# Anticipating African Conflicts

**A Capability Assessment of the African Union and its Continental Early Warning System**

**by**

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# Contents

***List of abbreviations***
ACTS: African Centre for Technology Studies
AU: African Union
CEWARN: Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CEWS: Continental Early Warning System
FAST: Frühanalyse von Spannungen und Tatsachenermittlung (German acronym for 'Early Analysis of Tensions and Fact-finding')
GNP/GDP: Gross national product/Gross domestic product
GTZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGADD: Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development
IGO: Intergovernmental organisation
LRA: Lord's Resistance Army
NGO: Non-governmental organisation
OAU: Organisation for African Unity
OCIBU: Office des Cultures Industrielles du Burundi
PIOOM: Interdisciplinary Research Program on Root Causes of Human Rights Violations
PSC: Peace and Security Council
SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army
USAID: United States Agency for International Development

**Foreword**

This has been a long journey. And then I am not thinking about my field trip to Ethiopia in February 2005 that serves as a foundation for this master thesis. I am referring to the process through which this thesis has evolved. Doing assignments like these are at times both lonely and frustrating projects.

I am indebted to many people, as they have made the task easier. The people I interviewed in Addis Ababa have all contributed to the factual content. I would like to thank them for welcoming me, and for sharing their time and their thoughts with a Norwegian student. Also, from the early phases of my research, I particularly want to thank Alf-Åge Hansen at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa, Girmachew Alemu Aneme, and Siegfried Pausewang. Yet, there are others who also helped me as I was struggling to build a contact network in Ethiopia. You should know that I am grateful to you all.

Though, most importantly, I would like to thank my supervisor at the University of Oslo, Karin Dokken. Even though I may have had some moments of melancholy, her insightful and enthusiastic advice helped me stay focused and on track. However, the responsibility for all errors and shortcomings in the final draft is mine and mine alone.

I accept that all research, but particularly on this level, will have difficulties having a profound impact. Still, I hope that this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of some of the challenges facing the African Union's Continental Early Warning System. Hopefully, I can avoid the general warning from the head of the Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern Africa, Alfred Nhema:

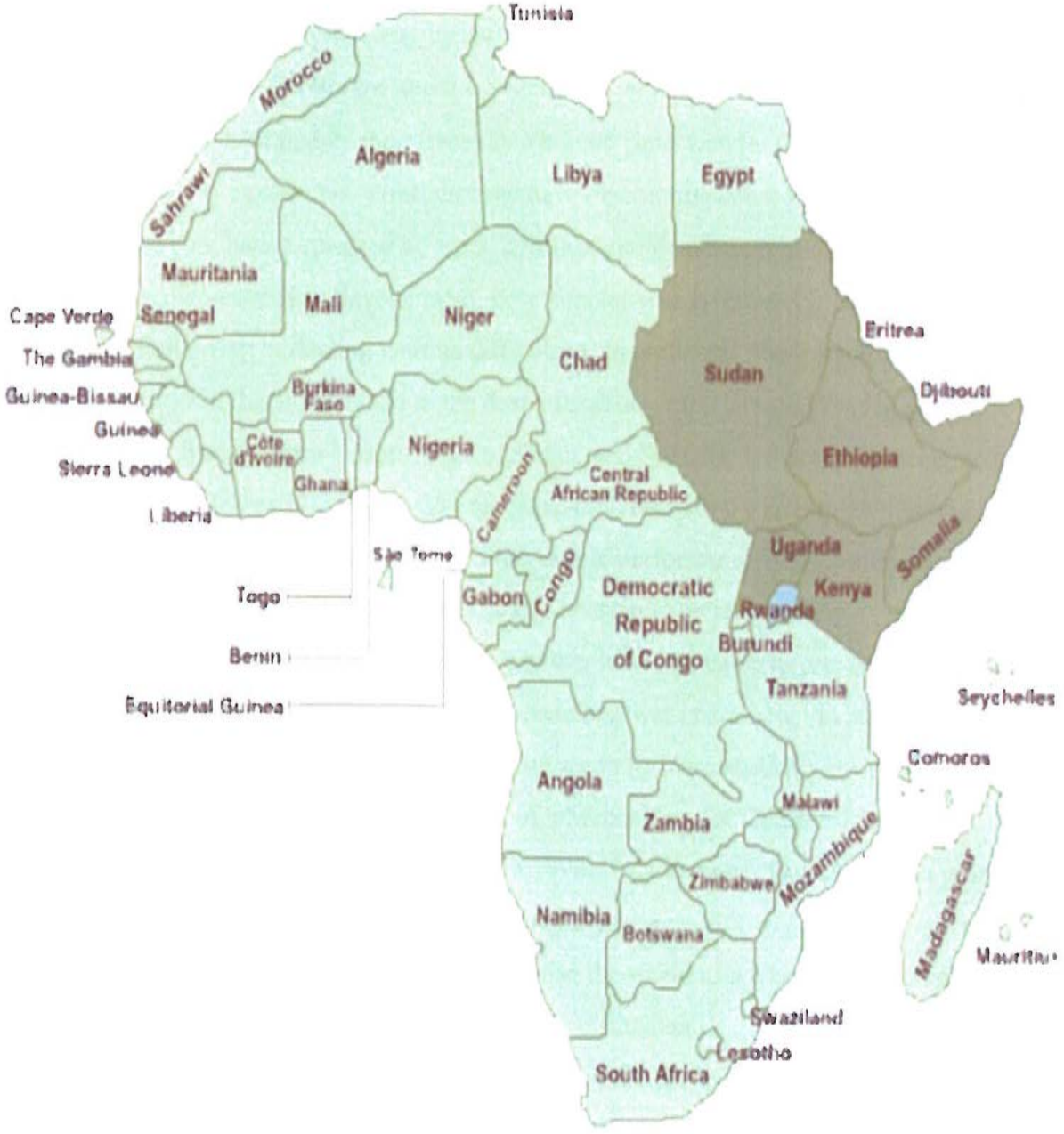
*'You can write wonderful books, you see, but what good will they do if they only collect dust?' (Nhema 2005 [interview]).*

Only future readers will decide if this thesis will be useful as something more than a dust-collector.

Oslo, May 2005.
Christian Nitschke Smith

# Map of Africa and the Horn of Africa

**IGAD member states are marked with a darker colour**




*Source: The Institute for Security Studies 2004c:10*

## 1.0 Introduction

Sometimes when the wind shifts, or if birds suddenly change the direction of their flight, it is said among the elderly in the Borana population that conflict may be emerging. Deep down in the southern part of Ethiopia, close to the border of Kenya and Somalia, the Borana – a sub-group within the Oromo – have for centuries observed and analysed information that may be early symptoms of rising tension. In recent years the conflict between the Borana and the Somalis has at times been very violent, and it has cost thousands of people their lives (Dawit 2005 [interview]). The hostility illustrates Africa's problems. Conflicts may have devastating consequences.

On a continent tormented by wars, conflicts and domestic tension, contributing to the low socio-economic development, new impetus was given in Africa during the 1990s to find a way of dealing with its difficulties. In particular, the Rwandan genocide in 1994 that contributed to the destabilisation of the Great Lakes region, and conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Sudan, and Somalia, left scars that triggered a search to develop early warning systems (Mwaûra 2002:101). The implied logic is that Africa would never improve its socio-economic performance if the continent were unable to do something about the conflicts that constantly were occurring.

One of the chosen paths was to see whether it was possible to prevent conflicts from emerging at all. Although the idea of preventing war is not new,[1] in many ways it was a turning point for Africa when the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) adopted the Cairo Declaration on the Establishment of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in 1993 (Nhara 1998:5$^{th}$ paragraph). Though, only a year later, neither the OAU nor the international community were able to prevent the atrocities in Rwanda. Not only the OAU, but also the world as a whole, intensified the search for systems that could prevent these kinds of incidents.

In this process, the realisation grew in Africa that the continent needed to take more responsibility for its own problems. Albaugh (2000:111) mentions that African states should not ask outsiders to bring peace, and that leaders and continental and sub-regional organisations gradually have matured. Also, the proximity to events, and the

[1] Prevention of war was the dominant theme at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, which put into effect a number of measures aimed at peaceful settlement of conflicts (Ackermann 2003:340).

alleged greater understanding of African conflicts, have been emphasised as reasons why African organisations seem to have taken more responsibility for conflicts on the continent (Mwaûra 2002:99). Furthermore, more pragmatic incidents like the end of the Cold War, and costly Western interventions in e.g. Somalia with a subsequent reluctance from Western powers to be further involved, may have contributed to the African initiatives (Nhara 1998:5th paragraph.).

When the OAU reformed itself and became a union in 2000, this also stimulated the work on constructing an early warning system. Currently, the African Union (AU) is developing a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) that is supposed to detect all potential conflicts in Africa before they threaten peace. Even though the organisation realises that the work progresses slowly, the information gathered through CEWS will in time be used to advise the newly established Peace and Security Council (PSC) on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa (Cilliers and Sturman 2004:17th paragraph).

Co-operation with sub-regional organisations is an integral part of the security architecture of the AU (The Institute for Security Studies 2004a:5). Therefore, the organisation is planning to use regional mechanisms as the main channels through which the AU will collect information. This kind of co-operation must be highlighted when discussing CEWS. Though, to limit the scope of this thesis, I choose to look into how the AU co-operates, or intends to co-operate, with just one of these sub-regional organisations on the continent. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the Horn of Africa has already developed a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), and has in fact progressed further than the AU in establishing a system of its own.[2]

### 1.1 Research question

First of all, it needs to be specified what is meant by ‘an early warning system.’ In itself, this may cause debate as the term is used to describe a number of different, and

[2] IGAD member states are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

differing, activities (Ahmed and Kassinis 1998:203).[3] It depends on issues like the goal of the system (who is to be protected), and the realities on the ground (what kinds of conflicts need to be monitored). I choose to use a definition developed by the Forum for Early Warning and Response – a workshop initiated by the AU in 2003. Here, early warning is 'the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from the areas of crisis for the purposes of anticipating the escalation of violence; development of strategic responses to these crisis; and the presentation of options to the critical actors for the purpose of decision making' (Aning et al 2004:5–6).[4]

Schmeidl (2002:72) has identified four components that tend to be part of early warning. These are collection of information (specific indicators); analysis of information (attaching meaning to indicators, setting it into context, recognition of crisis development); formulation of best/worse case scenarios and response options; and communication to decision makers. I focus on the first area, and aim to look into the development of indicators. Before it is possible to collect information, the people involved must decide what to look for. The collection of information is directly linked to the debate on conflict origins. Then, any early warning system is in need for a discussion on the causes of conflict in the area where it will function.[5] I will start by considering theoretical contributions on conflict sources, and then move on to discuss whether the AU is in a process of developing a system that seems capable of anticipating these conflicts. Then, I hope to answer the following research question:

*What are the kinds and causes of conflict that need to be monitored in the Horn of Africa, and to what extent does the AU seem capable of anticipating these conflicts in its Continental Early Warning System?*

Knowing that the AU regards the co-operation with sub-regional organisations as decisive for the success of CEWS, such an analysis needs to encompass the AU's

[3] The discussion on 'conflict prevention' as a concept, and 'early warning' as a tool will be outlined in section 3.1. Here, delineations will also be made to separate 'conflict prevention' from the concepts 'conflict management,' 'conflict resolution,' and 'peace building.'
[4] The workshop in Addis Ababa in October 2003 brought together academic and research experts, representatives from sub-regional organisations, as well as experts from continental and international institutions dealing with conflict prevention.
[5] In this thesis the terms 'causes,' 'sources,' and 'origins' of conflict will be used interchangeably.

relationship with these institutions. It is by using the sub-regional mechanisms that the continental organisation will collect information. I will therefore consider not only the capability of the AU itself, but also include an analysis of IGAD's mechanism CEWARN in the Horn of Africa.

Academically, there is no agreement among scholars on the origins of conflict.[6] Still, as my theoretical foundation, I have divided the causes into four categories where theorists have claimed to have established causal links to conflict. These are structural/political, economic/social, ecological/environmental, and cultural/perceptual factors. In the first category I rely on contributions by people like Clapham (1998), Reno (1998), and Bøås and Dokken (2002). In the second I primarily focus on Porto (2002), as well as theorists like Collier and Hoeffler (2002). The third will look into contributions from e.g. Huggins (2003), Markakis (1998), and Homer-Dixon et al (1993) on the relationship between ecology and conflict. The fourth category concerns the debate on ethnicity, where I will discuss the findings of, amongst others, Reynal-Querol (2002), Fox (2004), and DeRouen Jr. and Goldfinch (2005).

### 1.1.1 The conflicts

To answer this research question, I have developed four sub-questions that will be considered. The first two are related to the debate on conflict origins, while the last two concern the capacity of the AU.

1) What *kinds* of conflict ought to be monitored by CEWS?
2) What are the *causes* of these conflicts that also need monitoring?

I will primarily rely on existing literature on the goal of early warning systems when I discuss the kinds of conflict that such mechanisms ought to look into. Contributions by theorists like Henri Boshoff (The African Union 2003) and Susanne Schmeidl (2002) will be given weight. They claim that early warning systems must focus on human security, and not solely on state security. As I see it, such a choice of goal has implications for the kinds of conflict CEWS should look into.

[6] I will look deeper into the debate on conflict origins in chapter 3.

As for the question concerning the causes of conflict, I will not develop concrete indicators per se, and I will not claim to have developed an all-encompassing list of features.[7] My aim is modest in the sense that I hope to point my finger at some of the most important sources of conflict in this sub-region. In addition to the theoretical contributions on conflict origins, I will look into some aspects of existing early warning systems to see whether the AU can benefit from already established modules.

However, I will argue that such systems need to be context-specific. In particular, the African state structure and the phenomenon of trans-national processes are vital features to consider when developing such a mechanism. For example, many African rulers have seized power to get access to resources and build patron-client networks (Lind 2002:2), thereby excluding parts of the population from the state (Markakis 1998:3). Such exclusionary regimes seem more likely to trigger tension, and must, therefore, be monitored (Porto 2002:26). Furthermore, Bøås and Dokken (2002:12–14) refer to the phenomenon of trans-nationalisation, and talk about the fact that many conflicts in Africa cross national borders. Thus, far more countries than the one where the conflict originated are affected.[8] I will argue that it is crucial to be aware of such context-specific features when establishing such a system in this region.

### 1.1.2 The AU

The second set of sub-questions is related to the role of the AU. I will adopt from Cliffe and White (2002:44) the necessity for a *capacity assessment* where I consider the potential of the AU and the institutions it co-operates, and plans to co-operate, with. As my focus is the Horn of Africa, the co-operation with IGAD will be looked into. Because my research question asks whether the AU is *capable* of anticipating conflicts, it is natural to make use of theories that treat of the *capacity* of institutions.[9] By capacity, I will refer to the *existence* and *effectiveness* of such mechanisms (ibid.).

[7] In this thesis an indicator will be understood as an operational variable, i.e. a variable that is possible to measure empirically (Hellevik 1999:50–51).
[8] Thomas Risse-Kappen introduces the concept of trans-nationalisation to describe 'regular interactions across national borders when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organisation' (Risse-Kappen 1995:3).
[9] Capability may be defined as the quality of being able to do something (Cowie 1989:166).

Of course, it is crucial to separate between these two parts of the capacity concept, as the mere existence of a phenomenon does not guarantee its effectiveness.

Nevertheless, the concept effectiveness is a problematic measurement criterion. Various studies use different definitions, and consequently different indicators to identify the effectiveness of an organisation or a regime.[10] Wettestad (1995) provides a historical overview of the debate as he discusses the effectiveness of international environmental institutions. For example, it is possible to look into the type and stringency of the decisions issued by the organisation; one can say that an institution is effective if it reaches its own goals; if it triggers behavioural change; if it solves problems; or if it is shown that improvement would not have taken place without the existence of the institution (Wettestad 1995:10–16).

Since I have chosen a theoretical approach to conflict causes, I will define effectiveness in relation to the theoretical contributions. Inspired by Wettestad, my definition of effectiveness will be the degree of correspondence between expert advice (indicating what would be the ideal solution) and the regulatory/political decisions taken (ibid.:6). To assess the effectiveness, I will differ between the ability and the stated and actual willingness of the organisation to construct such a system.[11] The stated willingness will be identified using AU documents, and statements from AU officials. However, I will not just focus on hopes and ambitions. Therefore, I will discuss whether the AU has an actual willingness and an ability to implement the stated willingness as it may appear in statements and documents. These questions are the operationalisations through which I aim to answer the research question.[12]

3) To what extent does the AU alone show the capacity to look into the causes and kinds of conflict?
4) To what extent does the AU, in co-operation with IGAD, show the capacity to look into the causes and kinds of conflict?

In the capacity assessment I have developed indicators on effectiveness using contributions from Espegren (1999) and Wettestad (1995). To Espegren, institutional

[10] See for example Stokke (2001), Young (1999), and Andresen and Wettestad (2001).
[11] Espegren (1999) uses the concepts ability and willingness to evaluate the OAU and its role in conflict management, but as the focus of her study is different, I do not rely on her definitions.
[12] Hellevik (1999:50–51) emphasises the importance of operationalisation to evaluate whether an empirical phenomenon can be considered part of a theoretical concept.

capacity involves rules and norms protecting individuals, an effective decision-making procedure, and sufficient human, financial and logistical resources (Espegren 1999:24). I use her categories as my point of departure, but I include some indicators from Wettestad, as they are important supplements. In particular, this concerns issues concerning the role of the secretariat (the administrative organ), the role of the agenda, and the organisation of the scientific-political complex (Wettestad 1995:27–45).[13] A complete institutional analysis is beyond the scope of this thesis, and I have therefore chosen to use the indicators that seem particularly relevant for the AU in this early phase of its work on CEWS.

However, it seems evident that the criteria I have developed to evaluate this system run the risk of not making one important consideration. Ideally, systems like these ought to be evaluated based on their actual impact and ability to prevent conflicts. As I see it, the true potential of the agencies involved and tools employed cannot be properly assessed until they have been put to such an empirical test. They should be given the opportunity to function in the real world before a judgement is made. However, few researchers have the chance to use society as their laboratory, and manufacture the combinations of conditions that they want to investigate, like Ragin (1987:47–48) seems to recommend. My assessments will, therefore, be limited by the fact that the actual implementation of the mechanism is still under way.

Yet, as the AU is currently constructing its mechanism, I will not only register how far the organisation has actually progressed. I will look into the past, but also focus on the present and the future to discuss where the AU is headed. This will imply an identification of the most important challenges that the AU needs to look into when further developing its mechanism. The counsellor of the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry in charge of the AU/IGAD, Tesfaye Yimal, has named the AU system ‘an animal yet to be identified’ (Tesfaye 2005 [telephone interview]). In line with such a statement, the AU itself would not claim that the organisation has developed a fully operational early warning system. On the contrary, AU officials refer to the current system as an ‘Early Warning Unit,’ drawing a distinction between the present mechanism, and the one that

[13] For a further elaboration, see section 3.5.

is under construction (Mokhtar Awed 2005 [interview]). Still, I will look into the system as it appears now, and not *only* speculate on what kind of animal that might appear some time in the future. The development of such a system is a continuous process that constantly needs to be discussed and evaluated. I will therefore consider the current system as this is part of the process towards the implementation of CEWS. Then, it is interesting to identify the challenges along the way. All contributions that highlight how far the AU has come, the direction it appears to be choosing, and the obstacles that need to be overcome are valuable in this regard.

### 1.2 Theoretical framework

Whether or not it is possible at all to create a system that encompasses all potential conflict origins has been heavily debated in the literature.[14] Still, Bercovitch has stated that it is possible to identify the conditions that lead to conflict if you have historical information as well as knowledge about the context. In addition you should know each party's objectives, and be informed on ethno-communal groups and their grievances (Bercovitch referred in Apuuli 2004:176). I adopt the underlying assumption that it is possible to measure even root causes of a conflict, but I admit that it is a difficult undertaking. To make a complete list of conflict causes is at best an ambitious assignment, and would probably require the mind of an omniscient power.

Nevertheless, I will try to answer the first set of sub-questions in the chapter *Theory* (chapter 3). Here, I claim that it is important to clarify the goal of the system. One of the main distinctions separating early warning from intelligence is in fact the goal, where the latter is focusing on *state* security. I will draw a line between early warning and intelligence, and base my understanding of an early warning system on contributions by e.g. Boshoff (The African Union 2003:7–8) who argues that such mechanisms must focus on *human* security.

Following this short clarification, I move on to look into the scope of early warning. This will entail a discussion of what kinds of conflict that the AU ought to monitor, and subsequently I will seek to identify the relevant independent variables

[14] Writers like Ahmed and Kassinis (1998), Dedring (1992), and Cilliers and Sturman (2004) have all contributed to the debate.

causing these conflicts. Still, the discussion concerning the choice of a dependent variable will be given weight, as it seems clear from the literature that different kinds of conflict have different origins. For example, Marta Reynal-Querol (2002:39) shows that natural resources are an important variable in explaining the incidence of ideological/revolutionary civil war, but not to explain ethnic civil war. Therefore, to identify all the various patterns that lead to conflict seem to be a complex undertaking. In its efforts to establish a system that detects all the different ones, I will argue that the AU should choose a broad approach to the conflict term.

In my understanding of how conflicts may escalate, I rely on Peter Wallensteen (2004:34–39) who identifies three approaches that were prevalent in the 1990s. According to the author these three complement each other. First, he mentions 'conflict dynamics,' and refers to the interaction between attitudes, behaviour and incompatibility of goals. A conflict sequence can begin in all three areas. Second, he focuses on the denial of 'basic needs.' Here, a conflict may escalate if individuals or groups are denied for example security, identity or in some way are excluded from society. Third, conflict is said to stem from 'rational calculations.' It is said to commence more or less as the outcome of a rational assessment of costs and benefits. Thus, Wallensteen shows how conflicts are created in various ways.

Furthermore, Waltz differs between three images, and argues that conflicts may originate in all three areas. His point is that the causes may be attributed to man (image of the individual), the state (image of the nation-state), the state system (image of the state-system), or as the result of a combination of the three. He argues that 'so fundamental are man, the state, and the state system in any attempt to understand international relations that seldom does an analyst, however wedded to one image, entirely overlook the other two' (Waltz quoted in Porto 2002:17). Taking Wallensteen and Waltz into account, I adopt the view that we need a broad focus to understand conflict.

Still, it needs to be pointed out that the phenomenon of conflict itself is, as I see it, a more or less normal part of society. The challenge for any early warning system is to detect the conflicts that turn violent. Then, aiming to identify the relevant independent variables, the endeavour seems even more breath-taking as the causes of

conflict are complex, and that there are no one theory that explains the incidence of the phenomenon (Ackermann 2003:342; Huggins 2003:1). Scholars disagree on what kinds of issues that are most important, and thereby should be monitored. Consequently, Schmeidl (2002:79) points out that the search for a key set of indicators, upon which all conflict escalation processes could be monitored, largely has been abandoned. My aim may then seem ambitious, as I will try to point out some main conflict trigging features that such a system needs to look into in the Horn of Africa.

Often, theorists make a sharp distinction between the causes of interstate and internal conflict (O'Brien 2002:799). However, empirical work by Blomberg and Hess demonstrates a strong link between internal conflicts, external conflicts, and economic conditions that is mutually reinforcing (Blomberg and Hess referred in O'Brien 2002:799). Therefore, I will not distinguish sharply between these kinds of conflicts. The phenomenon of trans-national processes is also relevant in this regard as it shows how internal conflicts in Africa often involve other states (Mwaûra et al 2002:35).

The four categories that I have developed, and that I claim that CEWS should look into, are inspired by Michael Brown's categorisations. He differs between structural, political, economic/social, and cultural/perceptual factors when explaining the causes of internal conflicts.[15] Under the heading *political/structural,* I will discuss the role of the state, non-state actors, political systems, and trans-national processes in Africa. The next ones – *economic/social, ecological/environmental* and *cultural/perceptual* – will look into whether it is greed or grievance, i.e. money or identity that lead to conflict. Even though the ecological/environmental discussion is often referred to as the 'resource-war' debate (Porto 2002:8), and has economic implications, I choose to look into this separately to structure the presentation. I discuss whether ecological factors can contribute to conflict, and look into the need of monitoring areas that have scarcity or abundance of natural resources. (For a further elaboration of the theoretical framework – see chapter 3.)

## 1.3 Methodology

[15] Michael Brown's categorisations will be presented more thoroughly in section 3.4.2. For an even more thorough discussion, consult Porto (2002:24).

The research question focuses solely on the Horn of Africa, while the AU aims to develop a system that encompasses the entire continent. For the AU, it will of course weaken the relevance of the thesis that I have just looked into the sources of conflict in this part of Africa, and merely focused on AU co-operation with IGAD. Also, it is a weakness in terms of social theory and the search for developing indicators for the whole of Africa that I have chosen to limit my analysis to the IGAD region only. Nevertheless, I hope that my contribution at least may provide some insight to the kinds and causes of conflict that need monitoring in this area. Also, I claim that parts of the discussion will apply not only for the Horn, and may be used when establishing early warning systems in other regions of the continent as well. Though, in new areas, it would be necessary to do a new analysis, and consider other context-specific features.

### 1.3.1 Case study

The choice of method must be determined by the topic. Also, the intention of the study must be considered (Espegren 1999:6). As I aim to look into the progress of the AU's Continental Early Warning System, I have found it fruitful to use the organisation as a case study. My understanding of a case study is primarily based on Yin. He describes it as an empirical inquiry that 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin 1994:13).

Yin distinguishes between multiple and single case studies, and between holistic and embedded case studies. The first distinction is a question of how many cases one chooses to analyse. The second indicates whether a case study has more than one unit of analysis. An embedded study means that there are several sub-units that are to be analysed within the case. I have chosen a single, embedded case study as I analyse the AU, but look into IGAD's mechanism CEWARN as well.

I am aware of the fact that multiple case studies often are looked upon as more reliable than single case studies, partly because more than one case enables the researcher to look for structural patterns. Structural variables may have a tendency to change slowly in a single case, and these causes may easily be forgotten (Ragin

1987:70). However, this is not a valid criticism for this case study as my aim is just to look into the AU mechanism.

### 1.3.2 Choice of method

The researcher also needs to decide what kind of method that she will use to collect information. Broadly, quantitative studies emphasise statistical analysis, where the researcher presents her findings using numbers, and then interprets the pattern in her material (Hellevik 1999:13). Qualitative studies, on the other hand, are well suited to point out processes and meaning that are difficult to present quantitatively or by frequencies (Denzin and Lincoln referred in Thagaard 1998:16). Based on this distinction, I have chosen a qualitative approach, as my discussion focuses on the process within which the AU subsists. Furthermore, Thagaard (1998:12) asserts that qualitative methods are appropriate when the phenomenon has not been exposed to heavy research. This is the case for the AU's early warning system as it is a relatively newly born child.

To collect data for this thesis, I spent two weeks in Addis Ababa in February 2005. Home to the AU Headquarters, as well as the CEWARN head office, the Ethiopian capital was the natural destination point for a most needed field trip. Among my informants are 5 AU officials, and one representative for CEWARN. All in all, I interviewed 18 people, representing scholars, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Ethiopian bureaucrats, foreign donors, and the two African organisations.

As many of the informants had different views, and highly differing positions in relation to CEWS, I chose to develop an interview guide, but to use a partly structural approach in the interviews. This way of interviewing means that the main subjects that the researcher focuses on are identified in advance. However, the sequencing of the themes will vary (Thagaard 1998:85). As for the information guide, I developed a set of pre-planned main questions that together should cover the overall subject. This gives the researcher the opportunity to estimate how much time that she can spend on the various issues (Rubin and Rubin 1995:202). Still, even though there seems to be less room for follow-up questions using this strategy compared with more cultural

interviews, my aim was to be open and inclusive whenever the informants presented new perspectives.

Based on the four sub-questions I had developed from the research question, I had specified the topics that I wanted to discuss in the interview guide. This helped me remember all the issues, but each interview was unique in the sense that I formulated questions differently to each interviewee. Questions to AU and IGAD officials working with early warning were at times less critically stated than during interviews with highly sceptical scholars and representatives from NGOs. Some questions could be sensitive, and I therefore chose a somewhat passive approach at some occasions. At least, this strategy was from time to time employed in the beginning of the interviews to develop confidence. Though, being a Norwegian student, I believe that it might be easier to share reflections on potential obstacles with me than with people more politically involved in the realities in the region.

The interviews I conducted resemble what Rubin and Rubin (1995:196–225) call topical interviewing. Here, factual content matters, and the researcher guides the questioning more actively in topical interviews than in cultural ones. It is essential to be prepared, and I had done considerable background work as I had read documents, academic contributions, and also done some preliminary interviewing of scholars. Moreover, in the weeks and months preceding the field trip, I had established a vast network of contacts in Addis Ababa, and identified some potential key informants. One of the advantages of background work is the opportunity to identify interviewees that are most likely to have first-hand knowledge of the theme of the study (ibid.:198). Background work also enabled me to ask specific detailed questions on various issues.

### 1.3.3 Validity and reliability

To judge my research design, I have employed the four different tests that have been commonly used to establish the quality of any empirical social research. Yin (1994:32–33) differs between construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. To some extent, they all must be considered in my research, even though their relevance varies.

*Construct validity* is a matter of establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied (ibid.). It was particularly important for me to address this issue, because if I failed to develop a sufficiently operational set of measures, or if I can be criticised for being too 'subjective' in the data collection and the analysis, the study would loose its trustworthiness. In my effort to deal with this aspect of the validity problem, I have used multiple sources of evidence, as recommended by Yin (1994:34). I have spoken with informants both inside and outside the AU. Also, I have relied to a considerable extent on academic contributions, in addition to the official AU documents, to be able to evaluate and discuss the AU's efforts.

The next area of concern is *internal validity*. Here, the researcher aims at establishing causal relationships to say whether one variable leads to another. I face the internal validity problem in the first set of sub-questions where I look into the debate on conflict origins. This is a difficult undertaking as Hoyle et al (2002:33–36) demonstrate that even though two variables are present simultaneously, they are not necessarily causally linked. No scholar can stroll self-confidently past the difficulties to establish internal validity.

Furthermore, a case study researcher has to address the possibility of multiple conjunctural causation. Usually – and perhaps particularly when it comes to the causes of conflict – it is the combinations of conditions that lead to change. This kind of intersection in time and space is referred to by Ragin (1987:19) as 'Mill's chemical causation.' The author points to the fact that many different combinations can yield the same result. He says that social causation can both be multiple (many independent variables affecting the dependent variable) or conjunctural (the independent variables might interact and then together cause the dependent variable) (Ragin 1987:19–27). As for my study, I have tried to deal with the threat to internal validity by employing the tactic of explanation building. Here, the explanation evolves as the research moves on. Hence, the researcher moves back and forth between theory and data, and builds an explanation as she goes along (Yin 1994:110–113).

The point with *external validity* is to establish the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised (ibid.:32). This is relevant for the causes of conflict-debate, but it is less relevant for the discussion of the AU. As for the former, I sought

to identify a set of causes that were prevalent in the entire region, but my study did not consider every country in detail. Then, I encountered a problem with external validity. My way out seemed to be Yin's replication logic where the researcher tests her findings in more than one area (ibid.:36). This can strengthen the argument. By using practical examples from several countries, I claim that my findings on the causes of conflict can be applied to all countries in the Horn.

As for the latter, external validity is less relevant since my aim is just to say something about the AU. Though, to some extent the findings on the challenges related to the co-operative efforts between the AU and IGAD can perhaps be generalised to apply to the AU's relationship with other sub-regional organisations in Africa. It is hard to generalise on the basis of one case, but some of the challenges will probably be identical. However, my aim is to say something about the AU's relationship with IGAD, and I do not claim that my findings should be generalised.

When it comes to the *reliability*, the point is that my results should be independent of me as a researcher. If some other scholar decided to conduct the same case study all over again, and followed the same procedures, her findings and conclusions should correspond with mine (Yin 1994:36–37). To deal with this difficulty, Yin suggests that as many steps in the research design are made as operational as possible, and that the research is conducted 'as if someone were always looking over your shoulder' (ibid.:37). I have demonstrated what kind of choices I have made to be able to evaluate the AU, and what kind of criteria that I have employed. Taking these steps, I feel that I have ensured the reliability of the study.

### 1.3.4 Sources

To answer my research question I have relied on different sources. As for the first two sub-questions that deal with the kinds and causes of conflict, I have primarily used secondary sources. In general, this consists of academic literature like books and articles that are written on the basis of previously collected information (Trollstøl 2004:15).

I have answered the second set of sub-questions by using both primary and secondary sources. The primary ones – interviews and AU-documents – are important

not only for information on the factual progress of the mechanism, but also as sources for my discussion on the ability and the willingness of the AU to move forward. Dealing with all kinds of sources, but especially the ones linked to the AU, it is crucial that the researcher keeps a critical distance. I argue that it is a greater danger that people attached to an organisation may express more positive, sometimes biased views compared with people who are independent. Their views are not necessarily wrong because they happen to be positive, but this possibility made me intensify the search for other sources. They may be a counterweight to the information from AU officials.

### 1.4 Structure

In this chapter, I have outlined the background, and the topic, of my thesis. I have presented the research question that has both normative and descriptive elements. I moved on and introduced four sub-questions to structure the analysis. Then, I sketched the methodological framework, and considered some methodological difficulties faced by my research design.

In chapter 2, *Background*, I will give a short presentation of the two systems (CEWS and CEWARN). Moreover, I will briefly look into the history of early warning in Africa to place CEWS in a historical and geographical context.

In chapter 3, *Theory*, I will seek to answer the two sub-questions that are linked to the debate on conflict origins. I will look into theories on the causes of conflict, as well as theories on early warning systems. I will establish my own criteria for evaluating CEWS, based on my argument that such mechanisms in the Horn of Africa need to be context-specific. Also, I will specify the indicators from which I will do a capacity assessment of the willingness and the ability of the AU.

In chapter 4, *The capacity of the AU*, I will consider the third sub-question, and try to analyse how the AU alone takes the criteria that I develop in the theory-chapter into account.

Chapter 5, *Co-operation*, will deal with the fourth sub-question. The aim will be to identify the capacity of CEWARN, and look into how the AU and IGAD co-operate.

I will end this thesis by summarising in chapter 6, *Conclusion*. Here, I also aim to give some policy recommendations based on the findings in the study.

## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 The need for conflict early warning in the Horn of Africa

In many ways the recent history of the Horn of Africa has been written with weapons. It would not require a lot of work to identify conflicts in the area, as there are so many to choose from. The region is one of the poorest and most turbulent in the world (Sørbø and Pausewang 2004:5). On the CEWARN web page, it says that the area suffers from 'thirty potentially threatening inter-communal conflicts; a collapsed state due to internal conflicts; a recent interstate war between two member states; a great number of endemic violent cross-border pastoral conflicts; and, the continued threat of inter-state wars arising from cross-border inter-communal and inter-clan conflict (CEWARN 2004:1st paragraph).

This kind of numbering of conflicts runs the risk of hiding both their various causes, and the devastating consequences emanating on the ground from each and every one. Still, adding them up creates an image of a region that constantly struggles, but always fails to stand up. Tension. Disputes. Conflict. War. All the time there seems to be something new arising, impeding all kinds of development.

When it comes to the *history* of conflict in the area, Alex de Waal (2004:12–16) talks about three strategic power games. The oldest one concerns the river Nile, and the Nile Waters Agreement from 1959. Then and now, Egypt has played a major role, unwilling to give up historically based privileges entitling it for large parts of the annual flow.[16] The second power game was the way the superpowers got involved in conflicts in the region. Due to the geo-strategic importance of the area, the USA and the Soviet Union supported governments and rebel groups in different countries. Yet, the end of the Cold War made the superpowers loose some interest, but the USA renewed its Eastern Africa-attention in the war against terrorism. This is referred to as the third strategic power game.

Talking about historical legacies of conflict, other theorists point to the colonial borders, and assert that they have resulted in problems with state making and nation

building. For example, Lionel Cliffe lists three of the countries, identifying problems with 'Somalia, whose nationalism embraced neighboring Somali minorities; Ethiopia with a territory that resulted from resistance to European colonialism but also from becoming an empire; Sudan straddling the cultural divide between Africa south of the Sahara and the north' (Cliffe quoted in Mwaûra et al 2002:32). Revision of boundaries has not been common in Africa, but the appearance of Eritrea, the continued struggle for a separate Oromo state in Ethiopia, and the ambitions of Somaliland and Puntland to become recognised nations in the failed state Somalia, indicate that the colonial borders continue to trigger disputes (Mwaûra et al 2002:32).

Today, the most pressing sources of tension seem to originate in these areas. In the Sudan, a peace agreement was signed in January 2005, but the country still struggles with the conflict in Darfur. Furthermore, the peace agreement must be implemented, by Walter (2002) referred to as the most difficult phase of a peace process. In addition, the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the conflict between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the lack of a state in Somalia, are all adding to the impression of a shaky region (Sørbø and Pausewang 2004:6). If we include the threat stemming from the HIV/AIDS epidemic that de Waal (2004:20) asserts will 'make economic development and good governance all but impossible,' and the way all the countries struggle with enduring poverty, it seems evident that the Horn of Africa faces a plethora of challenges. In this context, the creation of any mechanism that would make it possible to prevent some of the conflicts, would be a most needed helping hand.

## 2.2 Presentation of CEWS

For decades, various kinds of early warning systems have been employed in the region, but the establishment of mechanisms for *conflict* early warning is a fairly recent phenomenon.[17] The Organisation for African Unity established its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in 1993. During the 1990s, a Situation Room that should collect information was established within the Conflict

[16] The conflict of the Nile waters is discussed as an ecological source of conflict in section 3.4.5.

Management Centre in the OAU (The African Union 2003:3). However, the organisation never managed to establish a fully operational early warning system. Even though the change primarily is of formal character, the challenge was passed on to the AU after the reform in 2000.[18]

The most important document as far as the AU and early warning is concerned is the 'Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union' that replaced the OAU Mechanism.[19] (From here, referred to as the PSC Protocol.) The powers of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) include that it shall 'anticipate and prevent conflicts, as well as policies that may lead to genocide and crimes against humanity' (The African Union 2002:Article 7 (1a)). Also, it has the right to recommend intervention if it detects 'war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity' (ibid.:Article 7 (1e)), or 'institute sanctions whenever an unconstitutional change of Government takes place in a Member State' (ibid.:Article 7 (1g)).

The Continental Early Warning System is one of the pillars of the PSC. Together with the Commission, the African Standby Force, a Panel of the Wise and a Peace Fund, the system is supposed to secure that the PSC shall be 'a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa' (ibid.:Article 2 (1) and (2)).[20] In the PSC Protocol, article 12 concerns the development of CEWS. Here it says that it shall consist of a 'Situation Room' that will be responsible for data collection. In addition, the Situation Room is to establish links with regional mechanisms (such as IGAD's CEWARN). The AU also aims to create links to the United Nations, other relevant international organisations, research centres, academic institutions and NGOs (ibid.:Article 12 (2a/b,3)).

[17] For example, aiming to predict *food shortage* in Ethiopia, there have existed mechanisms dating back to 1976 (Beletu 2005 [interview]).
[18] The Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted during the Lomé Summit of the OAU on 11 July 2000 (The Institute for Security Studies 2004b:1st paragraph).
[19] The Protocol on the PSC of the AU entered into force on 26 December 2003, after ratification by the required 27 of the AU's 53 member countries (Cilliers and Sturman 2004:5th paragraph).
[20] Elderly African statesmen and women will sit on the Panel of the Wise to advise the PSC. The African Standby Force will undertake peacekeeping or intervention missions, while the Peace Fund will provide for necessary economic support (Aning et al 2004:3). The Chairperson of the Commission in the AU is mandated to bring to the attention of the PSC any matter that he/she feels may threaten peace, security and stability on the continent (The African Union 2002:Article 10).

## 2.3 Presentation of CEWARN

IGAD has already developed its own early warning system called the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN). This system will serve as the channel through which the AU will collect information. Regional mechanisms are in many ways the actual building blocks in the house the AU is trying to build. Harmonisation, co-ordination and co-operation with organisations like IGAD are therefore considered to be important parts of the AU project (The Institute for Security Studies 2004a:5).

The objectives of IGAD include the promotion of peace and stability in the sub-region to prevent, manage and resolve interstate and intrastate conflicts through dialogue (The Institute for Security Studies 2004c:3).[21] As one tool, CEWARN was formally established in 2002. Informants are instructed to monitor the following areas: livestock rustling; conflicts over grazing and water points; smuggling and illegal trade; nomadic movements; refugees; landmines and banditry (The Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2002). Although CEWARN presently covers only two local areas, the sub-regional mechanism is more developed than the continental one.[22]

[21] Here region is understood as an international area with geographically proximate countries (Bøås and Dokken 2002:15).

## 3.0 Theory

### 3.1 Theoretical clarification

To establish theoretical clarity around 'early warning' is a difficult project. Not only in Africa, but also in the world as a whole, conflict early warning systems did not seem to trigger much interest until the end of the Cold War. Before the 1990s, early warning mechanisms were primarily used to predict phenomena like floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes, as well as stock market crashes in the economic sphere (Schmeidl 2002:72–73). It moved into humanitarian affairs during the 1980s, as it was used to predict famine and refugee migration. Then, throughout the 1990s, the concept was made relevant for conflicts as well.

In this process, though, scholars have disagreed on whether early warning actually should be seen as part of 'conflict prevention' (The African Union 2003:26). In my understanding of the phenomenon, I agree with Bond (ibid.:6) who asserts that, for conflict prevention, early warning serves as capacity building. I define conflict prevention as 'any structural or intercessory means to keep intrastate or interstate tensions and disputes from escalating into significant violence and use of armed forces, to strengthen the capabilities of potential parties to violent conflict for resolving such disputes peacefully and to progressively reduce the underlying problems that produce these issues and disputes' (Lund quoted in Ackermann 2003:339).

The academic debate on conflict prevention also affects the scope of early warning. Scholars have debated whether prevention shall encompass early phases of conflict, or also escalation and post-conflict situations. Furthermore, another question has been if it shall address immediate or root causes (Ackermann 2003:341–344). Other areas of concern have been the difficulties of analysing the causes of conflict, and identifying the requirements for *effective* conflict prevention.

As for conflict prevention, I would argue that it is extremely hard to act only prior to conflict escalation. This argument is in line with statements from former UN

[22] At the moment, CEWARN functions only in the Karamoja and Wajir Clusters that put together the countries of Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]).

Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali from 1992. In the report *Agenda for Peace*, he stated that conflict prevention should prevent disputes from arising, and escalating, but also limit the spread of conflicts when they occur (Boutros-Ghali referred in Schmeidl 2002:71). In many ways it would be an exercise of academic interest only to draw a sharp line between disputes *about* to escalate, and *already* escalated conflicts. Furthermore, Schmeidl (2002:70–71) points out that conflicts move in cycles with pre,- in,- and post-conflict phases. To limit the scope of early warning to just one or two phases would make it a mind-game, and trigger unnecessary discussions and delineations concerning which parts of the conflict process that an early warning system should look into.

Yet, I do find it fruitful to say something about how concepts like conflict management, conflict resolution, and peace building relate to conflict prevention and early warning. First, conflict management is clearly inter-related with the two concepts. Even though it refers to actions taken to mitigate or contain ongoing violent conflict (Cliffe and White 2002:46), this aspect often becomes intertwined with conflict prevention and early warning in the real world, considering the difficulties of evaluating the level of 'escalation' of each dispute. As for the relationship between early warning and conflict management, Schmeidl asserts that 'their effectiveness is only maintained if the activity of early warning is not mixed in with conflict management' (Schmeidl 2002:72). Her concern seems to be attributed to a fear that if the two concepts are not separated institutionally, there may be a danger of adapting the analysis to fit the already chosen modes of action. Although she may have a point, it seems clear that conflict prevention activities like early warning is part of conflict management when it comes to the area where the aim is to suggest response options to decision-makers. Then, it is a challenge to make a clear distinction.

As for the other concepts, conflict resolution refers both to immediate activities that seek to bring an end to violence, and to long-term action aimed at removing the structural causes of conflict (Cliffe and White 2002:47). These efforts may of course have a preventive effect, as some sources of conflict may be dealt with. As for the relationship to early warning, I claim that these activities may be part of the response options that the systems aim to formulate after issuing a warning. If a conflict is

detected, and root causes are identified, it would be natural to consider resolution mechanisms that deal with these specific causes.[23]

Peace building is applied to only in post-conflict situations. Although it is not easy to define this concept either, the main issue separating conflict prevention and early warning from peace building is the focus on early and not late action (Schmeidl 2002:72). In the Agenda for Peace, peace building was referred to as something that could strengthen the structures fundamental for viable peace (Semb 2004). It includes military, economic and political activities, and has a specific focus on the inclusion of civil society. Peace building aims to build or rebuild sometimes shattered relationships. It seems like early warning tries to operate on the other end of the scale, before the relationships have a chance to deteriorate, by identifying early signals of tension. However, here too, the concepts are linked as conflicts move in cycles. If a country moves out of one conflict, but is about to experience renewed escalation, the strategies employed may be aiming at conflict resolution, peace building and the like.

Between the concepts, the lines are blurry. For an early warning system to be effective, the warnings and responses must be triggered *early enough*. Though, there will always be a discussion what is early enough, and what to call the measures being taken. Because of the lack of clarity on this issue, and because I see no need to separate between the different cycles of conflict, it would be natural to conclude that early warning systems ought to have a broad agenda. This goes for the timing, where I claim that an early warning system should be operational in all parts of the cycle to recommend preventive efforts. And it goes for the issues that it ought to be monitoring – the kinds and causes of conflict – the theme of this thesis to which I now turn.

### 3.2 The kinds and causes of conflict

As the above-mentioned concepts to some extent seem to overlap, it is therefore important to go deeper into early warning itself to get a clearer view of what it actually ought to entail in the Horn of Africa. In section 1.1, I presented the research question, and from that I derived four sub-questions requiring answers. Because of their

[23] For example, the aim of many conflict resolution mechanisms is to transform relationships, change attitudes, and bring about lasting peace (Cliffe and White 2002:47).

theoretical relevance, in this part I will deal with the first two sub-questions listed in section 1.1.1. I aim to identify the kinds and causes of conflict in the sub-region. Therefore, I will look into academic studies and various theoretical contributions in search of the answers that have been given in this debate.

## 3.3 The first sub-question

### 3.3.1 The goal of early warning

When building mechanisms that are supposed to detect conflicts, it seems obvious that the people involved must have some common understanding – explicitly stated or subconscious – of the term 'conflict.' There are numerous kinds of conflicts in society. To limit their search, collectors of information, analysts, and decision-makers in some way need to be guided on what to look for. However, the understanding of conflict largely depends on the goal of such systems. If there are people involved from, say, a dictatorial regime, they might want to use the system to monitor troublesome opposition groups that constitute a threat to *their* security. Then, there is a chance that conflicts like public protests would be given attention. On the other hand, the 'troublesome' opposition group would most likely identify the dictatorial regime as a source of conflict in the country. It would perhaps wish for a system that looked into the role of the state, and came up with warnings and response options when the state intensified its political suppression.

Clearly, the choice of goal lays somewhat of a foundation for the mechanism. However, to say normatively that one goal is better than another depends on whose interests the system is designed to protect. Both Boshoff (The African Union 2003:8) and Schmeidl (2002:73–76) emphasise that early warning has a focus on 'human security.' Thereby, they make the distinction to traditional intelligence, as the aim there primarily centres on the protection of the state. Though, confusion may arise as the two different systems rely on similar methods. They both collect and analyse information, and recommend options to decision-makers for action and intervention.

The focus on human security has implications for the kinds of conflict that the system needs to look into.[24] This is the reason why such a system ought to specify its

[24] I define human security as the security of the individual in his or her personal surroundings and within the community (Aning et al 2004:5).

goal. Doing this, it would be clearer to everybody involved – individuals, states, and regional organisations – what they are obliged to do. If this is not specified, I argue that the opportunity increases for the system to be confused with traditional intelligence systems where the focus is on state security. I adopt the view that early warning is something else, and that its goal must be to protect more actors than the state. Individuals, families, and communities ought to be the centre of attention.

### 3.3.2 The kinds of conflict

By choosing such a goal, early warning automatically increases its scope. The situations that constitute threats to a state are not necessarily the ones that threaten the individual although the link can be made. Therefore, I will argue that the AU has a profound challenge, as it is to construct such a system. Not only are the independent variables, the conflict causes, difficult to identify. The AU and IGAD also have to specify their dependent variable. They must ask; how serious does the outcome of a situation need to be to trigger an early warning? Participating in the AU workshop in 2003, Dr. Doug Bond asked whether incidents that lead to such different events as war, terrorism or pastoral raids should be reported, or if the system wanted to focus more on outcomes like public protests, demonstrations, state failures or coups d'état (The African Union 2003:5). The answer to such a question obviously has implications for what phenomena to consider.

As I see it, and to simplify, early warnings should be triggered by conflict itself. Here conflict is understood as *all situations that threaten national and/or individual security, that involve two or more actors, and that include an incompatibility of goals*.[25] This definition is rather broad, and encompasses both state and human security. Yet, in my opinion all potential conflicts should be identified by an early warning system to avoid the risk of missing out on small disputes that may escalate. What to *do* with the information is a whole other issue as some conflicts obviously are more serious than others are.

[25] This definition that combines action, actors and incompatibility is inspired by Wallensteen (2004:16) who defines conflict as 'a social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources.'

Still, the question ought to be asked whether such a broad definition alone is satisfactory when we move from theory to practice. If we rely on theorists like Reynal-Querol (2002:39) who finds that natural resources are an important variable in explaining the incidence of *ideological/revolutionary* civil war, but not to explain *ethnic* civil war, we realise that different conflicts have different causes. As for the practical implications for an early warning system, this should perhaps entail that different sub-dependent variables ought to be identified.[26] Taking such a step, the aim would be to avoid the possibility that the system missed out on certain conflict patterns.

However, Schmeidl (2002:83) mentions that the analysis of early warning signals in fact has moved *from* the explanation of specific types of conflict, such as genocide/politicide, ethnic discrimination and ethnic conflict, inter- and intrastate war, or environmental conflict, *to* more general anticipation of conflict escalation at earlier stages. It would be demanding to establish causal patterns for all these various kinds of conflicts. Also, most likely it would be confusing, as some conflicts may be difficult to categorise. For example, a civil war may have important interstate sources in the Horn of Africa, as other states support opposition groups abroad.[27] Some would perhaps label such a conflict interstate as it involves other states. Then, it would seem as if clear distinctions between the various kinds of conflict, and divisions into sub-dependent variables, would just be making such a system unnecessarily complex.

Based on this discussion, I argue that it is not necessary to divide 'conflict' into different sub-dependent variables. Instead, and to include the important observation by Reynal-Querol, the challenge is to create a set of independent variables that encompasses all the sources of the different kinds of conflict. Then, when the information is collected, the analysts must be aware of these distinctions as they try to establish links between features and potential outcomes. Of course it will be challenging for the analysts to be aware of all the different conflict patterns, but I believe that my proposed definition of conflict – no matter how broad it seems – is

[26] By sub-dependent variables, I mean variables that limit the scope of the dependent variable by focusing on small aspects of it. In this thesis, the dependent variable 'conflict' could, theoretically, be divided into sub-dependent variables like ethnic civil war, interstate war, public protests, demonstrations and the like.
[27] See the discussion on 'trans-national processes' in section 3.4.3.

sufficiently helpful in this regard. The key words are potential threats to human security, and incompatible goals. Although it would require heavy analytical skills to identify all potential conflicts, it seems as if this may be a way to go.

It would perhaps facilitate the analytical process if country profiles were developed for each country.[28] The analysis phase per se is beyond the scope of this thesis, but such profiles would also be helpful for the development of indicators. At least, such a profile would include background information on that country in particular. Conflict causes are complex, and features, or combinations of features, which lead to one outcome in one country, do not necessarily lead to the same in another.[29] These kinds of profiles would be of great help to an analyst, often constrained by time pressure limiting her chance to collect sufficient information on various country differences.

## 3.4 The second sub-question: The causes of conflict

### 3.4.1 Background to the theoretical debate

Following the end of the Second World War, contemporary conflict analysis to a large extent centred on interstate war. Conflicts around the world were termed 'proxy wars,' and were seen as replacements for the cold, silent one between the two superpowers (Porto 2002:2). Analysts focused on issues like nuclear deterrence, balance of power, alliances and arms races to explain disputes all over the world.

However, during this phase it appears that the conflict pattern was changing. The number of violent conflicts *within* societies increased. Various names were given to what was seen as a new phenomenon. For example, they were called 'low-intensity conflicts,' 'wars of the third kind,' and 'new wars' (ibid.:5). Some analysts argued that these new wars were of a completely different type. While the 'old' ones were about the geo-political or ideological goals of states, the new wars were about identity politics.[30] Here, as part of the identity concept, ethnicity, religion, culture, and nationality gained momentum, and were referred to as sources of conflict. In the

[28] To get country profiles was one of the suggestions from the AU workshop in 2003 (The African Union 2003:29).
[29] See the discussion on multiple conjunctural causation in section 1.3.3.
[30] Analysts like Kaldor, Holsti and Van Creveld have argued that identity is an important variable when explaining these 'new wars' (Porto 2002:5).

beginning of the 1990s, ‘ethnic conflict’ became ‘the most fashionable term’ to explain the new wars (ibid.:7).

Yet, as the biblical figure Adam quickly was thrown out of paradise, the debate on conflict origins was not harmonic and peaceful for long. Conflict analysts have seldom managed to agree. People like Paul Collier disputed the identity view, and claimed that contemporary war could be explained by looking into the economy (Porto 2002:8). This triggered the greed versus grievance-debate. Two positions, where greed referred to fight over resources and economic agendas, and grievance to issues like ethnic discrimination, inequality, and historical animosity, were opposing each other (ibid.).[31] The debate also included discussions on the role of political systems, and how democracy/autocracy may weaken or strengthen the opportunities for peace.

### 3.4.2 The different sub-sets

To explain conflicts, numerous explanations are mentioned in the literature. Issues concerning territory, ideology, dynastic legitimacy, religion, language, ethnicity, self-determination, resources, markets, dominance, equality, and revenge have all been highlighted (Porto 2002:6). Though, in general, scholars seem to agree that there is no *one* variable that can explain the incidence of conflict (see e.g. Ackermann 2003:342; Huggins 2003:1). As pointed out in section 1.2, the contributions by Wallensteen and Waltz show how conflict patterns may be very different, and that conflicts may escalate in a number of ways (Wallensteen 2004:34–39; Waltz referred in Porto 2002:17). Recognising the complexities of conflict, it seems that the road towards the establishment of an all-encompassing early warning system is far from clear-cut. Furthermore, the way variables interact made Rupesinghe and Tiskhov (1996) issue a warning that academics should avoid simplifications, and reject the temptation to make categorical classifications.

In this context, it seems evident that all lists of conflict causes will be disputed. Still, I aim to look into some sources that such a system ought to consider. I have developed four sub-sets of categories; *structural/political*; *economic/social*; *ecological/environmental*; and *cultural/perceptual*. Even though I have a wide focus in

the sense that my definition of conflict is rather broad, I will not create different sets for different kinds of conflicts. Nor will I differ between the causes of internal and interstate war, like many analysts do (O'Brien 2002:799). Here I will follow O'Brien who refers to the work by Blomberg and Hess. They demonstrate a strong link between internal conflicts, external conflicts, and economic conditions that is mutually reinforcing (Blomberg and Hess referred in O'Brien 2002:799). This means that internal conflicts can lead to interstate war, and that the pattern also may be the other way around. So even though some variables may be more relevant for interstate conflicts, I argue that it is not necessary to separate them as far as the development of indicators is concerned. As long as the indicators encompass the possible incompatible goals of the parties, it is for the analysts in the analysis phase to link the information, and identify dangerous situations.

To facilitate the search for the causes of conflict, early warning theorists have separated between underlying causes, which form the slow-changing conflict background, and proximate causes that are incidents characterised by being closer in time to the outbreak of violence (Schmeidl 2002:80). Remembering how Waltz differs between man, the state, and the state-system (Waltz referred in Porto 2002:17), and that the relationship *between* these three often trigger tension (Porto 2002:23), it seems as if the sources of conflict may be found on various levels. It is important to be aware of all these levels when discussing conflict causes to avoid missing out on all the various conflict patterns. I have chosen not to make a sharp distinction between underlying and proximate causes in this thesis, but I still aim to include sources from all levels in the discussion below.

In addition to the underlying and proximate causes, we could also talk about a third level. The so-called trigger causes may be sudden events that spark off and escalate violent conflict (Kameri-Mbote 2004). Examples are severe drought, a devastating flood, or the like. Though, as these sudden triggers may be difficult to anticipate for early warning systems, such mechanisms should probably focus on the underlying and proximate causes. I therefore use Michael Brown's analysis of internal

[31] To a large extent, the greed versus grievance-debate sought to explain the 'new wars,' primarily civil wars *within* societies.

conflicts as a starting point for my own discussion on what features that are most important to look into in the Horn of Africa.

**Table 3.1: Underlying causes of internal conflict**

| Underlying causes | Proximate causes |
|---|---|
| Structural<br>- Weak states<br>- Intra-state security concerns<br>- Ethnic geography | <br>- Collapsing states<br>- Changing intra-state military balances<br>- Changing demographic patterns |
| Political factors<br>- Discriminatory political institutions<br>- Exclusionary national ideologies<br>- Inter-group politics<br>- Elite politics | <br>- Political transitions<br>- Increasingly exclusionary ideologies<br>- Growing inter-group competition<br>- Intensifying leadership struggles |
| Economic/social factors<br>- Economic problems<br>- Discriminatory economic systems<br>- Modernisation | <br>- Mounting economic problems<br>- Growing economic inequities<br>- Fast-paced development and modernisation |
| Cultural/perceptual factors<br>- Patterns of cultural discrimination<br>- Problematic group histories | <br>- Intensifying patterns of cultural discrimination<br>- Ethnic bashing and propagandising |

*Source: Porto 2002:24.*

Based on this list of features, I will look into the areas that I find particularly relevant for the Horn. The making of a complete list of characteristics is beyond the scope of this thesis. My aim will be to identify some of the most important sources of conflict that ought to be considered by conflict early warning systems in this sub-region. There are numerous ways of categorising, and the one I have chosen is just one of many. However, I emphasise that my categories will not be mutually exclusive. Especially if the discussion shall take into account Waltz' important observations, I claim that there cannot be sharp distinctions between the categories. For example, on Waltz' state-system-level, structural features like the phenomenon of trans-national processes will have an impact on the formation of conflicts. The structural pattern will affect the individual and the nation-state in various areas, as it will materialise in economic affairs, ethnic relations and the like. Therefore, the categories will overlap in the discussion.

Still, as the Horn of Africa is a conflict-ridden region, I first wish to consider one important debate. Collier and Sambanis (2002) mention that it is an empirical fact that the risk of war is higher in post-war societies compared with countries with no prior war history. Yet, they state that the causal links for this phenomenon are not clear. This could imply that previous conflicts per se trigger renewed tension in the

Horn. On the other hand, Walter (2004) claims that conflict does not beget conflict, and argues that it has to do with the presence of other conditions.[32] As I look into the causes of conflict in this sub-region, I aim to identify the underlying or proximate sources of tension. I do not consider whether conflict triggers conflict by itself.

### 3.4.3 Structural/political

***The state***

When it comes to the structural and the political features, I claim that it is particularly crucial to look into the role of the African state. As I see it, it seems relatively easy to identify political suppression as a cause of instability on the continent. Aning et al (2004:22) mention for example that a ban was placed on political party activity in Kenya under Ex-President Daniel Arap Moi. This flared up tension across the country. Here the state and its government show that they can be a source of conflict. Though, such an example is not necessarily unique to Africa. Political suppression occurs all over the world.

However, there are certain distinct features that characterise the African state that I claim make it particularly liable to suppress. A well-known label of the post-colonial African state is Jackson's term 'quasi-states.' This refers to states that lack 'substantial and credible statehood by the empirical criteria of classical positive international law' (Jackson quoted in Clapham 1998:144). Although he may be accused of making too broad generalisations, Jackson claims that most African states only enjoy what he calls 'negative sovereignty.' This means that the legitimacy of the state rests to a considerable extent solely on international recognition. In contrast, countries that enjoy 'positive sovereignty' have governments that exercise effective dominion over their peoples and territories, and are able to defend themselves (Clapham 1998:144). The lack of such criteria has implications for ruler legitimacy, and is a reason why the structure of the state should be monitored closely in an early warning system.

[32] Walter (2004) claims that renewed war only occurs if people are willing to enlist. This depends on conditions of individual hardship, the absence or presence of any non-violent means of change, the quality of life, and access to political participation.

Reno (1998:45–46) points out that the Cold War allowed rulers, through their countries' strategic importance, to cling to power by getting external assistance. For example, many states in the Horn sought support from rival superpowers, and got access to weaponry. This was used both to control their domestic population and to fight one another (Clapham 1998:147). Such a foundation created internally insecure and bureaucratically weak African states. The people who led them developed their own form of personal rule as they did not separate between office and individual (Bøås and Dokken 2002:12). The result was a situation with weak states, but at the same time considerable continuity and stability when it came to leaders filling top-level positions in society. Uganda under Idi Amin is an illustrative example of the privatisation of power and a brutal rule (Clapham 1998:154).

In the post-Cold War era the footing on which these states were built has disintegrated, and shown why houses should not be built on sand. Yet, were states a source of conflict in Africa before, they certainly are now as well. Reno (1998:46) claims that the African state is changing as the superpowers backed out, and were replaced by external donors imposing a growing list of conditions in return for cash. It has become more difficult for state leaders to view countries as a personal accessory. I argue that this change may exacerbate conflict as other actors in society observe that the power of the state diminishes. Kalevi Holsti uses Somalia as an example of a country where weak-state rulers were unable to eliminate or manage military challenges from armed strongmen after the Cold War (Holsti referred in Reno 1998:9–10). Thus, the risk of conflict has potential to grow.

***Non-state actors***

As weak states lack effective bureaucracies and are unable to control all territories, this creates space for non-state actors to operate in certain areas. Informal actors like businessmen, social leaders and warlords are able to dominate economically, socially or territorially. This is a common feature in the Horn of Africa, and here too, power is highly personalised (Bøås and Dokken 2002:13–14). Furthermore, there are effective state-like bureaucracies outside the state. Mohammed Ayoob shows that local strongmen pose a security threat to African rulers, and prevent the state from

successfully building some sort of political authority. Instead strongmen build rival power centres and provide people with identities such as clan or ethnicity (Ayoob referred in Reno 1998:19). Until recently, Somalia has been a country where none of the parties have been able to claim statehood. Clan leaders have provided the security, thus making loyalties stronger to non-state actors (Wallensteen 2004:66).

***Political systems***

As part of the analysis of the state, early warning systems should also be aware of the possible structural sources of conflict that stem from the political system. There is no lack of academic contributions that deal with the impact of democracy on peace and conflict, and many scholars conclude that being a democratic state reduces the risk of tension both internally and between states (e.g. DeRouen Jr. and Goldfinch 2005; Weitsman and Shambaugh 2002). Porto recommends an analysis of the political system to fully grasp the complexity of each conflict. He states that 'authoritarian, repressive, exclusionary regimes are naturally more likely to create dissent and therefore increase the propensity for conflict' (Porto 2002:26). His point is that if certain groups are excluded from political power, this may trigger disputes. Supporting Porto, Cilliers and Sturman (2004:20$^{th}$ paragraph) state that abuses of power and transgressions of human rights, bad governance and circumvention of democracy have been the main reasons for causing intrastate tension and regional instability in Africa.

During the last few decades, the import of democracy has gradually affected most African states. Many of the countries on the continent still have a way to go to be called democratic, but at least some democratic elements seem to have been introduced (Nhema 2004:16). In this context, I find it very important to monitor the political system, as a country seems to be particularly at risk of conflict when a political transition from one system to another is occurring (Weitsman and Shambaugh 2002; Zegeye and Maxted 2000).

Though, an analysis of the current system in each country, democratic or authoritarian, would be wise either way, as it may reveal whether some groups are excluded from political power. Not only authoritarian, but also some democratic systems have an in-built possibility for exclusion. For example, Reynal-Querol

(2002:29–30) shows that a democratic system where all groups are secured proportional representation is safer than a majoritarian system where only the winner in each constituency is elected. Here, some groups may risk to be excluded if their support base is dispersed throughout the country.

***Monitoring the state and non-state actors***

The characteristics of many African states are the reason why I think it is most crucial to monitor governmental structures in an early warning system. States may exercise their power in different ways; some of which as the legitimate political authority, other times in illegitimate ways.[33] The AU needs to develop a context-specific country profile on each of the countries in Africa, and evaluate the potential of that specific state structure to generate conflict. Of course, the organisation needs indicators from many areas, but the monitoring of the development of legitimate state institutions and legitimate political rule is particularly important. The AU needs to specify what kinds of principles that should be the basis of legitimate authority – whether that be independent bureaucracies, electoral support, or the like.

I therefore agree with a leading expert on the field, Dr. Doug Bond. At the AU workshop in 2003, he wanted the AU to specify the benchmarks for normal social, political, economic and cultural activities on which to measure change (The African Union 2003:5). Then, any deviations from such benchmarks would most likely make the situation more susceptible to conflict. Here, the AU could look into the recommendations from O'Brien (2002:Appendix A) who argues that such systems should have indicators on issues like democracy, civil liberties, and political rights. The already established early warning system FAST (German acronym for 'Early Analysis of Tensions and Fact-finding') also has indicators on internal politics, and human and civil rights, and would be worth considering (Swiss Peace Foundation 2005b).[34] Finally, the recommendations from Dedring (1992) are worth looking into to fully encompass the role of the African state. He points out that early warning

[33] By legitimate political authority I mean here that the state is perceived to represent the interests of the entire population, not just a small elite.

indicators should include the characteristics and behaviour of governments, classified according to levels of instability, incompetence and oppression.

A country profile should also include an analysis of the so-called 'brute causes' of conflict. Alex de Waal warns that, in this sub-region, there seems to be a readiness of those in positions of power to use force to resolve disputes. He calls this a culture of militarism, and defines it as 'a political culture in which militaristic values dominate civil ones, marked by a particular style of decision-making that values the decisive use of force' (de Waal 2004:19). For example, the author asserts that the former liberation movements that are in power in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda have a militarised state of mind. He also stresses the militarism of General Bashir in the Sudan, as he is an example of 'the Nasserite tradition of the 'free officers,' who seize state power as a short-cut to social transformation' (ibid.). In addition, the phenomenon of warlords in Somalia is also an example of militarism according to the author, as the actors choose violence to solve disputes that most likely would have been solved peacefully in other regions (ibid.:20).

***Trans-national processes***

In my opinion, an early warning system in the Horn of Africa will not function as intended if it does not take into account the structural phenomenon of trans-national processes. Cliffe refers to this feature as 'mutual interference,' describing a culture in the sub-region that has existed at least 30 years (Cliffe referred in Mwaûra et al 2002:35). Authoritarian and dictatorial regimes forced opposition groups to organise abroad. As these groups formed alliances with other states, cross-border networks were established. This created a region where regimes intervene, and provide arms to support opposition movements in neighbouring states.

Wallensteen (2004:95–96) identifies the most important reasons for interstate conflict as stemming from what he calls Geopolitik (land disputes), Realpolitik (power and power capabilities), Idealpolitik (government issues) and Kapitalpolitik (economic disagreements). The Horn of Africa is a region particularly well suited to illustrate that

[34] In 1998, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) assigned the Swiss Peace Foundation to set up a political early warning system for early identification of impending armed conflict and political crisis situations. The result

elements from all these categories have an impact on the relationship between the countries.

The contemporary tension between Eritrea and Ethiopia shows the importance of both Geopolitik and Realpolitik. This conflict affects the entire region. While it appears to look like a border dispute between two countries, in recent history Somalia more or less reluctantly was affected.[35] The country accused both Eritrea and Ethiopia of giving military support to different factions in the state (Bøås and Dokken 2002:18). The break between Eritrea and Ethiopia also had implications for the internal conflict between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Previously, the two countries constituted the core of a regional alliance of states that opposed the government in Khartoum. The Eritrean/Ethiopian conflict weakened this alliance, and also affected the SPLA that lost much of the military support it received from both Eritrean and Ethiopian sources (ibid.). In short, the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia is a land dispute as well as it contributes to conflicts over power elsewhere.[36]

The same feature can be identified in Uganda where the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) opposes the government. For long, this group was believed to receive aid from the Government of Sudan in return for support against the SPLA (Reno 1998:68). Now, peace in the Sudan has weakened the LRA (NRK Text-TV 15.11.2004), but the example shows how states and parties interact, and that conflicts are trans-national. Many countries in the Horn of Africa have used their resources to increase their regional influence.

Economic and governmental issues also transcend national borders in the region. For example, Ethiopia has accused Eritrea of fomenting unrest among different ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Wallensteen (2004:116) claims that this definitely was 'an issue of the government's political standing in society.' Here he shows how Idealpolitik can trigger the dynamics of conflict.

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was FAST – now used to monitor several countries in Africa; Ethiopia amongst others (Swiss Peace Foundation 2004:9).

[35] The dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia has a territorial aspect as it centres on the border town of Badme. Yet, the conflict is much more complex, and cannot be termed solely a territorial dispute (Pausewang 2004:32). For a deeper look into the causes of this conflict, see Negash and Tronvoll (2000).

[36] Sambanis (2001) finds that countries that have undemocratic neighbours or neighbours at war significantly increase their risk of experiencing ethnic civil war.

When it comes to economy, or what Wallensteen calls Kapitalpolitik, I would like to stress the issue of the natural resources. Many of the rivers in the region flow through several states. In addition the number of nomads is high in the Horn of Africa, and many people continuously cross borders to find new land (Bøås and Dokken 2002:19). Adding to the tension potential, many of the states are among the poorest in Africa. Famine may result in refugee flows that affect the entire region. An organisation like IGAD has a difficult undertaking finding solutions to these challenges.

***Monitoring trans-national processes***

The phenomenon of trans-national processes shows how internal disputes may have an interstate component. An early warning system needs to uncover these trends. Internal groups may of course have a plethora of possible reasons for rebellion, but almost all conflicts in the region have trans-national features as well. For the Horn of Africa, this may be e.g. pastoral conflicts, refugee flows, fights over resources as well as governmental issues. As I see it, the trans-national processes add an extra dimension to all other potential conflict sources. I assert that there is a risk of intensifying a conflict when more actors, with varying interests, are added to the mix. The countries in the IGAD region may serve as illustrations of countries taking active part in conflicts in other states. This possibility must be addressed by an early warning system. It ought to specify and monitor all possible links that transcend national borders.

### 3.4.4 Economic/social

It is shown that economic and social issues transcend borders in the sub-region because the countries and the actors both interfere and depend on each other. Nevertheless, the debate on the importance of economic variables itself, both as structural underlying causes, and as proximate sources of conflict when economic conditions change more rapidly, must be given weight. Summarising the debate on economic variables, Porto states that few ‘would dispute that rapid transitions amid poverty and social exclusion, high unemployment and at times heavy dependence on single-commodity exports, potentialise vulnerability to armed conflict’ (Porto

2002:27). Tracing the link further, he also points out that 'economic factors are particularly acute when they are associated with patterns of discrimination between groups' (ibid.).

Malthus gave perhaps the first contribution on economy as a source of conflict. He argued that population growth and environmental degradation would trigger conflict over natural resources (Malthus referred in Reuveny and Maxwell 2001:719). Contemporary studies have expanded the focus from natural resources, and encompass other economic variables. In their discussion of the causes of civil wars, Collier and Hoeffler (2002:16) find that higher per capita income reduces the duration of civil war and the probability of its occurrence. Faster growth implies that there will be more job opportunities for young males, 'the main recruitment pool for rebellion' (ibid.).[37] Addressing civil wars on the African continent in particular, they claim that the increasing number of conflicts can be fully explained by looking into economic variables. Africa has been characterised by negative growth rates, low levels of income, and rising dependence on primary commodity exports (Collier and Hoeffler referred in Collier and Sambanis 2002:6). According to the authors, these features trigger tension in a country.

For Collier and Hoeffler, civil wars are motivated either by 'greed' or 'grievance.' While greed signifies a desire for private gain (Elbadawi and Sambanis 2002:309), grievance can be characterised more as identity conflicts, following from ethnic discrimination, inequality, and historical animosity (Porto 2002:8). The two authors find little explanatory value in the grievance concept, as they claim to have measured inequality, political repression, and social divisions (Collier and Hoeffler 2002:17).[38] They stick to greed, and give it almost sole explanatory power.[39]

Even though this rather strict conclusion is disputed, scholars seem to agree that economic variables may be conflict trigging.[40] Widening the focus from civil wars to

[37] Amongst others, Henderson and Singer (2000) support the proposition that economic growth reduces the probability of civil war.
[38] The debate on grievance as a source of conflict is outlined in section 3.4.6.
[39] Collier and Hoeffler (2002:26–28) use the following variables to measure the onset of civil wars: GDP per capita (GDP growth); primary commodity exports/GDP; population; social fractionalisation; ethnic dominance; geographic dispersion; peace duration; Sub-Saharan Africa dummy; French Sub-Saharan dummy.
[40] A strong argument against the Collier and Hoeffler-approach is that it is based on the rational-choice model of decision-making, even though rationality is a very ambiguous concept. Basing their research on expected-utility theory, the authors adopt the view that rebels will conduct a civil war if the perceived benefits outweigh the costs of rebellion. Though, the

conflict in general, there are studies that indicate that the economic relationship *between* countries both provides the background for tension, and/or creates conflict itself. Nhema points out that the economic and political conditionalities that the West has imposed on African countries in recent history, have 'either directly or indirectly caused social instability, making African states vulnerable to conflict' (Nhema 2004:13).[41] He claims that African countries are loosing the game of globalisation.

There are disputing views in this area where trade is mentioned as a source of conflict. Some studies claim that trade reduces the risk (e.g. Dorussen 2002; Hegre 2004; McDonald 2004), but there are also findings that suggest that trade interdependence does not have a significant effect on the prediction of militarised conflict (e.g. Goenner 2004). I realise that this is an area where it is difficult to establish clear causal links. However, to take an example from the Horn of Africa, Dejene and Abdurahman (2001) identify that during drought pastoralists face 'changes in the terms of trade that adversely affect the purchasing power represented by their herds.' Staying out of the debate on whether trade per se reduces the risk of conflict, I still claim that an early warning system at least needs to look into trade-affected areas. Dejene and Abdurahman's case study of the Borana and Degodia in the southern parts of Ethiopia shows how reduced purchasing power contribute to tension, as it during drought reinforces the deterioration of pastoral livelihoods. Though, this case study is also an example of how conflict causes are linked, as drought itself leads to increased conflict over scarce resources as the productivity levels of the herds fall.

Summing up, it seems clear that it would be wise to incorporate economic variables in early warning systems in the area. Following the advice of many theorists, these variables should focus on several areas, ranging from each country's dependence on primary commodity exports, and their income, to the internal price levels that may worsen the livelihoods of certain groups. In this context, O'Brien's early warning model would be helpful, as it includes the measurement of trade openness (import and export), GDP per capita, and the youth bulge (O'Brien 2002:Appendix A). Though, to

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majority of empirical research in this field has adopted a 'modified rational actor model' recognising the limits of the rationality assumption (Porto 2002:11).

[41] For a deeper look into this debate, see Amy Chua's contribution on how exporting free market democracy breeds ethnic hatred and global instability (Chua 2003).

incorporate the vulnerability to price change, an early warning system should also include the monitoring of prices. FAST incorporates this aspect, and is therefore worth looking into when developing indicators on this issue (Swiss Peace Foundation 2005b).

### 3.4.5 Ecological/environmental

As the example from Ethiopia concerns drought, it also could be used to illustrate the importance of ecological variables in the sub-region. Still, even though ecological/environmental factors have economic implications, and perhaps trigger conflict through the economy in particular, in my opinion these features need to be treated separately.

Ecological and environmental variables have been highlighted as a source of conflict in the Horn of Africa, but the causal links seem extremely difficult to establish. Parts of the problem seem to be that environmental scarcities per se do not directly lead to conflict (Kameri-Mbote 2004). Various causes seem to be interacting, making the ecological variables dependent on issues like 'governance regimes, economic structures, external political intervention, and a host of other factors' (Huggins 2003:3). Then, as the link between environmental degradation, social unrest and political instability is disputed (Markakis 1998:1–2), it may seem problematic to argue for the inclusion of ecological/environmental variables in an early warning system.

Nevertheless, I do not think that complexity itself should make us give up searching for the causal links. There has been done considerable work on this issue in recent history, and much evidence points in the direction that the variables matter in various ways. One of the most comprehensive studies in this field is the one performed by the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS). In July 2000, ACTS launched a policy research project on the *Ecological Sources of Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The aim was to identify 'the extent to which ecological factors, including land, natural resources and agricultural commodities, have contributed to conflict' (Huggins 2003:1).

The findings show parts of the complexity that surrounds ecological variables and conflict. Though, showing how environmental degradation and associated competition for natural resources have caused conflicts in countries like Ethiopia, Sudan and Eritrea, the link from ecology to conflict seems to be made. Still, it is worth discussing the project in detail, as each part of their ecology-conflict nexus gives valuable insight to the role of ecological variables.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ==> | | Commodity chains | ==> | |
| Ecological variable | ==> | And/or | Land and natural resource use systems | ==> | Conflict |
| | ==> | And/or | Ecological structure and functions | ==> | |

**Figure 3.1: Simplified ecology-conflict nexus**
*Source: Huggins (2003:2)*

First, the project demonstrated how the commodity chain might be a source of conflict. Huggins' most clarifying example is not from the IGAD region, but I still include the regulation of coffee in Burundi because it shows how a natural resource contribute to a conflict on who is to control the state. The Office des Cultures Industrielles du Burundi (OCIBU) has a monopoly over coffee export and marketing in the country. Yet, by 'consistently fixing low producer prices paid to coffee farmers,' the state is a source of tension (Huggins 2003:3). It gets most of the income, thus making it important to be part of the state apparatus. Here, conflicts over ecology and the state clearly seem to be intertwined. Moreover, from the Horn, Lind refers to the conflict in Somalia, identifies it as a conflict over resources, and points out that 'land and natural resources help to maintain patron-client networks that preserve political order and the allocation of national wealth' (Lind 2002:2).

Second, the project linked land and natural resource use systems to conflict. For example, it refers to the fact that nomads cross borders, and it states that 'increasing ecological scarcity and the expansion of agricultural production into key resource environments undermines the sustainability of pastoralist resource use systems in the Horn' (Huggins 2003:3). Knowing that the vast majority of the work force in the sub-region is engaged in agro-pastoral activities (Mwaûra et al 2002:32–33), a lot of people are affected by changes in ecological conditions. Furthermore, high population

growth rates in these poor regions that already have to deal with substantial refugee flows, increase the pressure on the environment (ibid.).[42] Over the last two decades, new user groups have begun competing for land and water in these regions, thus making areas like the borders of Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda constantly insecure (Ludi and Hagmann 2004:19). The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the area has intensified the problem (Lind and Sheikh 2001; Porto 2002: 39–40). For the IGAD region, this development has made pastoral conflict a recurrent phenomenon. To protect human and state security, it is critical to address these kinds of conflicts.[43]

Third, ecological structures and ecological functions were highlighted. The former are physical features of land and natural resources (Huggins 2003:3). This topic has been heavily debated in the literature, as scholars have disagreed on whether it is scarcity or abundance of resources that trigger conflict. ACTS concludes that both environmental abundance and scarcity are sources of conflict, but emphasises that the concept of abundance is complex. It depends on the way resources are distributed geographically and socially, not just on the absolute quantity of the resource (ibid.). Collier and Hoeffler are among the other scholars that have stressed the significance of abundance as a conflict cause. They claim that given certain social conditions, lootable resources trigger violent conflict (Collier and Hoeffler referred in Matthew et al 2004:10). Greed seems to motivate the parties.

The view that abundance triggers conflict was in many ways an attack on the position that dominated in the debate on ecological variables. Theorists have concluded that it is *scarcity* that leads to conflict by linking population pressures, natural resource scarcity, and violence. Homer-Dixon et al (1993:38–42) contend that because of scarcity, people are forced to migrate onto marginal lands. There, they become chronically poor, and put added pressure on the environment. The authors claim that ‘these people may be the source of persistent upheaval, or they may migrate yet again, stimulating ethnic conflicts or urban unrest elsewhere’ (Homer-Dixon et al

[42] For example, refugee flows from the Sudan have created tension between the Anuaks and the Nuer in the region of Gambella in Western Ethiopia (Dawit 2005 [interview]).
[43] Pastoral conflicts are defined as violent conflicts carried out by or involving pastoral communities (i.e. groups that earn their livelihoods from livestock herding) (Ludi and Hagmann 2004:19).

1993:42). Scarcity is identified as the source of deprivation conflicts, ethnic conflicts, and conflicts in weak states.

Furthermore, when it comes to this issue, Markakis makes a strong argument that stresses the role of the African state as a conflict generator. He maintains that there is little doubt that environmental degradation does lead to resource scarcity. Unrelieved scarcity may intensify group competition, and result in social conflict. In the developed world, institutionalised economic and political processes resolve such disputes. In Africa, the states do not represent all actors, and 'raw political power utilizing the instrumentality of the state is the regulating factor in this competition' (Markakis 1998:3). Consequently, the author concludes, 'the role of the state is a key variable in the process of conflict generation' (ibid.). To be excluded from the state means to be excluded from the natural resources. Then, conflict is easily triggered.

The scarcity versus abundance debate is important to the Horn, because resources are distributed unequally in the sub-region. Some places experience abundance, but many areas have scarce resources (Porto 2002:30–31). Identifying which of the two that cause conflict would make it easier to know what to look for when establishing country profiles or doing risk assessments. It would also facilitate the process on how to choose the right resolution or preventive mechanism.

However, I argue that it would be rather presumptuous to totally exclude either scarcity or abundance as sources of conflict in the area. Gleditsch (2004) and Matthew et al (2004) recommend that these two features both should be considered, the latter stating that 'all these arguments reflect real-world situations' (Matthew et al 2004:10). Gleditsch emphasises that there seems to be a lack of research in this area, but still claims that competition over resources may be a source of conflict. Especially where resource distribution coincides with ethnic boundaries, the risk of conflict increases (Gleditsch 2004:17).

Turning to practical examples, there are signs that indicate that both abundance and scarcity cause tension in the Horn. Looking into the former, competition for oil has been highlighted as one of the reasons for the civil wars in the Sudan (Johnson 2003:124;162–165). When it comes to scarcity, Porto (2002:30–31) explains that ecological scarcity, and the expansion of agricultural production in pastoralist areas,

undermines the sustainability of pastoralist resource use systems. The link to pastoral conflict is made.

Furthermore, reviewing the relationship *between* states, scarcity of for example water resources has caused problems in the Horn, exemplified in the competition for the waters of the Nile. About 160 million people depend on the Nile Basin, which covers an area of about three million square kilometres in ten countries (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi) (Kameri-Mbote 2004). Under the Nile Waters Agreement from 1959, Egypt is entitled to 55,5 milliards of cubic metres of water per year from the Nile. Moreover, Sudan gets 18 milliards, even though the annual average flow is only 80–85 milliards. In particular, Egypt fears loosing control of the waters to the upper riparian countries, and refuses to let Ethiopia dam the river, even though that would most likely flood relatively little agricultural land and reduce evaporation (de Waal 2004:13–14). Scarcity of water is clearly a source of tension.

Finally, in the ACTS project, ecological functions are identified as a link to conflict. These are cyclical or seasonal changes in the land and natural resource base (Huggins 2003:3). In their case study from Ethiopia, Dejene and Abdurahman (2001) observe that conflict occur during drought years. Lonergan points out that ‘climate change will increase the severity of floods and droughts, which may lead to mass migration, undercut state capacities, and exacerbate widespread poverty’ (Lonergan 2004:1). Knowing that a country like Ethiopia has experienced drought on average once every two years between 1965 and 1992 (Huggins 2003:3), it seems evident that early warning systems in this sub-region should include variables that predict drought, and also incorporate variables that encompass the above-mentioned ecological and environmental threats. The FAST project has developed some indicators that cover issues like natural resources, migration, and environmental damage, and would be worth looking into as a start (Swiss Peace Foundation 2005b). FAST also has some indicators that aim to monitor the arms trade, a feature that ought to be included as well. In particular, the flow of arms intensifies conflicts over natural resources.

### 3.4.6 Cultural/perceptual

When it comes to the question of people, their roles and identities in conflict, there are many issues that could be highlighted.[44] I have chosen to look into the concept of ethnicity, as most of the wars in the Horn have been described as ethnic conflicts. Still, it is not perfectly clear what this means. A common definition is that an ethnic group is a collectivity of people who share the same primordial characteristics such as common ancestry, language, and culture (Assefa 1996). (Religion has been included in the culture category.) The behaviour and feeling that stem from the membership of such a group is referred to as ethnicity. Although there has been a discussion on how many of the characteristics like language and religion that need to be in place for a group to be termed 'ethnic,' the term has been popularly used to explain conflicts in many different societies (ibid.).

However, there are theorists that argue that subjective factors such as perception, belonging, and self-identification determine ethnic membership (Assefa 1996). In line with this argument, some scholars have thought of ethnicity as situational, and created in specific historical circumstances (Sorenson 2000:39). Considering the lack of clarity of the concept, it seems clear that it is highly unsatisfactory just to refer to ethnicity as a source of conflict without explaining what is meant by the term. Assefa points out some of the difficulties of identifying ethnic groups in Ethiopia, as not all people that speak Amharic as their mother tongue, and are Orthodox Christians, consider themselves as one ethnic group. He explains that the 'Gondare Amharas are distinct from the Shoan Amharas, as the Gojam Amharas are from the Wollo Amharas' (Assefa 1996). These observations just highlight the difficulties of establishing a surveyable ethnic landscape.

The lack of clarity on this issue has implications for the debate. Confusion may arise as theorists look into different parts of the concept, or understand ethnicity in various ways. In my opinion, it is important to be aware of this theoretical impediment when discussing the role of ethnic groups in conflict.

[44] For example, consider contributions on the relationship between gender and conflict. Caprioli (2000) claims that domestic gender equality has a pacifying effect on state behaviour on the international level, while Schmeidl (2002:88–89) argues for the incorporation of gender-specific indicators into early warning systems.

Nevertheless, there have been many studies on the importance of ethnicity as a cause of tension. Collier and Hoeffler (2002:17–22) find that ethnically and religiously fractionalised societies are significantly safer than homogenous societies, thus stating that 'the social characteristics of African societies make them much less prone to conflict than non-African developing countries' (Collier and Hoeffler 2002: 22). (Compared with other regions, Africa has a much higher degree of religious and ethnic fractionalisation.) Employing the results to the Horn, it seems like the authors have a point when we consider e.g. countries like Somalia and Kenya. Somalia is one of the few ethnically homogenous states in Africa, with Somalis constituting around 97 per cent of the population (Zegeye and Maxted 2000:241). Nevertheless, the country has endured a lot of suffering as the result of conflict. Kenya, on the other hand, is heterogeneous, and has been relatively peaceful (Astatke 2001). Thus, following Collier and Hoeffler, it seems like various ethnic identities do not contribute to conflict.

This view that grievance is *not* an important conflict cause attacked the dominating position from the 1990s that gave ethnicity and identity considerable explanatory power. Still, this debate is by far over, and there are many contributions that show how ethnic characteristics play a role in conflicts. Reynal-Querol (2002:40) mentions that animist cults are very typical in sub-Saharan countries, and finds a positive and significant effect of animist diversity on the incidence of ethnic civil war.[45] Her conclusion is that to explain conflict, economic variables are not more important than religious variables.[46]

Investigating the role of religion in ethnic nationalism and revolutionary wars between 1945 and 2001, Fox (2004) finds that religion can influence conflict. Moreover, in a case study from the North Omo zone in Ethiopia, Daniel shows how language caused conflict. Referring to a dispute that arose, he states that the conflict happened 'due to ignorance and deliberate neglect of the application of tested and

[45] Reynal-Querol defines ethnic civil war as 'an episode of violent conflict between governments and national, ethnic, religious, or other communal minorities (ethnic challengers) in which the challengers seek major changes in their status' (Reynal-Querol 2002:36).

[46] The different conclusions of Reynal-Querol (2002) and Collier and Hoeffler (2002) may of course be attributed to the fact that they do not have the same dependent variable. While Reynal-Querol investigates *ethnic* civil wars (and excludes ideological/revolutionary civil wars), Collier and Hoeffler try to explain *all* civil wars.

workable linguistic, sociolinguistic and language planning theories' (Daniel 2001). So it seems, there are studies pointing in various directions.

However, what we probably can say without offending too many scholars is that the presence of ethnic and religious groups by themselves do not lead to violent conflict (Rupesinghe 1996). Still, DeRouen Jr. and Goldfinch (2005) show that although other factors also play a role, the possibility for violent conflict increases when there is an ethnic dimension to the dispute.[47] Then, what seems to be crucial is to identify the issues that trigger the ethnic component. Namely, in the Horn, there seems to be a tendency that conflicts over control of economic and political power is framed in ethnic terms (Zegeye and Maxted 2000:229). In addition, speaking more generally, Reynal-Querol (2002:29) mentions that fear of assimilation or cultural domination also lead to tension between ethnic groups.

What seems to be an issue is the potential politicisation of ethnicity. In my opinion, it is therefore important to monitor not only religious or ethnic affiliation, but also to monitor the claims that the different groups put forward. It is the claims that can trigger conflict as they, when faced with another actor, may imply an incompatibility of goals. The groups may be religious like the SPLA in the Sudan, and the LRA in Uganda, but it is the demands of various forms of autonomy or self-rule that cause conflict. Here I follow Bercovitch who claims that to identify the conditions that lead to conflict, it is vital to know the objectives of each party, and be informed on ethno-communal groups and their grievances (Bercovitch referred in Apuuli 2004:176).

An early warning system must consider the possibility that conflict is triggered in areas where there are many different groups, perhaps identified in various ethnic ways. In the Horn, most of the states have many nationalities and language groups, and people from the same ethnic or religious group inhabit areas on both sides of international borders, thus complicating the picture (Bøås and Dokken 2002:17–18). The effects of religious or ethnic interaction need to be monitored. The fact that some groups are dispersed and perhaps constitute minorities in several countries may also

imply that they are excluded from political power. Then, religion or ethnicity may be the channel through which a conflict is materialised. For reasons like these, many early warning systems incorporate ethnic and religious variables in their mechanisms.[48]

### 3.5 Doing a capacity assessment

Based on this theoretical understanding, I will discuss the AU's capacity to look into all the features. My starting point is Cliffe and White's definition where they view capacity as the existence and effectiveness of a mechanism (Cliffe and White 2002:44). Obviously, my focus will be on the effectiveness, a theoretically problematic concept that has been defined in various ways during history (Wettestad 1995:4–17). For example, one definition of effectiveness could be whether an organisation reaches its own goals (ibid.:12).[49] My understanding of effectiveness will be related to the normative ideal that I have identified in the theoretical framework. I will use this framework as a foundation, and seek to identify whether the AU has the willingness and the ability to monitor all the identified kinds and causes of conflict. Inspired by Wettestad (1995:6), I define effectiveness as the degree of correspondence between expert advice (indicating what would be the ideal solution) and the regulatory/political decisions taken. In this context an organisation is effective if its qualities make it capable of reaching the theoretically defined goals, i.e. to monitor all causes, and thereby anticipate all kinds of conflicts in the Horn. The definition is focusing on the decisions that *have been* taken, but since the early warning mechanism is currently under construction, I will discuss whether the AU seems capable of making the necessary decisions. The distinction between willingness and ability is important, as an explicit willingness to do something is easily impeded if the ability is lacking.

However, my use of the concept willingness needs further clarification. First, the concept is problematic because it is difficult to measure. Second, it is worth

[47] According to DeRouen Jr. and Goldfinch (2005), interstate and intrastate conflicts more likely escalate into violent ones if there is social unrest in the country, if it is contiguous to its main adversary in the crisis, if there is a violent trigger to the crisis, if there is an ethnic dimension to the crisis, and if the crisis is a long one.

[48] For example, consider the mechanisms developed by PIOOM (the Interdisciplinary Research Program on Root Causes of Human Rights Violations) (Shmid 1998:39–55); O'Brien 2002:Appendix A; Swiss Peace Foundation 2005b.

discussing whether the *stated* willingness in protocols or reports always signifies an *actual* willingness to implement the agreements. Dokken (1997:286) shows in her research study from West Africa that even though West African leaders may have signed protocols or documents in intergovernmental organisations, the political will to reach the new set of goals was often not strong enough.[50] I will therefore differ between stated and actual willingness whenever there seems to be a discrepancy between what some actors say and what they do.

I will discuss the AU's willingness and ability under a set of categories inspired by Espegren (1999). In her study of the OAU, she combines theories on international regimes with theories on the state and the relationship between states and individuals. She asserts that institutional capacity has three important implications. These three are rules and norms protecting individuals, an effective decision-making procedure, and sufficient human, financial and logistical resources (Espegren 1999:24).[51] I adopt her theoretical tool, as it may provide valuable insight to the capacity of the AU. In the first one – the rules and norms protecting individuals – I will discuss whether the AU – in its agreed-to rules and norms – is in a process of creating a system that considers the various kinds and causes of conflict. To supplement this discussion I will include Wettestad's effectiveness indicator on the role of the agenda. Here, he mentions that if a system is comprehensive, the risk of potential controversies increases (Wettestad 1995:35–37). Also, he states that an institution is more effective if it has the opportunity to be flexible, and add and subtract issues and parties.[52]

In the second category – the decision-making procedure – I will discuss how the decision-making structure in the AU affects its effectiveness. Both Wettestad (1995:30–32) and Espegren (1999:31) argue that majority voting is a stronger decision-making rule than consensus. Based on this understanding, I will discuss the

[49] Levy defines effectiveness as the extent to which institutions alter the behaviour of their members in accordance with the objective the institution was established to achieve (Levy referred in Wettestad 1995:12).
[50] For a more comprehensive discussion on the concept political will, see Dokken (1997:34–39;179;284–288).
[51] Amongst others, Espegren relies on contributions by theorists like Crawford, Deng, Kimaro, Lyons, Rotchild and Zartman to develop these categories (Espegren 1999:22;31).
[52] Wettestad's list of effectiveness indicators is primarily meant to apply for international environmental institutions (Wettestad 1995). I argue that it can be applied more generally to all organisations, and choose to employ parts of his findings in this study.

effectiveness of the AU, both within the organisation and in its co-operation with IGAD.

The third category – sufficient resources – deals with the human, financial, and logistical capacities of the AU. Here, I will limit the discussion to focus on Wettestad's indicators that concern the role of the secretariat (the administrative organ), and the organisation of the scientific-political complex. In general, an active secretariat that initiates and actively participates in the procedures is seen as more effective than a passive behind-the-scenes adviser (Wettestad 1995:33–35). Furthermore, the author includes a discussion on resources, and mentions that the budgetary and the administrative resources must be above a certain minimum for the secretariat to be effective. A large secretariat does not always guarantee effectiveness, but the resources need to be sufficient (ibid.). Even though sufficiency is difficult to measure, I will discuss whether the allocated resources seem to increase the capacity of the administrative organ, and whether this will increase the AU's ability to reach the theoretically defined goals. Second, I will briefly consider the organisation of the scientific-political complex, as this is an indicator that concerns the inclusion of professionals in the implementation of the mechanism (ibid.:37–39). As the discussion on conflict origins is such an important part of the AU project, CEWS would probably be more effective if scholars and academics were included in the system.

### 3.6 Summary

In this chapter I have answered the first two sub-questions of my thesis by considering various academic studies. It is shown that there are numerous explanations for conflict in the literature, and I have tried to extract the ones that I have found particularly relevant for the Horn of Africa. In the following, the theoretical framework on conflict origins and the theoretical contributions on capacity and effectiveness will serve as a foundation for my analysis. I will use the findings to discuss the capability of the AU to create an all-encompassing early warning system. The theory serves as my basis as it specifies the issues that ought to be considered.

## 4.0 The capacity of the AU

In this chapter I will discuss the capacity of the AU to look into the causes and kinds of conflict, as identified in the previous chapter. In particular I will assess the effectiveness of the organisation, as it is necessary to consider the existence and effectiveness of the early warning mechanism in a capacity assessment (Cliffe and White 2002:44). The AU needs to overcome many obstacles when it comes to the establishment of CEWS. Though, some of them are not only obstacles – they resemble barricades impossible to pass as the organisation tries to decide on what features to monitor. In the following I will discuss whether it seems capable of standing up to the challenge.

### 4.1 Existence[53]

At first glance, it ought to be easy to answer whether a mechanism currently exists. Either the AU is establishing an all-encompassing early warning system, or it is not. Obviously, the AU is in the process of constructing a mechanism, but as CEWS still has a long way to go, one cannot simply give a yes or no-answer to the question of existence. I find it fruitful to take a brief look at the history of early warning in the organisation to say how far the AU has actually progressed.

The Organisation for African Unity (OAU) never managed to establish a fully operational early warning system due to structural and institutional weaknesses within the organisation (Okoth 2004). The AU Anti-Terror Analyst, Martin Ewi, refers to its deficiencies as the OAU syndrome. He defines it as 'the inability to act because of constraints in the OAU Charter' (Ewi 2005 [interview]). This charter, which dates back to the birth of the OAU in 1963, committed the organisation to the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states (Aboagye 2004). As the OAU has seemed effectively handicapped by these early agreements, analysts have judged the organisation. Olonisakin states that it was

[53] The numbered headings in this chapter follow the structure of a capacity assessment as it was described in section 3.5. The division between the existence and the effectiveness of a mechanism is the main dividing line.

‘powerless to address situations of poor governance and the abuse of human rights within many member states that threatened to erupt into violent conflict in some cases’ (Olonisakin 2000:15th paragraph).

The OAU focused on developing consensus on the conceptual basis of early warning after the adoption of the Cairo Declaration in 1993. It tried to develop a set of indicators and an early warning model, and to establish a system that would facilitate information gathering and monitoring (Mwaûra 2002:102). Though, this declaration was also linked to the principles in the OAU Charter, and was meant to function on the basis of the consent and the co-operation of all member states (Aning et al 2004:10–11). Even though the OAU summit in June 1995 endorsed the establishment of an Early Warning Network, and the OAU engaged in some fact-finding and observer missions (The Institute for Security Studies 2004b:23–24th paragraph), little was made on the establishment of the mechanism. Cirû Mwaûra asserts that the reason for the slow progress was attributed to ‘the inclination of many regimes (…) to restrict public access to an inordinately broad range of information’ (Mwaûra 2002:103). The early warning challenge was passed on to the successor.

The AU is in a process of developing an early warning mechanism, but the system still has a way to go until it is operational. As the mechanism to a certain degree only exists on paper, one could argue that it would be difficult to do a capacity assessment at all. Particularly this would be the case if the implementation phase of the process – the system’s actual impact on the ground – were the focus of interest. Nevertheless, the issue of capacity can be assessed in various ways, using different kinds of indicators. So even though we must conclude that CEWS only partly exists, it is still possible to discuss the AU’s potential to create such a system.

### 4.2 Effectiveness

The discussion on effectiveness will contain an assessment of the willingness and the ability of the AU to move forward with CEWS. I have adopted the categories developed by Espegren (1999:24) as she mentions that institutional capacity implies rules and norms protecting individuals, an effective decision-making procedure, and sufficient resources. To supplement the analysis, I have included from Wettestad

(1995) some effectiveness indicators that I found to be relevant to the AU at this moment in time, as the mechanism is still under way. The scope of this thesis does not allow for a complete institutional analysis, but I still hope to identify some areas where the organisation appears to be effective. Also, I aim to point out some of the AU-characteristics that seem to impede the progress.

### 4.2.1 Rules and norms protecting individuals

In this category it is crucial to identify whether the AU is in a process of creating a system that protects human security, and if this goal has had implications for the kinds of conflict that the organisation aims to look into. As the system is under construction, this will primarily entail an assessment of the stated willingness of the organisation to move forward. (In section 3.5, this concept 'willingness' is discussed.) In addition, it is important to consider the actual willingness and the ability of the AU to establish a comprehensive set of rules and norms. Therefore, I will look into these issues as well to be able to say something about the capacity of the organisation.

#### *The goal of the AU*

The explicit focus on national sovereignty in the OAU shows how the concept of state security guided the AU's predecessor. All the countries were committed to respecting the territorial integrity and independence of all African countries (Bøås and Dokken 2002:13). In the AU, new steps have been taken. Adam Thiam, the only AU press attaché, states that 'all our responses must be based on the need for human security' (Thiam 2005 [interview]). Furthermore, he claims that 'the union has a clear aim of taking individual requirements into account.'

In many ways, Thiam's statement must be considered as an effort to broaden the scope of the continental African organisation. Based on the recognition that the causes of intrastate conflict necessitate 'a new emphasis on human security,' African leaders adopted the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy in 2004. Here, common security was defined, and given a content that 'encompasses both the traditional, state-centric notion of the survival of the state and

its protection by military means from external aggression, as well as the non-military notion which is informed by the new international environment and the high incidence of intra-state conflict' (The Solemn Declaration quoted in The Institute for Security Studies 2004b:48th paragraph). As part of the human security concept, it was realised that this included 'issues of human rights; the right to participate fully in the process of governance; the right to equal development… [whereby] the aim would be to safeguard the security of individuals, families, communities and the state…' (ibid.). Thus, not only for CEWS, but also for the AU in general, the aim seems to be to protect more actors than the state. Consequently, the goal of the AU appears to be to protect human security – identified in the literature as one of the building blocks of early warning. (See section 3.3.1.)

***The kinds of conflict***

After the clarification on goal where the AU obviously has given itself a comprehensive assignment, we should move on to identify what practical implications the wide goal has had for the work on CEWS. First it is worth considering the kinds of conflict that the organisation aims to look into. As pointed out in section 3.3.2, a focus on human security should imply that the AU must look into a much broader range of disputes compared with the ones threatening just state security. In the PSC Protocol, it is stated that the PSC shall 'anticipate and prevent disputes and conflicts, as well as policies that may lead to genocide and crimes against humanity' (The African Union 2002:Article 6 (1a)). At first glance, it seems that the PSC aims to look into a broad range of issues.

However, the concepts 'dispute' and 'conflict' seem to lack precise definitions. Ahmed Mokhtar Awed (2005 [interview]), a political officer working in the Early Warning Unit, explains that this is a conscious move by the organisation in the sense that the AU at the outset does not want a narrow approach. Since there are so many conflicts, listed by Mokhtar Awed as ranging from demonstrations, and coups d'état to the postponing of elections, and government abuses, the AU needs to have the opportunity to look into each one. Other employees do not see the need to define these

concepts. Martin Ewi (2005 [interview]), the Anti-Terror Analyst, claims that it is easy to identify emerging disputes.

There is no formally established definition of conflict that is used by the bureaucrats working in the African Union. Implicitly though, they seem to have adopted a wide definition of the concept. There is a widespread recognition of the need for a wide focus, and a fear that a formal definition would perhaps limit the broad mandate that the AU seemingly aims to adopt. As I have argued in section 3.3.2 that it is not necessary for an early warning system to operate with many sub-variables of 'conflict,' the decision not to specify the various types may be defended.

Still, to establish theoretical clarity on the aim of CEWS, and because the employees already seem to operate with an implicit understanding of conflict, I believe that the AU would benefit from a definition. I argue that a system that does not establish clarity on what the concept ought to entail, risks becoming too dependent on the human resources that exist in the organisation at all times. New employees may see things differently, and the building of strong independent institutions that exist independently of the people who hold office is impeded.

Though, when it comes to this issue, the AU has already decided (even though the Solemn Declaration is not directly attached to CEWS) that human security should guide all the AU's efforts. Moreover, the PSC is given a mandate to anticipate and prevent conflicts. Thus, it seems as if CEWS at least in its starting phase will operate with a broad definition of conflict even though the exact wording is lacking.

So far, the work on CEWS appears to be following the theoretical requirements to early warning as they have been identified in the literature. Human security is emphasised, and the system will – most likely – employ a wide definition of conflict. There seems to be at least a stated willingness in the AU to create an all-embracing mechanism. However, since the concepts are vague, the question is whether these features will be mirrored in the actual implementation of the system. To decide, we have to move on to look at the causes that the AU aims to monitor to see how far they go.

***The causes of conflict***

The area that will serve as a foundation for the mechanism is the choice of variables to monitor. At the moment, the AU is developing a roadmap that is to specify the variables in greater detail (The African Union 2004a:Article 10). However, in the PSC Protocol, it is already determined that CEWS shall collect and analyse data on the basis of an appropriate early warning module. It is mentioned that this module must be based on political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (4)).

Even though the indicators as such are not specified, it is stated among the objectives of the PSC that it shall 'promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law, as part of efforts for preventing conflicts' (ibid.:Article 3 (f)). A report issued in 2004 was even more specific as it mentioned that the PSC should take action in the following areas: grave abuses of human rights; issues of ethnic and religious extremism; corruption; exclusionary definitions of citizenship; poverty and disease; the illegal exploitation of natural resources; mercenarism; and the threat stemming from weapons and landmines (The African Union 2004b:Articles 7 and 11).

The link to CEWS and the development of indicators is not stated explicitly, but it is clear that the objectives of the PSC, and published reports, say something about the ambitions for CEWS as well. Statements from AU officials support this impression. For example, Adam Thiam states that 'government systems, human rights abuses, and the issue of small arms contribute to conflict. These are all security issues that early warning must look into' (Thiam 2005 [interview]). Mokhtar Awed (2005 [interview]) emphasises that CEWS ought to consider all kinds of conflict, and monitor all their respective causes.

Keeping in mind that the system is developing, and that ambitious statements from the pre-negotiation phase may wither as words are filled with content, it seems as if the AU aims to construct an all-encompassing system. The variables cover a broad range of areas. As for the political/structural variables that I discussed in section 3.4.3,

the AU states that it will encourage democracy and good governance, and protect human rights. Also, the AU specifies that it will look into issues like corruption, and exclusionary definitions of citizenship (The African Union 2004b:Article 11). In short, it seems as if there is at least a stated willingness in the organisation to look into the role of the state as instigators of conflict, and the political systems in each country.

Though, it is not pointed out explicitly that the AU will look into the threat stemming from local strongmen, or non-state actors. Still, by listing issues like ethnic and religious extremism, and the illegal exploitation of natural resources, it could be argued that the organisation intends to monitor areas where the goals of non-state actors would be incompatible with the state. Then, it looks into the role of non-state actors as well.

When it comes to the other causes of conflict that I have identified in this thesis, it is too early to say whether the AU aims to include all the issues. I argued in section 3.4.4 that economic and social variables must be given attention, and the organisation mentions that indicators from the economic and social field must be incorporated in CEWS. Specifically, the AU identifies poverty and disease as important areas for the PSC in the statement from 2004 (ibid.). However, the organisation has not specified its indicators, and it is not possible to say whether it will look into e.g. vulnerability to price change, dependence on primary commodity exports, and the like.

Furthermore, I argued in section 3.4.5 that ecological/environmental variables should be given space – and that both scarcity and abundance of resources could trigger conflict. For the time being, ecological/environmental variables are not given much attention, but the AU states that it shall address itself to issues like the ‘illegal exploitation of natural resources’ that have contributed to conflict and insecurity (The African Union 2004b:Article 11). Though, the organisation is still to reflect on whether it shall monitor for example areas that have scarce or abundant resources. The debate in the AU has not reached this level. The organisation needs to go into this issue before it can fully implement such a system.

The last set of variables that I identified was cultural/perceptual variables in section 3.4.6. Here I claimed that the AU needed to recognise the potential difficulties that could arise when ethnic groups interact. Here too, it seems to be a willingness to

take this problem seriously. It is mentioned that 'issues of ethnic and religious extremism' will be looked into by the PSC (ibid.). I also argued that religion or ethnicity might be the channel through which a conflict is materialised, if a group is excluded from political power. When stating that the AU also will consider 'exclusionary definitions of citizenship,' it appears that the organisation has reflected on this possibility (ibid.). It recognises that such exclusions may trigger tension, and that they should be looked into.

Consequently, it also seems like some aspects of the phenomenon of trans-national processes are emphasised by the AU. This feature concerns all issues that transcend international borders, and must be monitored by looking into each one. (See section 3.4.3.) People often move around in the sub-region either as refugees, migrants, nomads, or pastoralists. Thus, the stated focus on natural resources, and ethnic and religious extremism, could be interpreted as a sign that the AU aims to monitor these aspects.

All in all it seems as if we can conclude that the AU appears to be aware of the most important causes of conflict in the Horn. Even though the process is still under way, the statements from AU officials, and the documents that member states have agreed to, signify a willingness to consider various sources of conflict. However, it is important to remember that the AU is yet to go into detail on the different issues. It is difficult to assess whether the organisation will look into all the causes of conflict until it actually produces a set of indicators. Such a list is still somewhere in the future. Important considerations on for example the relationship between ecological variables and conflict remain.

***The actual capacity to establish the rules and norms***

Nevertheless, the words and the willingness are of little value if the AU fails to create a system that is capable of monitoring all the variables. Even though the organisation seems to be aware of the causes of conflict in this sub-region, no indicators have in fact been developed. The AU has not yet decided on how it will measure the various issues. For example, it has to specify what it means by 'exclusionary definitions of citizenship.' I claim that the creation of indicators on this topic may fuse more tension

than the mere concept itself. Member states may have different perceptions of what constitutes exclusion. Then, the general willingness to an issue may turn to a specific unwillingness to some indicators. Here, member states need to agree on what kinds of exclusions that they regard as conflict trigging. The alternatives may range from the mere denial of some individuals' right to vote to a point where exclusion means that a whole group does not have access to resources or positions in the state.

Furthermore, it is clear that the organisation regards democracy and good governance as conflict preventive, but it is not perfectly clear how the organisation defines these concepts. The AU needs to specify what aspects of these issues that it actually wants to look into. In order for the people involved in the system to know what to monitor, the AU ought to develop a set of benchmarks or standards on which to measure change. Then, the organisation must clarify what sort of deviations from these benchmarks that would trigger an early warning.[54] As long as we do not know the content of the words, it is difficult to say where the AU is headed. Viewed in such a perspective it is perhaps easy to agree with statements from political scientists like Merera Gudina at the Addis Ababa University. He argues that the AU resembles the OAU in its ineffectiveness, and claims that the organisation will have little opportunity to implement its early warning system (Merera 2005 [interview]).

The fact that the AU has not developed a set of benchmarks shows how little progress that actually has been made on the work with early warning in the continental body. At this time of writing, no indicators are in place, and the Situation Room of today seems to monitor member states in a rather ad hoc way.[55] On a daily basis, the employees produce three or four news bulletins after monitoring various news agencies on the Internet.[56] The bulletins are divided into six categories; *Conflict Situations; Crisis Situations; Human Rights Situations; Post Conflict Situations; Humanitarian Situations Arising From Conflict;* and *Political Developments.*

[54] The establishment of benchmarks on which to measure change for normal social, political, economic and cultural activities was suggested by Dr. Doug Bond at the AU workshop in 2003 (The African Union 2003:5).
[55] As stated in the PSC Protocol, the Situation Room is to become the channel through which early warning information is distributed from other sources to analysts within the union (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (2a)).
[56] The employees in the Situation Room work shift on a 24-hour basis. To monitor member states, they rely on news agencies like BBC, CNN, Panapress, UN news centre, and Reuters (Fetun 2005 [interview]).

Employees refer to their experience when they are asked on what grounds they group the various incidents.[57]

Then, what is clear is that although the AU has stated its comprehensive list of goals on various occasions, the goals are yet to be implemented on a daily basis. Other than the six categories, the employees in the Situation Room work without specific guidelines of what features to monitor. This is also the case for the analysts in the organisation. Mokhtar Awed (2005 [interview]) explains that there are no clear indicators as such, but that the analysts have experience with each country, and know what might trigger conflict each place.

There is no doubt about the academic and intellectual capacity of Dr. Mokhtar Awed and his associates working with early warning in the union. But, as mentioned earlier, the problem is that the AU system is highly subjective, highly dependent on the individuals already working there. New employees will start from scratch, as they would not have that experience. Summing up, it seems that the AU has willingness, but that it has not yet shown the ability to create a system that embraces all the necessary rules and norms to consider all kinds and causes of conflict. Although the mechanism is still under construction, it should be pointed out that the AU lacks sufficient studies on conflict causes, it lacks country profiles, and it lacks a set of benchmarks. Then, I claim that the chance for the monitoring to be performed quite randomly increases.

### *The role of the agenda*

The effectiveness indicator focusing on the agenda may provide valuable insight to the reasons for the slow progress of CEWS. (See section 3.5.) In fact, the AU's ambitious goals may hinder the ability to implement even small parts of the system. Wettestad explains that, in general, the higher number of issues, the higher number of potential controversies and 'blocking points.' Consequently, 'a narrow approach incurs less risk of hold-outs that impede agreement' (Wettestad 1995:35). In theory, this would entail that the greater the ambition, the bigger is the chance of someone stalling future progress.

[57] This information is based on an interview in Addis Ababa with Fetun Antonios, a Situation Room Assistant, 18.02.2005.

Traditionally, as pointed out by Cilliers and Sturman (2004:9th paragraph), African states are sceptical to new innovations. Yet, after the establishment of the AU, the scepticism has been particularly profound when it comes to the expanded mandate of the organisation (Merera 2005 [interview]; Mokhtar Awed 2005 [interview]). The Constitutive Act allows for the AU a more active role in internal political affairs of member states, and the employees talk about their 'new freedom' to look into more issues compared with the time of the OAU.[58] Furthermore, the Constitutive Act has an opening for sanctions and even interventions. Phenomena like war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, and threats to legitimate order are mentioned specifically (Porto 2004). They may trigger an AU intervention.

Even though the principle of non-interference is still part of the Constitutive Act, thus causing some principles of the new AU mandate to contradict, it is perhaps easy to understand this scepticism. Consider for example the fact that 'threats to legitimate order' may trigger an AU intervention. For countries to qualify as legitimate, the AU will in time maybe include criteria like respect for democracy and some sort of political inclusion of all groups in society. If the union decides to do just that, there will probably be countries on the continent that do not match up to the standards. No wonder these states are sceptical to the development of indicators that perhaps will be derived from a set of benchmarks that the countries may not live up to.

A more theoretical approach to this problem is perhaps to say that it stems from the African project of building a westphalian – and a post-westphalian society at the same time. The first relates to the building of what Espen Barth Eide calls stateness (the building of legitimate political authority), and the second concerns a more institutionalised form of integration between the states (Eide et al 2004). This may imply giving up sovereignty. As I see it, states that lack internal legitimacy, and do not even control their own areas may have difficulties giving up even more power. The development of indicators in an early warning system is important, as they will constitute an ideal of legitimate statehood. Down the road any deviations from the ideal will perhaps trigger reactions from the union. In most cases states will probably

[58] This statement stems from an interview in Addis Ababa with the regional desk officer, Salvator Nkeshimana, 17.02.2005.

resist such measures unless they ask for them themselves. Therefore, they remain sceptical to anything new.

When it comes to the flexibility of the agenda, Wettestad (1995:35–37) mentions that the opportunity to add and subtract parties and issues is a way of increasing the effectiveness of an organisation. Clearly, the AU has a profound challenge as it tries to make its 53 different members agree to a set of indicators.[59] Yet, to exclude some parties to increase the effectiveness is not considered as a possibility to the AU. The building of CEWS is founded in a belief that all countries need to be part of the mechanism (Ewi 2005 [interview]).

As far as the subtraction of issues is concerned, the discussion on the development of CEWARN in the next chapter will reveal how the narrowing down of the agenda made IGAD member states able to agree on a set of issues to monitor. So far, the AU has not tried to limit the scope of the mechanism, and faces instead a sociological challenge of creating joint indicators that can be applied to countries that do not resemble each other. Cilliers and Sturman (2004:19th paragraph) point out that the causes of conflict are not the same in all countries, and that it is problematic to make mechanisms that encompass this complexity. In the AU negotiations on CEWS, member states have only managed to agree that they will develop 'political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators' (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (4)). The specific set of operationalised indicators is yet to be established.[60]

Mokhtar Awed (2005 [interview]) reveals that it is very difficult to convince member states to be monitored, and to accept a comprehensive list of indicators. Sceptical African nations, and a lack of political will, are referred to as reasons why the nations have difficulties co-operating (Merera 2005 [interview]; The African Union 2003:5).[61] Aning et al (2004:13–14) identify political will as decisive for the success of early warning. The comprehensive agenda coupled with scepticism to the new AU opportunities to react and interfere in internal affairs of member states, appear to impede the work on CEWS. Then, it seems as if we can conclude that the actual

[59] All countries in Africa are members of the African Union, apart from Morocco (The Institute for Security Studies 2004b).
[60] Further down the road, the AU will encounter a technical challenge as an established early warning system would entail the coding and collection of huge amounts of data.

willingness among some nations is lacking. Even though the members state their willingness in various documents, and most nations may have every intention to monitor all areas, the ability of the AU to construct a wide-focused mechanism may be impeded by some sceptical states.

### 4.2.2 Decision-making procedure

The next category that I discussed in section 3.5, and that Espegren (1999:24) identifies as affecting the institutional capacity is the way decisions are made. Wettestad (1995:30–32) points out that majority voting is a stronger decision-making rule than consensus. For the topic of this thesis, it is relevant to look into the decision-making procedure in the internal AU negotiations where member states are to reach agreement on indicators. Even though there may be an explicitly stated willingness, and an actual will among most nations to create an all-embracing mechanism, this issue may impede the organisation's ability. If sceptical nations are given the right to veto all decisions, it is evident that the effectiveness of the AU will suffer.

The AU is an intergovernmental organisation and all decisions with political implications need to be agreed to by member states. Already, when signing the PSC Protocol, member states have accepted that CEWS will be based on political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (4)). Yet, as mentioned earlier, there has been no further progress on the development of indicators. The PSC Protocol specifies that this module must be 'clearly defined and accepted' (ibid.), thus implying that all members of the organisation must be involved in the process. A set of indicators may be passed without the consent of all parties, but then member states have the right to write a reservation. In that way, the article does not bind them (Ewi 2005 [interview]). The principle of consensus generally guides the efforts of the AU, and the organisation struggles to make member states agree on all issues (The Institute for Security Studies 2004b:41st paragraph). Here, it seems as if little has changed from the time of the

[61] I define political will as the sincere zeal of a state to participate in and also contribute positively towards peacemaking and peace-building efforts (Aning et al 2004:14).

OAU. Espegren (1999:34) shows that the capacity of the Central Organ of the OAU was limited as it was bound by the principle of consensus.

The way that decisions are made in the AU seems to hinder the progress on CEWS, as the organisation depends on the willingness and the goodwill of all member states. In fact, Martin Ewi, the Anti-Terror Analyst, regards it as a major accomplishment that the countries at all agreed to include variables from the political, economic, social, military and humanitarian field in the PSC Protocol. His point is that the causal links in the debate on conflict origins often are disputed, and that it is difficult to convince all member states to adopt an all-encompassing mechanism (Ewi 2005 [interview]).

Clearly, the decision-making procedure has the potential to impede the progress. Even though the AU may have left the starting line, and have managed to run a few metres with its early warning project, it still has many laps to go. For example, the agreement of including political indicators in the module says nothing about the specific indicators that the organisation will use to monitor the political arena. As long as the organisation lacks a set of benchmarks on this issue, it is difficult to say what the AU will look into. Yet, it seems as if the organisation will have difficulties pointing out its own direction in this area as long as the principle of consensus guides the AU. Consequently, its effectiveness seems to be impeded.

### 4.2.3 Sufficient resources

In this category where Espegren (1999:24) lists the human, financial, and logistical resources as affecting institutional capacity, I have chosen to use two effectiveness indicators developed by Wettestad. (See section 3.5.) When it comes to the administrative organ, he refers to the role of the secretariat. He also emphasises that co-operation with academic experts may increase the effectiveness of an institution, and refers therefore to the organisation of the scientific-political complex (Wettestad 1995:33–35,37–39).

### *The role of the secretariat*

As far as the administrative capacity is concerned, Wettestad differs between two aspects. First, he makes a distinction between 'active' and 'passive' secretariats, assuming that 'the more resource-rich and active the secretariat, the stronger the resulting outputs' (Wettestad 1995:33). Active secretariats that initiate and actively participate in the procedures are seen as more effective than secretariats working more off-stage (ibid.:33–35). Though, he also points out that this is not a necessary condition for the effectiveness of such an organ. Evidence so far indicates that if the parties themselves have overall reasonable administrative capacities, and the secretariat's budgetary and administrative resources are above a certain minimum, then the active/passive distinction is not that significant (ibid.:34–35). It is therefore important to look into Wettestad's second aspect. Here, he mentions that it is important to consider the manpower and the budgetary resources to assess the effectiveness of the secretariat.

To assess the degree of 'activism' for the Early Warning Unit within the Peace and Security Department, and also to measure the early warning initiatives taken by the department as a whole, is a difficult assignment. The assessments risk being based on subjective perceptions, thus leading to problems with the reliability of the study. It is also hard to isolate the role of the secretariat from signals coming from member states, encouraging or discouraging the initiatives. Therefore, I will not put too much weight on this issue, but it is still worth looking into the early warning efforts taken by the officials working in the AU.

Compared with the initiatives taken during the time of the OAU, it seems as if the secretariat has continued the work on how to create an early warning mechanism.[62] Some expert seminars were organised on early warning in the 1990s, and the officials working in the AU have continued to organise workshops intended to guide the development of the system.[63] Often, the AU officials do much of the work by preparing drafts, and they actively participate in the discussions. Then, the AU secretariat fulfils Wettestad's requirements for 'activism,' and must be considered as

[62] For example, expert seminars on early warning were organised in Addis Ababa in 1996 and 1998 (Cilliers 2005:4–5).

being an active organ. Then, the active secretariat that clearly expresses willingness and has an ambition to create a mechanism with a broad mandate, should increase the efficiency of the organisation, and make it more likely that a system with a wide focus is established.

Yet, turning to the more important question of resources, Wettestad (1995:35) mentions that they must be above a certain minimum for the secretariat to be effective. Intuitively, it appears to be easier to measure the allocation of resources, but this assessment is perhaps equally as difficult. The point that constitutes a minimum is relative, depends on the mandate that the administrative organ is meant to fulfil, and differs from organisation to organisation. Relevant for this thesis is whether the allocated resources seem to increase the capacity of the administrative organ to contribute to the development of a system that looks into all kinds and causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa. The exact number is hard to point out.

Recognising the difficulties of establishing a minimum, the issue of manpower is still worth discussing. In the Maputo summit, it was stated that three professionals, a secretary, and six interns working shift to staff the Situation Room were to be employed (The Institute for Security Studies 2004a:9). The Situation Room is operational, but there are only two professionals working in the Early Warning Unit (Mokhtar Awed 2005 [interview]). To reach all its comprehensive goals, the AU recognises the need to increase its staff (Commission of the African Union 2004b:17). The December 2004 Executive Council have now agreed on an expanded budget for the administrative organ, but it should first expand to the Maputo level of staffing before seeking approval for additional manpower (Cilliers 2005:22). At least, there seems to be willingness to increase the number of early warning professionals.

Nevertheless, the number of individuals working with early warning appears to be far below what is actually needed. The Institute for Security Studies in South Africa has criticised the structure of the early warning component as it was approved by the Maputo summit, arguing that the AU has no ability to stand up to its challenge (The Institute for Security Studies 2004a:9). There are five regions, and 54 different

[63] A workshop on early warning was organised in Addis Ababa in October 2003 (The African Union 2003). Plans are in the making for a new workshop, but the dates are yet to be set (The African Union 2005).

countries in Africa. Two professionals seem to be in no position to monitor all the causes of conflict. In addition to the people working in the Situation Room, the South African research institute proposes a staffing structure of a total number of 21 staff members.[64] One of the professionals working in the Early Warning Unit, Ahmed Mokhtar Awed, also expresses concern for the question of manpower. He realises that the employees are in 'no position to monitor closely the situation in all the countries' (Mokhtar Awed 2005 [interview]). The lack of manpower seems to limit the capacity of the administrative organ.

When it comes to the budgetary resources, it is difficult to assess the capacity of CEWS. The AU has not discussed exactly how much it believes that a fully operational early warning system will cost, and it has not revealed how much it intends to spend on early warning (Ewi 2005 [telephone interview]). The model proposed by the Institute for Security Studies would supposedly cost less than US 1 million dollars to establish (if building costs are excluded) and roughly US 1 million to run on an annual basis (Cilliers 2005:22–23). At first glance, these sums may seem not too deterring, but I will refrain from giving an estimate on the expected costs of such a system in this thesis. It appears that we just have to state that there has been little progress on the question of financing. Also, it is difficult to say how much CEWS actually needs. At least, we cannot say whether CEWS will be provided resources above Wettestad's important minimum.

This part of the analysis will be impeded by the lack of progress on this field. To assess the AU's capacity, it is therefore necessary that the analysis moves up a level and considers the AU in general. It follows that we cannot put too much weight on the findings, but a general discussion can illustrate important features of the organisation's capacity.

The AU itself recognises that it struggles with a lack of resources. To explain by example, it is worth looking into the established Peace Fund that is intended to finance all the AU's peace support missions (The African Union 2002:Article 21 (1)). This fund will not provide resources to early warning as such, but it may turn relevant

[64] This proposal of 21 includes the head, a deputy head, 2 secretaries, 2 clerks and 15 analysts. The analysts should have different backgrounds, and include for each region in Africa one military analyst, one political analyst, and one socio-

for CEWS if early warning analysts should suggest preventive intervention on the basis of an early warning. Then, the size of the fund would determine the AU's ability to act on the information. In the *2004–2007 Strategic Framework of the Commission of the African Union*, it is estimated that this fund needs US 200 million dollars annually from 2004 to 2007 for the AU and the PSC to fulfil their comprehensive mandate (Commission of the African Union 2004b:50–51). Currently, 6% of the regular membership contributions of member states are allocated to the Peace Fund, but the fund also depends on voluntary contributions, and grants from donors (The African Union 2004a:Articles 24 and 25).

However, as the actual budget for the organisation as a whole is only US 158 million dollars for 2005, growing from a mere US 43 million dollars in 2004 (Cilliers 2005:8), it is evident that the AU will have a problem financing its operations. In 2004, member states had debts to the union amounting to US 45 million dollars (Commission of the African Union 2004b:30–31). As for the support to the Peace Fund, from 1993 to 2004 it had received just over US 96 million dollars, but over three-quarters of this amount was from partners of the AU. Only one quarter came from member states (The African Union 2004a:Article 25). Yet, whoever provides the resources to the fund, the sums are far from reaching the ambitious goals of the strategic framework.

The dependence on external partners, and the missing contributions from member states may indicate a sense of unwillingness among some members to contribute. It seems that the actual willingness may be lacking. Of course it is worth remembering that African states generally have low GNPs (gross national products) (Commission of the African Union 2004a:49; The World Bank Group 2001:2nd paragraph). This may be a sign that the countries do not have the opportunity to pay their dues. Still, the insufficiency of member state funding may indicate that some nations lack the political will to build stronger continental institutions. Though, whatever the reason, the lack of resources has considerable potential to decrease the effectiveness of the AU in general, and may also stall the progress on the implementation of CEWS.

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economic analyst (Cilliers 2005:9,22–23).

### *The organisation of the scientific-political complex*

The next effectiveness indicator concerns the inclusion of scientific research. Wettestad (1995:37–39) points to the importance of knowledge production, and states that the findings from relevant scientific research should have implications for policy decisions. For the topic of this thesis, it would be relevant to see whether academic experts are included in the process towards the establishment of CEWS.

To a large extent, it seems as if the AU is actively using scholars and academics. As mentioned above, the AU has arranged a number of seminars where experts on early warning have participated.[65] Though, the discussions have primarily centred on the many practical steps that need to be taken to create an early warning model. The development of indicators as such has not been discussed to the same extent by the organisation. Yet, two sets of indicators for the prediction of impending, and the indication of ongoing, conflicts were discussed but not finalised on the workshop with academic experts in 1998 (Cilliers 2005:4). Apparently, it seems as if the AU is actively trying to increase its knowledge by turning to scholars and experts on the field. Consequently, the potential for the AU to create a wide-focused early warning system might increase.

However, Wettestad (1995:38) warns that the link between decision-makers and researchers must not grow too strong. This is the case particularly when the level of political conflict is high for the issue in question. Then, the scientific research may be 'contaminated' by a direct link to decision-makers. His point is that research can point out winners and losers, and allocate blame. Some actors would perhaps try to influence the researchers to avoid being identified as for example instigators of conflict. The theoretical framework in this thesis clearly hands out the blame to some actors. Then, it is important for scholars to keep a certain distance. The only way academics may provide to the AU a set of reliable contributions on conflict causes is by staying independent. At present, the AU seems to be at no danger of having too close links to academic experts, but the general warning is worth remembering.

### 4.3 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the capacity of the AU to develop an all-encompassing early warning system. I have identified a stated willingness to set out with a broad approach to encompass all sorts of conflict. The administrative organ may be characterised as being active initiators, and the organisation seems to be aware of the need to learn from scientific experts. All these features have the potential to increase the effectiveness of the AU, and will most likely facilitate the establishment of CEWS.

Nevertheless, there are obstacles that need to be overcome. The system progresses slowly, partly due to the fact that the continental body has difficulties convincing each member state to accept a comprehensive set of indicators. It seems to be a long way to go from accepting a general intention of monitoring nascent conflicts to agreeing to a specific list. Then, it seems as if we can ask whether the actual willingness is lacking among some nations. Some of the answers are perhaps found in the AU's ability that appears to be impeded by a lack of resources and a lack of political will. Its institutional capacity also seems to be limited due to a decision-making procedure that emphasises consensus, thus giving each member state an opportunity to stall the progress.

However, the question of capacity cannot be answered without the consideration of how the organisation co-operates with sub-regional mechanisms. It is to this subject that I now turn.

[65] See for example the workshop in Addis Ababa in October 2003 (The African Union 2003).

## 5.0 Co-operation

As the most important suppliers of information to the AU, the sub-regional mechanisms are highlighted in the PSC Protocol. These units are to be 'linked directly through appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room,' and they shall 'collect and process data at their level' (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (2b)). For CEWS to succeed, it is clear that efforts must be co-ordinated, and that the AU and the sub-regional intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) pull in the same direction.

In this chapter I will discuss whether the AU together with IGAD are capable of developing an early warning system that will monitor the causes of all kinds of conflict in the Horn of Africa. I will look into how far the two organisations have progressed in their co-operative efforts, and identify future challenges. I will do a capacity assessment of IGAD's mechanism as well, but the focus in the discussion will be how the various features affect the capacity of the AU to create an all-encompassing early warning system.

### 5.1 Existence

The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) was established in 1986. Originally, the organisation was to function as a forum to deal with drought disasters only. Over the years, its focus has widened to encompass environmental questions, food security, economic co-operation, and political and humanitarian issues (Bøås and Dokken 2002:19). This development, and the fact that it now even plays a significant role when it comes to efforts of conflict resolution in the area, has changed the organisation and the specific link to drought has been dropped from its name.

In January 2002, the Protocol on the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) was signed in Khartoum. In the first week of September the same year, CEWARN was established in Addis Ababa, and the office was formally opened on 30 June 2003 (The Institute for Security Studies 2004c:7).

Three professionals constitute the core staff (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]).[66] Furthermore, in the CEWARN Protocol, it is stated that the mechanism will co-operate with national conflict early warning and response mechanisms called CEWERUs in each IGAD member state (The Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2002).

From the time of its inception, CEWARN has successfully prevented a violent raid in Northern Uganda. A country co-ordinator passed on information gathered from lower levels to CEWARN analysts. They alerted the local district commissioner (Levy and Meier 2004:45). Yet, the head of CEWARN, Charles Mwaûra (2005 [interview]), explains that so far the CEWARN successes have been ad hoc, and not attributed to the mechanism as such. He refers to the fact that the mechanism is still young, and that the employees only recently have started working on a set of criteria to measure the impact of the system. These criteria will be linked to the CEWARN Protocol in the sense that they will rate whether the mechanism fulfils its specified mandate.

Evidently, the capacity of CEWARN to assist the AU with the monitoring of all conflicts in the sub-region is limited by the mere fact that the system has just recently started its operations. However, here I will discuss the potential of CEWARN to fulfil its future role.

## 5.2 Effectiveness

When compared with CEWS, CEWARN has progressed much further as it already has operations on the ground. Till now the two mechanisms have been developing independently, as the work on CEWS has moved forward more slowly. An assessment of the willingness and the ability to establish CEWARN can highlight the capacity of this mechanism, and it can also provide some insight to the challenges that the AU and IGAD will have in their future co-operative efforts.

### 5.2.1 Rules and norms protecting individuals

***The goal and the kinds of conflict***

[66] According to Charles Mwaûra (2005 [interview]), CEWARN will expand in the near future, as the workload requires the recruitment of more academic experts.

At first glance, the CEWARN point of departure seems to be broad as far as the mandate is concerned. The CEWARN Protocol states that it shall 'receive and share information concerning potentially violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD region' (The Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2002:Annex). However, how we shall interpret such a mandate all depends on whose security the system aims to protect, and how IGAD countries have defined the term 'conflict.' As for the former, it is not specified whether state or human security shall be the focus of the mechanism. Still, it can be argued that this is implicit, because early warning per se differs from intelligence. Charles Mwaûra claims that it is not necessary to make this specification, because 'the concepts of security and conflict become muddled up in intrastate affairs' (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]). He argues that there are so many different kinds of intrastate conflict, and that it is not necessary to approach this issue from a security dimension. I disagree with Mwaûra and claim that a specification would be helpful, as it would indicate the goal of the system. As I have argued in section 3.3.1, it would be clearer to everybody involved what they are obliged to do, and who the system aims to protect if the mechanism specified its goal.

But even though the security question per se is not addressed, we can still answer it by looking into the kinds of conflict that the system is to consider. I claim that the choice of conflicts can say something about whose security that seems most important. (See section 3.3.2.) An answer to this question seems to be found in the operating guidelines of the CEWARN Protocol. They limit the kinds of conflict that the mechanism is to look into. It says that the system shall 'rely for its operations on information that is collected from the public domain, particularly in the following areas: livestock rustling; conflicts over grazing and water points; smuggling and illegal trade; nomadic movements; refugees; landmines; and banditry' (The Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2002:Annex). In effect, even though it is mandated to monitor 'potentially violent conflicts,' its focus has been limited primarily to rural areas, and to cross-border pastoral conflicts (The African Union 2003:11).

According to the head of CEWARN, early warning systems can only be built in bits and pieces. Mwaûra feels that IGAD has chosen a right approach in the sense that ambitions have been kept low. Even though there are conflicts that the system does not look into, the stated intention is to expand the mechanism across IGAD for all kinds of conflict over the next five years (Cilliers 2005:14). The line of argument is that this is a pilot project and that an expansion cannot take place until it has proved its worth (Tesfaye 2005 [telephone interview]). Viewed in this perspective it seems to be a wise choice to limit the number of entry points in CEWARN. Mechanisms like these are new innovations, and there are no blueprints on how to measure them, or on how to develop variables and indicators that suit the African context.

However, the limitations placed on the mandate make it possible to wonder whether human security is CEWARN's main concern, or if the system is primarily constructed as an instrument to protect the state, represented by the governing elite. For example, Dawit (2005 [interview]) points out that various ethnic groups in the border areas in Gambella from time to time constitute threats to the Government of Ethiopia. The Government may protect itself by monitoring the activities of the groups. Though, this is not an argument saying that state security is the sole concern of CEWARN. To prevent conflicts among ethnic groups may just as well contribute to the protection of communities, families, and individuals.

Still, I claim that the main focus of CEWARN as it appears now seems to be to protect the interests of the rulers and the state. The aforementioned conflicts may threaten human security as well, but it seems that the states are particularly willing to address conflicts in rural areas. Here, the government structure often is weak, as is the case in Ethiopia (Beletu 2005 [interview]). Then, it would be natural if governments want to get a clearer view on impending conflicts in these areas to protect themselves.

It should be pointed out, however, that CEWARN as well as CEWS is in a nascent phase, and that we should not make too much of this stated conclusion. Turning to the causes of conflict, there are indications that CEWARN also focuses on human security e.g. by looking into the role the *state* plays as instigators of pastoral

conflicts. So even though the interests of the state appear to be most important now, this may be attributed to the fact that CEWARN is a newly established mechanism.

***The causes of conflict***

The choice of independent variables and the subsequent development of indicators are of course guided by the limitations placed on the dependent variable. Still, it is worth looking into the categories I developed in section 3.4, as each one sheds important light upon how CEWARN regards the causes of conflict. First, I identified in section 3.4.3 some political/structural variables that such a system ought to encompass. The mechanism does not deal with governance structures and political systems per se, and it has no stated benchmarks on legitimate political authority. In that way, it should be easy to conclude that the system fails to consider the African state and the various political systems as important sources of conflict in the Horn of Africa.

Though, this argument could be disputed. The political systems are not addressed, but Mwaûra (2005 [interview]) claims that the states are not left completely off the hook. The mechanism allows the analysts to say something about the role the state plays with its policy in pastoral areas. Here, the head of the sub-regional mechanism clearly has a point. CEWARN – that used the FAST project developed by the Swiss Peace Foundation as a starting point for the development of indicators – has taken some political variables into account. It has developed a set of indicators that encompasses issues like 'Harmful migration policy' and 'Harmful livestock policy.'[67] By incorporating these indicators, and by monitoring government policy in pastoral areas over time, the analysts are able to say something about the impact of the various government decisions and activities. Then, it can be argued that the system considers the role of the African state. Even though CEWARN just looks into pastoral conflicts, it recognises that state policy may trigger tension.

Furthermore, I would say that the mechanism seems to encompass many of the important trans-national processes in the region. By looking into the activities of nomads, refugees, and pastoralists, the people behind the system have understood that groups or activities that cross borders have potential to trigger conflict in this area. As

these groups also could be termed non-state actors, it appears that CEWARN in fact recognises both the potential threat stemming from trans-national processes, and that it aims to monitor groups that operate outside the state.

Second, I emphasised economic/social variables in section 3.4.4. The choice of indicators shows that this aspect is partly considered as the mechanism aims to look into for example cross-border trade, access to health care, access to education, and the price level on livestock. The ecological/environmental factors that I discussed in section 3.4.5 are also given weight, as there are indicators on e.g. natural disaster and land competition. Finally, CEWARN seems to recognise the potential for cultural/perceptual variables to trigger conflict. (See section 3.4.6.) It has indicators on issues like inter-group marriage, inter-ethnic group alliances, and religious peace building. One could always criticise the choice of indicators for not being extensive enough, but in general CEWARN has strengths as it covers a broad range of variables.

***The actual capacity to establish the rules and norms***

Still, even though the system seems to encompass many of the sources of conflict, it must be emphasised that the mechanism is for pastoral conflicts only. In my opinion, this limits the value of CEWARN, and makes it only partly effective. IGAD narrowed down the dependent variable to focus on an area that seems less threatening to the governments in each member state. The system can point out how governmental policy in pastoral areas may be harmful, but this is just a small part of government activity. It does not look into Waltz' system-level as such, and has no benchmarks for legitimate political authority. The many conflicts that arise from illegitimate governments clinging to power, excluding their opposition, are not considered by the mechanism. To create a system that aims to protect human security, and deals with all the sources of conflict in the Horn of Africa, it is necessary for CEWARN to expand. The system must change its dependent variable to cover more areas, and see conflict in a broader light. Consequently, the AU's ability to establish a comprehensive mechanism seems to be impeded by the limited capacity of CEWARN.

[67] See Appendix A for a list of CEWARN's indicators.

As the system functions now, it fails to consider all issues that do not have a specific link to pastoralist activity. For example, the mechanism has no opening to address and monitor the interstate competition for water resources. By only looking into how small groups in the districts compete for resources, bigger conflicts like those over the Nile waters would slip its attention. I therefore agree with parts of the criticism as Apuuli formulates it. He regards it as a weakness that the system does not specifically address interstate conflicts (Apuuli 2004:183). I argue that the mechanism does not need to give interstate conflicts special treatment as long as it develops independent variables that consider the causes of these conflicts as well. Yet, at present, as a consequence of its choice of monitoring pastoral conflicts only, CEWARN lacks variables and indicators to sufficiently encompass all causes.

Summing up; even though there seems to be a *stated* willingness to create an all-encompassing mechanism in IGAD, it is possible to question the *actual* willingness of the states to reach this goal. So far, the system has been given the ability through its mandate to focus on the protection of state security in particular. It is an open issue whether a comprehensive set of rules and norms protecting the individual will be established.

***The role of the agenda***

However, when it comes to the development of CEWARN, it may be argued that the decision to monitor anything at all was a major accomplishment for IGAD member countries. Through the narrowing down of the agenda, by Wettestad (1995:35–37) identified as a way of increasing an institution's effectiveness (see section 3.5), the states found at least some common ground. Traditionally, as pointed out by Cirû Mwaûra et al (2002:36), 'disagreements between member states in IGAD have tended to undermine the organization's ability to execute its mandate effectively.' Merera (2005 [interview]) claims that these states do not want their own actions to be identified, and that this is the reason for the choice of monitoring pastoral conflicts only. Furthermore, there is always the chance that information gathering equals 'spying' (Khumalo 1996:44$^{th}$ paragraph). The countries in this region have a complex

background of hostility and tension. In this context, it is perhaps understandable that the organisation needs to move forward step by step.

There have been several conferences where IGAD countries have discussed how to broaden the scope of the mechanism to cover more areas, but these initiatives have yet to result in an expansion of the system (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]; The Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2003:2nd paragraph). In their study of CEWARN, Mwaûra and Schmeidl (2002:18) mention that IGAD member states had to find an area where they were willing to exchange information. Then, conflicts in pastoral areas along borders were chosen as an entry point of the mechanism.

Here, it is shown that the subtraction of issues from the agenda made it possible for the countries to agree in at least one area. By using this tool, the effectiveness of an organisation that struggles with internal disagreements, grew. By monitoring these areas, CEWARN will in time provide information to the AU. Then, it will increase the ability of the continental organisation to look into some of the conflicts on its comprehensive list. This can be regarded as being important for the progress of CEWS, as the sub-regional mechanism already has started its operations. Still, the contemporary efforts of CEWARN are just minor contributions compared with the identified theoretical framework on the sources of conflict, and the ambitious goals of the AU. The limited agenda may have increased the possibility to agree in IGAD, but it is not evident that the agreement will trigger a future expansion of the mechanism. Scholars should always hesitate to speculate, but if the system were set to monitor how some groups are excluded from political power, or how some states interfere in the political life of their neighbours, the role of various governments would be scrutinised to a larger extent. Then, some of them may have stalled all the progress. It seems hard to convince member states to agree on monitoring conflicts concerning issues like governance and political power as well.

### 5.2.2 Decision-making procedure

When it comes to the way decisions are made in IGAD, this resembles the way the AU negotiates. It is important to IGAD member states that they reach agreement on the

various issues, and the principle of consensus seems to guide the efforts of the organisation (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]). Wettestad (1995:30–32) shows that this principle is not as effective as majority voting, and that it might impede the effectiveness of the institution. (See section 3.5.) As mentioned earlier, with the hostile history the countries had to find an area where they were willing to exchange information. Becoming CEWARN's first entry point, the states only managed to agree on monitoring pastoral conflicts (Mwaûra and Schmeidl 2002:18). Following Wettestad, it seems that we can conclude that IGAD and CEWARN will struggle to increase their effectiveness due to this issue.

To assess the relationship between the two organisations when it comes to the making of decisions is even more decisive for the discussion of the AU's capacity. The importance of creating a well-functioning link to sub-regional mechanisms cannot be over-emphasised, as it would require too many resources for the AU to create a complete monitoring network of its own. A problem here is that the mandate of CEWARN is decided by IGAD, and the AU has no other possibility than to employ diplomatic pressure to convince the organisation of expanding its system to cover all the AU's areas of concern. Mwaûra (2005 [interview]) explains that the AU had no role in establishing IGAD, and he questions the AU's opportunities to decide the mandate for the sub-regional IGOs.

To the capacity of the continental organisation, it is a problem that there seems to be no clearly defined hierarchy between the AU and sub-regional organisations like IGAD. For the AU to function as a reliable actor, and for it to avoid the OAU syndrome, it seems obvious that decisions taken by the AU must be upheld by sub-regional organisations. Though, the internal AU negotiations on the establishment of an early warning indicator module will probably indicate whether this potential difficulty may be solved. IGAD member states will of course also participate in the discussions on the content of CEWS, and they have the opportunity to limit or expand the continental mechanism. The experience of CEWARN then shows what kind of difficulties that the AU will run into when it is to operationalise and to implement its own early warning system. The same countries that could only agree on monitoring

pastoral conflicts in IGAD are to participate in the discussions within the AU. Then, it may seem like the continental organisation faces an insuperable barrier if it is to convince all member states to agree to its ambitious goals.

### 5.2.3 Sufficient resources

The question of resources is equally as important in CEWARN as it is for CEWS. Both mechanisms need resources above what Wettestad (1995:38) terms 'a certain minimum' to be effective. (See section 3.5.) Unless CEWARN is provided with a sufficiency of resources, the AU's ability to monitor a comprehensive set of indicators will be impeded. Here, I focus on the role of the administrative organ (the secretariat), and the relationship with scientific experts (the organisation of the scientific-political complex) to assess the effectiveness of CEWARN.

#### *The role of the secretariat*

As far as the role of the administrative organ is concerned, Wettestad (1995:33–35) identifies two character traits. The first is a distinction between active and passive secretariats, and the second deals with the question of resources. However, I choose not to go into the first aspect in the case of CEWARN. Primarily this is because this issue has proven difficult to measure, but it is also because Wettestad (1995:34–35) shows that the active/passive distinction under certain conditions is not that significant. The distribution of resources is referred to as more important.

Turning to the second aspect, the allocated resources can say something about the willingness and the ability of IGAD member states to let CEWARN fulfil its mandate. To a certain degree, this debate can perhaps also say something about the actual willingness to broaden the scope of CEWARN to make it look into other sorts of conflicts as well. Although it is difficult to determine the actual reasons behind a decision, the allocation of resources can perhaps indicate the importance of early warning to IGAD member states.

When it comes to the manpower and the budgetary resources, three professionals are currently employed in the secretariat (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]). The organisation is in a process of expanding geographically to cover more areas than

the two it is currently monitoring. It operates in the Karamoja and the Wajir Clusters that put together the countries of Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]). More and more data is generated into the system, and the workload has increased. The system is relatively expensive, and costs about US 600,000 dollars per year in its present form (Cilliers 2005:15).[68] Though, the stated plans of an expansion would imply that the costs would increase substantially, and that CEWARN would require more staff and more money to pay for its operations on the ground.

However, it is in this area that I claim that it is crucial to look into the role of each country. The system is intended to generate funding from member states as well as from other sources (The African Union 2003:Annex 1). Yet, it is heavily dependent on grants from donors. Currently, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) provide financial support, and cover, respectively, about 80 and 20 per cent of the costs (Mwaûra 2005 [interview]; USAID 2005). Consequently, it seems as if no member state is willing to contribute to the efforts of CEWARN. Then, it is worth asking the question whether member states really support the establishment of this system, or if it is just a step taken to signal their good will to donors and the like. They seem to lack the will to provide the resources even though the current entry point of CEWARN is limited to pastoral conflicts, and should not trigger a fear among members to be monitored internally.

Though, the explanation is perhaps found in the weak economic performance of IGAD member states. The Horn of Africa is one of the poorest regions in the world (Sørbø and Pausewang 2004:5). This may partly explain the lack of willingness, but it probably does not explain it all. Lack of political will is highlighted as a reason for the limited entry point of CEWARN, and it appears to be an unwillingness among member states to rely on each other for information in all areas (e.g. Cilliers 2005:15; Merera 2005). Also, CEWARN had to turn to foreign donors. Even though its ability might not be impeded if the grants continue to arrive, it seems to be an unreliable

[68] The assessment of a relative cost is easily disputed. I therefore rely on Cilliers' (2005:15) evaluation of the costs as 'relatively expensive' on this point.

source of income just to depend on funds from outside the region. This is the case especially if the system expands, and the need for resources increases. The ability to look into all kinds and causes of conflict may be impaired.

***The organisation of the scientific-political complex***

The last indicator that I will focus on here concerns the way CEWARN co-operates with scientific experts. Wettestad (1995:37–39) emphasises the importance of knowledge production. As for the topic of this thesis, it would be relevant to identify whether CEWARN co-operates with experts on the field. It is difficult to say something about the future, but the way this has been done might say something about where CEWARN is headed.

To a large extent the development of CEWARN has depended on co-operation with early warning experts. A number of workshops were arranged by IGAD in the early phase, and included representatives from foreign ministries of member states, legal offices, universities, and institutes of peace (USAID 2002). When it comes to the actual development of a concrete methodology, the FAST project that I highlighted in chapter 3 was involved (Swiss Peace Foundation 2005a). In general, academics are given space in the CEWARN model.

However, even though scholars seem to be sitting at the CEWARN table, it is difficult to say whether they will be able to broaden the scope of the mechanism. Eventually, the member states will decide if the system will look into more issues than those on pastoral conflicts. Nevertheless, the fact that academics are included at all (presupposing that the included analysts come to similar conclusions as the scholars in my theoretical framework), indicates that CEWARN has potential to increase its effectiveness and look into other conflicts. Ultimately, the inclusion of scientific experts in CEWARN may increase the ability of the AU to create an all-encompassing system. The ambitions of the two systems appear to be somewhat different right now, but the strong link to scientific experts may alter this in time.

## 5.3 The co-operative efforts

When it comes to the capacity of CEWS, the co-operation between the continental and the sub-regional mechanisms is perhaps the most problematic issue to discuss. Even though it is decisive for the success of the continental mechanism, little progress has been made on the linking of CEWS and CEWARN. Then, to some extent it is questionable whether it is fruitful to analyse the co-operative efforts at all. In effect, the two mechanisms seem to live in two different worlds. They have neither formally established channels through which they will exchange information, nor have they agreed to a set of mutual variables to monitor. The capacity of CEWS will obviously be impeded if the co-operative link to CEWARN is not made.

Trying to solve problems on how to co-operate, the AU and the sub-regional IGOs are currently working on a Memorandum of Understanding as stipulated by the PSC Protocol (The African Union 2002:Article 16 (9)). This document is intended to enhance co-ordination and co-operation between the organisations (The African Union 2004a:Article 14). In recent meetings, the need to strengthen the efforts towards the realisation of CEWS has been underlined by all parties, and early warning workshops will take place in the near future (The African Union 2005:2). A main concern for the AU, however, is that some countries – also in the IGAD region – are not willing to give the continental organisation the upper hand (Mokhtar Awed 2005 [interview]). As pointed out in the previous chapter, the new mandate of the AU to interfere in the internal affairs of member states creates insecurity and tension.

Charles Mwaûra, the head of CEWARN, claims that there are many unanswered questions on how the AU will co-operate with the sub-regional organisations. Therefore, no Memorandum of Understanding is in place, even though a draft was finalised in 2005 (The African Union 2005:2). Yet, Mwaûra (2005 [interview]) refers to the present document as ‘a joke,’ and explains that much work needs to be done before the continental and the sub-regional IGOs have assigned the parts, and agreed on how to distribute responsibility. Traditionally, lack of consistency has characterised the relationship between the AU and certain intergovernmental organisations on the continent (The African Union 2004a:Article 27). Then, it remains to be seen whether the AU is able to convince all member states to open up to external

monitoring on *all* issues when that might trigger warnings, and perhaps responses, from the continental organisation. Even though the AU expresses willingness to fully implement a system that looks into all kinds and causes of conflict, the relationship with the sub-regional IGOs may hinder its ability.

It seems as if the AU will encounter difficulties as long as many political systems on the continent and in the Horn remain illegitimate. DeRouen Jr. and Goldfinch (2005) show that the development of democratic institutions is one way of preventing that the conditions that might trigger violent behaviour are allowed to materialise. The AU has no opportunity to wait for all countries to build democratic structures, but it must work with the member states as they appear today. Then, it follows that the road ahead has some obstacles. The AU depends on the goodwill and the acceptance by member states to be allowed to monitor their internal structures to a much larger extent than it does today. Also, in the AU negotiations on the early warning indicator module, these states must be convinced to accept each indicator. The Memorandum of Understanding is a most needed document to establish clear lines of responsibility between the sub-regional organisations and the AU. However, it remains to be seen whether these discussions, and the subsequent practical implementation, will give the AU an opportunity to reach its goals.

### 5.4 Summary

In this chapter I have looked into how far the co-operation between the AU and IGAD has progressed when it comes to the linking of CEWS and CEWARN. To the effectiveness of CEWS, it is important that CEWARN eventually monitors the same issues that the AU wants to look into. Sub-regional mechanisms are to function as the AU's main suppliers of information. Lack of willingness among IGAD member states to increase the number of entry points will also impede the effectiveness of CEWS. The co-operative struggles in IGAD may be an indication of all the difficulties that the continental organisation may encounter in a later phase, trying to get all member states to agree to a comprehensive set of indicators. Only by narrowing down the agenda, the countries in the Horn of Africa managed to find an area where they were willing to exchange information.

All in all it is possible to question the actual willingness of IGAD member states to create a mechanism with a broad mandate. One indication of this lack of willingness may be the fact that CEWARN currently depends only on donors, not on member state contributions, to perform its operations. Furthermore, as the AU does not seem to have the decision-making power to impose on IGAD a more wide-focused mandate, it seems that this lack of actual willingness ultimately might hinder the ability of the AU to create an all-encompassing system.

## 6.0 Conclusion

In this thesis I have tried to answer the following research question:

*What are the kinds and causes of conflict that need to be monitored in the Horn of Africa, and to what extent does the AU seem capable of anticipating these conflicts in its Continental Early Warning System?*

To simplify and to structure the analysis, I approached this research question by separating it into two main parts. In the first, I used theoretical contributions to identify the kinds and causes of conflict that ought to be monitored by CEWS. An early warning system in this sub-region needs to have a broad approach to fully encompass all the various kinds of conflict in the area, and to protect human – as well as state – security. Traditionally, intelligence systems only aim to protect the state. Early warning systems with a focus on human security must look into a broader set of conflicts. For example, such a system ought to consider cases where the state itself may constitute a threat to its own population.

When it comes to the causes of conflict, I separated them into four categories. I looked into *political/structural* variables, and found that the structure of the African state, the political systems in the sub-region, and the phenomenon of trans-national processes all are potentially conflict trigging features. Furthermore, *economic/social* variables must be given weight, in addition to the emphasis that must be put on *ecological/environmental* variables. It is critical to address the issue of natural resources, as this is an area over which people compete, sometimes violently, to gain control. Finally, I looked into *cultural/perceptual* variables, because most of the

conflicts in the Horn have been termed ‘ethnic conflicts.’ I found that ethnicity may be used as a channel to protest, and that an early warning system needs to monitor ethnic issues as well.

To answer the second part of the research question, I discussed the capacity of the AU. I used the theoretical contributions as a normative ideal, and considered whether the organisation seems capable of creating a set of rules and norms protecting individuals. I also looked into various parts of the structure of the AU that may affect its effectiveness. I discussed the role of the agenda, the decision-making procedure, the role of the secretariat, and the organisation of the scientific-political complex.

My findings indicate that the AU seems only partly capable of creating a wide-focused early warning system. Its ability increases because the organisation clearly states its willingness to implement such a mechanism, it co-operates with scientific experts, and it has a secretariat that actively participates and works for the establishment of a system with a broad approach. Yet, the AU is an intergovernmental organisation, and each member state still has opportunities to stall the progress. Since the AU generally is guided by the principle of consensus, member states can refuse to accept a comprehensive set of indicators. Also, as the system will depend on a constant flow of resources, countries that are sceptical may reduce the AU’s capability by refusing to pay their membership fees. Already, many member states have debts to the union, even though this cannot be attributed to the establishment of CEWS. Though, these features limit the ability of the AU to act, and the organisation can therefore be characterised only as partly capable of implementing such a system.

Because the AU hopes to use the regional mechanisms to collect information, I looked into the co-operation between the AU and IGAD. The experience of CEWARN reveals that the AU may encounter some difficulties when it is to implement its mechanism. Primarily due to a lack of political will, IGAD member states have only managed to agree to exchange information in one area; cross-border pastoral conflicts. The AU recognises that African states often are instigators of conflict, but at the same time it needs the goodwill of these states to construct an all-encompassing system that will monitor them as well. This is the paradox of the AU’s early warning initiative.

Summing up, there are many challenges facing the AU and the implementation of CEWS. The identification of features to monitor is particularly problematic along two dimensions that both need to be addressed. The first is theoretical: It concerns the debate on what traits that actually cause conflict in the region. The AU's ability may be impeded by disagreements among member states on the areas that the system should monitor. The second is practical: It is related to technical and financial difficulties as well as obstacles like suspicion, and the lack of political will. It may seem like the actual willingness to construct such a system is lacking among some members.

### 6.1 Critical remarks

In this thesis I have discussed whether the AU will be creating a system that is capable of looking into all the various kinds and causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa. By narrowing down my focus, there are many parts of CEWS that have not been properly addressed. Schmeidl (2002:72) divides early warning into four areas as she includes the collection of information (specific indicators); the analysis of information; the formulation of best/worse case scenarios and response options; and communication to decision makers. I have looked into the AU's potential for developing a comprehensive set of indicators. Yet, all of these components need separate treatment, as the AU must decide how it shall approach each area. This thesis must therefore be supplemented by other studies to get an even more complete view of the capability of the AU to create a fully operational early warning system.

Furthermore, by choosing to look into the co-operation with the sub-regional organisations represented by IGAD, I may be criticised for neglecting important parts of the AU project. The sub-regional IGOs are not intended to be the sole providers of information to the AU, as it plans to co-operate with organisations like the UN, and representatives from civil society (The African Union 2002:Article 12 (3)). Also, by just discussing the role of CEWARN, the AU's relationship with the other sub-regional mechanisms slips my attention. Even though I do not aim to say anything about the AU's relationship with the sub-regional IGOs in general, and even though I have chosen to consider the relationship with IGOs because they are to function as the *most important* channels of information to the AU, I realise that the other issues also

need to be discussed. Studies on these subjects would improve our understanding of the AU's capability to implement CEWS.

When it comes to the area that I in fact have looked into, it was more difficult than I had anticipated analysing the AU's co-operation with IGAD. Till now, there has been little progress in the work on linking the sub-regional mechanisms to the continental one. I had expected to find more efforts aimed at strengthening the bonds between the organisations. Consequently, the co-operative efforts are given limited space in this thesis due to the mere fact that little has been made on the establishment of closer links. Ideally, I had hoped to go deeper into this issue.

It is also worth discussing whether the theoretical contributions that I use as my foundation to assess the capacity of the AU, are sufficiently helpful. My theoretical framework on the sources of conflict is useful as it uncovers some issues that such systems should consider. It does not, however, contain a prescription on how to do it. I have referred to some early warning models that already exist, but I have not found one that fully takes the African context into account.

As for my theoretical tool, I may also be criticised for the way I have chosen to do a capacity assessment. These kinds of assessments may be performed in various ways, using a broad range of indicators. The indicators that I have used highlight some features of the AU that seem to increase and/or decrease the organisation's capability to implement a wide-focused early warning system. The choice of other indicators would complement the picture, as there seldom is one set of indicators that is capable of addressing all parts of an institution's effectiveness. It is important to remember this potential deficiency that characterises the majority of scientific research.

### 6.2 Policy recommendations

Still, from the discussions in this thesis, and for the AU to reach its goals, it is possible to derive some policy recommendations. First of all, the organisation should support independent research on the causes of conflict in Africa. These kinds of studies would be helpful in the internal AU-negotiations on conflict origins, where member states are to agree to a set of indicators to monitor. Probably, it would be more difficult for the various countries to argue for a limited set of indicators if several research studies

pointed out the conflict trigging causal links. Here, it follows that the AU should specify how it defines conflict, to ensure that all researchers realise the AU's point of departure. The definition should be wide, and encompass both human and state security. I recommend my own definition of conflict as it is stated in section 3.3.2. It has a wide focus, encompassing both national and individual security. If such a definition were stated explicitly, it would be more difficult to limit the mandate of CEWS on a later occasion.

In search for the sources of conflict, the AU should also create country profiles to be able to estimate the risk potential. To do this, it needs benchmarks on normal social, political, economic and cultural activities from which to measure change. The AU ought to formulate a set of benchmarks to clarify what it regards as conflict trigging behaviour. Establishing such a set would make it possible to create the country profiles that would facilitate the evaluation of risk potential in each state.

Furthermore, the AU should look further into some mechanisms that already have been established, like it did e.g. at the workshop on early warning in 2003. Although the organisation needs to establish a model adapted to the African reality, it would be less expensive to adopt the main parts of existing modules. Here, it can learn from the experiences of CEWARN in the sense that this system has adjusted the indicators from FAST to the African context.

However, the lack of political will is perhaps the greatest obstacle to the establishment of CEWS. Member states that are sceptical to the new innovation have the opportunity to stall the progress. Unfortunately, there are no easy answers to this problem. The AU needs to find a way to implement its early warning system, but at the same time stay 'realistic about the political will of Member States,' as it was formulated at the workshop in 2003 (The African Union 2003:27). As political negotiations between member states will decide what indicators the AU adopts, the organisation probably needs to balance between respect for national sovereignty and all-encompassing checklists to reach its goals.

The ambitions of the AU go far beyond the ones that presently guide CEWARN in the Horn of Africa. Clearly, the continental body is facing a demanding challenge. It may be criticised for wanting to do too much, thus giving itself an unachievable task.

Yet, the first secretary of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa, Alf-Åge Hansen, puts the AU's efforts in perspective. He states that there often is 'a wide gap between the abilities and the ambitions of the AU. At times, the goals are unrealistic, and the organisation always ends up somewhere far below its initial aim. Still, the AU is slowly moving forward. Over the last few years, important steps have been taken (Hansen 2005 [interview]). As the first secretary wisely points out; every small step forward – for example in the area of early warning – is better than none at all.

# Appendix A

## CEWARN Initial Baseline – Ethiopian Side of the Karamoja Cluster

**Appendix: Description of Indicators (from the Situation Reports)**

| Alliance Formation | |
|---|---|
| Inter-ethnic group alliance | Ethnic group – government alliance |

| Armed Intervention | |
|---|---|
| Internal armed support | External armed support |

| Behavioral Aggravators | | |
|---|---|---|
| Interrupt other activities | Pastoral migration | Bullets as commodities |
| Development aid problems | Harmful migration policy | Protest |
| Media controls | Harmful livestock policy | Student attendance interrupted |
| Migrant laborers | Influx of IDPs | Separation of groups |
| New Markets | Security escorts | Livestock prices dropped |
| Negative media coverage | Small arms availability | Post-raid blessing |
| | | Livestock sales increase |

| Environmental Pressure | | |
|---|---|---|
| Natural disaster | Land competition | More livestock in secure areas grazing |
| areas abandoned | Livestock disease | |

| Exchange Behavior | | |
|---|---|---|
| Celebration | Inter-group marriage | Gift offering |
| Inter-group sharing | Cross-border trade | |

| Mitigating Behavior | | |
|---|---|---|
| Access to health care | Relief distributions | Law enforcement |
| Small arms disclosure | Markets remain open | Bride price stable |
| Access to education | Positive media coverage | Negotiations taking place |

| Peace Initiatives | | |
|---|---|---|
| Women peace messengers | Weapons reduction program | Local peace initiatives |
| Religious peace building | NGO peace initiatives | |

| Triggering Behavior | | |
|---|---|---|
| All-male migration | Pre-raid blessing | Traditional forecasting |

**Bibliography**:
A note of clarification: The second names of Ethiopians are not family names as is the norm in Europe, but the first name of the person's father (Pausewang 2004). It would create confusion to call an Ethiopian by his second name. In this bibliography, therefore, all Ethiopians are ordered alphabetically by their first names, and they are also referred to in the text using this name.


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