

NAI NEWSLETTER

22 November 2004

WITH FOCUS ON THE AFRICAN UNION AND NIGERIA

THE AFRICAN UNION – GOOD NEWS FROM AFRICA?

While the Afro-pessimism dominating the media reports on the continent still finds enough evidence and reason to nourish deep-rooted reservations, policy makers on the continent have also recently showed new initiatives to overcome the stereotypes they are confronted with. The NEPAD blue print has formulated a policy catalogue, which emphasises the need for good governance, democracy and the respect for human rights as substantive ingredients for sustainable economic growth and development. The African Union (AU) has adopted a Constitutive Act, which for the first time offers the Heads of States at their summits the power to decide upon intervention in another African country in cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Until recently, and in contrast to this new reading, national sovereignty and non-intervention had been a holy principle not to be touched upon within the community of African states. The handling of the Darfur crisis and the way to go about an intervention will be an important test case for future interventions by Africans in African affairs.

As the strengthening and/or creation of other institutions as additional tools for the AU suggests, the political will to support the notion of good governance is gaining ground. The appointment of eight commissioners within the AU enhances responsibility and a pro-active tendency. The establishment of the African Court of Justice signals a similar will. So does the newly created Pan-African Parliament opened in South Africa a few weeks ago. Along similar lines, the creation of the Peace and Security Council and the expanded competencies for the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights as well as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights/Human Rights Court are part of an emerging new map. Its co-ordinates place more prominence and emphasis on aspects of a profound human rights oriented political culture.

Sceptics might argue that so far this is mainly window dressing and lacks any indication of being seriously implemented. Optimists would counter this reservation by emphasising that the institutional set ups are a necessary first step, which creates the conditions to implement new policies and enhance the consolidation of values, concepts and norms aiming into the right direction.

The latest litmus test for the AU is not Zimbabwe (which continues to remain a challenge and will emerge as a new test case with the elections in early 2005) or other kleptocratic regimes under despotic rule. It is much more so the

handling of the Darfur crisis and the way to go about an intervention by Africans into African affairs as a matter of principle in the future.

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USEFUL WEBSITES:

<http://www.allafrica.com>

<http://allafrica.com/nepad/>

USEFUL ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS:

Melber, Henning. *South Africa and NePAD – Quo Vadis?* 2004.

<http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000682/index.php>

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Melber, Henning. *The G8 and the NePAD :more than an elite pact?* Leipzig: University of Leipzig, 2004. ULPA – University of Leipzig papers on Africa ; 74

Meles Zenawi, Kifle Abraham. *NEPAD*. Addis Ababa: Ethiopian International Institute for Peace & Development, 2004. EIIPD occasional policy papers ; 19

Karuombe, Barney. *NEPAD: a new partnership between rider and horse?* [Windhoek]: LaRRI, 2003

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): internal and external visions / Rachel Hayman, Kenneth King, Simon McGrath (editors). Edinburgh: Center of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, 2003

NIGERIA: DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS ON REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

As Africa's demographic giant and one of its most endowed countries in relation to oil and natural resources, Nigeria has been thrust forward as a natural leader of the continent. The euphoria that greeted the country's independence in October 1960, was in part due to the expectation that given the country's vast economic potential and strategic assets, it would play a historic role in the quest for African unity and development, as well as the continent's meaningful participation in global affairs. Although Nigeria took up the challenge of regional leadership, it has since met with mixed fortunes, largely as a result of domestic constraints and the realities of the power relations in the world. After the return to democracy in 1999, the country has however returned to a place of reckoning in the international community.

The evidence suggests that Nigeria's effectiveness as a regional power continues to be limited by its daunting domestic challenges. These include the high expectations among the over 120 million Nigerians for "democracy dividends" in the form of greater access to power, employment, infrastructural development, better conditions of living, and the conflictive relations between various groups: ethnic, communal and religious, over access to power and shrinking resources. The adoption of certain economic policies, particularly the increase in the price of refined petroleum products has been a socially sensitive issue leading to national strikes by a coalition of organised labour and civil society groups. The combination of the struggle for the control of oil by armed ethnic minority youth militia in the Niger Delta, the agitation by civil society to prevent further increases in the price of petrol, communal and sectarian violence either involving indigenes versus settlers or Christians versus Moslems have continued to fuel tension or violence. Also, demands for political restructuring and socially sensitive economic reform policies constitute formidable domestic challenges that limit Nigeria's capacity to play an effective leadership role in Africa. Without that capacity, Nigeria's leadership role in Africa and beyond, will for the foreseeable future be largely affected by the ability of the present democratic government to manage the country's complex pluralities, resolve its daunting domestic challenges, and fully realise its widely recognised potential as a regional power.

Please find attached the paper "Nigeria: Democracy on Trial" by Cyril Obi. Obi is Senior Research Fellow, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Visiting Researcher, Nordic Africa Institute, and 2004 Claude Ake Visiting Professor, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, University of Uppsala. The full article is attached to this Newsletter as a word document.

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USEFUL WEBSITES:

Nigeria Web: <http://odili.net/nigeria.html>
Nigeria world : <http://nigeriaworld.com/>

USEFUL NAI PUBLICATION:

Agbu, Osita. *Ethnic militias and the threat to democracy in post-transition Nigeria*.
Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2004. Research report No. 127
Available for free download through:
<http://www.nai.uu.se/webbshop/ShopGB/index.html>

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS IN THE NAI LIBRARY:

Obi, Cyril I. *The oil paradox: reflections on the violent dynamics of petro-politics and (mis)governance in Nigeria's Niger Delta*. Leipzig: University of Leipzig, 2004.
ULPA – University of Leipzig papers on Africa ; 73

Indigenous political struggles and governance in Nigeria / Ed. by Olufemi
Vaughan. Ibadan: Bookcraft, 2004

Oloko, Sarah B. A. *Educating Nigeria's youth for positive leadership: present
challenges, future promises*. Lagos: Centre for Social Science Research &
Development, 2004. Positive leadership monograph series; 1

Civil society and ethnic conflict management in Nigeria / Ed. by Thomas A.
Imobighelbadan. Nigeria: Spectrum books, 2003

Testing democracy: political violence in Nigeria. Human Rights Watch – Africa
1079232515:9A; 2003

MORE ABOUT DARFUR AND BURUNDI

BOOKS ABOUT DARFUR

Short-Cut to Decay. The Case of the Sudan. (Eds.) Sharif Harir and Terje Tvedt
Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute, 1994
With focus on the southern Sudan and the background analysis of the ethno-
political conflict and the regional cultural factors in Darfur. The book is still a
very valuable reference source even though it was published in 1994.

Rolandson, Oystein. *Guerrilla Government. Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute. Jan 2005; (Draft version available for journalists in November 2004)

This important study takes as its principal reference point the National Convention of 1994, does much to clarify the issues in Southern Sudan and provides a valuable case study of guerrilla government, that will be of much wider relevance.

THE BURUNDI PEACE PROCESS – DELAYED BUT CONTINUED

The Burundi Peace Process has met a number of setbacks. The ambition to have all political parties involved have demanded more time than envisaged in the Arusha Peace Agreement. But the chances for a durable solution will hopefully be enhanced.

According to the Arusha Peace Agreement, signed in August 2000 and implemented on 1st November 2001, the three-years transitional period was supposed to have come to an end on 31st October this year. The transition has however been prolonged with a six months' period, all with the blessing of the parties involved, including the regional Heads of States. Incumbent Transitional Head of State, President Domitien Ndayizeye remains in his position. A timetable for a referendum on a new Constitution (22/12 2004), as well as Communal (23/2 2005), National (Parliamentary) (9/3 2005) and Presidential (22/4 2005) elections has been set.

Differences still exist between the two main political families concerning the interpretation of the power sharing arrangements stipulated in the Arusha Agreement, but a door to a compromise is open. Hopes for progress have increased with the appointment of Frédéric Ngenzebuhoro as vice-president. He is known as a man of dialogue also among his political opponents. He replaces Alphonse Marie Kadege, generally considered less flexible than his successor.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

http://www.burundirealite.org/burundi/news_f.cfm

http://www.jeuneafrique.com/pays.asp?pays_id=28

<http://www.crisisweb.org/home/index.cfm?id=1172&l=1>

http://www.irinnews.org/frontpage.asp?SelectRegion=Great_Lakes&SelectCountry=Burundi

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NEW NAI PUBLICATION:

Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. *From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of Congo* Second and Revised Edition. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute. Current African Issues 28, Dec 2004. Available for free download through:

<http://www.nai.uu.se/webbshop/ShopGB/index.html>

News about DRC: In this publication you find an updated analyses of the situation in DRC based on the developments in the past ten years written by on of the best informed persons on that country.

EVENTS CALENDER**NOVEMBER 2004:**

Nov 26-27: 10th francophonie summit in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Nov 29–Dec 3: Delegates of parties to the 1997 Anti-Personell Mine Convention to meet for the first review conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

Nov 30: mandate of UN operations in Burundi to expire, unless renewed.

DECEMBER 2004:

Parliamentary elections to be held in the Sudan.

Dec 1–2: Parliamentary and presidential elections in Mozambique.

Dec 4: Second round of presidential elections in Niger.

Dec 7 (28): First and second round of parliamentary and presidential elections in Ghana.

JANUARY 2005:

Jan 1: Tanzania enters its first year of a two-year term as a non-permanent member in the UN Security Council.

Jan 1: Angola enters its second year of a two-year term as a non-permanent member in the UN Security Council.

Jan 30: Parliamentary and presidential elections in Central African Republic.

COMMENTS ON THE NEWSLETTER ARE WELCOME

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