

AEGIS Thematic Conference
Questions around the extraction of natural resources in Africa
Madrid, 14-15 April 2011
GRUPO DE ESTUDIOS AFRICANOS
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

CONFERENCE REPORT

The Group of African Studies-UAM, organized this Thematic Conference that was approved by AEGIS board in September 2010. The Conference was financed by the Spanish Aid Agency: Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional al Desarrollo – AECID, and Casa África. During these two days of April 2011, experts from Europe, Africa and America (Canada), met in the Faculty of Philosophy Sala de Conferencias, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, to deal with different social dynamics related in one way or another to the extraction of minerals in Africa.

The conference was first announced on the AEGIS website and the website of the Group of African Studies. The call for papers was open from 12 October 2010 to 7 February 2011, with a first period for AEGIS members. We received 15 proposals, nine of which were finally selected and presented. The conference was attended by 35 participants, a number of which came from AEGIS member centers. There were also participants from Africa, two of them obtained a travel bursary from the organization. (List of participants in annex)

We enjoyed the participation of three extraordinary keynote speakers, **Cyril Obi**, **Bonnie Campbell** and **Erwin Bulte**, who talked about broad perspectives, but also about deep field works. The **first panel** was articulated around oil extraction in Chad, their effects on family relations and the lights that a comparison with neighbouring Equatorial Guinea may shed. The **second panel** was developed around the participation of certain international organizations in areas of natural resources extraction and conflicts; specifically the UN sanction system in Angola, and the IGAD in the Corn of Africa. The **third panel** resulted in a very cohesive one, with three contributions on artisanal mining in Upper Guinea, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, and a forth one on mining by companies in Katanga-RDC.

Most of the speakers based their analysis on nuanced case studies of extractive spaces more than on broad models. However, they did not avoid to make comparisons or to extract implications of their findings for other places, avoiding the excesses of extreme particularism. On the other hand, institutions, at all levels, and their relations with social dynamics, have been one of the *leit motifs* of the conference. Engagement of researchers with the aggrieved populations has not been so openly dealt with, but it has gone through many presentations and debates.

Initiatives have been taken after the conference in order to produce a monograph in an academic journal based on many of the papers presented.

Convenor of the conference was Dr. Alicia Campos, research fellow at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid; the Secretary of the conference was Aloia Alvarez (Grupo de Estudios Africanos-UAM) and the Scientific Committee was formed by Iraxis Bello, Eduardo Bidaurratzaga, Artur Colom, José Luis de la Flor, Manuel García de la Cruz, Jesús García-Luengos, Coro Jiménez Arellano, José María Muñoz, Ángeles Sánchez,

Jordi Sant. We had the support of Marivi Ordóñez as webmaster and Susana Pérez in the secretary of GEA.

There follow the **rationale** of the conference, the **definitive program**, as well as the **list of participants**.

Alicia Campos Serrano

RATIONALE

Natural resources and extractive industries have received in recent times increasing attention by specialists working in Africa. Scholars and activists have linked the intensification of mineral extraction in many African contexts to social and political processes leading to violence and the impoverishment of surrounding populations.

The historical context in which such processes have developed can only be tentatively sketched. On the one hand, the neoliberal economic recipes of the 1980s, fostered by international financial organizations and adopted by most governments in the region, meant that many mineral and oil producers abandoned industrialization policies and concentrated in this sector, in which they enjoyed alleged comparative advantages. The wave of privatization that accompanied structural adjustment entailed the arrival of numerous private corporations, foreign for the most part, that took over a market that had been hitherto controlled by the public sector. Among the most consolidated oil producers, a simultaneous inverse process has taken place as a result of which parastatal companies have become stronger and began competing with established private corporations, sometimes even beyond their national frontiers.

The newly increased needs of electronic industries for certain mineral and hydrocarbon products and the industrialization of South East Asia have reinforced this trend towards a concentration on mineral production. The ensuing increase in demand, which has reached surprising proportions, caused prices peak in 2000. Conversely, during the present financial crisis prices have experienced dramatic falls.

On the other hand, the end of the Cold War and of the last struggles of national liberation indirectly made the impact of mining and oil extraction activities on armed conflict more visible. The continuation of the wars in Angola and Colombia, as well as the emergence of others in West and Central Africa and in the Persian Gulf, forced observers to revise explanations of those conflicts that relied almost exclusively on political or geostrategic factors. The role of the extraction and sale of oil, diamonds, or tantalite, among other examples, in the onset and maintenance of conflicts needed to be reassessed.

The increasing salience of the links between mining activities and phenomena such as environmental degradation, incidence of disease, armed conflicts, and authoritarian trends in producing countries has not pass unnoticed to scholars, activists and, of course, neighbouring populations. "Extractive industries" have become the topic of monographs, seminars, campaigns, networks and research projects that have attracted academic centres, social movements, officials of governments and international organizations, and managers of transnational corporations alike.

The aim of this Conference is to transcend general debates that have seemingly outlived their usefulness. Authors who consider these processes largely as part of a New Scramble for Africa or those who see them exclusively as the result of a purported Resource Curse risk finding themselves in analytical dead-ends. While always attentive to comparative dimensions, we propose instead to focus on specific dynamics and processes and to approach them from a variety of perspectives.

INFORMATION:

<http://www.uam.es/gea>

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“QUESTIONS AROUND THE EXTRACTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA”

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DEFINITIVE PROGRAMME

APRIL, 14	09:30 – 10:00	Registration
	10:00 – 10:30	<u>Welcome Address</u> Silvia Arias: Oficina de Acción Solidaria y Cooperación Director, UAM Alicia Campos: Research Fellow on International Relations, Grupo de Estudios Africanos (GEA)
	PANEL I: DEBATES AROUND THE RESOURCE CURSE	
	10:30 - 12:00	KEYNOTE by CYRIL OBI (<i>Nordiska Afrikainstitutet</i>) “The Lie of the Curse: Natural Resource Abundance and Conflict in Africa”
	12:00 – 12:30	Coffee break
	12:30 – 14:30	-Artur Colom & Alicia Campos: “Oil in Chad and Equatorial Guinea: the resource curse revisited” -Hoinathy Remadji: “Monetization of social interrelations in the Chadian oil zone: money in the core of family interrelations and alliances” <i>Discussant: Jesús García Luengos.</i> Presentation of the study on Spanish policy coherence of Spanish between development and energy security in Africa.
	14:00 – 14:30	Jeannette Unite - Visual Artist: “Paradox of Plenty: The Resource Curse in the African Industrial Landscape”
	14:30 – 16:00	Lunch break
	PANEL II: RESOURCES, CONFLICTS AND INSTITUTIONS	
	16:00 – 17:30	KEYNOTE by ERWIN BULTE (<i>Wageningen University / Tilburg University</i>) “Natural resources and conflict in Africa: A fresh look at the macro and micro evidence”
	17:30 – 18:00	Coffee break
	18:00 – 20:00	-Kasaija Phillip Apuuli: “IGAD’s Peace and Security Strategy and Trans-boundary Natural Resources Management”

		-Thomas Kruiper: "Measuring the Effectiveness of UN Sanctions in Angola, Liberia, and the DRC Congo" <i>Discussant: Alicia Campos</i>
APRIL 15	PANEL III: MINING, WORKERS AND COMPANIES	
	10:00 – 11:30	KEYNOTE by BONNIE CAMPBELL (Institute d'Études Internationales de Montréal, UQAM) "Mining for Development in Africa: Regulatory Frameworks, Issues of Legitimacy, Responsibility and Accountability"
	11:30 – 12:00	Coffee break
	12.00 – 14:00	-Matthieu Bolay: "The profesionalization of artisanal gold mining in Upper Guinea: situated risk management within transnational practices" -Samuel J. Spiegel: "The Politics of Criminalization in Zimbabwe's Mining Communities: Labour Struggles in the Gold and Diamond Sectors" -Michael Bürge & Laurent E. Cartier: "Formalising Artisanal Gold Mining in Sierra Leone – On Whose Terms?" -Jana Hönke: "New political topographies. Mining companies and indirect discharge in Southern Katanga (DRC)" <i>Discussant: Artur Colom</i>
	14:30	Closing remarks

VENUE:

Sala de Conferencias
Facultad de Filosofía
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Campus Universitario de Cantoblanco
Ctra. Colmenar, km. 15, MADRID

ORGANIZED BY:



Grupo de Estudios Africanos
Dpto. Ciencia Política y Relaciones Internacionales
Despacho 13
Facultad de Derecho



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PRESENTERS

SURNAME	NAME	CENTRE	PAPER	E-MAIL
BOLAY	Matthieu	MAPS, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.	"The profesionnalization of artisanal gold mining in Upper Guinea: situated risk management within transnational practices"	matthieu.bolay@unine.ch
BULTE	Erwin	Department of Economics. Wageningen University, Tilburg University, Netherlands.	KEYNOTE "Natural resources and conflict in Africa: A fresh look at the macro and micro evidence"	erwin.bulte@wur.nl
BÜRGE	Michael	Department of Social & Cultural Anthropology, University of Zürich, Switzerland.	"Formalising Artisanal Gold Mining in Sierra Leone – On Whose Terms?" (with Laurent E. Cartier)	michael.buerge@gmail.com
CAMPBELL	Bonnie	Institute d'Études Internationales de Montréal, UQÀM, Canada.	KEYNOTE "Mining for Development in Africa: Regulatory Frameworks, Issues of Legitimacy, Responsability and	campbell.bonnie@uqam.ca

			Accountability”	
CAMPOS	Alicia	Grupo de Estudios Africanos, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain.	“Oil in Chad and Equatorial Guinea: the resource curse revisited” (with Artur Colom)	alicia.campos@uam.es
CARTIER	Laurent E.	Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Basel, Switzerland.	“Formalising Artisanal Gold Mining in Sierra Leone – On Whose Terms?” (with Michael Bürge)	laurent.cartier@unibas.ch
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KRUIPER	Thomas	University of Valencia, Spain.	“Measuring the Effectiveness of UN Sanctions in Angola, Liberia, and the DRC Congo”	thomas.kruiper@gmail.com

OBI	Cyril	Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, Sweden.	KEYNOTE "The Lie of the Curse: Natural Resource Abundance and Conflict in Africa"	Cyril.Obi@nai.uu.se
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SPIEGEL	Samuel J.	Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom.	"The Politics of Criminalization in Zimbabwe's Mining Communities: Labour Struggles in the Gold and Diamond Sectors"	samspiegel@gmail.com
UNITE	Jeannette Rosemund	Fort Hare University, FHISER (Fort Hare Institute of Social and Economic Research), South Africa.	"Paradox of Plenty: The Resource Curse in the African Industrial Landscape"	jeannette@artunite.com

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