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The State of Aid

Citizenship and Humanitarianism in Angola 2000-2002

MA dissertation in Political Studies

University of the Witwatersrand

Colin Murphy

> Far more genuinely in Africa [than in the advanced nations], real contact with the grass-roots of the African society has to be and to remain close, since politics, as the stuff of argument and the channel of aspiration and the safety-valve of personality and hope, is an integral part of the living tissue of each day.
>
> (Jomo Kenyatta, 1968, Suffering Without Bitterness: the founding of the Kenya Nation, x)



Political map of Angola downloaded from http://www.angola.org/referenc/maps/polmap1.html on 21 May 2005.



Outline map of Angola downloaded from

http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ao.html on 28 May 2005.

Note. The town of Kuito, capital of Bié province, is just east of Huambo (marked above).

Declaration

This thesis is the sole work of the author, Colin Murphy.

Acknowledgements

The research on which this paper is based was conducted in Luanda, Angola from 2 November to 16 December 2002, while the author was a student of the Masters programme at the Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

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In Angola, I was reliant upon the hospitality of Justin Pearse and am grateful to him and to a myriad of friends and colleagues who gave of their time and friendship both to facilitate my research and my integration into Luanda life over that brief period.

In Johannesburg, I was supervised by Professor Tom Lodge and received vital help with translating and transcribing interviews from Michael Machoe, a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, and Gila Carter, a member of staff at the university.

Prior to undertaking this research, I lived and worked in Angola for almost two years, from February 2000 to December 2001. (The organisation I worked with wished not to be cited.) A large number of people made my time in Angola both richly rewarding and immensely enjoyable, despite the pressures we worked under and the trauma then afflicting the country. Without their support and friendship, I would not have stayed, initially, and would certainly never have returned to do this research.

This paper is dedicated to Sabino Carlos, who passed away in Luanda in April 2005.

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1. Introduction: from citizenship to humanitarian intervention

Introduction

Outlining the relationship between citizenship and humanitarianism

Citizenship and humanitarianism are closely related political concepts.[1] In its classical formulation, the former provides the conditions for the fulfilment of a life lived in community: man, the political animal, enjoys citizenship to the extent that he partakes in the life and governance of his community. Citizenship speaks to the ability of the individual to enjoy a secure and healthy life as a member of a greater political community. A politics of citizenship will entail discussion (and contest) around the rights and responsibilities of the members of that community, and on the criteria for membership of it.

Humanitarianism is a creed of outside intervention in a community or area in the aftermath or immediate context of crisis, where a crisis is understood as anything threatening the life or welfare of the mass of people. Humanitarian aid entails the provision of emergency assistance to those afflicted by crisis by exogenous actors or organisations (known thus as "humanitarians"). Such assistance most immediately takes the form of provision of essential life-saving items, such as food, medicines, shelter and sanitation facilities. Ultimately, some measure of reconstruction and rehabilitation may be undertaken by humanitarian organisations within their remit of emergency assistance.

The defining feature of humanitarianism is the so-called "humanitarian imperative". This entails that the imperative to protect and save human life overrides other concerns, such as political sensibilities and, even, sovereignty.

For this reason primarily, humanitarianism is more commonly seen as a force "above" politics, in that it concerns itself with the prior imperative of saving life, than as a political force, which might be defined as one concerned with the organisation or government of human society. Yet, a growing body of literature has rigorously documented both the politicisation of humanitarian aid (whereby aid is manipulated or diverted for political ends) and the unintended political consequences of humanitarian aid (whereby aid ultimately serves a political aim).[2] Humanitarianism has been brought down to earth, and a Hobbesian earth at that. These studies of the politics of humanitarianism, and of the complex political contexts in which they operate, have allowed us to see that humanitarian aid can be both an instrument of and justification for conflict, as well as a tool of geopolitics. In environments where life is "nastee, brutish and shorte" and politics dominated by the contest for

[1] Each will be elaborated in greater detail in their respective chapters.

[2] See Chapter 3 for references.

authority over that life, intervention that aims to protect life is a primary political force.

As such, humanitarianism acquires a normative content as a political concept, and it is this politics of humanitarianism, and its encounter with the politics of citizenship, that is the subject of this paper.

Some parallels between humanitarianism and citizenship:

- The community is the locus of citizenship, while it is the displaced or fragmented community (stricken by crisis) which is the locus of humanitarianism.
- Both are concepts addressing the mass of the people, delimiting the circumstances of their engagement with each other and with such social infrastructure or services as exist. Both are principles addressed to the welfare of the subject population.
- Both are delimited in practice by the prior circumstances of security. Citizenship is secured by exercise of sovereign authority, extending to the use of force where necessary; humanitarian interventions, although commonly occurring in the context of conflict or the unstable aftermath of conflict, are often severely delimited by security constraints.

If one measure of citizenship can be taken to be the stability of a society, whereby its members are enabled to lead lives that are economically and socially secure, then humanitarian crisis threatens that citizenship, and the need for humanitarian intervention is a marker of its failure. Conversely, the achievement or restitution of citizenship in the wake of crisis might be taken as a marker of the point where humanitarian intervention is no longer required.

Thus, if there is a cycle of political crisis and development in society, then citizenship can be seen as the endgame or objective of humanitarianism, and humanitarianism as the response to the failure of citizenship. Crisis marks the failure of the community to afford its citizens protection; humanitarian intervention substitutes for that protection thus allowing for the rebuilding of community and restitution of citizenship.

Real-life circumstances are not so schematic, however. Because community is itself an abstract concept and because there are no formal measures of the impact of crisis on a *community*, per se, or indicators of the sustenance or collapse of citizenship[3] in the aftermath of that crisis, the concepts of citizenship and humanitarianism are not, in fact, addressed to distinct empirical contexts, but to a messy, complex context where both criteria for humanitarian intervention and measures of active citizenship may co-exist.

[3] Robert Putnam's studies of social capital and other work applying the concept to African societies and to development issues might be seen as attempts to develop such measures. (Putnam 1995; Heller 1996; Widner and Mundt 1998; World Bank 2002)

This leads humanitarianism and citizenship into conceptual tension, a tension which is manifest in contradictions and incoherence in humanitarian and political discourse in areas of humanitarian intervention. One such place is Angola, where a civil conflict endured from approximately 1975 until early 2002, characterised most tragically by a succession of humanitarian crises during the 1990s and 2000 to 2002 period.

This paper is an attempt to consider the encounter between the concepts and norms of citizenship and humanitarianism in Angola in the period 2000 to 2002. This period saw the endgame in the Government's ultimately successful war against Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement, and a humanitarian crisis in the central highlands of Angola provoked primarily by the last stages of that war.[4]

The ending of the war in early 2002 following the death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi and the signing of a peace accord between UNITA and the Government was followed by a further humanitarian crisis as greater than anticipated numbers of UNITA soldiers and civilians gathered in demobilisation camps. This paper will not explicitly address issues arising out of this crisis, but will focus on the humanitarian crisis during 2000, 2001 and early 2002 which, it is argued, was attributable primarily to the Government's military strategy.[5]

This encounter takes place primarily at two sites: amongst the humanitarian, political and "civil society" communities in the capital, the site of humanitarian coordination and seat of government; and amongst the humanitarian, local and "beneficiary" communities in the locations of humanitarian programmes in rural and peri-urban areas in the Angolan interior.

Chapter 1 considers the context and circumstances of citizenship in Angola, and Chapter 2 considers the politics of humanitarianism in Angola, as reflected in humanitarian discourse and in critiques of humanitarianism offered by key informants. These illuminate the conceptual tension between humanitarianism and citizenship.

In a concluding chapter, I argue that this tension is revealing of the failure of the dominant

[4] The central highlands, or *Planalto*, constitute a broad area in the Angolan interior, including the provinces of Bié and Huambo, which is predominantly Ovimbundu in ethnicity, has traditionally been strong in support for Savimbi and, since UNITA's retreat from Andulo and Bailundo in 1999, provided UNITA forces with the bush territory from which they conducted much of their guerrilla campaign.

[5] For an outline of the post-ceasefire humanitarian crisis of 2002, which was occasioned by the rapid demobilisation of UNITA and the arrival of UNITA troops and civilians at quartering areas in much greater than expected numbers, and in multiple, difficult to access areas across the country, see the extensive series of news reports from the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) available on www.irinnews.org and searchable by date for Angola. The initial "opening" of the camps to humanitarian access was controversial and provoke a rift between OCHA and MSF. See The Lancet (2002) and IRIN, "Row over response to humanitarian crisis", Johannesburg, 1 June 2002.

operational paradigm of humanitarian intervention, the "complex emergency", and that an understanding of this is instructive for attempts to foster citizenship in the wake of humanitarian crisis and intervention. I offer some brief suggestions as to how ethics of humanitarianism and citizenship may be reconciled; the focus of this study, however, is to explore this tension, rather than reconcile it.

An eclectic mix of sources is drawn on in this paper, the collateral from six weeks' research in Angola in late 2002. The analysis also draws on two years' experience working with an international Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in provincial Angola, from 2000 to 2001.[6]

These sources include key documentation produced by the United Nations system and NGOs in Angola, recorded interviews and confidential personal communication with key informants in Luanda, miscellaneous documents acquired in various libraries and archives in Luanda and from informants, transcripts of parliamentary debates and newspaper cuttings from the Luanda-based Angolan press. (Full details are provided in the appendices.)

[6] I worked in Malanje from March to July 2000, in Huambo city during August and September 2000, and in Kuito, Bié Province, from September 2000 to December 2001, including a short period in Camacupa, in Bié Province, in September 2001.

2. Citizenship in Angola

2.1 An African citizenship

What is citizenship? As described in the introduction, drawing on its classical formulation, citizenship provides the conditions for the fulfilment of a life lived in community. Man, the political animal, enjoys citizenship to the extent that he partakes in the life and governance of his polity. Citizenship speaks to the ability of the individual to enjoy a secure and healthy life as a member of a greater political community.

Let me enumerate, firstly, what this citizenship is not.

It is not merely or primarily a formal or juridical definition of citizenship. Although I will go on to consider the status of formal citizenship in Angola, I will argue that such legal definition owes little to socio-political reality, and rather more to a combination of artifice and aspiration. The realm of formal citizenship in Angola has little application to the vast majority of Angolans, except possibly codifying an ideal-type of citizenship of use in advocacy.

It is not necessarily a national citizenship. Apart from the formal citizenship inscribed in law, the only tangible national measure of citizenship in Angola derives from the state's monopoly of legitimate force. (Weber) That this monopoly was contested by UNITA during the period of this research, and that the Government showed a marked readiness to displace and otherwise jeopardise the welfare of large numbers of citizens in the exercise of this force in the latter stages of the civil conflict, renders even such a minimal conception of national citizenship as "security" dubious.

It is not a "modern" conception of citizenship, in the sense alluded to by T.H. Marshall. Modern citizenship requires the equal access of every individual to the rights provided by each of three discernible elements of citizenship, each upheld by distinct institutions: the civil element, "composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom"; the political element, comprising "the right to participate in the exercise of political power"; and the social element, comprising "the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society". (Marshall and Bottomore 1992, 8)

"In earlier times", writes Marshall, "these three strands were wound into a single thread". To the extent that non-formal citizenship is enjoyed by many Angolans, Marshall's description of citizenship in earlier times proves adequate to describe it. The norms of citizenship in Angola dictate the measure of individual freedom, participation in governance and welfare that each individual (or household) may partake of in and through the community, "wound in a single thread" and upheld or protected (if at all) not so much by distinct institutions as by less tangible measures of social

cohesion, economic stability and traditional authority.

In their study of the African state, *Africa Works*, Chabal and Daloz argue that "the development of the modern state implies the emergence of a notion of citizenship binding individuals directly to the state - above and beyond the more proximate ties of kinship, community or faction." (Chabal and Daloz, 6)

Angola is not such a state. For as Paul Robson writes,

> In practice, most communities have difficulty in defining their relations with the State and have difficulty in distinguishing between the State and one of the two main political parties. (Robson, 13)

The conception of citizenship advanced in this paper is not such a modern notion as that articulated by Marshall or Chabal and Daloz, but rather one that binds the individual to a more proximate social unit, such as community. This citizenship is recognisable simply by the presence of shared social norms within a bounded community, norms which provide for both rights and responsibilities on the part of the individual and the community: a social pact that is not necessarily inscribed in law, nor in the distinct institutions described by Marshall.

However, this conception of citizenship is not zero-sum: membership of such a community does not preclude the possibility of partaking of formal or national citizenship. Thus, although a rural community might be characterised, following Goran Hyden, by an "economy of affection", binding its citizenry through exchanges motivated not purely by profit or formalised redistribution, this is not to say that this community is necessarily "uncaptured" to the state. Aristide Zolberg has elaborated this possibility of individuals partaking of "multiple roles":

> the new set of values, norms, and structures, which constituted an incipient national centre did not necessarily grow at the expense of the older ones, as if it were a constant-sum game in which the country becomes "modern" the less it remains "traditional"... The behaviour of a given individual tended to be governed by norms from both sets which defined his multiple roles and even mixed to define a particular role. (Zolberg, 71)

Citizenship in Angola is a fluid and multi-faceted concept, determined in part by factors of community cohesion and of proximity to the infrastructure of state, and an understanding of citizenship in Angola must accommodate these diverse possibilities. The objective henceforth will be to inquire into the fluid circumstances and varying quality of citizenship in Angola, and to what extent it has been impacted upon by humanitarian crisis. Most simply, however, Angolan citizenship is enshrined in law. That, then, is where we shall begin our investigation.

2.2 Formal citizenship in Angola

The nature of formal citizenship in Angola has been concisely set out in the United Nations System's Common Country Assessment 2002, by Tony Hodges for UNDP (UNDP, 3-7). It transpires that there are comprehensive provisions for the constitutionally guaranteed and legally protected citizenship of the Angolan people. Hodges summarises,

> The Constitution provides legal protection for a wide range of civil and political rights, and also for many social and economic rights. Article 50 of the Constitution specifically makes it incumbent on the State to create the 'political, economic and cultural conditions necessary for citizens to enjoy effectively their rights and fulfil their duties'. Furthermore, Article 43 makes all the legally established rights justiciable. Citizens 'have the right to challenge and seek redress through the courts against any acts that infringe their rights as established in the Constitutional law or in any other legislation'. (UNDP, 5)

Not only is there recognition of and protection for such rights in indigenous law, but force is further given to the protection of rights by international legal instruments. According to Hodges, "Angola has also ratified most of the main international human rights instruments". He elaborates,

> These include the two broad-ranging covenants on civil and political rights and on economic, social and cultural rights, which were adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1966 and ratified by Angola in 1991. The two covenants codified and developed further the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1948. International human rights law also includes several specialized instruments, such as the convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which were adopted by the General Assembly in 1979 and 1989 respectively and ratified by Angola in 1984 and 1990…

Such international instruments have not merely been ratified and recognised in Angolan law, but have been given the force of domestic law. Hodges explains,

> Significantly, Article 21 of the Angolan Constitution expressly refers to these international legal commitments, stating that:
>
> > The constitutional and legal norms relating to fundamental rights must be interpreted and integrated harmoniously with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other international instruments to which Angola is a party.'
>
> Taken together with Article 43 on justiciability, this article means that the international human rights conventions ratified by Angola have the force of domestic law. In legislative terms, that is abstracting from issues concerning the enforcement of the law in practice, these provisions give Angola a strong framework for the protection of human rights. (UNDP, 5-7)

Angola, it is clear, has an impressive juridical framework for the provision of citizenship and protection of rights; indeed, a look at the websites for any of the official government agencies or foreign missions will further confirm this.[7]

As Hodges implies here, these are, however, abstract provisions, ultimately dependent for realisation upon the enforcement of the law – which, as will be seen, is chronically lacking. Nonetheless, a small network of civil society advocates, growing in strength and confidence, increasingly has recourse to this legal framework. David Mendes, Angola's leading human rights lawyer, explains this.

> Nobody can tell us to close our offices because we are acting according to the law. Nobody can tell us that it is interference in the internal affairs because we are Angolans. Nobody can tell us that we are making a political intervention because the constitution gives us political freedom and our political rights… So, this ensures that the reinforcing of the capacity of the Angolan organisations permits that Angolans might be capable of doing that which the international organisations would like to do but are not able to do. (Mendes, interview, 2002)

Yet while Mendes and other individuals and organisations are growing in prominence, and have had some impact on the provision and defence of human rights, by and large the provisions afforded here by Angolan law remain merely abstract.

However, such constitutional or juridical citizenship as is elaborated here is incidental to the majority population. The circumstances which make this so are the subject of the next section.

[7] For example, the site of the Embassy of Angola in Washington DC at *www.angola.org*.

2.3 The Angolan State: disorder as political instrument

The guarantor of such formal, juridical citizenship must be the State, and so it is there that I look first for evidence of the norms of citizenship and the foundations of the national political identity. In place of the State, however – in place of a rational, institutionalised, bureaucratic infrastructure of governance – I find an elite comprising what I term a "complex" of personages and networks that extend from the centre of governance, in the *Futunga de Belas* presidential palace, into and across Angolan society, the economy, and the civil conflict.[8] The Angolan state bears close resemblance to the African state typologised by Chabal & Daloz in their paradigm of the political instrumentalization of disorder (Chabal & Daloz 1999). The core agency at the heart of the state and governance in Angola is a "politico-military complex" that embraces the presidency and key political, economic and military associates. The "politico-military complex", as elaborated below, is an Angola-specific manifestation of the instrumentalization of disorder, and this terminology draws on a specific Angolan idiom.

The politico-military complex

An article in the weekly independent newspaper, *Agora,* gives me a clue to both the thinking and make-up of the Angolan political elite. Describing the impact of the war upon social service delivery by the Government, the Vice-Minister for the Family and Promotion of Women, Filomena Delgado invokes what she calls "the politico-military factor".

> The politico-military factor had consequences for the social sector. It resulted in the Government not realising in full its programmes related to support to families at the level of jobs, of health and of education, amongst others.[9]

This concept is not new to me: when I worked in the provinces, the "politico-military situation" (*a situação politico-militar*) was the umbrella term used by locals to describe developments in the war as they impacted upon the immediate environment. I had come to the realisation that "politico-military" was in some ways comparable to the phrase "political economy": although in conventional,

---

[8] Located on the outskirts of Luanda, the presidential palace known as the *Futunga de Belas* gives its name to the elite clique centred around the President, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, which is believed to dominate executive governance in Angola. This is commonly known as the *Futunga.* For example, the *Agora* newspaper makes the following comment in an article on the lack of transparency in Angolan government.

"In Luanda, various civil societies personalities say that now the *Futunga de Belas* is going to have to confront the challenge of transparency and governance." ("Para onde vão os biliões do petróleo angolano?", Agora, Luanda, 2 March 2002: 9)

See also David Birmingham's account of the Angolan ruling elite in his article, "Angola revisited". (Birmingham 1988).

[9] Sebastião Marques, "Reencontro familiar destapa crises", Agora, Luanda, 18 May 2002: 4-5

modern usage, the components of each term are conceived of as separate entities, in Angola the political is as inextricable from the military as politics was from economics for early modern social scientists.

In Kuito, for example, it was difficult to discern anything that approximated to "politics" in a conventional, Western sense of the word. There was patently economics – a thriving informal economy based on a potent combination of a subsistence agricultural economy, a constant supply of aid resources and an unfettered merchant capitalism. In place of politics, however, there was apparently merely impotent bureaucracy and patronage, the former embodied in the provincial Departments, and the latter embodied particularly in the notorious Governor of Bié. Political power was predicated purely and simply upon the command of military or economic resources, and was only instrumental insofar as it was dedicated towards maintaining or extending these forces. In other words, there was nothing approximating to social policy; nothing approximating to representation; nothing approximating to participation. If there was politics, it was a politics remote from the polity. Mary Daly, an expatriate doctor and aid worker who has spent the last twenty years in Angola, surmises,

> Politics – I'm not sure that in the realms of social studies and the understanding of our policies, I'm not sure that we have that here. There's influence and power and people approach the use of influence to affect decisions taken by power in different ways. (Daly, interview, 2002)

On one occasion in late 2000, I entered a bar in Kuito to find a long table lined with the *mais velhos* (literally, "most old") of the town – the local notables, a heterogeneous collection of black, mestiço and white businessmen, civil servants and aid workers – keenly debating some hotly contested issue. I was intrigued. This was the first evidence of anything approximating political activity, or political community, that I had seen. It turned out to be the management board of the local football team, engaged in the business of electing a new chairman. (The position went to the provincial representative of Sonangol, the state oil company, who promised extensive redevelopment of the grounds, to begin with plastering over the shrapnel and bullet holes in the walls.) In this context, when people spoke in hushed tones of developments on the front and amongst the officer class of the military – gossipy conversation about who had recently defected from UNITA, who was implicated in illegal economic activity, etc. – and described these as "the politico-military situation", it seemed eminently appropriate, for this was indubitably a politics dependent upon military developments, and there was little other politics to rival it. The politics people spoke of, that effected them, was the politico-military situation: how troop movements and insecurity impacted upon trade routes; how the war was going and where it was going on; how were the Government

and *Futunga* elite strengthened or threatened by developments; how the command of key resources (diamonds, oil, arms) was influencing the conflict.

In the Minister's comment above, however, "politico-military" acquires a normative resonance. As the war has been the dominant focus of Government in the period since the breakdown of the Lusaka Protocol, it has, according to the Government, legitimately and inevitably impacted upon social and economic policy. The politico-military situation entails the *real-politik* of Angolan politics and development. The politico-military factor is not simply the fact of neglect of the social sector; rather, it is the justification for the neglect of the social sector. Conceding that the politico-military factor has resulted in the Government "not realising in full its [social] programmes", the Minister is not criticising the Government for poor service delivery, but is rather absolving the Government from direct responsibility for service delivery. Invoking this abstract politico-military factor in this way has the effect of legitimising neglect of other aspects of governance and of deflecting critique of Government. The politico-military factor becomes the inarguable, catchall response to the hint of criticism or of political demands.

In the hierarchy of governmental imperatives, politico-military factors have priority over social factors. Correspondingly, ministers (and also extra-governmental members of the elite) with responsibility for, or influence over, politico-military strategy are of greater influence in the Government than those with responsibility for the social sector. The identification of the politico-military factor as both the dominant reality of Angolan governance and as a conceit central to the regime's discourse allows the identification of the *politico-military complex*, comprising those individuals and their associates who are influential within the politico-military sphere. Thus the term acquires a critical purchase in an interrogation of the mechanics of power in Angola.[10]

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[10] There are conscious echoes here of Eisenhower's "military-industrial complex"; in fact, it might be more accurate, if unwieldy, to speak of Angola's "politico-military-industrial complex". Employing some of the insights of the resource war literature on Angola, the concept of the politico-military complex can be extended to implicate within it those whose connection to it may be through their leverage over resources and not directly over the military situation or over policy. Certainly, key economic interests, in particular focussing on the extractive industries, are inextricable from this complex. Kuiba Afonso has termed this "the sphere of mineral power" [*poder-mineral*]:

"If on the one hand, we have the mineral economy, sustained by petrol and diamonds, which form the major options of Government, on the other hand, we have the informal economy, in which the majority of the country works and which welcomes the majority of the active population who feel marginalized from the sphere of mineral power." (Kuiba Afonso, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 30 November 2002)

The justification for this attribution of the term "mineral-power" is the same that I have used above – that there is identifiable (at least in the abstract) a realm or sphere (or cartel) which monopolises leverage over the management and disposal of national resources to its own benefit, and from which the vast majority are entirely excluded. The mineral economy and sphere of mineral power are inseparable from the war economy and politico-military complex, and each has traditionally been reliant upon the other. And as this commentator identifies, this complex or sphere of power is instrumental in marginalizing the majority of the population, whose only recourse is to the informal economy.

Global Witness have described this process as "a legitimate exercise of self defence against UNITA [which] turned

Centralisation

The nature of this complex is further elaborated in Christine Messiant's description of the "privatisation of the state" in Angola. Drawing closely upon Jean-François Bayart's work on the clientelist or patrimonial state (Bayart, 1993, 1999), Messiant exposes the complex networks of clientelism and patronage that intertwine the different elements of Government and of "civil society" in Angola, ultimately serving to emasculate politically all actors outside of the presidential circle. Messiant argues

> What might be termed 'the privatisation of the state' in Angola has proceeded through various forms in which the public good is appropriated to the private domain, via acts of blatant illegality and the undermining of institutions… Tenure of actual power in Angola is thus increasingly centralized and, although power is exercised largely by ignoring or subverting the formal institutions defined by law, those who wield it are able to reinforce their control of such institutions at the same time as they maintain their grip over both legal and illegal sectors of the economy, thus acquiring a certain degree of penetration of society. (Messiant, 2001, 289)[11]

I put this to Benjamin Castello in the claustrophobic, cluttered back office from where he runs a small local NGO. A former government minister, Castello is now a leading advocate for civil society in Angola. Castello pins down the emergence of clientelism within the Government to the advent of the multi-party system with the Bicesse Accords and subsequent elections in 1991. Within the single-party system, there was at least some form of constituency representation. With the advent of the multi-party system in 1991, constituency representation was replaced with party representation, with the result that elected deputies were alienated from the people. "The people are not known", says Castello.

> For better or for worse, in the first two phases which were considered of the single party [1975-79; 1979-1991], the people were represented, well or poorly, [but] they had a certain representation, because the people elected their deputies… It was a single party, but it had a system of election of deputies, that is to say, the people could choose: this one or not… Afterwards, at least, the people identified with their deputy… And [the deputy], when he went to the parliament, he came to the parliament from the people. He represented those very people… And now, with the multi-party system, as the transition was very short and neither the political parties nor the actual population were prepared for a new disposition, what happened was that the deputies were not elected. The parties were elected. And the parties chose the deputies. So, the current deputies do not represent the

into a conspiracy involving highest level politicians and individuals in Angola and beyond to rob the country of its wealth through kick-backs related to over-priced arms deals, financed by oil-backed loans". (Global Witness, 2002)

[11] For a comprehensive summary of the main phases of the "long privatisation of the Angolan state", see Messiant, 2001, 289-91.

> people, they represent their parties. Whereas before, in the single party, the deputy defended the interest of the people… But now, no. The people are not known, or are lost. So, now, in this type of environment, clientelism was created – which did not exist during the two first phases of the single party. (Castello, interview, 2002)[12]

Castello explains further that clientelism is self-reinforcing, and crowds out pressures for reform and transparency that might otherwise exist. Client and administrator become mutually dependent, as patrimony becomes the sole technique of power of the administrator, and the sole means to gain of the client. As Castello sees it, access to the Presidency is monopolised by "egoistic and personal interests" with the result that any change in policy or advent of progressive politics is inconceivable.

> [The President] is now locked into a clientelist system, which ensures that he does not now have access to information which could help him to think why those who are around him don't allow him this. Therefore, they blocked all the information… What arrives to him is information completely distorted, and for this reason, he does not take decisions. Have you heard the interviews that he does, the conversation that he makes? When he says things do you say that he *knows*? No! So, he is now a hostage of his own system. That is to say, [to find] the solution here with him is going to be very difficult, because those who are around him, those who are consolidating his power, are not going to allow him take this opportunity to change policies, or else things are going to change and they will loose. So, they are egoistic and personal interests. (Interview, 2002)

This may be an account of clientelism in Angola that is markedly sympathetic to the President, but the point here is nonetheless clear: the centralisation of power at the core of the clientelist system in Angola acts to exclude progressive forces and reject all pressures for change. The presidential palace, the *Futunga de Belas,* is in effect an ivory tower, isolated from popular pressure and demands. As such, it is the locus of an elite citizenship in Luanda, one not merely demarcated by the contours of the *Futunga* but extending out into Angolan society along the networks of clientelism. Thus does the politico-military complex embed its citizenry in a social pact of patrimony and mutual advancement and protection.

Mary Daly recounts an anecdote that illustrates well both the nature of the *Futunga* clique itself and how it is perceived in Angola society.

> The discussion that we had here at the weekend [was] about would Nandó make a good Prime

[12] It should be noted here that commentators have seen the abandonment or isolation of rural Angola as consistent with earlier policy, and not merely as a development characterised exclusively by the *limpeza.* Malaquias writes, "[after the initial stages of the civil war] the MPLA installed a one-party regime that attempted to either co-opt or destroy most elements of civil society. Political participation could only take place when mobilised and organised by the state to serve its own specific purposes… The basic contractual relationship between state and citizen was lost in the Marxist-Leninist ideological fog. Instead, the people became a valuable element to be used in furthering the goals of an oppressive state." (Malaquias, 2000, 109)

> Minister[13]. And some of the comments were… "Yes, because he could *manage*." "He is a sufficiently *political* animal to work with *Futunga*." So, even though the power base that is *Futunga* is an entirely illegitimate power base it's one that's widely recognised as real. And many people in the country feel that it would be impossible to do anything, to run the country, without getting on with [*Futunga*]. (Daly, interview, 2002)

This will be instructive for an understanding of Angolan civil society. Daly, who is married to Benjamin Castello, cited earlier, is part of a tight circle of civil society advocates in Luanda, a network of indigenous development professionals and settled expatriates who are politically engaged and motivated. The *Futunga* may, in effect, be an ivory tower, but these people nonetheless realise that the country is run from that ivory tower, and that there is no option for them but to attempt to work with the people in that tower, the *Futunga* elite.

I talk to an international official with extensive experience of working with the Government. Careful to avoid any mention of the *Futunga* itself, or any direct indictment of the regime, he describes the peculiarly "centralised" nature of the Angolan regime, whereby even within the sphere of Government there is an elite that monopolises decision-making:

> in Angola, to a large extent, decision making is highly centralised, which means that the technical people and, I think, arguably, even the Ministers don't have as much decision making capacity as their counterparts in the West… This, essentially, makes the policy discussion a bit more difficult. Because, whereas our everyday contacts are with the Ministers and with the Directors, Ministers, Vice-Ministers, and whereas we might be able to discuss *technical* issues of measurement of GDP [gross domestic profit] or CPI [consumer price index], *policy* discussion is a bit more difficult if the people with whom you are talking to are not the ones effectively making the decision. It has been said by many people that the Minister of Finance controls a fraction of the budget, for example. (Anonymous interview, 2002)[14]

The Minister of Finance only controls a fraction of the budget because the remainder is controlled directly by the *Futunga*. (Global Witness, 2002) In this economistic account of Angolan centralisation, what is at stake as a result is not so much illegitimacy as inefficiency:

> clearly there is a binding constraint which is [that] there are [too] few people who are taking decisions to actually consider every single issue, leading to a less efficient public policy. It's difficult to argue

[13] "Nandó" is Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, Minister for the Interior until appointed Prime Minister in December 2002 after the position had been left vacant for an extended period.

[14] A number of senior informants from the international organisations participated in interviews as part of this research on condition of anonymity. Where permissable, I have indicated the organisation represented, either in the text or in the bibliography. In some instances, the numbers of senior staff in organisations were so small that to mention the organisation would effectively identify the informant, so in some cases, as here, it is not possible to identify even the organisation. However, all organisations consulted have been listed in the appendices.

> that over 27 years, the system *should* have maintained this kind of centralisation, that avenues to improve the implementation of public policy shouldn't have been found, and couldn't have been found. (Interview, 2002)

The system did not develop greater levels of efficiency, and succeeded in maintaining this level of centralisation, precisely because it was immune to popular pressure or social concerns, as illustrated by Castello. It was unaccountable to and alienated from the people. The result is a lack of internal (i.e. popular) credibility that it supplants with the external legitimation derived both from multinational business and from the pageantry of national sovereignty on the international stage. This informant elaborates,

> The Government does face a lack of internal credibility with respect to its approach to public policy. But to some extent, external signs of credibility - being voted on to the Security Council, signing an agreement with another Western nation, attracting more non-oil investment, all these things - are in part a substitute, and in some ways a compliment to, the lack of internal credibility. The Government needs to find ways to send a signal about its credibility, about its new approach, about its ability to meet the new challenges. And because of its lack of *internal* credibility, in some way it lacks the tools to be able to do that. And it can substitute external signs, in order to send those same signals both internally and externally. (Anonymous interview, 2002)

This amounts to a precise description of what Christopher Clapham terms the "rentier state": a state dependent for its income not upon taxation or other forms of internal income, but upon the marketing of state-monopolised resources – preferably extracted off-shore – on the international market for the private gain of the regime. As Clapham surmises,

> These states are not responsible for generating the conditions under which economic enterprise can flourish, nor do they directly depend on their own citizens to raise the money needed to produce the social goods which those citizens desire. (Clapham, 70)

Legitimacy

In the offices of the non-governmental organisation Open Society, overlooking the city from the hill of *Miramar*, Rafael Marques concurs with this reading of the credibility of the Angolan state.

> There is an international legitimacy [for] what goes wrong or goes right here. And just a very recent example: everyone said Angolan troops are in Côte d'Ivoire and the President of their National Assembly came forward and said 'Yes, they are here. They are brothers. We've never fought a war, so they're here to help us.' And then, the Deputy Secretary of State for African Affairs [of the] US came publicly to say that there's no real evidence of Angolans in Côte d'Ivoire and then you had the following day big headlines in *Journal de Angola* [to say that] "Everyone is a liar. Look at what the

> Americans say. You can't dispute that." Angola has never been able to formulate a policy, a drive - even a dictatorial one - for this country, without being dependent upon the international agenda. The internal one never counted. And when you have that, you know, there is very little you can do to acquire [a] political identity… The self-respect, the dignity - we don't have that.[15] (Marques, interview, 2002)

This disassociation of the elite from the majority, the lack of pursuit of internal credibility or legitimacy, is akin to what Benjamin Castello calls *immediatismo* (Interview, 2002), implying that the elite lives for today, for themselves, as opposed to living for tomorrow, for successive generations, or for the general welfare. Mary Daly elaborates:

> Many people say that one of the huge weaknesses of the deciding classes here are that they have no long-term vision – I mean that they're not even trying to build the country for their children. That they only think short term, in terms of how much money I can make now, make next year, make the year after. But, they're not thinking what legacy am I going to leave my children, which is also... very African. Bantus think like that… They do think of the generations afterwards in a traditional Bantu philosophy. Whereas the ruling classes here [do] not. You know, they're not trying to build the nation for the generations that come afterwards. And, that sort of a notion of building for the generations would involve certain decisions like, particularly, investment in education. There's no great indication that that's what's happened. (Daly, interview, 2002)

Yet despite this negligence of the nation, the regime is quick to invoke the nation when seeking to assert its integrity and legitimacy. The rhetoric of national sovereignty and of the illegitimacy of both internal insurrection and international intervention are consistently deployed in defence of the regime and its interests. The malign intentions of both Savimbi and the international community are readily heralded as *de facto* evidence of the legitimacy of the regime and of its inviolable sovereignty.

I find an example of this in the archives of the National Assembly, in a collection of worn brown envelopes holding photocopied transcripts of parliamentary debates. In this excerpt from a debate of July 6, 2000, the President of the Parliamentary Group of the MPLA, Bornito de Sousa, laments the consequences of the ongoing war for the State.

> Unfortunately, we note more and more an absence of the meaning of the State, a denial of the

[15] Allan Cain, country director of Development Workship and a long-time Luanda resident, puts it succinctly: "The state gets off the [hook] by the fact that its income comes from a central source which is external to the mass of the population. I mean, [the] oil. So, the state isn't actually depending on income generated from its structure or from the state or from taxes or other forms of income. So, I think it's also slowed down the movement towards democratic accountability as well and I think, people would be putting far more demands on government if they were paying taxes out of their pocket and would feel that- Where right now we have a somewhat more abstract situation where civil society is putting demands on government for accountability of oil revenues which are external to both, you know, to some extent." (Cain, Interview, 2002)

> homeland [*Patria*], of the nation, and a denial of Angola. We note this in: the gradual return to the concept of political parties; the labelling of what is effectively a subversive, anti-democratic insurrection as a "conflict" between the MPLA and UNITA, or between Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the renegade Savimbi; and the call to restart the vicious cycle of negotiations, where each cycle of negotiations has brought more destruction of human lives, destruction of social and economic infrastructure, and the rearming of the insurgents.[16]

Lauding the military efforts of the Armed Forces (the FAA) he indicates the frustration felt within the regime and the party at the apparently compromised nature of Angolan sovereignty and Governmental authority that has resulted from both the interference of the international community and the deceitful behaviour of UNITA. De Sousa identifies a tendency towards the "absence of the meaning of State, a denial of the homeland" in political discourse current at the time that effects what he calls a "reduction of what is effectively a subversion against the democratic regime to a supposed conflict MPLA/UNITA". In this thinking, UNITA are merely a belligerent, minority, terrorist organisation whose continued existence may pose a politico-military challenge for the Government but can not be seen as a challenge to the Government's legitimacy or entitlement to rule. Thus, initiatives that seek to *elevate* UNITA to the status of contender in a civil war, thereby *reducing* the Government from the status of legitimate, sovereign regime to the status of opposing contender in a civil war, entail an affront to the integrity of the State itself. The regime is democratic and thereby legitimate; UNITA are subversives engaging in terrorism and thereby illegitimate. Dialogue cannot be countenanced. De Sousa says:

> I consider that this tendency to the denial of the Homeland, denial of the State, [this tendency] to be speaking as if there didn't exist a State, there didn't exist a country, a homeland, a nation, there didn't exist Angola, implies something else: the defence of military action and ultimately of terrorism, as a form of political claim, as a rule of the democratic game. We would do ill to accept this.[17]

De Sousa may be historically accurate: earlier peace processes were indeed wrecked by the duplicity and paranoia of Savimbi's UNITA, on two occasions using the ceasefire and negotiations period to rearm and ultimately restart the war.

However, there are two undertones in de Sousa's speech that have bearing upon this study. The first is the assertion of sovereign right that underlies his rejection of the legitimacy of the UNITA challenge to the state: UNITA are not simply seen as a politico-military challenge, but rather as a

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[16] *Diário da Assembleia National, I Legislatura, Numero 1, Ano legislativo 1999/2000, I Série–Numero 4/Extraord/2000: Reunião Plenária Extraordinaria 06/07/2000, Periodo da Tarde.* All excerpts from parliamentary transcripts tranlsated by author.

[17] *do.*

challenge to the very notion of the State itself. Savimbi's subversion is an affront to the sovereign, and hence must not merely be defeated, but must not be given recognition in the first place.

Secondly, de Sousa invokes the sovereignty of the State by equating it with the homeland [*patria*] and the nation [*nação*], both terms that echo the liberation ideology of the MPLA, as an anti-colonial nationalist and socialist liberation movement.

De Sousa continues with a reference to the supposed complicity of the United Nations and international community in permitting UNITA to rearm during the peace pursuant to the Lusaka Protocol.

> In this case, I think that the Government and the Armed Forces cannot be, in no way should return to being, ingenuous; we had here the example of the powerful weapons which entered into Angolan territory under the eyes of the international community, under the eyes of international observers; the Government cannot return to being ingenuous. The State should exercise the sovereignty that emanates from the people; the State should defend the democratic institutions, the people and their goods.[18]

The Government was "ingenuous", according to de Sousa: out of goodwill for the peace process, the Government failed to exert its sovereign entitlement to direct the process and ensure the compliance of UNITA. This sovereign entitlement is deemed to emanate from the people, through the democratic institutions; however, this is a people from which UNITA and its supporters have been purged. The defence of "the people" implies an uncompromising pursuit of UNITA, an organisation with a strong claim to widespread popular support, despite its recent history. The legitimacy of the regime emanates from the authority of the Government, equated with the State, and this authority serves to confer legitimacy upon the democratic institutions, which in fact ceased to be democratic during the mid 1990s.[19] The integrity and authenticity of the State is manifest by the regime is the monopolisation of the use of force; in a vicious circle of authority and legitimacy which does not permit the participation of any outside of the politico-military complex, the exercise of authority confers legitimacy and legitimacy confers the entitlement to exercise authority. This criticism is also directed at the international community and United Nations for its supposed complicity in allowing UNITA to rearm in the post-Lusaka period. As de Sousa says,

> We had here the example of the powerful arms which were smuggled into the Angolan territory under the eyes of the international community and the international observers; the Government

[18] *do.*

[19] This is elaborately detailed by Justino Pinto de Andrade, in his article "Evaluation of the process of democratisation in Angola" (Pinto de Andrade, 2002).

> cannot be so ingenuous again.[20]

Daniel Salweio, writing in the independent weekly newspaper *Folha 8*, has little difficulty in seeing through the regime's invocation of sovereignty and rejection of "interference".

> For [the governors of the country] the truths revealed by those who daily struggle with the reality of the natives on the ground (where the Government has not yet arrived) are no more that the ingredients of a supposed interference in the internal affairs of Angola.[21]

The fact that Salweio characterises the areas where NGOs work as those "where the Government has not yet arrived" is an exaggeration that nonetheless tellingly emphasises the vacuity of the Government's critique. In truth, since the fall of Bailundo in 1999, all international organisations have been restricted to working in areas where the Government has at the very least the minimal juridical presence of a local administrative official, accompanied by some security apparatus.[22] In the field of social and humanitarian services, however, the Government has indeed typically been absent, and substituted to that extent by the work and presence of NGOs. Salweio's argument is simple: that the claim of sovereignty by the regime is a rhetorical exercise provoked by the telling of uncomfortable truths by non-national actors. Not only is it normatively suspect, it is self-contradictory in its attempt to invoke sovereignty over areas where it has little capacity to exercise that sovereignty.

Conclusion: the instrumentalization of disorder

This, then, is the instrumentalization of disorder in Angola. After the decades of centralisation in the one-party state, a flawed and failed democratisation allowed for the development of a clientelist system based on the maintenance of the war economy and on covert and corrupt resource extraction.

As Global Witness describe this,

> Investigations indicated that certain key individuals benefit financially from the military procurement process, from almost every item consumed in the pursuit of the war against the UNITA. This leads to a disturbing conclusion: political and economic disorder and a total absence of financial transparency of the Government's oil revenues are the necessary conditions for this machinery of

[20] *Diário da Assembleia National, I Legislatura, Numero 1, Ano legislativo 1999/2000, I Série–Numero 4/Extraord/2000: Reunião Plenária Extraordinaria 06/07/2000, Periodo da Tarde*

[21] Daniel Salweio, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 19 October 2002

[22] See IRIN, "Angola: Ceasefire before 'humanitarian corridors'", Johannesburg, 18 October 2001

> cash diversion and kickbacks to operate. (Global Witness, 2002)[23]

This system was embodied in the politico-military complex at the heart of the regime, geographically located in the *Futunga de Belas* presidential palace. This complex is bounded by a social pact of patrimony and mutual advancement and protection and sustained by the continuing resistance of progressive political forces and of what it perceives as "interference" from both internal (i.e. Angolan) "renegades" and external (i.e. international) neo-imperialists. Through its close identification with the architecture of the State, both as hegemonic within the executive branch and as largely dominant over the legislative and judicial branches through the extension of patrimony, this complex is able to invoke nation-state sovereignty to reject interference and to cement and protect its entitlements. The disorder entailed in the continuation of the war, in the extreme impoverishment and consequent displacement of the people, and in the covert extraction of mineral resources is the key political instrument of Angola's elite in sustaining its privilege and isolation from internal and external forces for change.[24]

[23] Domingos, a former soldier cited in Pedro Rosa Mendes' account of his travels in Angola, *Bay of Tigers*, reflects upon the "liberation" war that he was conscripted to fight in – by both sides.

"That's not liberation. Nothing to liberate anymore. In the end, it's business. One is oil, the other is diamonds and mercury. The people don't get any of it. The people have no part in it. The people die." (Mendes, 2003, 279)

[24] A further insight into the constitution of the Angolan state, and the politics of citizenship in Angola, comes from Michel Foucault. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault's study of the constitutive disciplines of modernity (which we will draw upon again later), he identifies the process of "individualization" at work both in modern and pre-modern societies.

Individualization, in this account, entails the separation of the individual from the body politik, from the normative ties of society and citizenship. Foucault identifies the process of mass individualization as the point of emergence of modernity and the disciplines that characterise it: in the hospital, the school, the barracks and the prison, the person is removed from the society that nurtures them and is rehabilitated, instructed or incarcerated (as appropriate) according to a strict disciplinary regime that treats them purely as individual disciplinary subjects.

In the pre-disciplinary society, the political axis of individualization is reversed. Individualization works as a force for the permissiveness of the sovereign rather than the discipline of the subject.

"The disciplines mark the moment when the reversal of the political axis of individualization – as one might call it – takes place. In certain societies, of which the feudal regime is only one example, it may be said that individualization is greatest where sovereignty is exercised and in the higher echelons of power. The more one possesses power or privilege, the more one is marked as an individual, by rituals, written accounts or visual reproductions. The 'name' and the genealogy that situate one within a kinship group, the performance of deeds that demonstrate superior strength and which are immortalized in literary accounts, the ceremonies that mark the power relations in their very ordering, the monuments or donations that bring survival after death, the ostentation and excess of expenditure, the multiple, intersecting links of allegiance and suzerainty, all these are procedures of an 'ascending' individualization." (Foucault, 1979, 193)

Such a process of individualization is evident within the Angolan elite, and manifest in the instrumentalization of disorder elaborated above. The ascending individualization that accompanies the exercise of sovereign power in the Angolan state is a further mark of the corruption of citizenship and the isolation of this elite from the Angolan citizenry.

2.4 The victims of disorder

The situation of rural Angola

Fernando Pacheco, a leading Angolan intellectual and co-founder and director of the NGO ADRA (Association for the Rural Development of Angola) describes the prevailing attitude of the state to rural Angola, and its contemporary legacy, in an article on rural communities in Huambo province.

> During the civil war the State gradually withdrew from the role it had decided to play immediately after independence… The presence of the State reduced to a series of military strong points, normally in the district capitals. Rural communities were abandoned, in Huambo as much as in other parts of the country. Therefore the State's only activities are services that barely function. A community's only points of contact with the State are the *osoma*, the *regedor* [local traditional authority figures], or the police. The role of the *osoma* is as a channel of information, but the amount of information he transmits is small. There is a clear lack of information from the State to the community, and not much material flows in the other direction either. There is a political gulf between the State and rural communities… For the communities, the State seems more concerned with control and containment than about defining policies or participation. (Pacheco, 2001, 108-9)

The state – as we have seen, a state monopolised by a politico-military elite whose interests lie in the perpetuation of military and economic disorder, and which derives legitimation from a combination of offshore rents and international recognition, and not from internal sources – is more concerned with control and containment of rural communities that with providing the means for political participation. Pacheco describes the state as unconcerned "about defining politics", recalling Mary Daly's comment,

> Politics – I'm not sure that in the realms of social studies and the understanding of our policies, I'm not sure that we have that here. There's influence and power and people approach the use of influence to affect decisions taken by power in different ways. (Daly, interview, 2002)

Without the need to seek income or popular legitimation from the majority population, and in the absence of both functional and identitive links with the interior, the state's only concern for the interior is manifest in terms of security. Justino Pinto de Andrade, Dean of the Faculty of Economics at the Catholic University of Luanda (and brother of the putative independent candidate for the presidency, Vicente Pinto de Andrade), characterises this absence of identitive links in terms of a rural/urban divide.

> The fact is that in reality there are here two worlds. There is an urban world and a rural world. And the urban world and the rural world have their backs to each other. That is to say, there is not a

> normal relationship between the urban world and the rural world. The urban world even expresses great contempt for the rural world. And therefore, the rural world thinks that it is another Angola. It is clear that the rural world does not trust the urban world. Because it feels that this world is very concerned with using it, and not with its welfare. (Pinto de Andrade, interview, 2002)

Fernando Pacheco (in person) elaborates:

> When we hear the directors of the country, be that at the level of the government, be that at the level of civil society, there is a tendency to speak [of] "our people", as if they were not part of the people. "Our people", "the people like this", "our people like that"… They speak of the people as if there were a distance between those who are speaking, who belong to the elite, and the citizens… [The elite] have always the tendency to regard the excluded [people] precisely in their condition of being excluded. [They say] "They don't belong to my world". (Pacheco, interview, 2002)

This, then, is the isolated and excluded rural polity that has experienced repeated conflict and consistent insecurity since independence. Such instability has perpetuated its alienation from the urban elite and centre of governance, and has threatened the viability of traditional and community-based norms and social structures. As humanitarian crisis has followed conflict, displacement has devastated rural communities and driven millions of people both to the cities and provincial capitals (but primarily to Luanda), and into the safety nets provided in the provinces by humanitarian organisations. It is estimated that as many as four million of Angola's population of approximately twelve million have been displaced; as the war ended in early 2002, almost one and a half million of these were receiving food aid.[25]

Over the 2000-2001 period, up until the death of Savimbi in February 2002, there were marked increases in displacement and significant deteriorations in indicators of humanitarian crisis in a number of locations in Angola and particularly in the central highlands (the *Planalto*). In rural areas in the central highlands in particular, vast numbers of people were forcibly displaced and subjected to chronic shortages of food, shelter and basic items necessary for health and survival.

On the one hand, this crisis can be seen as the latest manifestation of the prolonged vulnerability of much of rural Angola. The features of recurrent crises are broadly similar. Displacement may be sudden, on command of local armed forces or as a result of a surprise raid on a village; those fleeing may be strong and healthy but leave behind dead and injured family and neighbours, and leave without anything. Hunger and the road may wear them down as they seek sustenance and assistance. Or raids by armed forces may destroy much of the village's food supply and future harvest, and it

[25] "According to the Government, 4.28 million people are currently displaced in Angola. Of this number, 1.36 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been confirmed by humanitarian partners for assistance. Provinces with the largest concentrations of IDPs include Bié, Huíla, Malanje and Huambo." (OCHA, 2002b)

may be hunger or the fear of starvation that finally drives them to leave. Or the prospect of an aid bounty in a nearby town may persuade those struggling from a poor harvest or chronic banditry to seek to improve their lot as an IDP (Internally Displaced Person) in the camps.

On the other hand, however, this humanitarian crisis was distinguished (albeit largely in retrospect) by the circumstance of the conflict which engendered it. These circumstances are enshrined in the Angolan government's politico-military strategy of *limpeza*.

Limpeza

I was stationed during some of this period in the town of Kuito, capital of Bié Province, in the central highlands.[26] As an officer of an international non-governmental organisation there, I attended weekly security meetings at the local office of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). At these meetings, security issues and incidents in the province and country would be presented and discussed, allowing individual agency representatives to keep abreast of both local and national trends. We were well used to reports of incidents perpetrated by the Government security forces, and were accustomed at this stage to getting vague and sometimes contradictory reports of Government and UNITA military manoeuvres. In early 2001, a new term become common at these meetings: *limpeza*, literally translated as "cleaning". It was explained that military sources had indicated that we should expect ongoing displacement into Kuito as a result of the Government's *limpeza* operations against UNITA in the province. This "cleaning" was explained as the Government's pursuit of UNITA guerrilla elements, and involved raiding possible bases and logistical support sites (including rural villages) in the attempt to choke UNITA's supply lines. I understood that the *limpeza* was something like a military "mopping up" operation. I did not particularly remark upon this new development.

From the point at which this term was first introduced, it became reasonably common to receive reports of *limpeza* operations in different parts of Bié and neighbouring provinces, and consequent warnings to expect inward displacement; or, agencies working in the town and camps would note the arrival of a particular group of people or community and this would be attributed to further *limpeza* operations. The *limpeza* operations were perceived to be part and parcel of the conflict going on in "the bush", a conflict which generally and consistently uprooted communities and provoked displacement in to the camps around Kuito.

In March/April 2001, the crisis entered a new phase. Up until then consisting of a steady stream of

[26] I arrived in Kuito in September 2000 and left in December 2001.

displaced people, in bad condition, into Kuito – in manageable numbers for the aid agencies working there – it was discovered that much larger numbers of people in need of aid were unable to reach Kuito and were being effectively held in displacement camps in remote areas of the province. The *limpeza* strategy had apparently entered a new and more extreme phase. Entire towns in the province were being emptied and displaced towards areas that the government perceived to be "secure". A massive push against UNITA was taking place in the north east of Bié and the west of the bordering Luena province, where the UNITA leadership were perceived to be concentrated, and the rural populations of these areas were being displaced to camps within the government-secured zone.

As aid workers on the front line of humanitarian operations in Angola (and close to the front line of military operations) we were responsible for the "emergency response" to the humanitarian crisis that was developing as a result of this military strategy. Although we noted the immediate political implications of our work – by aiding people displaced by the Government as part of a military strategy, we could conceivably be represented as providing logistical support to the government – we were fully and urgently engaged in addressing the humanitarian need.

By the time I returned to Angola in the capacity of academic researcher, in November 2002, the full significance of the *limpeza* strategy was well recognised. When the remnants of Savimbi's column were brought to Luanda after his death in a Government ambush, the consequences of the *limpeza* were visibly evident: UNITA had been starved into submission; indeed, one senior UNITA general reportedly died of starvation in the bush, and another received treatment for malnutrition upon arrival in Luanda.[27] Not only had UNITA been starved, but a politico-military *strategy* of *limpeza* had

[27] It should be noted here, however, that the *limpeza* was not solely responsible for the military defeat over UNITA. United Nations sanctions on UNITA and on the so-called "blood diamond" trade were highly successful in reducing the resources available to UNITA. See Kevlihan, 2002 for a detailed analysis of the sanctions regime as implemented by the Irish chairmanship of the United Nations Angola (UNITA) Sanctions Committee (established by the Security Council under Resolution 864 (1993)).

Thus, at the time of the humanitarian crisis resulting from the *limpeza*, the international community was engaged in its own battle with UNITA through the sanctions regime, whilst at the same time liasing with the Government for the provision of humanitarian relief. Both the inherent interest of the humanitarian system in justifying its own intervention, and the shared interest of the international community and Government of Angola in defeating UNITA, conspired to facilitate the quietude of the humanitarian system in the face of the *limpeza* itself.

Kevlihan notes that a joint paper produced by Irish NGOs and submitted to the Irish Ambassador to the UN and chair of the Sanctions Committee, Richard Ryan, "argued for the Irish government to do all in its power to end Government counter insurgency strategies (in particular its *limpeza* operations) that were an increasing contributor to the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the interior". (Kevlihan, 2002, 13) However, when Ambassador Ryan subsequently visited Angola, "his public statements focussed only on the issue of sanctions, despite Irish NGO representations". (15) By early 2002, the Irish position continued to put primary responsibility for the continuation of the war on UNITA, but conceded some concern about "additional displacement arising from military actions" (16)

(Robert Kevlihan was Country Director for Irish NGO GOAL in Angola at this time; GOAL were one of few NGOs to be explicit and outspoken about the *limpeza*, as detailed below; see note 23.)

ordained the mass displacement – at the but of a gun barrel – of rural communities in the vicinity of military operations, and many of these communities themselves had starved or suffered immensely in the process of being displaced and in the absence of adequate humanitarian response.[28] The *limpeza* was not just a type of operation against individual UNITA elements in the bush; it was a countrywide strategy against UNITA as a whole that sacrificed the integrity of the rural livelihood to the pursuit of the military victory over UNITA. The term had lost its minimalist connotation of "mopping up" military operations, and now resonated with the more odious concept of cleansing, as in ethnic cleansing.

The independent newspaper *Agora* ("Today") gave a succinct account of this strategy in practice in a February 2002 report:

> According to [anonymous sources in the Angolan Armed Forces and NGOs] the Government military are…forcing the populations of the central highlands to abandon their lands, destroying areas under cultivation and their houses, in order that the rebels no longer have sources of support. This practice is provoking thousands to displace themselves and resulting in their installation in urban areas, controlled by the Government, where they have to live off international charity. The

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See also IRIN, "Angola: IRIN Focus on new sanctions monitoring mechanism", Johannesburg, 4 August 2000

[28] This is documented in contemporary news and NGO reports. The United Nations IRIN news service reported on February 13 2002 that the limpeza operation was concentrating on Moxico, where the UNITA leadership was believed to be based.

"Angola's UNITA rebel leadership is believed to have taken refuge in Moxico - an early stronghold of the movement - a vast, under populated and remote region bordering Zambia. A long-running government offensive has sort to trap UNITA forces and their guerrilla chief, Jonas Savimbi, active in the rugged territory.

"Analysts suggest that as part of that operation, the government is attempting to remove the civilian population that could provide supplies and support to UNITA. Provincial authorities estimate that an additional 50,000 IDPs could arrive in Luena in the next five months." (IRIN, "Angola: 'Scorched earth' policy condemned", Johannesburg, 13 February 2002)

African correspondent Declan Walsh documented this in the Scotland on Sunday newspaper:

"Before Savimbi's death, the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) were forcing hundreds of thousands of rural civilians from their homes and into the towns. The strategy, known as "limpeza", or "cleaning", was intended to cut Unita supply lines and destroy their food source. It was devastatingly effective. Unita commanders who negotiated the ceasefire were "clinically malnourished" according to one aid worker." (Declan Walsh, "Catastrophe threatens Angola", Scotland on Sunday, Sun 7 Jul 2002)

And MSF reported in June 2002:

"As the year progressed and 2002 began, the Government created hundreds of thousands of additional IDPs, often pushing humanitarian organizations beyond their ability to cope with the mounting needs. For example, during the first two months of 2002, the Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) stepped up its limpeza strategy of removing the people from their land in several provinces, resulting in at least 98,000 new IDPs." (MSF, June 2002)

Earlier evidence of the *limpeza* comes in an IRIN report from October 2001:

"According to news reports, a massive government offensive, based on intelligence that UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi may be cornered in Moxico province (which borders Zambia), could be the primary reason for much for the instability in the interior of the country." The same report documented the consequent deterioration in the humanitarian situation, citing a World Food Programme report that "1,348 new IDPs (internally displaced persons) from across central Bié province were registered in its capital, Kuito, over the five-day period", while "during the month of October, a total of 3,142 IDPs have been registered in Kuito and Camacupa". (IRIN, "Angola: More civilians flee as fighting continues", Johannesburg, 26 October 2001.)

> Government takes advantage also of the fact of the flight of these populations to increase the electoral base of the party in power.[29]

And John O'Shea, of NGO GOAL, quoted in a United Nations IRIN report, aptly characterised the *limpeza* as a "razed earth strategy". The report continued,

> "The red flag we are raising is that the policy of the government seems to be the cleansing of Moxico province and a rapid resettlement of people in the Luena area without the provision of adequate services like water, sanitation and shelter," one aid worker said. "They are bringing people to Luena without ensuring that there are any safety nets when they arrive."[30]

Politico-military strategy

In the National Assembly archives, I find evidence of the precise forethought and surprising transparency of this strategy. The (then) Vice-Minister for Defence, Armando da Cruz Neto (later Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, FAA), elaborated this strategy in the parliament on 20 June 2000, to the acclaim of the deputies.

> The Armed Forces and the Government designed a strategy for the total destruction of the forces and means of Savimbi's terrorist organisation and this strategy follows certain objectives, one of which was the withdrawal of the support of the people and organisation of Jonas Savimbi.[31]

The Armed Forces, he continues, would further "withdraw from [UNITA] the support of the people, confine them in inhospitable areas and, subsequently, deliver them the mercy blow."

Withdrawing the support of the people is a euphemism for the physical removal (or "forced displacement") of the people from rural areas which the government cannot secure and so where UNITA can feed off the population. The Vice-Minister briefly but revealingly elaborates the thinking behind this forced displacement:

> Of course, these populations, after presenting themselves to the military are directed to the centres for welcoming IDPs and, subsequently, the organs and institutions of the Government mandated for this, [and] the Non-Governmental Organisations, have given what help possible.[32]

Thus a government military strategy is made explicit whereby 1) rural populations will be forcibly

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[29] *Agora*, Luanda, 23 February 2002

[30] IRIN, "ANGOLA: 'Scorched earth' policy condemned", Johannesburg, 13 February 2002

The same report cited the following figures for displacements from an OCHA report: "more than 5,600 internally displaced persons (IDPs) arrived in the city from conflict areas in Moxico and other provinces during January. Around 90 percent of the new arrival were ferried in from the countryside on board government helicopters".

[31] *Diários da Assembleia Nacional, Diario Numero 1, Ano Legislativo* 1999/2000*, I Série – No 4/Extraord/2000: Reuniao Plenaria Extraordinaria de* 20/06/2000*, Periodo da Tarde*

[32] *do.*

displaced from their homes and communities (to become known as their "places of origin" in the humanitarian discourse) while 2) non-governmental organisations will be expected and relied upon to help provide for their welfare.

The Vice-Minister concedes, "we consider that this help to these populations should improve [and] we will work with the intention of motivating the other institutions to improve this help"; in other words, the government will seek the active cooperation of non-governmental organisations in providing for the care of these forcibly displaced populations.[33]

Later in the same parliamentary session, the most revealing allusion possible as to the true nature of this strategy is made by a deputy from the FNLA party, Benjamin da Silva. Objecting to the open use of the term *limpeza* to describe this government strategy, da Silva points out the unfortunate echoes of colonial policies towards the "natives":

> Cleaning operations were utilised in the colonial period, when the natives belonged to an autonomous community that was different to that of the colonial; this was not normal, but it was comprehensible. Today, after independence, the expression "cleaning operations" implies self-destruction and I hope that our language should be a little more distinct from that of the past, from such colonial atavism. [34]

This is the crux of the issue: da Silva is exactly right in his comparison of the government's strategy of *limpeza* with that of the colonial regime, as a strategy of "atavistic" destruction of the natives. At this point in the politico-military campaign against UNITA, the government embarked upon a strategy of total defeat of the military infrastructure of UNITA at the expense of the lives and welfare of the rural population, a population which is perceived by the contemporary equivalent of the colonial community – the elite – as belonging "to an autonomous community". As Fernando Pacheco described this perspective of the elite previously,

> They speak of the people as if there were a distance between those who are speaking, who belong to the elite, and the citizens… [The elite] have always the tendency to regard the excluded [people]

[33] A similar combination of rhetoric of sovereignty and sovereign might, applause for the military and appeal for international aid can be seen in an earlier parliamentary debate, when Deputy Bornito de Sousa, President of the MPLA Parliamentary Group, proposed a resolution "Considering that the functioning of the democratic institutions and the exercise of citizenship is inevitably dependent on the establishment of constitutional order and governmental action in the entire national territory" in which he sought "to congratulate and laud the Angolan armed Forces, the National Police and the Organs of Security and Civil Defence for their self-sacrificing commitment to the defence of the Homeland and to the reestablishment of constitutional order" and subsequently "to call on the international community and the Non Governmental Organisations to continue to give humanitarian support to the needy populations of the areas devastated by war". (*Diário da Assembleia National, Diário I Série–Numero 4/2000,* 10/11/1999)

[34] *Diários da Assembleia Nacional, Diario Numero 1, Ano Legislativo* 1999/2000*, I Série – No 4/Extraord/2000: Reuniao Plenaria Extraordinaria de* 20/06/2000*, Periodo da Tarde*

> precisely in their condition of being excluded. [They say] "They don't belong to my world". (Pacheco, interview, 2002)

This is the paradox of national sovereignty and citizenship in Angola: the total defeat of UNITA is mandated by the necessity of ensuring the territorial integrity and security of the Nation; yet the process of pursuing this mandates the abandonment or violation of large sections of the population that constitute that Nation.

This will be born out in a discussion of some of the contemporary commentary on the *limpeza* and ensuing and related humanitarian crises. This commentary also documents central characteristics of this abandonment or violation of the rural population which are necessary to an understanding of its broader social impact.

The abandonment of rural Angola

A series of articles in late 2002 in the independent weekly newspaper *Folha 8* under the by-line of A. Quino, explores the circumstances of humanitarian crisis. Quino quotes Jasta Cabungo, an employee of the Ministry of Health.

> It seems that the people have more fear of hunger than of the illnesses. At least one can flee from the bullet. Now, when the hunger knocks at our door, there is no escape route.[35]

Fome, "hunger" – also translated as "famine" – strikes to the heart of rural society. People can flee from war, and can be treated for illnesses, and in each case return to their livelihood subsequently; hunger – in the sense being invoked here, of absolute devastation of the food supply – destroys that livelihood. The use of hunger as a tool of war against rural communities (or against those depending or preying on those communities, such as guerrilla soldiers) is a fundamental element of the *limpeza* strategy and the broader politico-military strategy of the regime. In a subsequent article from Mavinga, the epicentre of the crisis, Quino contrast this with previous periods of heightened military activity.[36]

> During the [earlier] war, the people fought, ran and fled, but they cultivated… Remember, this last war strangled every type of subsistence economy, to the point of there not being even a grain of seed.[37]

Cultivation is crucial to subsistence – and to the survival and sustainability not only of the individual,

[35] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 12 September 2002

[36] The war in Angola is perceived by outsiders to have been ongoing since the independence in 1975; Angolans often describe it in terms of separate wars, characterised by pronounced and evident military combat.

[37] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 28 September 2002

but of this society. When cultivation is impossible, this society collapses. Quino reports the comment of a *Soba*, or local elder, to the local Administrator (a Government-appointed local official responsible for a townland) in Mavinga.

> The hunger is worse than a bullet. Its effect is slow and makes a person fall to the lowest level of human dignity. Looking at me, these rags that I wear, do you credit that I am a *senhor*?[38]

A *senhor* is a gentleman, a person of dignity, worthy of respect: a citizen. The hunger and concomitant poverty literally strips the person of his clothes and, in this account, strips him of his citizenship, of his dignity.

Mary Daly explains something of the conception of dignity and authority being invoked by this *Soba*. One of the "most traumatic and fragmenting things" that afflicts communities who have been displaced, she says, is the loss of leadership that results from destitution. Without the visible attributes of leadership status normally possessed by the *Soba*, the *Soba* is indistinguishable from the rest of the community, and possesses no visible authority. The community – or its remnants – loses its political identity as it loses its political authority.

> It's impossible for them to decide on leadership because everybody is equally poor. Nobody has anything… And the people, the groups, describe it again and again: adults in relation to each other become equal... Even the person who was important in the last village becomes just like the poorest guy in the village. (Daly, interview, 2002)

This is one aspect of the destruction of the social structure wrought by famine and displacement. All adults are rendered equally destitute, and in this context, leadership is rendered impotent.[39] The loss of leadership is a metaphor for the loss of sovereignty – sovereignty of the individual and sovereignty of the community. The individual "falls to the lowest level of human dignity", surrendering his autonomy in his dependence upon aid; in the loss of the *Soba*, the community loses its capacity for representation and defence of its interests.

Mavinga, where Quino talks with the *Soba*, is traditionally known as "the end of the earth" (*o fim do mundo*) in Angola, such is the extent of its geographic isolation (this reputedly dates back to the earlier Portuguese settlers). In remote rural Angola, the rainy season often renders the roads impassable and the runways treacherous. Quino describes this:

> With the [coming of] the rains, Mavinga finds itself even further from Angola and more distant from

[38] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 14 September 2002

[39] On notions of leadership amongst the Ovimbundu people, who are the majority ethnic/tribal grouping in the central highlands, see Linda Heywood's essay on the Ovimbundu (Heywood, 1998).

> the world.[40]

Mavinga, where the government's politico-military strategy has reduced thousands of people to dependence on international aid, and where a local leader describes his tangible loss of status and dignity, is not merely remote and inaccessible from the capital, it is remote *from Angola itself*. Its isolation and devastation is such that it is no longer effectively a part of the country in any meaningful sense.

This abandonment is not only felt in Mavinga. A letter to the newspaper *Angolense* signed by sixty-six *Sobas* from the provinces of the Angolan interior graphically documents the isolation and consequent loss of sovereignty of the abandoned communities in the Angolan interior.

> Today, Angola practically does not exist. The country is now only Luanda. Family is merely those who live in Luanda, because those who live in the provinces are condemned to isolation.[41]

The isolation of rural, provincial life is complete. The interior ceases to exist as part of the polity, and even the ultimate social referent, family, ceases to retain value outside of the capital.

The complexity of this notion of sovereignty and legitimacy is captured in a comment by Quino.

> Almost all of the population wet their mouths [eat] thanks to the World Food Programme, including the de-salaried employees of the State.[42]

Not only is the State neglectful of its responsibility to provide for the people, but it is perversely absent in its presence: in providing human resources but failing to pay them, the state enters a paradoxical state of legitimacy, where it survives thanks to the presence of the WFP but where its internal legitimacy is put in question by the dependence of its employees on WFP.

The editor of *Folha 8*, William Tonet, documents the same themes in an article on the IDP camps in Vianna, outside of Luanda.

> One cannot conceive of a policy of social integration without the possibility of participation of the citizens in their living spaces. "The government is [here] and is going to create all of the conditions for improving the life of the displaced in Vianna," says the minister Albino Mulungo… The reality is, nonetheless, the opposite of this affirmation. Marginalized, thrown on their luck, the solidarity between them and civil society is all that remains for the war displaced in Vianna.[43]

The Minister's comment here is revealing of an underlying assumption of governmental integrity,

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[40] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 14 September 2002

[41] "Nós, Sobas, não aceitamos a visão dos líderes", *Angolense* Open Society supplement, IX, 23 February 2002

[42] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 14 September 2002

[43] William Tonet, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 26 February 2002

based on mere physical presence. "The government *is*," (*O governo está*) he says, meaning that the government is in place, or in existence, in Vianna. Clearly, their presence is the first step towards their activity, but the impression this leaves is that their presence, irrespective of their action, is significant. The fact that they are there is enough. Legitimacy is secured by their presence. In any case, it is clear from Tonet's comment that the presence of the Government is, in fact, incidental to the welfare of the "marginalised" in Vianna. In its absence, it is only "the solidarity [with] civil society" that offers any possibility of social welfare and integration.

> "The life of a *deslocado* [displaced person] is really like that. It's the life of a dog!
>
> "As we're from the interior they're playing around with us. How is it that a rich country can treat its citizens this way?"[44]

Tonet comments,

> These compatriots here consider themselves at the edge of the world and left in a damaged [derelict] place where, as *deslocados*, they live in sub-human conditions very similar to those of the colonial concentration camps.[45]

As *deslocados* and people "from the interior", these people have no illusions about their marginal status. Effectively restricted to a concentration camp, as Tonet points out, they are citizens in the very minimal sense of merely being Angolans: all that this citizenship confers upon them is a dubious exercise of force in their protection, which may result in their displacement, and the mere presence – without action – of the government. They consider themselves to be at the edge of the world, echoing the perception of Mavinga cited earlier.

Tonet's reference to the solidarity existing between the IDPs and civil society – presumably a reference to media empathy with and publicity of their plight, and of Angolan NGO efforts to intervene in their protection and support, is interesting. The recognition of human dignity in the face of state oppression or ignorance is a primary virtue of civil society in Angola, and in this case civil society's efforts (symbolically at least; there is no measure here of their efficacy in quantitative health terms) restore to this community, or serve to maintain, some semblance of individual dignity and the possibility of being citizens and not just *deslocados*.

It is not just *deslocados* that have suffered such abandonment. The plight of the IDPs is not the enactment of a Government policy so much as the consequence of it: their abandonment is not consequent upon their displacement; rather, their displacement is consequent upon their

[44] *do.*

[45] *do.*

abandonment. As abandoned peoples – or non-citizens – the Government is free to displace them, and to ignore them once displaced (as they ignored them prior to the politico-military imperative of displacing them arising).

A pioneering human rights case-study by Rafael Marques documents the precise manifestations of such a policy of oppression and abandonment in the enclave province of Cabinda, where the FLEC guerrilla force continue their (poorly) armed struggle for a measure of self-determination. According to Marques,

> It is necessary to document that Cabinda lives in an undeclared State of Siege. The exercising of rights, freedoms and guarantees to the citizenry is practically suspended or subject to major and severe restrictions.[46]

Marques identifies the failure of the State to extend the constitutional guarantees of citizenship to the population of Cabinda as equivalent to a suspension of the Constitution in an effective State of Siege.

In this regard, although the political issues in Cabinda are distinct from those underlying the *limpeza*, the normative issues are not: the indigenous, rural population is considered incidental to the legitimacy and policies of the elite, except insofar as it obstructs or challenges them. Such challenge is dealt with without reference to law and legal protections; the policy of abandonment permits the deliberate oppression of populations.

Marques documents numerous horrific incidents that demonstrate the extent of this oppression. In the incident below, it is clear that there is more at stake than simple military aggression and indiscipline.

> *November 08, 2002* – "Commander Decidido" raped Tina Passi, 16, at Ganda Cango village (municipality of Belize), who, after satisfaction of his sexual appetite, gave her to his men for the same purpose. According to information provided by the villagers, more than 14 FAA soldiers raped Tina… Witnesses refer to the constant practice of raping women by the "Commander Decidido". According to these witnesses, in the absence of military operations that justify such acts, the women that do not present identity cards are the immediate victims of rape – with the label that they are wives or mistresses of FLEC guerrillas.[47]

Marques comments,

> an ongoing practice in the Cabinda conflict is the systematic rape of women and girls, as proof of the

[46] Ad-Hoc Commission for Human Rights in Cabinda, Coalition for Citizens' Rights, Reconciliation and Transparency, Terror in Cabinda: 1st Report on the Human Rights Situation in Cabinda, December 10, 2002

[47] do.

> military domination and the impunity that characterizes their actions. There are several reports of rapes that took place in the presence of parents and husbands, as a form of intimidation and humiliation.[48]

Rape, in this scenario, is not simply an incident of sexual violence inflicted by one aggressor upon one victim, but is symptomatic of a generalised attitude amongst the aggressor forces to the indigenous population. Domination and, crucially, impunity, manifest the absolute sovereignty that these forces exercise over this people. Intimidation and humiliation, through the extreme violation of socio-cultural norms and taboos, emphasise both elements of domination and impunity.

In another incident, it is not the occasion of violence in itself that is significant, but the subsequent treatment of the dead.

> *In June of 2002*, three youths were killed by a FAA military patrol in Micuma village (Buco-Zau). The villagers were prevented from burying them, and the bodies were already in decomposition when the municipal authority obtained authorization to do so.[49]

Traumatic in any culture, the inability to bury one's dead is extremely significant in Bantu cultures, for it is only with burial and consecration that one can renew one's relationship with the dead and seek their protection and counsel. We are not told how or why the three youths were killed, but it seems clear from the subsequent actions that they were not killed purely as an act of violence against themselves, but against the community as a whole.

Jonas Savimbi, killed by Government forces in Luena in February of 2002, was summararily buried in Luena, without ceremony or, as such, dignity. Alcides Sakala, UNITA's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, told the IRIN news agency

> The reburial of Comrade Savimbi is important for national reconciliation. Now that the war is over we must treat our wounds of the past. It is important that we restore some dignity to our leader. UNITA's request is also that all of those who died during fighting since 1992 should have their bodies returned to their families and given proper burials with the dignity they deserve.[50]

It is the nature of war that bodies are hastily buried, and commonly by the opposite side, without proper identification, ceremony, or notification of kin. As Sakala points out, the country as a whole needs to face this legacy of the war and the reinterral of bodies on both sides would allow for the restoration of dignity to the dead and their families, and further the process of national healing. The

[48] do.

[49] do.

[50] IRIN, "Angola: UNITA calls for Savimbi reburial", Johannesburg, 19 February 2003. Jonas Savimbi was subsequently reburied with appropriate ceremony and in a marked grave; see article by Severino Carlos, "Sepultura de Savimbi no Luena e um sinal da condição humana", *Angolense* no 53, 20 March 2004.

refusal to bury or return the bodies of the youths shot in Cabinda demonstrates another kind of violence, one remote from the norms of war between opposing forces; it is a violence that seeks to desecrate the community and culture of the people, a people who live not simply under an "undeclared State of Siege" but remote from any application or understanding of Angolan citizenship.

Quino writes in *Folha 8* of the food crisis in September 2002:

> In the school, because of the food crisis, the teacher stopped giving classes and the students stopped attending. The school year proceeded, but without its principal actors.[51]

The school stands as testament to the status of citizenship in Angola: structurally sound and habitable, it is rendered redundant by the failure of those who provided and protect it to mitigate the food crisis. Without food for the students, the school is meaningless; without food, or basic social protection, for the citizens, citizenship itself is an empty shell. The school is like the rags worn by the *Soba* quoted earlier ("Looking at me, these rags that I wear, do you credit that I am a *senhor*?") – the vestigial remnants of a derelict citizenship.

'Who can save this people?'

In February 2002, a letter from the *Sobas* of the northern provinces of Malanje and Kwanza-Norte is published in the independent weekly newspaper, *Angolense*. Of the prevailing politico-military situation, they write

> Those who are going to liberate, as much those as the others, also mistreat the populations; they take the sheeting from the roofs of the houses, they steal the goats and rape the women. In the final account, who can save this people?[52]

The people are mistreated by the military forces: their roof sheeting is taken, leaving them homeless; their goats are stolen, leaving them hungry; and the women are raped, demonstrating their vulnerability to random violence and striking at their very viability as a community.

Writ large, these acts are constitutive of humanitarian crisis: they are causes of displacement, hunger,

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[51] A. Quino, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 14 September 2002

[52] The Sobas of Uige and Zaire, "O Papel e a Voz das autoridades tradicionais", *Angolense* Open Society Supplement, VII, Luanda, 23 February 2002

This is echoed in testimony collected by Human Rights Watch in Malanje in 2001. (This report contains further individual testimonies on abuses perpetrated by both Government personnel and UNITA.)

"Last week [May 2001], a group of armed men came to our *bairro*. They were wearing FAA uniforms. They forced us to take the zinc roofing off our homes. Then they forced us to carry it, along with beds and other household things, to Malanje. If you did not carry it, they beat you. It took us four days to bring it here to Malanje. Then they told us to leave it, over near the market." (HRW, 2002b, 3)

injury and death. The *Sobas*, the people's leaders, appeal for help – and the humanitarians respond. To them we now turn.

3. Humanitarianism in Angola

3.1 Introduction. 'Who can save this people?'

The Angolan rentier state subsists on offshore rents, without recourse either to taxation or allegiance from the rural interior; the reliance on internal sources of legitimation is obviated by the international credibility derived from business and diplomatic links, while the entrenchment of the elite within the politico-military complex allows it to denounce outside interference as a violation of sovereignty and pursue territorial integrity through the defeat of UNITA at the expense of the social integrity of the polity and the lives and welfare of tens of thousands of its people.

The Angolan humanitarian crisis is consequent upon this governmental politico-military strategy that mandates the "cleaning" of large areas of rural Angola and the (often violent) displacement of masses of people into nominal camps around provincial towns where these "IDPs" are required to construct transitory dwellings and are left dependent on the provision of relief by the humanitarian system, the government's promises of relief largely unrealised.

This is the *limpeza*, outlined in parliament and closely linked, in the regime's discourse therein, to the provision of humanitarian relief by international agencies. The *limpeza* is an act or strategy that is constitutive of sovereignty. Admitting of no legitimate external interference in the affairs of state, and demanding the total defeat of UNITA in pursuit of the territorial and identitive integrity of the nation, the regime mandates the displacement and dispossession of many of its people.

The perverse corollary or consequence of this constitutive act of sovereignty is the extreme subjugation of Angolan citizens in the name of the nation or state. The citizens of the rural highlands – already remote from the apparatus and consciousness of the state – are effectively abandoned. Their citizenship becomes meaningless. Their political identity is revoked. The camp, where they find themselves – whether geographically located in rural Angola or in peri-urban Luanda – is like "the edge of the world". It is a liminal zone on the fringes of the Angolan polity: an area technically within the territory, and nominally subject to the Weberian sovereignty of state security, but remote from the norms and infrastructure of national society.

This is the context for the Angolan humanitarian crisis in 2000-2002. This is the context in which the Sobas of the provinces of Uige and Zaire issue their cry for help.

> Those who are going to liberate, as much those as the others, also mistreat the populations; they take the sheeting from the roofs of the houses, they steal the goats and rape the women. In the final account, who can save this people?[53]

[53] The Sobas of Uige and Zaire, "O Papel e a Voz das autoridades tradicionais", *Angolense* Open Society Supplement, VII, Luanda, 23 February 2002

Thus do the Sobas describe the Angolan humanitarian crisis: it is rooted in politics (*liberate*, they say), and devastates both the social fabric as well as individual lives. The Sobas describe the attack on their shelter, food and security – three of the core components of any humanitarian crisis and response. Yet they describe it in terms that weigh heavier than the indices of crisis used by humanitarian organisations. In taking the sheeting and stealing the goats (and in the Sobas' decision to emphasise these aspects of their vulnerability), not only do they attack the means of shelter and sustenance, but they attack the very viability of rural community life. The rape of the women is not simply an act of violence against individuals, but a violation of the community and its constituent families. The Sobas issue their plea in terms that are heavily weighted by the social and political context for the crisis they have witnessed. The crisis they describe is one that is steeped in politics: both in cause, and in the socio-political consequences of the upheaval in rural community life, it is one that is complex and particular to this time and place.

The Angolan humanitarian crisis in 2000-2002 is both a symptom of a failed polity and a direct result of a corrupt political strategy, the *limpeza*. In the comments of the Sobas, as in the comments of Angolans subject to displacement and camp regimes cited earlier, there is implicit recognition of this failure and politics at the heart of the crisis.

What, then, is the nature of the humanitarian response to this nuanced, particular and complex socio-political crisis?

Firstly, it is necessary to explore briefly the nature of "humanitarianism" itself.[54] As introduced earlier, humanitarianism is a creed of outside intervention in a community or area in the aftermath or immediate context of crisis, where by "crisis" is understood anything threatening the life or welfare of the mass of people. Humanitarian aid entails the provision of emergency assistance to those afflicted by crisis by exogenous actors or organisations (known thus as humanitarians). Such assistance most immediately takes the form of provision of essential life-saving items, such as food, shelter and sanitation facilities. Ultimately, some measure of reconstruction and rehabilitation may be undertaken by humanitarian organisations within their remit of emergency assistance.

Humanitarianism derives its formative statement from the Red Cross (Pictet, 1979) and its legal definition from the Geneva Conventions.[55] More colloquially, humanitarianism is commonly

[54] This has been well analysed by other writers. See in particular Duffield (1994, 2001), Slim (1997, 2002), de Waal (1997), African Rights (1994), Terry (2002). A particularly incisive and impassioned journalistic critique of humanitarianism is David Rieff's *A Bed for the Night* (Rieff, 2002).

[55] Hans-Peter Gasser provides a succinct overview of the development of humanitarian law and the successive Geneva Conventions, as follows:

> The first treaty on the protection of military victims of warfare was drawn up and signed in 1864 in Geneva, on

described using the founding principles of the Red Cross: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.[56] The Red Cross defines these principles as follows:

〈 Humanity:

> The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.

〈 Impartiality:

> It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

〈 Neutrality:

> the initiative of Henry Dunant, at a Diplomatic Conference convened by the Swiss Government and attended by representatives of almost all States of that time.
>
> In 1899, in The Hague, international protection was extended to wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea, and in 1929 prisoners of war were also placed under the protection of the law of Geneva.
>
> In 1949 four Geneva Conventions, which are still in force today, were adopted, each of them dealing with the protection of a specific category of persons who are not, or are no longer, taking part in hostilities:
>
> First Convention: on the care of the wounded and sick members of armed forces in the field
>
> Second Convention: on the care of the wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea
>
> Third Convention: on the treatment of prisoners of war
>
> Fourth Convention: on the protection of civilian persons in time of war…
>
> The various treaties that make up what is known as "Geneva law" deal extensively with the fate of persons who have ceased to fight or have fallen into the power of the adversary. They do not set limits to the way military operations may be fought. Concurrently with the development of "Geneva law", States have therefore codified, in various stages, international rules setting limits to the conduct of military operations. The main thrust of what is known as "Hague law", with the various Hague Conventions of 1907 as its main expression, is to limit warfare to attacks against objectives which are relevant to the outcome of military operations. Thus, the civilian population must be immune from military attacks.
>
> The new Geneva Conventions of 1949 did not develop the rules of "Hague law". In particular, they failed to cover a fundamental issue of international humanitarian law: the protection of the civilian population against direct effects of hostilities (attacks on the civilian population, indiscriminate bombardment, etc.). The lessons of Coventry, Dresden, Stalingrad or Tokyo were still to be drawn.
>
> Furthermore, new technologies had produced new weapons, i.e. a new potential for destruction, but also new techniques for ensuring the protection of war victims.
>
> Decolonization had more than doubled the number of States and, with new types of conflict (wars of national liberation), some new priorities for humanitarian law had emerged.
>
> Finally, the ever-increasing number of civil wars with frequent recourse to guerrilla warfare demonstrated the need to strengthen the protection of victims of non-international armed conflict.
>
> In response to these challenges Switzerland convened a Diplomatic Conference in Geneva. From 1974 to 1977 that conference worked out two new treaties of international humanitarian law, the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions. They were adopted on 8 June 1977 and, since that date, they have been open for ratification or accession by all States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. (Gasser, 1993)

[56] That these principles can come into tension with each other is one of the problematic aspects of contemporary humanitarian discourse. See in particular Slim (1997).

> In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

〈 Independence:

> Providing care and assistance and doing so in complete independence - that is the Movement's line of conduct. To act accordingly, it must rely on its own assessment made on the basis of objective criteria. It must not give in to political pressure or let itself be swayed by public opinion. (ICRC, 1996)

While much of the contemporary debate within and about humanitarianism centres on the precise place to be accorded these principles (as well as the emergence of additional principles, such as that of solidarity (Slim, 1997)), the foundational principle is that of humanity. In recent years, this has been codified somewhat in the terminology of the "humanitarian imperative". Broadly speaking, this entails that the imperative to protect and save human life overrides other concerns, such as political sensibilities and, even, sovereignty. The humanitarian imperative dictates that the humanitarian organisation intervene where strictly "humanitarian" circumstances dictate (i.e. where technical criteria for conventional humanitarian intervention, such as mortality, morbidity and malnutrition rates, are present), subject only to the circumstances of security and access. This humanitarian imperative was curtly and summarised by one senior aid worker in the prescriptive mantra of "needs versus risks": the job of the humanitarian aid worker was to weigh the needs and the risks, and to intervene wherever the needs- on humanitarian criteria – were sufficiently significant to justify the risks entailed to the humanitarian organisation and its personnel.[57]

The definitions, labels and principles cited here are all contested within the humanitarian sector. Nonetheless, it remains the case that there exists a field of action and organisation that defines itself as "humanitarian" and in which the vast majority of elements are committed to the principle of foreign intervention in a crisis situation to bring aid to a vulnerable population, and subscribe to some variant of humanitarian ethic comprising elements of the above. This, then, is the humanitarian system. The actions and discourse of that system in Angola (in particular during the period 2000-2002) are the subject of this chapter.

Rather than conduct here an analysis of the formative *principles* of humanitarianism, and the debates current as to their definition and application, our focus shall be on the predominant *operational* mode

[57] The Sphere Project (1998) defines the humanitarian imperative as "the belief that all possible steps should be taken to prevent or alleviate human suffering arising out of conflict or calamity, and that civilians so affected have a right to protection and assistance".

of humanitarianism. This is the "complex emergency"[58] paradigm of humanitarian intervention.

The complex emergency is defined in the OCHA Orientation Handbook on Complex Emergencies (with reference to the UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee).

> The official definition of a complex emergency is "a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/ or the ongoing United Nations country program" (IASC, December 1994).[59]

The complex emergency is characterised by the following elements:[60]

- There are a multiplicity of political stakeholders, whose interests may be opaque, inconsistent or overlapping.
- Political identity (whether driven by ethnicity, religion, race, tribalism, regionalism or class) may be a motivating factor in the conflict; however, the loyalties of belligerents may not be predictable.
- Stakeholders may be implicated in illicit rent-seeking activities facilitated by or directly attributable to the conflict.
- Stakeholders' interests may be furthered by the continuation of the conflict and are therefore inimical to conflict-resolution.
- Aid organisations are themselves implicated in this complexity through hiring staff, importing and distributing resources, and seeking to intervene in potentially sensitive or insecure areas. Aid organisations may bring an additional level of complexity in their own organisational structures and divisions.[61]

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[58] This is also known, in elongated jargon, as the complex political emergency (CPE): in its more common, abbreviated usage, the 'political' is implicit; politics is understood to be a key factor in complexity.

[59] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), OCHA Orientation Handbok on Complex Emergencies, Geneva, August 1999.

[60] According to OCHA, such complex emergencies are characterised by:

- extensive violence and loss of life; massive displacements of people; widespread damage to societies and economies
- the need for large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian assistance
- the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints
- significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas.

(Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), OCHA Orientation Handbok on Complex Emergencies, Geneva, August 1999)

[61] As Mark Duffield identifies, "the humanitarian institutions involved in a complex emergency, their roles and effects, are themselves part of the complexity of the situation. Aid agencies in a protracted political crisis are not

The peculiar and pressing challenges of operating in such environments (which were seen to be a largely unique development attributed in part to the end of the Cold War[62]) forced much rethinking of the humanitarian mission and strategising for humanitarian intervention in such complex emergencies. The complex emergency paradigm is largely the product of a generation of such strategising, which both interprets and implements the complex emergency mode of analysis of sites of crisis, and shapes its intervention accordingly.

It is, thus, a fluid model, and there are undoubtedly organisations utilising the complex emergency mode of analysis whose do not subscribe to the complex emergency mode of intervention which will be critiqued here. I do not argue here that the complex emergency paradigm is a totalising framework for humanitarian intervention, or that the application of aspects of complex emergency analysis to a crisis or intervention is necessarily or absolutely flawed; rather, the analysis here of humanitarian discourse and action in Angola reveals aspects of the complex emergency paradigm to be, at best, inappropriate and, at worst, inherently insidious; at the same time, the application of the insights of the complex emergency paradigm to humanitarian intervention in Angola is revealing of some of the specific failings of that system.

Take this description of the Angolan crisis from a paper produced by the Angola office of the World Health Organisation.

> Angola was plunged in an army conflict for more that 27 years. The period of hostilities created a large internal displaced flow estimated to be one of the largest flows registered in the last 20 years in Africa. During this period the health system collapsed impacting dramatically the socio economic and health indicators…. During the army conflict, WHO in partnership with UN Agencies, national/International NGOs, and other International Agencies, support the Ministry of Health in providing humanitarian relief to vulnerable people living in area of possible access.[63]

Their reading of the context in which they intervene is characterised not by an appreciation of social or political particularity, but by a generalised, abstract understanding of Angola in which the primary criteria for humanitarian intervention are health indicators and "access". The distinct phases of the Angolan conflict and consequent cris*es* are characterised as a generic 27-year "period of hostilities", generating one of the largest "flows" of internal displacement on the continent, an apparently seamless phenomenon; the coincident collapse of the health system has dramatic impact upon

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'neutral' bystanders. In several complex emergencies aid itself has become a player." (Duffield, 1994, 12)

[62] *do.*

[63] World Health Organisation, 2002, November, "Angola. Draft concept paper: minimum nutrition and health care package for the newly accessible population" in Emergency plan of action for resettlement, Luanda, WHO; grammatical mistakes in original.

"socio economic and health indicators".

This is a neutralised, depoliticised rendering of the political specificity of the Angolan conflict and humanitarian crises, in which not only political value judgements, but any sense of intimate analysis or understanding of the specificity of the Angolan conflict (some of which has been detailed in the last chapter) are entirely absent. Not only does it neglect Angolan political dynamics and their impact upon the humanitarian situation, but in doing so it neglects the formative politics of the humanitarian crisis – the abandonment of large sectors of the Angolan rural population by an elite that derives its legitimacy from external sources and consolidates itself through the extraction of illegal rents and the extension of patrimony through Angolan society – and compounds this neglect by failing to conceive of the people to whom it distributes aid as individuals with political identity.

I will argue in the following sections that this neutralised, depoliticised approach to intervention is characteristic of humanitarian aid in Angola, and that this arises due to a number of overlapping factors: the paradigm of "complex emergency" humanitarian intervention and the failure to elaborate a humanitarianism predicated upon political values as well as minimalist criteria of health and security; the institutional interests of the humanitarian system in operating in a depoliticised framework; and the embedding of the institutional framework for humanitarian intervention in Angola within a framework of close coordination with the Government which is responsible for the *limpeza* strategy that is critical to the genesis of the humanitarian crisis.

In the two-part analysis that follows, we will examine humanitarian discourse in Angola, in the form of a discourse analysis of key documents produced by the humanitarian system, and will present a thematic analysis of humanitarian practice in Angola based on interviews with key informants. This will be done with the objective of interrogating and advancing upon the complex emergency paradigm with a view to elaborating a more rigorous politics of humanitarianism.

In the final chapter, this will be considered more closely in connection with the politics of citizenship in Angola previously analysed.

3.2 The politics of aid in Angola: the United Nations system

The humanitarian system in Angola is itself a complex and heterogeneous entity. While undoubtedly such a system exists, its precise limits are unclear. To varying and, at times, controversial degrees, the humanitarian system in any one place might be described as comprising a combination of United Nations agencies (some of which are explicitly humanitarian in remit, while others have varying political, developmental, rights-based and sectoral remits), international and national non-governmental organisations (which also commonly combine remits for humanitarian and developmental intervention, as well as for human rights monitoring and advocacy) and government agencies. The humanitarian system could even, in theory, be extended to include military organisations, most obviously in the case where troops are used in support of humanitarian operations or peacekeeping.

This paper will not attempt to address the humanitarian system in Angola either in its entirety or comprehensively. Rather, as a point of entry into humanitarian discourse in Angola, it will consider select documentation produced within the humanitarian system. This is the United Nations system's annual Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal.

United Nations discourse

The Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal, commonly referred to as the CAP, is the product of the Consolidated Appeal Process.[64] It is an annual public document produced by the United Nations system in the country, after an extensive process of correspondence and coordination between different United Nations agencies and independent non-governmental organisations and other actors, which aims to lay out the basis for and details of the humanitarian fundraising appeal for the following year. The 2002 Appeal for Angola, for example, includes an analysis of the prevailing humanitarian situation, a description of the "Common Humanitarian Action Plan", a section on "sectoral strategies" for humanitarian intervention in separate sectors such as nutrition, water and sanitation, etc., and a very substantial section detailing projects and funding requirements in all sectors, proposed by both UN and non-governmental agencies. (OCHA, 2001)

The CAP is formally described as a "programming process through which national, regional, and international relief systems are able to mobilise and respond to selective major or complex emergencies that require a system wide response to humanitarian crises"[65] (Porter, 2002, 46), and is

[64] I will use the term 'Appeal' to refer to the annual, published Appeal documents, and 'CAP' to refer to the process.

[65] It is so described by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), a mechanism established at the United Nations to facilitate the Consolidated inter-Agency Appeal process.

mandated by the United Nations General Assembly.[66]

The centrality of the CAP to the humanitarian system is explained here:

> Whatever its practical shortcomings, few deny the potential of the CAP as a key coordination tool for humanitarian assistance. The CAP remains the only co-ordination mechanism that, every year, brings together IASC [Inter Agency Standing Committee] members, host Governments, NGOs and increasingly donors for shared analysis, and to discuss and set common strategy and objectives for humanitarian assistance in a country or region. This is particularly significant for regional consolidated appeals as their preparation may provide one of the few or only forums for inter-agency discussion at a regional level. (Porter, 15)

Thus the CAP, as the only humanitarian coordination mechanism bringing together this range of partners, is potentially a valuable indicator of the priorities and procedures set out for humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, as an annual document, it provides for the possibility of a comparative year-on-year analysis. The annual Appeals are circulated amongst the donor community worldwide as a baseline document for the raising of both profile and funds for humanitarian intervention. Ultimately, the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal Process acts as an international voice for the humanitarian system and gives NGOs an opportunity to solicit funding for programmes under the UN umbrella. The CAP is simultaneously used by the UN as something like an annual audit of the humanitarian system, and its review section offers an opportunity to address "lessons learned" as well as setting out forthcoming priorities. (See, for example, OCHA, October 2002, 2-6)

The discussion below follows key themes through the annual Appeals from 1998 to 2002.

These themes are:

- *Coordination*, whereby non-governmental, international/UN, donor and governmental agencies collaborate in the management and administration of humanitarian programmes;
- *Vulnerability*, whereby the indices of crisis and humanitarian intervention are measured; and
- *Protection*, whereby insecurity and human rights violations are monitored and advocacy is envisaged.

Coordination

In 1994, the horrific War of the Cities that followed upon the contested elections of 1992 was finally resolved and concluded with the signing of the Lusaka Protocol. Movements to tangibly embrace these Accords by the MPLA Government and UNITA were slow and contested, but a key step was

[66] Resolution 46/182 of 1991 (part V. on "Consolidated Appeals")

achieved in 1997 with the formation of the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (GURN). (Hodges, 2001, 15-18). As this supposed reconciliation progressed, the humanitarian system gradually divested itself of its preoccupation with non-partisanship and actively embraced collaboration with, and capacity-building of, the government, as the primary and legitimate guarantor of national development in a putatively stable and democratic Angola. From the humanitarian perspective, the formation of the GURN legitimised the Government as the sovereign authority and effectively depoliticised the humanitarian context, removing the formal constraints of a bipartisan conflict.[67] The humanitarian system, headed by the United Nations, henceforth sought to transfer responsibility and capacity for coordinating humanitarian response to the Government.[68]

The 1998 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal sets outs this policy:

> As a result of the advances in the peace process, efforts are being made to strengthen the leadership role of the Government with respect to the co-ordination of humanitarian assistance. (UN, 1998 1, 5)

By the 2000 Appeal, the Government's leadership role is more explicit:

> Line ministries in the Government of Angola (GoA) are responsible for setting the stage for humanitarian interventions. Relationships between the GoA and the humanitarian community at large should be strengthened to ensure standardisation of approach, complementary programming and avoidance of duplication. (UN, 1999, 2)
>
> It is the primary duty and responsibility of the GoA to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to all civilians suffering from the civil conflict. In recognition of the vital coordinating role that state institutions play in addressing humanitarian needs, the humanitarian strategy will aim at establishing programme and operational links with those Government entities responsible for humanitarian action. As always, this approach will be based on principles of neutrality and impartiality. (UN, 1999, 10)

This gradual move to enshrining the sovereign responsibility of the Government for humanitarian response is neatly concluded in the 2001 Appeal.

> The United Nations Agencies support the Government in its leadership and coordination role. (UN, 2000, 23)

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[67] Anna Richardson has documented the demise of the Lusaka peace process and concludes that a combination of United Nations weakness in the face of Government obstructionism and frustration with UNITA led to a situation where the UN "had de facto accepted the government's ostracization policy and openly taken sides in the forthcoming conflict". (Richardson, 2000, 26)

[68] In fact, the United Nations and humanitarian system has been here before. Following the first Bicesse accord in 1988, the World Food Programme implemented a Special Relief Programme for Angola (SPRA) in collaboration with the Government. That same Government was to find itself back at war with UNITA by the end of 1992. (Beaudet, undated)

And this is elaborated in the 2002 Appeal:

> The strategic goal for humanitarian partners during the next three to four years is to continue to transfer full responsibility for the delivery of emergency assistance to the Government of Angola by helping to establish and support institutional mechanisms for managing emergencies and by strengthening social sector ministries, particularly at the provincial level, through capacity-building initiatives. (OCHA, 2001, 26)

Describing the "Roles and Competencies" of the Government, it stresses:

> The main actor in the humanitarian operation will continue to be the Government, which will retain overall responsibility for coordination and provide substantial financial support to the social sectors. As the sovereign authority, the Government will be responsible for the protection of internally displaced persons. (OCHA, 2001, 32)

As the 1998 CAP stresses, the emergent emphasis on coordination of humanitarian assistance under the direction of the Government came about "as a result of advances in the peace process". By 2000, the CAP acknowledges that the Government's line ministries (those with direct sectoral responsibility) "are responsible for setting the stage for humanitarian interventions", while advocating that relationships between other humanitarian organisations and the government should be strengthened. In 2001 and 2002, the CAP acknowledges leadership role to be played by the Government and describes the humanitarian system's strategic goal as the transfer of "full responsibility for the delivery of emergency assistance" to the Government.

However, the background to this movement within the humanitarian system was not one of ever-strengthening legitimacy of the Government and expansion of governmental protection and service provision in a post-conflict society, as might be expected from the emphasis on the peace process above. Rather, throughout 1998, the situation destabilised and eventually descended into open war again in December 1998. (Hodges, 2001, 16) This conflict reduced zones of security once more to tight perimeters around key urban centres (such as the provincial capitals), and rendered much of rural Angola vulnerable to banditry and undisciplined military activity by both sides. By the end of 1999, the Government succeeded in taking UNITA's last remaining urban strongholds of Bailundo and Andulo, and UNITA retreated to the bush and a strategy of low intensity guerrilla warfare. (Hodges, 2001, 17) Attempts by the ICRC[69] and the United Nations to maintain contact with UNITA were rebuffed and, in the absence of an interlocutor and of the possibility of negotiating safe access across Government lines and through insecure areas, any attempt to deliver or administer assistance to zones outside of the Government-secured perimeters was abandoned. Through no

[69] Personal communication from anonymous source in ICRC Angola

desire of its own, the humanitarian system was effectively reduced to partisanship: the benefits of humanitarian aid would henceforth be appreciated only within the Government-secured "safe areas".[70]

In this context, it is notable that in the Appeal excerpts above, the Government is not merely being engaged as the necessary partner in the administration of humanitarian aid, but is explicitly cited as the legitimate and sovereign authority with the primary duty of care for the Angolan people. The principle of impartiality – that aid should go to those in need, irrespective of identity or affiliation – is not necessarily violated by this engagement; but the principle of neutrality – of the refusal to take sides in a conflict and the maintenance of strict operational neutrality in working with all parties to a conflict – is quite simply absent.

Yet, as in the quote from the 2000 Appeal above, there are statements of the imperative of neutrality in the Appeals, coincident with the renewed outbreak of conflict and the return to prominence of emergency relief in response to the immediate crises provoked by this renewed conflict. The 1999 Appeal, published in December 1998 as President Dos Santos declared the ending of the Lusaka peace protocol,[71] sets out the doctrine of neutrality quite explicitly:

> Even though humanitarian crisis is often the result of political and military activities, negotiations regarding humanitarian issues should be clearly separated from political/military issues in order to advocate humanitarian principles, ensure free and unhindered access to populations as well as independent assessment and monitoring and guarantee success in implementing emergency humanitarian programmes. (UN, 1998, 3)

The same Appeal, however, invokes the instability resulting from these "political and military activities" as necessitating ever-increased coordination with the Government.

> *Given the unstable environment*, the need to maintain and strengthen humanitarian coordination mechanisms between the UN, NGOs, and international organisations is essential to address the evolving situation in a quick and appropriate manner. In addition, strengthening coordination mechanisms among international agencies *and with the Government* will ensure more efficient use of resources towards our common humanitarian goals. It is also necessary to *support the concerned Government institutions to carry out their respective roles of coordination.* (UN, 1998, 3; emphasis added)

Humanitarian organisations thus have two objectives in their dealings with the government: to *negotiate* in order to *advocate* humanitarian principles and guarantee access, and to *support* the

[70] This summary is based on oral accounts of these events from key informants in the humanitarian system in Angola, 2002.

[71] Dos Santos did so at the Fourth Congress of the MPLA in Luanda, 5-10 December 1998. (Hodges, 2001, 16)

government in order to strengthen *governmental coordination* of humanitarian operations. To the extent that the imperative of neutrality is recognised in the appeals, then, it is immediately compromised by its conflation with the principle of cooperation with the government.[72]

The war was to continue until the death of Jonas Savimbi, UNITA's leader, in February 2002, and the consequent signing of an accord between UNITA and the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). The trend over this period of the United Nations system in Angola, and of the humanitarian system as largely bound to the UN, was one of ever-closer collaboration with the Government, and of the explicit integration of political and humanitarian strategies. By 2002, not only has this trend to ever-increasing collaboration with the Government maintained, but the humanitarian agenda of the United Nations system has been explicitly integrated within the UN's political agenda.

The 2003 Appeal documents this:

> In mid August [2002], on the basis of Security Council Resolution 1433, the humanitarian operation was integrated into the new United Nations Mission in Angola (UNMA). Under the terms of the Resolution, the UN Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator continued to have primary responsibility for all policy and operational aspects of the humanitarian operation. (OCHA, 2002)

Humanitarianism and politics (in the form of cooperation with the political authorities) have heretofore maintained an uneasy relationship in Angola. With this Security Council Resolution, the United Nations' humanitarian mission in Angola is formally subsumed within the United Nations political mission in Angola. As the political mission exists entirely at the bequest of the Government and is mandated explicitly to liaise with that Government, the humanitarian mission is here effectively rendered dependent upon political cooperation. The potential excesses of such political collaboration are identifiable in this slight comment from the 2001 Appeal.

> State administration is also expected to expand, giving humanitarian agencies increased access to vulnerable populations and paving the way for pilot resettlement in secure areas. (UN, 2002, 3)

The humanitarian system here implicitly identifies with Government successes in its campaign against UNITA, as the expansion of State administration implies the successful conduct of military operations and the effective liberation of areas formerly insecure or in UNITA hands: such will allow for the concomitant expansion of humanitarian relief operations.

Coordination is embraced initially both as a mechanism of improving the efficiency of humanitarian operations, and as a means to building the capacity of governmental agencies to respond to crises

[72] For further critique of the United Nations system's stance, see the MSF report on "normalisation" in Angola (MSF, 2000) and subsequent article in The Lancet (The Lancet, 2000).

and promoting the taking of primary responsibility for humanitarian response by those agencies and the Government in general. Yet it becomes the means by which humanitarian policy is insidiously integrated within governmental policy and by which humanitarian actors are emasculated by the embrace of government, such that objectivity, impartiality and neutrality are forsaken in pursuit of humanitarian interests defined in sympathy with governmental objectives, as in the case where the expansion of state administration rewards humanitarian agencies with access to vulnerable populations.

From relief to development

The embeddedness of the humanitarian system within the framework of governmental cooperation is closely tied to the United Nations mandates of development, conflict-resolution and peace building. In the operational paradigm for United Nations interventions, humanitarian assistance is designed, where possible, to promote conflict-resolution, peace building and development.

The 1998 CAP states that "the NGO community aligns itself with the rest of the international community in its commitment to peace, stability and development in Angola" (UN, February 1998, 7), while the 1999 CAP identifies the following goals of the humanitarian system:

> Ensure the sustainability of emergency operations so that they can serve as a foundation for future development initiatives; and
>
> Assist and support the Government to address present and future needs and to reinforce its capacity to ensure the smooth transition to development. (UN, December 1998, vii)

Emergency operations are envisaged as the first stage in a linear progress ("smooth transition") to development; and this emphasis on future development as tied to current emergency response requires the close involvement of the Government within the emergency response, such that their capacity to "ensure the smooth transition to development" be reinforced. The idea that emergency operations can provide for a "smooth transition" to development is also known as the relief-development continuum.

What this notion of continuum neglects, however, is the nature of the complex emergency context, as opposed to that of the "natural" or once-off emergency: in the complex emergency, the progression to development is not necessarily a linear one. Yet, this assumption that there might be such a linear transition from relief to development effectively legitimises collaboration with the government, and the imperative of preparation for a developmental stage to follow upon an emergency stage mandates that humanitarian organisations coordinate with the Government even at the stage of emergency intervention, when conflict may be still ongoing.

In fact, the 1999 Appeal concedes this:

> The progression of relief, rehabilitation and development programmes is often mistakenly viewed as linear transition when, in fact, the design of these programmes should allow for activities to run parallel. (UN, December 1998, 2)

Yet the 2000 Appeal is nonetheless able to avow the viability of linkage and "perfect union" of emergency and rehabilitation activities.

> PNEAH [Government of Angola National Emergency Programme for Humanitarian Assistance] will provide humanitarian assistance to populations affected by the war and aid the process of reinstallation, thus possessing a character of emergency response while establishing the necessary linkages to ensure *a perfect union* with rehabilitation activities. In this manner, the global strategy of GoA humanitarian assistance *should pass through three phases: emergency, rehabilitation, and development* in coordination with programmes and projects that benefit from assistance from the international community. (UN, 1999, 10; emphasis added)

Again, the emphasis on this "perfect union" serves to mandate and justify coordination between Government and non-governmental agencies in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and is a critical factor in the emasculation of the humanitarian system.

The normative confusion and incoherence that results is epitomised in the 2002 Appeal's elaboration of the role of NGOs in humanitarian response, as follows.

> The role of the NGOs operating under the framework of the 2002 Consolidated Appeal will be to serve as the main implementers of humanitarian programmes.
>
> NGOs will also:
>
> Work in partnership with the Government and UN Agencies and participate fully in coordination forums at the Luanda and provincial levels.
>
> Play a central role in monitoring by providing accurate and timely information on humanitarian conditions.
>
> Engage in critical dialogue with humanitarian partners, particularly the UN, and help to develop appropriate policies by upholding and advocating for humanitarian principles and standards.
>
> Provide strong support to civil society and help to ensure that beneficiaries are included in the planning and implementation of humanitarian assistance programmes.
>
> Provide technical support to national organisations and help to build capacities within communities

> and local institutions. (OCHA, 2001, 33[73])

So NGOs are enshrined as service-providers, the on-the-ground implementers of humanitarian programmes designed, overseen and funded through coordination forums managed by the United Nations system and the Government. Their potential roles in "critical dialogue", in "upholding and advocating for humanitarian principles and standards", in supporting civil society, in providing for beneficiary participation in programmes and in capacity-building exist in tension with this prior role as "partners" and "implementers" in a humanitarian enterprise closely integrated within the mechanisms of United Nations-Government cooperation.

The legacy of this is evident in a United Nations IRIN news service report from February 2002 (quoted earlier), which juxtaposes evidence of the Government's *limpeza* strategy with details of humanitarian-governmental coordination.

> "The red flag we are raising is that the policy of the government seems to be the cleansing of Moxico province and a rapid resettlement of people in the Luena area without the provision of adequate services like water, sanitation and shelter," one aid worker said. "They are bringing people to Luena without ensuring that there are any safety nets when they arrive."… During the first week of February, local authorities, UN agencies and NGOs developed a plan of action to address the emergency needs in Luena. The steps include opening a new reception centre close to the airport and a local hospital where there is a therapeutic feeding centre. [74]

This is a humanitarianism that is paradoxically stripped of political content while being immersed in a highly politicised context. It is politicised through its dependence on the coordination mechanisms of the United Nations and Government of Angola, yet within these mechanisms it is perceived as an apolitical adjunct to the greater political imperatives of development and peacebuilding, which imperatives are largely shared by the Government and the United Nations.

The emphases on the ostensibly uncontroversial imperatives of coordination and relief-to-development linkage results in the emasculation of NGOs as independent humanitarian organisations, critically compromising their ability to engage in critical dialogue.

It would be timely here to recall the Vice-Minister for Defence's comments to the National Assembly in June 2000:

> The Armed Forces and the Government designed a strategy for the total destruction of the forces and means of Savimbi's terrorist organisation and this strategy follows certain objectives, one of

[73] Note that the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals from 1998 to 2001 were published by the United Nations, while from 2002 on they were published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

[74] IRIN, "ANGOLA: 'Scorched earth' policy condemned", Johannesburg, 13/2/2002

> which was the withdrawal of the support of the people and organisation of Jonas Savimbi. [The Armed Forces] withdraw from [UNITA] the support of the people, confine them in inhospitable areas and, subsequently, deliver them the mercy blow… Of course, these populations, after presenting themselves to the military are directed to the centres for welcoming IDPs and, subsequently, the organs and institutions of the Government mandated for this, [and] the Non-Governmental Organisations, have given what help possible.[75]

And as Rafael Marques writes of the situation in Cabinda at a later stage, in late 2002

> It is necessary to document that Cabinda lives in an undeclared State of Siege. The exercising of rights, freedoms and guarantees to the citizenry is practically suspended or subject to major and severe restrictions.[76]

The humanitarian crisis is both a consequence of and compounded by the mass violations of human rights perpetrated by the Government's forces in pursuit of military ends. This is the primary politics of aid in Angola, and this politics is inextricable from the humanitarian situation. Yet the principle vehicle for the coordination of humanitarian assistance in Angola has gradually elaborated a variant of humanitarianism that is embedded within governmental systems, and so both emasculated in its capacity to respond independently to abuses that it witnesses, and conditioned to perceive such abuses as are perpetrated in the narrow terms of humanitarian crisis and response, and devoid of this political (or politico-military) context.

Vulnerability

Such emasculation is both evident in, and compounded by, the depoliticised terminology of humanitarian assistance. This depoliticisation (a term borrowed from James Ferguson) consists in the rendering of highly political scenarios in the politically neutral, technical terms of humanitarian response: people become "beneficiaries"; a population becomes a "caseload"; the particular dynamics of conflict are framed in terms of "insecurity" and "access"; crises are framed in terms of consequent "vulnerability", not cause; displacement, or being an "IDP" is taken as an indicator of vulnerability, and not of political cause or failure.

James Ferguson draws this notion of depoliticisation from his experience of a development project in Lesotho.

> By uncompromisingly reducing poverty to a technical problem, and by promising technical solutions

[75] *Diários da Assembleia Nacional, Diario Numero 1, Ano Legislativo* 1999/2000*, I Série – No 4/Extraord/2000: Reuniao Plenaria Extraordinaria de* 20/06/2000*, Periodo da Tarde*

[76] Ad-Hoc Commission for Human Rights in Cabinda, Coalition for Citizens' Rights, Reconciliation and Transparency, Terror in Cabinda: 1st Report on the Human Rights Situation in Cabinda, December 10, 2002

> to the sufferings of powerless and oppressed people, the hegemonic problematic of "development" is the principal means through which the question of poverty is de-politicized in the world today. At the same time, by making the intentional blue-prints for "development" so highly visible, a "development" project can end up performing extremely sensitive political operations involving the entrenchment and expansion of state power almost invisibly, under cover of a neutral, technical mission to which no one can object. (Ferguson, 1990, 256)

In the humanitarian context (as opposed to the development context), "vulnerability" becomes the hegemonic problematic, providing licence for a humanitarian response that is essentially depoliticised. In this context, humanitarian partners can laud the expansion of the state administration, as documented above, and covet "security" and "access" as necessary preconditions for their work, where both are in fact euphemisms for governmental control of the area of intervention, dependent upon military success.[77]

The depoliticisation of the CAP is reflected in two tendencies evident within the Appeal documents: the reduction of the crisis (both political and humanitarian) to measures of vulnerability; and the rendering of the conflict and of protection and human rights issues in generic, blanket terms that absolve either side of responsibility and reduce the politics of the crisis to a generic complexity while obscuring particular responsibility.

Thus the 2001 Appeal describes the "Humanitarian Context" as

> a profound structural emergency which can only be overcome if insecurity stops and massive poverty-alleviation programmes during the post-conflict phases raise the overall standard of living for the entire population. (UN, 2000, 10)

The overcoming of this emergency is clearly a laudable goal; however, the Government's stated strategy for so doing is the "total destruction" of UNITA and it is this, in the short term, that is provoking much of the stated "insecurity". The same Appeal goes on to invoke the imperative of "Access" as the "Key to the Humanitarian Operation":

> Insecurity and logistical constraints in many parts of the country continue to impede humanitarian operations. More than 90 percent of Angola's municipalities are now under Government control.

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[77] Peter Uvin makes an analogous critique of development aid in Rwanda prior to the 1994 genocide. He asks,

"Is there something about our definition of development, and the indicators we use to measure it, that makes us blind to the social, political, and ethnic forces that exist in society?" (Uvin, 1998, 2)

And he surmises,

"Like most foreigners, I knew Rwanda… only as a developing country, that is, a country receiving development aid, mainly in that unique form of social engineering known as the development project… The pauperization was omnipresent, the racist discourse loud; fear was visible in people's eyes, and militarization was evident – but that was none of my business, for I was there for another Rwanda, the development model." (Uvin, 1998, 4-5)

> Fifty-one new sites will be shortly assessed in an effort to expand humanitarian coverage in these municipalities, many of which have small security perimeters, limiting free movement, trade, agriculture and resettlement. In light of constraints, it is expected that agencies will be able to launch operations in 20 percent of the assessed sites, perhaps more if security and other factors improve. (UN, 2000, 12)

The close connection between the expansion of Government control and the establishment of humanitarian coverage is explicit.

While the evidence of this strategy was there for anyone concerned with Angolan politics and politico-military developments to find, and while the United Nations system clearly had access to the full extent of this knowledge, the Appeal documents are careful to avoid any reference to Government abuses, or even to strategy. The conflict is reduced to a clash of unknown forces in unspecified places that impacts upon the humanitarian effort in only two ways: the threat posed to humanitarian staff and operations by "insecurity" and the demand for humanitarian response caused by increased vulnerability resulting from said insecurity. "Guerrilla and counter-insurgency warfare" becomes the euphemism for a Government campaign of "total destruction" of UNITA and occasional UNITA guerrilla attacks on civilian settlements.

This is in the explicit in the 2002 Appeal's review of the previous year:

> Guerrilla and counter-insurgency warfare had a serious impact on civilians living in militarily contested areas. Tens of thousands of civilians were systematically attacked by armed elements and relocated, sometimes forcibly, into municipal and provincial centres where international agencies provided life-saving assistance. Many populations who entered safe havens were in appalling condition, having suffered extended periods of hunger and been subjected to harassment, looting and physical assault. Catastrophic malnutrition rates of more than 45 percent were recorded among several of the newly arrived populations. (OCHA, 2001, 3)

This description is entirely generic. "Guerrilla and counter-insurgency warfare" occurs in "militarily contested areas"; attacks on civilians are attributed to unnamed "armed elements": this describes a situation where civilians are subject to apparently random violence and where military engagement is presumably too "complex" for belligerents to be identified and strategy to be discerned. Fortunately, there exist "safe havens" remote from the conflict, where international agencies can provide life-saving assistance, presumably in a neutral and apolitical fashion.

A parallel United Nations agency report from the end of 2001 is rather more descript in its depiction of the context for the humanitarian crisis during the previous year. The reports from Bié and Moxico contain explicit details on the limpeza.

> In the second half of December and in January, [the province of] Bié saw an intensification of FAA's counter-insurgency operations, with the objective to cut off UNITA from logistics and resupply. A direct result is that civilian population in these areas is being forced to leave at a moments notice, often with villages and property being destroyed. In December, 5,779 new IDPs entered Kuito, 7,229 in Camacupa and 922 in Cunhinga. In January, preliminary reports state that 9,720 new IDPs arrived in Camacupa and 2,799 IDPs arrived in Kuito.

And in Moxico:

> The security situation in [Moxico] province is worrying given the intensification of the military offensive or 'limpeza'. The border area with Zambia is also not considered safe. As a result of the 'limpeza operations', new IDPs are arriving in groups from Bundas, Luchazes, Lunge-Bungu, Cangumbe, Muangai, Licumbi, Lucusse, Lumbala-Nguimbo and Alto Zambeze - municipalities of Moxico; Camacupa, Luando - Cuemba (Bié); Sautar, Catemba (Malange); Dilolo, Divuma, Chimbumbulo, Hoji-ya-Henda, Chissenge (returnees RDC); Kazaji, Tchingi, (returnee Zambia). Most of the IDP were airlifted by FAA Helicopter from remote areas where fighting is underway… Humanitarian agencies registered 9,059 new IDPs arriving between 10 December - 30 January. (*sic*) [78]

To summarise the unreported details of the 2002 Appeal:

- "militarily contested areas" are primarily those areas in which the Government of Angola's Armed Forces are pursuing UNITA, conducting *limpeza* operations whereby indigenous populations are displaced leaving the Armed Forces free to pursue UNITA elements;
- "armed elements" responsible for forcible relocation of civilians are primarily Government troops following orders for the clearance of civilian settlements, as per the *limpeza* strategy;
- "life-saving assistance" was not provided to the substantial numbers of civilians, not mentioned here, who were killed or died in the process of being displaced, or to those amongst the 45% of the newly-arrived displaced people who were malnourished who did not recover;
- "safe havens" are towns under governmental control where humanitarian agencies are operating at reduced "security" risk, such as Kuito in Bié and Luena in Moxico.[79]

The use of depoliticised terminology, the absence of particular information or detail, the description

[78] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Angola situation report mid-Dec – Jan 2002, 20 Feb 2002
The report states that these details are compiled from security reports from UNICEF's "Field Offices", that is, offices based in the provincial towns. Being a bi-monthly situation report, most likely produced for internal use, this report is clearly free of some of the pressures described afflicting the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals.

[79] For further details, see for example the reports cited earlier:
IRIN, "Angola: More civilians flee as fighting continues", Johannesburg, 26 October 2001
IRIN, "ANGOLA: 'Scorched earth' policy condemned", Johannesburg, 13 February 2002
MSF, Angola Crisis: Peace Reveals Horrors of War, Update: June 11, 2002

of significant military developments in terms of generic complexity and the emphasis on humanitarian access and the provision of "life-saving assistance" all serve to obscure the fact of the reliance of the humanitarian system upon the Government and its close identification with governmental interests in obtaining access and security.

The sanitisation and depoliticisation evident in this is reinforced in this statement of one of the "lessons learned" in the course of the previous year:

> The suspected deterioration of humanitarian conditions in areas where international agencies do not have access has underlined the need for the Government to assume full responsibility for the delivery of frontline direct assistance. (OCHA, 2001, 7)

This description casts the problem as the "deterioration of humanitarian conditions"; the solution lies in the provision of humanitarian access; in the absence of access for international agencies, then the responsibility must fall to the Government to provide such "frontline assistance". A close reading of humanitarian law would problematise the same circumstances in terms of the failure of a warring party to respect the rights of and provide humanitarian assistance for populations under its care. Under humanitarian law [REF], the Government's responsibility extends to providing access for neutral humanitarian assistance, and providing for the care of civilians displaced by its military strategy or deployments. In the reading above, the Government is simply viewed as a humanitarian partner that *has access*, rather than as a warring party or, in fact, the warring party primarily responsible for the "deterioration in humanitarian conditions".

The close identification with the structures of Government and the reluctance or failure to address the documented failures and offences of that Government in relation to humanitarian abuses and violations of human rights leads to a situation where it becomes difficult to disentangle the interests of the humanitarian system from those of the Government. The system wishes to provide politically neutral humanitarian assistance to as many people as possible; the Government intends for the system to provide politically neutral*ised* assistance to as many people as it sends it.

The 2002 CAP predicts that

> Internal displacement will continue to result from guerrilla and counter-insurgency warfare. An estimated 350,000 newly displaced, down from the projected total for 2001, are likely to enter safe havens. Influxes into provincial centres will increase the number of vulnerable people accessible to international agencies. (OCHA, 2001, 23)

Warfare – primarily from the Government's *limpeza* campaign – will result in displacement. 350,000 people will as a consequence enter Government-secured zones. These people will thus become

accessible to humanitarian agencies. In this excerpt, it is not possible to disentangle the interests of the Government from those of the humanitarian system. The Appeal here appears to perceive displacement as a good thing: rather than being "vulnerable" in their places of origin, these people will instead receive the assistance of humanitarian agencies in so-called "safe zones". So the entire context of the *limpeza* is ignored; and the failure of the humanitarian system to provide impartial aid to those outside of government-secured zones is obscured by the depoliticised description of the conflict.

Protection

The United Nations system did in fact implement a system of monitoring and reporting upon abuses of civilian populations. Known as the "Protection" system, designed and implemented by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), it was designed to provide a mechanism for humanitarian partners to communicate and collate information about abuses, with a view to influencing Government policy and strategy.

The protection doctrine, as described by OCHA staff, consists of three core advocacy components: lobbying for the development of legally-binding frameworks for dealing with humanitarian and protection issues by government; building and empowering political "constituencies" of support for these frameworks within government; and independent monitoring and reinforcing of these frameworks as implemented in the field.[80]

The 2002 Appeal briefly introduces the notion of protection:

> The main goal in the protection sector is to promote the protection of Angolan citizens, particularly vulnerable populations, by building capacity and accountability within Government structures and encouraging communities to participate in safeguarding their rights. (OCHA, 2001, 44)

On the face of it, this is a simple and coherent case for a useful protection strategy: Government, the primary guarantor of security and protection of citizens, is to be aided and strengthened in this role; and the necessary corrective to any possible imbalance of power is to be found in the communities, who will be facilitated in their natural role of self-protection. However, if we factor in to this our knowledge of a deliberate and explicit governmental policy of violating the rights of

[80]Declan Walsh, "Catastrophe threatens Angola", Scotland on Sunday, 7 July 2002, posted on the internet at http://news.scotsman.com

This is based on separate conversations with various UN OCHA staff in Luanda, November & December 2002. OCHA's "basic principle", one officer told me, was "the linkage between humanitarian assistance and the political agenda", incorporating the United Nations, the Government and international donors. He surmised: "There is no action in a complex system that will not be perceived as part of the game." (Anonymous interview, OCHA, 2002)

individuals and communities in pursuit of a military end, it becomes clear that the protection strategy herein described is fundamentally flawed for lack of a third party: if the communities fail to safeguard their own rights (through lack of physical or legal capacity to do so), and the Government actively violates those rights, from where might "protection" issue?

This failing is born out in closer analysis of the protection priorities enshrined in the same Appeal. Two trends are evident here: the conception of protection as facilitating access to governmental structures; and the implicit equivalence of individual human rights violations with the documented large-scale abuses perpetrated by the government and described earlier.

In describing the "Vulnerability Criteria and Caseload" for the 2002 Appeal, the fact of forced displacement is problematised in terms of lack of legal documentation and access to the judicial system.

> Although protection problems continue to affect a wide range of people, the most vulnerable in this sector are persons without legal documentation and access to the judicial system. Agencies admit that more than 90 percent of displaced populations lack legal documentation. (OCHA, 2001, 45)

These are undeniably problems in Angola; however, in the context of State service provision (legal or otherwise) that is weak-to-non-existent in much of the country, improving access to such services does not appear to be a valid priority of a protection strategy whilst the Government is waging a military campaign that is illegitimate under international humanitarian law.

This failure of prioritisation is starkly born out by a glance at the Priorities for Protection elaborated in the Provincial Emergency Plans of Action that accompany the Appeal. At a time when the provinces of Bié and Moxico were suffering the full force of the Government's military campaign, the stated priority protection issue in Bié is:

> Reduce sexual abuse of displaced women and adolescents by developing mechanisms for victims to safely convey protection problems to competent authorities (OCHA, 2001, 60)

The stated priority protection issue in Moxico is:

> Provide IDPs with proof of identity by conducting free civil registration campaigns. (OCHA, 2001, 72)

Yet IRIN had reported in late October 2001, that "a massive government offensive, based on intelligence that UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi may be cornered in Moxico province (which borders Zambia), could be the primary reason for much for the instability in the interior of the country." The same report documented the consequent deterioration in the humanitarian situation, citing a World Food Programme report that "1,348 new IDPs (internally displaced persons) from across

central Bié province were registered in its capital, Kuito, over the five-day period", while "during the month of October, a total of 3,142 IDPs have been registered in Kuito and Camacupa".[81] And MSF would later report of this period at the end of 2001:

> As the year progressed and 2002 began, the Government created hundreds of thousands of additional IDPs, often pushing humanitarian organizations beyond their ability to cope with the mounting needs. For example, during the first two months of 2002, the Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) stepped up its limpeza strategy of removing the people from their land in several provinces, resulting in at least 98,000 new IDPs. (MSF, October 2002)

The protection strategy – as documented in the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals – is so embedded in the logic of governmental cooperation and coordination that it is incapable of identifying the primary threat to security, and consequent imperative for "protection" – that arises from the government's military strategy in the central highlands.

The stark vacuity of the protection strategy is only emphasised by the first of the "Achievements during 2002" listed in the "Protection and Education" sector, in the 2003 Appeal.

> More than 3,000 persons in eight provinces received legal advice and follow-up occurred on 628 individual cases through organisations supported by humanitarian and human rights agencies. (OCHA, 2002)

There were 628 individual cases of agency-supported advocacy in a year in which X number of people were reportedly displaced by conflict, the large majority of them under a Government strategy of forcible relocation of populations. That these individuals received advice and support is indeed an achievement, but one that is pales by comparison with the failure of the humanitarian system to offer or provide protection to those people and communities displaced by Government military strategy, until within the reach of conventional humanitarian operations in the "safe havens" of Government towns.[82]

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[81] IRIN, "Angola: More civilians flee as fighting continues", Johannesburg, 26 October 2001

[82] For further discussion of the UN's protection strategy in Angola, see IRIN's interview with Anders Pedersen of the UN Human Rights Division of 18 October 2002. The interviewer cogently leads Pederson into a discussion of the key tension within the protection strategy, that of the conflict between long-term capacity-building of Government and short-term advocacy around human rights abuses. While Pederson's discussion appears justifiably pragmatic, there is no mention of the context of *limpeza* and organised, mass abuse of human rights such as occurred under the *limpeza* strategy.

The issue of the role of the UN Human Rights Division (HRD) in Angola, although little appreciated, has been controversial and quite politicised, and is germane to this discussion. As a division of the United Nations Office in Angola, rather than an agency in its own right, the HRD answers directly to the Special Representative to the Secretary General and is not properly a humanitarian agency. The development of the OCHA-led protection strategy in 2002 came about in the absence of an explicit strategic approach to human rights protection on the part of the HRD.

Some insight into the non-confrontational approach of the HRD is gleaned from a 1999 HRD document entitled "Developing a UN human rights division for 2000: consultation with Angolan and international partners", where it baldly states that the aim of the consultation is "to identify more clearly how the HRD, if it continues, can

The *limpeza* operations culminated in February 2002 with the ambush of Savimbi's UNITA column for the Angolan Armed Forces and Savimbi's death in that battle. That the *limpeza* in particular had been instrumental in the defeat of Savimbi was visibly evident in the malnourished state of the UNITA leadership that accompanied him. The OCHA situation report for the last two weeks in February noted the following developments in the humanitarian situation in Moxico province, where Savimbi's column was ambushed:

> During the last two weeks of February, approximately 4,300 new IDPs arrived in Luena. The majority of the new IDPs were transported by military helicopter… Increasing numbers of persons also arrived by foot… Due to critical shortages of essential non-food items, an average of five to six families are forced to share one piece of plastic sheeting and only one blanket is distributed to each family. The health and nutritional status of the population remains precarious. Large numbers of new arrivals continue to be referred to over-crowded nutritional feeding centres.[83]

Further into the same report, there is a section detailing provincial developments in "Security". For Moxico, it documents,

> On 16 February, one person was killed as a result of an anti-personnel mine explosion on the road to Lumeje Pinto. On 18 February, a humanitarian worker was assaulted by military personnel in Luena. On 22 February, the leader of UNITA, Jonas Savimbi, was killed in Lucusse, 130 km from Luena.

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contribute to measurable incremental change in the way Angolan institutions prevent and remedy human rights violations". (HRD, 1999, 2) Focussing at that point on incremental change, to be achieved through Angolan institutions, paves the way for the failure of the UN to develop a coherent strategy to respond to the mass abuse that is the *limpeza*. Thus the normative weakness of the OCHA protection strategy, which was subsequently embraced by the HRD, and is due largely to OCHA's primary responsibility for humanitarian coordination in collaboration with the Government, comes about in the wake of the failure of the HRD to advance a prior strategy, due perhaps to the HRD being subsidiary to the political mission of the United Nations in Angola, which has a similar imperative to collaborate with the Government.

Tony Hodges illustrates the intended separation of political and humanitarian mandates in the introduction to the United Nations System's 2002 Common Country Assessment document. Referring to the separation of agencies within the UN, and to the remit of the CCA, he states that the CCA "does not address the political or diplomatic dimensions of the UN's work in Angola. That work is conducted by the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA) headed by the Representative of the Secretary General, under mandates provided by the UN Security Council. In the chapters that follow [of the CCA], the politico-military situation is not addressed as such." (Hodges, 2002, 3) Thus is the ideal division of labour; however, in practice, as we have seen, the UNOA failed to undertake responsibility for the decidedly political issue of human rights protection, leaving OCHA to assume that remit.

The protection strategy did have its successes, however. Although this paper focuses on the failure of the protection strategy, within the context of the humanitarian system in Angola, to counter the dehumanising impact of the Government's politico-military strategy and of the humanitarian intervention writ large, nonetheless there is evidence that OCHA's advocacy of protection led to, at least, increased awareness within the administration of the legal rights of displaced people and of the imperative of providing for them once displaced. OCHA's effort focussed on the elaboration and implementation of the Norms for the Resettlement and Reintegration of Populations (see HRW, August 2003), and one informant in OCHA claimed that compliance by the state with the Norms increased from 20% to 80% with the advent of the OCHA-led protection strategy. Nonetheless, the same informant conceded, "we failed to change the military strategy of the government; it was impossible to convince the parties in government [to desist from the strategy of forced displacement]". (Anonymous interview, OCHA, 2002)

[83] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Humanitarian Situation in Angola. Situation Report. Reporting Period: 16 - 28 February 2002, Luanda, 2002

> On 23 February, one woman was killed by armed men in Cangongo, 18 km from Luena.

The subsequent "monthly analysis" report for February summarised the population movements as follows:

> During February 2002, as many as 48,750 persons may have been displaced as a result of military operations and guerilla activities, bringing the total number of persons displaced since the beginning of the year to more than 98,000.[84]

The absence of any mention of responsibility for or strategy behind these apparently generic "military operations and guerrilla activities", despite the overwhelming evidence of the extent and ultimate success of the *limpeza* operations, facilitates the maintenance of the relationships of coordination and supposed protection-oriented engagement. The same OCHA report describes the response of the UN/humanitarian system to the Moxico crisis in the form of an "Integrated Plan of Action for Moxico Province":

> During the first week of February, local authorities, UN Agencies and NGOs developed an Integrated Plan of Action for Moxico Province to address emergency needs in Luena and areas that remain inaccessible to humanitarian partners. Priority actions include immediate repair of the Luena airstrip, establishment of a new reception centre and IDP camp, closure of abandoned buildings and warehouses, health and nutrition interventions and targeted programmes for separated children.

So in the month that an emaciated UNITA leadership column is ambushed by the Angolan Armed Forces, following directly from the implementation of a "cleaning" operation conducted across vast swathes of the central highlands, an operation which has been clearly signalled in the Angola parliament as early as June 2000, and been documented in media and NGO reports in late 2001 and early 2002, the United Nations system, through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, is working on "integrated" action with the Angolan authorities, while ostensibly maintaining responsibility for the protection function and coordinating the humanitarian response to the *limpeza*-induced crisis.

The lack of normative coherence and potency to the protection strategy is a symptom of a critical failing of the UN system in Angola: the failure to adequately attribute and separate humanitarian, protection and political mandates, leading to both confusion between agencies and a consequent normative incoherence and tension when agencies confuse mandates or when mandates conflict with each other. The assumption of the role of coordination the protection strategy by OCHA is a clear example of this: OCHA's primary duty is the coordination of humanitarian assistance; this

[84] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Humanitarian Situation in Angola. Monthly Analysis. February 2002, Luanda, 2002

must be done in collaboration with the Government (in order to ensure security, as well as to promote the "responsibilisation" and capacity-building of the Government); yet if protection issues are fully taken on board, such as the reporting of mass violations of human rights or humanitarian law (for example, to the Security Council), then OCHA's humanitarian mandate will inevitably be compromised. This scenario is well described in a damming Human Rights Watch 2002 report on the plight of Angolan IDPs after the ceasefire, in which they describe the UN's protection efforts as having "no clear ownership". They identify that there was "no single U.N. agency with clear formal responsibility for protection of internally displaced persons—contributing to the neglect they have suffered". (HRW, 2002a, 8-9)

Of OCHA's protection strategy , they say

> The U.N. program of support for internally displaced persons, under the overall coordination of OCHA, is a hodgepodge of several overlapping initiatives that, accompanied by jockeying between the various agencies contributes to a lack of sufficient oversight or quality control. The various programs, plans, working groups, and subgroups have led to confusion within the U.N. itself as to the roles of the different U.N. agencies, government structures, and other partners, including nongovernmental organizations. Clarity is urgently needed. (HRW, 2002a, 9)[85]

The consequence of this lack of "clarity" is the dilution of the protection role and its subsumption within the broader remit of humanitarian coordination. HRW write

> in interviews with staff in December 2001, OCHA informed Human Rights Watch that it neither had the mandate nor the ability to take up individual protection cases with the Angolan authorities. Such actions could, according to OCHA, jeopardize its role of assisting humanitarian assistance operations. (HRW, 2002a, 9)

And while OCHA insist that they have been successful at elaborating the protection strategy through monitoring of abuses in the field and subsequent contacts within governmental departments, HRW are sceptical.

> The provincial focal points [OCHA field advisers] collect information on violations of humanitarian law and other protection issues from the displaced, church groups, nongovernmental organizations, and other relevant sources. There may have been some efforts at "quiet diplomacy" with the authorities on the basis of these reports. However, humanitarian agencies working in Angola have stated to Human Rights Watch that this system has not been able to prevent, for example, cases of forced and disorganised return or settlement of populations to or in areas that are not secure. (HRW,

[85] HRW describe the structure and mandates of the United Nations system in Angola with relation to protection in some detail in this report. (HRW, 2002a).

2002a, 10)

Conclusion

The Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal is not the only statement of humanitarian priorities annually, and is by no means a totalising, all-encompassing or hegemonic process. Clearly, individual NGOs will resist tendencies within the appeal process, and overall it may lose clarity and accuracy through striving to attain a level of generality that will make it effective as a generic fund-raising document. Nonetheless, it is a key focus of the United Nations system's year, and it embraces a significant number of Angola's international NGO community.[86]

The Appeal provides the core statement of both strategy and guidelines for humanitarian assistance over the following year, and the NGO and humanitarian community as a whole has consciously been the subject of entreaties on the part of UN representatives, both through the appeal process and within individual appeal documents, to participate in an ever-closer union of strategic partners. The identification of certain tendencies with the appeal, then, must be taken as a valid indicator of their existence (probably to varying extents) within the humanitarian system as a whole in Angola.

These key trends evident within the appeal documents – the emergent consensus around the need for ever-closer coordination under the auspices of the government; the depoliticisation of humanitarian discourse; and the emasculation of the humanitarian system generally through the advancement of the protection strategy – are evident within humanitarianism in Angola. They are further documented, and elaborated on, by observers of humanitarian aid in Angola.

[86] As an example of NGO resistance to UN humanitarian coordination, see the editorial in The Lancet, "Beyond trading insults in international humanitarian aid" (The Lancet, 2002). This documents a dispute between UN OCHA Angola and MSF Angola through 2002/2003, to which, although outside the direct scope of this research, various sources referred at length in interviews. Briefly, UN OCHA took responsibility for coordinating humanitarian access to the quartering camps that were established following on from the ceasefire and peace process of 2002. Due to logistical and security difficulties, and in order to present a united front in negotiations with the Government, which were intended to produce as substantial a contribution to the relief effort from the Government as possible, there was some delay in gaining access to the camps. MSF chafed at this and gained access independently. Tensions between senior agency personnel underlying and arising out of this fuelled a dispute that was ongoing through late 2002 and early 2003, and led in part to the aforementioned articles. (These events were described in off-the-record interviews with senior agency personnel in the United Nations, MSF and other NGOs in Luanda, November & December 2002.)

3.3 Humanitarian politics in Angola

Over six weeks in Luanda in late 2002, I discussed these issues with key informants from amongst the humanitarian community (and its affiliate development/human rights/United Nations organisations) and from the political, media and academic sectors. According to the circumstances, I opened the interviews on the topics of the "politics of aid", citizenship and political developments generally and we talked from there. People approached the subject of politics from very different angles, with some taking a more mechanistic, immediate view of what politics was, comprising primarily interaction with explicitly political forces, and others more readily raising issues of participation, representation and empowerment at a community level. There was a large discrepancy in the approach people took to discussing aid and humanitarianism also. International staff in the UN and international organisations very readily identified humanitarian assistance as distinct from developmental or other forms of assistance, although it was common to couch discussion of humanitarian issues in terms more traditionally associated with developmental discourse (such as rights and participation). Angolan informants (across the NGO, church, political, media and academic sectors, though not including any employees of large scale humanitarian NGOs) more often understood humanitarian aid as an indicator of general assistance to be offered people, whether in crisis or developmental situations. The level of knowledge about the work done by large-scale international NGOs was varied and quite low, with a number of informants unable to identify correctly the most substantial NGOs in terms of aid distributions in Angola. Amongst these varied discussions, there was much said that touched on themes of concern here, and in the discussion that follows I have drawn on observations made to further this analysis of humanitarianism in Angola. The views expressed here are offered not as representative of a generalised opinion, but as indicative of the validity of arguments made elsewhere.

The decontextualised response

The Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations System in Angola in 2002 is Eric de Mul. I ask him about the criticisms of the humanitarian response in Angola under his tenure.

"Like everything, we should try to strive and try to get things better and do things better", he concedes, "but the point is also that humanitarian or emergency operations are not necessarily done much in context". He elaborates

> Basically the idea behind it is, well, we have these people, they are in tremendous trouble, so dump a lot of things on them – food, and try to get them some water – and that's it. They survive then. And after that, then it's something else or someone else who has to pick up the pieces, so it's never done

> really in context. It's dealing with the moment and that moment can be long, can be months or it can even be years but it is not linked much to anything else… There is no time for it, I guess, but we are never taking into account the real needs of the people. We go and see and then, almost automatically, even when we try to assess or evaluate their needs, we take into account what could be available. "This is the population; there are the needs; and now we are going to try to figure out what they really need." That is always clouded somehow [with] what we think is going to be available. (De Mul, interview, 2002)

The humanitarian system is oriented towards identifying needs in terms of what that system most efficiently provides: primary aid goods (these being food, medicines, and "non-food items", commonly known as NFIs and including such basic shelter and sanitary items as blankets, soap, buckets, gerrycans and possibly tents and clothes). In other words, this sets in train a vicious circle of emergency assessment and response: as a humanitarian organisation develops a capacity for a particular kind of emergency response, it acquires an incentive to apply this capacity; thus humanitarian organisations are incentivised to measure and perceive crises purely on strict humanitarian terms defined according to their capacity for response. What is humanitarian – in other words, what is appropriate to alleviate a crisis afflicting the people of a region – is identified exclusively in terms of what humanitarian organisations have the capacity to deliver.

Justin Pearse, correspondent for the BBC in Angola from 2000 to 2003, makes a similar observation on this humanitarian perception of Angola. In the eyes of humanitarian organisations (with whom Pearse has had close contact, particularly as when travelling in the provinces he has largely been dependent upon them for transport and support), Angola is "facing a problem that is principally humanitarian, [defined] primarily around the lack of basic material necessities". The solution, as they see it, he says, "is large injections of foreign assistance in one way or another". (Pearse, interview, 2002)

Pearse suggests that the humanitarian system acts to define the problems facing Angola in terms of the solutions the humanitarian system can provide. In De Mul's words, "dump a lot of things on them": the aid industry specialises in logistics – the provision of necessary goods – and so defining a crisis in terms of a shortage of such goods provides both a rationale for intervention and an ultimate indicator of success and closure.[87]

This critique echoes an observation by Mark Duffield on the terminology of the "complex emergency", made in the context of an assessment of UNICEF programmes in Angola, that

[87] Hugo Slim labels this a "heresy" of humanitarianism, by which humanitarianism is "commodified" and reduced to a "package of 'humanitarain assistance'". This serves to minimise the rights of humanitarian beneficiaries, by restricting them to the immediate purview of physical aid goods. (Slim, 1997, 345)

> for the past couple of decades, the response of the international relief and humanitarian system to the effects of droughts and floods on the one hand, and political crises and conflict on the other, has, despite the differences between these phenomena, essentially been the same. That is, *it has centred on the delivery of basic survival items or services* for the victims of such events. Rather than emerging from attempts to understand a situation, *it is a case of definitions being shaped by the agendas and mandates of the intervening agencies*. Sudan, for example, is declared a 'famine' largely because the international relief system is primarily geared to supply food aid. (Duffield, 1994 #346, 8; emphasis added)

Definitions of the crisis are shaped by the agendas and mandates of the intervening agencies; as de Mul says, interventions are "not done much in context"; as Pearse says, the problem facing Angola is defined "primarily around the lack of basic material necessities". Karim Hussein has documented this in a study of the international agency response to a nutrition crisis amongst Mozambican refugees in Malawi.

> Relief-oriented, as opposed to development-oriented, organisational frameworks lead agencies to employ 'problem-solving', reactive responses to emergencies rather than developing a 'process' approach that would be more suitable in a protracted refugee context. (Hussein, 41)

In Hussein's distinction between 'relief-oriented' and 'development-oriented' the insidious politics of humanitarianism is visible: at the core of the development ideal lies the individual and community, whereas the object of 'relief' is the population en masse. Although the practicalities of actualising a 'development-oriented' approach to intervention when on the ground are substantial, the failure is a prior one – that the structure and mandate of international crisis response is inimical to the proper consideration of context.[88]

Both Eric De Mul and the country director of the Canadian NGO, Development Workshop, Allan Cain lament an inertia that they have perceived within the humanitarian system, one that reinforces the reflexively reactive nature of the system.[89] Cain, himself over twenty years with Development

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[88] Viewed from 'the field' – on the ground of the crisis, within the humanitarian system – the adoption of a process approach in place of a reactive approach is easier said than done. A World Food Programme informant expresses this pithily.

"There are things that are changing so quickly all the time that I never have time to pre-empt anything… We're always setting up guidelines [as] to what to do and what not to do and then the situation changes… so that we're always, as I say, reacting to situations much more than pre-empting them, unfortunately." (Anonymous interview, WFP, 2002)

[89] In response to the question, "Where have the weaknesses been in humanitarian aid here?", Erik De Mul gave the following answer.

"One thing I could say about it is that in humanitarian crisis you get a kind of a inertia. In that, it's always easier to continue things that you are already doing, than to start something. I think, at any time, in general. whenever, a new situation brings about more dramatic changes in the field or in the area, there's always a problem in getting everybody's noses pointed again into that direction. Because the tendency is to [say] 'We have made a lot of effort to try to deal with this situation, we're now okay, and for goodness sake, now we have to move again to something else.' And that has happened a number of times in Angola, as well. Notably this year, I think, 2002." (De Mul,

Workshop in Angola, explains that the prolongation of the Angolan emergency has institutionalised emergency response.

> I think the emergency has tended to institutionalise some kinds of emergency responses that by their nature should be short term but have ended up being long term. You know, decades of those kinds of responses – and I think that then can, indeed, undermine community capacities. And also I think there's a danger of humanitarian institutions, who are trying to who have a niche, to some extent, in an emergency setting, being unresponsive to the fact that there's change in the environments. (Cain, interview, 2002)

Cain perceives the change in political circumstances in 2002 - namely, the death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi and the subsequent ceasefire – as mandating a changed approach to humanitarian aid in Angola, one which is to be informed by careful social and political analysis.

> I think we have seen so many opportunities in recent months now, since the cease fire, for creative responses to the new situation, where I see some of my colleagues, arguing probably with well-founded arguments, that we're arguing for the kinds of responses we've had in the past, you know what I mean rather typical humanitarian [responses] and I think almost fearful to deal with the changing reality, the fact that we have to develop, that we have to take different approaches and be very responsive and creative to the changing conditions. And I think you can only be responsive and creative if you're processing knowledge, if you're processing information and monitoring the changes in our own programs, changes in the economy. (Cain, interview, 2002)

Thus we come back to the decontextualised humanitarianism identified by De Mul and embodied in the complex emergency paradigm and insipid discourse of a United Nations system deeply embedded in the logics of governmental coordination – one which has displayed precisely this failure of "processing knowledge" and allowed itself to perpetuate "typical" humanitarian responses without seeking to be responsive or creative to the changing political and social conditions.

The target population

Thus the humanitarian system in Angola perpetuates a mode of humanitarianism that fails to identify the insidious effects of decontextualised response, while allowing itself to be effectively recruited to a governmental campaign to empty the central highlands of the indigenous population and relocate them in peri-urban "humanitarian" camps. Integral to this mode of humanitarianism is the objectification of the intended recipients of aid as "beneficiaries" of the international charitable largesse, rather than as individuals bearing political rights and cultural identity.

Interview, 2002)

As one World Food Programme informant explains,

> The food beneficiaries here, so far that I've seen, have been perceived as recipients of food only. They've never been perceived as anything else but food beneficiaries, [instead of as] participants, actors, people with a long-term view on things. (Anonymous interview, 2002)

Compare this with a comment from Angolan commentator Kuiba Afonso in the independent journal *Folha 8*.

> The Angolan indigenous, in 2002, seem also to be dying of shame for permanently having to extend their hands for international charity, in order to nourish their stomachs, with corn and other products coming from the exterior and which, often, use them as guinea-pigs, when their primary anxiety is to see the carriages of seeds, hoes and projects, so as to make the fields flower, creators of riches, dignity and citizenship.[90]

Both within the system and without, there is common perception that the beneficiaries of humanitarian aid are demeaned or undermined by prolonged exposure to and consequent dependence upon humanitarian aid. Humanitarian Coordinator for Angola, Eric de Mul, concedes that there is an arrogance to the implicit assumption within the humanitarian system that it intervenes to help those who are otherwise entirely vulnerable victims of crisis. De Mul explains that "in the end, we take positions and we think for the so-called 'target population'". (He admits, "this is a bad word but 'beneficiaries' is an even worse term".)

> "Looking after people." What do you do by saying that? You kind of put yourself in a bit of an arrogant position by saying, "These people are weak and they are vulnerable and all that and somehow they have to be looked after". Well, I think, in many instances people can also – they prove it all the time anyway – they can pretty well look after themselves. The main problem is that their space to look after themselves is all the time being narrowed, by all kinds of conditions and situations. (De Mul, interview, 2002)

As both de Mul and the World Food Programme respondent quoted above indicate, the very terminology employed to describe the recipients of the humanitarian largesse, "target population", and "beneficiaries", is indicative of and perpetuates a simplistic attitude towards those people, whereby they are perceived as passive recipients of goods that it has been decided they need, and that they should be thankful for. Their problem, as De Mul identifies, is that their capacity to provide for themselves has been radically circumscribed by circumstances outside their control; the question is whether humanitarian aid can address these circumstances and help provide not only the

[90] Kuiba Afonso, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 30 November 2002.

For a similar observation, see Francoise Bouchet-Saulnier's comments quoted by African Rights (African Rights, 1994, 8).

minimal requirements of a physically secure life, but those for the people to revive their capacity to provide that security for themselves.[91] We return to the plea of the Sobas:

> Those who are going to liberate, as much those as the others, also mistreat the populations; they take the sheeting from the roofs of the houses, they steal the goats and rape the women. In the final account, who can save this people?[92]

We might interpret this: the people seek liberation and protection, and in that will they be saved. How likely is it that the kind of humanitarianism that De Mul describes (self-effacingly, for it is he who is responsible for the management of the system), one that is largely ignorant of socio-political context and cultural nuance, and one that abstracts from the plight of individuals and communities to characterise a crisis situation in terms of a "target population" made up of "beneficiaries", can intervene on the Sobas' terms?

Angolan commentator Kuiba Afonso, quoted above, provides a scathing critique of the circumstances of the "Angolan indigenous". Dying, in fact, of malnutrition and associated diseases, he describes the victims of the crisis as "dying of shame" through their dependence on "international charity". This charity comes in the form of donated foreign foodstuffs when their "primary anxiety" is to receive the seeds and tools that will allow them to reassert their dignity and, ultimately, their citizenship, through self-subsistence.

There have in fact been substantial distributions of seeds and tools in Angola, particularly from 2001 on, although these have been undermined by the persistent failure of the Government to fulfil promises to distribute fertiliser to accompany NGO-led distributions of seeds and tools. Much of the lands available to IDPs are incapable of sustaining a family without the use of fertiliser, due to their poor quality and small size. (Pers. obs., Kuito, 2001) In any case, Fernando Pacheco, of Angolan NGO ADRA, makes a similar critique of such distributions of seeds and tools, based on the lack of "responsibility" that such distributions entail. In the delivery of humanitarian aid, he explains, ADRA "always seek to link whatever process of humanitarian aid to the construction of citizenship, even when we have had to distribute foods." ADRA "always seek that the responsibility

[91] In fact, Allan Cain cites evidence of the extent and significance of communities' coping mechanism in providing a front-line "humanitarian response":

"Communities are the first line humanitarian response for a large proportion of displaced families. OCHA estimates that out of approximately one million confirmed newly displaced people more than half, that is, 555,000 (55 per cent), are integrated into local communities of the provincial capitals or the municipal towns, while about 450,000 are living in camps or are included in temporary resettlement programmes (OCHA, April 2000). If one uses OCHA's estimates of reported displaced this proportion integrated into communities increases to 75 per cent. If one accepts the Government's numbers which include the estimated half a million absorbed into the *musseques* of Luanda, the proportion increases to over 80 per cent." (Cain, 2001)

[92] The Sobas of Uige and Zaire, "O Papel e a Voz das autoridades tradicionais", *Angolense* Open Society Supplement, VII, Luanda, 23 February 2002

lies with the population", he claims. This strategy, however, is undermined by the parallel distributions by international organisations, which do not seek to impose such responsibilities. Echoing Cain's arguments earlier, he claims this betrays the failure of these organisations to respond to the changing circumstances and context of the humanitarian intervention. "What I am criticising", he explains, "is that these organisations do not have strategies for rapidly passing to another situation."

> It is more, even that when they pass [from food aid] to the distribution of seeds and work instruments it is always with the idea of free [handouts]. There is no concern to look for responsibility from the persons." (Pacheco, interview, 2002)

Pacheco argues that the standard mode of humanitarian intervention further undermines the loss of dignity and dereliction of citizenship that are both manifest in, and constitutive of, the crisis.

> The first major lesson for me is that emergency aid contributes substantially to the loss of dignity of the persons. This lack of citizenship that today exists in quartering areas, particularly in the IDP camps, in my opinion, is one part the responsibility which should be allocated to the Angolan government, but the other part has to be allocated by the humanitarian organisations, because they insist on methods which… "irresponsiblise" the persons. They provoke very serious situations of dependency. Today there is a generalised idea that the international community was obliged to feed these persons. They themselves [the people] said so: "I suffered from the war – you must feed me." (Pacheco, interview, 2002)

Thus, the decontextualised intervention of humanitarian organisations has a dual pernicious legacy: as well as disguising the Government's failure to provide for the security and welfare of the people, it works to pervert the logics of blame and responsibility such that these are directed towards the international organisations themselves, provoking a generalised dependency of aid-recipient populations on this international charitable largesse.

For Rafael Marques, a leading Angolan human rights advocate and director of the Open Society office there, the combination of government neglect and humanitarian assistance that is designed to ensure "apolitical" survival – i.e. the survival of the apolitical individual – are morally equivalent: the government displays flagrant disrespect for the people at the end of the politico-military strategy; and the humanitarian agencies and their donors do little to restore this respect; administering aid to people in the non-participatory, hegemonic manner of the camps serves to further compound these people's loss of dignity.

Marques says of his experience with international NGOs

> I kept telling people 'Don't come to me with this bullshit of "saving lives" because, up there in the

> war, you give them a plate of food and you leave them. And they probably will survive for six months, three months, and then they will die anyway. But that's not how we [should] address the situation. Because surviving is not only being alive. It's more than that. Unless, [that is,] we as human beings, don't deserve more than just staying alive. (Marques, interview, 2002)

Marques is angry, and although the anger here is not rigorously focussed, it betrays an abiding concern amongst Angolan observers of humanitarian aid that aid to their country is misconceived and remote from both the social context and from social opinion. In Marques' formulation, there is no answer to the crises that have beset Angola in the responses of humanitarian aid organisations, and there will not be as long as these organisations remain remote from Angolan social reality.

Marques' comments, conflated with those of Kuiba Afonso, echo those recorded by Fiona Terry in Bosnia, where humanitarian organisations brought aid to besieged Muslim populations whilst their governments conspired to prevent the same populations from obtaining arms to defend themselves.

> Bosnian Muslims recognized this when they shouted at humanitarian organisations, "we have no need of you, we need arms to defend ourselves, your food aid and medicines only allow us to die in good health." (Terry, 2002, 2002, 22)

By analogy, the needs are similar: in Bosnia, Muslims called for arms as the tools of protection and liberation they needed in the face of war and ethnic cleansing; in Angola, the question for humanitarian organisations is what are the appropriate tools of protection and liberation that will facilitate and further the capacity of the people to provide for themselves.

Marques elaborates on his argument.

> Do we, as human beings, only need soya beans? That's all we want in life? If not, then we have to *discuss* it. And that is, in my view, what is arrogant about humanitarian organisations, very arrogant. They say they're here to save lives? First, they have to ask Angolans if that is the best way to save them. And no one poses that question. As if we do not think. We think. We have ideas. So, people have to come and have to talk. And you don't see international organisations promoting much dialogue, among themselves and among Angolans. You don't see that. Everyone comes here to teach human rights these days but how much dialogue do they promote with the people they're trying to support? And that's what I think is the main problem with international organisations here: they don't respect locals. And because locals have been battered by so many situations and do not even bear the respect of their own government, [there is] a situation of no moral obligations, of no respect.[93] (Marques, interview, 2002)

[93] Ironically, the very week before this interview with Rafael Marques, there was a conference in Luanda jointly hosted by Angolan NGO, ADRA, and German Agrarian Action, entitled Emergency Aid Examined, which explicitly sought to explore the nature and methods of humanitarian intervention amongst international and

One explicit manifestation of such lack of "respect" comes in the form of World Food Programme food distribution statistics. Criticised in "the field" (i.e. at the site of humanitarian programmes) for a failure to provide timely and accurate figures on food distributions (pers. obs., Kuito, 2001), WFP were accused in a report in July 2002 of providing inaccurate information and reports on the extent of food distributions and of failing to provide food rations to registered "beneficiaries" in IDP camps. "There is a serious lack of real-time and accurate reports between WFP field offices and WFP Luanda", it notes. "The USAID/DCHA team noted that information and reports generated by WFP Luanda did not always reflect the true situation on-the-ground and that the data provided where often incomplete and inconsistent… Additionally, WFP Luanda is providing distribution tables/data that are incomplete and confusing and in some cases are not providing all information requested". The report, a draft Trip Report of a joint USAID/DCHA assessment, further suggests that WFP may have been removing IDPs prematurely from food distribution lists, "prior to being food secure". (USAID/DCHA, 2002, 19) The failure to adequately monitor distribution data and to provide a transparent and accountable food distribution service is indicative of a lack of respect for intended recipients of distributions; this undermines the capacity of individuals to rebuild both their livelihoods and communities, and the capacity of other organisations to intervene strategically to support this.

The Country Director of African Humanitarian Action, Connie Braithwaite, suggests one means of providing for increased respect, understanding, context and responsibilisation alongside food distributions: the deployment of a social worker. "If you doing whatever intervention", she says, "you have to have a parallel structure of some social work with it". She elaborates, "the best way of understanding the people, of who you are dealing with, is to have a social worker there who will work with the population. It may be just talk to them, but it is *very*, *very* important to have that structure there: it may even be in nutrition, it may be in health, it may be in education, where ever, you have to have that social sector in it. (Braithwaite, interview, 2002)

The social worker, as the liaison or mediator between the state and the individual or community, is the antithesis of the system which treats people only as a mass populace. Adapting Foucault (to whom we will return later), we might see the social worker as the possibility of redemption of the mass disciplinary techniques employed by the state in the provision of generalised health care and social welfare. Braithwaite's observation captures the insight that humanitarian aid must be integrated within a socio-political approach that perceives those in need of humanitarian relief as

Angolan aid workers. Nonetheless, one two-day conference in the capital does not disprove Marques' point that international organisations typically do not promote dialogue with Angolans.

primarily in need of less tangible social and political goods such as security, stability, rights and citizenship.[94]

Lack of engagement

The corollary of the institutional or systemic failure of the humanitarian system to engage with "beneficiaries" in the field is the failure to engage with government at the strategic level. Perversely, as the humanitarian system in Angola becomes embedded in the highly political networks of coordination with the Government and the United Nations, individual agencies remain largely isolated from real contact with the state administration and political system. While the UN stage-manages coordination forums which compromise humanitarian independence, NGOs themselves neglect opportunities to engage and influence at the political level in Luanda.

One informant with experience of liaising with government officials on behalf of an international donor speaks to me at length about this process. His words, recorded below, provide a concise statement of the "engagement paradigm": a mode of orientation and action for international organisations in Angola that is advocated in similar terms by a number of international humanitarian and development workers, and diplomats, with significant experience of working with the Government in Angola. Engagement is portrayed as the only *viable* strategy of advocacy. This consists in seeking out the "willing consumers of ideas and information and solidarity" within the Government and bureaucracy and working with them in order to further empower this constituency

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[94] Allan Cain has documented the move to embrace a more rigorous, coherent and transparent set of standards for humanitarian intervention, under a "rights-based" rubric, in an article. He explains the context for this emergent rights-based approach:

"An emerging 'rights-based' strategy based on a set of norms, accepted under international common law as the standard of protection of civilian populations is beginning to form a framework for humanitarian action. Linked to these rights is a demand for minimum standards to be respected in dealing with affected communities within humanitarian emergencies.[5] In the context of Angola, this approach provides common ground upon which humanitarian actors who have had little leverage on the warring parties can stand firmly. The norms also provide guidelines that can be negotiated with government for acceptance as minimal pre-conditions for resettlement and the protection of the displaced. The approach facilitates co-ordination, and potentially defuses political dispute between international and local and government actors. Commonly accepted standards shift focus on to operational concerns and provide a basis for a coalition of interests (for example between local government and international partners) in confronting abuses and violations of rights."

However, there is a blindside to this approach which is consistent with the critique advanced in this paper. Cain writes,

"The emerging rights-based approach to humanitarian action risks however, seeing displaced and vulnerable communities as essentially powerless victims of the crisis. By adopting minimum standards, the role of communities in achieving these conditions as participants could be ignored. The rights based approach to date has primarily addressed itself to the warring parties, government and the humanitarian community (donors, international agencies, NGOs); communities are seen as victims or potential victims rather than actors. NGO programmes have largely depended on the participation of communities in the provision of humanitarian assistance and in rebuilding after conflict. A rights-based strategy will need to evolve further in order to ensure that communities are not just consulted but become focal to the process of rehabilitation, resettlement and the achievement of their rights." (Cain, 2001)

for reform and progress, and in order to build one's own capacity to pre-empt Government strategy and thereby respond and lobby more effectively.[95]

Firstly, he concedes that NGOs (he is referring primarily to the lead NGOs in Angola) are close to the people on the ground and so are aware of the difficulties, issues and abuses that confront them; they see it as part of their remit to act on this information and lobby for humanitarian aid and human rights protection internationally, *outside of* Angola.

> The NGOs would argue with a great deal of credibility that they know a lot about the needs and the aspirations and the problems of sectors of the population, i.e., the ones that they're helping. I think (and I think that they will agree) that they take on some kind of moral responsibility for projecting those views outside [of Angola]. (Anonymous interview, donor, 2002)

However, they neglect to do so *within* Angola: rather than concentrating on international advocacy, they should seek to understand, engage with and influence the mechanisms of government and administration *in* Angola.

> I think the intelligent thing to do would be to devote some time and energy to getting to know how government works, how to access government, who are the players in government, what do they do. How many NGOs really know what the role of FAA [Armed Forces of Angola] is, what the role of MINARS [social affairs ministry] is? (Anonymous interview, donor, 2002)

One of the insights that arises from engagement with the Government is that the Government is not homogenous, that political decisions and policies embody tensions and conflict within Government. This provides the room for leverage; an engaged NGO is in a position to advocate for its constituency with sympathetic individuals within the administration and thereby attempt to influence policy.

> Very few of them have actually bothered to go and find out whether the Government has one unitary view or whether there is tension and confusion [and] aspirations to do something different within Government. And I think they all say they can't do that because it's political. But it's not political. It's working out how to advocate for your constituency. And I think what should set a serious NGO aside from the ones who are just service providers should be a very strong advocacy dimension… understanding the issue, having an objective and actually doing it… You have to work out how to actually talk to the government. And most of them don't know how to talk to the

[95] One of the most explicit statements of the engagement paradigm comes in fact in the form of the OCHA protection strategy: they aim to build constituencies for reform within their parallel governmental agencies. However, in the wake of the failure of the Human Rights Division to take an activist, advocative stance with regard to the *limpeza* and human rights protection generally, the OCHA policy of engagement is one of the means by which the UN system becomes embedded in governmental coordination and neglects to identify or respond to the *limpeza* as a violation of humanitarian law and human rights per se.

> government… There are a hundred and twenty odd international NGOs in this country, probably less then ten of which have a relationship with government that goes beyond their immediate counterparts, less than ten of which trouble to find out how policies are made here, what politics are and what is it that Government is trying to do here. (Anonymous interview, donor, 2002)

The crucial aspect of such engagement is that it prepares organisations for the inevitable changes in their field of intervention that occur because of political decisions, and gives them a voice whereby they can seek to influence such decisions.

> And I think that those organisations that do do that would say it's difficult, it's hard, it's expensive, because you've got to devote some staff time to it, but actually in the medium to long term the benefits are clear because you know how to engage government and when things change, and it happens a lot in Angola, you know how to change with them. Most of the service-providing NGOs don't know how to change. You know, when someone comes along and just moves their [target] population because of a decision the government have taken, they're taken by surprise and they don't know what to do about it, whereas I think a strong advocacy dimension in an NGO's work here puts it in a position to pre-empt disastrous situations in Government by actually working with them closely. (Anonymous interview, donor, 2002)

He reiterates

> I think the Government doesn't give a damn. But I think there are people within the Government who do. So I think it's a question of identifying who *are* the people in Government: who *are* the ones that care? Who are the ones that don't care? How can you work with the ones that do care, to help them influence the ones that don't care? … I think the elite are a thoughtless, heartless, bunch of callous bastards. That doesn't mean to say that I think that everyone who works for the Government is. It means that they are not sufficiently empowered yet and they can be empowered with ideas as well as money and solidarity. (Anonymous interview, donor, 2002)

Fernando Pacheco agrees:

> non-governmental organisations [and] humanitarian agencies should be concerned to work with the institutions of the state. This for me is fundamental… Much of the time, persons say that the state is corrupt and they will not be able [to work with it]. I do not completely agree with this. Because our experience reveals that there are situations of corruption, but there are also situations where there is no corruption. (Pacheco, interview, 2002)

And Connie Braithwaite spells out an approach to such strategic engagement via "quiet diplomacy":

> We shouldn't do it confrontationally. There are ways of doing things quietly… You can work with the Administrator, you can work with the population and they would respond. But if you're going to start shouting from the top of the trees – that's another story. We don't have to be confrontational to

> say we are doing humanitarian work. (Braithwaite, interview, 2002)

Yet this is clearly a risky strategy: not only does it run the risk of leading to a similar embedding of the "engaged" agency in the governmental systems as that of the UN-led coordination, but it also risks cultivating the *perception* that the "engaged" agency is so embedded.

David Mendes, a leading (indeed, pioneering) Angolan human rights lawyer and director of the legal and rights NGO *Mãos Livres* (literally, "free hands"), addresses what he calls the "collaboration" between the World Food Programme and other United Nations agencies with the government. He identifies two possible interpretations of this "collaboration": the positive, "that they are going to reinforce the capacity of the administrative organs in good governance"; and the negative, "that they are going to insure that the government does not recognise that which is its obligation to do, because the government is thinking that it is the obligation of these organisations to train its personnel, and not the obligation of the government. (Mendes, interview, 2002) Echoing an observation made earlier on the consequences of non governmental food distributions, he sees food aid as directly reinforcing the Government's support amongst the people, and as serving to redirect claims of accountability towards the international humanitarian system and away from the Government.

> The humanitarian aid given, for example, by WFP and other institutions was used by the government as a form of campaign for votes. We arrive at a certain point where the population does not complain that the government does not bring us food. They said, "WFP does not bring us food". Which is to say, they transferred the blame to another institution… The government was left free of any criticism because the population retained the idea that this is not the obligation of the state, but of WFP. (Mendes, interview, 2002)[96]

Mendes posits as a solution to this dilemma that humanitarian agencies must tell the recipients of their largesse why it is that they are dependent upon international organisations for support. "Alongside giving food to people", he says, "it is necessary that the people know why it is that they don't have food."

> And no international organisation does this. They give the food but they do not tell the people why

[96] This is explicitly documented in a "pre-election assessment report" produced rather optimistically in March 2002 by an American NGO consortium and led by the National Democratic Institute's Angola office.

"The [project] team noted that the conduct of basic government activities by theoretically impartial public servants are portrayed as an example of the benevolence of the MPLA. The clearest example of this phenomenon is the practice of MPLA officials taking credit for the distribution of food and erection of lodging in the camps for displaced persons, even when such services are clearly provided by the GRA with the assistance of foreign humanitarian organizations." (International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International Republican Institute & National Democratic Institute (Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening), Angola pre-election assessment report, Luanda, March 2002, 5)

> they don't have food. … Why? Because the international organisations prefer to cooperate with the government. To cooperate from a point of view of… giving a good political image to the government. (Mendes, interview, 2002)

He offers a derisory précis of the situation:

> Cooperation that requires the forsaking of independence is not cooperation, it is complicity. (Mendes, interview, 2002)

The challenge, then, is to maintain independence and avoid complicity *while* seeking to engage and even cooperate with the Government. Mendes offers this prescription:

> In my opinion, cooperation does not mean subordination. It is one thing to cooperate with the state for the realisation of the social aims for which we consider ourselves involved, [it is another to] subordinate ourselves to the state for the realisation of the objectives of the state. We need to understand that the function of governing is not the function of the NGO. The NGOs have the function of *obliging* good governance. The NGOs cannot want to participate in governance. If they want to participate in governance, they should stop being NGOs and should transform themselves into political parties. Because the function of the NGOs is not to participate in governance. To cooperate with the government does not mean to subordinate oneself to the government; it is only to create this so-called "coordinated action" so that… society may have optimal services. (Mendes, interview, 2002) [97]

It is a fine line that Mendes would have NGOs tread, under his watchful gaze. He advocates that NGOs seek to oblige good governance – by undertaking advocacy – and that they should not subordinate themselves to the Government as merely service-delivery agents; yet they should cooperate with Government in order to maximise the impact of service provision. For many international NGOs, this would be counter-intuitive: either you engage in advocacy, or you cooperate with the Government in the interests of the efficiency of aid provision. For Mendes, as for other informants amongst the Angolan political and civil society sector, it is not so cut-and-dried. As in the analysis offered by the anonymous informant above, they understand that the Government, or administration, or bureaucracy, is not homogenous; that within it there is tension and conflict of ideas and priorities; and that amongst those are humanitarian and social imperatives. The goal of any organisation with such imperatives, then, must be to cooperate with and support those elements within the administration which are sympathetic, while maintaining a stance independent of the Government per se. And the basis for doing this can only be a sustained and

[97] It seems likely that Mendes is using the term NGO here as a shorthand for the organisations of the international humanitarian system in Angola, including the United Nations and, in particular, the World Food Programme, to which he has earlier referred. Such interchange of terms and labels for the distinct components of the humanitarian system is common.

rigorous analysis of local politics and socio-political dynamics.

Legitimacy & substitution

One humanitarian agency country director recounts to me a recent visit to an IDP camp, where he encountered a Soba with his two sons. He asked them who they would vote for in a democratic election. One of the sons said "UNITA", and the other said "MPLA", and they started to argue. Then their father, the Soba, intervened. "You are both stupid", he told them. "I will vote for whoever gives me food". (Anonymous interview, international organisation, 2002)

We turn briefly to the background to the phenomenon of NGO intervention in Angola. In the early 1990s, with a gradual opening up of the Angolan socialist, centralised state and the greater engagement of the international community in efforts to resolve the conflict, a new political space was created for international NGOs to work in Angola. Tony Hodges quotes from a 1997 Angolan Red Cross report, by Ian Christopolos, which provides some of the context for and consequences of this development.

> The new space created for NGOs in 1991 happened at a time when donors were increasingly seeing NGOs as vehicles for channelling foreign aid (the so-called 'new policy' agenda for donor assistance). This international trend was reinforced in Angola by most donors' lack of confidence in official Angolan institutions, due to the weak capacity of government ministries, the government's failure to take the lead in co-ordinating humanitarian relief or rehabilitation and the low budgetary priorities accorded to the social sectors. As a result, much of the aid to Angola from the donor community, whether for emergency relief or for rehabilitation and development, came to be channelled through NGOs. The majority of NGOs have engaged in what can best be described as 'service-delivery': due to the decline in social provision by the state, particularly in health and education, and its failure to respond in any meaningful way to the humanitarian crisis, the vacuum was filled during the 1990s by NGOs acting as contractors to donors and UN agencies (Christopolos, 1997). (Hodges, 2001, 78)[98]

Christopolos continues

> In the eyes of the people, the NGOs and the UN are assuming the legitimacy of the state. If a NGO rehabilitates a health post, it is they who are expected to pay the staff and stock it, not the government. (Christopolos, 1997 in Hodges, 2001, 80)

Christopolos argues that, against the background of the increasing use of NGOs by donors as alternative recipients of aid money to national government who were perceived as corrupt or

[98] Joseph Hanlon describes a similar situation in relation to aid organisations in Mozambique (Hanlon, 1991).

incompetent, NGOs came to engage in service-delivery, replacing the state in both the delivery of social services and humanitarian response.

The argument here assumes that humanitarian service provision in the absence of governmental service provision gives rise to a situation where popular expectations of service delivery are directed not at the government, but at the NGO. This confers the "legitimacy of the state" upon the humanitarian system, which is thereby placed in a position of obligation and responsibility with regard to emergency services.

Hodges comments further that "the willingness of donors and NGOs to take on these responsibilities let the government off the hook; it could continue to divert the substantial public revenues from oil to other uses". He concludes that the government "began losing legitimacy, not just in the eyes of the international community, but before its own people", while "the population was likewise becoming increasingly less dependent on the state".

Another commentator, Howen, agrees.

> At least during the 1990s international humanitarian aid also reinforced a sense in the government that this was not their responsibility. Before 1991 almost all humanitarian and development work was routed through the government. There were almost no international aid agencies present… During the 1990s, as donors lost confidence in the capacity and willingness of the government to deliver social services and the war ravaged health and education infrastructure, funds were increasingly channelled through UN agencies and the growing number of international and secular Angolan NGOs. NGOs became the new service providers and the government was at least partly able to avoid its responsibilities. (Howen, 2001, 43)

There are two questions here: one is whether NGO service delivery and/or humanitarian intervention serves to reorient popular demands for support and services away from the Government and towards the international organisations; the second is whether such a dynamic impacts upon the legitimacy of the state and the formative political relations therein.[99]

[99] Loren Landau has observed similar processes at work amongst communities in Kasulu in Tanzania, where the presence of the international aid system has caused local residents to redirect claims against the state, and blame for infrastructural and service delivery failings, to the international organisations. He compares Kasulu, a town subject to a "humanitarian influx", with a town untouched by the aid system, Mpwapwa.

"The presence of both refugees and aid agencies has also provided new opportunities and incentives for 'administrative shirking'", he writes. "Indeed, local and national politicians have rarely missed an opportunity, however incredible, to indict international actors for the problems facing Kasulu's permanent residents… There is considerable evidence that these charges have successfully redirected popularly held logics of cause and responsibility… Kasulu residents are now considerably less likely than their Mpwapwa counterparts to implicate the district, regional, or national administration for causing or resolving these problems. Even security, a paramount concern for Kasulu residents and typically the state's most basic function, is not overwhelmingly seen as a government responsibility." (Landau, 2002)

Rafael Marques gives pithy voice to this argument: governmental service delivery and legitimacy is one thing; non-governmental service delivery and popular expectations are entirely another.

> The government doesn't do anything, but that's a problem between us and the government. The moment you come in to provide support, then people expect you to do everything the government does not do. (Marques, interview, 2002)

The fallacy of Christopolos' argument lies in the confusion of services with legitimacy. While it is demonstrably the case that in certain circumstances, popular expectations have been redirected from the Government to the international aid system, this does not amount to evidence that anything like governmental legitimacy has been acquired by the humanitarian system, or lost by the state. [100] In fact, it can be argued that the appropriation of international humanitarian services by the Government (through visibly associating themselves with the provision of the services, for example in opening and publicising them, as well as managing registration) actually boosts governmental legitimacy, and that the popular understanding of the role of international humanitarian organisations casts them as temporary phenomena acting either under the auspices of the Government, or in the temporary absence of the Government due to the conflict.

However, Christopolos and Howen make an incisive point, despite overstating the case. Service delivery by non-governmental organisations may set in train social expectations of continued non-governmental service-delivery, and these expectations may both serve to provide international organisations with an indigenous identity and place them in a situation of responsibility for the expectation they foster. In the context of humanitarian operations which are "not done much in context", as De Mul observes, both the awareness on the part of NGOs of this social impact of their work, and the capacity to foster it, will be largely missing. In the context of the corruption of Angolan political society as manifest in the abandonment of the rural interior by the politico-military elite, the failure of NGOs to recognise that their interventions might implicate them in the social politics of service provision and social expectation, and their inability to engage with these politics, compounds the political abandonment by government. Although services are to be provided by

[100] In one situation witnessed by the author, IDPs resident in one of the camps outside Kuito staged a demonstration outside the local OCHA office after they encountered difficulties with their registration as "beneficiaries". (Pers. obs, Kuito, 2001) However, it is debatable to what extent this phenomenon is generalised throughout Angola. For example, Allan Cain cites statistics that indicate the primacy of community-based "humanitarian" aid over aid provided by the international humanitarian system.

"Communities are the first line humanitarian response for a large proportion of displaced families. OCHA estimates that out of approximately one million confirmed newly displaced people more than half, that is, 555,000 (55 per cent), are integrated into local communities of the provincial capitals or the municipal towns, while about 450,000 are living in camps or are included in temporary resettlement programmes (OCHA, April 2000). If one uses OCHA's estimates of reported displaced this proportion integrated into communities increases to 75 per cent. If one accepts the Government's numbers which include the estimated half a million absorbed into the *musseques* of Luanda, the proportion increases to over 80 per cent." (Cain, 2002)

NGOs, there is little attempt by NGOs to foster or utilise the political capital – in the form of popular participation or contribution – that might accompany them. David Mendes would argue that NGOs should inform aid recipients of the provenance of the aid, so as to promote awareness of the Government's neglect and failures; Allan Cain would argue that the mode of aid delivery should change to reflect a changing socio-political context, and that it must seek to foster and engage communities in the maintenance and provision of their own services; other informants have argued that the treatment of people merely as passive beneficiaries of humanitarian aid compounds their abandonment by the state and the dereliction of their communities, and that aid distributions and other services should be accompanied by mechanisms to counter this. Decontextualised humanitarianism fails to perceive these imperatives, and these opportunities.

José Antonio Martins, a senior advisor to the Minister for Social Assistance and Reintegration, blithely concedes that the Government ceded space and responsibility to the international humanitarian/NGO system, "due to the war". With the war resolved, the Government must now move to reassert its authority and primacy over this space and over the international organisations. At question is not an issue of sovereignty or constitutional legitimacy, but rather the relatively simple, pragmatic considerations of functional service delivery and the disciplining of heretofore unregulated non governmental service providers. The Government, he explains, "wants to discipline the type of aid, because for a long time, these NGOs occupied the space of the government, because the government did not have time due to the war". "As in all countries in conflict", he observes, "there is a tendency for the NGOs to occupy the space which the Government does not manage to occupy".

> It is not a problem of sovereignty. There is a problem in that the Government is going to have to reassume some functions that for a long time it did not assume, only this. It is not a problem of sovereignty. Sovereignty has always existed. The problem is that the Government cannot occupy its space. And when it can't occupy it, the NGOs occupy this space, for better or for worse. Because many times they did what they thought they should do, and it was not what the communities wanted nor was it the priorities of the government. And this was because of the situation at the time. (Martins, interview, 2002)[101]

[101] Mary Daly reinforces Martins' argument by casting doubt on the extent to which humanitarian interventions have impacted upon the consciousness of the Angolan population, due both to the narrow geographical spread of NGOs in Angola and the high turnover of both staff and projects, leading Angolans to understand them as fundamentally transitory entities. She vividly captures the stereotype of the expatriate aid-worker and the context in which most work, that of emergency intervention which is largely disengaged from consideration of social or political context.

"I would imagine that most Angolans view them as transitory phenomena, you know, a lot of these sandaled, baggy dressed people, you know, they will eventually go away. I think they're probably right. A large percentage of them

David Mendes elaborates this pragmatic relationship between the state and NGOs (echoing here the insight provided in parliament when the Vice Minister for Defence stated that NGOs would be to the forefront of aid provision to those people displaced by the *limpeza* strategy): rather than NGOs usurping governmental legitimacy through operating in the absence of the state, their intervention suits the state as it provides for the welfare of the people without expenditure of state capacity or resources. (Mendes, interview, 2002)

Conclusion

Discourse on humanitarianism, citizenship and politics generally is contested in Angola, and the diversity of both interests and perspectives amongst informants renders scientific conclusions problematic. Nonetheless, certain themes are evident here that reinforce the conclusions earlier made on the discourse of the humanitarian system as captured in the UN's annual Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal; these allow us to draw some preliminary conclusions on humanitarianism in Angola in 2000-2002. A failure to conceive of humanitarianism as engaging on the political terrain, and to conceive of 'beneficiaries' as political individuals, brought about by both a disdain for supposedly 'complex' politics and by a system that is oriented towards the reactive provision of instrumentalist relief, results in a humanitarianism that is blind to the profound politics and potentially regressive impact of intervention. Despite its success on other criteria, this is the failure of humanitarianism.

will go away. The ones who will stay around are ones who have a vision of strengthening the state or strengthening other NGOs... They are not actually widespread service providers. They are in no way providing services for the vast majority of the people nor do they have the capacity to do it." (Daly, interview, 2002)

4. Conclusion. From humanitarian intervention to citizenship.

Conclusion

The failures of the humanitarian system in Angola

The humanitarian system in Angola has become closely embedded in logics of coordination and government "responsibilisation" which have led to its close identification – at least rhetorically – with the administration of state. Because of the need for coordination of humanitarian programmes, because of the desire to engage in capacity-building and to advance along a linear continuum from relief to development, and because of the accepted synergy of humanitarian objectives with the overtly politicised peacebuilding objectives of the United Nations system, independent humanitarian NGOs have largely accepted or tolerated this embedding.[102]

This is not to say that such NGOs have necessarily been emasculated. Close integration with the UN system and with government agencies presents clear opportunities to exert influence and for "quiet" advocacy and may improve the efficiency of administration of humanitarian programmes. Yet this integration has a twofold insidious legacy: it restricts the *capacity* of individual agencies to voice critique of the regime (and also of the UN system), and it acts to restrict their field of vision to the narrowly "humanitarian" arena, as defined and perceived by the State and the UN system.

This restriction of the field of vision of humanitarian organisations is facilitated by the development of a distinctive humanitarian discourse. This is a peculiarly depoliticised, technicist, jargon-laid idiom that serves to strip humanitarian discourse of value implications or judgements. In part, this is a consequence of earlier periods of negotiated humanitarian access in Angola, when the Angolan crises more closely fitted an emergent "complex emergency" paradigm and value judgements about the political context of humanitarian intervention were thought inimical to neutral and independent humanitarianism, as well as being unviable amidst the prevailing political complexity. Within this framework, the existence of a "complex emergency" demands that humanitarians negotiate "access" with belligerents to "vulnerable populations" whose vulnerability is measured in terms of "food security" and/or "displacement" (which renders them "IDPs"). By placing the linguistic emphasis exclusively on the humanitarian aspects of a crisis, such discourse facilitates responding to the crisis purely on humanitarian terms, and serves to obscure a political or politico-military context.

Humanitarian monitoring mechanisms measure trends in humanitarian indices of food security, malnutrition and displacement, and are designed to prompt humanitarian intervention. They are not sensitive to the underlying politico-military dynamics, except to the extent that they monitor military

[102] Médecins Sans Frontières are a notable exception. See the MSF reports and the Lancet articles already cited.

activity in order to anticipate humanitarian demands and security needs. The technicist discourse of humanitarianism in Angola, as documented in the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal documents, serves both to obscure the political context to the humanitarian crisis, and to emphasise the rationale and incentive for humanitarian intervention.

In the context of a complex emergency, in which humanitarian organisations are actively engaged in negotiation with warring parties for access to vulnerable populations, and hence are steeped in the immediate politics of resource management and population security, such discourse may not be problematic. It reflects a humanitarian mindset that sees humanitarianism as political only to the extent that it can be manipulated by political forces, and accepts that it must negotiate to obviate this: this is what Mark Duffield has called "politics as policy". Humanitarians indulge in politics to the extent that they take policy decisions – to open this or that programme; to negotiate for access; to acquiesce in the "taxation" of humanitarian supplies by a warring party in order to gain access – and, to that extent, see themselves as political. Value politics are absent from such a conception of humanitarianism, and in this complex emergency context, are largely unviable.

The Angolan humanitarian crisis in 2000-2002, and the broader political crisis, is distinct from this context. There are two key stages in the development of the crisis of 2000-2002. The first is the legacy of both the two failed peace processes, each of which saw the humanitarian system consolidate in Luanda, and seek both to improve collaboration with the government and to move towards developmental programming, and of the failure to maintain contact with UNITA in the aftermath of its retreat from Bailundo and Andulo in 1999. The legacy of these is the restriction of the humanitarian system exclusively to the Government territory and under Government mandate. Following this process, the extension of Government territory – secured through military victory – became the key factor in the geographical expansion of humanitarian operations. The securing of new areas and towns by the Government's Armed Forces allows humanitarian agencies to reach ever more "vulnerable" populations, populations which have, in many cases, been rendered vulnerable by an explicit military strategy on the part of the government.

The second stage in the development of the Angolan political emergency is the fundamental change in the nature of the conflict in Angola that occurred in 2000, a change which was in part obscured by the maintenance of this technicist and effectively neutral humanitarian discourse. When UNITA retreated to the bush from its last urban bases of Bailundo and Andulo in 1999, and the Government signalled the start of the *limpeza* campaign in 2000, the nature of the Angolan conflict, and with it, of the complex political context, was fundamentally changed.

The *limpeza* was not simply a further factor in Angolan political complexity, but an unprecedented

operation across large areas of the interior that sought to and succeeded in starving UNITA into submission. A combination of proximity to and identification with the government and the maintenance of an exclusively technicist perspective on political developments facilitated the widespread failure within the humanitarian system to document it, and to problematise its implications for humanitarianism in Angola.

To the extent that the humanitarian system ultimately responded, through the "protection" strategy advanced by OCHA, it was largely emasculated through reliance on the government. The protection strategy closely followed the logics of coordination, whereby primacy is put on engagement and coordination with government, with the consequence that objectivity and independence suffer. Protection provided for neither a voice of critique nor a policy of intervention.

Fiona Terry's description of the humanitarian response to a different crisis is apt:

> The limits [of humanitarian action] had been exceeded long before, but [the aid organisations] had continued to play along as if meeting the material needs of the refugees translated into a humanitarian act. Limiting their focus to the number of liters of water available per day and the vaccination coverage of children blinded them to the context in which the refugees were embroiled. (Terry, 2002, 216)

In Angola in 2000-2002, the limits of narrowly-defined, technicist humanitarianism were exceeded as the humanitarian system maintained coordination mechanisms with the Government, while that Government pursued the very politico-military strategy that was constitutive of the humanitarian crisis responsible for the politico-military strategy of *limpeza* which was constitutive of the humanitarian crisis. Limiting their focus to the technical criteria of humanitarian intervention blinded humanitarian organisations to the politico-military context of their intervention and enabled them to measure success and progress in technicist humanitarian terms despite the evidence of the ongoing crisis-inducing, *limpeza* campaign. Attempting to meet the material needs of the displaced was perceived as a humanitarian act, despite the fact that the Government responsible for the crisis had explicitly described the *limpeza* strategy as being reliant upon international humanitarian intervention for its success. The consequence of this for humanitarianism generally must be a rethinking of the paradigm of complex emergency humanitarianism.

The limitations of the complex emergency framework

Fiona Terry argues cogently that the term complex emergency "blurs rather than illuminates the contemporary context". She rightly identifies that the term can be used as a substitute for informed political analysis rather than as a catalyst for it.

> It confuses the specificities of war, famine, epidemics, drought, population displacement, massacres, and genocide, and renders irrelevant the precedents from the "simple" past… What is more insidious, the term actually distorts understanding, making no distinction among causes of suffering, instead defining a crisis in terms of the required "multifaceted response". (12-13)

Ironically, the paradigm of political complexity facilitates the abdication of responsibility for political analysis and action by the humanitarian system. In this paradigm, the defining feature of the complex emergency is unpredictability: actions will have unforeseen outcomes, and inputs will inevitably have unintended outputs. Thus the humanitarian political engagement is limited to negotiating for humanitarian security and access, and strategising in order to minimise loss or diversion of inputs and maximise humanitarian outputs (i.e. benefits to the population in need). The nature of the complex emergency context is such that it precludes the possibility of engaging with questions of political value judgements; the complexity defeats these, and in the face of such complexity any engagement risks violating humanitarian principles, or being interpreted as such by other parties to the conflict. Experience has left humanitarians working in such contexts cynical of attempts to engage with local politics. So we have a humanitarianism that is largely depoliticised, or even "anti-politics" (in the phrase of James Ferguson). Politics is a game to be played only in order to facilitate humanitarian interests; the political context is measured in technicist, depoliticised humanitarian terms; these terms preclude value judgements and serve to obscure underlying political realities; humanitarian intervention thus contrives to ignore politics except to the minimal extent that it must engage for its own interests.[103]

Again, this is evident in the representative excerpt from a report on Angola by the World Health Organisation cited previously.

> Angola was plunged in an army conflict for more that 27 years. The period of hostilities created a large internal displaced flow estimated to be one of the largest flows registered in the last 20 years in Africa. During this period the health system collapsed impacting dramatically the socio economic and health indicators…. During the army conflict, WHO in partnership with UN Agencies, national/International NGOs, and other International Agencies, support the Ministry of Health in providing humanitarian relief to vulnerable people living in area of possible access.[104]

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[103] An alternative formulation of this point is made by Dillon & Reid, who refer to complex emergencies as "emerging political complexes" because "they are comprised of dynamic power relations that have long, often convoluted, and poorly understood histories that are social and cultural as well as political and economic and that are simultaneously undergoing significant reformulation and change. The term complex emergency tends to elide these dynamics, often simplifying the vexed political character of them. It does so typically by masking the complex implication of global liberal governance in them." (Dillon & Reid, 2000)

[104] World Health Organisation (WHO) Angola, Draft concept paper: minimum nutrition and health care package for the newly accessible population, *in* Emergency plan of action for resettlement, Luanda, Nov 2002; grammatical

Within the framework of complexity, all political (and military) identity and action are perceived simply as further instantiations of this complexity. Normative issues of sovereignty, justice, rights and humanitarian law are discarded or neglected. The overriding concern of humanitarians is to identify and gain access to sites of humanitarian emergency; in the complex emergency context, parallel issues of responsibility and legitimacy (Who is responsible for the crisis? Who has responsibility for intervening? Who is the legitimate sovereign authority? What is their role in the crisis and humanitarian response?) are perceived as impenetrable or inapplicable.

Ironically, a framework devised to accommodate the politicisation of humanitarianism, whereby humanitarian organisations would engage and negotiate politically in order to protect and further humanitarian interests, ultimately facilitates the depoliticisation of humanitarianism. Complexity becomes a byword for impenetrability as humanitarians abdicate responsibility for political analysis and engagement.

Terry concludes,

> Humanitarian action is more than a technical exercise aimed at nourishing or healing a population defined as "in need"; it is a moral endeavour based on solidarity with other members of humanity. If reduced to a technical act it can be employed in the service of any kind of abuse. Thus the consequences of humanitarian action must be given equal weight with the intention if an ethic or responsibility is to be more than an ethic of response. (Terry, 2002, 244)

An "ethic of response" provides justification for unthinking humanitarian access. Terry posits instead a fuller ethic of humanitarianism which gives weight not only to the immediate justification for intervention (the intention to ameliorate crisis), but to the ultimate consequences of that intervention, consequences which may be better measured in socio-political than in humanitarian terms. In the thesis herein presented, such consequences are part of the underlying political context of humanitarian intervention. Proper evaluation of those consequences will stem from a proper consideration of the normative content of humanitarianism and the political context for intervention. It will stem, ultimately, from consideration of the intended beneficiaries of humanitarian aid as citizens – as political individuals and members of a community, society or polity – and not merely as lives to be saved. The moral endeavour of humanitarianism demands that solidarity and respect characterise humanitarian interventions as much as technical criteria and distributions.

The humanitarian paradox

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mistakes in original.

Fiona Terry argues that increasing complexity is less a feature of humanitarian crises than it is of the humanitarian response: "proliferation in the number and type of actors in the field has exacerbated dilemmas inherent in the provision of humanitarian assistance". (5) She elaborates.

> Much of the "complexity" of contemporary crises resides in the changed response to crises, particularly the competing agendas of the multitude of actors from NGOs, the UN, donor governments, and international military forces. Some 250 NGOs were present in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, working beside at least eight UN agencies, three branches of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, and military contingents from eight different countries.

She continues,

> Emphasising the complexity of crises has become a convenient way of deflecting responsibility for the negative consequences of humanitarian action from the international aid regime to the context in which it operates. (Terry, 2002, 15)

Complexity becomes an excuse for the abdication of responsibility – a catch-all concept that serves to deflect criticism from the humanitarian system. Rather than indulge the complex emergency model, therefore, Terry illustrates the challenges facing humanitarianism by drawing out dilemmas inherent in the constitutive principles of humanitarian action – humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence – dilemmas which are reconciled differently by different organisations according to their individual mandates.

These dilemmas are captured within what Terry calls "the paradox of humanitarian action": simply put, that "it can contradict its fundamental purpose by prolonging the suffering it intends to alleviate". (Terry, 2002, 2) African Rights similarly documented this in a groundbreaking paper in 1994, "Humanitarianism Unbound":

> The central dilemma is whether it is possible to supply humanitarian assistance, under the auspices of a governing authority that abuses human rights, without also giving undue assistance to that authority, and hence doing a disservice to the people one is aiming to help. (African Rights, 4)[105]

[105] This paradox is further elegantly captured by Tzvetan Todorov.

"Humanitarian activists necessarily have a relation with politics. Originally, the relation could be described as voluntary ignorance: the Red Cross succoured the wounded and the starving without reference to their political affiliation. Humanitarianism aimed to avoid becoming political in itself. But it quickly became apparent that the requirement of ignorance or indifference to the political dimension was inadequate.

"When they intervene in a political confrontation, humanitarian workers acquire a political role whether they like it or not. Let's say a dictator decides to displace a population inside state boundaries, or to expel it, so as to grab its land. When humanitarian NGOs come onto the scene to relieve the suffering of the refugees, they become the unwilling allies of the dictator: by removing one reason for indignation, they allow him to consolidate his position. But if they should decide not to intervene, or even to denounce the aggression, then the refugees die of starvation or sickness. In either case humanitarian workers cannot easily feel proud of what they have done. It's a Faustian trap: the price of effectiveness is a degree of complicity with the "devil" (or wicked dictator). If they refuse to

Although Terry's formulation is more sweeping than this latter – she argues that humanitarian action can prolong suffering rather than alleviating it, as opposed to the narrower and more instrumentalist notion that aid might assist a governing authority that is guilty of human rights abuses – both ultimately endeavour to counter the (as they see it) simplistic creed of complex emergency intervention.

Terry examines the specific and extreme case of armed refugee camps. The militarisation of the Rwandan Hutu refugee camps in Tanzania after the 1994 genocide, which Terry witnessed as a country director for Médecins Sans Frontières, forced her and her colleagues "to reflect deeply upon what humanitarian action represents, and at what point it loses its sense and becomes a technical function in the service of evil," she writes.

> It prompted us to think about what our responsibility is for the fate of people under out care when we are unable to influence the overall context. As an aid organisation we had to choose between only two options: to participate or to refuse. (Terry, 2002, 2)

This is the humanitarian dilemma at its starkest: there are two choices – to be complicit in neglect of a humanitarian crisis, or to be complicit in the sustenance of a conflict that is constitutive of humanitarian crisis. The humanitarian paradox, as articulated here, is that neither choice is the right one: each risks doing harm, either by omission or commission; in fact, each *must* ultimately do *some* harm. Although such choice must be informed by rigorous political analysis (in the broadest sense), incorporating local insight, such analysis has commonly been replaced by an appreciation of some generic political "complexity" which does not further the understanding of the situation, but may even act to obscure it.

Terry's identification of the "humanitarian paradox" takes us closer to the heart of contemporary humanitarianism than the complex emergency paradigm. As an alternative to the "politics as policy" approach of agencies willing to get their hands dirty in negotiating with partisan political forces, or to juggle rights-based advocacy and needs-based intervention according to their leverage with the governing authorities, Terry's "humanitarian paradox" encapsulates the awareness that humanitarianism is fundamentally limited; that even within a strictly disciplined humanitarian intervention there is the capacity to do harm; that political analysis and fieldcraft is not in itself an answer to genuine political complexity; and that when humanitarian agencies exceed or seek to expand their mandates they risk confusion, incoherence, ineffectiveness and ultimately complicity.

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compromise with evil, they are paralyzed, but following the orders of the powerful robs them of their soul and gives a depressing message to the world: victims have to abandon the hope of justice if they want to have something to eat." (Todorov, 2003, 265-266)

The ground on which humanitarianism must thus be negotiated is indeed politically complex, but this complexity goes beyond shifting political allegiance, considerations of inputs and resources, corrupt governance and security concerns. It is a complexity of political constitution – a constitutive political complexity – whereby what is at stake is not simply the physical resources for survival, but also the defining values of a society: the sovereignty and legitimacy of the regime, and the integrity and autonomy of the individuals and communities within its boundaries.

Discipline, sovereignty & the camp

Thus the site of humanitarian intervention (in this particular case in Angola) is not reducible to a generic complex emergency. It is a formative political space where sovereignty is enacted in the abandonment and violation of a population who had been nominally considered citizens. Politics is manifest not merely through conflict or the management of resources, but on the sphere of human life itself.

> One day, the FAA [Angolan Armed Forces] came to a village. They went to the house of some people and took the women and children. They took them to Jamba, but they took all the men of this house, four men and even the nine-year-old boy and shot them all. And these men were just farmers there, living on the side of UNITA because they had no choice; these men didn't know anything about UNITA, but FAA killed them all the same. Some people here wanted to go with FAA, but when they arrived they just ran to the bush because they are afraid that they would be killed too.[106]

The forced displacement of rural populations by the Government's armed forces, accompanied by acts of horrific violence, perpetrated with apparent impunity, and failure to provide aid: this is the *limpeza* strategy, announced by the Vice-Minister for Defence in Parliament in a speech invoking the provision of aid by the international community.

The Angolan "native" subjected to crisis is the necessary corollary of the sovereign elite: this is the defining, if perverse, state of Angolan citizenship, and the constitutive act of the sovereign, though corrupt, state.

Humanitarian intervention occurs on this landscape. It is constitutive of the humanitarian crisis that a population (comprising communities and citizens) be abandoned and/or subjugated; humanitarian intervention acts to ameliorate the physical effects of this abandonment (measured most starkly in indices of morbidity and mortality) through the administration of programmes of relief.

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[106] Testimony from international humanitarian agency (name withheld on request), internally displaced man from Kuvango Municipality, Huila Province, February 2001; HRW, 2002, 3

On this landscape, humanitarianism confronts the dilemma of whether to intervene, and risk reinforcing a corrupt authority, or to abstain, and so tolerate mass dispossession and loss of life. This is the humanitarian paradox – dammed if you do; dammed if you don't. But the paradox goes deeper, into the normative heart of humanitarianism: the paradox is not simply that either intervening or abstaining may be to side with the corrupt regime, but that intervention itself is conducted on the terms set by the regime, compounding the political abandonment of the people.

Humanitarian intervention is based here on the value of the human being as physical life. The humanitarian imperative mandates the saving and protection of life irrespective of political creed or context: it neither recognises, challenges nor fosters the political identity of the people it is designed to help. The recipient of humanitarian aid does not do so as a citizen, or representative or member of a community, but simply as a person whose needs are to be measured and met on the physical level: nutrition, health, shelter. In this, the defining symbol of humanitarianism is surely the Internally Displaced Person (IDP) or refugee camp. The camp is the locus of the encounter between citizenship and humanitarianism at its most radical – the paradigm of the conflict of values, or conceptual tension, inherent within humanitarian practice. At its most extreme – or in its ideal type – this form of organisation that makes humanitarianism possible is that which makes citizenship impossible.[107]

Conceived as a rational response to the management of crisis, the camp is inherently in the interests of both the state authorities and humanitarian system. David Keen draws on a historical perspective to observe that "the interests of security services and international aid agencies frequently converge" in situations of conflict and emergency. He observes of the history of the camp:

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[107] The IDP/refugee camp is the typical site and object of humanitarian intervention. This analysis relies on an ideal-type notion of the camp.

However, the camp may also be the site of subversion and contestation of these logics of subjection and discipline. This is perhaps most evident in the informal economies that spring up around camp after any period of time – trading humanitarian relief items is one of the most immediate possibilities for those in the camp to assert their individuality and their social relations: the market is the mark of reinvigoration of informal citizenship. Further, Lisa Malkii has documented the specific norms that developed in the long-term camps of Rwandan Hutu refugees in Tanzania. She writes,

"Exile did not erode collective identity among the Hutu refugees in Mishamo refugee camp. Far from "losing" their collective identity – and far from living in an absence of culture or history – the Hutu refugees located their identities within their very displacement, extracting meaning and power from the interstitial social locations they inhabited. Instead of losing their collective identity, this is where and how they made it. The refugee camp had become both the spatial and the politico-symbolic site for imaging a moral and political community." (Malkii, 1995, 16)

Malkii concludes,

"Prisons, old-age institutions, mining compounds and refugee camps: these are transformative technologies of power in which collectivities of persons become fixed and objectified as "the inmates," "the elderly," "the labour force," and "the refugees." But it is also relevant that such technologies of power can, and often do, become generative, productive sites for social and political invention and transformation – just as the refugee camp has become the privileged locus for the creation of a mythico-history." (Malkii, 1995, 238)

> Ever since the Malaya and "Mau" emergencies of the 1950s, and drawing on the Anglo-Boer war at the turn of the century, military strategies against guerrillas have involved the creation of concentrated settlements or camps in which civilians can be more easily controlled. (Keen, 218)

And he goes on to argue that

> international relief aid is dependent on the visibility of aid provision in the media and on logistical access to concentrations of people in the terminal states of distress. Despite two decades of recognition that camps are a menace to life, livelihood and long-term recovery for the people involved, it has proven almost impossible for large-scale relief programmes run by international agencies to take place outside camp environments, where delivery and distribution can ostensibly be made more easily, to discernible numbers of beneficiaries with measurable results… Thus, whilst agencies may disagree with the brutality of roundups of refugees and the displacement of people in war zones, these actions nevertheless provide them with the context for their work, and they may therefore share a macabre and indirect common interest in creating camps. (Keen, 218)[108]

So, while the Angolan Armed Forces were conducting the politico-military campaign of *limpeza* in the central highlands, forcibly displacing the indigenous population to urban centres within Government-secured areas, where they were instructed to set up camp in delimited areas on the outskirts of the towns, humanitarian agencies were raising money and opening projects to intervene and bring aid to these camps. Irrespective of individual or personal intentions, the interest of the humanitarian system – like any institution or enterprise – is served by expansion and by action, and the camp facilitates this.

As Christopher Clapham succinctly comments

> The NGO needed access to a beneficiary population: like a bank which can only survive by lending money, it could only justify its existence by finding someone to help. (Clapham, 228)

The camp both facilitates access to the beneficiary population, and facilitates the administration of relief. The incentives for humanitarian agencies are strong: relief is easier to secure, administrate, document and publicise in the camp context.

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[108] This macabre interest of humanitarian agencies in the maintenance of the camp infrastructure echoes an observation of Michel Foucault on the disciplinary aspect of emergent early modern militarism.

"Historians of ideas usually attribute the dream of a perfect society to the philosophers and jurists of the eighteenth century; but there was also a military dream of society; its fundamental reference was not to the state of nature, but to the meticulously subordinated cogs of a machine, not to the primal social contract, but to permanent coercions, not to fundamental rights, but to indefinitely progressive forms of training, not to the general will but to automatic docility." (Foucault, 1979, 169)

This is the dream – or nightmare – that haunts modern humanitarianism – that the perfect realisation of humanitarian ethics is to be found not in the restitution of individual and community rights and citizenship but in the workings of the meticulously coordinated camp, in which aid is administered efficiently and effectively to a docile and receptive population.

Humanitarianism is, in this context, very close to what Foucault called a "discipline". In the advent of the characteristic disciplinary institutions of modernity – such as the hospital, prison, school and barracks – Foucault witnessed a paradigm shift in the exercise of power by the sovereign or state. No longer is power exercised in order to punish or to command loyalty; rather, power becomes a productive force employed to produce citizen-subjects disciplined to protect and further the interests of the state in their everyday lives. The paradox of modernity is that an apparent growth in liberty is paralled by a deepening of the reach of the state into the private lives of its citizens; the apparent freedom of the individual to choose his means of livelihood and lifestyle is paralleled by an increasing power of the state to discipline those choices in its own interests. The disciplines produce citizens who perceive their interests as coterminous with those of the state. Furthermore, in the pursuit of refinement and improvement of technique, the disciplinary institutions collect ever greater amounts of information over their subjects and employ ever more refined methods of discipline, exerting control that is the more efficacious the less it is perceived. It is also characteristic of the disciplinary institution that the disciplinary regime be perceived as being benevolent, in the interests of the population, while it in fact furthers the interests of the governing authority.

Most simply, however, the disciplinary institution is characterised by the imposition of external disciplinary regimes on its subject population: ordered and numbered housing arrangements, regulated feeding or food rations, restrictions on freedom of movement, the imposition of force in order to enforce discipline when necessary are all characteristic of such a institution. A discipline is "a power that insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied; to form a body of knowledge about these individuals, rather than to deploy the ostentatious signs of sovereignty". (220)

Humanitarianism is a disciplinary creed of administration of programmes for the survival of life; it does not – as we have seen – articulate a political agenda or operate coherently or consistently within a political framework. Humanitarianism intervenes where citizenship has been lost, but in the administration of aid it makes "subjects" of former "citizens" – subjects, not of a sovereign authority, but of a disciplinary regime.

Giorgio Agamben describes the depoliticised approach of agencies to working in the complex emergency context as the "separation" between humanitarianism and politics. For Agamben, the attempt by humanitarian actors to intervene to protect life, without the means to provide for quality of life (in essence, citizenship) risks "secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight".

He writes

> The separation between humanitarianism and politics that we are experiencing today is the extreme

> phase of the separation of the rights of man from the rights of the citizen. In the final analysis, however, humanitarian organizations – which today are more and more supported by international commissions – can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight… A humanitarianism separated from politics cannot fail to reproduce the isolation of sacred life at the basis of sovereignty, and the camp – which is to say, the pure space of exception – is the biopolitical paradigm that it cannot master. (Agamben, 133-4)

In humanitarianism, no borders are recognised as inhibiting the humanitarian imperative to save and protect life wherever possible. But because *rights* are still dependent upon borders – because citizenship flows not from international instruments, but from national sovereignty – humanitarianism can only recognise individuals as "bare life", as the subjects of humanitarian aid, but not as political individuals. Humanitarian aid offers sustenance, not citizenship. "Despite themselves", therefore, humanitarian organisations "maintain a secret solidarity with the powers they ought to fight".

This solidarity may not only be by omission. In order to expedite humanitarian aid distribution, humanitarian organisations may need to collaborate or coordinate with the regime – the powers they ought to fight. And they may employ disciplinary or management techniques that appear to violate the integrity of the individuals they deal with, in the interests of the efficiency (logistical or financial) of their operation.

In this sense, aid can be described in a term used by Foucault: "an economy of suspended rights" (Foucault, 11). The economy of aid (in Foucault's sense of the word here) is that of cost efficiency and of doing no harm: aid should be of minimal quantity and of maximum efficiency. As such, it aims to restore minimal rights of sustenance and shelter, or to impose a regime of partially-restored, partially-suspended rights, where citizenship remains ephemeral and discipline is tangible. It is an economy of suspended rights because of the socio-political (or politico-military) context in which it operates: it is the suspension of rights, or abandonment of the Angolan rural population that allows the military campaign that provokes humanitarian crisis. The humanitarian response to this crisis, administered in camps mandated by the same regime that provoked it, has no capacity to address that suspension of rights. Humanitarianism here is not rights-based, but operates in the absence, or suspension, of rights.

T.K. Marshall has documented similar processes at work in the 1824 Poor Law in Britain.

> [The Poor Law, following the Act of 1834] offered relief only to those who, through age or sickness, were incapable of continuing the battle, and to those other weaklings who gave up the struggle,

> admitted defeat, and cried for mercy. The tentative move towards the concept of social security was reversed. But more than that, the minimal social rights that remained were detached from the status of citizenship. *The Poor Law treated the claims of the poor, not as an integral part of the rights of the citizen, but as an alternative to them – as claims which could be met only if the claimants ceased to be citizens in any true sense of the word.* For paupers forfeited in practice the civil right pf personal liberty, by internment in the workhouse, and they forfeited by law any political rights they might possess… The stigma which clung to poor relief expressed the deep feelings of a people who understood that those who accepted relief must cross the road that separated the community of citizens from the outcast company of the destitute. (Marshall, 15; emphasis added)

In the Poor Law we see the antecedents of modern humanitarianism: in Marshall's claim that the claims of the poor were treated not as "integral part of the rights of the citizen, but as an alternative – as claims which could only be met if the claimants ceased to be citizens in any true sense of the word", we can recognise the plight of the beneficiary within the humanitarian system (or camp).

Perversely, humanitarianism, whose ultimate objective is the restoration of the conditions necessary for the realisation of citizenship, compounds the subjection of the populace through enforcing humanitarian discipline and negotiating for access with the sovereign power, reaffirming its sovereign right.

That process of reflection commonly focuses on instrumentalist questions of how to do *aid* better: what form of feeding programme is most effective; how to lessen damage to local markets. It should also focus on how to do *politics* better: how to engage aid recipients in the design and administration of programmes; how to balance the imperatives of engagement with government and deference to governmental coordination with the requirement of objectivity and independence; how to overcome or moderate the disciplinary aspects of humanitarian interventions; how to promote social health and the restitution of political identity.

This is the landscape we engage on, one in which corrupt politics may be constitutive of crisis, and in which the realisation of popular citizenship is conducive to stability and security. Recognition of this, and action to attune humanitarian intervention to this context, can reinforce the impact of humanitarian aid and moderate its negative aspects.

A decade on, we can document the failure of the humanitarian system to accommodate the crucial insight of *Humanitarianism Unbound*: that humanitarian ignorance of politics is its downfall. The system has responded to this challenge by adopting what Rieff calls "politics as policy"; it has not addressed the fundamental question of its "democratic deficit": what is the politics of humanitarianism? How can this politics become progressive – be designed to foster political growth,

norms and community? How is humanitarianism undermined by its failure to register – let alone shape – this politics? How and when has humanitarian intervention reinforced the regressive or oppressive politics of a corrupt or failed polity?

Reconciling citizenship and humanitarianism.

Where to, then, for humanitarianism? Does humanitarianism founder on the humanitarianism paradox; is it rooted in the camp, and the subjection and discipline that entails? Is the politics of humanitarianism fundamentally at odds with a politics of citizenship, their relation that of poles on the political scale rather than that of evolutionary, or overlapping, stages? Or is there, amidst the awareness and analysis of this politics, the germ of a different humanitarianism, one that is progressive in that it fosters the norms and social constructs that are necessary to obviate the need for humanitarian intervention in the first place?

Humanitarianism is inherently political, and must recognise itself as such. The principle-led neutral humanitarianism of the Red Cross and Geneva Conventions has its place, and that place is the principle-led conflict that the Conventions mandate. The pragmatic and endlessly flexible humanitarianism of the complex emergencies of the 1990s may have its place too, for there are contexts and conflicts so inextricably bound up in resource-appropriation, shifting identities and allegiances and impenetrable social and political histories that there is little the humanitarian can do other than negotiate his way around road-blocks and give aid when and where security and logistics allow. In such a context, the rigorous application of humanitarian principles would make humanitarianism redundant; to not apply such pragmatic flexibility would be tantamount to saying "let them all kill each other". But such an approach is not endlessly adaptable. The complex emergency paradigm has created a humanitarianism mired in a vicious circle of political cynicism. Engagement with politics and political actors only takes place to the extent necessary to secure humanitarian access or security, and all other politics is seen as irredeemably corrupt and impenetrable. All complex political contexts are reduced to a generic complexity, which entails pragmatic political negotiation and dismissal of any possibility of progressive political action. Value judgements or statements other than the humanitarian imperative are inapplicable and meaningless. The context is evaluated in purely humanitarian terms, in which politics is understood purely in security, logistical and financial concerns: will they give us access/who will protect us? Will they provide visas/transport/staff? Do we have to pay import taxes/minimum wage/etc.? Once this paradigm is applied, it acts to exclude properly political concerns. It pulls a blanket down over the humanitarian perspective and shields it from actual developments in the "complex" politics outside.

The complex emergency paradigm of humanitarianism, although necessary in some contexts and a valuable progression from a strictly neutral humanitarianism that foundered in the crises of the 1990s, has permeated the humanitarian mindset and obscured the specific politics both of local contexts and of humanitarian interventions themselves. It has become productive of its own brand of humanitarianism - reductive, depoliticised and even "anti-political", in that it both mandates negotiation with corrupt and oppressive regimes and extends its own disciplinary practices, entailing the largely unmitigated subjection of humanitarian beneficiaries in the camp.

This is the necessary consequence of a humanitarianism that is blind to its own politics, blinded by its cynicism and obsession with political complexity. (Of course, individual aid workers, individual organisations and occasional interventions will subvert this, either consciously or unconsciously acting to counter the regressive politics of such humanitarianism.)

What, then, of a humanitarianism that recognises itself as inherently political? For humanitarianism to recognise itself as such creates the possibility of producing, rather than replicating, a politics of humanitarianism. Blind to its own politics, the mode of humanitarianism explored above replicates and perpetuates the regressive politics of the regime or context in which it acts. It neglects its own potential as a political force and in so doing allows itself to be subverted by greater political forces. A self-consciously political humanitarianism, at the very least, will engage with these forces, countering regressive elements with a progressive politics. This is the terrain on which the politics of citizenship inform the politics of humanitarianism, on which these concepts are not poles on a political spectrum, but overlap.

Could such a model of humanitarianism have been implemented in Angola in the 2000-2002 period? It is vital to acknowledge here that this is not a black and white issue: the arguments here are not for or against humanitarianism per se, but are a question of degree. To say that a CAP document is mired in technicist language that serves to obscure the properly political context prevailing in the country at the time is not to argue that the Consolidated Appeals Process in its entirety is redundant, or that the United Nations system was incapable of doing good humanitarian work; rather, it is to critique the prevailing mode of humanitarian intervention in Angola and argue that it can and should be done better in the future. The horrific crimes perpetrated against the Angolan people that resulted in humanitarian crisis were perpetrated by the Angolan government and its armed forces and by UNITA (to a lesser extent during the period herein documented). By and large, the international humanitarian community endeavoured to help the victims of those crimes and, in many cases, succeeded in doing so in the immediate context. Feeding centres and IDP camps saved many, many lives; on occasion, interventions by OCHA's protection officers succeeded in improving

discipline amongst troops at a local level and in countering the prevailing trend of impunity. But these efforts were inadequate to the task at hand, that of countering the central abuse of the *limpeza* campaign, and at a diplomatic level, it may be that tolerating this campaign was the necessary price to pay for the achievement of peace in Angola. Clearly, if humanitarian organisations had not been present, the crisis would have been far greater. The point, looking forward, is whether this is sufficient to deem the humanitarian operation a success, and whether humanitarian interventions, elsewhere and in the future, can not be oriented to protect both physical lives and human dignity, to protect both individuals and communities, to promote principles of humanity and of citizenship.

So what will such a humanitarianism look like? To conclude this paper, we can suggest, briefly, some of its components or principles.

Citizenship

Humanitarian interventions deal with people, not beneficiaries. The model of interaction of the system with the recipient of aid should be one of citizenship, entailing mutual responsibilities, engagement and participation. The promotion of norms of citizenship within the humanitarian system both counters an inherent tendency to disciplinary modes of subjection of beneficiaries, and can be productive of progressive politics outside of the humanitarian system through the extension of such practices into the community and polity. Citizenship is not zero-sum. To attempt to promote norms of citizenship within the system does not curtail their promotion or extension within the polity, but rather may act to promote this.

Of course, the humanitarian system is not some form of state: it cannot endow citizenship; it cannot be held to the formal responsibilities of a constitutional sovereign, nor demand reciprocal duties from its citizenry. In key respects, however, it is analogous: in the creation of institutions and systems crucial to the survival and welfare of a population; in the provision and administration of services though these; and in its dealings en masse with the population of, or displaced from, a region, it replicates some of the key functions and relationships of the state. It is in these that it must look primarily to its own politics, and to the potential therein for promoting progressive norms or, by default, for compounding the abandonment of the citizenry that is constitutive of the humanitarian crisis at its origin through perpetuating the treatment of that population as beneficiary-subjects rather than as citizens.

Service provision.

In providing services, the humanitarian system falls victim to two "legitimacy" critiques: firstly, that

it subverts the legitimacy of the state through substituting for the state in the provision of services and creating expectations amongst the populace of non-governmental service provision; and secondly, (paradoxically) that it provides services which are then claimed by the state and serve to insidiously reinforce its legitimacy.

A mode of humanitarianism that promotes citizenship values within its system and endeavours to promote them outside will answer both critiques. The provision of services based on mutual responsibilities, engagement and participation of the citizenry, even if by non-governmental agents, will foster both ownership of those services by the community and empowerment of the community through that. At the same time, they provide a model to the Government of progressive service provision, and the engagement of the community inhibits the appropriation of the actual services by the state.

The State.

Whether negotiating, liaising, coordinating or collaborating with the state, the humanitarian system may ultimately be providing support to a corrupt regime, facilitating its oppressive practices and providing it with international legitimation. A humanitarianism that engages with the regime purely as necessary to secure its own interests risks thereby being manipulated or coerced into supporting or facilitating those of the regime. Here, two key lessons can be learned from the experience of Angola.

Firstly, the division of labour and mandates between different institutions and organisations in the humanitarian system (broadly understood) is vital to the integrity of the humanitarian mission. The subsuming of responsibilities for "protection", for example, by the chief humanitarian agency of the UN, OCHA, and the weakness generally of the United Nations Office in Angola (and its constituent Human Rights Division) led to the dilution of the protection mandate and facilitated the failure of the humanitarian system to perceive or respond to the politics of the *limpeza* campaign. Both humanitarian and human rights interventions are necessary in contexts of conflict or state oppression; fusing their mandates in one agency will lead to the compromise of both. It is vital that elements of the humanitarian system – or of parallel monitoring mechanisms – retain the capacity for independent critique.

Secondly, local politics, even if characterised by a clientelist, centralised oligarchy, contains within it the capacity for change, for advocacy and for progress. As with one of the aspects of the OCHA protection strategy, the building of constituencies of support for progressive intervention within the state administration and political system can counter the tendencies to and constituencies for

corruption and clientelism. The state is not homogenous, and its politics – no matter how "complex" – is neither impenetrable nor irredeemable.

Further, the administration of state extends beyond the central level into local administration, security and services. At these levels too there is the possibility of engaging support for progressive politics and countering both the tendencies to clientelism and centralisation of the state, and the abandonment or neglect of the citizenry. A schematic overview of such progressive mechanisms includes: capacity building of local officials, both in technical skills and, crucially, in accountability and advocacy; "sensibilisation" both of officials and local populations of legal protection, rights and modes of recourse; and forums for bringing local officials into non-adversarial contact with local populations and their representatives, for example in workshops, seminars and focus groups.

The geopolitical & strategic context.

What Robin Cook termed "ethical foreign policy" and Mary Robinson has termed "ethical globalisation" testify to the same real-political realisation: that international relations that are dominated by imperatives of strategic economic, corporate and military concerns will neglect the ethical imperatives of ensuring and securing justice and peace internationally. The point here is not that the wave of a neo-colonial magic wand will bring these to troubled places, but that ethical concerns must drive foreign interventions. This is critical to the humanitarian enterprise: clearly, any attempt to influence the Government of Angola by humanitarian officials responsible for $300 million worth of aid annually will be subverted if international or corporate officials responsible for billions of dollars of oil rents are simultaneously exerting a countervailing influence. Likewise, the protection strategy depends ultimately on securing the backing of international opinion (epitomised in the Security Council) for punitive sanctions on the miscreant state; if such international opinion is lacking, or its attention is diverted or has already been monopolised by other political concerns (such as support for the Angolan Government's campaign against UNITA), then this will fail, irrespective of whether the proper separation of mandates has been implemented. In this, humanitarians are geopolitical small-fry. Yet their influence is sometimes surprising. Humanitarians may have access to the Security Council, and often have substantial influence on donor governments as well as on public opinion.[109] A humanitarian system that is alert to the need for political advocacy and aware of the possibilities of implementing it may succeed in countering a prior bias in international opinion towards the status quo. For this to occur, however, the conditions referred to above have to be in place: primarily, that of a humanitarianism that understands itself as political and is sensitive to both

[109] On the point of humanitarian access to the Security Council, see in particular Samantha Power (2003).

the separation of mandates and to the norms of engagement that characterise that politics at its most progressive.

The individual.

This piecemeal and schematic overview of the mechanisms and methodologies of a so-called "progressive" humanitarianism, or of an "authentic" humanitarian politics, may not sufficiently emphasise a crucial aspect, however. The critical insight is that humanitarian politics must be predicated on the integrity of the citizen, not merely on the life of the individual. Such initiatives as are suggested above must arise from the conceptualisation of humanitarianism at base, rather than from the policy concerns of head office. These are not add-ons, further elaborations of our charity, but manifestations of the humanitarian imperative at its deepest: that shared humanity demands respect as well as aid.

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Alberto, Guilhermino. Political Editor, Jornal de Angola (Angolan newspaper)

Braithwaite, Connie. Country Director, African Humanitarian Action (international humanitarian & development NGO)

Cain, Allan. Country Director, Development Workshop (international development NGO)

Castello, Benjamin. Director, Acção Ecumenica para o Desenvolvimento Social de Angola (AEDSA, Angolan NGO)

Chivukuvuku, Abel. Member of Parliament, União Nacional pela Independência Total de Angola (UNITA)

Daly, Mary. Country Director, Christian Children's Fund (international development NGO)

Domingus, Br. Joao. Instituto de Ciencias Religiosas de Angola (Angolan school)

Emerson, Isabel. Country Director, National Democratic Institute (NDI, international democratisation NGO)

Fernandes, Emilia. General Secretary, Rede Mulher Angola (Angolan women's NGO)

Feio, Raul. Medical Officer, DG Dev Angola (health), European Union delegation in Angola

Foreman, Paul. Country Director, Médecins Sans Frontières, Holland (MSF-H, international humanitarian NGO)

Kumah, Fred. Country Director, Oxfam GB (international humanitarian & development NGO)

Hughes, Patrick. Deputy Director, Human Rights Division, United Nations Office in Angola

Junior, Caetano. Editor, Journal de Angola (Angolan newspaper)

Kevlihan, Rob. Country Director, Goal (international humanitarian & development NGO)

Marques, Rafael. Country Director, Open Society (international democratisation NGO)

Martins, José Antonio. Senior advisor to the Minister for Social Assistance and Reintegration

Mendes, David. Director, Mãos Livres (Angolan legal NGO)

Mwanza, Manuel. Angola correspondent for Agence France Press (AFP)

de Mul, Eric. Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations

Neto, Gilberto. Journalist, Folha 8 (Angolan newspaper)

Ntoni-Nzinga, Daniel. Executive Secretary, Comité Interclesiástico para a Paz (COIEPA, Angolan religious NGO)

Pacheco, Fernando. Director, Associação do Desenvolvimento Rural de Angola (ADRA, Angolan NGO)

Pearse, Justin. Angola correspondent for the BBC

Pinto de Andrade, Justino. Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Catholic University of Angola

Roberto, Holden. Founder and former leader of Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA, liberation movement)

Rui, Br. Mario. MOSAIKO (Angolan Catholic human rights NGO)

Sacala, Alcides. Spokesperson on foreign affairs, União Nacional pela Independência Total de Angola (UNITA)

Sapalo, T. Coronel Eng. Leonardo S. Director, Instituto Nacional de Remoção de Obstáculos e Engenhos Explosivos (INAROEE, state demining agency)

Tunga, Francisco. Chair, Forum of Angolan NGOs (FONGA)

Utterwulghe, Steve. Country Director, Centre for Common Ground in Angola (international conflict-resolution NGO)

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