Third World Quarterly, Vol 23, No 2, pp 333–350, 2002

Carfax Publishing
Taylor & Francis Group

Politics in the hot zone: AIDS and national security in Africa

ROBERT L OSTERGARD, Jr

ABSTRACT *Traditional security studies and international relations theory do little to address the security issues associated with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Because security studies and international relations have been preoccupied with conditions affecting the major powers, little of the long history of international relations and national security has practical application to Africa and the HIV/AIDS epidemic it is experiencing. From a theoretical perspective many fields of security studies and international relations do not adequately address critical dimensions in dealing with security. Dimensions of time, scope and depth are often overlooked. This point is important regarding the AIDS epidemic because time and extent often determine the security threat and whether it is a short-run threat (which is subject to greater political expediency) or a long-run threat (which is subject to less political expediency). In the short run the epidemic threatens the security of political institutions, the military and military operations. In the long run the security of populations and national economic performance are at risk.*

To scholars and practitioners who study Africa, the issue of whether HIV/AIDS constitutes a threat to state security in Africa seems obvious. But the proposition itself raises fundamental questions concerning the nature of national security and security studies in general. In the context of security studies, two issues need to be addressed. The first concerns the long-term development of the security studies field. The second deals with the essence of national security—what constitutes national security and threats to it? The answers to these questions are related but not easily reconcilable in the complex realm of security studies.

After World War II international relations, foreign policy and security studies often blended together. What they had in common was their primary focus on the Cold War between the USA and the USSR. Most scholars in the field of security studies were concerned with Soviet–American relations and, more importantly, the prevention of nuclear war. The preoccupation was understandable given that most of the world had split between the two superpower camps, with some states vacillating between the two. The bipolar nature of the international system provided a restricted basis for building the field of security studies, particularly as it pertained to the developing world. The primary theoretical focus was on the

Robert L Ostergard, Jr is in the Institute of Global Cultural Studies Center on Democratic Performance and the Department of Political Science (LNG-100), Binghamton University, State University of New York. PO Box 6000 Binghamton NY 13902-6000. E-mail: rost@binghamton.edu.

ISSN 0143-6597 print/ISSN 1360-2241 online/02/020333-18
DOI: 10.1080/0143659022012667 6

interplay between the major powers, while relatively little attention was paid to states outside the group of major powers. As a result, a narrow focus in security studies emerged that would later affect how we perceive the notion of security in Africa.

Security studies during the Cold War period took on an ethnocentric bias (Nye & Lynn-Jones, 1988; Clark, 2001; Crawford & Jarvis, 2001). Most writers in the field of security studies tended to be American or West European; hence their research favoured US or European national security, with a special emphasis on defence issues in particular. The bias was understandable in that the major perceived threat to Western security was the USSR. So arms races, deterrence, co-operation and theoretical concepts such as bipolarity, realism, neo-realism, and institutionalism were placed in the context of relations among the major powers, but in fact had little relevance to the rest of the world. If peripheral regions were mentioned, it was often merely as an extension of Cold War politics. Although the Cold War had a significant impact on these regions, they also faced issues and problems that were not necessarily related to the Cold War.

For instance, issues of conflict and the military in Africa have been mostly *intra-national* , not international. Whether in the form of civil wars or *coups d'état*, the indigenous military has often been the dominant *domestic* threat to regimes in Africa. During the Cold War international threats in the form of war on the African continent have been few (Tanzania–Uganda War, 1979 and the Ogaden War, 1977), whereas military coups in Africa have been a common occurrence.[1] But, according to Clark (2001), the concept of national interest (and consequently its subcategory national security) has little meaning in Africa. The origin of this problem, Clark argues, can be traced to the colonial period when state boundaries were crafted by European colonisers, creating artificial nations. The military has been willing to act more in self-interest than in the national interest. If 'national interest' plays any role in Africa, it is more likely to be 'sub-national interest'. The implications of this are critical because, as Morgenthau points out, national interest involves not just the nation, but also the physical and political identity of the *state* (Morgenthau, 1952; Morgenthau & Thompson, 1985). Given the problem of state stability in Africa, the notion of security is more ambiguous.

Overall, it is easy to see that military threats have been the dominant focus of security, to the neglect of other areas (Buzan, 1983; Cable, 1995; Mastanduno, 1998; Nye & Lynn-Jones 1988). For instance, international relations scholarship in the pre-World War II era recognised the importance of economics in security (Carr, 1940; Viner, 1945). But as Mastanduno (1998) notes, in the immediate post-World War II period, security researchers sought to limit and contain Soviet military threats to the USA and Europe, leaving economics as a 'neglected area of study' in international relations (Knorr & Trager, 1977: v; Mastanduno, 1998: 925). Researchers focused on the causes of and the means to wage war, leaving an entire field of non-military security threats to the research back burner.

It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that a shift occurred as some scholars started to examine other areas that could threaten security. Researchers began to examine the role of economics in security, and the use of economics as a tool of statecraft (Baldwin, 1985; Keohane & Nye, 1989; Knorr & Trager 1977). The

field of international political economy emerged during this period, but was distinctly different from security studies itself. Researchers attempted to explain international political economy and economic security in the context of the major powers, which had economic leverage to use in the international system (Gilpin, 1981; Gourevitch & Cohen, 1982; Ikenberry *et al*, 1988; Katzenstein, 1978; Keohane, 1984; Rogowski, 1989). Peripheral regions and region-specific security threats were, for the most part, neglected in research in both security studies and international political economy.[2] While the general emphasis weighed in favour of the major powers, some scholars saw the biases and began to look at other actors at the international level.

One of the first major challenges came from Buzan (1983), who argued, convincingly, that national security extended beyond the military and included other areas of concern, namely military, political, economic, societal and environmental forms of security.[3] Clearly, these forms of security do not operate independently. He also delineates security at three levels: the individual, the state and the system. While it is also clear these levels do not operate independently, he does argue that the focus of international security studies should be on the latter two because security is the protection of the human collective, not the individual (Buzan, 1983: 50–51, ch 2).

To a large extent, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) challenged this view in the wake of the Cold War's collapse. In the 1994 *Human Development Report*, the UNDP argued for a new concept of security that equated security with people, rather than territories or states. The idea of linking security to the individual is not a new one. As Rothschild (1995) has argued, the idea of 'common security' or 'human security' was characteristic from the mid-17th century to the time of the French Revolution; the military sense of the idea of security dates from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (Rothschild 1995: 60–61). But in the modern era the UNDP claims that human security contains four essential characteristics:

1. *Human security is a universal concern*
   The notion of human security is not limited to the poor or the rich countries. It recognises that there are common threats to all people, including unemployment, crime, pollution, drugs, and human rights violations.
2. *The components of human security are interdependent*
   Components of human security are not territorially limited anymore. Famine, floods, pollution, terrorism, ethnic disputes, and social integration no longer can be considered isolated events confined within national borders. They have an impact across the globe.
3. *Human security is easier to ensure through early prevention than later intervention*
   When balanced, the costs of preventive measures are less than the costs of dealing with the aftermath of a security breach. For instance, rather than trying to stem the tide of death and disease after a disaster, prior emphasis on primary health care may lessen the potential damage to the population.
4. *Human security is people centred*
   Human security is concerned with how people live and breath, how they

> exercise choice, how much access they have to opportunities and whether they live in conflict or peace (United Nations Development Programme, 1994: 22–23).

The UNDP also lists specific categories in which human security may be threatened: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (pp 24–25). While many of these areas are addressed in the conventional security literature, the *way* they are addressed is dramatically different from the suggestions of the UNDP. For instance, economic security in traditional literature assigns security risk to areas of trade, sanctions and other forms of statecraft that could have a positive or negative impact on the economic performance of a state.[4] The UNDP defines economic security as 'an assured income—usually from productive and remunerative work, or in the last resort from some publicly financed safety net'. Human security, while dealing with conflict and human rights at the individual level, also contains elements that could be categorised more appropriately as human welfare.

In human security, the level of analysis shifts from states and the international system to individuals. However, these three levels are not divorced of each other. If one carefully dissects the elements of human security, two factors increasingly become clear. First, the issues such as unemployment, crime, pollution, drugs, and human rights violations are issues that all nations must contend with in some form. Changing their status from problems of good governance to a security threat diminishes their distinct importance. Governments must contend with these issues on a daily basis; some governments perform better than others at handling them. But to bring these issues to the level of a security problem is almost meaningless—governments have no greater sense of urgency about them. The concept of human security thus becomes insignificant. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is an extraordinary threat to individuals, but by grouping it with a series of social maladies, we lessen the seriousness of the problem. We equate the HIV/AIDS issue with the everyday challenges that governments face.

Second, the issues addressed in the human security area, in many forms, resemble the literature on human rights.[5] The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights seeks to promote the causes that are omnipresent in the human securities agenda (United Nations, 2001). In one sense, the human securities agenda is paralleling, if not overlapping, the human rights agenda. Not all nations can or do adhere to the principles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Even though they are principles of good governance towards which all nations *should* strive, these principles are not necessarily followed universally or even truly believed by some policy makers. Policy makers can generally agree about what constitutes threats to the government, the state or even to the system. Terrorism, military invasion, coups, etc all constitute direct threats to the existence of the government and, therefore, concrete policies can be taken to counteract these threats. But most government action concerning human security is reactive because many of the problems cannot be anticipated in either duration or in scope.

As Rothschild has noted, because of the various calls to revamp how we

perceive security, the concept has taken on a geometric complexity extending vertically from the state to the biosphere and horizontally from the individual to the system (Rothschild, 1995: 55). Discussion of what is to be included under the rubric of security has become complex because of the segmented approach taken to security and the ever-increasing scope of what researchers classify as an element of security or a threat to security. Such haphazard treatment of security has the potential to lead to the 'boy who cried wolf' syndrome. If all human maladies are a security threat (as the UNDP seems to propose), then the potential for complacency or apathy becomes the real threat. Eventually, people and policy makers will not be able to raise concern to significant levels in the face of danger at the human, state or system level. At the same time, however, it is increasingly clear that states are no longer the only actors involved in issues of security.

Moving in this direction, Stopford and Strange argued that international relations must move beyond the unitary state explanation for international relations (Stopford *et al*, 1991; Strange, 1996). In part, structural changes in the world economy have led to a shift in international diplomacy: governments are forced to bargain, not only among themselves, but also with corporations, while corporations are forced to negotiate among themselves as well as with governments (Strange, 1996: 1). What this implies is that competition in the international system has changed fundamentally, forcing governments to place economic policy ahead of the traditional areas of foreign policy and diplomacy.

As a result of the structural changes in the global economy, the nature of the relationships between corporations and between states and corporations has changed. The interests of corporations and governments have converged, with both becoming allies in the global race for economic growth. Global corporations offer a source of technology, market access and capital, all of which states seek in propelling economic growth, while states provide territory and establish the 'rules of the game' by which companies may operate within that territory. As a result, macroeconomic and industrial competitiveness policies have overtaken traditional state security concerns in the foreign policy arena. This implies that corporations have an impact on the security agenda of states, both as tools of managing security (in the case of the West) and as threats to security (in the case of developing countries). In short, the emphasis among the major powers on macroeconomic and industrial competitiveness has placed the security interests of major powers on a collision course with the security interests of the developing world.

Conceptually, corporations operate in the short run. The long run is seldom addressed by corporations in any significant way. In much the same way, the major powers operate with a short-run conception of national security. Hence what is often missing from the complexities of security is a foundation that attends to the elements of time and scope in security threats. Security is sensitive temporally and in scope and intensity (who it affects and to what extent). A security threat to one state may not be so to another state until a later time, if ever.

What this amounts to is a short- and long-run temporal dimension to security and a dimension of scope and intensity. This idea is not necessarily new as it only refers to the immediacy and severity of a problem. The inherent danger is in

distinguishing between the short run and the long run. Often policy makers attach themselves to Keynes' concept of the long run—'in the long run we're all dead'—leaving the notion of long-run problems to the back burner until they become short-run (ie critical) problems. Why do policy makers pursue this avenue of problem solving? Hayek may have touched upon the answer in his critique of Keynes when he said 'He [Keynes] was, in a sense, corrupted by political necessity. His famous phrase about "in the long-run we're all dead," is a very good illustration of being constrained by what is now politically possible. He stopped thinking about what, in the long run, is desirable' (in Hazlett, 1977).

While Hayek was not a supporter of Keynes' work, he makes a significant point about the temporal nature of issues and, for our purpose, security issues. Short-run issues are subject to political expediency conditions that neglect long-run implications. Likewise, policy makers perceive issues that dominate the agenda of others and that happen 'beyond the water's edge' as having little impact beyond the geographical locale of the issue. The temporal and scope-intensity dimensions of security issues have significant implications for how we begin to conceptualise the HIV/AIDS epidemic as a security issue for Africa and less of a security threat to the major powers.

Time, intensity and scope in the HIV/AIDS pandemic

Generally, what makes HIV/AIDS difficult to contemplate as a security threat is the very nature of the problem itself. Most conceptualisations of security focus on threats from groups or states. This element is removed from the security issue because HIV/AIDS is a virus. The primary threat is not group- or state-oriented. Despite this, HIV/AIDS does have an impact on security. But whom does it affect and to what extent? One of the problems in contending with the pandemic is that its impact varies geographically. While the HIV/AIDS pandemic poses a threat to individuals, the state and the international system, the impact on each of these levels and even the direction of the impact on each of the levels varies temporally and in intensity and scope. In part this is because of the nature of the virus and the affected individuals.[6] The HIV-1 strain of the virus is dominant in the USA and Western Europe, with the primary groups affected being homosexuals and intravenous drug users. The HIV-2 strain of the virus is dominant in Africa, with the primary affected groups being heterosexuals. On the surface, this may seem to be just a characteristic of the virus, but the emergence of the two strains and whom they affected had significant consequences for the response to the virus.

In the early 1980s in the USA the virus became primarily associated with two groups: homosexuals and Haitian immigrants. As for the latter, the entire country of Haiti was stigmatised by the association. In the USA the disease became known primarily as a 'gay' disease. The labelling could not have come at a worse time. The American political climate in the 1980s turned distinctly towards a conservative agenda that emphasised family values and religion as necessary components of society's foundation. The media in the USA maintained the affiliation between HIV/AIDS and the gay community until others were affected. Women, children and blood recipients eventually were touched by the disease. The media turned its attention to creating a two-tier structure of victims—the

'innocent victims' consisting of those who contracted the disease through non-sexual contact and 'guilty' victims consisting of those who contracted the disease through homosexual activity and (later) through intravenous drug usage (Bastos, 1999: 24–25). The two-tier public perception of the disease promoted, at first, a lack of urgency in coping with it. The early association of HIV/AIDS with the politically unpopular gay community caused early calls for policy action to be approached with indifference at best.

The two-tier structure of AIDS created differences in perceptions about the urgency of the ensuing pandemic. For the USA and Western Europe the proportion of the population affected by the disease was relatively small and politically controversial (homosexuals and drug users). In Africa the proportion of the population affected by the pandemic was significantly higher. In addition to being pegged to politically unfavourable groups in the West, the virus hit Africa at the worst possible time internationally. The disappearance of the Soviet 'threat' in Africa after the Cold War also marked the beginning of the USA's diplomatic departure. Within three years of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs lost 70 positions, and consulates in Kenya, Cameroon and Nigeria were scheduled to be closed. The US Agency for International Development's Africa desk lost between 30 and 40 officers out of a total of a normal staff size of 130 (Michaels, 1992: 96–98). The end of the global ideological tug-of-war between the USA and the former Soviet Union marginalised Africa in US foreign policy and in the international community and consequently marginalised Africa's social problems, not the least of which was the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic. The spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa was not a *direct* security threat to the West in any sense of the word.[7] For Africa, however, the virus had grown into a critical security issue, reflected by the extent of the epidemic on the continent.

Africa's epidemic

More than 24 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are infected with the HIV/AIDS virus as of the end of 1999. But that number alone does not establish the severity of the problem as the following data in Table 1 illustrate. These data are sorted by the percentage of adults infected, which ranges from 35.8% in Botswana to less than 1% for several countries. In 15 countries more than 10% of the population of adults between the ages of 15 and 49 (the most economically productive demographic group for a country) are infected. Additionally, more than 12 million children in Africa have been orphaned (losing the mother or both parents to the virus) by the epidemic. In total, more than 8.5% of sub-Saharan Africa's population is infected with the HIV/AIDS virus.

In sheer numbers the magnitude of the epidemic in Africa is significant. However, these data only present part of the problem. In order to see why sub-Saharan Africa's epidemic has a greater sense of catastrophe, comparative data are useful. Table 2 presents those data. Compared with other regions, sub-Saharan Africa possesses 71% of the infected people in the world and 91% of those children orphaned by the virus, exceeding the percentages of all other areas combined. On the whole, the data reveal that Africa has been hit hardest by the virus.

TABLE 1
HIV/AIDS Infection Data for Sub-Saharan Africa, end of 1999*

Country	*Estimated number of people living with HIV/AIDS*					
	Adults and children	*Adults (15-49)*	*Adult rate (%)*	*Women (15-49)*	*Children (0-14)*	*Orphans cumulative*
Botswana	290,000	280,000	35.80	150,000	10,000	66,000
Swaziland	130,000	120,000	25.25	67,000	3,800	12,000
Zimbabwe	1,500,000	1,400,000	25.06	800,000	56,000	900,000
Lesotho	240,000	240,000	23.57	130,000	8,200	35,000
Zambia	870,000	830,000	19.95	450,000	40,000	650,000
South Africa	4,200,000	4,100,000	19.94	2,300,000	95,000	420,000
Namibia	160,000	150,000	19.54	85,000	6,600	67,000
Malawi	800,000	760,000	15.96	420,000	40,000	390,000
Kenya	2,100,000	2,000,000	13.95	1,100,000	78,000	730,000
Central African Republic	240,000	230,000	13.84	130,000	8,900	99,000
Mozambique	1,200,000	1,100,000	13.22	630,000	52,000	310,000
Djibouti	37,000	35,000	11.75	19,000	1,500	7,200
Burundi	360,000	340,000	11.32	190,000	19,000	230,000
Rwanda	400,000	370,000	11.21	210,000	22,000	270,000
Cote d'Ivoire	760,000	730,000	10.76	400,000	32,000	420,000
Ethiopia	3,000,000	2,900,000	10.63	1,600,000	150,000	1,200,000
Uganda	820,000	770,000	8.30	420,000	53,000	1,700,000
United Republic of Tanzania	1,300,000	1,200,000	8.09	670,000	59,000	1,100,000
Cameroon	540,000	520,000	7.73	290,000	22,000	270,000
Burkina Faso	350,000	330,000	6.44	180,000	20,000	320,000
Congo	86,000	82,000	6.43	45,000	4,000	53,000
Togo	130,000	120,000	5.98	66,000	6,300	95,000
Democratic Republic of Congo	1,100,000	1,100,000	5.07	600,000	53,000	680,000
Nigeria	2,700,000	2,600,000	5.06	1,400,000	120,000	1,400,000
Gabon	23,000	22,000	4.16	12,000	780	8,600
Ghana	340,000	330,000	3.60	180,000	14,000	170,000
Sierra Leone	68,000	65,000	2.99	36,000	3,300	56,000
Eritrea	–	49,000	2.87	–	–	–
Liberia	39,000	37,000	2.80	21,000	2,000	31,000
Angola	160,000	150,000	2.78	82,000	7,900	98,000
Chad	92,000	88,000	2.69	49,000	4,000	68,000
Guinea-Bissau	14,000	13,000	2.50	7,300	560	6,100
Benin	70,000	67,000	2.45	37,000	3,000	22,000
Mali	100,000	97,000	2.03	53,000	5,000	45,000
Gambia	13,000	12,000	1.95	6,600	520	9,600
Senegal	79,000	76,000	1.77	40,000	3,300	42,000
Guinea	55,000	52,000	1.54	29,000	2,700	30,000
Niger	64,000	61,000	1.35	34,000	3,300	31,000
Mauritania	6,600	6,300	0.52	3,500	260	–
Equatorial Guinea	1,100	1,000	0.51	560	<100	860
Madagascar	11,000	10,000	0.15	5,800	450	2,600
Comoros	–	400	0.12	–	–	–
Mauritius	–	500	0.08	–	–	–
Sub-Saharan Africa	**24,500,000**	**23,400,000**	**8.57**	**12,900,000**	**1,000,000**	**12,100,000**

Source: UNAIDS, http://www.unaids.org/epidemic_update/report/Final_Table_Eng_Xcel.xls, accessed July 1, 2001.
*Data are sorted by Adult Rate, reflecting the percentage of the population estimated to be infected with HIV/AIDS. Data were not available for Reunion and Somalia.

TABLE 2
Comparative HIV/AIDS Regional Data, end of 1999

Country	*Estimated number of people living with HIV/AIDS*					
	Adults and children	*Adults (15-49)*	*Adult rate (%)*	*Women (15-49)*	*Children (0-14)*	*Orphans cumulative*
Sub-Saharan Africa	**24,500,000**	**23,400,000**	**8.57**	**12,900,000**	**1,000,000**	**12,100,000**
East Asia and Pacific	530,000	530,000	0.06	66,000	5,200	5,600
Australia and New Zealand	15,000	15,000	0.13	1,100	190	<500
South and South-East Asia	5,600,000	5,400,000	0.54	1,900,000	200,000	850,000
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	420,000	410,000	0.21	110,000	15,000	500
Western Europe	520,000	520,000	0.23	130,000	4,100	9,000
North Africa and Middle East	220,000	210,000	0.12	42,000	8,000	15,000
North America	900,000	890,000	0.58	180,000	11,000	70,000
Caribbean	360,000	350,000	2.11	130,000	9,600	85,000
Latin America	1,300,000	1,200,000	0.49	300,000	28,000	110,000
Global Total	**34,300,000**	**33,000,000**	**1.07**	**15,700,000**	**1,300,000**	**13,200,000**

Source: UNAIDS, http://www.unaids.org/epidemic_update/report/Final_Table_Eng_Xcel.xls, accessed July 1, 2001.

The long-run impact is in the loss of human life and in Africa's economic decline. People may be able to live 10 years or more with the virus before AIDS develops and takes their lives. With inadequate health care and the lack of access to life-extending drugs, there appears to be little that can be done for those already infected in Africa; government efforts now focus on AIDS prevention (the reactive policy elements) to curb the epidemic there. The human catastrophe in Africa is extensive and poses a long-run threat to one of the base elements of the nation-state—population. In traditional security terms, however, the threat appears in the short run in the form of indirect affects that the virus has on the political and military security of African countries.

The invisible enemy: AIDS, politics and the military

In traditional security concerns the epidemic has touched every aspect of the political spectrum. From the military to high-level government officials, the epidemic has tapped into the political structure of African countries. For instance, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe has admitted that three cabinet-level ministers have died from AIDS. Extended periods of illness and finally death of policy makers can render decision making inconsistent, creating problems in formulating and implementing policy. But the problem extends beyond bureaucratic efficiency to affect other African institutions.

Aside from the human toll, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has become a social issue and a political weapon in Africa. Socially, the virus carries with it a severe stigma that follows individuals infected with the virus. Isolation and exclusion are often the result of being diagnosed as HIV-positive. People's ability to work or to carry

out duties when they are HIV-positive is called into question. Worse yet is the killing of people who are or are rumoured to be HIV-positive. Such a powerful stigma provides political weaponry in Africa for those willing to employ AIDS as a political tool.

In Uganda's February 2001 elections President Yoweri Museveni made his purported success in fighting the virus a high campaign priority. But the issue went far beyond Museveni's claims of battling the virus. In the campaign leading up to the election, both President Museveni and his opponent Dr Kizza Besigye accused each other of being HIV-positive. What made the accusations even more powerful was the previous relationship between the two men: Besigye was once Museveni's personal physician while both were fighting in the Ugandan brush. While it is unlikely that the accusations changed the election outcome, it highlights the critical nature of the stigma attached to the virus and the political damage that such accusations can yield. The stigma attached to the virus has the potential to disrupt political processes (either democratic or undemocratic) and political transitions.

Beyond politics: AIDS and defence

The more obvious security problem is with the military and the impact that the HIV/AIDS virus has on the military's capacity to carry out its duties. This issue appears at a critical time in Africa's history when it has been freed from external influences to manage its own affairs. The post-cold war period has placed responsibility for Africa's problems in Africans' hands, almost by default. Given the lack of interest the international community has in Africa, the options for maintaining peace have narrowed, perhaps for the better in terms of the managing of Africa's affairs by Africans. In one sense the idea of Africans handling their own crises has tremendous appeal, particularly given that the will of others was the determining factor in settling such crises during the Cold War. But the additional responsibility being taken up by African governments puts a strain on already scarce resources. Much of these resources has been devoted to expanding military operations in conflict areas.

After the USA's disastrous peacekeeping efforts in Somalia in 1992, regional and sub-regional organisations have acted to maintain peace in Africa, most prominently the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its monitoring group ECOMOG. Nigeria, the primary ECOMOG state intervening in the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, has had to confront not only the external military foe in its operations, but also the HIV/AIDS viral foe as well. Some soldiers serving in the Sierra Leone intervention have returned to Nigeria infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. United Nations peacekeeping forces, which come from a number of non-African countries, have also experienced HIV infection incidences, although it is unclear whether the infections occurred before or after their duty in Africa.

War-torn regions promote an indiscriminate sexual culture among soldiers. The presence of the military attracts sex trade workers, which promotes the spread of the virus to soldiers who may return home to their families. Of course, their families back home are then at risk. However, war-torn regions can also promote

the spread of the virus through terror. In Sierra Leone, violence against women has been used as a weapon of terror and torture by revolutionaries fighting the government army and peacekeeping forces. Rape and sexual slavery have been systematic and indiscriminate. From the very young to the very old, women have been raped and tortured by revolutionary soldiers, further spreading the HIV virus. Reports of soldiers raping civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's ongoing civil war have also emerged. But perhaps most disconcerting has been the reaction of government officials, who look upon such behaviour in war regions as 'boys being boys'.

The HIV threat to the military has great implications. But Nigeria is not the only state faced with a high incidence of HIV infection among the military. Armies across Africa are experiencing infection rates that exceed those in the general population. While data are variable and scant, as infection rates for military personnel can be a sensitive security issue, some data have been reported, as shown in Table 3.

While systematic studies have been limited, a number of individual studies collected by the US Census Bureau Population Division International Programme Centre (2000) have also shown the same trends. Among a number of cited studies, data reveal that the extent of the problem is growing. HIV prevalence data for the military show that Tanzania, Chad and Gabon show rates of 12.9%, 10.1% and 5.8% respectively.[8] For military recruits, high prevalence rates have also been reported in Uganda (26.7%), Guinea-Bissau (17.3%), and Ethiopia (6.7%). Domestic police and security forces have been hit equally hard: Zambia (15.4%),

TABLE 3
Estimated percentage of military personnel that are HIV-positive

Country	*Infection rate* (%)
Angola	50
Botswana	33
Cameroon	14.7
Congo	50
Malawi	75
South Africa[a]	40
Uganda	66
Zimbabwe[b]	80

Notes:
[a] Some subunits of the South African military, such as those in the Kwazulu-Natal unit, are estimated to be 90% HIV-positive (Heinecken, 2001).
[b] In 1993 the Zimbabwe government admitted that as much as 70% of its officer corps was HIV-positive (Heinecken, 2001).
Sources: Bisseker (1998), Heinecken (2001) and US Census (2000).

Tanzania (14.3%), Cameroon (12%) and Guinea-Bissau (11.3%). At best, all these data are estimates and, without formal study of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the military and police, confirmed data may never be available. However, if these figures are close to actual infection rates, the percentage of HIV-positive people in Africa's militaries seriously compromises the security of a number of African countries.

In the short run the virus has the potential to compromise military performance because of the chance for opportunistic infections to appear as a result of soldiers' weakened immune systems. In the long run fewer capable people will be able to join military forces as the number of suitable recruits declines from increasing death rates. At the same time troops incapacitated by the virus and the decrease in suitable recruits will also have an impact on the available corps of experienced military leaders. The decrease in available, experienced military leadership may contribute to a decline in military performance and even to a further breakdown in military discipline, particularly in war-prone areas.

The ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of Congo involves seven countries whose armies are reported to be from 50% to 80% HIV-infected, seriously calling into question the capacity of the armed forces to carry out duties. Domestically, the same problem confronts political leaders as additional questions have been raised concerning the capacity of the military to maintain stability under conditions of high HIV infection rates (Copson, 2001). The weakness of the military can also promote the opportunity for invasion if other countries perceive a major weakness in the military. In battle, the soldiers' compromised immune systems also make them more vulnerable to chemical and biological attacks, even on a small scale.[9] Hence HIV infection of military personnel in Africa poses serious challenges for security and stability in the continent.

Economic security: domestic and international threats

The long-run domestic economic impact of the HIV/AIDS virus has been well studied by a number of researchers and scholars (Barnett & Whiteside, 2000; Cross & Whiteside, 1993; Nevin, 1998; Over, 1992; Tbaijuka, 1997; Topouzis, 1998). In general, it is safe to say that the conclusions reached show that the HIV/AIDS epidemic will have tremendous consequences for the economies of Africa. Lost productivity, decreased investment, worker illness, increasing government expenditures, higher insurance costs, and the loss of trained workers will contribute to a decline in economic performance in many countries. Most prominent among the economic problems is the increased government expenditure needed to combat the epidemic. Increased expenses arise in two areas: government prevention programmes and government health care expenses for those already infected. Government prevention programmes become a fundamental necessity in trying to stop the epidemic from doing further population damage. Government health care expenses increase through two factors: the number of people infected (more people needing assistance) and the basic costs of assisting those people (drugs and other medical supplies). Both have added burdens to African governments; however, it is the latter issue that has had the

greatest international economic impact.

In 1994 the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization was signed by over 100 nations. The agreement was another step forward for nations to promote their future economic security through trade and investment. In that agreement, for the first time in history, a global trade regime for the protection of intellectual property rights (IRP) was included as a result of a strong lobbying effort by the USA and private corporations (Sell, 2000; Ryan, 1998). The Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement binds *all* signatory nations to implementing a full Western-style intellectual property (IP) regime within 16 years of the agreement's national ratification.[10] The agreement itself was the final product of a long process that brought the IPR issue from an obscure, esoteric legal field to a critical political and economic issue that has brought nations to the brink of trade wars.

The TRIPS agreement provides national treatment for intellectual property across a range of property rights areas (copyrights, patents and trademarks being the primary ones).[11] Covered under patents in particular are pharmaceuticals. Under the agreement foreign pharmaceutical companies can apply for patents on pharmaceuticals in individual countries and receive exclusive rights to produce the pharmaceutical product in that country. In essence, intellectual property rights provide a limited monopoly to the pharmaceutical producer; in the case of the TRIPS agreement, the time limit is 20 years. Because the producer has a monopoly on the market, price is not dictated by open market conditions (supply and demand); the producer has more control in establishing the price for the product. This issue has become the source of international disputes, particularly between developed and developing countries, and major ethical dilemmas in international trade policy that pit the economic security of the major market powers against the national security of developing countries.[12]

Pharmaceutical firms in developed countries have produced drugs which can prolong the lives of HIV/AIDS patients; however, these drugs are priced too high for people in the developing world (and many in the developed world) to afford. The pharmaceutical industry has a captive audience for its products—without the pharmaceuticals, people die more quickly. Hence demand for the drugs is high among infected patients. The obvious question for developing countries is how can they obtain the drugs to stem the loss of life in their countries. Because of the extent and scope of the epidemic, African countries have been on the front lines in trying to obtain the drugs inexpensively.

One possible solution has been to opt out of the TRIPS agreement. Article 73 of the agreement allows states to declare a national security emergency to abrogate responsibility under the agreement. Doing this would allow states to bypass the international trade agreement and to produce the needed drugs at a cost far below those on the open international markets. Despite the threat to human life and security, states have decided not to pursue this course of action, choosing to adhere to their international obligations under TRIPS.

But even if states bypass the multilateral TRIPS agreement, they are still faced with the possibility of trade sanctions on a *bilateral* basis. US policy regarding intellectual property has taken a two-track approach which includes pursuing multilateral action and bilateral actions against violators of US intellectual

property rights. In fact, the USA has been at the forefront of efforts to stop African nations from producing the HIV/AIDS drugs themselves. African nations have been forced to deal with pharmaceutical firms directly to negotiate lower prices in an effort to deter punitive trade sanctions from the USA for violating pharmaceutical intellectual property rights.

Analysis and conclusions

Africa has fallen victim to an avalanche of problems. With the emergence and escalation of the HIV/AIDS virus in the 1980s, Africa's traditional economic and political problems were compounded and magnified. That process was pushed along considerably when the Cold War ended and Africa saw itself increasingly marginalised. Relative economic and political isolation has hindered Africa's attempts to maintain control over the epidemic as countries in the West are increasingly disinclined to involve themselves in the internal problems of other countries. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is perhaps the greatest security threat from disease since the bubonic plague ravaged Europe between 1346 and 1351.[13]

While not often addressed, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa has brought new security challenges that have been complicated even more by the changing nature of the international system. At the system level the end of the Cold War meant that Africa was marginalised even more than during it. But globalisation has brought its own changes that have affected Africa. While states have been important players and the focus of international relations, corporations are playing a greater role in this area as well. The latest period of globalisation has brought corporations and governments together as partners in an increasingly competitive international environment. In some regard, economic foreign policy and the promotion of business has become a centrepiece of foreign policy agendas, adding to the traditional focus on military security while at the same time putting it in direct conflict with the security concerns of other nations.

Stopford and Strange were correct when they pursued the research agenda dealing with the new corporate–state dynamics of the international system. Extended negotiations with *corporations* were needed to move towards stemming the epidemic while at the same time not engaging in major trade disputes. In essence, if we are to believe that corporations have taken on state-like qualities, it follows that they have become players in the security game. Historically, corporations have always been players in traditional security, mostly as arms manufacturers. However, new types of corporations are entering into the widening concept of security, especially as it pertains to Africa's epidemic. As we conceive of security in greater dimensions, we also intertwine a greater number of actors. The particular role that businesses play as agents of security in the international system seems to be a strong avenue of research needing exploration. More critically, the role of corporations in stemming (or not) Africa's epidemic deserves immediate attention.

The short- and long-run impacts vary considerably. While ultimately population decline (in terms of deaths associated with the HIV/AIDS virus) is a humanitarian crisis in its own right, the indirect or short-run consequences of the epidemic are what makes this an immediate security concern to African

countries. African countries differ from most of the rest of the world in that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has reached a level of concern to them that would warrant perceiving the virus as a *direct* security threat. The scope and extent of the virus globally shows that Africa is disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The indirect impacts will have the greatest effect on Africa at first, with other regions, particularly south and east Asia, eventually coming under increased pressure.

The challenges faced by African countries with the HIV/AIDS epidemic are overwhelming. In the short-run, potential political destabilisation poses threats to the security of African states. With the increasing regional security responsibilities that African states have taken on in the wake of the Cold War, the impacts of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are magnified. The threat of the military becoming incapacitated and economies being decimated bears considerable weight in African domestic and international affairs. How African countries deal with these issues remains one of the most pressing, immediate problems that these governments face.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dean Kehoe for his invaluable assistance in preparing this manuscript. I am also indebted to my research assistant Matt Tubin for his contributions to this article. I would also like to thank Dr Ricardo Laremont and Dr Ali A. Mazrui for their comments, support and friendship. Earlier versions of this work were presented at the International Studies Association meeting (Hong Kong, 2001), the Annual Conference of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy and the Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy (Binghamton University, 2001), the Reves Center for International Studies Program on Civil Society and Governance in Africa Speaker Series (College of William and Mary, 2001), and the Institute for African Development (Cornell University, 2001). I am indebted to the students and scholars at these venues and particularly to Steve Ndegwa, Sue Peterson, Joan Mulondo and Muna Ndulo for giving me the opportunity to present my research at their respective institutions. Of course, all errors are mine alone.

Notes

[1] The research on African military coups has been extensive. See for example (Decalo, 1976; 1990; 1998; Jackman, 1978; Johnson, 1984; O'Kane, 1981; Welch, 1970).

[2] As Clark (2001) notes, 'realist' schools concerned with power and the statecraft used to wield it had little concern for Africa. According to Clark, the only people attracted to study Africa were those who sought to undo the injustices that had befallen it.

[3] In the wake of the Cold War, these forms of security have taken on greater importance in the literature. See for example Cable (1995), Carey & Salmon (1992), Klare, Thomas *et al* (1991), O'Meara *et al* (2000) and Tehranian (1999).

[4] See, for instance, Baldwin (1985) for details on the nature of economic statecraft in IPE and security literature.

[5] For an excellent overview of the human rights literature and the forms that human rights take, see Donnelly (1989).

[6] Two main strains of the HIV virus have been identified, with additional strains and mutations being discovered. The two primary strains, HIV-1 and HIV-2, according to the Centers for Disease Control (1998), are distinct. As they describe them, 'researchers discovered the primary causative viral agent,

the human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1). In 1986, a second type of HIV, called HIV-2, was isolated from AIDS patients in West Africa, where it may have been present decades earlier. Both HIV-1 and HIV-2 have the same modes of transmission and are associated with similar opportunistic infections and AIDS. In persons infected with HIV-2, immunodeficiency seems to develop more slowly and to be milder. Compared with persons infected with HIV-1, those with HIV-2 are less infectious early in the course of infection. As the disease advances, HIV-2 infectiousness seems to increase; however, compared with HIV-1, the duration of this increased infectiousness is shorter' (Centers for Disease Control, 1998). In 1999 it was also reported that a new strain, HIV-1c, had been discovered in Africa which is more virulent than the other strains (Copley, 1999).

[7] In this sense, I am using the word 'direct' to mean that the virus does not pose a significant security threat at this time to the West. For African countries, the extent and scope of the epidemic there warrants a discussion of how it affects the security and even the existence of some African countries. Such a threat is not present in the West.

[8] It is important to note the difference between HIV prevalence and HIV incidence. Studies of HIV prevalence data are for one specified period of time; HIV incidence data cover an extended period of time. Hence HIV incidence data are more stable and reliable over time and across groups. Because of the inherent data collection problems and lack of systematic record keeping in Africa, most often data reported are prevalence data, making estimates of the extent of infection difficult to assess.

[9] While this may sound implausible, the use of biological weaponry does not require a sophisticated delivery system. For instance, smallpox infested blankets and handkerchiefs were used to 'reduce' Native American populations during the French and Indian War (1754–67). See Christopher *et al* (1997) for additional examples of low technology biological warfare. More recently, the use of anthrax tainted letters by bio-terrorists in the USA illustrates the low-tech nature that can characterise biological terrorism.

[10] An introduction to the TRIPS agreement and its associated issues can be found at the World Trade Organization web site, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/trips_e.htm.

[11] National treatment refers to treating domestic and foreign intellectual property equally under national laws.

[12] For a discussion of the theoretical issues in the ethics of intellectual property rights see Hettinger (1989) and Ostergard (1999).

[13] Jay (2000) has compared the current HIV/AIDS pandemic to the Black Death in Europe. After the Black Death, Europe was able to recover and achieve a better economic condition than it had had before the plague. It took Europe roughly 200 years to regain the population it had lost to the epidemic. In Africa's case this will be a daunting task. The HIV/AIDS virus is sexually transmitted. So, unless an absolute cure is found for the virus, the practice of safe sex or abstinence has to be a part of any plans to derail its impact. This will make population recovery extremely difficult in Africa, extending its economic and political problems.

References

Baldwin, DA (1985) *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

Barnett, T & Whiteside, A (2000) *The Social and Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS in Poor Countries: A Review of Studies and Lessons* (Geneva: UNAIDS).

Bastos, C (1999) *Global Responses to AIDS: Science in Emergency* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press).

Bisseker, C (1998) Africa's military time bomb, *Financial Mail* (South Africa), 11 December, pp 34–36.

Buzan, B (1983) *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books).

Cable, V (1995) What is international economic security?, *International Affairs*, 71, pp 305–324.

Carey, R & Salmon, TC (1992) *International Security in the Modern World* (New York: St Martin's Press).

Carr, EH (1940) *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Macmillan and Co).

Centers for Disease Control (1998) CDC Update: Human Immunodeficiency Virus Type 2.

Christopher, GW & Cieslak, TJ *et al* (1997) Biological warfare: a historical perspective, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 278(5), pp 412–417.

Clark, JF (2001) Realism, neo-realism and Africa's international relations in the post-cold war era, in: KC Dunn & TM Shaw (eds), *Africa's Challenge to International Relations Theory*, p 242 (New York: Palgrave).

Copley, GR (1999) National security in a pandemic situation, *Defence & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, p 7.

Copson, RW (2001) AIDS in Africa (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service).
Crawford, RMA & Jarvis, DS (eds) (2001) *International Relations—Still an American Social Science*? (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press).
Cross, S & Whiteside, A (1993) *Facing up to AIDS: The Socio-Economic Impact in Southern Africa* (New York: St Martin's Press).
Decalo, S (1976) *Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military Style* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press).
Decalo, S (1990) *Coups & Army Rule in Africa: Motivations & Constraints* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press).
Decalo, S (1998) *Civil–Military Relations in Africa* (Gainesville, FL: Florida Academic Press).
Donnelly, J (1989) *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
Gilpin, R (1981) *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
Gourevitch, PA & Cohen, SS (1982) *France in the Troubled World Economy* (London: Butterworth Scientific).
Hazlett, TW (1977) *The Road from Serfdom: Forseeing the Fall. FA Hayek Interviewed by Thomas W Hazlett*, Reason Online.
Heinecken, L (2001) AIDS: the new security frontier, Accord Online.
Hettinger, EC (1989) Justifying intellectual property, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 18, pp 31–52.
Ikenberry, GJ Lake, DA & Mastanduno, M (1988) *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
Jackman, RW (1978) The predictability of coups d'etat: a model with African data, *American Political Science Review*, 72, pp 1262–1275.
Jay, P (2000) A distant mirror: Europe's Black Death is a history lesson in human tragedy—and economic renewal, *Time International*, p 38.
Johnson, TH (1984) Explaining African military coups d'etat, 1960–1982, *American Political Science Review*, 78, pp 622–640.
Katzenstein, PJ (1978) *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press).
Keohane, RO (1984) *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).
Keohane, RO & Nye, JS (1989) *Power and Interdependence* (Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman).
Klare, MT, Thomas, DC and Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies (1991) *World Security: Trends and Challenges at Century's End* (New York: St Martin's Press).
Knorr, KE & Trager, FN (1977) *Economic Issues and National Security* (Lawrence, KA: Regents Press).
Mastanduno, M (1998) Economics and security in statecraft and scholarship, *International Organisation*, 52, pp 825–854.
Michaels, M (1992) Retreat from Africa, *Foreign Affairs*, 72, 93–109.
Morgenthau, H (1952) Another great debate: the national interests of the United States, *American Political Science Review*, XLVI, 961–988.
Morgenthau, HJ & Thompson, KW (1985) *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf).
Nevin, T (1998) Will AIDS kill Africa's economy?, *African Business*, pp 16–19.
Nye, JS & Lynn-Jones, SM (1988) International security studies: a report of a conference on the state of the field, *International Security*, 12, pp 5–27.
O'Kane, RHT (1981) A probabilistic approach to the causes of coups d'etat, *British Journal of Political Science*, 11, pp 287–308.
O'Meara, P, Mehlinger, HD & Krain, M (2000) *Globalization and the Challenges of a New Century: A Reader* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press).
Ostergard, R (1999) Intellectual property rights: a universal human right?, *Human Rights Quarterly*, 21, pp 156–178.
Over, M (1992) The macroeconomic impact of AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, Population and Human Resources Department, World Bank.
Rogowski, R (1989) *Commerce and Coalitions: How Trade Affects Domestic Political Alignments* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).
Rothschild, E (1995) What is Security?, *Daedalus*, 124, pp 53–98.
Ryan, M (1998) *Knowledge Diplomacy: Global Competition and the Politics of Intellectual Property* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press).
Sell, S (2000) Structures, agents and institutions: private corporate power and the globalisation of intellectual property rights in: RA Higgott, GRD Underhill & A Bieler (eds), *Non-State Actors and Authority in the Global System* (London: Routledge).
Stopford, JM, Strange, S & Henley, JS (1991) *Rival States, Rival Firms: Competition for World Market*

Shares (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
Strange, S (1996) *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
Tehranian, M (1999) *Worlds Apart: Human Security and Global Governance* (London: IB Tauris in association with the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research).
Tbaijuka, AK (1997) AIDS and economic welfare in peasant agriculture: case studies from Kagabiro Village, Kagera Region, Tanzania, *World Development*, 25, pp 963–975.
Topouzis, D (1998) The implications of HIV/AIDS for rural development policy and programming: focus on sub-Saharan Africa, Sustainable Development Department, Food and Agriculture Organisation HIV and Development Programme, UNDP, New York.
United Nations (2001) Fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, at http://www.un.org/rights/50/decla.htm.
UNDP (1994) *Human Development Report* (New York: Oxford University Press).
US Census Bureau, Population Division, International Program Center (2000), HIV/AIDS surveillance database, at http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/hivaidsn.html, accessed 5 September 2001.
Viner, J (1945) *The United States in a Multi-national Economy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations).
Welch, CE (1970) *Soldier and State in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Military Intervention and Political Change* (Evanston, MI: Northwestern University Press).