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**Democratisation and conflict
in eastern Africa:
Kenya's succession crisis and
its likely impact on eastern
Africa and the Great Lakes region**

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Executive summary

In recent years the countries of the east African and the Great Lakes regions C Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been embroiled in internal conflicts which have culminated in the current regional security nightmare - the DRC crisis. Uganda, a key player in the current crisis, has been described by the west as a bastion of peace and prosperity, an island of stability in a region riddled with conflicts and instability. In Sudan a civil war between the Khartoum government and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) has raged for 34 of its 44 years of independence in which an estimated 2 million have been killed, and twice that number rendered refugees. Somalia, as is well known, has ceased to exist as a nation state. The civil war that followed the fall of the Barre regime which brought about the disintegration of the state continues to this very day. The number of casualties in the nine year war is difficult to tell with precision. Recent attempts to reconstitute the Somali state and reconcile the warring warlords do not appear to be making any headway (*Daily Nation* Sept. 4, 2000).

It would seem that what has so far held the region together is the relative stability of the other two east African partner states, Kenya and Tanzania. The situation, however, changed rather drastically with the introduction of political pluralism at the beginning of the 1990s. Kenya=s political future has looked rather uncertain since the re-emergence of competitive multi-party politics in 1992. The two competitive elections held in 1992 and 1997 exposed the potential weaknesses of a system which had hitherto been held together by an authoritarian one-party state. A significant feature of this weakness was the re-emergence of ethnicity as a medium of political mobilization and contestation of power. The post-election political uncertainty was further exacerbated by the >succession crisis=. Theoretically president Moi is serving his final term, and should retire at the end of the current parliament. In reality president Moi does not appear ready to go just yet. By all indications he is preparing to legislate a third term for himself.

Because Kenya has traditionally been central to security considerations in the region, it would seem that whatever happens in Kenya over the next few years will be crucial to the overall political and economic stability of the region. This paper attempts to tease out the complex phenomena between the processes of democratisation and conflict in east Africa and the Great Lakes region. I attempt to show that contrary to views of the west=s policy makers, the entire eastern Africa region is riddled with conflict, and Uganda is no exception. I further argue that in the event of a political eruption in Kenya, the region would be drawn into an intractable political crisis, with devastating consequences for the rest of central and southern Africa.

Introduction

At the height of its regional ascendancy in the 1970s, Kenya was perceived to be a sub-imperialist power capable of exerting regional hegemony in east Africa. Kenya's increasingly cosmopolitan role and notably its role as host to international institutions and conventions was seen as having promoted it to a middle-ranking power comparable to South Africa and Nigeria in southern Africa and West Africa respectively (Mugomba, 1978). Kenya and South Africa, Tim Shaw wrote, stood in a hegemonic relationship with their respective regions. They both exported manufactured goods to their regions with which they had significant balance of trade and payments (Shaw, 1977). This elevation of Kenya above its neighbours in terms of power, wealth and influence, was widely seen as the source of growing distance between the east African states, a development which unfortunately was to lead to the collapse of the East African Community.

Within the Kenyan ruling class, the country's perceived sub-imperial position in the region was reflected in the growing arrogance of Kenyatta's ruling coalition, the dominant members of which treated the rest of east African countries as its own backyard. Tanzania and Uganda, the two partners in the then East African Community were often referred to as the 'poorer' members of the community, and were constantly under fear of being peripheralised into economic satellites of Kenyan sub-imperialism (Mugomba, 1978; Shaw, 1977). Kenya, this ruling elite believed, was the capital of the region & if it sneezed the whole east African region caught a bad cold.

As a settler colony, Kenya had enjoyed certain advantages which were to foster a speedy development of a modern economic sector. The logic of settler capitalism was ultimately the development of a processing sector & processing of agricultural products, initially for local use, but later on for export to the regional market. This policy was pursued very much against the wishes of the colonial office. London had initially pursued a colonial policy which sought to preserve the colonies as captive markets for its manufacturing sector. Be that as it may, by 1939 the colony could boast 15 major processing industries (Ogonda, 1992). It was the processing sector which was to provide the platform for manufacturing industries which emerged in the post-war period after Britain had reluctantly changed its policy in favour of import substitution industrialization in the colonies. Between 1945 and political independence in 1963, the secondary sector had expanded to include such diverse areas as oil refining, steel-rolling mills, industrial chemical, tobacco, cigarettes, and a textile industry.

These modest industrial foundations served to privilege Kenya's economic growth at the expense of its neighbours. Kenya increasingly continued to attract more and more foreign capital investments. It built up impressive service, insurance and money market sectors. For a long time the Nairobi Stock Exchange was the largest in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) after the

Johannesburg Stock Exchange. It developed superior economic, communications and transport infrastructures in comparison to those of its neighbours. This concentration of foreign capital had by independence in 1963 transformed the country into the industrial and commercial core of the region. By the 1970s Kenya had clearly emerged as the regional centre of multinational capitalism, and the corporate and diplomatic capital of the region. Above all it remained the main gateway to the region. Its natural deep harbour at Mombasa served the entire region as far as Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, eastern Zaire (DRC) and southern Sudan. This seeming economic success taking place in the context of the cold war geopolitical context engendered so much arrogance on the part of the Kenya ruling elite that the future of the community did not look auspicious at all.

Kenya might have resembled a subimperial power in the 1970s. The reality however was different. It lacked the military capacity to perform such a role. Its dominance was more visible at the economic level where it stood in a hegemonic relationship with the regional market. In fact it could be argued that Kenya stood to benefit from an integrated regional economy more than any of its neighbours. Unfortunately, the political classes did not appear to share that vision, and ultimately political and ideological considerations of the time were to plunge the region into political disarray. In the context of the existing balance of forces: Tanzania=s moving to the 'left' (socialism and self-reliance); Amin=s increasing embrace of the Arab world and military assistance from Libya, and subsequently the disintegration of the region in three directions C a Tanzania ideologically allied to China and increasingly looking southwards, Uganda under Amin increasingly allied to Gadafi=s Libya, and Ethiopia within the Soviet orbit and Somalia in and out of the Soviet orbit C resulted in the hegemonic political class in Kenya increasingly withdrawing into its own cocoon in the mistaken belief that it could go it alone.

Thus in an increasingly volatile cold war environment, Kenya remained isolated from its neighbours for nearly a decade. Throughout the 70s and 80s Kenyans enjoyed the protection of the west and the >authoritarian stability= of a single party state. Paradoxically enough, despite its isolation, Kenya continued very much as the nerve centre of the region and it remained the industrial, commercial and diplomatic capital. Continued instability in the region (Ethiopia, Uganda and Somalia) only served to buttress its centrality as the stabilising force in the region. The end of the cold war and the redemocratization process has however unsettled the balance in the region, undermining the dominant position of Kenya, and threatening once again to plunge the region into in an intractable political instability. The process of democratization initiated in SSA over a decade ago has had mixed results in the continent. While a few countries have succeeded in transforming themselves into multi-party >democracies=, a majority of SSA countries have literally sunk into intractable crises leading as in the cases of Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Burundi, to national disintegration, and in the case of Somalia, the complete collapse of a nation state. While the two

eastern African countries, Kenya and Tanzania, have so far survived the worst trials of the re-democratization processes, the political situation in Kenya no longer looks encouraging, and this certainly does not bode well for the prospects of stability in the entire east African and Great Lakes regions.

While Kenya remains an important economic player (the comparative advantages inherited from settler political economy have however been seriously depleted by an increasingly kleptocratic and predatory ruling elite) in the region, its political clout has waned, and it can no longer claim to be a middle ranking power. The future has looked rather uncertain since the re-emergence of competitive multiparty politics in 1992. The two competitive elections held in 1992 and 1997 have indeed exposed the potential weaknesses of a system which had hitherto been held together by an authoritarian one-party state. A significant feature of this weakness has been the re-emergence of ethnicity as a medium of political mobilization and contestation of power. The postelection political uncertainty has further been exacerbated by two factors: the one, an economic downturn which has crippled most institutions, increased unemployment and created high levels of poverty, the other, the tricky question of the succession crisis. Moreover, the process of democratisation has unleashed forces which have threatened the very survival of a once deeply entrenched ruling elite. The result has not only been a declining regional profile, but more profoundly the fear that the country is slowly sinking into the abyss of political instability, especially with the ruling class now chiefly preoccupied with predatory informalisation of the state.

Kenya, as we have indicated above, has for a long time been central to the economic performance of the eastern Africa region, and consequently political uncertainties in Kenya are bound to have a ripple effect throughout the region. The succession question in Kenya is now threatening to engender precisely that kind of crisis. While it is generally acknowledged that the future of the country, and of the whole of the eastern African region, depends to a large degree on how the transition to the post-Moi era in Kenya is managed, current political calculations in Kenya do not seem to factor the wider east African region into their equations. Since the last election in 1997 president Moi has been more preoccupied with working out constitutional mechanisms which would guarantee the safety of his own family and that of the kleptocratic cabal which has constituted his coalition over the last fifteen years. President Moi appears to be addressing himself to his immediate political constituency with scant consideration for the wider Kenyan public. Such narrowly based strategies, if they were to succeed, could easily lead to political chaos and acute political crises which could impact negatively on, for example and especially, Uganda, whose ethnic cleavages run like structural faults through the political edifice that president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has attempted to construct since the fall of Uganda's second republic.

This paper attempts to explain the nature of Kenya's succession crisis and to assess its implications for political stability in the eastern African and Great

Lakes regions. This is done in three parts. The first part provides a broad overview of the political situation in the region. This is done with a view to identifying areas of political weaknesses, probable political fault lines, which are likely to be subjected to intense pressure in the event of a collapse of any part of the region. The second part focuses on the Kenya political dispensation and discusses recent experiences of democratisation and the crisis of succession, and its implications for political stability in Kenya. The final part assesses the impact of these developments on the political stability in the region.

The region in perspective

The traditional east African region covers the four countries, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Somalia. However, eastern Africa and the Great Lakes as a geo-political region cover a much wider area, and includes Ethiopia, Southern Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and to some degree that strip of the Democratic Republic of Congo that runs down Rwanda and Burundi from Kivu to Lake Tanganyika. Obviously this is a huge area covering some 3 591 802sq km, a population of 163.3 million (1995), a gross national product of US\$32 billion, and a total debt of slightly over US\$32 billion (Africa South of Sahara, 2000). This region is not particularly buoyant economically. A population growth rate which far outstrips economic growth (with the exception of course of Uganda, which currently enjoys IFIs favourable ratings), the region falls broadly into the HIPC category. Except for Kenya and Tanzania, the countries of the region have been embroiled in internal conflict over the best part of the last 15 years, and to a certain degree the region remains in political turmoil.

In Sudan a civil war between the Khartoum government and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) has raged for 34 of its 44 years of independence from Britain in which an estimated 2 million have been killed, and twice that number have been rendered refugees. The war rages on to date with no possibilities of an outright winner in sight. More significantly, the cascading effects of this war have been felt by almost all members of the region with Uganda bearing the military brunt, while both Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia have all provided succour to refugees from this war.

Somalia as is well known has ceased to exist as a nation state. The civil war that followed the fall of the Barre regime which brought about the disintegration of the state continues to this very day. The number of casualties in the nine year war is difficult to tell with precision, but informed guestimates have put the figure at hundreds of thousands. Recent attempts to reconstitute the state and reconcile the warring warlords under a new president appear to be on the verge of collapse (*Daily Nation* Sept. 4, 2000).

Uganda=s civil war officially ended in 1994 when Museveni opted for a political rather than a military solution in which the National Resistance Army (NRA) was transformed into a more inclusive political platform, and a number of

northerners were brought into government (Brett, 1995). But since Museveni's Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) misadventure, and his continued support for Garang's Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA), the civil war appears to have returned with a vengeance. Uganda now has to contend with a revitalized Joseph Kony's Lords Resistance Army (LRA) from the north; the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), whose late leader, Juma Oris, was a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Allied Democratic Front (ADF), a hotch-potch of Islamic fundamentalists, former soldiers of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), Rwanda's Interahamwe, and an amalgam of ex-Mobutuists. These rebel movements appear to be supported by the Sudan regime. This is further exacerbated by incipient hostilities between Uganda and Rwanda which have already culminated in several military confrontations in the DRC's town of Kisangani, and tension along their common border at Ntungano.

In Rwanda and Burundi the worst of the fighting appears to be over, but in the absence of sustainable political solutions, the barricades remain, manned by the very same people who have been engaged in political negotiations. The future of these two countries does indeed remain too ghastly to contemplate. Two recent developments in Rwanda threaten to plunge the country into fresh turmoil: the one, the resignation of Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu whose appointment to the presidency signalled reconciliation in the aftermath of the genocide; the other, the deteriorating relations with Uganda, which have now culminated in open hostility and military confrontation in the DRC, where the two countries were recently supporting different factions in an attempt to unseat their former ally, Laurent Kabila. It will be observed for example, that Museveni was conveniently absent from President Kagame's inauguration.

Even though Kenya has been spared the same scale of civil conflicts, small scale warlordism is beginning to appear on the country's outer margins, especially the borders with north-eastern Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. In these areas the government appears, for all practical purposes, to have ceded control to militias and warlords (*Daily Nation*, 18 & 20,5,2000; *Africa Research Bulletin*, Feb.2000). Furthermore, the increasing use of violence as an instrument of political competition through the encouragement of private armies by leading lights of the ruling party has now become part and parcel of political practice (*Daily Nation*, January, 2000). Tanzania shares a similar predicament. The long drawn out political crisis in the Island of Zanzibar, and the failure or inability of the national leadership of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) to implement the Commonwealth brokered agreement of June 1999 is probably an indication of a much wider political problem within the Tanzania body politic (see for example, Anglin, 2000).

Small arms proliferation in the region

As a result of the conflicts described above, one commodity which is said to be available in abundance in the region is small arms. Apart from small arms in

the hands of the different bands of rebels, the alarming development in the region is the ease with which it has now become possible for ordinary people to access small arms C anything up to AK47 and M16s. The US peacekeeping force is said to have donated 5000 M-16s and 5000 handguns to the Somali police at the end of their tour of duty in 1994 (UNIDIR, 1996). Most of these guns are believed to have landed either in the hands of the warring militia groups or criminals (see for example, Lewis, 1997; Abdi, 1997). Thus on the Kenyan side of the border, it is said that at the height of the Somali conflict, two jerry cans (large plastic liquid containers often used for carrying petrol in east Africa) of water could fetch one AK47 (personal communication from Nairobi, January 2000). Along the Sudan/Uganda and Sudan/Kenya borders, it is said that arms from SPLA have ended up in the hands of private dealers in northern Uganda and north-western Kenya where an AK47 sells for as little as \$50 (*The East Africa*, March 11, 2000)

It is no wonder that the outer edges of the North Eastern Province of Kenya, bordering on Somalia have, for all practical purposes, become a no mans land, and that the old >noble art= of cattle rustling, whether between the Pokots and Marakwets in the Rift Valley province of Kenya, the Boranas and the Degodia in the North Eastern Province or the Turkana and the Merile on the Kenya/Ethiopia border, has become heavily militarised; a deadly combat involving heavily armed sides (see for example, *Africa Research Bulletin* February, 2000, *Daily Nation*, 26.2.00; *East African*, 18.2.00).

It is not possible to calculate with a degree of accuracy the amount of small arms in the hands of different groups of people. However the escalation and intensity of cattle rustling all the way from the Uganda/Kenya border between the Karamojong and the Pokot, the Uganda/Sudanese border, Kenya/Somali border, and the extent to which guns (particularly the AK47) have replaced spears, bows and arrows as the tools of this trade, does indeed suggest the extent of proliferation of small arms in the region over the last decade or so. Along the Uganda/DRC border and Rwanda-Burundi/ DRC, proliferation of arms have been more than adequately documented (*UNIDIR*, 1996; *Africa Watch*: 1998)

Political liberalisation and political stability in the region

There is no doubt that the process of democratization initiated in the SSA over a decade ago has played havoc with political systems in the region. Taking place against the background of globalisation and the dictatorship of the international financial institutions (IFIs); the marginalization of the continent within the wider global market, the declining resource base, and the informalisation of the state by a largely kleptocratic ruling elite, competitive multi-party politics have sparked off intense battles between competing political constituencies and political actors. These struggles have been at their most debilitating and internecine within those countries where ethnic identities have been highly politicised. Thus Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Somalia

seemed to have borne the brunt of these political upheavals, but Kenya has not been far behind, and now increasingly Tanzania is beginning to show signs of unease, especially since the advent of the crisis in Zanzibar. The political vacuum created by the recent death of Mwalimu Nyerere will no doubt add to its difficulties. Below we attempt to explore the impact of democratisation on the political stability of the countries of the region in slightly more detail.

Burundi

With a population of some 6 million of which 85 per cent is Hutu, 14 per cent Tutsi and 1 per cent Twa, there is a population density of some 222.5 persons per sq km. Burundi like Rwanda has often been a perfect theatre for politicised ethnic identities and debilitating ethnic conflicts.

Burundi became independent in 1961 as a constitutional parliamentary monarchy under the traditional Tutsi dynasty which had predated German colonialism. The first open conflict between Tutsi and Hutu came in the aftermath of the assassination of the first Tutsi Prime Minister and leader of the ruling multi-ethnic Union Pour le Progress National (UPRONA), Etienne Rwagasore in October 1961. Again in 1965 the assassination of the Hutu Prime Minister, Pierre Ngendandumwe a week into office, and the subsequent elections which tilted the balance of power in the National Assembly to the Hutu majority, witnessed violent carnage against Hutu which left as many as 5000 Hutu intellectuals dead (Nohlen et al, 1998).

Captain Michel Micombero, appointed premier in July 1966, overthrew the monarchy in November 1966 and declared a one-party state under UPRONA which by now had become a Tutsi dominated party. Over the next four years Micombero launched purges of Hutu politicians and military officers and consolidated the Tutsi hold on power through systematic genocide. Between 1972 and 1976 nearly 250 000 Hutus, an entire Hutu elite, and close to 10 000 moderate Tutsis were killed, another 200 000 Hutus fled into exile (Nohlen, et al, 1998; *Africa South of Sahara*, 2000). At the forefront of this pogrom was the party UPRONA Youth League and Jeunesse Revolutionaire Rwagasore (JRR). Some of these characters have reappeared in the contemporary theatre of conflict.

Micombero was replaced through another coup by Lt Col Jean Babtiste Bagaza, another Tutsi. Bagaza promised to end Hutu deprivation, and in 1981 introduced a new constitution, and the single-candidate, single-party (UPRONA) presidential and parliamentary elections, and for a period there was some quiet. But by the mid-1980s, Bagaza was back to what his predecessors had always done best C repression and mass slaughter of Hutus. Bagaza constitutional reforms appeared to provoke intra-military rivalries within the Tutsi ruling elite, Thus in 1987 Bagaza was replaced in yet another coup by Pierre Buyoya, another Tutsi. Buyoya continued very much in the tradition of his predecessors. 1988 witnessed fresh massacres of Hutus, about 20 000

were massacred and another 60 000 fled into exile. In 1990 another massacre of 3000 Hutus was followed by government's claim that the Rwanda trained Parti de Liberation du Peuple Hutu (PALIPEHUTU), the extreme Hutu party, had infiltrated the country.

But Buyoya, like his neighbours in the region, increasingly came under pressure to open up the political space and introduce democratic dispensation. Thus in 1991 Buyoya launched a 'guided' democratisation process. He appointed 15 Hutu ministers out of a total of 25. A Charter of National Unity was promulgated and a new constitution which provided for a semi-presidential system was introduced. The constitution was approved by a landslide 90 per cent in the referendum of February 1992, which ultimately saw the return of a multi-party system. For the first time since the Micombero coup, opposition parties were allowed, with the only proviso that they be composed of different ethnic groups in the spirit of national unity. In the aftermath of the opening of the democratic space, 12 parties were formed, but the main players were the moderate Hutu party, Front pour la Democratie au Burundi (FROBEDU) and the old Tutsi party UPRONA now called Parti de la Unite et du Progress National.

Predictably, the June 1993 multi-party election was won by the FROBEDU which took the presidential elections by 64 per cent, and parliamentary elections by a landslide 71 per cent, taking 65 of the 81 parliamentary seats. FROBEDU's Michel Ndayaye thus became the first of Burundi's democratically elected head of state, and the first Hutu head of state at that. While Buyoya and his politico-military elite seemed to have accepted the democratic outcome, factions within the Tutsi military seemed to see the Hutu democratic triumph as a threat to their immediate and long term interests. Thus four months into office, the democratically elected president, the speaker of the Assembly, Bimazibute, and several government officials were killed in an abortive coup attempt. Another 50 000 people, mainly Hutus, were also reported killed during the abortive coup. Ndayaye was replaced by Cyprien Ntryamira also from FROBEDU. Unfortunately he was to die along with his Rwandan counterpart, Juvenal Habyarimana, in a plane crash near Kigali airport while returning from the ill-fated regional summit in Tanzania, an event which sparked off the now infamous Rwanda genocide.

Ntryamira was replaced by Sylvestre Ntibantungaya. However, the country was already sliding down the familiar conflict ridden path, more so in the aftermath of the Rwanda genocide. Both Hutu and Tutsi extremist factions began staking out territorial bases, Hutus probably supported by Interahamwe, and the Tutsis by the military which they have dominated since the 1960s. Tensions developed within the moderate FROBEDU with the hardline faction led by Leonard Nyangoma, energy minister, increasingly spoiling for an armed confrontation with the Tutsi army. In September a convention brokered a power-sharing arrangement in which a four year transition period was put in place with the opposition controlling 45 per cent of the ministerial seats.

Tensions however continued to simmer. Leonard Nyangoma broke with FROBEDU to form his Council National pour la Defence de la Democratie (CNDD), whose military wing, Force pour Defence de la Democratie (FDD) was supposedly supported by Interhamwe. Palipehutu continued to be active in the countryside, and for all practical purposes the country was engulfed in civil war. By 1996 the transitional government had all but collapsed. Not surprisingly Buyoya returned in another coup in June 1996, marking the end of the democratisation experiment which he had launched in 1991.

Rwanda

Across the border from Burundi lies Rwanda with an identical demographic profile. The population is 85 per cent Hutu, 14 per cent Tutsi, and 1 per cent Twa. A total population of 7 142 755 (1991) squeezed into an area of just over 26 000 square km, has produced one of the highest population densities in SSA (271 per square km), and an intense competition for land and other resources has historically produced a perfect recipe for politicisation of ethnic identities.

Here as in Burundi the story has been the same with the only difference that the Hutu have historically controlled the state and therefore meted out retribution to the minority Tutsis. The Rwandan case must however be understood against the background of colonial politicisation of ethnic identities which the colonial power, Belgium, has been accused of deliberately stoking as part of their divide and rule tactics (Abdulahi, 1995). The colonial regime vested power in the hands of the Tutsi dominated monarchy, while the majority Hutu were denied social and political rights. Not surprisingly therefore, the struggle for independence and subsequently, the entire post-independence period, has been dominated by conflicts between these two groups.

By 1960 the Belgian colonial power transferred its support to the Hutu majority, largely because of the strong anti-colonial position of Union National Rwansaise (UNAR), the predominantly Tutsi pro-monarchy independence party, while the Hutu Parti du Mouvement de l'emancipation Hutu (PARMEHUTU) was largely preoccupied with social and political rights. Buoyed by colonial support the Hutu majority under the Movement Democratique Republicain (MDR) declared a republic in January 1961, adopted a republican constitution and elected a president. The Hutu declaration was accorded international legitimacy eight months later when in a United Nations (UN) organised referendum on the Rwanda monarchy, the Hutu majority voted overwhelmingly for a republic. Thus in October 1961 MDR/PARMEHUTU's Gregorie Kayibanda was elected president of the Republic of Rwanda. This set the scene for internecine violent conflicts which have characterised much of the Rwandan Republic.

Continuous persecution of the Tutsi minority, of which the 1963-65 and 1972-73 occurrences were the most intensive, led to a Tutsi refugee exodus into

neighbouring countries. By the early 1980s UNHCR figures indicate as much as 130 000 Tutsi were living in Uganda (*Africa South of Sahara*, 2000). These purges increasingly consolidated the Hutu hold onto political power. By the 1965 presidential and parliamentary elections, Rwanda was for all practical purposes a one-party state. In July 1973 Kayibanda was replaced in a military coup by Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana. Habyarimana disbanded the MDR/PARMEHUTU party, and founded his own party, Movement Revolutionnaire National pour la Developpement (MRND), and introduced a de-jure one party state. Thereafter he was elected president in 1978, and reelected in 1983, and again in 1988 with overwhelming majority.

By 1990, however, Habyarimana like the majority of his colleagues in SSA came under pressure to open up democratic space. So in the midst of the Front Patriotique Rwandais' (FPR) invasion of the country in 1991, he initiated his democratic liberalization programme. The National Charter appointed the previous year submitted its report, the basis upon which a new constitution providing for legalization of political parties was crafted. With the end of the single party system came new political parties C the most significant of which were: Movement Democratique Republican (MRD) which had been disbanded in 1973; Parti Social Democratique (PSD); Parti Liberal (PL) and Parti Democratique Chretien (PDC). Habyarimana's old party, the MNRD was renamed Movement Republican National pour la Democratie et le developpement (MNRDD). Finally a coalition government including all the opposition parties was formed in 1992.

Habyarimana's guided liberalisation was however very much shadowed by the parallel Arusha peace talks which sought accommodation between the largely Hutu regime and the FPR. Until such accommodation was secured, this process could not really be said to have been completed successfully. In August 1993 the Arusha Peace Accord was signed, and a new transition government was formed with the moderate MDR's Faustin Twagiramungu as the Prime Minister. The coalition government was supposed to include the FPR, but as the Rwandese soon found out, signing the accord was one thing, its implementation another thing altogether. The prospects of the predominantly Tutsi FPR joining a government of national unity now brought to the fore the underlying tensions within the Hutu parties. Habyarimana now started dragging his feet. The Accord finally collapsed over Habyarimana's insistence on the inclusion of the Coalition pour la Defence de la Republique (CDR), an extreme Hutu party, in the Legislative Assembly. The assassination of the moderate PSD's Felicien Gatabazi (Public Works), and a supporter of the Accord, and the retaliatory assassination of CDR's Martin Bucyana in December 1993 signalled a descent to chaos and civil disorder.

In April 1994 Habyarimana, along with Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi, was killed when his plane was shot down and exploded at Kigali airport while returning from a regional meeting in Arusha. This was the signal for the beginning of the now infamous Rwanda genocide, for as evidence has since demonstrated, this was a well planned pogrom directed through radio

programmes, and some even allege, by the Catholic Church. It was not until July 1994 that the victory of the FPR brought the genocide to an end. Unfortunately the damage had already been done. Close to 800 000 had been killed (Abdulahi, 1995: Nohlen et al, 1998).

The victory of FPR in 1996 and the inauguration of a new Government of National Unity is widely acknowledged to have brought stability, and established an environment in which a solution to the country's endemic ethnic conflict could now be sought. Unfortunately it must be conceded that the situation is far more complex than this, and Rwanda's misadventure in the Democratic Republic of Congo has only served to complicate an already complex problem and render a regional dimension to it.

Political developments since Rwanda's intervention in the >Congo Crisis= has not only exposed potential instability of the entire region, but more significantly Rwanda itself remains at the centre of that crisis of political instability. The ruling Tutsi dominated FPR is unlikely to achieve political hegemony through the ballot box, and has so far failed to achieve the same through military means. The military campaigns in the north and south have not achieved any spectacular successes, as the Interahawe bands remain active in the country. The situation has now been exacerbated by the growing hostility, now virtually in the open, between Rwanda and Uganda. Tensions between the two armies in the DRC's town of Kisangani, and now along their common border at Ntungano, could easily ignite a military confrontation between these two former friends that might erupt any moment.

However it is the absence of a sustainable political solution within Rwanda that remains the major obstacle to political stability in the country and the region. The departure of president Pasteur Bizimungu has further strained the fragile ethnic coalition put together by the FPR in 1994. Although a prominent Hutu, Anastashe Makuza has been retained as the premier and traditional moderate Hutu politicians have been sidelined. Two former premiers, Faustin Twagiramungu and Pierre-Celestin Rwigema, considered MDR heavyweights; Marc Rugera (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Augustine Yamuremye (Foreign Affairs) and Abdul Karim Harerimana (Interior), prominent Hutu moderates, are now all in the political wilderness. Whatever the reason for their removal, it does not augur well for sustained stability. The resignation of Kabuye Sebarenzi, the former speaker of the Assembly is also another indication that all is not well within the Government of National Unity. The Sebarenzi factor is particularly important as he was considered a popular Tutsi with a considerable following internally. The FPR holds the lion's share of the cabinet while the four coalition partners, the MDR, PL, PSD and PDC appear to have lost out. Rwanda thus remains very much an unstable polity.

Uganda

There is no doubt that president Yoweri Museveni's NRM has gone a long way in pulling Uganda out of the deep hole that it dug itself into during the successive regimes of Obote, Amin, Obote II, and the two Okello's whom the MRM removed from power in 1986. What the NRM inherited then was a country on the brink of collapse C a declining state and the disintegration of the economy and society, a demoralized and corrupt civil service and intense ethnic conflict which soon erupted into a civil war (see for example, Brett, 1996; Omara-Otunnu, 1987). The civil war that came in the aftermath of the NRM victory was finally negotiated in 1994 when Museveni opted for a political solution which saw a number of prominent northerners brought into government (Brett, 1995).

Since then, with massive assistance from the west, and the guidance of International Financial Institutions, principally the Bretton Woods institutions, IMF/WB, Uganda has experienced a spectacular economic recovery. Uganda's growth rate has averaged 7 per cent per annum under Museveni. Uganda's economic growth record however, has not been without its critics, an overarching dominance of the Bretton Woods institutions has fostered an aid-driven economy with an administrative structure highly dependent on donor personnel. The Ugandan state has effectively surrendered its autonomy to initiate policy (Himbara & Sultan, 1995), factors which would seem to render Uganda's economic >miracle= unsustainable in the long run.

Museveni's ambition to play the regional power broker has however changed the internal balance of forces. Since Uganda's intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and his consistent support for Garang's Sudanese People Liberation Army (SPLA), civil war appears to have returned to Uganda. Uganda now has to contend with a renewed Joseph Kony=s Lords Resistance Army (LRA), which despite the Nairobi peace accord, has vowed to fight on, and continues to wreak havoc in the northern districts of Gulu and Kitgum. The West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), whose late leader Juma Oris was a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Allied Democratic Front (ADF), a hotch-potch of Islamic fundamentalists, former soldiers of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), Rwanda=s Interahamwe, and an amalgam of ex-Mobutuists. These two operate mainly from the West of the country. The ADF has been active in the western districts of Bundibugyo, Kasese and Fort Portal, right in the midst of Museveni=s political heartland. These are basically movements with little local support and therefore operate through perpetrating maximum violence upon local populations.

Recent evidence indicates that the rebel movements continue to receive funding from the islamic fundamentalist regime in Sudan, and that there now appears to be close collaboration between the three rebel groups. Uganda intelligence forces have at least acknowledged that these 'rebellions could last another 30 years' (*Africa Confidential*, March, 200). The government's failure to stem the tide of the rebel war, now basically in its thirteenth year, has provoked strong criticism of a government whose members, it is believed, are profiting from the

war through supply contracts. But more significantly, government response to the rebels in the north has once again rekindled the whole question of human rights abuses in the north. The Uganda Peoples Defence Force's (UPDF) atrocities and abuses against civilians has been more than adequately documented (*Amnesty International*, March, 1999). This indeed has serious implications for the north-south question in Uganda.

Yet another worrying element is Uganda's gradual slide towards a one-party state. Uganda outlaws opposition parties, they exist as legal organisations, but cannot participate as parties, hold political rallies, demonstrations or sponsor candidates for elections. The National Resistance Movement (NRM), it is argued, is not a party, but an all inclusive movement. The government has therefore proposed a referendum to be held later in the year to ask Ugandans whether they want to return to a multi-party system. Museveni has argued that multi-party politics cannot work in Uganda without a prosperous and educated middle class (Museveni, 1992). While there might very well be an intellectual basis for this assertion, there does not seem to be any difference between his notion of no-party state and the one-party states which dominated the African political scene over a decade ago.

The main opposition parties, the Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC), and the Democratic Party (DP) have boycotted the referendum, arguing that freedom of association should not be put to the vote (AC, April 2000). And so, with only the Multi-party Alliance of Nelson Ocheger, which is widely believed to be Museveni's own creation, there is hardly any doubt that Museveni will get what he wants from the referendum C a no-party state. But there should be no illusion that this is something new, to the extent that other political parties will have been prevented from freely participating in political activity, Uganda will be a one-party (NRM) state, all but in name. This in our opinion is a recipe for political disaster.

Another worrying indicator is the emergence and growth of state corruption in Uganda. Though not on a scale comparable to Kenya, a kleptocratic elite closely tied to the Hima faction of the ruling Ankole coalition is slowly gaining strength. The main sources of corrupt activities are contractocracy (kickbacks through award of contracts), and as middlemen in privatisation deals. It would seem that as the state relinquishes control of the economic arena it is at the same time parcelling this out to its cronies. The name of Major General Salim Saleh (Caleb Akandwanaho), president Museveni's half-brother, the Commander of the Reserve Force, who has accumulated a considerable fortune at a relatively young age, has been floated frequently in connection with the rising corruption, and so is the name of Museveni's wife (Tangri, 2000).

Finally, the continued war deep inside the DRC has similarly contributed to the growing uncertainty. Uganda is basically now fighting on three fronts C the north, the west, and inside the DRC. Should the Uganda/Rwanda hostility erupt into a military confrontation, Uganda will effectively open a fourth front

to the south. Many wonder whether Uganda, despite the best intentions of the west, can sustain this project on a long-term basis.

Somalia

Somalia as is well known ceased to exist as a nation-state for the best part of the last decade. Political power has been splintered and ferociously contested between the main clans of the wider Somali nationality. The last ten years witnessed intense power struggles between the different clans and sub-clans which were accompanied by slaughter of thousands and the displacement of close to three quarters of the 10 million population. The Somali war has without doubt spread into neighbouring countries, manifested either in border skirmishes, as in the North Eastern Province of Kenya, or in the supply of a large number of refugees (about 500 000) in camps in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti (Abdi, 1997).

As with the cases we have considered above, the Somali crisis is basically the result of failure of democratic dispensation of political power. From 1969 when Mohammed Siad Barre overthrew the parliamentary government of Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, Somalia was ruled by a Supreme Revolutionary Council led by Siad Barre. From 1976 a de-jure one-party state was established when Somalia became 'socialist', and Siad Barre founded the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP). Like all one-party states of the time, Barre's SRSP was based on a fragile political base C the Darood clan, but increasingly Siad Barre's rule rested on his narrow sub-clan, the Marehan, and the army was almost exclusively drawn from the Marehan.

By 1990 when Barre like his regional counterparts was pressured into political liberalization, he did so against a background of decayed political institutions of governance which had been left to atrophy during his 21 years of rule. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, Barre had deployed resources to manipulate clan rivalries. In the context of declining resources towards the end of the 1980s, this strategy was no longer possible, and political problems began to surface. By 1988, a number of opposition groups had coalesced against Barre. The Isaaq based Somali National Movement (SNM) whose confrontation with the Barre regime throughout 1988 weakened Barre beyond recovery; the Hawiye led United Somali Congress (USC) based in Italy, but with a guerrilla movement operating from Ethiopia led by Mohammed Farah Aidid, which was to run Siad Barre out of Mogadishu in January 1991. The Somali Patriotic Movement of the Ogaden, a sub-clan of the wider Darood and former supporters of Barre, withdrew from the government following the 1988 campaign in the north. It was against this background that Barre launched his guided political liberalization.

In 1989 the government lifted the ban on opposition parties and announced that they would be allowed to contest elections which were scheduled for 1990. The following year a constitutional referendum was announced to be followed

by elections in February 1991. However, by October 1990, Barre was getting rather desperate and the multi-party system was brought forward to be implemented immediately. Unfortunately the government was no longer in control of the country, its authority restricted to Mogadishu. Barre, to paraphrase the quotable Economist phrase, was fast becoming the Mayor of Mogadishu (*The Economist*, September 29, 1990, cit. in Abdi, 1997). Finally, faced with an escalating civil war, Barre's liberalization exercise was brought to an abrupt end, leading to the downfall of Barre and his SRSP. The departure of Barre led to the assumption of power by the United Somali Congress (USC), the political home of the Hawiye clan. The USC like Barre's SRSP failed to form an all inclusive government and not surprisingly this led to the eruption of inter and intra-clan warfare and the unilateral independence of the Republic of Somaliland in the north, in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Barre.

The war of annihilation that followed the collapse of the Barre regime as each clan fought for control of national hegemony, virtually reduced Somalia into a ruin, ironically justifying Siad Barre's often repeated prophetic message 'when I am finally forced to relinquish power there will be no nation left to govern' (cit. in Samatar, 1997). Numerous attempts to find political solution, from the Djibouti conferences to the UN sponsored ceasefire attempts, the United Nations Operations in Somali (UNOSOM I), the United Nations Task Force (UNITAF), and UNOSOM II, all failed to achieve the desired objectives, largely because of lack of political will, or as in the case of the UN missions, incompetence and subordination of the missions to the wider international political interests (Sahnoun, 1994).

Since the collapse of the state in 1991 Somalia has now fractured into five unstable clan fiefdoms. To the north the former British protectorate which seceded in May 1991 and declared itself the Republic of Somaliland. Here the four main Isaaq clan families - Habar Awal, Habar Yoonis, Habar Tol Jaalo, and Lidagle (see Abbink, 1999; Samatar, 1997) cohabit in an unsteady peace. To the north east, the Majerteen, a sub-clan of the Darood, have carved out a fiefdom for themselves. Further south, the Ogaaden and the Mareehan (Barre's clan) control the port of Kismayu and its hinterlands. The fertile farmlands of Baidoa and the river basin are controlled by the Rahanwayn, while the Hawiye clans under the various warlords, Hassan Aidid, Oman Oto and Ali Mahdi, continue to fight it out for control of Mogadishu and its hinterland. Contrary to popularly held views by a number of Somaliologists, these are not grass-root democracies, rather, basically unstable polities unlikely to gell into a unitary democratic state at some time in the future. This is precisely why the Somaliland brokered accord, leading to a unitary state with a new president, has been torpedoed by the existing warlords.

Further to the north, Ethiopian and Eritrean ruling elites do not seem to have learnt any lessons from the failure of the Mengistu regime. Ethiopia, now largely driven by ethnic conflicts, regional suspicions and antagonism, appears

to be lurching heedlessly towards a Somali type fractionalisation. No doubt a war with Eritrea seems a logical policy option at the moment.

Tanzania

Tanzania would seem to be the only country in the region which has enjoyed a semblance of political stability over the last 38 years of its political independence. This was largely due to a steadfastness of a political leadership which brought the country together and gave it a distinct national identity. With the introduction of a competitive political system and more recently the departure of the founding president, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, rumblings of disaffection are beginning to manifest themselves.

Due to limited capacities and resources the new parties that emerged in the wake of Tanzania's transition to multi-partyism have not been able to challenge Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM's) grip on power. However chaotic organization of the first election and the Zanzibar crisis have more than indicated that all is not stable within the ruling party (Anglin, 2000). Furthermore, economic liberalization has brought in its wake widespread official corruption. Though not as widespread as in Kenya, it is a phenomenon that is increasing rather than diminishing. The 1996 Warioba Commission led to the resignation of several ministers, including Natural Resources minister, Juma Ali Nyasongwe. More recently the controversy surrounding the privatisation of the National Bank has demonstrated that this phenomenon is far from rooted out.

To summarise briefly: it has been necessary to go through this brief regional overview in an attempt to identify faultlines of political instability in the region. What this overview tells us is that the region is indeed a rough neighbourhood. Contrary to widely accepted views, the region is far from stable. This instability is underpinned by the following features:

- § An arc of potential instability runs north-eastwards from Burundi and Rwanda through Uganda into Southern Sudan, and eastwards into Ethiopia and Somalia. This belt contains within it a lethal combination of ingredients of political conflict. Within this arc are to be found a number of weak states C Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, and a collapsed state, Somalia.
- § Nominally most of the countries in the region are market led democracies. However, these are facades behind which kleptocratic ruling elites continue to rob and pillage the economies with abandon. Predatory conversion of political power into economic wealth appears to be the norm rather than the exception, and the main function of the states in the region appear to be the corrupt appropriation of limited resources.]
- § Acceleration of globalization and deregulation of markets has engendered intense competition over dwindling resources, ultimately sharpening the

predatory instincts of this kleptocratic ruling elite. Not surprisingly, political power has come to be very intensely contested.

It would appear to me therefore that given this scenario, a single upheaval in any one area would be enough to spark off a political inferno that could consume the whole region for a considerable period. Our argument is that the brewing political crisis in Kenya might just provide one such spark. For this analysis we now turn to the crisis of succession in Kenya.

Kenya: the crisis of succession

According to the constitutional amendment of 1992 which brought the one-party state to an end, the presidential term was restricted to two five-year terms. President Moi should therefore be retiring at the end of this, his second term, in 2002. The question most people have been asking is whether come December 2002 he will hang up his boots and walk quietly into retirement, and if he does not, as is increasingly becoming evident, how does he propose to stay on?

Since the beginning of his second term President Moi has been sending conflicting messages about his retirement plans. In June 1999 soon after returning from South Africa where he had attended president Thabo Mbeki's inauguration, he announced that he too would like to retire at the end of his second term provided, he added, that a suitable successor could be found from among his ministers. In December 1999 he was even more forthright. >Three years from now=, he said, >I will retire from active politics, but I will make sure that I leave you united under a leader I will advise you to elect as president= (*Daily Nation*, December 4, 1999).

More recently he has appeared to waver from his earlier promise to step down come 2002. In April 2000 he told his ruling party the Kenya African National Union (KANU) Parliamentary Group meeting that he was not in a hurry to leave office until he was satisfied that doing so would satisfy the interests and wishes of the majority of Kenyans. >Some people have said that if I run for the Presidency in the next elections I will ignite a time-bomb. What time-bomb is bigger than the voice and wishes of Kenyans?= he is reported to have asked his parliamentarians (*Daily Nation*, April 19, 00). What are the reasons behind these conflicting statements from the President?

Kenya: the crisis within

President Moi's vacillations reflect the growing crisis within his ruling KANU party, panicked by the prospects of losing control of the state as the party contemplates the departure of the president. To appreciate the depth of this panic, it is important to understand the character of the Kenyan state under Moi. First, the state has served as the main dispenser of patronage and

resources. The state alone has had the capacity to create conditions and pursue policies that privilege the accumulation of wealth by the political elite. Hence it is not surprising that control of the state or proximity to those who have access to state power has been the main pre-occupation of political activity. Second, the Moi state became increasingly kleptocratic, largely because the coalition of class forces which came to dominate the state were primarily kleptocratic non-productive classes. Thus the state was seen as the principal source of accumulation and patronage resources for this class. This as I have argued elsewhere (Ajulu, 1996, 1998), was because, unlike the Kenyatta coalition which comprised the original indigenous accumulators, president Moi's ruling coalition was drawn from areas peripheral to capitalist development. Finally, the state under Moi became increasingly centralised and authoritarian, precisely because economic mobility and expansion of the new ruling class was largely tied to its continued control of state power.

This broadly explains why the ruling elite was unwilling to be subjected to democratic accountability. Indeed by Moi's own admission, he had accepted political pluralism because of the consistent pressures from donors and western governments, and not because he was convinced of the fecundity of competitive politics (see, in *Africa Events*, September, 1992). The problem from Moi's point of view is that when he conceded political space in 1992 he unwittingly agreed to the constitutional amendment which thereafter restricted presidents to serve a maximum of two five-year terms.

The first signs of panic appeared at the beginning of the 1990s. With the prospects of political pluralism around the corner, and somewhat convinced that they were unlikely to win democratically conducted elections, this class set about the serious business of plundering the state through such means as dubious contracts (the rise of contractocracy), questionable purchases by government departments and parastatals, unauthorised expenditures, non-payment of duties on imported goods, award of government lands to cronies and subsequent sales to well connected business persons, sale of government houses to cronies at knock-down prices and award of nonexistent consultancies to dubious consultancy firms. This was the period of the infamous Goldenburg scandal, in which a local firm Goldenberg International owned by an Asian businessman, Kamlesh Pattni, was allegedly paid KSh51.5 billion as export compensation for gold and diamonds. Kenya produces neither. In other words, the ruling elite and its supportive classes sought to 'make hay' while the sun was still shining. According to the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (1998), close to 1500 billion shillings was either lost, or irregularly expended between 1994 and 1996. Having looted so much, Moi and his team dug in their heels, and increasingly began to view democratisation as a threat to their personal security and material wealth.

As the economy continued to collapse around them, and politics was characterized increasingly by acute instability, the end of the presidential term

no longer seeming too far, the panic deepened and the KANU ruling elite turned its attention to how to hold onto power after 2002.

First, in the run up to the 1997 election, it set itself against a constitutional reform, fearing that constitutional changes involving electoral changes, righting the rampant constituency gerrymandering and limiting presidential powers, might shift the balance of power in favour of the opposition in Parliament. It took mass mobilisation during the months of July and August 1997 to persuade the government to concede to opposition demands for constitutional reforms before the general elections could be held (Ajulu, 1998). This was achieved through the Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group (IPPG), a KANU initiated platform which largely had the effect of blunting the impact of the reform agenda proposed by the section of the opposition and its allies in the National Convention Council (see the IPPG Report). And once again in 1998 it took mass mobilisation to force a reluctant KANU to concede the passage of the Constitution of Kenya Review (Amendment) Act which was passed in October 1998, providing for a multi-tiered structure for the constitutional review process now popularly referred as the 'people-driven' review process. I will come back to this below.

Second, the government set about informalising state repressive institutions. As Southall (2000) correctly points out, the security forces in Kenya have lost the monopoly of the means of violence. The faceless militias responsible for the ethnic cleansing in the Rift Valley Province before and after the 1992 elections; the Pokot raiders in the northern part of the Rift valley; the Samburu and Turkana militias who have been active in the Laikipia areas; the armed militia responsible for the deaths of up to 50 so-called up country people in the Coast Province in the run up to the 1997 elections, are all connected to people very high up in government. At least this was the conclusion of a Parliamentary Select Committee (the Kiliku Report), which fingered among others, the vice-president, Prof Saitoti and the Trade and Industry minister Nicholas Biwott. It is instructive that the government has so far failed to release the report of the Commission of Inquiry into tribal clashes (the Akiwumi Commission), which submitted its report at the end of 1999.

More recently the government has allowed the proliferation of urban youth militias closely linked to the party's big-wigs. The notorious Jeshi La Mzee (the Old Man's Army) is deployed regularly against anti-government demonstrations in Nairobi. Its members are known to the security forces. It is handled by a well-known politician who is also a deputy minister. So when President Moi declares, as he did in April at the end of KANU Parliamentary group meeting, that he will call the 'youth to come in and help' if anyone took mass action against the Raila report (*The Daily Nation*, April, 19, 00), it is indeed an acknowledgment that this strategy is sanctioned from the very top.

Predictably these political manoeuvres engendered serious divisions within the party. And not for the first time. KANU has been known to fracture incessantly

in times of crisis. For example, during the Odinga crisis in the 1960s, and the Change the Constitution Movement in the late 1970s, the party was for all practical purposes reduced to two warring entities (Odinga, 1966; Karimi and Ochieng, 1980). And so as in the past KANU fractured into two main factions, KANU A and KANU B. The third one KANU C is not really significant for purposes of our analysis here.

KANU A, fronted by Simeon Nyachae the former Finance Minister, represents the enlightened faction of the ruling elite, its objectives seem to be centred around the presidential ambitions of Nyachae himself, but significantly, the faction draws upon those sections in KANU leadership that have not been privy to the predatory activities of the inner ring of the ruling coalition. In order to appreciate the political orientation of this faction, it is important to understand the background of Nyachae himself.

A relative late comer to politics (he only joined active politics in 1992 when he was elected MP for the Nyaribari Chache constituency), he comes from a background not quite dissimilar to the old indigenous accumulators of the Kenyatta regime. His father, the late Chief Nyandusi, was a Senior Chief in Kisii. Simeon Nyachae started out as a civil servant, was one of the first permanent secretaries at independence in 1963, rose to a be Provincial Commissioner, where he served for a long time during the Kenyatta period, and ultimately to Chief Secretary from where he retired in 1988. At the time of his retirement he had accumulated a considerable amount of capital, significantly not through openly kleptocratic or predatory means. So, unlike other members of the Moi regime, he has an independent capital base, and is thus capable of dispensing his own patronage without the assistance of the president. Unlike other members of the ruling coalition he can be considered to be comparatively clean.

The KANU B, the dominant faction of the party closely identified with Moi's kitchen cabinet C Nicholas Biwott, Joseph Kamotho, the party Secretary-General, and Saitoti, the vice-president, is believed to be the core of party hardliners. It had Biwott as its unofficial leader and Saitoti as its presidential candidate, and is closely associated with that section of the ruling coalition which has made huge fortunes out of corruption and kleptocratic and predatory economic activities. Saitoti's name for example, has featured regularly in the now infamous Goldenburg scandal in which the Sh51.5 billion was allegedly siphoned off the Treasury as export compensation for gold and diamonds and paid to Goldenberg International owned by a Mr. Kamlesh Patni. More recently a number of members of this faction have been named in the so-called *Corruption List of Shame*, recently published by the Parliamentary Select Committee on corruption, among them, Saitoti, Biwott, Sunkuli, Arap Ngeny, the Water Development Minister, and President Moi's son, Phillip Moi (*Daily Nation*, May, 4, 00). This faction's objective, was initially to seek a settlement that would give them cover come Moi's departure. Initially this group sought to woo the Gema faction of the Kikuyu through the KAMATUSA-GEMA talks of

1993/4 period. When this failed Moi initiated the so-called Kikuyu Development Group. The failure of Moi to gain a foothold in Kikuyuland in the 1997 election put paid to this effort.

KANU A was in the ascendancy in the period immediately after the election when Saitoti was demoted from the vice-presidency to the relatively junior position of Planning and National Development while Nyachae was made the minister of Finance in which portfolio his brief was to win back the confidence of the IMF/WB by tackling economic mismanagement and corruption, a challenge that he accepted gladly with the full knowledge that the main culprits belonged to the other camp. By all assessment, within a relatively short period he had done an excellent job C balanced the budget, stabilized the shilling, and broadly established conditions for a return to negotiations with the IMF/WB. More importantly, Nyachae exposed the extent of high level involvement in graft, and the finger kept pointing in the direction of the State House. The revelations of bad debts at the National Bank of Kenya (NBK) exposed the extent to which close Moi hardline cronies, cabinet ministers Biwott, Ntimama, Saitoti, Kones, former cabinet minister Ndolo Ayah, a High Court judge, owed the bank billions of Kenya shillings (*Africa Confidential*, 1998). Nyachae also led a frontal attack on the import export sector likening to Al Capone's Chicago. These exposures predictably intensified attacks on him ultimately leading to his being moved to the junior position of Industrial Development which he refused to take and instead opted for the back-bench, where he continues to be a thorn in the flesh of government.

Meanwhile KANU B, recovered its dominance with the reappointment of Saitoti to the VC position in 1998. But as the government continued to come under pressure from the IMF/WB, on economic mismanagement and corruption, Saitoti now sought to distance himself from Biwott and attempted to cultivate a wider political base for himself, albeit in preparation for the presidency. Furthermore, the vice-president quite let it be known that he was not prepared to carry the responsibility for the Goldenberg scandal alone, thereby suggesting that the decision to loot the Treasury came from much higher up. The group was also not happy about the positive chord that Saitoti had struck within the Kikuyu opposition parties. When towards the end of 1999 the NDP's Otieno Kajwang brought a vote of no confidence against the Vice President, it was the Deputy President's support which bailed him out. Kajwang however was seen as a proxy of the KANU hardliners. Thereafter it became clear that the group no longer considered Saitoti their natural presidential candidate. They decided that they could not trust him any more, fearing that he might turn on them come Moi's departure.

With Nyachae out in the cold and Saitoti now no longer a favoured candidate, the succession issue continued to divide the ruling party down the middle. By mid-1999 it was quite clear that KANU was held together by Moi, and the fact that they still had control of the state, and by extension, patronage resources. In the absence of Moi, party followers feared the disintegration of the party into

its old KADU constituencies. It was probably at this point that president Moi and his kitchen cabinet decided that the only way out was for Moi to get a third term. But this would entail amending the constitution appropriately. How would KANU achieve this given the elaborate constitutional review process as negotiated in the Safari Park negotiations which led to the Constitution of Kenya Review (Amendment) Act, 1998, which effectively removed the process from Parliament where at least Moi had the majority, thanks to a >cooperation= with Raila Odinga's National Democratic Party (NDP)?

Managing the constitutional review process

In the run up to the 1997 elections, mass mobilization led by NCEC and a section of the opposition confronted Moi with a broad based demand for constitutional review before the elections. Confronted with violence in the capital, Nairobi, and at the Coast, the government suddenly lost the political initiative to the opposition. But ever the master of political intrigue and manipulation, Moi soon regained the initiative. He conceded the principle of a constitutional reform and persuaded a section of the opposition to join an Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) a KANU platform which according to the NCEC, had been designed to blunt the impact of demands of the country for electoral reform,...= (NCEC, 1997:1), a feat which president Moi achieved with remarkable success C the constitution was amended to render the country a de jure multi-party democracy; the Public Order Act (Cap 56) was amended to facilitate freedom of assembly; section 33 of the constitution was amended so that the nomination of MPs is proposed on a pro rata basis by all Parliamentary parties with a minimum of seven MPS. This enabled the election to be conducted as scheduled. The Act furthermore provided for the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission to be composed of 29 commissioners appointed out of 45 members nominated by political parties, churches, and >civil society=.

Having won the 1997 election, Moi predictably was in no hurry to honour the IIPG deal. It took 18 months of political fencing, mass mobilisation, and four conventions, Safari Park I, II III and IV, to establish a constitution review process. The outcome, established very much against the wishes of the KANU hard line, encompassed the participation of a wide section of the society through a multi tiered structure as follows:

- \$ District Forum C composed of representatives of local stakeholders responsible for civic education and nomination of district representatives to the National Consultative Forum (NCCF).
- \$ Constitutional Commission C consisting of 13 nominees of political parties, 5 representatives from women=s organisations, 4 representatives from civil organisations, and 3 from church organisations, would consult the public and draw up a draft bill.

§ The National Constitutional Consultative Forum (NCCF) § all MPs, Commissioners, and three representatives from each District Forum, and two representatives each from organisations which were party to the Safari Park negotiations. This body was supposed to study the Commission report and make appropriate amendments.

§ The Constitution Amendment Bill would be passed by Parliament, and finally forwarded to the President for assent (See Wamugo, cit in Southall, 2000).

Obviously, if the intention was to draft a KANU friendly constitution which might include a third term for the president, this elaborate structure was unlikely to be acceptable to the ruling party. So, having been pressured by mass mobilisation to accept the Safari Park negotiations, KANU now set out to wreck it. KANU initially started by demanding majority representation on the Commission, but it soon realised that even that would not quite secure the balance in its favour. Thus towards the end of 1999, it called on the process to be returned to Parliament, arguing that the Commission was after all an unelected body. Just like the 1997 period, KANU was helped along the way by a divided opposition which as always, was incapable of coming up with a united platform.

By December 1999 Moi had managed to scupper the elaborate structure put together at Safari Park and returned the review process to the House. This was achieved through a deal that was struck with the opposition NDP. Earlier in December 1999 the NDP leader prepared a motion to compel the Attorney General to convene a meeting of stakeholders to jump-start the stalled constitutional review process. The NDP leader was subsequently persuaded to include a crucial amendment which called for a House Select Committee to work on the Act. Thus was born the Parliamentary Select Committee on the constitutional Review (The Raila Committee), elected exclusively by KANU and the NDP and composed almost exclusively by the two parties, it was a partisan body that was bound to divide the country on the crucial question of the constitution making process. And divide the country it did. The rest of the opposition having rejected the Select Committee, went ahead, together with the Churches and >civil society= to form a parallel constitution making body C The Church led Ufungamano Initiative.

It has been suggested that KANU formed a review committee to explore the amendments to the constitutions long before the Parliamentary Select Committee was appointed (*Daily Nation*, February, 24,00). The core recommendation of this committee according to these sources, was for the Commissioners to be reduced to 15, and to be appointed by the President and not the stakeholders as provided for by the Act. And just so, the Raila Committee submitted its report to Parliament on 20 April and its core recommendation was that a parliamentary committee be responsible for identifying 21 people from whom President Moi would appoint 15 to form the

Constitutional Review Commission. The Select Committee thus handed the entire constitutional reform process into the laps of the president and the ruling party KANU. Ford Kenya MP, Dr Mukhisa Kituyi, alleged that the Raila Report was a replica of a similar constitutional draft made by the KANU think tank which was drafted as early as October 16, 1998 (*Daily Nation*, April 8, 00). And so it is quite possible that the Parliamentary Select Committee was fronting for KANU all along. It is not surprising that the opposition boycotted the debate. In the absence of the opposition, not much was expected of the debate on the Select Committee Report. Surprisingly, it was one of their own, Simeon Nyachae, who captured the mood of the country. Appealing to his fellow KANU MPs for common sense, he said that if KANU did not bring back the 65 MPs who had walked out then their action would undermine unity and peace:

...whether you call them stakeholders or not, there is leadership outside this House that must be included in the review process so as to give the final document a wide appeal, acceptability and legitimacy... Anybody who loves this country must stop dividing Kenyans... Disagreement on the constitutional review has now gone beyond political parties and it is now out there tearing the country apart... we cannot be divided like this and come out with a constitution that will be acceptable to all Kenyans (*Daily Nation*, April 21, 00)

All this fell on deaf ears. KANU was in no mood for compromise. And in any case, the adoption of the motion was never really in any doubt, as what was required at this stage was a simple majority. Thus, even if the opposition had stayed and voted against the motion, it would still have sailed through; a combination of KANU and NDP was enough to secure the required simple majority. So, with President Moi having said that he would give 11 seats to KANU, 2 to NDP, while the rest of the opposition would share the remaining seats (*Daily Nation*, April 19, 00) the country would have been saddled with a KANU version of the constitution. What does this portend for a country already torn apart by the preliminary process itself?

But first, how did KANU propose to proceed once they had captured the constitutional review process? Early in February 2000, Shariff Nassir, a minister in the President's office and generally regarded as the unofficial spokesperson of hardliners, publicly floated a possible direction of constitutional changes. He suggested the constitution could be changed to ensure that the Speaker took over as a temporary measure until a new president was elected (*Daily Nation*, February 12, 2000). This was seen primarily as a crusade against the vice-president George Saitoti whom, as I have already indicated, had fallen out of favour with the hardliners. But more significantly, Nassir also added that he was not happy with President Moi's announcement that he was set to retire once his terms expired in 2002. He thought this decision should be left to Kenyans. In April, as already mentioned above, president Moi himself indicated that he might not leave office when his

time came in 2002. Instead, he suggested that this decision should be left to the 'wanaichi (the people) to decide' (*Daily Nation*, April 19, 00). More recently the environment minister, Francis Nyenze reiterated the same message. Kenyans, the Minister said early in May, were worried about President Moi leaving office without a successor who could unite all the ethnic groups:

...This nation would be thrown into confusion should Moi bow out of office before a suitable successor is known... KANU's strategy would be to seek the view of the majority within and without parliament on whether President Moi should quit... (*Daily Nation*, May 8, 00)

This relentless campaign by KANU hardliners does lend credence to the now popular view that KANU indeed proposes to amend the constitution to give president Moi a third term. A recent commentary in the *Daily Nation* (April 16, 00) invoking >very credible= sources outlined the general thrust of the proposed changes as follows; the amendment of the constitution to enable Moi to remain as a ceremonial president, and two vice presidents and a prime minister who would be responsible for the authority over government.

The numbers game

KANU's intentions aside, the proposed amendments would first have to go through Parliament. Here KANU would need a two-thirds majority in order to amend the constitution. The magic figure is 140. The numbers game does not at the moment appear to favour KANU. The KANU block, that is, KANU, the National Democratic Party (NDP) of Raila Odinga, and the two one-person parties, the Kenya National Congress (KNC) and Shirikisho, together command 131 votes, that is, without any defection. Two NDP members, Dr Ochuodho (Rangwe) and Peter Oloo Aringo (Alego-Usonga) are not likely to vote with KANU which reduces the block vote to 129. If KANU defectors abandon the party (the likely figure is 5), this will leave KANU looking for some 16 votes to amend the constitution. On the other hand, the opposition block, that is, the Democratic Party (DP), the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Safina, Ford People and Ford Asili, together with two MPs from NDP have a combined voting power of 77, enough to prevent KANU getting the requisite two-thirds.

The question then is, will KANU be able to woo a sufficient number of defectors from the opposition block to attain the magical figure of 140? Here we have to turn to recent voting patterns in the House to assess the possibility. During the Orengo sponsored vote of no confidence in the president, KANU secured 137 votes against the combined opposition tally of 67, enough to defeat the motion, but falling short of the two-thirds margin by three votes. Once again during the debate on the Parliamentary Select Committee on the constitutional review process, 65 opposition members walked out, just enough to deny KANU a two-third majority by one vote. So it is not quite certain that Moi will get his way come the second round in Parliament.

This view however, must be tempered by President Moi's known abilities at political manipulation and wheeling and dealing. First, if what we have said about the proposed constitutional changes is correct then Moi and KANU will have two slots in the vice-presidency and a premiership to dangle before the opposition. Second, it will be recalled that during the no confidence vote mentioned above, 23 MPs, 19 from the National Democratic Party, 2 for the Democratic Party, and one each from Safina and FORD respectively voted with KANU, while 6 Ford Kenya MPs abstained. It was alleged then that a lot of money had changed hands to secure that outcome. Moi and KANU certainly have the resources to spread patronage, but whether there will be takers remains to be seen. In the ultimate analysis, the question must be posed: having gone this far, will KANU be prepared to accept a Parliamentary defeat?

The dilemma of transition

We can now come back to the question we posed earlier, and that is, what does all this portend for a country already torn apart by the preliminary process of constitutional reform?

It would seem to me that the dominant section of the KANU ruling elite have not yet contemplated the prospects of loss of control of the state. In any case, the stakes are so high for this lot just to pack up their bags and walk away. Apart from pressures for constitutional reform and continued political liberalization, Moi has continually had to parry pressures from the donor community and the IFIs, particularly the IMF/WB who appear more determined this time round to secure some sort of action against rampant corruption and financial mismanagement. The cat and mouse game that Moi has played rather successfully with the IMF/WB over the last ten years appears to be drawing to a close, as he begins to sacrifice some close cronies to the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority (KACA) which was established at the behest of the IMF.

The KACA which so far has been criticised for netting='small fish while letting the sharks go free' (*Daily Nation*, February 27, 00) has recently got some sharks. A Permanent Secretary and a former comptroller of the state House, Lawi Kiplagat was recently arrested for corruption and subsequently fired from his job. A wife of a cabinet minister, and the notorious trio at the City Hall, the Town Clerk, and her two deputies have similarly been charged with corruption. The so-called *List of Shame* recently released by the Parliamentary Committee on Corruption reads like a who=s who of President Moi's kitchen cabinet: vice president Saitoti, ministers, Nicholas Biwott, Henry Kosgey, Kipngeno Ngeny, Sunkuli, Moi's son Phillip Moi, former permanent secretaries, Charles Mbidyo and Wifred Koinange, former Central Bank Governor, Eric Kotut. The Committee has recommended that KACA investigate and prosecute those whose names appear on the list. The Chief Secretary, Richard Leakey, who already has appeared before the Public Investment Committee to answer

questions why the government has not implemented any of the resolutions, will therefore increasingly come under more pressure to act.

This is not to mention those within this ruling elite who fear prosecution against human rights abuses and other serious economic and political offences. It is significant for instance that recent debates in the press have finally led to the reopening of the 'Ouko file', that is, the investigation into the controversial assassination of the former foreign minister Robert Ouko, in which the government was alleged to have been deeply implicated. For these and other reasons, this lot will continue to associate democratisation with a threat to their material wealth and security and that of their families, and therefore are, in my opinion, unlikely to enter into any negotiations about surrender of state power.

It is significant to note for instance that the relentless campaign for a third term for president Moi has been accompanied by an equally virulent campaign for majimboism (federalism). KANU's or is it KADU=s (Moi's ruling coalition is comprised predominantly of ex-KADU members who crossed over to KANU in 1964) conception of federalism however, is not simply a question of devolution of power. For KANU, majimboism has come to mean ethnic separatism, a bargaining instrument which has been increasingly deployed by KANU since the opening of democratic space to cling to power at the centre. Implied in the call for majimboism is the threat that democratic dispensation at the centre will be confronted with retreat into ethnic baronies. As Joseph Misoi, the former KANU MP for Eldoret South, said:

...with the introduction of a multiparty system the survival of the smaller ethnic groups is (sic) threatened, and the only way to safeguard their interests was through majimboism (Kenya Times, 20.5.93)

Shariff Nassir, a minister in the president=s office, puts the matter differently, >if we want this country to continue being united, the person who succeeds President Moi should come from the minority tribes= (*Daily Nation*, February 12, 00).

The idea of majimboism however is not new in Kenyan politics. It had its origins in 1954 with the formation of the whites only Federal Independent Party (FIP) (Sanger & Nottingham, 1964). The FIP sought to protect the =White Highlands= from African control, and hence it opted for a regionalist platform. In 1958 the FIP was transformed into the Progressive Local Government Party (PLGP); the rhetoric had changed but the objectives remained the same. The white PLGP hoped to exercise political control over the White Highlands. They thus advocated strengthened local governments, with powers over local taxation and expenditure.

The old Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) which has been mistakenly credited with the founding of majimboism only adopted the idea in 1961, and

only when it had become clear that together with its allies, Michael Blundel's New Kenya Party (NKP) and the Kenya Indian Congress (KIC), they were unlikely to assume control of an independent unitary Kenyan state. It was then that majimboism was launched under the slogan >Regionalism or Civil War= (Sanger & Nottingham, 1964). William Murgor, then parliamentary secretary to the Defence and Internal Security portfolio in the transitional government, invited his Kalenjin tribesmen to sharpen their spears and wait for the sound of his whistle for the beginning of the war to drive non-Kalenjins out of the Rift Valley. Moi, then Chairman of KADU, vowed to shed his blood to ensure that regionalism was written in the independence constitution (Atieno-Odhiambo, 1998).

Thirty nine years later not much appears to have changed, the same political actors still believe very much in ethnic separatism as an alternative to loss of control of power at the centre. Yet what is clear is that ethnic regionalism is unlikely to serve the economic interests of this kleptocratic class. As I have argued elsewhere (Ajulu, 1998), control of the state has been central to the emergence and consolidation of Moi's kleptocratic bourgeoisie. An ethnic regional government is unlikely to provide the same source of largesse that this class has enjoyed through control of the central state. As Southall (1999) rightly points out, the disintegration of the central state would collapse what has hitherto been their principal source of accumulation: scatter the capital of the Asians, who have their principal middle-men, and drive away multinational capital which has been the mainstay of Kenya's role as the principal economic player in the eastern African region.

It would seem to me therefore that far from being a realistic option, majimboism is in reality a euphemism for a war of contestation of the centre. It is basically a strategy to extract concession from the centre by those who are unable to compete at the national level, a strategy which in South Africa for example, Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party has put to very good use to gain leverage at the centre. Crudely put, KANU seems to be saying that a unitary state is okay as long as they (KANU) control it, and it remains broadly undemocratic and unaccountable. Should the centre however be subjected to democratic accountability, or KANU, with the loss of control over it, then the alternative must be ethnic separatism.

Or is it sable-rattling on the part of KANU and the government? Moi, the master of brinkmanship has probably calculated that given the centrality of Kenya in the region, and western investments and other interests in the area, if he can achieve a third term with minimal rancour, he might be allowed to get away with it. But if on the other hand this kind of political gamble misfires, it could develop into something quite ghastly. Already the ingredients of warlordism and civil war exist in Kenya. As we have indicated above, since 1992 we have witnessed a gradual encroachment of low-intensity warfare C 1500 killed and over 300 000 displaced in the ethnic cleansing in the Rift valley and bordering regions between 1992-93; 120 killed and more than 4000 displaced in Nakuru and Laikipia; over 50 killed in Likoni and Kisauni in the

run up to the 1997 elections. Furthermore, the government has freely encouraged formation of youth militias, recruited from the socially uprooted sections of urban lumpens, and paid by some very well known ruling party politicians.

In the north western and north eastern parts of the country bordering Sudan, Uganda and Somali respectively, the government has for all practical purposes ceded control to militias and warlords. Moreover it is generally acknowledged that the Kalenjin based militias who were used in the ethnic cleansing in the Rift Valley province during the 1992/93 period have not been totally disbanded. A former MP from northwestern Rift Valley province, Frederick Cheserek, recently urged his tribesmen to sell their remaining livestock and buy arms to protect themselves from cattle rustlers. Otherwise there is no government to protect them= (*Daily Nation* March 11, 2000) - suggesting ominously that there is easy access to arms, and that government has all but lost legitimacy and monopoly over the repressive apparatus of the state. Add to this the proliferation of small arms along the country's borders which has increased banditry and militarised the once noble art of cattle rustling, then you have a classical recipe for political disaster, a typical situation where political crises and social unrest might easily trigger off a war of annihilation.

Let me conclude this section by emphasizing once more that for the present Kenyan ruling elite the stakes appear to be very high. As long as this ruling elite continue to associate democratisation with a threat to their material wealth and security and that of their families, they will increasingly find it difficult to enter into meaningful negotiations about transfer of state power. Over the next two years therefore, struggles over constitutional reform might very well trigger low intensity civil war. Alternatively, a failure by the KANU ruling to achieve their version of the amended constitution might very well accentuate panic within the ruling class, leading towards freelance violence which if continued unchecked might eventually lead to an outbreak of civil war.

Likely areas of conflict

In the event of a collapse of the centre, it is likely that the ruling KANU could break along the lines of its minority ethnic constituencies, and seek to use these to defend their respective turfs from encroachment from the perceived enemies, the so-called dominant ethnic groups. Within that framework it is possible to configure three different theatres of political instability as follows:

The north eastern corridor

This area is bordered by Ethiopia in the north and Somalia in the east and north-east, previously known as the Northern Frontier District, and including

most of the Kenyan pastoralist ethnic groups C Somalia, Boran, Rendilles and the Turkana. For much of the colonial period, the area remained a >closed district=, no person could enter the area without a special licence from government. It has thus remained one of the most underdeveloped parts of the country as a result of deliberate colonial and post-colonial policies. From independence in 1963 the area was demarcated as the North Eastern Province, and became predominantly populated by a Somali population politically, culturally, and economically attached to their kin across the colonial border in Somalia. It was this cultural affinity and Somalia=s expansionist ambitions which led to the attempted secession, soon after Kenya=s independence in 1963 was brutally put down by the newly independent Kenyan state with devastating consequences for future relations between the two countries. The area has since independence been characterised by acute insecurity which unfortunately has been used, first by the Kenyatta regime and more recently by the Moi regime to impose a repressive governance in the region. For all practical purposes the region has technically remained under emergency legislation since independence in 1963.

The region has a long history of low intensity civil war, beginning with the Shifta war of secession in 1963; the *Bulla Karatsi* >massacre= in 1980 when hundreds of people were killed and hundreds more wounded as government troops attacked and burned down the Bulla Karatsi village in retaliation for the death of six government officials; and more recently the >Wajir Massacre= in 1984 which allegedly claimed the lives of some 2000 Degodia clansmen and some thousands more missing or presumed dead (*Africa Watch*, 1991: 274 -8). Political upheavals in the region since then, Ethiopia in the mid 1970s, and more recently in the early 1990s has added to the continual instability in the area. As we have indicated, the region is visibly underdeveloped which has undoubtedly fed the perception locally of a lack of representation and political marginalisation.

The collapse of the Somalian state in the early 1990s not only added to this potent mix of instability, but equally guaranteed an endless supply of illegal arms. Killings and raids attributed to >bandits= have increased by leaps and bounds since the collapse of the Somali state. More significantly, the declining resource base, the political economy of collapsed states and the dominant economic activity across the border in Somali has sparked off intense rivalries between different warlords over declining economic resources. As this war of attrition over resources, manifested in cattle rustling, and inter and intra-ethnic conflicts, has continued over the last decade, indications are that government has for all practical purposes lost control of the region, and that political power and control over the wider area has passed over to the warlords while the government maintains control only in the urban centres.

In the event of a collapse of the centre, it is not unlikely that the warlords will take advantage to pursue their own respective agenda, not to mention the long simmering desire to secede and join their Islamic brethren across the

border. The current lawlessness in Somalia and along the bordering areas would make it a perfect theatre of internecine warfare in the event of a breakdown of law and order in Kenya.

The Rift Valley and the North Rift Valley corridor

The Rift Valley province was the scene of ethnic cleansing in the run up to the first democratic election in 1992, and again in 1993 and 1994. As we have indicated above, ethnic violence in the 1992-3 period was far from being spontaneous acts of a few trigger happy individuals, but rather, deliberately orchestrated political acts by the political elite in pursuit of a number of objectives C political gerrymandering by disenfranchising those in the province who were not supporters of the ruling party, establishment of ethnic baronies as political bargaining instruments, ultimately providing land for the supporters of the ruling party. Available evidence does seem to suggest that the killer bands, recruited mainly from the Kalenjin and Masai supporters of the ruling party have not been adequately disbanded and may be readily available for future deployment.

The Rift Valley is also the home to the minority alliance, the Kalenjin, Masai, Turkana, and Samburu (KAMATUSA) which has constituted the cornerstone of the ruling KANU party ever since president Moi assumed power in 1978. Its prominent politicians - Nicholas Biwott, the former minister for energy, Vice-President George Saitoti, William Ntimana, the minister for local government, and the then speaker of the House Prof Ngeno, were all named by two separate commissions, the Task Force, established by the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NECK) and the Parliamentary Select Committee (the Kiliku Report), which conducted an inquiry into the 1992 ethnic cleansing. These politicians as we have suggested, have in the past engaged in hostile political rhetoric threatening ethnic separatism in case they were not able to secure their desired political outcome.

The northern Rift Valley and the semi-arid areas bordering on Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia have been the setting for some of the most vicious conflicts between the various nomadic ethnic groups who inhabit the area. This region which was initially administered as part of the Northern Frontier District until independence in 1963, has been particularly notorious for cross-border cattle rustling. Because of its close proximity to northern Uganda, and southern Sudan, theatres of conflict over the last quarter of a century, much of the instability has been accentuated by the easy availability of small arms and automatic weapons from the wars across the border. This as I have already indicated, has in turn transformed the dynamics of cattle-rustling into military expeditions with significant risks to the region. As early as the early 1980s the Turkana from Kenya were already engaged in large-scale cross border raids into Uganda. According to *Africa Watch* (1991), one such raid penetrated as far as 200 km inside northern Uganda.

The introduction of multi-party competitive elections since 1992, the protracted drought which according to analysts is now in its sixth year, and finally, the collapse of the subsistence economy in the region, have all contributed to intensive rivalry over declining resources. Over the last seven years or so government has gradually lost control of the area, particularly the north western margins of the region, a development which has witnessed the emergence of warlords closely associated with the ruling party as the main power brokers in the area. Guns appear to be on unlimited supply and cattle rustling conducted by well armed groups appears to be the main economic activity. The region thus contains all the ingredients of political instability, and in the event of a political hiccup at the centre there is no doubt that this area is likely to emerge as a theatre of activity for those who are bent on continuing politics by other means.

The coastal corridor

As in the Rift Valley province, economic crises in the Coast province centres around land. Over the years high value land along the Kenyan coast has been purchased by well placed political elites from within and >outside= the area, a fact of great political resentment to ordinary people from the province. In times of political crisis, it has been possible to politicise the land issue and turn it into a campaign against the up-country people, as captured in the infamous separatist slogan C *wabara kwao!* (up-country people back to their original areas).

The run up to the 1997 elections constituted one such moment. This came at a time when the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) had lost the political initiative to a section of the opposition, and increasingly it was beginning to look as if a constitutional reform which would >level the political playing field= would be possible. It was in these circumstances that violence erupted with attacks on the Likoni police station. It is widely held that persons very high up in the government had been responsible for organizing, funding and orchestrating the violence. According to the Kenya Human Rights Commission (*Economic Review*, 15-21, 12, 1997), the Coast violence was seen as a strategy unleashed by the state to achieve two main objectives. One of these was to create an environment which would have served as a convenient pretext for the declaration of a state of emergency, thereby postponing the December elections until such time as the government had regained the initiative from the opposition. The other, of course, had to do with the undermining of the demographic strength of the opposition parties in a number of constituencies at the Coast in the run up to the election. The large populations of the Luo, Kikuyu and Luhya have often been considered as a crucial swing factor in the Coast electoral calculations.

These events and the continuing conflicts in the Province over land, marks out the region as a potential terrain of contestation should members of the ruling elite be confronted with loss of control of state power. Moreover, the region has

a history of secessionist ambitions dating back to the colonial conquest and the manner in which the coastal belt was incorporated into mainland Kenya from the Sultanate of Zanzibar. So, given the recent political crisis in Zanzibar, this could possibly constitute another dimension to the potential instability in the region with a possible spill over effect into Zanzibar, and the mainland Tanzania.

Implications for regional stability

What then are the implications of this ghastly prognosis for regional stability in the eastern African and the Great Lakes regions?

In our brief overview of the region, we identified an arc of potential instability running north-eastwards from Burundi and Rwanda through Uganda into Southern Sudan, and eastwards into Ethiopia and Somali. This belt contains within it a lethal combination of ingredients of political conflict. Within this arc lie a number of weak states - Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, and a collapsed state C Somalia. The region is indeed a very rough neighbourhood.

Our contention therefore is that an outbreak of civil war in Kenya would not be containable within its borders. On the contrary it would have a shunting effect throughout the region. As we have already shown above, a disintegration on a scale that we have suggested would involve a spill over into four countries - Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and possibly five, Tanzania. Thus, conflict in Kenya would pit the countries of the region against each other, and further complicate the security of the region, very much along the lines of the present crisis in the DRC.

Perhaps it is now possible to configure what the east African and the Great Lakes region would look like in the event of disintegration of the centre. If what we have said about the centrality of Kenya to the region is correct, then the region would be torn apart by conflict as a result. It is quite easy to imagine a situation in which the gradual slide to chaos would eventually reduce the already weak economies of the region to >enclave economies= operating in the midst of collapsed and collapsing states. Kenya would probably be reduced to a few enclave economies operating from the major towns C the Nairobi-Thika axis, Mombasa, Nakuru, and Kisumu, surrounded by a vast hinterland in which the state had virtually conceded control to an odd assortment of warlords.

Uganda would probably be the same, with formal economies existing around the Kampala-Entebe axis, and probably as far as the Luwero Triangle, while the rest of the north would be abandoned to a different assortment of beligerent warlords. Spilling over into the existing crises in Rwanda and Burundi, and probably continued instability in the DRC. We are probably looking at a belt of insecurity and instability running all the way from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean.

The consequences of such a scenario are not difficult to imagine. Authoritarian regimes would replace the semblance of democratic regimes in the region. Continued conflict would no doubt undermine the prospects of economic growth with devastating consequences for the majority of people. Informalisation of the economies, poverty, environmental degradation, intensification of the spread of HIV-AIDS, malaria and mass movement of refugees, would probably be the most identifiable hallmarks of such a regional economy.

How can we best respond to these challenges?

As we have seen, central to the eastern African and the Great Lakes security system are the endemic internal conflicts which have bedeviled these states throughout the post-colonial period. These conflicts have their roots in the specificity of their colonial and post-colonial political dispensation, economic underdevelopment, ethnic and religious rivalries, and more recently, lack of legitimacy due the failure of democratic dispensation of political power and resources.

In this region, as in other parts of Africa, internal conflicts and regional insecurity are intricately interwoven. It follows therefore that as long as domestic conflicts are allowed to simmer in one part of the region, so long will the region continue to experience this kind of security threat. There is thus an urgent need for regional organisations to rethink the whole norm of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states as enshrined in the OAU Charter. While this has in the past exercised significant restraint on intervention in other states, what we have learnt over the last 15 years with the advent of globalization, increasing integration and interdependency, is that states can no longer continue to act as if they existed in isolation.

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