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Going Back Home: The Politics of the Repatriation of Liberian and Togolese Refugees in Ghana - A. ESSUMAN-JOHNSON

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The United States, International Relations and World Leadership in the Twenty-First Century- BONI YAO GEBE

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Developing Binding Material from Rice Husk- R. J. BANU

Resolving Chieftaincy Succession Disputes and Communal Conflicts in Ghana: Lessons from Mamprusu - Northern Ghana- STEVE TONAH

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UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
P. O. BOX LG 25, LEGON, GHANA
E-mail: lecia@ug.edu.gh

Going Back Home: The Politics of the Repatriation of Liberian and Togolese Refugees in Ghana	1
<i>A. ESSUMAN-JOHNSON</i>	
Beyond The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Promoting Child Rights in Ghana	26
<i>KUMI ANSAH-KOI</i>	
The United States, International Relations and World Leadership in the Twenty-First Century.....	42
<i>BONI YAO GEBE</i>	
Openness and the Palm Oil Sector in Ghana.....	68
<i>T. O. ANTWI-ASARE and A. D. A. LARYEA</i>	
Developing Binding Material from Rice Husk	88
<i>RICHARD JINKS BANI</i>	
Resolving Chieftaincy Succession Disputes and Communal Conflicts in Ghana: Lessons from Mamprugu - Northern Ghana	100
<i>STEVE TONAH</i>	
<i>Book Reviews</i>	
Human Development Report 2004: 'Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World'	125
<i>KWESI YANKAH</i>	
Zimbabwe's Environmental Dilemma: Balancing Resource Inequities ..	134
<i>PHILIP ATTUQUAYEFIO</i>	



GOING BACK HOME: THE POLITICS OF THE REPATRIATION OF LIBERIAN AND TOGOLESE REFUGEES IN GHANA

A.ESSUMAN-JOHNSON¹

Abstract

The dream of all refugees is that of going back home. This is however always closely caught up in the politics of repatriation. The politics of repatriation is closely bound up with the resolution of the underlying cause of the flight and the return of peace to their country of origin. Ghana has hosted refugees from the conflicts in Liberia (since 1990) and Togo (since 1993). When peace returned to Togo, elections were held and a new government was put in place in Lome. A tripartite agreement for the repatriation of the Togolese refugees was signed between the UNHCR, the Togo and the Ghana government. The repatriation was largely smooth and the Klikor camp set up for them was closed down. The Liberian civil war ended with the election in 1996 of Charles Taylor, a former rebel leader as President. But Liberia never saw peace under President Taylor as other rebel groups tried to remove him from power. Following the civil war, many refugees from Liberia sought refuge in Ghana from 1991. When the civil war ended, efforts were made to repatriate the Liberian refugees. On the contrary, the conditions for the repatriation of the Liberians have not been very good. While some of the refugees were eager to repatriate, the peace in Liberia since the election of President Taylor could at best be described as one of "no peace no war" and it was not very good for repatriation. This paper looks at the politics surrounding the repatriation of refugees from Togo and Liberia from Ghana between 1995 and 1998. The paper examines the contrasting politics of the peace processes in the two countries prior to the efforts at repatriation and how this impacted the politics of going back home.

¹ Dr. Essuman-Johnson is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon.

BEYOND THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: PROMOTING CHILD RIGHTS IN GHANA

KUMI ANSAH-KOI¹

Background to the Study

Officially known as the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), it was adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly in Resolution 44/2 of January 26, 1989 in New York. It was opened for signature and ratification on January 26, 1990; and entered into force on September 2, 1990. It shall hereafter, in the present article, be called by its acronym: CRC. The CRC is reportedly the most widely ratified treaty in existence. By November of 1999, the tenth anniversary of its adoption, only the United States of America and Somalia had failed to ratify it. It must be stated though that a number of states ratifying the CRC had done so subject to various reservations.

Apart from its near-universal ratification, the CRC is significantly innovative on account of, *inter alia*, its integrated and comprehensive approach to the issue of rights; its affirmation of rights for children as distinct from parental rights; and its expansion of child right frontiers to embrace 'the best interest of the child' and to focus on the child's peculiarities and vulnerabilities. It is also remarkable for its focus on 'Provision for Children'; 'Protection of Children'; and on the 'Participation of Children' in what pertains to them¹. The drafting and implementation of the CRC boosted attention for children's rights globally. The main general principles of the CRC are incorporated into the mandates and mission statements of a range of relevant organizations, most prominent of which is UNICEF.

¹ Dr. Kumi Ansah-Koi is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon.

THE UNITED STATES, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND WORLD LEADERSHIP IN THE TWENTY- FIRST CENTURY

YAO GEBE¹

Abstract

The end of the Cold War and the transformations that have taken place in the international system have led to varied interpretations of the structure, power relations and leadership in the inter-state system. The arguments and disagreements have been further compounded by the events that took place on September 11, 2001, essentially the terrorist attacks on the United States of America. American foreign policy has, to a very large extent, been affected by this incidence, and has also impinged on her relations with the rest of the international community. The study attempts an examination of these diverse issues from the perspectives of the theory and practice of international relations and the historical and contemporary dynamics of inter-state relations. In particular, it evaluates the leadership role of the United States since the end of World War Two from the position of a hegemonic leader, her politics, policies and strategies as an egoistic and self-interested actor on the global stage and the repercussions of her choices for the rest of humanity and the world at large. It draws some fundamental conclusions that the structure of the international system and power relations among state actors play important roles in the processes of governance and cooperation in the international system. It proposes that any attempt to restructure or reform the institutions or organizations that regulate inter-state relations cannot be obtained through diplomatic maneuvers or arms twisting alone, but through a realignment of power relations and forces that shape and direct international politics.

¹ Dr. Yaw Gebe is a Research Fellow at the Legon Centre for International Affairs (LECIA) University Of Ghana, Legon

RESOLVING CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES AND COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN GHANA: LESSONS FROM MAMPRUGU - NORTHERN GHANA

STEVE TONAH¹

Abstract

Chieftaincy succession disputes and the associated violent communal conflicts have become rather prevalent in Northern Ghana since the 1970s. This paper examines one of such chieftaincy succession disputes that engulfed the Mamprusi province of Wungu (Northern Ghana) between 1996 and 2001. This conflict resulted from the selection of an unpopular candidate as the paramount chief of the area. The candidate chosen by the Nayiri (King of the Mamprusi) to be the paramount chief was rejected by the inhabitants and the rival candidates and prevented from taking up his position as paramount chief by the youth. The dispute between the Nayiri and the rebel province resulted in communal conflicts in the area. A period of interregnum then ensued, during which the province remained without a paramount chief. This period was characterized by a state of lawlessness and standstill in the implementation of development projects in the area. The paper also examines the resolution of this protracted chieftaincy succession dispute and the lessons that could be drawn from the Wungu case for other traditional areas in Northern Ghana and beyond.

Introduction

Communal conflicts have not only become more commonplace in Northern Ghana during the last three decades, but there has also been a dramatic increase in the intensity and destructiveness of such conflicts. Communal conflicts in Northern Ghana can be broadly categorized into two main types: inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts. Some of the well known inter-ethnic conflicts, that is, those that involve two or more ethnic groups, include the Mamprusi-Kusasi conflict in the Bawku area between 1980 and 2002, the

¹ Dr. Steve Tonah is a Lecturer at the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, Legon.