

## **Large-Scale Investments, Rising Powers, and Peacebuilding in Sub-Saharan Africa**

One-Day Workshop organised by the Sussex Centre for Conflict and Security Research  
University of Sussex, 16 June 2014

There is currently a strong, renewed debate over the future development of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries with regard to key strategic resources (land, minerals, oil, water) and the socio-economic and political impacts of resource extraction. Some have termed this the 'New Scramble for Africa'. The African continent has long been known to have large reserves of raw materials and resources but what is new is the pace, the geopolitical context and the scope of these developments. Firstly, large-scale investments are developing at an unprecedented pace and Africa's share of world trade and investment is rising. As a result, many African countries now have very high economic growth rates, including many post-conflict countries that are benefiting from these resource booms. Secondly, the geopolitical configuration is also rapidly changing with the growing role and influence of emerging economic powers ranging from China to Brazil to Turkey. And finally, the pace of resource exploitation is accelerating due to the discovery of new resources (such as new oil reserves along West Africa and in the Horn) but also because other resources are being more highly valued (especially land and water).

The aim of this workshop is to understand the governance of large investments with respect to local peacebuilding and strengthening security for local communities. Large development projects in marginal rural areas of SSA are being actively pursued by a host of investors. However, there has been little debate on the role of investors (private actors and governments) in stabilising or destabilising remote rural areas, many of which have histories of violence and conflict. Much of the debate has been at the macro-level on investment and inclusive growth or the global geopolitical fight over these strategic resources.

The workshop will be divided into three sessions.

Our first session will look at assumptions, trends and what is known with respect to rising power investments in Sub-Saharan Africa. There have been many concerns about the role of 'rising powers' in this new fight over strategic resources. But what do we know exactly? The first session will discuss the following questions:

- To what extent do rising power investments in strategic resources in SSA challenge the commercial, diplomatic and security interests of traditional western donors in the continent? Which particular resources are targeted?
- Who are the key actors? To what extent do international investments reflect particular geopolitical interests, either from rising or established powers?
- What is the shape of bilateral agreements between rising power investors and countries in SSA that underpin resource exploitations?

Our second session will then look at the potential impacts of these investments, particularly on conflict, institutions and relations for peace-building at the rural margins. While governments inevitably trumpet the potential positive social and economic impacts of large new resource-based investments, there is actually contrasting evidence on whether investments contribute to wider social benefits or if in fact they may actually have destabilising impacts. Key questions for this session are:

- What perceptions do international private actors have of their role in promoting peacebuilding and conflict prevention?
- What are the impacts of large development investments on local peacebuilding and conflict in marginal rural areas?
- What are the different ways that international investors negotiate access in remote rural areas of SSA?

Our third session will be on policy implications and the different options with regards to large-scale investments and peace building in SSA. Critics have argued that voluntary codes of conduct/principles for responsible investment are likely to have a limited impact at best, and that stronger regulatory approaches are needed. Key questions for this session are:

- What are current best practices with respect to acting sensitively in conflict-affected remote rural areas?
- Are international codes of conduct and principles for responsible investments feasible and of any use?
- How can international investors learn from conflict sensitive approaches to development?

The workshop aims to bring together representatives of the private sector (companies and associations), international peacebuilding organisations (such as Conciliation Resources and Saferworld), embassy officials from rising power countries, international organisations, international business organisations (such as the World Economic Forum), and think tanks (Chatham House, RUSI), and researchers from the University of Sussex and elsewhere.

The workshop is convened by Dr. Jeremy Allouche, IDS, Dr. Jan Selby, Department of International Relations and Director of the Sussex Centre for Conflict and Security Research, University of Sussex, and Dr. Jeremy Lind, IDS. The workshop is one of a series being held at Sussex on the theme of Rising Powers and Peace Processes, funded by the Higher Education Innovation Fund. The theme of this particular workshop is also feeding into a new DFID/ESRC project on [Large Development investment and local peacebuilding in rural Africa: building and sustaining peace at the margins](#) led by Jeremy Allouche and Jeremy Lind in partnership with researchers from the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies in Kenya and Njala University in Sierra Leone.

### **Programme**

9.30 – 10.15: Tea and Coffee

10.15 – 10.40: Introduction (Dr. Jan Selby and Dr. Jeremy Allouche)

10.40 – 11.45: Session 1: Assumptions, trends and knowledges with respect to rising power investments in Sub-Saharan Africa (leaders: David Nyheim; Alistair McKechnie, Terry Heymann, Padraig Carmody)

11.45 – 1.00: Session 2: Large development investments and local peacebuilding (leaders: Jo Ford, Jeremy Lind, Christopher Cramer)

1.00 – 2.00: Lunch

2.00 – 4.00: Session 3: policy implications and the different options with regards to large-scale investments and peace building in SSA (leaders: Vanessa Wyeth, Mark Segal/ Juliet Wattebotobrien, Ivan Campbell, Janet Mohammed)

### **List of Participants**

1. Dr. Jeremy Allouche, IDS
2. Dr. Jan Selby, Director SCSR, University of Sussex
3. Prof. Craig Barker, School of Law, University of Sussex
4. Dr. Jeremy Lind, IDS
5. Zahed Yousuf, International Alert
6. Prof. Christopher Cramer, SOAS
7. Mark Segal, DFID
8. Dr. Alistair McKechnie, Senior Research Associate, ODI
9. Alex Vines, Chatham House
10. Terry Heymann MD, World Gold Council
11. Isabel De Sola, World Economic Forum
12. David Nyheim, Incas Consulting
13. Ivan Campbell, Saferworld
14. Janet Mohammed, Conciliation Resources
15. Synergy Global Consulting
16. Dr. Achim Wennmann, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva
17. Juliet Wattebotobrien, DFID
18. Jo Ford, Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford
19. Vanessa Wyeth, OECD
20. Dr. Padraig Carmody, Trinity College Dublin
21. Prof. Clionadh Raleigh, University of Sussex

### **About SCSR**

The Sussex Centre for Conflict and Security Research (SCSR) is an interdisciplinary research centre dedicated to promoting original research, and enriching public and policy debate, on issues of conflict and security. It is led from Sussex's Department of International Relations, but its membership is drawn from across the University of Sussex, including researchers in Anthropology, Development Studies, Education, Geography, History, Law, and Science Policy Research. SCSR's research covers four broad programme areas: conflict, violence, war; non-traditional security challenges; peace processes, reconciliation, reconstruction; and the new geopolitics.

**Map and Directions to Sussex University**

The University of Sussex campus is at Falmer, which is just outside Brighton. Trains run direct to Brighton from London Victoria (50 minutes) at ‘06 and ‘36 and from London St Pancras (1 hour 20 minutes) at ‘10, ‘22, ‘40 and ‘54. Trains run to Falmer from Brighton every 15 minutes and take about 10 minutes.

Should you prefer to drive we can arrange parking for you on campus. The University is at Falmer on the A27 between Brighton and Lewes, about four miles from the centre of Brighton. (Please follow signs for University of Sussex on the north side of the A27; the University of Brighton also has a campus at Falmer on the south side of the A27.) Visitors from London and the north should take the M23/A23 road towards Brighton. Before entering the centre of Brighton, join the A27 eastbound signposted Lewes. Drivers from the east or west take the A27 direct to the University.

The workshop will be held in Fulton Building room 213 in the centre of campus (see map below).

