

APPENDIX E: TRAINING FOR PEACE OPERATIONS AS CONDUCTED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

1 INTRODUCTION

The project team visited Côte d'Ivoire over the period 16 October to 22 October 1996. For a more detailed itinerary, see Appendix J. The officials from the Foreign and Defence Ministries of Côte d'Ivoire who received the survey team informed the latter that they had not received the correspondence from the OAU Secretariat outlining the purpose of the visit. After explaining the nature and scope of the survey, with reference also to the team's experiences in other countries, a programme was provided to the OAU team. Despite the initial misunderstanding, the visit by the OAU survey team was nevertheless welcomed by Côte d'Ivoire as an opportunity to clarify a number of issues regarding its contribution to peacekeeping efforts.

2 SCOPE

Due to the circumstances outlined above, the nature and sequence of the report on peace operations training in Côte d'Ivoire as presented to the survey team is somewhat different to the preceding chapters, and is presented as follows:

- ◆ background: Côte d'Ivoire's contribution to conflict resolution and peace operations;
- ◆ the role of L'ANAD;
- ◆ the military's approach to training for peace operations; and
- ◆ comments and recommendations by host country.

3 BACKGROUND: CÔTE D'IVOIRE'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE OPERATIONS

It is felt that the OAU harbours the perception that Côte d'Ivoire is not interested in the problems of peacekeeping in Africa, for example in Liberia. This is not so. President Houphouët-Boigny had tried to broker a solution to the conflict in Liberia since its outbreak. Indeed, the first time the belligerents met to seek possible solutions was on Ivorian soil. Côte d'Ivoire also paid for the Yamoussoukro I-IV meetings, as well as the one in Geneva. Moreover, although not a troop-contributing country, Côte d'Ivoire has initiated many conflict resolution initiatives in the region and on the continent. Sharing a border with five other states, Ivorians realise that any conflict outside the country has a spill-over effect on Côte d'Ivoire. The country has already suffered the effects of refugees, illegal arms trafficking and banditry.

There are presently some 350 000 Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire. These people are not encamped and cared for by the UNHCR, but are dispersed among the local communities. They are cared for by these communities and by the selfless efforts of local NGOs. This is a

significant humanitarian contribution by Côte d'Ivoire towards alleviating some of the suffering caused by the Liberian conflict.

However, the Foreign Ministry of Côte d'Ivoire does not foresee the country contributing troops to peacekeeping efforts in the near future, for the following reasons:

- ◆ Historically, President Houphouët-Boigny sought to maintain the country's position as a leader of the region and an example of peaceful co-existence and successful development. His successor, President Bédié, wishes to continue with the position of leadership and neutrality established by Côte d'Ivoire's Founding Father.
- ◆ Côte d'Ivoire has a relatively small army (approximately 8 000), a large portion of which is presently deployed on the border with Liberia to prevent the incursion of rebels from that country. This is considered a priority task for the armed forces, as the people of Côte d'Ivoire have already suffered from the incursions of rebels since the outbreak of civil war in Liberia in 1989.
- ◆ President Houphouët-Boigny wanted no part in the ECOMOG operation at the time of its establishment. It was thus the Anglophone countries of ECOWAS that took the initiative in establishing this peacekeeping force.

The Foreign Ministry feels that the solution to the problem in Liberia is to get the warring factions to adhere to the terms of the Abuja agreement, and that their role in this effort is of a diplomatic rather than a military nature. It is felt that it would be inappropriate for Côte d'Ivoire to send troops into a neighbouring country as part of a peacekeeping operation, as they would be considered part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

It is also felt that there are so many pitfalls with the concept of peacekeeping in situations of intra-state conflict that such efforts are currently of dubious utility. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire would like the OAU to adopt and express a clearer stance on this issue.

With regard to attempts to enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of African states, Côte d'Ivoire is bemused by the number of seemingly uncoordinated foreign efforts in this regard, e.g. the initiatives of France, the UK, Belgium and the USA. The Foreign Ministry expressed a desire to receive clearer guidelines from the OAU on which of these initiatives should be supported, and how the various initiatives could be co-ordinated for the good of Africa. There is presently a danger that such initiatives may serve to further divide African states, rather than help to resolve conflict on the continent.

Nevertheless, Côte d'Ivoire has had limited experience in providing humanitarian assistance to help alleviate the effects of violent conflict on the continent. In 1978, the country sent an approximately 100-strong medical element to assist in Kolwezi, during the Shaba crisis in Zaïre. This medical support was in the form of offering the services of a group of military and civilian surgeons, general practitioners, nurses and medical assistants, as well as medical supplies to the people of Zaïre and the foreign contingents deployed there without the

necessary medical support. Once deployed, this group operated as individuals, without a formal unit or field hospital structure, providing assistance where needed to the best of their abilities. This means that they had to take care of their own accommodation, meals, etc. In fact, it is thought that further contributions to peace operations would be of a political and humanitarian nature, rather than military. In this regard, a three-person reconnaissance team has departed for Liberia to assess conditions in advance of a considered deployment of a 50 to 100-strong medical element in support of the ECOMOG operation in that country. However, the extent of medical support possible is limited by the fact that a large number of military doctors are already deployed internally near the Liberian border to care for Liberian refugees. The division of responsibilities in this regard is presently being discussed by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Health.

4 THE ROLE OF L'ANAD

Any discourse on Côte d'Ivoire's approach to participation in peace operations must take account of the importance and role of L'ANAD. In June 1977, a non-aggression and mutual defence and assistance agreement was signed at Abidjan by seven Francophone West African states, for the purpose of maintaining peace and security in the region, and for consolidating the political independence of the signatories. L'ANAD, or the Accord de Non Aggression et D'Assistance en Matière de Défense (Treaty of Non-Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence) was signed by: Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo. Benin and Guinea Conakry were granted observer status at the meetings of L'ANAD.

L'ANAD adheres to the principles articulated in the Charters of the UN and the OAU, especially those regarding the primacy of dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is designed to promote the security and stability which is essential for the economic development of the countries of the sub-region. L'ANAD does not develop military policy, and is not a supra-national body which subsumes the sovereignty of its member states. Since its inception, L'ANAD has only once had to intervene in order to resolve conflict between two of its member states. This was from December 1985 to January 1986, between Burkina Faso and Mali. This first action by L'ANAD provided the opportunity to test the structure and aims of L'ANAD, and operationalised the concept of the agreement.

The members of L'ANAD have declared that they will not commit any act of aggression among themselves, nor against any country or grouping of countries which are not signatory to the L'ANAD agreement. As far as military threats are concerned, L'ANAD is a defensive alliance. However, any act of armed aggression on a member of L'ANAD will be considered to be an attack on all the member states. The concept of mutual assistance operates in two different contexts. Firstly, an act of aggression between two member states will demand pacifist resolution measures, such as dialogue and negotiation. However, should the situation degenerate, the deployment of a L'ANAD peace intervention force may be considered. Secondly, an external act of aggression against one or more L'ANAD members would demand the following responses, in order of sequence and preference:

- ◆ a search for a diplomatic solution;
- ◆ the imposition of sanctions short of the use of armed force; and
- ◆ as a last resort, the use of armed force to counter and reverse such aggression.

While non-aggression is essential to the concept of peace, security requires also a common approach to dealing with both natural disasters and the challenges of economic development. Whilst originally conceived narrowly, as a non-aggression pact, L'ANAD is now moving beyond narrower conceptions of sub-regional security to include areas such as common policy formulation and co-operation on broader issues of human security, such as economic development, population migration, banditry, pollution, etc.

L'ANAD is considered the principle sub-regional organisation for preventing and dealing with conflict in West Africa. It has a permanent secretariat in Abidjan, and functions at the following levels:

- ◆ Conference of Heads of State and Government;
- ◆ Council of Ministers; and
- ◆ General Secretariat.

The Conference of Heads of State and Government is the supreme authority of L'ANAD. It meets every two years, and decision-making is based on the principle of unanimity. It is responsible for appointing the Secretary-General and Comptroller of the Budget, as well as for approving the biennial budget of the General Secretariat.

The Council of Ministers comprises Ministers of Defence as well as the Chiefs of Defence Staff of member states. It meets once every two years in advance of the summit of heads of state and government, and is directly responsible for drafting the defence concerns to be tabled for discussion and decision at the summit. The Council of Ministers may convene in extraordinary session in the event of a threat or an act of aggression.

The General Secretariat is the permanent organ of L'ANAD, responsible for the day-to-day administration of the organisation, management of its budget, and implementation of decisions taken by the Heads of State and Government. It is directed by a Secretary-General of the rank of a General Officer, who is appointed for a three-year term of office which may be renewed on the proposal of the Council of Ministers. The Secretary General is assisted by twenty-six professional staff. This number will increase to 45, when the Secretariat moves to its new premises in Abidjan during 1997.

The following points of clarification were made by the representatives of the General Secretariat of L'ANAD:

- ◆ L'ANAD is not opposed to bilateral security arrangements and agreements by member states;

- ◆ L'ANAD has no permanent or standby forces available for third-party intervention in any area of the world;
- ◆ The large number of troops fielded by the L'ANAD signatories are maintained purely for defensive purposes;
- ◆ L'ANAD qua L'ANAD has never been involved in a third-party intervention outside the territory of its signatory states;
- ◆ If L'ANAD was requested to participate in a third-party intervention in order to keep the peace, the request would have to be referred to the L'ANAD Heads of State and Government for a decision;
- ◆ The above does not preclude actions by member states acting in an individual capacity; and
- ◆ L'ANAD membership could be extended to other states in the sub-region, and consultations are presently being held on the issue of the inclusion of specific states.

In line with the Cairo Declaration of 1993 and pronouncements made at subsequent summits of the OAU Heads of State and Government, the L'ANAD secretariat feels that the emphasis in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution should be placed at the level of sub-regional organisations. This it considers to be both a geographic and political reality.

The Chiefs of Defence Staff of the L'ANAD member states have been mandated by a decision of the Heads of State and Government to investigate the modalities for establishing a sub-regional peacekeeping force, and recommendations on this aspect are expected some time during 1997. By December 1996, recommendations are also expected on collective measures for combating problems related to banditry, smuggling, illegal immigration, etc.

5 THE MILITARY APPROACH TO TRAINING FOR PEACE OPERATIONS

Côte d'Ivoire is presently at peace, but the military has an important role to play in the provision of border and internal security. Military co-operation, within the framework of L'ANAD, is considered an essential element of defence and security policy.

The Ministry of Defence understands that with the reluctance of the broader international community to risk the lives of troops on peacekeeping missions in Africa, the OAU will have to shoulder increasing responsibility for mustering peacekeepers from within the continent. Côte d'Ivoire will participate in whatever arrangements the OAU makes in this regard, but not at the expense of its traditional approach to and roles in conflict resolution in the region. Ivorian armed forces are willing to contribute to the cause of peace, as they did in Kolwezi in 1978. Future troop contributions to peace operations need not be excluded, but the armed forces would have to be well prepared for such a role. Although certain officers have attended seminars on early warning and peacekeeping in Africa, the armed forces are not yet ready for troop contributions to peace operations. Before such involvement could be considered, the armed forces would need to gain knowledge and experience in the following areas:

- ◆ the concept and conduct of multilateral peace operations under UN or OAU auspices; the nature of SOPs for peace operations;
- ◆ type of equipment used and equipment scales for various types of peace operations;
- ◆ the UN logistic system; and
- ◆ the legal implications of peacekeeping under the UN/OAU (SOF, ROE, etc.).

It should also be borne in mind that the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire are presently in a phase of extensive reorganisation. This reorganisation entails the provision of a logistic base for equipping the army for actual, rather than envisaged missions. For the foreseeable future, the armed forces will be engaged in border security and internal security operations. Readiness for third-party intervention to keep the peace outside the country is therefore a third priority. In the latter regard, however, the military is ready to accept any knowledge and expertise which is offered by countries such as France and organisations such as the OAU.

As a matter of priority, the Ivorian armed forces need to reorganise the structure of their medical system and scale of equipment and supplies, so that medical and sanitation/water purification elements can be deployed as organisational entities, rather than in an ad hoc fashion. External assistance would be appreciated with this task. Regarding the creation of further capabilities for participation in peace operations, the military has identified the following priorities:

- ◆ training of trainers in the concept and conduct of peace operations;
- ◆ acquisition of publications and documentation on peacekeeping developments at the level of the UN and OAU; and
- ◆ the establishment of a small contingent (which could include elements of the Gendarmerie), with background UN peacekeeping training, as a contingency measure for possible future participation in peace operations (this is over and above the planning to restructure the envisaged medical contribution).

Eventually, Côte d'Ivoire could extend background peacekeeping training to include all units and personnel in the armed forces, with appropriate packages being presented at all existing military training schools.

6 COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY HOST COUNTRY

The establishment within each African country of a standby unit of peacekeepers should be considered. The size and structure of such units would depend on the various national abilities and resources in this sphere.

The OAU should work towards the development and dissemination of a standardised concept of operations and set of SOPs for peace operations. Differences of approach as expounded on

the continent by the UN, the French, the British, the Belgians and the USA lead to the confusion of potential troop contributors.

It is important that potential troop contributors are provided with knowledge of the type of mandate they would be expected to fulfil, and of the legal aspects thereof. The legalities of specific mandates must be clearly interpreted for troop-contributing countries. A major problem with the ECOMOG operation has been the absence of a clear legal framework within which to operate, and the peacekeeping force was formed largely by the concern and goodwill of Liberia's neighbouring countries, rather than by the legitimate precepts of international law.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire needs much clearer guidelines from the UN and the OAU before embarking on a peacekeeping training programme for the armed forces.