology that was a feature of many (but not all) European NOD models (Møller 1991).

The European theories and models for defensive restructuring and NOD may thus need some revision for them to be suitable for Africa, but some of the basic ideas appear valid. While international

war has, fortunately, been a rare occurrence in Africa ever since independence, it is surely important to keep it so. This means that states should be prevented from attacking each other, e.g. for the sake of geographical expansion—as in the case of the recent war between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Gwexe 2001). I shall therefore first look at traditional NOD theory as applied to Africa and subsequenly venture some ideas for a possible modification.

2 FENCES AND NEIGHBOURS IN AFRICA

If one were to present the basic idea of NOD in one sentence it might be "strong fences make good neighbours". Not because fences are good in and of themselves, but because they allow states to feel secure behind them. In due course, states may create more and more openings in their fences which may eventually even come down completely, once mutual trust is established.

This idea might even be put on a "pseudo-mathematical formula", describing the ratio between the offensive and defensive strength of two states, labelled A and B for short.

$$D^A > O^B \ \& \ D^B > O^A$$

The "formula" describes a stance where the defensive strength of A is superior to the offensive one of B, and vice versa. Even though it would be hard to operationalise, the mutual defensive superiority stance which it describes is at least theoretically conceivable. It would indeed be stabilising, as it is the formula for a stalemate where neither side would have anything to gain from starting a war, and where both could feel reasonably comfortable with their ability to parry any attack.

2.1 Low or Broken Fences

When applied to Africa, there are both good and bad news with regard to mutual defensive superiority.

The bad news is that "fences" (i.e. "D values" in the above formula) are quite low across the continent, for instance as measured in troop densities as shown in Table 1. The typical African soldier has to patrol much longer borders to guard against incursions and, in the case of a fully-fledged invasion, defend a much larger territory than his European or North American counterpart ever had to.

Table 1: Force Densities (CIA 2001; IISS 2001)	**Armed Forces (000)** Reg.	Res.	Param.	Total	**Territory** Km2	**Land border** Km.	**Km2/Troops** Regular	Total	**Km / Troops**
Angola	107.5	..	10.0	117.5	1,246,700	5,198	11.60	10.61	0.044
Benin	4.8	..	2.5	7.3	112,620	1,989	23.46	15.43	0.272
Botswana	9.0	..	1.0	10.0	600,370	4,013	66.71	60.04	0.401
Burkika Fasu	6.8	..	4.5	11.3	274,200	3,192	40.32	24.27	0.282
Burundi	40.0	..	5.5	45.5	27,830	974	0.70	0.61	0.021
Cameroon	13.1	..	9.0	22.1	475,440	4,591	36.29	21.51	0.208
Cape Verde	1.1	..	0.1	1.2	4,033	0	3.67	3.36	0.000
Central Af. R.	3.1	..	2.3	5.4	622,984	5,203	200.96	115.37	0.964
Chad	30.1	..	4.5	34.6	1,284,000	5,968	42.66	37.11	0.172
Congo (Rep. of)	10.0	..	5.0	15.0	342,000	5,504	34.20	22.80	0.367
Congo (DRC)	55.9	..	37.0	92.9	2,345,410	10,744	41.96	25.25	0.116
Côte d'Ivoire	8.4	12.0	7.0	27.4	322,460	3,110	38.39	11.77	0.114
Djibouti	8.4	..	4.2	12.6	22,000	508	2.62	1.75	0.040
Eq. Guinea	1.3	..	0.3	1.6	28,051	539	21.58	17.53	0.337
Eritrea	200.0	120.0	..	320.0	121,320	1,630	0.61	0.38	0.005
Ethiopia	352.5	..	..	352.5	1,127,127	5,311	3.20	3.20	0.015
Gabon	4.7	..	2.0	6.7	267,667	2,551	56.95	39.95	0.381
Gambia	0.8	..	..	0.8	11,300	740	14.13	14.13	0.925
Ghana	7.0	..	1.0	8.0	238,540	2,093	34.08	29.82	0.262
Guinea	9.7	..	9.6	19.3	245,857	3,399	25.35	12.74	0.176
Guinea-Bissau	7.3	..	2.0	9.3	36,120	724	4.95	3.88	0.078
Kenya	22.2	..	5.0	27.2	582,650	3,446	26.25	21.42	0.127
Lesotho	2.0	..	..	2.0	30,355	909	15.18	15.18	0.455
Liberia	15.0	..	..	15.0	111,370	1,585	7.42	7.42	0.106
Madagascar	21.0	..	7.5	28.5	587,040	0	27.95	20.60	0.000
Malawi	5.0	..	1.0	6.0	118,480	2,881	23.70	19.75	0.480
Mali	7.4	..	7.8	15.2	1,240,000	7,243	167.57	81.58	0.477
Mauritania	15.7	..	5.0	20.7	1,030,700	5,074	65.65	49.79	0.245
Mauritius	..	..	1.8	1.8	1,860	0	n.a.	1.03	0.000
Mozambique	6.1	..	..	6.1	801,590	4,571	131.41	131.41	0.749
Namibia	9.0	..	0.1	9.1	825,418	3,824	91.71	90.71	0.420
Niger	5.3	..	5.4	10.7	1,267,000	5,697	239.06	118.41	0.532
Nigeria	76.5	..	30.0	106.5	923,768	4,047	12.08	8.67	0.038
Rwanda	70.0	..	6.0	76.0	26,338	893	0.38	0.35	0.012
Senegal	9.4	..	6.0	15.4	196,190	2,640	20.87	12.74	0.171
Seychelles	0.2	..	0.3	0.5	455	0	2.28	0.91	0.000
Sierra Leone	3.0	..	0.8	3.8	71,740	958	23.91	18.88	0.252
Somalia	50.0	..	..	50.0	637,657	2,366	12.75	12.75	0.047
South Africa	63.4	87.4	8.2	159.0	1,219,912	4,750	19.24	7.67	0.030
Sudan	104.5	..	15.0	119.5	2,505,810	7,687	23.98	20.97	0.064
Swaziland	..	..	..	0.0	17,363	535	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Tanzania	34.0	80.0	1.4	115.4	945,087	3,402	27.80	8.19	0.029
Togo	7.0	..	0.8	7.8	56,785	1,647	8.11	7.28	0.211
Uganda	50.0	..	0.6	50.6	236,040	2,698	4.72	4.66	0.053
Zambia	21.6	..	1.4	23.0	752,614	5,664	34.84	32.72	0.246
Zimbabwe	40.0	..	21.8	61.8	390,580	3,066	9.76	6.32	0.050
Total	**1,519.8**	**299.4**	**233.4**	**2,052.6**	**24,332,831**	**143,564**	**16.01**	**0.48**	**0.070**
For comparison									
USA	1,365.8	1,211.5	89.0	2,666.3	9,629,091	12,248	7.05	3.61	0.005
Germany	221.1	364.3	..	585.4	357,021	3,618	1.61	0.61	0.006
France	294.4	419.0	95.0	808.4	547,030	2,889	1.86	0.68	0.004
Denmark	21.8	64.9	..	86.7	43,094	68	1.98	0.50	0.001

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the quality of African troops is usually inferior to that of their northern counterparts, not only because of their lower educational standard, but also because of problems with “morale”, in their turn partly a reflection of the fact that armies (like the population at large) are often ethnically heterogenous. This is not necessarily a problem, as soldiers could, in principle, identify with the State as such, but it often is, simply because the State does not really command the requisite respect or enjoy the legitimacy which states in the North take for granted (Peled 1998). Moreover, as the officers of many African armies are selected as much on the basis of loyalty to the regime as of skills, their professionalism and competence leaves much to be desired (Du Plessis 1999a, 39-43).

These deficiencies in terms of manpower are all the more disturbing as African states cannot afford the luxury of replacing men with machines, i.e. of making their defence more capital- or weapons-intensive. This is all the more impossible, because they have no indigenous arms production but, with the exception of South Africa (Bachelor and Willett 1998) rely almost exclusively on arms imports. During the Cold War the major arms producers had strategic reasons to furnace African states with weapons for free or at discounted prices (SIPRI 1971, 597-685), but this is not longer the case. As a result arms acquisitions by African states have become an even greater burden on the national economies—to say nothing of the actual arms embargoes which have, over the last five years, been imposed on several African states (SIPRI 2001, 345-349). While slowly rising, the import of major weapons systems by African states thus remains minusclule compared with most of the rest of the world (See Table 2)

Table 2: Arms Imports — 1990 US$m

(SIPRI 2001, 409-410)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Sub-Saharan Africa	310	196	259	122	256	387	669	668	437	425
North Africa	76	126	306	431	212	209	118	496	299	382
North America	537	721	1,031	514	473	649	139	143	517	584
Central and South America	546	521	836	887	1,050	1,472	823	883	814	1,240
Asia and Oceania	5,567	6,070	5,694	8,178	8,188	11,423	9,035	9,906	5,660	7,436
Europe	6,325	5,175	4,462	3,013	3,409	3,802	4,570	3,988	3,710	3,976
Middle East	6,843	9,031	6,426	6,109	6,699	6,888	7,916	5,079	3,680	2,156
World	20,204	21,840	19,014	19,254	20,287	24,830	23,270	21,163	15,117	16,199
Sub-saharan African share	1.53%	0.90%	1.36%	0.63%	1.26%	1.56%	2.87%	3.16%	2.89%	2.62%

Each African soldier is thus much more poorly armed and equipped, hence is probably capable of covering much less border or territory, than European or American troops—a problem which is even more serious because of the more demanding terrain and lack of adequate infrastructure that usually characterises Africa.

To this should be added that African states lack such underpinnings of their national defences as NATO-type alliances or nuclear deterrence. While South Africa developed a few nuclear weapons under the apartheid regime, it has subsequently abandoned them, and the entire continent has been proclaimed a nuclear-weapons-free zone (Oyebade 1998).

2.2 Nasty, but Weak Neighbours

The good news about the offence/defence balance is that the low and/or broken "fences" may not be too much of a problem in Africa, as the neighbours of most countries are significantly different from those in Europe.

While some of them may be quite nasty and fearsome—or at least uncomfortably unpredictable—in terms of intensions, their military capabilities in most cases do not provide them with the means to attack their neighbours. The "O values" in the above formula are thus also quite low. While quite a few African states may be able to undertake small-scale incursions into the territory of neighbouring states, none are really in a position to launch (much less sustain and successfully complete) large-scale cross-border offensives, because of their lack of the means of power projection, both with regard to weapons systems and logistics.

This becomes obvious from a comparison between African states and selected northern great and small powers in terms of their holdings of those types of equipment that were singled out in the CFE negotiations mentioned above as critical for "surprise attack and large-scale offensive action". Table 3 thus shows the United States to have about four times as many main battle tanks and armoured personnel carriers, twice as much artillery, almost eigtht times as many combat aircraft and around four times as many armed helicopters as ***all of*** sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, even a small and relatively peaceful European country such as Denmark, has more "CFE-type" weapon systems that most African states, even such as are, by orders of magnitude, larger.

Table 3: "CFE Equipment" (IISS 2000)	**MBT**	**AIFV/ APC**	**Art.**	**Cbt. Ac.**	**Arm. hel.**
Angola	400	570	404	140	40
Benin	0	0	16	0	0
Botswana	0	30	18	30	0
Burkika Fasu	0	13	14	5	0
Burundi	0	29	18	4	0
Cameroon	0	35	54	15	4
Cape Verde	0	0	24	0	0
Central African R.	4	39	0	0	0
Chad	60	103	5	2	2
Congo (Rep. of)	40	68	?	12	0
Congo (DRC)	60	?	100	4	6
Côte d'Ivoire	0	29	4	5	0
Djibouti	0	12	6	0	0
Equatorial Guinea	0	10	0	0	0
Eritrea	100	50	100	17	?
Ethiopia	300	200	312	51	26
Gabon	0	12	4	10	5
The Gambia	0	0	0	0	0
Ghana	0	50	6	19	0
Guinea	30	40	26	8	0
Guinea-Bissau	10	55	26	3	0
Kenya	78	62	48	29	34
Lesotho	0	0	2	0	0
Liberia	0	0	0	0	0
Madagascar	0	30	29	12	0
Malawi	0	0	9	0	0
Mali	33	50	20	16	0
Mauritania	35	0	75	7	0
Mauritius	0	0	0	0	0
Mozambique	80	275	136	0	4
Namibia	?	60	24	2	2
Niger	0	22	0	0	0
Nigeria	200	330	458	86	10
Rwanda	12	50	35	5	0
Senegal	0	28	18	8	0
Seychelles	0	0	0	0	0
Sierra Leone	0	0	0	0	6
Somalia	?	?	?	?	?
South Africa	168	2,833	190	86	7
Sudan	200	343	460	35	10
Swaziland	?	?	?	?	?
Tanzania	45	60	265	19	0
Togo	2	54	10	16	0
Uganda	140	64	225	10	2
Zambia	30	13	96	71	12
Zimbabwe	40	330	30	52	32
Total	**2,067**	**5,949**	**3,267**	**779**	**202**
		For comparison			
USA	8,023	22,110	6,763	6,008	554
Germany	2,521	4,776	2,073	434	204
France	809	4,499	794	473	262
Denmark	238	296	475	68	12

Table 3 even underestimates the discrepancies by not taking qualitative factors into account. While most of the African tanks, for instance, are obsolete Soviet tanks (e.g. T-54s or even T-32s), the holdings of Germany consist almost entirely of Leopard-1 and 2 and those of the USA of Abrams-1 tanks, both of which are much more capable. Moreover, while most of the equipment of the powers of the North is combat-ready (as that which is not is usually "moth-balled" or destroyed), a very large proportion of the equipment of the African armed forces is, at best, suitable for parades, but quite inadequate for actual combat.

Even the continent's great powers, South Africa and Nigeria, thus have far fewer and less capable tanks or other armoured vehicles and much fewer aircraft than even minor European powers. Their recent experience with military interventions seems to confirm the assessment that their offensive strength is quite limited. Even though they were virtually unopposed by regular military forces, neither the Nigerian interventions (under the auspices of a multilateral ECOWAS force) in Liberia or Sierra Leone (Sesay 2000) nor the South African intervention in Lesotho (Neetling 2000) were thus particularly successful.

The main weakness may be in the field of logistics, where few states have the capacity to supply their armies over long distances—in its turn severely hampering mobility (Du Plessis 1999a, 43-49). While this defect affects both the offence and the defence, it is most severe for the former, and few African states have air forces (or air arms) or navies which could make up for the deficiencies in terms of ground forces (Hough 1999a; 1999b).

Arguably, Sub-Saharan Africa may thus constitute a zone of defensiveness almost "by default", as very few countries would be able to attack others, even if unopposed. Certain states may be able to launch small-scale incursions into the territory of their immediate neighbours—as in the combined Rwandan and Ugandan intervention in the DRC (Shearer 1999)—but none is able to defeat others decisively, much less to "consummate" victory through occupation.

2.3 The North-versus-South Scenario

This leaves us with the question whether African states would be able to defend themselves against non-African enemies, e.g. against Europe or the United States.

This question may seem irrelevant to most observers from the North who know that a new wave of colonialism in Africa has very few

attractions because of Africa's economic marginalisation. However, it is a very legitimate question for Africans to ask—and the global South surely has much more reason to fear the global North with its military prepon-derance and long history of aggression than vice versa.

In strictly military terms, the prospects for an African defence against "aggressors" from the North are obviously not good at all, as Africa today is even more outspent and outgunned than it was during the era of colonisation (Vandervort 1998), when the Brits could boast with Hilaire Belloc

> ***Whatever happens we have got***
> ***The Maxim gun and they have not*** (quoted in Boahen 1990:4)

The North still has the modern equivalents of the Maxim Gun, such as air surveillance and strike capabilities, amphibious forces, helicopters, etc.—and the Africans still have no equivalents thereof, if only because of the wide gap in terms of military expenditures, which showns no real signs of narrowing (see Table 4).

Table 4: Military Expenditures (SIPRI 2001, 226)	**1992**		**1996**		**2000**	
	US$b	Share	US$b	Pct.	US$b	Pct.
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.80	0.9%	7.10	1.0%	9.80	1.3%
North Africa	2.70	0.3%	3.20	0.4%	4.00	0.5%
North America	364.00	43.0%	290.00	40.1%	288.00	38.1%
Central and South America	19.30	2.3%	23.90	3.3%	30.00	4.0%
Asia and Oceania	105.00	12.4%	115.00	15.9%	123.00	16.3%
Europe	296.00	34.9%	235.00	32.5%	240.00	31.8%
Middle East	52.20	6.2%	48.90	6.8%	60.90	8.1%
World	847.00	100.0%	723.10	100.0%	755.70	100.0%

On the other hand, the lesson from the U.S. intervention in Somalia (Daniel, Hayes and Ouddraat 1999, 79-112) may be that even weak African states or armed non-state actors may be able to deter outside intervention—or even in a certain sense, defeat the intervening power—by "asymmetrical means". They may simply play on the casualty-scaredness of the intervening power (especially the United States), in combination with the low saliency of anything African for the West (Luttwak 1995). The abililty to merely exact a even minor casualty-toll from the prospective interventionist may thus

suffice for deterrence, as any U.S. president would find it hard to justify even a few body-bags for a cause with little impact on U.S. security or even interests.

Whether this is a good thing or not, however, is debatable, as the fact that the West in 1994 was deterred from dispatching the perhaps five thousand troops required to stop the horrific Rwandan genocide (Feil 1998) may have cost as many as 800,000 innocent civilian Tutsis and moderate Hutus their lives (Melvern 2000).

3 SQUARING THE CIRCLE: NON-OFFENSIVE DEFENCE IN AFRICA

We have thus seen that most of Africa constitutes a zone of mutual defensive superiority, but that this is not so much due to defensive strength as to a (largely unintended) absence of power projection (i.e. offensive) capabilities. While this combination does makes large-scale war between African states very unlikely, it is still far from an ideal situation.

- The inadequacy of defensive strength means that the door is wide open for small-scale incursions by neighbouring states, for instance for the sake of plunder—as has been the case of the Rwandan and Ugandan forces in the DRC (Report of the Panel of Experts 2001). Scarce resources thus cannot be protected from predators, which is even more true at sea, where the territorial waters and exclusive economic zones of most African states cannot be adequately protected from (European, Japanese and other) “maritime poachers” (Mills 1995; Du Plessis 1999b).
- Even armed forces which are insufficient for national defence may be used against a country’s own population. Indeed their defensive weakness is sometimes a reflection of their unfortunate emphasis on internal repression, or of a need to fight domestic insurgents, of which Africa has more than its fair share (Clapham, ed. 1998). While counter-insurgency warfare is certainly often justified (e.g. in Angola or Sierra Leone) the insurgents are sometimes in the right, as when the State with its armed forces represents a threat to, rather than a safeguard of, the security of its citizens.
- When regional states cannot, and extra-regional powers usually will not, intervene in cases of atrocities and genocide, unspeakable horrors can take place with impunity behind African borders, as in Rwanda—where the armed forces of the State were

the main culprit. If external powers (e.g. donors) were to help strengthen the armed forces for the sake of national defence, they may inadvertantly make outside interference to protect civilians in an extreme emergency even less likely than it is today—or even provide the implements of a coming genocide.

- Power projection capabilities are often indispensable for peacekeeping operations (PKO) and certainly for peace enforcement missions, but the indegenous African capacities for peacekeeping are quite inadequate for the needs of sub-Saharan Africa (Furley and May, eds. 1998; Berman and Sams 2000). This is even more deplorable as the countries who could (and should) provide most troops for PKOs—i.e. the powers of the global North—are less and less willing to do so, with UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone as a partial exception (Malan et al. 2002, 27-36).
- Weak defensive strength invites a privatisation not only of security, but also of war, where the use (by states as well as insurgents) of private military companies (PMCs) and warlordism challenge the paradigm of war as the prerogative of the State (Musah and Fayemi, eds. 2000; Reno 1998, Howe 2001). This, in turn, contributes to a further weakening of the State as an institution.

To devise a solution to the above problems and dilemmas may appear tantamount to squaring the circle, as it requires, on the one hand, a strengthening of the armed forces, including the provision of some power projection capabilities, and, on the other hand, safeguards against the development of genuine offensive capabilities. A few suggestions to this effect shall nevertheless be ventured below, only some of which are military in the narrow sense.

3.1 Preventing International War

Even though not everything is in the eyes of the beholder, a lot is, and military matters are very much a matter of perceptions. By implication, it is important to prevent such misperceptions about the respective other's intentions as could lead to war, thereby promoting confidence. Some of the "instruments" known from Europe could be valuable for building mutual trust, including confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs).

- Seminars on military doctrines, strategies and other military conceptions could acquaint military planners with how the

respective others plan to defend themselves, thereby preventing misunderstandings deriving from, e.g., military mobilisations in emergencies. They could also serve as the first step towards the interoperability which is a ***sine qua non*** of military collaboration (***vide infra***).

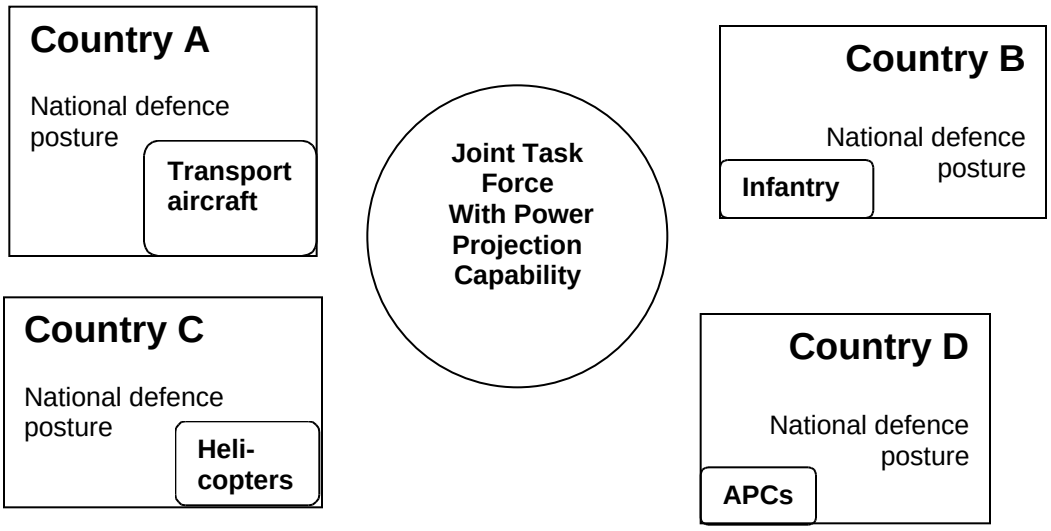
- Joint training programmes could further the same objective, albeit mainly for the lower echelons of the military hierarchies.
- Confidence-building measures (CBMs) of the European "CSCE type" such as invitations to observe military manoeuvres would serve the same purpose—and could be an "appetizer" for actual joint exercizes, of which some have already been conducted by the sub-regional organisations (Hough 1999b).

Multilateralisation seems to be the key to the more substantive changes in the direction of "African non-offensive defence". The power projection capabilities which would be required for PKOs as well as for humanitarian interventions would be much less likely to activate the security dilemma it they were to reside with a regional organisation such as the African Union or a sub-regional one such as SADC or ECOWAS than if under the national command of, e.g., South Africa or Nigeria.

The best way to achieve this would surely be truly multilateral forces under an all-African or sub-regional command—as seems to be implied by the AU's endorsement of the goal of "a common defence policy for the African Continent" (***Constitutive Act*** 2001, art. 4d) or by various decisions by SADC (Cawthra 1997, 133-142; Cilliers 1999; Hough 1999b). For the short and medium term, however, this does not seem to be a realistic objective.

Much more realistic is a gradually intensifying collaboration, producing an actual division of labour, which would also "do the trick". If, say, each country were to possess some of the components of a power projection capacity without having the whole panoply, the community of states would be able to project power in the form of a joint task force, but no single state would have any usable offensive force that might threaten its neighbours, as illustrated in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1: Combined Joint Task Forces



The implied division of labour would also allow for substantial savings as compared with a quest for "complete" armed forces that would anyhow be futile, but which would represent a further drain on resources much needed for civilian purposes.

3.2 Preventing Internecine War

In countries torn by internal strife, e.g. between opposing ethnic groups, an NOD-like solution to the intra-state security dilemma might be that each group or province should be able to defend itself against the others.

This, in turn, might be ensured through military restructuring, ***in casu*** a territorial defence arrangement that would allow each constituent part of a federation or confederation to defend itself against the other(s) and to defend its regional autonomy against encroachment by the national government. However, this would inevitably weaken the State as such, which may not be desirable in all cases.

A similar result might be achieved through various forms of power-sharing, be they territorial or consociationial (Lapidoth 1996; Lijphardt 1977), such as a quota system for the security services. Such an arrangement was, for instance, entailed by the peace agreement for Burundi, which stipulated that the security forces should be composed evenly by the two main ethnic groups, Hutus and Tutsis (***Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi***

2000, Protocol III, Art. 14, 1g and 2e), regardless of the fact that Hutus comprise about 85 percent of the total population (CIA 2001).

Even more important, however, would be a general security sector reform (Wulf, ed. 2000; Williams 2000) which should teach the armed forces the "ethos" of national defence and a "Huntiongtonian" professionalism, including a clear civilian supremacy (Huntington 1957, 80-85; Janowitz 1960). This would be a valuable contribution to strengthening the State as an institution, thereby providing a long-term safeguard against internecine war.

4 Conclusion and Perspective: What the North Can Do

We have thus seen that the general principles of non-offensiveness are applicable to Africa, albeit with a significant "twist". What is most needed is a strengthening of the national defence capacity of African states, but this must be done without—however inadvertantly—creating offensive capabilities that might, at the end of the day, make everybody less rather than more secure.

If they want to do so the countries of the North could help in this quest. A premise for such assistance must, however, be an acknowledgement of the legitimate security needs of African states. However well-intended, it is not helpful at all to simply stipulate artificial cealings on the "permissible" defence expenditures of African countries—and it is a blatant case of double standards when these cealings are well below those of the global North.

What the North could do to help is to provide military assistance that should be conditional, discriminatory and "multilateral in spirit": Conditional upon the adoption of democracy, security sector reform and the signing of peace agreements with neighbouring countries; discriminatory in the sense of only offering such military equipment as would strengthen defensive capabilities and the ability to contribute to PKOs and other multilateral operations; and multilateral in the sense of being offered not to individual countries—thereby perhaps tilting a delicate balance of power—but to regions as a whole. This does not necessarily mean that a donor country (or group of donors) should merely grant military equipment, infrastructure and training to groups of states, which might well be impractical. However, it means that donors should ensure an evenhandedness in their military assistance and primarily seek to boost the ability of adjacent states to collaborate in managing their shared security problems.

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