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**TOPIC: PEACE, SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE IN WEST AFRICA:  
TOWARDS ENHANCING RESEARCH ARENAS, PRACTICES AND  
CAPACITIES**

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**Peace, Security and Governance in West Africa: Towards  
Enhancing Research Arenas, Practices and Capacities**

**Kwame Boafo-Arthur**

**Introduction**

Expanding the frontiers of knowledge and thereby enhance development in various facets of life have been indispensable aspects of human existence. There is very little doubt about the fact that the frontiers of knowledge in virtually all fields of human endeavours have expanded beyond man's widest imaginations. The expansive natures of knowledge on various issues have come about as a result of persistent research in several disciplines. Being a social scientist, my interest in the search for knowledge via scientific research is circumscribed by my area of specialization just like any other area specialists. However, hailing from a turbulent, highly unstable and volatile region such as West Africa, has helped in defining certain areas of research in the social sciences that are of great interest in the international system. Until quite recently, the region had to contend with several forms of destabilizing conflicts including the civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, and Cote d'Ivoire, the rebellions in Niger, and countless intra state ethnic clashes in some countries and minority agitation for equitable disbursement of national wealth in Nigeria. The massive generation of internally displaced people and refugees naturally led to the diversion of greater research attention to peace and security issues. Whereas research in peace and security matters have had a longer spell, research activities in governance is of recent origin. This is explained by the fact that conflicts have been endemic in the region while serious attention began to be paid to governance issues only after the epidemics of democratic transitions in the wake of the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the end of the Cold War. A critical look at social science discourses in the context of research orientation in the West African sub region makes it clear, just like in most other areas that, research activities tend to move in line with changing human circumstances. Whereas there are overlapping areas of concerns, the major focus of research activities in the arts and social sciences have included, peace, security,

proliferation of small arms, governance, democratic transitions, human rights, brain drain, poverty alleviation, refugees, integration, political stability, etc. Given the broad array of issues, the research community has also expanded with various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaging in research or knowledge production to complement traditional research institutions such as the universities. Consequently, there have been several research activities in the area of peace, security, and governance and other related issues by these actors. Actors in the research arena have imploded to an extent that, in some instances, traditional research centres like the universities are overshadowed. A modest attempt at explaining this phenomenon is carried out in this paper.

The paper raises some fundamental questions regarding research in the sub region. Who are the main actors in the research arena in the sub region? To what extent has research been hijacked by NGOs and CSOs to the detriment of main stream research institutions? What are the determinants of research agendas in the sub region and who determines them? What explains the disharmonies in knowledge production between the North and South? Can partnerships bridge the gap in research capacities? What is the future of social science research in the areas of peace, security and governance?

### **The West African Research Scene: The Key Actors**

Research, in our context, implies the “production or co-creation of (new) knowledge but extends also to disclosure, dissemination, transfer, sharing, adaptation and the use of that knowledge for development”.<sup>1</sup> Research can play a critical role in generating knowledge about what particular groups and countries need, and about what approaches seem to be most effective in resolving specific problems. It is because of its relevance to development that various organizations keep on funding research. If social, political, cultural, and economic questions or problems are to be satisfactorily answered or addressed to facilitate development, research is necessary. There is no doubt that

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<sup>1</sup> See position paper for the conference on the theme “Knowledge on the move: research for development in a globalizing world”, p.2

investment in knowledge production is the key to sustainable development. This may explain, in part, why there are several actors in the research arena in the sub region.

Naturally, institutions of higher learning in the region have traditionally been the hub of research activities. Universities in the sub region, therefore, play crucial roles in knowledge production through research. These research roles have been expanded by the establishment of several private universities, especially in Nigeria and Ghana in addition to the expansion of the public universities. Both the public and more traditional universities and the recently emerging private universities carry out various research activities. The point is that even at the university level, the research arena has been expanded. Universities in West Africa, like other universities in Africa have a tripartite mission: teaching, research and extension service. It has been noted by a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, George Benneh that research enables the universities to “generate new knowledge which contributes to solving societal problems, impart problem-solving skills to their students and produce a stream of young researchers that can sustain the university enterprise”.<sup>2</sup> Virtually all institutions of higher learning tend to have teaching departments. In most of these departments, teaching is emphasized more than research even though most academics balance both teaching and research because research publications play a crucial role in the professional advancement of a university lecturer. However, within universities are also research institutes whose main agenda is conducting research or knowledge production. It would appear then that in any higher institution, researchers or knowledge producers in institutes spend virtually all their time conducting research whilst those in the teaching departments in some instances become consumers of the knowledge produced. However, teaching does not compromise the research obligations of university teachers. An effective teacher is the one who is also research oriented, at least, in his area of specialization. Given the fact that the activities of research institutes in institutions of higher learning may not satisfy the demand for knowledge on several developmental issues, other research groups have emerged in the

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<sup>2</sup> George Benneh, “Research management in Africa”, Higher Education Policy, Vol. 15, No.3, Sept. 2003, p/2.

private sphere and the work they do contribute immensely in expanding the frontiers of knowledge.

In other words, the locus of research in West Africa should first and foremost be sought in various institutions of higher learning in both academic teaching departments and designated research institutes. It has been pointed out by the World Bank that African Universities “are often the only national institutions with skills, the equipment and the mandate to generate new knowledge through research. The level of skills concentration in African Universities is higher relative to the rest of society”.<sup>3</sup> Apart from the teaching Departments in Ghana, the Institute for Social, Scientific and Economic Research (ISSER) at the University of Ghana, Legon is noted for its cutting edge researches in social and economic issues. Other universities in the sub region have such establishments in addition to numerous teaching departments whose research activities either complement or supplement research findings from other institutions both local and international. To complement the efforts of the universities on the research front, governments have also created public research institutes. An example of such publicly funded research institute in Ghana is the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) which has under its control such institutes, centres and units covering wide range of research areas, and the objective is to encourage and improve multidisciplinary approach to research. Plans are far advanced for such state created public research institute in Senegal.

However, I perceive the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) as a leading light in knowledge production in the sub region. Through its numerous activities and research networks in most of the areas listed above, knowledge is produced and teaching departments in various universities as well as governmental policy makers become the eventual consumers of the knowledge generated. When it comes to international research cooperation, CODESRIA is again a frontrunner as it has established several international research networks that bring African scholars

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<sup>3</sup> Cited in George Benneh, “Research Management in Africa”, *Higher Education Policy*, Sept 2003, Vol. 15, No. 3, p.2

together for research purposes on themes of developmental concern to the sub region. Furthermore, CODESRIA encourages national working groups based in academic departments of universities to research on themes of their choice. Research activities of CODESRIA are largely supported by Northern sponsors such as the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation (SAREC), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Ford Foundation, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish Agency for International Development (DANIDA). It could be argued then that knowledge production in Africa in the social science arena is having a massive support from Northern benefactors.

Added to the institutes of higher learning, state created research institutes and pan African research organizations such as CODESRIA, the research arena in West Africa is also very much alive as a result of the activities of NGOs and CSOs. Across the length and breadth of the sub region, these organizations have taken up a large research portfolio running the gamut of peace, security, governance, refugees, human rights, poverty alleviation, sanitation, the rule of law, etc. Few examples from Nigeria and Ghana clearly demonstrate the very broad ambit of such NGOs and CSOs who have research as a key component of their activities. From Nigeria could be cited the Law Research and Resource Documentation Center (LRRDC), African Strategic and Peace Research Group (AFSTRAG), African Centre for Governance and Democracy (AFRIGOV), Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR), Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission (HRVIC) and Centre for Peace Initiatives and Development (CEPID). In Ghana, some of the prominent NGOs and CSOs with bias towards research are African Security Dialogue and Research (ASDR), Foundation for Security and Development (FOSDA), Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD-Ghana), Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA), Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and the Third World Network.

International organizations and donors have either encouraged or directly commissioned various forms of research in West Africa on several development issues including peace,

security and governance or issues that in the long run have some form of bearing on these. Examples include the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department for International Development (DFID), and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA).

In sum, there are numerous actors in the West African research arena. They include institutions of higher learning, state created public research institutions, international organization, and indigenous NGOs and CSOs. Between them, various issues especially in the social sciences are researched and the findings disseminated in various ways to the larger community. It is clear from the vast array of research in the social sciences in the region that a lot of time has been spent on peace and security. Given the turbulence and chronic political instability in the sub region, this is to be expected. A lot of such research has also attracted the attention of regional organizations involved in preventing conflict and, promoting or upholding international peace and security.

A cursory glance at the research arena in the sub region also reveals the fact that NGOs and CSOs as well as policy think tanks, are effectively competing with universities in knowledge production. They appear to be winning the research turf for a number of reasons. First, most of the research oriented NGOs are like private business enterprises and are owned or led by people who are fully committed to the research activities they undertake. The distractions are very few unlike in the universities where lecturers have to engage in a balancing act between teaching, research and extension service. With the explosion of student intake in most universities in the sub region, very little time is found for research by academic teaching staff. Second, the NGOs have almost succeeded in edging out traditional research centres because they are able to obtain sufficient funding from Northern sponsors to keep them afloat and many teaching staff of the universities are hired to work for the directors and executive secretaries of these private research organizations. Third, they manage to engage in all kinds of research even in instances where they do not have the expertise. Because they always succeed in getting funds for research, they offer attractive baits to others who carry out the research for them. Fourth,

they are able to strike better working relations with donor organizations or their representative who continue to fund their research activities. This is something the universities, especially the teaching departments are not able to do because of divided attention between teaching and research.

Another important issue of concern is the determinants of research agendas in this vast research arena as mapped above. In most cases the research agendas are set and monitored by the donor partners. Even in some instances where a proposal is dealing with an issue of public concern, the partner that funds the research determines what should be done. This stifles initiative and innovations because researchers are invariably guided to reach certain conclusions anticipated by the agenda setters. Of course, one may submit a proposal but the one to fund may decide to make alterations to suit the interest of the organization or foundation.<sup>4</sup> Another issue of concern is whether there have been any enduring partnerships in this vast research minefield.

### **Contending with Research Arenas and Research Partnerships**

We must first state our understanding of the two key partnerships the theme deals with before attempting to find out whether there has been any semblance of enduring partnership. This logically leads to the question as to what amounts to enduring research partnership. Two kinds of research partnerships can clearly be delineated. The first is the partnership that normally evolves as a result development cooperation. Such development cooperation may have inbuilt research component with the sole objective of enhancing capacity building in the developing country. In most cases, cooperation agreement with Northern donors and other international organizations with strong Northern influence carry out such cooperation partnership to facilitate development. The United Kingdom's DFID is a good example of an organization that fosters development through development research partnerships. Through the role of the British Council offices dotted along West Africa, institutional support given by DFID has research components. The

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<sup>4</sup> I am aware of a situation where a academic was hired to review the operations of a foreign foundation in Ghana. The review was not favourable to the foundation and the reviewer was prevailed upon to reach certain conclusions. He had to oblige for fear that he would not be paid his contract sum. There is also an incident where my department pulled out of a research programme because the sponsors wanted us to view the Trade Union Congress from a certain angle.

same applies to the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Most of the research development cooperation agreements entered into by DFID with countries and/or institutions in the sub region come in the form of scholarship awards to institutions and individuals to sharpen the capacity of recipients. They facilitate various link agreements between higher institutions in the sub region and others in the UK for instance. All recipients are obliged to return to their home countries after various development and research oriented studies.

The second form of research partnerships is in the form of international research cooperation. In this instance, there are two research poles, one in the North and the other in the South. They enter into partnerships for research purposes. These may be between groups, organizations or group of individuals. The state may not have a hand in such international research cooperation unlike development cooperation engendered research. The Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon has been able to establish this form of partnership with the Danish Embassy in Accra. This has made it possible for the Department to carry out research on general elections. In 1996, 2000, and 2004, the Department received funding from DANIDA to investigate various issues underlining the elections to build a data base for election management in the Department. It is anticipated that a similar support shall be obtained for the upcoming general elections in December 2008. It is interesting to note that in this type of partnership, the research agenda is always set by the Department but not DANIDA. The UNDP, for instance, has also been in partnership with the Legon Centre for International Affairs have been funding the centres research activities in specified area and helped with the dissemination of the outcomes on a number of issues over the years. Several other agencies have been in partnership with think tanks and other CSOs or NGOs for research purposes. In most of these partnerships, the agenda is set by the local organization or institute. The International Federation of Electoral Systems at some point in time also had some level of international research cooperation with some Ghanaian institutions and group of individuals.

There is a clear overlap between research partnerships in the context of development cooperation and in the context of international research cooperation. If my categorization of the two above is anything to go by then in my perception, the first cannot readily evolve into the second unless there is a conscious effort by donors to institutionalize development cooperation embedded research on its own but not as a component donor package incorporating other forms of development assistance. When institutionalized even within the context of development cooperation, it may end up taking the form of international research cooperation. In my view, there is freedom of operation in the context of international research cooperation than in development cooperation oriented research. This is because of the several conditionalities attached to development aid under whose umbrage development cooperation research falls. This may not be the case in international research cooperation. For instance, the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana and the University of Ougadougou in Burkina Faso entered into an international research cooperation agreement with the African Studies Centre at Leiden to research into the nature of “small conflicts” in the West African sub region. We were not in any way restricted as to what to incorporate in the research agenda and what not to add. There was a consensus by the partners on the key issues to look at. This is what I may call international research cooperation. This form of research cooperation is different from one that has been instituted as result of development cooperation agreement between, for instance, Ghana and Great Britain or a Northern donor agency. In the development process, the two may complement each other though they are distinct, and a development cooperation oriented agenda could be institutionalized and transformed into international research cooperation if donors or development partners remove conditionalities attached to various grants.

### **Disharmonies in Knowledge Production**

The point is made by the World Bank that “poor countries and poor people differ from rich ones not only because they have less capital but because they have less knowledge. Knowledge is often costly to create and that is why much of it is created in industrial countries”.<sup>5</sup> It is apparent from the World Bank’s position that poverty constitutes a

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<sup>5</sup> The World Bank, World Development Report, 1999.

greater constraint to research in the South. Countries are poor, university institutions and research institutes are poor and this compels them to be junior partners in various research activities, that is, even if the Northern donor would be prepared to link up with a local research institute and fund its activities for a while. Another reason is that more often than not, renowned researchers are attracted to Northern institutes due to poor remuneration and working conditions in our African environment. On these grounds alone, there will continue to be pronounced disharmonies in knowledge production between the North and the South. All major industrial concerns with potent research and development outfits are located in North. The same applies to powerful and known research institutes. The disparity in resources and research capacities are reflected in the quantum of knowledge produced through research. Research institutes in the South will continue to play second fiddle to Northern research establishments so long as the inequities in resources exist. Whether it is possible to bridge this dichotomy is a wide guess. There is, therefore, the need for effective partnership that will ensure the bridging of the dichotomy between the North and the South in the area of research. We have to accept the fact that research can effectively enhance the quality of information on which effective policy could be based, as well as the solidity of the political process that stands behind formulation and implementation of that policy.

### **Research Orientations and Societal needs**

Research must serve the developmental needs of the people. It is in this sense that research outcomes become relevant to society. The impact of the knowledge produced through research may be direct or indirect. The findings of a social science research get into the public domain and are instantly utilized in academia or other institutions of learning through publications and other mode of dissemination of research outcomes. In the areas of peace, security and governance research, the wider society benefits as the findings may help in maintaining peace, facilitate negotiation between contending groups, publicize the causes of particular conflict that had led to the breach of peace, etc. In industry on the other hand, research findings emanating from their research and development (R&D) outfits may be utilized by the industry concerned to enhance the production of its industrial goods. Even though industrial set ups do not readily release

their findings but would rather use it to gain competitive advantage over other industries, the end product eventually help in societal development. Research into new drugs may enhance the profitability of pharmaceutical companies engaged in the research but eventually it is the wider society that benefits. Thus even though the industry may keep its findings a secret or will protect it from other competitors in the field, the wider society is the ultimate beneficiary.

The benefits of research that accrue to the wider society notwithstanding, it must be noted that not all research findings may be of relevance to society. This happens in situations where academic researchers are isolated from social realities in their environment. The point being made is that research will be relevant especially in the social sciences when the wider society or the community which is the target of research is involved in the agenda setting or identifying beneficial areas of social science research. The relevance of research comes to the fore if it readily impact on the people or the people get involved in targeting the areas to be examined. Not long ago, several countries in Africa were subjected to sweeping structural adjustment programmes. The objective was to help in economic rejuvenation of several countries in the sub region and thereby enhance the standard of living of the people. However, the modalities for the implementation of the programmes, the embedded conditionalities of the programmes and the expected outcomes were all hatched on the corridors of the Bretton Woods institutions without proper consultation with the target nations. In light of the harsh nature of the adjustment programmes, the fundamental rights of the people were trampled upon. Governments had to resort to draconian measures to implement the policies that clearly had very little support in various countries. The end result was that even though the programmes were well intentioned, their social outcomes were repulsive. The upheavals the implementation of the programmes caused were only abated when broad consultations were made. This led to attention to be paid to in-built socially mitigating mechanisms for the most vulnerable groups in the course of its implementation. In Ghana, for instance, a specific mechanism known as the programme of action to mitigate the social costs of adjustment (PAMSCAD) was put in place. It is believed that if there had been wider consultations with the stakeholders in the case of structural adjustment at the onset, the societal

tensions it created in almost all sub-Saharan African countries that were compelled to undergo the adjustment process could have been avoided. Much as research is geared toward societal development in most cases, the social tension that in some cases emanate from the implementation of research findings could be avoided if there is proper consultation with stakeholders even in zeroing in on the area of research. This may be a difficult proposition especially in academic circles due to time constraints as well as cost. It must, however, be stressed that research conducted purely on the basis of demonstrating pure academic excellence does not end up helping in societal advancement. It is not asking for too much in the social sciences if researchers are admonished to deal with issues that identify directly with the people and bound to help in advancing the progress of humankind. It is in this context that we must view the essence of research in the areas of peace, security and governance.

The mode of disseminating research findings could also determine whether the beneficiary society really appreciate what has been done. Most academic research findings are left to gather dust because in the dissemination process, the targeted beneficiaries were not made part of the whole knowledge chain either in its production or consumption. This means that academic research findings “must go to town” instead of being hemmed within university walls or the offices of research institutes. One may ask how often academics make their research findings available to policy implementers in the field. Most of our research findings are locked up in journal publications that do not in any way benefit the larger society apart from helping us to progress in academia. Universities are the worse offenders in this context as most research findings tend to serve very narrow academic ends with very little or no attempt to make the findings available to the wider society. By not making research findings available to policy implementers, the wider society is deprived of the knowledge produced. This also calls for stronger relations between universities and other research institutes and governments to ensure the implementation of policies derived from research. What is happening in Africa is that it is only when a research programme is initiated by the governments or its institutions that the findings receive any attention. This may explain the sad case of knowledge produced on several fronts which do not receive the required attention and

end up not directly benefiting society. In the dissemination process after painstaking research, in some instances, government officials invited with the aim of alerting them to new socio-economic as well as political issues of importance never show up. This calls for an effective way of making research finding useful to society.

In most cases, the agenda for research is set in an ivory tower or the offices of donors based on proposals submitted. The likely result and impact of the research on the wider society does not become a stringent demand because in several instances, donors set the tone for researchers to follow. When donors pursue narrow economic and patronizing interests research does not in anyway benefit the people. There is, therefore, the need to overhaul research practices with the aim of making the knowledge produced not only relevant but also readily available to policy implementers or governments. The issue of benefits from social science research is complicated anytime sponsors of research set out with pre-determined conclusions in mind. This happens most of the time so as to create the impression that a particular policy is good. If academics reject such imposition of predetermined end results in our research activities, better policies may evolve to the benefit of the wider society.

Most areas of research have been 'hijacked' by NGOs and CSOs especially those that could be labeled as research think tanks. Several factors account for this. First is the apparent marginalization of mainstream academia in high level research by Northern research conglomerates in the South. These come about because the private research organizations manage to be highly visible through various tactics. They succeed in establishing formal and informal links with donors to ensure a continuous flow of funds for various kinds of research. In effect, they specialize in lobbying for research funds. And because it is their full time jobs, they demonstrate commitment and succeed in most cases to edge out traditional research establishment in the contest for funding. Second is the creeping but worrying dependence on Northern researchers even in situations where Southern researchers are capable and know the terrain. Several instances could be mentioned in situations where researchers from the United States and Europe come all the way to the sub region to conduct research into issues local researcher might have

already dealt with. This results in the duplication of result findings and in extreme cases outright plagiarism. Third is the apparent lack of commitment by researchers in traditional research institutes on account of dearth of research capacities and logistics. Fourth is the dearth of effective partnership between Northern researchers and their Southern counterparts. It is argued that the chronic nature of such challenges could be attributed, among others, to the paucity or the lack thereof of sustained research into such challenges as well as the weak research capacities that in my view has been aggravated by relentless brain drain from institutions of higher learning and other state institutions.

In addition, the absence of well-structured and mutually beneficial partnerships and or collaboration with others in the advanced polities has tended not only to marginalize keen researchers in the sub region but also skewed research relationships and outcomes. The question of research resources or logistics and the tilting of research agendas to suit sponsors equally leave much to be desired. A careful assessment will bring to the fore the fact that many of the organizations engaged in various research activities in the areas of peace, security and governance in the sub region, have turned them into personal fiefdoms thereby enriching themselves at the expense of mutually beneficial research activities. A new form of research relationship or partnership that will not only broaden research arenas but also enhance research practices and improve the capacities or capabilities of researchers in the sub region is advocated.

Where these international research partnerships exist, the mechanisms for its operations should be strengthened. It is only through this that one can boldly state the likelihood of beneficial North-South research collaboration. “The mark of a superior international order is not one in which we are better off but rather one in which humanity as a whole is better off and in which even the poorest and weakest share in the gains”.<sup>6</sup> For Anthony Giddens, “tracking social and economic change, and the policies designed to cope with or further it, is wholly fundamental to achieving a prosperous and secure society”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Robert H. Bates, V.Y. Mudimbe, & Jean O’Barr (editors), *Africa and the Disciplines: The Contributions of Research in Africa to the Social Science and Humanities*, The University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 1993, p.xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Relevance of the Social Sciences*, LSE Magazine, 13 December, 1999.

## **Conclusion**

The research arena in West Africa faces a lot of constraints. This explains, to a large extent, why it appears the traditional research institutions such as the universities are losing grounds to NGOs and CSOs. Support for public universities keeps diminishing at a time most universities have doubled their student intake. A decade ago, the University of Ghana had a total population of slightly over 10,000 but now they number almost 28,000. The dwindling government support for universities is traceable to harsh economic conditions. This has paved the way for NGOs and CSOs to compete squarely in the research arena with universities. The irony, however, is that these mushrooming private research organizations depend on the universities for a constant supply of researchers and policy analysts for them to keep going. This then means that support to universities to stimulate their research potentials and thereby enhance their research capacities will be in order. Of late, there have been appreciable links between some universities and industry in the areas of human resources development, research and development and financially related development. What is important is to have enduring partnership with Northern institutions and foundations.

There is the urgent need for partnership but in my view, looking for equal partnership in all situations in the face of existing realities is idealistic. It cannot happen even in the long term. The best way to ensure some form of equity in the area of knowledge production is through mutual support for research institutions and institutes as well as other groups that are in the knowledge production business. Such support if sustained will also help in capacity building in the South.

It must be possible to also institute research links or collaboration with other universities or institutes across Africa. Already, there exists the African Economic Consortium (AERC) which has successfully brought together some Economics Departments to mount an Economics graduate programme. Other such innovative approaches could be engineered for other disciplines as a way of enhancing capacity building. Some of these links do exist but it has not become the norm most probably due to resource constraints. Sponsors from the North as a way of bridging the yawning gap in knowledge production

should encourage such links across Africa. The activities of pan African organizations like CODESRIA continue to forge some level of links among African researchers in multinational working groups. These must be encouraged and supported by donor organizations to help to bridge the gap in knowledge production between the North and the South.

In conclusion, it could be stated that a lot of research in universities, research institutes and private research organization on peace, security and governance are ongoing. Insights brought about by these researches have helped a lot in understanding the numerous conflicts situations in the sub region and the mechanisms to restore peace and security. At the same time, though relatively young in comparison to researches on peace and security, it appears research on governance related issues is also building up. The research agenda, however, must of necessity be expanded to include other more threatening issues that have the potential in the long term of destabilizing the West African sub region. As compared to a decade ago, there is relative peace in the sub region but the very rapid inroads being made by cocaine trafficking, child trafficking and trafficking in small arms still portend danger. Attempt must be made to forge stronger North –South research partnership on sustainable basis to look into the emerging developmental and politically destabilizing problems being created by the turning of West Africa into a cocaine haven by drug cartels.