

THE GREATER HORN OF AFRICA CONFLICT SYSTEM:
CONFLICT PATTERNS, STRATEGIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Makumi Mwagiru
Associate Professor of International Relations
Division of Arts and Science
United States International University - Africa

(Paper prepared for the USAID project on Conflict and Conflict Management in the Greater Horn of Africa, April 1997. Revised, September 1997)

Introduction

The pattern of conflicts developing the Greater Horn of Africa is at once depressing, and exciting. It is depressing because conflict, at whatever level, entails not only loss of life, but also severe distractions from the challenges of Africa's development as it enters the turn of the century. It is exciting because conflict also brings with it the need to reassess relationships. It signals much that is thriving - or decaying - in the body politic,¹ and hence poses challenges about future action. More pertinently perhaps, the patterns of conflict in the Greater Horn of Africa pose serious questions about the practices of its management, and centralises the need to engage in debate about creative conflict management.

The challenge of creative conflict management in this region poses serious challenges for the analyst or manager of conflict. It requires that possible and emerging avenues of conflict within states be identified and tracked. Beyond this, those conflicts that are most likely to be diffused across borders (of all sorts) and internationalised must be identified and proper modes of their management designed. The various levels of individual conflicts must be disentangled, and the interfaces between different types of conflict (e.g. between political and environmental conflict) identified. Within this broad approach, the conceptual basis on which analysis and practical conflict management must be embedded must be defined: for, without a sound conceptual basis any type of conflict management is bound to founder.²

This paper is concerned with the regional dimension of the conflicts in the Greater Horn of Africa region, and particularly with the modes and practices of their management. Its eventual

¹ Antony de Reuck, 'The Logic of Conflict: Its Origin, Development and Resolution' in M. Banks (ed) *Conflict in World Society: A New Perspective on International Relations* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984) pp. 96-118.

² See A.J.R. Groom, 'Practitioners and Academics: Towards a Happier Relationship?' in Banks (ed) *Conflict in World Society*, op. cit., pp. 192-208.

aim is to draw out the lessons to be learnt from past and current conflict management practices in the region, and hence to suggest a programme for strengthening these as a new and more challenging era dawns. In this pursuit, it examines the conceptual bases on which regional conflict management should be founded, surveys patterns of conflict management practices in the Greater Horn, and illustrates this empirically through case studies of official and unofficial conflict management in the region. It argues on that basis that mediation has emerged as the preferred practice of conflict management in the region, and in that spirit explores, through examples, the outstanding problems of mediation. Ultimately, the lessons learnt from mediation practices in the region are drawn out, and the strategic map of future needs of regional conflict management suggested.

The Idea of Conflict Systems

Until fairly recently the idea of conflict systems was strange to conflict analysts, and dead to conflict managers. Individual conflicts were suffocated within territorial borders. They erupted, lived, were responded to, and re-incarnated later as individual conflicts which had no implications for, or relationships with, regional diplomatic, political, environmental and other structures. This was not just because of lack of strategic thinking, but also because conflict managers failed to appreciate conflict as an organic being whose life cycle had amoebic characteristics. For example, the conflict in Sudan was appreciated and managed in the period before 1983 as if it had no transboundary realities. Secessionist conflicts such as in Ethiopia were treated as problems which only concerned the bordered realities of Ethiopian power politics whereas, as became evident after Eritrean independence, Eritrea has shifted the diplomatic and strategic balance of the whole region.

The notion of conflict systems champion the belief that every conflict has intimate relationships regionally, and what might at first appear as individualised conflicts in fact are parts of wider pattern of conflict regionally. It rejects the idea that conflicts do not have transborder realities, and instead perceives individual conflicts as an integral part of a

wider conflict system.¹ On the ground, for example, the conflict in Zaire in 1996-7 was not locked within Zaire's territorial borders. It possessed frontiers that transcended those borders, and intimate links with the conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. The parties to that conflict also had interests and linkages whose hinterland went beyond Zaire. What is true of political conflicts systems is even more so for environmental conflict systems, whose ecology and realities respect no territorial borders. Conflicts must therefore be seen in terms of their reality as part of wider conflict systems. In this respect, the countries of the Greater Horn relate together through shared conflicts even more than through shared borders.

The idea of perceiving conflicts within a system has some important implications for practical (and creative) conflict management. It means, for example, acceptance of the reality that management of a particular individual conflict which does not take into account systemic (or regional) realities is unlikely to be effective, much less enduring in its outcome. It also implies, in practical terms, that conflict management efforts which do not engage other interested actors within the conflict system are unlikely to succeed. It is in the catering for all interests within the system that successful outcomes are based. If interested actors i.e. systemic actors, are not involved in management processes, this means ultimately that their interests in the system will not be catered for. Hence they will be able to sabotage any outcome of a management process that did not involve, or even contemplate them. The settlement of the Sudan conflict in 1972 for instance, failed to conceptualise the internal conflict in Sudan within its systemic setting. Since it involved only (some) of the Sudanese parties, and none of other parties in the conflict system, the life of that peace was not only chequered, but ultimately collapsed in the ashes of its individualistic foundations.²

¹ Much of the literature assumes that there was a ten year peace following the 1972 Agreement. But that Agreement started collapsing soon after its signature: See J.R. Getugi, *Giving Mediation a Chance: A Critical Analysis of the Peace Processes in Sudan, 1972-1995*

The Epicentres of Conflict Systems

Having identified a conflict system and its interlocking dynamics, the conflict analyst or manager who wishes to be effective must identify its nodal points, and most importantly, its epicentre - the eye of the storm. Conflict systems, like all organic things, have epicentres around which their existence revolves. Identifying accurately such an epicentre is a *sine qua non* for effective management. However, as is evident for example from analysis of various conflict systems, the reality is that epicentres of conflict systems keep changing. Hence conflict management processes must constantly be aware of these sometimes subtle but often quite dramatic shifts. In the Great Lakes conflict system for example, the epicentre has sifted in the last five years from Burundi to Zaire. In the Horn of Africa conflict system, the epicentre has shifted during the same period from Somalia to Sudan. As the epicentres change, conflict management processes must similarly change emphasis to accommodate the shifting balances. In practice what has happened is to abandon one epicentre for another, or altogether as has happened in the Great Lakes conflict system. What should happen instead is to change emphasis, shift gears accordingly, and accommodate the emerging realities of the new centre. Thus, conflict management practices within conflict system must be alert to these realities and hence be based on a foundation that accommodates them. If they are rigid, outcomes will emerge within a time warp, outdated even before the ink is dry on the treaties marking the end of such peace processes.

The Greater Horn of Africa Conflict System

The traditional delimitation of the Horn of Africa region consisted of Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan. That delimitation was inspired by strategic concerns, particularly of the super powers during the Cold War. However, because of the interplay of wider diplomatic and strategic concerns in the region, that delimitation came to be extended logically in practice to include Kenya, and in some reckoning, Uganda. Given

(M.A. Dissertation, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi, 1997).

the fluidity of the international relation of the region, not even that expanded delimitation could be cast in stone. With its secession from Ethiopia, Eritrea clearly belongs to the strategic map of the Horn, and can not practically be excluded.

Within the Eastern and Central African region there exist two conflict systems: the Horn of Africa conflict system, and the Great Lakes conflict system. The latter comprises Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania, and by some accounts, Kenya. Because conflict systems are in part spurred by diplomatic and economic realities, they often overlap. The Horn of Africa and Great Lakes conflict systems have a clear overlap whose sub-set includes Kenya and Uganda. Perhaps this is why these two countries are active at several levels of the two conflict systems. This interface is useful in defining either the Greater Horn of Africa or the Greater Great Lakes conflict systems. The Greater Horn of Africa is delimited by the Horn of Africa, and the interface between that conflict system and the Great Lakes one. Hence the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system comprises Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Tanzania. At the periphery of this Greater Horn of Africa conflict system, sometimes affected by it and sometimes interacting with it, are Rwanda and Burundi.

This delimitation of the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system and those which surround, interface and interact with it has important bearings on the conflict management practices in the region. It means that any conflict within the system should be managed in terms of the wider conflict system, failing which important nuances, connections and realities might be overlooked, thus rendering such an individualistic management approach nugatory. It also opens up significantly the strategic map of actors, interests and players who must be involved in the management processes of conflict in the system. Hence a conflict system management approach expands significantly the mediation system⁴ of any conflict in the region.

⁴ United States' military engagement in Somalia marked the turning point in converting the reluctance to become engaged into policy.

Patterns of Conflict Management Practices in the Greater Horn

The institutional pattern of conflict management practices in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system is still evolving, but even so, some distinct patterns are emerging. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) provides the (historical) background against which these patterns are emerging. During the Cold War, OAU conflict management was driven in part by the interventionist imperatives of the super power rivalry. Where the interests of the super powers were involved, such as in the Horn of Africa - particularly in Ethiopia and Somalia - the OAU as an institution was not able to gain a serious *entree*, or even establish a firm management foothold. Also, Cold War doctrines of African international politics such as the doctrines of non-interference, *uti possidetis juris*, and respect for the sovereign equality of states, were the main pillars of OAU conflict management, which the organisation held dear. International legal notions such as the right to self determination provided the philosophical rationale for the existence of the OAU as a regional organisation with conflict management concerns. More seriously, the OAU was wedded to the Realist view that international and domestic politics were two distinct concerns, which in practice bore no relation to each other: hence its dichotomising between internal and inter-state conflict.

The end of the Cold War revealed serious shortcomings in OAU conflict management. It meant amongst other things that super power military intervention in African conflicts, especially internal conflicts, came to an end, as the reluctance of the United States to become militarily involved in Rwanda and Zaire suggests.⁵ The OAU was therefore faced with a series of emerging internal conflicts which its Cold War doctrines did not permit it to handle effectively. At the same time throughout the international system, events were demonstrating that the dichotomy between domestic and international affairs could not

⁵ See M. Mwagiru, "The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Management of Internal Conflict in Africa" *International Studies*, Vol. 33 (1996) pp. 3-21.

properly exist on the ground.⁶ The OAU's practice of managing only inter-state conflicts while allowing internal conflicts to simmer was therefore put under a sharp and uncomfortable spotlight. With the settlement of the conflict in South Africa and the institutional banishment of the apartheid system, one of the pillars of the political existence of the OAU was thereby removed. The OAU was thus confronted by emerging (post-Cold War) notions about self determination and post-colonial self determination.⁷ Internal self-determination including internal self-determination is directed internally to dictatorships,⁸ while post-colonial self determination addresses the realities of ethnic groups formerly (during the Cold War) divided by territorial borders, wishing to come together again and form state units.⁹

What all this meant was that the OAU, faced with these post Cold War challenges, needed to re-invent itself. Part of this process required ultimately that it establish mechanisms through which it could address the large problem of internal and internationalised conflicts in Africa. Logically also, it could not do this without simultaneously addressing the issue of democracy and good governance in the continent. Its 1992 review exercise suggested that it realised the urgency and need to do so. It established a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution¹⁰ whose short career has been chequered: it neither goes far enough in defining a new conflict management methodology, nor addresses the serious fault that its

⁶ M. Michalska, "Rights of People to Self Determination in International Law" in W. Twining (ed) *Issues of Self Determination* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1991) pp. 71-90.

⁷ See International Alert, *Internal Conflicts in Africa: A Report on the London Seminar* (London: International Alert, 1994).

⁸ OAU Doc: AHG/Dec. 1 (XXVIII).

⁹ See Mwagiru, "The OAU and the Management of Internal Conflict in Africa" op. cit.

¹⁰ See OAU Doc:

underlying principles are the same ones which for so long hampered OAU conflict management.¹¹ In terms of addressing specifically internal conflict, the OAU has made some progress in that now, unlike in the past, it openly condemns military *coups d'etat* such as in Burundi and Sierra Leone. Indeed, in the Comoros, it was actively involved in negotiating the return of the overthrown civilian government to office.

While the OAU is grappling with these various crises of identity, there has been a significant movement towards sub-regional conflict management in Africa. In this important shift, sub-regional organisations have taken the lead in trying to manage those conflicts that occur within their respective conflict systems, and particularly those which threaten the stability and security of the individual systems. Hence, IGADD (D) member states were engaged in the mediation of the conflict in Sudan,¹² while ECOWAS engaged in peace-keeping activities in the Liberian conflict.¹³ Within the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system, some important conflict management strategies and practices have emerged, or are in the process of emerging. These represent important shifts away from the continental strategies of the OAU. The three dominant conflict management approaches in this conflict system are institutionalised (IGADD), *ad hoc* (summits of the Great Lakes Heads of State), and inchoate (the East African Cooperation).

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGADD) was set up by states of the Horn of Africa in order to develop joint approaches to dealing with common problems, especially those related to life-threatening drought in the region, and the attendant threat posed by

¹¹ See M. Mwagiru, 'Beyond the OAU: Prospects for Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa' *Paradigms*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1995) pp. 107-124.

¹² See M. Vogt (ed) *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG* (Lagos: Gabumo Publishing Co., 1992); also, Vogt, 'The Involvement of ECOWAS in Liberia's Peace-keeping' in Keller & Rothchild (eds) *Africa in the New International Order*, op. cit., pp. 165-183.

¹³ See IGADD Doc:

encroaching desertification. In its pursuit of these limited concerns, the organisation realised that such common solutions could not be achieved provided there were festering and violent conflicts within its member states. Such conflicts made it practically impossible to implement programmes the organisation came up with. It therefore found itself increasingly preoccupied with issues of conflict management, and particularly of the Sudan conflict, whose effects were felt system-wide. In this spirit, a committee of member states - Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea - was appointed to mediate in the conflict. That mediation, which is discussed later on, brought to light a serious institutional limitation in that although IGADD member states could mediate in an internal conflict of one of its member states, its Charter did not specifically mandate it to do so. Hence the IGADD Charter was amended in April 1996 in order to give IGADD a conflict management mandate. Thus IGADD was transformed into the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).¹⁴ It was believed that the broad phraseology of 'development' encapsulates wider concerns, including conflict management. As part of this institutional transformation, the IGAD secretariat was also enlarged to include a department of conflict management. That department is part of the wider division of political and humanitarian affairs. It is mandated and expected to coordinate IGAD's conflict management concerns.

The Summit of the Great Lakes Head of State is not institutionalised like IGAD is, and is more *ad hoc* in character. The Summit was first summoned over the conflict in Burundi. The Heads of State of the countries in the Great Lakes conflict system, and those concerned from the Greater Horn of Africa met in order to take collective measures to manage the conflict in Burundi, whose effects were being felt system-wide. This was the first time that heads of state within a conflict system had met with a specifically conflict management agenda. That process led to the agreement to impose sanctions on Burundi, the first time also that such collective action had ever occurred in the region.

¹⁴ Nairobi 1, 2, and 2.5.

Although the Great Lakes summit on Burundi had earlier decided to lift partially the sanctions, pending progress on negotiations between the government and contending groups, such sanctions were reimposed in September 1997, in the face of the Burundi government's intransigence.

A Burundi style *ad hoc* summit was also summoned over the conflict in Zaire, except that this time it did so under the chairmanship of President Moi of Kenya. The *ad hoc* Nairobi summits¹⁵ were however unable to take concerted measures, owing in part to competition between some members about the diplomatic centre of power in the whole process. The process thus moved first to South Africa through Ugandan diplomatic manoeuvrings, to the OAU where it was handed over, and finally back to South Africa under OAU auspices, but in truth finally consolidating Ugandan diplomatic gamesmanship.

The East African Cooperation is an attempt to institutionalise a forum through which cooperation between the East African states can obviate conflicts whose sources are economic. The Cooperation is less ambitious than the East Africa Community which collapsed in 1977 amid growing conflicts between its member states of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The East African Cooperation is inchoate because its institutional format is still evolving,¹⁶ as are its areas of operational concern.

The philosophy of the Cooperation is a modern day experiment in functionalism. It is believed in its corridors that the more member states act in cooperation in various areas, the less conflict between them is likely to break out. It is also believed that, unlike the East African Community, this cooperation should be more people than state-centred. This belief was prompted by the view that the East African Community broke up because of unmediated conflicts between the heads of state. Indeed, so strong was this belief that in the original draft of the Agreement creating the East African Cooperation,

¹⁵ See *The Agreement for the Establishment of a Permanent Tripartite Commission for East African*, 30 November, 1993.

¹⁶ Ambassador Francis Muthaura of Kenya.

heads of states of the three countries were given a minimal role in the Cooperation's programmes and activities. This was subsequently changed following the appointment of the first Executive Secretary, to enshrine an institutionalised role for the three heads of state. Because it was felt that the programmes of the Cooperation could not take off without the support of the heads of state, they are now required to meet in summit annually to give impetus to the Cooperation's evolving programmes.¹⁷ It is in this spirit that the summit of April 1997 had before it for approval for a Strategy Paper which charts out emerging and projected areas of cooperation.¹⁸

One of the interesting aspects of the Cooperation is that it does to provide specifically for conflict management activities. This is strange, given that others like IGAD found it necessary to institutionalise a conflict management role, following its practical conflict management experience. The thinking behind eschewing a specifically conflict management component in the Cooperation is that since it will be engaged in diverse areas of cooperation touching on all aspects of regional life - security, trade, economics, immigration, etc. - these will lead to integration, and with it avenues of conflict will be removed.¹⁹ This is theoretically coherent, even elegant, but in practical terms rather quixotic. States, like individuals, will always experience conflict between them. The idea is to balance such conflict overwhelmingly with cooperation. This is best achieved through effective conflict management mechanisms, so that conflict, which is endemic in international life, does not overwhelm cooperative relationships, and like the East African Community, destroy all institutions of cooperation. Since

17 This included launching an East African passport: See *The Daily Nation* (Nairobi), 30 April 1997, p. 1.2.

18 Conversation between the author and Ambassador Muthaura, Executive Secretary, Arusha, 22 April 1997.

19 See M. Mwagiru 'Towards an Architecture of Peace and Conflict in the Horn of Africa Conflict System' (University of Nairobi, IDIS Working Paper No. 1, 1996).

conflict cannot be eliminated (and neither is this desirable). the practical response to it should be to manage it effectively. For this reason, the conceptual basis of East African Cooperation needs revisiting. In this, as in other respects, it must not step in the same water as its predecessor.

These sub-regional practices of conflict management are encouraging, and are also largely a fresh experience for Africa generally and the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system in particular. As expected, being almost experimental, they are experiencing teething problems. They need strengthening in terms of focussing more directly on issues of peace management, rather than purely conflict management. IGAD has this sort of structure in place. Its focus on development, supported by institutionalised conflict management, bears the roots of a framework for peace management. The problem IGAD is likely to face is that of being - even aspiring to be - a mini OAU, or even worse, being embraced in the bear hug of the OAU. The East African Cooperation as it is currently structured has in place some of the processes of peace management, but none on conflict management. The Great Lakes of state summits on the other hand, seem not to have contemplated that conflict management can only be consolidated by an equally heavy dose of peace management.

Practices of Conflict Management in the Greater Horn

There have been many instances of conflict management in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. This section will concern itself overwhelmingly with post-Cold War practices of conflict management in this system. The rationale for this is that during the Cold War, conflict management in the region was almost exclusively the concern of the OAU. OAU conflict management dichotomised between internal and inter-state conflict. In directing its management practices almost exclusively on the latter, it failed to make an impact on the management of internal conflicts which not only continued to fester, but were also contagious within the system, and hence became diffused conflict-system wide. The conflict in Sudan is a prime example of this. Other 'internal' conflicts such as those in Uganda and Somalia, while not diffusing throughout the system, did so into

significant portions of it. By the time the idea dawned that sub-regional approaches could effectively step where the OAU had feared to tread, the conflicts had become firmly entrenched in the landscape of the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. This foundation of conflict within the international relations of the system required a different management architecture,²⁰ which this section will examine.

The Intellectual Background

Two conceptual bases need to be touched in any investigation of conflict management practices in the Greater Horn conflict system. The first is the relationship between track one and track two diplomacy, and the second is the distinction between settlement and resolution of conflict.

Track one conflict management refers to official, state approaches to conflict management. These are nested on official diplomatic concerns, their foreign policy limitations, and are often trapped within the paraphernalia of diplomatic protocol, and the intellectual *bricolage* of official (sometimes officious) positions. While track one conflict management operates within the walls of official diplomacy, track two is not shackled by these concerns. It is non-official, and while it might nod at official foreign and diplomatic policy, it is not tied to them. Practitioners of track two diplomacy have no official relationship with states: while they are sometimes former officials, they can also be scholars, churches etc.²¹

Track one and track two diplomacy have historically had an uneasy relationship. Three broad schools of thought about this relationship have emerged. The first (not surprisingly championed by official diplomats) is that track one diplomacy is the

²⁰ On unofficial diplomacy See: J.W. McDonald & D.B. Bendahmane (eds.) *Conflict Resolution: Track Two Diplomacy* (Washington: Foreign Service Institute, 1987).

²¹ See for example John Burton 'Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy' in D.J.D. Sandole and H. van der Merwe (eds.) *Conflict Resolution Theory & Practice: Integration and Application* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1993) pp. 55-64.

dominant track, and should exclude track two from its processes. The second (whose exponents are track two players) is that track two diplomacy is emerging as the dominant management track and should eventually supercede track one.²² The third school of thought, which is the more progressive, maintains that the two tracks have different merits, and that they ought to cooperate in conflict management if it is to be effective and enduring.²³

Related to this debate is the distinction between settlement and resolution of conflict. The distinction is fundamental to the whole conflict management project, because, if third parties have no idea whether they want to settle or to resolve conflict, the output of their efforts at management is likely to be unmitigated confusion. Settlement of conflict entails the parties to a negotiation going through essentially bargaining processes. Such processes are founded on power relationships between the parties. Because power is the motivating credo, any bargain that is struck is likely to endure only as long as the power relationships that obtained during the negotiation subsist. Settlement processes are more concerned with power rather than with the causes of the conflict. Their outcome is thus imposed, and zero-sum in nature.

²² This third programme takes on board various permutations: See for example, R. Fisher 'Third Party Consultation: A Review of Studies' *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 27 (1983) pp. 301-334; R. Fisher & L. Keashly 'The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation within a Contingency Model of Third Party Intervention' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28 (1991) pp. 29-42; M. Mwagiru, *The International Management of Internal Conflict in Africa*, op. cit., Ch. 9.

²³ This third programme takes on board various permutations: See for example, R. Fisher 'Third Party Consultation as a Method of Intergroup Conflict Resolution: A Review of Studies' *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 27 (1983) pp.301-334; R. Fisher & L. Keashly 'The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation within a Contingency Model of Third Party Intervention' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28 (1991) pp.29-42; M. Mwagiru, *The International Management of Internal Conflict in Africa*, op. cit., Ch.9.

Resolution on the other hand rejects power as the basis of conflict management processes, and believe in legitimised outcomes. In resolution processes, the third party does not play a dominant role. Instead the parties are sovereign to the extent that they mutually engage in the search for a solution to their conflict. They examine the causes of their conflict and work out the basis of their post-conflict relationship. Because this process is mutual, the outcome is acceptable to both, hence legitimised. Unlike in settlement, resolution processes address the perceptual and psychological basis of conflict in the belief that in this way, a win-win solution can be reached.

The argument is that track one conflict management is not inherently inclined towards painstaking resolution processes. And also, because international relationships between states are power-based, track one processes incline towards power, and hence settlement. Track two on the other hand believes that international relationships are dominated not by power but by a whole set of other valued relationships. In track two conflict management, the threats to these relationships are explored through a painstaking resolution process. In truth, some issues are quite amenable to settlement, namely *disputes* for example about physical aspects -like borders; about percentages of representation for each party within a post-conflict parliament or army, as was the case in the Uganda conflict mediated in 1985. But some issues are only amenable to resolution, namely *conflicts*.²⁴ Such issues underlie *all* conflicts. They include issues such as the right to participate in political, social and decision-making processes of the community; the right to have one's dignity repected and reflected in political, social and other life; and the right to self-determination (at all levels). Conflict management, to be effective and enduring must address both *disputes* and *conflicts*, and this requires both settlement and resolution processes to co-exist. It therefore calls for a cooperative relationship between track one and track two

²⁴ See J.W. Burton *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (London: Macmillan, 1990), on the distinction between *disputes* and *conflicts*.

diplomacy. Without such cooperation, conflict management processes will be nugatory.

Official Conflict Management in the Greater Horn of Africa: Some Case Studies

There have been several official conflict management processes in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. This section examines these, and particularly tries to draw out the extent to which individual instances of conflict management have taken cognisance of the systemic bases of the conflicts in question.

IGAD(D) Mediation of the Sudan Conflict²⁵

The internal conflict in the Sudan has been one of the most protracted in the continent, and certainly in the Horn of African conflict system. Although the conflict is often characterised as one between the North and the South, that broad characterisation subsumes many important issues, including race, religion, governance and self-determination.²⁶ The conflict and its management processes have been often complicated by the ability of the north to co-opt some groups of Southerners, and hence by conflicts within the Southern alliances.²⁷

The most prominent official attempt to manage the Sudan conflict is the mediation by IGAD(D) member states. The IGAD(D) mediation of that conflict was undertaken by Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea. That mediation took on a classical bargaining format, and it essentially tried to achieve trade-offs

²⁵ See M. Mwagiru 'Beyond the OAU: Prospects for Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa' op.cit.

²⁶ Aspects of this conflict have been described and analysed elsewhere: See O. Aguda, 'Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.11 (1973) pp.177-200; D.M. Wai, 'Revolution, Rhetoric and Reality in the Sudan' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 17 (1979) pp.71-93; P. Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989: The Unstable State* (London: Lester Crook Academic Publishing, 1990).

²⁷ Currently the Khartoum government co-opted the Riak Marchar faction of the SPLM, and signed an Agreement with it. That faction has attracted a few high level defections from the one led by John Garang.

between the Khartoum government and the SPLA. The actual format was one of summits of the heads of state, followed by negotiations on detail between officials, mainly ministers and ambassadors. The mediation reached a deadlock in 1995 over the questions of the nature of the post-conflict state. The deadlock has recently been broken, and the mediation will resume in Nairobi on 28 October, 1997.²⁸

The IGAD(D) mediation of the Sudan conflict was a significant development in conflict management practices of the Horn. It saw the conflict as a problem of the entire conflict system, and hence involved all the actors in that system. Doing this meant essentially that no outcome which involved only the Sudanese parties would endure, and hence the interests of all the actors in the system had to be catered for. This however was also the cause of problems within that mediation. There developed severe inter-mediator conflicts during the mediation, and this complicated the mediation process leading to its eventual collapse. The conflicts were not just between the mediators, but also between Sudan and Uganda based on mutual accusations of giving comfort to supporters of each other. Similarly, relations between Sudan and Eritrea deteriorated for the same reason, and in both instances the conflicts led to the severing of diplomatic relations. At the same time, there were diplomatic conflicts between Sudan and Ethiopia based on Sudan's accusations that Ethiopia was harbouring anti-Sudan groups. Ethiopia in turn accused Sudan of harbouring and probably masterminding the assassination attempt in Ethiopia of the Egyptian president.

All these conflicts meant that the IGAD(D) member states mediation of the Sudan conflict was unlikely to succeed, given also that there were no arrangements through which such inter-party conflicts could be managed. Given the deteriorating diplomatic relationships between states in this conflict system, it seems unlikely that this mediation process can work. There are three options open: an individual mediation by one of the

states in the system, which is not in conflict with Sudan: a mediation under the direct institutional auspices of IGAD(D); or the introduction of an exogenous mediator from outside the Greater Horn conflict system. The first option cannot work because there is not state within the system with which Sudan enjoys a good relationship. The second is unlikely to work because IGAD lacks the institutional capacity to undertake such a task. The third option has some possibilities in that the so-called friends of IGAD can now play a more direct mediatory role, but would need to be supported by endogenous ones. A different variation which some parties in Sudan have suggested is to bring in South Africa - specifically President Mandela - as mediator.²⁹ South Africa rejected offers to mediate in the Sudan conflict, on the basis that it was already being mediated under the auspices of IGAD. However, President Mandela undertook to mediate the inter-state conflict between Sudan and Uganda. The third option (in whichever variation) bears some possibilities and is one that should be pursued. However, it is a process that should only take place within the context of the entire conflict system, because no solution to the Sudan conflict is likely to work if it spotlights Sudan exclusively and fails to integrate it into the conflict system of which it is a central part.

Uganda Conflict - 1985 Mediation³⁰

Kenya's mediation of the internal conflict in Uganda in 1985 was a welcome departure from traditional OAU approaches to conflict management in Africa. Kenya's mediation was prompted by its need to protect its interest within the conflict system. The mediation proceeded along traditional power bargaining frameworks, in which the parties (Tito Okello's UNLA and Museveni's NRM) bargained about the post-conflict constitutional and military structure of Uganda. The mediation involved only the main Uganda parties to the conflict, and did not involve any

²⁹ See *The East African* (Nairobi), 10-16 March, 1997, p.1.4.

³⁰ See for more details, M. Mwagiru, *The International Management of Internal Conflict in Africa*, op. cit.

of the other actors within the system, except peripherally, Tanzania. There were also no unofficial inputs into the mediation process. Because there was only a sole mediator who was also heterogenous, he laboured under the tensions of self-interest against the more systemic requirements of the system. Signally also, the mediator in this conflict was adversely influenced by various environmental factors, and these rendered the final outcome shortlived.

President Moi's mediation of the Uganda conflict suffered because it also failed signally to address the psychological dimensions of the conflict. He was unable - because he was too passive - to help the Ugandan parties bridge the psychological gap that separated them throughout the conflict and the mediation. As a result, the mediation did not deliver as much as it had originally promised. The Agreement that the parties eventually signed, while it reflected some elements of the power relationships between the parties, settled only the post-conflict power sharing framework, without going into its perceptual dimensions. Its failure to involve other parties within the conflict system meant eventually that the mediation process produced an outcome which nobody else could buy, and which certainly the Ugandan parties could not sell, as their re-entry problems after the mediation clearly demonstrated.

Responses to the Burundi Conflict

The strategies of response to the current conflict in Burundi are interesting in the context of systemic conflict management. They are, in effect, a combination of the responses to the Uganda and Sudan conflicts outlined above. A two-pronged approach to the Burundi conflict is clearly discernible: individual mediation, which is being undertaken by former President Nyerere, and the Great Lakes Heads of State summit which, through its own inputs, has tried to support the Nyerere framework. This is a fresh approach to conflict management within the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system.

The protracted conflict in Burundi, in all its dimensions³¹ predates the end of the Cold War, and has from time to time degenerated into genocide. This conflict is intricately connected to the other conflicts in that region, particularly in Rwanda and Zaire. Clearly therefore, the only management option that has any chance of success is one that addresses the cross-system basis of the conflict. However, peculiarly Burundian dimensions of the conflict must also be addressed. While the Great Lakes heads of state summit addresses the systemic dimension of the conflict, the Nyerere engagement addresses the Burundian internal dimension. There is therefore in place a fairly complex management approach to this conflict.

Nyerere's mediation of the Burundi conflict differs from Moi's mediation of the Uganda conflict because firstly, Nyerere is not a sitting head of state. Thus, although he might also champion Tanzania's interests, this is not within an official context. Secondly, Nyerere has the official blessings of the OAU, and indeed his mediation was undertaken at the OAU's request, although on the understanding that his independence must not be compromised. The mediation itself is being conducted within a power framework, and any leverage that Nyerere can muster is being brought to bear on the process. Nyerere appears more to be power broking than helping the parties search for a mutually negotiated solution. This explains partly why the Burundi government has attacked Nyerere's mediation, and called for a more 'neutral' mediator in the conflict.³²

The Great Lakes heads of state summit bolstered the Nyerere process considerably. The heads of state took the view that the most effective approach to the conflict is to act in concert, and

³¹ See R. Lemarchand 'Burundi in Comparative Perspective: Dimensions of Ethnic Strife' in J. McGarry & B. O'Leary (eds.) *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation* (London & New York: Routledge: 1993) pp.151-171.

³² See 'Top Burundi Officials Defiant Over Sanctions, Dar and Nyerere's Roles' *The East African*, 8-14 September 1997, p. 5.

in this respect they imposed economic sanctions on Burundi³³ in an effort to prompt the government to negotiate with its opponents. The heads of state were also concerned with making a broader statement about conflicts and their causes in the system. They argued against governments which take power extra-constitutionally, and signalled that such processes are unacceptable within the system. The sanctions imposed on Burundi were a fresh approach to sub-regional conflict management. The sanctions were accompanied by stiff conditions, most important being that the Buyoya government negotiate with its opponents and make significant progress towards establishing and institutionalising democratic government in Burundi.

The sanctions have had some effect at least from the perspective of the Burundi government. However, even as they were partially lifted in late April 1997³⁴ there were doubts about whether all the states involved had an equal commitment to their working. But this does not reduce in any way the validity of the experiment, and the fact that sanctions were a viable option and response by the conflict system generally to an internal conflict. Meanwhile Nyerere's mediation does not appear to have made much headway. This may be explained in part by the fact that the conflict underwent a fairly sharp transition³⁵ soon after the mediation started, with Buyoya's *coup d'etat*. The effect was to change the parties to the conflict and thus the basis of the mediation, and hence to change the issues. While some of the issues remain the same, nevertheless the conflict was

³³ Sanctions were imposed on 31 July, 1996. For a commentary on their effect, See the *Dail Nation* (Nairobi), 4 October 1996, p.11; See also the Join Communique Issued by the Fifth Regional Summit on the Burundi Conflict, Issued on 4 September 1997. The text of this is carried in the *East African*, September 8-14, 1997 p. 4.

³⁴ See *The East African* (Nairobi), April 22-27 1997, p.1,6.

³⁵ see M. Ottaway 'Mediation in a Transitional Conflict: Eritrea' in I.W. Zartman (ed.) *Resolving Regional Conflicts: International Perspectives* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1991) pp.69-81.

considerably transformed, and this has serious repercussions for the chances of a successful outcome to the mediation.

Unofficial Conflict Management in the Greater Horn: Some Case Studies

Alongside these efforts at official conflict management, there have been several attempts at unofficial conflict management in the Greater Horn of Africa. These have centred on churches and church organisations, and most of them have been concerned with the Sudan conflict.

WCC/AACC Mediation of the Sudan Conflict³⁶

The 1972 mediation of the Sudan conflict by the WCC/AACC remains the only full blown mediation of a protracted conflict by unofficial actors in the Greater Horn of Africa region. That mediation was possible because no official state actors were willing to be involved in the conflict on the basis that it would constitute interference in the internal affairs of Sudan. Similarly the OAU maintained a hands-off policy due to the same dogmatic interpretation of the Charter. Indeed Haile Selassie who was Chairman of the OAU was not keen on such an engagement because it might have inspired similar approaches being taken with respect to the Eritrea problem. Nevertheless Addis Ababa was offered as a venue acceptable to both parties.

The WCC/AACC were clearly a track two player in this mediation and indeed their very entry and acceptability as mediator was pegged on this identity. It would have been expected that the WCC/AACC would therefore play to advantage those elements of their unofficial identity which would have helped the parties to identify and analyse the sources of their conflict, and on that basis mutually shape the framework of a post-conflict Sudan. Instead, however, the WCC/AACC resorted to the methodologies of track one mediation, and in the end the whole exercise ended up being based on power and bargaining. Eventually, even though the parties signed a Peace Agreement in Addis Ababa, that treaty was based on the balance of the power

³⁶ See H. Assefa, *Mediation in Civil Wars: Approaches and Strategies - The Sudan Conflict* (Boulder Co. Westview Press, 1987).

relationship between the parties. Hence, it was merely a settlement which could not, and indeed did not, endure, even though it lasted for a decade.³⁷ When the conflict in Sudan broke out again in 1983, it was on precisely the same issues which were negotiated in 1972, and thus little progress was made perceptually by the 1972 peace process in Sudan.

The 1972 mediation was conducted on the wrong footing. First, it did not take into account other players within the conflict system, except in a limited way, Ethiopia, which was in any case a reluctant player. Any peace with pretensions of longevity in Sudan must engage all the major actors in the system, much like the IGAD(D) process did. Secondly the 1972 mediation of the Sudan conflict, although a track two process, proceeded much the same way a track one process would have done. This meant that the peculiar strengths of track two diplomacy, like its ability - even calling - to engage the parties on the perceptual and psychological level of their conflict, were not exploited. In that mediation, like in the later one on Uganda, a peace Agreement seems to have been the goal, and it was not thought necessary to undergird the process with a firm psychological foundation. This may be explained by the fact that there was lack of knowledge about the identity, place and role of track two processes and methodologies in conflict management. The end result however was that an otherwise strong and influential third party squandered its potential by trying to be, and to act, like what it clearly was not.

The NCKK in Southern Sudan³⁸

The National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCKK) became engaged in the Sudan conflict during 1990. Its involvement was with the Southern Sudanese, whose main party the SPLA had split up into two factions, one led by John Garang, and the other by

³⁷ In that the current conflict began a decade after the 1972 Agreement. Fissures in that Agreement however began much earlier, not long after its signature. See J.R. Getugi, *Giving Mediation a Chance op. cit.*

³⁸ See M. Mwagiru 'Beyond the OAU: Prospects for Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa' op. cit.; also M. Mwagiru, 'Who will Bell the Cat?...' op. cit.

Riak Marchar. The NCCK engagement as a third party was through facilitation (even though they considered it to be, and described it as a mediation). The idea behind the exercise was to get the two Southern Sudanese factions to agree on a united platform (and identity) on which they would better be able to negotiate with the Khartoum government.

The NCCK was irredeemably an unofficial actor in this process. Indeed its ability to enter into the conflict was based on its character of a track two player. As such, the NCCK had the possibility of adopting a vast repertoire of actions and roles which unofficial parties enjoy. The thrust of such actions is centred especially on the challenge of helping the parties to address the perceptual and psychological dimensions of their conflict through an analytical process rather than engaging in the formalised bargaining of track one power based diplomacy. In the South Sudanese facilitation however, the NCCK like the WCC/AACC before it, acted in the same way that a track one mediator would, and hence supervised a process through which the parties engaged in bargaining about power structures within the South Sudanese factions, and who would hold and enjoy such power. Although some agreement, namely about the exchange of prisoners of war and their safe conduct to release areas was agreed on, the process did not help to alter the views of the parties about each other, much less about their co-existence as a united negotiating front. Indeed the sort of formal agreements that were reached in the course of the facilitation were such that they represented concessions on the basis of the parties' relative power, rather than a meeting of minds on the issues that divided them fundamentally. Hence, although the NCCK exercise in Southern Sudan confronted less broad issues than the WCC/AACC did earlier in 1972, eventually the NCCK also fell into the same problems of ignoring its strengths as an unofficial player. It instead tried to play the type of diplomatic role for which it was eminently unsuited.

Economic and Structural Conflicts: The East African Community

The East African Community was an exercise in functionalism which for a time worked, and even looked like it might endure.

Through the Community the three East African states cooperated in various economic areas, and undertook common services. The political integration that underlay hopes of eventual political community never worked out. In its operations however, the East African community hid many serious structural conflicts, largely because the other two member states felt that Kenya was getting the better deal out of the arrangement. These structural conflicts became exacerbated by deteriorating personal relationships between the three Heads of State, especially after the unseating of President Obote in 1971. These deteriorating relations brought the structural conflicts to the fore, and the East African Community relationship formally ended in 1977.

Although the community broke up in this way, the conflict nevertheless remained, because the issue of the distribution of the assets of the community still needed addressing. The three states agreed to negotiate a solution to that conflict with the help of a mediator, who spent some years engaged in this mediation.³⁹ The bulk of the issues at hand in this exercise was the distribution of the assets of the defunct community. This essentially was a bargaining exercise in which the parties horse-traded about who should retain or acquire which assets. Because the issues were thus clearly delimited, bargaining was an approach that was maybe the most appropriate in this case. Indeed, the exercise more resembled an arbitration than it did a mediation, especially given that the political conflicts underlying the economic ones were outside the remit-and indeed competence - of the mediator.

Some salutary lessons from the East African Community experience appear to have been learnt. Some effort has been made to remove the structural conflict elements of economic cooperation by for example insisting on the principle of equal rather than weighted contributions to the budget. Decision-making has also been less concentrated on the heads of state, on the basis that cooperation should not be held hostage to the

³⁹ See V. Umbricht *Multilateral Mediation: Practical Experiences and Lessons* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1988).

changing personal relations between them. The main problem with the current East African Cooperation arrangements is that there is no provision for a mechanism through which conflicts arising from cooperation can be managed. The argument being floated within the cooperation is that the more areas of cooperation there are, the less there will be conflicts. This is a theoretically coherent argument. However, in practice, and pending the attainment of full integration, there will be many conflicts and especially structural conflicts that will arise. Some mechanism for their management ought to be emplaced, otherwise the whole cooperation structure could collapse yet again.

Conflicts within and between Political Parties

The period since the end of the Cold War has witnessed the growth of political parties within the East African states. This is certainly a healthy development, and a useful aspect of the whole democratisation project. However, the proliferation of political parties has not been matched by mechanisms through which conflicts within and between these political parties can be managed. By their very nature, the operation of political parties generates conflicts. These conflicts are both structural and violent. On the other hand, the continued refusal by governments in power - this is clearly the case on Kenya - to envisage cooperative relationships with political parties can lead to the sabotage of regional cooperation mechanisms, because political parties can withdraw their legislative support for regional cooperative programmes that need approval of parliament. On a regional level, the East African Cooperation has made some institutional headway by putting in place a committee of parliamentarians from the three countries, who are constantly appraised about the work of the commission. The idea behind this is that eventually, when cooperation measures require ratification in the various parliaments, they will find a ready audience, and one which understands the issues.

This is a useful mechanism. However, it requires to be supported by mechanisms through which political parties can

manage inter an intra-party conflicts.⁴⁰ The currently preferred methodology of conflict management within political parties has been litigation, which is not the most effective approach. At best, it only settles the conflicts and does not go to their sources as the experiences of FORD-K, Ford Asili and the DP have shown. Arbitration has also been attempted, but the problem with arbitration in this context is that its effects are eventually similar to those of litigation. The parties in Kenya have talked about mediation, but this is yet to be put in place. The mediation option is one which should be supported and encouraged, especially in as far as it might lead to resolution of the inter-party conflicts.

Mediation as the Dominant Mode of Conflict Management Practice

What emerges clearly from the foregoing accounts of conflict management practices in the Greater Horn of Africa is that mediation is the most widely preferred - indeed dominant - mode of conflict management. This is not surprising, and is in keeping with conflict management choice making internationally.⁴¹ But although mediation as a conflict management practice has been preferred in this way, most of its practices in the Greater Horn of Africa region have faltered. These will be examined below. At this point, it should be noted that there has been a confusion between mediation proper, and mediation-like activities. This has meant that where such activities have been attempted, the practice has not been properly conceptualised, and this has in turn militated against successful outcomes. Surrounding this is the related problem of what actually constitutes a successful outcome to mediation.

⁴⁰ See M. Mwagiru & S. Wanjala, 'Conflict Management between and within Political Parties' (paper prepared for the Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Organisation *Seminar for Political Parties Leaders*, Arusha, Tanzania, 12-16 February 1996).

⁴¹ See J. Bercovitch 'International Mediation' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28 (1991) pp.3-6; also Bercovitch 'The Structure and Diversity of Mediation in International Relations' in Bercovitch & Rubin (eds.) *Mediation in International Relations* op. cit., pp.1-29.

Currently the 'success' indexes' in vogue such as that by Bercovitch⁴² and Kriesberg's modification⁴³ suggest that almost any mediation effort will result in some form of success, either full, or partial. This is unsatisfactory, because for proper judgements to be made about mediation there needs to be a fairly clear cut criteria of success or failure.

The major problem with conflict management practices generally in the Greater Horn, and mediation in particular, has been the inability to see the process in the context of a wider conflict system. This has especially been the case with those mediations undertaken individually, such as Kenya's mediation of the Uganda conflict in 1985. Perceiving the management process within the context of the conflict system enables wider parties and interests in the conflict to be accommodated, and hence to reach a solution that is mutually supported throughout the conflict system. But it also presents its own conceptual and practical problems of management. The first problem concerns the identity of the third parties involved, and how these relate to the conflict, and the mediation. Traditionally, two types of third parties are recognised: exogenous and endogenous. While the former comes from outside the conflict, the latter comes from within it. This traditional categorisation of third party is not satisfactory when seen in terms of a conflict system. Within a conflict system a third category of mediator, namely a heterogeneous one is discernible. Such mediator possesses both endogenic and exogenic characteristics.⁴⁴ In terms of practical mediation this means that such a mediator is psychologically unable to "keep a distance" from the conflict because s(he) is

⁴² See J. Bercovitch, *Social Conflict and Third Parties: Strategies of Conflict Resolution* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1984), p.114.

⁴³ L. Kriesberg, 'Formal and Quasi-Mediators in International Disputes: An Exploratory Analysis' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28 (1991) pp.19-27:20.

⁴⁴ See M. Mwagiru, 'Mediation in Internal Conflict: The Uganda Peace Process, 1985' *East African Journal of Peace and Human Rights*, Vol. 3, No.2 (1997) - forthcoming.

also an integral part of it. This certainly poses serious challenges to the basis for impartiality in mediation as articulated most forcefully by Touval.⁴⁵

This kind of problem was evident in Kenya's mediation of the Uganda conflict where President Moi was unable, because of his heterogenic characteristics, to distance himself from the Ugandan parties and issues, thus adversely affecting the outcome of the mediation. Similarly the IGAD(D) mediation of the Sudan conflict has also been affected by this triple identity of the mediators, and this has affected not only inter-mediator relationships, but also those between the mediators individually, and the Sudanese parties. The peculiar problems that heterogenous mediators face is one of the outstanding problems of conflict management in the Horn Africa conflict system, and one which calls for careful and detailed study.

A second problem relates to intra-mediator conflicts, and there are two levels to this problem. The first concerns conflicts between the party/parties in conflict, and the mediator(s). The second concerns conflicts between the mediators themselves. Where the mediators' relations with one or other of the conflicting parties are tense, and even hostile, this reduces the prospects for a successful outcome. Similarly where the relations between the mediators themselves are hostile they will be unable to deliver the concentration on the issues required to generate successful outcomes. This has clearly been the case with the multilateral IGAD(D) mediation of the Sudan conflict, where deteriorating relations between some mediators like Uganda and Eritrea and Sudan have not promised much for the mediation. On the other hand, hostile relations between some mediators like Kenya and Uganda have adversely affected their ability to work in concert as mediators. Clearly, a supporting mechanism by which these intra and inter-mediator conflicts can be managed needs to be designed and put in place if the kind of multilateral conflict management effected by IGAD(D) is to have any chance of

⁴⁵ J. Touval. "Biased Intermediaries: Theoretical and Historical Considerations" *Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1 (1975) pp.51-70.

success. A similar problem dogged the heads of state management of the Zaire conflict, at least in as far as the Nairobi initiative was concerned. That initiative was put in place by Kenya which summoned the first and subsequent summits in Nairobi. It soon became clear however, that there were fundamental fissures within the process, which became more pronounced with the expansion of the Heads of state group to include especially the Southern African countries of Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. In the third summit some heads of state who should have been invited were not, and some who were invited declined to attend, and this effectively put an end to that initiative. The 'handing over' of the process to the OAU in Lome was diplomatic-speak for admitting the failure of the process.

A third major problem with conflict management in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system - and of mediation generally - is that the institutional mechanisms for conflict management and mediation are very weak. This is especially the case with the OAU itself, and with sub-regional institutions such as IGAD. While the OAU has tried to address this problem through the creation of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution,⁴⁶ that arrangement has several shortcomings. Its philosophical foundations mean that it cannot, conceptually, reach beyond the Charter; its hiring mechanisms are (perhaps understandably) subject to the OAU's bureaucratic policies and politics; and it is unable to conceptualise the content of some functions it sees as primary to its existence, such as designing an early warning system. The problem with this latter is that because conceptually early warning is still undefined, the mechanism may be asking the wrong questions, hence getting the wrong answers, and therefore not getting the business done. The notion of early warning goes beyond having a 'new' control room, and requires also a serious analytical input.

IGAD on the other hand now has a conflict management mandate, and a department specifically concerned with this. But

⁴⁶ See M. Mwagiru 'The Organisation of African Unity and the Management of Internal Conflict in Africa' op. cit. for an analysis of this Mechanism.

its relations with the OAU need to be sharply defined, if only to avoid duplication and buck-passing at crucial moments, like the UN and OAU are wont to do on (serious) occasion. With IGAD too, there is a need for serious recruitment policies, and not civil service exercises under the guise of hiring projects. For both the OAU and IGAD, conflict management is not something to be improvised about: just as people with some knowledge of biology do not get hired as doctors, so too should people not be hired as conflict analysts just because they have a nodding acquaintance with conflict issues. This problem is also reflected within government departments and foreign ministries. Because they do not employ conflict specialists, this tells on some of the policies and approaches adopted on conflict management within the system.

One of the most problematic aspects of conflict management in the Greater Horn system is the undefined role of exogenous third parties such as the United Nations. This may stem in part from the redefinition of its role which the end of the Cold War occasioned. But apart from this general problem, there is also the issue that the United Nations and other exogenous actors such as the European states seem to be locked in their own conceptual prisons when it comes to issues of conflict management. In the Greater Horn for example, the character and tenor of discourse of some of the conflicts and their actors has changed considerably after the Cold War, and these need to be approached in quite different ways from the approaches in vogue during the Cold War. The conflicts in Zaire and Rwanda for example are protracted, and are based on serious structural problems which, while they could be swept away under the carpet during the Cold War, cannot be treated in that way now. Further, the change in discourse about conflict and development after the Cold War means that these conflicts require more than just quick fixes to manage them. Exogenous third parties can contribute more effectively by supporting conflict management efforts in the system rather than taking over. A ripe moment will always present itself for their involvement as it currently has in the Sudan conflict, where the exogenous actors (like friends of IGAD) should now play

a more direct role in nudging the peace process forward. This is the trend the OAU should have followed in Zaire conflict. Instead of having kept a low profile until the Lome meeting, the OAU seemed to want to rush to have a mediation - any mediation - perhaps in the desperation to record some success in post-Cold War continental conflict management.

One of the emerging trends in conflict management in the Greater Horn that is interesting is the rise of what might be termed semi-exogenous third parties. These are African third parties who belong to a different but not necessarily overlapping conflict system. They are not completely exogenous because they are from within Africa and are members of the OAU. South Africa in its involvement in the Zaire conflict is such a third party. Perhaps because it is not from the conflict system, the parties in conflict found South Africa acceptable as a mediator. Perhaps this is also so because South Africa was not perceived to have the same sort (usually negative and selfish) of interests in the conflict, or even the leverage exogenous and especially western ones have in the conflict. This is a significant development and one which should be explored more carefully to examine if it holds any promise for African conflict management. If this is the beginning of a trend, then it means that conflict managers within one system, and particularly mediators, will be searched for from other conflict systems in Africa. This would be a very significant development. It is also one which calls for analysis in terms of sub-regional peacekeeping of the type ECOWAS has been engaged in. Although it would bring about (not insurmountable) problems of logistics, it might suggest that peacekeepers in one conflict system should be drawn from a different one. The implications of this especially for the coordinating role of the OAU are vast and important.

Surrounding all these issues, is the question of the OAU Charter and its ability to respond with flexibility to conflicts, for example the current ones in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. Although OAU heads of state and government evaluated the role of the organisation after the Cold War, they said nothing about the Charter and the need for its amendment to

reflect the changed structures of international relations after the Cold War. Clearly, some of the doctrines underlying the OAU Charter, while they might have been valid in a Cold war context, have been overtaken by events, and even outlived their usefulness. The doctrine on non-interference as enshrined in article 3 (2) of the Charter is one such. The doctrine of *uti possidetis* is another. Developments and conflicts especially within the Greater Horn have demonstrated that the strict non-interference doctrine has at best a very truncated role in contemporary international relations and diplomacy. The doctrine of *uti possidetis juris* too, strictly interpreted, ignores the fact that the wish to alter territorial borders cannot be checked by the Charter against the will of citizens. This was the case in Eritrean succession which *ipso facto* entailed a re-ordering the territorial borders of Ethiopia. It is also the case in Sudan, where promises of autonomy and secession have led some Southern factions to sign a peace treaty with the Sudanese government. The OAU Charter needs to be amended in order to reflect international political and diplomatic reality. Current heads of state of the OAU are unlikely to accede to this necessity, but this should not preclude pressure in that direction.

One of the issues surrounding conflict management and the role of third parties is the problem of ripe moments for third party intervention. The literature on ripe moments⁴⁷ holds that third party intervention which takes place before the moment is ripe (i.e. for the conflictants *and the conflict*) is unlikely to succeed. This was for instance what ailed Jimmy Carter's attempt

⁴⁷ See For example, I.W. Zartman 'Ripening Conflict, Ripe Moments, Formula and Mediation' in D.B. Bendahmane & J.W. McDonald (eds) *Perspectives on Negotiations: Four Case Studies and Interpretation* (Washington: Foreign Service Institute, 1986) pp.205-227; Zartman, 'Alternative Attempts at Crisis Management: Concepts and Processes' in G.R. Winham (ed) *New Issues in International Crisis Management* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1988) pp.199-223. For an excellent summary See C.R. Mitchell, 'The Right Moment: Notes for Four Models of "Ripeness" Paradigms, Vol. 9 (1995) pp. 38-52.

to mediate in the Eritrean conflict in 1990. This issue of ripe moments is especially pertinent for the Greater Horn of Africa. In the Zaire conflict for example, much noise was made about the difficulties and reluctance of Mobutu and Kabila to agree to negotiations. In their obsession with having a negotiation take place the UN, OAU and the United States failed to read the pattern of the conflict. Clearly, neither Mobutu nor Kabila perceived the moment to be right for negotiation. There did not exist a hurting stalemate, and both parties considered that they could settle the conflict on the military track. In the absence of such a stalemate - a plateau - they were unlikely to want to negotiate seriously; and if such negotiations were coerced, they would have been unlikely to make much headway. But, locked in their conceptual prisons, neither the UN nor the OAU seemed able to appreciate this.

Outstanding Issues of Conflict Management in the Greater Horn

The ability of actors within the system to approach individual conflicts as an integral part of a conflict system is one of the most encouraging developments in the Greater Horn of African conflict system. That approach was evident in the mediatory responses to the Sudan conflict, with respect to the Burundi conflict, and in the conflict in Zaire. Although response to the latter through the Nairobi peace process was not ultimately successful, nevertheless the fact that leaders within the system appreciated the interlocking interests and actors concerned with that conflict, was a particularly significant development.

The Nairobi peace process showed quite clearly, as did the IGAD(D) mediation in the Sudan conflict and Kenya's mediation of the Uganda conflict, that third parties are always susceptible to diplomatic, political, bureaucratic and other influences, and that these can adversely affect the ability of the third party to play a constructive role. Yet it seems that third parties are prone within this region, to jumping into conflicts from the deep end, without taking these influences into account. In other words, while the dynamics of conflict systems appear to be

appreciated and taking root, those of mediation systems are not. This means ultimately, that the earlier stages of systemic conflict management will always promise more than they deliver in this conflict system. And clearly this is what ailed the Nairobi peace process and what still ails the IGAD mediation of the Sudan conflict.

Although as was noted in the case studies there have been some track two conflict management efforts in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system, these have been few, have been inadequately - or even wrongly - done, and have not been related to, nor cooperated with, track one approaches. None of the track one approaches have engaged unofficial tracks in their management processes, and this has been reciprocated in full measure by track two conflict management initiatives. There is quite evidently a lack of a structure for cooperation between these two tracks, and frameworks for such cooperation need to be conceptualised and eventually operationalised. In order to make a practical difference to conflict management within the conflict system, such cooperative relationships need to be institutionalised.

An issue related to this is that there is a problem of lack of knowledge within track one and track two approaches. The sources of this problem - apart from the clear need for training - is that track one actors treat unofficial actors with feelings bordering on contempt. Track two players on the other hand view track one as incompetent. This is clearly a case of diplomacies in conflict, which needs to be resolved urgently if conflict management within the system is to prosper. In the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system for example, there is an abundance of both track one and track two players on the ground, each professing to be taking action and initiatives which would help settle or resolve the various conflicts.⁴⁸ But these two viewpoints never merge, and inputs from one track are never

⁴⁸ See a discussion of the role of relief agencies in these regions, in Africa Rights, *Humanitarianism Unbound? Current Dilemmas Facing Multi-Mandate Relief Operations in Political Emergencies* (London: Africa Rights - Discussion Paper No.5, November, 1994).

shared or strengthened by those from the other. This is a sorry state of affairs indeed, and it denies conflict management efforts in this region important sources of cooperation and creativity.

Within both track one and track two conflict management exercises in the Greater Horn - as the case studies show quite graphically - there is an unfortunate pre-occupation with bargaining and its associated structures. Bargaining as a method of mediation is an approach deeply embedded in the psyche of official, state actors. These use their roles and conflict management functions entirely within a power political framework. Eventually also, it must be admitted that such structures are necessary especially when finally consolidating the outcome of peace processes.⁴⁹ But alone, bargaining structures are not sufficient to create an enduring outcome. Hence track two mediation methodologies and philosophies with their preoccupation with perceptual, psychological and legitimacy components of conflict management, need to be involved within conflict management activities in the system. This perspective again harkens to the need for institutionalised cooperation between official and unofficial conflict management activities. There is really no way out if enduring outcomes - and resolution are to be contemplated.

Finally, no peace process should end at the negotiating table. Conflict, if followed by peace, requires also that the peace itself be nurtured. Hence there is a pressing need for peace management approaches to be considered as an integral component of conflict management. In the Greater Horn of Africa region, peace management has not been treated with the same urgency as conflict management has. Perhaps this is because of the high profile that conflict management involves. However, it needs to be emphasised that the relatively boring activities that peace management entails - systems of continuous negotiation at the grassroots level; replacing peace structures in local

⁴⁹ See for example P.R. Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

communities: training citizens right from the grassroots on conflict, its management and processes: designing confidence building measures that can be used to bridge perceptual and psychological gaps between communities in conflict, and between those whose relations are based on long running structural conflict - are a crucial component of a working peace system. The Greater Horn of Africa system especially requires such structures of peace management. Eventually, regional and other conflict systems need to be transformed into peace systems, and this is the ultimate challenge for conflict managers and analysts.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to draw up an anatomy of conflict management in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. In this quest, it has described and analysed the predominant patterns, practices and strategies of official and unofficial conflict management within this conflict system. The paper argued at the outset that the beginning point in approaching this task is to conceptualise the various conflicts in the Greater Horn as belonging to the same conflict system.

It was noted that although there are diverse actors and strategies of conflict management in the Greater Horn, the dominant mode and practice of conflict management is that of mediation. Some of the mediation activities that have taken place in different conflicts within the system were examined, and the problems these have given rise to enumerated. The paper has also underlined some of the outstanding problems of conflict management, which have arisen from not learning properly the lessons of systemic conflict management.

The Greater Horn of Africa conflict system has been marked by severe protracted conflicts since independence. Some of these run their course before they are transformed and begin again. But there are many more which are latent, and which are fuelled by underlying structures which generate structural conflict, and frequently erupt into violent conflict. Conflict management if it is creative, can provide mechanisms for the management of these. However, the concern of conflict managers, and others

communities: training citizens right from the grassroots on conflict, its management and processes: designing confidence building measures that can be used to bridge perceptual and psychological gaps between communities in conflict, and between those whose relations are based on long running structural conflict - are a crucial component of a working peace system. The Greater Horn of Africa system especially requires such structures of peace management. Eventually, regional and other conflict systems need to be transformed into peace systems, and this is the ultimate challenge for conflict managers and analysts.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to draw up an anatomy of conflict management in the Greater Horn of Africa conflict system. In this quest, it has described and analysed the predominant patterns, practices and strategies of official and unofficial conflict management within this conflict system. The paper argued at the outset that the beginning point in approaching this task is to conceptualise the various conflicts in the Greater Horn as belonging to the same conflict system.

It was noted that although there are diverse actors and strategies of conflict management in the Greater Horn, the dominant mode and practice of conflict management is that of mediation. Some of the mediation activities that have taken place in different conflicts within the system were examined, and the problems these have given rise to enumerated. The paper has also underlined some of the outstanding problems of conflict management, which have arisen from not learning properly the lessons of systemic conflict management.

The Greater Horn of Africa conflict system has been marked by severe protracted conflicts since independence. Some of these run their course before they are transformed and begin again. But there are many more which are latent, and which are fuelled by underlying structures which generate structural conflict, and frequently erupt into violent conflict. Conflict management if it is creative, can provide mechanisms for the management of these. However, the concern of conflict managers, and others

engaged in the discourse about conflict. should be with the conflict generating structures and the structural violence they give birth to. This essentially. is a project of peace management. After conflict managers have laid down their tools. it is structures and processes of peace management which will drag the Horn of Africa to the twenty first century. Conflict management. if it is creative and effective enough. must lead ineluctably to defining the project of peace management.

* * *