

Coping with Internal Conflict Project (CICP).

## **Proceedings**

International Seminar

Political Economy of Internal Conflict

22 November 2000

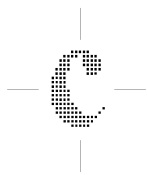
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## Executive Summary

This report comprises the proceedings of the international seminar 'Political Economy of Internal Conflict', held at the Clingendael Institute in The Hague at 22 November 2000. The 'political economy of internal conflict' is one of the four sub-themes of the Coping with Internal Conflict Project (CICP). The most important issues that have been discussed by a group of experts during this seminar are listed below:

1. The distinction between 'greed and grievance' was the subject of many debates during the seminar. It was felt by the participants that the distinction remains too deterministic and therefore holds little practical value in addressing the political economy of conflict. Focusing on the economic agendas of war profiteers in civil wars forms a necessary albeit no sufficient condition to understand the incentives of parties participating in violent conflict. Although sanctioning of such 'greedy' rebel groups extracting mineral resources and making a profit out of it might form an attractive instrument for policy makers, the grievances underlying such actions should also be addressed. Access to the political arena, power struggles, socio-economic disparities and deep-rooted cultural and ideological complexes also comprise important motives for parties expressing their grievances by violent means. Instead of prioritising either greed or grievance and thereby dichotomising them, both should be taken into account as important factors underlying the political economy of contemporary conflict.
2. Transcending the debate on greed and grievance, attention was drawn to the issue of regression and transformation. It was argued that many conflicts showed signs of regression, where exclusionary politics by among others warlords, the national state and the global capitalist system result in greater inequality, scarcity, various forms of criminality and further violent conflict, especially in more 'peripheral' areas. However popular this view on contemporary conflict might seem to policy makers due to its interventionist quality, it needs to be criticised from a perspective of transformation. Over time, conflicts change in scope and nature. The conflict in Angola for instance was said to be entering into a new stage of on the one hand a further degeneration of the conflict and a fragmentation of both UNITA and MPLA forces, and on the other hand a structural transformation of the conflict expanding across Angola's border risking further destabilisation of the region.
3. All conflicts discussed in the seminar show states lacking the strength and capacity to counter the destabilising forces within their territory. Often part of the problem themselves, national states often resort to violent means in suppressing the grievances of the local population or the criminal activities of drug traffickers and armed factions. Unable to take sufficient security measures due to

poorly –trained, –equipped and –paid police and army personnel, governments like that of Sierra Leone have hired private military companies in order to fight insurgents in areas over which the state itself has no control. Although it was agreed that such companies form no viable alternative for a functioning security sector in the long term, proposals to use private military companies in conflict situations were discussed extensively. This led to the conclusion that private military companies are to be put under strict political control and need to have a well-defined mandate, acknowledging clear tasks. If not, the danger exists that such companies are tempted to prolong the war for their own (financial) purposes.

4. Another topic which has been discussed concerns the use of ‘smart sanctions’, and whether this would be an effective instrument to control the illicit flows of goods (like diamonds, tropical hardwood, drugs), money and people. It has been concluded that, although technologically feasible, it remains doubtful if smart sanctions in the form of economic boycotts or the certification of so-called ‘blood diamonds’ can stop criminalised networks of trade. Also, the international practice of labelling conflicting parties and diamond traders as ‘criminals’ can lead to the further criminalisation of such movements or trade networks, and may force them to go underground, thereby losing all control of their actions. In Angola e.g. the ban on conflict diamonds has led to the emergence of a new marketing body consolidating all diamond-trading activities. The government’s use of this body for increasing the taxes on diamonds has had the negative side effect of legitimate diamond companies participating in illicit networks of exportation. The freezing of assets of local warlords as well as de-criminalising drugs and more strict control on money laundering, also involving Western banks, was considered to be more effective in this connection.
5. A fifth topic, which has been touched, is the importance of the local as well as the regional dimension of conflict. Although much of the fighting and resource flows in conflicts are highly localised, involving particular local parties and traders, many of the conflicts discussed show spill-over effects and interference of neighbouring countries. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo for instance involves different commercial companies and several sovereign states, allegedly participating for security reasons but more often for economic profits. Countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia are other cases in point. Addressing the regional dimension and studying the organisation of conflict, in terms of how parties organise themselves and which networks they use, are crucial elements of a more sustainable solution to current conflicts. It was shown that combinations of old and new networks are being used.
6. Issues of economic liberalisation and deregulation have also been discussed in the seminar. Forming the basis of IMF and World Bank policies, market liberalisation and the promotion of privatisation have also provided a fertile ground on which many war economies thrive. Paradoxically also, the commitment of the international community to such neo-liberal policies prevents effective action against the flows of goods in and around contemporary conflicts. On the other hand it was argued that the present wars should not be seen merely as a function of globalisation, in this respect meaning the expansion of international markets of money and goods. Rather, according to some participants the ‘narrative of war economies’ seems to point at a shrinking of conventional forms of capitalist economy and is created as it were by means of controlling the peripheral areas in order to contain them within the dominant economic and political world system. In this respect, recent interventions in the Balkans e.g. have been explained

by some as signs of desperation, not strength. The political economy of external intervention and the lack of a clear rationale behind such interventions are fields of interest that need to be looked into.

7. This brings us to the role of the state and the process of state formation. Drawing historical parallels from European, Asian and also African conflicts, the participants felt that the discourse of war economies and the role of the state therein should take into account these past experiences. Moreover, thinking in terms of control and norms of sovereignty holds little value in dealing with parties in conflict situations. Addressing only those insurgents who succeed in legitimating themselves in the international political arena homogenises conflicts and endangers a sustainable solution to peace by ignoring and excluding those people in conflict areas who hold a different opinion on how to govern a certain territory. Out of fear of disintegration of the state system, Western governments treat them as rebels or people 'who do not fit'. If the international community is truly committed to find an antidote for war, capacities of local communities and social defence mechanisms are to be strengthened. Therefore we need to reverse our thinking by asking ourselves what causes peace instead of war.





## **Proceedings International Seminar ‘Political Economy of Internal Conflict’**

### **Opening Prof. dr ir Georg E. Frerks, Head Conflict Research Unit**

Prof. Frerks welcomed the participants and explained the aim of the seminar, which was to discuss contemporary trends and changes regarding the political economy of internal conflict and to identify pertinent themes for follow-up research. The programme comprised a review of relevant literature and some conceptual considerations by Mr. Pyt Douma, followed by four case studies from Sri Lanka, Angola, Sierra Leone and Colombia respectively. After each presentation, there was the opportunity for debate while the whole afternoon was reserved for presentations and discussions by the participants. Prof. Frerks invited all to contribute on the basis of their own work and expertise.

### **A Provisional Inventory of Research Results and Policies on the Political Economy of Internal Conflict by Mr. Pyt Douma**

Mr. Pyt Douma presented a tentative working definition of the political economy of internal conflict: *i.e. the way in which economic resources are generated and exploited by participating factions and actors in specific areas characterised by so-called internal conflict, in order to sustain their own existence and further their own political and economic interests.*

In this connection, he raised the following issues:

#### **1. The internal or localised character of conflicts**

Most so called internal wars are ‘internal’ to the extent that most violent activities and war theatres can be located inside a specific territory. The conflict dynamics involved, however, are increasingly interconnected with international trends, markets and actors. It could even be postulated that many such conflicts are ‘resource-related-external-demand-driven’ violent conflicts. However, important internal political dynamics must not be overlooked. Most social scientists agree to the fact that these wars thrive on the nexus between internal political dynamics and external demand generated through the globalisation of finance, markets and trade. Internal conflicts may therefore be regarded as the violent localised expression of the current globalised dynamics of economic exchange between resource rich areas located in weak states and the world commodity market.

## 2. Weak and strong states

Notions of the state and bureaucracy performance relate to predominantly Western perceptions about the role of state structures. Can specific patterns of co-optation and exclusion be regarded as alternative expressions of strong state performance contrary to widely held normative views that such practices only reflect regime weakness in poor states?

## 3. Legal and illegal trade in commodities

In most cases the transfer of war related commodities to the world market has received scant attention. Once such commodities have left a specific country and enter the world commodity market they become regarded as neutral commodities unrelated to the production area or the ways in which such commodities have been generated. One could therefore postulate that the contemporary world market hardly distinguishes between legal and illegal products and commodities, and hence that the distinction between legal and illegitimate economies is merely symbolic.

A number of trends can be observed in relation to the political economy of violence. These trends relate to:

### a) The crisis of the neo-patrimonial state

The loss of external support seriously undermined the possibilities for incumbent elite groups to maintain the neo-patrimonial state they had captured from their predecessors. In the local context, demands by an ever-increasing number of clients on scarce state resources further compromised the possibility to maintain the existing, broad and inclusive, clientelist mode of governance. A selective policy of co-optation and exclusion emerged, in which enterprising elites and politicians used the remnants of state bureaucracy and state power to divide distinct groups within local society as well as to promote dissent. The army and other state security agencies became instruments of incumbent regimes for state repression and violence.

### b) The process of globalisation

Globalisation has opened up new opportunities for individual non-state actors within weak states to link to global trading networks and potential partners without state interference. Improved communication technology, fast capital movements and increased deregulation in Western economies have created the necessary preconditions for coalitions between local warlords, private business, intermediary agents and emerging private security companies to capitalise upon the lack of state control on resource extraction.

### c) Donor imposed political and economic reform

Due to the unsatisfactory performance of many poor state regimes the western donors progressively adopted an economic and political agenda aimed at reform of the public sector leading to government deregulation and privatisation of state assets. The Bretton Woods agendas coincided to a large extent with the interest of local politicians to sustain or to create their own clientelist networks and to ward off potential rivals. The donor insistence on elections led to contested polling procedures, staged or rigged elections and to all types of manipulation.

d) The emergence of private military companies

The alliance between private commercial interests in resource extraction and the political objectives of incumbent elites has led to an increased use of private security companies to provide security in specific areas for specific actors. Hence, private solutions are widely condoned against realist notions of strong state's preference to maintain monopoly over violence in the international system.

The current debates on contemporary changes in the political economy of conflict centre around the following issues:

1. The role of the state

Two mutually reinforcing theoretical perspectives are recommended, as both possess a strong explanatory potential; the adapted neo-patrimonial state theory and the post nation-state interpretation. Both explanations have taken into account globalisation and the post Cold War changes in patron-client relationships in poor countries. According to the post nation-state model it seems that the state-centric analysis of domestic political developments has become obsolete since in many weak states conventional state tasks and responsibilities have been abolished or simply withered away. By contrast, creative adaptations of the neo-patrimonial state by threatened state leaders have emerged. To what extent can the state in the context of poor weak states be restored, and to what extent should such a state execute 'regular tasks' associated with western notions of the state? Is it possible to implement long term restructuring of the social fabric of state institutions in states where such institutions have ceased to exist, i.e. is social engineering possible for instance under conditions of virtual re-colonisation?

2. The role of economic incentives in causing and sustaining internal wars.

Some researchers have stressed the importance of economic agendas in civil wars. David Keen argues that economic incentives provide a powerful motivation both for leaders and followers to engage in violent conflicts and sustain them. In fact, violence is used as a means to an economic end and 'has increasingly become the continuation of economics with other means'.

Protagonists of an 'economic causality' paradigm are criticised because of their deterministic view of individual motivation. To some extent, the debate on the economic dimension of civil wars reflects the current post-ideology trend in social sciences, as material incentives are presented as the ultimate drive for participation in armed gangs and militias, solely in order to acquire goods by inflicting violence upon others. The prevailing consensus in social sciences, however, focuses on multi-causal explanations and country and situation-specific sets of factors. There is still considerable debate on whether political power struggles, socio-economic grievances or private economic agendas stand out as the single-most important factor, often summarised as the distinction between 'greed and grievance'.

3. The uneven impact of globalisation

Economic core states profit disproportionately from globalisation as opposed to poor countries. The differential impact of globalisation in various parts of the world has created a dichotomy in exchange modes between 'virtual' trade as opposed to exchange and barter of real goods, products and money. In many cases this trans-border trade is intimately connected to the new political economy of conflict. It covers a whole range of imported primary goods and manufactured products from Western economies and export of mineral and natural resources and other products generated by local war

economies. Trans-border trade enforces informal protectionism and is mostly based on forms of monopolistic control or price regulations outside the formal realm of state or market control. As a result, trans-border trade counteracts efforts to liberalise markets and commercial elites vehemently oppose the free market ideology as Duffield observes: ‘The anti-free market and quasi-feudal tendencies associated with trans-border trade find their most violent expression in contemporary forms of post-nation-state conflict’<sup>1</sup>.

Douma then highlighted the most pertinent questions regarding the contemporary political economy of conflict.

a) The local dimension of political economies of conflict

Can quantitative knowledge about microeconomics of conflict explain the attraction of war economies for specific sub-groups in local society as well as the substitution of formal economies by war economies on the local level? How important is it to focus on the microeconomics of conflict?

b) The interface between the national and the international dimension

Much attention has focused on the emerging coalition of local war profiteers, intermediary businessmen and outside actors, such as global private enterprise and security firms. A generalised analysis of specific patterns of such coalitions is currently lacking as well as of relationships between the formal economy and informal economy. What are the mechanisms involved in illicit trade networks between local warlords, alternative power elites or entrepreneurs and foreign private companies? Through which mechanisms do illicit goods become regular economic goods and are formal and informal economies linked?

c) Specific thematic issues

Some specific themes and commodities have been widely covered whereas others are partly or wholly neglected. The entire aid and emergency sector has been widely covered by a range of authors, not in the least because of direct implications for foreign donors. As a result, all types of manipulation, extortion, taxation and abuse of emergency aid have amply been studied.

The extraction and abuse of mineral resources also has received wide coverage, as such resources are easily identified and localised. Recently, the diamond trade has attracted much international attention, though precise volumes and revenue generated can only roughly be approximated.

Though the exploitation of strategic mineral resources such as oil, copper, aluminium and uranium may be a fundamental source of revenue for parties in conflict, they are rarely portrayed as products of an ongoing war economy. However, the case of Angola reveals that the oil trade functions as the exclusive property of a besieged regime, unwilling to share revenues with the population at large, and requires a more critical analysis. The illicit trade in drugs has been widely covered in some cases (Colombia) but as yet there have been few attempts to link such practices with an overall analysis of the political economy of specific actors. The role of arms traders has been studied, but systematic surveys of exchange patterns between arms and other commodities are still scant. Looting, plunder and

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Mark Duffield (2000) ‘Globalization, Transborder Trade and War Economies’, p. 81. In: Mats Berdal & David M. Malone (eds) *Greed and Grievance*, chapter 5. London & Boulder (Colorado): Lynne Rienner.

extortion of local residents by armed gangs and factions has been identified as a source of income for such groups, but little is known about volumes involved or dynamics of illicit property transfer. Flows of remittances, voluntary or forced, generated by diaspora groups have been analysed by some researchers but little is known about the volume of resources involved. The use of migrant remittances in general and the ways in which such financial transfers impact on internal conflicts remain as yet unstudied. Finally, the result of external interference in conflict situations deserves special attention. Although, a review on incentives and disincentives has recently been executed at the request of the OECD more in-depth knowledge is required on the effects of specific donor policies related to specific actors or state elite groups in states engaged in internal conflicts.

## Discussion

Prof. dr Paul Richards questioned the opposition between greed and grievance. He stressed that greed was an insufficient explanation for internal conflict and that models of economic causality in general show severe limitations in understanding what was going on in these conflicts. It was only a visible tip of deeper rooted cultural and ideological complexes and, as e.g. indicated for Sierra Leone, political cultures of secrecy. In his view, it was incorrect to perceive of these debates in a post-ideological manner.

Dr. Stephen Ellis underlined these remarks and also stated that an economic explanation could never account for the situations encountered. Many wars did not even start as economic wars in the first place. Very often, questions of social justice were at stake. In this connection, he warned against one-sided models such as propagated by the World Bank.

Mr. C. Kortekaas elaborated on Collier's and De Soysa's study as discussed in Douma's paper (p. 17). He pointed out that for a useful summary of the predictive ability of a probit or logit model the table of hits and misses is indispensable, as it reports how well the model classifies the war and no-war countries of the sample correctly. Collier's and De Soysa's article, he stated, could be called misleading because it is precisely this table that is missing. Referring to his own Ph.D. study, he moreover emphasised that it is possible to obtain highly statistically significant results (including a large number of hits) in your sample, and yet have a very large number of misses 'outside your sample'; With regard to the Clingendael project, Kortekaas suggested a comparative analysis for weak states where violence has already surfaced and where it has not surfaced so far.

Prof. Mark Duffield remarked that there is agreement that the capitalist world system in its inclusive way stopped to exist around the 1970s and since then was drawn to the metropolitan areas. In the political economy there is a division on how one deals with the borderlines. The issue is not one between greed and grievance, but the way the literature is dealing with it in terms of regression and transformation. The main view is that along these borderlines we find regression such as expressed in the work of Emmanuel Castells, Robert Cox and straight on to the work of Paul Collier. Exclusion leads to scarcity, leads to conflict, which leads to chaos, including various forms of criminality, abnormality etc. This view is popular among policy makers as it offers points for intervention. What is needed is to criticise this view from a perspective of transformation. Yet these forms of transformation are ambiguous. Most related phenomena are double-edged, e.g. violent forms creating their own aspects of legitimacy and social mobilisation.

Prof. Sam Samarasinghe stressed that these phenomena could best be seen as an interaction between economic and political fields, while they are also extremely dynamic and changing shape in the process. Though these ideas are not particularly new, they make it difficult to practically deal with conflict on a policy level.

Mr. Berto Jongman stressed the importance to study terrorism and different forms of international crime.

Mr. Mark Bantinck suggested not only to study contemporary conflicts, but also to derive lessons from past European experiences, such as e.g. during the Roman Empire.

Prof. William Reno suggested in this connection to study particular examples from the colonial and pre-colonial era in Asia and Africa, where individuals ruled large areas like enterprises.

Dr. Stephen Ellis warned that in this type of analysis one should not be side-tracked by the notion of globalisation, as the real question is what happens when internationally dominant economic systems are restructuring on their fringes. The present wars should not be seen as a function of globalisation meaning an expansion of international financial markets over the last two decades. In this connection, globalisation is a very misleading notion.

Prof. Paul Richards suggested that lessons could be drawn from the Dutch revolt in the 16th century that showed quite some parallels with contemporary situations in Western Africa.

Prof. Reno stressed, however, that the different forms of peripheralisation respond to rather unique features of a globalising capitalist economy, privileging different types of greed and behaviour.

Dr. Klaas van Walraven referred to the analysis of the slave trade in Africa and the way it became legitimised.

Prof. Siccama referred to the distinctions made by Olson between successively roving bandits, stationary warlords, and democratically legitimised extraction of resources. He stressed that these democratic systems also could relapse again in situations of stationary warlordism.

### **Presentation of Research Findings on Sri Lanka by Prof. Sam Samarasinghe**

Prof. Sam Samarasinghe from the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, introduced his paper which was based on about 50 sources. In the paper he did not elaborate on the causes and the history of the conflict, as this had been done in earlier work. Moreover, he stressed the interrelationship between the political economy of internal conflict and the other research themes undertaken in the Clingendael project. A salient point about the Sri Lankan conflict is the issue of grievances among the Tamil population which has felt that their rights have been denied by the Sri Lankan government since Independence as well as the failure to build an acceptable state in a multi-ethnic society. In contrast to the cases of Sierra Leone and Angola, the Sri Lankan state at the beginning was strong and even held as an example for the developing world. The present situation is intricately linked to governance and the way the institutions are functioning. In the paper, seven sub themes are listed for research, identifying the rebel groups, the state and the international community as the main actors. Another theme concerns the relationship of the market economy and sustainable development. A hot issue is also the political economy of solutions to the conflict and of interventions in the field of relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation. Keeping in mind the required policy orientation of the study, he proposed to focus the study on the winners and losers of the conflict or on the solution of the conflict. For example, politicians who propagate the continuation of war appeared to be very popular during the elections. This has to be related to the household economy at village level and the effect of war on living standards and income. At the level of the government there is corruption in relation to military procurement. Regarding the international community the role of development should be looked into also from the fashionable perspective of the 'do no harm' approach. Further work is possible on the rebel war economy. A much debated topic in Sri Lanka are the economic aspects of devolution of power, even to the degree that it may form a stumbling block for reaching sustainable peace. A further topic of research is the role of the international NGO community and the way relief, rehabilitation and peace-building efforts are being distributed. A salient issue in the Sri Lankan situation is that the government continues to provide food and medicine to the rebel-controlled areas and is not using these resources as a weapon, such as happened in certain African conflicts.

### **Discussion**

Dr. Philippe Le Billon suggested looking into some of the smuggling communities in the North and the East of the island. He also raised the issue of the relationship of corruption and military efficiency.

Mrs Victoria Uribe mentioned that Colombia, like Sri Lanka, still has free elections, and wonders what could be said about the relationship between democracy and war.

Prof. Jan-Geert Siccama suggested focusing on the question how the Tamil Tigers are financed through illegal trafficking (drugs) and contributions from the diaspora. He wondered how these flows of income could be stopped. Could revenue raising be prohibited in democracies?

Prof. Paul Richards raised the role of the political-economic versus the 'normal' economic factor in the conflict. He asserted that the value of the rice economy in Sierra Leone was much higher than the value of the alluvial diamond industry. He referred to Mick Moore's work and the way in which

resources have been channelled to Sri Lanka's rice economies and rice areas to the detriment of cash crops and Tamil-owned mercantile networks. In Sierra Leone the situation is just the opposite, showing a gross neglect of the subsistence rice research capacity.

In response, Prof. Sam Samarasinghe said that the Tamils involved in the cash crop economy were not those involved in the conflict. Regarding the control of financial flows to the rebels, there is a contradiction between the notion of the control itself and the ideology of the open market. The process in Sri Lanka started as decay in the fringes, but is now moving to the heart, as key political institutions are getting affected. Many people think that a solution to the war is a precondition for improvement, referring to e.g. the criminal activity of 15,000 army deserters. Finally, the war has become a central theme in the elections.



### **Presentation of Research Findings on Angola by Mr. Mark Shaw**

Mr. Mark Shaw, from the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) presented the findings of his paper on Angola. His professional background as a criminologist gives him a somewhat different starting position from which the study was undertaken. The paper presents an overview of the history of conflict in Angola and is among others based on empirical research in the country itself. Furthermore some future trends have been outlined on where and on what issues further research on the Angolan conflict could take place. One of the most important points to make about the Angolan case is that the conflict is not confined to Angola itself, but has in fact important regional dimensions. The oil wealth has allowed the Luanda MPLA government to project its power within the region as a whole. Contrary to war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which has 'sucked in' various players, the war in Angola has been expansionist. Therefore, research in the next phase of the project should pay more attention to this regional dimension. Much work on Angola can be done in Zambia for example. In general, more research has to be done on the local level as well as on the regional level. At the local level the prospects for fragmentation of the conflict are now quite strong as both armies are essentially predatory armies. Both the government army as well as the UNITA army simply live off the land in the areas they occupy or move through. Recently, the Angolan army has advanced substantially across Angola, towards the east. As a consequence, their lines of communication have been lengthened significantly which has changed the nature of the conflict. The longer the lines, the further from Luanda, the less control from the centre on the army. The same applies to UNITA of which it is said that local commanders are operating more and more independently. Also the occupation of the Angolan army of the diamond fields itself has changed the nature of the conflict. Another feature of the Angolan conflict is the existence of localised peace agreements between units of the Angolan army and units of UNITA. In other words, agreements between people on the ground arranging for the continuity of resource extraction by both parties without the opposition of the other party. These features of localised peace agreements and continuing fragmentation mean that there is less control on the opposing players in the area. In this respect parallels can be seen with developments in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa.

The second important point to make is that local banditry is increasingly linked with illicit activities at the regional level. There is continuity between the old and new networks of crime that are at play in Southern Africa. It is not the case that after the Cold War suddenly new networks have developed. Instead, it is old networks that have commercialised. Moreover, there is a significant cross-over between legitimate and illegitimate business activities in the region, including import-export companies, private security firms, airlines, etc. Also, it is not a hierarchy or mafia, but more a network of individual players. This makes it much harder to police and counter them. The network of illicit activities involves a significant amount of state intervention across the region, like for instance the involvement of Zimbabwe in the DRC. The profit motive of getting paid for their involvement and the access to natural resources is quite strong here. The conflicts in Angola cannot be separated from regional developments. South Africa, the strongest regional economy, is both the target and the source for illicit activities, which means that also the Angolan conflict cannot be seen in isolation. Criminal syndicates, dealing in motor vehicles, arms and narcotics are involved in old regional networks linking South Africa, Angola and other countries in the region. These networks include ANC networks, old Portuguese networks and also the old security networks of the Apartheid state.

Another point to be made on developments in Angola links with the recent ban on conflict diamonds. This can have negative consequences, especially in areas where the government is very weak as it further criminalises the diamond trade and forces it to go underground. Another aspect of the Angolan conflict, which needs further study, is the nature of the political economy in Angola itself, and the role of the church and civil society groups in bringing the conflict to an end. The impact of the IMF programme is also important in this respect. Concluding, it seems as if the conflict itself is more degenerating than ending. Therefore, it seems to enter a new stage of relative fragmentation with, given the overlap into Zambia, critical regional implications.

## **Discussion**

Prof. Mark Duffield asked more information into the cross-over of old into new networks of illegitimate activities. He wondered whether there has been a succession of leadership within these networks and if old networks, trading in legitimate goods have transformed into criminal networks of illicit activities.

Mr K. Vlassenroot, doing research on the conflict in the Congo, wanted to know more about the dynamics of the degenerating war in the Congo.

Mr. Doug Brooks focused the attention on South Africa and asked if there are motivations for the South African government as the regional stabilising factor and peacemaker to intervene in the conflicts in the region.

Mr. Guido Vigeveno drew attention to the campaign against blood diamonds. He wondered whether the remarks Mark Shaw made in his presentation, i.e. that the diamond trade would probably go underground as a result of sanctions, were only valid for Angola or also applied to other cases in the diamond trade.

Prof. William Reno mentioned the impact of the conflict on the changing nature of Angolan diplomacy. From his work he detected a tendency for privatisation of Angola's foreign relations, particularly with regard to the United States, oil investments, the channelling of military supplies and expertise through agencies like OPIC, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. This more or less private foreign military assistance is a key strategy for the US government to exclude UNITA and criminalise it.

Dr. Philippe Le Billon focused on the direction of the flows of resources, flowing from the bottom towards the top, rather than vice versa. Within the diamond sector, Savimbi could consolidate commercial exchanges through fully legitimate key diamond buyers, who would fly in on Lusamba for example and pay Savimbi directly. A network of buyers, on the other hand, functions in a much more indirect way through intermediaries. The latter gives room for further fragmentation of the movement, as local commanders need to trade at the local level. Regarding the impact of the ban on conflict diamonds, there has emerged a new marketing body at the level of Luanda, which is now supposed to consolidate all the diamond-marketing activities. This has been done through a company, which is closely tied to the Angolan president Dos Santos, who has used it to increase product taxes for instance. As a consequence some of the legitimate diamond companies are looking for illicit networks

of exportation. We can see therefore that there is criminalisation, also of the more open and legitimate diamond companies.

Prof. Paul Richards reminded the audience that the issue of conflict diamonds had been set on the international agenda by Canadian NGOs, at the same time as the DeBeers company decided to abandon its global cartel and shift its emphasis towards the large new source of diamonds in Canada. As we have been criticising Paul Collier on confusing correlation and cause, this development is also interesting. Paul Richards underlined the interesting points made in Mark Shaw's presentation, especially on how to understand the Angolan conflict also from its regional dimensions, including the role played by South Africa. He drew the parallel with the West African crises, where you simply cannot consider the Sierra Leonean or Liberian situation as merely Sierra Leonean or Liberian, but instead have to understand these conflicts in their regional context. The conflicts emanated from a broad range of social, economic and political changes going on in the region, like the regional dominance of Nigeria. Moreover, Prof. Paul Richards asked whether Mr. Mark Shaw in the line of Prof. Mark Duffield's argument would consider Angola to be a case of regression or transformation of conflict. Although the conflict seems to be degenerating, it might equally be about transformation; region-wide structural changes with new notions of conflict coming up. Furthermore, more attention should be placed on this apparent division between the church and other civil society groups and how this plays out in the wider regional context.

Mr. Berto Jongman emphasised the spill-over effects of the Angolan conflict into Zambia. UNITA needs Zambia for its supply lines to sustain the war. Are there developments towards a de-stabilised zone from which they can supply their troops in Angola?

Prof. Sam Samarasinghe suggested that we should look for conclusions that can be drawn from what has been said so far. To him it seemed that one could see a change in the link between the internal actors and external forces. For example, what used to be very dependent actors now begin to develop a life of their own and become more independent. UNITA started off as a client of the US during the Cold War period, but now has its own means for developing and sustaining itself. Similarly, the LTTE used to be a client of India which nurtured the LTTE. Later, when the Indians inducted troops in 1987, the LTTE went to war with India and developed its own international connections. If we take these kinds of dynamics into account, we might better be able to understand how these conflicts transform over a period of time. The globalisation issue comes into play therefore.

Prof. Jan-Geert Siccama asked how to define the region in the Angolan case, when considering that there are lines to South Africa, the DRC and even to West Africa.

In response, Mr. Mark Shaw proposed to do some case studies, so that we can have more insight on the continuities between the old and the new networks. So far, it seems that it is both old, people involved in the traffic of weapons from South Africa to UNITA, and new. New people are entering for profit motives, West Africans are coming in because their criminal networks have been penetrated, while new networks of narcotics emerge, etc. However, even if it is new networks or new players, it is still based on lines or *modi operandi* that are not entirely new. We would make a mistake if we think that there is a sudden increase of organised crime. It is more interesting to see how things have changed over time: what have been the push factors, etc.? Although there has always been banditry and a degree of degeneration in the Angolan war, it seems as if it is much more institutionalised

nowadays. The identification of UNITA as a criminal movement on the international stage for example has allowed the movement to degenerate: because it has been labelled as 'criminal', control has been lost over several of its components. If Savimbi were to die or be killed tomorrow, the course would continue with a subsequent fragmentation of little UNITA's. The key sign for this process is the violence from the top, Savimbi killing a top general among others as a means to try and retain control over a fragmenting movement. Regarding the role of Dos Santos, he manages very carefully in Luanda, but in the hinterland of the country it is the generals who are calling the shots. With respect to South Africa, it is interesting to see that it is playing a very important role. South Africa is the only country still trying to achieve peace through negotiations, especially because of its own history. It is also based on the idea that you have to negotiate with enemies, contrary to the international practice of alienating UNITA, which in Mr. Mark Shaw's opinion has been enormously destructive. Ironically, in Angola itself, the failure of past negotiations undercuts the chances for future peace negotiations. Precisely because they fail, it is pointed out that there is no alternative. Therefore it is not very likely that the Angolan war will end through sanctions, without negotiations. Regarding the issue of conflict diamonds, that is merely a process of certification. It won't be very effective, as organised crime syndicates will subvert it through corruption and the bureaucracy entailed in it. To launder Angolan diamonds in the South African diamond market is not very difficult. The same goes for selling Angolan diamonds on the Luandan markets. Whether or not it will prevent the selling and trading in diamonds, what the conflict diamond ban has done is further isolating UNITA. Regarding US policy towards Angola, this is a complex issue. In Luanda there are still deep suspicions towards the US, as there the idea exists that Republicans still have residual support for Savimbi. The Americans have tried very hard to break this down. Where the Angolans have been remarkably successful, a diplomatic triumph indeed, is in portraying Angola as a normal country progressing towards a particular outcome.

Another issue that had been raised were the spill-over effects into Zambia. According to Mr. Mark Shaw this has been a quite sensible strategy of UNITA to expand the war clearly beyond the boundaries as it makes the war much more visible internationally. This prevents the government from isolating the war against UNITA within Angola itself, which destroys the 'normalcy' argument of 'we got a small guerrilla problem in the east'. However, it holds tremendous dangers for the entire region. The solution to the war should therefore clearly take into account this regional dimension, also involving SADCC, which has been too much divided so far.

Concluding, there are both regressive and transformative aspects in the Angolan war.

### **Presentation of the Sierra Leonean Case by Mr. Doug Brooks**

Mr. Doug Brooks, from SAIHA gave his presentation on the Sierra Leonean case. According to him the war is to a large extent driven by external factors, funded by diamonds. What we also see is a massive failure of the UN peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone, which is considered to be a relatively 'easy' case. Regarding the nature of the war it is not ethnic or religious, although these elements have been used for a variety of purposes. The underlying causes of the war are closely related to the origins of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Its roots lie in student movements in the 1970s unsatisfied with government policies and with some influences on these students from Libya. After the organisation had started and leaders received training in Libya, a lot of the original intellectuals were either dispersed or chased away from the RUF around the world or killed. Although to some the RUF could have taken the country within a few weeks, had they had a legitimate platform or operated like a guerrilla organisation. Instead they came in very violently and subsequently lost the support of the local population. Charles Taylor, the President of Liberia is considered to be the godfather of the RUF with his goals being the control of the diamond areas in Sierra Leone to finance his own projects; revenge on Sierra Leone for its participation in and support to ECOMOG's operations in Liberia; and finally to further destabilise and control West Africa. As the RUF is not very popular among the Sierra Leonean population because of its terror tactics, there is not much willingness to invite them into the negotiations, which might involve elections. Other external actors like Ivory Coast, Togo and Burkina Faso are involved mainly because of the diamonds they can get out of Sierra Leone. Furthermore there is Libya behind the scenes, some foreign diamond dealers (Israelis and Americans), the Lebanese, South Africans involved in diamonds and in deploying mercenaries (as well as the Israelis) and other countries like China which is interested in Sierra Leone's fishing rights. The diamond trade in and from Sierra Leone is hard to control. Charles Taylor and also the RUF have an important role in this respect as they trade diamonds for weapons, etc.

Regarding the UN peacekeeping force UNAMSIL, there are several reasons for its failure: slow deployment, poor quality of troops which are mostly from developing countries, and political reasons. The latter comprises an argument that has risen between the Indians accusing the Nigerians for participating in illegal (diamond) trade. Moreover the Indians and Jordanians who form a large part of the UN mission are planning to withdraw from the mission. Another issue is the problem of negotiating peace without the RUF being a true political organisation. Mr. Doug Brooks stressed that for professional soldiers the Sierra Leonean crisis would not be a very difficult issue, with the RUF not being a serious military force. A private military company like the South African Executive Outcomes has always said how easy it was, especially in comparison with other cases like Angola. Compared to the UN mission such private firms are also very cheap: US\$ 1.2 million a month compared to US\$ 2.2 million a day for the UN mission. Obviously, there need to be safeguards and regulations regarding the operations of such companies. Also, once you've stopped it, there is the more difficult task of reconstructing the state.

Other points Mr. Doug Brooks mentioned in his presentation include the international pressure on e.g. Charles Taylor regarding his role in Sierra Leone; developments within the RUF, which has seen several splits; the increasing British involvement although they will not easily go into the bush and start a war against the RUF; and the bad performance of the UN, which is also due to its poor mandate. Research suggestions regarding the Sierra Leonean case would among others entail more focus on UN peacekeeping reform also incorporating the results from the Brahimi report. The contracting of professional soldiers for peacekeeping, how to recruit First World countries for involvement in Third

World wars, and how to control the diamonds trade more effectively would all be issues for further research. Another point to look at is the role of regional destabilisers like Liberia and how embargoes and sanctions can control their influence in the region.

## Discussion

Mr. Guido Vigeveno wondered if it can be regulated to involve private military companies in these kinds of operations and make it acceptable internationally. Furthermore, if we are talking about prevention and at the same time are confronted with spill-over effects of the Sierra Leonean war into Guinea, what can we do, can we seal off the borders?

Prof. Paul Richards asked why Mr. Doug Brooks did not pay more attention to the regional context, especially the rivalry between anglophone and francophone countries in the region, and the role of Nigeria which entered Sierra Leone as early as 1991, a couple of months after the war started. He also lacked an explanation for the single-minded devotion of RUF cadres for Foday Sankoh as their leader. Moreover, when exactly did Executive Outcomes drive out the RUF from Sierra Leone? In Prof. Richards' perception it was Executive Outcomes who played a part in wrecking the Abidjan peace accord, not that they drove the RUF out. A final remark Prof. Paul Richards made was whether Mr. Doug Brooks realised that the authors whose work he cited much in his paper were part of the Pan-Africanist group that helped create the RUF.

Regarding the question on the regulation of private security companies, Mr. Doug Brooks replied that a distinction needs to be made between private military companies and rogue individual mercenaries. The former are easier to control because they have bases and are based on legal frameworks. They can therefore be controlled financially and legally. If those companies are used in peacekeeping operations they can be controlled under the threat of firing them if parts of them become involved in illegal activities, like diamond trade. On the issue of the spill-over effects into Guinea, according to Mr. Doug Brooks it is technologically possible to seal the border. The role of the Nigerians is acknowledged to be a whole topic in its own for further research. Regarding the devotion of RUF members to Sankoh, it might be strong, although there we can see different splits in the movement. According to Mr. Doug Brooks it is more a personality issue than an ideological issue although this can be argued. With respect to Executive Outcomes wrecking the Abidjan peace accord he holds a different opinion as he argues that this company had to leave the country as a part of this particular agreement. This issue was further debated between Prof. Paul Richards and Mr. Doug Brooks.

Prof. Sam Samarasinghe asked how the Casamance region links with the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Dr. Stephen Ellis underlined the remarks made on the use of private sector security companies. He emphasised that if they are to be used, it has to be for clearly defined tasks and they have to be under very clear political control. Although they might be very competent and well organised, which they not always are, regulation and control of their actions is extremely important, because otherwise they are tempted to prolong the war for their own purposes as it just makes them more money. The circumstances in Sierra Leone might therefore not provide the ideal conditions for this kind of control. The strong international presence in Sierra Leone of the UN and the British lacks a clear strategy, which in the long run can make things worse. At least they need to have a clear middle-term strategy on what they are doing there and for how long. Ironically, the whole idea of Western involvement in

African countries, apart from humanitarian reasons, is extremely unpopular in the West, whereas it might be very popular among the population of a country like Sierra Leone.

Responding on the issues put forward, Mr. Doug Brooks said the likely scenario would be that the RUF-Liberian coalition would actually make a strike towards the capital of Guinea, Conakry. Then chaos would be created in the countryside, which would allow more destabilisation in the region in which weapons could be brought to the Casamance region. Regarding the private sector security companies, a clear mandate is very important, acknowledging the clear tasks and political control.

### **Presentation on Colombia by Mrs Victoria Uribe**

The presentation of Mrs Uribe focused on Colombia. Since its independence in 1810, Colombia has been a violent country, with more than 7 civil wars in the 19th century, a major war between 1948-1964 called 'La Violencia' and a contemporary war which is the subject of the paper. Due to the increased attention for research into Colombian violence, a new discipline emerged by the name of 'violontology'. Studies into the Colombian conflict have been conceived of by starting from three hypotheses. First, there is a direct relationship between the recourse to violence of rebel groups and the restrictive democracy introduced by El Frente Nacional in 1957. However, this hypothesis falls short in explaining the increase in armed struggles during the 1990s. Secondly, the absence or precarious presence of the state in certain regions of the country as a primary reason for the violence. This hypothesis also seems to be problematic as the state is also constructed from below. The third hypothesis relates poverty and the use of violence, as the latter is considered an expression for the struggle of equality. Again, this relationship is also not proven as there appears to be no correlation between homicide and e.g. unemployment rates. At the same time, it is impossible to sustain a mechanical relation between poverty and the use of violence, as from research it can be concluded that the higher the per capita income, the higher the rates for homicide. Armed confrontation is only one element of the Colombian crisis, violence used in drug trafficking and the high levels of common crime are other aspects. In general, epidemiologists consider violence in Colombia to be a social epidemic.

Until the mid-1980s the internal conflict in Colombia remained isolated, financed only with internal resources. As a result of the increase in drug trafficking, armed groups like FARC started to nurture from narcotics and commercial resources. Guerrilla groups then transformed themselves in effective capitalist conglomerates. Nowadays, international resources feeding the war in Colombia directly come from international drug trafficking (marihuana, cocaine and heroine), arms trafficking and extortion. Moreover, there are resources coming from fees paid by multinational companies trading in oil, coal and gold. Internal resources come from ransom of kidnappings, extortion activities and tradesmen living in military and paramilitary areas of influence and finally the constant plundering of the agrarian banks with branches all over the country. The production processes of coca have effectively been taken over by the Medellin and Cali cartels. Drug traffickers have formed alliances with guerrilla and paramilitary groups, which in turn earn enormous amounts of money to be spent for the further improvement of their weaponry arsenal. These alliances have caused intensified territorial struggles among military, paramilitary and guerrilla groups transforming Colombia into a battlefield. The growth of these groups imperils one of the oldest democracies in Latin America and has provoked enormous internal displacement of the local population and mass departure of threatened professionals, intellectuals and businessmen. Today, the armed conflict not only involves agrarian centres, but also industrial and mining areas, and extensive areas where coca is produced. The agrarian sector has been severely affected by the war in aspects of cattle-breeding, cargo transportation, systematic destruction of infrastructure and massive devastation of jungle zones which have been converted into coca and poppy fields. So far, studies have noted that this is a prolonged war between the insurgency and the army, without any side able to claim victory. It can therefore only be solved through political negotiations.



## Discussion

Mr. Mark Shaw focused his comment on whether the high ordinary levels of violence are clearly connected with the conflict itself in Colombia or that the two should be distinguished. South Africa that e.g. is just after Colombia with regard to the level of violence, has experienced a relatively successful and peaceful transition but much of the violence seems to come from the stalemate nature of that transition. Another suggestion of Mark Shaw with regard to the Clingendael study as a whole would be to distinguish political groups becoming criminal from criminals becoming involved in politics.

Mr. Berto Jongman reminded that there is no distinction being made between counter insurgency and policies against drug trafficking, which is mainly related to how the conflict is presented to the outside world, dominated by American views. For effective peacemaking, these two different elements should be distinguished in addressing the problems in Colombia. Furthermore, more attention should be directed to human rights. Taking into account that most foreign aid to the country is conditioned on the improvement of the human rights record of Colombia, we now see an increase of paramilitary groups doing the dirty jobs for the official government army, which in that case cannot any longer be blamed for its human rights violations.

Prof. Jan-Geert Siccama asked how the Colombian case is related to other areas of drug trafficking in South America.

Prof. Mark Duffield was interested in the three themes mentioned in the presentation on Colombia, the restricted democracy theme, the absence of the state theme, and theme of poverty or struggle for equity. Not only in the Colombian case, but also more in general these themes form the metropolitan explanation for conflict. The fact that the evidence from Colombia questions these three is very important.

Mr. Mark Bantinck asked what the role of the (intellectual) elites in Colombia has been in the various crises.

Mr. Pyt Douma asked for more focus on the interdependent relationships between different groups (military, guerrilla, government officials) involved in drugs trafficking.

In response, Mrs Victoria Uribe agreed that the difference between common violence and political violence in Colombia, which used to be quite sharp in the past, has been blurred more and more. For example, it has become rather common for criminal gangs to kidnap people, who are then sold to the rebel groups.

Different regions of Colombia are involved in the crisis: the northern part of the country is more or less controlled by the paramilitary, the south-eastern part by the guerrillas and the state controls the centre, the Andean part. The war in Putumayo province e.g. is only one of the conflicts. Here, the Americans want to eradicate more than 5,000 hectares of coca fields, which belong to the Cali cartel. Coca, however, is grown all over the country. The reason for the Americans to concentrate on Putumayo is that they have six oil concessions in that particular area, which they have not been able to explore yet because of the war.

The guerrillas are not growing the coca themselves, but taxing the coca growers. The Colombian elites have been very short-sighted in treating the problems of the Colombian people; land could have been given to the (Communist) peasants in the 1960s which would have solved the problem to a large extent, as they were just asking for land. Instead, they bombed those areas and tried to exterminate them. Failing in this, guerrilla groups have prospered in those areas. Regarding human rights, Colombia has one of the poorest records in the world. The government is doing very little about the rise of paramilitary groups. The distinctions between FARC, paramilitaries and corrupt government officials are very hard to make, as their activities are all intertwined. Future research has to take into account the feelings of how Colombian people think about politics and war, which are phenomena perceived to be highly interlinked. A couple of years ago the conflict in Colombia was to a large extent an internal war, now it has links with the US, Ecuador, Venezuela, etc.

Mr. Guido Vigeveno wondered if, apart from the mentioned political solution to the problem (through negotiations), a purely military solution would also be possible. Is the military too weak for that, or are the guerrillas too strong?

In response, Mrs Victoria Uribe said that this is a very difficult guerrilla war similar to Vietnam, with neither party able to win. 200,000 soldiers and some 4,000 paramilitaries are fighting only 15,000 guerrillas. Regarding the recent plan Colombia, Mrs Uribe said that the American assistance involves mostly military assistance providing helicopters, arms, etc, with very little socio-economic assistance to the country. The plan is therefore very unpopular in Colombia as it only pays attention to a military 'solution', mostly in the Putumayo part of the country. The government's policy towards the problem has been very ambiguous, as the Pastrana government is in the middle of a war supported by the US against the guerrillas, and simultaneously trying to negotiate with the guerrillas.

### **General Suggestions by the Participants**

The next part of the seminar gave the floor to the participants to present their views on pertinent issues that need to be addressed in studying the political economies of war.

Dr. Stephen Ellis asked for more research focus on specific networks of people trading resources connected to the conflict. Tracing the flows of resources and follow the people would lead to interesting information on the political economies of those conflicts. Looking at specific places, like e.g. Ostend airport, would also give a certain amount of evidence of how goods are being smuggled, or e.g. banks to see how money is being laundered. In the light of ideologies and motivations for the conflicts, it would also be interesting to look into the process of social legitimization of the violence, to establish where the seeds of political order lie.

Prof. Bas de Gaaij Fortman spoke about drawing the four sub-themes of the Clingendael research project together as they have important linkages. Another point he brought up focused on the legitimacy of interests and identities of parties in the conflict, where a certain political order is established. In this respect it might also be useful to look for alternative mechanisms of establishing such legitimacy. The real challenge for research like this would be to look not only for more insight but also for prospects of intervention and policy. If we can get more insight into the roots of conflict, the next challenge is to learn more about the possibilities for transforming conflict into more creative ways of dealing with them, emphasising grievance probably more than greed.

Prof. Mark Duffield is highly sceptical when looking for the causes of conflict. Instead, what is more interesting is addressing the issue of organisation of conflict: how do warring parties organise and use or build networks of different actors. Although we know a lot about the so-called 'new wars' of the Post-Cold War period, that they are regionalised, privatised, networked, another thing which is interesting and has not been looked into very much, is that wars through history have been based upon notions of organisation and also imitation: if the warring parties don't imitate each other, one will be eliminated by the other. If one looks to the interventions in the Balkans e.g., one sees the emergence of new strategic complexes based upon innovative networking and forming relationships between public and private actors, between civilians and military actors. Here we see an imitation between the metropolitan strategic complexes and borderland new wars; they're both using the same techniques and the same strategies. In this imitation, we are actually seeing the emergence of a liberal way of war. This type of mobilisation of public-private assets on a networked and regionalised manner will characterise and shape the wars of the 21st century.

Regarding the future nature of the state, it might be interesting to look at how the borderlines are being described by people like Madeleine Albright: as regimes that we can do business with, regimes which we might do business with, and regimes which we certainly cannot do business with. We have to be careful, however, that the notion of the war economy is not becoming a means or metaphor for re-mapping that area: those parts of the borderlands are beyond the pale. At the level of policy we can already see how this re-mapping is turning into a strategy of liberal war. Also interesting in this context is the growing strategic use of aid. Unlike in the past, where development was seen as something that would occur on its own, aid is now used consciously as a way of organising and changing the balance of power between groups.

Moreover, it might be interesting to draw attention to look at colonial forms of rule and so-called aid forms of rule. There is a very interesting overlap between imperial discourse and moral responsibility in the 19th century and the forms of discourse developing now about war economy, about moral outrage and the need to control and contain and even about trustee areas in such conflicts. However, the technologies of power are very different: now the used aid techniques are non-territorial and based upon controlling populations through new methods of inclusion and exclusion, enabling technologies, etc. The colonial forms of rule were based upon autonomy, having colonial officials working on their own. Technologies now are far more centralised, using new techniques of public management, project cycle measuring techniques and new auditing techniques to centralise decision-making. It seems as if we are trying to attempt to control the borderlands. Finally, contrary to the hype of globalisation, it may be possible to turn this round completely and see the narrative of war economies as a shrinking of conventional forms of capitalist economy. The forms of intervention, which Duffield has termed liberal war, can then be considered as signs of desperation, not signs of strength.

Prof. William Reno underlined the points made by Prof. Duffield. Ideas about how to control the periphery, and particularly looking at norms of sovereignty, has limiting power in terms of how insurgency is actually played out in peripheral areas. The price goes to the individual or the group who can style itself and present itself as the best interlocutor. This has a homogenising impact on insurgencies because the ones who can capture Statehouse first are the ones who are get talked to, if you have the right kind of letter head, convince important people in foreign governments that you are a legitimate black African president, etc. This coincides with the Western anxiety to preserve the state system, they see it as preserving themselves. Thereby Western governments ignore the fact that there might be people in these conflict areas which have completely different views on how to run the world, how authority can be legitimated. Instead, they are being treated as rebels or people who 'do not fit'. The way the outside world is pressuring rebel groups, privileges those rebel factions which are more self-interested into gaining a profit, thereby ignoring the more ideologically driven factions.

Prof. Paul Richards wants to get away from the question of either / or in regard of globalising tendencies. He asserts that where there are people, social order can and will be created. We should then not prejudge too much the legitimacy and morality of that social order. It is important to occasionally change between what is the foreground and what is the background. Therefore greed *and* grievance, the background and the foreground seem to be equally important. A recent change in Sierra Leone concerns the openness people talk about e.g. local social injustices within the community. If people are trying to come up with an antidote for war, as Paul Richards considers war to be filling a vacuum as it were, these capacities need to be strengthened. Therefore it is no so important to ask what causes war, but more what causes peace. Much more can be done at the grassroots levels. It will be very difficult to do this in a top-down way. The critique of humanitarianism, described by Mr. Alex de Waal and Mr. Mark Duffield, is an illustrating example of what goes wrong: aid agencies providing food by dumping bags of rice and not looking at how this causes new injustices. As people lack good ways of ordering, they start to fight over the distribution. Getting strategic resources of a smart kind that would support conflict-resolution training, which is culturally appropriate is a challenge in this respect. If we are able to address the strategic weaknesses and strengthen local capacities, there is a possibility to defeat the war, through social defence. Giving more focus on this grassroots level is therefore particularly important, also in this type of research.

Prof. Jan-Geert Siccama suggested to look into the financing of armed forces to prevent the preparation for war. In the fighting phase we have to try and cut off the financing of warlords or political entrepreneurs. After the fighting has ended, the question of disarmament and demobilisation of military and guerrilla groups comes up. Reintegration and power-sharing arrangements are important in this respect.

Dr. Philippe Le Billon explained why the issue of political economy of conflict has come on the agenda largely because the wars have been de-politicised in recent years. This has brought the extraction of mineral resources e.g. into the area of illegality, no longer being legitimised by a state. The issue of greed has come up very strongly therefore. However, the importance of grievance elements needs to be re-established. Although curbing resources, like diamonds, is an attractive instrument also for policy makers in sanctioning such rebel groups, the grievances underlying the conflict should also be addressed, like access to the political arena. As a result of criminalising such rebel groups and not listening to the political discourse, you risk ending up with de facto criminalised groups.

Mr. Mark Bantinck introduced the concept of political economy of external intervention. What we are needing is more scientifically-validated findings on what the international community can do in areas like Bosnia or the Balkan region. Now, the hope is that by just staying there with the sufficient amount of people we can make a difference. This is however, a rather primitive way of going about the problem. Our politicians will in the longer term need more sophisticated rationales if we are to justify to our public the huge efforts we are making in those areas.

## Final Discussion

Before closing, each participant was invited to give his or her remaining comments with regard to the seminar's topic.

Mr. Doug Brooks reminded that seen from a purely neo-liberal perspective ending the war is actually in the interest of companies. Hiring private military firms, like Executive Outcomes to end the conflict is in this respect quite profitable as the cost of hiring them and their operation is almost nothing in comparison to the legitimate profits that private companies can make when the economy of a country like Sierra Leone is functioning normally again. The question then becomes how to channel efforts of such private companies to further encourage and bring the peace so that they can receive a bigger profit.

Dr. Stephen Ellis disagreed with this analysis, however, as it tends to forget important things. According to senior oil executives, oil companies are making much bigger profits in Africa than in any other part of the world. The reason for that is simply that African governments are in a much weaker position to effectively bargain with oil companies than governments of other countries in the world. This is not to say that oil companies cause the war, but they can surely make a big profit out of it.

Dr. Philippe Le Billon underlined this by saying that war situations sometimes have provided specific companies a certain niche market in which enormous profits can be attained without worrying about competitors operating in the same market. However, it is also true that they experience negative consequences of operating in these areas, like loss of equipment, costs of evacuating people, etc.

Mr. Pyt Douma invited Paul Richards and Stephen Ellis to share their views on more 'invisible' anthropological or religious aspects of the political economy of the conflicts discussed. Also, he wondered how important it is to substantiate the present analysis with pure statistical facts of microeconomics. Plus, he asked what the role is of remittances from diaspora communities. Is it useful to know exactly how much money these people generate or is that simply irrelevant for the analysis of these conflicts?

Prof. Paul Richards replied that some of the 'invisibles' at least in Sierra Leone are now becoming more and more visible in stories people tell in newspapers, consultations, etc. on the local social arrangements people have made. From such cases comes information that for example points to a systematic intergenerational accumulation of resources from the young to the old. In order to prevent young people having money in their pockets -which would mean an inversion of the local social order where young people are considered to be dependent- such resources would be extracted by the elders through the social hierarchy by just taking away these resources or even expelling young people from the community into the jungle. These young people would then run the risk of becoming conscripted by the RUF and come back to their own communities with revenge in mind, severely injuring or killing people, including their own relatives. External donor agencies are finding it very difficult to grapple with these sorts of issues. However, people building their own 'social defence' mechanisms could be given more attention in the form of resources, facilitation, which can then provide a window of opportunity for local people in these areas. Another point Paul Richards made was that diaspora

communities are very important, but not only in terms of remittances. Also, overseas frustrations and dreams about wanting your country to be better when you left it, are more important here.

Prof. Sam Samarasinghe stated in response to Pyt Douma's questions that looking into the local coping mechanisms forms a crucial part of any sensible effort to find a solution to these wars. One would be surprised to see how these communities cope with the scale of violence in African countries or in e.g. Sri Lanka if we compare this with violent situations in Western countries where small 'dents' in the social order have a strong impact on the whole country, not only the community. Another point he addressed was the lack of gender in the analyses of this seminar, and how women and children cope with these situations, as they are the most vulnerable groups in war. Thirdly, he pointed to the connection between conflicts and HIV/Aids as the soldiers have become major transmitters of this disease. Even after demobilisation and peace, bringing those soldiers back into their home communities poses major problems with significant health and economic implications.

Mr. Guido Vigeveno added some practical points where more research could be undertaken. He was especially interested in ways to cut off the tap of warlords by freezing their assets, obstructing the trade in logs, etc.

Dr. Stephen Ellis reminded that religion has played many important roles in history, including political ones. One point to stress is that it is wrong to think that religion is something that makes people nice. Charles Taylor is a deeply religious person for instance. Bas de Gaaij Fortman in this respect quoted Troelstra by saying that 'the problem with the Christians is not that they are Christian but that they are not!'. Ellis therefore agreed that religion can be a source for nasty people as well as for good people, but is still an important factor e.g. in West Africa.

He further touched upon the issue of the 'local level'. The problem with that, is that the external international actors cannot do much about it, unless they are willing to completely manage a country right down to the local level. This will not be seriously contemplated or done by any external actor, however. Although he agreed with Paul Richards that the reconstruction of the village level is certainly something, which needs to happen, there is not much to be done there by external powers or agencies. Instead, it is the role of the state to co-ordinate those kinds of things.

Prof. Mark Duffield also mentioned the issue of economic liberalisation and deregulation in this connection. Paradoxically, forming the basis of IMF and World Bank policies, market liberalisation and promotion of privatisation have also formed the basis on which many war economies have expanded. This issue has not been addressed at the policy level. The commitment of the international community to these policies of liberalisation also caused the situation where they can not do much about the flows of goods in and around these conflicts. Therefore, attempts have been made to certificate war diamonds, which is the limit to what things can be done. It might be interesting to research if neo-liberal thinking has actually boxed donors in this respect, with very little room for manoeuvre.

Dr. Philippe Le Billon added to this point, that the overarching goal of all sorts of political bodies, including the WTO is deregulation. This forms therefore a serious impediment in trying to put sanctions on certain countries or trade flows.

Dr. Stephen Ellis noted that this is the very problem for any policymaker who is trying to regulate conflicts by regulating markets. The fundamental issue is that criminals make themselves a market by doing that which is illegal. By making markets illegal, the danger exists that you encourage people to become criminals. De-criminalising the drug trade for instance, although not very popular among e.g. the American government, might prove to be more effective in controlling it. Another example like the laundering of money would also have to imply Western banks and institutions to be effective, in whose interest it is to have as much money coming in as possible. But as this is not in their interest to control this kind of flows, a lot of Western governments are not very enthusiastic about enforcing restrictive policies here. Another thing he added was that once a group of people, whether their original motive has been either political or classically criminal, has got the organisation and expertise to smuggle then they can use this infrastructure for any commodity.

## **Conclusions**

Concluding Prof. Georg Frerks stated that all the discussions during the seminar showed the importance of this type of research and that there are a lot of interesting points which can be looked into more closely. Throughout the discussions a number of topics has been touched upon as well as different ways and analytical approaches to look at these conflicts. Fashionable notions, like that of globalisation, simplistic economic causality and the idea that we are in a post-ideological phase have all been debunked or rejected. The idea of transformation concerning the actors involved, the conflict itself and the type of diplomacy towards those conflicts has also been discussed. The analysis of more cultural and symbolic issues has been underlined as well as the importance of ideologies at local and other levels, including the narratives we use in for instance policy interventions. Typologies are not easy in this respect, but remain shifting. Not only the causes but also the mechanisms of the conflict are important. The remarkable continuity of the old and new networks is another point that has been extensively discussed. The idea of greed and grievances has been debated and more refined. Prof. Frerks concluded by promising the participants more detailed proceedings. Apart from the proceedings, the Conflict Research Unit of the Clingendael Institute will present a research proposal for the second phase of the study to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He finally thanked all present for their contributions to an inspiring and very fruitful debate.



## Seminar Programme

09.30 hrs	Welcome and coffee
10.00 hrs	Opening <i>Prof. dr ir Georg E. Frerks</i> , Head Conflict Research Unit
10.10 hrs	Review and Discussion on the Political Economy of Internal Conflict <i>Mr. Pyt Douma</i> , Associated Expert Conflict Research Unit
10.45 hrs	Presentation and Discussion of Research Findings International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES, Sri Lanka)
11.15 hrs	Coffee Break
11.30 hrs	Presentation and Discussion of Angola Case South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)
12.00 hrs	Presentation and Discussion of Sierra Leone Case South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)
12.30 hrs	Presentation and Discussion of Research Findings on Colombia Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress
13.00 hrs	Lunch
14.00 hrs	Each participant shortly (10 minutes) presents his own ideas or issues with regard to the topic
15.30 hrs	Tea Break
15.45 hrs	Plenary discussion to define a future research agenda
16.45 hrs	Closure
17.00 hrs	Reception

## List of Seminar Participants

Bentinck, Mr M.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Netherlands)
Bouta, Mr T.	Clingendael Institute (The Netherlands)
Brooks, Mr D.	SAIIA (South Africa)
Douma, Mr P.	Consultant & Co-organiser Seminar (The Netherlands)
Duffield, Mr M.	University of Leeds (United Kingdom)
Ellis, Mr S.	Africa Study Centre (The Netherlands)
Frerks, Mr G.	Clingendael Institute (The Netherlands)
Gaaij Fortman, Mr B. de	Institute of Social Studies (The Netherlands)
Goor, Mr L. van de	Clingendael Institute (The Netherlands)
Heijer, Mr P. den	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Netherlands)
Heyden, Mrs M. van der	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Netherlands)
Jongman, Mr A.	PIOOM, University of Leiden (The Netherlands)
Kortekaas, Mr C.	Tinbergen Institute, Erasmus University (The Netherlands)
Le Billon, Mr P.	Overseas Development Institute (United Kingdom)
Reno, Mr W.	Northwestern University (USA)
Richards, Mr P.	Wageningen University (The Netherlands)
Samarasinghe, Mr S.	ICES (Sri Lanka)
Shaw, Mr M.	SAIIA (South Africa)
Siccama, Mr J.G.	Ministry of Defence (The Netherlands)
Uribe, Mrs V.	Arias Foundation (Colombia)
Verstegen, Mrs S.	Clingendael Institute (The Netherlands)
Vigevano, Mr G.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Netherlands)
Vlassenroot, Mr K.	Gent University (Belgium)
Walraven, Mr K. van	Africa Study Centre (The Netherlands)
Zeeuw, Mr J. de	Clingendael Institute (The Netherlands)