

**The
Third World Quest
for Political and Economic
Security
in the Post-Cold War Era**

PROBLEMS AND PARADOXES

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Introduction

The dizzying pace of change that the international system has witnessed in the last three years has introduced an air of uncertainty in the international landscape. The popular movements for democracy in Eastern and Central Europe, the clamor for multi-party systems in many African countries, and the growing consolidation of regional trading blocs in Europe and the Americas, constitute some of the elements of global change which signal the end of the Cold War and even the imminent collapse of the post-World War II international political economy. Now that the Cold War is over and many proxy wars in developing countries are undergoing conflict transformations, there is a strong need to examine the challenging and inseparable issues of democratization, economic and military security, and environmental degradation and their effect on Third World security. The emerging new world order is underlined largely by an increasing emphasis on the redefinition of security along economic lines. The combination of geopolitical fluidity and socio-economic effervescence brought on by the end of the Cold War means that many Third World countries may have finally outlived their geopolitical utility in terms of Great Power politics.

The unfolding political, economic, and military changes in developing countries are underlined by factors which constitute a variegated and interlocking mesh of security problems that confront the various regions. Africa is a case in point.¹ The security, stability, and development of every African country is viewed as inseparably linked with those of other African countries. In the same way, it could be argued that because of the realities of interdependence, the developing nations as a whole share a variegated and intermeshing set of security problems. This paper will examine the security implications of a new world agenda on the Third World state. The specific objective of the analysis is to: (1.) explore the interlocking aspects of political and economic conditions of security as they relate to political and economic democracy; (2.) examine the often inextricable linkage between objectives of military security and the elements of environment degradation - population pressures, resource scarcity, governmental repression, and the like; and, (3.) underscore the interactive effects of national and external imperatives on political, economic, military, and environmental security objectives in developing countries.

¹This paper was presented at the 26th General Conference of the International Peace Research Association - ICON - Sessions on Conflict Transformations, July 27-31, 1992, Kyoto, Japan.

²Lardner, Tunji, "Distilled Quartet," *West Africa*, (10-16 June 1991) p.50.

The Concept of Security

The security focus employed here is broad in scope and underscores safeguards against the usual reinforcing and interwoven effects of political, economic, military, and environmental upheavals. It is an approach that is predicated on a holistic and non-traditional conception of security, and on security as a relational concept within the context of both internal and external Third World relations. It is about the ability of states to maintain their independent identity and functional integrity in relation to the pursuit of freedom from threats in the political, economic, military, and environmental arenas at both the national and international levels of interaction. The analytical lens used here raises a number of concerns as they relate to the rapidly changing and fluid situations in many Third World states and the global system. New developments, contradictions, and complexities are emphasized. The Third World state even in a non-rapidly changing global environment has, since its achievement of independence, been characterized by flux, fluidity, and potential instability. The Third World state, more so at this time than at any other, needs to be conceptualized as a complex of variable issue-areas. Just as during the Cold War, there is going to be continued struggle between centripetal and centrifugal forces of nationalism spawned by active societal cleavages and catalyzed by a perception of relative deprivation in political and economic matters. The Third World state is now, more than ever, characterized by factors susceptible to fluctuation, rapid change, and great uncertainty. James Rosenau in 1989 aptly described the current dilemma facing many states in the international system when he wrote: "If stress is placed on the consequences of the world's growing interdependence, the state appears as a withering colossus. If adaptive capacities are highlighted, then the state is seen as weathering change."² Now more than ever, the foundation of the Third World state's security will be predicated on resources, productivity, and a unified national population. This means that effective, holistic security depends on the state's capacity to mobilize, organize, and deploy its resources efficiently in the service of objectives in the areas of political, military, economic, and environmental security.

The Duality of Democratization

The new democratic movements that are rapidly engulfing many regions of the Third World initially manifested themselves in Latin America in the 1980s. In Africa, the new campaigns for democracy

²Rosenau, James, "The State in an Era of Cascading Politics: Wavering Concept, Widening Competence, Withering Colossus, or Weathering Change?" in James A. Caporaso (ed.) *The Elusive State: International and Comparative Perspectives*. (Sage Publications: Newbury Park, 1989) p. 20.

since 1989 are what have sometimes been called the 'second wave of independence' manifested especially in the idea of national conferences. However, many Third World nations in Africa and Asia have had some kind of democracy at the start of their post-colonial political life, a democracy with the existence of a recognized organized opposition both within and outside the legislature which monitored the activities of the government either in the form of a vibrant and legal opposition within parliament, or at least as an independent press acting as an effective watchdog. By the early 1970s, the democratic structure had been largely replaced by either one-party systems or military governments as dominant forms of governance. In reality, what happened in many Third World states was that earlier democratic governance did not guarantee the security of some groups, resulting in a power game between contending groups such that the victor assured his security by outlawing the loser.³ Monopolizing power thus became a means of ensuring the government's security. The government's hold on power with despicable tenacity was often motivated by opposition violence, spawned by frustration in a winner-take-all political system, and by opposition abuse of parliamentary privileges (for example, mass boycott of sessions). Now that the new order democratic drive is sweeping across many countries of the developing world, some old and well entrenched authoritarian governments are very reluctant to encourage the creation of a legal and recognized opposition because of survival instinct. That is, the possibility of retribution makes clinging on to power, even if despicably done, a more attractive option.

The successful maintenance of political security in the Third World in a post-Cold War environment would depend largely on the effectiveness of a democracy with popularly elected government acting as: (1.) a provider of, at least, basic human needs especially in regions with states perennially grappling with scarcity in collective and distributional goods; (2.) an honest broker in a new democracy characterized by spiralling demands from the various conflicting groups; and, (3.) a guarantor of an effective decision-making environment making the preceding objectives a reality. All three criteria for security are in fact interactive and in a positive sense mutually supportive as they are prerequisites for an equitable distribution of goods and services and the maintenance of a proper and acceptable balance between and among groups. In sum, they relate to David Easton's celebrated definition of politics as "the authoritative allocation of values for a society."⁴

³Cf. Wallerstein, Immanuel, *Africa: The Politics of Independence*. (New York: Vintage Books 1961), Mazrui, Ali A. and Micheal Tiddy, *Nationalism and New States in Africa*, (London: Heinemann 1984), and Palmer, Monte, *Dilemmas of Political Development*, (Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers Inc., 1985).

⁴Easton, David, *The Political System: An Inquiry in the State of Political Science*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 129.

In many states in the developing world, political security did not materialize and the above criteria were not met because both the government and the opposition frequently manipulated cleavages to seek political advantage. The democratic process was often undermined by the ruling parties with government employing thugs, committing electoral fraud, and essentially violating democratic procedures. Moreover, the governments could not be providers of basic human needs because of the existence of incompetent economic management which in turn leads to the inability of government to stave off the effects of collapsing world commodity prices. Efforts at maintaining an environment for effective decision-making, providing basic needs, and serving as an honest broker were overwhelmingly overshadowed by government corruption, self-seeking politicians, and widening inequalities.

The consequences of such government failure to adequately perform its political security functions culminated in popular protests especially in Africa, a 'contagion' effect of popular upheavals in Eastern Europe, and resulted to threats from western donors to tie aid to political reform. A disturbing element of the pro-democracy revolution sweeping across many parts of the Third World is the narrow conception of democracy - multi-partyism and electoral competition - instead of a legal and recognized opposition with unrestricted access to the mass media and other facilities that enhance the realization of their freedom. Guaranteeing and enhancing political security means a change in the political culture to ensure the following: (1.) the creation of powerful trade unions and a respect for their rights; (2.) the universalization of norms that curb state violence and terrorism (for example, police brutality); and, (3.) respect for the rule of law, among others, which is supposed to be an integral part of a viable political security environment.

However, taking into account the great diversity and heterogeneity in developing countries, this political democracy and drive for multi-partyism may end up eroding the legitimate government's competence and effectiveness. First, because the intensification of cleavages it may produce may embolden groups to contest government policies and thereby diminish the legitimacy of government actions. Second, because it may sharpen the interest articulation skills of citizens in such a way that a new, inexperienced, and fragile regime becomes overwhelmed and incapable of addressing the barrage of demands.

Many Third World states may abandon the authoritarian and repressive rule of the past for a democratic rule based on respect for civil and political rights. But the provision and guarantee of economic democracy (in particular, the right to a minimal level of economic welfare and subsistence) is not the same as the introduction of political democracy and other adaptations to global systemic changes. Introducing free and fair elections, or freedom of

speech may guarantee the election of effective leaders, but such actions cannot immediately provide the foreign exchange needed for basic economic needs or improve educational standards. Civil and political rights, in other words, can be guaranteed, but not viable and efficient economies.⁵ Indeed, often the introduction of political democracy and multi-partyism can diminish the state's capacity to cope with its internal and external demands, as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank prescriptions proved in Zambia, Algeria, Egypt, Venezuela, and other countries in the 1980s. Expanded political participation and full-fledged regime legitimacy do not necessarily result in greater economic and social security. It remains questionable whether regime legitimacy and popular participation are sufficient to resolve the major economic problems endemic to weak and often non-viable Third World economies. Rosenau aptly described the dilemmas of the modern state when he wrote:

Neither the concentration nor the expansion of the resources presently available to the state enable it to end poverty, eradicate unemployment, stabilize agriculture, eliminate pollution, or overcome the many other obstacles to a better quality of life within their jurisdiction.⁶

In the case of weak, externally-dependent Third World states, the ability to expand resources is often an impossibility.

Economic democracy itself could be undermined by a Third World in crisis. For instance, the Third World was left out in the 1980s boom in direct foreign investment. In 1988, three-fourths of the \$140 billion of this investment benefited only a small group of industrialized nations.⁷ The flight of capital from the Third World to the advanced industrial countries has contributed to the debt crisis. In 1988, developing countries had to channel \$178 billion to industrialized nations to meet debt bills. The total external debt of the Third World is an incredible \$1.2 trillion. In 1987, low and middle income governments paid out \$102 billion in interests alone. This was 3.4 times the total development assistance from all aid-disbursing nations. In the case of Africa, debt obligations are approximately equal to half of Africa's export earnings and are nearly equal to the continent's Gross Domestic Product.⁸

⁵Cf. Arat, Zehra F. "Can Democracy Survive Where There is a Gap Between Political and Economic Rights?" in David Louise Cingranelli (ed.) *Human Rights: Theory and Measurement*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1988) pp.221-235, and also Spalding, Nancy, "Democracy and Economic Human Rights in the Third World" in David Louis Cingranelli (ed.) *Human Rights: Theory and Measurement*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1988) pp. 173-189.

⁶Rosenau, *op. cit.* p.33.

⁷Cruikshank, John, "The Rise and Fall of the Third World" in Jeffrey M. Elliot (ed.) *Third World 92/93*, (Suice Dock: The Dushkin Publishing Group Inc., 1992) p.6.

⁸United Nations, *Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1988. A/43/150*, (August 10, 1988).

The growing catastrophic economic situation in Africa has compelled many states to embark on a fundamental restructuring of their economies according to American guidelines. Since the mid-1980s, all African countries, including those that labelled themselves Afro-Marxist, have overhauled their anti-capitalist policies. But this significant and fundamental restructuring geared towards achieving economic security is being increasingly undermined by the US retrenchment and disengagement from the continent since the mid-1980s. An accelerated pace of disinvestment, a substantial fall in bilateral trade with non oil-producing countries, and a fall in export of capital goods to the continent are some of the indicators of American disengagement.⁹ Moreover, in terms of the Third World in general, the West has made fundamental democratization, the adoption of multi-party politics, and free and fair elections preconditions for the extension of foreign assistance. It has become a policy option among western aid donors to assume that respect for civil and political rights is linked to the adoption of western capitalist economic policies. A speech by Britain's Douglas Hurd in June of 1991 captures this trend:

Countries tending towards pluralism, public accountability, respect for the rule of law, human rights, and market principles should be encouraged. Governments who persist with repressive policies, corrupt management, or with wasteful and discredited economic systems should not expect us to support their folly with scarce aid resources.¹⁰

In 1990, the increasing detente with the former Soviet Union encouraged the US Congress to make it clear that future public assistance to Third World countries should be linked to democratization.

With the Third World's economic weakness coupled with profound geopolitical changes in the former Communist bloc, it has been argued that a powerful new leverage is being exercised over poor developing countries by western nations and financial institutions. The West and its financial institutions use the power of a preeminent capitalism to compel developing nations to adopt free market policies. Key western donors work in close collaboration with the IMF and World Bank to ensure adoption of liberal economic policies.

However, both western demands and Third World structural adjustments do not seem to be bringing about economic stability in many developing countries. Collapsing commodity prices have made it impossible for many developing countries to meet the West's economic performance targets. As

⁹Hull, Richard W. "The Challenge to the United States in Africa," *Current History*, vol.90, no. 556 (May 1991).

¹⁰*Africa Report*, vol. 36, no.4 (July-August 1991)p.58.

a result, disbursement of additional aid has been delayed or suspended, compounding the problems and causing increased frustration on the part of both donor and recipient. The new western economic leverage on many developing countries is a consequence of the shift from global ideological polarization to the undisputed preeminence of liberal capitalism with all its inherent gross inequalities and economic deprivation. The continued imposition of structural adjustment programs in the last two years, despite their destabilizing and painful effects on Third World societies, is proof that even in the developing countries, there is a broad consensus that liberal capitalism is the most effective and desirable political economy available in the pursuit of economic security.

These so-called free market policies, popularly known as structural adjustment programs, entail cuts in government spending in areas such as public sector wages, education, and food subsidies – measures which often result in great popular discontent leading to collective political violence. In other words, the adoption of free market policies geared towards the realization of economic security could set off economic and political destabilization in the short-run. The inter-connectedness of political and economic security is such that widespread opposition to government economic austerity measures has spilled over into popular opposition to repressive and undemocratic political systems. The struggle for political freedom has been closely connected with opposition to structural adjustment. The consequences have been outright repression resulting in deaths and other types of state violence in order to enforce the measures.¹¹ Venezuela, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, among others, stand as examples. The collective political violence has ranged from protests and demonstrations to bloody confrontations. The protests were prompted by a perception of relative economic deprivation caused by food shortages and rising prices due to the removal of food subsidies and the consequent price increases.

A possible question related to the convergence of opposition to austerity measures and authoritarian government is, what if voters in developing countries popularly choose a government which rejected the perceived western imposed structural adjustment measures? Would the West consider it a democratic government? Such a scenario remains a strong possibility because in many developing nations, people have been used to a subsidized existence and would thus find it very destabilizing if the next day they discover that the subsidy had been withdrawn by the government. The consequence in some countries has been collective political violence at the level of organized attacks against the government. It could lead to progressive weakening of the state by the organized opposition and the eventual overthrow of the government. It could also lead to guerilla attacks against

¹¹ *Ibid.*

the government with the aim of ensuring power sharing. Somalia and Mali in 1991 are examples of the first scenario, and Ethiopia and Angola in 1990-1991 represent the second. In both cases, the organized opposition or rebels were emboldened by the financial and military weakness of the state.

The Third World's current clamor for democracy and a new kind of security does not seem to rest on a strong economic foundation because: (1.) the West may not be as willing to supply the resources needed to sustain democracy as it is presently willing to urge it on; and, (2.) the new democracies could produce destabilizing group conflicts due to power reversals resulting from democratization. Democratization constantly produces changes in political and economic security, privilege, and welfare. Political and social structures are dynamic, and institutions which embody such structures are, in large part, the arenas within which group competition unfolds. Stated differently, the focus on political and economic security implies institutional fluidity and adaptation as well.¹² The notion of group security *vis-a-vis* other groups cannot be understood except as a part of some larger institutional-bureaucracy, labor unions, the military, the universities, among others - interaction. The security available to any one group at any given point in time is constrained by the level of security available to other groups and the deprivation they experience. Inter-institutional competition or group competition have become part of the overall security structure in many developing countries. The recognized practices or patterns of relations that have constituted a structure which institutions have taken for granted constitutes the institutional or group expectations that are central to internal security and stability in a state. These expectations have embedded in groups privileges, roles, behavioral patterns, and the like. The political and economic democracy drive in many developing nations may conflict with such institutional inertia as it may mean the redistribution of power among groups in civil society.

If economic security is about having access to resources, finance, and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of basic needs and state power, then the wide-ranging structural adjustment programs and political changes in the past few years still have not made any differences in answering the economic security problems of developing countries. A structural adjustment program may be no better than none at all when one takes into account the contradictions and paradoxes involved in the idea of economic security. The persistent structural disadvantages of late development and a position in the lower ranks in terms of wealth and level of industrialization are among the disadvantages which Third World countries have. The consequences of such an underdog status in the global capitalist order

¹²Krasner, Stephen D. "Sovereignty: An Institutional Perspective" in James A. Caporaso (ed.) *The Elusive State: International Comparative Perspectives* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1989).

ranges from the inability to sustain the basic human needs of the population, to an inability to resist the policy pressures of dominant western financial institutions for needed capital. There seems no reason, in the short-run at least, to expect any fundamental change in the overall Third World economic position in a global capitalist system where prices, trade, finance, and technology are all controlled from the outside. In other words, economic security for most Third World nations will continue to be dictated by the major capitalist powers.

Military Security

Third World states, more than the advanced industrial states, are characterized by some less benign externally-derived consequences. They may be unable to contain minimal economic and other disturbances emanating from the global environment and the notion of autarky in an increasingly interdependent and technologically interlocked international system is virtually economically unsound. Another aspect of this external effect on Third World security is an adoption by major powers of the extreme opposite of their interventionist behavior in the Cold War era. The Third World may become more deliberately marginalized following the end of the Cold War, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the other events related to the new world agenda. In the case of Africa, the Nigerian Foreign Minister, General Ike Nwachuku warned of this possible marginalization:

The realignment of forces with closely linked economic interests and the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Africa may bring about an increased marginalization of the African region from international political calculations.¹³

This concern corresponds largely with Africa's low level of geopolitical utility. The manifestation of US military and economic disengagement from the continent since the mid-1980s and the persistent and determined linkage between free market reforms and democratization to western aid disbursements are strong indicators of a new and intensified marginalization of the continent.

A second aspect of the external factor impinging on Third World security is the inclination of governments, even democratically elected ones, to enhance their power by drawing on support from advanced

¹³"Marginalization Scare," *West Africa* (16-22 September 1991) p.1547.

industrial states as was the pattern during the Cold War period. Economic aid constitutes one of the factors that are considerably important in the maintenance and realization of economic security and economic democracy. This reasoning is in line with the fact that the world capitalist system has been so organized that weaker states are propped up in large part by the economic, military, and diplomatic support and direction of allied major powers. However, with the changed global agenda focusing mainly on economic security, it seems that only regimes in economically salient countries would be propped up against an organized opposition to free market reforms. Such an outcome would constitute selective treatment by western powers of Third World security dilemmas.

The changing geopolitical configurations could also mean the diminution of global political concerns and a focus on regional ones, especially since the international system now is characterized by more state and non-state actors with regional economic concerns. Moving toward a regional focus means each region will strive to guarantee its own security and resolve its own regional disputes in a more formal way than during the Cold War period. Generally, because of the potential of a gradual, long term challenge to their integrity and erosion of their effectiveness, states have often embarked on a series of coping mechanisms – regional integration, federalism, and 'consociationalism,' among others. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Gulf Cooperation Council in the Middle East, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Andean Common Market in Latin America, are among the many experiments at regional cooperation for security. Above and beyond the concern for regional security, there is a growing concern for regional military security arrangements to ensure peace and resolve conflicts, as demonstrated in Liberia with the formation of the ECOWAS Peace Keeping Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). It was set up for dispatch to the Liberian War in 1990. After an initial wave of opposition, the succeeding months saw a number of African leaders visiting Nigeria to express support for the idea of a monitoring group as well as seeking assistance to address rebellion in their countries. Since its formation, states previously critical to the idea are now willing to contribute troops. The role of ECOMOG is now among the most discussed issues along with democratization and the continent's deplorable economic situation.

The question of the need for an African High Command or African Defense Pact is now part of the domestic African agenda due to the success of ECOMOG in Liberia. The increasing importance of the issue was summarized by Organization of African Unity (OAU) Secretary General Salim Salim, when he said: "We hope the Liberian experience and the coups

in the Comoros by a group of mercenaries will make Africa realize the necessity of a Joint High Command and military cooperation."¹⁴ In Africa, it is possible that more civil wars and colonial boundary disputes will succeed the pro-democracy movements. The OAU in the past has been ineffective in resolving African disputes because: (1.) the organization lacks the resources to assemble and project a sizeable military force to resolve regional disputes; and, (2.) most African countries are so poor that they fail to pay their annual dues and contributions. Perhaps, the only solution is to form collective security arrangements along the lines of ECOMOG with a regional hegemonic power at its head. Nigeria, in the case of ECOMOG, is an example.

Thus, an emerging feature of the Third World in the post-Cold War era could be an idea of security communities within either regions or continents as a whole. A security community would refer to a group of states (ECOWAS, for example) that prepare to collectively engage in peace-keeping functions in their relations with each other. It is the collective expectation and preparation to resolve disputes ranging from border disputes, civil wars, to interstate wars. If the idea of a security community is strongly adhered to and internalized by regional members, it could lead to a dominant inclination for eliminating the use of military force in their domestic and regional relations with each other.

The combined existence of a capitalist security community (Andean Community or ECOWAS, for example) and a military security community (Andean Security Force, or ECOMOG) gives the Third World states an immense advantage in the global political economy. Because they do not have to compete with each other militarily, they can more easily meet other challenges, whether singly or collectively. The relative ease with which Nigeria was able to spearhead the formation of ECOMOG stems from the fact that ECOWAS was already in existence as an organization whose members constituted somewhat an 'economic security community.'

During the Cold War, Third World alignments were symbols of success and failure in the global and regional competition between the US and the Soviet Union. Non-alignment was a product of the Cold War, and provided many Third World countries with a moral foreign policy ideology in the game of world politics. This fact gave many Third World governments a lever against the great powers, though it also exposed them to unwanted intervention in their own domestic problems. But with the demise of the Soviet Union, there is no longer a divided center to be non-aligned against. In terms of global politics, the loss of leverage also implies a loss of non-

¹⁴"Rectifying the Damage," *West Africa* (17-23 December 1991) p.853.

alignment as a useful political platform for developing countries. The end of ideological polarization has already prompted the advanced capitalist countries to begin reasserting control over global international fora like the United Nations, and to emphasize economic efficiency by requiring Third World countries to democratize and adopt free market principles before foreign assistance can be had.

The Environmental Problematique

Violence, which is often spawned by political and economic insecurity, is inseparable from the problem of resource scarcity which, in turn, is related to environmental decline. Thus, the issue of military security, or regional defense pacts, are closely tied to the problem of environmental degradation which, in turn, is aggravated by overpopulation, scarcity, political repression, and civil wars. The interaction among these variables constitutes a key element of insecurity. Many countries in the Third World have embarked on reconstruction and reorganization programs in which environmental issues have become compelling forces. In Nigeria, for example, a Nigerian Federal Environmental Protection Agency and a National Council on the Environment were set up in November 1989 as measures to check the rapidly advancing environmental degradation in the country.¹⁵ As far back as 1983 when the Lome Convention between the European Community and 48 African, Caribbean, and Pacific states was renegotiated, ecological provisions were incorporated. As the environmental issue gains momentum in the Third World agenda, the new conception of security will be predicated on an examination of the inextricable linkage between the struggle over scarce resources, wars, ecological degradation, and environmental refugees, as part of a vicious cycle of 'ecological insecurity.'

The environmental problematique has been underscored by Jessica Matthews when she wrote: "Environmental decline occasionally leads directly to conflict, especially when scarce resources must be shared."¹⁶ Just as the causes of environmental degradation are multi-dimensional, so are they mutually reinforcing and interactive in producing scarcity, frustrations, conflict, environmental violence, and the generation of refugees. The wars in Angola and Ethiopia are good examples of this vicious cycle of insecurity. The ongoing wars in Mozambique, Somalia, and Sudan, among others, all fall into this category. Destruction of farms and farmlands, elimination of

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Matthews, Jessica, "Redefining Security" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 68, no.2 (Spring 1990) p.171.

entire villages, and physical displacement of rural populations mean famine. In the Liberian Civil War, for example, famine was the main cause of death in its capital Monrovia. In November 1990, a spokesman for the humanitarian organization, *Medicins Sans Frontieres*, said that roughly 50 people were dying each day.¹⁷ In Africa, the nature of conflict is changing with more severe environmental implications. According to Mark Duffield, a British academic and former field director in Sudan for the voluntary agency Oxfam, it used to be that pastoralists and subsistence farmers resolved their disputes over access to resources – grazing land or water – with relatively few fatalities. But the combined effect of economic development, population growth, expansion of commercial land ownership, and environmental decline have produced a crisis situation, with armed conflicts becoming a pattern of interaction.

Kofi Awoonor, current president of the Group of 77, laments the fact that the ecological degradation plaguing developing countries is directly linked to over exploitation of their natural resources for export, in their scramble to earn foreign exchange and service huge foreign debts.¹⁸ The consequence is a terrible loss of forests, land, rivers, and oceans that contribute to the gradual and daily devastation of the Third World's biodiversity. In other words, many of the developing nations, in their scramble to earn foreign exchange to offset the increasingly unfavorable terms of trade, often adopt rural development strategies that significantly contribute to environmental degradation. In many developing countries, governments encourage the use of harmful agricultural chemicals to stimulate production of single crops. In addition, the concentration of government assistance in the hands of large and more advanced farmers compels the disadvantaged and deprived population to engage in environmentally unsound and unsustainable practices. The need to export leads to increased deforestation of already denuded forests, excessive cultivation in marginal areas, and use of environmentally harmful agricultural chemicals with utter disregard to its consequences.¹⁹ In Nigeria, with the oil bust in the mid-1980s, the World Bank supported structural adjustment that provided for incentives for agricultural exports; this contributed to rapid deforestation.²⁰ Nigeria's annual deforestation rate became the world's second highest. This will

¹⁷"Greening Africa" *West Africa* (5-11 November 1990) p.2788.

¹⁸Awoonor, Kofi, "An Opportunity for Justice, Too," *Development Forum* vol. 19, no. 5 (September-October 1991) p.3.

¹⁹Stone, Roger D. and Eve Hamilton, *Global Economics and the Environment*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1991).

²⁰Ayenyi, Olugbenga, "African High Command?" *West Africa* vol. 27, (May-June 1991) p. 853.

definitely result to dire consequences if left unchecked.

To ensure a healthy and sustainable environment, a holistic approach to the environmental issue is required. It involves new technologies and new laws that will encourage development of new values and to ensure, in the end, the maintenance of the Third World's ecosystem. The continuation of environmental stress, resource scarcity, and civil strife, will undermine the democratic movements and there will be continued pressures in many parts of the developing world unless the developing world acts now in concert to address in a holistic manner the underlying factors of environmental degradation.

Conclusion

Post-World War II developing countries have come to a point in their development where they have to further adapt and adjust to internal and external dynamics and imperatives. While authoritarian and one-party regimes are experiencing a challenge to their authority, the Third World state, in general, may find itself further losing its grip on issues of foreign affairs because of its dependent status *vis-a-vis* the custodians of the dominant paradigm of development - free market capitalism. The domestic and external inter-connectedness of political, economic, military, and environmental factors constitutes the root of the current security problems facing developing countries. There is a constant interaction among all these factors on the one hand, and state policies aimed at achieving greater internal and external security on the other.

The immense problems created by the interaction between systematic pressures and those internal in nation-building appear to be almost insurmountable to most Third World states. Thus, there will persist a multi-level confrontation between the West and developing countries even with the end of the Cold War. There is bound to arise economic confrontation in the free market framework, there will be political confrontation over the issue of democratization and conflict resolution, and there will be developmental confrontation over the hegemonic environmental model favored by western countries eager to combat ecological degradation.

Finally, among the broad consequences of the clamor for democracy and multi-partyism in many developing countries, future scenarios relevant

to political and economic security are possible: (1.) the coherence and stability in existence during the Cold War/Authoritarian era may be replaced by blatant sectionalism and tribalism that will render Third World societies more fluid, unstable, and anarchic; (2.) the clash between political and economic democracy may intensify creating more complex and intractable problems of governance for popularly elected governments; and, (3.) the clash between domestic Third World economic policies and external economic pressures may create a complicated economic and political crisis situation for new democratic regimes.

The persistence of the West on the adoption of free market policies by developing countries may constitute a widespread form of external intervention in the Post-Cold War era. The autonomous capacity of the Third World state to guarantee domestic peace and security can be increasingly undermined by its economic dependence on industrialized countries and by IMF and World Bank demands. That is, security in many developing countries would be dependent on their perennial cooperation with western powers. Similarly, the inability of popularly elected Third World governments to maintain their legitimacy, internal peace, and security may be intensified by the scope and depth of relative economic deprivation suffered by groups as a result of free market policies, and their readiness to express their frustration in the form of collective political violence – a situation that can infuse paralysis into the activities of governments and spawn anarchy in already heterogeneous societies.