

CONFLICTS IN AFRICA AND IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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Aims of the project



- To observe and to formulate recent conflicts happened in Africa and in the Middle East
- To trace possible way of resolution

Introduction

- Despite decades of conflict, death and tragedy, coverage of issues in Africa has often been ignored, oversimplified, or excessively focused on limited aspects. Deeper analysis, background and context has often been lacking, so despite what seems like constant images of starving children in famines, news of billions in aid to Africa from generous donor countries, the background context and analysis is often missing.
- Whether aid makes the situation worse, or why there is famine and hunger in Africa when African nations are exporting crops to other parts of the world are rarely asked by the mainstream.

- According to research from media organization Media Tenor, from 1 January 2002 until 30 June 2003, “September 11 has turned the watch back to the pre-1990’s, virtually eliminating all events and issues that are not related to either the United States or its coalition partners—especially when reporting on conflicts.... conflicts and wars played the most important role in all analysed television stations in Britain, Germany and the United States. But subtracting from this coverage Iraq and Afghanistan, only 0.2% (n=507) of all reports (N=23587) focused on conflicts in Africa. Wars without the involvement of the Western nations, do not seem newsworthy enough to appear on international TV news agendas, and the little coverage given only focuses on the brutality of the conflict and not on possible solutions.”

Background



- Background such as the colonial as well as post-World War II history, social and political context, international economic issues and much more are all perspectives needed to help people in the western nations and elsewhere to really begin to understand the present situations and issues in appropriate context

Root causes

- Political corruption, lack of respect for rule of law, human rights violations are all common reasons heard for some of the causes of Africa's problems. Although, not the only reasons, some often overlooked root causes also include the following:
 - **The Legacy of European Colonialism**
 - European colonialism had a devastating impact on Africa.



Conflicts in Africa

- There have recently been numerous civil wars and conflicts going in Africa, some of which are still going on, including
- [Angola](#), which has seen an estimated 500,000 people killed since 1989 and an estimated 3 million refugees. It is also being torn apart due to resources such as diamonds and offshore oil, with various factions fighting for these prizes, supported by multinational corporations and other governments. See also the following:
 - A Rough Trade; The Role of Companies and Governments in the Angolan Conflict, by [Global Witness](#), December 1998. (Their web site has other reports on related issues as well.)
 - [The Zambian Connection: Ukrainian plane came to deliver UNITA diamonds?](#) from the Monitor for Human Rights and Development, Issue 101, April 7-13 2000, also reports on the Diamond and Zambia connection.
 - [ANGOLA: Allegations of embezzlement of 'petrodollars'](#), by IRIN, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 26 March 2002



States in Africa involved into conflicts

- Algeria Burundi Congo The Democratic Republic of Congo Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) Eritrea/ Ethiopia Liberia Nigeria Rwanda Sierra Leone Sudan and South Sudan/Darfur Uganda Zimbabwe Some of these nations are also involved in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the DRC is also involved in some of these civil wars.

two paths to normalization

- There are theoretically two paths to normalization. “Top-down,” artfully described in the European context by the American scholar Charles Kupchan. This involves consensus among the strategic leadership, followed by a progressive opening up, so that two societies, nations, and economies become intertwined and therefore mutually dependent. “Bottom-up” first involves trade, people-to-people diplomacy, and cultural ties, with the assumption that this will persuade leaders to normalize. Realistically, both approaches have to be present, but none have brought either dispute to a resolution. Nor have the participants tired, the grievances and fears of the past have mostly been transferred from generation to generation.
- Sometimes outsiders can induce or force an agreement. In South Asia, the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank but conceived in America, was a milestone. It is now significant because it was the last major successful agreement between India and Pakistan. Both sides regret having signed it, and despite later agreements, there has been nothing that led to a reciprocal negotiation process. Even the 1971 Simla agreement between Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a failure. It supposedly led to a settlement in Kashmir and a new set of rules for both sides, but in reality it led directly to the Pakistani nuclear weapon and gloating in New Delhi that Pakistan had finally been put in its place.

Strategies, to resolve or ameliorate conflicts

- Kashmir was identified as the core India-Pakistan issue by Clinton and Obama, but it is more than a territorial issue and involves China; similarly, the West Bank is an element of the identities of Israelis and Palestinians, but so is the status of Jerusalem and the right of return; and Muslims everywhere have taken up the Kashmir cause as they once took up the status of the Palestinian territories. Each has an element of civil war in which two closely related peoples are in a mostly zero-sum struggle.


Strategies

- All four states see themselves as the victim, surrounded by threats, a vulnerable minority still haunted by apocalyptic visions with paranoia baked into the political culture. This allows such states to do unacceptable things in the name of fighting for their very existence. Rarely will one of these four parties take a first step; never a second or third, hence the term “intractable.” In both, there is an ultimate absence of trust; all sides have resorted to “other means” when diplomacy has run its course.

potentially dangerous areas

- From this perspective, the potentially dangerous areas of the "external" conflicts appear to Yemen - Saudi Arabia, Syria - Jordan (Turkey), Sudan - Egypt. It is unlikely though included in the zone of potential conflict, a number of Gulf countries, among which are not ruled out armed conflict on border disputes.

With regard to Iraq, especially its internal and external situation give reason to assume that in the near future, concerned resolution of its internal conflicts (with the Kurds - in the north and Shiites - in the south), the ruling regime of Saddam Hussein is likely to seek external "allies" and partners in the region than the opponents and the subject of conflict. This allows for a certain time actually classified as a zone of moderate Iraq conflict.

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- The degree of probability of escalating internal conflict to the outside, the higher the acute socio-economic and political crisis facing the country, and therefore socio-political protest against the ruling here mode, and (most importantly) the stronger the accumulated country's military potential, able to be involved

