



The Bulletin

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The Niger Delta Region: Natural Resources as Causes of Conflict in Africa

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When livelihoods are undermined, the environment degraded and communities displaced in an attempt to reach a highly valuable resource, the result is often insecurity and conflict. Competing actors may struggle to gain control of the resource or share in its proceeds. The situation is exacerbated when a nation relies on the resource as its major source of revenue. Nigeria's Niger Delta region provides a classic example of how dependence on a resource combined with lack of sustainable development can leave communities more vulnerable to disease, poverty and insecurity.



Credit: Lt Col Rudolph Attalah The livelihoods of millions of people depend on quality water resources.

Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer. The nation's revenues are oil-dependent and the government exercises tight economic and political control over oil resources. Most of Nigeria's oil comes from the Niger Delta region, which is one of the world's largest wetlands. Despite this, the Niger Delta is one of the poorest and least developed parts of the nation, characterized by years of environmental degradation and pollution caused by oil exploration activities, oil spills and gas flaring. The livelihood of the population is threatened. Streams and water supplies have been polluted, fish are no longer edible and farmlands have been destroyed. Social problems include underdevelopment, negative health effects such as a high incidence of cancer, unemployment and poverty. The poverty and frustration has led to the evolution of militia groups, angered by inequities in the distribution of oil revenues and years of corruption.

The groups' demands include recognition, resource control, provision of social amenities, employment opportunities, oil concessions

and compensation for past environmental degradation. The militia groups have resorted to violence to ensure that their demands are met. Recently, they claimed responsibility for attacks on oil facilities, car bombings and abduction of oil workers. The attacks have led to a decrease in the nation's oil production. The government's response has been to adopt forceful measures, such as police and military intervention, rather than address the root causes of the conflict — namely the failure to achieve sustainable development, the lack of inclusion of communities in resource planning and inequities in the distribution of oil wealth and corruption. With the advent of presidential elections in 2007, the region has become increasingly volatile as political groups canvass militia groups to further their political agendas.

As noted by Philippe Le Billon in his article "Fueling War? Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts," "conflict is facilitated because extractive resources are [...] highly amenable to taxing and looting" and are "easily accessible to governments and rebels alike with minimal bureaucratic infrastructure." Furthermore, he notes that the "nature and geography of resources play a crucial role in conflicts." Thus, proceeds from resources may be used to further conflict situations when the resource is easily accessible and not confined to a specific location. Illegal oil bunkering, a phrase used to describe the theft of crude oil, has provided militant groups in the Niger Delta with funds to purchase weapons. In Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo, resources such as diamonds, coltan and timber financed both government forces and rebel groups.

African nations need to tackle corruption, unemployment and weak governance systems as a step towards avoiding environment-related conflicts. Meaningful dialogue on resource control between the governments and community groups should be initiated. Resource extraction companies and governments need to adopt transparency and accountability measures in their processes. There is also the need for governments to diversify exports, and shift labor and resources to other revenue generating activities, such as the manufacturing or agricultural sectors, so as to lessen dependence on a single resource.

In this Issue

Focus	1-3
Environment and Security in Africa	
The Niger Delta Region: Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa	
Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa: Triggers for Increasing Instability	
Environmental Security Hotspots in Africa	
Annotated Bibliography	
Community Chapter News	4-5
Piracy in the Horn of Africa Project	
Policy Corner	6
Environment and Security Linkages in Africa	
African Voice	7
Security Implications of Water Shortages in Botswana	
Africa Center Highlights	8
Ambassador Chaveas Named Africa Center Director	
Small Arms and Light Weapons Workshop Addresses Proliferation in West Africa	
Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea Ministerial Conference	

Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa: Triggers for Increasing Instability

by Keith Millar

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Global surface temperatures rose 0.5 degrees Celsius in the 20th century – the largest increase in 1,000 years. Six of the hottest years have all occurred since 1998. According to climate experts that trend will continue as greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels build up in the atmosphere. Without action to cut these emissions we will warm our world another 2-3 degrees Celsius within 50 years. Although everyone will be affected, the poorest countries will suffer earliest and Africa will stand out for its vulnerability.

The consequences deriving from higher temperatures, wildly fluctuating precipitation and sea level rise are already being felt in Africa and will continue to intensify. The impact of adverse climate changes will be exacerbated by the lack of adapting strategies, which are limited due to institutional, economic and financial capacity. Africa watchers should now look, instinctively, beyond the political and military dynamics that have defined regional insecurity in the past and examine the growing influence of critical environmental factors in precipitating disruptive events, contributing directly or indirectly to conflict and crisis. In short, we must redefine 'security.'

Given that a majority of Africans depend on the land for their livelihood, climate change and its impact on agriculture is crucial to the survival of the continent and its people. Food production systems, already under stress, will experience greater difficulty in accumulating food reserves. The chance of major drought occurring has already doubled from once every six years to once every three. One-third of the region has an annual rainfall of less than 700mm – the absolute limit to sustain long-term rain-fed crop production. With desertification affecting nearly half of Africa's land area, water sources are becoming more distant and harder to locate for many rural Africans. Subsistence farmers are already being forced into areas with poorer soils and rainfall, where yields are lower.

Throughout Africa, the natural resource base is steadily deteriorating, with some of the world's highest rates of soil degradation and loss of forests, pastures, wetlands and wildlife populations. Ninety percent of Africans use biological resources for food, shelter, medicine (herbal) and income. Nevertheless, in the future, there may be fewer alternatives or options to compensate. Millions of people's livelihoods may be affected and national economic growth could stagnate as a result of repeated crop and livestock losses. Sea level rise and floods also threaten public and private infrastructure with the potential for enormous losses. Communications, transport, and commerce would all be affected. Poorer communities will suffer most, with fewer financial reserves to re-locate or to re-build.

Competition over diminishing and increasingly valuable bio-resources will lead to more environment-related instability resulting

from either scarcity conflict, arising over renewable resources that can be physically seized or controlled, or group identity conflicts, caused by large-scale movement of populations brought about by environmental change. The continent's uncontrolled population growth, combined with some of the highest rural fertility rates in the world, will add severe pressures to countries already too poor to provide basic services, and accelerate damage to landscapes stressed and depleted by global warming. Poverty will increase and poor people will be more susceptible to extreme climatic events, economic fluctuations and civil strife.

Global warming is perhaps the greatest long-term threat to the continent. Aggressive mitigation measures of greenhouse gas emissions are crucial if long-term environmental and climatic changes are to be averted. Ultimately, however, for a problem created by the industrialised world, it is a cruel irony that the region least equipped to deal with the potential effects - and which generates only 3.5% of global emissions itself - may have the most to lose. The future development of strategies to address African security issues will need to reflect this new reality.

The views expressed are those of the author and not of the UK Ministry of Defense.

Environmental Security Hotspots in Africa

by Dr. Anthony Turton

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The notion of environment and security is best encapsulated within the human security discourse, which seeks to build security from below by focusing on three core issue-areas. These are best defined as:

- Freedom from want, which translates into a need for economic development that ensures household livelihood security.
- Freedom from fear, which translates into a system with checks and balances ensuring social justice and the rule of law at all levels of society.
- Freedom from hazard impact, which translates into the need for safety nets when segments of society are exposed to extreme events.

These issues are best illustrated by two simple case studies, which can be thought of as environmental security hotspots in Africa.

The first case study concentrates on the rapid environmental changes occurring in the Lake Chad River Basin. This endoreic river basin – the largest of ten inland drainage basins in Africa – is home to 30 million people. The basin is hydrologically complex, fed by both perennial and ephemeral rivers, with a delicate balance between stream flow and water level. Given that endoreic river systems do not flow into the sea, water evaporates from a terminal



Credit: Lt Col Rudolph Attalah



lake, leading to high salinity. As things now stand, stream flow is decreasing, in part by over abstraction, and in part due to global climate change. The resulting condition is a rapidly decreasing lake area. This is driving ecosystem change, which in turn is causing a major loss of ecosystem integrity. As people lose access to goods and services formerly provided by the ecosystem, they migrate. The current Darfur crisis is driven in part by ecological changes taking place in the Lake Chad Basin. It is not too far fetched to predict a range of Darfur-type crises all around the Lake Chad Basin in the next decade.

The Lake Victoria area constitutes the second hotspot. Situated in the upper reaches of the Nile River Basin, draining Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, Lake Victoria is a sub-system of a larger complex basin with a history of politically motivated massacres. The best known of them is the 1994 Rwandan genocide. What makes this genocide relevant to an environmental security discourse is that the core driver was land. In this regard, the doctoral work by Leif Ohlsson gives considerable insight into the dynamics of the process (Ohlsson, L. 1999. *Environment, Scarcity and Conflict: A Study of Malthusian Concerns.*) Rwanda has a high population density and,

in the absence of a diversified economy, access to land became the sole subsistence base. The traditional practice of dividing land among male members of the family ultimately resulted in smaller farms, eventually leading to unsustainability. According to Ohlsson,



Credit: Laurent Tricottet

Lake Victoria.



Africa has 63 river basins that cross international borders, ten of which do not drain into the sea and are thus endoreic. The largest is the Lake Chad Basin, followed by the Okavango River Basin.

this triggered the genocide, which was meticulously planned using records left by the former French colonial masters. Other mass killings, perpetrated by the Lords Resistance Army in Uganda, are currently underway in the same basin. There are records of unspeakable horrors including mass rape, removal of body parts, hacking off of lips, ears and hands of live victims, as well as kidnappings of children. Just downstream of Lake Victoria, Southern Sudan has also seen mass killings. Thus, the Lake Victoria Basin and its immediate environs have a violent recent history in which environmental issues are one of the main drivers.

These two brief case studies highlight the impact of ecological deterioration coupled with poverty. Some people can live on 2 USD a day and have a reasonable quality of life, provided the ecosystem that sustains them remains intact. Examples are found in the Mekong Delta, where extraordinary biodiversity enables a relatively good quality of life for the poor. The Lake Chad ecosystem, in turn, is simply incapable of providing the goods and services needed to complement the 2 USD a day existence. The same holds true in Lake Victoria, where rapidly collapsing ecosystems, caused by a variety of factors, are adding to the already complex set of social and political instability drivers that has seen at least 5 million people killed over the past decade. Combined, these two case studies illustrate some of the complexities associated with Africa's environmental security discourse, best understood in the context of the human security paradigm that focuses on freedom from want, fear and hazard impact.

**Annotated Bibliography:
Maritime Security**

Levy, Marc A. "Is the Environment a National Security Issue?" *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 2. (Autumn, 1995), pp. 35-62.

Levy examines the arguments of Homer-Dixon and other proponents of the link between the environment and violent conflict in relation to the national security of the United States. He argues that, while environmental problems may pose security risks, they are not substantial enough to warrant reframing traditional ideas about defining security. Rather, he suggests that scholars incorporate more "environmental considerations into research and analysis."

Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. "Environment Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases." *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1. (Summer, 1994), pp. 5-40.

Homer-Dixon examines possible links between the depletion or degradation of renewable resources such as agricultural land, water, fisheries, forests and violent civil or international conflict. Evidence based on case studies from a range of countries, including conflicts between Egypt and Ethiopia and between South Africa and Lesotho, suggests that environmental scarcity causes violent conflict. Homer-Dixon suggests that security experts pay greater attention to "the social impacts of environmental scarcity" when assessing national security and developing policies and strategies.

BENIN Inaugural Reunion Meeting

Twenty-nine Benin Community Members attended a meeting at the Palais des Congrès in Cotonou to officially form a Benin Community Chapter. Opening remarks were made by Africa Center Ambassador (ret.) Peter R. Chaveas. US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Rick Holtzapple also extended his welcome and relayed a supportive message from US Ambassador Gayleatha B. Brown. His Excellency Albert Agoussou, Ministre Délégué chargé de l'Intégration Africaine et des Béninois de l'Extérieur auprès du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères from Benin expressed his commitment and interest in the Benin Community Chapter and encouraged those present to be active and participate in future meetings. This event provided an opportunity for the members to choose an executive committee responsible for organizing the group and securing a date for the next official gathering.

BOTSWANA Distinguished Lecturers Series

On 11 December, the US Ambassador to Botswana, Katherine Canavan, welcomed the Botswana Chapter and distinguished guests to her home to hear a presentation on comparative contemporary African politics by Dr. Nelson M. Kasfir, Professor of Government at Dartmouth University. The Chair of the Botswana Chapter, Ms. Shirley Segokgo (Participant, Regional Security Cooperation in Southern Africa: Threats, Challenges and Opportunities, September 2002), provided guests with an update on Chapter activities and introduced Dr. Kasfir. Following a lively discussion of "When Guerrillas Rule" and closing remarks by Lieutenant General Tebogo Carter Masire, community members had an opportunity to interact with each other and US Embassy staff. By all accounts, it was a fabulous evening.

CONTACTING THE AFRICA CENTER

Due to extensive maintenance, the Africa Center computer network was down in December and January. We apologize if you attempted to reach us but failed to get in touch with us. By the time you receive this issue of The Bulletin, you should be able reach us at our usual e-mail addresses or at communityACSS@gmail.com.

BURKINA FASO General Assembly



Credit: ACSS

Mme. Fatimata Vicens,
Chapter President.

On 5 December, the Burkina Faso Community Chapter held a General Assembly meeting in Ouagadougou. This event served to brief the Africa Center, the US Embassy in Ouagadougou and participants in the Africa Center's Small Arms and Light Weapons Workshop on the results of their 2006 training program on good governance and rule of law. US Ambassador Jeanine Jackson made welcoming remarks and Africa Center

faculty member Dr. Mathurin Houngnikpo presented a brief update on Africa Center events. Formal presentations on Chapter activities were given by Ms. Fatimata Vicens, Colonel Dominique Djindjere, and Mr. Alexandre Ouedraogo.



Credit: ACSS

Community members Mme. Idiema Véronique Kando and Mr. Siméon Sawadogo attended the SALW workshop.

CHAD Reunion Reception

The Chad Community Chapter has received formal recognition and approval from President Idriss Déby Into. This approval allows Chapter members to formally organize their plans and hold meets as an association. To celebrate this important milestone, the US Embassy in N'Djamena held a reception for the Chadian Community on 14 September. US Ambassador Marc M. Wall and Defense Attaché Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Mitchell co-hosted the event and voiced their continued support of the Chapter's activities.



Credit: ACSS

Community members Col. Zakaria Nguobongue and Col. Moussa Nadji.

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Ratified Constitution

In October 2006, the Republic of Congo Community Chapter held two General Assemblies. Community members ratified the Chapter constitution and by-laws, and elected a five-member executive committee, led by Mr. Gabriel Nzambila as President and Colonel (Ret.) Alphonse Tsila as Secretary General. The Chapter has determined two thematic areas of focus for 2007 events: Border Security and Youth Integration in Post-Conflict Societies.



Credit: ACSS Major General Charles Richard Mondjo, Chef d'Etat Major Général des Forces Armées, and Mr. Gabriel Nzambila, Senator and President of the Republic of Congo Community Chapter.

UGANDA

Workshop and Capstone Exercise

In December, the Uganda Chapter organized a workshop on security sector reform as it pertains to East African integration. The workshop brought together key stakeholders from the wider security sector in Uganda, including all the Ugandan community members, and six community members from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania. At the heart of the two-day program was a Capstone exercise featuring three fictitious island nations that were encountering a range of security threats and were, therefore, considering sub-regional integration. Participants, split into four groups, were asked to role-play and develop a comprehensive strategy to combat the nations' shared security threats. Guest speakers included His Excellency YK Museveni, community members from five countries and Dr. Matt Hounnikpo from the Africa Center. At the end of the workshop, the Uganda Chapter developed a list of recommendations which they will present to the Minister of East African Community Affairs. These recommendations are available upon request.

Community Members: Please contact Jessica Coulibaly (coulibalyj@ndu.edu) or Mary McGurn (mcgurnm@ndu.edu) if you have been promoted, changed job positions, or moved in the past year. **We love to hear from you!**

Africa Center

Kenya Community Project

Piracy off the Coast of the East and Horn of Africa Nairobi, Kenya; October 2006

The following is an excerpt from the Africa Center Kenya Community project on Piracy and Maritime Security in the Horn of Africa. This portion of the research paper explores the distinction between the issue of piracy and terrorism.

A distinction between piracy and terrorism is important largely due to the fact that both concepts are often used interchangeably and can be misleading. Piracy is defined as an economic crime on the sea for a financial gain while terrorism is a criminal activity with a political imperative. The two definitions demonstrate that piracy and terrorism are fundamentally different in context. The following matrix (below) elaborates their fundamental differences.

Terrorism	Piracy
Driven by a political imperative.	No political objective, economic gain is the main driving force.
Terrorism is seen as an expression of political strategy.	Piracy is seen as an expression of barbarism, alienation, and poverty.
Insurgents resort to terrorism as a method of intimidation and coercion to demand change in policy.	Pirates resort to piracy as a method of obtaining economic gains and immediate gratification.
Terrorists resort to acts of terrorism as a means to an end (pure Terrorism), usually at a national or subnational level.	Pirates use piracy as a means to an end, and usually planned at an individual or sub-group level.
Terrorism can create revolutionary conditions.	Piracy does not possess revolutionary capability.
Terrorism is systematic, deliberate, and sustained over time. It requires a sustained commitment. Terrorism occurs on land, sea and air.	Piracy represents spontaneous, erratic, and uncoordinated acts of violence in the sea.
Terrorism is ideologically and or religiously driven. Underlying causes can be sought in economic, political, and social conditions.	Piracy is economically driven. The underlying causes can be sought in prevailing economic conditions.

However, despite distinctions between piracy and terrorism, the two possess similarities: Firstly, piracy and maritime terrorism are viewed as transnational threats to international peace and security. Secondly, and in light of International Law, piracy and maritime terrorism are transnational crimes. This demands that both acts be treated as fundamental crimes against humanity. Thirdly, piracy and terrorism employ violence by using similar weapons. Finally, piracy and maritime terrorism overlap due to the fact that some conditions that allow piracy are also similar to underlying causes of terrorism. This convergence suggests the difficulty of discerning where either piracy or terrorism start. As a result of these similarities, piracy in East and Horn of Africa does not fit into a single cause category.

Environment and Security Linkages in Africa

by Mike Chaveas
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On a continent of vast natural resource wealth such as Africa, where the majority of people rely upon the land for their livelihood, environmental conditions are inseparably linked to good governance, economic development and security. Ignoring these links diminishes long-term possibilities for sustainable solutions to the continent's security problems.

The term "environment" comprises a host of renewable natural resources along with all the economic, social, cultural and health benefits they provide. Forests, wildlife, air, water, plants, biodiversity and soil all fall under the "environment" umbrella. Like others, Africans rely on their environment for clean drinking water, agricultural products, hydroelectric power, fuelwood, construction materials, protein sources and ecotourism revenues. However, effective and sustainable management efforts have been hampered by a lack of capacity, staff and resources as well as by widespread corruption.

The loss or degradation of these environmental resources, or the non-equitable access to them, leads to loss of livelihood secu-



Credit: Mike Chaveas

Population pressures and a lack of safeguards to protect natural resources, as exemplified in Burundi by intensive small plot agriculture on steep hillsides which have been cleared of forest cover, contributes to a lack of livelihood security and can threaten long term stability.

urity, health problems and conflict, which can threaten the stability of entire countries or regions. Numerous violent conflicts in Africa have been created, fueled or prolonged by environmental factors. Environmental degradation, a scramble to exploit valuable natural resources and severe land shortages have led or significantly contributed to bloodshed in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. An important common underlying factor in these types of conflict has been ineffective or corrupt governance of natural resource sectors, leading to inequitable access to their benefits. Additionally, shortages or severe degradation of land and soil resources, fuelwood or clean drinking water lead to smaller

local conflicts and endanger development efforts and the long term future and stability of many countries.

The link between environment and security is well illustrated through the case of Liberia's forest resources. During the country's



Credit: Nitza Sola-Rotger

In Africa, people's livelihoods are inextricably linked to the land and land-dependent resources.

14 years of armed civil conflict, Liberian warlords, including former President Charles Taylor, financed their arms purchases with revenues obtained from illegal timber concessions. The imposition of timber sanctions by the United Nations Security Council, motivated by the recognition of the link between conflict and the use of forest resources, contributed significantly to the fall of the Taylor regime and the end of armed conflict. The country's forests are an important economic resource for Liberia's development. Nevertheless, without effective governance and accountability in this sector, a return to the timber for arms trade remains a possibility. In order to ensure long-term stability, forest sector reforms cannot be separated from other government reforms.

The case of Liberia also demonstrates how natural resource management can be transformed to benefit a country's population. A natural asset that is managed in a transparent and accountable fashion can contribute to a peaceful future for a post-conflict nation. The Liberia Forest Initiative (LFI) – a US Government-led program which coordinates activities among government, international and non-governmental organizations to rehabilitate the Liberian forest sector – has been working towards this goal. The LFI began work in 2004 to assist the Liberian government in achieving economically, ecologically and socially sustainable forest management through commercial forestry, conservation and community forestry. In order to improve forest sector management, several components are being addressed, including establishing transparent financial management practices and equitable allocation of revenue generated from timber harvesting; providing the agency mandated to manage the nation's forests with the appropriate levels of staff, skills and financial and material resources to effectively carry out this mandate; and assisting Liberian authorities with effective enforcement of forest resource laws. A well managed and transparent forest

sector will contribute much needed tax revenue for the country and long-term employment opportunities for its citizens.

The benefits of good governance of natural resources, along with effective enforcement of laws and a transparent judicial and legal process extend well beyond the environment and natural resource sectors. Security strategies should be linked to areas that ensure local people's livelihood security. In Africa, people's livelihoods are inextricably linked to the land and land-dependent resources. In this context, the link between the environment and good governance, economic development and security in Africa is a clear one.



Security implications of Water Shortage in Botswana

by Colonel Peter F. Magosi

Staff Officer, Botswana Defense Force Headquarters, Gaborone

Water scarcity poses challenges to development and security. Botswana is in a difficult situation as it shares its river basins with other countries – the Okavango river basin with Angola and Namibia; the Zambezi river basin with Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique; and the Limpopo river basin with South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. A few



Credit: Magosi

Colonel Peter F. Magosi.

internal rivers in the Eastern part of the country have enabled the government to invest in construction of dams in an attempt to fulfill water requirements. Nevertheless, due to current climatic conditions, water shortages remain a potential security threat not only to Botswana but to all Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. Urbanization has increased water demand in cities and water evaporation is high due

to hot summer temperatures. These factors cause a considerable loss of trapped water. This is a potential national security threat that cannot be ignored and will compel the government to develop a strategy to avoid crisis.

The socio-economic and political implications of future water shortages require coordinated regulation of ownership, appropriation, distribution, management, protection, utilization and conservation of water resources by countries sharing the various water basins. The diversity of water users in the Okavango basin and their future needs highlight the complexity of water security issues in the region. Angola, for example, may need to expand its agricultural sector to meet the growing demand for food. It may also seek to dam the Okavango River in order to build a hydroelectric plant for increased electricity production. Namibia will also have to meet its growing requirement for food and water by increasing its limited use of water from the Okavango River.



Credit: Nitza Sola-Rotger

Economic development will require higher electricity usage, establishing the Okavango River as one of Namibia's options to provide more electricity to the nation. Currently, Botswana is using limited amounts of water from the Okavango River, but population growth indicates that, by 2020, water demand for both drinking and food production will be much higher. The amount of water flowing into the delta gives the government an option to draw water from the

Okavango River for these purposes. If all the countries were to implement these options, water flow into the Okavango Delta would be drastically reduced and its ecosystem would be critically affected. Botswana will be at the receiving end of the blow as tourism and the lives of the Delta community will suffer badly.

In 1998, SADC member states initiated a protocol on shared watercourse systems to facilitate prudent management of basin waters. Angola, Botswana and Namibia further established the permanent Okavango River basin Water Commission in 1994 to address water issues affecting the three countries. Another measure to harmonize water sharing in the region was initiated by Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe with the signature of the Zambezi Watercourse Commission Agreement (ZAMCO) in Botswana in 2004. The Commission is intended to spread peace in the region while contributing to the integration of SADC with regards to the efficient and environmentally sustainable use of water resources.

Water security in the SADC region cannot be addressed by individual countries because river basins are shared by many countries. The question of who should use how much water for what purpose becomes extremely sensitive and requires careful coordination of all involved nations.

African Voice

Upcoming Programs

Counterterrorism Workshop on Building Capacity in African Sub-Regional Organizations

15-18 January 2007

Algiers, Algeria



Senior Leaders Seminar

25 February - 9 March 2007

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ambassador Chaveas Named Africa Center Director



Credit: ACSS Amb. (ret.) Peter R. Chaveas.

In early December 2006, Ambassador (ret.) Peter R. Chaveas was appointed Director of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Ambassador Chaveas had been serving as the Acting Director since September when General Carlton W. Fulford's tenure came to an end. Ambassador Chaveas joined the Africa Center as Deputy Director in 2004 after retiring from the US Foreign Service. He possesses more than 35 years of US Government experience.

Small Arms and Light Weapons Workshop Addresses Proliferation in West Africa

Leaders from across West Africa gathered in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in early December for an Africa Center sponsored workshop titled "Enhancing Capacity for Tackling Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation in West Africa."

Around 40 participants from the region's security sector, including representatives of the military and police, government agencies, members of leading civil society organizations, academics and international experts attended the week-long event. The program included overview presentations about the nature and

scope of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and associated problems. It also assessed West African responses to those problems. Smaller discussion groups provided a forum for participants to address the issues raised in the plenary sessions and share ideas based on experience. Throughout the workshop, the focus remained on ways to build regional and national capacity to reduce the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the sub-region.

The problems related to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in West Africa present some of the greatest security



Credit: ACSS

Session at SALW workshop in December.

challenges to the region. The availability of these weapons prolongs violent conflict and poses a grave danger to domestic and regional security, and to long-term stability and development.

The West Africa workshop was the first of five sub-regional events planned as follow-on to the 2004 all-Africa seminar on Small Arms and Light Weapons held in Uganda. Workshops will be held in the remaining four sub-regions in 2007 and 2008.

Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea Ministerial Conference • Cotonou, Benin

Ministers from Gulf of Guinea countries drew an action plan to improve maritime safety and security in the region. To read the communiqué and action plan adopted during the conference visit: www.africacenter.org.



Credit: NAVEUR

MSS Group Photo.

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