

Jānis Balodis
University of Latvia
Faculty of Geography and Earth Science

POLIECONOMICS OF AFRICAN CIVIL WARS: PERIOD 1950. –
2010 – MILITARY GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

**Regional Studies Association Annual International Conference 2011, April 17–
20, Newcastle, United Kingdom**

Abstract:

Civil war is now far more common than international war. Most new outbreaks of large – scale armed conflict occur within the boundaries of sovereign states and pit the government against one or more groups challenging the government's sovereignty. In this paper will be analysed 90 civil wars from polieconomical scope. This paper's main aim is how military logistic regulate war.

The main mechanism to understand African civil wars, is use to Collier – Hoeffler Model (CH) of Civil War Onset. Even if the CH model predicted all cases of civil war onset perfectly, it would still not be able to tell us much about the process through which these outcomes (war or peace) are generated. By contrast, analyzing the process – the sequence of events and the interaction of variables in the CH model over time – is the comparative advantage of case study designs.

In an econometric model of civil war onset, we use measurable variables to test the difference between wars in period 1950. – 2010. These military conflicts we should understand from approaches of military geography. In this case we should to choose one of the theme of military geography. This theme is economic geography of militarism (Collier & Sambanis. 2005). The economic geographies of militarism extend also to the defense industry, that sector engaged with the manufacture of weapons systems and other military material, and the networks and supply chains through which components are brought together, and manufactured objects distributed nationally and globally (Collier & Sambanis. 2005).

Boundaries and borders are an integral component of a state's geopolitical code. The legitimacy and tenure of a government depends upon its ability to maintain boundaries from external threat.

The phrase, 'postcolonial Africa' is literally a reference to the continent in the period after the end of European colonialism. However, the usage of the phrase in this sense is actually inadequate, because the autonomy of African states is so circumscribed and the legacies of colonialism.

In example of Africa important term is *location*. Location is the role a place plays in the world, or its function. The key industries and sources of employment within a place are good measure of location – whether it is a steel mill, coal mine, military base, or tourist resort. Of course, these are simplistic examples, and usually places will be a combination of different functions – perhaps complementing each other or existing together uneasily.

Key words: Africa, political economics, military conflicts, natural resources, size of military area

Main foreign actors in African military conflicts

By the 1960s, after years of fighting for independence, most Western colonial territories (e.g., Algeria) had gained self-rule. Sovereignty, however, did not bring with it freedom from imperialist influences. Colonial legacies were visible in the desire of the new governments to keep the boundaries that were created during colonial times, in the promotion of ethnic rivalry, in the continuation of inhumane and unjust actions against minority populations, and in the practice of distributing the country's resources in an uneven manner (Olsen, 2009). Also, after being under foreign rule for decades, newly independent governments often lacked governmental institutions, good governance skills, and the governing experience needed to effectively rule their newly sovereign nations. In most cases, the transition from colonial province to independent state was a violent and arduous journey.

We can divide main actors of instigation of military conflict in Africa. These actors are:

- 1) USSR with satellite states (example Cuba) - postcolonial era
- 2) USA with NATO partners - postcolonial era
- 3) China and India – 21 century

Developments in Africa - and in the capitals of the great powers - made that continent an important testing ground for the foreign policies of the Western nations and the Soviet Union in 1978. While clearly still the dominant foreign influence in Africa, the Western countries were thrown on the defensive and groped for new ways of protecting their interests there (Olsen, 2009). In the open diplomatic confrontation with the Soviet Union and Cuba, the West came off worst in the Horn of Africa but continued to maneuver actively in southern Africa.

Containment was the principal foreign policy objective of the United States in Africa like in the rest of the world (Cox, Low and Robinson. 2008). It was aimed at resisting the spread of communism and the enlargement of what President Ronald Reagan would later call “the evil empire.” It was an issue of extreme urgency for the U.S. to respond “rescue” Africa as political economist Hilton P. Goss notes” in his paper titled *Africa: Present and Potential*.

China has become Africa’s main commercial partner causing surprise and restlessness among the former European colonial powers such as France, England and Portugal. But it has also caused unrest in the United States, whose newly inaugurated administration that has made important efforts to improve the image of the country in that Continent. Recent statistics indicate that during 2008 commerce between China and Africa quadrupled that of the former decade, when it reached US\$ 107 billion, higher than US-African exchange of US\$ 104 billion.

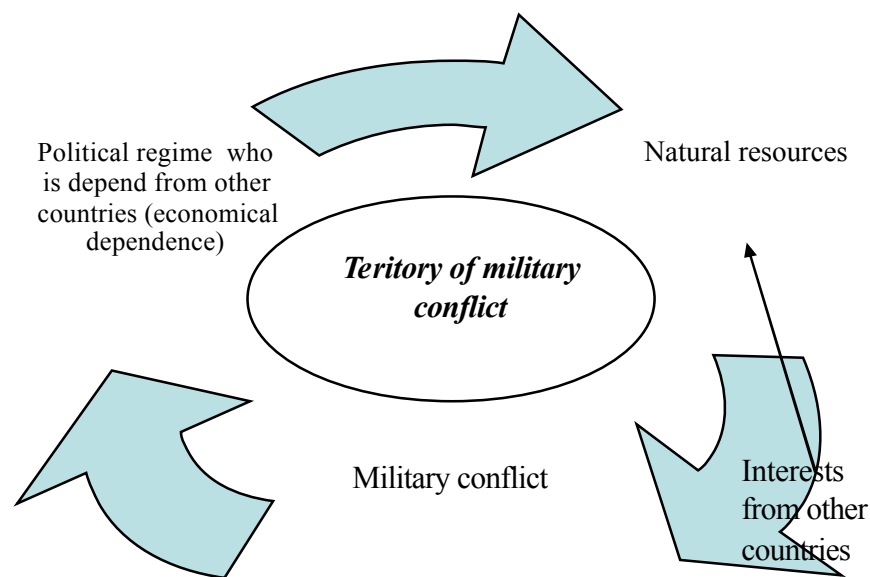


Figure 1. Scheme of dynamics in military conflict

Military conflict in Africa and that Dynamics are depend's from many aspects. The United Nations defines "major wars" as military conflicts inflicting 1,000 battlefield deaths per year. In 1965, there were 10 major wars under way. The new millennium began with much of the world consumed in armed conflict or cultivating an uncertain peace. As of mid-2005, there were eight Major Wars under way, with as many as two dozen "lesser" conflicts ongoing with varying degrees of intensity (Buhaug, 2002).

Military conflicts mean „opinion clash” in Africa context. Important is to see crucial issues. One of the example is „Diamond wars”. On 1 December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, unanimously, a resolution on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict, as a contribution (Collins, 1998) to prevention and settlement of conflicts (A/RES/55/56). In taking up this agenda item, the General Assembly recognized that conflict diamonds are a crucial factor in prolonging brutal wars in parts of Africa, and underscored that legitimate diamonds contribute to prosperity and development elsewhere on the continent.

EU and African military conflicts

The role of the European Union is, in this regard, an interesting case of policy changes and shifting priorities. Relations between the EU and African countries were for a long time essentially economic and development oriented. This remains the fundamental dimension of EU-African relations (Teichova, A; Matis, H. 2003), but the issue of conflict prevention has gained increasing importance in the overall EU policy towards Africa since the early/mid-1990s. The main focus of current EU policy is on addressing the root causes of instability and violent conflict.

During the 1990s, conflict prevention and conflict management became core priorities of the European Union's policy towards Africa (Faria, 2004). In the current decade, conflict management with military means has become increasingly important to the EU. The article scrutinizes the efforts of the EU to develop a military conflict management policy and it shows the dynamics and the interests lying behind the two core instruments: EU military operations within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) / European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the funding of 'African solutions to African problems'. It is the argument that

development of a military conflict management policy has been and still is motivated by European concerns and European interests (Betts, 2005).

African military conflicts statistical and geographical distribution

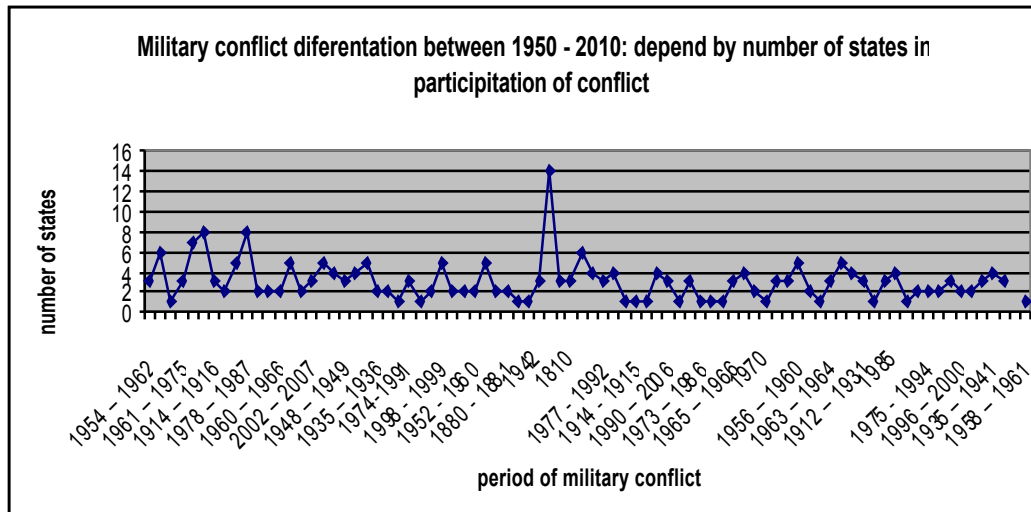


Figure 2. Military conflict diferantation between 1950 – 2010: depend by number of states in participation of conflict

Analysed military conflicts in Africa, we can see taht these military conflicts are quite long in time. Military conflicts in Africa are long in term and in areal size. But these components are secondary components. Most important components are casualties, belligerents, strengthes, but also financial resources. The statistics on major armed conflicts around the world show that the greatest number of these phenomena occurred at the beginning of the 1990s, when there were no less than 30 of them. After 1993 their number fell to somewhere between 20 and 30 per year (Woodward, 2005).

Military conflict in modern territoriality research methodology

Military conflict territoriality studies are associated with database development by scientists at Uppsala University. This database developers out military conflict territoriality research is mainly in studying conflicts in the continent of Africa originally. Scale studies are now grown up to conflict and war research on a global

scale. The studies used the CRS and PLAIN database software, which was based on quantitative methods of war and conflict research and analysis (Storper, 1997).

A more comprehensive and largest database was created at Uppsala University in 2001, held in Uppsala conflict data conference (Uppsala Conflict Data Conference). One of the largest databases, which analyzes the conflicts beginning of World War II is AKUF database, which has compiled the 218 wars and military conflicts. Data base has been war and conflict on the basis of records of armed conflicts and wars, involving at least two countries.

The next significant development of databases software Cascone (Computer Aided System for Analysis of Conflict). This database contains 85 war and conflict analysis. Cascone software for the simulation function, which appears, for example, an active military conflict in the future development.

That another of the research methods include projects ECOR (Ethnic Conflict Research Project). This research project aims to research the ethnic conflict during the period from 1985. - 2000. year. The program provides a database of conflict analysis, which would separate the ethnic conflicts of causal factors and their impact on the conflict of territorial expansion.

References

- Betts, R, K. 2005. *Conflict after the Cold War: arguments on causes of war and peace – second edition*. Washington, Pearson Longman.
- Buhaug, H. 2002. The Geography of Civil War, *Journal of Peace research*. 39(4), 417-433.
- Collier,P; Sambanis,N. 2005. *Evidence and Analysis: Understanding civil war – Africa*. Washington, The World Bank.
- Collier,P; Sambanis,N. 2005. *Evidence and Analysis: Understanding civil war – Europe, Central Asia, and Other Regions*. Washington, The World Bank.
- Collins, J, M. 1998. *Military geography for professionals and public*. Washington D.C., Brassey's edition.
- Cox, K, R; Low, M ; Robinson, J. 2008. *The SAGE Handbook of Political Geography*. Los Angeles, London. SAGE Publications.
- Olsen, G, E. 2009. The EU and Military Conflict Management in Africa: For the Good of Africa or Europe?, *International Peacekeeping*, 16(4), p. 245 – 260
- Faria, F. 2004. Crisis management in sub-Saharan Africa - the role of the European Union, *Institute of Security Studies*, 14 (2), p. 167 – 176
- Storper, M. 1997. *The regional world: territorial development in a global economy*. New York, The Guilford Press.
- Teichova, A; Matis, H. 2003. *Nation, State, and the Economy in history*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tietze, W. 1993. Military Geography – Wehrgeographie – Geography of Security, *GeoJournal*, 31 (2). 215 – 219.

Tīrums, I. 2009. Latvija mainīgā drošības vidē, *Militārais apskats: zinātnisks žurnāls par drošību un aizsardzību*, 2 (131), 2. – 16.

Woodward, R. 2005. From Military Geography to militarism's geographies: disciplinary engagements with the geographies of militarism and military activities, *Progress in Human geography*. 29(6), 718– 740.