



Casamance:
Understanding Conflict 2016
Conflict Management and African Studies Programs
Student Field Trip to Senegal
Edited by Dr. I. William Zartman

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List of Acronyms

ANRAC	Agence Nationale pour la Relance des Activités Economiques et Sociales en Casamance
CCC	Collectif des Cadres Casamançais — Collective of Leaders of the Casamance
CHD	Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
CNAMS	Centre National d’Action Antimines au Sénégal
DDDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEC	European Economic Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
FRELIMO	Frente de Liberacao de Moçambique
GOS	Government of Senegal
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MFDC	Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance
MOCAP	Mission for the Observation and Consolidation of the Peace Accord
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPA	Norwegian People’s Aid
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCA	Agricultural Marketing Office
PADERCA	Program for the Reactivation of Economic Activities in Casamance
PAIGC	Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde
PDS	Parti Démocratique Sénégalais
PPDC	Projet du Pôle de Développement de la Casamance
PRAESC	Programme de Relance des Activités Economiques en Casamance National — Agency for the Revival of Economic and Social Activities in Casamance
PSE	Plan Sénégal Emergent — Emerging Senegal Plan
RENAMO	Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNICEF	UN Children’s Fund
UNICEF	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USDoS	U.S. Department of State
WFP	World Food Program



Introduction

I. William Zartman

A long lasting and little-noted conflict in West Africa has been festering like an old sore since 1982, or 1960, or around 1500, depending on the remembered source of grief and grievance. Perhaps its basic cause is the wicked colonial inheritance of the formerly British enclave of Gambia that cuts Senegal into unequal halves and separates the conflict area, Casamance, from the rest of the country. From that bold fact all other causes flow. Yet efforts are underway to overcome the ensuing conflict, if not the geopolitical cause, and that is what attracted 15 graduate students and three senior scholars from the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) to travel to Dakar, and Ziguinchor and Bignona, on 16 to 23 January 2016¹. We had a series of open discussions with a wide range of Casamançais in high and low places and with analysts and observers in the capital and in the south, providing some very penetrating insights into the situation and a frank exchange of views. Many figures from the region hold important positions in government circles in the capital. We found it curious that we met less openness on the side of the government, which we regretted. Our challenge was to understand why and how the conflict has lasted so long, at such a low level; we came away with an impression of conflict fatigue in the midst of continuing feelings of neglect and official efforts to finally put an end to the conflict and also to the grievances that feed it, a long-term as well as an immediate challenge.

Senegal is a showcase country of democracy and stability in a troubled continent, a country poor in natural resources and rich in human experience. It build a solid political and socio-economic system centered on presidential dominance of the Jacobin state inherited from its position as capital of French West Africa and maintained through a vibrant democracy functioning first through a dominant party and then a vigorous

¹ Previous research trips have included Sri Lanka January 2016, Colombia January 2015, Mindanao 2014 and 2011; Nagorno Karabakh 2013; Tunisia 2012; Kosovo 2010; Cyprus 2009; Northern Ireland 2008; Haiti 2007 and 2006. Reports from previous Field Trips are available at <https://sais-jhu.edu/programs/cm/activities>.

multipart system characterized by both limited presidential reelection and by party alternance. Thus the problem of the Casamance poses a challenge to an otherwise unusually healthy state.

The Casamance conflict is felt on three levels. One level contains all the grievances of neglect, underdevelopment, and “colonization” from the hypercephalic state that the Casamançais refer to as “the Senegal” of which they are not a part. The third is the level of violence, which has risen and fallen since the confrontation of 23 December 1982 when the Senegalese army fired on a peaceful demonstration. In between lies a second level of memory that ties the two levels together and continues to be assiduously cultivated even as the first level loses activity.

The first level of the conflict began with the French colonization that came only in the late nineteenth century in the south. In contrast, the seventeenth century French implantation in Cape Verde included the “four communes” of Dakar, Rufisque, St Louis and Gorée that have voted in French elections since the Revolution of 1789. The 1793 Treaty of Paris confirmed British ownership of “The Gambia,” effectively amputating the Casamance from French territories to the north and creating the physical basis of the conflict; Gambian borders were established in agreement with the French in 1889, and Casamance was governed separately from Senegal until World War II. Casamance is an enclave, and communication and affinity is stronger across porous neighboring borders with Gambia and Guinea Bissau than with the government, economy and society of the main part of Senegal. Access to the territory from the north is through Gambia, which refuses to construct a bridge across its river, or through a long circuitous road that circumvents its territory, inhibiting commerce and communication. Casamance is inhabited by various tribes, with the Atlantic side predominated by the Diola, an acephalic society of many little agricultural “kingdoms” with strong animist traditions, little inclined to commerce. Investment in services, health, and transportation infrastructure from the government or from private sources in the “backward” region has been low, and economic activity including rice farming has been dominated particularly since a 1974 land reform by interests from the north, locally referred to as “Senegalese colonization.” Government is concentrated in Dakar in the centralized tradition inherited from France and perfected by Léopold Sedar Senghor, the father of the country and first

president (1960-1981). Various programs of decentralization have been variations on a system of strong regional governance interacting directly with the central authority, untouched by local politics.

To Senghor's successor, Abdou Diouf (1981-2000), under whom the rebellion broke out, Casamance was a nuisance worthy only of repression, and it took him a decade to begin to turn to negotiations and ceasefires, all cut short by his electoral defeat in 2000. His successor, Abdoulaye Wade, junked Diouf's measures, promised a solution in 100 days, and achieved ceasefire agreements taking four years instead, after which he abandoned the search for a meaningful solution. When the current president Macky Sall was elected in 2012, he instituted a number of measures to begin to handle the economic isolation and underdevelopment of the enclave and instituted efforts to negotiate an end to the conflict.

The third level of the conflict began as early as 1947 with the founding of the Movement of Democratic Forces (MFDC) in Casamance as a cultural association by Diola intellectual Emile Badiane. The MFDC supported Senghor's drive for independence of Senegal in 1960 and then turned to work for Casamance's own independence under the iconic leadership of Abbé Diamacoune Senghor (no relation). The 1982 repression turned the movement violent, and protracted violence led to the creation of a militant wing (Atika) under Sidy Badji in 1984. The Cacheu agreement in May 1991 produced a ceasefire and further splinters in the Movement; the Ziguinchor agreement in July 1993 fell apart by June 1995, followed by another ceasefire in January 1996 that brought on serious confrontations with the army. The Banjul II agreement in November 1999, with the help of the Sant'Egidio Community from Rome, brought another ceasefire and a Mission for the Observation and Consolidation of the Peace Accord (MOCAP), and the Banjul III agreement in February 2000 to consider the negotiation calendar. Just as Diouf was getting his stride on handling the conflict, Wade, elected a month after Banjul III, abolished the MOCAP and fired Diouf's Casamance team, and brought the MFDC and Casamançais civil society groups to the Ziguinchor Accord of December 2004, officially ending the conflict. Foundiougne I in February 2005 and II in January 2006 moved the peace agreement toward implementation, but to Wade the war was over and he turned to other projects, including personal enrichment.

The MFDC was not quiet during this decade. Prolonged conflict and disputed peace agreements led to splits upon splits, as did political upheavals in neighboring countries where MFDC camps and support were also to be found. The government of Dawda Jawara in Gambia, generally cooperative with Senegal with which it confederated in 1981-1989, was overthrown in 1994. Yahya Jammeh, also Diola, has given greater support to the Movement's factions, including accommodation of their illegal timber operations. In Guinea-Bissau to the south, coups occurred every three or four years, with effects on the fortunes of the MFDC on its borders. Violent encounters with the army and civilian targets have occurred yearly since 2000, increasing since 2009 but falling off lately, and a leader who sought to negotiate with the government in 2006 was shot as a traitor.

Badji's death in 2003 and Diamacoune's in 2007 left the Movement with no recognized leader. The South Front under Salif Sadio, camped along the Guinea-Bissau border until chased north to the Gambian border by the Guinean army and other Atika factions; although most militant with a bloody past within the Movement, it reached out to Sall and began negotiating contacts with the involvement of Sant'Egidio. The other factions make up the North Front directed by César Atoute Badiaté around Ziguinchor at Kassalol, who in February 2016 brought together the groups of Kamougue Diatta at Diakeye near the Gambian border, of Ibrahima Compass Diatta, and of Abdou Elinkine Diatta in Ziguinchor, some of whom have armed camps in the bush (*maquis*). The consolidating agreement sought to establish an assembly (*assise*) that would choose a military commander, a secretary-general to head the political wing, finally replacing Abbé Diamacoune, and a negotiating commission with a spokesman for the MFDC, to speak directly to the Ad Hoc Commission.

Another faction of Ousmane Nyantang Nyatta has declared itself a political party and left the armed struggle, sending disarmed militants to DDRR pilot programs for resettlement, and a different faction has constituted itself as a Contact Group working to combine the factions. Diaspora figures such as Kourouma Sané, Jean François Biagi, and Ousmane Tamba, mainly in Paris, claim to be the political wing and are certainly a financial wing of the movement.

Under the many attempted ceasefires from 1991 to 2005, the political groups were pulled away from their militants in the *maquis*, who in turn felt no constraints from the ceasefires, and indeed were impelled ever more to break them because they did not respect the goal of independence. By 2016, violent incidents had all but disappeared although the camps continued to attract young men, and Sadio's threat to go back to violence if progress were not made on major demands is hollow. Sall's government, under the control of a mostly-military Ad Hoc Negotiating Committee for the Casamance, headed by Admiral Farba Sarr, chief of Intelligence, began a reconciliation process, using the offices of Sant'Egidio with the Sadio group and hiring the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue to reach out to other factions, notably Badiaté. Talks continued without notable progress toward active resolution, but as the lingering ceasefire took its effect and the region remained calm, the pressure for moving from conflict management to conflict resolution shifted at best to the minds of the political elite and their felt need to meet their electoral promises for an end to the conflict. As Casamançais youth began to move to the bush not as an independence movement but as a protest movement against economic neglect and unemployment, it was left to the first, economic level of conflict to pick up the pressure for attention that the third level or rebellion could no longer muster.

In between the first and third levels of conflict, the level of memory has been sustained with assiduity, carrying the other two levels with it. Myth and memory, history and tradition, are active elements in local culture. Every account of the present state of the struggle begins in 1982 or earlier. The demand for independence, still alive in the litany of young and old alike, rests on precolonial history and on a remembered remark ostensibly exchanged between Senghor and Badiane (or somebody) promising Casamance independence twenty years (coincidentally one generation) after Senegalese independence, deceived memories of which triggered the 1982 demonstration. An anchoring event in many minds is the oath for independence taken before the women guardians of the sacred woods, many now dead and therefore unable to release the militants from their oath; such oaths continue to be sworn, if in lesser numbers.

Older members in small towns and rural areas use the village community to socialize the youth in the memory of the struggle, and receptability is aided by the poor prospects for a satisfying future that Casamance youth face. Memory gives meaning to

events and clouds trust and credibility of new government programs to overcome the first level of neglect. New approaches, such as investment and decentralization, are viewed with skepticism because the old programs fell so far short, setting up a huge handicap to sincere government efforts. Especially in view of Wade's approach in the past, current government efforts to address the conflict as a first level problem of development, which it is, are hard for the Casamançais to hear. They are then thrown back onto the memories of the struggle and the language of independence, a goal that would be certain to exacerbate the situation of underdevelopment. How to understand and overcome this conflict on its three levels is the subject of this study.

Part I: Elements of the Problem

The Neighborhood: Enclaved

Zachary Vinyard

Senegal has long been the most stable, peaceful, and prosperous country in a region beset with chaos, violence, and poverty. In spite of its lack of natural resources or any other exceptional endowment,² it has managed three peaceful transitions of power while its neighbors were beset by civil war and intractable violence, and has managed to achieve significant economic growth even during periods, such as the 1990s, when most other African economies were shrinking. Senegal, on the surface, has been a model developing nation.

Despite its relative peace and prosperity, since 1982 Senegal has been beset by a low-level insurgency in its southern reaches. While this insurgency has had little effect on the ability of the state to function, it has been a thorn in the side of its success.

As presented in the introduction, this conflict exists on three defined levels: that of politics and economics, that of culture and shared memory, and that of violence. However, each of these levels is ultimately connected to the geographic division of Senegal by Gambia, and the resulting physical, political, and economic isolation experienced by the Casamançais.

On the first level, Casamance is isolated from the economic and political center of the country by the very existence of Gambia. As will be explored below, this isolation is exacerbated by the behavior of the Gambian regime and the hypercentralization of the Senegalese state. This political and economic isolation has led to an underdeveloped economy and a lack of infrastructure in the Casamance, as well as a sense of neglect and resentment against the northern Senegalese on the part of some of the Casamançais.³

On the second layer, that of memory, Casamance differs from northern Senegal in its ethno-linguistic and social organization; these ethnolinguistic differences are due in part to the differing precolonial ethnic and religious configuration as well as a different colonial experience. Further, this sense of memory ties the Casamançais more tightly to

² Arguably, Senegal's long-term peace and prosperity may be due to its relative *lack* of natural resources.

³ As expressed in many of the interviews that our group conducted.

their immediate neighbors to the north and south, the inhabitants of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, than to their fellow Senegalese in the north. This sense of separate memory and identity amplifies the sense of political and economic distance from power imposed by the physical distance to Dakar and the existence and behavior of Gambia.

These first two layers coalesce to drive the third, the layer of violence. Without the political and economic distance from power imposed by Gambia, amplified by the sense of distinct history and identity, the case for an independent Casamance would be hollow.⁴ In addition to the driving force provided by the first two layers, the violence has been enabled by the instability and weakness of Guinea-Bissau. While this instability has not functioned as a driver of the conflict, it has given the Casamançais rebel groups access to weaponry and, frequently, a safe haven from pursuit by the Senegalese military.

In this chapter, I will argue that the Casamance conflict is, fundamentally, driven by the geographic separation of the region from northern Senegal, and that consequently any resolution to the conflict must implicate Gambia and, to a lesser degree, Guinea-Bissau. Further, I will argue that in the absence of increased political and economic cooperation between Senegal and Gambia and, secondarily, increased stability in Guinea-Bissau, this conflict will remain unresolved in perpetuity. In making this argument I will first present an analysis of the physical, political, and cultural geography of the region, followed by a brief presentation of the historical involvement of the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau in the Casamance conflict. I will then argue that without significant political change in the Gambia, the physical geography of the region combined with the political dynamics operative in the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau will obviate any potential negotiated peace between the MFDC (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance) and the Senegalese state. I will conclude with a list of policy recommendations for the Senegalese, Gambian, and Guinea-Bissauan states, as well as for the involved international community.

⁴ Or, at the very least, *more* hollow.

Political and Historical Context

Geographic and Ethnic Context

Geographically, northern Senegal and the Casamance are quite distinct regions. Casamance is characterized by lush and verdant swamplands and forests, which range from the southern bank of the Gambia River to the Yila Peninsula in Guinea-Conakry. This stands in stark contrast to the semi-arid Sahelian landscapes that make up northern Senegal. Physically, the Casamance is congruent with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. Gambia, the Casamance, and Guinea-Bissau all form a discrete, continuous region, distinct from the dryer regions to the north and east (Nugent 2009).

This differing physical geography is reflected in the cultural geography and the colonial history. The Gambia-Casamance-Bissau region is inhabited primarily by the Diola (Jola in Gambian English), a group deeply distinct, culturally and linguistically, from the groups found north of Gambia. Historically, the north and the south had a differing experience with colonialism: while northern Senegal was claimed very early on by the French, Portuguese claims on the Casamance lasted a negotiated trade between the two powers in 1888, a fact reflected in the continued survival of Portuguese creole in Ziguinchor. These ethnolinguistic and historical ties bind the Diola of the Casamance more closely to their immediate neighbors than to the Wolof and Wolof-speakers that dominate Dakar and its environs (Nugent 2007).

Gambia

After achieving independence from Great Britain in 1965, Gambia enjoyed sixteen years of relative peace under the benignly autocratic rule of Dawda Jawara. This peace was cracked by a July 1981 coup attempt and uprising that left the country in crisis and Jawara's regime unstable. In the aftermath of the coup, Jawara, in an attempt to stabilize his rule, forged closer political, military, and economic ties to Senegal. Together, the two nations joined to form the Senegambian Confederation, a close but unbalanced union from which Jawara would unilaterally withdraw seven years later (Gambia 2015 Country Review). The fallout from the disintegration of the Confederation led to more distant ties between the two states.

In 1994, a contingent of the Gambian National Army led by a young lieutenant named Yahya Jammeh launched a bloodless coup against Jawara. Jammeh,⁵ 29 years old at the time of the coup, seized power and installed himself in the presidency. His ascension to power was marked by a radical shift in the Senegal-Gambian dynamic: Jammeh adopted a deeply belligerent stance in his dealings with the larger country. Additionally, Jammeh, has lent overt and covert aid to the MFDC in the Casamance (Fall 2010); he has used them as a tool to punish and humiliate the more powerful Senegalese government.

In his time in office, Jammeh has repeatedly batted down the proposed extension of the Trans-Gambian Highway to include a bridge at the Bamba-Tenda-Yella-Tenda crossing. This bridge would have a significant economic and political impact on Senegal as a whole, allowing both northern Senegalese and Casamançais access to their respective regions, and vastly improving the economic and political integration of Senegal as a whole. The repeated failure to allow the construction of this bridge has done much to retard the development of the Casamance.

Further, Jammeh has used the conflict in the Casamance to further his domestic power: in 2002, facing a domestic election, Jammeh, himself an ethnic Diola, registered Diola refugees of the Casamance conflict to vote in the elections, helping to ensure his victory and continued power over the country (Fall 2010). He has weaponized the Diola identity as domestic political tool and as a justification for his continued surreptitious support of the MFDC.

Guinea-Bissau

Unlike either Senegal or the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau's path to independence was marked by significant bloodshed. Portugal, the last of the European powers to retain a colonial presence in sub-Saharan Africa, had fought a brutal seventeen-year-long war to maintain its control over Guinea-Bissau,⁶ and only surrendered control of its colony after the so-called "Carnation Revolution" in 1974 brought an end to the *Estado Novo* regime. The Guinea-Bissauan wing of PAIGC (the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e*

⁵Currently styling himself "His Excellency Sheikh Professor Doctor Colonel Yahya A. J. J. Jammeh."

⁶ Much as it had also done in Angola and Mozambique.

Cabo Verde) took control of the country in the aftermath of independence (Guinea-Bissau 2014 Country Review).

The withdrawal of the Portuguese was followed by a series of purges and mass executions by the PAIGC and the installation of a revolutionary council, headed after 1980 by President João Bernardo Vieira that would rule the country until its first democratic elections in 1994. While these elections were widely heralded as a success by the international community, they served primarily to reinforce the power of Vieira, who was easily reelected. Vieira's rule continued until 1998, when the Guinea-Bissauan military engaged and killed a cadre of MFDC *maquisards* in Guinea-Bissau near the northern border with Senegal. The subsequent deployment of troops to secure the northern border helped expose the complicity of a group of officers in supplying the MFDC with weaponry stolen from the Bissauan military's armories. The exposure of this corruption prompted Vieira to dismiss several senior military leaders, which, in turn, provoked a violent coup and uprising that quickly deteriorated into a cruel and bloody civil war (Guinea-Bissau 2014 Country Review).

By May 1999, the civil war reached a negotiated conclusion, with Vieira agreeing to complete surrender. In the aftermath of the war, elections were held and KumbaYala was installed as president. After a period of three troubled years in power, Yala's regime was violently overthrown in 2003. Subsequent elections, held in 2005, restored Vieira to power.

Under Yala and the second Vieira regime, the Guinea-Bissauan government adopted a decidedly more pro-Senegal stance. The supply of illicit arms that had been flowing to the Casamance was cut off, and the Guinea-Bissauan army was strengthened along the Senegalese border in an attempt to curtail the movements of the MFDC. Therefore, the assassination Vieira and Army Chief of Staff Tagme Na Wai on 2 March 2009 was not just disastrous for the future prospects of Guinea-Bissau, but also had serious implications for the stability of Casamance.

Vieira's death was followed by widespread unrest in the country; however, the assassinations did not trigger massive waves of violence. Emergency presidential elections were held and resulted in the installation of Malam Bacai Sanhá, who survived three years, until January 2012, before dying in office. Sanhá's death triggered a confused

series of coups and countercoups, leaving the country in utter chaos and disarray. By 2014, José Mário Vaz had managed to take control of the state, but the government, like the country itself, had been devastated. Guinea-Bissau had become a failed state and major hub of the international drug trade, incapable of maintaining a military or securing its own armories, let alone pursuing a coherent policy on the Casamance and the MFDC.

Modern Politics and Economics

Even in relatively decentralized state structures, the physical division of a country makes access to power difficult. In the context of a hypercephalic state such as Senegal, this division is crippling. The hostility of the Gambian government under Jammeh towards the Senegalese state has served to amplify the distance between Dakar and the Casamance by limiting the ability of ordinary Casamançais to quickly and cheaply reach the capital.

Under the current arrangement, Senegalese hoping to travel from Dakar to the Casamance (or vice versa) are faced with two options: they can go around Gambia to the east, traveling many hours out of their way over difficult desert roads, or they can cross through Gambia to cross with a ferry at Banjul or Farafenni. Either option presents a massive time investment, either due to long distances over difficult roads in the case of the first option, or due to customs delays and unpredictable and unreliable ferries as in the case of second option.

The political and economic isolation, combined with the ethnic and linguistic identity shared by communities to the south and the porousness of the border, has created a high degree of economic and political linkage between Casamance and Gambia: in the northern reaches of the Casamance, near the Gambian border, use the Gambian dalasi in place of the CFA franc is commonplace, and many people engage in commerce in Gambian market towns to the north, and maintain strong social ties to refugees still in Gambia. Additionally, marijuana, a major source of income for several of the *maquis* groups, is sold almost exclusively in Gambia, sometimes with the complicity of Gambian officials. In some parts of the country, the Gambian-Senegalese border crosses through large communities, with no markers or other formal indication of where one country ends

and the other begins. Despite this regional integration, Gambia is still often used as a refuge by *maquisards* fearing arrest or persecution by the Senegalese military or police.

This pattern continues in the south: there are still several large communities of refugees from the conflict living in northern Guinea-Bissau, who serve as a social base for the MFDC to operate in the region; further, several of factions of the MFDC have developed a de facto truce with the Guinea-Bissauan government, allowing the *maquis* to use Guinea-Bissau as a refuge from the Senegalese authorities, much as occurs in Gambia. This shift of operations south has created another barrier for the reintegration of the MFDC into Casamançais society.

The creation of a direct linkage across Gambia is essential not only for the Casamançais' ability to access political power, but also for the economic development of the region. The extreme lack of current transport linkages between Casamance and the north has a deep limiting effect on the ability of the region to develop. Because Casamance is an agricultural hub, the majority of its exportable products, such as its vast mango crop, are time- and heat-sensitive, meaning they are rendered uneconomical by the long travel times associated with either of the current options.

While the barriers to economic and political development in Casamance are daunting, Senegal has made efforts to close the gap. Recent years have seen an expansion of the ferry service between Dakar and Ziguinchor, providing reasonably affordable, if slow, transport for individuals and goods between the national and regional capitals. Additionally, a project led by the Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend, a Dutch international development agency, is currently working to expand the capacity of the Ziguinchor port facility, increasing the ability of the Casamance to export agricultural and other products that might not otherwise be able to reach market. Finally, air links, while limited and far A round trip ticket, costing between \$190 and \$220, is equivalent to more than ten percent of Senegal's per capita GDP. As such, their use is limited to the very richest Senegalese and to foreign tourists.too expensive for the average Senegalese,⁷ allow travel between Dakar, Ziguinchor, and Cap Skirring. While these alternate forms of transport do

⁷ A round trip ticket, costing between \$190 and \$220, is equivalent to more than ten percent of Senegal's per capita GDP. As such, their use is limited to the very richest Senegalese and to foreign tourists.

not compensate for the lack of a direct linkage across Gambia, their existence does help to reduce the impact of that lack.

Conclusion

The issue of violence as it relates to the Casamance's neighbors is deeply intertwined with both the political and economic layer and the layer of memory. Absent the driving economic and political forces and the ideological sustenance provided by the long-held grievances, the incentive to violently secede from Senegal would be greatly diminished, and, eventually, the rebellion would wither.

Further, as has been shown, instability in Guinea-Bissau has long enabled continued violence in Casamance. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, Guinea-Bissau's armories were turned against the Senegalese state in the hands of the MFDC. If the Guinea-Bissauan state can be pulled out of its tailspin and stabilized, the prospects for peace would be vastly improved.

However, the current situation is not promising. Gambia's political climate continues to become more oppressive and hostile to Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau shows no signs of hope. In the absence of change on these two fronts, the prospects for the Casamance are limited.

Recommendations

The majority of the recommendations below are focused on reducing the degree to which the geography of the Casamance and Gambia act as a barrier to economic development for the Casamançais. Reducing the impact of this geographical barrier is critical to overcoming the economic and political isolation of the Casamance and, consequently, ending the conflict.

Recommendations to the Government of Senegal

- **Commit to continued diplomatic and economic engagement with Gambia.**
Work with Gambia to reduce barriers to trans-Gambian travel and trade.
Despite the intransigence and political volatility of the current Gambia regime, no

solution to the conflict in the Casamance can circumvent the implication of the Gambian state.

- **Commit to maintaining diplomatic and political pressure on the Gambian government to complete construction of a bridge crossing the Gambia.** A bridge across the Gambia is essential to the economic and political integration of Casamance into the greater Senegal. The completion of the planned bridge across the Gambia will allow the Casamançais much greater access to Dakar, the political and economic center of Senegal. Additionally, the creation of this road link will help the development of Casamançais industry, by reducing both the cost and time required to bring products to market in Dakar.
- **Commit to the continued expansion air and sea connections between northern Senegal and Dakar and the Casamance. Explore the feasibility of developing rail connections to the Casamance through eastern Senegal.** As has been stated, increasing the ability of the Casamançais to participate in the economy of the broader Senegal is key to ending the conflict. In the absence of political cooperation from Gambia, these connections will grow in importance.
- **Consolidate continued cooperation with the Guinea-Bissauan government to secure the Senegal-Guinea-Bissau border.** Guinea-Bissau has long been a source of arms and financing for the MFDC, especially during the frequent periods of unrest and instability in the country. Any long-term solution to the conflict must limit the impact of future Guinea-Bissauan instability on the Casamance.

Recommendations for the Government of Gambia

The recommendations enumerated below are included for completeness. Given the current political climate in Gambia, it is unlikely that these reforms will occur; as such, a near-term resolution to the Casamance conflict is unlikely.

- **Commit to continued political and economic engagement with Senegal.** Improving the Casamançais' access to political power and economic development will require the cooperation of the Gambian government.

- **Commit to the construction of the trans-Gambian highway and a bridge across the lower Gambia.** Improving Casamançais citizens and business access to northern Senegal and Dakar is key to addressing the grievances of the MFDC and further developing the Casamance. While improving air and sea connections remains important, a bridge crossing the lower Gambia would provide the most time efficient and economical route to the north for the majority of the population of the Casamance.
- **Commit to cooperating with the Senegalese government to end the illegal cross-border trade of wood.** Ending the illegal wood trade will eliminate a major source of funding for the northern branches of the MFDC.
- **Commit to cooperating with the international community to bring about a negotiated end to the conflict.** Due to Gambia's close economic, political, and ethnolinguistic ties to the Casamance and the MFDC, Gambian cooperation will be critical in any negotiated end to the conflict.

Recommendations for the Government of Guinea-Bissau

The recommendations included below are, again, included for the sake of completeness. At present, Guinea-Bissau lacks the capacity for self-governance, and as such any policy reforms are unlikely.

- **Commit to cooperating with the Senegalese government to secure their shared border.** Guinea-Bissau has historically acted as a safe-haven and an armory for the various factions of the MFDC. A solution to the conflict will necessitate the cooperation of the two governments in stopping any future flows of people or arms.

Recommendations for the International Community

- **Commit to continued diplomatic support for the completion of the Trans-Gambian Highway.** As noted above, the completion of this highway is essential to addressing the political and economic isolation of the Casamance.
- **Commit to supporting the peaceful transition of power in Gambia.** The current political climate in Gambia benefits neither the Casamançais nor the

government of Senegal, nor the citizens of Gambia. Further, a solution to the Casamance conflict can only occur with the cooperation of Gambia, which is extraordinarily unlikely under the Jammeh regime. Progress will only be made after the transition of power and the installation of a new regime.

- **Commit to supporting the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau.** The Casamance conflict has, through several sections of its long history, been driven by the instability and conflict in Guinea-Bissau. For both the sake of the peace process in the Casamance and the sake of the Guinea-Bissauan people, the international community must work towards a peaceful and stable Guinea-Bissau.

The Challenge: Trust and Reconciliation

Kimya Zahedi

A week of meetings with Senegalese state officials, civil society leaders, journalists, businesspeople, activists, and aid workers failed to produce a final unifying narrative on the Casamance conflict that one so often hopes to encounter when performing field research. In fact, to quite the opposite effect, almost every individual provided a different understanding of the very facts and history surrounding the Casamance situation, with individual ideas on what the country needed in order to move forward. There was, however, one unifying sentiment expressed by every delegation with whom we met: the acknowledgement that the current level of distrust between the parties engaged in the conflict is a major impediment to any sort of potential compromise/peace between the Casamançais and the state, and that rectifying this distrust should be a major priority.

The relationships between the Casamançais and the people of northern Senegal have been acutely fractured by over 30 years of what has mainly been low-intensity violent conflict with bouts of more violent eruptions whenever they appear, reflecting Dakar's neglect of the region since or even before independence. Consequently, government affiliated programs, initiatives, and/or persons are met with widespread suspicion, which results in their being perceived as illegitimate and hollow by many southerners. This includes the various efforts that Sant'Egidio and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD) are currently undertaking to facilitate/mediate dialogues between the MFDC factions and the Senegalese state.

Such an environment would benefit greatly from assessing the roots of the distrust between Senegalese, as well as an exploration of potential ways to lessen suspicions, sow the seeds for cooperation, and eventually rebuild trust. The ubiquitous call for reconciliation on behalf of all of those we encountered (the state, MFDC, civil society, media, and local communities), attacking the conflict on its second level of memory, should be taken quite seriously by all involved in the conflict, because, if for no other reason, it was the one thing all parties agreed the country needed.

Reconciliation—as both a process and a goal—is a pragmatic necessity for any stable society. As a goal, reconciliation is something to strive for and as a process it is the means of achieving that goal (Bloomfield et al. 2003, 12). It is perhaps most useful in democratic states looking to lessen the likelihood of resurgence in violent conflict, which the Senegalese government states it is. If politics is the process of addressing the *issues* that divide groups in conflict, reconciliation is the process of addressing the troubled *relationships* between those groups. After all, the degree to which communities trust one another and their institutions helps determine whether the compromises made during a peace process can/will be effectively implemented, upheld, and respected.

This chapter will discuss the sources of resentment and frustration that underpin the distrust between Casamançais and northern Senegalese and then discuss potential ways to approach reconciliation, both in new initiatives as well as by drawing on local conflict management mechanism and actors to enhance ongoing peacemaking efforts. It will mainly focus on the relationship between the Casamançais and the “northerners,” as they were so often referred to in the region, which includes the Senegalese state, the military, and citizens living in/originating from northern Senegal. It will also touch on the relationship between the discordant MFDC factions.

Casamançais Distrust of Northerners

The question of what contributes to the high levels of distrust is an important one, because understanding where its roots lie can aid in figuring out how to alleviate tensions and mend the relationships fractured by conflict. The Casamançais, even those who insisted the conflict was already solved, very often expressed resentment and frustration toward “northerners,” whether toward the state, the military, or people in general, both explicitly and implicitly. Frustrations and resentments among Casamançais are diverse and numerous, resulting from events that have taken place over time, current conditions in the region, memories of history, and the various societal repercussions and reverberations of long-term violent conflict.

There is a widespread perception among many Casamançais of having been oppressed and/or marginalized by “northerners” that appears to be quite deep-seated. This perception of northerners having continuously, over the course of recent history, taken

advantage of the Casamance, its resources and its people is at the heart of widespread distrust of the state, the military, and even researchers and NGOs. Many perceive poverty, lack of opportunities and access to social services, mining casualties, displacement, geographic isolation, and crimes committed by the military as forms of/products of state oppression.

This neglect, as it is perceived, is often seen in the lack of opportunities and the presence of high poverty rates in the Casamance region. High rates of job scarcity and food insecurity are prevalent and lead people, especially youth, to engage in illicit activities or join the MFDC. Half of all households in the Casamance are considered vulnerable to food scarcity (World Food Program), as discussed in a later chapter by Chelsey Buurman. Lack of adequate infrastructure, social/health services, and perceived government investment in overall development in the region are thus a sour source of resentment amongst many.

Another aspect of perceived marginalization related to limited access and transportation to and from northern Senegal, where many believe there is a greater level of overall opportunity. Many find the state's lack of headway on its plans to build a bridge through Gambia, which is in part at the hands of the Gambian state, deeply frustrating and an illustration of the unimportance of Casamançais' livelihoods and integration for the state. Flights, which take approximately one hour, are far too expensive for the average Casamançais, while travel by boat and car takes up to 12 hours. Boats are also expensive and driving requires one to have proper identification, which many Casamançais do not possess. Although the state did not create Gambia, there is a strong sense among many that the state has reinforced the region's geographic isolation in its lack of investment in transportation, further marginalizing the Casamançais.

Many also blame the government for expropriating lands and resources. We often heard people suggest that local authorities representing the central government had appropriated the region's lands at the expense of the local populations. Casamançais often referred to land reform initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s, in which the Senegalese state allegedly distributed large amounts of property around Ziguinchor to northerners (Lambert 1998, 596). One individual expressed anger at the fact that northerners had taken over their fishing industry, coming south to fish during season and then returning

back north during the off seasons. This same feeling is shared by many vis-à-vis the natural resources of the region.

Adding to this feeling of marginalization and oppression is the widespread feeling of being victimized and mistreated by the military. Many have been humiliated or harassed by Senegalese authorities in the region, while others have witnessed the military commit crimes and brutally hurt or even kill family members/friends (Evans 2015). The very presence of the military in Ziguinchor served as a sort of symbol of occupation in a few conversations we had with locals. There is also a widely shared belief that the military is responsible for the mines in the region and that the government has since neglected to undertake a sweeping demining initiative. This leaves farmland unusable and/or highly dangerous and disallows many from returning to their homes after having been displaced.

The two forms of perceived marginalization that Casamançais mentioned the most were exclusion from power positions and decision-making processes, and the state's disregard of local cultures, traditions/practices and values. Casamançais reported being excluded from ongoing dialogues with certain MFDC factions or having local posts filled by northerners who do not understand the local culture, needs or frustrations. While representatives from the state suggested it works with civil society groups, none of the ones we spoke to said they had been contacted by the state.

Additionally the perceived disregard/distaste for their culture/traditions/values is a source of resentment and anger to many. Casamançais referred often to instances in which the state and the military had killed women, who are sacred in Diola culture. Many also refer to the state and military's destruction of the *bois sacré* or sacred forests of the region as particularly offensive and heinous. The ultimate illustration of exclusion rests in the fact that Casamançais refer to northern Senegal as "Senegal," distinct from the Casamance. When someone leaves for the north it is often referred to as "going to Senegal" (Lambert 1998, 596).

Potential Reconciliation Frameworks

National Dialogue

Given the prevailing sense among Casamançais of isolation from northern Senegal and of marginalization by the state/north, a national reconciliation initiative designed and implemented by an independent group representative of the demographics that make up the Senegalese populace would benefit all stakeholders in the conflict. Reconciliation initiatives allow people to voice their grievances and discuss the events of the past as they perceive them, which can be cathartic and lay the groundwork for ongoing peace negotiations, disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) initiatives, and other post-conflict/development initiatives.

If Casamançais civil society groups were represented in a national body tasked with designing a national reconciliation platform, it would provide them a sense of agency in something both national and institutional. It would present an opportunity to diminish distrust by demonstrating to people of the region that they have a voice in shaping a national institutional process that will affect all Senegalese, not solely those in the south. In this way it could lend itself to a greater sense of belonging to the nation.

Many working in Casamançais civil society have already circulated this idea. When asked if they would participate in a national truth and reconciliation initiative, every civil society group we met with, even the political MFDC factions, replied, “yes.” All of them provided the same condition, however, that Casamançais civil society be involved in the actual designing and planning of the initiative and not just be included as participants. Additionally, three groups said they would only participate if the conference were independent and not state-led. The key characteristics of the initiative should therefore be that it is national, meaning accessible to, inclusive of, and representative of all groups of Senegalese society, and not state-led. Casamançais organizers and leaders across the board expressed their sheer desire to be included in the processes intended to affect the future of the region.

The usefulness of such an effort to the state, third party facilitators, as well as NGOs, civil society leaders, and even private businesses is not to be downplayed. Understanding the sources of frustration as well as the desires and priorities of the Senegalese could help the state and the negotiation facilitators like Sant’Egidio develop

sounder peacemaking strategies. If, for example, a national dialogue conference reveals that most Casamançais would not view an agreement between the state and Salif Sadio favorably or as at all meaningful, it may move Sant'Egidio to recalibrate its course of action and reestablish new priority actors.

Using Local Reconciliation Mechanisms in the Peace Process Itself

Furthermore, those involved in the ongoing peace process and negotiations underway today can draw upon local reconciliation mechanisms and integrate them in various ways into peacemaking efforts. This could not only contribute to increasing the level of legitimacy and effectiveness of ongoing peacemaking activities but also provide Casamançais with a greater degree of agency in the process, which many desire.

Mistrust is not felt solely between Casamançais and northern Senegalese. Amongst Casamançais themselves, many civilians and members of civil society are wary of the *maquisards* and MFDC political factions, for example. According to many civil society organizers, local communities in the south also experience conflicts between one another that produce tensions and strained relations quite often. Usually, however, local conflict resolution mechanisms are able to resolve these disputes in ways mutually accepted and respected by the parties involved.

The communities living in the Casamance region possess their own local conflict management and resolution mechanisms rooted in their respective traditions, cultures and histories. Many expressed what they said was the potential for these mechanisms to play a part in the broader peace process and reconciliation effort to increase legitimacy of ongoing peace efforts. These local processes are used to settle low-level disputes between individuals and/or communities and often play an important role in shaping people's perceptions of ongoing conflicts and enemies.

In the Casamance, community radio is hugely influential across different religious, ethnic groups and regions, and has a history of influencing people's perceptions and the course of conflict. It has done this in the past by augmenting fervor to fight at certain times, and/or by diffusing tensions and encouraging peace at different times. Radio is also the medium through which people receive information and hear from the MFDC leaders fighting in the *maquis*. Local radio such as Zig-FM is thus an important

venue for commentary, discussion and exchanging ideas surrounding the conflict with large potential to influence communities. The state could capitalize on the role of local radio and organize a weekly or scheduled radio event in which a senior government official from Dakar would take calls from locals, hear their concerns, and have a chance to engage in conversation with them. These are opportunities to provide people with a sense of inclusion and increase dialogue and exchange information that could benefit all actors.

Many also mentioned the important role of local religious leaders who often act as arbiters as well as purveyors of certain wisdoms and can therefore affect people's perceptions of conflicts. Imams have a large degree of influence over their respective communities, for example, through pardoning, settling disputes between individuals or villages, and shaping community norms. Imams intervened on the issue of property ownership for women in Senegal. When there was confusion in Muslim communities surrounding the matter, a group of imams stepped in, presented their findings, which were based in Islamic texts, and argued that women were in fact allowed to own property within Islam. This challenged what had become local custom in some places of disallowing women from owning property. The imams traveled to various communities to share their research and findings in order to make the case that the practice and belief were not based in Islamic law (Guénette 2012, 55). In this way local religious leaders can help establish truths and reshape perception of reality, which can be extremely useful in peacemaking processes.

Local leadership, depending on the community, can also pardon individuals, settle land and property disputes, and give sermons calling on people to behave a certain way. Within Diola communities of the south, *les femmes du bois sacré* serve as spiritual guides as well the beholders of culture, which provides them a large degree of clout within Diola communities. With regard to this conflict in particular, *les femmes du bois sacré* have historically been linked to the *maquisards* fighting in the bush. They play an important albeit somewhat enigmatic role in leading male rites of passage ceremonies, which take place in the sacred mangroves and allegedly initiate individuals into both manhood as well as the MFDC through certain rituals and prayers. Historically *les femmes* have been integral in shaping perceptions of the conflict, through spiritual justifications for combat

and independence, the practice of cursing (which most Diola take quite seriously), and helping to supply fighters with resources.

Those involved in the peace process would benefit greatly from drawing on these mechanisms. Many suggested that the local leaders, particularly *les femmes du bois sacré* could play a role in unifying the MFDC factions of Badiaté and Sadio. Other suggested they would be helpful in deterring young men from going to the *maquis* by reversing the alleged blood pact that is performed during initiation and compels men to fight for independence. Such mechanisms have shown to change perception and discourse in the past and can therefore be used to change the way people view the conflict.

Facilitators, both from the Senegalese state and from outside organizations, should seek strategies that draw upon leaders of such local conflict management practices as a way to deliver a sense of inclusion and cultural sensitivity to those who feel neglected, add legitimacy to whatever initiative is being pursued and also potentially augment efficacy.

There have already been instances in which the state has utilized traditional cultural norms of a particular region to help ease tensions and lessen distrust between the state and the MFDC. A cultural phenomenon that some Senegalese state representatives have drawn upon in the past to ease distrust between those of the north and south is that of perceived common ancestry or “joking relationships,” as anthropologists have labeled it, between ethnic groups.

A mythical story has existed for centuries, and is well known by Casamançais and northerners alike, which suggests the Diola and Serer are related by blood and descended from common origins (De Jong 2005, 403). This perceived, historically rooted blood relation lends to the ethnicities feeling a sense of obligation for mutual assistance and a freedom to joke or tease those of the other group (De Jong 2005, 403). Because the Diola-Serer relationship has been arguably antagonistic for many years, in 1993, Saliou Sambou, then Governor of Fatick, a region in northern Senegal, and ethnically Diola, organized a “*Festival des Origines*” to celebrate the links and relationship between the Diola and Serer. The festival drew about 300 Casamançais from southern Senegal and almost 500 Casamançais residents in northern Senegal. The festival not only served to increase cultural understanding and acceptance but also served Sambou himself, who was

serving as a Diola in a northern Senegalese city and would benefit from a decrease in inter-ethnic distrust.

Inclusion of Important Actors

More generally, it was quite clear that those representing the state, local authorities, as well as international NGOs and facilitators had not reached out to civil society actors. This was perplexing considering the amount of emphasis the administration had allegedly placed on addressing and solving the Casamance conflict. The vast pools of knowledge and society sway that these organizations possess are not to be underestimated. It would be in the state's and all other facilitating actors' best interest to at the very least consult with active civil society organizations, as doing so would provide valuable local insight, potentially help reach certain goals, and also provide the community with the sense of inclusion it so desperately seeks.

Women in the Casamance have an extraordinary ability to mobilize, which seems to extend from their sacred role within Diola culture, but also from a long history of well-organized civil society organizing and leadership in the region. Despite having far-reaching networks, active membership/participation and having organized a march of up to 5,000 people, one women-led organization suggested it was completely in the dark with regards to the ongoing negotiations. Neither the state nor Sant'Egidio or CHD had reached out to them.

The same is true for youth groups. The youth in Casamance are key to securing stability in the region. Youth in the south are overall underemployed and undereducated, which leads many to seek purpose and belonging in the *maquis* or illicit activities. These young people provide the backbone of what is left of the MFDC. Providing them with a sense of inclusion in the peacemaking process could serve to lessen their desire to fight or at the very least give them an opportunity to express their desires for the region. Continuing to have a large group of young, unemployed men in a Diola-dominated society in which the meaning of manhood is connected to one's ability to provide for a household could serve the benefit of extremist and radical organizations moving quickly across the region.

Conclusion

The prevailing feeling amongst many Casamançais is that collectively they have minimal power or agency as Senegalese due to exclusion, neglect and marginalization by the north. This feeling and the resulting distrust between Casamançais and northerners is perhaps the largest obstacle to achieving peace. Overturning this perception and ameliorating distrust will require any actor involved in peacemaking and/or development (the state, NGOs, civil society groups, facilitators/mediators) to rethink their current strategies. By better integrating local Casamançais actors and their knowledge and experience, actors working on issues in the Casamance can spread a feeling of inclusion among Casamançais that is so desperately sought, and enhance the efficacy of their existing projects by better understanding which strategies are accepted by locals.

Recommendations

To the Government of Senegal

- **Reach out to and initiate dialogue with Casamançais civil society groups.** There is a wealth of knowledge, experience, and organizing capacity within Casamançais civil society that the state will benefit from engaging with. Civil society actors like women and youth organizations are particularly active and will appreciate the inclusion.
- **Include local pro-peace NGOs, civil society organizations, and leaders in the ongoing peace negotiations through consultative status.** This will hopefully help shift perceptions of exclusion/lack of agency and give people an incentive to support the process and its resulting agreement.
- **Engage the elderly female leaders,** particularly *les femmes du bois sacré*, because they can help change the interests and perceptions of the MFDC fighters and political wings.
- **Support an independent initiative for a national peace and reconciliation conference.** The government, while remaining independent of the process, should publicly offer its support of such an initiative and perhaps even volunteer to help with facilitating event spaces or logistics.

- **Produce a report on the various Casamançais cultural sensitivities to be read by any government officials working on Casamance issues.** Government officials working on any issue related to the Casamance should be well informed of the cultural norms and practices of the various groups there. They should be encouraged to furthermore behave with cultural respect when interacting with Casamançais.
- **Seek out qualified Casamançais to fill local government posts.**
- **Plan special reconciliation-driven initiatives during the months of Ramadan** when Muslims may be more compelled to empathize and pardon one another.

The Role of Ethnicity

Yael Mizrahi

Casamance separatism has a marked ethnic dimension—since the outbreak of hostilities in 1982, members of the Diola ethnic group, concentrated primarily in the Lower Casamance, have propelled the movement. Despite claiming to represent the interests of the multi-ethnic Casamance, the MFDC has capitalized on intra-ethnic Diola fraternity, while also exploiting inter-ethnic hostilities towards the growing Northern Senegalese ‘foreigner’ presence in the region. Senegal is often lauded for its relatively unique tradition of ethnic and religious tolerance, which is portrayed in stark contrast to some of its neighboring African nations that have been wrecked by bloody and devastating ethno-religious conflicts. Nonetheless, with the unrest in Casamance now nearing thirty-years, this conflict is referred to as one of Africa’s longest standing.

This chapter is concerned with understanding the components which make up Casamançais identity, the impact this identity has had on the evolution of the conflict, and recommendations which both the Senegalese government and the MFDC separatists should take into account in their efforts to reach a fair resolution to the conflict. This separate Casamançais identity heavily permeates the first two levels of analysis outlined in the introduction—from the first level, the colonial past, which was fundamental in solidifying the Casamance disparate enclave status, to the second level, that of memory, which is where the root of debate on Casamançais identity is lodged.

Issues of identity are often contentious, and can prove among the most thorny to resolve. The salience of identity dynamics in driving the conflict is also greatly contested—with incongruity between the narrative advanced by the Senegalese State, the people of Casamance, and the MFDC rebels. Often co-opted to buttress or delegitimize the claims of the opposing side, the ethno-religious lenses of the conflict remain a sensitive and complex subject, with an individual conception of salient group identity varying to a large degree according to their socio-economic status.

Most scholars agree that the categorization of Casamançais separatism as an ethnic revolt is not only untrue, but obfuscates our understanding of the main dynamics and drivers of the conflict. Mirroring the separatist movement and its history of

factionalization and incongruity, the nature of Casamance identity is riddled with contradictions and ambiguity. The prevalence of ethno-religious conflicts of succession has been one of the defining features of the 21st century; with one of the most common motivating factors of separatism often being ethnic or linguistic in nature. Yet, the true function of ethnicity in these conflicts remains contested—while some see it as the genuine source of conflict, others see it merely as a rallying cry, or façade, which social entrepreneurs capitalize upon in order to garner support in furthering their political and material goals. As is the case with most quandaries—the truth lies somewhere in the middle, scattered along the way.

Casamançais Exceptionalism

Historically, ethnicity and race were never contentious flashpoints in Senegalese society. During and after colonial rule, ethnicity played a minor role in politics and society, with caste biases being the most salient distinctions of identity. Senghor, a Catholic Serer, was focused on creating a pan-ethnic national Senegalese identity, which was successful in integrating a large number of immigrants from Mali, Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau who settled in Senegal during the 1960s (Gellar 162). Diouf actively promoted ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity as a mainstay of Senegalese democracy, and claimed that the Senegalese national culture was the result of “a long tradition of intermingling, cultural cross-fertilization and respect of pluralism in all its dimensions—ethnic, linguistic, and religious” (Gellar 163). While Wade was unsuccessful in bringing an end to the conflict in his own country, he was one of the few African leaders who publicly condemned the regime of Côte d’Ivoire for its policies of ethnic discrimination against the Burkinabe.

As mentioned, the Diola form a majority in Casamance’s largest city, Ziguinchor, which lies in the westernmost portion of the region. In the north and east, the Mandinga are the prominent ethnic group, forming a majority in the regions of Sédhiou and Kolda. Other ethnic groups of Casamance include the Balanta and Bainouk, while in the north, the dominant ethnic is Wolof, who make up over half of the Senegalese population.

To understand the role of ethnicity in the Casamance conflict, a short review of Africa’s post-colonial history is necessary. Ever since the wave of independence that

swept the continent, the normative principle of respecting colonial borders has remained strong. By extension, political parties that represent narrow ethnic interests have been delegitimized. In their desire to assert strength, the leaders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) prescribed to a territorial model of nationalism that disavowed tribal and ethnic claims as the basis for self-determination. Not only was the territorial model favored, but ethnicity was considered antithetical to an advanced political identity. Despite the seemingly arbitrary nature of the colonial borders, African leaders clung to them with the hopes that this would ensure and safeguard stability.

Definitive ethnic distinctions distinguish the indigenous populations of the Lower Casamance from those of northern Senegal. The Diola are referred to as acephalous societies—non-hierarchical in nature, with egalitarian and individualistic practices. Diola villages are mostly self-sufficient, and Diola society has no caste or hereditary defined positions—each Diola citizen is given free rein to become a warrior, an artisan, or a *griot*, depending upon their wishes, with no social stigma attached. Official commentators often capitalized upon these differences, stating that it is this cultural exceptionalism which has precluded them from integrating with the rest of Senegalese nationalism. In reality, the Diola have proved to be far from averse to hierarchical political structures—they are well represented in the Senegalese army, as well as the civil service.

The portrayal of the conflict in this simplistic binary—of Diola versus Wolof—has been successful in tainting the political goals of the movement. The “Casamance question” as it became known, made the issue of Diola identity salient, as it brought the debate to the public sphere. Understanding the limitations of this ethnic dimension, the MFDC, as well as other non-Diola proponents of Casamançais independence do not frame the conflict in ethnic terms—while the Senegalese government has repeatedly argued that the MFDC’s goal is the establishment of a Diola Republic, which would contain not only Casamance, but also Gambia and parts of Guinea-Bissau.

Yet, the claims that the ethnic distinction of the Diola as the decisive motivating factor behind Casamance separatism has been reinforced or denied at different points in time by both the MFDC and the Senegalese government. A position frequently brought up by our interlocutors was that Casamance identity, and by extension, the separatist movement, is religiously and ethnically inclusive, yet the fact that the movement was

born out of Ziguinchor, and has a strong Diola essence, cannot be overlooked in the implications this has had in the success of the movement, as well as the future of mediation efforts.

The Diola and the MFDC

In its original apparition under the leadership of Emile Badiane and Ibou Diallo in the 1940s and 1950s, the MFDC was not mobilizing on behalf of Casamance separatism, and was not tied to any specific ethnic identity. Yet while the MFDC claims to be acting in the name of Casamance, their motivations remain ambiguous—are their separatist claims based on the recognition of their disparate and unique identity, or is it in order to obtain improvements and rectification to the socio-economic and political disparities between the north and the south?

The movement was started by Diola literati who had strong connections to the Senegalese state, and to France. The Diola stood out among the region's other ethnic groups—with near universal rates of primary and secondary schooling; they integrated well within the Senegalese system, and entered the civil service in large numbers. It is a function of this increased agency and education that the Diola were the angriest, and were thus the mobilizing force when the relationship with northern Senegal soured, due to a budget crisis, and the separatist movement was launched. Having the most to lose, the Diola were driven to claim the largest stake in demanding separation.

It is no coincidence that the MFDC movement erupted in Ziguinchor, and that the Diola are the region's prominent ethnic group. Yet, the Diola still only represent a third of the urban population of Ziguinchor, and remain a minority in the Casamance. Despite claiming that they speak for the whole of Casamance, almost all of the MFDC leadership has been, and is currently, Diola; their symbols, land rights, and dominant language used to communicate is Diola as well. It is striking that in most of Abbé Diamacoune's public statements, his references to the people of Casamance are made only to the Diola. During our interview with a prominent journalist, an anecdote was relayed of a journalist looking to write a story on rebel leaders residing in the *maquis*—yet, his invitation was politely rejected due to his recognizable Wolof family name. This unofficial policy of non-Diola

discrimination explains why the MFDC has not had more success at reaching a more diverse audience in the region.

The MFDC has capitalized on both structural and conceptual inter and intra-regional grievances to garner support under the banner of separatism. One prominent structural grievance has been the inter-village land disputes between the various ethnic groups—villages were offered protection in return for granting support to the MFDC, and often resulted in Diola fighters kicking out rival ethnic groups that had taken over important agricultural lands. On the conceptual level of memory, the MFDC co-opted Diola intellectuals by fanning resentment against the other Senegalese for their lack of acknowledgement of Casamançais war heroes, signaling that the Senegalese State did not respect the south.

While many would assert it is a metonymy, the claim that Casamance separatism is Diola is difficult to prove. Many Diola openly support the separatist movement, whether by attending MFDC sponsored rallies and festivals, or by participating in the political factions of the movement, while an increasing number have rejected the violence and armed struggle, and, due to the protracted nature of the conflict and the lack of progress, are no longer willing to bear the political and economic costs involved.

Ethnic traditions are utilized as a mode of interaction between the State and the Diola people, and thereby the Casamance region. Political ethnicization has also had an impact—any MFDC leader who had not gone through initiation in the sacred grove, or *bois sacré*, cannot be trusted. There is thus a crucial element in the traditional mechanisms of Diola identity. The Diola were entrusted with leading the rebellion due to the particular cultural elements in which they were seen as superior—the strength of their tradition, and rituals; “once you have taken the oath, you are never going to go back.” Diola identity is predicated upon this oath, they are defined through it. The idea that the Diola represent Casamance in its “purest” form is a clear indicator of the power these traditional societal mechanisms have in the advancement, as well as a hindrance of the successful resolution of the conflict. Yet, Casamance identity and nationalism is a fusion of a number of disparate forces: both the traditional culturalist elements of the Diola ethnic group, as well as the legacy of relative deprivation and socio-economic discrimination meted out by the hyper-centralized Senegalese state.

Language

Casamançais speak mainly Diola and Mandinka, and use the increasing imposition of the Wolof language by the hands of the Senegalese state to attest to their collective marginalization. This sentiment is not wholly wrong, as the Senegalese from the north look down upon the Diola and their language, considering it provincial and backwards. Yet, the Diola are not the only ones suffering linguistic marginalization in Senegal; Halpulaar intellectuals hailing from Fouta Toro have recently engaged in a renaissance of the Pulaar language, aimed at revitalizing and increasing acceptance of the Fula people.

That the Diola are seen as provincial in the eyes of the urbanized Wolof may be an understandable claim, considering their continued agrarian lifestyle; however, with regard to the claim of their “primitive savage” nature, the Diola boast universal primary school attendance, which is the highest rate among all of Senegal’s ethnic groups (Foucher 2002, 88). The Diola also have the highest rates of migration to Dakar, where Wolof is the lingua franca. The majority of the Diola residing in Dakar prefer Wolof to their native tongue, with the older Diola choosing French over Wolof. Linguistic trends in Ziguinchor also reflect the growing shift developing throughout urban Senegal where non-Wolof Senegalese are increasingly taking on multi-lingual identities, in which Wolof is increasingly accepted.

Interestingly, the distinct Diola language has been used by the Diola émigrés living in France, where they published a Diola language magazine aimed at promoting the awareness of the Diola. The cultural association behind the magazine is known as the *Esukolal*, many of the organizers have moved on to become important figures in the MFDC.

The impact and importance of this linguistic discrimination for the majority of the Diola population, however, remains questionable. Many consider it hypocritical that the most adamant calls for the recognition of an authentic Diola culture—one with heavy attachments to the land, including the religious rites of the sacred forests and traditional Diola religious practices—stems from the Western-educated elite. This is happening at a time when the people of the Casamance are more intent on securing upward mobility, which has included abandoning their agrarian lifestyle, moving to Dakar, and learning Wolof. This leads back to the main contention regarding the discussion of Casamançais

identity, that the emphasis that the Diola leadership of the MFDC places upon the Diola language and traditions undermines their claims to represent the whole of Casamance.

Religion

With the history of religion being implicated in various conflicts in the African continent, some have pointed to the Diola's animist religious nature as the salient defining characteristic through which to view their separatist claims. This assertion has been undermined however, by the impact that the Catholic Church has had on the formation of Casamançais nationalism—leading some experts to claim that the Church has played perhaps the most fundamental role in the process of cultivating awareness of a unique Diola identity.

It is true that Casamance has a larger non-Muslim population than the rest of the country—which is precisely the reason why Catholic missionaries were drawn to the region in the late nineteenth century. As the Diola are classically animist, a classification that distinguishes them by their resistance to hierarchy, and their demands for independence are thus complicated, as their structures do not provide the classic framework for separatist organization. This assertion has led many to claim that outside elements must have played an oversized role in advancing, and even appropriating Diola cultural representations (De Jong 2002). As the Catholic Church has promoted and fostered Diola traditions, this does not mean the conflict has been transformed into one based upon religion. The Catholic Church has been successful in rallying support in the Diola, as well as strengthening the rebellion, mainly through capitalizing upon the increasingly salient public sentiment that the Senegalese state has favored the predominately Muslim Northern Senegalese.

In a time when all of West Africa, including Senegal, feels threatened by the Islamic State and its franchises in al-Qaeda in the Maghrib and Boko Haram, it is worth noting that political Islam was never mentioned in discussions in Casamance, explicably because of the minority position of Muslims if nothing else. However, the topic is not to be totally dismissed: Gambia now calls itself the Islamic State of the Gambia and has instituted symbolic practices of Islamic awareness such as the cowl (*hijab*) which was never worn before in the region. Senegalese Islam is looser and more moderate than the

version from the east, and is kept under control by the powerful Sufi sects, the very characteristics that make it a target for radical attacks, as seen in Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso in 2016. Nonetheless, that danger has currently no role in the Casamance conflict.

Recommendations

The ethnic dimension of the separatists leaves certain question marks for the future of Casamance—being a minority in the Casamance region, if granted independence how would the Diola assert themselves over the majority? Many sources we spoke to claimed that if a referendum were to be held tomorrow, it would not receive a majority of support from the people. Further complicating this issue—if it does come to a referendum, who would be allowed to vote? When asked to respond to these issues—the MFDC reiterated its oft-quoted position that they remain religiously and ethnically inclusive. Yet, any successful mediation effort between the government and the rebels will depend upon more than the mere mutual recognition of the multi-ethnic nature of the region, but an honest and deferential acceptance of the material and ideational grievances, past in memory, and present in policy, that continue to aggravate both sides.

In the conflict of the Casamance, where no concrete discrimination is enforced based upon ethnic or religious affiliations, the question of identity is relegated to the second level described, that of memory. This tier, remaining conceptual, is still a concrete issue, and is one of the driving forces responsible for perpetuating the conflict. This places identity in the category of root causes to the conflict—which provides a useful clue attempting to find a resolution to the conflict. A central lesson to emerge from the study of successful mediation efforts is the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict. Despite the disputed salience of the ethnic dimension of the conflict, here a few are concrete steps the Senegalese government, and the MFDC should take in order to address the grievances of both sides:

- **Official spokesmen should refrain from equating the Casamance struggle with the Diola**, or claiming that the struggle stems from a Diola antipathy towards hierarchy. Reifying notions of ethnicity does nothing to advance conflict management strategies, and only serves to paint the struggle in a zero-sum lens. The Diola are not threatening the Senegalese nation, and Casamance identity does

not stand in opposition to the Senegalese nation. By advancing the idea that the Diola have an intrinsic opposition to nationalism or hierarchy challenges the democratic and ethnically diverse nature of the Senegalese nation.

- **Efforts at reconciliation should address the sacred grove.** This aspect of the conflict is the most poorly understood, and is often stated as one of the obstacles that stands in the way of its resolution. The sacred grove, and the blood oaths taken, are a fundamental part of Diola identity, and local conflict management dynamics need to be integrated into the national level mediation efforts.
- **The Senegalese government should ensure it is enshrining linguistic pluralism.** Instead of language becoming a divisive factor, it should be used to bring people together, foster increased communication, and enrich Senegalese culture. This should include increased access to teaching and learning disparate languages, and upholding the freedom to choose which language to use in which context. This can reduce the communication gap and further contribute to the spread of democratic culture.
- **The MFDC needs to make an effort to extend beyond its Diola core,** if they truly claim to represent the Casamance in its entirety, they should reinforce their ethnic plurality by increasing local cooperation between members of the disparate local ethnic groups.

Part II: Handling the Conflict

Mediation

Catherine Simon

Given the lengthy duration of the Casamance conflict, it is perhaps unsurprising that during the course of the conflict there have been several attempts at mediation. The Casamance conflict has in part been characterized by an aversion of the Senegalese government towards external involvement, and with that the rejection of internationalization. This changed with the election of Macky Sall as President in 2012. Whereas President Wade had closed the door to the international community on the Casamance question, Sall's election as President offered a new opening. It was therefore not until 2012 that the Roman Catholic lay community, Sant'Egidio, was given permission to intervene as a mediator, partly off the back of its recognized success in bringing about a resolution to the conflict in Mozambique.

The fragmentation of the MFDC and the divisions among its political and military wings since the death in 2007 of its spiritual leader, Abbé Diamacoune, has been reflected in turn by the involvement of several mediators. In 2012 Sant'Egidio became the designated mediator for Salif Sadio, the leader of a MFDC military wing. Sadio prevented Sant'Egidio from speaking with the other MFDC factions, and threatened to revive his *maquis* if the government talked to them. These other factions—greatly divided, but representing a larger number of rebels—appear to have been initially dismissed by the government, whose efforts were focused on Salif Sadio, at the time perceived to be the most hardline and key to resolving the conflict. Since then, there appears to have been an acknowledgement of the need to draw in these other factions into the negotiation process, hence the involvement of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD), which nominally became the designated external mediator for César Atoute Badiaté. Badiaté, who relies on the Cardinal of Dakar for his communications, has not officially endorsed CHD and there is yet to be a meeting between them; upon the claimed unification of the Northern factions in February 2016, he professed to want only direct talks with the government's Ad Hoc Committee once he had received adequate training and preparation for the negotiation process.

This multifaceted and protracted conflict has been described by one of the mediators “like an old man with multiple illnesses operating on many different levels.” A slowly closing wound rather than an open sore, the Casamance conflict has been the subject of both half-hearted and hearty attempts at resolution, with the latest attempt, spearheaded by President Sall in 2012 in the wake of his election, seemingly the most convincing and most likely to succeed thus far. But even since Sall’s resolve in 2012 to end the conflict there has not been a straightforward path toward peace. In 2013, U.S. special envoy James Bullington (2015, 26) noted “the perception, especially in the Casamance but to a lesser extent in Dakar and within elements of the international community, that the Casamance peace process has begun to lose momentum and may ultimately fail (as did several peace efforts over the past 30 years)” despite the “impressive” progress made during the previous year. To this day, there remain several obstacles to current mediation efforts, which continue to signal to the international community that peace in the Casamance is not yet guaranteed.

What Can Be Expected From the Mediators?

Mediation has been defined as “a form of third-party intervention in a conflict” and “a mode of negotiation in which a third party helps the parties find a solution that they cannot find by themselves” (Zartman and Touval 2007, 437). This is distinct from other forms of third-party intervention in so far as it does not rely on the use of force and is not designed to benefit one of the parties involved. Rather, its purpose is to bring about an agreement mutually acceptable for both sides. The fact that such an agreement must be coherent with the third party’s interests and proportional to its investment is an important aspect of mediation rendering it political in nature, and at the very least not neutral (Bercovitch 2009, 346). Mediators cannot be indifferent to the outcome of the negotiations in which they are involved. This may be less easily distinguishable in the case of international organizations and NGOs, many of whom have mediation and conflict resolution in their DNA. But they too are subject to influence by the particular policies or interests of their members, of states or of donors. In the case of non-state mediators, there are necessarily interests involved, even at the most basic level, whether it be seeking to maintain a role or presence in a conflict, or preserving a reputation.

Mediators are rarely invited by parties to intervene unconditionally in a conflict. They are expected to justify their presence. In the initial stages they must seek to convince parties of their credibility and value: many fail to do so and face rejection by the parties involved. Favor or disfavor with the parties usually depends on whether or not those parties believe in the mediators' ability to serve their interests. The perceived impartiality or objectivity of the mediator does not weigh heavily, if at all, in a party's choice of mediator; rather, the anticipated advantages or disadvantages of a particular mediator's intervention and envisaged outcome are far more significant.

Even when doubts about the effectiveness of the mediator are successfully appeased, the parties' opposing, seemingly nonnegotiable positions can pose another stumbling block. Of course, with the help of a good mediator, these positions can become negotiable. A mediator's perceived leverage—its ability to make a party comply with the process—is an important factor weighing into a party's decision to endorse a mediator, especially when the party believes that the mediator is capable of forcing the other party to cooperate. But parties often choose a mediator not just on the basis of the mediator's perceived ability to resolve a given conflict but rather, as in the case of organizations such as the United Nations, on the basis of other important factors pertaining to a mediator's identity rather than its skill set, including weight, image and reputation.

A mediator's modes of operation are manifold, including communication, formulation, and manipulation, with increasing levels of involvement (Zartman and Touval 2007, 437). Mediation strategies also have been categorized as facilitative, procedural and directive. Ultimately, mediators choose those strategies that are "available, feasible, permissible, and likely to achieve a desired outcome" (Bercovitch 2009, 347). Mediation is therefore adaptable and in large part a response to what is permitted by a given context. Communication serves to bridge the divide between the parties and to facilitate the delivery of messages between them. Formulation means a more substantive approach, whereby the formulas for an agreement can provide "a common understanding of the problem and its solution or a shared notion of justice to govern an outcome" (Zartman and Touval 2007, 446). At the deepest level of involvement, a mediator may manipulate, bringing its power to bear in order to get the parties to reach an agreement.

Different sources of leverage are at the mediator's disposal, including persuasion, extraction, termination, deprivation, and gratification.

Mediators must be realistic and weigh their options carefully. All mediators are faced with the dilemma of balancing the pressing ethical need for violence and hostilities to cease versus the long-term need for a just and sustainable solution. Mediators must evaluate this trade-off based on the situation at hand and make a judgment which may or may not be correct in the long run. Moreover mediation can never resolve all underlying elements to a conflict; "it does not provide deep reconciliation or cancel the causes of the conflict" (Zartman and Touval 2007, 453). The final question for a mediator must be to decide when to withdraw from the process, allowing the parties ownership and independence while staying long enough to ensure implementation of the terms of the agreement.

Finally, measures of success are ultimately subjective since they are dependent on the parties' perceptions, but can include fairness of mediation, satisfaction with its performance or improvement in the climate of the parties' relationship.

The Role of State Actors in the Mediation Process

Organizations such as Sant'Egidio and CHD are reliant on the support of state actors who have the resources and material power to bestow legitimacy on the process, and on the parties' perception that their relationship with a more powerful state can constitute an "access point" for the parties (Bartoli 2009, 403). In some instances there are guarantees and legitimacy that only a state can provide. In Mozambique, it was the United Nations who implemented the peace accords between FRELIMO (Frente de Liberacao de Moçambique) and RENAMO (Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique) while Sant'Egidio had received the backing of the United States. This support structure is mirrored in the Senegalese conflict. Without the backing of these international actors, the mediators' ability to facilitate a peace agreement and to ensure its implementation would be severely diminished.

In the case of the Casamance, state actors have taken a role in the background and worked through the designated mediators. The best example of this is the United States, who appointed Ambassador James Bullington in 2012 as the U.S. special advisor and

Ambassador Mark Boulware as his successor in 2014, after which the particular role ceased and the file was handed to the U.S. Embassy. In his account of his experience, Bullington explained U.S. involvement under the model of “expeditionary diplomacy,” as he called it, of which the goal was to capitalize on the U.S. leverage in supporting ongoing peace negotiations without taking a lead role.

As such the main purpose of the role was to maintain focus and participation in the peace process by all players, to inject legitimacy, and to show to the Senegalese and to the international community that “this was not a forgotten conflict.” Responsibilities included liaising with the government, making contact with the MFDC factions (Ambassador Bullington met with Badiaté in 2013, an encounter which he describes without going into detail in *Expeditionary Diplomacy*), and working with civil society to help with the peace process. In so doing this gave the special advisor “the broadest view” and greatest visibility in the process. Although the U.S. has not acted as a mediator in a formal or informal sense, the special advisor acted as the “connective tissue” between organizations and a “conduit for information,” encouraging the Senegalese government and the international community to prioritize key issues.

The special advisors perceive their greatest contribution to the ongoing peace process to be incremental, most visible in the general de-escalation of tension and broad rejection of violence since 2012, as well as in their ability to keep the question of the Casamance firmly planted on the U.S. government’s agenda, a highly contested and competitive space. Moreover their ability to support the designated mediators, in particular Sant’Egidio, in their ongoing mediation efforts has been recognized as a positive contribution by the U.S. Both U.S. special advisors attended meetings hosted by Sant’Egidio in Rome with representatives of Salif Sadio. In so doing the U.S. brought added weight to the mediation process together with its expertise and resources.

Quoting an article by Professor Jean-Claude Marut and published by the Senegalese Press Agency, “The Role of American Diplomacy in the Casamance Crisis,” Bullington referred to an extract in which Professor Marut stated that the American involvement in the Casamance conflict not only permitted “movement of the lines” in the negotiations but it “inspired more confidence, due to the weight of American diplomacy,” and on a more practical level “enabled the financing of the delegations that traveled to the

Rome negotiations” (Bullington 2015, 88). Bullington remarked that the U.S. contribution consisted in “mobilizing and focusing U.S. Government resources on the Casamance,” in “encouraging the involvement of our allies and the international organizations of which we are a member,” and in “just being there” as “an engaged, committed partner in the peace process, offering encouragement and help wherever we can” (Bullington 2015, 88). This U.S. engagement in support of the Casamance peace initiative was according to the special representative “warmly welcomed by all Senegalese, including the rebels as well as the government; and it has attracted positive attention in the Senegalese press” (Bullington 2015, 62). The role of U.S. special advisor was welcomed by Macky Sall’s newly-appointed government in 2012, and has continued to receive a positive reception: this is in part due to the deliberate policy decision by the U.S. to take its cue from the Senegalese government on the question of the Casamance and to collaborate with it in the delivery of its key priorities, rather than to impose its own agenda.

The Role of Non-State Actors in the Mediation Process

The fact that the two principal mediators in the Casamance peace process, Sant’Egidio and CHD, are non-state actors is a symptom of the Senegalese government’s historical resistance to official involvement by state actors and of a more general trend in the field of mediation. Since the end of the Cold War, the presence of NGOs has become established in international conflict resolution, which finds itself adapting to state failures, state formation, and state cooperation (Bartoli 2009, 393). The diplomatic landscape, hitherto characterized by “great man” personal diplomacy, has shifted as a result of a deliberate dissemination of responsibilities by governments, including political, social and security roles “at the core of sovereignty,” with business and with international and civil society organizations (Betsill and Corell 2008, 22). The place of NGOs on the world stage is in part the fruit of a conscious decision by governments to allow for such actors to mediate, where state actors are unwilling or unable, or where a state chooses to involve NGOs as a demonstration of confidence. In this case, a state “can engage in a process of transformation using a plurality of actors according to its interests and goals” (Bartoli 2009, 393), addressing the need for the mediation of an

internationally relevant conflict without the burdens and constraints of national interests and international organizations.

NGOs such as Sant'Egidio are often dependent on the political climate from which states take their cues. The greater the political interest, often the less room the NGO has for maneuver. As such, higher levels of NGO influence are more likely when the political stakes of the negotiations are relatively low, whether in negotiations over non-binding principles or in framework agreements with few demands for change. This could explain in part the willingness of state actors to allow Sant'Egidio to be instrumental in the Senegalese negotiations. Other strategies available to NGOs, faced with a situation in which the political stakes are high, include the development of close personal relationships with participating states or the ability to persuade negotiators of their importance to the overall process.

In recent years the stream of requests received by organizations devoted to conflict resolution and mediation has been limited but sufficient to justify their continued presence in the international arena. Their perceived qualities include, for example, their ability to access states as non-states, their relative independence and impartiality, as well as their ability to strike a balance in being “international enough to offer guarantees but unofficial enough to not be invasive” (Bartoli 2009, 395). Their weaknesses, on the other hand, include their limited capacity to force action by parties. This lack of coercive capacity does not necessarily constitute a fatal flaw, however, and organizations such as Sant'Egidio have shown how they can capitalize on perceived weaknesses in order to deliver an effective mediation strategy.

The synergistic method, defined as “the ability to use the energy of great powers in a coherent way” and to fuse “often disparate actors, motivations, and interests into a coherent and positive peace process,” has been viewed as one of the Community’s most profound contributions to the Mozambique peace process (Bartoli 1999, 249). There, Sant'Egidio was able to act as a conduit of negotiation “because of the very weakness that made it such an unlikely leader—its lack of international prestige and power [...]. Sant'Egidio helped to solve a difficult problem by introducing and, when necessary, recruiting other players into the process in order to create synergies—and, as a consequence, political latitude—that were previously absent” (Bartoli 1999, 248). One

member of Sant'Egidio explained that “international consensus is important” and that Sant'Egidio's ability to perceive its weakness was in fact its strength. The member acknowledged that the UN and U.S. were able to provide legitimacy and encouragement but affirmed that its role was to “fill the empty space left by government.” Unlike ambassadors who must be more cautious in their meetings, Sant'Egidio and other organizations of this nature are “freer from hidden agendas and economic or political interests.” “We do something states cannot do,” the member said.

The Community of Sant'Egidio

Among the mediators involved in the Casamance conflict is the Community of Sant'Egidio, the international Roman Catholic community founded in 1968 in Rome by Andrea Riccardi. Its founder has described it as “peacemakers rather than pacifists” (Riccardi 2013, 9) and “a very unique kind of “international actor [...] dubbed “the UN of Trastevere” by the famous Italian journalist Igor Man (so as to emphasize its international profile paradoxically linked to its convivial and Roman character)” “independently” from the Italian government and the Vatican choosing its fields and modes of intervention. It now comprises over 50,000 members. Unlike CHD, whose main focus is conflict resolution, the Community of Sant'Egidio in its own self-description is a community that is spiritual in nature grounded in prayer and Gospel values, and committed to its work with the poor. Out of its emphasis on dialogue—described by its founder as “engrained in the DNA of the Community” (Riccardi 2013, 9) and as “as a way of peace and co-operation among the religions, and also a way of life and as a means of resolving conflicts” (Riccardi 1999)—can be derived its de facto role as mediator. Its work on peace is thus “more the result of a serendipitous series of events than a clearly stated choice enshrined in a mission statement” (Bartoli 2009, 396).

Its mediation in Mozambique (1977-1992) between the RENAMO resistance movement and the official government of the FRELIMO party, culminating in the Rome General Peace Accords of 1992, marked an important step in the evolution of the organization as an international mediator. The Mozambique peace process served as visible proof that a non-state actor such as Sant'Egidio was capable of playing an instrumental role in conflict resolution, not just fulfilling the role of diplomat previously

performed by states but on some level doing so to greater effect with the strategies only at their disposal, providing an efficiency and a responsiveness which states are sometimes unable or unwilling to provide. Sant'Egidio's involvement stemmed from its personal relationship with Jaime Gonçalves, the bishop of Beira, Mozambique. Indeed its reliance on already established networks of local actors, together with its capacity to accurately understand recent events in light of its peacebuilding experience accumulated over 40 years, have constituted an important part of its success and credibility in the field (Bartoli 2009, 399). Since Mozambique, Sant'Egidio has also been involved in peace processes including in Algeria, Burundi, and Kosovo.

Sant'Egidio were first approached in the 1990s by the MFDC, following its successful mediation in Mozambique. The offer was apparently refused by the Senegalese government, who was determined to keep the conflict an internal affair. Sant'Egidio then extended its hand to President Wade after he participated in some interreligious meetings conducted by Sant'Egidio, but again the offer of help was declined. It was not until the 2012 presidential campaign that President Wade made an announcement in which he said that he had contacted Sant'Egidio to ask for help in resolving the conflict. The Community used this as an opportunity to reach out to President Wade, who on this occasion accepted Sant'Egidio's invitation and agreed to a meeting in Rome.⁸ The election of Macky Sall changed the dynamics: Sant'Egidio's role in the Casamance peace process was welcomed by a man seeking to begin his presidency with a firm commitment to the peace process. The head of the Sant'Egidio mediation team met with President Sall in April shortly after the elections. In August of that year Sall agreed to the negotiations and in October the negotiations began. In December, the government released eight MFDC prisoners and entered into negotiations with the armed wing led by Salif Sadio, perceived to pose the most serious threat, with Sant'Egidio as mediator. Since 2012 and the beginning of the ceasefire, there has been no serious resumption of violence.

A team of seven people at Sant'Egidio has been assigned to the Casamance dossier. The group receives a delegation sent by Salif Sadio to their offices in Rome. The main obstacle to reaching an agreement, according to a member of Sant'Egidio, is the

⁸ At the same time, Salif Sadio claims to be the one who contacted Sant'Egidio.

fragility of the peace process: “it is always easier to make war than peace, in the same way that it is easier to destroy a house than it is to build it.” The focus of Sant’Egidio’s efforts has been on finding “protocols of agreement” between Salif Sadio and the government, for instance agreement on humanitarian problems and confidence-building measures. They are still “working on the issue of independence,” the greatest dividing line between the government and the rebels.

An important aspect of Sant’Egidio’s strategy is its belief in maintaining confidentiality during the mediation process, although it is accepted that the final agreement has a necessarily public dimension to ensure its implementation (Bartoli 2009, 399). From an outsider’s perspective, this can be frustrating and raise questions about its work or indeed its effectiveness in achieving its aims. This was explained by one member of Sant’Egidio as belonging to a concept of peace as “something holy to be dealt with carefully” rather than being “business as usual.” Secrecy has therefore been a “key element” to the negotiation process, best served by a “strong ethical and moral background and a spirit of humility.”

As a non-state actor with limited leverage, the Community’s success is dependent on several factors, including conflict ripeness and timing, conditions for the negotiation process itself, and legitimization by state actors and by the international community. So far, the Community has been the representative of just one MFDC leader in the negotiations, Salif Sadio. This leader has effectively forbidden the Community from speaking with other factions. When asked, those in the Community involved in the mediation process said that they did not perceive the current divisions in the MFDC nor the fact that the Community was only mediating on behalf of one of the actors as a limiting factor. They envisaged a solution negotiated separately between the different MFDC factions. This view is shared by a former U.S. special advisor to the Casamance, whose own involvement led him to the conclusion that two or more tracks for a negotiation process was not only possible but preferable in the likely event that the MFDC failed to unite as one entity; otherwise those involved risked “letting the perfect become the enemy of the good.” The feelings on the ground seem to be somewhat different, with Badiaté insisting on the MFDC’s unification before negotiating. At the procedural level, the Community is thus limited, since it cannot act as a conduit for

communication between the parties. Moreover Sadio has never been to Sant'Egidio's offices in Rome, only sending his representatives.

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD) is a private humanitarian institution, established in 1999 in Geneva as an “attempt to constructively engage the international system by offering a variety of services that would complement the activities of traditional state actors and international organizations” (Bartoli 2009, 402). Its engagements in Indonesia were the launch pad for its work in mediation and conflict prevention, which is typically separated into three categories: direct mediation, the provision of negotiation and technical expertise as a means of facilitating dialogue, and the support of facilitators in ongoing peace processes. Since its beginnings, the Center has worked in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Balkans, and the Middle East, and developed humanitarian ceasefire agreements in Darfur and “cessation of hostility” agreements in Aceh, Indonesia, where it initiated dialogue between the Indonesian Government and the leadership of the Free Aceh Movement. As with Sant'Egidio, the principle of confidentiality under which CHD operates in many of its initiatives make it “difficult to ascertain the full effect of the Center's contributions to peace” (Bartoli 2009, 402).

CHD was invited by the government to mediate primarily because of the Community of Sant'Egidio's constriction to Salif Sadio and inability to work with more actors in the MFDC. A member of CHD told the group that “there was not yet a formal mediation process” but rather that CHD was still in the initial stages of “creating political dialogue.” CHD's role has been contested among some of the key actors, in particular members of the MFDC. Whereas Sant'Egidio appears to have worked closely with the government from the beginning in its mediation efforts with Salif Sadio, CHD's involvement of the Senegalese government in its programming as well as its level of support among the government remain unclear.

There are several issues at stake which are damaging and potentially fatal to CHD's role as mediator. One difficult obstacle to overcome is the apparent lack of trust in CHD, which appears to stem in part from its source and use of funding. This has negative

connotations reminiscent of the period in which the former President Wade gave money to various MFDC factions in order to appease them. As practiced by Wade, CHD has been given money to give to groups to support the peace process, and this is seen as a tool of the state as a briber.

Another reason for general dissatisfaction with CHD appears to be linked to its perceived lack of weight as a non-state actor. The expressed desire among local facilitators and the rebels for more powerful state actors such as the U.S. or organizations such as the UN to act as mediators seems to constitute a form of “great Powerism” and nationalization of the mediator, dismissed as ineffective based on identity and regardless of the process of mediation. A small-minded but culturally significant limitation has been the dismissal of the CHD’s representative as “the Crimean” because he does not come from French-speaking West Africa.

Quite apart from the reservations regarding the choice of CHD as mediator, a key obstacle lies in the current disunity of the MFDC factions and their chosen strategy of seeking internal unity before becoming engaged in a process of mediation, as discussed in Sam Fishman’s chapter. The focus appears to be on unifying the MFDC under César Atoute Badiaté: only then will the rebels approach the negotiating table. One member of CHD spoke of the difficulties in knowing the current interests, demands and approaches of the MFDC, given the absence of a central spokesperson and an unclear, decentralized decision-making process. This member also told the group of CHD’s offer to the rebels of “separate negotiations,” a proposal which was apparently rejected. The current unwillingness and unpreparedness of the MFDC to negotiate remains a significant stumbling block which CHD and others cannot easily resolve or ignore.

Recommendations

To the Government

- **The Government should consider ways of creating a more unified process.** This means focusing its efforts on creating a single negotiating table around which the terms of an agreement can be decided upon, including the possibility of working with the rebels to identify one external mediator who can work with most or all parties and factions of the MFDC. The Badiaté efforts to form a council of

related factions should be discretely supported by the Government in order to speed up the negotiation process.

- **The Government should seek to support mediation efforts with a development plan for the region.** The Government must demonstrate its commitment to the Casamance peace process and seek to ensure that gains from the process can be maximized. The successful implementation of any peace agreement relies heavily on the Government's ability to create the right conditions under which such an agreement can flourish.

To the Mediators

- **Mediators should develop perceptions that unilateral and multilateral policy options are counter-productive.** Action without negotiation is an expensive, damaging means of reaching an acceptable outcome, and a multilateral policy option leads to wasteful outbidding.
- **Mediators should awaken the MFDC faction to the impracticability of independence.** Mediators should focus on conveying to key stakeholders the attractiveness of substitutes under a creative name such as “self-governance” or “regional specificity.”
- **Mediators should seek to develop perceptions of a stalemate and of the conflict's ripeness for a resolution.** Complementing the current MFDC policy to seek complete unity before negotiation will help to develop a sense of ripeness. Mediators should impress on the parties involved the need for a resolution, and emphasize that a resolution far outweighs the current stalemate or any alternatives to a negotiation.
- **Mediation should work on key ways to marshal the parties' interests.** To this end mediators should improve the currently dysfunctional and deficient communication between mediators and parties, and should strengthen the government's sense of responsibility to resolve the conflict by making it aware of the benefits of reaching an agreement.
- **Mediators should continue to work with state actors.** Mediators should recognize those state actors that have demonstrated their commitment to the

Casamance peace process, in particular their ability to reinforce legitimacy, to engage the international community and the Senegalese government, and to use their resources and leverage in strengthening or speeding up ongoing efforts.

- **Mediators should, in addition to speaking with the rebels, seek to cast their net more widely.** The voices of Casamançais, particularly the most vulnerable who are likely to be directly or indirectly affected by any agreement, need to be heard and incorporated into any negotiation process. To this end mediators should collaborate closely with civil society contacts and local notables.

Handling the Conflict from the MFDC Side

Sam Fishman

In each successive stage of conflict and negotiation in the Casamance, the MFDC movement has been subject to intense competitive pressures, tearing apart the leadership and fragmenting the militant Atika wing into territorial enclaves. This factionalization of the movement has blocked the peace process, leaving mediators confused over whom to talk with, and leaving the MFDC leadership paralyzed by real and perceived enemies. To address these challenges, it is important to identify the most salient factors underlying fragmentation, and determine what they tell us about the viability of peacebuilding efforts. Taking evidence from approximately 80 hours of interviews within rebel held territory, as well as media accounts and secondary sources, this chapter identifies five categories underlying fragmentation: 1) weak notions of authority; 2) competition for legitimacy; 3) betrayal and money grievances; 4) blood grievances and; 5) the development of enclave communities. Through discussion of the final category, this list combines fragmentation dynamics at two-levels: the local level of the *maquis* enclave (and adjacent communities), and the political level of MFDC leadership. The resilience of grievance and competition between leadership at the political level is in large part due to the crystallization of frictions at the local level that block mediation, communication and confidence building efforts. This nuance is key to identifying the appropriate measures to manage fragmented politics productively.

Weak Notions of Authority

The Diola ethnic group from which the MFDC sprang has no clear hierarchical organization of authority. Usually authority rests with village “wards,” or patrilineal descent groups that command general respect in villages. Historically, age groups and self-help organizations were organized across densely packed villages, allowing communities to pool labor for larger community projects (Boone 2001, 90). Such self-help systems and egalitarian cultures have a high capacity for collective action but a very low capacity for vertically organized leadership and governance. As a result, Casamance lacked any notables or client-party networks with which to establish opposition to the

widely despised policies of the Jacobin French and Senegalese governments, policies which only further neutered the region politically under Senghor and Diouf (Boone 2001, 99). Under President Wade, this crisis of authority only worsened, as the government's strategy of unilateral quick fixes only empowered local commanders at the expense of the movement's more widely charismatic leaders like Father Diamacoune (Zartman 2015, 146). Though effectively containing the conflict by reducing the capacity of the MFDC to mount an affective guerilla movement, these strategies only accelerated factionalization of a movement already prone to it (Zartman 2015, 147).

To understand how this happened, a look at the origin of the movement's leadership is necessary. The movement grew out of student protests that Vincent Foucher described as "a loose, multilocal network of networks, with no evident leader" (2007). As violence accelerated, the movement was passed from the separatist literati to a new group of militant leaders—Sidy Badji, Léopold Sagna, and Aliou Badji—a group that derived legitimacy from battling in the streets of Ziguinchor. The Senegalese government dug its own grave by arresting charismatic political elites like Father Diamacoune who could best articulate the group's demands. The military Atika wing, from the beginning, evolved separately from this political leadership, developing with few resources on an ad hoc, grassroots basis, outgrowing the educated urban student cadres who built the protest movement.

In the 1990s, the *maquis* burgeoned into a small army that required civilian assistance and as a result mixed with local population and refugees (Foucher 2007). This fluid relationship between the village and the insurgent camp detached *maquis* from the discipline of militant life and allowed them to develop civilian patterns and dependencies. Furthermore, MFDC politics and indoctrination often equated the independence struggle itself with the preservation of Diola freedoms (Evans 2004, 7). *Maquis* communities gathered and made decisions through a democratic *fora*, or council of several dozen men (Foucher 2007). This loose system of deliberation made the maintenance of legitimacy and authority all the more difficult, and possibly explains why disagreements and divisions grew so easily between MFDC commanders.

Today, it can sometimes be difficult to determine exactly what level of authority is exercised in the bush. Though Salif Sadio is often described as maintaining tighter

discipline and control over his men, other factions are more like loose collections of militants with various commanders. As leaders like Sidy Badji, Diamacoune Senghor, and Léopold Sagna passed away, the ability for the factions to rally together and deliberate as a unit was further degraded.

Competition for Legitimacy, Authority, Prestige

Competitive relationships between MFDC leadership are primary drivers of fragmentation, and have origins in both localized sub-ethnic identities and in a long history of political and military brinksmanship. Competitive fragmentation occurred in two-steps: First, an original contestation occurred between leaders based on claims of legitimacy, and second, these divides were widened in each round of negotiation and conflict. Today, these competitive relationships have been extended to a complex battle for legitimacy, fought through various civil society and mediation networks.

In the early stages of the rebellion, competition between different territorial, and even religious identities created dividing lines. It is not easy to trace these divisions precisely, but Vincent Foucher (2007, 186) identifies a particularly potent divide between the Buluf (district of Bignona) *maquis* and other localized groups and leaders south of the River Casamance. The Buluf *maquis* formed a cadre of the most militant members of the resistance including Atika head Sidy Badji, who retreated into the bush after the 1983 outbreak of violence and provided initial troops and funding for the movement. A heated rivalry developed between Badji, a Muslim, and southern Catholic leaders like Léopold Sagna from the Bandial district of Ziguinchor, Maurice Adiokane Diatta from Kasa district of Oussouye, and the Diamacoune brothers (Bertrand and Augustin), Catholics from Kasa (Foucher 2007, 186). This set the stage for the *Front-Nord Front-Sud* split in the 1990s by encouraging the resentful Badji to negotiate unilaterally with the government while excluding other stakeholders.

This logic played out again in the *Front Sud-Front Sud* split that occurred between Sadio and Léopold Sagna. Sadio, a Muslim from Buluf, felt some ownership over the hardline politics of the movement (Foucher 2007, 186). This may have empowered him to split with Sagna, his nominal commander, after Sagna deigned to negotiate with the President Diouf in 1999. Sadio was successful in pushing Sagna out of

the driver's seat, but would pick the wrong side in the Guinea-Bissau Civil War (Evans 2004, 5). The resulting alliance between the Kassalol group and Guinea-Bissauan President Kumba Yala eventually led to Sadio's retreat to the North. However, despite ending up on the losing side of the war, Sadio won a major legitimacy coup, increasing his prestige as a "hardliner." Even after Sadio's move to the pacified northern theater and commencement of a mediation process with Macky Sall's government, he maintains a reputation as the legitimate hardline leader of the MFDC. This competition for "hardline" status is not lost on the César Atoute Badiaté faction, representatives of which repeatedly attack Sadio for negotiating while emphasizing Badiaté's military strength and readiness for war (Field Interviews, 9 July 2015; 17 July 2015).

Such competition is both contingent on contextual shifts in the political-economic landscape, and rooted in localized identity lines. Louis Kriesberg notes that motives and local these identities are expressed is based on context:

"Some people gain prestige, income, and power by participating as warriors in the fight, and they may lack alternative careers promising equal gains. Others may profit by engaging in a variety of illegal activities associated with the struggle. The nature of their identities, their grievances, and their goals are changed in ways that make a mutual accommodation more difficult to reach" (2005, 74)

Throughout the conflict, leaders have developed divisive motives based on a variety of calculations of self-interest. However, whether for personal gain, legitimate belief in their leadership, or out of desperation, MFDC commanders still follow certain deep rooted rules of trust and legitimacy. The first question a Casamançais is usually asked when entering a new village is what town or district he/she comes from. After years of conflict, the answer to this question is sometimes critical to the security of people passing through *maquis* territory. Such lines constitute rules of the game based on local identities and past allegiances.

A final set of rules was constructed primarily during the Wade era, and involved the embedding of MFDC politics in a set of relationships with mediators and civil society groups. During this era, the political calculus of MFDC leaders shifted away from militancy and toward leveraging political relationships. Such relationships can provide some amount of income, or they can be leveraged to gain local autonomy and protection.

Cultivating these relationships also became part of the logic of legitimacy: whoever was perceived to have the strongest network might be seen as having a legitimate right to leadership. Mediators served as off-ramps from militancy, allowing leaders to lay claim to being legitimate representatives of peace with one hand, while saber rattling with the other.

The development of these relationships and networks accelerated after a final spurt of negotiations in 2004, when the remaining MFDC leaders cemented involvement in a series of commissions and programs aimed at preparing the ground for future negotiations and demobilizing the MFDC, per Diamacoune's wishes. Among other things, the 2004 General Peace Agreement Between Senegal and the MFDC on 30 December made provisions for "a monitoring group composed of Government officials, soldiers, former MFDC combatants and representatives of the political wing of the MFDC responsible for carrying out the process demobilization of the military wing," and appointment of "delegates in the Consultation Commission." Though leaders met for one series of negotiations (Foundiougne I) later in 2004, the second round (Foundiougne II) never occurred.

This period of negotiation and "committee building" birthed a cottage industry of mediators and civil society activists with very limited contact with the MFDC. Unfortunately, rather than create a new forum for inclusive dialogue, mediators and civil society actors actually created a new arena of competition. Observer and journalist René Captain Bassène describes one view of these relationships: "In fact on the ground, everyone has their turf, his faction of fighters with whom he is the only one with access and dialogue. They are only furthering intra-MFDC discord instead of urging them (the factions) to unity" (Diallo, 6 September 2014). Bassène lists la *Plateforme des Femmes*, the M3K movement, Amsatou Sow Sidibé group, Robert Sagna's *Groupe de Réflexion Pour la Paix en Casamance*, Admiral Farba Sarr's Ad Hoc Negotiating Committee, and mediator Ahmed Said of the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue as all fitting in this category (Diallo, 6 September 2014). Foucher cites another example in which the Minister of the Armed Forces Youba Sambou, and the Minister of the Interior, Lamine Cissé, "competed for connections and operated with their own set of 'civil society' and MFDC, and wittingly or not, neutralized their interventions" (2007, 195). Journalists and

political observers unsympathetic toward the government and sick of the failed peace process sometimes accuse these mediators of being *Messieurs Casamance*, a term that conjures up images of corrupt government carpetbaggers with briefcases full of cash. At the very least, many actors are accused of exaggerating their repeated claims to be “near a breakthrough” with the movement (Diallo, 6 September 2014). Though many of these people and groups have sincere objectives, it is true that they have largely failed to create meaningful dialogue between the military factions, especially between Sadio and Badiaté. Additionally, their presence has created another sphere of public relations competition, giving MFDC leaders opportunities to point the finger at their enemy’s *Monsieur Casamance*.

There are a few reasons why MFDC leaders engage at all with these groups. With the conflict in stalemate, the opportunities for proving “hardline” credentials have been greatly reduced. Since the drop-off in violence, factions are more interested in public relations and controlling the narrative. As various actors scramble to resolve the conflict, the military factions have at times welcomed them in to conduct interviews and make their views heard. Sadio’s decision to sign a cease-fire and accept Sant’Egidio as a mediator, may be a public relations ploy and a way of stealing leadership from rivals, but as the chapter by Catherine Simon discusses, four years have passed with no real sign of interest or engagement in the mediation process. Sadio has made a number of other attempts to improve his relations with the population, releasing a series of CDs of his speeches, and in June 2015, welcoming a youth delegation with a delegation of local Buluf (Mané, 1 July 2015). These efforts are important for Sadio, who faces a considerable bloc of discontent due to his notoriously bloody past.

Other commanders have also shown interest in leveraging limited communications to improve their legitimacy and image. Colonel Lamarana Sambou of the Diakeye faction has struggled against Badiaté’s rising star by alternately sending signals of cooperation with and dissention from him. In 2013, he declared that the group had broken from Kassalol (Badji Diatta, 27 December 2013). However, Sagna’s *Groupe de Réflexion* now insists that they have come back into the fold (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, 23 January 2016). Meanwhile, Badiaté has also tiptoed around his relationship with mediators, at times declaring that the *Groupe de Réflexion* are his

official contacts (*Le Journal Du Pays*, 29 March 2014), and at others condemning reports disseminated by the group as misinformation (Kondiarama, 7 August 2014). Currently he has indicated that he would use no mediator but only talk with the official Ad Hoc Committee (SAIS Group Meetings, 23 January 2016).

The MFDC internal and external political wings have an even longer and more experienced history of public relations competition. Nkrumah Sané and Jean-Marie François Biagui have reportedly been battling for control of the exterior political wing for years (Ndiaye, 16 December 2015). Newcomer and German University professor based Apakena Diem created yet another front in the *Cercle des Intellectuels et Universitaires*, which unilaterally anointed Compass Diatta as the head of Atika wing, while accusing Niatang Diatta, head of the one faction to date to disarm and demobilize, as a “slum lord” (Cissé, 21 April 2013). Internal leader Abdou Elinkine Diatta has developed a prominent public persona by building a large compound in Ziguinchor and calling his home the “White House of Casamance” (SAIS Group Meeting, Ziguinchor, 22 January 2016). His annual celebrations of Father Augustine Diamacoune Senghor draw hundreds every year, as pictured on our cover, and Elinkine has succeeded in making himself the immediate point of contact for the movement in Ziguinchor. Though his actions are largely irrelevant when it comes to the militant wing, Elinkine’s energetic community engagements are part of a battle for the inheritance of Father Diamacoune’s charisma. As MFDC actors age and see their relationships with various actors crystallize, they have sought to demonstrate that their leadership and their communities are most essential to the MFDC’s future.

Zartman (2005) argues that “solution polarization” is a key element in many intractable conflicts, occurring when parties become attached to one set of solutions or strategies, and instead of working together, compete for the adoption of their framework. In the Casamance case, the evolving competition between actors exhibits characteristics of what could more properly be termed “network polarization.” No group is tied to a particularly different solution, with each group claiming independence as the non-negotiable goal of their struggle. However, each group has embedded itself in a separate set of relationships. Mediators and civil society members propel these relationships,

interested in prestige, or simply in pointing out that they are the ones with the strongest MFDC connections, and therefore should be relied upon.

Betrayal Grievance: Distrust of Money, Motives and Mediators

The competitive process outlines a deeper culture of grievance and frustration among MFDC actors, many of which complain about the movement being sold out by their opponents. These grievances are grounded in the *Messieurs Casamance* narrative developed in the Wade era, which usually involves accusations of corruption and bribery at the hands of men bringing suitcases full of cash. Though direct payments and subsidies to MFDC officials are most likely relatively low, this perception remains a major barrier to intra-MFDC confidence building measures. Furthermore, it has tarnished the reputation of government mediators and development organizations, who are viewed with extreme cynicism by the MFDC. These grievances suggest the need for sensitive dialogue and confidence building measures, and not merely an alignment of political and economic interests.

During the Wade era, large disbursements of money and subsidies to the MFDC became more commonplace. In September 2005, *Le Quotidien* claimed the government had allocated CFA 16 million to subsidize MFDC fighters, and 5.5 million to “MFDC political leaders over a one and a half year period” (Fayeo 2005, 60). In 2005, after the December 2004 cease-fire, Abdoulaye Fall provided new funds to the *maquis* ostensibly to convince them to lay down their arms and participate in the peace process (Deets 2009, 107). Often, leaders attempted to justify taking money by claiming they were some sort of reparation or compensation for the harm inflicted upon the Casamance (Foucher 2007). Today, differing reports on the nature and sums of these subsidies exist, some suggesting that they are small to negligible, while others, mostly from frustrated local actors, intimate much larger sums. Furthermore, the MFDC has come to treat all development aid as bribery, leveling accusations of extreme corruption at the *Agence Nationale pour la Relance des Activités Economiques et Sociales en Casamance* (ANRAC) set up under Wade and expanded under Sall’s multi-billion dollar Casamance development finance scheme. This dynamic has created deep mistrust. In discussions with MFDC actors, they will frequently declare a rival leader or their network middleman

“false” and then cite bribes and false development money. This obviously has a strategic political element to it as we’ve already discussed, but it is also grounded in historic grievance and mistrust.

Negotiations around Foudiougne have been cited as a moment when the prospect of intra-MFDC negotiations was dashed by corruption (Fall 2010, 27). Between 2006 and 2008, some relatively prominent figures like Presidential envoy Samsidine Dino Nemo Aidara and local PDS party representative Oumar Lamine Badji were killed in a spate of assassinations targeting corrupt officials (Fall 2010, 26). The treatment of the military wing towards the political wing also worsened. Guerillas that resent the “good life” of hotels, European lifestyles, and accumulated wealth, often accuse political leaders of treason and forced them to pay their own way among the *maquis* (Foucher 2007). Diola communities typically express contempt for showy wealth accumulation. One Diola recounted a story of a man who built an ostentatious home for himself in the middle of his community. The people in the village responded by burning down his house, intolerant of flashy personal accumulation (Field Interview, 17 July 2015). Communal conceptions of the land have also fueled resentment over spoliation of the environment. The willingness of some *maquis* to pillage the *bois sacré* is a sticking point for many MFDC, and was a key element in a document on economic affairs signed by the Sadio faction in Rome (SAIS Group Meeting, 30 November 2015).

The connection that MFDC members make between money, betrayal, and the peace process is a natural reaction to repeated failed negotiation attempts. Zartman’s discussion of intractable conflicts is again useful:

Since conflict management measures tend to carry with them the promise of conflict resolution at a later moment, when that next step is not taken, the conflict flares up again, heightened by feelings of betrayal and faithlessness, hardening the parties against sensitivity to ripeness and again contributing to the conflict’s intractability (2005, 53)

This almost exactly describes the aftermath of the Foudiougne I, which specifically prepared for a Foudiougne II that never occurred. This was followed by accusations of betrayal, treason, and a culture of distrust which has hindered any inclusive intra-MFDC negotiation from emerging since. At the root of this betrayal is the independence goal itself. As most of the factional leaders still profess sincere commitment to independence,

the dashing of this aspiration by greedy actors is particularly galling after 33 years of struggle. This factor cannot be discounted when assessing the difficulties of building trust and getting people to the same negotiating table, and of examining the possibility of arriving at a lesser goal.

Blood Grievances

After the fragmentation of the *Front Sud* into the Sagna and Sadio factions, intense internal warfare racked the MFDC movement. Over the course of the 2000s, the main cause of death among the *maquis* was attributed to infighting (Foucher 2007). The split polarized other low level commanders into the camps of Sadio, Sagna, and Sagna's successor César Atoute Badiaté. Though allegiance of *maquis* to a commander was in part a function of local identity politics, it was also determined by perceptions of a given leaders brutality toward fellow MFDC members. In particular, a large number of guerillas have negative attitudes toward Sadio due to his violent attempts to kill off competition. Some *maquis* describe choosing a leader based on personalities and perceptions of leadership, including the way individual leaders dispense justice and conduct themselves in the intra-MFDC conflict (Field Interview. 17 July 2015).

Sadio's alignment with Brigadier Mané in the Guinea-Bissau civil war cemented his status as a heavy-handed leader, while also sowing the seeds of bloody conflict between the *Front Sud* factions. Mané supposedly emphasized training and discipline and encouraged Sadio to impose these principles within his own organization (Foucher 2007). On top of disagreements over negotiations with the government of Senegal, Sadio's style of command is sometimes cited as a reason for the *Front Sud* split, as members of the *maquis* found his punitive and authoritarian directives counter to the more democratic principles governing Diola communities (Foucher 2007). After Mané's death in November 2000, Sadio was faced with a series of offensives against his camp over a five year period, one of which resulted in his injury. In the aftermath of some of the fighting, Sadio captured and executed opponents in a number of incidents. However offensives in 2006 forced Sadio to move north of the Casamance River where he took over a number of pro-Kassolol camps along the Gambian border.

This period of intense intra-MFDC violence created a lasting set of grievances against Sadio. Beyond the direct conflict over territory prior to 2006, the brutal torture and execution of *maquis* leadership is often cited, in particular the torture and murder of Léopold Sagna in 2007. Sadio's detractors accuse him of literally starving some of his captives, including Sagna, to death. Grievances also extend beyond the leadership. Though 2004 is often cited as the point at which the Casamance conflict began winding down, many *maquis* and village mayors were subject to some of the most intense traumas of the conflict after 2004. The mayor of Djibiyame, a village close to Sadio's northern camps, described the period from 2006-2009 as the most intense for the local population, much of which was displaced after Sadio's move north. Sadio's fighting with both Kassalol and Diakeye commanders north of Sindian is often overlooked, and continues to be a source of major insecurity for the population to this day.

The division between Sadio and "the rest" remains possibly the largest factional barrier to mediation and an inclusive and successful negotiation process. Even the most optimistic of mediators and civil society actors involved in the Casamance conflict describe the Sadio-Badiaté divide as completely impossible to resolve (Field Interview, 3 July 2015). One civil society actor noted that even if those aggrieved by Sadio agreed to speak with him, Sadio would not agree to mediation for fear that some would seek vengeance. Although the Diakeye, Kassalol, and Compass factions agreed to unity during one council in February 2016, none even pretend that Sadio could join that coalition (SAIS interview, 25 February 2016). Furthermore, Sadio's relative isolation in the area north of Sindian, where bad roads and military checkpoints put him at a relative distance from Ziguinchor, has again detracted from his reputation among MFDC and civil society. However, due to his reputation as the most dangerous and hardline leader, the Senegalese government and other outside actors continue to treat him as the centerpiece of the MFDC, and the primary target for mediation efforts. This strategy will be very hard to reconcile with the intense stigma Sadio has accumulated.

Enclavement: Localized and Spatial Logics of Fragmentation

The territorial enclaves formed by competing *maquis* factions impose divisive dynamics at the local level. Particularly in the Lower Casamance along the border with Gambia and

Guinea Bissau, MFDC enclaves have forced part of the population into a painful but durable status quo in which villages and local *maquis* outfits are spatially confined in various ways, and often still live in a state of paranoia and insecurity. Though *maquis* soldiers and refugees are officially given freedom of movement throughout the region, the reality is that many of these enclaves are de facto isolated, or rather detached from the mainstream political, economic and communication networks in Casamance. The political economies of these enclave territories are often more closely tied to Gambia and Guinea Bissau than Casamance, as discussed in the chapter by Zachary Vinyard. Enclaves are further reinforced by de facto autonomy granted by the government to *maquis* factions, the use of mines as defensive barriers, lasting presence and fear of the military and police, the blending of *maquis* with displaced communities, and continued *maquis* violent activity including banditry and defense of crops. All of these factors impose real and perceived restrictions on the community's efforts to reintegrate, communicate and reverse local fragmentation. However, it also directly affects the intra-MFDC mediation process by reinforcing a status quo mentality amongst the *maquis*, who prefer to avoid any effort that might disrupt stable lifestyles and embedded political relationships.

Geography

A glance at Casamance from an airplane window gives a good idea of why the conflict was prone to the development of enclave communities. Networks of river ways, dense forests, and marshes divide the region into different zones. Political boundaries further divide the Casamance between Gambia and Guinea Bissau, and into three regions (Upper, Middle, and Lower). Intense rainfall and abundant waterways make Casamance the most fertile region in Senegal (it has been called the “granary of Senegal,”) allowing people to develop self-sustaining communities in absence of major agricultural infrastructure (Fall 2010, 14). These geographic factors lend themselves to the development of stationary guerillas capable of building functional relationships with the communities around them (Mkandawire 2002, cited from Evans 2004). Paul Richards and Christian Geffnay discuss war-oriented social bodies that separate themselves into enclaves from which they continue fighting to perpetuate themselves (Geffnay 1990,

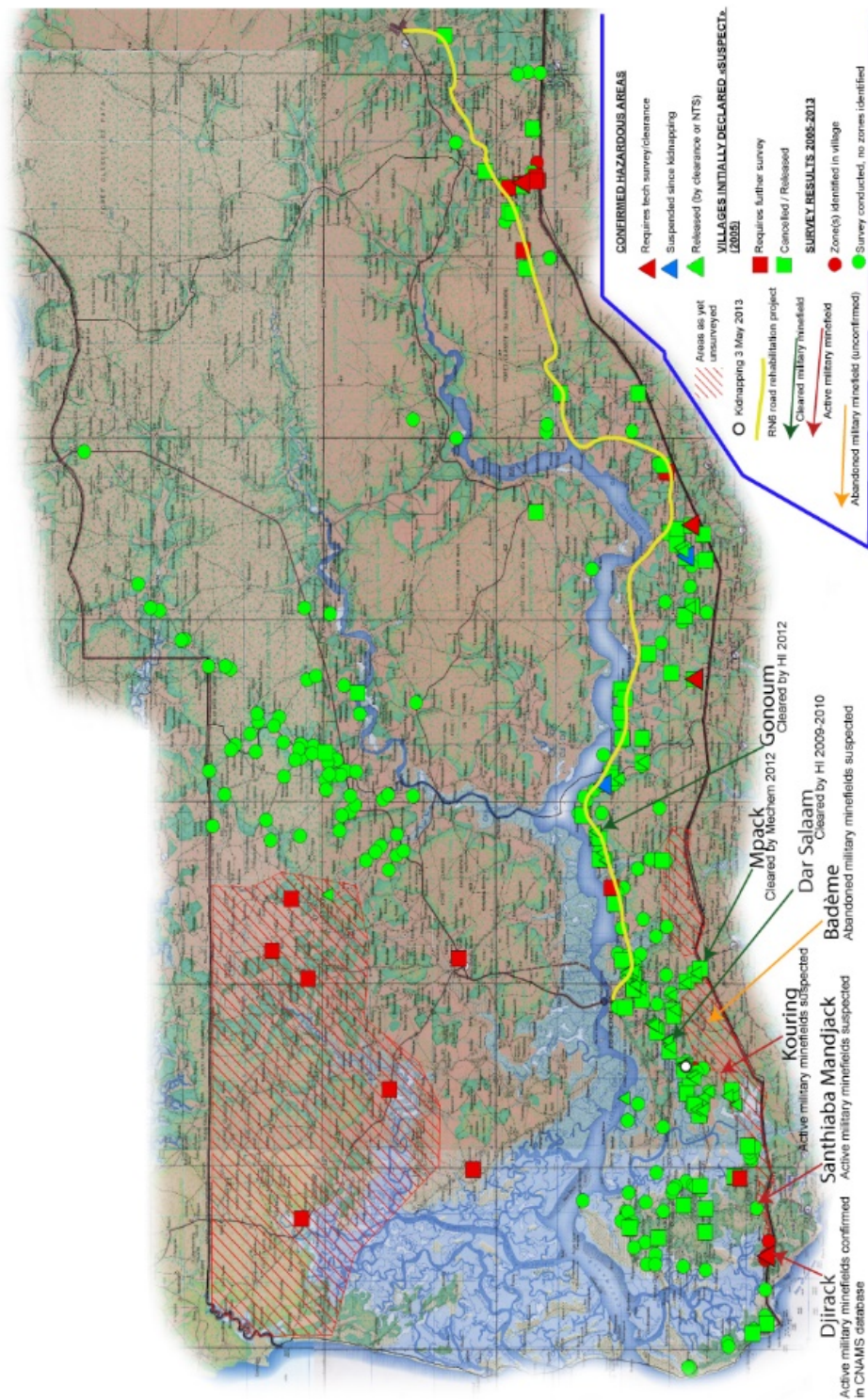
Richards 1998, cited from Evans 2001). The *maquis* in Casamance exhibit some of these characteristics, developing relatively self-sustaining enclaves integrated socially and economically with local communities. They differ in that, for many, especially in the older generation, grievances against the state and against other factional leaders motivate members to fight. The MFDC forms a hybrid of greed and grievance, engaging in low profit activities and stable relationships of autonomy and domination, while also maintaining a set of deeply held grievances (Collier, 2000).

Maquis-Civilian Relations

The mediation of *maquis*-civilian relationships defines the character of each enclave. During the war, the *maquis* used the population to hide them and supply them which created a set of lasting dependencies (SAIS Group Meeting, Dakar, 9 January 2016). The *maquis* often market low-value agricultural goods for communities, and in many instances members marry women in adjacent villages. Much of the year *maquis* live normal lives of agriculturalists in nearby villages. Often integration is highest among displaced and refugee communities, who are geographically closest to the *maquis* and most likely to fall into dependent relationships. Furthermore, these relationships correlate with the conflict's intensity in different regions, with *maquis* in the south forming more hostile and predatory connections with the population compared to the more stable relationships in the north. Foucher notes the variety of these civilian-*maquis* relationships:

If anything, what is striking is the variety of configurations of relations between guerillas and civilians in Lower Casamance—a variety that echoes the amazing cultural and dialectal diversity of the region. But toward the end of the 1990s, MFDC internal divisions worsened, and the odds turned increasingly against the MFDC. Because they owed much to (some of the) people, the guerillas were forced into an uneasy standoff (2007, 188)

The variance between *maquis* zones political-economies and embedded relationships should not be overlooked when considering how to foster intra-MFDC communication and cohesion. Different *maquis* outfits not only have divergent interest as a result of these variations, but may consider cooperation a threat to their brand of local authority.



(Millett, 7 April 2014)⁹

⁹<https://landmineandclustermunitionblog.wordpress.com/2014/04/07/clearance-and-compliance-in-casamance-is-senegal-doing-all-it-should>.

Mines

Over the course of the conflict, both the military and MFDC buried mines as a tactical defensive weapon. The boundary lines created by mines also played at least an indirect role in factional dynamics, allowing commanders to mark off their territory and exclusively exploit their zone (SAIS Group Meeting, Dakar, 20 January 2016). Though considerable demining progress was made in 2012 and early 2013 after Macky Sall's election, the process has unfortunately come to a near complete standstill as a result of the Kidnapping of Mechem deminers in May 2013. Though the deminers were cared for and eventually released unharmed after three months, the incident demonstrated the spatial barriers imposed by mines, and the political repercussions of crossing them. To date, the demining has not been completely resumed (SAIS Group Meeting, 21 January 2016).

Since the kidnapping, the government has repeatedly cited insecurity and political blockage as the reason for its failure to put forward a plan to comply with the Mine Ban Treaties Article 5 deadline of 1 March 2016, which will have come and gone by the publication of this report (Millett, 7 April 2014). Instead, entire swaths of territory, including the entire area North of Sindian and East of the N5 have declared "red zones." Most NGOs refuse to enter these zones, with the exception of the International Red Cross which donates some basics to refugees (Field Interview, 17 July 2015, Red Cross, villagers). Village officials have complained that the red zone designation is harmful, and only further restrict efforts to reintegrate enclave territories (Field Interview, 17 July 2015, Oulampane officials). Such "red zones" are perhaps the most tangible representation of territorial fragmentation, as they represent real restrictions on military, NGO, and civilian movement, and generally mark the boundary of autonomous *maquis* enclaves.

De Facto Arrangements With Government and Development Agencies

Negotiations and relations between the government and the MFDC crystallized enclave autonomy. In the early 1990s, President Diouf's negotiations with the *Front Nord* granted tax exemption and arranged for the withdrawal of military forces from certain zones.

From 2001 to 2004, President Wade's piecemeal offerings of economic carrots led to a series of deals granting *maquis* groups tax exempt status. In 2003, pro-MFDC civilians, religious leaders, and development professionals negotiated a cease-fire that allowed for the return of refugees, and in 2004, "officials of the MFDC in Fogny," or civilians in the northern *maquis* zone, signed a deal with General Fall to help stabilize the Bignona district. During this period the military also developed a wide range of de facto arrangements with *maquis* factions which "closed" *maquis* zones to operations (SAIS Group Meeting, 19 January 2016).

Since the beginning of the development push in the early 2000s, enclaves have also competed for access to aid flows, using their civil society and mediator networks to search for assistance (Evans 2007). Ironically, these sources of funding intended to invest *maquis* in the external concerns, have only strengthened their embeddedness in local communities. As Foucher notes, *maquis* usually form together in stronger communal lifestyles when they can develop secure sources of funding (Foucher 2007). As a result, these concessions by the government and development agencies remain one the greatest reasons for weak political will among the *maquis*, giving each group ample incentive to continue life under a relatively stable status quo.

Other Sources of Exploitation, Friction, Insecurity Near Enclaves

Beyond the use of mines, the *maquis* factions continue to engage with each other, the military, and the surrounding population in ways that perpetuate insecurity around their enclaves, degrading the capacity of communities and leadership to communicate and reintegrate. Banditry and predation is a commonly cited complaint, and continues to plague some communities. One interview with the chief of the village of Colonia in Upper Casamance—a region generally thought of as less affected by the conflict—revealed the *maquis* had been raiding his village every few weeks, taking all the animals and food (Field Interview, 15 July 2015). Other more notorious incidents have been captured in recent news, such as the Sadio factions kidnapping of a group of loggers and demand of a 10 million CFA ransom (Demba 11 July 2015). These incidents often cause a flare up of tension between the military and the MFDC, sometimes resulting in small skirmishes (Mané 12 October 2015). Other types of MFDC friction with the population

are even more granular, such as the mutilation of villagers who wander onto *maquis* cashew groves.

Despite the relative stability of enclave frontiers, there is also evidence that *maquis* still engage in intra-factional conflict, or at least come close to it. One set of interviews in the town of Borome sheds light on at least one example of how intra-MFDC tension plays out at the village level. Remnants of the *Front Nord* faction still operated out of a base south of town, but since Sadio moved north, tensions escalated between the militants in the area. In the summer of 2015, 15 of Sadio's men crossed the N5 and set up positions on "their side of the road" (Field Interview, 17 July 2015). The rebels also complained about the Diakeye faction, a member of which had recently burnt down a garden of one of the men in the village. On top of these threats to their security, the *maquis* expressed fear of the Senegalese military. With nothing more than a thin bike trail leading out to the N5, villagers preferred crossing the border into Gambia, avoiding the gauntlet of factional tension and police and military checkpoints. This situation not only demonstrates the micro-level authority and rivalries of *maquis* commanders, but also the still shifting battle-lines and the spatial and psychological limits they impose on communities.

These incidents and observations (all occurring/collected in the last year) still suggest a significant degree of insecurity, though a more comprehensive study would be required to determine just how widespread that insecurity is. And though the body count has trickled down to almost nothing, it should be noted that this is in part because of the extreme paranoia of much of the population, and their adaptation to spatial and communication barriers of the conflict. As a result of this adaptation, open and inclusive dialogue across fragmented communities is difficult. Often people refuse to talk about the conflict, sometimes for fear of retribution for their role with one faction or another. The weak capacities of the communities, often still made up of people returning from displacement and without resources, translates into a weak capacity of the *maquis*. It may not even be inaccurate to describe some *maquis* groups as whittled down to mere bandits, or as simply men who pick up guns a few times a year but mostly just engage in normal village life. However, as we have seen, the lines of fragmentation in the Casamance look less like World War I trenches, and more like a complex array of geographic, civic,

historic, political, economic and psychological fissures mediated and stabilized over the course of the conflict as enclaves.

Impact on Mediation: From Community to Political Dynamics

Local formation of enclaves, and the insecurity that has come with them, reduce the will and capacity for negotiation. This is in part because *maquis* life has been normalized, and disruption of the status quo is avoided. Zartman notes how routines in intractable conflicts prevent parties from seeing pain and deadlock that governs their lives. Evans notes that this is true of the *maquis* war economy, which represents a “continuity with much ‘normal’ activity in the region. When this reality is factored in to military leader’s decisions to mediate or communicate with other factions, one can speculate that there is little motivation to push for new solutions or alter relatively stable exploitive relationships.”

Other problems are more tactical. There is great difficulty in facilitating basic communication between spatially restricted populations, scattered over three countries, often in remote and inaccessible areas, and wracked with trauma, paranoia and insecurity. This is manifested in the complex series of steps anyone must take to meet with Badiaté or Sadio, who usually employ an intense vetting process. Furthermore, the attachment of enclaves to Guinea-Bissau and Gambia has cut ties between *maquis* communities and Ziguinchor and Bignona, emphasizing the ever widening divide between the political wing and the military wing. Furthermore, the autonomous self-reliant nature of *maquis* enclaves has made them less reliant on external and internal political wing members’ patronage. These present challenges to both mediators and village officials positioned within walking distance of *maquis* camps. In one argument in the civil offices of Oulampane, three officials debated whether attempting to communicate with the MFDC was even a viable option for resolving problems in their district (Field Interview, 17 July 2015, Oulampane officials). These difficulties presumably trickle up to the level of leadership, where the same culture of paranoia and mistrust exists.

Conclusion

Civil society actors and mediators in Ziguinchor continue to give off the impression of progress in intra-MFDC relations, particularly between the Badiaté faction and the Compass and Diakeye factions. However, given Badiaté's past refusal to meet with mediators for Compass, the volatile relationship with Diakeye, and reports of less than solid connections between the *Groupe de Réflexion* and the Kassalol faction, these claims should be taken with a grain of salt. Furthermore, overoptimistic mediation efforts can actually have negative impacts. Not only do factions use their set of relationships and development promises to compete for legitimacy, but that legitimacy is called into question as soon as any faction moves toward disarming or negotiating, in turn making that faction less capable of speaking for the movement and less useful in reversing fragmentation (Foucher 2007). This dynamic is only worsened by intra-MFDC grievances, and the de facto local enclave arrangements that block confidence building and communication efforts. There continues to be a low capacity for factions to communicate, reintegrate in useful ways with larger Casamançais political and economic community, and build symbiotic relationships between enclaves.

However, this pessimistic picture does not mean that mediators, civil society groups, international partners, and the Senegalese government have no options. It does mean, that both conflict management and conflict resolution efforts should be applied carefully, and with a recognition of their cross-factional impacts. For example, when development promises are made, policy makers and NGOs must consider whether this will strengthen local enclaves, embedding them further in the surrounding communities, and reducing their interest in de-escalation. Similarly, such efforts can worsen cross-factional rivalries by strengthening corruption and betrayal grievances weakening trust. These negative cross-factional impacts of mediation and development should be minimized. This does not mean abandoning unilateral mediation efforts between Sant'Egidio and the Sadio faction, pulling out of civil society and intra-MFDC mediation efforts based in Ziguinchor, or stopping development efforts. It does mean building in new sensitivities to the peace-building process. Additionally, there are a number of stalled processes and efforts which could help wind down the logic of *enclavement*.

Recommendations

To the Senegalese Government

- **Reinvigorate demining operations and related negotiations.** CNAMS should improve transparency and dialogue with actors in areas where land release operations can be conducted. The government should attempt to leverage demining efforts into limited negotiations, while also gaining the confidence and support of international operators with a stake in helping Senegal meet its demining obligations. Finally, non-technical surveys should resume in the Bignona department, where no deminers were kidnapped and the existence of political blockage remains unclear.
- **Involve Guinea-Bissau and Gambia.** By leveraging the United States and ECOWAS, the Sall Administration should begin high-level meetings with President Jammeh and President Mario Vaz. The goal should be the creation of a joint-effort to naturalize refugees, open back-channels to the MFDC factions, and explore opportunities for further cooperation in fleshing out dialogue with MFDC factions.
- **Identify trusted interlocutors, such as catholic notables.** Using a respected cardinal in the region, the government has managed to arrange three meetings with the Badiaté faction (SAIS Group Meeting, 30 November 2015). The utility of identifying and using trusted interlocutors could be extended to intra-MFDC communications, and should not be abandoned as a plan for expanding mediation efforts.
- **Senegal should leverage other development goals, such as road and school construction.** Larger projects can be used as entry points for negotiation with certain communities in enclave zones, and could be leveraged further into intra-MFDC negotiations.

To the Development Community

- **Avoid overpromising and incorporate villagers and displaced voices into assistance programs.** Development agencies should focus on participation in community meetings, leveraging the legitimacy inferred on development by village level forums and democratic processes.

To the MFDC Political Wing

- **Develop communications with appropriate factions and align goals and interests.** The MFDC political wing should prioritize strengthening its relationship with the military factions and coordinating their messaging. This will not be easy, but a first step would be the identification of trusted interlocutors and shared interests.
- **Engage with civil society actors.** The failure of many civil society organizations and mediation groups can be in part attributed to the refusal of the political wing to engage. This has prevented broader coordination and inclusive forums from developing. Political wing members should discretely open lines of communication with civil society actors and mediators.

To Civil Society Actors and Mediation Groups

- **Improve Civil Society Coordination.** Civil society actors should develop an inclusive forum aimed at coordinating their activities, increasing transparency, and developing a unified strategy for addressing mediation and communication with MFDC factions. Long-term goals of the forum should include the consolidation of civil society leadership under a single body, and the broader legitimization of certain interlocutors among multiple *maquis* factions.
- **Improve Discretion.** To prevent spoilers from politicizing mediation efforts, civil society groups must, at times, keep a smaller profile. This is already a standard of Sant'Egidio. However, public competition between actors in Ziguinchor over MFDC contacts should be reined in. The public broadcasting of activities should be treated with greater sensitivity to the political nature of the conflict.
- **Target factional grievances in civil society efforts.** Efforts should use women, religious figures and village forums to build transparency on dialogue on issues of blood crimes, inequitable treatment, corruption and reprisals.

Handling Conflict from the Government's Side

Matthew Brandeburg

The executive branch of the Government of Senegal (GOS) has held a significant role in both promoting and reducing the conflict between the MFDC and the state. This is through both the executive's leadership of ministries and other government bodies tied to resolving the conflict—such as the Ministry of Commerce and the state's negotiation working group—as well as its control over the military. The military is an important factor in the conflict as it was the military's response of excessive force to a peaceful protest march in 1982 which served as the original catalyst for the modern incarnation of the MDFC as a rebel movement, and it is the military which ostensibly handles the *dossier*, the euphemism for the negotiating effort on behalf of the State. Therefore, by controlling the military, economic, and diplomatic responses to the conflict, the executive has maintained a pivotal role over the three decades of confrontation in the Casamance. Understanding the decisions of the President, as head of Senegal's executive branch, is therefore critical to understanding the status of the conflict—historically and at present. This paper will review the impact of the presidency over the years, as well as the current strategy for the government of Senegal going forward.

Léopold Senghor, Abdou Diouf, and the Origins of the Conflict in the Casamance

Léopold Senghor and the Legacy of Centralization

It is impossible to discuss the origins of the conflict without discussing the role of Léopold Senghor in the formation of the Senegalese state as the first president of Senegal. While the MFDC did not transition into a rebel movement until 1982, it did stake part of its origin ethos in a story—unlikely but widely believed— involving Senghor. According to the legend, at the time of independence for Senegal in 1960, Senghor, wanting to win the election and become the new state's first elected leader, allegedly struck a deal with leaders of the Casamance region, promising independence in twenty years time for the region in exchange for their vote (Deets 2009, 95). This deal was allegedly promised in a letter, the existence of which has never been confirmed yet remains a critical justification for the MFDC leadership. Consequently, as the alleged

bargain was vehemently denied by the government following Senghor's ascension, independence for the Casamance never materialized by the twenty year mark in 1980.

The Casamançais were agitated not only for political reasons, but also for economic ones. By 1980, the economy of the Casamance was characterized as “poor, with underdeveloped infrastructure, low income and education levels[,] and insufficient investment” (Minorities at Risk Project, 31 December 2006). While the regional economy's marginalization can be partly explained by geographical determinants—as is examined in the chapter by Zachary Vinyard—centralization policies inherited by the French colonial system were strengthened under Senghor to become another dominant factor in the lack of economic development in the Casamance. As mentioned in the introduction, investment from the government or from external sources in critical sectors, such as: education, healthcare, and infrastructure, has been low since inception of the state.

Under Senghor, land reforms since 1972 have maintained nordiste control over agriculture much to the region's economic detriment (Zartman 2015, 136). This was primarily orchestrated through the development of regional governors, as dictated (and subsequently directed) by Dakar, which took increasing control over local agricultural planning in an attempt to boost rice and other agricultural exports from the region. These regional governors progressively eroded more of the Casamançais' local control over their economy. The irony was that the regional governorship itself was ostensibly an effort towards devolution, though the central authorities refused to relinquish their command. As a result, these regional governors, acting on behalf of the central authority, levied new taxes and were even found to occasionally appropriate plots of land as gifts for northern religious leaders (Zartman 2015, 142). Where local leaders from the Casamance were empowered by the system, the relationship was still one of dependence on Dakar. In these cases, the highly centralized state “traded power” with rural elites, creating a system of social organization based on small fiefdoms, in which the rural elites hold great power in their relationships with local peasantries but are still economically dependent upon the modern state for resources and technologies required for economic productivity (Zartman 2015, 138-139). In the words of one author: “Dakar did everything possible to ensure that no local state machinery, and no state resources, would

be captured by political communities in Casamance that the center could neither harness nor discipline” (Boone 2003, 94).

All told, these efforts worked to undermine local support for Dakar’s policies while simultaneously fomenting a narrative of empty devolution promises. These twin factors would lead to mass protests in the coming decade.

President Abdou Diouf in the 1980s and 1990s

The origins of the militarization of the MFDC is explored in chapter three; however, it is worth addressing at this time the role of Abdou Diouf in the early years of the conflict, and how his government approached handling the conflict.

During the early 1980s, Diouf expanded on Senghor’s nordiste agrarian reforms through a land-grab disguised as an effort to “increase the productivity of the traditionally under-utilized land of Casamance” (Minorities at Risk Project, 31 December 2006). To accomplish this goal, the Senegalese government “forcibly seized lands from the subsistence farmers and transferred it to northern Muslims (i.e. Wolofs, Serers and Toucouleurs)” (Minorities at Risk Project, 31 December 2006). Furthermore, tourism revenue from the beaches in the Casamance were reportedly diverted to Dakar before being returned to the Casamance, preventing the majority of the funds from reaching the Casamançais.

Diouf further eroded channels for economic gains for the Casamance through the legacy of Senegambia. In 1981, Gambia’s President Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara was threatened by a coup d’état, prompting Diouf to send the Senegalese army into Gambia in order to save Jawara, as discussed in the earlier chapter. The intervention resulted in a promising agreement to form a confederation between the two countries on 12 December 1981 (effective 1 February 1982), known as Senegambia. The confederation ended on 30 September 1989 reportedly as a result of the Gambia’s anger over trade policies perceived as unfair, as well as political fallout of Diouf’s efforts to consolidate control over the confederation in Dakar. Quite simply, “the failure of the confederation adversely affected the Casamançais because they preferred to trade out of Banjul (Gambia’s capital) rather than Dakar (Senegal’s capital)” as transportation costs to

Banjul were easier and less expensive, while trade networks developed over shared cultural heritages within the region (Minorities at Risk Project, 31 December 2006).

Furthermore, the collapse of Senegambia was not the only reason for the deterioration of the Casamance's economy. At the time of Diouf's ascension, Senegal faced a serious economic crisis that was exacerbated by "its rising oil import bill, the effects of oil price increases on the cost of imported manufactured goods and a drought in sub-Saharan Africa that has cut the production of peanuts, Senegal's only major export, in half" (Associated Press, 1 January 1981). The drop in groundnut production not only hurt the Casamançais, but as a result of the increasing control of the local economy by the *nordistes*, especially in the agrarian sector, northern elites out of Dakar began to bear the burden as well. A top priority for the government was to protect the rice and groundnut sectors, as they were integral to ameliorating the current economic crisis and were an important source of patronage for the regime. Diouf could have reasonably calculated that political instability would further undermine the already faltering agricultural sector, thus the government responded by gunning down protesters, jailing the movement's leader, and repressing it severely over the following years (Zartman 2015, 142, 144).

In short, Diouf not only began his presidency by dismissing Senghor's alleged "promise" of independence, he also worked to further the central government's control of the economy of the Casamance far beyond the scope of Senghor, both militarily and socio-economically. The resulting frustrations laid the critical groundwork for the MFDC to exploit resentments and press for popular support in the Casamance for a separatist movement (Zartman 2015, 146).

The following decade saw a change of tactics under Diouf. Seeking to achieve a solution through a mixture of military and political pressure, Diouf opened the decade with the installation of a "hard-fisted military governor" to control the region (Zartman 2015, 144). At first, the plan appeared to be a success. Despite government efforts in the 1980s to crush the movement, the spectre of the MFDC persisted, causing Senegalese elites, likely in a bid to protect their assets, to begin developing contacts with the MFDC (Foucher 2007, 188). As Senegal simultaneously began to experiment with greater democratization under Diouf, opposition members of parliament began politicizing the "peace process." It was in this context that a group of Diola parliamentarians under

opposition party Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (Senegalese Democratic Party—PDS) established links with the MFDC and brokered the first ceasefire on 31 May 1991 (Foucher 2007, 188). Unfortunately, the ceasefire was quickly undermined by politicians in the ruling Parti Socialiste (Socialist Party—PS), as well as by other members from within the PDS, who used released former MFDC fighters—a condition of the ceasefire—to stage a coup within the MFDC. The released MFDC detainees accused the signatories to the ceasefire of betraying the movement and sidelining Sidy Badji, the then-leader of the armed wing of the MFDC, Atika (Foucher 2007, 188-189).

Diouf was not content to let the failure of the ceasefire define his MFDC policy. In the mid 1990s, he once again mixed political concessions with military pressure to attempt to force a closure to the Casamance question, this time however through different political and military structures. On the political side, Diouf first needed to consolidate his control of the government and military. In March 1993, Diouf abolished the position of the prime minister through a constitutional reform. He continued reforming the constitution, culminating with the institutionalization of local collectivities in Title XI of the Constitution of 15 June 1994, leading to the second “act” of decentralization. This Act II enshrined regionalization by treating the regions as local authorities. In practice, this was achieved through “the creation of district municipalities, the transfer to the local authorities of powers in nine areas, and the establishment, as a principle, of the [a] posteriori legality control and the free administration of local authorities” (Diouf 2016).

Concurrently, while governorship was “devolved” to the region under Act II, military pressure was fortified starting on 22 December 1995 with presidential directive n. 0245/PR/MSSAP/EMP/CAB. This ordered the creation of a mixed military staff (*Etat major mixte*) to be installed in Ziguinchor. The post was filled on 3 January 1996, creating a military presence that was tasked with preventing “extractions” and monitoring progress of any ceasefires in the area (Diallo 2009, 126). It is perhaps no surprise then that by 1996, Abbé Senghor set a date for negotiations between the government and the MFDC: 8 April 1996 (Diallo 2009, 128). Unfortunately, this ceasefire also fell apart, as did ceasefires before and after it, with the last, futile effort, Banjul III, negotiated on the eve of Diouf’s departure in February 2000.

In short, Diouf's neglect to follow through on ceasefires with comprehensive demobilization agreements, or as one author puts it, "[his] focus on continued management—rather than resolution—of the Casamance conflict" ultimately undermined his efforts by "further [aggravating] the MFDC and [alienating] many Casamançais" (Zartman 2015, 146). The MFDC had simply undergone too many splits over personal ambitions, thus irreparably inhibiting any attempts at true negotiation.

The Legacy of Factionalization and the Presidency of Abdoulaye Wade

The pattern of competing groups within the Senegalese elite establishing links with factions of the MFDC to splinter under the guise of "true rebels" versus the "sell-outs" continued under the first years of Abdoulaye Wade (Foucher 2007, 189). This outcome, while regrettable, was to be expected considering the political origins of President Wade.

As the perennial opposition leader of the PDS, Wade was instrumental in the "link and splinter" policy that undermined Diouf's ceasefire agreements (Diallo 2009, 132). The popular narrative of events at the time alledge that Wade would give money to lower members of the MFDC and encourage them to break away, forming their own branches and walk away from the peace negotiations in the process. This policy earned Wade the nickname in the press of *Monsieur Casamance*. While the motivations for Wade's alleged role in the fracturing of the MFDC are not officially known, it can be speculated that perhaps Wade thought this activity would buy him loyalty from the splinter groups, aiding his own negotiations should he become president—and thus providing him with a ready-made legacy.

Unfortunately, when Wade became president, the legacy ran into immediate difficulties. First, as the money to incentivize fractionalization ended (at least under his auspices), the resulting factions—diminished in size as a result of the previous decade of splintering—were left with little choice for funds but to rely even further on low level banditry. In this sense, the government's attitude towards the MFDC resulted in prolonging the conflict by turning the MFDC to dependence on petty crime for sustaining their efforts, thus breaking down motivations for reentering society through a negotiated solution with the government.

Furthermore, at the start of the presidency, Wade lost complete control over the military's handling of the crisis as a leadership feud broke out "between the Diola minister of the armed forces, Youba Sambou, and the minister of the interior, Lamine Cissé," an army general with not only Casamance experience, but also the former handler of the dossier under Diouf. As one author describes:

Each operated with his own sets of connections to the Casamançais "civil society" and the MFDC and thus, unwittingly or not, they mutually neutralized their interventions: for every step made, there were instant critics denouncing "corruption" or "lack of inclusiveness" (Foucher 2007, 189)

The same author additionally notes that "at some point, from about 2003 to 2005, President Wade seemed to try to regulate the Senegalese side of the peace process, setting one man, General Abdoulaye Fall, in charge and calling everybody else into line, but this policy later frayed" (Foucher 2007, 189). In a sense, the policy of *Mr. Casamance* and political linkaging had gotten so out of hand that, despite the government's efforts to bring the MFDC soldiers in from the cold, each faction which agreed to cooperate too readily lost their legitimacy, further encouraging those who remained to keep steadfast to the bush.

It was not always supposed to be this way. Wade began his term with a great deal of political resolve. Coming off the heels of a historical election by African standards, a rare constitutionally mandated case of alternance in Africa, and thanks to a revival of Senegal's economy and state budget, Wade had room to buy time for resolving the conflict. He was elected in part on a pledge to end the conflict in the Casamance within the first 100 days of his term. However, a more energetic effort on the Casamance *dossier* failed to materialize and little progress was initially made towards forging a peace deal. Nevertheless, Wade did try to promote the proper financial levers to achieve Diola reintegration with the state (Foucher 2011, 98).

Having come through the years of structural adjustment policy and its repercussions in the 1990s, state spending was now allowed to take-off. In fact, state spending doubled between 1999 and 2006, from CFA 600 billion to 1,200 billion. In light of this, Wade was able to provide financial incentives to the Casamançais and in the

process erode popular support for the MFDC. Examples of Wade's inducements were: reopening of recruitment in the civil service, raising the wages of civil servants, and boosting scholarships; in Casamance specifically, Wade's government opened new primary and high schools in rural areas, and a number of high-ranking civil servants met with authorities of the Collective of Leaders of the Casamance (*Collectif des Cadres Casamançais*, CCC), an organization seeking to promote political unity and economic development in the Casamance. In Ziguinchor, a public university was created in 2007. While it is hard to quantify the public support gained from these programs, it should be noted that over the course of these spending efforts, the Lower Casamance in particular has become a bastion of the PDS. In the local elections of 2009, while the PDS lost votes throughout Senegal, it saw its best results in the Casamance. Ziguinchor was a rare major city with a majority of votes to the PDS, replacing the seasoned Diola opposition politician Robert Sagna with Abdoulaye Baldé, a Fula who long served as the secretary-general under Wade (Foucher 2011, 99).

While urban electoral support at that time had become strong, village-level support for the government by the local Casamançais in exchange for public services was being documented with increasing prevalence. Under Wade's policy of "peace and development," international donors, who had become increasingly focused on "post-conflict reconstruction" projects, had begun to flood the local communities with resources and programs, compounding the state's efforts. Villagers, eager to enhance their new access to health and education services, would reportedly engage with local MFDC fighters to create ceasefires and other conditions which facilitated the arrival of NGO workers (Foucher 2011, 98). In the end, this lends a bit of credence to Wade's claim that the Casamance's vote in favor of the 2001 constitution was a vote of confidence for Senegal, one and indivisible, thus removing the question of independence from resolving the conflict.

Military and Political Pressure by Wade After His 100 Days

While initial progress on the peace process was slow, Wade was not content to rely purely on financial incentives to bring about an end to the conflict. The military and the political establishment however became more of a liability than an asset for Wade,

causing embarrassment for the president as he attempted to navigate the terrain of conflict resolution.

Though Wade's troops, especially those involved in the Casamance, had received outside training from France and the United States, they often failed to provide the government with consequential victories against the MFDC (Evans February 2003, 5). According to interviews with facilitators in the current peace process, two particularly glaring examples of military failure under Wade stick out. In 2009, when troops were sent to fight Salif Sadio's faction, the operation failed and resulted in the surrender of the government troops. In 2011, in another display of force, Wade mobilized helicopters to attack MFDC targets, only to have one helicopter gunned down in the fight.

Politically, internal factionalization plagued Wade to the point of embarrassment culminating with a 2004 peace agreement fiasco. This peace agreement attempt was under the aforementioned "fall in line" period which disastrously failed to achieve Wade's desired results of coherence in the government under General Abdoulaye Fall.

On 30 December 2004, Priest Diamacoune, Secretary-General of the MFDC, signed a peace agreement with the Senegalese Minister of Home Affairs, Ousmane Ngom. The agreement, referred to by some as a "treaty" and signed in the center of Ziguinchor, was full of symbolism. However, the most glaring symbolism of all was in the fact that the signing was not attended by President Wade, who only arrived later. Still, the President was one of the first to congratulate the Secretary-General for his "historical gesture" and to underscore that the agreement was the fruit of his Presidency (de Jong and Gasser 2005, 21). Reportedly, at the very last minute, so many speakers had tried to intervene in the peace process that Diamacoune preferred not to read the speech that he was meant to read, and instead improvised one (de Jong and Gasser 2005, 25). In the days following the signing, it became clear however that the agreement had little foundation, was hastily completed, and was full of confusion among both parties. The resulting "treaty" quickly became an article of paper with no real follow-through by the respective leadership, eventually being scrapped completely by the parties involved.

Wade would never again come so close to achieving a comprehensive peace accord with the MFDC. While the death of Diamacoune certainly exacerbated the fracturing of the rebel groups, undermining the viability of any *one* agreement, as has

been shown, the government itself was highly factionalized itself, and furthermore ineffectively applied military pressure, thus undermining attempts at forcing MFDC units to the negotiating table. Wade's greatest legacy on the peace process may be his efforts to mobilize financial incentives to dissuade popular support for the rebels, however that alone was insufficient for securing conflict resolution.

Macky Sall and the Peace Process

While the three previous presidents have been derided for relying on conflict prevention (Senghor), conflict management (Diouf), and conflict mitigation (Wade), all seemingly inadequate or inappropriate responses at the time, Wade's successor, Macky Sall, has thus far attempted to pursue a blend of all three of these policies. Though he has worked to enhance some policies of his predecessors, as the chapter will show, he has also taken his time to enact them, thus seemingly reducing their impact by both delay and lack of coordination vis-a-vis his other respective policies.

First and foremost, Macky Sall seems to have continued his predecessor's efforts at bringing financial incentives to the Casamance as part of his comprehensive economic development plan, Emerging Senegal Plan (*Plan Sénégal Emergent, PSE*). Launched in 2014, the PSE sought to streamline the business climate in Senegal while also boosting critical investments with the goal of turning Senegal into an emerging economic power by 2035. The PSE focused on promoting sectors including agriculture, mining, energy, tourism, and infrastructure, many of which have led to direct benefits to the Casamance. While Wade was often criticised for fear of "internationalizing" the conflict in the Casamance, Macky Sall had decided to embrace international assistance and business development for all of Senegal, including the Casamance.

Furthermore, the PSE was coupled with an ambitious effort to devolve genuine responsibilities and authorities to the regions. On 28 December 2013, building on the Act I and II of Decentralization launched under Senghor and Diouf respectively, Macky Sall's government adopted the Act III of Decentralization. Similar to the PSE, the Act III of Decentralization's primary objective was to "organize Senegal in viable competitive territories that become engines for sustainable development by 2022" (Diouf 2016). To achieve this goal, Act III specifically set to: build "territorial coherence for organizing the

space and for the emergence of development poles; guarantee the readability of the different levels of territorial governance by clarifying the relations amongst stakeholders and articulating the powers to be transferred to technical, financial and human resources; and [improve] the mechanisms for funding territorial development and for fiscal governance” (Diouf 2016). The poles would replace the “regions” of Senegal, at least in the fiscal accounts, so as to give more resources to local authorities, as well as broader local taxation authority. As one author describes Act III, the law provided for “the effective transfer of resources [concurrent] with the transfer of powers; [...] a training program for the decentralization actors, mainly for elected representatives” (Diouf 2016).

Act III can therefore be seen as building on the empowerment of local communities began in 1996, where governors were no longer explicit envoys of Dakar; the effort was now to move these ostensibly more locally-controlled areas into economic centers in their own right. In short, the PSE combined with Act III of Decentralization addresses a long-standing economic grievance of the MFDC to this day, that Dakar has consistently failed to invest in the economic development of the Casamance (de Jong and Gasser 2005, 214).

Macky Sall’s Negotiation Efforts

Since Macky Sall’s inauguration, he has worked to do more than provide economic incentives to the Casamance, but has also worked to simultaneously negotiate with the leading MFDC factions. When he came to power in 2012, he claimed he was willing to go “to the moon” to achieve peace, and welcomed invitations by Salif Sadio to enter into negotiations, while holding the door open for other factions to join. To many in the Casamance, the role of Sant’Egidio in resolving the conflict was an additional sign of progress on the crisis, as it showed a willingness to “internationalize” the conflict in a way previous administrations were afraid or unable to do, and broke with years of failed policy achieved by presidents “doing it alone.” The injection of Sant’Egidio into the peace process—as well as the overture for negotiations by Sadio—has many competing narratives. These narratives and the impact of Sant’Egidio are further explored in the chapter by Catherine Simon.

Macky Sall immediately supported the Sant'Egidio intervention upon his election in 2012. Only a few days after his inauguration, Sall met with Angelo Romano of Sant'Egidio. By October 2012, negotiations with Sadio's faction, under the auspices of Sant'Egidio, began in earnest. As a good-will gesture, that December the government released eight MFDC prisoners.

On 30 April 2014, Sall received the first dividend of his commitment to the process. After government concessions, including dropping charges against high-level rebel leaders and continued promises to push for economic development and political integration of the Casamance region, Sadio accepted a ceasefire and announced his commitment to formal negotiations for a conclusion to the conflict (Seyferth 9 July 2014).

While Macky Sall fully embraced the efforts of Sant'Egidio, he has maintained a level of secrecy around them and the negotiation process thus far, suspending public confidence. Sall arguably has maintained this strategy for fear of repeating the disastrous fracturing within the Wade government over handling the peace process. However, as a result of Sant'Egidio's apparent lack of universal appeal among the leading MFDC factions, Sall has also allowed other third-party actors and mediators to play a role in resolving the conflict.

While not as successful (thus far) as the Sadio– Sant'Egidio efforts, Badiaté has at least nominally requested outside mediation, to which the government has acceded. Reportedly, he has requested to work through the Cardinal of Dakar, however little progress has been made to show for this.

The government has also been working with Geneva-based Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD), a European Union-financed mediation group which is also said to be in contact with the Cardinal of Dakar. However, CHD has been unsuccessful in starting negotiations, awaiting the results of Badiaté's efforts to unify the non-Sadio factions of the MFDC.

Additionally, Macky Sall accepted assistance provided by the United States through the State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. The bureau sent Ambassadors James R. Bullington and Mark Boulware in 2012 and 2013, respectively, to Senegal to attempt to motivate a conclusion to the peace process. The

mission made small progress but showed welcomed interest from the United States government.

Gridlock Today

Despite all the progress in Macky Sall's first two years, the process appears to have stalled. Badiaté appears finally to have united his factions in meetings in February 2016, but GOS is waiting on council of his allegedly unified factions to appoint a negotiator and a political leader for the MFDC, but such moves happen slowly and have thus far failed to materialize. Sadio has not closed on a deal, perhaps intent on dragging the negotiations into the next presidency for hopes of even greater rewards for demobilization. Thus, rivalries are moving towards a hardened bipolar rivalry. Their failure to cooperate with each other indicates their inability to take the challenges of governing seriously were Dakar to cede such authority to MFDC commanders.

The blame for current gridlock cannot entirely rest on the shoulders of MFDC faction leaders. The Senegalese government does not appear to have a coherent negotiating strategy for closing the deal. The government claims that the constitution prohibits it from further talk of devolution, let alone independence, which comes across to rebel groups as double-speak, as the government has a long history of changing the constitution for its own benefit. The government policy also appeared to be aimed at substituting development for independence, hoping to reduce the already low level of conflict by attention to the former rather than the latter. This is not potentially unwise but the two levels need to be addressed simultaneously, and development alone is not credible to the Casamançais and sounds too much like Wade's approach.

Most recently, this drama has played out over Macky Sall's campaign promise to limit presidential terms to five years, rather than the current seven. While his most recent effort to reduce term periods was struck down in the courts this February, Sall subsequently announced a referendum for 20 March 2016 to make constitutional changes to go into effect for the next presidential term (Baker 16 February 2016). Further emboldening the rebel's claims that the constitution could be amended for a more pluralistic political society which recognizes the MFDC and their demands, in 1981, the constitution, which had until then restricted the number of political parties to four, was

amended to end all restrictions. In 1982, the government amended the electoral law for the legislature so that half the deputies would be elected on a basis of proportional representation, while the remaining members were chosen by direct suffrage. Diouf also changed electoral ballot rules under a new electoral code in 1992. Additionally, Wade took the most egregious constitutional change upon his election in 2000. At the time, the PS still ruled the national assembly, so Wade drafted a new constitution which was passed in April 2001, allowing Wade to dissolve the legislature and hold elections which brought his PDS into majority (Villalón June 2015). As one author notes, after years of falling victim to presidential power, once Wade won in 2000, he instituted a *new* constitution, not a revision, demonstrating his lesson from years of victimhood: make the president stronger (Zartman 2015, 140). This goes to the crux of the discussion on presidential policies: at the end of the day, the president controls the economic, political, and military decisions in Senegal. When the MFDC wants to negotiate for peace, they want to negotiate with the president—knowing full well that for the president, no concession is impossible.

Conclusion

The Government of Senegal is unlikely to escalate tensions with the MFDC. The status quo—neither war nor peace—does not raise international scrutiny over the handling of the conflict; GOS wants to maintain the low-profile of the conflict. Furthermore, the military is convinced that the remaining factions are too loosely organized, too mistrustful of one another, low on numbers, and lacking of significant weapons and the popular support necessary to mount a successful attack of their own, thus the government is further disinclined to directly confront the MFDC factions, despite knowing their whereabouts and their weakened state. This avoids putting direct pressure on the MFDC to negotiate.

Senegal also feels constrained by its democratic system. This was an excuse pointed to by military personnel when questioned about their reticence to confront the MFDC directly with their supposed intelligence and firepower advantages. Under the current democratic system, the level of press freedom and popular mobilization in the country means that any severe military repression of the MFDC could reignite popular

support for the movement, thus proving counterproductive. The military did not appear to be implying that this system was unfavorable, despite indicating that it was a major cause for tying their hands over the conflict.

The dominant strategy by the government of Senegal, despite claiming to desire a negotiated solution, appears to be to let the rebel movement rot. The MFDC militants are low in numbers, do not appear to be popular among the Casamançais, and their commanders are largely leftover from the original armed resistance movement of the 1980s and early 90s—when they were already of an advanced age. For example, one faction which met with our group, MFDC 221, was led by a rebel aged 86 years.

The president's offer (and the Senegalese embassy in Washington) did not respond to interview requests, canceling appointments on arrival throughout the week. Military personnel that accepted meetings did not answer questions about next steps. The same was true of the current official GOS negotiating team lead by Admiral Sarr of the Ad Hoc Negotiation Committee for the Casamance. This has given the impression that GOS lacks a plan for closing “the final gaps” to finally conclude peace. However, the blame is not entirely GOS' to shoulder. MFDC lacks a unified command following the death of their leader, Abbé Diamoucouné, in 2007. The round of splintering among the MFDC which followed Diamoucouné's death has resulted in deep mistrust between the remaining factions. No clear effort has been made to remedy this situation, including rejection of a third-party group to mediate between factions, which significantly discounts the MFDC's ability to govern or play a leading role in a post-conflict Casamance. Sadio and Badiaté, who control groups with bases of operation in and around Gambia and Guinea-Bissau respectively, have chosen to work with separate mediators and to-date have refused to participate in simultaneous negotiations.

Recommendations for the Government of Senegal

- As the peace talks appear to have stalled, **the Government of Senegal (GOS) must make every effort to overcome this by providing momentum through a clear roadmap for reintegration**, not just for the rebels into the political sphere, but also economically for the Casamance in general.

- Unfortunately, for developing trade in the region, unless GOS can overcome obstacles to greater linkages with Banjul, **a major harbor or a direct bridge over the Gambia will be necessary.**
- **GOS needs to make clear to MFDC cadres that positions of authority are available to them should they disarm.** These positions can range from the policy sphere, such as assigned legislative seats to demobilized leadership, to the economic sphere, such as board membership of major development projects funded by PSE and other related programs. MFDC members should be appointed now to regional development and service boards.
- **GOS should propose constitutional reform in package form to the MFDC. Possible reforms could include modifications to the National Assembly composition, as proposed above.** More critical forms include enshrining the principles and institutional mechanisms of Act III of Decentralization. While this does not give full autonomy to the Casamance, it does show a significant effort by the GOS to appeal to the calls for devolution without compromising core principles of state integrity.
- **GOS should maintain its regional economic development programs and work to expedite their roll-out wherever possible.** As the peace talks in their present form have stalled, to keep regional public sentiment from shifting to MFDC support, GOS needs to maintain high-level publicity of its major development projects in the Casamance in order to demonstrate to the public that the fruits of PSE and Act III of Decentralization are tangible and not illusory for the average Casamançais.

Challenges of Devolution

Wout Van Eylen

As set out in the introduction of this work, the conflict is a multi-layered one. The first levels are the grievances because of the “colonization from the hypercephalic state that the Casamançais refer to as “the Senegal” of which they are not a part.” This chapter investigates the legacy of the Jacobin structure the first president Senghor inherited, and in which way Dakar decentralized the country over time, or better, the lack thereof.

In other words, this chapter analyzes the core of the Casamance conflict. It sets out the reforms that have been taken by the central government to grant more power to the Casamance region, and discusses why, nonetheless, many Casamançais strife for independence.

Senegal After Its Quest For Autonomy: A Centralized Jacobin State

In nearly all interviews conducted with rebel group representatives, the installment of the Jacobin state by French colonizers was pointed at as the start of the problem. The idea of the revolutionary Jacobin movement, after the French revolution in 1789, was to create a centralized administration to prevent counter-revolutionaries from gaining a foothold in the country. This idea was picked up in the governance of the French colonies, including Senegal.

The result was that, upon independence in 1960, Senegal consisted of 20 mixed communes, all of them under control of a centrally appointed mayor. These special-status communes were switched for normal communes and their number increased to 38, Dakar being one of them. Furthermore, in 1972, Senghor decided to add rural communities to the institutional framework as part of the Act 1, in an attempt to promote development in the Casamance and elsewhere. The outcome was more than three hundred rural councils nationwide, including the Casamance from 1978 onwards (Gellar 1995, 49).

Nevertheless, the government only allocated limited resources and liabilities to these councils, such as a rural tax introduced by law in 1972, while at the same time staying in command by appointing those in charge. Moreover, in and around Ziguinchor,

the sub-prefects were instructed by Dakar, and strongly intimidated local council members.

One can say the set-up of the institutional framework after independence laid the foundation for the grievances of the Casamanacais. Local authorities were merely a means of communicating Dakar's decisions (Dafflon and Madiès 2013, 208-10). Casamance never fell in love with the capital, and felt Senghor took over the role of colonizer. This is not surprising as Senghor took over the structures the French left behind.

The Senegambian Federation

As time went by, a confederation was founded on 1 February 1982 following an agreement between Senegal and Gambia. A few months earlier, Senegal decided to institute, what was at the time the largest institutional reform imaginable. The Senegambia confederation would last until 30 September 1989, when it dawned upon the Senegalese that Gambia did not have the same intention to move toward a union.

Critics argue that the union was the mere attempt of Abdou Diouf to increase his influence on the isolated country, seizing the opportunity when it was asked to militarily intervene in Gambia to prevent President Jaware from being overthrown after an attempted coup. However, the relation between Gambia and Senegal is much more complicated, and because of its ethnic similarities and geographic location, Gambia has always been deemed to cooperate in a way with Dakar. Since independence up till 1982, 30 collaborative treaties had been signed.

Indeed, the Treaty of confederation was far reaching. In terms of political institutions it foresaw a President and Council of Ministers, it implied a partial integration of the army structures, as well as the formation of an economic and monetary union. Also, external affairs would be coordinated. Despite the explicit reference of absolute sovereignty, it was undoubtedly true that the federation aimed to create a union in the long haul, although the Gambians had never articulated tremendous support for total integration.

One of the main reasons for the confederation was the internal security concern that Senegal faced. Ethnic secessionists in the Casamance increasingly aimed to

destabilize the central government in Dakar at the time, and a union was the possibility for Senegal to indefinitely deploy troops in Gambia, undermining the secession efforts further south. Indeed, Dakar undoubtedly wanted to avoid Banjul becoming an example for revolutionary minds in Casamance, possibly even cooperating with Gambia to attempt an aggression against the capital

Also, Dakar assumed that an overreaching institutional framework could address the massive amount of cross border illegal trade. A free trade zone would make smuggling through Gambia far more complicated, which would in turn undermine the uproar in the Casamance.

Though intended to promote cooperation between the two countries, the confederation was dissolved by Senegal on 30 September 1989 after Gambia refused to move closer toward union. Frictions popped up from the start, but nevertheless, the confederation lasted for seven years, until it became too obvious that it was the idea of elites rather than of both countries' nationals. Furthermore, Gambia always feared a hidden agenda from Dakar to strive toward a complete political union.

After the disintegration, Senegal had no reason to alienate Gambia, i.e. because of the Casamance dispute. Gambia was a necessary partner to help Senegal prevent insurgents attempting to flee the Casamance through Banjul (Hughes 1992, 202-219).

Senegal's Attempts at Decentralization

The Diouf Administration

After the break-up of the confederation Diouf was reelected, despite protests, while the opposition was attempting to revitalize itself, even though the three-party system was already introduced before the confederation was created.

In the midst of tensions and increased violence, Dakar made what—at first sight—seemed like significant decentralization reforms in a series of laws passed on 22 March 1996. Act 2 transferred 9 powers to the regions, such as education, health, as well as the rural communities. Another one laid the organization, both administrative and financial of the *commune d'arrondissement*. Also, a National Council on Local Development was created. The outcome was the existence of regions, two for the Casamance, Upper and Lower Casamance, which are the first layers of the subnational

government. Furthermore, the *commune* is supposed to be a local government entity, and consists of at least one thousand inhabitants. Ziguinchor counted 5 of them, as well as 25 rural communities, which consist of families and land parcels.

Their competences were broad, consisting of nine functions: Youth and sport, culture, education, planning, territorial development, and urban planning and housing. Not only the Upper and Lower Casamance region but also the *communes* and the rural *communes* have part of the legislative power.

The representatives of the states could review their legality, be it only ex-post. Prior approval of supervisory authority is necessary for six domains, among them budget control and urban development. Especially with regard to the decentralized budget, Dakar maintained a strong hold on the subnational governments, since the complete and detailed budget had to be approved by the state representative.

Unfortunately, it was the result of patronage politics, rather than a presence of willingness to grant more self-governance to regions such as the Casamance, ruled by those who failed to make it to the top in Dakar, but stayed loyal to the ruling party. On top of that, “since 1996, tax collection has been transferred from the state agent (the *sous-préfet*) to locally elected councilors, a process which has turned tax payment into a key issue in the local political process, if only because of the lack of its execution: revenue collection has experienced a steady decline since the transfer” (Juul 2006, 823). Every decision was in reality double-checked by the ministry of the Interiors. Meanwhile, the situation worsened for many Senegalese, including the Casamançais (Juul 2006, 820-823).

Among many interviewees though, there is a strong feeling that Diouf would have closed a peace deal if he had won the next elections. He was negotiating towards a stronger decentralized Casamance, with strongly independent regional counsels. According to former senior officials we met, it would not have implied a regionalization “as in the United States, but nevertheless much further than Dakar had ever been willing to go.” In any case, he did not succeed, as he lost the 2000 elections.

The Wade Administration

In 2000, Abdoulaye Wade, ended 40 years of African socialist rule of Senegal, when he won the second round of the presidential votes, cause by deep frustrations which helped him to gain the support of a broad coalition. Soon thereafter, he passed a new constitution by referendum, devoting chapter eleven to embody and confirm the role of the subnational governments. Although the primary reason for the new constitution was to fulfill his promise to strengthen the role of the judiciary (Gellar 2005, 159), in article 102 of the constitution it is stipulated that “local government bodies will constitute the institutional framework for citizens' participation in the management of public affairs.”

The 2008 reforms further worked out this idea, and divided the Casamance region, which is governed by a president and his regional council in three departments, Bignona, Oussouye, and Ziguinchor. The communes remained to be five, and organized at the same level as the departments, through a municipal council with a mayor as main officials. They are subdivided into eight districts (*arrondissements*), led by a president and his rural council, with at the same level also rural communities (Dafflon and Madiès 2013, 214).

The relationship between the central government and the decentralized entities is complicated, even despite the creation of the Ministry of Local Government in 2009. On behalf of the Ministry of the Interior, the Directorate of General Affairs of the Territorial Administration, plays a managing role to bridge the gap between Dakar and local authorities.

The regions have no fiscal resources, and rely entirely on grants from Dakar, which makes them strongly dependent on the central government. In terms of financing, despite financial transfers from the government, the communes and rural communes rely mostly on taxes they self-imposed. Despite the initial drop in tax income in the 1990s (see above), tax income has gone up again in recent years.

Most importantly however, is the fact that the subnational governments has been delegated more tasks than resources. Their own imposed taxes do not make up for the lack of grants given by Dakar. In those cases, the deconcentrated government again take over, being made available ad hoc. These less noticeable measures imply the countering of transfers powers. The latter has not changed under Wade, and created a highly

uncertain climate, both for the institutions on the local level, as well as for the citizens, such as in the Casamance, who must benefit from them. For example, in 2006, the total budget of the communes was about 6% of state expenditure, and stayed stable for the next years. This mounts up to barely one percent of GDP (Dafflon and Madiès 2013, 240-260).

Investment agencies have been set up with both national as well as foreign money, such as the Program for the Reactivation of Economic Activities in Casamance and PADERCA which promotes rural development. Yet, they are inefficient, because an overreaching efficient institutional framework, which provides a friendly investment climate, remains absent (For more information, see our chapter on economic investments in the Casamance).

There is a widespread consensus among almost all interviewees that Wade has understood the least the Casamance conflict and grievances, and not only blocked a solution through malgovernance, but also hardened positions among both sides of the negotiation table, by stating he was able to solve the conflict within his first hundred days in office.

Grievances of the Casamançais Continue Under Current President Macky Sall

It remains unclear what Macky Sall's institutional reform propositions are with regard to the Casamance. From the rebels' side though, there continues to be a strong belief among them that former president Senghor promised to one day grant Casamance independence. Macky Sall's team negotiating decentralization reforms have not yet been able to take away that conviction. In fact, to the contrary, every year passing by only strengthens many Casamançais' view that independence is the only way forward, feeling "betrayed." Indeed, among most Casamançais, especially the rebel groups themselves, there is a belief that any further reform of decentralization would only be an empty box, without real improvements made. For example, over and over again, Casamançais ousted complaints about high officials sent by Dakar, who lack the political will to implement and fully execute the decentralization as set out in previous institutional reforms.

This hinges together with the interviews we conducted, in which it became clear that the Casamançais share the opinion that Dakar, including current president Macky

Sall, simply does not understand how the Casamance functions. As various tribes, such as the Diola predominating in the west, inhabit the Casamance they still highly depend on animist traditions. Consequently, as in the case throughout the country but especially in Upper and Lower Casamance, villages are highly independent and customary law remains predominant. The implications are that the region itself is highly fractioned, both politically and culturally. A peace agreement that does not address such complexity will be no solution at all. Exemplary are the indigenous land rights, which were formally abolished as a result of several land reforms. However, a good share of them is still informally in place in the region, and is one of the causes of the ongoing conflict. It is therefore not advisable to ignore the customary traditions of the different tribes. To the contrary, sustainable peace will only be acquired when reforms are not only decided upon, but also being implemented at the local level.

On the other hand though, several high level Casamançais also expressed the need for the Casamançais themselves to “embrace each other more.” Indeed, the MFDC fractions will have to negotiate univocally with Dakar if they attempt to start the negotiations from a stronger position, in order to make a strong deal which benefits the region (or to make a deal at all). On top of that, cooperation will undoubtedly also be required to implement possible future institutional reforms at the local level after such an agreement would have been reached.

Another grievance is the fact that the negotiating team assembled by Macky Sall consists almost entirely of military staff. Several Casamançais we interviewed regret this decision, and would prefer to have a stronger focus on the institutional aspects of the conflict, than the pure militarization of it. According to them, technocrats would be welcomed.

With regard to what a peace agreement would possibly look like, some more pragmatic interviewees argue that federalism as some form of devolution might be a better idea than decentralization. A strong self-governing body would allow the Casamance to remain a part of Senegal, but at the same time grant it a form of special status. Such self-governing body would be more suited to take into account the local characteristics of the indigenous tribes. Especially concerning cultural sensitivities, for example on how to address religious or educational needs, a stronger local authority—

with the adequate financial means—could bridge the divide between the tribes and the governing instances. Yet, the latter would imply a true transfer of power, something Dakar does not seem to be willing to give up.

Lastly, according to some officials and advisors we interviewed, a bipartisan solution could be the creation of a regionally elected assembly, with an executive elected by the Casamançais themselves. This solution would avoid loaded terms such as “federation,” but would grant the Casamançais the power to take the region into their own hands.

Conclusion

For historical reasons, Senegal started as the centralized state as it used to be structured as a colony. President Senghor faced the enormous task to build an underdeveloped Senegal, and did not have the Casamance at top of his agenda. Senegal’s second President Diouf however, seems to have understood that the struggle and complaints of the Casamançais were in one way or another justified, and he therefore tailored his—for that time—far reaching 1996 institutional reforms to the region. His election loss thereafter must in hindsight be regretted, especially from a Casamance perspective. The consequence was a decade of standstill for the region.

It will be up to Macky Sall to prove that he truly takes into account the long-lasting struggle of the Casamançais. Whatever the outcome of such peace agreement would be, it has to entail real inclusion into the decision making process at the executive level of those living in the region.

On the other hand, it will be up to the rebels to realize that having independence as their single demand will not solve their situation, but only keep the conflict into deadlock which does not serve the local population, nor Dakar.

Recommendations

- **Allow the rebels to bring up independence at the negotiation table.** As long as both parties continue focusing on positions rather than interests, a peace agreement is not in sight. Only when an issue is on the table, can it be shaped to meet the real needs of the parties.

- **Show the Casamançais that there is a sincere will to work towards real devolution of powers from Dakar to Ziguinchor.** So far, Dakar has primarily adhered to devolution on paper, but deconcentration in reality.
- **Allocate appropriate resources to the subnational governments.** This way they can take up all responsibilities granted to them.
- **Set up local training centers for civil servants,** in order to reduce the number of central government officials in the Casamance regions, communes and arrondissements, of whom the Casamançais feel are not serving the local population of Upper and Lower Casamance.

Role of the Military

Elizabeth Parker-Magyar

In 2016, the Senegalese state and the MFDC have accepted that there can be no military solution to the conflict in the Casamance. However, they continue to find themselves at odds when they seek to define one another: for the Senegalese state, the MFDC are a loose gang of bandits, who make their living off of the porous borders between Senegal and its less-developed neighbors. From Senegal's perspective, the MFDC is an illegitimate negotiating partner that does not represent aggrieved populations. The MFDC, meanwhile, defines the Senegalese military as an occupation force from the north, and not as a representative army of multi-ethnic Senegal, including the Casamance. Even further, while the Senegalese state insists that the MFDC no longer has any zones of influence, the MFDC can trace their zones on a map.

Despite this chasm of understanding, both sides admit that, at times, members of the MFDC will play soccer against members of the Senegalese army. Those soccer games, which MFDC officials insist are unplanned, are a manifestation of the low intensity of a conflict that, over the past thirty years, has claimed between 1,000 and 5,000 lives (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015). For Senegal, those matches are a positive arbiter of some reconciliation between the Senegalese state and the MFDC, and are, at least partially, the results of a shift in strategy in how it prosecutes the conflict. But, as this paper will examine, the Senegalese military's presence today in the Casamance remains marred by the memories of thirty years of conflict, at the beginning of which the military's routine oppression of civilian populations contributed to the Casamançais turn to violence. In these terms, this second level of the conflict blocks resolution of the conflict.

In 2016, Senegalese President Macky Sall has reframed Senegal's interest in the conflict. Sall's policies first and foremost seek to preserve Senegal's international image as a showcase of democracy and stability in a troubled region, in the hopes that development efforts will sufficiently address Casamançais grievances. In the absence of a formal accord, Casamance is experiencing another period quiet, as the Senegalese military does not conduct raids, despite the MFDC's failure to disarm. Sall's strategy,

however, must also grapple with the legacies left by his predecessors: President Abdou Diouf's early pursuit of a military victory in the conflict scarred the MFDC and helped provoke its subsequent armament, while President Wade sought peace but was unable to achieve meaningful reconciliation. The Senegalese military, then, responsible for executing Sall's directives, walks a tight line in securing a region that is in a state of neither war nor peace. In largely representing the interests of Dakar, the Senegalese military acts to maintain an equilibrium in which the Senegalese state dominates through little violence, in the hopes that a wider agreement and reconciliation will disarm the MFDC through non-military means.

The Senegalese Military within Senegalese Democracy

In this analysis of the armed actors to the conflict, it is critical to contextualize the Senegalese military's relationship with the Senegalese state. The Senegalese military is very highly professionalized, serves frequently overseas, and is viewed by the state first and foremost as a tool to promote Senegalese foreign policy (Schraeder 1997).¹⁰ Moreover, it has a strong institutional history of non-interference in political affairs that is in many ways a legacy of French colonialism. Political scientists have argued that French preference for post-independence civilian rule is one decisive factor in guaranteeing civil-military stability (Clark 2007). Structurally, the Senegalese military is built upon the French model, which has ramifications for how it seeks to maintain internal security. Constitutionally, Senegal's President is the Commander-in-Chief of Senegal's armed forces, giving the Senegalese executive strong authority over military behavior. While Senegal has a navy and air force, its two most important branches are the army and the *gendarmerie*, charged with providing internal policing and security, but distinct from police forces. Both Mamadou Sow, the Major General of the Army, and Mamadou Guèye Faye, the head of the *gendarmerie*, report to the head of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, Augustin Tine. In 2009, Senegalese military spending was \$207 million, or 1.6% of Senegalese GDP, with 19,000 active members of the armed forces (Armed Forces Personnel, Military Expenditure).

¹⁰ Senegalese troops are currently deployed alongside Saudi Arabia in Yemen. Senegal also deployed more than 2,000 troops to U.N peacekeeping operations in 2015.

However, despite its status as a regional model, the Senegalese military is also a powerful institution that has pursued its own interests historically, a point some interviewees stressed. As Schraeder wrote in a 1997 analysis of Senegalese foreign policy, citing several episodes in which the Senegalese military intervened to avert political crises, the Senegalese military is an “often neglected bureaucratic actor,” so that “despite strong adherence to the republican ideal of civilian control over the military,” the military nonetheless has played an important “behind-the-scenes role in shaping Senegal’s political history” (Schraeder 1997, 498). Further, interviewees stressed the well-trodden avenue between a career in military and one in politics, which can distort the Senegalese military’s behavior.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of interviewees stressed the military’s subservience to the Senegalese democratic state, and its ability to conduct itself in the Casamance conflict in a way that services the interests of Senegal. To understand this behavior, the Casamance conflict must be contextualized within Senegal’s wider strategic considerations; the Senegalese military does not uniquely exist to prosecute the Casamance conflict. Instead, as discussed in other chapters, Senegal is also deeply concerned with the rise of Islamist extremism in Mali and Mauritania. Additionally, the Senegalese military has other avenues through which to pursue its fiscal solvency as an institution: members of the Senegalese military are frequently deployed in U.N. missions abroad as peacekeeping troops in roles that generate revenue for the state. Without the Casamance conflict, the Senegalese military will remain an influential institution (Providing for Peacekeeping, 2015). Further, as Clark (2007, 153) concludes in his review of liberalization and African military interventions, “lengthening democratic experience, and deepened democratic legitimacy, limits the military’s institutional independence and likelihood to intervene in politics.” Along among all African states except Botswana, Senegal has never experienced a military coup. As a result of Senegal’s lengthening democratic experience and multiple political turnovers, the military can be seen as largely subservient to the democratic state in its pursuit of a resolution to the Casamance conflict.

Nevertheless, given the clear connection between a successful military career and a subsequent political career, major military figures themselves are deeply involved in the

politics surrounding the resolution of the conflict. Today, in the latest in a long line of military chief negotiators, Admiral Farba Sarr, the director of Senegal's Ministry of Intelligence, leads the Senegalese state's Ad Hoc Negotiating Committee for the Casamance in its negotiations with MFDC leaders in Gambia. As a result, the Senegalese military should be seen as not a force tasked with the defeat of the MFDC, but rather the institution in Senegal directly charged with resolving the conflict, through military or diplomatic means.

The Specter of the Past: Senegalese Military Strategy Through the Conflict

As all parties acknowledge, the Senegalese military pushed the MFDC to arm itself when it fired on peaceful protesters in Ziguinchor on 26 December 1982, and again on the 17 and 26 December 1983 (Diallo 2004, 70). In response, as MFDC lore goes, Sidy Badji, founded Atika, allegedly armed first with a single rifle. Despite the relatively low levels of violence in the conflict since then, the Senegalese military must grapple with the legacy of thirty years of war during which time it has committed significant atrocities, marginalizing segments of the population.

The Senegalese military's practices in the early phases fueled the MFDC, as they contributed to local grievances against the state. A 1990 Amnesty International report chronicled routine torture of Casamançais detainees, including of Father Augustin Diamacoune Senghor between 1983 and a temporary amnesty in 1988. A subsequent Amnesty International Report, a decade later, detailed human rights violations both on the part of the Senegalese army and the MFDC, writing that both "consciously chosen to terrorize civilians" (Amnesty 1998). In the period, Amnesty International still portrayed human rights violations as "essentially the work of the army and the *gendarmerie*, which have for years been acting with total impunity," detailing the *gendarmerie*'s practice of cutting off detainees lips, and forcing detainees to eat them (Amnesty 1998, 4). The MFDC, meanwhile, consistently instrumentalized violence against women to force villagers off of their land (Amnesty 2003). Outside of torture and mass arrest, a 2003 report emphasized the Senegalese military's routine continued use of "forced disappearances," and their failure to redress the grievances of the families of those believed to be taken by security services, never to be returned (Amnesty 2003, 3).

As has been chronicled in this report's chapter on Presidential Politics and the Casamance conflict, the behavior of the Senegalese military throughout the conflict in many ways reflects Senegalese presidents' varying desires to suppress the conflict violently, pursue a political solution, or sometimes attempt to do both. Indeed, regardless of the strategy, the military has been responsible for executing it. In documenting the Senegalese military's crimes, Amnesty International was careful to note the military's professionalization: "the Senegalese army is unanimously seen as a well-structured and well-disciplined army...Senegal itself proudly claims to have republican security forces that obey the orders of the political authorities" (Amnesty 1998, 4). At the beginning of the 1990s, when Abdou Diouf elected to pursue a mixed political-military strategy and negotiated a ceasefire, he installed a military governor in Ziguinchor, the first in a string of members of the armed forces granted some power over governance. The subsequent decade witnessed four ceasefires, and almost as many splinters in the MFDC. Throughout, Abdou Diouf used military and intelligence personnel as his chief negotiators: Interior Minister Lamine Cissé was the chief negotiator of the Banjul III Accords.

During President Wade's tenure, the military retained its central role as both strategic executor and diplomatic liaison to the Casamance. At the beginning of his presidency, Wade once again entrusted a military leader, General Abdoulaye Fall, as his chief mediator (Evans 2004, 6). Fall was a chief signatory to the 2004 Accord, in which the Senegalese army agreed to cease raiding MFDC bases in exchange for MFDC disarmament (Thomas-Lake 2010). It later emerged that, in the wake of the 2004 accord, General Fall, on behalf of Senegal, had begun paying the *maquis* to quit the MFDC (Foucher 2011). At the same time that he directed his military to pursue this disastrous long-term policy (2011, 98), Wade also took several measures to reform his military. In the words of Vincent Foucher, he promoted "a new set of Casamançais *cadres*, many of them Diola," and "consistently chose a Casamançais to head the Ministry of Armed Forces" (Foucher 2011, 98). Foucher, accordingly, notes the improved human rights record of the military during the Wade era: "the Casamance section in Amnesty International's Senegal reports has grown thinner over the years" (Foucher 2011, 98). However, when the 2004 Accord fell apart in 2007, the Senegalese military returned to its

role as a combatant in the conflict, as Wade halfheartedly dictated a series of offensives against the MFDC, several by helicopter.

Though the Wade era brought no political or military victor in the conflict, it did witness significant military reform, as the military turned away from the human rights violations that marred the conflict in its early years. By 2015, human rights observers primarily decried the MFDC's practices, not the Senegalese military's, in targeting of "noncombatants and civilians, including women and children, primarily through banditry" (U.S. Department of State Country Report 2014, 7). However, despite these shifts in Senegalese strategy, the memory of Senegalese army action continues to impact the conflict, as does its continued, though sporadic arrest of political prisoners (U.S. Department of State Country Report 2013). In 2016, the Senegalese military, as both a chief negotiator and chief party to the conflict, grapples with this legacy.

Senegalese Military Strategy in 2016

Senegalese government officials insist that, in 2016, there can be no gain through military action in the Casamance. In one former official's words, "the only battle being fought right now is for the development of the Casamance." Practically, if not verbally, the Senegalese government accepts that armed elements of the MFDC challenge the Senegalese monopoly of force, particularly in border regions. Indeed, the most recent U.S. Department of State's Human Rights report, examining 2014, the Bureau lauded the prolonged decreasing in violence, as neither side had conducted offensive operations in the prior year out of the acknowledgement "that a military solution to the conflict was not achievable." During this prolonged ceasefire, the Senegalese military is attempting to prevent the MFDC from gaining strength while refraining from any offensive operations that could stoke further violence, guided by the belief that a wider resolution is the only effective avenue through which the MFDC will disarm. Nevertheless, there remain five significant arenas for military decision-making, outside of military action: diversification of the military, the deployment of checkpoint, de-mining, aid demobilization efforts, and border efforts.

Diversification of the Military

It is difficult to define what a “diversified” or “inclusive” military would entail in the Casamance, given the continued challenge of even defining who are the parties to a conflict by turns described as along economic, religious, or ethnic divides. As mentioned above, beginning with Wade, there have been concerted efforts to integrate Casamançais into high levels of the military. To combat the perception that Casamançais separatists are representative of the entire Casamançais population, the Senegalese military continuously emphasizes its diversity: there are Casamançais who serve in the Casamance. But through the conflict, and since independence, the Senegalese military has nominally included Casamançais: Sidy Badji, the first military leader of the MFDC, was a sergeant in the Senegalese forces that fought alongside the French in the Algerian War for Independence (Diallo 2004, 70). Further, one interviewee, a younger leader of the MFDC, described his experience fighting for the Senegalese military, only to join the MFDC’s ranked upon completing his service. A different MFDC group, somewhat transparently, emphasized that any member of the Senegalese military must be spying for the MFDC. In another interview, a life-long resident of Dakar who served in the Casamance, for instance, noted that while French was the official language of the military, some of his superiors in the military only spoke Wolof.¹¹ Thus, despite the rote demographic diversity of the Senegalese military, it clearly continues to face challenges in integrating Casamançais. In order for the military to effectively diversify, it must go beyond this recruitment, and effectively professionalize, particularly linguistically.

Deployment of Checkpoints

The military’s focus on internal security and the checkpoints lining the road into and out of Ziguinchor are a clear manifestation of the fear of the MFDC’s continued influence. From the Senegalese perspective, it is “MFDC banditry” and the threat of violence that makes the assembly of these checkpoints a necessity (U.S. Department of State 2014, 11). However, the Senegalese military’s checkpoints are an obvious source of grievances for local residents. At a small stand in downtown Ziguinchor, a shop-owner noted that the

¹¹As has been discussed the encroachment of Wolof-speaking populations into the Casamance, and onto Casamançais land, is often emphasized as an early driver of the conflict.

distribution of black plastic bags had been banned by police forces, who are seeking to limit the flow of weapons in the city. But in several interviews, Casamançais discussed the ways in which checkpoints annoy civilian life: one oft-repeated grievance is that the elderly are made to walk hundreds of yards, at times, just to pass through a checkpoint. Further, the checkpoints revive memories of periods of greater violence in the conflict, and of the military's historic over-reliance on violence, torture, and arbitrary. On a motorcycle ride, one local driver stopped at every checkpoint, scared of arbitrary arrest, despite the military's continued exhortation that he proceed onward. As a result of this history, though checkpoints may be necessary as an internal security measure, the military should be wary not to over-rely on them, to avoid exacerbating local grievances.

De-Mining: Navigating MFDC “Zones” of Control

The existence of MFDC “zones” of control is most obvious in the continued inability of the Senegalese state to remove mines from the Casamance. In interviews, Senegalese military officials stated that they have never placed mines, as representatives of the MFDC stressed that they have ceased planting mines, while also insisting that, in the past, the Senegalese military planted mines as well. In Casamance, interviewees in the fields of economic development noted that the presence of mines, whose existence is an obvious rebuttal of the notion that there is no internal conflict in the Casamance, severely hinders agricultural development, while also limiting tourism. Since May 2013, when MFDC factions, likely affiliated with César Atoute Badiaté, kidnapped 12 workers clearing mines, demining in the region has effectively stopped, leaving several zones in which the military presence cannot extend beyond main roads (Landmines and Cluster Munitions Blog). Indeed, one interviewee bluntly described Badiaté as openly unwilling to allow demining near his zones. Further hindering efforts, both the MFDC and the Senegalese military accuse the other of being unwilling to describe where land mines are present, even to the Centre National d'Action Antimines au Sénégal (CNAMS). In a 2014 map published by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (See chapter by Sam Fishman), large swaths of northwestern and southern Casamance require technical surveying and clearance, while a few campaigns to remove known mines remained suspended. However, despite the danger of landmines and their hindrance on agricultural

production, the Senegalese state, respecting MFDC zones and in order to avoid the provocation of violence, is not actively supporting de-mining efforts.

Demobilization Programs

Demobilization programs are a recent source of optimism in Senegal's engagement with the MFDC in the Casamance. In recent years, Senegal has piloted a Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DDRR) program with one former faction of the MFDC willing to disarm. According to Senegalese statements, the program, which received funding from a European donor, has thus far been a success, and has displayed to the state the importance of prioritizing retraining, particularly for *maquis* who have been fighting for more than five years. Though the economic drivers in the conflict will be discussed at greater length in later chapters, through its pilot programs, Senegal has come to recognize that the *maquis* are often young men who left the state's education system too early. To reintegrate them sustainably as it attempts to equitably develop the Casamance, the state will have to concentrate investments on these young men in order to prevent the recurrence of conflict. Unsurprisingly, MFDC groups interviewed dismissed the program, in keeping with their movement's self-consciously political, rather than economic, rhetoric. Moreover, as a separate interviewee noted, even this pilot program has suffered from limited resources and funding. The Senegalese military, at the frontlines of these projects, will play an important technical role in expanding these programs if other factions were to agree to disarm.

Efforts to Secure the Border

Among Senegalese officials, there is a widespread belief that full peace will not arrive without the cooperation of Gambia and Guinea Bissau. In interviews, Senegalese political and military officials continually noted the challenges Senegal faces in weakening the MFDC given the continued porousness of the border. Diallo (2004, 76) quotes a researcher, Ousseynou Faye, who argues, "For the duration of the Casamance conflict, the inability to control the frontiers and thus neutralize the migratory flows or arms networks will not be facilitated except for the establishment of a lasting, fraternal policy of coexistence between Senegal and its neighbors." Indeed, maps of existing landmines

label the MFDC zones of control as directly along Senegal's borders with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. The MFDC's funding sources, and its political divisions, will be discussed in other sections of this paper. Succinctly, the MFDC's ability to subsist by leveraging the cross-border smuggling of illicit timber and cannabis, and import weapons, poses a military and strategic danger for Senegal, as well as a developmental one as it seeks to expand and legitimize the formal economy in the Casamance. Yet, under Macky Sall's strategy toward reconciliation, the Senegalese military has not announced any unilateral action to secure the border. Rather, a more secure border will be derivative of wider, diplomatic trends. Given Senegalese strategy, border security will come after reconciliation with the MFDC and the forging of deeper partnerships with their neighbors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Senegalese military is the primary institution tasked with executing the Senegalese executive's strategy for reconciliation in the Casamance. Amidst an overarching strategy that prioritizes a political solution over a military victory, the military's behavior impact several critical policy arenas daily, so that military behavior can contribute to either reconciliation or a reversion to violence.

- **The Senegalese military must continue its recruitment of Casamançais into the military to lessen the validity of politicized grievance that the Senegalese military represents an occupation force.** More immediately and importantly, though, the Senegalese military faces an imperative to professionalize the military so that French is the sole language spoken by officers and soldiers alike.
- **The Senegalese military should continue to be available as escorts for de-mining teams from international organizations.** In negotiations, Senegalese actors should pursue the exchange of information on the location of mines, as well as permission to engage in de-mining, as trust-building measures.
- **While maintaining checkpoints as necessary to prevent the flow of weaponry, the Senegalese military must avoid the harassment of locals at checkpoints,** so as to limit the widely-articulated grievances over the checkpoints' impact on

Casamançais daily life. Where possible, the Senegalese **military should transfer its duties to community policing.**

- **The Senegalese military must stand ready to provide technical support to expand piloted DDRR programs, which should receive continued funding.**
- **The Senegalese military should study available options to secure the border wherever possible so as to deprive the MFDC of funding.** However, it should not conduct offensive operations. If able to deprive the MFDC of cross-border funding, the Senegalese military must coordinate with Senegal's economic institution to supplement the *maquis*' loss of informal revenue with opportunities in the formal economy.

Part III: Societal Insecurities

Displaced Populations

Alice Dufeu

Civil or international conflicts are often associated with large forced migratory movements and the scale and timing of those movements can sometimes destabilize states. UNHCR describes internally displaced persons (IDPs), or people forcibly displaced within their own country, as “probably the largest group of vulnerable people in the world.” Yet this group remains silent and largely ignored.

Despite the low intensity of the conflict in Casamance, a large number of people were forced to flee their homes and the humanitarian impact was sizable. While figures vary depending on the source due to the lack of comprehensive surveys, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates that the conflict in Casamance has created more than 50,000 IDPs over its course (IDMC 2006). While most displacement took place at the beginning of the conflict in the first half of the 1990s, when clashes between the MFDC and the Senegalese army peaked and populations in rural Casamance sought refuge within the region as well as in the capital city, sporadic acts of violence throughout the conflict have caused further movement. The alternation of periods of conflict and peace that characterize this conflict has led to both long-term and short-term displacement as populations sometimes returned to their villages of origin in peaceful times but had to flee when violence started again. Most displaced individuals lost access to their land—an often main source of livelihood—and were forced to live in precarious conditions. Though numbers of spontaneous returns have increased in the past 10 years, lack of infrastructure and social services, security concerns and land grievances are serious challenges to the return and reintegration of displaced populations in Casamance and thus threats to sustainable peace in the region.

The Reality of Displacement in Casamance

The IDMC estimated the total number IDPs within Casamance in 2010 to be between 10,000 and 40,000 (IDMC 2010). The U.S. Department of State estimated that around 10,000 were still internally displaced at the end of 2009 (USDoS March 2010) and the ICRC reported as many as 40,000 (ICRC, 4 March 2010). Internal movements are

particularly difficult to quantify and monitor as their temporary nature complicates the gathering of reliable statistics. In addition, like in most civil conflicts in Africa, the majority of IDPs seek refuge at family members, friends and host communities and are “absorbed in into the urban fabric rather than isolated in camps” (Evans 2007, 60). They are thus difficult to interview and survey. Further, they also take urban-rural migration lines to Ziguinchor, and those who are moving to flee violence rather than to look for better economic opportunities are difficult to single out. In 1988, the region of Ziguinchor counted 502 villages and in 2001, 62 were abandoned (Robin and Ndione 2006). While Ziguinchor is believed to have received between 14,000 and 38,000 IDPs throughout the conflict (Evans 2007), between 10,000 and 14,000 were estimated to live in Ziguinchor city as of 2010 (ICRC 2010).

Displacement in Casamance has tended to follow a pendulum pattern, with people seeking refuge in nearby towns or villages and returning when clashes end (on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis) (Evans, 2007). Since the 1982 protest march in Ziguinchor that marked the beginning of the crisis, the 30-year conflict has been punctuated by ceasefires, fragmentation of the MFDC, and intermittent violence. Those cycles have caused profound trauma among the population of Casamance and have led to deep distrust and fear of both the Senegalese armed forces and the MFDC.

In May 1991, in Cacheu (Guinea-Bissau), the government and the MFDC negotiated a ceasefire and an amnesty agreement aimed at freeing all MFDC members currently detained. Those accords led to radicalization within the rebel movement and resulted in a fragmentation between the *Front Nord* led by Sidy Badji who was willing to accept the deal, and the *Front Sud* led by the Abbé Diamacoune, pushing for independence (Robin 2006). This fragmentation sparked a period of violence with attacks from the *Front Sud* of the MFDC, which were met by retaliatory attacks from the Senegalese armed forces. Both parties targeted civilians and about 1,000 people were reported to have died in Casamance as a result of violence between July 1992 and July 1993 (AFP 1993).

In December 1993, a third ceasefire agreement sparked further fragmentation within the *Front Sud* of the MFDC and the fighting around the villages of Naguis, Boffa or Kaguitte, and along the frontier with Guinea-Bissau led to more forced movement of

population to the city of Ziguinchor and UNHCR camps in Guinea-Bissau. In 1994, for instance, 7,189 Senegalese families were registered in UNHCR's main camps near the border (Robin 2006).

Between 1995 and 1998, three key events accentuated displacement of local populations away from fighting zones. While the conflict had mostly affected the Ziguinchor region so far, from 1995 onward, violence spread to Western parts of the Kolda region as the Senegalese army underwent a combing operation to retrieve French tourists that had been kidnapped by the *Front Sud* and arrest its three rebel leaders (Léopold Sagna, Mathieu or "Gagarine," and Salif Sadio). Bombings and fighting occurred between the Senegalese army and the MFDC faction, which drove people to flee their villages and seek refuge in areas secured by the army but again, mostly in Ziguinchor city and Guinea-Bissau. After a cooling period of roughly eighteen months, in 1997, violence started again when land mines were introduced by both sides of the conflict. Mines had devastating effects on local populations. "Refuge" zones were not spared and incidents were reported near the center of Ziguinchor and along the border with Guinea-Bissau. In addition, a change of government in neighboring Guinea led to the expulsion of refugees Casamançais suspected by the Guinean authorities to belong or indirectly support MFDC fighters (Robin 2006).

At that point, twenty-years of conflict and violence had led to the exodus of between 30,000 and 50,000 people and the desertion of around 12% of villages in the Ziguinchor region. The Districts of Nyassia and Niaguis between the Casamance River and the frontier with Guinea-Bissau were most affected (Robin, 2006).

In the early 2000s, a new round of violence broke out, where the region experienced an increase in thefts and armed robberies, notably on the way from Ziguinchor to Gambia. As a result, the Senegalese army underwent military offensives and uprooted between 10,000 and 20,000 people, half of which fled to Gambia. The fighting was particularly heavy in the region of Bignona as the army burned down houses in pursuit of rebel forces (IDMC 2006). Those in combination with rebel incursions provoked displacement of an unprecedented magnitude in this part of Casamance. However, following the signing of a peace agreement between the MFDC and the

Senegalese Government in 2004, people began to return. The IDMC estimates that during the year of 2005, 65% of IDPs in the South of Casamance were able to return home.

Violence accentuated again during 2009 and at the beginning of 2010, due to further MFDC fragmentation and “a lack of coherent political vision from the Senegalese government” (IRIN 18 September 2009). Political instability in Guinea-Bissau following the assassination of the President in March 2009, also contributed to the worsening of the situation in Casamance.

Yet finally, in recent years, the sporadic clashes between the Senegalese and the MFDC armed forces that have characterized the past 30 years of conflict in Casamance have reduced in number and intensity. Again, while no rigorous data is available, figures from 2010 placed the number of IDPs at 24,000 with no new displacements reported (IDMC 2010).

MFDC fragmentation and their lack of clear political strategy led to their failure to fully rally the population of Casamance behind their cause. MFDC’s change of strategy from military targets to acts of theft robberies or attacks that impact civilians’ access to land have also caused loss of support from part of the population (IRIN 17 February 2012). The Senegalese army has also left some scars of its own. Insecurity has led the army to impose restrictions on Casamançais’ freedom of movement. The governor of Ziguinchor established security measures in 2009 including military checkpoints, as well as restrictions of travel on certain roads at night (USDoS 2010).

The Impacts of Displacement on Livelihood

IDPs typically find themselves in a particularly ambiguous legal situation. As they do not qualify as refugees, they do not benefit from the protection granted by the international community and are thus all the more vulnerable. The impoverishment of the displaced populations adds to the humanitarian dimension of the conflict in Casamance. The conflict affected the livelihoods of IDPs in both rural and urban areas along with that of host communities.

Indeed, according to a study undertaken by Martin Evans in 2007, “long-term” IDPs in Ziguinchor have fared worse than natives in terms of living standards. The loss or lack of access to their land and thus agricultural capital impacted their livelihood

tremendously and drove many to engage in more precarious urban activities (Evans 2007). As the region became more impoverished as a result of the protracted conflict, tensions between IDPs and their host communities have intensified as resources have become scarcer. In addition to financial hardship, IDPs thus experienced social and political marginalization as a result (IDMC 2010).

As discussed previously, most of the displaced in Casamance are hosted by relatives and hometown networks, which have proved determinant in supporting IDPs' adaptation particularly by providing advice with regard to accommodation and employment and by sharing land (Evans 2007). However, despite a culture of hospitality, the prolonged nature of those displacements (some have been displaced since the 1990s) led to inevitable tensions between IDPs and their hosts. Those tensions were exacerbated by the poor economic conditions that developed as a consequence of the protracted conflict.

While the rate of school enrollment has historically been higher in Casamance than in the rest of the country,¹² internally displaced children have shown poor performance in classrooms and risk being abandoned by families who are struggling financially and often have to look elsewhere for income (IRIN 3 August 2006). Social and psychological issues due to the trauma of violence-induced displacement are also recurrent among IDPs (IDMC 2010).

The Challenges of Return and Reintegration

The sporadic yet prolonged nature of violence in Casamance has led to both temporary and permanent returns of populations throughout the years. There has not been any comprehensive survey on intentions or success-rates of return and re-integration but only anecdotes from interviews highlighting a desire to go back despite existing challenges (*Jeune Afrique* December 2009). Rate of returns have been varying since at least the early 2000s and have followed different patterns. Many IDPs' returns observed have been mostly unassisted and spontaneous (Evans 2009). Some have chosen to re-settle in areas closer to the capital of Ziguinchor as a transition before fully returning to their villages.

¹²Average enrollment in Senegal was estimated at around 60% in 2006, it was 90% in Casamance according to the United Nations.

Testimonies report that some spend the day in their home villages and go back to Ziguinchor to spend the night due to persisting insecurity (RFI Online December 2009), with the aim to initially maintain a foothold in their place of displacement while reconstructing their homes and restoring their agricultural land (Evans 2009). When their place of resettlement is too far to make the commute daily, some stay in interim housing in rural areas, which can be extremely precarious.

Rates appear to have accelerated in recent years (SAIS Group Meetings, 19 January 2016) as some returnees shared success stories and others followed their lead (Evans, 2009). Returnees have shown keenness to leave the economic and social struggles of IDP living conditions in Ziguinchor and return to their village, sometimes without the guarantee that they will have a better life (Evans 2009). Serious challenges remain to their full return and reintegration, notably persistent security issues, land disputes and lack of infrastructure.

Challenges to Return and Reintegration

Fear and Violence

Though most of the fighting has stopped, populations appear to still be vulnerable to armed crime and robberies. Indeed, armed robberies and attacks on civilians by “criminalized MFDC” guerillas have slowed return stirring bad memories and trauma. Reports of violent acts perpetrated by young men claiming to be from the MFDC are still being reported South of the Casamance River (IDMC 2010). In addition, the MFDC members allegedly used violence to prevent populations from accessing their land and houses, as they may have feared intrusion of the Senegalese army on their territories or consider returns without their consultation a violation of the 2004 Peace Accords (Evans quoted by IDMC 2010). The armed group is also thought to be earning revenues from orchards of cashew nuts and may wish to keep them under their control. The rise of the market price of cashew nuts can also explain the increase in attacks against farmers in order to seize cultivable land since 2008 (IDMC 2010).

Landmines

Landmines are one of the main deterrents of IDPs return and pose a serious threat to returnees' safe reintegration. Roads and tracks in the area around Ziguinchor as well as near the departments of Bignona and Oussouye were heavily mined. Thousands of landmines placed by the Senegalese army and the MFDC are scattered throughout Casamance. According to a study ran by Handicap International, between 1990 and 2008, landmines killed or injured about 1,000 people in the region. While the number of victims from landmines decreased thanks to a demining effort, displaced populations are still afraid and many pieces of arable land have been deserted as a result. NGOs and Government initiatives have been set up to focus on assistance in house reconstruction to make return of populations easier. However, many access roads or tracks to rice fields or arable land are mined, leaving villagers in a highly precarious state, as they could not access their main source of livelihood. For lack of a better alternative, many of returnees went back where they came from, mainly to Ziguinchor (Robin and Ndione 2006).

In addition to preventing return, landmines hinder reintegration as it prevents returnees from fully re-settling and use land to sustain livelihood. Partial demining efforts have been efficient but focused mainly on villages and left large pieces of land uncultivable. In addition, villages' immediate surroundings as well as roads or tracks remain mined and risks increase as villagers come back and the area becomes more densely populated (Evans 2009). Demining efforts have been stopped by rebel attacks who feel threatened by the presence of deminers on their "territory" and feel that further demining efforts would need to be part of a future peace agreement.

Land Disputes

The displacement of a large part of the population in rural Casamance in a climate of fear and precipitation, along with the mining of many of the rice fields and arable land, increased the scarcity and value of land in the region, and favored speculation.

Land issues upon the return of IDPs have led to conflict between villages or ethnic groups, and thus undermine their re-integration but also durable peace in the region. Interviews with villagers in the Ziguinchor and Kolda region have shown that two types of situations have been recurrently contentious (Robin and Ndione 2006). First, the

presence of individuals expecting to benefit from total impunity due to political or family ties on returnees' land. The climate of war has made land appropriation easier by individuals who think they benefit from political or military protection. Fearing retaliation, rural populations have been afraid to denounce those dispossessions to local authorities. Those conditions resemble greatly those that led to independentist claims and sparked the conflict in the early 1980s. Second, the presence of individuals that lived in neighboring villages before and sometimes during the conflict but that resettled in the village in question as part of reconstruction programs led by NGOs. Traditional leaders would have typically allocated a piece of land to them upon request from organizations (Robin and Ndione 2006).

Though land issues have been recognized as one of the root causes of the conflict in Casamance, they have not received much attention from either party in the conflict from a peacemaking perspective (Robin and Ndione 2006). On the contrary, they have been eluded by many of the actors involved and were not mentioned in either the 2001 or the 2004 Peace Agreements signed between the MFDC and the Senegalese government. The history of Casamance has shown the strong attachment of its inhabitants to their land-ownership and self-management. Failure to address those issues is thus in danger of reactivating old grievances and frustrations and trigger a new crises (Robin and Ndione 2006). Land issues are a crucial factor in IDP return and reintegration and should be a crucial part of any reconstruction plan or peace-building effort.

Social Services and Infrastructure

The broadest obstacles to return and smooth reintegration are the lack of infrastructure and overall underdevelopment of the region. Years of conflict have ravaged villages, infrastructure and utilities throughout the region. Fighting forces targeted community infrastructure such as hospitals and school buildings. Returnees often have to re-build their houses from scratch and lack the material and financial resources to do so. Key infrastructures such as wells have been left unused and investment is lacking to rebuild them. Educating the returning children is also a challenge for the region as the school system has suffered neglect during the conflict and is already overstretched (BBC 2005).

School buildings have been affected by violence and it is common to see some without roofs, making it impossible to teach during the rainy season for example.

National Response

Demining Efforts

While the Senegalese army claims to have placed mines in an organized fashion and blames most incidents on the MFDC, evidence suggest that rebels used mines sporadically and that the army is responsible for placing hundreds, if not thousands, of mines around their outposts (Grovestins and Oberstadt 2015). President Macky Sall formally requested foreign assistance to support the *Centre National d'Action Anti Mines au Sénégal* (CNAMS)¹³ de-mining effort in 2012. The German and Norwegian government responded with significant grants and a mission to clear every landmine by a 2016 deadline. Though the de-mining started well, for it to be effective it required the cooperation of both sides of the conflict to establish where mines were laid and the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) was not allowed communication with either party. In May 2013, rebel forces kidnapped 12 demining personnel working near the border of MFDC "territory." During a meeting with the CNAMS in San Domingos, the military faction of the MFDC of César Badiaté said that it understood the need for demining but that CNAMS had reached a "redline" where security of demining operators could not be guaranteed and that further demining operations should be contingent on a broader peace process. After their liberation, NPA decided to withdraw from Senegal as one of their leading member argued the CNAMS was the biggest obstacle to demining efforts in Senegal and that he believed the government was delaying de-mining efforts to serve their own strategic interests (Grovestins and Oberstadt 2015). Since then, there have not been concrete demining activities on the ground (Sagna 2015).

Facilitating Return

The approach currently undertaken by the Senegalese government to mitigate the suffering of IDPs is centered on wider development and reconstruction of the region, development of infrastructure, and increased access to basic services. Government

¹³National Center of Anti-mine Action in Senegal.

support to IDPs has come mainly through the PRAESC (the National Agency for the Revival of Economic and Social Activities in Casamance,)¹⁴ which was launched in June 2001 with support from donors and humanitarian agencies. PRAESC's mandate focuses on demining, demobilization, reconstruction and community development with a focus on reintegration and durable development. However, direct assistance to IDPs is decentralized and the responsibility of each regional body.

PRAESC has been implemented with the help of the World Food Program (WFP) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), along with other international and national NGOs. They have specifically targeted areas with a large concentration of returnees or displaced. WFP notably focused on providing returning children with free school meals to encourage attendance and focused on restoring livelihoods of returning households (WFP 2009). UNICEF has focused on education and has built schools in the commune of Ziguinchor for displaced children and provided training to teachers in post-traumatic stress diagnosis and management. More generally, UN agencies have worked with local governments and NGOs to facilitate the return of populations. Though, the participation of such different and multiple actors is thought to have caused confusion and at time, inefficiencies (IDMC 2010).

International Response

Access to Land and Community-Based Conflict Management Initiative

USAID was the first of the international aid agencies to come back to Casamance as tensions started appeasing in 1999 and thus has been an important actor in the reconstruction of Casamance in alleviating obstacles to return through partnerships with local NGOs on a project basis. They believe that as the origins of the conflict were linked to disputed land rights reforms and lack of opportunities, addressing those issues at the community level would help bring peace to Casamance. One of their core projects consists of setting up peace committees made of members of the community that mediate local conflicts and in particular disputes between returnees and current occupants. By addressing underlying grievances of returnees, the program also aims at stopping recruitment by the MFDC (SAIS Group Meetings, 19 January 2016).

¹⁴Programme de Relance des Activités Economiques et Sociales de la Casamance

Livelihood

As violence decreased in intensity, international aid either channeled through government entities or local NGOs was sent to support IDPs and returnees. Initiatives have focused on the provision of material to help returnees rebuild their homes and villages. Indeed, roofing materials, doors and shutters have been provided by local NGOs. Other have helped villages rebuild amenities such as wells, schools, or clinics, as well as infrastructure such as roads, anti-salt dikes to increase rice cultivation in the region, or farm tracks to make the marketing of produce easier (Evans 2009). To ease the return process, the ICRC has focused on economic security and reconstruction (SAIS Group Meetings, 19 January 2016). They assist returnees notably through the provision of micro-loans and skills training. They provide technical training to returnees so that they can repair and maintain infrastructure in the future as well as training in agricultural skills to help them secure livelihood by improving their productivity. Most of the international organizations have aimed to alleviate the main obstacles to return and mitigate the lack of social services provision from the State.

Conclusion

People of rural Casamance have been returning in increasingly large numbers and the situation they face upon their return is frightening: many of their villages have disappeared into forest outgrowth, infrastructure is missing or aging, the local economy is depressed, and landmines and armed groups still pose serious security threats. Their adaptability and ingenuity in working against those obstacles show the willingness of those who have fled to return and close this 30-year chapter of violence. Both MFDC fighters and members and the government have expressed their commitment to bringing durable peace to Casamance and this will have to start effecting positive change in the lives of people in the region. Facilitating the return and reintegration of those populations by resuming de-mining efforts as well as making the lack of infrastructure and land grievances a priority in reconstruction programs, will be crucial to achieve sustainable peace in the region.

Recommendations

To the Government of Senegal

- **Invest in rebuilding infrastructure to incite return of displaced populations and ease their reintegration.** Government projects should focus on re-building roads to facilitate access to cultivable land and fields as well as community infrastructure such as hospitals and schools.
- **Increase police, *gendarmerie* and army capacity in the region to improve security and ensure safety of civilians.** Insecurity in the form of sporadic acts of banditry perpetrated by groups claiming to be part of the MFDC is a major obstacle to many IDPs' permanent return as it maintains a climate of fear. Protecting civilians from such acts would contribute to restoring trust in central and local government.
- **Take appropriate actions to improve transparency and dialogue between actors involved in land-release operations and de-mining efforts.** The government needs to show donors and international operators its willingness to successfully complete de-mining operations by allowing operators to speak with members both of the Senegalese army and of the MFDC.
- **Include land grievances in reconstruction programs.** Land issues are among the most contentious in Casamance and need to be mediated in order to prevent conflicts from erupting within communities. Empowering community-based dispute-settlement initiatives would undoubtedly contribute to peaceful and sustainable returns of displaced population.

To the MFDC

- **Publically condemn all acts of banditry perpetrated against civilians in the name of the MDFC** and dissociate with any group that commit such acts to restore its credibility as a political movement.
- **Cooperate with de-mining operators and international actors involved in land-release operations on the location and removal of antipersonnel mines near villages and cultivable land.**

To the Aid Community

- **Focus on empowering returnees through livelihood-strengthening programs** to facilitate reintegration of returnees.
- **Continue and strengthen community-based dispute resolution programs** as they help mediate disputes between returnees and occupants on land issues, which will only continue to increase.

Agriculture

Ruchira Srinivasakrishnan

Casamance was long considered Senegal's richest agricultural region. Well-endowed with fertile agricultural land and high levels of rainfall, Casamance leads the country in the production of mangoes, citrus fruits and cashew nuts (World Bank 2013, 9). It is also a major rice producing region in the country. However, many years of conflict and underinvestment have stifled agricultural output in a region that was once considered the bread basket of Senegal. In fact, Casamance, which comprises more than 1.8 million people, suffers from the highest levels of hunger in the country, with 37% of households facing food shortages as of 2014 (IRIN News 2014). Protracted, low-level conflict motivated by a desire for independence from Senegal has negatively impacted agriculture development in Casamance for several decades.

Today, gradual improvements in security and increased investment in the region have translated into improvements in agricultural development. However, low level violence, lack of trust in the Senegalese government, limited resources and corruption continue to hamper agriculture in the region. Economic development through agriculture is a necessity for assuaging grievances held by the Casamançais and achieving lasting peace in the region. This paper will examine the history and current issues surrounding agriculture (under)development in Casamance and the important role development can play in promoting long-term peace.

Background

Around 70% of Senegal's population is involved in agriculture (World Bank 2013, 9). The Casamance has endured Africa's longest low-intensity conflict for the past 30 years, resulting in as many as 60,000 people being displaced to other parts of Senegal and severely damaging the regions' agriculture sector. It is estimated that the conflict has cut agriculture production by 50% in Casamance (World Bank 2013, 9). However, Casamance has immense potential to become food secure and supply products to the rest of the country due to its fertile land, abundant water resources and favorable climate. In fact, Casamance is the second major rice producing zone in the country, providing 27%

of national rice output with 62% of the country's cropped area. By comparison, the Senegal River Valley provides 70% of national output with just 35% of the cropped area, illustrating Casamance's potential for improvements in agricultural productivity (World Bank 2013, 10).

Barriers to Agriculture Development

Economic isolation plays a large role in the agricultural underperformance of the Casamance region. Separated from the rest of Senegal by Gambia, trade and development in Casamance have long suffered due to geographic isolation and lack of adequate transportation routes. These barriers to trade limit the ability of local producers to access markets and adequately harness new opportunities from increased urban demand and export possibilities (World Bank 2013, 11). For instance, an 18-hour ferry ride from Dakar to Ziguinchor is considered the most common form of transportation between Casamance and northern Senegal. Along these lines, the most direct road to the region from Dakar is through Gambia. Transporting produce through Gambia, which requires crossing two international borders in order to reach Dakar is both time intensive and costly (IRIN News 2014). Moreover, around half of all produce in Casamance are left to rot as farmers are unable to move them to markets due to a lack of roads (Pana Press 2013).

While Casamance is well-situated to markets in neighboring Gambia, poor roads have also made it difficult to fully tap into Gambian markets. It is also commonplace for customs officers to confiscate produce and demand bribes on the way to and from Gambia, making it all the more difficult for farmers to realize profits (Evans 2005, 297). In addition to regional roads, a lack of adequate local roads also presents a problem in terms of marketing and trade. For example, non-existent or poor quality roads make it difficult for farmers who live away from major transportation routes to sell their produce even in nearby Ziguinchor, let alone Dakar or Banjul (Evans 2005, 285). Several projects for the construction of local and interregional roads are currently underway. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has funded the construction of around 75 miles of feeder roads in Casamance to pave the way for larger vehicles, rather than bicycles and donkey carts, to carry crops to market (Dong 2014). The World Bank and the Millennium

Challenge Corporation (MCC) have similarly funded projects for interregional road construction, however, progress is slow and it will likely take years to realize the full trade and economic benefits of these initiatives.

A history of neglect by the Senegalese government has also severely hampered development in the region. Indeed, the central government has been accused for years of foregoing investment in Casamance (Fall 2010, 12). This lack of investment relative to agricultural production in the region is shown in Figure 1. As Figure 1 illustrates, the majority of public investment in past years— 40%, has gone to the Senegal River Valley, which was responsible for just 6% of agricultural production. In contrast, Casamance received 25% of public investment, despite comprising around 19% of agriculture production (Oya 2006, 230). The lack of investments has led to underdevelopment in the region and decreased the income generating opportunities for the local people. As a result, many people in Casamance have left farming occupations in the south in search of employment in Dakar (Fall 2010, 13).

Figure 1

TABLE A3
ALLOCATION OF AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENTS BY REGION (PISA 1987–95)

	% PISA (Public Investment Programme)	% of agricultural production	% population
<i>A) Senegal River Valley</i>	40	6.1	8.7
<i>B) Casamance</i>	25	18.9	11.4
<i>Subtotal A + B</i>	65	25	20.1
<i>C) Senegal Oriental</i>	7.8	10.2	4
<i>D) Groundnut Basin</i>	6.7	59.1	46.8
<i>E) Forestry areas</i>	3.3	5.7	4.1
<i>F) Niayes</i>	1.4	Nd	25
<i>G) Cap Vert</i>	0.4	Nd	nd
<i>H) National level (unspecified)</i>	14.8	Na	na

Source: Oya 2006.

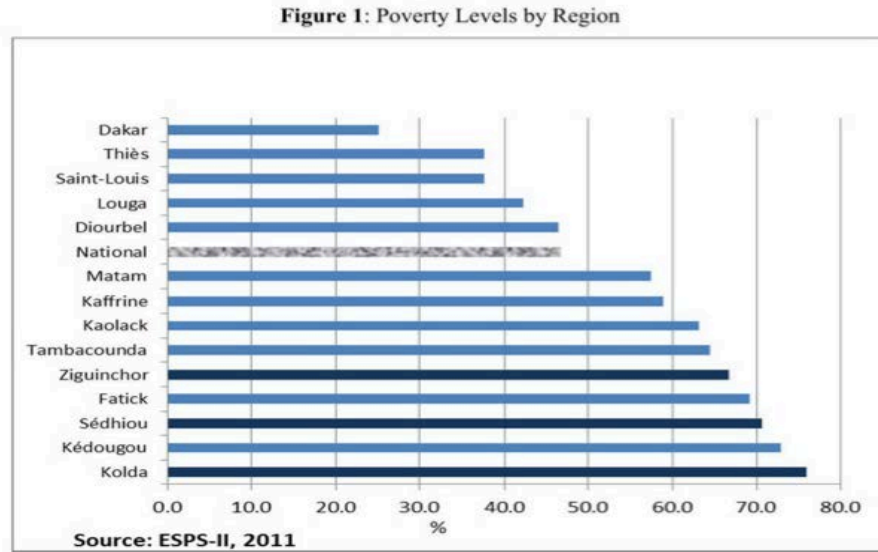
Issues of neglect and underinvestment stem from Senegal's colonial history and constitutional design from its time under French rule. Under this hyper-centralized system, Casamance has long been marginalized as a distant region under direct control from Dakar, causing much political, economic and social neglect during the administrations of Senghor, Diouf and Wade. Due in part to its isolated geography and

the differing ethnic and religious traditions of its inhabitants, the Casamance region has historically been considered a “backward” region by the central government, leading to much frustration among the Casamançais.

Senegal’s hyper-centralized constitutional design has had a negative impact on the agriculture sector in Casamance. For example, land tenure and by extension, farming has been dominated in past decades by the interests of the central government. The government attempted to control land allocation through the adoption of the 1964 National Land Act, which established the state’s property rights over all land for which no legal deed existed (World Bank 2013, 16). This enabled northerners to buy land from the Diola at prices below the land’s value in order to cultivate peanuts (Fall 2010, 13). In the past, the government has attempted to grow peanuts for export in order to increase national profits. The Diola have associated the crops with colonialism as peanuts have neither been profitable for them nor useful in terms of self-sustenance. This control over land allocation and crop cultivation violated Diola customs and traditions, in which land is sacred and passed down from generation to generation. These actions have inhibited the livelihoods of many Casamançais and in turn contributed to the deep feelings of neglect and frustration that fueled the secessionist rebellion.

In addition to isolation and underinvestment, climate change, in the form of a decline in rainfall since the 1970s, has further hampered agricultural output and productivity. The decrease in rainfall has resulted in high salinization of rice-growing areas, which has in turn contributed to a general decrease in the fertility of the land and the non productivity of thousands of hectares of salinized or acidified valleys (Bayemi, Boulenger and Traoré 2005, 1). Combined with the effects of the conflict, decreased rainfall and salinization have led to a decline in agricultural revenue and food insecurity in the region. Moreover, these climatic conditions have forced people to shift from subsistence farming to cash cropping and migrant remittances as a means of obtaining rice for consumption (Evans 2005, 293). As a result, Casamance and the three regions that comprise it, Ziguinchor, Sédhiou and Kolda, are among the poorest parts of Senegal, as seen in Figure 2. It is difficult to ameliorate these challenges without sufficient investment from the government and international actors to support sustainable agricultural development in the region.

Figure 2



Source: The World Bank.

Impact of the Conflict on Agriculture Development

The conflict has affected the agriculture sector in Casamance through multiple channels, which can be analyzed through the broader lens of insecurity. One major source of insecurity is the presence of landmines from the conflict, which have caused hundreds of injuries and deaths in Casamance through the years, as also discussed in the preceding chapter by Alice Dufeu. The areas with the greatest number of landmines correspond to fall back areas of the MFDC along both the northern border with Gambia and the southern border of Guinea Bissau (Bayemi, Boulenger and Traoré 2005, 36). The existence of mines has led to the abandonment of otherwise fertile agricultural land and has also prevented many internally displaced peoples from being able to return to farming following the end of violent conflict (SAIS Group Meeting, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Dakar, January 2016). Moreover, the landmines have hampered agricultural trade as public transport providers are often discouraged from serving areas believed to contain landmines (Evans 2005, 303). Similarly, the widespread seeding of landmines by the MFDC in 1997 prompted key donors in the Casamance, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the African Development Fund and the U.S.

Agency for International Development (USAID) to abruptly end a number of agriculture development projects in the region (Evans 2002).

Although a demining campaign is being conducted under the auspices of Handicap International and the South African group Machedem, efforts are incomplete and mines continue to pose a threat to agriculture. As Michael P. Moore (Landmines in Africa 2016) explains in “Why Mine Action Matters: Landmines, Casamance and the End of a Thirty Year War,” by making it difficult to farm land and access roads, mines hamper agricultural development and contribute to perpetuating the cycle of poverty in the region:

Last, poverty has become endemic in the Casamance. Between people fleeing the violence and agricultural lands abandoned due to landmine contamination, what was once the breadbasket of Senegal had been allowed to run fallow. ‘For us the demining represents a return to normal life. This will allow people to escape from the poverty into which the landmines plunged them.’ But in addition to alleviating poverty through cultivation, trade across the borders with the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau can resume. Roads that had been closed due to fears of landmine contamination will now be opened allowing trade within the Casamance. The World Bank estimates that 0.1% of contamination by landmines results in a 0.5% decrease in GDP. For every field freed of landmines, the economy of the whole will grow

In the past, land mines as well as broader level insecurity due to the conflict have made international organizations reluctant to engage in long-term development in Casamance. As stated many times in interviews, the Casamance is a region with neither peace nor war. This situation of low-level, protracted conflict has generated much debate regarding whether the Casamance problem is primarily one of conflict or of development, which in turn has made both humanitarian and development organizations reluctant to intervene. For example, in 2014, Robert Piper, then UN humanitarian coordinator for the Sahel, admitted that Casamance presents a real “dilemma” for the international aid community (IRIN News 2015). Piper noted, “on the one hand, there are very real needs...particularly food insecurity. On the other hand, we also need to recognize that this is a well-endowed part of Senegal that should not have a humanitarian operation” (IRIN News 2015). While humanitarian organizations have been hesitant to engage in

Casamance due to its ample resources, development organizations have also been reluctant to engage in long-term projects due to insecurity. As members of a development agency explained, “there was little motivation to engage in long-term development due to insecurity. What is the guarantee that tomorrow the infrastructure you built will still be standing?” (SAIS Group Meeting, Dakar, January 2016). Although improvements in the security situation in recent years has led to more involvement from development agencies such as USAID and the World Bank, development efforts remain piecemeal and uneven, with many people in more remote parts of Casamance lacking assistance. There is broad consensus that a negotiated peace agreement is necessary to complete demining efforts and promote increased involvement from foreign development organizations.

Aside from land mines, a general lack of security further hindered development by making it more difficult for farmers to access markets and engage in trade. For instance, rural kitchen gardeners in Casamance, who are largely women, were often discouraged from supplying the Ziguinchor market with their produce due to fear of armed robbery (Evans 2005, 302). Similarly, during the height of the conflict in the 2000s, traders from northern Senegal were often deterred from coming to Casamance to buy local produce due to the mines, with the few who risked it in a strong position to impose high prices on producers (Evans 2005, 302).

It is important to note that problems of insecurity disproportionately affect women in Casamance. Many women have been forced to stop or reduce their participation in subsistence farming as a result of the conflict. Reasons underlying this fact include the threat of land mines in agricultural fields and areas where women commonly harvest cashews and retrieve firewood, memories of sexual violence and assault by armed robbers and fear of having their crops and produce stolen by rebels and other groups. Moreover, given that most transport work for economic activities is undertaken by women, they are particularly affected by the poor local infrastructure and unsafe transportation options in Casamance. Indeed, women have lost a considerable amount of autonomy since the advent of the conflict in the 1980s (World Bank 2013, 31).

Agricultural Development in Casamance Today

Today, Casamance is largely peaceful and conflict has subsided to a minimal level. There is a desire, at least among the young people in Casamance to move on from the painful memories of the struggle for independence towards creating a more hopeful economic outlook for the region (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, January 2016). This is in line with the Senegalese government's desire to finally free itself of the conflict by addressing it first and foremost, as a problem of development. Under Macky Sall, the government has pursued a strategy of decentralization and investment, in order to assuage the Casamance issue, which has been the Achilles heel of an otherwise peaceful country. The government is operating with the understanding that the key to sustained peace in Casamance is development and better economic linkages between Casamance and the rest of Senegal. This also coincides with the government's broader strategy to focus on development based on the comparative advantage of the various regions of the country (World Bank 2013, 7). In the case of Casamance, its comparative advantage resides in agriculture. This implies that the development goals as well as the desire for sustainable peace of both the Senegalese government and the Casamançais are well-aligned. However, despite increased funding from the government and international actors, the fact remains that agricultural development in the region has been slow and a perception of neglect and underinvestment persists among the Casamançais. Indeed, many in Casamance are distrustful of the government's plans to develop the region, especially as previous promises to do so have been lack luster (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, January 2016).

There have been investments in a variety of development projects relevant to agriculture by both international actors and the government in recent years. For example, the World Bank's Casamance Development Pole Project has committed to investing \$40 million to improve the productivity of rice, mangoes and other crops, rehabilitate rural roads to better link farmers to local markets, and create jobs for youth and female farmers (World Bank 2013). Similarly, the MCC and the Senegalese government signed a compact in 2009 to boost economic growth by increasing agricultural productivity through investing in roads and irrigation networks. These projects appear to support the idea that investment in Casamance is increasing. Yet, a common sentiment that was

expressed during the SAIS research trip was that the benefits of these projects were not immediately visible to those living in the region. This points to the fact that long-term projects such as the building of roads must also be combined with agricultural development projects that have tangible results in the short-term. Moreover, although the support of international donors and development organizations is critical for improving the situation in Casamance, it is also beneficial for the government to play a larger role in these projects in order to enhance the sense of political good will among the Casamançais.

Additionally, there is a disconnect between the government and development organizations on one side and the Casamançais on the other, in terms of accurately assessing the needs of farmers in the region. For example, a need for investing in salt water dams or barrages was expressed multiple times in interviews. Several people active in Casamance civil society stressed the fact that underinvestment by the government and donor agencies in large anti-salt barrages has allowed saltwater to accumulate in valleys where rice is grown, undermining productivity. A number of barrage projects that were underway in the 1990s collapsed following the departure of aid agencies from Casamance due to the dangerous conditions created by the conflict (Evans 2005, 301). Development of these barrages has been slow to resume since that time but would play an important role in improving agricultural productivity in the region.

Along these lines, corruption both at the local and federal level also plays a role in diminishing the effectiveness of development aid and investment to the Casamance. For example, federal funds earmarked for Casamance often end up in the pockets of local Casamance ministers or regional chiefs (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, January 2016). Corruption and poor governance have discouraged foreign investment in Casamance, negatively impacted rural livelihoods and perpetuated the sense of neglect from the national government among the people of Casamance.

Lastly, social and cultural factors also contribute to the slow progress of the agriculture sector. Specifically, there is a belief among many Senegalese that the Diola people, the majority ethnic group in Casamance, are not inclined towards commerce and thus that economic development in the region is likely to be underwhelming (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, January 2016). As animists, the Diola support an

egalitarian political system and reject any central authority, which from the point of view of the government, makes them difficult to govern and trade with. In addition to a perceived lack of interest in commerce among the Diola, the youth in Casamance are also disinterested in pursuing employment in the agriculture sector. Instead, many of the young people seek to leave Casamance in pursuit of office jobs in Dakar (SAIS Group Meetings, Ziguinchor, January 2016). It is apparent that efforts to create jobs for youth in agriculture will need to be accompanied by sensitization to the benefits and variety of jobs available in this sector.

Overall, economic development, and more specifically, increases in the efficiency and output of the agriculture sector in Casamance have an important role in healing the wounds of the conflict and assuaging long-held grievances due to neglect from the central government. In fact, the current state of relative calm in Casamance underscores the importance of enacting measures now to help Casamance reach its full potential as a food secure agricultural hub in Senegal. Agricultural development, if done in a sustainable and inclusive manner, is mutually beneficial to both the central government in terms of ensuring that the Casamance does not become a source of insecurity for the rest of the country and to the people of Casamance themselves, in terms of ensuring food security and increasing income generating opportunities.

Recommendations

The Government of Senegal

- **Continue with demining initiatives**, as this crucial for ensuring security in the region and attracting donor support for agriculture projects.
- **Focus on using a participatory rather than top-down approach to development projects** in order to build trust and ensure that project goals are aligned with the needs of Casamançais.
- In addition to long-term infrastructure projects, **initiate more short-term agriculture projects with tangible results**, such as the creation of local vegetable gardens and small-scale barrages to improve livelihood options for farmers.

- Focus on **engaging women farmers in development projects**, especially since they are disproportionately affected by insecurity and lack of transportation in Casamance.
- **Initiate awareness raising campaigns for youth** regarding the potential profitability of agriculture sector jobs, stressing the fact that agriculture development can yield to any number of jobs off the farm, in areas such as packaging and processing.

The International Community

- Continue to support the Senegalese government by **providing funding and technical expertise for infrastructure projects** such as road construction.
- **Fund and promote commercial agriculture and value chains**, with a focus on processing activities, diversifying to new cash crops and improving efficiency of agriculture through modernization.

Food Security

Chelsey Buurman

In the previous harvest seasons, extreme levels of food insecurity were recorded in the Casamance region in southern Senegal. In the region where nature is most generous, over a third of the population faces food shortages, with ten percent experiencing regular extreme food insecurity. Hunger levels in the rural areas of Kolda, Sédhiou and Ziguinchor have been higher than those in urban areas, and regularly peaked to over 65% in the past years (FAO-WFP 2014). Early onsets of the lean season and inadequate food stocks problematized food access for the poor and very poor households, concentrated in rural areas (IFAD and WFP 2014; 2015). In rural areas, 57% of the population is poor, and is struck first by food insecurity (Dang et al. 2014). Although the conflict's intensity has decreased, human and agricultural development in the Casamance has stagnated. If the Government of Senegal (GOS) fails to address the food insecurity in the rural areas, and particularly in the Casamance, the perceived neglect is likely to persist. The feeling of resentment under the Casamançais remains strong, and the perceived dependence of the north on the resources in the Casamance is considered unfair. The compounded effect of a sequence of failed and counterproductive government policies, trade agreements and adjustment programs since independence has led to an irregular agricultural production, enforced by geographical and climatological challenges and the ongoing civil conflict. The GOS' post-independence agricultural policy promoted the production and export of cash crops at the expense of staple foods for domestic use. The GOS chose to exploit crops that were high risk but low yield, such as cashews harvested by vulnerable groups. After trade shocks, increased competition and price collapses between the 1970s and the 1990s, crisis finally hit and Senegal's undiversified agricultural portfolio left it vulnerable to hunger. It is no coincidence that at the height of failed government policies and the agricultural and food crises in the 1980s, the MFDC and their separatist cause started to gain traction. How is it possible that in a region so well endowed with natural resources, regular rainfall and lush green fields, people depend on food rations and handouts?

Ineffective reform policies and the conflict have reinforced the fragile food security situation. The GOS incentivized farmers with large subsidies to grow cash crops

such as groundnuts instead of self-sustenance growth. When the profitability of these crops declined and terms of trade fell, the imbalances grew. With their farms heavily influenced and shaped by government policies, farmers have faced great difficulties providing for their own families. In addition to this, food security has been affected by the ongoing unrest between the different MFDC factions and the GOS. The widespread use of landmines in the conflict and direct violence has led to an estimated 60,000 IDPs who fled their homes and abandoned their farms. Unexploded ordinance prevents IDPs from returning, forcing them to live in economic insecurity, as discussed in the preceding chapter by Alice Dufeu. Long-term displacement due to the conflict has led to land rights issues and neglected lands have become impossible to farm due to salinization and desertification. Even when communities return to their lands, they face numerous technical issues and are unable to effectively cultivate land.

Agricultural Reform and Economic Development

Similar to the rest of West Africa, Senegal has a shortage of staple foods such as rice, millet, sorghum and other similar carbohydrate rich foods that form the basis of the Sub-Saharan African diet (World Bank 2015). The GOS makes up for the difference by importing these foods in large quantities, resulting in a large trade deficit. The negative trade balance is due to high levels of imports of rice, wheat, onions and other cereals, and high volume, low-value exports such as groundnuts, oil seeds, fish and tropical fruits such as melons and mangoes (Collinson 2002). In 2013, Senegal had a negative trade balance of \$6.95 billion, making the country extremely vulnerable to price hikes, such as the 2008 global increase in food prices. Starting in 2007, the increase in oil prices affected the price of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, which eventually resulted in a 68% increase of the FAO food price index, including a 74% increase in the price of maize and a 166% increase in rice (FAO 2009). The resulting drop of staple food imports affected the food security of the Senegalese, especially in the rural areas of Casamance and Kolda.

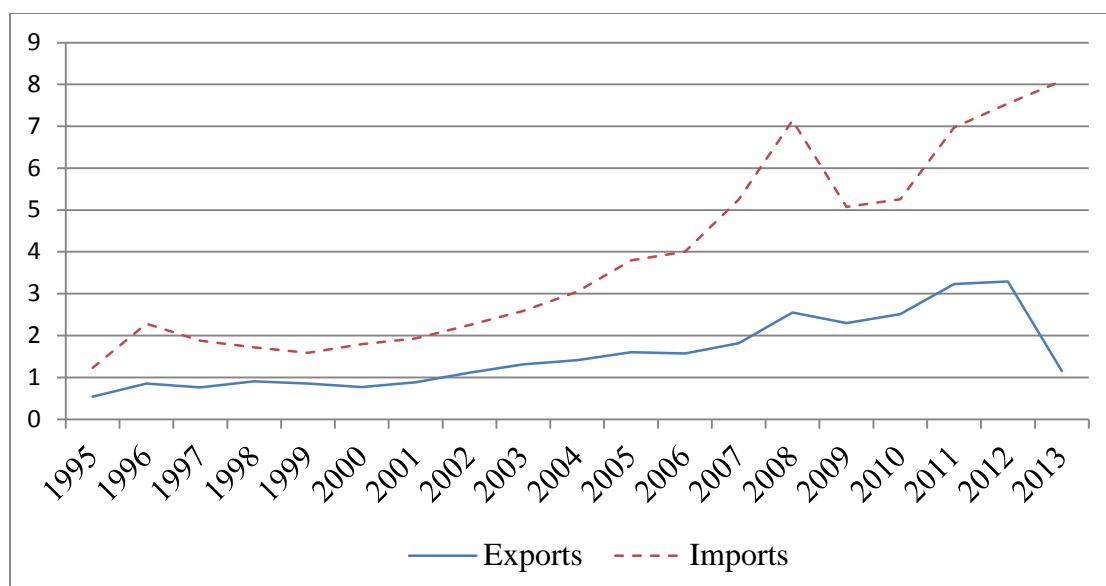


Figure 1: Senegal Trade Balance 1995-2013. Source: CEPII 2016.

Senegal's habit of importing cheap rice is a remnant of colonial rule, when France forced Senegal to import rice from Indochina at low prices in the 1930s. After independence in 1960, state interventionism in agriculture continued, especially in the groundnut export. The GOS adopted a model of African socialism for economic development, which resulted in heavy state involvement in all private sector economies. State-controlled corporations were established to promote modern production methods and to diversify agricultural production (Diagne et al. 2006). The structural staple food deficit can be traced back to the country's post-independence economic policy that was built on cultivating cash crops, in particular groundnuts and peanuts, to finance the purchase of staple foods. This included multiple adverse measures and a lack of export diversification that have created a structural crisis since the 1970s. With current local production costs being higher than the price of rice, which is higher than the price of imported rice, Senegal's dependency on rice imports is unsurprising (Claassen and Salin 1991).

Initially, these policies were successful. In the early 1960s, Senegal produced almost a quarter of the world's exports in groundnuts. Peanuts were the driving force behind rapid economic growth, and so the government planned to capitalize on this. The groundnut export made up three-quarters of Senegal's total exports in that period, and was planted on over half of the country's cultivated area (Youm 1991). To protect the

sector, the GOS implemented protectionist measures. Although these policies were profitable in the short-term, they would hinder economic growth in the long term. As a former French colony united as French West Africa, the Senegalese groundnut sector benefited from preferential access to the French market. To support the sector even more, the government favored import-substitution industrialization, and high tariffs as well as other non-tariff trade barriers protected the sector (Kirschke 1991). But when AOF fell apart in 1960, the market shrank, dragging investment flows down and driving operating costs up. It became clear that Senegal would not experience an economic wonder based on its peanut production. With an annual population growth rate of 2.7% (World Bank 2016) and shrinking government revenues, budgetary problems quickly followed. Since the GOS allocated the majority of its revenue from groundnuts to the import of staple foods, declining profits on groundnuts lead to a deterioration of the terms of trade. Whatever profits the GOS made on the sale of groundnuts was not enough to feed the growing population. The initial decision to encourage the cultivation of export-oriented cash crops over self-subsistence farming would amplify the issues of food insecurity. As the GOS tried to push farmers into the market sector of groundnuts and away from sustenance production (millet), discontent grew.

Terms of trade deteriorated even further when the European Economic Community (EEC) of which France was a member, further integrated in the 1960s by implementing a common agricultural policy that reduced internal tariffs and aimed to protect member states from foreign imports. As part of the negotiations, EEC members were expected to cease any form of price support to their former colonies, and in 1968 France halted its price support to Senegalese agricultural produce and groundnuts. Terms of trade deteriorated by 25% and producer prices fell by 16%. To offset the price drop, the government decided to provide local producers with substantial subsidies, including interest-free loans and loan forgiveness (Youm 1991). Groundnut exports fell by half, increasing the trade and budget deficits. Meanwhile, the public sector rapidly expanded due to the formation of many state agencies for the implementation of import substitution agencies (Badiane 2001). The tertiary sector in Dakar has been large since it served as the seat of the French administration. This function left the city with a large bureaucratic legacy and budget deficits, which continue to burden society (Claassen and Salin 1991).

Despite record peanut crop profits in 1965, harvests failed in the subsequent years. The Agricultural Marketing Office (OCA) was set up to purchase farm output, distribute inputs and import rice. Prices were determined by the administrative regime if the state had set the prices, and by a regulatory regime if the private sector had set the prices (Diagne 2006). The complicated system of cooperatives, delayed payments, credit and marketing payments instead of cash was inefficient. The Sahel drought of the early 1970s did not only bring famine, but also caused the price of groundnuts to increase. Failed harvests in the U.S. and substantial grain purchases by the Soviet Union drove up groundnut prices and world demand collapsed in 1973. Key groundnut importers such as the EEC substituted groundnuts with other oilseeds products and simultaneously increased their own domestic production capacity. Producer prices for groundnuts fell and inputs such as fertilizers became more expensive. Senegalese production of groundnuts was at a low point, and rural incomes decreased by more than half over the span of just five years (Badiane 2001). When in the early 1970s the first oil price shock drove up prices of imported cereals and rice, the trade deficit grew even further. The GOS decided to continue handing out food subsidies and accumulated significant levels of foreign debt. Although the GOS attempted to diversify its exports, prices for other products such as phosphates eventually also fell. As the budget deficit grew, its ability to withstand the volatile world prices decreased and economic decline set in.

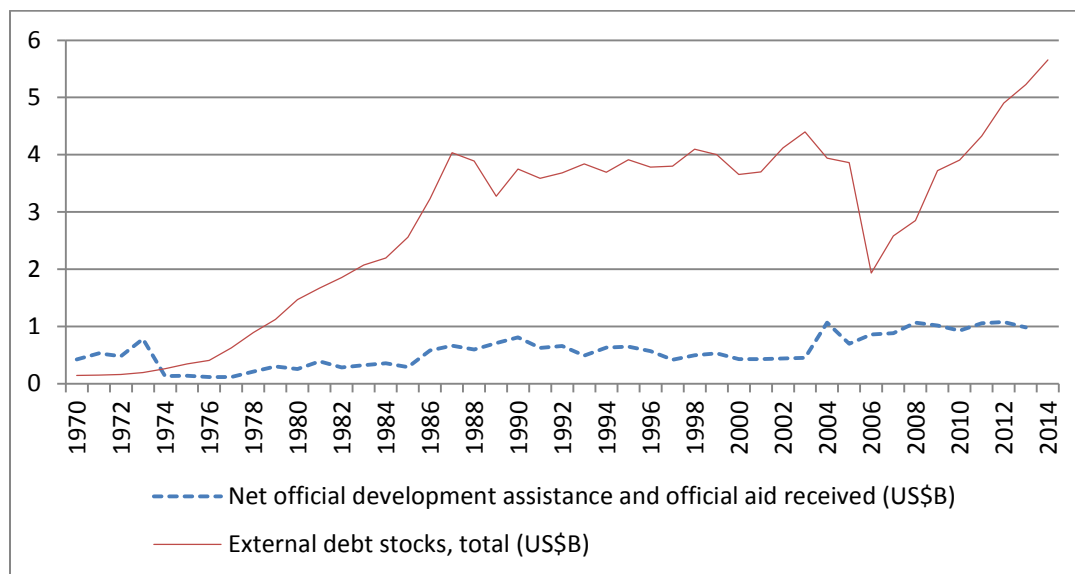


Figure 2: Foreign Debt and Official Development Assistance, 1970-2014 (in billions).

Source: World Bank Human Development Indicators.

The income of peanut farmers declined and debts increased due to the rising costs of inputs and heavy taxes. The government failed to support the rural population, and as discontent under the farmers grew, OCA non-compliance grew. Farmers did not repay the loans that rural development services had provided them, which resulted in collective debt default (Schumacher 1985). Some farmers moved from peanut farming to sustenance farming; others illegally crushed peanuts for oil production to meet their needs, and large quantities of groundnuts were flowing over the Gambian and Guinean borders as farmers resorted to parallel markets. In the early 1980s, an estimated 100,000 to 250,000 tons of peanuts illegally crossed the borders (Claassen and Salin 1991).

The bureaucratic internal marketing system extracted and absorbed more resources from farmers than it reinvested in the sector. The cooperative system was doomed to fail, and the collapse of the agricultural credit system came as no surprise. With the philosophy of replacing individual responsibility with village solidarity, each cooperative was built around a number of villages. As these villages belonged to the same cooperative, the solidarity was not confined to a single village. A freerider problem was inevitable. When some villages were late with loan payments or defaulted completely, others refused to be held accountable. This set off a domino-effect of collective debt defaults. Unable to persuade the villages and with no options left, the GOS moved to debt cancellation of all seed and fertilizer debts in 1982. However, this procedure did not distinguish between those who had consistently made loan payments and those who had not, and the relationship between the rural farmers and the government in Dakar worsened. As the profits of groundnuts continued to decline, the GOS lost its grip on the situation. Since the internal marketing system had failed to set correct domestic price signals, farmers decided to sell their produce elsewhere. The lack of true prices for inputs and outputs prevented the establishment of an effective market. Most alarmingly, the policies consistently demonstrated a bias in favor of the urban population and bureaucratic waste, leading to a situation where in agriculture is systemically unappreciated (Claassen and Salin 1991). In the Casamance, these sentiments of inequality have been the strongest.

The GOS institutional capacity for agricultural policy is historically weak. Decades of failed administrative reforms and organizational weaknesses of the

cooperative marketing system are the institutional causes for the rural population's discontent and the food insecurity today. The GOS' attempts to commercialize the production of millet and sorghum and decrease their dependency on a single crop were never successful, and rice imports remain high today. Stabilization of rice prices is important in early stages of economic growth, and should be prioritized (Timmer 2015). Although government programs were ridden with corruption and non-compliance, the GOS did not allow any competition in the agriculture sector, and private firms were prohibited from competing with the cooperatives. Despite its desperate attempts to engineer egalitarian, community-oriented social change and rural socialism, the GOS was forced to abandon this and instead pursue optimization of bureaucratic efficiency. It eventually conceded to providing incentives such as technical services for individual producers in the 1970s in the hopes that production would increase (Schumacher 1985).

However, the groundnut sector was never internationally competitive to start with. The growth model that the GOS pursued was unsustainable and the structural adjustment programs and reforms decreased the production of staple foods, leading to higher levels of food insecurity. The government programs failed to allocate resources efficiently, distribute inputs fairly and market agricultural products adequately. Realizing the unsustainability of the situation, the government gradually started to remove tariffs, liberalize trade and implement stabilization policies in 1984. It aimed to develop a private sector that would fulfill the functions previously held by the state, but failed to provide producers with access to credit and inputs, so harvests remained low-yield (Kelly and Delgado 1991). But this was too little too late. Increased competition from other countries drilled down the value of groundnuts. Compared to other producers such as the U.S., India and Argentina, Senegal has significantly lower levels of productivity and no notable comparative advantage (Bonnetfond and Couty). In the 1980s, Senegal's agricultural production was one of the worst performing in the region. By the time agricultural tariffs were negotiated in the GATT Uruguay round, Senegal's groundnut sector did not stand a chance.

Rural Discontent

A long sequence of government decisions has contributed to reliance on the Casamance as the primary producer of staple foods, but without the necessary investments and development assistance. Despite having the greatest production potential of the region, rice yields in the Casamance are only one sixth the tonnage per hectare of yields from the northern river valleys. The region faces low yields due to soil constraints, low availability of inputs such as quality seed, adverse effects of climate change and a lack of technical capabilities (USAID 2016). When soil becomes unsuitable for cereal production, West African countries typically switched to cassava production, which only further degrades the soil and depletes nutrients (Bumb, Johnson and Fuentes 2011). Instead of investing in fertilizers and fighting soil degradation, the GOS has for decades prioritized the water storage facilities in the northern parts of the country, pushing capital-intensive plans for irrigation to achieve self-sufficiency, instead of increasing production in the rain-fed areas of the Casamance (Claassen and Salin 1991). The grievances perceived by the rural population in the Casamance are unsurprising. Although it is impossible to confirm an actual lack of investment in the region, the experiences alone are enough to fuel their calls for separatism or enhanced autonomy.

Multiple interviewees cited the importance of the GOS showing its *bonne volonté*, or its goodwill. For them, this means investing in the region and providing them with the financial means necessary for development. When asked about what kind of investments they would like to see, some pointed to the lack of agricultural inputs such as quality seed, fertilizers and machineries, but one person said: “What they invest in does not matter. What matters is that the government in Dakar shows their goodwill, that they are prepared to invest in the Casamance. We need large, visible investments.”

This attitude has resulted in a public choice problem. People have expressed their preference for large, highly visible investments that look more like PR stunts than development projects. If smaller but less visible investments such as technical training would be more effective, it is likely that the population would still conclude that the GOS is neglecting the region’s development. Another example is the choice of projects supported by the GOS and the international community. Division between local communities has also been cited as an obstacle to effective agricultural production.

However, these divisions also present an opportunity for community-level peacebuilding between supporters of different MFDC factions and people of different ethnic groups, as they are forced to work together on agriculture production, anti-poaching and illegal logging of timber. For example, one interviewee informed us how an economic security program was an instrument for reconciliation, as communities are forced to find compromise on what production to focus on. In several cases, this led to villagers identifying the needs for a palm oil press and other micro projects. Agriculture in the Casamance is characterized by many production sub-sectors, such as fruits, vegetable, sesame, palm oil, oysters, etc., which are all underdeveloped and affected by the conflict. Investments in micro projects in these sectors would help develop the region, but are not the glitzy, prominent projects that interviewees referred to (African Development Bank 2005). Mangoes and oil palms thrive in the Casamançais climate, and community choice is an essential step in peacebuilding, creating ownership and self-directed development. However, villagers must also be educated about the consequences of their choices (Otto and Otto 2005). Regional neighbors Côte d'Ivoire and Benin are top exporters of palm oil, and it is unlikely that Senegal can develop a comparative advantage large enough to compete with these countries (USDA 2016). Provisions of infrastructure, such as improved port facilities and a rapid direct route across Gambia to Dakar are necessary to ship mangoes before they spoil.

Challenges

A challenge to investing in agriculture in the region has been the remaining unexploded ordinance. Despite the fact that demining has been successful in several areas, there is a broad understanding that removal of unexploded ordinance cannot be completed without a negotiated peace agreement. However, NGOs have continued to demine areas, clearing an estimated 80% of the total polluted area, but until the region is completely cleared, IDPs are unable to return (Handicap International 2016).

The belief that investing in development will solve the conflict may also prove to be difficult to realize. Although a degree of risk-taking is critical to escaping poverty and enhancing food security, there is no guarantee that there will be immediate returns. Initiatives to increase rural incomes range from investing in fertilizers and switching to

different crops to migrating to a different area. Rural households in the Casamance have less or no buffer at all to fall back on if the risk does not pay off, and so a low-risk strategy may be considered. The downside of deploying assets conservatively is the risk of lower returns or the complete loss of opportunity (Hoddinott 2009). However, if a peace agreement is negotiated and risk is low, average farm incomes are estimated to be 10 to 20% higher (IFAD and WFP 2010). Key to improving rural livelihoods and food security is addressing governance and reducing the risk environment. Bad governance affects vulnerable groups directly, but also causes mistrust, inefficient use of public resources and discourages private or foreign direct investment, while incomes in the Casamance and other rural areas in Senegal are largely determined by on-farm income sources, and make up to 30 to 70% of total household income (IFAD 2010). To address this, the government of Senegal should not only enhance its legitimacy and effectiveness in the Casamance, but also create concrete opportunities for rural populations and their organizations to engage with the government.

Senegal's geographic location makes it sensitive to droughts, rainfall shocks and agricultural fragility. The droughts have led to ecological deterioration, due to an increase in livestock and population. It has pushed farmers south to the humid climates, where the marginal lands are subsequently over-populated, over-farmed and over-grazed. This shift combined with natural soil erosion and encroaching desertification, partly due to years of illicit logging and timber trade, pressured the Casamance. The GOS and farmers must find a way to stimulate growth while working around irregular rainfall patterns (Cabrel 2014). Nowadays, when the growing season comes to an end and the lean season sets in early, dependency on the region increases, and reinforces existing sentiments of Senegal's dependence on Casamance's agricultural production.

The trade agreement penury is not over yet for Senegal. The recent EU-ECOWAS Economic Partnership Agreement has created a free trade zone from which Senegal is unlikely to profit in the short-term. Senegal already enjoys very good access to European markets, but as it fully opens its economy for European imports, they are likely to see another increase in imports. This can lead to a depreciation of real exchange rates and a loss of tariff revenues if European imports such as wheat (more than 86%) and sugar (more than 95%) are liberalized (Bouët et al. 2007, 2016).

Recommendations

- **The GOS should stimulate agriculture production in the rain-fed areas such as the Casamance and reduce the expenditure on capital-intensive projects to expand irrigation agriculture in other parts of the country.** The GOS should be weary of plans for irrigation and water-storage projects in the north and its ambition for achieving self-sufficiency
- **The GOS should specifically target the most affected households: the rural poor.** This would allow the GOS to battle food insecurity more effectively. The GOS should aim to stimulate a dynamic rural economy with rising real wages, stabilized by a concern for volatile food prices.
- **The GOS should promote diversification in agricultural production.** Current government policies still heavily emphasize the production of rice, groundnuts and peanuts. However, diversity in farming is associated with higher family incomes and would improve the situation of lower income groups in rural communities. It would also reduce the dependency on imports and single-crop farming, which has significant ecological consequences on the long-term.
- **The GOS should focus on enhancing economic security in rural areas by investing in micro projects such as palm oil presses and anti-saline dikes to increase productivity under smallholder farmers.** It should also stimulate the creation of small household gardens to improve and strengthen self-sustenance in the lean season. These projects are currently financed and coordinated by international donors, but a larger government role enhances the perception of political goodwill.
- **The GOS cannot reach and maintain its desired level of peanut oil exports unless it achieves an adequate domestic food supply.** The GOS can either continue to import large quantities of rice or increase agricultural production. In order to balance this, the GOS should equally promote cash and food crops and move from traditional cash crops to traditional and introduced food crops. In order to achieve this, it must provide structural technical training and retain the learnt knowledge by focusing on rural youth and institutional capacity.

- **The GOS should reexamine its large subsidy schemes**, which lean towards rice, groundnuts and peanuts, which do not allow for efficient functioning of the market. Therefore, **the GOS should consider measures to reduce agricultural supply rigidities** and more accurately reflect market prices. However, structural transformation of food insecurity requires raising productivity in agricultural and nonagricultural sectors.
- **The GOS should invest, with assistance from donors, civil society and the international community, in agricultural education.** Currently, the farmers' own perception of nutritional needs place limits on the range of policy options the GOS can realistically consider. A change in diet to reduce the reliance on rice imports may also be achieved through education initiatives.
- **The GOS must ensure the safety of demining personnel working on demining activities.** The frozen state of the conflict has led to the return of many IDPs whose fields must be cleared of unexploded ordinance in order for them to be economically secured. Demining personnel must be able to carry out this work safely.
- **The GOS must consider structured short-term measures to cope with food price volatility**, in coordination with donors and the international community. To achieve this, domestic price stabilization, increased supplies of fertilizers and emergency food stocks to local markets and safety nets for the poor, in the form of food aid and cash vouchers, are necessary. The GOS should also design and fund safety nets that protect vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities from chronic poverty.
- **The GOS should support regional and public goods such as infrastructure**, which are essential to sustain adequate food supplies, access to food and adequate nutritional levels. It is also advisable to strengthen regional trade, as the shortage of staple foods is a common problem in West Africa.

Part IV: Economic Development

Underdevelopment

Julia Miller

Three decades after demonstrators flooded the streets of Ziguinchor, replaced Senegalese flags hanging from government buildings with solid white ones, distributed pamphlets encouraging independence, and clashed with *gendarmes*, feelings of economic neglect and exploitation continue to fuel the Casamance conflict. Lack of federal government investment in basic public goods such as health and transportation infrastructure has stunted regional development, inhibited commercial trade, and exacerbated pre-existing tensions between Ziguinchor and Dakar. Moreover, profits from the industries in which the state has dabbled, notably agriculture and tourism, have disproportionately benefited *nordistes* (northerners) prompting many Casamançais to regard Senegal as just another colonial power. In order to move the peace-process forward, the Senegalese government must overcome the MFDC's historic distrust of its intentions in the region by implementing confidence-building measures, following through on its pledges, and speedily achieving concrete results. This paper will explore the socio-economic aspects of the conflict and make recommendations as to how the Senegalese government, the MFDC, and the international community can address key grievances and help move the parties one step closer to peace.

Underdeveloped and Exploited Casamance: A History

The Casamançais' economic grievances date back to the founding of the Senegalese state and center around Senegalese government and *nordiste* exploitation of the region's natural resources and money-making sectors. Just four years after independence, newly instituted government policies on land rights, such as the National Domains Act of 1964, turned non-deeded land over to the state. As land in Diola culture is considered sacred and traditionally passed down from one generation to another, many Casamançais were forced off land their families had inhabited and farmed for generations. The Act, implemented in the Casamance in 1979, was meant to encourage productive land use in order to make the country agriculturally self-sufficient. (Humphreys and Ag Mohamed 2006, 271-272). However, in reality, it benefited the *nordistes*—who were supported by

the government and more easily able to obtain land titles—and made life for locals that much harder (Evans December 2004, 3). In addition to the Act being a cultural faux-pas and reminiscent of colonial policies, it ultimately resulted in food insecurity, economic marginalization, and further dissatisfaction with the central government.

In the same vein, Senegalese government and *nordiste* domination of Casamance's tourist sector led to the rebel argument that wealth generated in the Casamance disproportionately benefits the North. In the 1960s, private-sector investments transformed Casamance's unparalleled white-sand beaches into a booming tourist industry. Tourism is Casamance's most profitable industry and Senegal's second biggest revenue source, after fishing. Club Méditerranée, the first major hotel in Cap Skirring, opened in 1973, and its success attracted a number of investors, including the Senegalese government. Since 2000, the government—supported by the European Union and the World Bank—has worked to develop the region's infrastructure and revamp its tourism sector. For example, it built a new road from Ziguinchor to Cap Skirring and extended the runways at the Ziguinchor and Cap Skirring airports to accommodate international flights (IRIN 2008).

Unfortunately, the growth of Cap Skirring's tourist sector has not noticeably improved the Casamançais' quality of life. The majority of the profits generated from tourism do not trickle down; instead, they are transferred abroad, incorporated into the government budget, or collected by Dakar's tourist entrepreneurs (Fall 2010, 14). For many locals, investment in the high-end tourist industry is an example of significant government spending on grandiose projects of limited value to the general public. As of 2010, locals reported a lack of permanent access to running water and difficulty finding work in the tourist sector, as it is dominated by *nordistes* (Fall 2010, 14).

Given Casamance's lush green forests, pristine beaches, arable land, and abundant natural resources—such as rice, peanuts, maize, palm oil, timber, fruit shrubs, tuberous plants, cashews, sorghum, and cotton—one would assume its socio-economic indicators would be superior to those of the rest of Senegal, which is located in the arid Sahel. However, this is not the case. Poor transport infrastructure makes healthcare difficult to access and goods hard to transport. Infant mortality rates in Casamance's three main cities—Ziguinchor, Kolda, and Sédhiou—are well above the national average (Agence

Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie and ICF International 2012, 116) as are the rates of child malnutrition (UNICEF 2009, 28) and HIV/AIDS. Further, many of the region's basic healthcare centers fail to meet national standards. A clinic that opened in Western Casamance in 2010 and serves 2,500 people from ten villages, for example, employs midwives and community health workers, but no doctors. Moreover, poverty levels in Casamance are among the highest in the country, and half of households are vulnerable to food insecurity (IRIN, 2009). The poverty level in the Casamance is estimated to be 60%, while Senegal's poverty level is estimated to be 46.7% (Central Intelligence Agency 2011). Although these indicators are coupled with three decades of ongoing, low-level conflict, they are also part of a larger pattern.

Casamance's below-average socio-economic indicators are not solely due to protracted conflict; they are also indicative of five and a half decades of minimal central government investment in the region's public goods. Statistics from 1978 indicate that on average, there was one doctor per 13,691 Senegalese, while in Casamance, there was one doctor per 32,342 Casamançais. Statistics from the following year show a similar disparity: the regional average for paved roads was 486 kilometers, while the Casamance lacked paved roads altogether (Humphreys and Ag Mohamed 2006, 170).

Government Initiatives

While the Casamance's socio-economic indicators remain some of the country's worst, they have started to slowly improve thanks to increased government investment in the region and the presence of international and non-profit organizations. Successive Senegalese presidents have used development as a carrot in an effort to bring the conflict to a close. In the 1990s, Abdou Diouf invested significantly in northern Casamance's road infrastructure, and when Abdoulaye Wade came to power, he promised a development package for the region, which included a peace deal, the removal of landmines, and economic growth measures (Pinfari 2013, 165). Further, as part of the 2004 General Peace Accord, he established the National Agency for the Reconstruction of Casamance (ANRAC). Tasked with carrying out the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of MFDC ex-combatants, demining, and long-term development planning for the Casamance, the Agency was given a budget of U.S. \$402 million (Diop 2013,

245-246). The government's financial commitment, though, was predicated on the signing of a final peace agreement. When negotiations broke down, ANRAC was kept in place. However, without its hefty government allowance, it was only able to carry out small development projects, such as building schools in rural areas and establishing a university in the Casamance (IRIN 2006).

When Macky Sall ascended the presidency in 2012, he proposed a Senegalese "Marshall Plan" for the Casamance. He supported new projects like the building of a ring road; the purchase of a cargo ship to go between Casamance and Dakar; a bridge over the Gambia River; a special rice production program; and the construction of new middle schools and a second university in the Ziguinchor region (U.S. Embassy 2012). He also secured \$40million from the World Bank to boost local rice and mango cultivation, create jobs, and repair roads, and accepted a five-year, \$540 million Millennium Challenge Corporation funded compact to help rebuild a key 157-mile stretch of the highway from Kounkane to Ziguinchor (Bullington 2013).

Despite these efforts, MFDC factions insist they have seen little development progress. Ten years after the announcement of Senegal's first major Casamance development initiative, hospitals are still difficult to access, and rebels claim there is little evidence of central government presence in the area. They point to the fact that buildings in Ziguinchor are in need of a face-lift, and the only visible development projects are funded by the United States government. One MFDC member explained how members of his faction were excited about Macky Sall's development plan and hopeful that things would be different. However, lack of visual progress has led them to return to memories of past governments and to conclude that Sall's government is like them, all talk and no action. Most disappointing to them was the failure to build a bridge connecting Senegal to Gambia, which would lessen the travel time between Casamance and Dakar (SAIS Group Meeting with Rebel Factions, January 2016), as discussed in Zachary Vinyard's chapter.

Reducing the time and the money it takes to travel from Casamance to Dakar is of great importance to many Casamançais, as they feel that easier access to Dakar is key to reducing the region's economic isolation (SAIS Group Meetings, January 2016). Thus, if Dakar is to gain public support from those Casamançais that wish to remain part of

Senegal, linking Casamance to the capital, both physically and economically, is a priority. With Gambia situated in between the Casamance and the rest of Senegal, this is not an easy task, since it depends completely on Banjul's cooperation. World Bank funding for a bridge is available but construction has been delayed by the Gambian government. Until the bridge is built, the journey is fraught with uncertainty, for it means crossing the border twice, encountering corrupt border guards, waiting hours for a ferry to cross the Gambia River, and being subject to the whims of Gambian president Yahya Jammeh.

Alternative options are a distant second best but can be improved: travelers can drive for hours on badly paved roads that circumvent Gambia, pay a hefty price for a daily forty minute flight, or take an overnight ferry running only twice a week. Some of these issues can be easily fixed. Building a high-speed roadway would cut travel time in half. One interviewee estimated that such a road could be completed in two years. Allowing for competition on flights would increase the number of flights available, and thus the number of people able to travel between the two cities each day, and drive down prices. By turning a core grievance into a confidence-building measure, the government could demonstrate that it is listening to and acting on its citizens' needs.

International Donor Involvement in Casamance

International and non-profit organizations (NGOs) largely fulfill the state's responsibilities when it comes to social services. In non-rebel held areas, international entities work alongside local NGOs and state officials. In rebel-held areas, they provide services in lieu of the state. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for example, runs five clinics that have thus far served over 20,000 people. It also collaborates with national health authorities to run malaria vaccination campaigns, provides economic support in the form of micro-loans, and helps internally displaced persons (IDPs) get back on their feet. Meanwhile, the World Bank has provided \$40million to help expand local rice and mango cultivation, create jobs, and repair roads.

The United States also has a strong presence in the region. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to support the Senegalese government in its mission to establish a lasting peace by implementing grassroots conflict

resolution and peace process advocacy/training programming. Further, the Millennium Challenge Corporation has entered into a five-year, \$540 million compact with Senegal to boost economic growth by promoting agricultural productivity and investing in roads and irrigation networks.

A visible international presence in Casamance, though, is a double-edged sword. The need for international aid organizations to provide basic public services highlights the fact that the central government does not have the means to take the lead themselves. However, by training locals and working collaboratively with the Senegalese government, such organizations work to build the state's capacity to implement much-needed programs, thus ensuring their sustainability. Eventually, the international organizations will transfer responsibility to the state, and if the state continues to successfully provide basic services, local distrust of the state will fall and confidence in the state will rise.

Conclusion

While developing the Casamance will not directly lead to a lasting peace, it will help create the conditions necessary for achieving it. In time, greater economic integration of the Casamance and increasing state provision of public goods will nullify the core grievances of neglect and exploitation. For this to occur, though, the Senegalese government must develop a more streamlined and efficient way of implementing the development projects to which it has committed. On the flip side, those on the receiving end of such projects must accept the fact that development is an ongoing process and just because efforts are not easily visible does not mean that they are not taking place. The state must also take concrete steps to build legitimacy, particularly in regions where state institutions have largely been absent. In these areas, the population largely associates the state with the army, as discussed in the chapter by Elizabeth Parker-Magyar. Thus, the state must take adequate measures to prepare local populations for the entrance of state institutions, to overcome the conflict on the second level of memory. By committing to develop the Casamance, the Senegalese government has made a good-faith effort to address a core cause of the first level of conflict and improve the socio-economic disparities within its borders. Addressing grievances related to underinvestment,

underdevelopment, and “colonization” is an important part of the solution. To be effective, development efforts must thus be undertaken in tandem with efforts that address a political solution of the conflict on the third level.

Recommendations

To the Senegalese Government

- **Recognize underdevelopment as a core driver of the conflict.** Government officials we spoke with emphasized cultural and ethnic drivers of the conflict over underdevelopment. Recognizing underdevelopment as a core driver legitimizes grievances, signals to the local population that their voices are being heard, and ultimately make the aggrieved less defensive.
- **Complete local, highly visible development projects in a timely manner to highlight positive state presence and combat lack of trust.** Development is not something that happens overnight. To demonstrate the government’s commitment to the region and help residents overcome their mistrust, the government must be a constant, positive, and effective presence in previously neglected areas.
- **Facilitate travel between Casamance and Dakar.** Building a multiple-lane, high-speed highway from Dakar to Ziguinchor should be a priority. Such a project could be completed in a short amount of time (approximately two years) and will have an immediate, positive effect on people’s lives. Also, diversify the airline and Atlantic ferry market, to make trips more affordable and more frequent.
- **Invest in job training and job creation.** In the early 1980s, MFDC recruits reported joining the movement because although they were educated, they could not find a job (Clark 2011, 155), and our interviews confirmed the feeling three decades later. A 2013 survey by the charity Y Care International found that only 38% of 15 to 24 year-olds residing in the Casamance were employed (either part-time or full-time). Additionally, 98% reported that their households did not earn enough money to meet basic needs (IRIN 2012). If such conditions are allowed to continue and young people cannot find gainful employment, it is likely that an increasing number will turn to the MFDC as their parents’ generation did—not

because of their ideological convictions but because of the economic opportunities associated with membership.

- **Establish a micro-credit system to support entrepreneurs.** Before the benefits of government initiatives can be realized, such a program can provide individuals with ways to generate increased income and to overcome their distrust of the state. Providing micro-credit loans is also a fast, easy way to increase state presence in the region.
- **Organize community forums attended by local, regional, and state government officials.** Such meetings are a confidence-building measure; they allow community members to air their grievances and the state to address them and to manage expectations. They also build the foundation for strong civil society mobilization. As most Casamançais are not in favor of independence, supporting civil society growth that challenges the MFDC is in the government's favor.

To the MFDC

- **Join in demining the Casamance.** The presence of mines on agricultural land is hindering development by promoting food insecurity and discouraging foreign investment. The MFDC must acknowledge that its long-lasting campaign has contributed to the region's low socio-economic indicators.
- **Provide the Senegalese government with suggestions for confidence-building measures.** This way, the government gains insight into the MFDC's priorities and can devise a framework for development on which both sides can agree. Being upfront is not a sign of weakness. It helps reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings so that issues can be resolved in a timelier manner.

To the International Community

- **Coordinate with the state and other aid organizations** to avoid overlap and to improve efficiency.
- **Provide long-term financial support to the Senegalese government.** Senegal is a lower-middle income country, and its resources are stretched thin. To ensure that

government confidence-building measures succeed and development is sustainable, the internationalcommunity must continue to provide Senegal with financial and technical assistance until the state is ready to provide for its own citizens.

Local Enterprise

Jillian Foerster

A lack of infrastructure and human capital, illicit trade, and perceptions of instability have handicapped the expansion of the otherwise promising agriculture, fishing and tourism industries in the Casamance region of Senegal. Decades of low-level conflict have combined with the region's unique geographical isolation to deter investors, choke the development of value-chains, and raise the price of transport of goods and people to the region.

Although Casamance is frequently referred to as the “rice basket” of Senegal, its fields repeatedly fail to reach their potential output. The fishing industry in Ziguinchor ranks number four in Senegal, but catches are transported using smaller boats, lacking the capacity to scale its operations. The ups and downs of the conflict have affected the tourism sector perhaps more than any other, given the risk aversion of international travelers. Even during periods of burgeoning demand, operating a hospitality business in a “conflict zone” is a challenge without transport infrastructure, local governance institutions, or even the functioning of basic utilities. As if to illustrate this point, during the first evening of our stay in Ziguinchor, our hotel—which is a local enterprise—did not have running water due to a broken water main in the town. Impediments such as these affect the ability of individuals to conduct daily business and maintain a reliable client base.

Any approach to conflict resolution must recognize the primacy of politics, but as we learned from one of our interviews, “a political solution needs to be coupled with an economic solution,” bringing together the first and third levels of conflict. This chapter will address the role of domestic business, specifically legally registered, local enterprises based in the Casamance, as an unexplored avenue for peace. The incentives of private sector actors in Ziguinchor are well-aligned with the objective of peace given that stability in the region may allow them to better execute daily operations and engage in long-term planning, as well as being embedded in local networks and having a social interest to see their community thrive. These actors may not only add value to peace efforts, but are obviously important for post-conflict economic development.

This chapter will explore the importance of formal enterprises for peace in Senegal, the kind of role that they have played in the peace process in the past, and the barriers to engagement and economic development.

Why is the Private Sector Important for Peace?

The local private sector in Senegal is important to resolving conflict in the Casamance for four major reasons. First, it has a major role to play in addressing grievances and giving the population an economic stake in peace. It can also incentivize the government to view ending the conflict as important in order to meet its economic goals while bolstering the legal private sector will aid in countering illicit trade networks. Finally, private enterprises may add an innovative boost to otherwise moribund peace processes through “peace entrepreneurship.”

In the short- and medium-term, enterprises in Senegal may contribute to Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) processes by providing employment to former combatants. In the long-term, the private sector is the most important actor for sustaining a durable peace through delivering “peace dividends” in the form of economic development. International development aid has an important role to play but not sufficient for catalyzing the necessary economic growth. Aid has provided an important service to improving standards of living in the region, but it cannot drive an economy and sustain necessarily economic transformation and growth in the Casamance. Aid may even alter incentives to end the conflict, since NGOs play a major role in providing jobs and funding. The author Martin Evans questions what individuals working in peace building will do with the end of the conflict, noting, “Since 2000, there’s been a lot of multilateral and bilateral money coming in to support the peace process, return of the displaced and reconstruction... it can be a bit of a gravy train for everyone” (cited in Deets 2009, 106).

In addition to serving as an important alternative to aid dependency, the economic potential embedded in the Casamançais private sector may actually incentivize the Senegalese government to unfreeze the conflict and take the peace process more seriously. Just as the Casamance “poses a challenge to an otherwise unusually health state,” it also poses a challenge for an otherwise unusually healthy economy in West

Africa. Senegal has not been negatively affected by the recent global commodities downturn like many of its neighbors and has actually benefitted from lower oil prices, due to its relative economic diversification. However, the World Bank notes that Senegal has been stuck in a “low-growth” equilibrium since 2006. In efforts to spur growth and diversify the economy, Macky Sall’s administration created the ambitious development agenda, *Plan Sénégal Emergent* (PSE), in order to transform Senegal into an emerging country by 2035. The ambitious plan has already fallen behind in its goals, such as failing to meet the target 7% growth each year from 2014 to 2018 and only achieving 4.7% growth in 2014 (World Bank 2016). Although the conflict in the Casamance is often only listed as a footnote in political risk analyses for investors interested in Senegal, the unexploited potential of the tourism, agriculture and fishing sectors in Casamance represents a major opportunity cost for the country. Improving the ability of enterprises in the Casamance to do business, first by ensuring stability, can aid the government in reaching its national economic goals of increased growth.

A focus on bolstering institutions to grow legal, legitimate businesses can serve as a stalwart against their capture by illicit trade networks. This provides a further impetus for the government to provide support and partner with the formal private sector to combat illicit trade, considering our interviews indicated that the MFDC received financing in part from the trade in cashews and timber. Furthermore, individuals who are able to find employment through legitimate industries operating in the Casamance may be less inclined to resort to illegal means to support themselves.

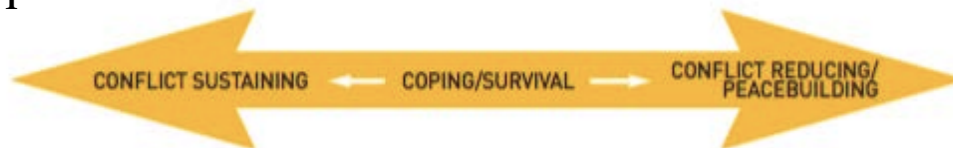
Lastly, the private sector may be an important actor not only in creating incentives for peace and ensuring the durability of agreements, but enterprises represent important actors for engagement. Analyses of the role of the private sector in conflict tend to focus on the predatory role of multinational corporations, extractives, illicit economies, and generally the role of enterprises in fueling war economies. However, an emerging literature has highlighted the potential contribution of domestic businesses to constructive peace building through creating confidence across conflict divides, prompting collective action and lending support to peace processes, and, as already mentioned above, encouraging sustainable development. Organizations such as International Alert have documented the varying roles of enterprises in contributing towards peace building in

South Africa, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Burundi, and Columbia, among others. Their work has highlighted the influence of large companies, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and informal traders in “peace entrepreneurship,” through engaging in not only economic dimensions, but also in political, reconciliation, and security dimensions of peace building. Senegal may be easily added to the list of example countries where the private sector plays a positive role in creating constituencies for peace, although this role is limited.

The Private Sector as a Mediator

Does the local private sector directly participate in efforts to resolve the conflict, play an enabling role or remain neutral? This is an important question not only for contemplating alternative actors to transform decades of failed negotiations and peace agreements, but taking into consideration that the private sector can act as a spoiler when not included in negotiations (International Alert 2006, 39). Although the illicit trade of natural resources remains a problem in the Casamance and along its borders with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, our interviews suggested that many of the enterprises operating in and around Ziguinchor have well-placed incentives to promote stability and development in the Casamance.

Figure 1



Source: International Alert 2006, 2

The degree of involvement in peacebuilding processes by the private sector is a function of the individual entrepreneur or company, the available opportunities for involvement, the size and influence of the companies involved, and the receptiveness of the different sides to private sector representatives (International Alert, 2006, 40). Although the regional Chamber of Commerce in Ziguinchor is active, individual enterprises are relatively small. They are not likely to have significant leverage like large firms in South

Africa in ending apartheid or serve as an important interlocutor as in the peace process in El Salvador (International Alert 2006, 45).

Given the limited and informal involvement of representative members of the private sector in the Casamance, they fall between “coping/survival” and “conflict reducing/peacebuilding” on the spectrum of business responses to the conflict, as seen in Figure 1. Respondents during our interviews expressed that they did not want war to continue in the region and noted that they engaged in discussions with individuals in Banjul, people in Guinea-Bissau, and in “the north,” referring to various peace processes and actors in Dakar. When asked about how they related to the different factions, interviews revealed that they tried to encourage factions to respect their political agreements. However, when pressed, our respondents were not specific on what type of engagement this entailed or specific actions.

The responses to our questions suggested that business leaders aim to contribute indirectly to peace efforts but either do not have a great interest (in case of risking retribution) or ability to exert formal influence in negotiations at a high level. Our interviews revealed that private sector representatives were willing to get involved in the peace process at an arms length and certainly not willing to mediate.

Nonetheless, the dynamics of relationships display significant potential for facilitating more constructive relations between Ziguinchor and Dakar. As in other country examples, business representatives may act as a go-between with the government in Dakar and communities in Casamance. The regional Chamber of Commerce in Ziguinchor has been active in writing letters and promoting several different economic initiatives in the Casamance, displaying an interest and ability to advocate for change that may promote development and the growth of their enterprises. However, interviews with representatives at APIX (the one stop shop investment promotion agency for Senegal, based in Dakar) and representation from the local Chamber of Commerce exposed an apparent disconnect in sequencing and priorities for private sector development, for example, through apparent disagreement on the primacy of the airline industry.¹⁵ Although the Casamance has been labeled as a priority for the Sall government and a

¹⁵While the Chamber of Commerce in Ziguinchor aimed to develop the airport and facilitate more flights to the town to aid the tourism industry, representatives at APIX noted that the first priorities were building the port, a bridge in Gambia, and electrification.

“*Pôle attractif d’investissement*,” this disconnect suggests that there is room for improvement in communication and collaboration between the capital and regional private sector interests.

Some private enterprises also maintain connections to the diaspora of the Casamançais. APIX revealed that Casamançais living in Dakar and abroad also continue to invest in the region. Although this likely comes through remittances and goes towards family businesses (e.g. small shops or kiosks and sell bulk goods), APIX did not have specific data on what form these investments took. Even if at a small scale, these financial ties to the region present an important opportunity for further engagement and warrant further research and measurement.

Our interviews did not suggest that the private sector wields bargaining authority or leverage within the various factions of MFDC to entice them to come to the table. Instead, they get involved in the peace building process or engage with various actors when there is a specific issue that directly concerns their daily business operations, similar to our hotel owner pressing the local authority to repair the water line. Members of the Chamber of Commerce have also frequently been quoted in the international press, calling for an end to the violence, pointing to the impact on local tourism revenues (Lewis 2016). The economic development initiatives of the regional Chamber of Commerce and work with their counterparts in Dakar overall represent an important appeal to the communities of the Casamance to witness potential peace dividends with the cessation of conflict.

Barriers for Engagement

There are a number of barriers in engaging the private sector as an actor to promote peace processes and also in working through the private sector to stimulate inclusive growth in the region, allowing communities to have a stake in peace.

Business actors may not have the trust of the wider community or be perceived in a positive light, especially if they are perceived to work too closely with the government in Dakar. The widely held perception of Dakar as *les colons* have caused past economic initiatives to backfire and actors from the private sector may be viewed with suspicion or negatively as agents of the state. The tourism industry is a demonstration of this dynamic.

Although tourism development is not a panacea for creating widespread employment, it is a promising and organic sector for growth. However, this industry has faced skepticism from local communities and has exacerbated contempt for the central government:

In Cap Skirring, local people complain that they do not even have permanent access to running water and the tourism businesses like Club Med do not contribute to alleviating their problems. A number of people employed in managerial positions come from the north (often because private tour operators act as a go-between in organizing tourist transporters). ... [Tourism] did not contribute in any notable way to improving the quality of life of most of the inhabitants of the region. Most income from tourism is transferred abroad, goes into the central budget, or to tourist entrepreneurs in the capital city (Fall 2010, 14)

Many sources have criticized the top-down nature of economic projects in the Casamance, including a project in 1960s and 1970s where land in Ziguinchor was reportedly allocated to northerners, not Casamançais. Development projects driven by the capital will continue to be “colored by the perception that the Casamance is economically and politically dominated by the northern Senegal” (Lambert 1998, 591). Additionally, there is also a perception that individuals in the Casamance are “bought off,” further heightening the level of suspicion and distrust among actors working with Dakar. The government reportedly invested 3 billion CFA, coupled with 20 billion and 180 billion from the World Bank and USAID, respectively, but this money was not only diverted by intermediaries (as is common due to the structure of the international aid industry), but was diverted for personal use by its recipients. Numerous interviews highlighted the challenge of corruption not only in aid, but the flow of government investments to stimulate growth in the Casamance.

There is also little space for failure on the government’s part and the rumor mill among communities in the Casamance continues to damage the reputation, rightfully or wrongly, of Dakar. Failures are blamed on the government and comprise “part of the popular oral culture of the Casamance [and] includes rumors of American multinational companies, which wanted to build fruit-processing plants ... in Ziguinchor, but were thwarted by the Senegalese government (Lambert 1998, 597). Upon further examination, we found that the company actually failed due to its inability to remain profitable and

overcome the high costs of transporting mangoes, due to underdeveloped value chains. This perception of the local community will present a challenge given the nature of private enterprises to fail during sometimes risky endeavors and points to the importance of carefully managing expectations. A measured approach would consider that it is not “the speed but the nature of economic growth” that is important in the Casamance (Berdal and Mousavizadeh 2010, 41).

Another barrier is that of language. Although numerous sources point to the traditionalist nature of the Casamançais as being anathema as to entrepreneurial endeavors, language barriers represent a more likely, proximate cause for the challenges that face the growth of business networks between the, for example, Diola speaking Casamançais and the largely Wolof-speaker traders from the north. Our sources indicated that language represents a major challenge for the conduct of business with the capital, a major market for goods and transport center. Villagers have even expressed resentment at the “exploitation” they have faced at the hands of Wolof traders who arrive in villages to transport mangoes, peanuts and orange produced in the Casamance to Dakar (Lambert 1998, 596).

A final and important barrier to economic development spurring peace is that it may not adequately satisfy long-held grievances. Communities in the village have high expectations and individuals during our interviews in Bignona spoke of 33 years of oppression, saying “We are not Senegalese, we will never be Senegalese!” Economic development will take time to reach the rural areas of the Casamance, and the short-term improvement of water lines in Ziguinchor, increase in tourism revenues, or the dredging of a port to bolster the fishing industry will not easily sway hardliners.

Economic development and the engagement of members the private sector will not necessarily address the resentment felt by the communities due to the heavy police presence enforcing curfews. The private sector also cannot reverse the blood pact forged in the sacred forest that binds MFDC militants to the struggle to achieve independence. However, local businesses in the Casamance possess important insights, social networks, and value to the government in Dakar that may contribute to “unfreezing” one of world’s longest-running conflicts.

Recommendations

To the Government

- **Target “quick wins” that show visible change while managing expectations.** Growing the private sector takes time. It requires the upgrading of infrastructure, strengthening of institutions, ensuring that contracts are enforced and attracting necessary investment and access to capital. Consult further with civil society and private sector representatives to discover what these “quick wins” might be, but ensure that speed does not come at the cost of careless and unethical practices.
- **Build consensus by taking the lead of local enterprises and working through the regional Chambers of Commerce.** The government in Dakar needs to dispel the perception of top-down economic development and of domination by *nordistes* in the Casamançais formal and informal economies.
- **Operate with transparency and set up accountability mechanisms for investments.** It is important to bolster the communication of aims and progress of economic projects to build consensus and trust and also to ensure that resources meet their intended purpose.

To the Local Private Sector

- **Ensure where possible that activities may benefit a broad sector of society and employ locals.** Business decisions impact complex conflict dynamics and may aid or harm peace agreements. Given past criticisms, especially of the tourism sector, it will be important to make visible contributions and social investments to show good will toward surrounding communities.
- **Continue to develop networks and trust both at the national and local levels.** Work with both the national Chamber of Commerce and APIX authority to establish a common development agenda and gain support and spur collective action on peace building. Explore the development of local councils to narrow the divide between rural and more urban or peri-urban areas. Leverage the influence of the diaspora where possible and appropriate.

To the International Community

- **Target the youth in entrepreneurial training programs.** The youth are becoming less interested in the ideology of the MFDC, and more interested in “practical matters.” Training programs should also recognize that youth are not as interested in engaging in agricultural projects, but working in the civil service or in white-collar positions. These programs should adjust accordingly to either meet demand or be creative in attracting the interest of the youth.
- **Recognize that no amount of aid can replace the local economy.** The international community and international NGOs can provide support to regional Chambers of Commerce and promote targeted investment in the Casamance as a more sustainable strategy for delivering economic dividends of peace.

Foreign Direct Investment

Jamie Farrell

A lack of economic opportunity in the Casamance has provided fuel to the conflict; allowing it to burn at a low level for a long time. Because of the poor state of the economy, the first level of the conflict, is so deeply intertwined with the third violent level and the origin of the conflict itself, ensuring the economic recovery of the region is a critical element to overcoming the conflict. One man who works with youth organizations in the Casamance explained, “the only battle remaining is the battle of economic development.” While SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) owned by local residents have an important role to play in this process, the right kind of foreign direct investment (FDI) has the potential to add another reinforcing layer of stability to the region, and can fill economic gaps in a unique way. FDI can encourage economic prosperity in the Casamance by providing large amounts of capital to the region, encouraging job creation, and by bringing skilled professionals and knowledge exchange to the region. By incentivizing investments into the Casamance, the Senegalese government can also demonstrate its commitment to improving the economic situation in the region.

The Unique Role of FDI in Conflict Management

FDI is not always seen as a step on the route to peace. Conventional wisdom holds that FDI does not always have a role to play in active and violent conflicts, where political risk must be too high even for those investors with the greatest of risk appetites. Additionally, in the African context, natural resources, and the private enterprises managing or purchasing those resources, have indeed fueled conflict in some situations; take the DRC, Sierra Leone, or Angola as examples. Because of this, the private sector, especially foreign business owners, has historically been viewed as at best irrelevant, and at worst a roadblock to the peace process by conflict management and peacebuilding professionals. According to Berdal and Mousavizadeh (2010, 13), the “discussion of the role of economic incentives has often centered on the ways they prolong conflict, obstruct

peacemaking and lead to an exploitation of natural resources to the detriment of peace, development and social progress.”

Yet, in more recent years, stakeholders in conflict management are beginning to recognize the wide range of roles that the private sector can play in preventing conflict, encouraging peace, and rebuilding in post-conflict zones. In 2004, Kofi Annan made it clear that private enterprises are relevant in the peacebuilding process, when he claimed, “business itself has an enormous stake in the search for solutions [to conflict]” in a statement at the UN Security Council. There are two forces driving this change.

First, it is becoming clearer that FDI is relevant in conflict situations; despite very high levels of political risk, most countries in civil strife continue to receive some FDI flows, and these are not always dedicated solely to natural resources (Berday and Wennmann 2013, 137-156). Some notable investments into conflict zones include the Hyatt Regency hotel that was opened in Kabul in 2003, a battery manufacturing plant in Angola undertaken by AMT in 1998, and in Colombia, Kimberly-Clark continued their operations producing paper goods throughout the conflict.

Secondly, there is a wider acceptance of the idea that on the most basic level, underdevelopment in a society implies that an economy lacks diversification; and therefore there is a relatively low cost of conflict for the majority of individuals within a society (North, Cox and Weingast 2013). This is especially true in the Casamance, where most individuals are subsistence farmers with no ties to the larger economy. Therefore, businesses that can create economic linkages and interdependence, through supply chain networks, employment, and through the encouragement of complimentary business activities, can raise the cost of conflict for many individuals within a society. This has been witnessed in examples all over the world. In Colombia, the region west of the capital was able to remain relatively insulated from most of the impact of the war largely due to coffee production by small-scale farmers in the region who were all connected by the National Coffee Federation (Rettberg 2011). In Nepal, the tourism industry in Pokhara, which is supported by a network of local businesses including over 500 restaurants and hotels, and over 50 tour guide operators (Dhakal and Subedi 2006, 420) was able to negotiate with the Maoists in order to ensure that the tourism sector would be

exempted from vandalism and general strikes associated with the conflict. These recent examples highlight the ways in which investments can lead to stability.

Foreign investments have a unique role to play in economic development for the following main reasons (Bray 2010, 3)

1. *International companies tend to have greater financial resources than local businesses.* They can therefore invest in large-scale projects and businesses that may not be feasible for the majority of local businesses. This is extremely important in the Casamance region, because according to those interviewed, the economic development of the region must be highly visible in order for disenfranchised people to feel that their region really is developing. Numerous small economic development programs implemented by the government have failed because average citizens could not see the results of the programs. Large investments supported by foreign enterprises may bring the level of visibility that is needed for the region to feel that it is being reintegrated economically with the rest of the country.
2. *Foreign enterprises often bring technical expertise to their area of operation,* where local people have not had the opportunity to become technical experts in business management and specific sectors. International businesses often provide training to local individuals, and knowledge sharing for best-practices in the industries in which they operate. For example, in Ghana one study found that almost every new domestic mining firm has been established by former employees of foreign mining companies (Farole and Winkler 2014, 148).
3. *Foreign enterprises may be able to contribute to local infrastructure,* either by providing infrastructure or basic services as their business model, or by coming to agreements with the government to build supporting infrastructure. Some investments, such as those into power plants, cell phone towers, and toll roads provide basic services to local populations. In Senegal, a recent example of this is the IFC's investment into "Société Effiage de la Nouvelle Autoroute Concédée," which constructed a toll road from Dakar to Diamniadio.

4. *FDI can signal to the world that a conflict is ended, or very close to being over.* The presence of reputable international companies moving into a conflict or post-conflict region can indicate that a region has attained a level of peace that will enable them to begin to normalize their economy. For example, when Coca Cola invested into Bosnia in 1999/2000 it was, “welcomed as tangible evidence that the country was well on the path to recover” (Bray 2010, 3).

While investors who move into conflict or post-conflict zones have the opportunity to gain first-mover advantage, and secure high returns in line with their risky investments, the benefits outlined above demonstrate that local communities and governments have much to gain from foreign investments as well.

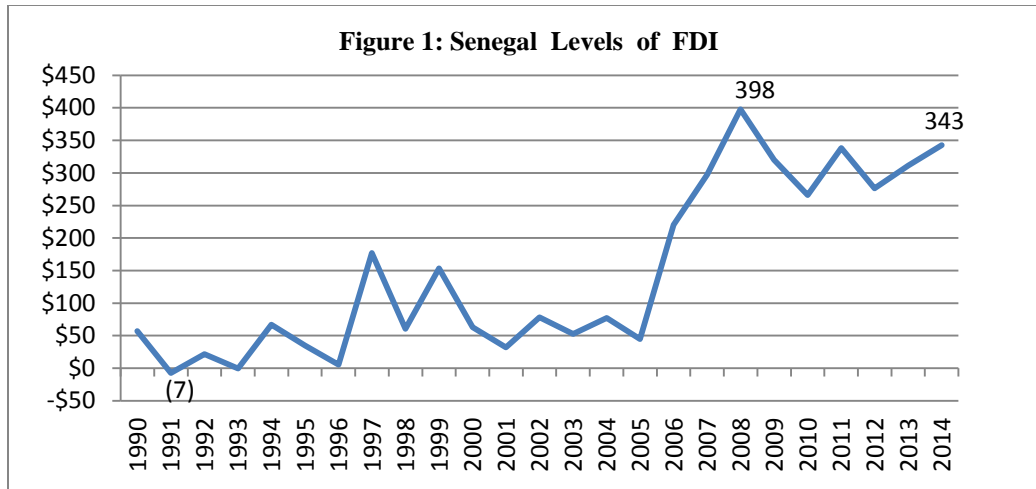
The Historical FDI Landscape in the Casamance

Regional FDI

By global standards, FDI inflows to the Casamance have been so small they are nearly negligible. However, the inflows that the region has managed to capture, in a broader environment of underinvestment, speak tremendously to the potential of the region.

To paint the broader picture, the Casamance sits within a country and region that has, up until very recently, attracted minimal investments. For almost every year on record, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has received the lowest level of FDI of any major region. However, if FDI growth continues at its current pace, this could change in the near future. The ten-year average FDI level for SSA from 1990-99 was \$4.8 billion, while the average for the last five years has reached \$38 billion (UNCTAD 2015). Even when competing for investments among other emerging markets, SSA has not attracted much attention until very recently; in the field of private equity, SSA has received only 5% of totalemerging markets private equity investments over the last ten years (EMPEA 2015).

Senegal itself is still struggling to attract FDI. In all of SSA, Senegal ranks 27th in average FDI over the last three years. In 2014, Senegal attracted \$343 million of foreign investments (see Figure 1), accounting for only 0.6% of FDI in SSA, and 2.7% of FDI in West Africa.



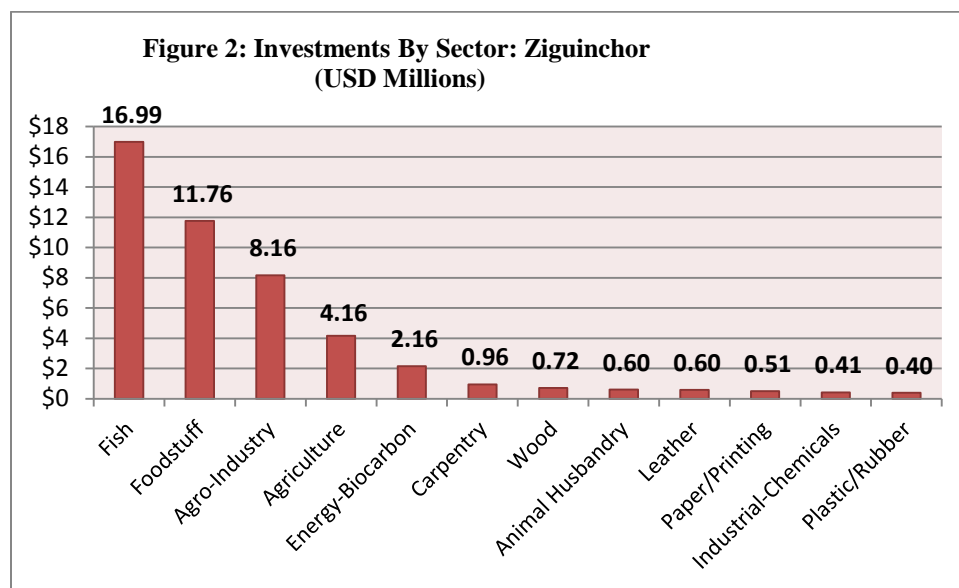
According to a representative of the Investment Promotion Agency of Senegal (APIX), up until now, Casamance has attracted around 1% of FDI in the country. In the early 2000s, the first group of foreign investors entered the Casamance market, with investments almost exclusively into the tourism sector. Many of these businesspeople had visited the region as tourists themselves, and, “they were really charmed by the region” (SAIS Group Meeting, Dakar, January 2016). However, since 2005, despite low levels of violence, there have been no further foreign investments into the region. In 2014, Macky Sall called on the private sector to invest more in Casamance during a launching ceremony for a development program (PPDC). He explained, “The real economic recovery of the Casamance will be ignited by private investments into agriculture, horticulture, fish raising, and in the industrial, and tourism sectors” (Casamance News).

The tourism industry, which historically attracted the most FDI, has struggled in recent years as a result of the financial crisis, which led to fewer international vacationers, and because of the Ebola epidemic, which spread fear of traveling anywhere in West Africa. One article that interviewed multiple hotel owners, estimated that there had been a 50% drop in tourism rates as of 2015 (Financial Afrik).

Due to these struggles, the Senegalese government enacted a new law in July 2015 which provides special tax incentives for investments into the tourism sector in Ziguinchor, Kolda, and Sédhiou. This is the only public policy that has privileged the Casamance region specifically.

However, the Casamance region also benefits from a general tax incentive for businesses outside of Dakar, which applies to all regions. In Dakar businesses can receive a 40% tax credit and a maximum tax holiday of five years. Outside of Dakar (including but not limited to the Casamance) businesses can receive a 70% tax credit and an eight-year tax holiday (SAIS Group Meeting, Dakar, January 2016).

Overall investments into the Casamance region since 2000 (including domestic investments but excluding tourism) have been focused on fish production, foodstuff, and agro-industry (APIX, see Figure 2).¹⁶



Source: APIX

According to a representative of APIX, Casamance differs from most regions in that almost all of the investments into the region come from people who were born in the Casamance. In any other region, it is much more likely for non-local Senegalese citizens to make major investments. Additionally, multiple people interviewed, including a prestigious businessperson in Ziguinchor, expressed the idea that the people of Casamance are less entrepreneurial than most Senegalese. However, extremely high

¹⁶ Note: Data is shown as a sum of investments from 2000-2015. A spot exchange rate of .0017 was used as of 2 March 2016. Data compiled by APIX does not include tourism investments.

interest rates of around 18%, and potential jail punishment for those who do not repay their debts, certainly does not create an entrepreneurial environment.

The Investment Opportunity of the Casamance

The Casamance region has many positive qualities that make it a promising investment opportunity. Nearly everyone interviewed, from government officials to rebels, to civil society workers, and businesspeople, saw abundant potential in the region. One interviewee who owns a growing business in the Casamance explained that it will be a “gold rush” for investors once the war is over. He explained that the current environment is a time of great opportunity for those who are willing to take the initial risk, and that those who do will capture first-mover advantage. This section outlines the key reasons why so many people see such great potential in the region.

Very Low Levels of Violence

As has been explained more thoroughly in other chapters of this work, the actual levels of violence in the Casamance are now quite low, and very few MFDC factions still have military forces. Although lulls in the fighting have occurred periodically, many people feel that this may actually be the end of the conflict. A former member of the military claimed that dialogue is more important than arms at this point, and another person interviewed explained that the youth are not integrated into the war as earlier generations were since they leave the region to study and find employment. While there are many people who will stop at nothing but independence, the number of those people is dwindling and their average age is rising.

Abundant Natural Resources

Numerous people interviewed on this trip expressed the sentiment that the Casamance should be the bread basket of the country. There are minerals and oil deposits in the region that have been largely untouched, and due to higher levels of rainfall than in the rest of Senegal, the land is very fertile. This is evident in the natural forest-savanna topography, and a climate that is more humid and greener than that of Dakar. A popular anecdote in circulation is that during mango season, the region has such a plentiful

amount of fresh mangos that even the cows will not eat day-old fruit. However, like most of West Africa, the Casamance has a rainy season and a dry season, so in order to increase output, irrigation systems are needed for the dry season. If transportation costs could be overcome (see Challenges section below) Senegal could exploit the fertile land in the south to cut its imports of rice, which amounted to \$418 million as of 2013 (OEC).

The agricultural sector and agro-processing offer tremendous opportunity due to fertile land and aligned interests with local populations. One rebel leader, when asked what type of development the region needed, responded that development must come from agriculture first, and suggested irrigation systems for rice fields. It is worth noting however, that the youth more generally want to see industrialization more than agricultural development. One person interviewed explained that the sentiment of the youth was, “put in factories and then we will be Senegalese.” For this reason, businesses in the agro-processing industry could benefit from the fertile land for input materials, while taking advantage of the young workforce.

Well-Educated Population

The people of the Casamance place a high value on education. In fact, according to UNICEF the Casamance region has nearly 100% enrollment rates in primary school, much higher than the rest of Senegal. This became clear when even the most extreme separatists argued their points eloquently; citing comparable struggles throughout the world.

Infrastructure Development

Although most separatists from the Casamance will say that the government has done nothing for them, the Senegalese government in partnership with development institutions is making major investments into the region. A staff member at the Chamber of Commerce claimed that 45% of infrastructure spending in Senegal goes to the Casamance. Some major recent projects include:

- Ferries which run overnight from Dakar to Ziguinchor
- A 157-mile road from Kounkane to Ziguinchor which was funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation

- A port dredging project to deepen the port in Ziguinchor and allow larger transportation boats to move in and out of the city, which has been carried out by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency

Welcoming Environment

Many businesspeople working in Ziguinchor explained that they wanted partners to be investing with them. One business owner said that he believes it will help the peace process, and the investors who enter the market now will be well-placed in the future.

The Investment Challenges in the Casamance

Although the Casamance has a high level of potential, only the most innovative investors who can carefully manage the risks and challenges of the region will succeed. This section outlines the most pressing challenges facing investors in the region.

High Transportation Costs

Despite recent infrastructure upgrades, transporting goods in and out of the Casamance is still extremely difficult. If transporting goods to Dakar, business owners must choose between risking severe delays on the Gambian border, or long travel times on uncertain roads. Since the dredging in Ziguinchor is not complete yet, most goods transported by boat must be taken out in small batches by smaller ships to a larger ship. An APIX representative explained that only small high-value goods such as cashews are very profitable. A business that shipped mangos to Dakar ended up going bankrupt because the fruit continually got stuck on route and rotted before reaching the market. Due to the difficulty of getting goods transported, most goods processed and produced in the Casamance are shipped straight to Europe, where they can be sold for higher prices to justify the high costs of transportation.

Accessibility and Banditry

The southern region of Senegal still has many forbidden zones, and territory which MFDC members claim as their own (although Senegalese officials disagree). The MFDC manages cashew production on these forbidden zones, and multiple people interviewed

explained that those who do not abide by these regulations have been mutilated in the past. In fact, the MCC road project was forced to reroute in certain areas to avoid these ones. As an added layer of complexity, the region has not been demined. The Senegalese army placed the mines, and the MFDC moved them, which has created a standoff on their removal. Finally, banditry and crimes of opportunity remain common in the region which complicates the logistical operations of any enterprise.

Criminal Economy

A large criminal economy has developed in the Casamance. The profits of cashews, drugs, and lumber are all connected to rebel groups. One interviewee explained that there is a terrible underbelly of an economy that is developing in regard to these three businesses. Although cashews do offer the potential for high profits due to their high value and small size, since almost all of the cashews would need to be sourced from the armed rebels, it is an industry to avoid, although not all international businesspeople do. One businessperson encountered in Ziguinchor told me that he was involved in cashew processing. When asked how he manages in an industry whose supply chain is so deeply connected to the MFDC, he asked, with a look of feigned innocence, “what is the MFDC?”

Corruption

There is a history of corruption in the Casamance which has been fueled by the war. The *Mr. Casamance* tradition in which mediators were paid large sums of money in order to negotiate with the government is one aspect of this. However, there is a wide discrepancy between what the government provides to the region, and what the region actually receives. One person interviewed explained that government money is funneled away from its intended targets on two levels. First, government workers involved in development projects in Casamance, who tend to be from the region, take a large share of the funds for themselves. Then, the money that does reach the region is generally further thinned by regional authorities and local chiefs who also take a share before allowing the funds to continue on.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Despite the challenges of operating commercial activities in the Casamance, there is tremendous opportunity for foreign investors who are willing to enter the market with a carefully constructed business model and risk management plan. This opportunity could create a win-win scenario for the local community which would benefit from employment, skills transfer, and visible economic development and the entrepreneurs who gain first-mover advantage. However, the Senegalese government must put serious attention into attracting investment into the region, and multinational organizations and development institutions must partner with the Senegalese government. The government should consider the following recommendations:

- **Implement more tax incentives for those who invest in the Casamance.** The privileged tax regime for the tourism sector in the Casamance is a step in the right direction. However, the agricultural industry and agro-processing need similar incentives.
- **Create a Special Economic Zone in Ziguinchor.** Once the port deepening is complete, Ziguinchor could greatly benefit from the establishment of a special economic zone. This would also have the benefit of creating jobs for the youth in the region.
- **Work with international development finance institutions to identify businesses that could expand into the Casamance.** Critical businesses, especially those that are Senegalese, that provide basic services such as electricity and roads should be targeted and encouraged to expand their operations.
- **Continue to work with NGOs and aid foundations on infrastructure projects.** There have been many positive steps made on this front, and these efforts should be congratulated and continued.
- **Combat corruption.** Corruption is the valid reason why the government feels that it is giving so much to the Casamance, while the people in the Casamance feel that they receive nothing. The siphoning of money destined for development projects in the Casamance must be halted.
- **Work with UNESCO on the possibility of creating a cultural heritage site in the Casamance.** While UNESCO has multiple heritage sites in Senegal, none of

these are in the Casamance. The distinct history of the region should be recognized and celebrated, and leveraged to increase tourism.

Funding the MFDC

Katrien Hinderdael

MFDC funding sources shifted continuously over the past several decades from local support to external backers and finally to self-sustenance off of local resources. However, financial resources to sustain the fight for independence have been limited throughout this period, resulting in a low-level conflict over an extended period of time. Any flash point or period of escalation was typically caused by a sudden influx of cash or weapons from external actors and failed to represent a sustained increase in the power of the MFDC factions.

Today, depending on location, the different MFDC factions sustain a minimal level of activity through the trafficking of illegal timber and cultivation of cannabis, peanuts, and cashews. Most of these resources find their way through the relatively porous borders with the Gambia to the north and Guinea-Bissau to the south. In order to freeze MFDC resources and incentivize a movement to peace, the government of Senegal must combat these illicit activities by providing viable alternatives for livelihoods in a resource poor region through agricultural and economic development.

Local Support to External Backers

Following the creation of the MFDC, the movement survived by building local support and a network of collectors in the Casamance. Throughout the region, the MFDC organized local support committees who sold membership cards for 1,000 CFA or in kind payments, typically with rice, as well as set-up fundraising events (Evans 2004, 10). *Maquis*, the military fighters of the movement, survived off these finances and often lived within communities.

By the late 1980s, sustained government repression, including arrests of MFDC activists and suspected supporters, disconnected the *maquis* from local populations (Evans 2004, 10). Instead, they were forced to turn to external sources of financing, particularly neighboring states. Increasing support from Gambia and Guinea-Bissau in the early 1990s resulted in a surge in MFDC military capabilities and consequently, violence, also discussed in Zachary Vinyard's chapter.

In the early 1990s, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau were in a long-time maritime dispute over potential oil reserves. During this time, the Senegalese government continuously accused Guinea Bissau's President Vieira of supporting the MFDC by supplying arms and allowing them safe havens across the border. Some reports found that Guinea Bissau was the largest arms supplier of the MFDC until the breakout of civil war in 1998, largely due to the large arms caches left from Soviet support to Guinea-Bissau. Such allegations help explain the MFDC's ability to stage an offensive in Casamance in the early 1990s (Faye 2006, 42-44). While President Vieira reduced support in 1995, Brigadier Ansumane Mané, chief of staff of the army, reportedly continued backing the MFDC, although the extent of support has been disputed (Foucher 2007). A parliamentary investigation in Guinea in 1999 actually cleared Mané of supporting the MFDC and instead accused 40 of Vieira's aides of arming them, threatening to put the President on trial if he didn't stop the arms trade. Relations between Dakar and Bissau have improved due to such investigations into MFDC support and the change in leadership with newly elected Kumba Yala (Foucher 2007).

In the Gambia, Yahya Jammeh came to power in a military coup d'état in 1994. As a Diola, he was believed to have good relationships with MFDC's Diola-dominated *Front Nord*, including reports that the MFDC formed the presidential guard at Jammeh's residence across the border (Faye 2006, 40-42). The Senegalese government accused Jammeh of allowing the MFDC to have rear bases in Gambia and supporting commercial trade across the border. Furthermore, thousands of Diola from Casamance were registered to vote in the 2001 presidential election in Gambia that legitimized Jammeh's power. However, Jammeh's perceived support of the MFDC must be tapered with political realities of increasingly seeking good relations with Dakar and domestic concern of increasing banditry by the MFDC along the Gambian border (Foucher 2007).

As the MFDC received external funding and violence intensified, several MFDC actors as well as opportunistic actors in the region took advantage of the security vacuum to carry out banditry and looting of local trade routes and communities. The government repression of local support for MFDC fighters is also cited as a cause for increased violence and banditry (Evans 2003, 12). Without a local support base, some *maquis* turned on local communities, raiding food supplies, cattle, and stores.

External support also came from MFDC members in Europe. Mamadou Sané aka Nkrumah, known as the chief of the external wing of the MFDC, moved to France and organized fundraising efforts among diaspora communities. Nkrumah, along with Almamy Badiane in Bordeaux and Ansoumana Badji in Lisbon generate support abroad through newsletters, websites, and other propaganda (Evans 2004). While Nkrumah claims to currently control local factions at present, several analysts and local factions say he is separated from local political and military MFDC leaders. Despite this, he continues to fundraise in Europe and has consistently been criticized for opposing peace negotiations with the government because of the financial benefit accrued from MFDC contributions abroad (Faye 2006, 60).

By the late 1990s, Senegal had improved relations with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. While Gambian and Guinea-Bissauan leaders largely allowed cross-border trade and movement of rebels to occur in a discreet and peaceful manner, overt support for the different factions was limited. As these relationships shifted, the MFDC factions once again had to reinvent themselves and find alternative sources for survival. By the mid-to-late 1990s, the groups began to rely more heavily on the low-value, high-volume natural resources of the region and government financing.

Local Resources and Government Financing

Casamance is Senegal's richest agricultural area, referred to as the country's breadbasket. The region has the longest rainy season in the country, extending from June to October, as well as the highest precipitation rates. While the north is facing an expanding desert, Casamance has dense forests and arable land. However, these natural endowments provide largely low-value commodities. Therefore, the MFDC has been able to use these resources for financing on a small-scale by illegally and legally exporting local resources through porous borders with neighboring states. As a relatively labor-intensive and small-scale endeavor that gets little government attention, exploitation of resources has built upon existing trade structures in the region.

All such economic activity has built on and interacted with the pre-existing production base and trade routes in the Casamance and across its international borders, making it difficult to identify the extent of the 'war economy' within these wider structures (Evans 2004, 10)

As a result, the cultivation and sale of most of these resources predates the MFDC and is pursued by a variety of other actors in the region, particularly local communities and the Senegalese military.

The *Front Nord* has taken advantage of its surrounding resources by timber trafficking from the vast forests in northern Casamance bordering Gambia as well as the cultivation and sale of cannabis. While amounts of illegal timber exports are unknown for the 1990s, more recent estimates argue that Senegal loses 40,000 hectares of forest per year, with dozens of hectares lost due to illegal logging (Toupane 2015). MFDC factions have previously and continue to move illegally cut trees from Casamance to Gambia. While the *Front Nord* is highly dependent on timber trafficking revenues for survival, unaffiliated local communities are also very involved in the business, which is considered a main source of livelihood in the Casamance.

Several local and international analysts believe the timber is sold in Gambia to a range of international buyers, including China. In addition to timber, factions are trafficking wood fuel, including firewood, chips, and sawdust. The forests of teak, ven, and cail-cédrat (mahogany) in Bissine and Bayottes in Ziguinchor near the border with Gambia are the most affected. As a result of extensive timber trafficking by the MFDC and local communities, the region is facing concerns of deforestation and land degradation. Thus far, the *bois sacré* or sacred forests have been spared from such activities.

Cannabis trafficking through Gambia is reportedly also a source of revenue for the *Front Nord*; however, the extent of its importance for MFDC financing is debated and several movement leaders deny MFDC involvement. Some analysts argue that local populations predominantly run the drug trade with minimal involvement of *maquis*. Rather, they believe the MFDC taxes contraband flows, including cannabis, on the way to the Gambia. Other analysis finds the *maquis* facilitate production and trafficking, but the cannabis is of low value and is therefore, exaggerated as a funding source for the MFDC (Evans 2004, 11).

Similarly to the *Front Nord*, the *Front Sud* has exploited local resources by controlling plantations and cultivating cashews and peanuts to sell in Guinea-Bissau. This border region is the most fertile for orchards with the *Front Sud* able to harvest roughly

200-300 tons of cashews per year in the 2000s from the cashew forests, which is minute in comparison to the 10,000 tons per year for the Casamance (Evans 2004, 10). These resources can be sold locally or in Guinea-Bissau, or exchanged for rice or arms. An article in 2000 by *Sud Quotidien* described the border zone as the ‘granary’ of the rebels (Faye, 52). Similarly to cannabis and other resources, the revenue generation of cashews, peanuts, and other goods is minimal; however, “while the profits are modest, in an impoverished region, they are better than nothing” (IRIN, Finding incentives).

The *Front Sud* is also involved in cattle rustling along the Guinea-Bissau border, particularly in the Kolda region. Similarly to timber, cashews, and cannabis, cattle are sold through existing trade routes and family ties in neighboring states. In addition, local populations and bandits are often involved in cattle theft, which is a common practice along all of Senegal’s border regions.

Since the mid-1990s, these resources have reportedly continued to be the main sources of financing for the MFDC. However, the extent of MFDC involvement in each is continually debated with reports of the Senegalese military’s and other groups’ acting within the security vacuum in the trafficking of timber and cannabis, the cultivation and sale of agricultural goods such as peanuts, and the taxation of counterfeit goods. Regardless of the proportional involvement of each group, these resources have been vital to supporting the daily activities and survival of the MFDC. Yet, the ability of these financing sources to not just sustain but enrich MFDC members is very unlikely.

By the 2000s, the MFDC also had access to government resources due to government attempts to incentivize peace through financial and material commitments. During President Diouf’s reign, aid agencies were allowed to supply food directly to *maquis* during ceasefires in order to encourage negotiations and ensure that MFDC members did not loot for food (Evans 2004, 11). Under President Wade, who came to power in 2000, government strategy shifted from delivering food aid and medicine to providing large sums of money to gain traction with MFDC leadership.

Rather than supporting peace, Wade’s strategy had the opposite effect of enabling violence and creating a form of clientelism (Evans 2003, 13). In reality,

The former president, Abdoulaye Wade, “thought he could buy peace ... without settling the root problems,” says Nouah Cissé, a historian of the MFDC. “All he achieved was to line the pockets of go-betweens and split

the independence movement, making it more difficult to control” (Chatelot 2012)

As a result, several actors have been accused of attempting to sustain the conflict to reap the benefits of government financing. In particular, rebel leaders and mediators were accused in the mid-2000s for attending peace committee meetings to get financing for flights, hotels, and other benefits. A local Dakar newspaper, *Le Quotidien*, reported in September 2005 that Wade’s government was providing monthly allocations of up to 16 million CFA to the MFDC (Fall, 27). Since Macky Sall’s election in 2012, government financing has lessened with the President’s focus on peacemaking efforts (Africa Confidential 2012).

At present, the MFDC predominantly depends upon the exploitation of various natural resources outlined above. Links to former-MFDC leaders in Europe as well as financial or in kind support from local communities has diminished. In addition, the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau have increasingly stated intentions to work with the Senegalese government to deal with the MFDC problem. As Macky Sall’s government continues to focus on a political resolution to the conflict with the multiple MFDC factions, the Senegalese government will need to take the time to understand the war economy, how it functions, the risks of it continuing, and how to address it without cutting off the livelihoods and economic capabilities of the local people.

Addressing the War Economy

Thus, the MFDC currently survives off a very unique war economy based on labor-intensive, low-scale, low-productivity, and low-profit financing (Foucher 2007). Furthermore, analysis from researchers of the region and meetings with several individuals in the field confirm that these resources are enough only for the basic survival of MFDC members, including *maquis*, rather than a source of enrichment and profit. In fact, these low-value goods result in a war economy that sustains a low-level of conflict, which is unusual in the African conflict context known for its “blood diamonds” or oil wars.

What seems counterintuitive about the MFDC’s resource base is that its weakness has been its strength—at least in terms of the conflict’s

longevity. The MFDC's relatively weak resource base has perpetuated the conflict because it has perpetuated the notion that the conflict is 'not that bad' (Deets 2009, 104)

Understanding the financing is only complicated by the mix of legal and illegal activities as well as the dependence on local communities of similar financing methods, particularly logging and trade of agricultural commodities.

As a result, there has rarely been a sustained regional and international focus on ending the conflict. However, some analysts and interviewees believe such inaction allows a security vacuum to persist and could be extremely damaging in the future. Narco-trafficking groups from Colombia have become increasingly active in Guinea Bissau over the past decade. The entire West Africa has been reported as a drug route from Latin America to Europe with a series of high profile incidents over the past several years, including the recovery of a Boeing 727 with 10 tons of cocaine in the Malian desert. The plan was linked to Africa Air Assistance, a company owned by Senegalese businessman Ibrahima Gueye (O'Regan 2014).

While there have been no links of the MFDC to cocaine trafficking, there are concerns the Casamance region could become a narco-trafficking corridor if porous borders and a lack of state security persist. Furthermore, such a high-value commodity could vastly change the revenue generation capabilities of the MFDC and other criminal actors in the region, potentially increasing insecurity and violence.

Thus far, government action toward the Casamance conflict has focused on incentivizing MFDC leaders to enter peace negotiations and supporting economic development projects. As noted in other chapters, these actions have had limited success thus far. Additional investment and capacity building is necessary in agricultural development to provide livelihoods for the majority of the population. Infrastructure is also essential to connect the Casamance to the rest of Senegal. In addition, the government of Senegal should investigate and attempt other strategies to cut off MFDC funding sources while improving employment and development options in the region.

In July 2015, President Macky Sall took a new approach to addressing timber trafficking and announced several measures to limit the practice in Casamance. Policies include the immediate suspension of issuing timber licenses, mobilization of defense and

security forces, recruitment of 400 officials for the Department of Water and Forestry, and more severe penalties for offenders (Toupane 2015). While undertaking new strategies for a long-term problem is important, some of the proposed measures could face challenges and actually have negative consequences.

First, logging is a central source of livelihood for people in the region; therefore, suspending new licenses could fuel illegal logging, increase loggers participation with the MFDC to access the black market, and potentially push unemployed workers to sympathize or join the MFDC. Furthermore, increasing local officials from the Department of Water and Forestry should be combined with additional resources to help them monitor timber trafficking and arrest culprits. Lastly, any measures to address timber trafficking must involve collaboration with Gambian and Guinea-Bissauan military, police, and customs officers as the MFDC utilizes the porous borders to enable illegal trading.

As a result, in exploring new strategies for ending the conflict in Casamance, the government must balance efforts to eliminate funding sources and provide alternative options to MFDC members and local communities that rely on legal forms of natural resource extraction. These approaches should deal with police and customs controls along the borders with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, capacity building for local government ministries concerned with natural resources, and alternative economic options to illegal timber and cannabis trafficking.

Recommendations

- **Secure the border so as to continue to deprive the MFDC of funding**, but supplement this loss of informal revenue to MFDC elements with opportunities in the formal economy.
- **Improve cooperation with Gambian and Guinea-Bissauan military and police** to manage and prevent illicit cross-border smuggling of timber, cannabis, and agricultural products and MFDC taxation of legal and illegal trade.
- **Increase staff, capacities, and security capabilities of the Department of Water and Forestry** in order to stem illegal logging and cannabis trafficking along the Gambian and Guinea-Bissauan borders.

- **Support alternative job opportunities and economic development projects** focused on agriculture, fishing, and legal logging.

Conclusion

I. William Zartman

The intriguing question that troubled the visit from the start was how a conflict could last so long at such a low level. One must recognize at the start that Casamance is not Africa's longest conflicts, as Senegalese (like to) claim: Congo, Sudan, even Mali have longer and more intensive conflicts, off and on to be sure but still persistent in their violence. Perhaps the answer is in that contrast. The Casamance conflict has lost its steam: It is hard to find young men to take oaths and women to give them in the *bois sacré* to join the *maquis*. The search for financial support has become an end in itself as local "taxes" are replaced by contraband drugs and timber, reversing the erroneous but accepted progression of greed and grievance. The conflict on the third level, the rebellion, lives on mainly on the second level of memories. But they are kept in bright relief by the first level of the conflict, Casamance's enclavement, isolation, distance and neglect. So the rebellion does not die, nor does it live, suspended in longevity, and that makes its resolution all the more elusive.

The Casamance problem is created by the existence of Gambia. If it were not nearly amputated from the rest of Senegal, Casamance would simply be a local region with its own customs and weather, seeking investment, no doubt, but not independence. As it is, its cultural idiosyncrasy is consolidated by its geography and the MFDC clings to its demand to consummate the excision. There is not a lot that Dakar can do to move Banjul to go ahead with the bridge that is an absolute necessity, but any pressures and diplomatic cajolements are fully justified, as many of the previous chapters' recommendations underscore. Other measures are a poor second best but necessary: a highway through and around Gambia, more frequent ferries, more and cheaper flights.

The problem is perpetuated by neglect and underdevelopment of the region, that ironically has the highest education rate in the country. Economic affirmative action is needed to make the potentially rich agricultural area a real rice basket for Senegal (that now imports rice!) and to bring investment into other economic activities, as preceding chapters emphasize. Casamançais are not natural businessmen; their culture shuns risk and avoids economic competition. Yet they are active and devoted to improvement of

their region; one rice farmer pedal-biked 27 kms to come and talked to us. Better border controls are needed to keep the rich timber trade in Casamance rather than leaking into neighboring countries, notably Gambia again.

Casamançais need to be shown that Dakar's promises of development and investment are not on paper only; preceding chapters have made a number of recommendations. Plans have indeed been announced and some implemented, providing sizable tax advantages and incentives for investment in the region, but skepticism and suspicion die slowly. In Dakar, government cannot simply dump its economic attention in Ziguinchor; it has other less developed regions to care for as well, and particularly in the current economic situation, its resources are short and strained. The recommended approach is devolution, a tricky two-handed move that means releasing the direct control over regional affairs while increasing support for development activities under local initiative. But it also calls for another two-handed endeavor, promoting greater integration of the region into the national economy while fostering autonomous regional entrepreneurship that takes economic involvement and command away from long-distance "colonial" treatment from the north, as chapter recommendations have detailed. These pairs are real challenges, and the government must keep its balance in walking in both directions at the same time. The national Senegalese government deserves domestic sympathy and international support in the conduct of its devolutionary policy under these challenges.

The immediate attention needs to be turned to the third level, the rebellion and measures for its termination, in ways recommended in the chapters above. Handling the Casamance issue on the first, economic level alone is simply a too long-term effort and political events do not stand still in the meanwhile. Contacts between the MFDC and the government have begun, mediated by two international non-government organizations (NGOs). Like development, talks go slowly too, and require patience, but time has passed and Macky Sall's first term risks vanishing like Abdoulaye Wade's hundred days—and he is talking of shortening terms. Sant'Egidio talks with Sadio's representatives have not involved Sadio directly and he still threatens to go back to the bush, where his troops are few. CHD talks await a laudable effort by Badiaté to unite the other rebel factions in a council to choose leaders and negotiators, a process that has

always plagued the MFDC. And then there will be two lines of negotiation when both are fully activated, requiring a third, combining effort.

In these efforts, the *bois sacré* could be mobilized, to work for integration, peace and harmony, and local development efforts. Traditional conflict management methods are a neglected peacemaking and reconciliation resource in many African countries; their influence is especially strong in Casamance and they could be activated for ending violence, building regional pride, and conciliation with other ethnic groups beyond the Diola.

More direct and visible signs of progress are needed, some measures to signal movement. One specific action would be to co-opt Casamançais—including MFDC sympathizers, or even leaders—into the decision-making structures of national and regional boards, committees, and councils of public and private organizations concerned with the economy of the region and of the country in general. Another urgency is to complete the removal of land mines that now seriously hinder travel and farming.

However, there also needs to be an indication that time is not unlimited, that the past tempo will not happen again. The government needs to tell the MFDCs that a political agreement is necessary by a set date, such as the end of the presidential term, or there will be no agreement at all, and it needs to indicate that a full force of economic measures on level one depends on a political agreement on level three, throwing the monkey on the back of the factions rather than the reverse, since there is no real *maquis* to go back to. The MFDC has to show to the populations that they can bring them something. By the same token, the NGO mediators need to accelerate their efforts, if they are to support their reputations.

As in Mindanao, Colombia, and Aceh, among others, the two sides should move to establish a common agenda for their talks along with a timetable. Discussions need to address positions but get behind them to interests. Negotiation is a matter of finding alternatives. “Independence” is indeed a non-ender, as everyone but a few MFDC memory addicts agree, but not necessarily a non-starter for finding functional substitutes, as was done in Aceh, Mindanao, Chiapas, and elsewhere where the demand for independence was softened by mediated negotiation into something jointly acceptable. A regime that talks of changing the constitution for the presidential term cannot pose

constitutional immutability as a reason not to open a search for alternatives with a consideration of the real reasons behind the demand for independence.

The Casamance conflict is a quarter of a century or half a millennium old. It has robbed the rebels of their energy and the government of its credibility. The government can win back the faith of its population by engaging the rebels in an agreement to end the conflict and to turn their energies to their own development, supported by official, remedial effort. Hopefully the analyses and recommendations of this group study of a troubled, endearing region can be of help in that direction.

List of Interviews

Washington DC

- Dr Kamissa Camara, National Endowment for Democracy
- Rebecca Wall, U.S. Department of State
- Dr Janette Yarwood, U.S. Department of State

Dakar

- Ambassador Salliou Cissé
- Ambassador Papa Abdou Cissé, Ad Hoc Negotiating Committee for the Casamance
- Col. Mamadou Kane, Ad Hoc Negotiating Committee for the Casamance
- Governor Saliou Sambou
- Collectif des Cadres Casamançais
- Gen. Lamine Cissé, Partners West Africa
- Dr Said Abbas Ahamed, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Fr. Angelo Romano, Sant'Egidio
- Danny Dedeyan, USAID
- Aliou Demba Kebe, USAID
- Prof. Amsatou Sow Sidibe
- Prof. Ousmane Ba
- Dr Doudou Sidibé, Negocia

Casamance

- Moussa Coly and Bignona council, MFDC
- Abdou Elkiné Diatta, MFDC
- Baboucar Badji, Amicale des Étudiants pour le Développement de la Casamance
- Min. Robert Sagna, Groupe de Réflexion pour la Paix
- Prof. Paul Diedhou

- Prof. Nouha Cissé
- Boubacar Sonko, Agence Régionale de Développement de Ziguinchor
- N'deye Marie Thiam, Plateforme des Femmes
- Prof. Malamine Kourouma
- Ibrahima Gassama, Radio Zig-FM
- Samba Goudjaby, MFDC
- Lamine Tendeng, MFDC
- Pascal Ehemba, Chambre de Commerce, Industrie et Agriculture.
- Demba Keita, APRANIS D P
- Yannick Büchli, CICR

Individual Interviews

- Field Interview. 20 July 2015. “Interview, anonymous MFDC commander.” Interview by Sam Fishman conducted in Lower Casamance.
- Field Interview. 21 June 2015. “Interview with Barham Chaim, chef de CNAMS.” Interview by Sam Fishman, conducted in Lower Casamance.
- Field Interview. 3 July 2015. “Interview with Nouha Cissé.” Interview by Sam Fishman, conducted in Lower Casamance.
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- Field Interview. 15 July 2015. “Interview with Chief of Colonia.” Interview by Sam Fishman conducted in Upper Casamance, Senegal.
- Field Interview. “Interview with Abdou Elinkine Diata.” Interview by Sam Fishman conducted in Ziguinchor, Senegal.
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