

**Transnational Security Challenges
and Statehood in Africa: A Case Study of Drug
Trafficking in Ghana**

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DECLARATION

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ANDREWS ATTA-ASAMOAH

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Mr. Stephen Anane and Madam Akua Serwaa, for their love and care.

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I wish to express my gratitude to the Almighty God for His grace, provision and guidance throughout my education, particularly in the course of conducting of this study. I will forever be grateful to Him for being my shield and anchor in my daily pursuit of excellence and success.

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ABSTRACT

From a point of very little knowledge about illicit drugs in the 1980s, Ghana has evolved over the last three decades into a major transshipment point in the global supply and demand of narcotics. Apart from the resultant rise in Ghanaians involved in trafficking activities and the consumption of narcotics, the prevalence of the phenomenon has suggested a growing interface between the country's emerging political culture and drug trafficking trends. Taking advantage of the recent provenance of Ghana's experience, this study investigates the cause-effect relationships in the onset and impact of drug trafficking, as a transnational security challenge to statehood in Africa.

Following a thorough analysis of available quantitative and qualitative data collected from multiple primary and secondary sources, the study establishes the centrality of state weaknesses in the cause-effect relationships surrounding the onset and existence of drug trafficking in Ghana. It finds that the existence of Ghana in the confluence of the interaction between internal and external factors made it vulnerable to the activities of criminal networks exploring new routes to markets in the global North. Upon emerging, traffickers have sustained the country's weaknesses, worsened them in some cases and also initiated new forms through narco-corruption, intimidation, infiltration and state capture.

The study argues, among others, that the rise in drug trafficking, and organised criminality more broadly, is more of a symptom of existing weaknesses and structural fault lines in the state than an initiator of state weaknesses by itself. The onset and existence of transnational organised criminality is thus an important indicator of the existence of certain forms of state weaknesses as well as weakening factors requiring responses. The transnationalisation of security challenges in a given region requires the prior existence of a regional weakness complex. Organised criminals are thus opportunistic in their activities and merely capitalise on existing weaknesses of the state. By their weakening impact on state institutions, drug trafficking activities erode the functional and juridical attributes of the states by influencing citizen perceptions of the appropriateness of institutions and the legitimacy of the state.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP		Assistant Commissioner of Police
AFAG	:	Alliance for Accountable Governance
AfDB		The African Development Bank
AFRC	:	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ARQ	:	Annual Report Questionnaires
ATS	:	Amphetamine-type stimulants
BCEAO	:	Banque Centrale des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest
BNI	:	Bureau of National Investigation
CCTV	:	Closed-circuit television
CEPS	:	Customs, Excise and Preventive Service
CID	:	Criminal Investigations Department
CJA	:	Committee for Joint Action
CPI	:	Corruption Perception Index
CPP	:	Convention People's Party
DCOP	:	Deputy Commissioner of Police
DDR	:	Disarmament, demobilization and re-integration
DCE	:	District Chief Executive
ECOWAS	:	Economic Community of West African States
EOCO	:	Economic and Organised Crime Office
EU	:	European Union
FATF	:	The Financial Action Task Force
GBA	:	Ghana Bar Association
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
GNA	:	Ghana News Agency
GPRTU	:	Ghana Private Road Transport Union
GPS	:	Ghana Police Service
GSB	:	Ghana Standard Board
GT	:	Ghana Telecom
HDI	:	Human Development Index
IGP	:	Inspector General of Police
IIAG	:	Ibrahim Index of African Governance
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
INCB	:	International Narcotics Control Board
INCSR	:	International Narcotics Control Strategy Report
JFK	:	John F. Kennedy
KAIPTC	:	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
KIA	:	Kotoka International Airport

LECIAD	:	Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy
LSD	:	Lysergic acid diethylamide
MAP	:	Muslim Association Party
MFDC	:	Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance
NACOB	:	Narcotics Control Board of Ghana
NDC	:	National Democratic Congress
NLC	:	National Liberation Council
NLP	:	National Liberation Party
NPFL	:	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP	:	New Patriotic Party
NRC	:	National Redemption Council
OAU	:	Organisation of African Unity
PAIGC	:	Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde
PCU	:	Container Control Programme
PDA	:	Preventive Detention Act
PNDC	:	Provisional National Defence Council
PNP	:	People's National Party
PP	:	Progress Party
REC	:	Regional Economic Community
RED	:	Rot, Enclaves and Disengagement
RSC	:	Regional Security Complexes
RUF	:	Revolution United Front
RWC	:	Regional Weakness Complex
SALWs	:	Small arms and light weapons
SAP	:	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMC	:	Supreme Military Council
TEIN	:	Tertiary Education Institutional Network
TESCON	:	Tertiary Students Confederacy
THC	:	High delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol
UAE	:	United Arab Emirates
UGCC	:	United Gold Coast Convention
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Programme
DPKO	:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNDCP	:	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNODC	:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WAEMU	:	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAMZ	:	West African Monetary Zone
WMD	:	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Even though Africans have been involved in the global illicit drugs trade for several decades, the continent remained peripheral to the global discourse and trends of the phenomenon (Allen, 1999:6; UNODC, 2007:3; Liana & Cook, 2009:1). However, due to the activities of transnational criminal groups operating in the various regions of the continent, Africa has become an inevitable reference in contemporary global discourse on narcotics trafficking (Aning, 2007:193-212; UN, 2008; Ayodele, 2011:35).

Subsequently, the once peripheral continent is now noted for its role as a *transshipment point* where transnational trafficking cartels re-route South American cocaine consignments meant to satisfy increased American, European and Asian demands; and a *production hub* where khat and cannabis are cultivated in commercial quantities for both domestic¹ consumption and exportation (Gelbard, 1998:178). The continent is also a major hub where illicitly diverted precursor chemicals for synthetic drugs, particularly ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, are turned into amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) such as methamphetamine and methcathinone for domestic demand and markets in Central and North America (Liana & Cook, 2009:2; UNODC, 2012:8). Africa is currently the second largest *producer* of cannabis after the Americas, and accounts for about 8,900 tonnes per year or about 22.0 per cent (%) of total global production (UNODC, 2008; UN 2008). The continent is also home to a burgeoning population of drug users representing a significant percentage of the global *consumption* base for drugs, especially cannabis, cocaine, heroin and ATS.

¹ “Domestic” in this sense refers to the African continent, as a whole.

Consequently, apart from the litany of conflicts, political instability, infectious diseases, terrorism, environmental degradation and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs), which have characterised the recent history of the continent and bedevilled states, the African continent now grapples with non-state actors, particularly drug traffickers, whose activities transcend national boundaries and impact the state in multiple ways (UN 2004:10-15). Unlike Southern American states where the primacy of the state in the provision of public goods and monopoly over the use of force is contested by trafficking syndicates, the impact of the phenomenon in Africa is only beginning to emerge with visible presence in all regions of the continent, but most prominently in West Africa. Currently, the extent of the proliferation of illicit drugs in the region is epitomised in Guinea Bissau, which is widely regarded as Africa's first "narco-state."² In this country, there is an extensive manifestation of the endemic proliferation of the activities of drug cartels across various sectors of the state. There is therefore the presence of systematically compromised institutions, economy and politics (Dupont, 2001:208).

West Africa has also effectively become a "*narco-region*" recording remarkable seizures of drugs and known to be the conduit of between 46 and 300 tonnes of cocaine (with street value of more than \$2 billion) reaching the global North and other parts of the world every year (Liana & Cook, 2009:8-10). Given the massive proceeds of the trade vis-à-vis the poor economic performance of the average country in which the trade occurs, it is the case that traffickers in the region wield enormous economic power with which they corrupt and compromise state institutions, interface the legitimate economy and influence politics. Through these avenues, cartels in the region thereby undermine

² "Narco-states" as used here refers to states with extensive manifestation of the endemic proliferation of the activities of drug cartels across various sectors of the state and the presence of systematically compromised institutions, economy and the politics.

state-making and the very essence of statehood in the region. Assessing this trend, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Antonio Maria Costa, summed the influence of the phenomenon as an “attack, from within and especially from abroad” which requires an urgent concerted response “before more of the common wealth is stolen, more lives are lost, and before criminality deepens its penetration of state institutions and society at large” (UNODC, 2009:1).

Apart from providing a succinct summary of the impact of the phenomenon, Maria’s assessment also captures the overall consensus of both policy and academic discourse on the reality and impact of the phenomenon on states in West Africa (Akyeampong, 2005; Ellis, 2009; Mazzitelli, 2007; UNODC, 2008, 2009). Whilst his view is consistent with the rhetoric in literature, it is informed by conceptualisations derived primarily from states with “narco-state”³ characteristics, such as Guinea Bissau and Mali,⁴ who are at the lower end of the state strength/weakness continuum. As a result, even though the deduction is important, it does not disaggregate or take into consideration the differences in the depth and pervasiveness of the phenomenon in the various states and therefore is a victim of the use of the extreme cases for generalisations, without reflecting the exceptions of those states that are not as worse. Mark Shaw and Tuesday Reitano (2013a:2) agree in relation to the dynamics and impact of drugs in the region that the “dynamic is now present in different degrees in almost every state, both along the West Africa coast, but significantly too across the Sahel, where huge territories and weak state

³ As already indicated, “narco-states” have the characteristics of extensive manifestation of the endemic proliferation of the activities of drug cartels across various sectors of the state and the presence of systematically compromised institutions, economy and the politics.

⁴ Until the 2012 coup, which led to the current instability in northern Mali, the country was usually praised for its stability and democratic credentials. The onset of the crisis has, however, revealed that the country harboured fault lines and that the perception of its strength was a façade, at best. See detailed analysis by Baker, A. 2013. Mali’s new president-elect faces a long, hard road ahead. *Time*. 13 August 2013. Available: <http://world.time.com/2013/08/13/in-mali-a-candidate-concedes-and-a-president-elect-faces-a-long-road-ahead/> [2013, September 1].

institutions face outwards onto a series of states.”

The deduction does not also consider the consequent possible differences in impact and manifestation by virtue of differences in state strength and/or weaknesses; or the impact of each state’s peculiarity on the onset and cause-effect relationships of the drug menace. Additionally, existing debate does not adequately take advantage of the sufficiently recent provenance of the phenomenon in some of the states to inform discourse on statehood and state-making in the region and beyond.

Of the 16 countries in West Africa,⁵ one that epitomises the recent provenance of the drug trafficking phenomenon and the concurrent relative strength and strengthening of statehood is Ghana. In recent times, the country is counted alongside Nigeria and Senegal as one of the major transshipment points of illicit drugs in West Africa. A case in point is the 2005 declaration of Ghana as a major transit point for illegal drugs destined for Europe, South Africa and North America from South America, Southeast and Southwest Asia by the United States (US) Government (US Department of State, 2005:533). It is also one country where it is public knowledge as to which businesses are fronts for laundering of drug money, which properties were acquired by drug traffickers or which politician has close connections with drug cartels (Akyeampong, 2005:443).

However, the literature on drugs in the country indicates that this used not to be so. Citing the 27 June 1992 edition of the People’s Daily Graphic newspaper, Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005:437) argues that as of the early 1980s a “negligible percentage of Ghanaians knew anything about heroin, cocaine and other complex synthetic drugs.” However, by the early 1990s, the situation had drastically changed in two major ways.

⁵ West Africa is made up of 16 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

First, there was the rise in Ghanaians involved in drug business worldwide as reflected in the popularity of such individuals on the streets of Ghana and the number of Ghanaians busted or jailed for drug-related offences across the world. By 1990, for instance, about 1,774 illegal narcotic deals involving Ghanaians had been recorded and by 1992, about 42 Ghanaians were already serving various jail sentences in Thailand with more than 60 awaiting trial for similar offences in the same country (Akyeampong, 2005:437). The second evidence was the emergence of drug cases involving high profile government officials, diplomats and politicians in the country. About three cases illustrate this. A 1993 drug trafficking case involving Madam Mamouna Ouattara, a Burkinabe Ambassador to Ghana, and Emmanuel Boateng Addo in which Said Sinare the then Managing Director of Global Medical Supply and Member of Parliament (MP) was implicated. There was also a case involving a Ghanaian diplomat, named Frank Benneh, who was arrested in Switzerland for drug trafficking in 1996 and a 2005 case involving a sitting MP for Nkoranza district, Honourable Eric Amoateng, who was busted and jailed in the US on charges of drug trafficking (Daily Graphic, 9 February 1996; Free Press, 6 February 1996; Amoateng v USA, 2009).

Whilst these two major indicators have suggested a rise in the phenomenon of drug trafficking in Ghana, the country has also concurrently enjoyed considerable rise in various indicators of state strength including the entrenchment of democratic strides and economic gains. Using the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), which assesses the performance of states based on safety and rule of law; participation and human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development, for example, Ghana has consistently improved performance from 2000 to 2013 and was at an overall score of 66.3 in 2012 over a West African average score of 51.9 and a continental average of

51.2.⁶ Similarly, Foreign Policy's 2008 Failed States Index listed Ghana within the third quintile, whereas many of its peers in the region were grouped under the bottom or second quintile (Rice and Patrick, 2008:38–42). Thus, indicating a relative strength and overall performance over and above the average in West Africa.

1.2 Problem Statement and Research Questions

Two trajectories characterise Ghana's experience with the emergence and proliferation of drug trafficking activities in the country. First, from a point of very little knowledge about narcotics and its trade, the country has since the late 1980s risen to become an important player in the international illicit drugs trade (Daily Graphic, 1992; Akyeampong, 2005:437; Bernstein, 1999; US Department of State, 2005:533). Secondly, the arrest and implication of state officials and politicians, and the release of certain drug suspects under suspicious circumstances have suggested a growing interface between the country's emerging political culture and drug trafficking. Whilst the former points to the existence of certain factors that must have predisposed the country to the activities of traffickers, thus, leading to the onset and proliferation of the phenomenon in the country; the latter, provides an insight into the state-crime nexus and the direction of impact on the state.

Against a background of its sufficiently recent provenance and the dynamics of the two trajectories, this study answers one central question: how has the emergence of drug trafficking impacted statehood in Ghana? Within this, the study answers three specific questions: (a) What are the internal weaknesses of the state that predisposed the country to the activities of drug trafficking, (b) what is the relationship between drug trafficking and the Ghanaian state, and (c) how has the increase in drug trafficking activities in the

⁶ For detailed analysis, see Ghana's recent and historical performance in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, online <http://www.mmoibrahimfoundation.org/ghana> [2012, October 24].

last two decades reinforced the internal weaknesses of the state? By finding answers to these questions, the study unravels the onset and cause-effect relationships surrounding the drug menace and the internal weaknesses of Ghana. It also establishes the extent to which internal weaknesses of the state contributed to the emergence of drug trafficking in the country, the state-crime nexus, and how the onset of drug trafficking has reinforced existing weaknesses of the state.

By situating empirical evidence from the Ghanaian experience within the explanatory framework of the weak state theory, this study makes three central propositions:

- a) the rise in the activities of organised criminals, and drug trafficking in particular, is more of a symptom of existing weaknesses and structural fault lines in the state than an initiator of state weakness;*
- b) the ability of organised criminal activities to weaken the state is a product of internal and external factors in relation to the state; and that organised criminals are opportunistic in their activities and merely capitalise on and mutually-reinforce existing weaknesses of the state; and*
- c) even though transnational security challenges undermine statehood, they require the complicity of the state structures.*

The use of Ghana presents a strong case because, as Henry Bernstein (1999:13-32) argues, the sufficiently recent provenance of drug trafficking in the country allows for a historical reconstruction of the introduction and spread, and the ability to draw on the evidence of participants in those processes in understanding the underlying intricacies of the phenomenon. Owing to the relative strength of the country in the region, its use as a case study also provides important insights into the onset and impact of the phenomenon on relatively stable states in the region and other developing countries on the continent.

1.3 Hypothesis

Based on the central arguments, the study is informed by the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1a: There are certain internal weaknesses of the state that predisposes it to the activities of drug traffickers.

Hypothesis 1b: Drug traffickers are opportunistic and have the capacity to exploit existing vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the state.

Given their related focus, the two are summarised as follows:

Internal weaknesses of the state predispose it to exploitation by opportunistic organised criminal groups, particularly drug traffickers.

1.4 The Weak State Framework

Advancing a set of arguments about transnational security challenges that takes its point of departure from the African state will have to be anchored on a theory relating to the state-making process, particularly the strength or weakness of the state. This is in line with an argument by Mohammed Ayoob (1992:64) and Richard Jackson (2002:38) that since state-making is a primary concern for political elites in the Third World, it must be central to any paradigm constructed to explain the internal and external behaviour of states in that part of the World. The choice of such a point of departure is also as a result of the weaknesses of traditional international relations and political science theories in providing concrete explanations for the activities and influences of transnational non-state actors on the state. In this context, there is the need to discuss the state in terms of its nature in relation to strength and/or weakness.

Notwithstanding, there is the need to proceed on the basis of the assumption that states, in this context, satisfy or at least aim at achieving the Weberian properties of statehood.

The Weberian criteria of statehood requires a state to have

unchallenged control of the territory within the defined

boundaries under its control, monopolisation of the legitimate use of force within the borders of the state, and [the] reliance upon impersonal rules in the governance of its citizens (Harbeson & Rothchild, 2000: 7).

This assumption is necessary because of the existing debate in academic literature on the character of the African state and the overwhelming understanding that the state in Africa is more juridical than empirical (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982; Hopkins, 2000; Jackson, 2002).⁷ As largely juridical entities, it is realistically unfair to attempt to assess the strength and/or weakness of a typical African state against a set of Weberian criteria developed on the basis of the organic evolution of the average European state. Such an attempt is, in fact, synonymous to comparing mangoes and oranges. The assumption is, however, tenable if placed against a background of the fact that state strength is a continuum and not a binary measure and so whether weak or strong, each state either meets some of the requirements or aim at meeting them. Based on this assumption, this study is anchored on the weak state theory.

Among the many academics who have advanced conceptualisations of the weak state theory, few have specifically related it to security concerns. Such scholars include Barry Buzan (1991), Caroline Thomas (1987), Charles Tilly (2007), Joel Migdal (1988), Mimi Soderberg & Thomas Ohlson (2002), Robert Rotberg (2004) and Richard Jackson (2002). Each of these scholars has placed emphasis on different variables for identifying and/or discussing weak states. Overall, however, there is consensus in two key areas. First, that the concept is relative and ambiguous. As such, the definition of a weak state is relative to a strong state and vice versa. Secondly, for a state to be weak, it should “lack the capacity and/or will to perform core functions of statehood effectively”

⁷ An empirical state refers to states that satisfy the Weberian property of statehood. Juridical states, on the other hand, are those that are internally weak but enjoy external recognition of statehood. The latter is the case of majority of states in the developing world, particularly Africa, by virtue of the nature of the creation and evolution of the state. See for instance Jackson, R. H. & Sørensen, G. 2007. *Introduction to international relations: theories and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(Rice and Patrick, 2008:3). There is therefore no one acceptable definition for what constitutes a weak or strong state. To avoid the trap of specificity and ambiguity, which can limit the usefulness of social science discourse, therefore, scholars prefer to use set of criteria or variables for identifying and assessing state strength and its associated security ramifications.

Barry Buzan (1991:65) approaches the assessment of state strength from the perspective of the three-interlinked basic components of the state comprising the *physical base* of the state, the *institutional capacity* of the state, and the *idea* of the state. The physical base of the state represents the area and physical content of the state including territory, population, resources and wealth. The physical base of the state represents the physical existence of the state as an entity and is the primary target for threats and expression of vulnerability. The institutions of the state, as a component of this approach, are the structures that express and represent the idea of the state and perform the functions of the state. These include the executive, legislature, administrative and judicial bodies, and the laws, procedures and norms by which the state operates. The idea of the state, however, is the distinctive idea, national identity or ideology central to a state's political identity and key in organising the social, economic and political systems of the particular state. According to Buzan's model, the component parts are threatened in different ways and manifest vulnerability in different forms in relation to the strength or weakness of the state. Given their importance, these components are essential to national security considerations in the post-Cold War era as a threat to any of them directly represents a threat to the existence of the state.

Whilst placing importance on all three components, Buzan emphasises that strength or weakness rests largely on the *idea of the state* because it is central to the construction of

social consensus. It is also important in organising the political and economic system and rallying citizens to identify with the state. A state is therefore weak if it is unable to “create a domestic political and social consensus of sufficient strength to eliminate the large-scale use of force as a major and continuing element in the domestic political life of the nation” (Buzan 1983:67). States with strongly held ideas develop the necessary socio-political cohesion, which legitimises the state. A state gains its *idea of the state* from the idea of the nation and its organising ideology: be it political, economic, religious or social in character. The strength of any state with respect to the idea of the state can be measured as to whether “the ideas themselves are weak; or if they are weakly held within society; or if strongly held, but opposed, ideas compete within society: then the state stand on fragile political foundations” (Buzan, 1991:79).

Robert Rotberg (2004), on the other hand, places emphasis on the ability of the state to deliver political (public) goods, defined as “those intangible and hard to quantify claims that citizens once made on sovereigns and now make on states,” in the measure of strength or weakness. The public goods include security, rule of law, human rights, development infrastructure and amenities. He argues that

[N]ation-states fail because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants. Their governments lose legitimacy, and the very nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes and in the hearts of a growing plurality of its citizens (Rotberg, 2004:1-3).

Whereas strong states perform well across these categories, weak states show a mixed profile, fulfilling in some areas and performing poorly in others. The more poorly a state performs in each issue area, the weaker it is. Based on these variables, Rotberg categorises weak states as either *inherently weak* as a result of geography and physical or fundamental economic constraints; or *temporarily and situationally weak* as a result of particular threats to its stability such as internal antagonism, management flaws, greed,

despotism or external attacks. In any of these two contexts, weak states harbour tensions (evident or latent), high and increasing urban crime trends, challenges to rule of law, and diminishing or diminished ability to provide adequate amounts of political goods to citizens.

Mimmi Soderberg and Thomas Ohlson (2003:10) instead argue that the strength of post-colonial states can be examined with two analytically different but related variables around the state-building process. The first variable is low levels of socio-political cohesion and political legitimacy and the second is the lack of capabilities by political leaders to overcome the first weakness. Consequently, because the state is weak, “a certain political style of governance often develops in these states that risk further undermining the state and make it less, not more, inclined to development.”

Joel Migdal (1988: xvii) advances a closely related variable by emphasising state capacity or the ability of leaders to secure compliance through the agencies of the state. He argues that in weak states, there can be an imbalance of power between the state and society (where society is made up of powerful social forces), which can lead to resistance by the latter. In such context, the challenge is more about the societies than the weaknesses of the state, since the state is ultimately weakened.

Caroline Thomas (1987), on the other hand, views state strength by virtue of institutional capacity. From this perspective, she identifies two forms of state power – despotic and infrastructural power. Despotic power refers to a state’s coercive abilities and the exercise of force to impose rule on citizens. Infrastructural power, however, refers to institutional effectiveness and legitimacy, and the ability to rule through consensus. Empirically, weak states make use of coercive force to impose rules unlike strong states whose strong infrastructural power facilitates rule through consensus. However, the more

coercive force a weak state uses, the weaker it becomes, since it tends to undermine its infrastructural power base by inciting sub-state entities against the state.

Kalevi Holsti (1996:82-98) promotes legitimacy as the critical variable that can be used to explain the relative weakness or strength of a state. This takes two dimensions – vertical and horizontal. Vertical legitimacy stems from a population’s acceptance of the right of authority to exist and rule. It thus establishes the connection between institutions, society and authority or regimes. Horizontal legitimacy, however, relates to the attitudes and practices of groups and individuals in a community towards each other (Söderberg and Ohlson, 2003:12). Weak states usually harbour numerous communities and groups. Horizontal legitimacy is high when tolerance towards each other is high. This implies that in cases where inter-group or communal intolerance exists, horizontal legitimacy is practically undermined and the strength of the state is low, and vice-versa.

In the view of Stewart Patrick (2011:8), the propensity of state weakness is a factor of the “baseline level of institutional resilience; the presence of long-term drivers (or “risk factors”) of instability; the nature of the state’s external environment (whether positive or negative); and the occurrence of short-term shocks or “triggering events.” In extreme forms of this mix, the state fails.

Of the different approaches, this study posits its theoretical point of departure on the conceptualisation of Richard Jackson (2010). In an attempt to refine the different variables, Jackson argues that despite the different approaches, three dimensions summarise the key aspects of state weakness in relation to security. These are

- (1) infrastructural capacity in terms of *the ability of state institutions to perform* essential tasks and enact policy;
- (2) coercive capacity in terms of the state’s *ability and willingness to employ force against challenges* to its authority; and
- (3) *national*

identity and social cohesion in terms of the degree to which the population identifies with the nation state and accepts its legitimate role in their lives (Jackson, 2010:188) – ***Emphasis added***

As a result of these three key dimensions, a strong state is characterised by

the willingness and ability of a state to maintain social control, ensure societal compliance with official laws, act decisively, make effective policies, preserve stability and cohesion, encourage societal participation in state institutions, provide basic services, manage and control the national economy, and retain legitimacy [...] strong states also possess high levels of socio-political cohesion that is directly correlated with consolidated participatory democracies, strong national identities, and productive and highly developed economies. Perhaps most importantly, strong states exist as a hegemonic idea, accepted and naturalised in the minds of the population so that they consider the state as natural as the landscape around them; they cannot imagine their lives without it (Jackson, 2002:38).

In contrast, weak states exhibit a number of major characteristics. First, they show the characteristics of unconsolidated or non-existent democracies accompanied by serious crisis of legitimacy, which often leads to high levels of political apathy and disengagement by sections of the population. Second, weak states lack cohesive national identities evident in the loyalty to subnational entities such as ethnic groups instead of the state. There is also empirical lack or weak presence of the states as a “*hegemonic idea*” around which citizens rally.

The third characteristic of weak states is the varying levels of institutional incapacity and government’s inability to formulate and implement policies. According to Jackson,

the institutions of state are incapable of even a minimal level of operability and may actually be in a terminal spiral of collapse. At the least, weak states possess under-resourced and underdeveloped institutional capacity, and face enormous difficulties in mobilising the population or regulating civil society (Jackson, 2002:39).

The fourth major characteristic of weak states is vulnerability to international actors and forces as a result of internal weaknesses. External issues therefore easily get diffused into

internal matters, including transnational security challenges such as arms smuggling, refugee flows and drug trafficking. Kalevi Holsti (1996:15) posits that the nature of internal security between weak and strong states is a defining variable of their respective strengths. Whereas strong states are largely pre-occupied with preventing external threats to the idea, institutions and territory of the state, weak states usually grapple with internal weaknesses at the level of structures and regimes (Ayoob, 1995:4; Buzan, 1991:100; Swanstrom, 2007:10). Even though strong states may also have internal challenges, they usually have the institutional and legal structures capable of dealing with those internal weaknesses thus leaving the state pre-occupied with issues of external threats. Ayoob (1995) argues that as a result of their preoccupation with internal challenges, political elites in most developing countries are usually obsessed with staying in power through whatever means, thus providing the context for collusion with drug traffickers who ultimately impact on the internal and external legitimacy of the state. The last but most important characteristic of weak states is the inability to maintain monopoly over the instruments of violence and the use of force. Consequently, a range of non-state actors including trafficking cartels, gangs, private armies, and local militias, among others, are able to resist the state's efforts to enforce compliance.

Whereas strong states perform well across all dimensions, weak states show a mixed profile, fulfilling in some areas and performing poorly in others. The more poorly a state performs in each issue area, the weaker it is. According to Rotberg (2004:4), a state needs not fail in all dimensions of strength to show weakness. It is, thus, necessary to judge the extent to which an entire weakness is less or more than its component parts. However, a state's performance is according to its delivery of the most crucial political good – security. Security is crucial because it is traditionally and fundamentally the duty of the state. In addition, some form of security or stability is necessary in the delivery of

other political goods. Notwithstanding, insecurity alone does not condition weakness, as the absence of insecurity does not necessarily imply state strength.

Jackson's conceptualisation as elucidated above specifically speaks to three key issues. First, it establishes that a state's weakness can be assessed by virtue of its (a) institutional capacity, (b) monopoly over and willingness to use force, (c) legitimacy, and (d) vulnerability to external forces. This implies that any threat to a state's strength can, as well, be assessed in relation to these areas. Secondly, it can be derived from the conceptualisation that a state needs not fail in all the areas before it may be considered weak; but must show considerable strength in all the areas before it can be considered strong. In the context of developing countries, such as Ghana, it implies that even though the state might be better of in some of these factors, the overall strength or weakness of the state is a factor of the net effect of its performance in all these areas. Thirdly, a state can be generally strong by the net effect of its ability to deliver in the various dimensions, but *situationally* weak by virtue of its inability to deliver in a particular dimension or contain a particular threat. Rotberg (2004:20) places Ghana among states that are inherently weak as a result of geographical and physical legacies and one whose willingness to provide political goods in quantity and quality is severely limited at best of times.

The principal implicit assumption behind these variables is that the state's response to factors capable of creating weaknesses will impact these key components. Therefore the state's vulnerability to threats and associated weaknesses are also in relation to these key variables. This will then hold true that an impact of drug trafficking in relation to the state leads to the weakening of the identified components. The problem with this assumption is that it takes for granted that the relationship between a given threat and the

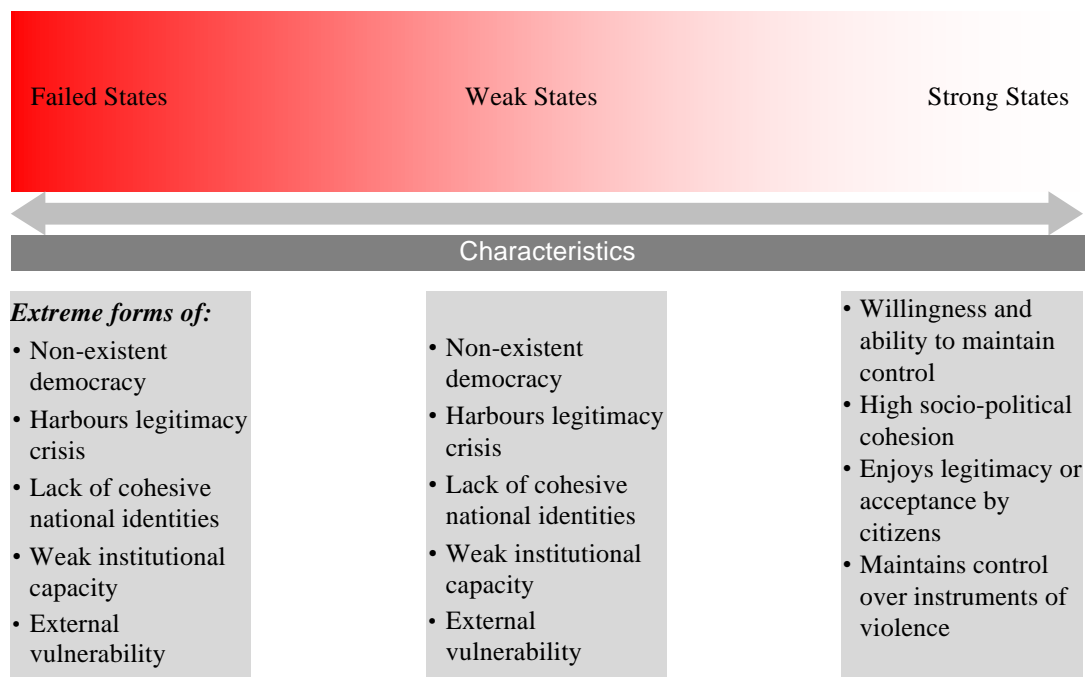
weakening of the state is linear and that there are no intervening variables or effect of multicollinearity of factors. That is, it appears to assume a direct relationship between “weakeners” (threats) and performance. As such the joint impact of multiple variables that may co-influence with drug trafficking, for example, are not adequately covered.

It also assumes that state structures involved in the delivery of the four main political goods have no inherent weaknesses and therefore any weaknesses it shows is a result of the variable that has been introduced. Since the state is itself an evolving entity in the developing world, it holds true that several inherent weaknesses in the development of its structures exist. The identification of endogenous factors that facilitate the emergence and trend of drug trafficking in Ghana by this study will help refine Rotberg’s conceptualisation in specific relation to drug trafficking and the weaknesses of the state. The strength of this framework, as an explanatory paradigm for this study derives principally from its clarity in providing the dimensions and characteristics for identifying and measuring state weaknesses and therefore the ability to assess the impact of a particular threat on a state.

The use of the weak state theory in assessing state strength or weakness in this study will be informed by three important underlying dynamics. First, it is not wholly possible to define strength without reference to its relativity to weakness. This, in a sense, seems to imply that even though there is no acceptable definition of state strength and or weakness, scholars imply strength to mean the absence of weakness; and weakness to mean the absence of strength. This is as a consequence of a second factor, which is that state strength and weakness is a continuum. States therefore fall at various points of a spectrum and may depict associated characteristics, as represented in Figure 1. Third, the strength of any given state is dynamic. This implies that the overall assessment of

strength is subject to rapid changes in the various key dimensions of strength. A strong state can thus become weak, whilst a weak state can become strong with changes in the underlying defining variable(s). Overall, however, the long-term assessment of the strength of a given state takes into consideration what the state of that state is over a relatively long period of time.

Figure 1: State Strength - Weakness Spectrum



Source: Author

1.5 Research Methodology

The principal methodology used in this study is Case Study Research. Different methodology theorists define case study research in different ways. According to Robert Yin (1984:22–26), it is an empirical enquiry of a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence. It is suitable for studying complex social phenomenon where the investigator has little or no possibility of controlling events. It is, thus, usually concerned with how and why things happen and focuses on variables of interest and multiple sources of evidence collected through theoretically guided methods (Patton, 1987:18–20).

It helps to probe a variable of interest in-depth and is suitable for asking broader questions of science. Unlike natural science, which attempts to answer little questions precisely, case study methodology generally answers more questions less precisely and can qualitatively answer questions that provide new insight. Given that these characteristics perfectly fit the context of drug trafficking in Ghana, case study methodology was used.

1.5.1 Selection of case

This study makes use of the case study methodology at two major levels. At the international level, it is based on Ghana as a single case study. The choice of a single case was informed by the need to reduce the cost of this research, as focussing on two or more countries would be too expensive. Multiple cases would also be too tedious and would not have allowed for meticulous and detailed analysis as this study does within the confines of its word limitation. Despite the use of Ghana as a single case, however, where necessary as in Chapter 3, the case of Guinea Bissau is discussed in detail as a typical reflection of West Africa's experiences of the impact of the drug trafficking phenomenon.

The selection of Ghana as a case was informed by a number of reasons. In many African countries, the issue of drug trafficking is a highly sensitive security issue, which remains the primary preserve of the security agencies and with a great deal of political consequences if details of dynamics are leaked to pro-opposition media houses. Coupled with the largely least understood, understudied and sometimes also under-reported nature of such phenomena in many countries, collecting data for evidence-based studies, such as this, can be a daunting task, if not impossible. The possibility of accessing available data and access to key stakeholders for interviews despite the sensitive nature of the issues

and dynamics surrounding the phenomenon in Ghana was therefore the most important consideration for zeroing in on the country. Access to multiple sources of data and interviews with stakeholders was fundamental to this research. It was also inevitable for the triangulation of evidence towards achieving stronger substantiation of deductions and overall generalisability of the findings of the study.

The choice of Ghana was also informed by the extent to which the country's experiences typically represent the nature, form and context of drug trafficking on the continent. There is every possibility that the state-making trajectory of many countries on the continent may follow Ghana's path. In order to be able to derive lessons that are enduring and representative of the situation in Africa, there was the need to select a country that is fairly representative of the progress and drawbacks of Africa's state-making experiences. The sufficiently recent provenance of the phenomenon in Ghana is perhaps one of the greatest merits for selecting the country. This is because the recent provenance of the drug trafficking phenomenon in the country provided the context for the construction of the country's emergence, experiences and history from the account of the key experts and stakeholders involved in tracking and shaping the narrative of the country's experiences with the phenomenon. The choice of Ghana was also informed by my personal familiarity with the country and the associated interest in unravelling the dynamics of the drugs trade in the country and what that understanding stands to offer for the existing knowledge of the drug trafficking phenomenon in Africa.

At the national level or within Ghana, the study utilises in-depth study of six high profile cases of drug trafficking between 1990 and 2010.⁸

⁸ See a justification of this periodisation under section 1.7 (scope of the study) of this chapter.

- The first case relates to a 2004 seizure of 588.3 kg of cocaine at the Tema Community 10 residence of Kevin Gorman, a British-American, which resulted in severe sentences for a number of foreign and Ghanaian accomplices.
- The second case is a 2005 arrest and subsequent imprisonment of a Ghanaian MP, Honourable Eric Amoateng, in the US for the trafficking of 62.0 kg of heroin.
- Third is the 2006 MV Benjamin cocaine saga, which saw the disappearance of 76 parcels (out of 77) of cocaine from a fishing vessel at the Tema port of Ghana;
- a related case in which Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Kofi Boakye, the then Director of Operations of the Ghana Police Service (GPS), had a secret meeting with four self-confessed drug barons in his residence in 2006, constitutes the fourth case.
- The fifth case is a 2006 Prampram cocaine case in which about 42 kg of exhibit under storage at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters in Accra turned into corn dough.
- The sixth case is similar to the fifth and is a 2008 case involving Nana Ama Martins in which 1020 grammes of cocaine exhibit before an Accra Circuit Court presided over by Judge Eric Baffour was later tested in court to be sodium bicarbonate.

The choice of the six cases was informed by the need for detailed analysis through the use of multiple cases as a way of justifying the deduction of trends and patterns of the phenomenon in Ghana. There is no single case that represents all the complex aspects of the phenomenon. The choice of multiple cases therefore made it possible to tease out different aspects of the respective cases in constructing a clear representation of the country's experiences. Additionally, all six were high profile cases, which attracted a great deal of political, domestic and international interests culminating in the setting up of committees that delved into the facts of those occurrences with the primary objective of preventing similar occurrences.

1.5.2 Sources and collection of data

Two main types of data were used in this study – primary and secondary data. These were generally collected in qualitative and quantitative forms from expert interviews,

state security institutions and desk research, respectively. As earlier indicated, the phenomenon of drug trafficking has a fairly recent provenance in Ghana. As such it has been possible for certain individuals working in various capacities of government, civil society, academics, security service and parastatals to amass a great deal of insight on various aspects of the onset, prevalence and nature of drug trafficking in the country. Fifteen (15) of such experts were purposefully sampled and interviewed on various aspects of the phenomenon in Ghana. Field trips were made to Accra in February 2013 and the UNODC regional office in Dakar in November 2013. Extensive reading of available newspaper reports on narcotic cases since 1990, and various committee reports on high profile cases complemented these sources. The yearly International Narcotics Control Strategy Reports by the US embassy in Accra, and leaked diplomatic communications from the US embassy in Accra to Washington provided insights into some bilateral interactions between Ghanaian officials and their US counterparts on some cases involving drug trafficking in the country.

Interviews were preceded by extensive desk review of existing literature on the key questions of the discussions. This provided the benefit of preventing gaps in the coverage of the checklist of issues discussed and in the data collected for this analysis. The study also made use of data collected from the Ghana Police Service (GPS), the Ghana Narcotics Control Board (NACOB) and UNODC in providing quantitative inputs into the discussion. The choice of interviews of purposefully sampled experts was informed by the sensitive nature of issues surrounding the activities of drug trafficking and sometimes the unwillingness of state personnel to divulge relevant information for this study. The interview process involved a one-on-one discussion with key experts and practitioners and made the analysis of qualitative data collected from the method easy since follow-up questions and discussions were used to gain greater clarity on issues surrounding the

dynamics of the phenomenon. Thus, it became easy to sketch out the intricate linkages and triangulations necessary for clearly understanding the qualitative empirical data for establishing the arguments in this study.

In addition to the primary data, secondary data collected from extensive desk research was used. Apart from providing the context of existing literature and knowledge on the topic, it assisted with conceptualising the trends and patterns of the phenomenon in Ghana.

1.5.3 Data analysis

Data collected were analysed through the use of inferences and deductions in the case of qualitative data. Simple statistics involving the use of tables, pie charts and graphs were used in the cases involving time series data of drug trends. These were done within the context of the grounded theory approach and helped the study to benefit from systematic set of procedures and evidence-based cases to develop and inductively analyse the onset, nature, trends and prevalence of drug trafficking in Ghana (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:307-309, 553). In this context, the approach made it possible to discover patterns that point to relatively universal principles of the phenomenon in Africa through the inductive method by reviewing and analysing the various aspects of numerous cases of drug trafficking in Ghana.

1.5.4 Research ethics employed

Virgina Dickson *et al.* (2008) have argued that conducting research on sensitive topics require that attention be paid to a number of specific ethical issues. This was the case in this study because of the fact that there was the need to gain access to sensitive information. As such attempts were made to adhere to the following strict codes of

ethics.

(i) Confidentiality and anonymity

The use of confidentiality and anonymity in the collection of data in this study aimed at concealing the true identity of participants so as to prevent possible targeting by organised criminals in the region (Dickson-Swift et al., 2008:96; Liamputtong, 2009). Even though this is usually difficult in some qualitative studies, it was easier in this study because of the institutional base of the information that was required for the analysis. Where required, attributions are made to institutions rather than individuals. In cases where institutional association of data collected could not be used, attempt was made to utilise various parts of different participant responses to build composite narratives or descriptions capable of conveying the same message whilst maintaining the authenticity of the data and associated findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Dickson-Swift et al., 2008:96). Participants were assured at the onset about the researcher's commitment to confidentiality and anonymity and conditions under which confidentiality may be breached were clearly spelt out.

(ii) Informed consent

Informed consent involved the provision of information to participants of the study regarding the purpose of the study, procedures involved, and the risks. This aimed primarily at making sure that participants understood the nature of the study and were ready to participate at their own volition. To be able to circumvent the difficulties associated with the use of this requirement, attempts were made to fully disclose all relevant information about the study to the participants in order to make sure that participants fully understood the nature of the research. Owing to the use of expert interviews, the need to assess the competence of participants as suggested by Charles

Bosk (2002:v64–68) was not necessary since participants were experts on the theme in their own rights.

1.5.5 Limitations of the methodology

The choice of expert *Interviews* was informed by the sensitive nature of issues surrounding the activities of drug trafficking networks in Ghana. However, the sensitivities surrounding the issues impacted the willingness of some state personnel to divulge information that was relevant for the study. The use of experts and practitioners drawn from existing research institutions in the country helped in gaining access to relevant information for the research.

It has been argued that the main limitation of the grounded theory approach is the possibility of researchers being too subjective and having high level of arbitrary decisions. To overcome this limitation, all findings of this study were based solely on the data collected. No conclusion is drawn without adequate substantiation.

1.6 Challenges Encountered during Field Study

Trafficking of narcotics in Ghana is a relatively recent subject for both law enforcement attention and as an area of focus for research among academics. As such, few Ghanaian academics and practitioners have in-depth understanding of the trend and particularly underlying complexities surrounding the cause-effect relationships in relation to the state. Interviews with various law enforcement officials were extremely challenging. This is because even though they have in-depth understanding of their operational response, most of them do not necessarily appreciate the key dynamics surrounding the phenomenon and the underlying cause-effect relationships.

Data on the trend of narcotic trafficking in Ghana is also scanty and patchy, at best. Even newspaper houses have haphazard records of their day-to-day reports of the situation in the country. At NACOB where various law enforcement officials made extensive references to the Board's annual reports, which were supposed to be available on the organisation's website, the website remained unavailable for access at the time of data collection.⁹

1.7 Scope of the Study

Available literature on drug trafficking in Ghana points to its sufficiently recent onset. It is argued that before 1990, few citizens of the country knew about or had adequate knowledge about drugs and its trafficking and trade. Owing to the lack of reliable data and the difficulty in collecting reliable data, this study focuses on the situation in Ghana from 1990 to 2010. Within the two decades time period, it zeroes in on six key high profile cases as a way of allowing for depth of study and meticulous analysis. It also centres on how the emergence of drug trafficking has impacted statehood in Ghana, and how internal weaknesses of the state predisposed it to the onset of the phenomenon.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Apart from bridging the yawning knowledge gap that currently exists on the extent to which existing weaknesses of the state in Africa predispose it to the activities of organised crime and subsequently impact development and stability, findings of the research will be of value in four major ways. First, it will help establish the place of endogenous and exogenous factors in the onset and rise of organised criminal activities

⁹ A visit to NACOB's website, <http://www.nacob.gov.gh>, consistently returned a "server not found" message. The use of more advanced Internet archiving algorithms as offered by the Internet Archive WaybackMachine website (<https://archive.org/web/>) showed that the site was only active between March and July 2013. See archive results as of March 2014, https://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.nacob.gov.gh, generated on 25 March 2014.

in developing countries. Second, based on the identification and discussion of the factors, the use of the Ghana case will help to outline indicators to the onset of organised criminal activities from the point of view of the state. Most importantly, the application of the weak state theory in relation to organised criminality and the state will help sharpen the application of the concept in relation to transnational security challenges in Africa. The findings of the study will also help inform policy-makers on the need to urgently confront and manage the drug menace, and ways of doing that.

Whilst its central arguments might not be completely new to certain contexts of the global debate on transnational security challenges, the novelty of this study lies in its disaggregation of state strength in West Africa with respect to Ghana, and the articulation of the state and state-making process as the crucial point of focus for the vulnerability of the state in relation to transnational security challenges in contemporary contexts. Most importantly, however, is its in-depth and empirical application of the arguments to a typical African case, which is the Ghanaian context.

1.9 Overview of the Study

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on the background of the study and outlines the problem statement, scope and theoretical framework that serve as the introduction of the study.

This is followed by an extensive review of existing knowledge in literature on key aspects of the theme and the central question. Within this, the study reviews literature on the evolution of the concept of security, the concept of transnational security challenges, existing debates on drug trafficking as a security issue, models of state-crime nexus,

drivers of the drugs trade and the evolution and nature of the state in Africa, among others.

Chapter 3 provides details of the origins and dynamics of drug trafficking in West Africa as a basis for understanding the regional context and external dynamics within which the phenomenon in Ghana is situated.

Chapter 4 then discusses the nature of the Ghanaian state as well as the history and dynamics of drug trafficking in the country as part of empirical data from expert interviews, and reliable secondary sources.

Chapter 5 makes use of six high profile trafficking cases representative of the nature and dynamics of the phenomenon in the country as basis for identifying and discussing the cause-effect relationships surrounding the nature of the state and the onset of drug trafficking. It, thus, establishes the linkages of issues surrounding the cases in relation to the role of the weaknesses and nature of the Ghanaian state in facilitating the onset and growth of the drug trafficking phenomenon in the country and the nature of the weakening impact of drug trafficking on the state.

Chapter 6 provides detailed conclusion and recommendations for addressing the phenomenon in Ghana, and other contexts similar to it.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature and thoughts on various aspects of transnational security challenges, statehood in Africa and the global illicit drugs trade. This is done with the main aim of mapping out the context within which the remaining empirical chapters of this study is situated. It is also a way of outlining the gap in existing literature to be filled by the findings of this study; and to facilitate a balanced and holistic approach to the complex debate on the issues surrounding transnational security challenges and the state in Africa. The chapter surveys literature on existing definitional issues on security, drug trafficking as a transnational security issue, the nature of statehood in Africa, models of state-crime relationship(s) and drivers of drug trafficking.

2.2 The Concepts of Security and Transnational Security

2.2.1 *From traditional to expanded security*

As is typical of many social science concepts, there is no acceptable single definition of security (Gallie, 1955:167–198). Nevertheless, there is consensus in existing academic literature that when used in international relations context, it implies or is concerned with the “*freedom from threats*” to the survival of a given “*referent object*” – be it individuals, groups or both (Williams, 2008:5; Baylis et al., 2001:253; Collins, 2010:2). The two major variables at the heart of the consensus – “freedom from threats” and a “referent object” – appear simple from the surface. However, inherent in them are complex viewpoints relating to what should constitute a threat, and what the ultimate referent object should be. This has become the main underpinning variable for major disagreements and points of departure for different schools of thought in the conceptualisation of security within international relations theory, particularly in security

studies.

Of the many existing perspectives, one of the most influential conceptualisations is traceable to Walter Lippman. According to Lippman (1943:51), “a nation is secured to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by such victory in such a war.” His view is synonymous to later conceptualisations by Ian Bellany (1981:102), who states that “[S]ecurity itself is a relative freedom from war, coupled with a relatively high expectation that defeat will not be a consequence of any war that should occur.” As has been observed by Arnold Wolfers (1962:150), the centrality of the ability of the state to deter attack or to defeat it is implicit in the notion of security from this perspective and, particularly that of Lippman, is noted for giving the concept of security its classic or traditional formulation or common usage. This line of conceptualisation has subsequently become categorised as the traditional view of security, largely based on the realist school of thought in International Relations. According to Carolina Echeverri (2010:54), this perspective constitutes “a Hobessian conception of the world order as a state of nature, on which states constitute a superior order that provides security inside its territory, and shields individuals in order to protect them from external terror.” Consequently, the concept of security in its traditional sense is largely equated to “national security,” aptly defined by Giacomo Luciani (1988:151) as “the ability to withstand aggression from abroad” and synonymous with “defence” (Hussein, 1998).

Whilst the traditional notions do not deviate from the core variables for defining security, and thereby highlight “*threats*” to a particular “*referent object*,” their mention or implied reference to the “state” as the primary referent object and “military concerns” as the source of threat has earned the traditional notion and its derivatives strong criticisms.

First, the notion is criticised for being state-centric and narrow. This is in the sense that traditional conceptualisations of security do not accommodate other sources of threats, apart from external threats from military concerns. The state is also seen as the main referent object. Secondly, it is criticised as being Eurocentric and culturally biased; on the basis of its strong attachment to the primacy of the Westphalia model of the state and generalisations based on only inter-state conflicts (Baylis et al., 2001:255). As argued by Richard Ullman (1983:129–130), such a narrow definition of security ends up with an over-militarisation of issues and a neglect of even more dangerous issues. Ultimately the “total security” of states is affected.

Notwithstanding the criticisms, traditional notions have been strongly articulated since the emergence of statehood in Westphalia in 1648 and have only come under major sustained scrutiny since the latter part of the 1980s. However, alongside the dominant thinking during the Cold War were notable dissenting perspectives. Amongst them is a 1950 argument by political scientist Harold Lasswell in favour of the broadening of the notion of security on the basis that not all measures proposed under the ambit of national security really contributed towards the desired end and that humanity’s

greatest security lies in the best balance of all instruments of foreign policy, and hence in the coordinated handling of arms, diplomacy, information, and economics; and in the proper correlation of all measures of foreign and domestic policy (Lasswell, 1950).

Similar views are attributed to former US Secretary of State, Robert McNamara, who called, in 1968, for “less of a military-political focus on security” (Hussein, 1998:1). In 1974, Joseph Nye (1974) also echoed such a view by stating that “[E]conomic issues have risen in importance on the agendas of world politics,” and that in “such a world, the composition of threats to states has become more subtle and more complex. ‘Security’ is more than a military matter.”

Allan Dupont (2001:10) argues that there were two important calls for the redefinition of security in the 1970s. The Brandt Commission called for the inclusion of “non-military agenda of complex interdependence,” whilst Richard Ullman (quoted in Romm, 1993:4) advocated for a balance between the concerns of state and non-governmental entities, including the individual. Adding her voice to the call for redefining security in the 1990s, Jessica Tuchman Mathews (1989:163) acknowledged attempts by the US to expand the coverage of security to include issues of international economics as it

became clear that the US economy was no longer the independent force it had once been, but was powerfully affected by economic policies in dozens of other countries. Global developments now suggest the need for another analogous, broadening definition of national security to include resource, environmental and demographic issues.

Despite these seminal works and calls for the reconceptualisation of security beyond its traditional notion, state-centricism and military-centeredness persisted in the conceptualisation of security because of the fear or threat of nuclear annihilation, which was the overwhelming defining threat in the international system during the Cold War (Hussein, 1998). With the shifts in the global trends of issues, emergence of weak states in the Global South with numerous internal challenges, intra-state conflicts, and the influence of non-state actors after the end of the Cold War, the tenets on which the traditional notion of security were anchored, came under immense scrutiny in the 1990s, thus reigniting the age-old debate about the conceptualisation of security.

David Baldwin (1997:8-10) notes that for such an important concept as security, the fact that its acceptable definition has been so slow to achieve represents some form of neglect of the concept. He makes this deduction from cases as early as the 1960s and observes that

[I]n 1965 one such study lamented that ‘thus far there have been very few attempts . . . to define the concept of national security’.

In 1973 Klaus Knorr began a survey of the field by stating his intention to ‘deliberately bypass the semantic and definitional problems generated by the term “National Security”’. In 1975, Richard Smoke observed that the field had ‘paid quite inadequate attention to the range of meanings of “security”’. In 1991, Buzan described security as ‘an underdeveloped concept’ and noted the lack of ‘conceptual literature on security’ prior to the 1980s... And none of the eleven course syllabi described in *Security Studies for the 1990s* includes Wolfers’ seminal article on the concept of national security (ibid, 8) - ***Emphasis in original***

He blames this perceived neglect on the fact that many social science authors never bothered to use the concept of security as a framework for rigorous analysis (ibid, 9). Barry Buzan (1991:7–11) rather argues that the underdevelopment of the notion can be attributed to the difficult overlap of the concept of security and power, the lack of interests by critics of realism; the fact that security theorists are too busy with keeping up with new developments in technology and policy, and the probability that the inherent ambiguity of the term might be favouring some policy makers.

The post-Cold War era subsequently saw a paradigm shift in the academia for an expanded conceptualisation of security to accommodate economic, resources, environmental and demographic issues (Møller, 2000:7–10). Whilst the need for an expanded conceptualisation has a long history and is not in doubt, the question as to the definition of the ultimate referent object or whose security persists. This has led to several derivatives of security and an epistemological evolution of the concept of security. Whilst the traditional notion of security has the state as the ultimate referent object, the post-Cold War era has seen arguments for the broadening of the concept of security to take care of other referent entities. Some analysts have argued in favour of humans (McSweeney, 1999). This perspective underpins the body of literature on the concept of “human security,” defined basically in terms of “*freedom from fear*” and “*freedom from want.*” This concept was popularised by the application of the two freedoms in the discussion of

development in the 1994 Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994). Others have also argued for a focus on *collectives* since, according to Paul Williams (2008:7), “humans do not always view group identities and collectives in purely instrumental terms” and to be fully human is to belong to a “specific social group.” Such perspectives have given rise to notions of international security, collective security and societal security, among others.

Another perspective devolves around the level of analysis. It emphasises the conceptualisation of the “unavoidable relationships and tensions between the different levels of analysis” (ibid,7). Other perspectives argue for the recognition of human beings as “part of nature and dependent on ecosystems and the environment.” Such perspectives note that without a conducive environment to support humans, arguments about other referent objects cannot be sustained (Hughes, 2006). The increasing body of literature on the different aspects of the above referent objects/entities have emerged to constitute the non-traditional notions of security principally centred on the neo-realist push for an expanded definition of security beyond the state and military concerns.

There has been a paradigm shift in the body of literature with the majority of them arguing in favour of the inclusion of non-traditional threats including drug trafficking into security concerns. The argument is made that security should incorporate more than just the state as the analytical referent object. They also argue that security is a dynamic concept, which inevitably changes over time. Therefore, there is the need for an expanded reconceptualisation to make room for emerging issues, which are largely “softer” in kind and form. Within this school of thought, perhaps Barry Buzan *et al's* (1998:37) idea that an issue borders on security when it poses “*existential threats*” to a designated referent object offers a broad framework incorporating issues of organised criminality, and drug

trafficking in particular, into the debate of security concerns. This is because it represents a typical post-Cold War new security theoretical perspective and provides room for issues of the performance of the state and its governing capacity to be securitised.

2.2.2 *The rise of human security*

Of all the emerging conceptualisations, that of human security has had profound impact on policy and academic literature over the past two decades. Proponents of human security, however, have not been able to agree on what constitutes, “*threats to*,” and the “*means to*” human security. This has led to two schools of thought – narrow and broad schools. Authors within the narrow school uphold “*freedom of fear*” and consider “threat of political violence to people, by the state or any other organised political actor,” as central to the definition of security in relation to humans (Kerr, 2010:124). This school of thought subsequently narrowly defines human security as “the protection of individuals and communities from war and other forms of violence” (ibid,125). Though admitting that there are other forms of threats to humans apart from violence, the school considers many of the other threats as correlates of violence. To the broad school, human security is more than freedom from fear and includes “*freedom from want*.” The freedom from want argument makes the question of development central to the broad school. Proponents of the broad school, such as Ramesh Thakur (2004:347), posit that human security is concerned about critical life-threatening dangers to humans, regardless of the source – whether external or internal to the state. Whilst his view constitutes an aspect of the broad school that attempts to limit the conceptual boundaries of the use of human security, there are others like Sabina Alkire (2004:360) who define the focus of human security as the protection of “the vital core of all human lives in ways that advance human freedoms and human fulfilment.”

The human security focus in the search for an expanded definition of security in the post-Cold War era has helped to challenge the state-centric and militaristic realist perspective of the traditional conceptualisation. It has, however, been far from addressing the conceptual crispiness that is required for the use of the concept in rigorous analytical projects that can stand the test of time. One basic problem is that by attempting to bring everything that matters under the ambit of “fear and want,” the human security notion has succeeded in broadening the boundaries of the referent object question; but has failed to clearly establish limits around the question of threats. A conservative interpretation of the human security notion will therefore end up without limits to what constitutes a security threat. According to Pauline Kerr (2010:125), the problem that has arisen is that “the number of causal hypothesis for human insecurity are so vast that frameworks for research and policy are difficult to formulate.” Additionally, the concept has succeeded in decoupling humans from states but has not succeeded in clearly articulating the means to the achievements of the security of humans, without the state. Proponents of the notion still imply a role for the state, which makes the debate more complicated given the fact that in many Third World cases, the state is a major source of insecurity to the people.

Even as the conceptualisation of security still evolves, it is clear from the foregoing that both the traditional and expanded notions of security are useful in some ways, and have limitations in others. The choice of an appropriate conceptualisation for academic discourse is therefore not a matter of either/or. Rather, the usefulness of a particular notion is dependent on the given referent object and the level of analysis. That is to imply that in a case of the analysis of threats to the states, for instance, the appropriateness of the traditional school cannot be over-emphasised. This is particularly so if the key threat under consideration is external and military in nature. However, in a typical African situation, the limitations of the traditional school are evident.

Yet, a closer scrutiny indicates that the limitations of the traditional notions do not imply strength for the new forms of conceptualisation, particularly human security. This is principally because of the weaknesses of the human security notion outlined above; but most crucially because of the inability of the human security school of thought to exempt the state as an actor in the means to the desired end. The underlying usefulness of all the competing conceptualisations is therefore the sum that they all agree with the fact that any sound conceptualisation of security should be clear about freedom from *threats* to the survival of a given *referent object*, be it individual, group, or both.

In avoiding the trap and weaknesses that come with adopting the use of any of the conceptualisations, the use of security in this study is anchored on the general framework of the cross-cutting consensus of the key variables that should be characteristic of a useful conceptualisation of security: Freedom from a threat (whether a want or fear) and a given referent object. More specifically, however, of the many seminal attempts to define security within the two main schools, this study situates its discussions on Barry Buzan's (1991:18–19) definition, which states that “security is about the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity.” The usefulness of this definition for this study stems from the fact that it is broad enough to accommodate both military and non-military threats from external and internal sources, but specific enough regarding the state and society as referent objects/entities. It also provides an explicit indication as to the impact of the threat thereby making it useful in the context of its application to issues of drug trafficking and the state in Africa.

Overall, however, this study identifies with the widening of the concept of security within the dynamics of contemporary issues and its broad neo-realist conceptualisation, but agrees with Arnold Wolfers's (*quoted* in Romm, 1993:3-4) caution regarding ambiguity

of any security notion that whilst “appearing to offer guidance and a basis for broad consensus, they may be permitting everyone to label whatever [policy] he favours with an attractive and possibly deceptive name.” It also agrees with Ralf Emmers (2010:138) who also cautions against the risk of overstretching the conceptualisation to the extent that nothing in “particular, ends up being a security problem.”

This study defines a threat as any phenomenon that may cause human society to be vulnerable to deprivation, misery and/or annihilation or as defined by the UN (2004a), “any event or process that leads to large-scale death or lessening of life chances and undermines states as the basic unit of the international system.” Threats to any given referent objects exhibit two key characteristics – evolution and relativity. Overtime, threats evolve under the imperatives of the dynamic of socio-political forces and are therefore not static. For example, if the immediate threat to global peace and security was nuclear war and its accompanying possible use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) earlier in history, today it combines with the threat of terrorism as the greatest. In its relative sense, however, what constitutes a threat to individual states and regions and their intensities differ. Whilst to the US terrorism could be the major threat; in Africa, it may be internal strife.

2.3 Transnational Security Challenge defined

Territory is an important variable in defining the state and outlining the boundaries of state relations. In the context of the latter, Joseph Nye and Keohane (1971:332) have used territory in defining transnational interaction as the “movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organisation.” Similarly, the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime employs territory as the basis for defining

transnational crimes. According to Article 3(2) of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, an offence is transnational if it is committed in more than one state; committed in one state but has a substantial part of its preparation, planning, direction or control taking place in another state; committed in one state but involves an organised group that engages in activities in more than one state; or committed in one state but has substantial effects in another state (UN, 2004b:6).¹⁰

From the two definitions, the transnationality of a given situation can be assessed by the number of territories involved in it or impacted by it. In relation to security threats, particularly, as defined by the UN Convention, the number of territories involved in the planning, targeting, execution, and effects is what defines the transnationality of a given threat. A terrorist threat, for instance, is considered transnational if more than one territory can be identified with the planning, preparation, targeting, execution and effects of that act. Classical examples in Africa's recent history are the 1998 coordinated bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salam and the 2013 Westgate mall attacks in Nairobi. The terror attacks in these instances resulted in the deaths and injuries to people of different nationalities. The transnationality of the attacks resulted from their preparation, target selection and effects across different countries.

On the other hand, a threat that occurs within the confines of a single state boundary without the involvement of groups with transnational spread and does not have the effects transcending national boundaries can be considered domestic. Against this background, this study defines a transnational security challenge as any security threat that transcends state boundaries in planning, targeting, execution, and effects or any non-military threat that cross borders and either threatens the political and social integrity of a nation or the

¹⁰ See Article 3 (2) of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime.

health of that nation's inhabitants (Anggoro, 2003:25). In recent security discourse, the main issues that make up transnational security challenges include transnational organised crime, terrorism, trafficking (in arms, humans and drugs) and infectious diseases. Origins of transnational security challenges are as varied as the many issues that can be listed under the theme. However, economic inequality, globalisation and the weaknesses of the state are key issues that underlie a number of contemporary transnational security challenges. Typically, the rise of territorial fluidity as a result of the forces of globalisation has made it easy for otherwise domestic issues to easily acquire transnational characteristics and to constitute a transnational challenge. Consequently, the post-Cold War world has seen an increase in the number of issues that constitute transnational security challenges as it has become increasingly difficult for issues to be deemed exclusively domestic.

2.4 Drug Trafficking as a Transnational Security Issue

The question as to when drug trafficking becomes a security issue is not one that elicits an easy answer in the literature on the subject. This is principally because of the covert nature of the activities involved, the fluid interface with the legitimate economy, numerous intervening factors between drug trafficking and its impact on the state, and the overly enduring mythology about the potential of organised criminal groups particularly drug traffickers. Two broad perspectives, however, generally exist in the literature. Those that argue that drug trafficking does not constitute a security issue even though it impacts the state, and those that argue otherwise.

Within the former school of thought is David Charters (2003:10) who argues that despite the fact that the activities of drug traffickers stray into the national security realm by impacting on social stability and integrity of national institutions, they do not have any

direct bearing on security, at least in countries such as Canada. In his view “as bad as they are, these problems by themselves are unlikely to sunder the foundations of the state. So their relationship to national security is tangential at best.” In the view of Niklas Swanstrom (2007:1–25), such perspectives originate from a largely state-centric approach to the discourse on national security in which issues or events can only be classified as bordering on security if the survival of the state as an entity was at risk.

Within the state-centric perspective, there is another argument based on the theory that transnational criminal organisations, including drug trafficking cartels, are principally economic entities and do not pose as much threat to states, if at all they pose any, as other forms of threats such as terrorist or insurgency groups. Instead, they utilise entrepreneurial skills that would have been wasted. They also make huge profits, part of which is ploughed back into local and national economies, with their associated multiplier effects and can, therefore, in some cases rather contribute to national wealth, job creation and enhance a country’s safety net against recession (Williams, 1998:255–256). This argument is based on a purely economic dimension of the phenomenon and is influenced by the narrow militaristic and state-centric definition of security without a holistic assessment of the net effect of the activities of organised criminals.

However, from the perspective of the neo-realist expanded security paradigm in which non-military issues with bearing on the functional integrity of states and the individual are considered, then a different set of arguments justify the consideration of transnational criminal activities and drug trafficking, in particular, as a security issue. Within this contemporary discourse, drug trafficking is argued to pose threats to security at three principal levels – the individual, state and international levels. At the individual level, the drug trafficking phenomenon is known to directly undermine human security through the

violence associated with the underlying activities. According to Phil Williams (1998:266), the drug industry is known for about three kinds of violence:

violence by criminal organisations to protect their “turf” and profits; crimes against people and property by drug users who need to pay for illicit drugs; and violence perpetrated by individuals under the influence of mind-altering substances.

All the three directly impact human security and raises the threat perception of citizens of a state, as it also feeds crime trends. The average heroin addict, for example, is estimated to commit about 200 crimes in a year in sustaining their crave for drugs (ibid).

In states with pervasive and agile drug trafficking cartel activities, such as the US, violence associated with the drug industry has led to the emergence of drug enclaves or “no go areas” where citizens do not enjoy the right of access and freedom of movement. Sometimes, even law enforcement agents in such areas respect the restricted movements into such enclaves for their own safety. Consequently, the illicit drugs industry does not only undermine human security through drug abuse resulting in health crisis, which undermines national productivity and economic wellbeing; but also leads to the emergence and perpetuation of societies where human security is pervasively and prevalently undermined through gang violence and violent crime (ibid, 266-268). By creating “no-go areas,” their activities also limit the presence of the state in all parts of its territory with implications on the Weberian requirements of statehood.

Regarding state security, however, drug trafficking is argued to pose a threat to security in a number of ways. In extreme forms of the activities of drug trafficking cartels in states, Jeanne Giraldo and Horold Trinkunas (2007:116) make a case that strong groups seeking to utilise violence to advance their economic interests end up challenging the state’s role in the monopoly over the use of force, and provision of security for citizens and thereby undermine the stability of the state. Using the cases of the Mafia in Italy,

Medellin cartel in Colombia and the Sicilian Mafia, Phil Williams (1998:266) argues that willingness to use force against the state and law enforcement authorities undermine the capacity of the state to maintain monopoly over the use of force thereby undermining and destabilising the state in a more devastating form than insurgency and terrorist groups.

He specifically notes that

[I]n Colombia, the Medellin cartel posed a direct threat to the Colombian government and, despite the death of Pablo Escobar, the cost has been enormous. The Colombian judiciary has been decimated, violence has, at times, reached levels characteristic of small civil wars, and Colombian political and economic activity has been dominated by the threats posed by the narcotraficantes. The cartels have threatened the country's democratic values by killing journalists critical of their activities and corrupting the institutions of the state.

With reference to Italy, he states that the Mafia has gained enormous economic strength to the extent that it has sometimes launched attacks on state institutions and has created an illegal parallel authority wielding control over territory, population, laws and armed forces (ibid).

The second argument establishing drug trafficking as a security issue relates to the extent to which drug trafficking activities overlap with lethal forms of criminality or insecurity to endanger the state and its associated referent. This is in the use of similar routes for the perpetration of activities of arms trafficking, terrorism and insurgency. It is also related to the extent to which proceeds from drug trafficking prop actors that pose direct threat(s) to the political sovereignty of the state, undermine the primacy of the state, and its ability to function in fulfilling the expectations of its citizens. Such actors are largely cartels, insurgency groups and terror networks. Using the case of Colombia, Randy Willoughby (2003:116) has argued that,

Colombian cocaine has financed drug cartels, paramilitary operations, and the FARC and ELN revolutionary organizations, which have collectively produced unrivalled criminal violence (a

murder rate many times greater than that in the US), ongoing civil war (over 30,000 deaths in the past ten years), the near collapse of state authority, the provisional dismemberment of Colombian territory, and new or increased tensions with Colombia's neighbours (magnified by regional ambivalence to Plan Colombia). Drug money is the common denominator in this massive degeneration of Colombian and regional security, unsurprising given the estimate that drug revenues run anywhere from 7 to 25 billion dollars per year in a country with a GDP of 50 billions dollars.

Of particular concern is the case of "narco-terrorism" (Williams, 2001:61–67). In the case of the relationship between Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan, for example, the proceeds of drugs are known to have funded the war that allowed the Taliban to take control of the country and enabled them to subsequently provide shelter for Osama bin Laden who later became a threat to international peace and security. In some cases, revolutionary movements have been known to turn to crime so as to finance their political goals and motivation. In such cases, there is a growing fear that legitimate political goals could be bought over by criminal groups through financing and ultimately undermine the stability and territorial integrity of the state. UNODC adduces evidence to these issues in West Africa by positing that

aside from corrupting the military and other public officials, organised crime could become a source of funding for insurgent groups, as it has been in Colombia, Afghanistan, Peru, and elsewhere. And the domestic conflicts that plagued the region in the past are far from over (UNODC, 2009:72).

The third argument stems from concerns about the ability of drug trafficking cartels to negatively affect the economic security of states through the creation of shadow economies and distortion of the financial sector. In developing and weak states, drug cartels are able to achieve this through the use of illicit covert processes that circumvent state regulatory frameworks, money laundering, tax evasion and extortion from citizens. Ultimately some cartels end up wielding economic might competitive to the state, if not more than that of the state. Such situations embolden cartels to interfere with political

and institutional constructs of the state in their favour, thus criminalising the state. The volume of their activities also gives a false impression about the real performance of a country's economy, a situation capable of contributing to the onset of the phenomenon of "*Dutch disease*".¹¹ In the early 1990s, one of Brazil's most notorious drug traffickers, Jabbes Reabelo and his brother succeeded in utilising their narco-wealth to dominate the coffee industry and to push his competitors out of business. He also succeeded in getting elected into National Congress (Williams and Milani, 1999:5).

Drug trafficking activities also reinforce the existing weaknesses of the state by exploiting the laxities created by other internal crises. Consequently, drug trafficking activities "flourish in states with weak structures and dubious legitimacy, which derives from economic inequalities, the dominance of traditional oligarchies, the lack of congruence between nation and state, poor economic performance and ethnic divisions" (Williams, 1998:255–260).

Drug trafficking also poses a threat at the level of the international system through its impact on the integrity of states. With the emergence of transnational trafficking organisations with enormous capacity to move illicit goods without respect for sovereignty and territorial control, the significance of such variables in defining the primacy of the state in the international system is undermined.

Despite the points articulated by these perspectives (traditional theorists and new security theorists), the two sides commonly appreciate the relationship between the phenomenon of organised criminal activities, including drug trafficking, and the state. However, the

¹¹ This is the phenomenon whereby natural resource rich countries experience a rise in the prices of non-tradable goods and wages as a result of the revenue from natural resource exports thereby damaging the productive economic sector and reinforcing dependence on natural resources. See Sala-i-Martin, X. & Subramanian, A. 2003. Addressing the natural resource curse: An illustration from Nigeria. *Working paper series*. Number 9804. Available: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w9804> [2012, September 25].

two perspectives are both trapped in a common reference to the state as a recipient of the threat. They do not strongly bring to the fore issues in relation to the weaknesses of the state that predisposes or enhances its vulnerability to the onset and impact of drug trafficking and therefore the strength of the state as a factor in explaining the dynamics of drug trafficking.

2.5 Securitising Drug Trafficking

Whereas the two main schools of thought about drug trafficking as a security issue – the argument that it is not, and the view that it is – are important additions to the nature and impact of drug trafficking in contemporary international peace and security discourse, there is more to be deduced if the arguments are juxtaposed with the Copenhagen School's model for securitisation. In such an attempt, the simplest deduction regarding drug trafficking as a security issue is that, firstly, it can only constitute a threat to security to the extent that an influential agent (for example, a government, political elites, military and civil society) has sufficiently portrayed it as an existential threat to a given referent object – be it the state, groups, national sovereignty, ideology or economy. Secondly, the securitising agent/actor should have sufficiently convinced a relevant audience (public opinion, politicians, military officers, or other elites) about the existential threats of the phenomenon.

Within these two broad stages for the securitisation of issues, there are sufficient grounds for drug trafficking to be considered as a security issue in Ghana and at the international level. In the case of Ghana, various government functionaries have expressly articulated the danger posed by drug trafficking to the youth of the country as well as the integrity of the political institutions and stability of the country (Daily Graphic, 20 March 2009). Successive governments of the country have also sufficiently sought to convince citizens

and development partners on the dangers associated with the phenomenon and the need to assist in curbing the trends. A case in point is President John Mills's expression of fears about the future of the country as a result of the country's role as a major transshipment point for drugs flowing through West Africa to the global North (The Guardian, 14 December 2010).

Internationally, the UN as an influential body in charge of international peace and security has sufficiently securitised the phenomenon of drug trafficking. The first time drug trafficking was discussed as a specific theme in the UN Security Council (UNSC) was on 8 December 2009. Discussions were presided over by the then Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, Bedouma Alain Yoda, who was chair of the Council. In that meeting, the Council unanimously adopted a presidential statement expressing concern about the

serious threats posed [...] by drug trafficking and related transnational organised crime to international security in different regions of the world, including in Africa. The increasing link, in some cases, between drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism (UNSC, 2009).

Before this, various discussions about the impact of drug trafficking on countries had arisen in several UNSC debates. The impact of drug trafficking and its related references such as drug abuse had appeared more than 200 times in debates. Reference to drugs had specifically been mentioned in 22 resolutions and 18 presidential statements (Security Council Report, 2009).

2.6 Models and Evolution of State-Crime Relationship(s)

Academics agree that the relationship between the state and crimes, such as drug trafficking are indistinguishable in practical terms and, at best, difficult to separate because of the intrinsic linkages to legitimate processes. Conceptually, however, they agree that historical and social circumstances as well as the nature of the weaknesses of

the state determine the relationship between the two actors. There are four (4) different scenarios of relationships between the state and criminal activities associated with drug trafficking.

The first kind of relationship between the state and traffickers take the form of “*evasion*” in which traffickers generally avoid the state and its structures through *sanctuary and disguise*. This model assumes that the state is efficient, its apparatuses are stronger and more assertive than traffickers, there is general commitment to rule of law, and no tendency to engage in criminal activities. It also assumes the existence of a strong state where citizens, state structures and enforcement entities are visibly working against the activities of organised criminals and so criminals persistently evade contact with the state by operating underground. According to Manuel Castels (1998:202), this form of relationship has been enhanced by the high mobility and extreme flexibility brought about by the forces of globalisation which has made it easy for traffickers, and organised criminals in general, “to evade national regulations and the rigid procedures of international police cooperation.” This constitutes a traditional model of the relationship between the state and traffickers. It is, however, hardly the case because of the highly perceptual perfect nature of the state.

In situations where state structures have a shared interest with certain aspects of trafficking activities, there emerges state “*collusion*” and “*corruption*” as the form of relationship between the state and traffickers. In this case, the state colludes with traffickers by forming covert and instrumental relationships with traffickers for particular purposes. Corruption as a relationship occurs when traffickers are able to form

more lasting covert relations with elements of the state or business corporations which are of mutual benefit to both sides. Organised crime groups may penetrate the state organs (e.g. police and judiciary) through techniques of bribery and

intimidation and use their power to deflect state agencies from their legal and democratically established goals. At the same time important political groups within the state may benefit from and use organised crime to secure their own political dominance within the state (Lea, 2005).

In the view of Randy Willoughby (2003:126), this can take the form of “elite exploitation” also referred to as “cash cows” in which “drug traffickers pay police and military authorities to run illegal activity through a particular zone, and those law enforcement officials pass on percentages up through the system.” Terrence Poppa (1998, *quoted in* Willoughby, 2003:126) argues that in some cases, corruption emanates from state structures to the traffickers and not the other way round. He observes that in the case of Mexico in the 1980s,

[T]he system itself was the corruptor through a downward reach, through the sponsorship of organised crime. The traffickers did not buy and intimidate their way in. Rather [...] they were exploited to generate wealth for their powerful sponsors [...] And when their time was up, the same system that empowered them killed or jailed them and took from them whatever was left.

With significant economic might and a favourable political environment, elite exploited trafficking groups sometimes evolve into ones that are openly rebellious and assertive about their wish for freedom from the manipulating authority (Astorga, 2001:58–82). The mafia, for instance, was tolerated in Colombia because they spurred the economy. However, the government declared war when the group attempted to infiltrate political processes (Castelli, 1999:9).

There is also the “*parasitic*” or “*symbiotic*” model in which drug trafficking cartels exist and operate in tandem with the state. In more extreme forms of state weaknesses, the enhanced capacity of traffickers sometimes lead to a situation where they usurp some functions of the state. They thus end up “*substituting*” the state in the performance of certain duties. In the case of Colombia and Mexico, for example, Sebastian Rotella

(1998) observed that whilst drug lords negotiated with the state in Colombia, in Mexico traffickers existed and operated as “state” within the state, with as much power but without at least yet the form of a state. John Lea (2005) summarises the four models as below (see Table 1)

Table 1: The State-Crime Relationship(s) Models

Nature of Relationship	Details
Evasion	Organised crime attempts to avoid the state through sanctuary and disguise
Collusion	State uses organised crime groups for covert activities
Corruption	Organised crime neutralises state agencies and/or penetrates them and turns them to its own uses. It is able to dissuade the public from giving practical support to crime control
Substitution	Criminal governance: organised crime groups take over state functions

Source: John Lea, 2005.

These four forms are conceptualised and discussed by different authors from different perspectives. From the angle of state stability and willingness to control the activities associated with organised criminality, Bailey and Godson (2001:2–6) conceptualises the relationship between the state and organised criminals, including drug traffickers in two principal models. First, organised criminals and therefore drug traffickers exist as a parallel authority outside the state structures and are connected with the state only through underground links. Even though existing as a strong parallel authority beside state structures, their influence on the political landscape at the top is minimal save for the local level where they exercise significant influence and control. Within this model, criminals may enjoy collusion with members of state structures who do so without regard to existing state authority or regulations. The second model represents a top-down perspective where drug traffickers operate under state control or under the control of elements in government. Owing to the pyramidal nature of relations between government and its structures, the involvement of elements of government at the top brings all

structures of the state into associated activities of criminality. As a result of its top-down nature of involvement of the state, this model is less a consequence of weak statehood and governance than the corrupt rent-seeking activities of state officials. Such a system therefore ends up with the emergence of rent-seekers whose major interest is in the perpetuation of the status quo under which they reap political and economic benefits.

Using the Mexican case, Peter Lupsha (1996:21-48) thinks that two basic patterns of state-crime relationship can be modelled: the “*stage-evolutionary model*” and the “*elite-exploitation model*.” In the stage-evolutionary model, organised criminals such as drug traffickers commonly evolve through three stages – predatory, parasitical and symbiotic. At the “*predatory stage*,” traffickers are usually localised and operate within specific geographic areas or neighbourhood. With the acquisition of corruptive influence, traffickers evolve from the predatory stage to establish an interface with legitimate powers thus making them *parasitic*. Where the political and economic systems of the state become dependent on a relationship with traffickers, a “*symbiotic*” stage emerges.

Within Lupsha’s stage-evolutionary model, traffickers follow “an illicit parallel ladder of upward mobility and overtime seek to legitimise their wealth and status” (ibid). In the elite-exploitation model, traffickers are exploited by political elites as “cash cows.” Traffickers are, thus, a source of funding and enrichment for the political elite. Corruption plays an important role in both models. However, traffickers in pursuit of a relationship with the state initiate corruption in the stage-evolutionary model. In elite-exploited relationships, traffickers are pressurised by politicians and other social agents to perform particular tasks whilst exercising their rent-seeking tendencies on them (the traffickers).

2.7 Statehood in Africa

Even though the conception of the state is central to the study of politics, its acceptable conceptualisation has been quite elusive. As early as 1910, political scientist James Wilford Garner (1910:38–39) remarked that there are numerous conceptualisations of the state, with any two scarcely alike. Of the many perspectives, however, three main approaches exist for understanding the nature, evolution and conception of the state.

The first perspective is anthropological. This conception of the state suggests that a state exists when there are distinctive leadership roles, rules of social interaction, and a set of organisational arrangements to identify and serve the collective needs of people (Danziger, 2011:115-130). This definition of statehood derives its key variables and hence its point of departure from Abraham Maslow's idea that human groupings form on the basis of facilitating the achievements of people's physiological, affectional, belongingness and security needs. Based on this perspective, the evolution of the state in history derives from the coalescing of tribes and ethnic groups around certain leadership and organisational structures towards the attainment of their needs. Whilst explaining the basis for the emergence of early states and their subsequent evolution, this perspective of the conceptualisation of the state introduces the ultimate goal angle to the conception of statehood and the mechanisms that unite individuals and collectives into any given state.

The uniqueness of this perspective for understanding statehood derives from its identification of the common goals of citizens, and the centrality of the individual's needs and aspirations in the onset, existence and relevance of the state. It is in line with one of the most popular definitions of statehood by Hugo Grotius as "a complete association of free men, joined together for the enjoyment of rights and for their common interests" (Grotius 1923, *quoted in* Simmons and Steinberg, 2007:224).

The second perspective draws on international law for the conception of statehood. It holds that a state is a “territorially bound sovereign entity” which possesses (a) permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government and (d) is capable of entering into relations with other states (Ranney, 1987:35-36; Danziger, 2011:115-130). The four attributes are derived from Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States.¹² A related legal perspective defines the state “as a community consisting of a territory and a population subject to organised political authority and characterised by sovereignty” or a legal person recognised by international law with the above attributes (Shaw, 2008:198–264). Within the legal perspective, the state is supposed to be the source of laws over a given territory, and recognised by its peers as sovereign, to the extent that rules made within its territory are not to be overruled by any other entity. In this sense, the wielding of sovereignty and its recognition by peers are the primary variables for conceptualising the state as a legal entity.

Whilst the legal perspective is essentially the basis for acceptance into international relations, Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg (1982:3) observes that it has “a tendency to postulate that the empirical attributes of statehood – i.e., a permanent population and effective government – are as definite as the juridical attributes.” This is precisely because it places a great deal of emphasis on the juridical attributes at the expense of the empirical functions of statehood. Consequently, it defines the state more from the *de jure* or constitutive point of view rather than its *de facto* or declarative criteria. Attempts in the literature to address the gap identified by Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg exist in the writings of those who have tried to define the state in terms of its structural and

¹² This was a Convention signed on 26 December 1933 by the seventh International Conference of American States at Montevideo, Uruguay. The Convention codifies the four attributes of statehood in international law.

functional aspects. This has given rise to the structural-functional perspectives of statehood. Max Weber takes into consideration government functions in defining the state. He thus defines the state as an entity, which successfully monopolises the legitimate use of force. According to James Danziger (2011:115-130), “[I]n this structural-functional perspective, the state might be defined as the organised institutional machinery for making and carrying out political decisions and for enforcing the laws and rules of the government.”

Whereas the three different perspectives for conceptualising the state highlight different issues, a very fair and balanced assessment of the relevance of all of them is to conclude that none answers it all. The dividing line between the empirical and juridical criteria is a moving target and “whether the birth of a new state is primarily a question of fact or law and how the interaction between the criteria of effectiveness and other relevant legal principles may be reconciled are questions of considerable complexity and significance” (Shaw, 2008:198–264). A state in a typical sense should therefore be able to answer both the legal requirements and the functional or empirical expectations. As posited by Christopher Clapham (1996:10), a state is not only an expression of sovereignty over a territory, it must possess territorial and governmental legitimacy, which provides governments with the right to act on behalf of citizens. It is also necessary for the state to have the capacity to perform its roles and functions, as expected.

This conclusion is particularly clear if all the three perspectives are applied to the African context. In such an endeavour, the anthropological perspective explains the complex issues about the beginning of states and the ultimate goals of statehood. It also establishes and/or supports the pan-Africanist inclination that the onset of colonisation was not necessarily the beginning of statehood in Africa and that the various kingdoms,

indigenous identities and tribal enclaves that existed before the advent of colonialism amounted to states at some stage of their embryonic formation (Olowu, 1994; Ayittey, 2006). This is by virtue of their means and intended ends of the actors who constructed them. Left on their own, they argue, an indigenous African entity would have organically emerged, perhaps different in structure and organisation from the modern states, but functionally equal to states as defined in contemporary context. To such views, the truncation of the African indigenous experiment towards the consolidation of statehood accounts for the contemporary challenges confronting state-making in Africa. Such arguments, however, do not provide answers in terms of how long the evolution of those indigenous “states” into states would have lasted; and what the ultimate outcome of such an evolution would have led to.

The application of the legal (juridical) and functional (empirical) perspectives of statehood to Africa is perhaps one attempt that has animated academic discourse on the subject of statehood for a long time. In a seminal paper published in 1982 on “Why Weak States Persist in Africa,” Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg (1982) juxtapose the juridical attributes of statehood, as outlined above, against empirical attributes. They argue that the functional definition of statehood, particularly as articulated by Max Weber in terms of the ability to monopolise the use of force, represents an expression of the state in terms of “means” rather than “ends” and thereby emphasises the empirical rather than the juridical – the *de facto* rather than the *de jure* attributes of statehood. By so doing, the perspective does not appreciate the “true character of territorial jurisdiction” which is as much an international legal condition as it is a sociological given. By the functional criteria alone, especially as articulated by Weber, the real measure of statehood lies in whether a government is able to monopolise the use of force. This implies that if another actor is able to wrestle the control of a portion of a state’s territory

and is able to exercise and monopolise the use of force over it, the new territory assumes statehood. Concurrently, the emergence of the new state undermines the statehood of the “parent state,” from which it was carved.

An application of this interpretation to many African cases raises a number of contentious issues. In Somalia, for instance, the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabaab has succeeded in wresting a significant portion of the territory¹³ from government and “governs” those territories with a strict form of Islamic Sharia. Apart from taxing businesses operating in those areas (in the form of zakat), aid agencies operating in those spaces have to do that with the explicit permission of Al-Shabaab. Under a strict interpretation of the empirical (functional) definition of statehood, the areas under Al-Shabaab control would be deemed to have acquired statehood, by virtue of the group’s functional relevance and monopoly over the use of force in that part of Somalia. In a related case, the self-declared independent Somaliland exists in the northwestern part of Somalia with all the empirical attributes of statehood – (a) permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government and (d) is in limited relations with some Western capitals. Notwithstanding, neither the south-central part of Somalia nor the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland, is recognised anywhere within the international community as a state. In these cases, despite their empirical attributes, the two entities lack the juridical attributes which are basically constructs of recognition conferred on the territory by other members of the international system.

The case of African states is complicated from the functional perspective. This is because of the challenges to their ability to fulfil and wield the empirical attributes of statehood. Even in states where monopoly over use of force is not challenged, the state’s capacity to

¹³ At the time of writing, the African Union mission in Somalia had liberated large swathes of land from the Al-Shabaab and the operation to wrestle more land from the group was still under way.

project presence beyond the capital is at best illusive in many African contexts. This has given rise to states harbouring strong societies and non-state entities whose influences and practical hold on certain territories are functionally stronger than the government. Such societies present their own challenges and trajectories of existence. In Somalia, for instance, whereas the state is known to have failed, the grassroot Somali society represented by traditional indigenous structures and clan leadership, has not. Even in strong states, such as the US, the capacity of criminal groups to hold and control large swathes of territories neither implies that those enclaves constitute states nor that those “parent states,” have ceased to be states.

This implies that even though the functional attributes of states are important variables for defining statehood, they are not sufficient to achieving statehood in contemporary international context. These cases speak to the importance of the juridical attributes in the definition of the state. Even when states like Somalia have empirically failed, they still remain states because of their juridical attributes. According to Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg (1982), however, the most important juridical attributes of states are territory and independence. In Africa, these attributes have been subjects of immense difficulty due to the continent’s colonial history, inheritance and solidification of colonial boundaries and continued dependence on former colonial powers. The complexity is best appreciated by a context of the narrative of the emergence and evolution of states on the continent, as expatiated in the next section.

2.7.1 The creation and evolution of states in Africa

Before the advent of colonialism, kingdoms and tribal enclaves existed in Africa with sophisticated systems of leadership, governance and social contract between leaders and the led. In the Ghanaian context, for instance, kingdoms such as the Asanteman, Gonja

and Dagbon existed with sophisticated centralised traditional political institutions with established arms of “government,” army and trading ties with other kingdoms. So did the Benin Kingdom in Nigeria, the Lula and Kuba in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Tswana of Botswana, the Igbos of Nigeria and the Tongas in Zambia. According to George Ayittey (2006:72–85), these constituted two types of states that existed before colonisation. Those that were stateless and acephalous, and those with centralised authorities. The latter were ruled by kings and chiefs, and had administrative, security and judicial structures. Examples of the former included the Igbo of Nigeria, the Kung of Liberia, the Talensi of Ghana, the Somalis, Jie of Uganda and Mbeere of Kenya. In both types of “statehood,” the welfare of the people was the core functions of the state and, there were checks and balances against excesses.

The evolution of indigenous states were, however, truncated by the onset of colonisers whose territories of operations were based on arbitrary balkanisation of Africa at the Berlin conference of 1844-1845¹⁴ without regard for existing pre-colonial indigenous functional “states.” Instead, it was based on resource and territory allocation among European powers. Consequently, territories administered by colonial representatives did not conform to indigenous identities and states. People of different indigenous identities ended up in the same territories or were split into different colonial states. This “big bang” approach to the creation of colonial states on the continent effectively dismembered existing identities and forcibly constructed new ones through the creation of Westphalia models of states out of them. Whilst belonging to the same territories, the majority of societies in colonies did not succeed in creating collective identities out of the disparate groups of people within those boundaries. The resultant colonised African entities, which formed the basis for the emergence of the modern African state, were

¹⁴ This conference was called by German chancellor Otto von Bismarck upon the request of Portugal and aimed at negotiating questions about the control of territories in Africa.

essentially elitist, extractive rather than productive and concentrated authority at the centre. It was created and sustained by force and made use of indirect rule through chiefs and warrant chiefs, in some cases, as means of securing law and order. The use of chiefs and the endorsement of particular ethnicities, nurtured hatred among the indigenous people. The legitimacy of the colonial state did not hinge on attachment and connection of the people, but the recognition and approval from imperial capitals.

At the dawn of independence, the lack of alternative structures to replace the colonial structures meant that existing colonies were granted independence as was. This was endorsed by the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) adoption of the inviolability of territories inherited from the colonial powers within the context of the legal principle of *uti possedetis* and under international pressure for the borders to be left alone (Deng and Lyons, 1998:73). Many post-independence African leaders also preserved colonial boundaries so as to secure their political survival and wealth (Clapham, 1996:4–6). Consequently, apart from Eritrea and South Sudan, no other secessionist tendencies across the continent has succeeded in altering the colonial boundaries.

2.7.2 The nature and character of the African state

As a result of the relatively recent emergence of statehood in Africa and their peculiar history and evolution into modern states, the resultant post-independence African state typically bears a number of characteristics. The first character of post-independence African states is that they are largely *predatory* and *rent-seeking*. This is true of both capitalist-oriented states such as Kenya and deeply socialist ones such as Ethiopia. In the view of the late Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, even the socialist states in the immediate post-independence Africa were pretentious about this. In his assessment, most post-independence African states were basically

state driven by the logic of maximizing rent for the rulers whatever its implications for the economy. Its capability to collect rent was based on its intermediary status. It was the intermediary between its people and the international system, and collected rents through foreign aid in return for diplomatic clientage, through providing privileged access to domestic resources and market and taxing trade (Zenawi, 2006).

This character is partly blamable on the West-directed character of the colonial state which was principally meant to plunder resources from Africa for the development of the West. Rather than reform the nature and mechanisms for the operation of institutions, post-independent African leaders for the purposes of elite capture and exploitation, largely maintained and reinforced the rent-seeking and exploitative nature of the state. Consequently, the typical African state takes from the citizens and does not deliver public goods commensurate with the level of rent received through taxation, grants, donor funds and loans from Bretton Wood Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Despite the massive natural resource endowments and the potential for development, the average state in Africa functions in the interests of a crop of exploitative capitalist elites whose bank accounts in Western capitals continue to swell at the expense of the economic wellbeing of citizens.

Secondly, as has been argued by Dele Olowu (1994:6–8), the post-independence African state has the tragedy of a disconnect with its past, experiences and lessons; the expectations of its citizens and their consequent social contract; and is, therefore, normless and amoral. Owing to this form of tripple disconnection, there is a legitimacy deficit reflected through citizen disengagement from the polity and alienation of governments principally because of the irrelevance of the state to the daily lives and expectations of citizens. As noted by Richard Jackson (2002:38), this crisis is “expressed through very low political participation rates (and high levels of disengagement or ‘exit’ by significant sectors of the population).” Due to the inability of political elites in such

states to honour their social contracts with citizens, it is increasingly difficult for citizens to accept and subsequently consolidate the state as a “hegemonic idea” considered as “natural as the landscape around them” (Migdal, 1998:12).

African states also have the challenge of multi-ethnic compositions. Owing to the creation of borders without regard to existing pre-colonial “states,” people of different ethnic identities and nationalities were thrown into territories. Many states are thus made up of people of different ethnic groups, religion and cultures. In many cases, this is a critical fault line along which intra-state conflicts and other insecurity challenges emerge. Similarly, many ethnic groups cut across several state territories resulting in transnationality of ethnicities. This makes the internationalisation of insecurity, particularly drugs trafficking, very high on the continent because transnational identities provide identity enclaves for shielding criminal networks who exploit socio-cultural ethos around tribal loyalties (Aning, 2007:209). States also exist with strong and functional traditional institutions who wield considerable loyalty of its members (Atta-Asamoah, 2012). Many states also harbour a great deal of challenges to nation-building. Identities such as ethnicity, race, language and regions of origins remain the predominant markers for identity construction and diversity. This has made it easy for the politicisation of identity, often ethnicity, in relation to political issues and also recourse to ethnic mobilisation where resource allocation or contention is concerned. Ethnicity as a variable in the politics of states makes them vulnerable to conflicts due to the “*we-versus-them*” situations it introduces.

African states sometimes also end up in a situation of “*elite capture*” where few political elites dominate national economic and political agenda and drive the direction of issues without regard for the welfare of the younger generation. This was the case in Sierra

Leone where young people grappled with worsening poverty, unemployment and dwindling hopes of a brighter future whereas the political elite wallowed in extreme affluence accruing from corruption and misuse of state resources. As a result of the largely clientelist and neo-patrimonial nature of politics on the continent, most countries end up in a situation of political exclusion and marginalisation where a particular political group dominate the national agenda and drive the direction of issues without consultation and consideration of the existence of other political groups. Affiliation to particular political parties is often the major requirement for jobs and participation in decision-making, and political dissent is restricted in an atmosphere of winner-takes-all. States also grapple with *inherent weaknesses* emanating from geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints; *situational weaknesses* as a result of internal antagonisms and greed; and *institutional weaknesses* emanating from weak judicial, law enforcement, decision-making and reform structures. Owing to these challenges, majority of African states are unable to project power and to make their presence felt beyond the centre of power. This makes non-state actors challenge the state's monopoly over the use of force through crime and conflict.

As a result of the numerous characteristics of the states in Africa, they have been variously characterised as vampire states, predatory states, juridical (instead of empirical) states, bed-ridden states, quasi-states, suspended states, collapsed states, weak states, imported states, lame Leviathans, and shadow states. Though these characterisations are far-fetched, due to their over-generalisations of particular cases, the various epithets are representative of some aspects of the nature and character of states in contemporary Africa. A number of these characterisations have gained enormous academic currency and are used in reference to Africa as discussed below.

According to William Zartman (1995:5–8), a *collapsed state* is one that is not able to perform the basic functions of statehood and is therefore not operational in the making and enforcement of laws, as an overarching symbol of identity, lacks the enhancement of social cohesion, does not guarantee the provision of security to citizens, and has completely lost legitimacy as a “central sovereign organisation.” Basically, the collapse of a state is the practical absence of functional state structures, and the authority to ensure security, rule of law and political order over its territories – be it economic, political or virtual. It involves both the juridical dimension involving its sovereignty; and the empirical or functional dimension, which involves the disintegration of state structures and apparatus.

State fragility, on the other hand, is characterised by vulnerability to strains from both internal and external sources thereby resulting in the propensity for the onset of challenges to the stability of the state.¹⁵ The failure of the state, as often used in reference to Africa, deals with the inability of states to sustain their functional dimensions, thus leading to a total loss of its power for meeting expected roles. Augustine Ikelegbe (2010:122) has observed that the collapse of the “extractive, allocative, regulatory, social services, security and developmental” functions of the state are particularly crucial in the decline of states into failure. He summarises the major characteristics and indicators of weaknesses in African states as tabulated in Table 2.

¹⁵ This can be through the onset of conflict, internal strife, violence, crime, and the proliferation of the activities of transnational non-state actors in the state.

Table 2: Major indicators of weaknesses in African states

-
- Declining respect for and loss of state authority
 - Difficulties in the maintenance of authority over territory and people and the inability to secure borders
 - Citizen and group disengagement or exit from the state
 - Closed or narrow constitutional and legal channels of regime change, political succession or 'political regeneration'
 - An inability to effectively regulate and control society as manifested in the prevalence of smuggling, currency trafficking, money laundering and proliferation of illegal arms and private armies
 - A failing capacity to enforce law and order, the rule of law and security
 - The collapse of public services, basic state functions, responsibilities and obligations
 - An inability to effectively implement public policies
 - A growing incapacity to monopolise and control institutions of violence
 - A decline in the strength, discipline and cohesion of coercive agencies
 - A dependence on private military companies, metropolitan centres, neighbouring countries and others for security and troop support
 - An inability to prevent and manage insurgents and external threats
 - Military intrusions and retaliations from neighbouring countries
-

Source: Collated by Ikelegbe, 2010:128–129.

2.8 Drivers of the Global Illicit Drugs Trade

The rise in transnational drug trafficking in the twenty-first century has elicited debate in academia. A number of factors are blamed for the rise. One of the most widely shared view is that the transnationalisation of organised criminality is a result of globalisation (Lloyd, 1999:57–58). However, the process of globalisation is not a recent phenomenon. The history of its emergence is traceable to the late twentieth century after which it suffered a slow spread during the period from the start of World War I until the third quarter of the twentieth century when its influence re-emerged on the world stage (Greenwald and Kahn, 2008:19). Since the end of the Cold War, however, the world has witnessed enormous political, economic and technological changes illustrative of the

increasing processes and reach of the influence of globalisation (Engvall, 2006:1). This has been marked by an unprecedented transnationality of both tangible and intangible factors such as goods, services, ideas, capital and people.

According to Louise Shelley (1995:463–489), the world saw an unprecedented rise in the global passenger volume by about six fold between 1960 and 1974, and more than four-fold by the early 1990s. Global trade also increased about ten-fold in the two decades between 1970 and 1990. Concurrent to these were unprecedented increases in the use of electronic means of communication, such as fax, mobile phones and the Internet. This has led to the emergence of the notion of “*global village*” in which economic, political and technological happenings among people in different places no longer exist in exclusion of occurrences in other geographical spaces. The forces of globalisation have practically succeeded in breaking down centuries-old boundaries established by time and space. The removal of the boundaries has subsequently enhanced quality information sharing among people and across different sectors (Atta-Asamoah, 2009:64). Territorial fixity in the idea of the state has since given way to the emergence of territorial fluidity in which whatever happens anywhere is felt everywhere. The consequent merit is evident in all spheres of human endeavour in the twenty-first century. The movement of goods, services, ideas and people across national boundaries has led to economic opportunities, acculturation and enculturation, cultural enrichment, political changes and ultimately enhanced quality of life in both developed and developing regions of the world.

However, the increasing globalisation of the world has manifested itself in two phases. Apart from the ease with which positive and licit processes and activities have progressively impacted different regions; the opening up of national borders has also led to the transnationality of threats and enhanced vulnerability of the state as well. This is

part of the widely acclaimed “*dark side of globalisation.*” The world now grapples with panoply of global security challenges emerging from the internationalisation of domestic and regional challenges such as infectious diseases, terrorism, environmental degradation, conflicts, proliferation of weapons and organised crime (UN, 2004:2). Additionally, just as licit business entities have taken advantage of the trends of globalisation to modernise and internationalise themselves into multinational entities with presence in different continents and regions, organised criminals with illicit interests have also taken advantage to establish themselves and expand their operations across national borders (UNODC, 2005:3). Whilst the globalisation argument explains the ease with which transnational traffickers operate across borders, it is not a strong argument regarding why traffickers decide to take advantage of those processes. Louise Shelley (1995:463–489) argues that the expansion in global business opportunities as a result of the factors of globalisation meant that just as legitimate multinationals began to think globally and attempted to take advantage of existing markets, so did drug traffickers. In an attempt to access a wide global market and to expand their profit base, local traffickers internationalised their operations across boundaries.

A second variable often treated as a driver of the global trade in drugs, is the interplay of market forces – global demand and supply. With globalisation comes ease of movement and access to markets otherwise deemed remote. The implied increase in demand for drugs has necessitated a rise in supply and, hence, a driver of the phenomenon. This increase in demand came with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent rise of strong non-state entities ready to fill the void of global trafficking in various goods. In a typical economic context, the increase in demand, granting constant supply, should have implied a rise in price and subsequent drop in patronage. However, due to the addictive properties of illicit drugs, their subjectivity to price elasticity of demand is not perfect. A

school of thought that makes the argument for the decriminalisation of drugs exist on the premise that the criminalisation of drugs has led to a rise in price and hence more profitability. Increased profits subsequently imply that the cost-benefit ratio is high and is a motivator for continued involvement in the illicit drugs business (Rhodes *et al*, 2000; Costa Storti and De Grauwe, 2009).

A third driver is the weaknesses of the state in the enforcement of laws against illicit drug trafficking and high levels of corruption. This makes it easy for drug traffickers to exploit the state to exist and function as a shadow economy. The fourth variable is socio-economic. The proceeds of drugs, vis-a-vis other commodities, is high. In Southern Africa, this has been a motivation for the production and smuggling of cannabis in countries such as Lesotho where it is a prime source of revenue for farmers. According to Akyeampong (2005:437)

the expansion of coca, the opium poppy, and cannabis fields from the 1970s coincided with the decline in world prices for primary products from developing countries, compelling indigent farmers in several countries to turn to the cultivation of coca in Latin America, the opium poppy in Asia, and cannabis in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.9 Africa and the Drugs Trade

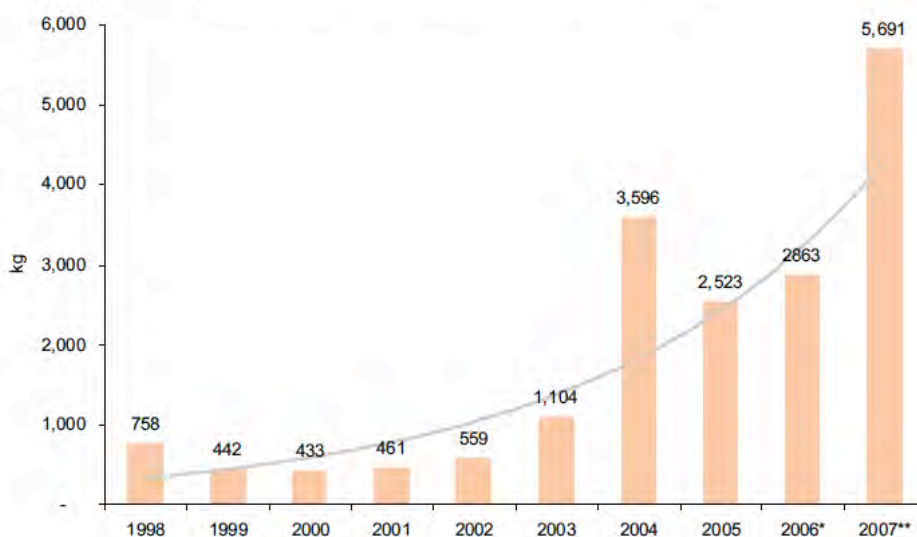
The total volume of the global drugs trade has been estimated to be between \$300 - \$500 billion annually (UNDCP, 1997:123-124; 1998:29, 55; 2005b:123-125, Thoumi, 2005:189; Jenner, 2011:902;).¹⁶ This accounts for about 7.0% of world commerce and is

¹⁶ Several organisations have attempted to measure the volume of the global trade in drugs. Each attempt has produced varied results. An estimate by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in the 1980s, for instance, placed the figure at \$124 billion per annum in the US and Europe. This value is equivalent to \$200 billion at current value. In 1997, the UN estimated that the global drugs trade amounted to about \$400 billion. The varied attempts by the UN has placed the accurate figure between \$300 - \$500 billion as quoted in this study. Interestingly all these figures have been contested. The debate surrounding the accuracy of the estimates is however outside the scope of this research. The use of this figure here therefore takes cognizance of the debate around the accuracy of the figure. However, it is used because it the most widely referenced range in the discourse on the drug trade. The figure has been used with the intention of contextualizing the enormity of the trade as an important requirement for understanding Africa's role and

comparable to, if not surpassed, the automobile, pharmaceuticals and even the banking industry (UNDCP, 1997:3).¹⁷ Animating this trend are Latin American and Asian cartels, and European and American mafias who have succeeded in globalising drug trafficking.

Traditionally, African cartels have been marginal to global hard-core illicit drug flows (Allen, 1999:6; Liana and Cook, 2009:1). Similarly, the continent was also largely marginal until the early 2000s, when a significant and consistent pattern of Africa’s role emerged in the production, consumption and trafficking of drugs. Between 2000 and 2003, total reported seizures of drugs on the continent began to rise (see Figure 2 for cocaine seizures in Africa). Compared to the global trends, the seizure in Africa was less significant despite pointing to the existence of the drugs trade on the continent (UNODC, 2005b:123).

Figure 2: Trends of Annual Cocaine Seizures in Africa, 1998- 2007



Source: UNODC, 2007

not an endorsement of accuracy. See detailed discussion of this debate in Thoumi, F. E. 2005. The numbers game: let's all guess the size of the illegal drug industry! *Journal of drug issues*. Vol. 35, No. 1, Winter.
¹⁷ There have not been recent attempts to recalculate the volume of the drugs market, hence the use of a reference dated in the 1990s. It is still relevant because estimations of the volume were estimates rather than absolute figures.

2.9.1 *The Andes – Africa routes*

Latin American countries dominate cocaine production in the world. It is estimated that most cocaine is grown, manufactured and supplied from the Andes states of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. In recent times, coca plantations and cocaine laboratories are also traced to other countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama and Guyana (S. Williams and Milani, 1999:4–5). On the other hand, the biggest and most lucrative global market for cocaine is in the US and Western Europe. A gramme of cocaine in the US, for example, is estimated to have a street value of \$169 and the same quantity goes for about €191 in Europe.¹⁸ In the 1980s and early 90s, these drugs were trafficked to the US market mainly through the Caribbean into Florida. As of the mid-2000s, the routes to the US were via Central America and Mexico (see Figure 4 for detailed mapping of the routes).

In recent times, the *modus operandi* involves the use of under-water vessels on these routes. It is estimated that such methods account for about 90.0% of cocaine reaching the US market from Latin America. Latin American cartels are largely made up of Mexicans and Colombians. Cocaine to Europe was, on the other hand, traditionally routed through Spain and the Netherlands (UNODC, 2007:6). Since the launch of the war on drugs by the US, which has seen an average annual expenditure of between \$35-40 billion, there has been an increase in intelligence and interception of flows through those traditional routes (NIAN 2007:558). Additionally, there has been a rise in seizures by Spanish authorities and increased enforcement of drug laws in the Netherlands (*ibid*).

¹⁸ This is UNODC price as of 2010 as street value of purity and inflation adjusted in Euro. See detailed listing online http://www.unodc.org/unodc/secured/wdr/Cocaine_Heroin_Prices.pdf [2012, October 12].

Figure 4: Major Trafficking Routes in Latin America and the Caribbean



Source: UNODC, 2009b.

The unintended consequence of the improved interception and law enforcement on the traditional routes is the rise in the use of alternative routes through West Africa, where lax border security and weaknesses of the state reduces the capacity of interceptions by state authorities, thereby reducing the cost of re-routing to their primary destinations. The change in routes through West Africa, apart from avoiding interceptions on traditional routes, also facilitates access to Western Europe and the emerging markets of Eastern Europe. The UNODC estimates that between 46 and 300 tonnes of cocaine (with street value of more than \$2 billion) reaching the global North and other parts of the world every year transit West Africa (Liana and Cook, 2009). The shift to the use of West Africa has subsequently led to the capacitation of local cartels, hitherto peripheral to global trafficking of drugs, particularly those destined for the European market. The *modus operandi* of the Andes cartels using West Africa as a transshipment point for

cocaine involves concealment in specially prepared parts of boats, freighters, and private aircrafts. It is suspected that these same means are used to transport them from Africa to Europe.

2.9.2 The Asia – Africa route

By its proximity to Southeast and Southwest Asia, East Africa and Southern Africa have become a preferred destination for heroin from poppy plantations in East Asia's *Golden Triangle* (Laos, Myanmar and Thailand), and the *Golden Crescent* (Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan). Drugs from these enclaves find their way to Africa en route to the European market. Popular routes in Africa include Kenya, South Africa and particularly Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa. According to the 2008 UNODC report, there is a sizeable number of African cartels who traffic Afghan heroin from Pakistan through commercial airlines through Africa to Europe. Sometimes the drugs are shipped or mailed (Akyeampong, 2005:440). The Asia-Africa route is reported to have been active in the 1980s and early 1990s but is noted to have reopened due to rise in corruption and border insecurity along the east coast of Africa.

2.9.3 Africa – Europe route

Whilst in Africa, the drugs are re-routed to Europe through boats and freighters, private jets or through commercial airlines. According to the UNODC (2007:9), “fishing boats and freighters leaving African ports can easily make their trip unnoticed to Europe among the heavy traffic off the coasts of Western Africa.” This is evidenced by the fact that majority of seizures, particularly significant quantities from Africa to Europe have usually been made on the high seas (Figures 13). The use of commercial airlines involves either cargo luggage or concealment on human couriers (mules). One of the most popular methods of concealment on humans is by ingestion of drug pellets.¹⁹

¹⁹ The method has been noted to pose considerable health hazards to couriers including death when pellets

Through the three trafficking routes and the operations of African cartels, the continent has become an inevitable reference in the global discourse on drug trafficking (Aning, 2007:193-212; UN, 2008; Ayodele, 2011:35). The once peripheral continent is now a *transshipment point* and a *production hub* where *khat* and cannabis cultivation are done in significant quantities (Gelbard, 1998:178). Illicitly diverted precursor chemicals²⁰ are also turned into amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) such as methamphetamine and methcathinone on the continent (Liana and Cook, 2009:2; UNODC, 2012:8). The continent accounts for about 8,900 tonnes or about 22.0% of global production of cannabis per year (UNODC, 2008b). As a consequence, Africa is home to a significant population of drug users, making the continent a growing *consumption* base for illicit drugs. See Figure 5 for the case of the massive flow of cocaine from the Andes through Africa to the rest of the world.

2.10 Conclusion

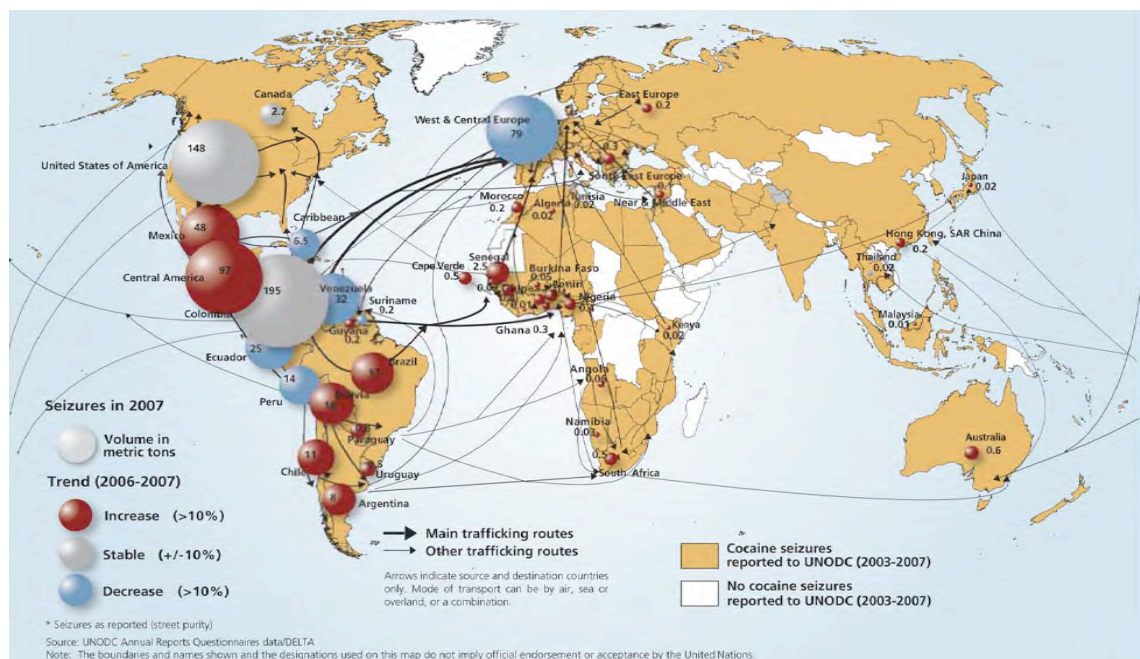
The review of literature on various aspects of the arguments in this study points to a number of issues. First, the place of African cases in existing conceptualisations of transnational security challenges in relation to the state in contemporary discourse is limited and peripheral. Even in cases where some attempts have been made, deductions have been influenced by existing mainstream views established on the basis of the evolution of criminal groups elsewhere. Where some African focus is given, there is a wide generalisation, which does not reflect the relative strength of the many states on the continent. It does not also appreciate the fact that states are different in strengths and weaknesses to the extent that the good cases do not necessarily reflect the experiences of

busts or leaks into the guts of the mule. A case in point was the death of Dansoko Sekouba, a Guinean drug mule who was busted by the Ghanaian authorities at the Kotoka International Airport in 2009. He died after expelling 55 pellets of up to 1.3 kg of heroin he was trafficking through Accra from Afghanistan. See Daily Graphic. 2009. Drug courier dies in custody. *Daily Graphic*. 15 August 2009. Available: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=166908> [2012, October 19].

²⁰ Particularly ephedrine and pseudoephedrine.

the worse, and vice-versa.

Figure 5: Global Cocaine Trafficking Routes, 2007



Source: UNODC, 2009:79

Secondly, there is also a general lack of attempt to take advantage of the recent onset of the phenomenon in some African countries to inform the debate on various aspects of state weaknesses and their role in the onset and impact of transnational security challenges. Thirdly, the place of state weaknesses in understanding transnational security challenges is alluded to under broad generalisations. Concurrently, the conceptualisations and application of state weaknesses with respect to the continent have been largely done in relation to conflicts and civil strife and not contemporary transnational challenges, such as drug trafficking. This study fills these gaps by taking advantage of the recency of Ghana's experiences with the drug trafficking phenomenon to construct the experiences of African states, whilst expressly appreciating progress in the state-making process in that country as a way of nuancing existing arguments influenced largely by states on the lower end of the state-strength continuum.

CHAPTER THREE

ORIGINS AND DYNAMICS OF DRUG TRAFFICKING IN WEST AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

Drug trafficking in Ghana is as much partly a spillover of the regional trend of the phenomenon as it is a constitutive part of the trend of illicit activities that define the region's contemporary experiences. To understand the transnational dimensions of Ghana's experiences, it is therefore important that the origins and dynamics of drugs trafficking in West Africa are appropriately contextualised. The five sections of this chapter, thus, map out the state of drug trafficking in West Africa, the origins and nature of trafficking activities in the region, and discusses Guinea-Bissau as a typical West African case of the interplay between state weaknesses, onset of drug trafficking and the further weakening of the state.

3.2 Defining West Africa

The region to the westernmost part of the landmass and oceans of Africa is called West Africa, Western Africa or the West of Africa. It is bound to the north by the Sahara Desert, to the south and west by the Atlantic Ocean and to the East by Central Africa. Whilst the core, southern and western limits of the region have never been disputed, the actual boundaries of West Africa to the north and east have always been subjects of considerable divergence of opinion among geographers. This is basically because whereas the Atlantic Ocean makes it easy to define the southern and western boundaries, there are no clear-cut features in defining the eastern and northern limits of the region.

Figure 6: Map of West Africa



Source: The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Cartographic Section, Map No. 4242, February 2005.²¹

Geographically, GUINEA, the northern boundary of West Africa is usually taken as the effective end of human settlement, which is at the southern edge of the Sahara desert. This definition is problematic given the widening of the Sahara desert as a result of climate change (Tucker *et al.*, 1991:299–300). To the east, the boundary of the region is usually considered to be the area along the Adamawa highlands which also marks the estimated eastern reach of the monsoon and harmattan winds²² characteristic of West Africa (Boateng, 1978:103). From a political geography perspective, the boundaries of the region are outlined as the “western bulge of Africa lying south of Libya and the Maghreb states of North Africa and west of the Federal Republic of Cameroun” (*ibid*). This locates the region between Latin America and Europe, a factor that is deemed to enhance its vulnerability to the illicit traffic and trade flows between the three regions of

²¹ Online version of this map, available: <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/westafrica.pdf> [2013, February 29].

²² Is a dry and dusty wind that blows towards the Gulf of Guinea from the Sahara desert beginning in November till March of each year in West Africa. Temperature and humidity during harmattan in some areas of West Africa could drop to about 3 degrees Celsius and 15% respectively.

the world. These definitions of the boundaries of the region give West Africa an estimated total area of about 6,141,901 sq. km²³ with a population of about 322 million people set to double in 25 years at the current growth rate of 3.0% yearly (OECD, 2012:39). The region divides into sixteen independent political territories as illustrated in Figure 6. Its characteristics are tabulated in Table 3.

The landmass of the region measures an estimated 3,622 km at its widest point from east to west and about 3,059 km from the southern tip of the Sahara at its north to the southern coast. With about 37,030 km of internal boundaries dividing the region into 16 independent sovereign states, it is one of the most highly segmented regions of Africa illustrative of intense colonial competition for its resources. The intensity of segmentation is particularly high along the coast where most colonial representatives first settled and traded with the hinterlands by means of water transport along rivers.

Table 3: Estimated Population and Sizes of Countries in West Africa

Serial	Country	Total Area (sq. km)	Total Land Boundary (km)	Population (2012 estimate)
1	Benin	112,622	1,989	9,598,787
2	Burkina Faso	274,200	3,193	17,275,115
3	Cape Verde	4,033	0	523,568
4	Cote d'Ivoire	322,463	3,110	21,952,093
5	Gambia	11,295	740	1,840,454
6	Ghana	238,537	2,094	24,652,402
7	Guinea	245,857	3,399	10,884,958
8	Guinea-Bissau	36,125	724	1,628,603
9	Liberia	111,369	1,585	3,887,886
10	Mali	1,240,000	7,243	15,494,466
11	Mauritania	1,030,700	5,074	3,359,185
12	Niger	1,267,000	5,697	16,344,687
13	Nigeria	923,768	4,047	170,123,740
14	Senegal	196,192	2,640	12,969,606
15	Sierra Leone	71,740	958	5,485,998
16	Togo	56,000	1,647	6,961,049
	Total	6,141,901	44,140	322,982,597

Source: Compiled with data from The CIA World Factbook²⁴

²³ The total area and population size are calculated from the total areas (in sq. km) and 2012 estimate of population in the individual states that make the region as itemized in table 3.

²⁴ The CIA Fact books is available online at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>.

Apart from few high altitude areas, such as the Mount Cameroun, the Bamenda and Adamawa highlands, the Jos Plateau, the Guinea Highlands, the Fouta Djallon Mountains and the Air Massif, the region generally lies at about 300 metres above sea level (Speth, 2010:33). From its northwards section, West Africa has a semi-arid belt making up the Sahel which forms a transition zone between the Sahara and the Savannah belt. The southern coastal belt is in turn separated from the Savannah by a forest belt of 160-240 km wide (ibid).²⁵

The concentration of trading along the coast left the region with a relatively densely populated coast with better infrastructure than the hinterlands where colonial presence was minimal. The multiplicity of European colonisers to the region also led to competition among the colonialists and the subsequent entrenchment of colonial differences and identities along the lines of colonial legacies. Consequently, there is Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone West Africa. Francophone West Africa is the biggest in terms of landmass and forms about 73.0% or 4.3 million sq. km of the region. It measures about 3,622 km from east to west and 3,059 km from south to north (Boateng, 1978:105–115). Currently, the political geography of Anglophone West Africa is made up of only five countries out of the sixteen. These are Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Gambia and Nigeria. The Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau are Lusophone. The struggle for the decolonisation of the region started with the independence of the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1957, which became a trail blazer for other countries in post-World War II West Africa, and ended with the liberation of Guinea-Bissau in 1974.

Before colonialism, trade relations between the region and other parts of the continent was northwards. However, colonialism led to a coastwards direction of trade. As the

²⁵ This belt is fast depleting as a result of excessive deforestation, climate change and the expansion of the desert. The estimate should thus be seen as one that is highly tentative and subject to rapid change.

trade at the coast intensified, there was a steady movement of populations towards the coast which contributed to the emergence of powerful pre-colonial kingdoms along the coast (ibid). Intra-regional migration in West Africa therefore dates back to the pre-colonial era and particularly the turn of the twentieth century (The Statesman, 25 September 2006).²⁶ Migration in West Africa persists and is intense. Between 1988 and 1992, for instance, more than 6.4 million migratory movements were recorded by Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal together (Bocquier and Traoré, 2000; Konseiga, 2005:5). About 1.3 million of the movements occurred within the countries whilst 2.3 million were international (ibid). There are enormous monthly movements of between 4 and 5 million citizens through the various highways of the region (Cissé, 2006:47).

3.3 The Defining Contexts and Characteristics of West Africa

West Africa is an underbelly of global threats as a result of the interplay of a number of defining socio-economic, institutional, political and security characteristics as outlined in the following subsections.

3.3.1 The socio-economic context of West Africa

About 15 of the world's 50 less developed²⁷ countries are in West Africa where large fractions of the population live below the poverty line and survive on less than a dollar

²⁶ In an interview conducted by Hamza Lansah Lolly, reporter of the Statesman newspaper in Ghana a Fulani herdsman traced his migration into Ghana to about 50 years ago. See The Statesman. 2006. Fulani herdsmen to cooperate with REGSEC. *The Statesman*. 25 September 2006. Available: http://www.thestatesmanonline.com/pages/news_detail.php?section=1&newsid=653 [2008, March 4].

²⁷ In the first quarter of 2014, Nigeria rebased its economy to surpass South Africa as the continent's biggest economy. A similar exercise by Ghana in 2010 put the country as a lower middle-income economy. As such of these and many other examples, there is an increasing realisation that there is a great deal of politics around the actual economic performance and measurement of African economies. There is therefore the need for the problematisation of some of these important statistics on Africa. In the interim, however, World Bank figures represent the most accepted assessment of the performance of African states. See BBC. 2014. Nigeria is Africa's biggest economy. *BBC*. 6 April 2014. Available:

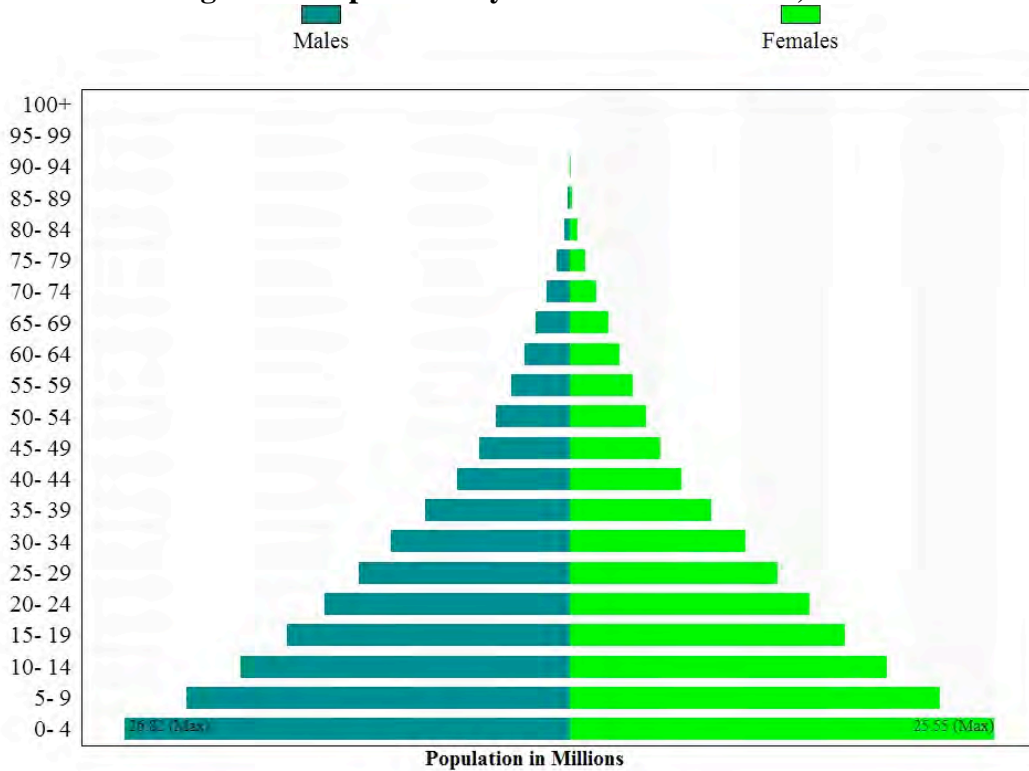
per day. According to the World Bank (2012), about 65.0% of the population in West Africa is rural. Economic growth is at an average of 2.5% but requires an average of 6.0 - 7.0% per annum for the region to half extreme poverty by 2015. Poverty is thus rife in the region with average annual income at \$309 per person against a sub-Saharan Africa average of \$470 per person. As a result, more than 55.0% of people in the region live on less than a dollar a day, 42.0% of adults are illiterates with secondary school enrolment at only 20.0%. Unemployment rate ranges from 11.0% in Ghana, through 40.0% in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire to more than 70.0% in Burkina Faso and Guinea-Bissau. Amongst children under five years of age, an estimated 29.0% of them are malnourished. The region is, thus, generally lagging behind in efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and life expectancy at birth is only 46 years (ibid).²⁸

Societies in the region are in their early stages of demographic transition and thus exhibit rapid population growth of about 3.0% on the average (ibid), very large numbers of children and adolescent dependents, and a relatively few working age adults per dependent – see Figure 7 for the 2012 population pyramid of West Africa (ibid; Cincotta *et al.*, 2003:32). Given the prevailing economic non-performance, corruption, and inept leadership, West African countries have large populations of poverty-stricken young people who are literally coping with life and uncertain future.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-26913497> [2014, May 04]; Reuters. 2010. Data overhaul shows Ghana's economy 60 pct bigger. *Reuters*. 05 November 2010. Available: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/11/05/ozatp-ghana-economy-idAFJ0E6A40BG20101105> [2014, May 04]

²⁸ The MDGs are development goals officially adopted by members of the international community at the 2000 Millennium Summit of the UN and are to be achieved by 2015. They are (1) Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (2) Achieving universal primary education; (3) Promoting gender equality and empowering women; (4) Reducing child mortality rates; (5) Improving maternal health; (6) Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (7) Ensuring environmental sustainability; and (8) Developing a global partnership for development.

Figure 7: Population Pyramid of West Africa, 2012

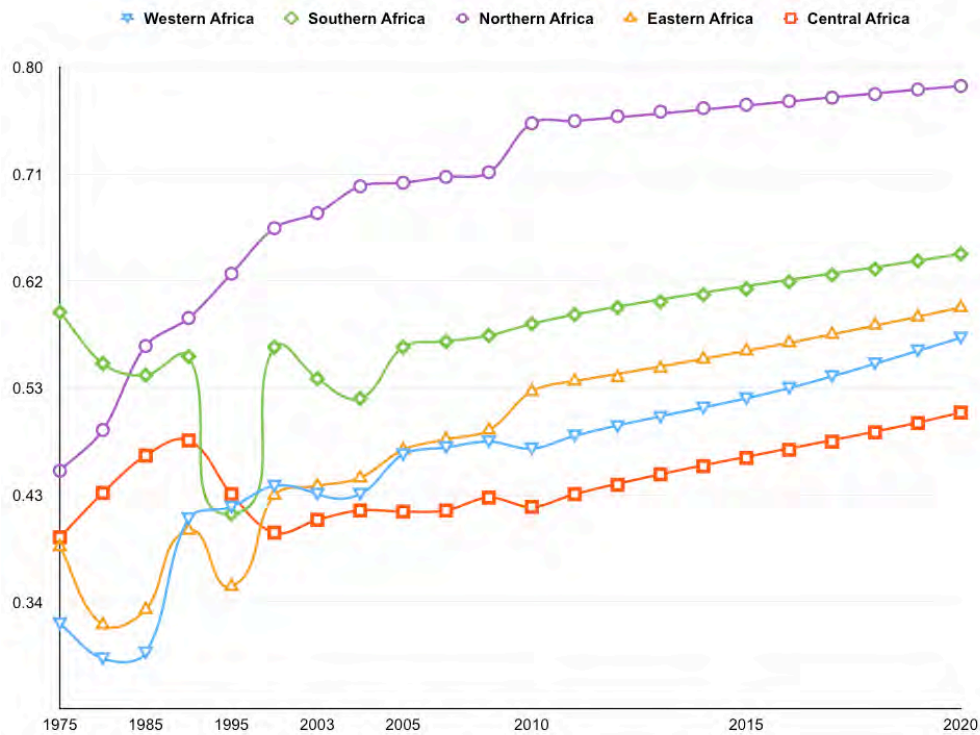


Source: The International Futures (IFs) modeling system, version 6.54.²⁹

The region’s average Human Development Index (HDI) has improved over the last decade. However, it still ranks fourth in Africa – behind northern, southern and eastern Africa – and is therefore one of the lowest in the world. At current rates, human development performance is projected to remain fourth among the five regions of the continent for the next three decades (see Figure 8). Only 10.0% of the West African population has access to electricity and is even less than 1.0% in rural areas. As of 2002, 35.0% of the people of the region had no access to safe water supply (World Bank, 2012).

²⁹ IFs was initially developed by Barry B. Hughes and is based at the Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, www.ifs.du.edu.

Figure 8: Trend of HDI for African Regions, 1975 - 2020



Source: The International Futures (IFs) modeling System, version 6.54.³⁰

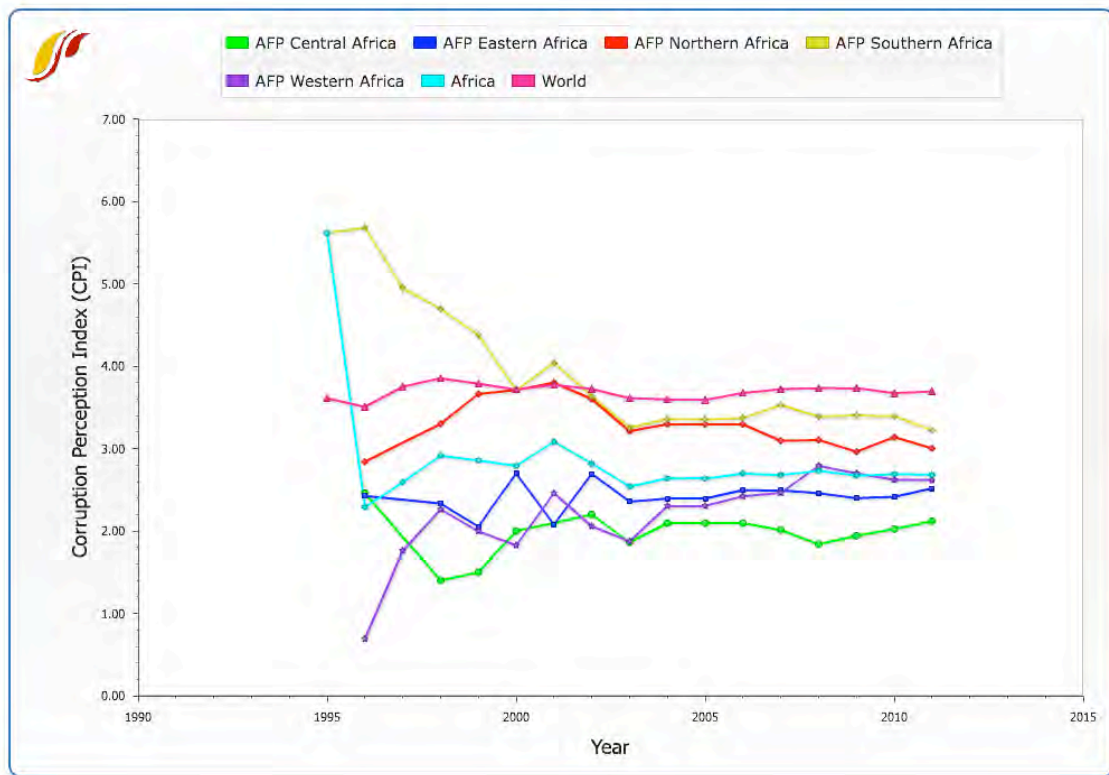
West Africa is also noted for its gross pervasiveness of corruption at every level of government. Trends of the performance of West African states on Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index (CPI)³¹ has consistently ranked them at the bottom of the index with less than 5 of 10 points (Figure 9). There is a long post-independence tradition of “dash” whereby gifts are given for services rendered. In most cases, the bigger the services rendered or the man rendering it, the bigger the “dash” required. Politicians are known to use their positions to extract benefits to themselves in the form of kickbacks up to about 10.0% on government contracts whenever possible.

³⁰ IFs was initially developed by Barry B. Hughes and is based at the Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, www.ifs.du.edu.

³¹ It should be noted that the CPI is an aggregate indicator based on the perceptions of people about the nature and extent of corruption in a given country. It’s global findings rank countries on the basis of the extent to which corruption is perceived to exist within the public sector and politicians of a given country. Data is generally collected from expert surveys carried out by reputable institutions.

This is to the extent that businesses dealing with governments in the region usually budget for an extra 10.0% payable as kickbacks to government officials and ministers. Many politicians have been involved in the looting of state coffers, the transfer of state funds to their private accounts and the appropriation of state funds for personal benefits through unscrupulous means. Consequently, as Frantz Fanon (1959 cited in Meredith, 2005:173) observed, “[S]candals are numerous, ministers grow rich, their wives doll themselves up, the members of parliament feather their nests and there is not a soul down to the simple policemen or the customs officer who does not join in the great procession of corruption.” Apart from Cape Verde, Ghana, and Senegal, which have sometimes performed beyond the continental average, majority of West African states generally fall below the overall African average. The regional average has also consistently fallen below 3 of 10 and ranked the region as one of the most corrupt regions in Africa, far below the continental average (see Figure 9). According to an African Union (AU) estimate of the cost of corruption to the continent in 2002, about \$150 billion dollars was estimated to be lost yearly (BBC, 18 September 2002). Total aid to the continent in 2008, for example, was only about \$26 billion (OECD, 2009). Of the countries deemed the most corrupt and contributed to that level of loss on the continent, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal in West Africa were named.

Figure 9: Corruption in the Regions of Africa, since 1995



Source: The International Futures (IFs) modeling system, version 6.54 based on data from Transparency International.³²

3.3.2 Regional security in West Africa³³

Over the past two decades, majority of the countries³⁴ in the region have experienced various forms of violent conflicts ranging from civil wars (Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone), through terrorist threats (northern Mali and Boko Haram in Nigeria), to election-related violence (Togo). As of 2003, only 35.0% of West Africans lived in countries not

³² IFs was initially developed by Barry B. Hughes and is based at the Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, www.ifs.du.edu.

³³ This section benefits from an earlier publication on “Military Challenges in West Africa” co-authored with Kwesi Aning. For a full publication, see Aning, K. & Atta-Asamoah, A. 2011. Military challenges and threats in West Africa. In *Coping with global environmental change, disasters and security*. H. Hans Günter, Ú. Oswald Spring, C. Mesjasz, J. Grin, P. Kameri-Mbote, B. Chourou, P. Dunay, & J. Birkmann, Eds. Berlin: Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.

³⁴ There have been conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d’Ivoire, Niger, protracted rebellion in the Southern Cassamance Province of Senegal, resource-related conflicts in Nigeria, ethnic conflicts among the Nanumba and Konkomba in northern Ghana; political instability in Togo, and the Tuareg rebellion in Mali.

affected by high intensity civil wars or violent political contestations (World Bank, 2000b). The World Bank (2000a:59) estimated in 1999 that about \$800 million of resources that could have contributed to development in the region was diverted into various aspects of these conflicts by governments. These happenings provided the basis for some analysts to perceive the region in the 1990s as representing the “coming anarchy” requiring extra-ordinary measures if it was to be stabilised (Robert, 1994:44–76; Pfaff, 1995:4–10; Cohen, 1995:95).

Despite commendable progress in the last decade due to the active role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in conflict prevention, resolution and management,³⁵ the region is far from eliminating threats to its peace and security. The region still grapples with variety of threats. The proliferation of illicit SALWs is a major threat as a result of years of leakages from legitimate government purchases, local manufacture and illegal dealings by foreign arms merchants who have over the years fed demands by warlords.³⁶ An estimated 7-8 million illicit SALWs are circulating within the boundaries of the sixteen countries. Though this only constitutes a minute fraction of the entire global challenge, the threat the phenomenon poses can be understood against the backdrop of the region’s fragility and conflict history (Ero and Ndinga-Muvumba, 2004:223-230; Aning, 2005:79-107). Even in times of peace, the proliferation of SALWs has been closely associated with crimes such as armed robbery, banditry and drug trafficking.

³⁵ ECOWAS is an organisation of all West African states, except Mauritania.

³⁶ The Cold War era in Africa witnessed massive arms flow into the region. Like many African countries, some countries in the region benefited from arms transfers from the United States and the Soviet Union principally motivated by ideological or geopolitical considerations including the fuelling of proxy wars. After the Cold War, remnants of these weapons found their way through the covert activities of economically motivated arms dealers, private military companies and local smugglers across the borders. Majority of these weapons are deemed to still be in circulation.

Other threats in the region include the existence of large populations of poverty-stricken young unemployed people who have been ready-made cannon fodder for exploitation by politicians and radical groups (Atta-Asamoah, 2014). Porous borders are another threat. The region has a total of 37,030 km internal boundaries that are poorly controlled due to inadequate resources, corrupt border officials and, a regional protocol for free movements of goods and services. The ease with which individuals and covert networks are able to traverse the region has made the regionalisation of security threats, such as arms and drug smuggling, easy. During the Sierra Leonean civil war, for instance, the ability of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to smuggle diamonds across borders provided a key source of funds for their operations. Other security challenges in the region include cyber criminality, child soldierism, internal displacement and religious fundamentalism. The collective influence of these threats have over the years made West Africa a region where the insecurities of the individual states are intrinsically linked to the extent that the pursuit of individual security is impossible to achieve.

3.3.3 Institutional context

The prominence of security concerns has made it the primary driver of West Africa's regionalisation strides. Initially, that was not the case. ECOWAS was founded in 1975 with a regional economic development remit. According to the preamble of its 1975 treaty, the organisation was formed against a backdrop of the regional consciousness of the need "to accelerate, foster and encourage the economic and social development of their states in order to improve the living standards" of its people (ECOWAS, 1975). The organisation was therefore primarily mandated to

promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity particularly in the fields of industry, transport, telecommunication, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters for the purposes of raising the standard of living

of its peoples, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and of contributing to the progress and development of the African continent (ECOWAS, 1975).

This aim implied regional commitment to the achievement of collective self-reliance in trading among states in the region and between the region and the world. Following the widespread outbreak of conflicts in the region, a realisation of the primacy of security to the attainment of the economic objective emerged. The Liberian crisis subsequently provided the basis for a swift revision of the economic objective through the deployment of the ECOWAS Ceasefire monitoring group, popularly known as ECOMOG, in search of peace and the stabilisation of Liberia. Since then regional security and stabilisation have become the flagship preoccupation of the regional body. The shift reflected in the 1993 revised treaty of ECOWAS, which provides for the “maintenance of regional peace, stability and security” as one of the fundamental principles of the organisation (ECOWAS, 1993). The organisation has since adopted several policy frameworks³⁷ within which it pursues institution building and conflict prevention, management and resolution.

ECOWAS is the major regional institutional arrangement. In 1994, however, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU/UEMOA) was formed out of the Francophone states in the region. Unlike ECOWAS, UEMOA is made up of eight member states³⁸ who generally share a common language (with the exception of Guinea-Bissau), currency (the CFA Franc), and a common monetary policy implemented by the *Banque Centrale des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest* (BCEAO). With a common colonial history and closeness to France, the French Treasury guarantees the convertibility of

³⁷ This includes the 1999 Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security; the 2001 Additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework.

³⁸ The member states are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

UEMOA's common currency. The value of the currency has thus been sustained and remained more predictable than the currencies of the non-UEMOA states in the region. With these characteristics, UEMOA has made more strides in terms of economic integration than ECOWAS, as a bloc. The existence of the two institutions in the region has entrenched regional divisions along colonial identity lines and sharply undermined the full commitment of member states to ECOWAS. The remaining Anglophone members of ECOWAS³⁹ have also formed the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) with the aim of achieving the use of a single currency and common monetary policy similar to UEMOA. Eventually, UEMOA and WAMZ aim to merge into a single regional monetary zone (AfDB, 2011:9).

3.3.4 Political and governance context

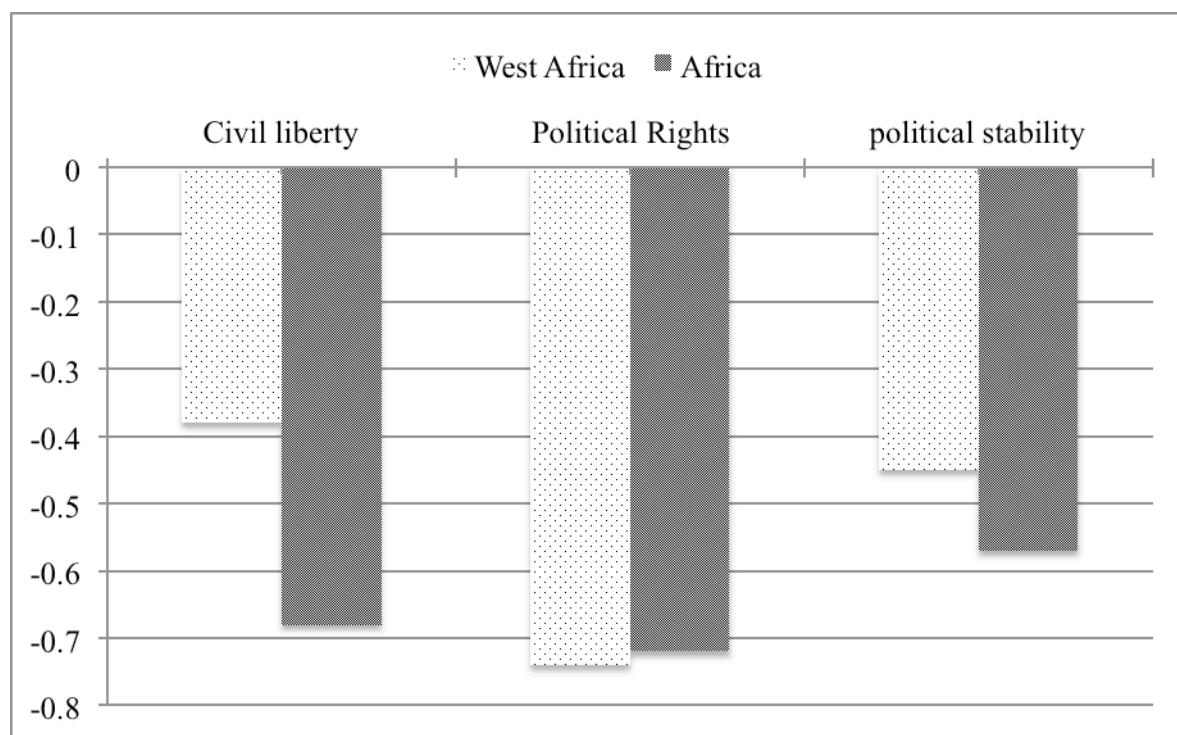
The post-independence political and governance history of West Africa has been turbulent due to incessant leadership ineptitude, political patronage, ethnic politics and coup d'états. About 70.0% of the numerous coup d'états recorded in the last five decades in Africa have taken place in the region (World Bank, 2012). This trend of unconstitutional changes in government, usually led by the military, gave way in the early 1990s to civil wars and eventually to a democratic dispensation in many West African countries at the turn of the century.⁴⁰ Hence multiparty democracy exists in most West African states evidencing the progress the region has made in its efforts to achieve political stability (Figure 10). Countries such as Cape Verde, Ghana, and Senegal have seen encouraging strides in democratic consolidation resulting in political alternation through multiparty democratic elections as well as some improvement in the

³⁹ These are The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

⁴⁰ It is important to note that despite the general reduction in coups from this period onwards, coups have not entirely disappeared as a challenge in the region. Countries such as Guinea-Bissau and Mali have recently experienced coups.

management of their economies. The region is also witnessing the emergence of new democracies in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. The conclusion of peaceful elections in most states has offered encouraging signs that good governance and the rule of law are taking root in the region. Notwithstanding the progress, the advent of multiparty elections in the region has led to the emergence of challenges associated with post-election violence, as was evident in Togo in 2005 and Côte d'Ivoire in 2010.

Figure 10: The Political Performance of West Africa in 2009
Score: 4.0 (worse) to 2.5 (best)



Source: The African Development Bank (AfDB), 2011

ECOWAS adopted an Additional Protocol for Democracy and Good Governance in 2001 as part of its regional Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Within the framework of the protocol, the organisation suspended the membership of countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Niger following unconstitutional changes to their governments till the restoration of democratic norms. The reversal of political and

governance gains in Mali in recent times, however, has pointed to the level of fragility of the various states and the existence of fundamental issues that question state construction processes in the region. It has drawn attention to the fact that state fragility, culture of impunity, widespread corruption and violent political contestations remain major sources of state instability and constitute a crucial challenge to the attainment of good governance, rule of law and stability in the region (AfDB, 2011:9).

3.4 West Africa's Narcotics Problem: A Much Ado About Little?

Like every region of the world, West Africa plays a role in the global supply and demand of illicit drugs.⁴¹ However, the region's centrality in Africa's contribution to the global illicit trade has since 2005 gained considerable global attention and drawn focus to the region in relation to the transshipment, production and the consumption of various illicit drugs. Prior to 2005, the growth in the volume of narcotics transiting the region had been noticed in the 1990s. However, by 2005 the cumulative evidence of the increasing number of large seizures in the region raised international suspicions about the actual volume of narcotics flowing through West Africa (IISS, 2011:9). Series of UN reports have since repeatedly highlighted the importance of the region in the supply of Latin American narcotics to both European and American markets and has earned the region negative publicity as one whose future security history may follow the trajectory of Latin American states such as Mexico. The region has since that time earned the perception in many law enforcement and policy circles as a "narco-region," where the phenomenon is so prevalent that international red flags have been raised. In a 2008 report by the UNODC, the organisation noted that "the former Gold Coast is turning into the Coke

⁴¹ Regions of the world contribute to the global illicit trade in drugs in multiple ways either in the production, consumption or trafficking. Every region therefore plays a role in the supply and demand cycles of drug trafficking. UNODC's World Drugs report series provide detailed account of the role of different regions of the world.

Coast” with the problem so severe that it was already threatening state stability (Johansen, 2008:4).

Notwithstanding the attention, the actual volume of illicit drugs circulating in the region has still not been reliably estimated. This is partly due to the clandestine nature of the trade and the fact that in West Africa many of the countries appear to doctor figures⁴² emerging from law enforcement authorities to the UNODC. Such moves by some governments are as a result of the implications of rise in trends on the international image and economic outlook of those countries. Given the fact that existing international data from sources such as the UNODC are also collated from reports of members, the resultant dataset is significant but not absolutely reflective of the actual situation. The actual volume of drugs in and transiting the region, thus, remains elusive to correct estimation.⁴³ The UNODC’s 2005 World Drugs Report alluded to this in a general sense by noting that,

[T]he obscurity of the global illicit drug market makes the exercise of estimating its size difficult. This is not because the drug market does not behave like most others in terms of supply and demand - there is a growing acceptance that it does. It is rather because the most basic inputs that are needed for such an estimation – data on production, prices, quantities exported, imported and consumed – are themselves often estimates and are frequently based on deficient data (UNODC, 2005: 123).

As a result of the lack of reliable data on the actual volume of narcotics produced,

⁴² Drug trends in some West African countries such as Ghana have been politicised in many ways. Rise in the figures is usually utilised by opposition propaganda machinery to illustrate the complicity of incumbents in drug trafficking activities, with dire political costs. See detailed report of parliamentary debate on this issue as reported by the Ghanaian Times. 2006. Drug menace is a national problem – MPs. *Ghanaian Times*. 26 February 2011.

⁴³ Several attempts have been made to measure the size of the illicit narcotics trade across the world. One of such estimates was made in the 1980s by The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and placed the volume of annual cocaine, heroin and cannabis sale in the US and Europe at about US\$124 billion or about US\$200 billion as of 2005. UN efforts arrived at annual global estimates of \$360 billion, falling within a range of \$85 billion to \$1,000 billion. The UN Drugs Control Programme also placed the estimate at about \$400 billion. See Thoumi, F. E. 2005. The numbers game: let's all guess the size of the illegal drug industry! *Journal of drug issues*. Vol. 35, No. 1, Winter.

consumed and/or transiting the region, monitoring actual trends of the phenomenon is problematic. Notwithstanding the challenge, there are four important noticeable indications of the rising trend of narco-trafficking in West Africa.

3.4.1 Volume of seizure in the region

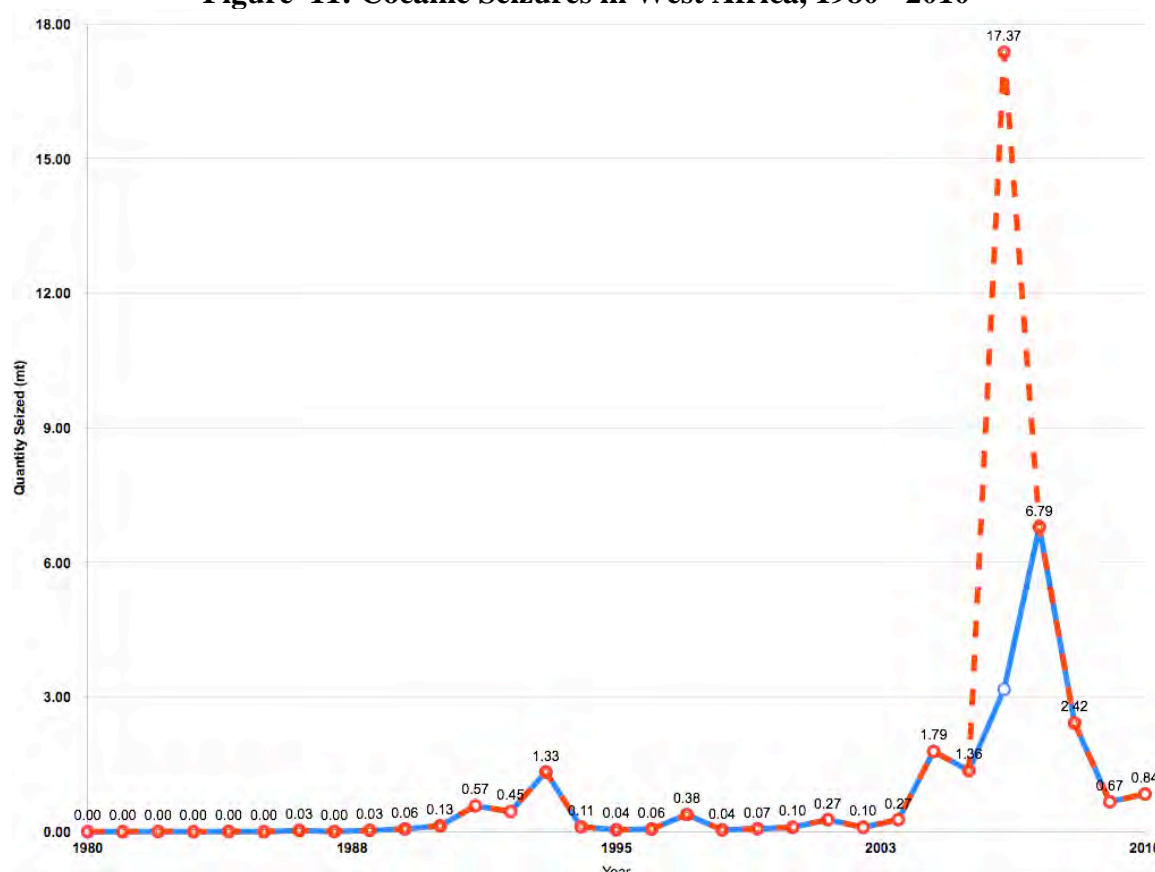
The first indication is the prevalence of illicit drugs and their related activities, such as trafficking, in the region. This is evident from the quantity of narcotics seizures (a) en-route to West Africa from various drug producing centres of the world; (b) quantities seized in the region; and, (c) those seized elsewhere but traced to have transited or originated from the region. Apart from reflecting law enforcement activities, the rise in seizures in any geographical region also illustrates the existence of a clandestine flow of illicit narcotics and an underworld of its related activities.

(a) Cocaine seizure

In relation to cocaine in West Africa, there are variable estimates as a result of the general lack of reliable data for estimating the actual quantity of drugs transiting the region and in the region. Estimates from Interpol place the volume of cocaine transiting West Africa at about 330 tonnes of cocaine per year, whilst American authorities estimate about 270 tonnes of cocaine transiting the region yearly. The UN, on the other hand, puts the figure at 44 tonnes (Klantschnig, 2011; Ellis, 2009:171-172; Liana and Cook, 2009:8-10). Despite the disparities in estimation, all the three organisations agree that the quantity of drugs transiting the region annually has increased over the past decade and it can be estimated that about 46-300 tonnes of cocaine with a street value of about \$2 billion transit West Africa annually to Europe (UNODC, 2007a:3-4). As a result, enormous amount of seizures have been registered in the individual countries of the region over the last decade (Figures 11 & 12) with an astronomical peak between 2005 and 2007 (Figure 11).

As illustrated in Figure 11, the peak of seizures in West Africa shifts to 2006, if the seizure of 14,200 kg of a mixture of cocaine and cement in Nigeria in 2006 is added to total seizures of that year. The quantity of seizures in the region rose from less than 97.6 kg in 2002 to about 6.8 tonnes, or 2.0% of the total global cocaine seizure, in 2007. This rise shot up Africa’s contribution to the flow of cocaine to the European and American market (UNODC, 2008:73). Cocaine seizures in West Africa tripled between 2005 and 2007, from about 1,787 kg to 6,789 kg respectively (UN, 2008). According to the individual seizures database of UNODC, the proportion of cocaine seizures in Europe that transited West Africa during the period also rose from about 5.0% (3 tonnes) in 2004 to 22.0% (47 tonnes) in 2007 (UNODC, 2008:79; 2013:4).⁴⁴

Figure 11: Cocaine Seizures in West Africa, 1980 - 2010



Source: Based on UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire data.⁴⁵

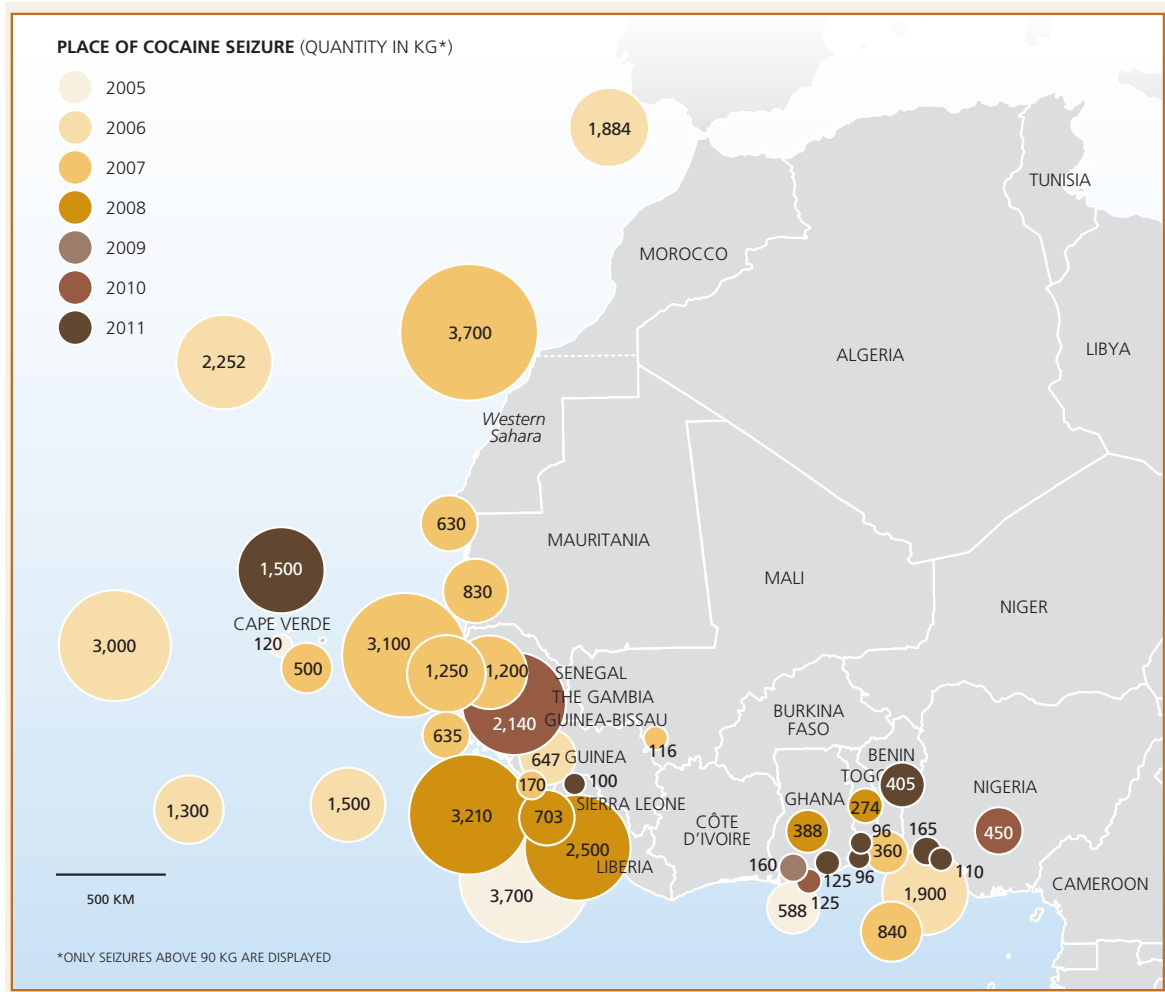
⁴⁴ This set of data involves seizures in Europe but linked to Africa. Figure 11 presents cumulative data of seizures in the individual countries of West Africa, as reported to the UNODC annually.

⁴⁵ Data from 1980-2006 sourced from UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire uploaded on 30/09/2008,

A disaggregation of the above volume of seizures in the region points to a number of instances of interception of hauls of more than 90.0 kg over the last decade. Between 2005 and 2011, the region recorded more than 42 instances of such seizures as spatially illustrated in Figure 12 and clearly demonstrates the quantum of the phenomenon. A narrative of specific cases of seizures in some countries within this period points to the extensive nature of the phenomenon, as there are cases of seizure of significant quantities for every individual state in the region. In January 2004 Ghanaian authorities seized 558 kg of cocaine in Tema, the country's port city. In November 2005, 580.0 kg were seized in Accra, whilst in May 2006 Ghanaian authorities seized a total of 1.9 tonnes of cocaine hidden in a vehicle during a routine traffic inspection at the coast of the country (UNODC, 2007b:4-9). In Cape Verde, a consignment of 3.7 tonnes was seized in the high seas in February 2006 whilst being transported in a Guinea-Bissau registered vessel. In the same year, Nigerian authorities intercepted a 14.2 tonnes consignment made up of a mixture of white cement and cocaine on its way into the country on a Peru vessel (International Narcotics Control Board, 2007:38). In 2006 British and Spanish navies seized 9,800 kg of cocaine on five fishing boats originating from the region in international waters (Mazzitelli, 2007:1071-1090). About 48 tonnes of cocaine valued at \$1.8 billion (about 27% of Europe's annual supply) is estimated to have transited West Africa in 2007 alone (UNODC, 2007a:3-4).

Available: <https://ras.unodc.org/ReportServerPublic/Pages/ReportViewer.aspx?%2fSeizures%2fSeizuresDataKgComp> [2013, April 9]. Data from 2007-2010 sourced from World Report 2012. Available: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/WDR2012/Seizures.xls> [2013, April 9].

Figure 12: Spatial Representation of Major Cocaine Seizures in West Africa, 2005 – 2011



Source: UNODC 2013:10

A total of 629.0 kg of cocaine was seized en route from Venezuela in a twin-engine Cessna plane by Mauritanian police officers in May 2007. In August of the same year, police officials seized another consignment of 800.0 kg in a minibus in Nouakchott. Nine people were arrested in January 2009 after they were intercepted whilst transporting 9.5 kg of cocaine in a fishing boat to Spain (Wikileaks, 2009). In Senegal, gendarmerie stumbled upon two consignments of cocaine in M'bour village, south of Dakar. One was found on-board a boat, which had been washed ashore containing 1.2 tonnes of cocaine in June 2007. Another seizure in the same month from a walled two-storey beach house around the same place totalled 1.25 tonnes (UNODC, 2007b:3-5).

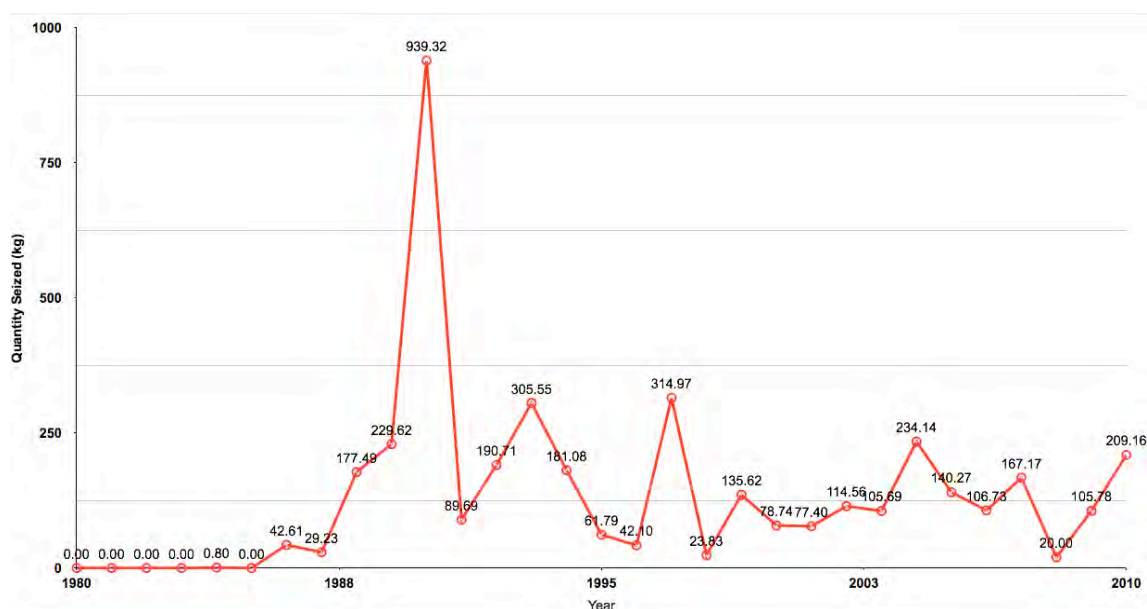
Spanish authorities also seized 800.0 kg of cocaine on-board an aircraft, which is deemed to have originated from some areas around Mauritania and the Western Sahara (UNODC, 2007b:9). In October 2007, Spanish marine forces intercepted 3.2 tonnes of cocaine on its way to the country in an old boat named “*Zeus-X*” (Agence France-Presse, 2007). In July 2007, 2.25 tonnes of cocaine were seized by Venezuelan authorities and was found on-board a plane bound for Sierra Leone (The National, 21 July 2008). Liberian authorities were handed a crew of nine Ghanaians aboard the *Blue Atlantic ship* in February 2008. The ship, which was flying a Liberian flag, was arrested by a French military vessel on the high seas and was found to be carrying barrels containing 2.5 tonnes of cocaine and is the single biggest seizure of narcotics in the history of Liberia (BBC, 1 February 2008a). In July 2008, the crew of a plane loaded with 600.0 kg of cocaine cargo was arrested in Sierra Leone. The plane, which bore a fake Red Cross logo, landed at the Lungi airport without authorisation and was found to contain 600.0 kg of cocaine, several gallons of fuel and weapons (BBC, 14 July 2008b). In 2009, a consignment of 5.0 kg cocaine was busted on its way into Mauritania from Guinea-Bissau (Wikileaks, 2009).

(b) Heroin seizure

The situation is not different in relation to heroin trends in the region. Africa plays a significant role in the supply of heroin to the European market. Overall an estimated 1.6 million people in Western, Central and Eastern Europe consume a total of 90.0 tonnes of heroin annually. Additional 10 tonnes of heroin en route to Europe is intercepted by law enforcement authorities whilst an estimated 5.0 tonnes is trafficked from the European market to the US and Canada. This implies that a total of about 105-110 tonnes of heroin is in demand in Europe annually. Of this total, about 84.0% of the quantity seized in Europe between 2000-2008 was shipped from the Balkans. A tonne each was from

Russia and Afghanistan-Iran / Central Asia - Caspian Sea Afghanistan - Georgia - Black Sea – Ukraine route. An estimated 3.0 tonnes reached Europe through Afghanistan – Iran – Turkey – Ukraine route. About 2-3.0 tonnes reach Europe through the Afghanistan – Pakistan – Africa route. About 2.0% of heroin intercepted in Europe is therefore trafficked through the African continent where Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa are the principal transshipment points (UN, 2009:38). Besides cocaine therefore heroin trafficking trend in West Africa also shows a rise (Figure 13). There are no indications of heroin production in West Africa. Available volumes in and through the region are therefore usually sourced from South West Asia either through East Africa or through available direct flights to countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal (UNODC 2013:21). Heroin transiting these countries is estimated to deteriorate in purity from about 90.0% on arrival to 16.0% on departure (IISS 2011:1).

Figure 13: Heroin Seizures in West Africa, 1980 – 2010



Source: Based on UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire data.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Data from 1980-2006 sourced from UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire uploaded on 30 August 2008. Available: <https://ras.unodc.org/ReportServerPublic/?/Seizures/SeizuresDataKgComp> [2013, April 9]. Data from 2007-2010 sourced from World Report 2012. Available: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/WDR2012/Seizures.xls> [2013, April 9].

This makes West Africa a major route to Europe. Trend of the flows in the region is directly related to the heroin demand patterns in Europe and America. In 2009 alone, for example, an estimated 7.0 tonnes of heroin reached Europe through Africa. Another one tonne was also trafficked through Africa to China (UNODC, 2011:71–72). From the estimate of Africa’s role between 2000-2008, the rise in 2009 can then be seen as an increase in the trend of the trafficking of heroin in Africa. Within these estimates transiting Africa, West Africa can be expected to supply up to about one-third of the supplies to Europe with East and Southern Africa accounting for the rest.

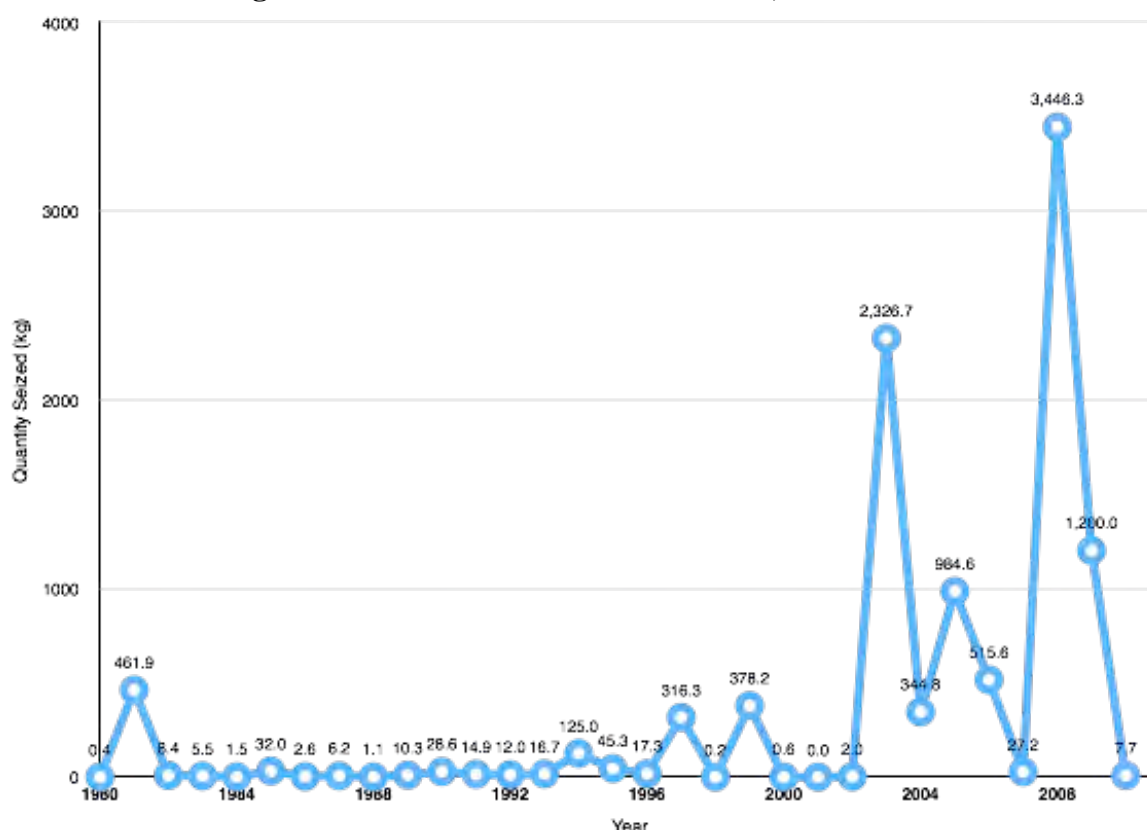
The seizure data on West Africa shows that the peak of reported cases by governments was in 1990 when seven governments in the region reported a total quantity of 939.321 kg. Significant within that was a report of 861.250 kg by the government of Nigeria. Since then, the pattern of seizure as illustrated in Figure 13, has shown a rise-and-fall pattern. Between 2000-2010, a total of about 1.4 tonnes was seized from an average of 83 reported cases averaging 123.0 kg per annum. Within this, 2004 reported the highest cases of reporting by governments and a total of 234.139 kg of seized heroin in the region. Recent major seizures illustrating this trend of heroin trafficking in the region include a November 2010 seizure of 139 kg concealed in auto parts in Nigeria and an April 2011 confiscation of 108.0 kg in Pakistan heading to Benin. Investigations into that incident led to additional 266.0 kg in a rice warehouse. Another consignment of 202 kg was seized in Cotonou en route to Nigeria a week later (UNODC, 2013:21).

(c) ATS seizure

Seizures of ATS smuggled from West Africa to East Asian countries, specifically Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea on flights became noticeable in 2008 when it was realised that ATS trafficking cartels were exploiting the region in ways

similar to cocaine and heroin (UNODC, 2012:2,11). From the UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaires (ARQ), ATS seizures in the region have been on the rise since 2000 (see Figure 14). From a quantity of 1.9 kg seized in 2001, the quantity of seized ATS rose to 2.3 tonnes in 2003; 985 kg in 2005; a towering 3.4 tonnes in 2008 and a subsequent drop in reported seizures to 7.7 kg. UNODC estimates that about \$360 million worth of methamphetamine was smuggled by about 3,000 West African couriers into Asia in 2010 (UNODC 2013:4). Whilst the quantity of total seizure appears to be on a dip since 2010, the trend from ARQ reported cases indicate a long history of ATS presence in the region, at least before 1980. From Figure 14, it is clear that primary seizure data for the region exists up to the 1980s.⁴⁷

Figure 14: ATS Seizures in West Africa, 1980 - 2010



Source: Based on UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire data.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ The existence of this primary data does not necessarily guarantee reliability. Despite its usefulness, the available data is patchy and incomplete. Some years have no data.

⁴⁸ Data from 1980-2006 sourced from UNODC’s Annual Report Questionnaire uploaded on 30/09/2008, Available online <https://ras.unodc.org/ReportServerPublic/?/Seizures/SeizuresDataKgComp>, accessed 09

(d) Cannabis seizure

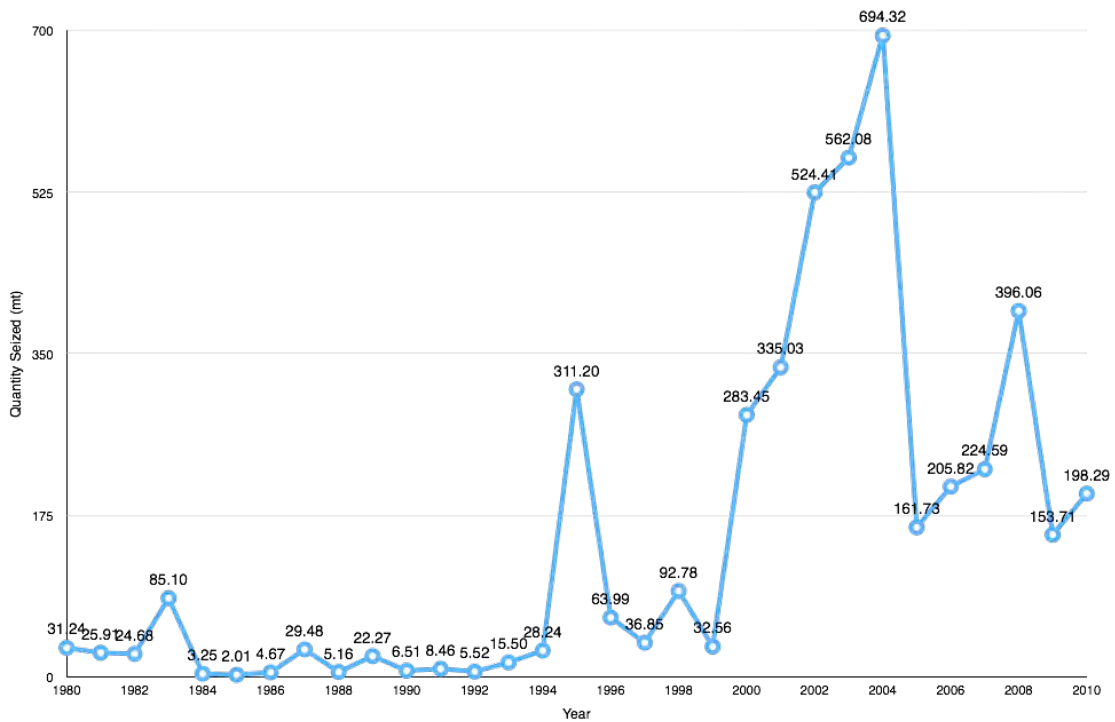
Similar to the rest of the drug flows in the region, data on cannabis production and trafficking in West Africa, and Africa in general, is difficult to come by. However, the trend of cannabis seizures in the region since 1980 shows a significant rise (Figures 15 & 16). Even though cannabis production takes place in all the 16 West African countries, Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal are known to be the major production and source countries of cannabis exports in West Africa. In Nigeria, for instance, the production of cannabis is known to take place across the country and feeds both a vibrant local demand and regional market. Cannabis produced in Senegal is also known to feed both domestic and regional demands. It is claimed that cannabis export and trafficking existed between the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) who traded it for guns from the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group in Liberia (Evans, 2003, 2004).⁴⁹ A vibrant smuggling operation also exists between Senegal and Gambia, and between Ghana and other parts of West Africa.

In all these cases, the actual quantity of cannabis in the region has not been accurately calculated. Seizures reported by governments in the region (in Figures 15 & 16) point to 6.590 tonnes in 1990 and a peak of 694.30 tonnes in 2004 (for cannabis herbs). Seizure of both cannabis plants and herbs in West Africa from 1980 - 2010 shows the highest reported seizure of 1,805.38 tonnes in 1998. Overall, cannabis production in the region is expected to increase over the long term to satisfy rising regional and local demands (Liana and Cook, 2009:16).

April 2013. Data from 2007-2010 sourced from World Report 2012. Available online <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/WDR2012/Seizures.xls> [2013, April 09].

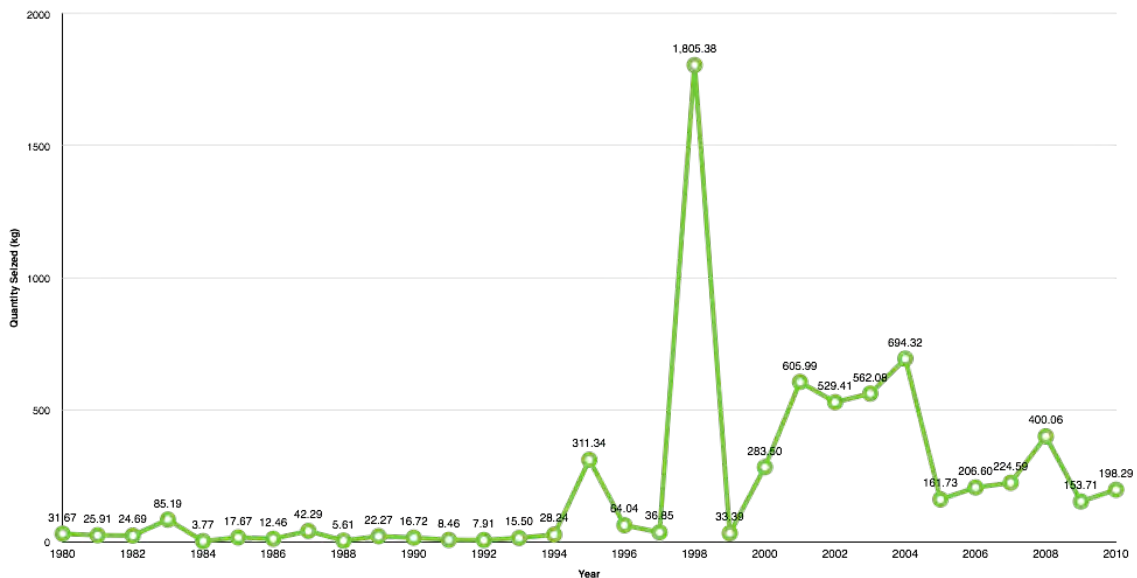
⁴⁹ Because of the conflict history in the region, there is every possibility that this happened. In the absence of multiple sources to adequately triangulate the reliability of this assertion, despite the fact that it has been used to illustrate the dynamics in the region, it should still be problematised as this section explicitly notes it as a claim.

Figure 15: Cannabis Herbs Seizure in West Africa, 1980 – 2010



Source: Based on UNODC's Annual Report Questionnaire data.⁵⁰

Figure 16: Cannabis Herbs & Plants Seizures in West Africa, 1980 - 2010



Source: Based on UNODC's Annual Report Questionnaire data.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Data from 1980-2006 sourced from UNODC's Annual Report Questionnaire uploaded on 30 August 2008, Available: <https://ras.unodc.org/ReportServerPublic/?/Seizures/SeizuresDataKgComp> [2013, April 9]. Data from 2007-2010 sourced from World Report 2012. Available: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/WDR2012/Seizures.xls> [2013, April 9].

⁵¹ Data from 1980-2006 sourced from UNODC's Annual Report Questionnaire uploaded on 30/09/2008,

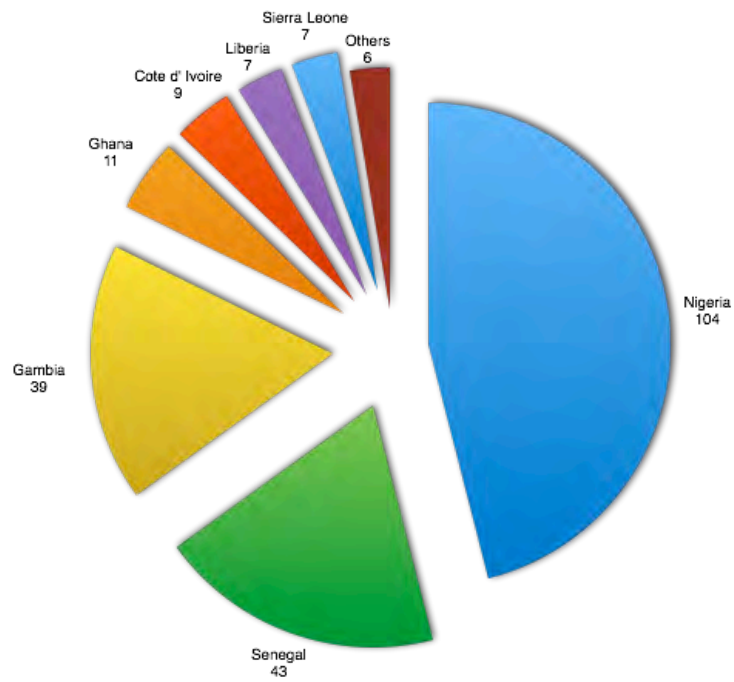
3.4.2 Arrests of West African narcotics traffickers

The second factor that points to the prevalence of drug trafficking in West Africa is the notable visibility of West Africans in the perpetration of the illicit narcotics trade across the world (Aning, 2007:193–212). This is evidenced by the rising trends in the arrests of West Africans in connection with drug trafficking and peddling across the world, especially traffickers using various international airports and West African syndicates involved in retailing of drugs elsewhere. In a number of European countries, for instance, West African peddlers dominate the cocaine retail market (UNODC, 2008:75).

In 2004, about 1,171 West Africans (mostly Nigerians) were busted for drug-related crimes in Austria; whilst 4 of 5 drug couriers arrested in Switzerland in the same year, were from West Africa. In Germany, they represented nearly a third of all drugs-related detentions between 2002 and early 2005 (ibid). In 2006, about 48.0% of cocaine traffickers busted in one network of European airports in the second quarter of the year were West Africans (UNODC, 2013:14). In the second quarter of 2007 this rose to 59.0%. In the first five months of 2011, about 227 West Africans were busted for trafficking heroin in Italy and were of nationalities disaggregated in Figure 17. By the end of the same year about 43% of the 4,444 cocaine arrests in Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Portugal were West Africans. The same trend applies to Asian countries. In 2010, about 3,000 West African traffickers are estimated to have couriered about \$360 million worth of methamphetamine from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal to Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Thailand (UNODC, 2013:4). See the case of arrests in Pakistan in Figure 18.

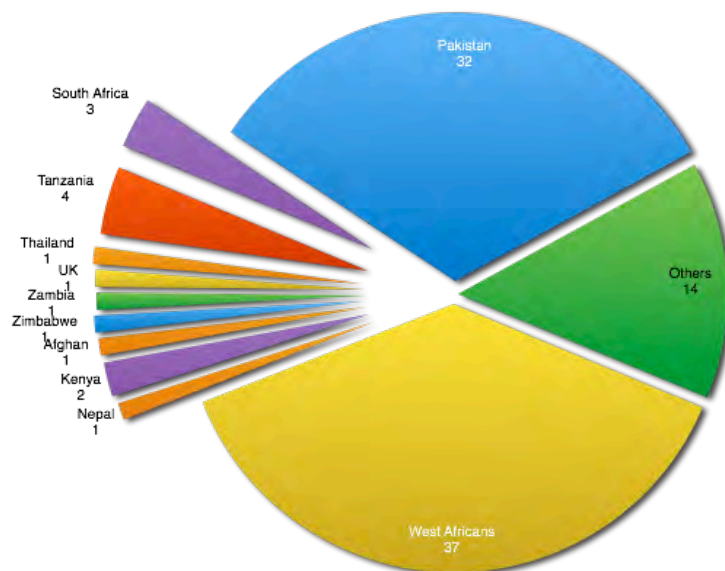
Available online <https://ras.unodc.org/ReportServerPublic/?/Seizures/SeizuresDataKgComp>, accessed 09 April 2013. Data from 2007-2010 sourced from World Report 2012. Available online <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/WDR2012/Seizures.xls> [2013, April 09].

Figure 17: Nationalities of heroin traffickers arrested in Italy, January - May 2011



Source: UNODC 2013:4.

Figure 18: Distribution of drug trafficking arrests in Pakistan by nationality, 2000-2008



Source: UNODC, 2009.

The trend of arrests are to the extent that majority of Western ports of entry have increased the layers of security surrounding flights and goods originating from West Africa. West African governments are subsequently being assisted by Western partners to increase security arrangements at their ports of departure to address the problem of drug transshipments to the global North. This is the case with operation Westbridge. In this operation, which began in 2006, British law enforcement authorities support Ghana in the screening of passengers exiting the Kotoka International airport in Accra. Flights from Ghana and Nigeria to the US are also cautiously scrutinised, since the categorisation of those countries as major transshipment points for drugs destined for the American market.⁵² Cocaine and heroin are not produced in West Africa.⁵³ The trend of trafficking from the region to other parts of the world thus illustrates the existence of flow into the region before their subsequent transmission to destination countries thereby establishing the region's role as a transshipment point in the global flow of illicit drugs.

3.4.3 Emerging evidence of narcotics production in West Africa

Apart from cannabis which is grown locally, the other drugs are largely known to be transiting the region and thus are produced elsewhere – cocaine in South America, and heroin and ATS in Asia. In recent times, there have been important indications pointing to the possible emergence of manufacturing sites for some of the drugs. Precursor chemicals for cocaine were discovered in West Africa in 2009 and may indicate that the region is somehow being used for refining cocaine into finished product (Reuters, 05 November 2009). Cutting of cocaine in the region is estimated to reduce the purity of Colombian and Venezuelan cocaine from about 80.0% to 12.0% by the time it has

⁵² This is deduced from the experiences of several people who have used the route several times and attest to that.

⁵³ As discussed in the next section, there are suspicions of possible refining of cocaine into finished products in some countries in West Africa. However, there is no concrete evidence of this. See for instance, Reuters. 2009. West Africa may become major narcotics producer. *Reuters*. 05 November 2009. Available: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/11/05/idUSN05317043> [2013, March 4].

transited Benin, Ghana, or Nigeria (IISS, 2011:1).

In 2010, a number of people were indicted by the US government for attempting to establish a laboratory for the production of methamphetamine in Liberia with the aim of supplying the US and Japanese market. In 2011, Nigeria authorities uncovered two separate production facilities outside Lagos capable of producing 25-50.0 kg of methamphetamine and 41.0 kg of ephedrine. Before these cases, the military junta in Guinea had provided evidence in 2008 to the effect that members of the previous regime were connected to two locations suspected of having been used for the synthesis of ecstasy (UNODC, 2013:19).

Several West African countries, such as Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Niger, Guinea, Senegal and Ghana have also been named for the illegal diversion and/or inappropriate shipments of precursor chemicals for ATS. Such cases of diversion point to the existence of the demand for ATS raw materials to feed some form of production cycle in the region (UNODC, 2013:19; International Narcotics Control Board, 2007:39). These cases indicate the rising sophistication of the narcotics phenomenon in the region and the gradual emergence of the region as a refinement and eventual production site for hard drugs.

3.4.4 High profile involvements in narcotic activities

The fourth indicator of the rising trends of trafficking in the region is the high profile involvements in the drugs trade and the presence of Latin American drug-lords operating from the region or pursuing particular consignments in the region. In all West African countries, drug trafficking is a crime. Perpetrators are therefore supposed to be prosecuted. If against this legal backdrop, government functionaries become glaringly

involved in those activities, it is an indication of an overall systemic pervasiveness of the crime at the various levels of the society. In many West African countries, such cases are common. Taking cocaine, for example, it became apparent after the death of Guinean President Lansana Conte in 2008 that certain individuals within his immediate family and elite military units were taking advantage of their positions and diplomatic privileges to traffic cocaine (UNODC, 2013:9). The President's oldest son admitted involvement in trafficking activities in 2009 (IISS, 2011:2).

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, the country's recent history of several coup d'états and the 2009 assassination of President Joao Bernardo Vieira are known to have had multiple causes. A 2013 UNODC report indicates that cocaine trafficking in the country raised the stakes in the leadership of the country and contributed to the nature of the political unrests that led to his assassination (UNODC 2013:8-9). The late president was thought to be deeply involved in cocaine trafficking and hence his failure to stem the tide of the phenomenon. His complicity particularly became apparent when Admiral Jose Bubu Na Tchuto was reappointed naval chief despite accusations from the US and the European Union (EU) about his active involvement in narcotic activities in the country (IISS, 2011:2; Ashton, 2010). In Mauritania, Police commissioner Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya was implicated in attempts to construct a runway in the desert to facilitate cocaine trafficking to Europe. He was subsequently handed a seven years prison sentence in 2010 but was released a year later (BBC, 12 February 2010). In August 2008, Transportation and Aviation Minister Ibrahim Kemoh Sesay was sacked in Sierra Leone following the involvement of his cousin, Mohamed Sesay, in a 700.0 kg haul seized from a private aircraft at the Lungi airport (Wikileaks, 2008). The US Drugs Enforcement Agency (DEA) busted a sitting Ghanaian MP, Honourable Eric Amoateng, for trafficking heroin in 2005 (see details of this case in Chapter 5).

The presence of kingpins operating from the region is also indicative of the generally pervasive nature of the crisis. Latin American kingpins such as Jorge Solano Cortes, a member of Colombia's Cali cartel; Walid Makled-Garcia; and Jesus Eduardo Valencia-Arbelaez have all been variously arrested in connection with or in West Africa. Jorge Solano was arrested in Togo and extradited to the US for trial, whilst the rest were arrested elsewhere in connection with plans to traffic drugs to West Africa (UNODC, 2013:13). Following the December 2008 coup in Guinea, reports of the movement of Latin American kingpins to Conakry emerged. Others such as Giovanni Bonomo, one of Italy's top 30 drug traffickers was expelled from Senegal following his involvement in money laundering there in November 2003 (BBC, 14 November 2003; Povoledo, 2003). In 2007 two Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) members, Juan Pablo Rubio Camacho and Luis Fernando Arango Mejia, were busted in Guinea-Bissau for their involvement in the importation of cocaine into the country. The two were released upon pressure from some high-level government officials (Smith, 2007). Such kingpins operating in the region have usually maintained residences in more than one country and operated freely across several, particularly in remote parts of some of those countries where they manage to have access to landing sites. For instance, Jesus Eduardo Valencia-Arbelaez claimed to have had access to military airfields in Guinea from where he flew drug consignments to Guinea-Bissau and Liberia (UNODC, 2013:9; The Telegraph, 3 December 2008; Ellis, 2009:72).

These four factors together define the narcotics problem in West Africa and provide indications as to the quantum of the crisis confronting states in the region. A number of important deductions can be made from the general trend of the four main indicators of the rising trend discussed above. First, it is clear from the quantity of seizures, despite being fractional to the actual volume, that there is the existence of active narcotics flow

through the region, particularly as indicated in the nature of seizures in the last decade. Secondly, prior to the noticeable rise in the quantities of narcotics seized in the region, the contribution of the region and, Africa in general, was almost infinitesimal in comparison with the volume of global flows. However, seizures between 2004-2007 have indicated more than sixty-fold increase in the quantities and frequency of seizures in 2002 (UNODC, 2007a:7). Additionally, the quantum of happenstance seizures points to a bigger underworld of narcotics flow (UNODC, 2007b:8).

Thirdly, it can be deduced that Africa's contribution to the global flow of drugs is still marginal compared to the quantum of flows originating from other parts of the world. The whole of Africa, for example, accounted for an average of 0.6 tonnes of the global annual seizures of cocaine between 1998-2003 (Figure 2; UNODC, 2007). Notwithstanding, all the seizure figures of the various drugs point to a rise in Africa's contribution to the global trends. Whereas the actual volume of drugs transiting West Africa is not as high as those from other parts of the world, the actual significance is in their comparative value. The enormity of the situation is manifest if the volume of narcotics transiting the region is considered vis-à-vis the weak economic performance and overall fragility of states in the region. In 2007, for example, proceeds from the estimated 43 tonnes of cocaine that transited West Africa to Europe was valued at about \$1.8 - \$2 billion in a region where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country such as Guinea-Bissau was only \$304 million the previous year. In comparison, the street value of the volume of cocaine that transited the region was about six times the GDP of Guinea-Bissau. Thus, the entire GDP of Guinea-Bissau was equivalent to the value of 2.5 tonnes of cocaine (UNODC, 2007:10). In many cases, the value of a single haul of seized narcotics has had value equivalent to the entire military budget of some countries. In 2008, for instance, the Malian army seized a haul of 750.0 kg of cocaine. The value of

that single seizure alone was about 36.0% of the military expenditure of the country the previous year. A similar seizure in 2007 of 350.0 kg in Benin had value equal to the cumulative per capita income of 31,000 citizens (O'Regan, 2010:2). The actual problem of drugs in West Africa therefore does not lie only in the absolute volume or quantity in and/or transiting the region, but the value of those narcotics in relation to the economic and political strengths of the average state in the region.

3.5 Origins and Dynamics of Narco-trafficking in West Africa.

3.5.1 *Origins of the West African drugs trade*

Let's be frank: Africa in general, never faced a drug problem - whether we speak about production, trafficking or consumption. Now the threat is real and present, on all these fronts (Costa, 2008).

Notwithstanding the popularity of recent seizures in the region and the subsequent perception that drug trafficking is new to West Africa, or at best, a phenomenon of the last few decades, the literature on the subject by authors such as Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005), Stephen Ellis (2009), and Neil Carrier and Gernot Klantschnig (2012) point to about a century of drug trafficking history in West Africa and perhaps centuries in terms of the production of cannabis in the region. The rise in trafficking in the region over the last three decades appears to be a natural evolutionary dimension of the region's historico-cultural association with drugs like cannabis and stimulants such as kola and tobacco. These substances could be described as ancestral to contemporary hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin and ATS.

Available archaeological evidence on cannabis in Africa suggests that as early as the fourteenth century, the plant was already in use in Ethiopia. This is buttressed by the

discovery of two ceramic smoking pipebowls⁵⁴ by J. C. Dombowski at the Lalibela cave in central Ethiopia with cannabis traces dated to that era (Toit, 1975:83). Before Dombowski's finding, cannabis had since the third century become outlawed in Egypt. It is believed that this situation may have provided the basis for those communities who still wanted to grow cannabis to migrate southwards into Ethiopia, where Dombowski's finding establish its use by the 1400. The Bantu-speaking natives who originally lived in North Africa may have also carried it southwards (ibid). Because the east coast of Africa already had established trading relations with the Arabs and Indians, it is also possible that Asian cannabis spread to the east coast of Africa and subsequently to the southern coast and central Africa by traders plying both regions (Embodden, 1972:226).

The West African coast was the last region to have been introduced to cannabis use and production in Africa. According to Brian M. du Toit (1975:101), it is either that cannabis was not introduced to the region or was not accepted until after World War II. Given the centuries-old trade relations between Arab traders and the Sahel communities in West Africa, it is intriguing how the trade routes connection in the spread of cannabis did not reach West Africa. It may appear that its introduction did not meet wide acceptance and use until its "re-introduction" by returning World War II veterans whose influence and ubiquity quickly popularised cannabis and provided the basis for various forms of cannabis subcultures to emerge. In the regions where it was first introduced in Africa, cannabis was quickly indigenised into various daily uses, religious and cult rituals, and as a prep for battle by warring tribes such as the Zulus (James, 1970:575–580). This is such that by the time Europeans came to Africa, cannabis had already been integrated into various facets of the lives of the eastern, central and southern African tribes. However,

⁵⁴ Among archaeologists, there is still an ongoing debate about the connection between pipes and evidence of early smoking of cannabis. See Philips, J. E. 1983. African smoking and pipes. *The journal of African history*. 24(3): 303-319.

when extensive cannabis use began to take root among the low-caste Indians brought into the Cape colony to work on the farms, its opposition began. This is because the emerging cannabis (locally called “*dagga*”) culture affected productivity.

By 1870, Europeans had been so alarmed over the effects on productivity that laws prohibiting “*dagga*” possession, use, smoking and sale were instituted (Toit, 1977:235-246). The failure of legal attempts to prohibit cannabis use persisted till 1887 when South African authorities concluded that cannabis posed a threat to white settlers. In 1923, following failed domestic attempts to prohibit cannabis, South African authorities sought the assistance of the League of Nations to outlaw cannabis globally. This move by South Africa firmly placed Africa at the forefront of global legislation against narcotics, thereby raising legitimate questions about the continent’s perceived marginal contribution to the global discourse on narcotics legislation (Carrier and Klantschnig, 2012:86).

As earlier noted, it is doubtful as to whether in the spread of cannabis by Arab, Indian and Swahili speaking traders from North Africa to east and finally south or from Asia, the plant was not introduced to West Africa at any time given the long history of smoking in West Africa. The fact of it remains a grey area requiring a thorough archaeological research. Smoking of tobacco and the production of smoking pipes in West Africa dates back to the seventh century with the production of tobacco observed in Sierra Leone in 1607. Subsequently, archaeological findings from Niger, Benin and Ghana show a wide range of smoking pipes used as early as the seventh century (Handler, 2008:1–2). The popularity of smoking pipes in the region is such that their types and shapes are an established form of dating archaeological findings. However, there is evidence to the effect that whereas Angolan slaves who were taken to Brazil in

the mid-sixteenth century had a cannabis culture, slaves from West Africa who ended up in the British American colonies were not into it (Akyeampong, 2005:432). This gives some indications that the spread of cannabis to West Africa had by the time of the departure of the slaves not taken root in the region.

Despite remaining less convincing, there are two archaeological findings suggesting early use of cannabis in West Africa. The first is evidence gathered by Federick Wulsin from a number of pottery pipes in the Shari basin in 1932. Based on their resemblance to elbow-bend pipes of Morocco, he deduced they might have been used for smoking cannabis around the sixth century, BC. Analysis of cakes in the pipes resembled residue left by burning cannabis tops rather than tobacco. However, the basis for deduction was not chemical testing but spectrographic.⁵⁵ Later dating techniques have found Fulsin's projection to be too early. The second attempt was by John Atherton who asserted that female pipes found in the region were used for smoking things other than tobacco (Philips, 1983:313). Writing on Liberia, Sir Harry Johnston noted in 1906 that

[T]here is distinct evidence of smoking having occurred long before the introduction of tobacco, but it was hemp (*cannabis sativa*) that was smoked, and not tobacco. Hemp is almost universal as a cultivated plant throughout Africa, but probably had an Oriental origin, and the vice of hemp-smoking reached Tropical Africa perhaps as much as a thousands years before tobacco-smoking was established. I have not noticed hemp-growing or smoking anywhere in Liberia except by Americo-Liberian Negroes of Congo origin, nor have I ever heard hemp-smoking amongst the indigenes alluded to by other travellers in that country (Johnston, 1906:994).

Furthermore, despite the popular assertion that cannabis was introduced to West Africa by returning World War II soldiers, there are records of cannabis arrests and convictions dating back to the 1920s in Sierra Leone, for example. The existence of cannabis in West

⁵⁵ Among Archaeologists, the spectrographic method of dating is considered more accurate because it allows for the analysis of small samples of various compounds. It involves passing the light refracted from a given material sample through a prism and making determinations of the nature and date of the material by virtue of the wavelengths of light emitted.

Africa is therefore certainly earlier than post-World War II and most likely existed before the twentieth century.

According to Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005), Sierra Leone appears to have been one of the first countries in the region to cultivate and start a trade in cannabis supply in the region. Its use during the colonial era in the country remained largely within the labouring class, particularly among fishermen. There is oral history to the effect that traditional midwives were even using it for medicinal purposes at this time. As of the 1930s, colonial authorities reported of a network of producers supplying a growing demand around Freetown. The subsequent spread of cannabis from Sierra Leone to other territories in the region was facilitated by Sierra Leonean sailors many of whom worked as stevedores in other British colonies in West Africa.

By 1933, a regional trade of supply from Sierra Leone to demands elsewhere had already become noticeable by British colonial authorities in Gambia and the Gold Coast (now Ghana). The governors in these two colonies had taken turns to formally inform the governor of Sierra Leone about the flow of cannabis from his territory into theirs and enjoined him to help put a stop to it. Extrapolating that supply is usually in response to demand, it can be inferred that the use of cannabis already existed in the region before the noted regional supply routes in 1933. By 1938, West Africa's role in the global supply of cannabis emerged when the League of Nations notified the colonial government of Sierra Leone about 131.0 grammes of Sierra Leonean cannabis that had been smuggled to New York on-board an American ship (ibid, 434). With such trend of supply along the coast and through ships, it is possible that other regions of the world may have been supplied cannabis from West Africa in the early parts of the twentieth century. However, the outbreak of World War II may have affected the supply routes.

The return of World War II veterans was therefore a re-introduction and subsequent popularisation of an existing phenomenon, than an introduction of the drug itself to the region. Better still, it was rather the beginning of the crystallisation of a cannabis subculture among and around the returning veterans in the region than an introduction of the drug.

The early supply of cannabis from West Africa to other parts of the world did not emerge out of a conscious attempt to export across borders, but appears to have emerged accidentally along existing trade routes between the region and other parts of the world. This is illustrated by the 1938 case of 131.0 grammes of Sierra Leonean cannabis that made its way to New York. In this case, the owner of the consignment had obtained the package from a Sierra Leonean who she encountered whilst their vessel, the *West Kebar*, docked at the Freetown port. The Sierra Leonean supplier therefore had no explicit plans of exporting to New York, neither could a sustained supply chain targeting the US be established. The transnationality of the transaction in this case was opportunistic and not a systematic and sustained attempt to produce and supply cannabis to an international market, as is the primary feature of contemporary hard drug production and trafficking cases. It is also clear that the eventual supply to an international market became possible by virtue of the existing contact between the American crew and the possibility of accessing existing domestic supply in Sierra Leone thereby internationalising what was otherwise a local supply. This is the trajectory along which the spread of cannabis took from its initial production in North Africa, through East Africa, South and Central Africa to West Africa and ultimately from these regions to the other regions and the global North, particularly Europe and America. By the 1950s therefore, apart from local usage, cannabis shipments from West Africa (Nigeria) to Europe and America had developed. There was also a notable importation of consignments from South Africa and Congo to

the region (Ellis, 2009:174).

The emergence of drug trafficking in West Africa can thus be argued to have emerged along age-old trade routes between the region and other parts of the world. In the context of trade, West Africa has long been an important supplier of stimulants, particularly *Cola nitida* (kola nut) to other parts of the continent for several centuries and since the advent of colonialism, to other parts of the world. A vibrant trade in kola nut existed along the upper Guinea coast as early as the 1500s (Lovejoy, 1980:123). This included trade between the largely forest producing areas in West Africa and the Sahel areas towards the north and east of Africa such as Central Sudan (ibid, 100). By the mid-1800s, a robust kola trade existed between several West African colonies and Europe, as well as America, for primarily pharmaceutical and industrial purposes, such as the manufacture of coca cola.

Available data suggests that in 1860, about 56.0 tonnes of kola were exported from West Africa into England. The quantity increased to 145 tonnes in 1870, 378 tonnes in 1879 and by the turn of the twentieth century, increased to about 1,000 tonnes (ibid, 123). Kola exports to Brazil from Lagos is traceable to 1851. Trade also existed between the region and the West Indies (ibid, 123). Due to the supremacy of sea transport at this time of history, this volume of trade in kola to the global North took place by sea. Paul E. Lovejoy (1980:124) notes that Africans were not only the producers of kola for the global demand but were also the principal merchants. The routes as well as the entrepreneurial context within which the trade between West Africa and other parts of the world took place could help explain how the import and export of particular narcotics emerged.

According to Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005:435) intercropping was common for the

purposes of diversification in crops produced in the forest areas. The decline in the profitability of crops such as cocoa in the 1950s vis-à-vis the demand for crops such as cannabis therefore provided the context for intercropping and eventual commercial production of cannabis in farms that preceded current forms of production for both domestic and international demands. By the 1950s therefore apart from the widespread local use of cannabis in many West African countries, cannabis export to the West was rampant. In Nigeria, for example, locally grown cannabis was being shipped to Europe and America in the 1950s. There were also imports from South Africa and Belgian Congo into Nigeria (Ellis, 2009:174). According to Stephen Ellis (2009:175), one of the developments that gave impetus to the emergence of cannabis trafficking from West African countries, such as Nigeria, to Europe and America was the rise in demand in those markets. The increase in export from Nigeria was to the extent that the military regime in 1966 decreed a ten-year jail term for the crime (ibid).

But by 1971, the situation had become rampant. Around this time, smugglers from the region largely carried small quantities by air travel. However, the case involving the importation of 78.0 kg of cannabis by a Nigerian into UK in 1974 illustrates the quantum of traffic to Europe in the 1970s. Apart from also illustrating the gender dimensions of trafficking in the region, an actor mapping of the case pointed to the involvement of two army officers and the connection of the main accomplice to influential people in the Nigerian society. The latter established the extent of penetration into various arenas of society in the region. By 1983, rampant occurrences of cannabis export to other regions were such that 1.5 tonnes of cannabis from Ghana was seized in 1983 by Western Germany authorities (Ellis 2009:177). Around this time, it was common for couriers to be innocent travellers persuaded by other people to help deliver parcels to certain people in their destination countries without knowledge of the drug content. Apart from arrests

in Europe, some West African travellers to Saudi Arabia were also busted. Most of these were religious people en route for pilgrimage in Mecca.

3.5.2 The emergence of hard drug trafficking in West Africa

Heroin and cocaine, which make up contemporary hard drugs, have a tortuous and long history of emergence onto the global stage. The history of cocaine as a hard drug and its eventual connection with West Africa is linked to the origins of the coca plant. Cocaine is one of the many alkaloids extracted from the coca plant. The coca plant is considered one of the first plants to have been domesticated for food, medicinal and religious uses in the Western Hemisphere. Its production and use played an important role in many aspects of life in the Andes. There is evidence of the use of coca, particularly chewing of coca leaves and chalk or ash, dating back to the sixth century. The plant is grown largely for its leaves, which are picked about 3 to 4 times a year, and can remain productive for several decades (Boucher, 1991:76). The importance of the plant to people in the Andes became the basis for robust economic activities connecting the Pacific coast, the Andes highlands and the Amazon lowlands (ibid, 72). Coca leaves from the slopes of the Andes were bartered for other goods such as fur and food products from the highland areas.

With the colonisation of the region by Spain, coca became more commercialised because the leaf was supplied to workers in the silver mines of Bolivia. As such even though the colonialists in the region considered the coca leaf dangerous, its important role as a stimulant for workers in the industrial silver mines made its production directly correlated to industrial productivity. By the nineteenth century, coca leaves were already being exported to Europe for medicinal uses as elixir and patent medicines (ibid, 73). In the production areas, it was also used in coca tea production. In major production areas, such as Peru and Bolivia, large farms (*haciendas*) controlled production. With the rise in

production and export to Europe came scientific interests in the effects of coca leaves and its active alkaloids in the 1850s. German chemist Friedrich Gaedcke was the first to separate “*erythroxyline*” alkaloid from the coca leaf in 1855. This was followed by the extraction of cocaine by Albert Niemann in 1859 (Gootenberg, 2002:84). By 1862, small scale production of cocaine was already underway by Merck’s Pharmaceuticals for the scientific community (Spillane, 2002:85). By 1886, Merck Pharmaceuticals was already importing “*crude cocaine*” or “*pasta basica*” (ibid). The late 1800s and early 1900s then saw a cocaine boom involving attempts to produce coca in other parts of the world apart from its original Andean region, to meet the sharp rise in global demand for the production of cocaine. The Dutch Java then emerged as a major rival to Peru in global supply of coca leaves.

The popularity of cocaine was attributed to its uses in the pharmaceutical industry, syrups and other products such as cocaine wine and early forms of coca cola, primarily because of its stimulant properties. The coca leaf is estimated to contain only one per cent of cocaine. When a coca leaf is eaten, its mixture with other alkaloids in the leaf modifies the effect of cocaine. Upon ingestion of coca leaf, its stimulating effect is estimated to reach the brain in about 15 minutes. However, the cocaine alkaloid is different. In its hydrochloride powder form, the purity of cocaine is about 10.0-60.0% and can reach the brain minutes after it is snorted. Freebase and crack cocaine is estimated to reach the brain in about 10 seconds (Boucher, 1991:75).

The increase in global supply pushed down the prices of cocaine and led to the widespread usage and addiction in Europe and North America in the first half of the twentieth century. The impact of the widespread addiction, similar to the Chinese opium addiction in the 1800s and early 1900s, helped galvanise support for the prohibition of

both drugs and their restriction to medicinal use. By World War II, the cocaine boom had subsided (Akyeampong 2005:436). However, as the generation of those people who witnessed the addictive aspects of the cocaine boom aged, a younger generation of people had by the 1970s emerged in Europe and America. According to Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005), having experimented with cannabis, this generation easily incorporated cocaine and heroin usage thereby pushing up the demand for cocaine in the 1970s and 80s, and heroin in the 1990s (Courtwright, 2001). In response to the increase in demand, Colombia emerged as an exporter of cannabis to the US. Their export of cocaine in the 1970s and 80s and then heroin in the 1990s also went up. By 1995, Colombia was supplying about 80.0% of refined cocaine to the global market and had more than 20,000 hectares of land under opium cultivation (Courtwright, 2001:38). Other countries such as Mexico also emerged as producers of opium. However, the *Golden triangle* states (Thailand, Burma and Laos) and those of the *Golden Crescent* (Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan) are still the principal sources for the global supply of Opium. Cocaine is primarily sourced from Colombia, Bolivia and Peru. Significant coca cultivation and cocaine processing is also done in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama and Guyana (Williams and Milani, 1999:4-5).

Within this history of the evolution of hard drugs onto the global stage, West Africa encountered the phenomenon at two different times. The first instance was part of attempts to grow coca in the region. During the era of cocaine boom in the 1880s, and the subsequent increase in the production of coca, several European countries attempted the commercial production of coca, in their colonies. Pioneer British coca botanist Sir William Hooker who was director of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, initiated coca research and botanical experiments in India, Malaysia, Jamaica, Guiana and West Africa. The Germans, Dutch and French also did that (Gootenberg, 2009:113). It is not clear

which specific colonies in the region were part of this experiment. However, available records show that in 1934, colonial authorities experimented with the cultivation of coca plants in Calabar and parts of southern Nigeria (Ellis, 2009:174). It is possible that similar experiments may have been done in other West African British colonies. It is also not clear how the crop fared and why Nigeria did not emerge as a coca production hub as a result of this. However, Paul Gootenberg (2008:113) notes that

[A]lthough coca took well to places like Mandras, by the 1890s it was discouraged as a colonial crop, save for the purposes of making elixirs from Ceylon. Clements Markham, the tropical commodity imperialist who knew Peru well, came down against commercial coca, eclipsed by the rapid success of the German-Peruvian crude cocaine nexus. By the 1920s, Indian coca was a relic, as were British consumer coca goods. Thus, Britain, still the world's reigning economic power, never became a force in global coca-cocaine: in short, it was a commodity chain that never unfolded. If it had, creating a vested British colonial stake in cocaine, the drug's twentieth-century trajectory might have been different (Gootenberg, 2009:113).

The region's second encounter of hard drugs is traceable to attempts to exploit it as a transit point for heroin destined for other parts of the world. Evidence of this dates back to the early 1950s. In 1953, Lebanese heroin smuggling rings were noted by US authorities to be supplying heroin to the US market through the use of commercial airlines transiting Kano and Accra. Heroin trafficking from the Near East to the US was diverted from its European route to Nigeria, so as to avoid law enforcement activity on the European route (Ellis, 2009:174).

These major instances of the introduction of hard drugs to the region were primarily externally driven. The region only became complicit by virtue of its relevance for the delivery of cocaine and heroin to the principal target countries – the global North. West Africans were hardly the primary initiators and drivers of the process. This feature easily gave way to active West African involvement in the global drug business.

According to US Drug Enforcement sources, the involvement of West Africans in the smuggling of hard drugs became evident when Nigerian naval officers undergoing training in India started buying and sending heroin to West Africa through students. Generally, however, the direct involvement of West African citizens is said to have began when governments in the region failed to deliver study grants to citizens undergoing training on scholarship in the US and Europe (Ellis 2009:176). Many of those students in the midst of the financial difficulties vis-à-vis the economic benefits the new trade offered, became drug couriers to make ends meet. Due to the region's experiences with the production and trafficking of cannabis, it became easier for the hard drugs to be incorporated into existing urban drug subcultures (Akyeampong 2005:435; Ellis 2005:176). By the 1980s, West African citizens, particularly Nigerians and Ghanaians were already driving a thriving cocaine and heroin trafficking trade in and through the region.

3.5.3 Regional cartels, couriers and their conducts

Following the emergence of cannabis, cocaine and heroin smuggling in the region, individual citizens would travel to the various source countries and buy them in small quantities for onward delivery to destination countries, largely Europe and America. Initially, they were usually concealed in personal luggage. Some of the traffickers later took residence in source countries and made use of available couriers for the delivery of consignments to consumer markets. As the usage of personal luggage became increasingly noticed and watched by law enforcement officials, the technique of ingesting packaged narcotics emerged. This technique involves packaging consignments in condom wraps of small sizes, which are ingested and expelled upon arrival at their destinations. The preference of West African traffickers for this technique gradually made it their notable feature.

The emergence of trafficking in the region has snowballed into three main complementary regional trafficking structures. The first structure is led and operated by foreigners, largely Latin Americans and Asians moving large shipments of cocaine, heroin and ATS into the region for onward transmission to Europe and the Americas. This structure is usually operated by cartels already established elsewhere and have the means to make extensive use of shipping containers, ships, yachts and private airplanes. Being largely foreign to the region, they partner with West African local collaborators who provide logistics for storage and repacking, if needed, as well as aid the operations of the foreign traffickers transiting the region.

The second structure is made up of local or regional elements who import significant consignments into the region for onward delivery to the global North. The operation of one of such local barons is the case of Joe Brown Akubueze who imported about 250.0 kg of heroin from Thailand into Nigeria in December 1993. The consignment was concealed in water coolers. The sheer size of his consignment provided early indications as to the quantity of drugs imported into the country, and the region at large. The emergence of local capacity for trafficking to Europe and America, even though was largely home-grown, particularly in the case of cannabis, was also partly an unintended consequence of the operations of foreign cartels - their strategy of paying their local partners in kind instead of cash. Payment in kind meant the local collaborators were forced to find market for their goods and thus led to the emergence of local supplies that were easily incorporated into existing domestic drug culture as well as the rise in the recruitment of West African couriers for the trafficking of drugs to other markets. Many of these local partners gradually graduated from small partners to drug barons in their own right as exemplified by the case of Joe Akubueze. Mazzitelli (2007:1076) argues that the availability of drugs and the emergence of a regional market together led to the

rise in the activities of a third structure of operators in the region – the freelancers. This group of perpetrators in West Africa are generally West African citizens and Europeans with easy access to the destination countries, usually West Africans with resident permits in major European countries. Such people invest their savings into buying small consignments for onward delivery in source countries as an economic activity.

Carrier and Klantschnig (2012:94-95) observes that despite the diversity of the West African traffickers, they are all generally relatively adaptable, project-based, comparatively small scale and have flexible smuggling routes that can change swiftly in response to perceived threats. West African cartels are, thus, not organised like Latin Americans, where central and hierarchical structures and operations can be observed. This form is, however, also becoming a notable pattern in non-African cartels as an adaptation mechanism to increased risk of law enforcement clampdown.

Notwithstanding their characteristics, the roles and/or players of any typical West African trafficking operation has been conceptualised by Carrier and Klantschnig (2012:94-95) to include:

- A financial sponsor
- A main coordinator
- A courier
- A recipient in the destination country
- A money launderer, and
- A settled law enforcement official.

Generally, West African *financial sponsors* of trafficking activities are responsible for providing the money required for purchasing the consignment, facilitating travel and paying *couriers*. They also provide the money needed for bribing *law enforcement* officials so as to ensure safe passage of consignments. The *main coordinator's* role involves recruiting *couriers*, tracking the state of the routes and bringing all other aspects

of the operation together. Those who do the actual trafficking or carrying of the goods for delivery are the couriers who deliver consignments to a recipient in the destination country in exchange for cash. The *launderers* find means of repatriating the proceeds of the operation to desired destinations. All these stages usually involve a corrupt law enforcer who has been paid to remain silent or look the other way.

This conceptualisation, however, does not take into account the role of the supplier who can either be a middleman, secondary source or a supplier in the source country. Adding the latter, seven key roles and/or players emerge in a typical anatomy of West African drug trade. The seven roles can also be categorised into two main activities. On one hand, an administrative part involving consignment buying, bribing for safe passage, payments, and laundering of proceeds. On the other hand, an operational part carried out by couriers involving the delivery of the consignment to the intended destination(s).

3.6 State Weakness and Narco-Trafficking in West Africa

West Africa emerged as a player in the global flow of contemporary narcotics basically because the region found itself at the confluence of two major forces. The rise in the demand for cocaine and heroin in the US and Europe in the 1970s and 80s led to a concurrent rise in the flow of drugs from the source countries in Latin America and Asia towards meeting the demand. The subsequent increase in addiction in Europe and America led to an intensification of law enforcement efforts against the drugs trade, particularly on known routes. In the quest for alternative routes, the use of African territories particularly West Africa, emerged. The rise in demand for drugs in the global North and its associated increase in law enforcement efforts therefore constituted major external shifts which made West Africa relevant to the global narcotics discourse.

Internal factors within West Africa also facilitated the use of the region for drug trafficking functions. First, the region at the time was not noted for any active role in global drug trafficking. Law enforcement officials in the global North therefore paid little attention to the possible use of goods and people from the region as conduits for narcotics. Secondly, national and regional mechanisms against narcotics trafficking were non-existent as countries of the region were yet to securitise the drug trafficking phenomenon as a threat to national and regional security. In addition, a number of countries were in the throes of political instability by the late 1980s and early 90s. Such countries lacked the requisite political leadership and law enforcement infrastructure for preventing the use of their territories for narco-trafficking activities. The third aspect was that there existed, in West Africa, by the 1970s and 80s local criminal infrastructure that could provide the launching pad and partnership for Latin American and Asian cartels seeking to make use of the region in getting to Europe and America. The existence of home-grown criminal enterprises around cannabis, for example, reflected the existence of an undercurrent of socio-economic, security, political and cultural issues bordering on the strength of the state and the weaknesses of the state-making process in the region.

It has been noted in Chapter 1 that the case of Guinea-Bissau, as a narco-state, represents the extreme form of the experience of narco-trafficking in West Africa. In spite of that, the general trajectory of factors that facilitated the emergence and influence of drug trafficking in the country is representative of the regional experience. An exposition of Guinea-Bissau's experience can thus help to elucidate the turbulence associated with the region finding itself at the confluence of both the internal weakening factors and the major global shifts. The next section therefore illustrates the interplay of these factors on states in the region using the case of Guinea-Bissau.

3.6.1 The Rise of Guinea-Bissau as a narco-state

Sandwiched between Senegal, Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean, the 36,125 sq. km country of West Africa was the last in the region to attain independence from Portuguese colonial rule in September 1974.⁵⁶ Independence brought self-rule to the country but also became the beginning of numerous challenges to the process of state construction.

Figure 19: Map of Guinea-Bissau



Source: The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Cartographic Section, Map No. 4063 Rev. 4, June 2002.⁵⁷

First of these challenges was the fallout from the independence struggle. The struggle for independence in most countries in Africa was negotiated. In Guinea-Bissau the struggle for independence culminated in a decade-long war (1963-1974) between the colonial

⁵⁶ It should be noted that independence was declared on 24 September 1973 but duly and fully recognized on 10 September 1974.

⁵⁷ Online version of map, Available: <http://www.un.org/depts/Cartographic/map/profile/guineabi.pdf> [2013, May 20].

authorities and the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC) after negotiations for improved economic, social and political conditions in the colony between the party and the colonial administration had failed. Even though the military struggle led to independence, the nature of the military operation and the dominance of the army laid the foundation for a number of challenges in post-independence Guinea-Bissau. One notable issue was that by virtue of the leadership role the army played in the struggle for independence, it emerged not only as the strongest institution in the country, but also the most empowered and emboldened to dictate the affairs of the new country. Their heroic role in securing independence had also nurtured perceptions among sections of the population and within the army itself that the military was the most legitimate state institution. According to Ashley Bybee (2011:5-2),

[M]embers of the military immediately capitalized on this newfound adulation and respect and assumed a major role in Bissauan society and politics. They adopted an entitlement mentality, reminding citizens that they scarified life and limb for the country's independence and were therefore entitled to their fair share of resources and influence over national politics.

This context became the basis for the military to assume a kingmaking role by regularly interfering in the political affairs of the country, a situation that has persisted till today with dire repercussions for the promotion of democratic norms in which the military is subservient to civilian authority. This move by the military was fairly easy because during the independence struggle, the army was the PAIGC's military wing. Therefore, members of the military were allowed to also hold positions in the party (ibid). The emergence of military cadres with political interests and influence thus predates independence. However, the military's influence in politics had been held in check by Amilcar Cabral's charismatic leadership during the struggle. Following the loss of that leadership within the PAIGC after independence, the military's influence in politics under the government of the PAIGC surfaced.

The second challenge was the ethnic composition of the army. As a result of the ethnic alignments in the era of colonisation, the Balanta ethnic group dominated the army that fought for Guinea Bissau's independence. Despite being the majority ethnic group in the country, the Balanta ethnic group were considered backward by other ethnic groups and the colonial administration. This perception originated from the Balanta's isolationist cultural outlook. "*Balanta*," which literally translates to "those who resist" had successfully resisted the influence of both Christianity and Islam and remained largely isolated from other segments of the Bissauan society. This left their cultural practices and beliefs shrouded in suspicions among other ethnic groups. They were consequently marginalised in the political activities of the colony. The marginalisation and the Balanta's resultant lack of alignment with the colonial administration made them ideal recruits for the independence struggle. Many Balantas found the anti-colonial struggle as not just a way for independence but particularly for liberation from political marginalisation. It is estimated that about 80.0% of the military wing of the PAIGC was made up of the Balanta ethnic group. However, despite the popularity and heroism that surrounded the Balanta-dominated army's exploits in securing independence, the ethnic group was still marginalised in the political space of the country. Worse of all, there were attempts by the government of President João Bernardo Vieira to embark on anti-Balanta moves within the party and the military.

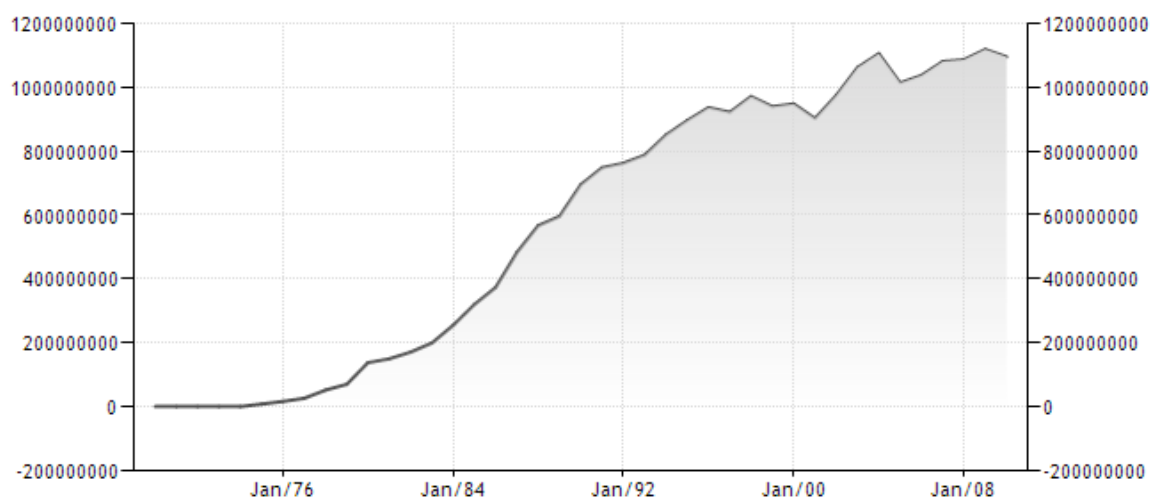
These issues created a complex situation whereby the perceived legitimacy of the military to contribute to political processes in the country came in confrontation with the struggle between civilians and the military for political authority; and ended up getting infused with the struggle by the Balantas for political participation. The resultant power struggle between the army and the political leadership of the country has led to numerous coup attempts one of which resulted in the 1998 civil war in the country. Though not a

major civil war, it lasted for about eleven months and accounted for the deaths of several hundreds of people and the displacement of many thousands. Among other effects, the civil war reflected as well as highlighted the deep-seated splits and power struggle within the PAIGC as well as between the military and the political leadership of the country (Massey, 2004). It also truncated on-going state-building processes and further eroded the confidence of the masses in their political leadership and the state.

These issues were compounded by the country's dependence on external forces and primary commodity exports, and the existence of a rural-urban split. After independence, the new crop of Bissauan leaders were confronted by the rural-urban split they had inherited from the colonial administration (Galli, 1990:57). The split was a situation of disconnect between the rural and urban areas of the country in terms of economic interactions and flows of political authority from the centre of the country to the rural spaces. According to Rosemary Galli (1990:57), this was neither the creation of the geography of the country, the cultural differences of the respective regions, nor the differences in the modes of production of the two areas; but a deliberate creation of the colonial regime. During colonial rule, Portuguese administrators in Guinea-Bissau structured the administration of the state purely as a raw material producing enclave. Production in the country was therefore directed at providing raw materials for Portuguese industries. Accruing foreign exchange was primarily used to sustain the colonial administration and the importation of the needs of the European minority in the country. Trade and economic interactions between the country's capital (i.e. urban centres) and the productive rural areas were not promoted. This created an externally dependent urban space grossly disconnected from its rural base. A split between the rural areas and urban centres in terms of economic interactions and development also emerged.

Instead of reversing the direction of urban dependence and the split, the post-independence ruling political class continued to expand the already bloated externally dependent bureaucracy they inherited. They also continued with the profligate lifestyles of the colonial ruling class and did not prioritise the re-organisation and/or construction of the state towards meeting the expectations of citizens. Government spending in the years after independence burgeoned enormously. Between 1977 and 1981, for example, government spending grew at 19.0% per annum against revenue growth of 14.0%. Thus, showing a deficit growth of 5.0% annually. Despite revenue generation deficit, dwindling agricultural productivity and decreasing foreign exchange, the bloated colonial state machinery and lavish lifestyles of the ruling class were maintained. The ruling class resorted to borrowing from the central bank and external sources, including from the IMF and World Bank. Government's development budgets became entirely dependent on foreign funding (ibid, 58). External public debt rose rapidly and by 1980 was already more than 17 times from what it was at independence (see trend in Figure 20).

Figure 20: Guinea-Bissau's Total External Debt Stock (In US Dollars), 1970 - 2008



Source: Trading Economics 2013.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ This is based on World Bank data. Available: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/guinea-bissau/external-debt-stocks-total-dod-us-dollar-wb-data.html> [2013, November 4].

Apart from resulting in a crushing debt overhung, the perpetuation of the colonial governance structures perpetrated the urban-rural divide and resulted in a bifurcated economy (Shaw & Reitano, 2013a:2). The visible profligacy of the political elites and ruling class vis-à-vis the inability of the government to meet public expectations gradually eroded government legitimacy and contributed to further disengagement of the rural productive class. The already wide gap between the haves and have-nots was entrenched. After more than a decade of independence, successive governments were failing to provide the requisite infrastructure for increased productivity and rather provided the space for a rapidly expanding government bureaucracy and spending. There was notable decline in rice production, which was estimated at about 80,000 tonnes in the early 1980s against an estimated production of about 93,000 in 1976 and 174,571 tonnes in 1960 (Galli 1990:56). Even the sale of agricultural produce to government buying agencies declined between 1978 and 1981 partly because of reduction in production but also because of the loss of confidence in the government. The overdependence on primary products also made the country susceptible to external economic shocks, which took its toll in the early 1970s. Between 1973 and 1974, the prices of primary commodities plummeted on the world market whilst that of energy imports rose as a result of the quadrupling of oil prices.

Following the massive debt overhung on the country and the government's apparent inability to address the fiscal deficit, it adopted a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) prescribed by the Bretton Wood Institutions in May 1987. As part of the conditionalities, the country rolled back on government spending, devalued the currency, retrenched government employees and cut down on tax exemptions, among others. However, as a result of the urban-rural divide, the SAP provided another opportunity for the exploitation of the state in diverse forms as financial flows benefited urban economic

groups and the political ruling class. Rather than reach the productive sector of the economy, loans and grants that were poured into the country under the SAP ended up benefiting economic groups, merchants and concessionaires (*ponteiros*) with connections and access to the ruling class. Many politicians took the opportunity to position themselves as *ponteiros* and benefitted hugely from the loans to enrich themselves and their relatives. The loans and grants were to boost the importation of the requisite capital and consumer goods to encourage production so as to raise government revenue sources thereby dealing with the fiscal crisis. The net effect of the policies was a further concentration of wealth in the hands of few. The gap between the haves and have-nots worsened. The bifurcated nature of the country's economy became even more pronounced. External dependence of the local economy also exacerbated. Reform processes suffered an elite capture resulting in further accumulation of wealth and weakening of the state construction process.

Overall the Bissauan state became weakened by the inability of its post-independence leaders to adopt a political consensus to continue with the state-making process. They also failed to honour the social contract between the state and its citizens. The strength of the state therefore never progressed beyond what was inherited at independence. Juxtaposing the situation with Richard Jackson's (2002:38-39) criteria for weak states, it is evident from the foregoing that post-independent Guinea-Bissau never realised the ideals of a strong state. Instead, the state suffered from a serious crisis of legitimacy culminating in the disengagement of the masses from the political leadership and the state. Ultimately, the political leadership of the state exploited the structures of the state for their parochial interests to the extent that their patronage networks can be said to have existed outside the state, by functioning without respect to the existence of the state. Ashley Bybee (2011:2-30) agrees with Lorenzo Bordonaro (2009:37) that the country

found itself at a point where even

the dysfunctional (criminal, hollow, or vacuous) state [is] declining, leaving leaders to function in a new political sphere that resides outside the state. This irrelevance of the state [renders] Guinea-Bissau vulnerable to influence by outside forces, including benevolent forces such as the IMF or EU as well as criminals such as drug traffickers.

Further, existing institutions such as the army became mere shadows of their reality as state institutions lacked the capacity to formulate and implement policies and laws consistent with the ideals of the state. Even tax collection became a problem in the country. The post-independence historical narrative of Guinea-Bissau therefore became a classic example of the dynamism of variables that define state weakness. The state existed in its legal and sociological sense but was non-existent in its functional sense. Worse of all, the decreasing institutional weaknesses of the state worsened to the extent that

the institutional presence of the state in rural areas became almost completely absent, with dire consequences for the development and security of the population. On the other hand, it created enormous volatility in government, as the state contracted into being a purely self-serving entity established to further its own interests (Shaw and Reitano, 2013a:2).

The situation also created a centre-periphery access problem in which the majority in the periphery had limited access to the centre where political and business elites existed and operated. This situation invariably commoditised access to the centre where resources including IMF and World Bank loans and grants could be accessed. Political patronage then emerged as the ultimate currency for reaching the commoditised centre of the state-citizen relationship. The situation ultimately affected the construction of the state and weakened the social contract between the masses and the government resulting in further disengagement by citizens, exploitation of the state, and corruption in the pursuit of influence. State structures were sacrificed as political and economic elites leveraged

positions in the army and other state structures for gains. The institutional base of the already weak state was further weakened. It also undermined the state-building process in the country. The structural and systemic cleavages in the foundations of the state had provided the recipe for the criminalisation of the state.

In the 1990s, as access to the centre became increasingly difficult and external resources dwindled, existing political elites, retrenched government workers and business elites became amenable to other sources of external funding to sustain their extravagant lifestyles – legitimate or otherwise. As this coincided with the era of search for alternative routes by Latin American cartels, Guinea-Bissau became ideal for drug trafficking syndicates. As Mark Shaw and Tuesday Reitano (2013a:2) have noted about the impact of the structural weaknesses of the state on its institutional presence, the geography of Guinea-Bissau and the inability of the government to extend control over its many islands facilitated the operations of drug cartels.⁵⁹ The many uninhabited islands provide(d) safe hideouts for clandestine activities by cartels. The country's proximity to Latin America and its existence within a region with exploitable financial infrastructure for criminality provided the underlying infrastructure for its weakness and resultant exploitation into Africa's first narco-state.

3.6.2 The weakening influence of narco-trafficking in Guinea Bissau

Given the local context and the willingness of external cartels, a symbiotic relationship emerged in the 1990s between the military, political and economic elites and their newly found external partners. Cartels provided huge sums of money to their local partners. Between \$700,000 and a million dollars was paid by cartels to their local partners for

⁵⁹ As illustrated in Figure 19, the territory of Guinea-Bissau includes the Bissagos Islands. The Bissagos Islands are made up of about 88 islands and islets in the Atlantic Ocean with only about 20 Islands inhabited.

protection. In some cases, about 30.0% of drug consignments were paid in kind to local partners as protection fees (Shaw and Reitano, 2013a:3; Shaw and Reitano, 2013b:2; UNODC, 2010:28). A triangular relationship between the state, elites and cartels emerged with a weakening outcome on the state (see Figure 30 for the case of Ghana). Whilst the relationship between local elites and external cartels was *symbiotically* beneficial to each other, that between the elites and the state, as well as between the cartels and the state were parasitical and exploitative thereby reinforcing the weaknesses of the state. In the midst of the existing political weaknesses of the state, the struggle among elites to share in the proceeds of the illicit trade became a major weakening factor.

First, by elites making use of their positions in government to aid trafficking activities, the state became complicit in trafficking activities and therefore became criminalised and corrupted. Secondly, the struggle for control and partnership in order to benefit from the activities of traffickers, further weakened the cohesion among the political class. It contributed to tensions within the army, between the army and some political forces and sometimes between the army and the police. A September 2006 case illustrates the latter tension. Judicial Police intercepted a cocaine consignment of 674.0 kg and also arrested two Colombians in connection with the haul. Subsequently, heavily armed army officers demanded the release of the suspects and the consignment to the army. In the hands of the army, the suspects were released on bail and they fled the country. The consignment of cocaine disappeared. A second case was the April 2007 arrest of two Colombians and two army officers in relation to the seizure of a 635.0 kg cocaine consignment. After they were handed over to the military, the suspects were released on bail and were never tried (The Miami Herald, 5 November 2012). The struggle for the control of the state subsequently partly explains the role of the drugs trade in the political instability and

successive military coups that have characterised the state of Guinea-Bissau in the last two decades. The complicity of state structures in the flow of drugs through the country is such that despite being known to account for 13.0% of cocaine supplies to Europe, seizures in the country are rare.

The symbiotic relationship between the elites in Guinea-Bissau and their foreign narco-partners impacted the capacity of the state in diverse ways. Influx of narco-dollars into the country and the subsequent “scramble’ among the political elites to benefit directly from dealings with traffickers has increased the stakes in competition for political power in Guinea-Bissau substantially, both between the army and civilian politicians, as well as among the latter. This is because access to power and the control of state institutional machinery has become synonymous with access to narco-dollars. This is so by virtue of the ability to wield the authority to freely deal with traffickers. Narco-dollars in the context of such situations implies the ability of political actors to sustain political patronage and alliances so as to remain in power or to buy votes in electoral processes. Ashley Bybee (2011:6-2) notes that this situation has particularly “emboldened high-ranking members of the military, who are now vying more than ever for these positions of power.” The ensuing struggle for power by members of the military has worsened the age-old challenge of lack of separation between the army and political offices, resulting in unconstitutional changes in government by the military. It has also resulted in a situation of confusion on the part of the military about their actual role within the frame of things in the country. Rather than serve as an institution for defending the territorial integrity of the country, the army has practically taken upon itself domestic politicking duties, including unlawful arrests and detentions.

Narco-corruption also emerged in which certain elements of the judiciary are influenced by narco-dollars to release suspects under suspicious circumstances. Cases in point include the September 2006 and April 2007 cases of cocaine seizures in the country (The Miami Herald, 5 November 2012). In both cases, the suspects were granted bail under suspicious circumstances and were never tried. Apart from the influences of the army in both situations, there was an undercurrent of corruption and collusion within the judiciary.

Economically, the country has also seen a sharp rise in unaccountable foreign direct investment in real estate development. The associated economic risks and uncertainties on the part of investors have had a major deterrence effect on the activities of legitimate investors. This has dire implications on the economy of the country.

The most important aspect of the interplay however lies in the extent to which the capacity of the state has been directly impacted. First, the blatant lack of political will in attempting to respond to trafficking in the country worsened existing perceptions among citizens about the elite capture of the state. It further contributed to the erosion of the legitimacy of both leaders and the state. Secondly, the glaring inability of the state has become symbolic of a certain level of erosion of sovereignty on the part of the Guinea-Bissau state. The country has subsequently become vulnerable to external influences including other forms of transnational criminality. By its direct influence on the army, the drugs trade has also directly impacted institution building in the country, a situation that reinforces the weaknesses of the Guinea-Bissau state.

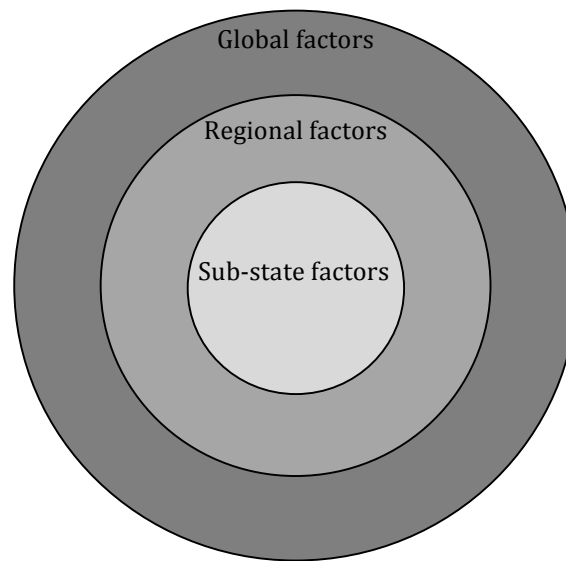
3.7 Conclusion

The rise and dynamics of drug trafficking in West Africa has a long history intrinsically embedded in the region's role and place in global trade and early colonial quest for new production centres for some of the hard drugs. The trend of growth in the region's role was impacted by the various World Wars. The return of WWII veterans from Asia thereby constituted a re-entry of drugs (cannabis in this case) and their subsequent popularisation. From then on, the spread and use of drugs has been key in the region.

Major global shifts in the demand for heroin and cocaine in Europe and America, rise in law enforcement in Europe and America, as well as drop in the global prices of primary export commodities contributed to the onset of narcotic flows through the region. However, regional geography, presence of regional criminal infrastructure and exploitable financial infrastructure provided the regional context for a thriving illicit drug business. All of these levels, however, drew on existing weaknesses of the state created and exploited in part by political and economic elites, and sub-state factors.

This establishes the concentric nature of the sphere of influence between the different levels of the factors that drive transnational security challenges such as drug trafficking and the relationship between the weakening factors of the state and transnational security challenges (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Spheres of Influence of the Drivers of Narco-Trafficking in West Africa



Source: Author

The concentric nature of the spheres of influence of factors driving drug trafficking in West Africa has a number of implications. First, state weaknesses are core to the influence of both sub-state and international factors in the spheres of influence. This provides a key to appreciating the centrality of the strength of the state in West Africa to the region's thriving criminal enterprises. This is because the state is the major linchpin on which all factors sustaining the emergence, existence and operations of criminal organisations thrive. However, the onset of drug trafficking invariably reinforces the weaknesses of the state thereby making it susceptible to further vulnerability and exploitation in a mutually reinforcing way, as the Guinea Bissau experience illustrates. Subsequent chapters will specifically address the later relationship in relation to Ghana.

CHAPTER FOUR

GHANA AND THE NARCOTICS TRADE

4.1 Introduction

Against the backdrop of the transnationality of drug trafficking in West Africa discussed in Chapter 3, this chapter zeroes in on the role of Ghana as a key transshipment point in the region. It traces the origins, history and trends of Ghana's experience with drug trafficking as well as the nature and dynamics of the phenomenon in the country. It also assesses the nature of the Ghanaian state and its key responses to the drug menace in the context of rising levels of domestic consumption and increasing sophistication in the use of the country as a base for transnational trafficking of narcotics to other countries in the region and the global North.

The chapter is based on interviews with key experts, law enforcement officials, academics and researchers knowledgeable on the situation of narcotics trafficking in Ghana. It presents both quantitative and qualitative results from official sources and the interviews on Ghana's experience with drug trafficking as well as the nature and weaknesses of the Ghanaian state despite the more than five decades of state-making. It is aimed at providing the context within which the synthesis section (Chapter 5 of this study) is anchored.

The chapter is organised into five key sections. The first section traces the socio-economic and political history of Ghana with the aim of outlining the country's state-making experiences in its post-independence era and the different governance and political dispensations the country has experienced. This is followed by a section, which conceptualises the main weaknesses of Ghana and provides a portrait for understanding the nature of the state in the face of transnational security challenges. The third section

then provides empirical qualitative and quantitative data on the drug situation in Ghana. Collected from varied sources, the presentation of the data provides a portrait of Ghana's drug problem. The next section then traces the origins of the drug menace in the country and the entry of cocaine and heroin into the domain of problem drugs in the country. After tracing its origins, the fifth section presents findings on the nature and dynamics of the drug trafficking phenomenon in Ghana in the context of the broader trend in the region and the globe. The nature of national responses to the phenomenon in Ghana is discussed before the chapter concludes.

4.2 The Socio-Economic and Political History of Ghana

Bordered by Côte d'Ivoire to the west, Togo to the east and Burkina Faso to the north, Ghana was administered by British colonial administrators as the Gold Coast. It gained independence on 06 March 1957. Currently, the country has an estimated population size of 25.199 million people inhabiting its approximate land size of 238,533 sq. km. Like most African countries, the Ghanaian population is hugely multi-ethnic with major ethnic groups such as the Akan (47.3%), Mole Dagbani (16.6%), Ewe (13.9%), Ga-Dangme (7.4%), Gurma (5.7%), Guan (3.7%) and Mande (1.1%) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013:61–62).⁶⁰

The country is credited with being the first black sub-Saharan African country to attain independence from colonial rule. Ghana's independence then became a spark of motivation for the subsequent wave of liberation struggles that Africa witnessed between the late 1950s and early 1960s.

⁶⁰ Each of these major ethnic groups is in themselves divisible into several sub-ethnic groups or tribes. For instance, the Akan ethnic group is further divisible into the Asante, Fante, Akwamu, Bono, Akuapim and others.

Figure 22: Map of Ghana



Source: The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Cartographic Section, Map No. 4186, February 2005.⁶¹

⁶¹ An online version of this map is available at <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/ghana.pdf>, accessed 11 September 2013.

The struggle for independence in Ghana began with the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC)⁶² as a political party by a group of chiefs, academics and lawyers in August 1947. The aim was to champion the cause of independence in the British colony. Five months after its formation, the party brought Dr. Kwame Nkrumah from the diaspora to become its Secretary General (Hettne, 1980:176). Apart from his capabilities as Secretary General of the party, the decision to give Nkrumah that position was to lift the popularity of the party through his charismatic leadership and grassroots mobilisation skills. From then on the struggle for independence became more animated (Apter, 1968:769). Two years into his role as general secretary of the party, Nkrumah left the party after disagreeing with Dr. J.B. Danqua (one of the founding fathers of the party) over the direction of the party and overall strategy for the pursuit of independence in the country.⁶³

Subsequently, Nkrumah formed The Convention People's Party (CPP) on 12 June 1949. The motto of Nkrumah's CPP was "self-government now." This was unlike the UGCC, which pursued independence on the basis of attaining "self-government within the shortest possible time" (Austin, 1961:287). Due to the charismatic nature and mass mobilisation prowess of its leader, the popularity of the CPP became apparent in 1951 following its overwhelming lead in that year's legislative assembly elections.⁶⁴ Of the 38 seats available to the contenders of the elections, the CPP secured a total of 34 seats,

⁶² Even though the UGCC was the Gold Coast's first post-war political organisation, it benefitted from earlier discontent and nationalism that had emerged after 1945. See Austin, D. 1961. The working committee of the United Gold Coast Convention. *The journal of African history*. 2(2): 273–297.

⁶³ As will be discussed in the next section, this cleavage evolved into the Nkrumah - Busia cleavage still evident in the contemporary politics of Ghana.

⁶⁴ It should be noted that despite Nkrumah's influence and charisma, Komlah A. Gbedemah is generally credited with the success of the party in this election as Kwame Nkrumah was still incarcerated at the James Fort Prison. Nkrumah was sentenced to a three-year jail term on 21 January 1950 for inciting a strike and for an article in the Cape Coast Daily Mail. During this time, Nkrumah and Gbedemah kept communicating till his eventual release.

whilst the UGCC won only two. Independent candidates won the remaining two seats.⁶⁵ The subsequent 1954 legislative elections also saw a massive lead by the CPP with 71 seats out of 104. Eventually the CPP, under the leadership of Nkrumah, led the country to independence in 1957 with another overwhelming majority in the July 1956 legislative assembly elections. The CPP managed to amass 57.10% of the total valid votes of 697,257.

Despite the high expectations among the population for an improvement in their lives after independence, the post-independence years became immediately characterised by severe economic hardships occasioned by the economic policies of the Nkrumah-led government. The government implemented various structural economic policies, which expanded the public sector at the expense of the promotion of a viable private sector. The move was principally as a result of the lack of a strong public sector to drive development and the government's adoption of a developmental state approach to nation-building. It was also in response to the fact that many of the liberal political elites, largely in the opposition UGCC, and traditional leaders of the various groups in the newly independent country controlled large shares of wealth in the cocoa producing areas of the country. In the period between 1957 and 1966, the government established 53 public enterprises, 12 joint state-private ventures and 23 public boards. It also instituted strict and extensive price and exchange controls (Sandbrook & Oelbaum, 1997:610). Despite the government's good intentions, the expansion of the public sector eventually frustrated the growth of the private sector. Additionally, owing to the lack of prudent economic considerations in the establishment of some of the public ventures, it soon became apparent that majority of those institutions were quickly rundown. The lack of proper

⁶⁵ Apart from the 38 representatives who were directly elected, territorial councils indirectly elected additional 37 members, six (6) were appointed as representatives of commercial interests with three (3) ex-officio members appointed by the governor.

government oversight over the running of state enterprises also readily provided the environment for rent seeking among people in the public sector working class who became self-seeking agents directly exploiting the Ghanaian state (ibid, 10; Brown, 1981:166).⁶⁶

By 1966 the country was already grappling with acute economic challenges reflected in the shortage of foreign exchange and consumer goods, increased taxation, high inflation, declining incomes, rising unemployment, banning of certain export commodities and rampant corruption in the public sector (Hitchens, 1979:173). Agricultural productivity and exports had begun plummeting. From total cocoa production of 420,000 tonnes in 1963, Ghana's production had by 1966 fallen to 390,000 tonnes due to decline in cocoa prices and high export taxes imposed by Nkrumah's government (Ofori-Sarpong, 1986:1; Kolavalli & Vigneri, 2011:203). Politically, the country had also become a one-party state through the adoption of the 1960 republican constitution that abolished the Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. There were also numerous political tensions in the country as a result of the application and/or misuse of the preventive detention act (PDA) against the country's opposition. Passed in 1958, the PDA, among other things, allowed government to jail people without trial for up to 5 years. Within this leeway, the PDA became a rubric for suppressing opposition in the country. Opposition activities in the country were pushed underground for fear of harsh government responses. As David Apter (1968:782) summed the overall consequences, "[F]rom a fraternal, open, populist

⁶⁶ It should be noted that Nkrumah's government inherited a weak state bureaucracy that was partly as a result of the lack of tutelage in state administration but also as part of colonial policy. As of 1954, for instance, Ghana had only 4 African heads of department, 10 assistant secretaries. Even after independence, about 69% of important positions were still held by Europeans till the last batch of British civil servants left in 1961. See Brown, D. N. 1981. *The political economy of dependence and underdevelopment in Ghana (1844-1966)*. A Thesis' submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts. McMaster University. October, 1981:166.

society, Ghana began to change into something else. Fear and conspiratorial undercurrent became noticeably common.”

In the midst of the country’s deteriorating economic fortunes and the many “enemies” Nkrumah had made for himself internationally as a result of his alignment with the Soviet Union and the promotion of a radical form of African unity, Ghana experienced its first coup d’état in 1966. The putsch was the combined efforts of the army and police service.⁶⁷ Rather than mass grief among the population for the overthrow of Nkrumah, his ousting was welcomed by majority of Ghanaians privy to the diminishing fortunes of the country as well as those familiar with his dictatorial tendencies. In a statement after the coup, one of the masterminds and the then Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mr. J.W. Harley, remarked in relation to the nature of the pre-coup political and economic atmosphere in the country that

we lived our lives perpetually afraid of prison, poverty, and unaware of our future. Glorious dreams were continuously unfolded before our eyes. And this beloved country of ours was plunged into dark night of misery and suffering. Nkrumah and his henchmen became rich, confident, and lorded it over us with all the ruthless instruments at their disposal – security forces, prisons and torture (quoted in Apter 1968:787).

Even one of Nkrumah’s ministers made comments amounting to a sigh of relief following his overthrow by saying that “[I]t was as if we were in a bus. The driver was Nkrumah. He drove us around one sharp curve after another. We all swayed, some more, some less, but we all swayed” (ibid, 759).

The coup abruptly ended the Nkrumah-led First Republic of Ghana and ushered in the National Liberation Council (NLC) government under the leadership of General J. A.

⁶⁷ It can be argued that the real spark of Nkrumah’s overthrow was the lack of measures to contain deteriorating economic situation in the February 1966 budget. The coup is alleged to have had the support of the US government. Nkrumah blamed his overthrow on neo-colonialists and reactionary Ghanaians who assisted traitors in the army and police.

Ankrah. However, rather than stability, the NLC's rule was to herald years of political and economic turbulence until the return of multiparty democracy in 1992. Within this period, Ghana witnessed several coups, worse economic decline and various economic policies implemented in hope of saving the once prosperous Gold Coast. Among other things, the NLC suspended the republican constitution of the country and abolished state institutions including the executive and parliament.

Through their rule by decrees and consultation with various selected groups, the NLC made attempts to salvage the economic fortunes of the country by implementing economic policies that sought to address the country's balance of payment deficits, shortage of goods and foreign exchange controls (Hettne, 1980:179). The military leaders were also known to have been receptive to the advice of the Bretton Wood Institutions. The leadership believed that the best way to restore order to the chaotic economic situation of the country was to leave the management of the economy to professionals. Notwithstanding the political will to salvage the situation, the economic fortunes of the country continued to worsen under the NLC with a rapidly depleting foreign exchange reserve, towering external debt (Figure 23) and internal divisions over ethnicity within the NLC. After 3 years of governing the country, the NLC oversaw the 1969 elections, which brought the Progress Party (PP) to power in August 1969 under the leadership of Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia.

Representing a liberal form of governance (unlike Nkrumah's socialist choices), the PP government embarked on economic policies that sought primarily to reduce government spending, subsidies, importations and currency valuation as a way of addressing the balance of payment challenges the country faced. The PP government therefore embarked on drastic austerity measures that included rollback of government grants to

university students, devaluation of the currency, ban on the import of selected goods and rise in petroleum levy, among others. In December 1971, for instance, the Busia government devalued the cedi from $\text{¢}1.02$ to the dollar, to a rate of $\text{¢}1.82$ per dollar (Gockel and Vormawor, 2004:6).

Figure 23: Ghana's Total External Debt Stock (In US Dollars), 1970 - 2010



Source: Trading Economics 2013.⁶⁸

In addition to increasing the cost of imported goods, the effect of the devaluation was an unintended reduction in the real income of citizens. The resultant spiral effect and the government's inability to control inflation stoked discontent among the middle class against the government. The harsh austerity measures and inability to immediately address the economic hardships became the basis for the overthrow of the PP government by a group of army officers who constituted the National Redemption Council (NRC) in 1972.

⁶⁸ This is based on World Bank data. Available: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ghana/external-debt-stocks-total-dod-us-dollar-wb-data.html> [2014, January 4].

In the midst of a severe crisis caused by the 1973/4 quadrupling of oil prices, plummeting of the prices of primary commodities, dwindling agricultural productivity⁶⁹ and the resultant shortfall in the country's export receipts, the NRC which later became the Supreme Military Council (SMC), declared a departure from the *laissez-faire* or free market economic policies which prevailed under the PP and rather adopted "the institution of effective planning in the allocation and utilisation of resources" (Acheampong, 1973, quoted in Gockel and Vormawor, 2004:6).⁷⁰ The government then embarked on a policy of expanding state participation in economic activity. It also reversed⁷¹ the devaluation of the currency by the PP government. The value of the cedi was re-valued from $\text{¢}1.82=\text{\$}1.0$ to $\text{¢}1.28=\text{\$}1.0$ (ibid). This move had dire implications on the policy choices of the government as well as the internal cohesion of the NRC.

The resultant negative economic impact was confronted through the printing of more money, which further worsened the country's economic situation by raising inflation to about 116.0% (Hettne, 1980:179). Within its resource allocation and utilisation policy framework, the government issued a decree for the establishment of a Prices and Income Board mandated to determine the prices of goods and services in the country. Hoarding of goods and smuggling in the country became punishable by 15 years jail term and mandatory death penalty, respectively. These policies rather worsened the economic outlook of the country and in 1979 as rampant corruption persisted in the NRC/SMC; a 15-member Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) chaired by Jerry John Rawlings, overthrew the NRC/SMC in a bloody coup d'état. In less than a year after the

⁶⁹ As of this time, cocoa production had continued to decline from 390,000 tonnes in 1966 to 386,000 in 1970. See Ofori-Sarpong, E. 1986. The 1981–1983 drought in Ghana. *Singapore journal of tropical geography*. 7 (2): 108–127.

⁷⁰ Acheampong. 1973. Speeches and Interviews, Chairman of the National Redemption Council.

⁷¹ The government reversed the value of the cedi from $\text{¢}1.82=\text{US}\text{\$}$ to $\text{¢}1.28=1.0 \text{ US}\text{\$}$. See Gockel, Fritz Augustine, and Dennis Vormawor (2004) Trade Union Country Reports: The Case of Ghana. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, February 2004.

NRC, the AFRC returned the country to civilian rule through elections in 1979. The People's National Party (PNP) led by Hilla Limann emerged winner of the elections.

Whilst handing over power to Hilla Limann, Rawlings admonished the new civilian leadership to “never lose sight of the new consciousness of the Ghanaian people” (Adedeji, 2001). In hindsight, however, this statement was a pointer to the possible return of the coup makers if nothing changed. From the time the AFRC took power from the SMC till then, they had embarked on a “house cleaning” exercise aimed at getting rid of the entrenched “*kalabule*”⁷² culture that had over the years permeated every aspect of governance and economic life of the country. As part of the exercise, three (3) former heads of state and other senior government officials and judges had been extra-judicially executed. At the time of handing over to the PNP, the AFRC leadership thought that the “house cleaning” project would persist under the new civilian administration. The failure of the PNP to continue the project therefore meant the Limann regime had failed. Before the PNP could settle into office and to take charge of the affairs of the country, a second coup d'état led by Jerry John Rawlings overthrew the PNP and established the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) in December 1981. As had become characteristic of coups in Ghana, the PNDC abolished the constitution, banned multiparty politics and disbanded all arms of government.

At the time the PNDC took power in the country, about half of the country's urban population and two-thirds of the rural population were living below the poverty line. Estimated calories intake was only about 68.0% of the actual requirements. In addition, diseases such as Yellow Fever and Yaws, which had earlier been eradicated, resurfaced

⁷² In the context of the late 1970s and early 80s, “*kalabule*” referred to the black-market trading in illegal goods outside of the government's price control. In a broader sense, the term emerged to describe the general context of entrenched corruption in the country.

in parts of the country (Sandbrook & Oelbaum, 1997:612). Despite frantic efforts, the Ghanaian economy continued to worsen under the PNDC (see Table 4). This was to the extent that the cumulative real GDP decline between 1971 and 1983 was 15.6%. Inflation over the same period rose about 122.8%. By the early 1980s, the country's economy was in desperate need of assistance in all sectors (Brydon, 1985:570; Ofori-Sarpong, 1986). On top of that the country was hit by widespread drought and the expulsion of millions of Ghanaians from Nigeria.

The resultant hardships fuelled a culture of rent-seeking activities encapsulated in the rise of the popular "*kalabule*" culture where parallel black market racketeering and hoarding of goods became a means of exploiting people. To address the situation, the PNDC adopted a set of neo-liberal austerity measures as part of an Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in 1983. The ERP was basically made up of two key programmes – set of IMF promoted stabilisation policies and SAP by the World Bank. Whilst the former sort to "realign the domestic absorption with domestic supply by restoring internal and external equilibria," the latter largely concentrated on promoting output growth so as to increase the country's economic production through efficient use of resources (Gockel & Vormawor, 2004:6-7). Despite the fact that the adoption of the SAP represented a departure from the PNDC's populist politics, it received little organised opposition in the country because the continued economic decay of the preceding years provided a stark reminder of how bleak alternatives to severe austerity measures would be to the livelihoods of Ghanaians (ibid, 613).

Table 4: Ghana's Macro-economic Indicators, 1974 - 1983

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1981	1982	1983
Real GNP per capita at 1975 prices (cedis)	520	459	404	403	435	393	365	325	320
Money supply (million cedis)	697	1009	1430	2386	3088	6058	9415	11440	16861
Current account (million US\$)	-2.7	-25.5	-144.4	-109.3	40.4	-508.1	-192.5	-294.2	
Inflation (%)	18.4	29.8	56.1	116.5	73.7	50.1	116.5	122.3	122.8
Govt budget deficit (million cedis)	357	624	870	1479	1906	4440	4675	3593	4511
Agricultural production ('000,									
- Cereals	890	672	689	639	540	674	725	543	308
- Starchy staples	7988	7462	4435	5995	4105	4349	4114	4431	3657
- Cocoa	382	397	327	277	268	254	220	179	159
Export index: 1968 = 100	55.1	56.4	59.1	48.7	40.1	39.5	40.7	246.0	32.6
Index of mineral production (1975	100	97	87	76	65	60	54	46	
Timber production, cubic metres	623	565	586	591	285	222	-		
Terms of trade 1968 = 100	100.7	95.5	99.6	103.4	94.6	95.0	61.6	48.2	48.2
Real minimum wage 1977 = 100	292	225	144	100	77	44	46	38	32

Source: Bawumia, 1998:51

By the late 1980s, a constituency of pro-democracy forces had emerged in the country. Organised groups such as the Ghana Bar Association (GBA), the National Union of Students, and other allied groups in the country were already pushing for return to civilian rule. Backed by sustained external pressure for a return to multiparty democracy, the push for a return to democracy continued to grow. In response to the pressure from organised groups, the PNDC resorted to popular mobilisation through groups such as the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) and the 31st December Women's Movement. As of 1991, the push for return to democracy had resulted in the government's initial moves to return the country to civilian rule. Processes in this direction led to the adoption of the 1992 constitution and the return of multiparty democracy. In the run-up to the 1992 multiparty elections, the PNDC morphed itself into the National Democratic Congress (NDC); a centre-left party that borrows heavily from Nkrumah's political philosophy. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) also emerged to represent the Danqua-Busia tradition of a centre-right liberal political bloc. Eventually the NDC emerged the winner of the 1992 elections with the NPP as the country's largest opposition party. The post-1992 political dispensation marked the Fourth Republic of Ghana.

From 1992 till date, multiparty democracy in the country has continued to mature. This is evidenced by two major successful power alternations between the two dominant political parties, the NDC and the NPP in 2000 and 2008, the growth of the rule of law and the entrenchment of respect for the functions of state institutions. In a region where military takeovers and electoral violence is common, the rise of democracy in Ghana and its generally peaceful nature has restored the country's respect as a pacesetter in the quest for democratisation and state stability in Africa. Commending the country's democratic

record during his visit to Accra in July 2009, US President Barack Obama summed Ghana's current state in a speech to the Ghanaian parliament by observing that:

[H]ere in Ghana, you show us a face of Africa that is too often overlooked by a world that sees only tragedy or the need for charity. The people of Ghana have worked hard to put democracy on a firmer footing, with peaceful transfers of power even in the wake of closely contested elections. And with improved governance and an emerging civil society, Ghana's economy has shown impressive rates of growth (President Barack Obama, 2009).

4.3 The Nature and Weaknesses of the Ghanaian State

Despite the praise for Ghana's progress in democratic consolidation and improvement in its economic fortunes as President Obama's observation succinctly conveys, the country still exhibits a number of structural cleavages that define its overall weaknesses and vulnerability to contemporary threats and challenges. The fault lines are many. Yet, they are fundamentally traceable to the nature of the state as crafted during the Gold Coast era, and the choices of successive governments in the state-making process after independence, as expatiated in this section.

4.3.1 The hangover from colonial state creation

Like every African state, the creation of the Ghanaian state was not a result of an organic evolution of the territory into its contemporary form of statehood as most European states did. Rather, it is a product of European scramble for territory and resources during the era of the scramble for Africa.⁷³ Historically, the British put together the current Ghanaian territory between 1844 and 1918 in a piece-by-piece manner. Initially, Britain was primarily preoccupied with the administration of the Gold Coast (see Figure 24 for the three divisions) from where it traded with the largely tough and least navigated

⁷³ The era of the scramble for Africa took place largely in the 1800s when the pursuit of national resources led to the balkanisation of territories on the continent among European powers in The Berlin Conference of 1884-85.

hinterlands. As illustrated in Chapter 3, this was largely due to the fact that most colonial representatives accessed Africa via the sea and therefore first settled along the coast and traded with the hinterlands by means of water transport along rivers. In the case of the Gold Coast colony, the resistance put forward by the Ashanti territories to colonial expansion delayed its reach and control of the northwards hinterlands (Azarya & Chazan 1987:109; Also Figure 23). The Ashantis were, however, conquered in the Yaa Asantewaa war and subsequently taken by Britain in 1901 thereby paving the way for easy access to the territories in the northern hinterlands. The Northern territories were subsequently added to the existing British-ruled territories in 1911. Later in 1918, the British Togoland became part of the Gold Coast following the defeat of the Germans in the First World War (Osei-Kwame & Taylor, 1984:579).

Figure 24: The Colonial Era Regions of Ghana



Source: (Chipp, 1923)

Due to this piecemeal approach to the acquisition of the landmass that makes up the modern Ghanaian territory, the resultant state-making process during the colonial era was a non-organic amalgamation of the southern Akan and Ga-Dangbe areas, Ashanti areas, Northern territories, and southeastern Ewe-dominated areas, without regard to existing national⁷⁴ identities and cultures of the indigenous people. The consequence of this is two-fold. First is the emergence of a country inhabited by people who share transnational identities with others on different sides of the border. An important example of this is the Ewe ethnic group whose cultural identity transcends several borders across Ghana, Togo and Benin; and the Akans who have transnational identities across the western border of Ghana into Cote d'Ivoire. In the midst of the state's inability to effectively police its 2,094 km total land boundary in contemporary times, the transnationality of ethnic identities is further driving vulnerability due to ease of cross-border mobility that promotes informal trade and several forms of security vulnerabilities. The second outcome of the approach is the creation of a Ghanaian state made up of disparate ethnic identities who least identify with each other and, if at all, have a lot of pre-colonial historical narratives and grievances that divide them. The ensuing diversity of cultural identities has created a subnational identity mix that has become the "raw material for factional fighting" and ethnic politics in modern Ghana (Osei-Kwame & Taylor, 1984:579). The emotive nature of the ethnic question remains one of the major state-making challenges the country grapples with.

Composing the country from distinct regional blocs has also provided the basis for *inter-regional cleavages*, as observed by Bjorn Hettne (1980:175). Cleavages exist between different ethnic groups and regions in the country, including

⁷⁴ "Nation" is used here to refer to a group of people who share a common language, culture, ethnicity, descent, or history. See Danziger, J.N. 2011. *Understanding the political world: a comparative introduction to political science*. Canada: Pearson education, Inc.

between Ashanti and the North...between Ashanti and southern Akan areas. This conflict is a reminiscence from the precolonial days when the Ashanti empire controlled all Akan peoples. Finally, there is a conflict between the Akan areas and the Ewe-dominated Volta Region.

There is also the north-south development gap due to the existence of a relatively rich southern area vis-à-vis a deprived northern area. *Intra-regional cleavages* also simmer in some parts of the country and constitute serious challenge to the stability of the country. In the Akan areas, there have been attempts by groups such as the Guans in the Eastern region to separate themselves from beneath Akan stools (Gilbert, 1997; Nugent, 2001:3; Coe, 2005:13–17). In the north, where the British colonial administration subjected acephalous people such as the Konkomba to existing organised chieftaincy institutions, attempts by those formerly stateless people to demand recognition and to enskin their own chiefs have ended up challenging existing kingdoms such as the Dagomba, Gonja, and Nanumba. The product of such a move is the unending tension between non-acephalous groups such as the Dagomba, Gonja and Nanumba ethnic groups and acephalous ones such as the Konkomba around the creation of paramountcies by the latter. In Ghana's post-1992 history, this tension partly explains the underlying motivation for the 1994 “guinea fowl”⁷⁵ war between the Dagomba and Konkomba people and subsequent tension in the region (Pul, 2003; *The Economist*, 12 November, 1994). Even in otherwise stable areas, tensions still exist around inter-ethnic perceptions of superiority and primordial stereotypes.

The third effect of the colonial state formation approach is that the ethnic mix has been a constant basis for political mobilisation throughout the history of the country (Chazan,

⁷⁵ This was a land dispute between the Konkombas and Nunumbas of the northern region of Ghana. The conflict was triggered over the sale of a guinea fowl. It however quickly spread across Nanumbas, Dagombas and Gonjas against Konkombas over deep-seated historical grievances. An estimated 2,000 people were killed. See detailed narrative in *The Economist*. 1994. Ghana's guinea-fowl war (tribal war breaks out over argument over guinea-fowl). 12 November 1994.

1978:461). Even in the run-up to independence, the lack of a unified subnational identity among the disparate regional groups became the basis for the emergence of ethnic political parties such as the Ashanti-dominated National Liberation Party (NLP), Northern People's Party, the Togoland Congress and the Muslim Association Party (MAP). Despite animating the politics of the time, these parties practically epitomised the politicisation of identities and sub-national interests. Since then successive regimes in the country have oscillated from a largely

southern Akan during the Nkrumah years; through a Ga-Ewe coalition under the NLC; the central Akan (Asante-Brong) alliance of Busia; the ethnically more balanced NRC/SMC constellation; a minority agglomeration with disproportionate northern representation in the administration of the Third Republic; and finally to a heavily Ewe-based ruling clique in the Provisional National Council (Chazan, 1982:461)

In the Fourth Republic, the ethnic base of political organisations is still evident in the two major political parties in the country. The NDC draws its support largely from the Volta region and, until recently, did not wield much support in the Akan areas. It is thus seen as a largely Ewe-dominated party primarily as a result of its evolution from the PNDC, which drew heavily from Ewe-ruling political and military elite.

The NPP is also controlled and run predominantly by Ashanti and Akyem political elites who have, since independence, consistently coalesced themselves around the political philosophy of the Danqua-Busia tradition. Its support base in the Ewe-Ga areas are very minimal and any cursory familiarisation with the political history and voting patterns of Ghana will indicate how ethnically divided voting patterns are in the country. Whereas this pattern can partly be explained by the origins of the founding leaders of the various parties, it also indicates persistent attempts by the various political elites to exploit existing ethnic fault lines to their political merit.

In the run-up to the 2012 elections, for example, the various political parties stoked negative ethnicity by appealing to their ethnic political bases. During a campaign rally in the northern region, where President John Dramani Mahama hails, he called on ethnic groups in the northern parts of the country to vote for his party, the NDC, because he is one of their own and that since the PNP (Hilla Limann) regime in 1979, no northerner has assumed the reigns of power, except as vice presidents of the country. He went on further to admonish the opposition NPP to give their flagbearership to Dr. Mumuni Bawumia, a northerner, if the party wants to win power. By this move, President Mahama did not only seek to exploit existing ethnic cleavages to his advantage but also acknowledge it by entrenching its use as a political triumph card. His running mate, Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah Arthur, in a similar vein appealed to the people of the Central region to vote for him because he is one of their own (GhanaWeb, 12 November 2012; The Ghanaian Chronicle, 7 November 2012).

The opposition, NPP, did not do better. Its flag bearer, Nana Addo Danqua Akuffo-Addo, whilst speaking to supporters in the Eastern region of the country, where he hails, attempted to exploit his Akan ethnic affiliation by using words such as “*yɛn Akanfuo*” (which literally translates “we the Akans”). In a related case, Kennedy Agyepong, an NPP MP was put before court for making statements that sought to mobilise the Akans against the Ewes and Gas in the country (Daily Graphic, 26 July 2013).⁷⁶

Pre-independence ideological and interpersonal cleavages in the history of politics in

⁷⁶ Honourable Kennedy Agyepong phoned into a radio talk show on 13 April 2012 to make statements reported to have aimed at inciting the Ashantes in the country against the Gas and Ewes. He was subsequently charged by the state with three counts of treason, attempted genocide, terrorism and declaring war. He was first put before court on 19 July 2012, however, a plea of no case by his lawyer, Ayikoi Otoo, led to the acquittal and discharge of the MP.

Ghana between Nkrumah and Danqua have always existed in the pre and post-independence Ghanaian politics (the Danqua-Nkrumah rivalry). It has gradually been drawn into the arena of ethnic politicisation thereby creating a multi-layered polarisation in the politics of the country. The highly competitive nature of politics in the country has implied that the politicisation of the ethnic affiliations has in turn led to a situation in which the country is evenly split between the NDC and NPP. Given the gradual ethnicisation of this split, the country is increasingly being weakened in that political affiliation has ended up becoming analogous to ethnic identities. The situation is gradually projecting the return of ethnic loyalties to kingdoms and chieftaincies in a context of multiple ethnicities were a “*we-versus-them*” partition undermines the creation of supra-national identities in the quest for nationhood.

4.3.2 Duality of the Ghanaian state

Perhaps the biggest and most evident fallout of the colonial legacy bedevilling the country is that as a result of throwing together established kingdoms into the modern state, Ghana has ended up not only as a modern state, but one that exists alongside and runs parallel to strong traditional institutions. As argued by Victor Azarya and Naomi Chazan (1987:109–110), this is traceable to the basic duality that was inherent in colonial rule in which there existed “a European administrative polity, only partly opened to a small indigenous elite, and a heterogeneous society still organised around various traditional structures and maintaining tenuous ties with alien central political institution.”

This made the resultant entity a prototype of a minimal state that touched only intermittently the lives of those within its boundaries. At independence, the alien central political institution and the territories they controlled became the modern state. The traditional structures were not dismantled nor effectively incorporated into the alien core,

now the state. Consequently, the two entities exist side-by-side each other and the tenuous ties that once existed between them persists. This has resulted in the duality of majority of African states, including Ghana. In an interview with Kwesi Aning (2007:209–210),⁷⁷ Director of the Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), he succinctly observed that

[O]n the one hand there is a parliamentary and judicial/legal (modern) system together with all its accoutrements and relevant institutions including a police force, which have been inherited from the former colonial masters. This is the ‘official’ (modern) system that appears on the surface of things and increasingly perceived by the populace as alien and corrupt. But on the other hand, there is the ‘unofficial’ (traditional /cultural) system that operates beneath the surface.

In the midst of this duality of systems, divided loyalties of citizens is nurtured by the dictates of natural social preferences and prioritisation between the modern state and the traditional “state.” The relative importance of each loyalty is a factor of the usefulness of the identity created out of it. Multiple identities eventually emerge around the state and traditional structures. Owing to the fact that the importance and compatibility of these multiple identities differ at various times and circumstances, people employ conditional identities based on what suits the context and needs (Atta-Asamoah, 2012:11). The attachment of citizens to the modern Ghanaian state has consequently become a function of state relevance and usefulness to the daily lives of citizens. Due to the inability of the state to project usefulness by providing the requisite basic public goods and services, resort to the traditional structures as a means of social security by citizens has arisen. Citizen disengagement or divided loyalty has emerged largely because the context for

⁷⁷ The interview with Dr. Kwesi Aning took place on 05 February 2013 at the KAIPTC, Accra, Ghana. His insights into the duality of the Ghanaian state expressed during the interview are also published in various peer-reviewed academic journals. Quotes attributed to him in this section are therefore taken from the published sources or references his published opinion for purposes of academic grounding.

loyalty between the state and traditional institutions are inversely related – *i.e.*, more relevance of the state implies less usefulness of traditional institutions and vice-versa.⁷⁸

The consequence of this in relation to state-citizens relationship is multiple fold. First, the state and existing traditional structures jostle for the attention and loyalty of citizens. Citizens, however, are more easily attached to the traditional structures because they constitute central part of ascribed identities inherited at birth. As part of ascribed or primordial identity markers, traditional structures and their correlate systems are deeply rooted in the socialisation of the individual and the cultural construct at the core of social networks. As a source of ascribed or primordial identity, attachment to traditional “nationality” or identity becomes unchangeable across time and space and also does not allow for attainment by all people. Traditional systems as source of identity are thus primarily exclusive. Despite being also a source of ascribed identity, attachments to identities resulting from belonging to the modern state is typically inclusive and allows for the inclusion of citizens of different traditional identities. Whereas members of different traditional identities can be citizens of a modern state, not all citizens of a state can belong to a given traditional “state.” The result is entrenched identity creation around exclusive and inclusive primordial identity markers and their associated socio-political challenges to the construction of nationhood.

The next challenge is the split loyalty between the demands of the modern state for loyalty through legal frameworks vis-à-vis the moral dictates of the traditional “state” who seek loyalty and enforce frameworks through traditional values and ethical

⁷⁸ It should be noted that in Africa people usually have multiple identities, the relative importance of the various identities and compatibility differs at various times and circumstances. People employ *conditional identities* based on what suits the context and needs. For detailed discussion, see Atta-Asamoah, A. 2012. *Overview paper on the management of diversity in Africa*. UN Special Office for Africa (UNOSA). Available: http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/reports/Diversity%20in%20Africa_final%20version.pdf [2013, August 20].

concerns. Kwesi Aning (2007:209–210) notes that this challenge is manifested in Ghana through the existence of

traditional systems of governance together with their traditional laws, often in the form of taboos, having various sanctions and systems of institutional support [...] Legally, only the first exists; the second is barely acknowledged. But realistically the first is embedded within the second. The way the first is interpreted in any given situation depends on its understanding vis-a-vis the traditional system. The power of the second system, of course, arises from the fact that it is embedded in the traditional values and ethical concerns of the people, and its ultimate sanction lies in the unseen dimensions especially with the ancestors. One may be ‘forced’ to observe the first but one is morally obliged to observe the second.

Legally, holders of traditional offices in Ghana are supposed to be apolitical.⁷⁹ This is in recognition of the duality of the state and the challenges posed by it. However, the increasing politicisation of ethnic identities and interests in the country has indirectly made traditional office holders unofficial stakeholders in the politics of the country. This is because they are custodians of the welfare of their ethnic groups and are therefore interested in the political successes and failures of their members. Apart from the resultant politicisation of the traditional leadership roles, there is a concomitant duality of legal regimes that has emerged between traditional norms, on the one side, and the laws of the modern state, on the other. This has huge ramifications on law enforcement against security challenges such as drug trafficking, as existing traditional social and “legal” enclaves easily provide havens for criminals, as will be illustrated in the next chapter.

4.3.3 Neo-patrimonialism in Ghana

Notwithstanding the formal administrative structures and their overarching rules and processes in Ghana, a lot of public affairs operations are actually governed by many unwritten ways of doing things, as is typical of neo-patrimonialism in Africa. It is such

⁷⁹ See for instance, the application of this to the case of MP in Chapter 10 (94) (c) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana. This section explicitly states that a chief cannot be a member of parliament.

that political power, national resources allocation and policy implementation are controlled by political and economic elites who appropriate access to resources to the advantage of their patronage networks in exchange for continuous stay in power.⁸⁰ Consequently, political and policy decisions by successive governments are not solely determined by general public good but are rather heavily influenced by political outcome(s) and the interest(s) of organised political, economic and, sometimes, identity constituencies. As Gyima-Boadi *et al* (2005:2-3) have noted, the net effect is that the state typically has little autonomy in the formulation and implementation of policies in accordance with public interest but is rather heavily constrained by patronage networks.⁸¹

All governing regimes in Ghana have employed different shades of patronage to their advantage. Nkrumah utilised many politically-mobilised groups such as the Young Pioneers (Tetteh, 1999), Worker's Brigade (Hodge, 1964) and Veranda Boys (Botwe-Asamoah, 2013:29). This gave way to the military-bureaucratic-chief consultative politics of the NRC/SMC (Chazan, 1982:465), the 31st December Women's Movement and the Civil Defence Organisations (the militia) of the PNDC regimes, and the contemporary Veranda Boys and foot soldiers of both NDC and NPP in the Fourth Republic. The pervasive nature of patrimonialism in the Ghanaian political context can therefore not be over-emphasised, not least its weakening impact on the strength of the state.

Apart from undermining state development, patrimonialism in Ghana feeds mediocrity as access to power is not by merit but by virtue of the collective voting influence of one's patronage bloc. It is also an avenue for the nationalisation of otherwise localised issues

⁸⁰ Interview with Dr. Vladmir Antwi Danso, Senior Research Fellow, the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Accra, Ghana, 17 February 2013.

⁸¹ In Ghana ethnic patrons, political loyalists and relatives are key components of political patronage networks.

thus worsening local issues by magnifying them into more dangerous proportions. A typical example of how cheap politicisation as a result of patrimonialism has worsened issues is the Yaa Naa murder case in which the overlord of the Dagbon kingdom, Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, was murdered in March 2002. Rather than a bipartisan approach to dealing with the conflict that ensued, the major political parties in the country rather sought to exploit the situation by blaming each other. To date, the politicised nature of the issue continues to define the political orientation of many people in the Dagbon area of the Northern region.

In the Fourth Republic, two major phenomena have worsened the trend of patronage in Ghana. The first is the *winner-takes-all* politics in the country.⁸² In the context of recent political competition in Ghana, the notion of winner-takes-all has emerged not just to imply a situation where the loser ends up in political opposition, as is characteristic of plurality winner-takes-all electoral systems, but means more. A number of issues emerge within which the losing party or former incumbent is forced to operate. Usually the winner takes all the glory and gains, whilst the loser bears all the guilt and blame for the country's ills. The winner does not consider using the institutional memory and expertise of those in opposition. Instead, the opposition becomes a target against which all propaganda is directed to discredit. Programmes and projects started by opponents are abandoned so as not to allow them to share the glory (Ghanaian Chronicle, 14 February 2011; Joy Fm, 14 February 2011).⁸³ This is usually done in the name of investigating

⁸² Interview with Dr. Vladimir Antwi Danso, Senior Research Fellow, the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Accra, Ghana, 17 February 2013.

⁸³ Upon coming to office in 2009, the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) at the Presidency of the NDC government, Dr. Tony Aidoo, told a radio station in Accra that the NDC government would not be continuing projects started by the NPP. In 2011, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, an NPP MP for Manhyia in the Ashanti region accused the NDC government of abandoning major projects in the opposition stronghold for fear that those projects would benefit people in an opposition constituency. For full details see Joy Fm. 2011. NPP MP accuses government of abandoning projects in NPP strongholds. *Myjoyonline*. 14 February 2011. Available: <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201102/61069.php>. [2014, April 06]. Also Ghanaian

contracts given by previous governments. In many cases, however, it becomes too clear that revisiting contracts is the broad rubric under which incumbents reassign government contracts to members of their patronage networks, where kickbacks are guaranteed.

The winner-takes-all politics in the country has thus increased the cost of losing elections for political parties in Ghana. Opposition parties are increasingly becoming desperate to win power by all means and at whatever cost. Incumbents are also mindful of the cost of losing elections and therefore consciously cultivate patronage networks that guarantee political survival. Contracts and government positions are given out to satisfy patrons and party loyalists at almost all levels of government – from ministerial appointments to district chief executives (DCE). Opposition parties, without national funding, do all they can to malign incumbents so as to gain political mileage. One effect of this is that stakes in democratic elections have risen significantly, with acute monetisation of political contests and vote buying. The monetisation of elections has in turn led to voracious fraternisation of political parties with various actors in the name of fundraising (Africa Confidential, 2001; Bridgewater, 2007a).

Articles 57(1) and 70 of the 1992 constitution⁸⁴ of Ghana grant enormous powers and discretion to the occupant of the office of president of the country. This has invariably

Chronicle. 2011. NDC has abandoned projects in NPP strongholds – Napo. *Ghanaian Chronicle*. 14 February 2011. Available: <http://thechronicle.com.gh/ndc-has-abandoned-projects-in-npp-strongholds-napo/> [2014, April 06].

⁸⁴ Article 57(1) and (3) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana state that the President “shall be the Head of State and Head of Government and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces of Ghana.” His roles and functions are to be exercised by “him either directly or through officers subordinate to him.” Article 70 provides for the appointment of various key positions in the country by the president in consultation with the Council of State. These positions include “(a) the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice and his Deputies; (b) the Auditor-General; (c) the District Assemblies Common Fund Administrator; (d) the Chairmen and other members of (i) the Public Services Commission; (ii) the Lands Commission; (iii) the governing bodies of public corporations; (iv) a National Council for Higher Education howsoever described; and (e) the holders of such other offices as may be prescribed by this Constitution or by any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution.” He is also in charge of appointing the Chairman, Deputy Chairmen, and other members of the Electoral Commission.

instituted an “*imperial presidency*.” The president has overwhelming powers, which includes directly appointing about 4,050 individuals. Such people include chief executives for all the 110 districts of the country and about 30.0% of local assembly members (Aning, Kwarkye & Pokoo, 2013:104). Revenue distribution to all levels of government is still centralised. Upon the change of any government, senior people in almost all state institutions, particularly the security sector, are changed to make way for new appointments, thereby placing the new appointees squarely under the influence of the new government and the president in particular. Worse of all, the terms of office of such appointees have ended up becoming co-terminus with that of the government, if not the president. This has practically over-empowered the presidency and virtually institutionalised a presidential capture of state bureaucratic institutions and their officials. It has placed other arms of government, particularly the legislature, at the mercies of an entrenched presidential patronage system. Local government structures therefore remain captured by the executive owing to the nature of appointments and resource allocation (Throup, 2011:4).

Another fallout of this patronage system is the fact that all actors involved hardly apply rigorous standards to policy formulation and implementation. Consequently, government business is exposed to nepotism, cronyism and clientelism, with dire implications for law enforcement, development and stability of the country. There are indications that political patronage has been on the rise with increased democratisation of the country. MPs gain and sustain access to power through various forms of political patronage (Lindberg, 2003:127). As such, the average Ghanaian MP is a typical proverbial “*father Christmas*” who is approached daily by members of his constituency and patronage networks for school fees and contribution to wedding, funeral and daily family expenses, among others. This has become entrenched to the extent that failure to do so amounts to

losing electoral votes. Doing this, on the other hand, perpetuates patronage; but is the way they keep themselves in power.

4.3.4 Endemic corruption

Closely associated with Ghana's entrenched patronage culture are high levels of corruption in politics and the management of public finance. Consequently, the country's performance on various anti-corruption ratings have continued to remain bad, despite being better than most of its peers on the continent. From a rank of 52 in 2000 on Transparency International's CPI, the country was ranked 64 in 2004; 67 in 2008 and 65 in 2010.⁸⁵ Evidence of corruption in Ghana prevails even in the political system. Despite praise for the generally free and fair nature of elections, allegations of electoral fraud have consistently accompanied all elections in the country since 1992, including multiple voting and enfranchising foreigners to vote for certain parties in their strongholds. In the 2012 elections, for instance, this culminated in a court petition by the NPP at the Supreme Court challenging the declared results. Even though the case was dismissed on a 5:4-vote basis, the nature of evidence tabled by the opposition highlighted the inefficiencies, loopholes and systematic negligence in the organisation of elections, which have together sometimes worked in favour and/or against particular candidates.

Owing to the lack of state financing of parties and the generally weak oversight of party funding in the country, the sources of funding of most political parties is also grey. It is public knowledge that incumbent political parties generate funds through kickbacks from inflated government contracts given to party loyalists and from donations made by party stalwarts whose sources of wealth are most times questionable. Most of the time, the

⁸⁵ This is in terms of the country's performance in relation to others. The country's score was 3.5 in 2000; 3.6 in 2004; 3.9 in 2008; and 4.1 in 2010. Data taken from various years of CPI reports. Available: http://archive.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi [2014, May 14].

sources of funds of such party financiers are either through grand corruption schemes on the basis of loopholes in the legal structures of the state or outright collusion between ruling governments officials and party financiers. Evidence of the latter in the recent history of Ghana is that of businessman Alfred Wayome, an NDC party financier, who was paid a total sum of GH¢58.0 million by the state for a judgement debt that was poorly prosecuted by the Attorney General and had clear indications of collusion by top ministers of the NDC government (Daily Guide, 19 December 2011). According to Akrasi Sarpong, drug money constitutes another shady source of political finance and has influenced Ghanaian politics in diverse ways (Ghanaian Lens, 30 June 2011; Joy Fm, 14 September 2011). The levels of corruption and perceptions of it are such that, among Ghanaians, political parties feature as one of the most corrupt institutions both in terms of their attitude in organising elections and raising funds for political campaigns (Ghanaian Chronicle, 24 April 2003).

Corruption is also rife in the police and judicial service of Ghana. Citizens generally perceive the Ghana police force as the most corrupt national institution in the country. This is precisely because of the everyday visibility of police officers who take bribes from drivers across the length and breadth of the country. It is also public knowledge that officers prosecuting cases in court try as much as possible to benefit from accused people for as long as possible.

The overall effect of these weaknesses and many more on the Ghanaian state is enormous and touches on all aspects of governance. First, the imperial nature of Ghana's presidency and its stranglehold on all levels of governance through its patronage system has effectively weakened the legislature in the performance of their oversight functions. Members of Ghana's legislature, particularly those representing the ruling party, find

themselves at the aprons strings of the executive. This is usually the case with parliamentarians who happen to be the biggest beneficiaries of the presidential patronage institutionalised by the excessive powers of the president. Therefore, majority of parliamentarians do their best to push through government policies without the requisite rigorous checks and balances. In some cases, certain crucial legislations have been approved under the influence of cash payments. A clear case of this was the payment of \$5,000 to each Ghanaian MP by the then office of the Chief of Staff in exchange for a favourable vote for the sale of Ghana Telecom to Vodafone Holdings in 2008 (The Al-Hajj, 28 November 2013; GhanaWeb, 6 July 2009). Additionally, the legislative body that is supposed to provide oversight over the executive and to make laws does little of these functions. Even in cases where these are done, MPs lack research support and office spaces to operate. Their contribution to the entrenchment of democratic gains in the country is, therefore, minimal. A typical indication of their weakness is the slow nature in which bills are processed and/or passed. The access to information bill, for example, remains to be passed into an Act after about 8 years.

Despite its generally independent nature, Ghana's judiciary is still slow in adjudicating cases and not up-to-date with the changing nature of crimes in contemporary times, especially transnational crimes such as trafficking and electronic crimes. In addition, it harbours structural corruption and perceived politicisation of key actors. Judgements on sensitive issues such as drug trafficking have sometimes raised questions about the integrity of the judiciary, as discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4 The Portrait of Narcotics and Narco-Trafficking in Ghana

Within the context of Ghana's weaknesses exist its narcotics trafficking industry. Like other African countries, however, data on the drug situation in the country is non-existent, and at best patchy. There is very little consistent quantitative data on the situation of drugs in Ghana.⁸⁶ Given the fact that the narcotics issue falls under national security matters, it is also difficult for non-governmental institutions to collect reliable independent data on the situation. Existing analyses of the situation therefore rely on government sources, which are sometimes subject to many political influences. Notwithstanding, a triangulation of multiple quantitative and qualitative sources provides reliable portrait of the nature of the situation in Ghana. Available data from law enforcement records, UN reports and interviews with various officials for this study points to cannabis, cocaine and heroin as the primary illicit problem drugs in the country.⁸⁷ Despite the problems associated with the data on narcotics in the country, the use of proxy variables similar to those employed in Chapter 3 of this study is helpful in sketching the portrait of narco-trafficking trends in the country. In this direction, five variables useful for understanding the trends are discussed in the following subsections.

4.4.1 Narcotics production in the country

First, the level of production of narcotics in any given country is an indication of the prevalence and usefulness of the country in the supply and demand relationships surrounding the economy of the drug, both at the local and international levels. However, due to the clandestine nature of narcotics production, the actual trends and volume of their production in Ghana can only be based on informed estimates. According to law

⁸⁶ Consequently, the few qualitative academic literature on the situation have variously highlighted the general lack of reliable data from published sources on the situation in the country.

⁸⁷ Other drugs abused include alcohol, tobacco and various forms of methamphetamine. These are however not illegal to possess or use in the country. This is according to officials interviewed at the Ghana police CID narcotics unit, Accra, Ghana, 18 February 2013.

enforcement officials in Ghana, cannabis (known locally as marijuana, Indian hemp, “wee,” “ntampe” or “obonsam tawa”)⁸⁸ is the most problematic of the three major illicit drugs currently circulating in the country. This is because it is the only one produced locally and across the ten regions of the country, particularly in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Western and Volta regions.⁸⁹ Cannabis is, thus, ubiquitous in the country, its use widespread, trafficking within the country and beyond rampant, and law enforcement against it challenging. Most cannabis produced are consumed domestically, a percentage is smuggled for supply to neighbouring countries and European consumer markets. Ghanaian cannabis boasts of a high delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels and grows well across the country as a result of the country’s sub-equatorial climate.⁹⁰ As such the quality of Ghanaian cannabis is high and well priced in West Africa, compared to what is produced in Nigeria,⁹¹ the region’s largest producer (United Nations, 1999:22).

Yet, a reliable estimation of how much cannabis is produced in Ghana is difficult. The quantities of seized cannabis in the country, as represented in Figure 25, and the numbers of cultivators are important indications of the possible volume of production. A narrative of some cases will therefore provide indications of the nature and volume of the narcotics production situation in the country. A pilot programme implemented by NACOB to reduce cannabis cultivation in the country gave intriguing insights as to the number of farmers growing cannabis. Between 2003 and 2005, 585 growers of cannabis volunteered to abandon its cultivation in exchange for immunity from prosecution and government assistance to grow food crops (US Department of State, 2005:465). A law enforcement

⁸⁸ Marijuana is also known in some Ghanaian localities and subcultures as *Taaba, Abele, Jah, Ahabanmono (new leave), Panyin, Gari, Hardina, Popoje, Sundu, Tampico, Rolls, Stuff, Timber, Swag, Babylon tea and church.*

⁸⁹ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013.

⁹⁰ Interview with officer of the Police Narcotics Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Accra, Ghana, 13 February 2013.

⁹¹ Cannabis produced in Nigeria has low THC levels.

operation in October 2005, also led to the destruction of a 3-acre cannabis farm in the Akatsi area of the Volta region and the arrest of 4 people including two Jamaicans (US Department of State, 2005:465). With this level of active growers in the country, the country is practically awash with cannabis production and constitutes the biggest challenge to narcotics law enforcement in the country.

4.4.2 Narcotics seizure trends in the country

(a) Cannabis seizure trends

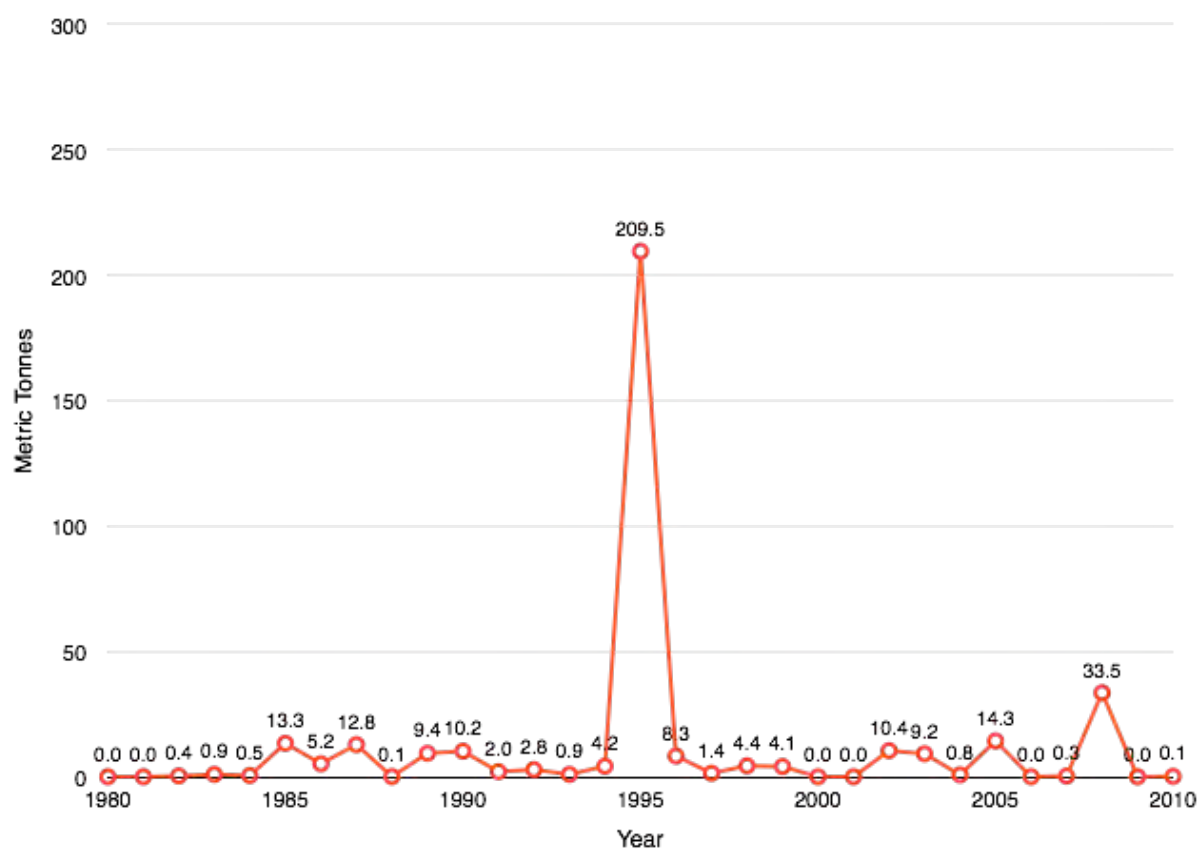
The second variable that provides insights into the narcotics situation in Ghana is the record of seizure for the three major problem drugs. Cannabis in Ghana is usually harvested between September and October. That time of the year therefore witnesses increased law enforcement activities targeting cannabis distribution networks, routes and retail points resulting in massive seizures yearly. Records of cannabis seizures in the country show that since 1980 law enforcement officials have been intercepting an average of 11.57 tonnes of cannabis (both herbs and plants) annually (see Figure 25).⁹²

Total seizure between 1990 and 1999 was 247.92 tonnes. In the years between 2000 – 2009, a total reported seizure of 68.41 tonnes was recorded. This provides an average seizure of 6.8 tonnes per annum for that decade. The differences between the average seizures in the 1990–1999 period and 2000 – 2009 period indicate a substantial cumulative decrease between 2000 and 2009. The high level of seizure in the 1990 – 1999 period is as a result of the reported seizure of 209,506.86 kg (209.5 tonnes) in 1995. Given the astronomical disparities between the reported seizures in 1994 (4,225.53 kg), 1995 (209,506.86 kg) and 1996 (8,294.19 kg), there are chances that 1995 saw a major

⁹² Between 1980 and 2010, there are 6 instances where no data was provided by the Ghanaian authorities to the UNODC. If this is taken into account in calculating the average, the actual average over the reported years will be 14,941 kg.

anti-narcotic operation by law enforcement agencies or an opportunistic interception of a large quantity of cannabis.⁹³ Drug enforcement seizures in Ghana are such that major narcotic interceptions are either the result of a major anti-narcotics police operation based on a tipoff, or an opportunistic interception by random police stop and search operations.⁹⁴

Figure 25: Cannabis Seizures in Ghana, 1980 – 2010



Source: Graph drawn from UNODC data series

The trend of cannabis seizure in the country is a typical reflection of its production, use and trafficking within and from the country to other countries. With its high delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels, Ghanaian cannabis is highly preferred and well priced in the region (United Nations, 1999:22). Its trafficking outside the country has led

⁹³ Interview with UNODC Regional researcher on West Africa, Dakar, Senegal, 25 November 2013.

⁹⁴ Interview with officer of the Police Narcotics Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Accra, Ghana, 13 February 2013.

to significant interceptions of cannabis originating from Ghana by foreign law enforcement officials. This includes a 1983 case in which Western Germany authorities seized 1.5 tonnes of cannabis from Ghana (Ellis 2009:177). In 2008, a 5.5 tonnes and 3.8 tonnes cannabis consignments from Ghana were busted in Hamburg and Antwerp, respectively (UNODC / World Customs Organization, 2009:5). In 2012, a 1.5 tonnes consignment of cannabis valued at £4.3 million destined for the UK market was seized at the Heathrow airport (London Evening Standard, 27 September 2012).

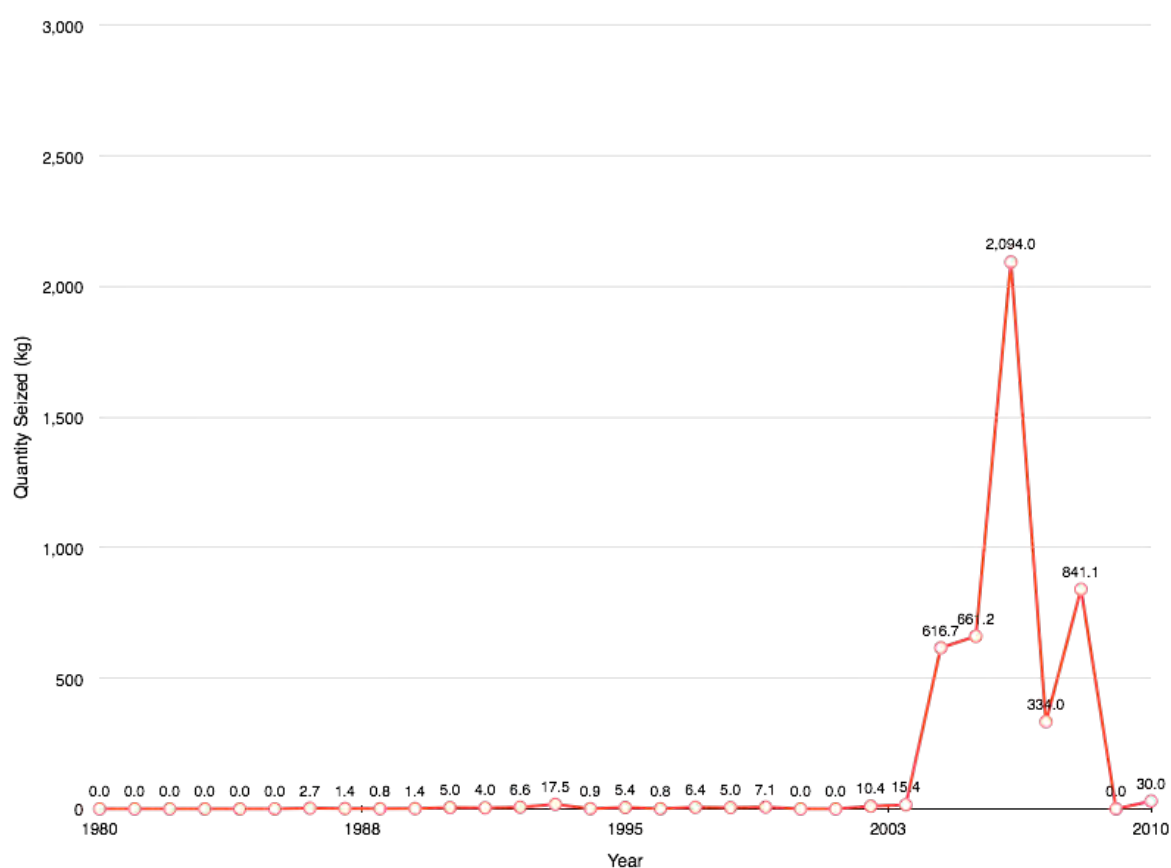
(b) Cocaine seizure trends

Available statistics from the UNODC indicates that the first reported case of cocaine seizure by law enforcement officials in Ghana was a quantity of 2.745 kg in 1986. In the period between 1980 and 1989, the highest total bust per year was in 1986 during which 2.745 kg was seized. Quantities of seizure subsequently dropped to 1.4 kg in 1987 and less than a kilogramme in 1989. However, the volume of seizure rose in the 1990s. Seizures in the 1990s period rose up from 5.0 kg in 1990 to 17.5 kg in 1993. This level of seizure in 1993 remained the highest in the decade between 1990 and 1999. The lowest seizure in this period was 0.8 kg in 1996. The decade between 2000 and 2009 can, however, be termed a cocaine boom period in Ghana. Seizure levels rose from 10.4 kg in 2002 to an all-time high of 2.1 tonnes in 2006 (Figure 26). The quantity of seizures increased from 15.0 kg in 2003 to 617.0 kg in 2004 and further rose to a peak of 2,094 kg in 2006.

Within this period, major busts were made by law enforcement authorities in the country, including the seizure of 588.3 kg of cocaine at the Tema Community 10 residence of a 59 year-old British-American citizen known as Kevin Gorman in January 2004. A total of 22 cartons containing 594 tablets were found concealed at the residence of Kevin

Gorman. The total street value was estimated at about \$14 million (12.6 million Ghana cedi).⁹⁵ Other major busts involved the seizure of 580 kg of cocaine in November 2005 and an interception of 1.9 tonnes in May 2006. The seizure of the latter quantity came about when a routine traffic inspection at the coast of the country led to the interception of the consignment hidden in a vehicle. Overall, a total of 4.6 tonnes of cocaine were intercepted in Ghana between 2001 and 2010. This represents an increase in the total quantity of seizures between 1990 and 2000, which stood at 58.0 kg (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Trends of Cocaine Seizures in Ghana, 1980 – 2010



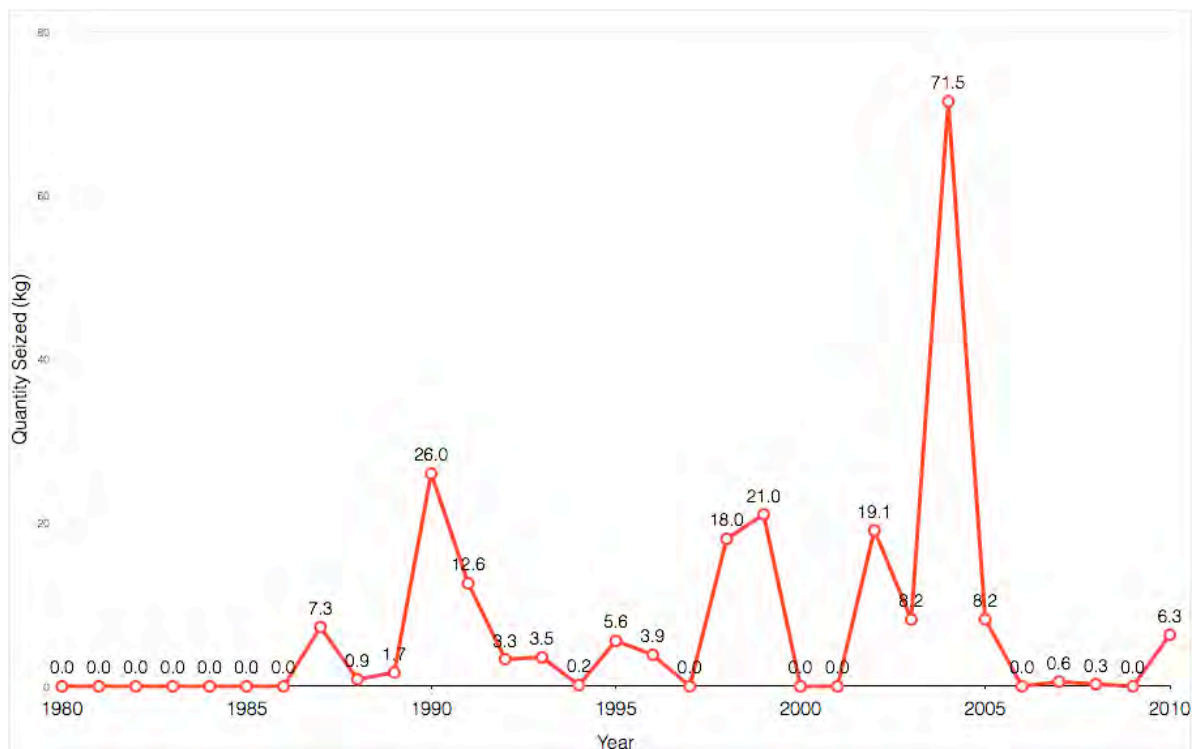
Source: Graph drawn from UNODC data series

⁹⁵ This was the estimated value of the consignment in current Ghana Cedis at the time of the seizure. The Ghanaian currency has since devalued significantly and may be higher in current exchange rate.

(c) Heroin seizure trends

In the case of heroin, the trend of seizure in Ghana has continued to increase significantly from the first reported seizure of 7.250 kg in 1987, 26.0 kg in 1990, 21.0 kg in 1999, 19.0 kg in 2002 and a record peak of 71.5 kg in 2004, as illustrated by Figure 27.

Figure 27: Trends of Heroin Seizures in Ghana, 1980 – 2010



Source: Graph drawn from UNODC data series

A number of seizures in the country has accounted for the rise. These include a 2007 undercover operation by US DEA agents resulting in the arrest and subsequent extradition of two Afghans who had conspired to export heroin from Ghana to the US, with the assistance of Kwame Asiedu, alias Clement Kwame Ablorh. The Afghans, Nasrullah Safiullah and Mohammed-Omar, were busted for selling 100.0 kg of heroin at \$17,000 per kilogramme to the two DEA agents (Bridgewater, 2007b; US Embassy in Accra, 2007; Harrigan, 2009).

The use of drug seizure records in understanding trafficking in any part of the world presents a number of weaknesses. First of all, seizure quantities and the number of arrests made could point to the extent of law enforcement attention given a particular narcotic rather than an absolute indication of the rise in prevalence. As such, seizure figures fluctuate with the direction and attention of law enforcement. For instance, in a situation where a specific operation is declared against a given narcotic, increase in law enforcement operations result in increased seizure of that drug. In that context, the rise in seizure does not necessarily amount to an indication of rise in prevalence for that period but an indication of rise in law enforcement intervention. A typical example of this relationship between increased law enforcement activity and seizure in Ghana was the interception of three stolen luxury cars that had arrived at the Tema harbour from Spain following the launch of a Container Control Programme (PCU) in 2008. Prior to the operation, law enforcement attention had not been centred on the interception of stolen luxury goods from other parts of the world and was therefore technically assumed not to exist. A general case is that of a drug like Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). Owing to the difficulties surrounding the detection of LSD, despite its prevalence, law enforcement officials are not able to report on it.

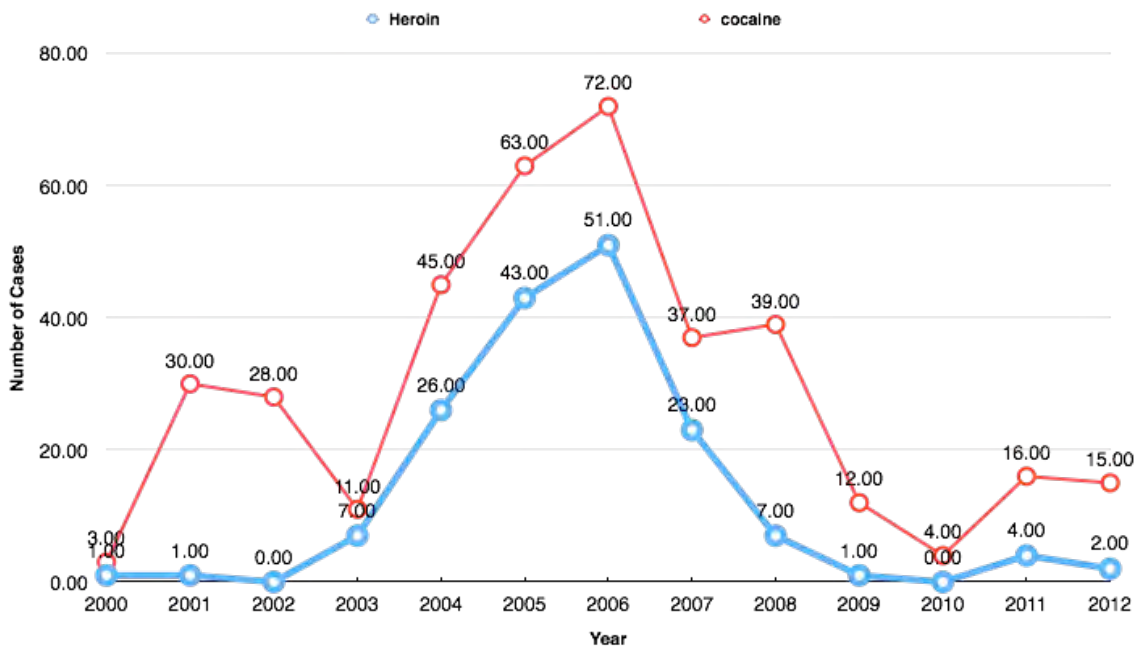
The absence of seizure therefore does not always imply lack of existence; just as increased seizure does not necessarily indicate actual rise of volume of narcotics circulating in a given geographical area. Notwithstanding, the quantum of seizures are able to provide an indication of the availability of the phenomenon in the country and the extent of its size by virtue of how many instances and quantities of drug hauls are intercepted. In the absence of accurate data as is the case in Ghana, seizure levels are an important indication and measure of the quantum of traffic surrounding the flow of narcotics in the country.

4.4.3 Narco-offences in the country

The level of criminal cases reported or recorded by law enforcement officials in relation to narcotics provide important indications of the extent of involvement of people and prevalence of the trade. This is because behind every seizure or bust, human perpetrators are arrested. In Ghana, police recorded about 770 drug offences in the country in 1991. Prior to that the police had recorded 737 drug offences in 1990 and 637 in 1989 related to the possession of dangerous drugs and marijuana. Overall, drug offenses in the country stood at 5.5 per 100,000 population in 1991 (Ebbe, 2005). Data from the Ghana Police Service, accessed during interviews for this study, as presented in Figures 28 and 29 indicate that 97.0% of all narcotics cases in the country are related to cannabis (compare Figure 25 for trends of cannabis seizure). Between 2000 and 2010, the country recorded an average of 34 cocaine cases and 16 heroin cases annually. The year with most narcotics cases over the decade was 2008 during which the police handled a total of 714 cases of cannabis, heroin and cocaine. An all-time high of cocaine and heroin offences was recorded in 2006 during which total seizure for the two problem drugs was equally high (compare Figures 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29).

A survey of 190 inmates at the Nsawam prison in 2005, indicated that 83.2% were cannabis users. A similar survey conducted among 1,366 inmates of the ten central prisons in the ten regions of Ghana between 2004 and 2005 also indicated that 71.7% of inmates used marijuana (Adjei *et al.*, 2006:593–597, 2007:391–397). This level of cases and arrests related to narcotics is not just an indication of people's dealing with drugs in Ghana. Rise in the trends of involvements over the years gives insights about the increasing popularity and prevalence of usage of narcotics among citizens in the country.

Figure 28: Cocaine and Heroin-related Cases in Ghana, 2000 - 2012⁹⁶



Source: Ghana Police Service (2013)

Figure 29: Cannabis-Related Cases in Ghana, 2000 – 2012



Source: Ghana Police Service, 2013.

⁹⁶ The graph for cannabis-related cases is presented in a separate figure for the purposes of clarity. Because of the high figures of the cannabis cases, putting all the three trends on the same graph reduces the visibility of the trends of the remaining two.

4.4.4 Activities of Ghanaian “narcopreneurs”⁹⁷

The involvement of Ghanaians in the trafficking of narcotics across the world is also indicative of the extent of the situation in the country and/or the role of the country in the global supply and demand of narcotics. In the early 1990s, majority of cases involving Ghanaians were reported to have been in connection with Nigerian drug kingpins but since the mid-1990s, many of such cases have either been (a) lone wolf Ghanaian couriers out to make quick bucks, or (b) individuals working for Ghanaian “narcopreneurs.” The activities of these two groups of people have touched on all continents of the world, particularly Europe, Asia and America. The case of a 29-member Ghanaian heroin trafficking ring busted in 1987 shows that Ghanaian traffickers were at that time importing and distributing heroin in the US with active presence in parts of Canada. The impact of the group was such that they were named among Chinese, Pakistanis, Indians, Iranians, Nigerians and Israelis as new breed of ethnic gangs at the time (New York Times, 11 October 1986; 21 March 1987). According to the 1993 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, for instance, the Government of Ghana sought the assistance of the US DEA in extraditing a Ghanaian involved in drug trafficking. The Ghana government has since the early 1990s collaborated with various governments in arranging for the transfer of Ghanaians involved in narcotics cases. This was the case because as of 1992, up to 42 Ghanaians had been convicted for various offenses related to drugs in Thailand and about 60 were awaiting trials for similar offenses (Daily Graphic, 11 August 1992; Akyeampong, 2005:438).

The Daily Graphic newspaper reported one of the most popular cases of the involvement of Ghanaians in international drug syndicates in April 1995. According to the story, the

⁹⁷ “Narcopreneurs” is coined here from two separate words narcotics and entrepreneurs. It is used in this context to imply narcotics entrepreneurs or individuals who exercise their entrepreneurship in the area of narcotics.

British Police arrested a smuggling ring involving a Ghanaian ringleader and seized 5.5 kg of crack cocaine estimated at about one million pounds. The ringleader, Raymond Kwame Amankwah, operated with a false identity and was assisted by his wife, Mariame Keita, his distributor named Andre N'Guessan and his personal assistant called Charles Oppong. Members of the syndicate were tried and sentenced to various prison terms ranging from 5 to 20 years. The group operated across various countries in Africa, Asia and Europe including Ivory Coast, Mali, Bangkok, Denmark, Switzerland, France, Italy and America between January 1993 and June 1994 (GhanaWeb, 5 May 1995). In 2007, the ringleader was again arrested in Brazil. Amankwah was arrested for attempting to assist the local drug gangs to access the European market, where the street value of cocaine was about £40,000 instead of \$12,000 in Fortaleza, Brazil (Daily Graphic, 19 May 2008c). It was later established that Amankwah travelled on a fake Ghanaian diplomatic passport thereby demonstrating the link between other forms of organised criminality, particularly forging of identity documents and the Ghanaian drugs situation (The Crusading Guide, 21 August, 2012) .

As a result of their active involvement in trafficking activities, as of 1997, hundreds of Ghanaians were already in many foreign jails in countries such as South Africa, Italy, Britain, US and Bangkok, among others.⁹⁸ On 02 October 2000, for instance, Italian police busted a syndicate of nine Ghanaians involved in the trafficking of 1.5 kg of cocaine with a street value of \$750,000 (Daily Graphic, 2 October, 2000). In June 2010, a Ghanaian was involved in the trafficking of China's biggest narcotics seizure since 1949. A 16-member trafficking ring, including the Ghanaian, had attempted to haul a 1,032.36 kg heroin consignment into China (Guangzhou Daily, 22 June, 2010). On Christmas Eve

⁹⁸ Many of these people, supposedly Ghanaians, were later found to be Nigerians using Ghanaian passports. See Akyeampong, E. 2005. Diaspora and drug trafficking in West Africa: A case study of Ghana. *African affairs*. 104 (416): 429–447.

of 2012, a 68-year-old Ghanaian woman attempting to smuggle 5.0 kg of heroin, valued at \$365,000, was arrested at the Dulles International Airport, Virginia (American Broadcasting Company, 28 December, 2012). The most popular involvement of a Ghanaian in narcotics trafficking in another part of the world is the 2005 case involving Honourable Eric Amoateng, an MP who was busted in the US for attempting to traffic heroin. Amoateng subsequently pleaded guilty to conspiracy charges on the importation of heroin in contravention of US laws (21 U.S.C. 963 and 960 (b)(1)(A)) and was sentenced to 120 months in prison (Amoateng v USA, 2009).

4.4.5 Ghana as narco-station for foreign traffickers

The country has also witnessed the presence of foreign nationals connected with drug trafficking into the country for onward transmission to America, Asia and Europe. On 22 November 2005, for instance, a total of 600.0 kg of cocaine was seized in Tema Community 11. Three Britons, an American, German and a Ghanaian were involved (Statesman, 22 November, 2005). In October of the same year, Antoon Verhaert, a Belgian trafficker was arrested in Ghana for attempting to traffic about 1.6 kg of cocaine concealed in a pair of boxer shorts and a false stomach band (ibid). An undercover operation by DEA agents with the support of the Ghanaian government led to the arrest of two Afghans who had conspired to export heroin from Ghana to the US in 2007. Nasrullah Safiullah and Mohammed-Omar were busted for selling 100 kg of heroin to the two operatives (Bridgewater, 2007b; US Embassy in Accra, 2007). In a 2005 operation by law enforcement officials, two Venezuelans were apprehended in Mempeasem for operating a drug trafficking ring (US Department of State, 2005). A 2007 cocaine case also led to the arrest of Nwakeeze Chukwemeka, a 31 year-old Nigerian known to be a kingpin in the importation of cocaine into Ghana (Ghanaian Times, 3 February, 2007c). The presence of foreign traffickers using Ghana as a base and

transshipment point establishes the country's reputation as a favourable destination for use by traffickers. It thus gives important indication of the illicit drug situation and trafficking trend in the country.

4.4.6 Narcotics consumption in Ghana

From a transshipment country, Ghana has also gradually evolved into a drugs consumption market. According to law enforcement officials interviewed, this has been as a result of two main factors. First is leakage from drugs transiting the country and, secondly, the fact that local partners to foreign barons are sometimes paid in kind (with certain percentages of the consignment) thereby forcing their Ghanaian partners to find means of trafficking them to major consumer markets or retailing them locally. In the case of the MV Benjamin, for instance, it became clear during court proceedings that the one parcel that was left on-board was to be used to pay the crew who brought the consignment into the country (Ghanaian Times, 23 December 2006b).

Prevalence of cocaine and heroin use in Ghana has led to local aliases such as "*obonsam powder*," gem, pepper soup, virus and white powder for cocaine.⁹⁹ Heroin is popularly known as "*Brown Sugar*." It also has other popular aliases such as "*Vigo*," "*Zimblim*," "*Abibe*," "*Para*," "*Ape*" and "*Figure*." The major means by which heroin and cocaine are used in the country is smoking and sniffing, respectively. In the early days of the introduction of heroin, injections were only known among health personnel but are gradually changing with increasing popularity and trafficking of these drugs through the shores of the country (Dennis-Antwi *et al.*, 2003:21–35).

⁹⁹ Other aliases are cracks, *Buu*, energy generator, crazy, Maggie powder, *soro abofo*, snow, coke, deck, fire on the mountain, and white lady.

In the early 1990s, the price of cocaine stood at ₵40,000 (\$18.0)¹⁰⁰ per gramme whilst heroin stood at ₵30,000 (\$13.8) per gramme according to law enforcement sources. In 2005, this had increased to ₵168,350 (\$75.80) per gramme¹⁰¹ for cocaine, ₵12,000 (\$5.40) per cocaine booster and ₵5,000 (\$2.25) for crack. A gramme of heroin also sold for ₵145,600 (\$65.53) whilst its booster sold for ₵10,000 (\$4.50). Cannabis in 2005 sold for ₵5,000 (\$2.25) per small parcel, whilst a wrap or joint sold for ₵1,000 (\$0.45) (US Department of State, 2006:464). As of 2009, police records indicated that the street price of a gramme of crack cocaine in Ghana was ₵66,660 (\$30) whilst a kilogramme of cocaine sold for ₵55,550,000 (\$25,000). Heroin was valued at ₵33,330,000 (\$15,000) per kilogramme with cannabis selling for ₵11,110,000 (\$5,000) and a single joint for ₵666.60 (\$0.30) (US Department of State, 2010:296).

The overall picture of Ghana in relation to drugs is one that has gradually evolved from a negligible role in the global flow of illicit drugs to one that is an important transshipment (cocaine and heroin) and production (cannabis) point. Illicit drugs use in the country continues to rise. According to NACOB, a total of 1,635 first time drug-related patients visited the four psychiatric hospitals (Pantang, Accra, Valley View (private) and Ankaful) in 2008. Of these, 91.0% were between the ages of 15 and 45. A year later, in 2009, 1,945 first time drug-related visitors made it to the four hospitals. As of 2010,

¹⁰⁰ For the purposes of accurate comparison between the prices in the 1990s and those of the 2000s referred here in this paragraph, a fixed rate of \$2,222 = \$1 calculated from the exchange rate conversions of cocaine and heroin in the early part of the paragraph (as per 1993 average Cedi to Dollar rate) is used. This is to ensure consistency of comparison. It is also to deal with the influence of the very high devaluation of the Ghanaian cedi against the dollar over the period. Where figures are quoted in dollars, the equivalent value in cedis expressed in the 1990s exchange rate is added in parenthesis. It should be noted that the cedi has since been redenominated and are quoted differently in contemporary value. In this paragraph, however, conversions of the cedi to dollar remain in the values of the old cedi. GHS refers to Ghana's new currency (Ghanaian Cedi) after the redenomination in July 2007. The old Ghanaian Cedi is often denoted as GHC (₵).

¹⁰¹ Cocaine is sold on the streets of Ghana by dips of the head of matchsticks or pen corks. A matchstick dip is estimated to be about a gramme.

drug-related patients in the same hospitals went up to 2,216 with 92.0% being youth (Ghanaian Times, 20 February 2011).

The cumulative portrait of these five variables in understanding the nature of the drugs trade in Ghana is that indeed there exists a significant domestic drug culture based on the production and consumption of cannabis, as well as active trafficking within the country and from it to other parts of the world. This has resulted in the active involvement of Ghanaians in the global drugs trade and the use of the country as a transshipment point. The rise in the situation since the first reported cases in the 1980s is also clearly evident from available data, thereby indicating that unless contained, the situation could continue to worsen in the future. The trend of the situation in Ghana, though might not be comparable to that of countries such as Guinea Bissau, is significant enough by virtue of its potential impact on the country in the context of the many fault lines discussed in this chapter, and its contribution to the global demand and supply trends of narcotics.

4.5 History of Narcotics in Ghana: From Cannabis to the “Problem Duo”¹⁰²

4.5.1 Origins of Cannabis and Cannabis use in Ghana

Even though cannabis, cocaine and heroin are contemporary problem drugs in Ghana, none of them is indigenous to the country. The actual dates of their introduction into the country are not known. In the case of cannabis, available literature associates its introduction to the return of WWII veterans from service in South Asia in 1945 (Senah, 1995:3). Before this period, however, there are indications of cannabis use and trafficking along the coastal areas of Ghana with supplies from Sierra Leonean sailors and ship crew in 1933. Citing correspondence between the colonial governor in the Gold Coast and his counterpart in Freetown in 1937, Emmanuel Akyeampong (2005:434)

¹⁰² “Problem Duo” is coined to refer to the two major hard drugs currently problematic in Ghana - heroin and cocaine.

recounts complaints from the colonial governor in the Gold Coast about the supply of Sierra Leonean cannabis to the Gold Coast market and the need for the governor in Sierra Leone to help put a stop to the trade. In December of the same year, an incident at the Takoradi harbour further established the extent of cannabis use and trafficking in the country in the early part of the twentieth century. According to Akyeampong,

a marine police constable stopped a labourer employed by the African Manganese Company at the foot of the gangway of the *MV Adda* because of his bulging pockets. A search revealed seven packets of cannabis, and under questioning the labourer admitted obtaining the cannabis from the assistant cook on-board the ship, a Sierra Leonean called Thomas Kofie. Kofie was apprehended and investigations unearthed a further 38 packets in his possession. Kofie confessed that he bought the drug from various persons in and around Freetown for three pence per packet (ibid).

Such an arrest was possible because prior to this incident, the 1935 Dangerous Drugs Ordinance had already criminalised the possession of cannabis in the Gold Coast. Similar to the arguments advanced in Chapter 3, this situation in the Gold Coast involving Thomas Kofie demonstrates pre-1945 (before the end of WWII) existence of the use of cannabis in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and the transnationality of its trafficking into the colony from other territories in the region, albeit at low levels, before the arrival of the WWII veterans. It is therefore sound enough to argue that the WWII veterans' connection to the contemporary narrative of the historicity of cannabis in the Gold Coast was a re-introduction and subsequent popularisation of the drug by virtue of the heroic exploits of the veterans and their association with the use of the herbs. WWII veterans were highly respected people in their communities. There is, however, no doubt about the connection between the re-introduction of cannabis to Ghana and Asia as suggested by its popular local name "*Indian hemp*" and "*ganja*." There are indications that the veterans returned with an established smoking culture to find an existing domestic tobacco smoking culture in the Gold Coast. The post-1945 era saw a rise in the demands

of tobacco and led to the commercialisation of tobacco production in the Gold Coast. Major commercialisation of tobacco took place in 1948. In this year, the British American Tobacco company in the Gold Coast established distribution presence and depots in partnership with indigenous businesses (Owusu-Dabo *et al.*, 2009:207).

Despite the recent provenance of drug use and trafficking traceable to the origins of cannabis in Ghana, the phenomenon of drug use in the country has a long history in the licit use of stimulants, such as tobacco, and the culture of smoking in the country. Thurstan Shaw (1960:276) has traced the probable introduction of smoking in West Africa to the Portuguese who were present in the Gold Coast (Ghana) as early as 1471.¹⁰³ However, M.D. Jeffreys (1965) has challenged Shaw to “explain how he decides that his pipes are ‘tobacco pipes’ and were not used for smoking hemp?” This is indicative of the existence of a debate about the use of smoking pipes for historical dating. In places like the Middle East, the arrival of tobacco is believed to have met the existence of an already developed cannabis smoking culture.

In Africa, however, differences in opinion exist about the sequencing. In Ghana, however, the fact that cannabis smoking was introduced after tobacco appears linguistically evident from the popular Akan language alias “*obonsam tawa*” which literally translates “*devil’s tobacco*.” It can be deduced that an existing familiarity with tobacco provided the context for calibrating the use and potency of cannabis in reference to tobacco (as the “*devil’s tobacco*,”). This implies that, at least in the Akan speaking areas of Ghana, the introduction of tobacco may have predated cannabis. If there existed

¹⁰³ It should be noted that there are variable narratives about the introduction of tobacco to West Africa. Apart from the documented view of Shaw, others trace the introduction of tobacco to West Africa to French merchants who brought the commodity to the modern-day Senegal and Gambia around 1600. Early movements of Moroccan caravans supplying the Timbuktu area of West Africa are also noted around the same era. Generally, however, the popularisation of tobacco across Africa is estimated to have happened in the 1650s. It is not certain as to whether the region already had a smoking culture by then.

a familiarity with cannabis before the introduction of tobacco, a similar linguistic calibration would have placed the reference of tobacco in relation to cannabis. Therefore an alias such as “*ntampe / wee foforɔ*” (new cannabis) could have emerged if a cannabis culture was the reference for the acceptance of tobacco. The use of tobacco as the major reference for the alias may also point to the probability that the introduction of cannabis benefited hugely from the existence of a tobacco smoking culture in the country, thereby making the introduction, acceptance and uptake of cannabis as a “*smokable*” commodity easy.

With the popularisation of cannabis use came the emergence of a cannabis culture as a result of the diffusion and popular adoption across the country. According to the *Observatoire Geopolitique de Drogues* (1995) and various NACOB officials interviewed for this study,¹⁰⁴ the immediate post-1945 period saw the cultivation of cannabis in the peri-urban areas of Accra. According to Akraasi Sarpong, “once planted, cannabis use began to spread due to its addictive properties among those who used it and its illegalisation by the state.” Its production began to spread beyond Accra and its surrounding areas along the paths of areas settled by WWII veterans. Incidentally, many war veterans settled into farming and are likely to have been the early post-War years cannabis farmers in the Gold Coast. This meant that production and supply of cannabis as a narcotic in the Gold Coast had started taking roots.¹⁰⁵

By the 1950s, the Gold Coast had emerged as an independent country, called Ghana, with *Theobroma cacao* (cocoa) as the mainstay of the country’s economy. Following the decline of cocoa prices in the mid-1950s vis-à-vis high cocoa export taxes by the

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013; Interview with Nii Lante Blankson, Deputy Executive Secretary of NACOB, Accra, 15 February 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013;

Nkrumah government, returns on cocoa production to farmers fell (Kolavalli & Vigneri, 2011:203). In the search for options for sustaining returns from their farms, many farmers began diversification from monocultural cultivation of cocoa into other crops with high demand. Akraasi Sarpong observes that this quest for alternative economically profitable and reliable crops was the beginning of experimentation and adoption of cannabis by adventurous farmers in the cocoa producing areas.¹⁰⁶

As of the 1960s onwards till the 1980s, production of cannabis in Ghana grew as its intercropping with cocoa expanded into the more fertile forest areas, particularly the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Afram Plains and Western regions. The worsening performance of the Ghanaian economy (see Table 4) following the decline in the prices of primary products in the 1970s also provided additional context for the spread of cannabis production as a reliable alternative source of income.¹⁰⁷ The expansion also reflected a widening use across different classes of people in the country. By the mid-1970s, the functional use of cannabis had emerged among the poor lower class involved in occupations such as construction, mining, transportation, watchmen, prostitution, agricultural labourers and fishermen, among others (Bernstein 2005:17-19).¹⁰⁸ For this group of people, the use of marijuana helped them cope with the high-energy demands of their occupations. It also helped certain classes of people, particularly sex and night soil workers, overlook the stigma associated with the work they did. To this date, a high percentage of people in this occupational category remain functional users of cannabis across the country.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013.

¹⁰⁸ There are so many varied means by which people use cannabis in Ghana. This includes lacing it with “*Akpeteshie*,” a local dry gin, so as to release the active ingredients into the drink. This gives users both the effect of the alcohol as well as the cannabis. Even this form of intake is a crime. See Ghanaian Times. 2007. “*Akpeteshie* laced with ‘wee.’” 19 April 2007.

By the 1990s, cannabis usage had evolved in some sections of the Ghanaian population into a subculture characterised by an ideological justification of its usefulness. Adherents of this subculture uphold the use of cannabis as having the potency for improving mental concentration, enhancing sexual performance and improving resilience for work, among others. Prominent in this subculture is the Rastafarian fraternity who believe that the use of cannabis has both a religious and ideological symbolism of resistance to the “Babylonian”¹⁰⁹ West and corrupt upper class who are seen as oppressors of the masses. This subculture has a distinct music (reggae) culture and attachment to the pan-African ideologies of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Marcus Garvey. They also have a *lingua franca* influenced principally by Jamaican creole, usually known as “*Patwa*.”

As of the mid-1980s, the use of cannabis in Ghana was widespread. Estimates of regular users was about 15.0%¹¹⁰ of the population and close to 50.0% of total local production was projected to be crossing the country’s loose borders to other territories in the region and beyond (Bernstein 2005:19).¹¹¹ A typical example of this export is seen in the 1983 seizure by Western Germany authorities of 1.5 tonnes of cannabis from Ghana (Ellis 2009:177). The continued worsening of Ghana’s economic fortunes, particularly during the famine in 1983 and expulsion of Ghanaians from Nigeria in the same year, provided an even more compelling harsh economic context for people to venture into cannabis cultivation for its quick economic benefits. By 1990, the production of cannabis in Ghana and its associated exports was matured enough to have been cited as one of the sources of

¹⁰⁹ Rastafarians use “Babylon” in reference to any government or institution deemed to be rebellious against God.

¹¹⁰ Bernstein problematises these estimates by arguing that they must have been arbitrarily generated by law enforcement officials.

¹¹¹ This estimate appears to be on the high side. However, law enforcement sources also use this figure in the absence of a concise estimation of the actual production levels and the exact quantity leaving the country.

cannabis to the Ivorian narcotics market (US Department of State, 1990:380). In 1993, the US Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics reported that cannabis from Ghana was already reaching Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Angola and the Canary Islands by truck or boat (US Department of State, 2005). Quantities seized in Ghana continued to increase till a record seizure of 209 tonnes in 1995 (Figure 25). The UNODC estimated that the prevalence of cannabis use for the 15-64 age group of the Ghanaian population was about 21.5% in 1998 and is still rising (UNODC, 2007:245). Today, marijuana production is still concentrated in the forest areas of Ghana with places like Serkwa, Sefwi and Aowin areas widely noted for their massive cultivation. Cultivation generally occurs as intercrops for purposes of concealment or as separate stands in remote areas where law enforcement presence is non-existent. Across the country, the sources and quality of cannabis vary. According to a 1999 report by the UNODC, Ghana has four different qualities of cannabis.

- a. *No seed dope*: grown in the most fertile soils, often marshy and deep inside forests, on the Afram plains, in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo, with marijuana from Wenchi, especially prized
- b. *taffeta*: dense leaves and very small (concealed) seeds, grown in the Volta Region
- c. *seed dope*: which grows anywhere
- d. *area dope*: grown close to Accra and cut early to avoid detection, giving the lowest-quality marijuana (United Nations, 1999:23).

As of 2012, the prices in some parts of the country were as low as one Ghana cedi (10 US cents) for a piece enough to high an adult and 10 Ghana cedi (\$5.5)¹¹² providing

¹¹² GHS refers to Ghana's new currency (Ghanaian Cedi) after the redenomination in July 2007. The old Ghanaian Cedi is often denoted as GHC (¢).

about a handful of compressed “*ntampe*” enough to last an adult for about two weeks.¹¹³

Distribution is mostly done through middlemen and sometimes by farmers through trucks and concealment in farm produce such as tomato boxes, fruits and vegetables. Farm produce used in concealing cannabis during transportation are usually those with strong aroma capable of overpowering the smell of the cannabis so as to conceal it from law enforcement officials who are either avoided or bribed for safe passage.

A broader glimpse of the widespread nature of trafficking of cannabis within Ghana and from Ghana to the rest of the world can be deduced from the yearly seizure trends represented in Figure 25. One of the most important cases of seizure of cannabis in recent times was the interception of a 1.5 tonnes cannabis consignment concealed in fresh fruit and vegetable freights at the Heathrow Airport in London in 2012 (London Evening Standard, 27 September, 2012). The occurrence indicates the contemporary volume of production in Ghana, daring nature of smuggling syndicates and the importance of the country as a major source of cannabis to the European market, and the wider global North.

4.5.2 *Enter the problem duo*

The introduction of cocaine and heroin to the Ghanaian context is also difficult to trace. It seems however plausible as observed by many authors on the subject that the contemporary wave of drug problems associated with cocaine and heroin are traceable to the early 1980s. Data from the Ghana Police Service, as represented in Figures 28 and 29, indicate seizures of cocaine and heroin in 1986 (2.745 kg) and 1987 (7.250 kg),

¹¹³ Cannabis is sold in “roll” in Ghana. Each roll contains about 2.50g of cannabis. Loose cannabis can also be purchased. In the case of loose purchases, however, retailers provide paper for rolling before smoking. As of 2012, a roll of cannabis costs about 10 pesewas (\$0.05); larger deals of 20-30grammes cost up to GHS 3 (\$1.50). See more details in Sensiseeds. 2013. Cannabis in Ghana. Available: <http://sensiseeds.com/en/blog/cannabis-in-ghana/#comment-9919> [2013, October 23].

respectively. Whilst these are absolute indications of actual seizures in the country, clues of the date of introduction of the two drugs into Ghana are still difficult to trace, but can be extrapolated to predate the dates of seizure. This is because between 1984 and 1987, US Drug enforcement authorities had already noted the popularity of Ghana as a transit point for heroin. During this period, law enforcement officials in the US had to seek the services of Akan language interpreters to be able to monitor, intercept and dismantle a 29-member Ghanaian heroin trafficking ring operating in the US. The group was noted for importing heroin from southwest Asia through Ghana to the US. Members of the ring were active principally in Bronx and Harlem but had operational presence in Washington, Boston and Canada. The impact of the group in the US drugs trade was such that they warranted a mention as one of the new breeds of ethnic gangs in the US besides Chinese, Pakistanis, Indians, Iranians, Nigerians and Israelis (New York Times, 11 October 1986; 21 March 1987). The Telegraph (18 September 1986) also reported Ghana as a transit point for Indian heroin to Europe through the use of false-bottomed suitcases, shoes and swallowed contraceptives in 1986. A 2006 confession of Rev. Ibrahim Yussif, a former cocaine and heroin dealer turned Christian preacher, in Ghana also points to the presence of the drugs trade in the early 1980s (Daily Graphic, 24 August 2006). The actual date for the introduction of heroin and cocaine trading in the country is thus more likely to be before the 1980s. The 1980s is actually when law enforcement authorities must have firmly noticed the existence of the drugs in the country.

From the time law enforcement noticed the presence of drugs in the early 1980s, the use of Ghana as a transshipment point continued to rise because of three key factors. First, was the already discussed domestic context of cannabis culture, which provided the ideal environment for the uptake of the trade and use of cocaine and heroin in the country.

Second was the existence of longstanding trade relations and historical ties between Ghana and the destination regions, largely Europe and America, facilitated by regular maritime and flight connections between Ghana and countries of those regions (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction & Europol, 2013:24). Additionally, Ghana was yet to appear on the radar of the global war on drugs. Goods from the country had a relatively easy access to Europe and America. Using Ghana also meant taking advantage of its high diaspora networks and presence in Europe and America thus giving West Africa and Latin America drug cartels a wider retail base in the destination countries. These factors made Ghana the ideal candidate in the search for alternative routes for supplying narcotics to the Global North. By 1993, Ghana had already become a major transit point for the transfer of heroin and cocaine to other parts of the world. The 1993 US International Narcotics Control Report noted that southwestern and southeastern Asian heroin and Latin American cocaine were transiting the country through the activities of Nigerian cartels making use of Ghanaian couriers. The Ghanaian counterparts were not only couriers but by this time had gained control of smuggling businesses from source countries through Ghana to destination countries in the West. This is exemplified by the arrest of 29 Ghanaians for shipping heroin and cocaine into The Netherlands from Ghana in 1992. The US therefore identified Ghana as the second source of illicit drugs in West Africa, behind Nigeria, in 1993 (US Department of Justice, 1993:64).

Indications of the existence of crack cocaine in the country emerged following seizures of crack cocaine for the first time in 1992 (US Department of State, 1993). The seizure gave an indication of local processing of crack cocaine in the country and the baron behind it was sentenced in 1993. Since then there have been occasional reports of raids of crack “kitchens” in the country (Bernstein, 1999:21). In February 1995, for instance, 731

wraps of cocaine and heroin were seized in Kumasi. In 1997, about 436 wraps of heroin were seized in Nima, a suburb of Accra (Daily Graphic, 11 February 1997). The country also saw a concurrent rise in the domestic consumption of heroin and cocaine. The domestic use first took off from existing functional users¹¹⁴ of drugs such as cannabis and as the price of the commodity rose, its use gradually became the preserve of the middle to upper class who can afford it. A mutually-reinforcing relationship then emerged between the splash of wealth and flamboyance of perpetrators of drug trafficking in the country and the temptation for more participants to join the “trade.” Businesses such as forex bureaus, boutiques, vehicle parts and used clothes importation readily became fronts for laundering proceeds from the illicit business by “narcopreneurs” in the country.

By the mid-1990s, the drug trafficking trend in Ghana had taken roots. The country saw massive rise in the cases of seizure at the various ports of entry and exit (Figures 26 & 27) following increased law enforcement attention directed at the crisis. The links between drug trafficking and politics emerged in 1996 with the arrest of Frank Benneh, a Ghanaian diplomat, for dealing in drugs whilst serving in Switzerland and subsequent allegations that the ruling NDC government was implicated by its handling of the situation (Daily Graphic, 9 February 1996; Free Press, 6 February 1996). Not only were the allegations of the NDC’s involvement political, the debate about the nexus between narcotics and Ghana’s politics took roots in the country. By the early 2000s, Ghana’s drug situation was matured enough with signs of bulk flows of hard drugs through the country, as evidenced by subsequent law enforcement action that has since registered the mid-2000s as the era of cocaine and heroin boom in Ghana’s post-independence history (Figures 26 & 27).

¹¹⁴ This category of functional users included musicians. A popular case is that of Kiki Gyan who confessed having picked up narcotics use whilst based in the US. Even upon his return to Ghana in the 1980s, Kiki remained hooked on drugs till his untimely death in 2004.

4.6 The Nature and Dynamics of Drug Trafficking in Ghana

As already indicated, cannabis is the main problem drug produced locally in Ghana. Its trafficking is thus a major component of the volume of drugs making rounds across the length and breadth of the country, particularly from the heavy production zones in the Western, Volta, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions to the urban areas where demand for cannabis and other forms of narcotics are concentrated. The transnationality of Ghana's cannabis trafficking has been variously noted and has two levels of transnational sophistication. The first level is made up of smuggling to neighbouring West African countries. This makes use of the porous borders of Ghana and the many unapproved routes through which other products such as cocoa, unregistered smuggled vehicles, untaxed goods, fake cigarettes and fake pharmaceutical products are smuggled in and out of the country. The second and most sophisticated smuggling of cannabis involves consignments targeting the global North, particularly Europe. Smuggling rings in this second category operate with similar modus operandi and dexterity as those of the two hard drugs transiting the country – cocaine and heroin. Cocaine and heroin are not produced in Ghana. Consignments of these two drugs reaching Ghana are primarily for export to other destinations particularly Europe and America. From 2004 onwards, about two major transshipment routes have existed in West Africa. The first route is anchored around Guinea-Bissau and Guinea, whilst the second is along the Bight of Benin in which Ghana and Nigeria are key hubs (UNODC, 2010:97). Cocaine reaches Ghana from the Latin American production countries, especially Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama and Guyana whilst heroin is sourced from Asian production countries, largely the *Golden Triangle* states of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand; and the *Golden Crescent* states comprised of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

Sea routes and air transport are the most preferred means of transportation for

consignments destined for Ghana. As such, majority of seizures entering the country have either been intercepted at the Tema and Takoradi harbours, along the many landing sites at the beach, or at the Accra airport. Bigger consignments reaching the country, such as the 77 parcels that were on-board the MV Benjamin vessel in 2006 (see details of case in Chapter 5), have mostly been intercepted at the ports. Similarly, smaller cocaine and heroin consignments are usually predictably routed via the airport into the country. The logic for this has to do with the ease with which bigger air cargoes can be detected and seized at great cost to cartels. With sea transport, goods are easily given to smaller boats to be taken to shore through the many unapproved landing sites dotted along the coastline of the country with minimal risk. The exit of hard drugs from Ghana has seen the Accra airport and the various border posts play significant roles. This is largely because of the country's role as a transit point where large narcotics consignments are parcelled and rerouted out of the country by taking advantage of direct air flights plying routes to Western capitals and South Africa.

Analysis of popular destinations frequented by Ghanaian “*narcopreneurs*” and narcotic rings operating in the country indicate a triangular trade involving the source, transit and destination countries as well as the repatriation of funds to their base in Ghana, and the region. A typical supply, demand and delivery chain of heroin by Ghanaian trafficking rings involves a trip to any of the countries in the *Golden Triangle* (Laos, Myanmar and Thailand) or the *Golden Crescent* (Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan). Usually Iran and Pakistan are preferred destinations for sourcing heroin. The consignment is flown, shipped or posted (via DHL)¹¹⁵ to Ghana where it is stored and repackaged for onward

¹¹⁵ This was particularly the case in the 1990s before law enforcement officials started paying attention to parcels arriving in the country through DHL. In recent times, cases such as the 06 September 2006 arrest of 25-year-old Ellis Nyaho Tamakloe and a DHL worker, Roger Oklu, for attempting to export cannabis via DHL to the UK. The accused were sentenced to ten years each in 2007. See Daily Graphic. 2007. Nyaho's son, DHL staff jailed 10 years each. *Daily Graphic*. 11 May 2007. Available:

transmission to the target market, mainly the US. Transiting cities in-between Accra and the source or destination countries usually depends on the route used.

In the 1990s, heroin traffickers on the Ghanaian route made frequent use of Ethiopian airlines. Thus, from Accra, traffickers transited Addis Ababa before reaching Bangkok en route to other destinations for heroin (US Department of State, 2010:273, 274). Recent seizures indicate the use of other transit points such as Kenya and Tanzania en route to or from Asia, particularly Bangkok. A trip for cocaine usually involves a flight from Accra to any of the Latin American production countries, especially Brazil and Venezuela, where cocaine is sourced and then either flown or sent via ship to Ghana for onward delivery to Europe. In the case of the MV Benjamin cocaine case (see details of case in Chapter 5), a ship rented by the Ghanaian importer, met the consignment from Latin America on the high seas where the MV Benjamin received the consignment to be sent to Ghana. Owing to the rise in law enforcement activities on frequented routes, no route is fixed. Flexibility of route choice is, thus, the equivalent of military camouflage in the Ghanaian narcotics trade. In cases of suspicions, either a route is quickly changed or trip is immediately aborted.

A transaction for purchase is usually done by ringleaders but actual collection from source countries to Ghana and from Accra to the consumer markets is seldom done by the leaders. This is usually the key role of disposable mules. The mules are the human agents responsible for moving the drugs to destination countries. They are usually people desperate to travel to the West, students in need of money, people in desperate need of some assistance or willing participants whose specialisation is delivery of consignments

<http://www.modernghana.com/news/135645/1/nyahos-son-dhl-staff-jailed-10-years-each.html> [2013, November 24]; Also see GhanaWeb. 2006. Ambassador's son busted with narcotic drugs. *GhanaWeb*. 9 September 2006. Available: <http://ghanaweb.com/mobile/wap.small/news.article.php?ID=110133> [2013, November 24].

for a fee. Owing to the diversity of interests of mules, a typical one could either not be aware of the content of what s/he is carrying for delivery or are willing people who care less about what the repercussions of their actions could be – usually numbed by the huge monetary benefits from successful trips. The major characteristic of the latter, apart from their in-depth knowledge of their role, is the fact that they take advantage of multiple identities through the use of different identity documents and multiple passports bearing different names and professions. The use of multiple passports establishes the nexus between narcotics smuggling and other criminalities such as forging of identity documents, particularly the Ghanaian passport. The ease with which the Ghanaian passport is forged is notably evident from the high number of Nigerian traffickers using Ghanaian passports and Ghanaian mules brandishing fake Ghanaian diplomatic passports across the world (Gastrow, 2011:31-33; The Crusading Guide, 21 August, 2012). On trips where visits to particular destinations arouse law enforcement attention and suspicion, multiple identities are employed so as to make their routes untraceable. Typically, the passport(s) containing the Asian or Latin American immigration entry and exit stamps are not the ones presented to Ghanaian immigration officials. The leaders of smuggling rings are usually the most adept at the use of multiple passports and identities. Some of them even exploit their links with Ghanaian politicians and financing roles in political parties to have privileged access to VIP section at the airport. In search of this, Raymond Amankwah, one of Ghana's most notorious international barons, acquired a fake Ghanaian diplomatic passports (The Crusading Guide, 21 August, 2012).

In the early days of the phenomenon, concealment in personal luggage through false-bottom brief cases, parts of Ghana-made clothes and sophisticated hairstyles were most used. With increasing law enforcement understanding of this modus operandi, the preference for the usage of personal luggage shifted to ingesting or swallowing packaged

narcotics. This technique involves packaging consignments in condom wraps of small sizes, which are ingested and expelled upon arrival at their destinations.¹¹⁶ The preference of Ghanaian traffickers for this technique gradually made it a notable feature of the Ghanaian smuggling rings.¹¹⁷ In recent times, seizures at the Accra airport and the Heathrow airport have indicated preference for concealment in cargoes destined for Europe and America. In the case of MP Eric Amoateng, the heroin consignment was concealed in a cargo of ceramic products.

As a transshipment point, Ghana's primary relevance to the trade is the haven it offers for repackaging and re-routing to destination countries. In the post-2008 era, this role seems to have attracted a great deal of attention hence a sharp drop in the number of significant seizures made. This drop is a region-wide occurrence, however, in Ghana, the massive publicity surrounding the politicisation of narcotics seizures has played an important role in this direction. In a conversation with a law enforcement officer at the Takoradi harbour, he indicated that the tough political statements made by President John Atta Mills after the 2008 elections against traffickers in the country scared the various cartels using the country (Atta-Mills, 2011).¹¹⁸ Additionally, the change in government after the 2008 elections and subsequent change of guards in various aspects of government disrupted established corruption networks exploited by traffickers. It should be noted, however, that the reduction in seizures does not necessarily reflect a reduction of actual

¹¹⁶ It is one of the most dangerous techniques and has accounted for the deaths of several Ghanaian couriers.

¹¹⁷ In a 2007 case involving this technique, Abraham Otibah, a Ghanaian resident in Italy was arrested at the KIA for swallowing 117 pellets of cocaine and upon interrogation by security personnel revealed that he was to deliver the consignment to someone in Italy for a fee of 4,000 Euros. See detailed story in the Ghanaian Times. 2007. He swallowed 117 pellets of coke. *Ghanaian Times*. 9 February 2007.

¹¹⁸ Prior to this, other government functionaries such as Kwaku Agyeman Manu, who was Deputy Minister for Interior in 2007, spoke tough against the activities of narcotic traffickers and the fact that the government was not going to permit the use of Ghana as a transship point for their activities. See details in Ghanaian Times. 2007. Drug traffickers to have it tough. *Ghanaian Times*. 15 March 2007. Also, based on a non-attributable interview with a law enforcement official at the Takoradi harbour, Accra, Ghana, 29 August 2009.

flow through the country, and therefore the region. It may point to a probable change in tactics from what law enforcement authorities are aware of or change in route.

Apart from the 10-30%¹¹⁹ of the consignment that leaks into the domestic market in cases involving non-Ghanaian rings collaborating with local actors, the bigger proportion of the goods are usually sent out via smaller parcels through the Accra airport to the West (Aning, 2007:201). Consignments to Europe usually target Spain, Amsterdam or Heathrow as various seizures have indicated. The result of the influence of this route is such that some law enforcement estimates place Ghana's contribution to the European narcotics supply chain at about 8.0% of the total quantity of drugs intercepted en route to Europe (Aning, 2010:8). The US market is another major destination for narcotics transiting Ghana. The arrest of smugglers from Ghana in November 2004 indicates that various consignments from Ghana access the US market through entry points in the US Midwest. Consequently, US aviation authorities have since July 2004 banned direct flight from Accra to the US for security reasons (US State Department, 2005). Ghana's major ports in Takoradi and Tema and the Elubo, Aflao and Sampa exits are also frequently used as exit points for drugs leaving the country for various destinations. Law enforcement sources indicate a rise in the flow of narcotics from the country by land to Cote d'Ivoire, where the breakdown of rule of law since 2011 has favoured trafficking activities. This flow is particularly easy because of the lax border security between Ghana and its neighbours and the vast unpatrolled coastline connecting Ghana and its neighbours.

Recent busts at the Accra airport have indicated that the preference of the airport and

¹¹⁹ There are variable estimates for the percentage of consignments that remain in the system as means of payment. Whilst Kwesi Aning (2007: 201) estimates 10-15%, other estimates by the UNODC (2010: 97) place the regional average around 30%. Here, a range between the lowest and highest estimates is presented, since law enforcement authorities can hardly generate an absolute figure.

other exits have been as a result of the collusion of various airport staff and workers who facilitate safe passage of consignments. This is done either by revealing the schedules of uncompromising law enforcement officers or concealing drugs in certain restricted areas of the airport so as to avoid security checks. Cases of such occurrences include a 29 December 2005 arrest of Daniel Sarpong and Frederick Cofie, both airport catering workers, for concealing 6.3 kg of cocaine at the back-galley washroom of an aircraft at the Accra airport. A 2007 search of the airport terminal led to the discovery of narcotics weighing about 70.0 kg.¹²⁰ In June 2013, Solomon Adelaquaye, the managing director of a private security firm (Sohin Security Services Ltd) operating at the airport was also arrested for his involvement in drug trafficking (Daily Graphic, 22 September 2006a; Ghanaian Times, 23 March 2007d; Daily Graphic, 4 June 2013).

There has also been tacit collusion between law enforcement officials and traffickers as revealed by the Operation Westbridge team. According to the Wikileaks cable reports from the US embassy in Ghana, even officials of NACOB have been assisting traffickers by telling them the best times to travel so as to avoid detection. There are indications that some NACOB officials have at times sabotaged scanning machines so as to enable traffickers avoid been detected (The Guardian, 14 December 2010). Before the launch of operation Westbridge, there were indications that traffickers were exploiting their political connections and patronage for the use of the VIP section of the Accra airport where searches were less rigorous. Apart from indicating the complicity and collusion of political elements, a request by President Mills to be screened on his way through the airport and for members of his entourage to be screened anytime they were travelling outside the country points to the possible active involvement of politicians, as

¹²⁰ This case led to the arrest of Owusu Yelbert, a top security person at the airport and two other security personnel. See details in Ghanaian Times. 2007. Drugs hidden at KIA. *Ghanaian Times*. 16 March 2007.

exemplified by the MP Amoateng heroin trafficking case.

From these operations, a typical Ghanaian trafficking ring or foreign rings operating from bases in the country hinges on the operations of three key actors – a ringleader (a “baron”), a coordinator and a courier. Whilst the *courier* does the delivery, the *coordinator* is the primary interface between the *ringleader* or narcopreneur and the courier. In some cases, smaller kingpins are their own coordinators. Unlike the popular Mafioso godfather-like structured cartels, the only consistent member of a Ghanaian ring is the narcopreneur who is the key indispensable individual at the centre of all operations. They are also financiers. Apart from cases where kingpins take advantage to recruit couriers, a typical courier might not necessarily have knowledge of the principal operator of a ring. This is such that in case of a bust, the narcopreneur does not get busted as well. There are also the “all-in-one” operators who buy quantities of drugs on their own for delivery at the consumer markets for profits. These could be considered lone wolves who are either new entrants or are breakaways from existing local rings.

The typical attributes of the rings are their largely strong connections to people in power, the presence of a law enforcement official either shielding them or protecting them from the grips of the law, and successful laundering of proceeds. The profitability and success of any given ring is dependent on these factors. However, these are the factors that have effectively solidified the nexus between drug trafficking and politics in the Ghanaian context. They have also been the basis for the rapid emergence of businesses that provide fronting for the drugs trade. Such businesses range from pharmaceutical companies, fashion boutiques, luxury car importation and dealerships, building material importation, forex bureaus, hotel businesses and fishing companies, among others. One of the cases that illustrate this was the one involving the seizure of 588.0 kg of cocaine at a house in

the East Legon suburb of Accra in 2005. It became evident during prosecution that David Duarte Vasquez, the accused, was using a firm known as Compimchex Limited as a front for cocaine activities (Ghanaian Times, 5 May 2007e). Another case involved the managing director of Market Direct Limited, a supposed yogurt importation company that was used as a front and cover for the importation of consignments of cocaine. In 2006, a consignment of 3,980 boxes of yogurt was found to have 15 parcels of cocaine concealed in them (Ghanaian Times, 22 December 2006a).

In cases of increased law enforcement activity and harsh response from the state, there are indications that cartels that have not succeeded in making the requisite connections for protection and/or shielding have avoided collision with the state by switching bases from Accra (the capital) to other commercial centres where law enforcement tracking of their activities are minimal, if not non-existent, for example Agona Swedru in the Central region of Ghana. In the conceptualisation of John Lea (2005; see table 1.1), such relocation of activities constitutes an evasion of the state. This has gradually resulted in a balloon effect, which has led to a rise in the activities of trafficking in, hitherto, unsuspecting towns such as Agona Swedru (Aning, 2010:7).

4.7 National Responses to the Drug Challenge

The rise in the transshipment of drugs through the territories of Ghana has not gone unnoticed by the state. There has therefore been a great deal of attempts in four major areas around which the state has confronted the scourge. First of these is the institutionalisation of the appropriate legal framework for addressing the drug menace. The country is thus a party to the 1998 UN Drug Convention, the 1991 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs as amended by the 1972 Protocol. Bilaterally, the country has extradition treaties with the

US and UK governed by the 1931 US-UK extradition treaty and mutual customs assistance agreements signed in 2003 with the US government. In line with the legal framework of extradition, three people were extradited to the US for prosecution in the 1990s.¹²¹ The 2007 extradition of two Afghan heroin dealers to the US for prosecution also happened under this law.

Domestically, the enactment of the 1935 Dangerous Drugs Ordinance marked the beginning of attempts by pre-independence authorities to control drug trafficking and abuse. In recent times, PNDC Law 236 promulgated in 1990 on Narcotics Drugs Control, Enforcement and Sanctions remains the key legal framework for dealing with narcotics in the country. Key provisions of this law criminalise unlawful¹²² possession, production, importation and exportation of any narcotic drug. The law stipulates a term of not less than ten years for any offence related to narcotics in the country.¹²³ Despite persistent requests for amendments to certain sections of some of the laws, particularly PNDC Law 236, the laws collectively constitute the legal framework within which the war on drugs in Ghana is being waged. Various Acts of Parliament touching on money laundering and other related issues supplement the framework.

The legal framework in Ghana has been the basis for the establishment of the requisite institutions for operationalising the legal provisions and implementing national anti-narcotics response programmes. At the forefront of institutions driving anti-narcotics operations in Ghana is NACOB. Created in 1990 by Section 55 of the PNDC Law 236, NACOB is placed under the Ministry of Interior and is primarily responsible for the

¹²¹ One person was extradited in 1990 and two in 1993.

¹²² The Ghana Standards Board (GSB) is the only statutory body permitted by law to import drugs such as cocaine in limited quantities for medical purposes. Individual imports are not permitted. The International Narcotics Control Board has given Ghana a quota of 10 grammes per annum. In 2007, for instance, the GSB imported 0.92 grammes of the assigned quota in two major instalments for analysis. See the Ghanaian Times. 2007. Prosecution concludes case in cocaine trial. *Ghanaian Times*. 10 May 2007.

¹²³ See Part 1, subsection 1 & 2 of PNDC Law 236.

formulation and enforcement of narcotics laws in the country as well as the implementation of activities aimed at preventing the use, importation and exportation of narcotics. The Board remains an umbrella organisation hosting staff seconded from various member institutions. Its operations have involved investigations and interdictions in collaboration with the Ghana Police Service (GPS). As an unarmed institution, NACOB relies on the police service for both investigation and armed support, where necessary.

Through NACOB, Ghana's anti-narcotics enforcement operations have hinged on seizures and search and destroy operations¹²⁴ with the aim of reducing supply. There are also important operations and programmes aimed at demand reduction. Demand reduction operations are centred on public education on the health risks associated with the use of narcotics and the dangers associated with the trafficking of narcotics. NACOB does this in partnership with educational institutions, mass media outlets, and media houses in the publication of happenings in narcotics control in the country.¹²⁵ In the implementation of various programmes in these broad areas, NACOB works in partnership with a number of Western countries in the area of capacity building and equipment provision for domestic operations. The US government has in this direction regularly helped equip NACOB with important detection equipment such as full body scanners and various forms of training for all the agencies manning the ports of entry into the country (US Department of State, 2011). Technical assistance is also provided to institutions such as the Financial Intelligence Centre, which is key to the fight against money laundering in the country. Similarly, the British government has since November

¹²⁴ Search and destroy operations in the country have usually targeted cannabis farms across the country. In 2005, for example, NACOB investigated a number of cannabis farms and distribution networks and succeeded in destroying several acres of cannabis farms and plants.

¹²⁵ Interview with Mr. Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Director of the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Accra, 16 February 2013. Also based on interviews with representatives of the Narcotics unit of the Police CID unit, Accra, 13 February 2013.

2006, worked in partnership with the Government of Ghana in supply reduction through operation Westbridge. Under this operation, the country has seen the installation and manning of modern scanning equipment at the Accra airport and is credited with majority of recent narcotics interdictions at the airport since 2006 (ibid).

Notwithstanding these, the fight against drugs in Ghana remains daunting owing to the rapidly evolving sophistication and elusive nature of the illicit flow in and out of the country, on one hand, and the weaknesses in the operational, legal and institutional architecture at the forefront of anti-narcotics operations, on the other. These challenges have been evident in the inability of law enforcement actions to dismantle bigger operational rings. Instead, interdiction efforts have usually succeeded in arresting low-level perpetrators, such as peddlers and couriers, who are at the lower end of the narcotics supply chain in the country. As such little effort have been made towards containing established networks that are key to the nature and form of the drug menace in the country.

NACOB officials lament the lack of proper understanding of the nature and extent of sophistication of the drug menace and trafficking networks in the country as well as the incapacity of the legal system to respond adequately to the challenge.¹²⁶ Apart from challenges regarding the inadequacy of the capacity of the legal system to prosecute cases, the legal system in the country is slow, and thus, riddled with various forms of corruption at the many levels where attention is needed. Consequently, there is an extremely slow rate of conviction. For instance, between 2001 and 2004, a total of 667 narcotics cases were logged before courts in the Ashanti region. By 2005 only 33.6% (224) of the cases had been dealt with (US Department of State, 2005). At such a slow

¹²⁶ Interview with Nii Lante Blankson, Deputy Executive Secretary of NACOB, Accra, 15 February 2013.

rate, the judicial system across the country has gradually accumulated a backlog of narcotics cases thereby increasing the risks of corruption and meddling in pending cases by trafficking networks with enough gravitas in the Ghanaian society. Against this backdrop, the 2005 US State Department report on narcotics lamented that

NACOB officials complain that courts often release suspected smugglers, including foreign nationals, on bail that is often set at only a tiny fraction of the value of the drugs found in a suspect's possession. The court requirement of a surety in addition to bail is often either dropped, or court registrars [will] fraudulently use [the] identical property as surety for multiple cases (ibid).

These are compounded by inadequate institutional capacity by the police service to properly investigate the many drug cases to enable proper prosecution. Poor prosecutions have consequently led to the loss of many cases. According to Kwesi Aning *et al* (2012:111), as a result of poor preparation on the part of prosecutors, some Judges have sometimes had to ask prosecuting officers to go back and properly prepare thereby slowing the process as well as increasing the risk of losing otherwise watertight cases.

There is also a challenge related to inter-agency collaboration. Not only does this happen at the international level between NACOB and some of its international counterparts, domestically the collaboration between NACOB, the police, the Bureau of National Investigation, Ghana Navy, the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), and the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) for fighting narcotics¹²⁷ is constantly challenged by inadequate information sharing due to administrative bottlenecks and inadequate equipment. This is to the extent that sometimes information about arrests and quantities of seizure put out by the different institutions in the partnership against narcotics in the country has been conflicting (ibid). Such a situation makes room for tampering with exhibits, thereby resulting in inconsistencies in legal sentences.

¹²⁷ EOCO was established by Act 804 of 2010 as a Public Services institution augmenting efforts against corruption in the state.

4.8 Conclusion

As observed by Mohammed Ayoob (1992:64) and Richard Jackson (2002:38) in relation to the Third World, state-making has been the primary preoccupation of successive pre and post-independence governments in Ghana. Despite the strides in the realisation of Ghana's state-making objectives as illustrated in this chapter, the primacy of state-making in the country is such that the economic, social and political challenges associated with it have been central to the nature and weaknesses of the modern Ghanaian state. Consequently, Ghana grapples with a number of important weaknesses, which together define the nature of the state. Concurrently, post-independence Ghana has witnessed the recent provenance of the introduction and proliferation of cannabis, cocaine and heroin. The onset of the drug trafficking phenomenon has gradually progressed from the use of Ghana as a transshipment point to a key player in the narrative of Africa's role in the global supply of illicit drugs as well as an emerging consumer market. The evolution of the phenomenon therefore has developed alongside state-making attempts and the gradual maturation of the Ghanaian state. There are therefore indications that the onset and evolution of the three key problem drugs in the country have benefitted from challenges associated with the state-making process or the weaknesses of the state.

Yet, the raw data presented in this chapter about the trends and dynamics alone do not adequately answer questions that arise around the question of the relationship between the country's weaknesses and its drug trends. The next chapter will therefore establish clearly how Ghana's weaknesses facilitated the onset of the drug situation and how the drug situation in turn reinforced the country's weaknesses.

CHAPTER FIVE

STATE WEAKNESSES AND DRUG TRAFFICKING IN GHANA

5.1 Introduction

From the recent history of drugs in Ghana, it is evident that the country has had at least three major encounters with the phenomenon. The first encounter was earlier flows from other parts of the region to the coastal areas of the Gold Coast via crew working on ships reaching the shores of the then British colony. The flow of cannabis from Sierra Leone as was the case involving Thomas Kofie in 1933 (see Chapter 4), and indeed even cases that may precede it, was more accidental and unintended. Despite the evident existence of some market for cannabis along the coast at that time therefore there appear not to have been a planned attempt to introduce the drug to the Gold Coast or to drag the country into the global supply and demand chain of cannabis.

The country's second major encounter of cannabis associated with WWII veterans was also unintended. Individual veterans brought the cannabis culture along with them after their service in WWII. The adoption and subsequent spread of the drug therefore appear not to have been a calculated attempt to introduce the drug to the country. The same can be said of Ghana's third encounter with drug trafficking through the emergence of heroin and cocaine use and their subsequent trafficking in the country in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The pursuit of alternative routes to the global North led to the use of West African countries like Ghana as transshipment points by Latin American cartels.

In all these instances, the country encountered the drug trafficking phenomenon by virtue of its place in the global flow of goods and services as well as its connectivity to the world by means of trade, transport and communication. Ghana's encounter with drug

trafficking therefore has been practically as a result of its interaction with legitimate external forces, particularly global economic activities with other parts of the world. The unintended emergence of illicit trade, such as drug trafficking alongside licit activities thus reflects the country's experience with the darkside of globalisation.

So if the phenomenon of drug trafficking in Ghana emerged as an unintended encounter rather than homegrown, how did the phenomenon develop from one that was external to the country to one that is now a major domestic issue at the level of trafficking and consumption? To what extent did the external factors driving the phenomenon exploit internal vulnerabilities to facilitate the emergence and eventual existence of drug trafficking in the country? To interrogate these questions within the context of transnational security challenges and statehood, this chapter juxtaposes the nature and weaknesses of the Ghanaian state with the emergence of drug trafficking in the country. The chapter is organised into four main sections. Section one provides details of six key high-profile narcotics cases in Ghana. Section two examines the role of Ghana's weaknesses as driver of drug trafficking from the details of the cases. Section three conceptualises the nexus between systematic rot in Ghana and the emergence of the requisite favourable environment for criminals to thrive. The fourth section does the reverse of section two. It discusses the extent to which drug trafficking has driven and/or drives weaknesses in Ghana. After this, the chapter addresses the question of drug trafficking and statehood in Ghana, before concluding.

5.2 Selected Key Narcotics Cases in Ghana

Of the many cases cited in the previous chapters as having illustrated drug trafficking in Ghana, this section details six (6) key cases and makes use of them as the basis for analysis. The choice of a multiple case approach at this level is informed primarily by the

fact that painting a complete picture of the nature of the criminal underworld anywhere in the world is difficult. However, details of every interception of drug hauls provide some important glimpses into some aspects of the phenomenon. Reconstructing cases where there is adequate information as the basis for analysis therefore provides the merit of detailed insight on multiple dimensions from the perspective of the different cases. Such an approach helps address the lack of information on drug trafficking in Ghana and also provides multiple perspectives as a framework for understanding the issues more broadly. This approach prevents over-generalisation of trends and patterns of the phenomenon in the country. The choice of the cases is informed by the high profile nature of each as well as the availability of information on them. In-depth study of these cases provides for the achievement of the requisite detail useful for justifiable conceptualisation and generalisation.

5.2.1 Tema Community 10 cocaine case

Acting on intelligence received from its UK counterparts, NACOB agents raided the Tema Community 10 residence of Kevin Dinsdale Gorman, a British-American citizen on 07 January 2004. The raid resulted in the interception of 588.3 kg of cocaine concealed in a special compartment behind a mirror in the house. According to the facts of the case availed to the Supreme Court presided by Justice Atuguba on 08 December 2010, upon receiving the information, NACOB put Gorman's activities under surveillance (*Kamil v The Republic*, 2010). His telephone communication in December 2003 indicated that Gorman was communicating with several individuals about the importation of a consignment disguised as fish to land at the Prampram beach in Accra. Around the same time, Gorman and someone named Mohammed Ibrahim Kamil visited the Captains Lodge, located at Abea, near Prampram, and informed people at the Lodge about a consignment of fish he was expecting to land at the beach. Three days later,

Craig Alexander Pinnick and four others only referred to as “black men” landed the supposed consignment of fish at the beach. Upon the arrival of the consignment, Tetteh Kofi, who worked as a watchman at the Lodge, and a fisherman named Jonathan Lartey Awuley, assisted with offloading the consignment into a van driven by Ibrahim Kamil (Daily Graphic, 11 May 2005). Kofi and Awuley were paid \$23 each for their role in offloading the consignment. The consignment was taken away from the beach in two batches to Gorman’s house in Tema Community 10, where it was packed into a special compartment in a wall upstairs behind a large dressing mirror.

Upon a raid by a combined team of NACOB agents and Ghana Police Service officers, the supposed parcels of fish were discovered to be cocaine weighing a total of 588.3 kg, with a street value of about \$140 million. Various sums of money (\$18,841; £1,150; €9,485; 442 Venezuelan dollars; 40 Thai baht; 10 Swiss francs, and ₵4.2 million) were also seized from various suspects picked up as part of investigations into the case. Those behind the consignment viz Kevin Gorman, three British nationals (Alan Hodson, David Logan and Frank Lavelrick), a 45-year-old Sven Herb, a German, and Ibrahim Kamil, a Ghanaian, were subsequently arraigned before court in a high profile case which was decided after about six months of heated proceedings, which ended at the Accra High Court on 27 October 2004. The accused persons were charged under the Narcotic Drugs (Control, Enforcement and Sanctions) Law, PNDCL 236, 1990 for conspiracy to commit crime relating to narcotics, illegal importation of narcotics, unlawful possession of narcotics, and use of property for narcotics.

Despite pleading not guilty to all the charges, the accused persons were found guilty and sentenced to 20 years on each count to run concurrently. Subsequent appeals reduced their sentences to 15 years. In the ruling, Justice F. Kusi-Appiah noted that

taking into consideration the method or design of the mode of importation of the offending drug - cocaine into the country and by the very huge quantity of the drugs brought in and the modus operandi of all the accused persons in this case, **they appear to be leaders or grand masters for the distribution of this condemned drug in Ghana and elsewhere** (Kamil v The Republic, 2010)¹²⁸ – *Emphasis added*.

A later appeal at the Supreme Court concluded that there is “no good reason to disturb the sentence on the appellant by the Court of Appeal, and think it was even on the low side and should have been increased” (ibid). In a commentary on the case to Washington, the then US Ambassador to Ghana, Mary Carlin Yates, observed that “[T]hat this high-profile case involving five foreign nationals resulted in such a stiff penalty is widely regarded [here] as a success for both counter-narcotics authorities and the judiciary in Ghana” (Yates, 2004).

5.2.2 Honourable Eric Amoateng’s heroin trafficking case

On 12 November 2005, two Ghanaians were arrested at the American self storage facility in Staten Island, New York, for importing 62.0 kg (136.4 pounds) of heroin valued at \$6 million. The two accomplices later turned out to be the then sitting NPP MP for Nkoranza North, Mr. Eric Amoateng, and his accomplice Nii Okai Adjei. According to documents of the Eastern District Court of New York, where the two were tried, Amoateng and Adjei had shipped a cargo of seven (7) crates of ceramic products to a storage facility at the John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport via the UK on a Continental Airlines flight. Upon arrival at the Newark International Airport in New Jersey on 11 November 2005, customs officials discovered that the ceramics were stuffed with a total of 62.0 kg heroin. The heroin was subsequently removed and the remaining

¹²⁸ Note that the ruling of Justice Atuguba JSC of the Superior Court on 08 December 2010 found this statement widely exaggerated and excluded that conclusion and/or observation from the factors that aided his review of the case that in his consideration of factors to aid his ruling on the appeal. See Kamil v The Republic 2010, Mohammed Ibrahim Kamil vs The Republic, The Superior Court of Judicature in the Supreme Court, Accra.

cargo was allowed to continue to the Continental Airlines storage facility at the JFK Airport where Adjei was listed as the consignee. The cargo arrived at JFK on 10 December 2005. On 11 December 2005, Amoateng and Adjei cleared the cargo at the JFK storage facility and transported it in a black van to the American Self Storage facility in Staten Island, New York. On their way to the storage facility, the two drove “erratically in a manner suggesting an attempt to elude law enforcement” (Amoateng & Adjei v USA, 2005). They returned the next day to inspect the consignment but were arrested by customs and border protection officials.

Upon his arrest, Amoateng sought the use of his diplomatic immunity as a sitting MP in Ghana but that attempt failed (Joy Fm, 21 November 2005a). The two were subsequently charged with “knowingly and intentionally conspir[ing] to distribute and possess with intent to distribute heroin, a Schedule I controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841” (Amoateng & Adjei v USA, 2005). By a ruling presided over by Judge David G. Trager on 12 December 2007, the MP was sentenced to 120 months in jail and is currently serving his term at the Moshannon Valley Correctional facility in Philipsburg. He is due for release on 30 July 2014. Nii Adjei has since served his sentence and was released on 03 June 2008.

Investigative reports by various Ghanaian newspapers revealed that the MP had exported heroin to the US on two other occasions (in May 2003 and May 2005) before the trip, which got him busted. Before entering politics, Amoateng was the marketing manager of a private company called Koajay, which specialises in school supplies. Until 2004 when he renounced his chieftaincy title to contest for political power, he was also the traditional chief of Amoma in the Kintampo district of the Brong Ahafo region of

Ghana.¹²⁹ As traditional leader, he was described by many “as a good leader [...] really concerned about the development of his community” (Ghana News Agency (GNA), 2 April 2004). Amoateng earned such descriptions because of his generosity and widely publicised philanthropic activities in the area, including donations to orphanages, funding of needy students, lavish lending of interest-free loans to people, assisting farmers with farm implements (especially tractors) to clear their farms, and his overall contribution to the development of the area (ibid).

Despite his popularity, his attempt to run for political power in the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana was frustrated by certain people in the NPP who were not only uncomfortable with his influence but were also particularly suspicious of his source of wealth. In the 2004 elections, however, he managed to contest following the intervention of a delegation of chiefs from his area who pleaded with the leadership of the NPP to allow Amoateng to contest for a parliamentary seat on the ticket of the party. He subsequently won the Nkoranza North parliamentary seat with a total vote of 9,144 (46.9%) over an NDC opponent who polled 4,354 (22.3%) votes (Daily Dispatch, 23 November 2005).

Details from court documents on his case show that Amoateng and Nii Adjei struck acquaintance whilst Amoateng was contesting the parliamentary seat in 2004. After winning power, he sought Adjei’s assistance to export 4.0 kg of cocaine to the US at a fee of \$2,500 per kilogramme.¹³⁰ Adjei’s primary role was to act as the consignee in the

¹²⁹ Chapter 10 (94) (c) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana explicitly states that a chief cannot be a member of parliament. He abdicated his title to enable him contest for the position of MP.

¹³⁰ Here, court documents indicate Amoateng recruited Adjei to help export cocaine and not heroin. It is not clear at what point Adjei realised the consignment was rather heroin and also more than the 4.0 kg agreed. See The Enquirer. 2008b. Amoateng’s ‘paddy’ hits town. *The Enquirer*. 22 September 2008. Available: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=150447> [2013, December 23].

US. Apparently, Amoateng had already exceeded the three-shipment limitation for goods destined to the US and therefore needed a third-party or a broker to clear the goods, hence his partnership with Nii Adjei, a Ghanaian bearing a Canadian passport (Amoateng v USA, 2009). Against such a backdrop, it does appear that Amoateng was not new to the export of ceramics to the US and if ceramics export was a front for trafficking heroin to the US, then he must have previously exported several consignments before being busted. Before the trip with Amoateng, Nii Adjei is known to have rather frequented Holland and Germany and was thus new to the US route (The Enquirer, 22 September 2008b).

According to a 2008 Enquirer newspaper investigative report, the goods were loaded into a 40-footer container kept deep in the bush behind the Sangonaa-creek, near the Coco beach in Accra. According to labourers who worked on the consignment,

it took them a couple of nights to stuff pottery crates, as they often worked in the silence of the nights, for a fee. They claim though that they never knew the nature of the material they stuffed the pottery with, but were informed only when the news of the arrest hit town [...] during the period, Eric Amoateng became a regular visitor to the Okai-home at the Coco Beach area. The two were alleged to have travelled also to some areas in the hinterland for “prayers” before the “great” journey (ibid).

Investigations into the source of the heroin also indicated that it came from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) into Ghana before Amoateng and Adjei shipped it to the US through London (Joy Fm, 22 November 2005b). After shipping the goods, the MP sought permission from the speaker of parliament, Right Honourable Begyina-Sekyi Hughes, not to attend parliamentary sessions to enable him attend to a personal business in the US from 9 – 24 November 2005 (GNA, 21 November 2005b).

Initially Amoateng pleaded not guilty. According to his 2009 appeal case file, he tried to intimidate Nii Adjei into taking full responsibility for the trafficking operation by threatening that “Adjei would never see his family again if he refused to take sole responsibility.” In order for his accomplice to take full responsibility, Amoateng (the petitioner)

gave Adjei a letter that stated Adjei was entirely to blame for the drug shipment and instructed him to copy the letter in his own handwriting and submit it to his attorney. Instead, Adjei gave petitioner’s original letter to the government. The letter also contained inducements petitioner promised to Adjei for taking all the blame for the shipment, such as money to “retain a competent attorney,” money in a Ghanaian bank account, a car, funeral expenses and the costs of running a farm (Amoateng v USA, 2009).

In 2009, an appeal by Amoateng was rejected on the basis of the fact that he voluntarily waived his right to challenge his sentence in exchange for a minimal sentence of 120 months (ibid).

Following Amoateng’s conviction in the US, NACOB initiated investigations in Ghana with the aim of identifying local accomplices, the source of the heroin exported, how the consignment left the country and property associated with accomplices for possible seizure as per Section 49 of PNDC Law 236.¹³¹ As part of their investigation, agents of NACOB questioned the then Minister for Communication and Technology, Mr Albert Kan Dapaah. The minister was questioned following suspicions that a certain George Owusu, alleged to have been involved in purchasing the heroin consignment in Ghana and also facilitated its export to the US, may have been having links to the Kan Dapaah Foundation, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) founded by the minister. The

¹³¹ This section of the law states that “ (1) An authorised police officer shall, on the direction of the Ghanaian authority seize any property, or article, the seizure of which is requested by a foreign government or a foreign authority under section 42. (a) on the ground that the property is liable to forfeiture under the law of the foreign country; or (b) on the ground that the property or article is required either as evidence or otherwise by the foreign government or authority for the purpose of a drug-related matter.”

Foundation had received goods from the US from someone named George Owusu, thereby raising suspicions that the NGO may have been used as a front for laundering the proceeds from Amoateng's illicit trade from the US to Ghana (The Enquirer, 2008c). A later court case by the originator of the goods from the US to the Kan Dapaah Foundation, the second George Owusu, indicates that law enforcement officials erroneously linked two individuals with the same name (GNA, 20 March 2009; The Ghanaian Chronicle, 20 March 2009).¹³²

As a result of a ministerial reshuffle by President John Kufour in 2006, Kan Dapaah became the Interior Minister (GNA, 28 April 2006b). Owing to the fact that NACOB operates under the Interior Ministry of the country, the choice of the president to place the NACOB under a person being investigated by the Board raised suspicions about the president's move. Allegations became rife that the move was an attempt by the NPP to stifle investigations by NACOB on the probable involvement of the minister and the possible confiscation of the assets of Amoateng and others linked to the case (The Enquirer, 26 November 2008c). Another factor, which raised suspicions, was that despite Amoateng's absence from parliament for more than the statutory fifteen sittings as per the 1992 constitution,¹³³ members of his party in parliament persistently shielded him from suspension. In distancing itself from the case, however, the NPP described the MP's involvement in the heroin trafficking case as a "reckless and perilous adventure by

¹³² The George Owusu behind the goods shipped to the Kan Dapaah Foundation from the US was later found to be the Country Manager of Kosmos Energy. He sued the Enquirer newspaper for implying his involvement in the Amoateng heroin trafficking case. See Ghanaian Chronicle. 2009. Ghana: FTC gives default judgment against Enquirer. *Ghanaian Chronicle*. 20 March 2009. Available: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200903200921.html> [2013, December 24]. Also see GNA. 2009. AMA: Cosmos Goes to Court. *Ghana News Agency*. 20 March 2009. Available: <http://www.ghanadistricts.gov.gh/news/?read=24018> [2013, December 24].

¹³³ See Chapter 10 (97)(1c) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana indicates that "(1) A member of Parliament shall vacate his seat in Parliament ... (c) if he is absent, without the permission in writing of the Speaker and he is unable to offer a reasonable explanation to the Parliamentary Committee on Privileges from fifteen sittings of a meeting of Parliament during any period that Parliament has been summoned to meet and continues to meet;"

an individual for which the party should not be responsible” (GNA, 21 November 2005a).

In his constituency, the arrest of the MP did not only come as a shock to many but also elicited sympathy. Owing to his philanthropic activities, people who had benefited from him rallied in his support. Upon his incarceration, the community organised for the weeding of his seven-acre farm. At some point in 2006, crowds trooped streets in his constituency to express their support for the MP. Samples of placards held by protesters read “Cocaine or No Cocaine Amoateng Is Still Our MP” and “Against Go Quench, Jealousy Go Shame” (GhanaWeb, 28 March 2006a). In 2007, the chiefs and people of Busunya, Amoateng’s area, named some streets after him in honour of his philanthropic activities and contribution to development in the area (Joy Fm, 10 August 2007).

5.2.3 *The MV Benjamin cocaine case*

One of the biggest known cases of narcotics trafficking in Ghana’s recent history is the MV Benjamin cocaine case. In this case, some 76 parcels of cocaine got missing from a vessel at the Tema harbour in April 2006. Details of the case are that on 21 April 2006, intelligence from some Western countries reached NACOB about *MV Adede II*, a vessel carrying goods suspected to be cocaine. According to the alert, which included detailed photographs of the vessel, the cargo was heading into the territorial waters of Ghana and was about 40 nautical miles from Tema, in the Greater Accra region of the country. Four days later, on 25 April 2006, NACOB relayed the information to the Ghana Navy and the Ghana Air Force and solicited their involvement in tracking the vessel. At the time of receiving the information, the only sea-worthy vessel that the Navy could deploy was the *GNS ANZONE* stationed in Sekondi, in the Western region. The deployment of the

vessel to trail the *MV Adede II* therefore took the *GNS ANZONE* a 12-hour sail from Sekondi to Tema before it could begin its primary goal of tracking the cocaine vessel.

By midnight of 25 April 2006, the *GNS ANZONE* had not found *MV Adede II*. The operation was then suspended to enable the crew collect additional information on the cocaine vessel. The Air Force deployment also faced challenges. There was no “aircraft suited for marine operation.” Additionally, the weather was bad for the operation to begin on 25 April 2006. The Air Force therefore got involved in the operation to find *MV Adede II* on 26 April 2006, at which time the vessel was said to have entered Ghana’s territorial waters already. Their tracking flights could not find the cocaine vessel (Wood, 2006). Commander Issah Yakubu of the Navy had by 11.00am of 26 April taken over the leadership of the operation on-board the *GNS ANZONE*. Further extension of the Navy’s areas of monitoring along the eastern coastline of Tema still did not find the *MV Adede II*. The Navy’s operation team later spotted a vessel named *MV Benjamin* with descriptions similar to *MV Adede II* abandoned at the Tema harbour. A search of the *MV Benjamin* revealed that its name had been freshly inscribed to change its identity from *MV Adede II* to *MV Benjamin*. Further search led to the discovery of a padlocked sack containing 30 slabs of cocaine, each weighing a kilogramme – i.e. 30.0 kg for the sack.

Due to the popularity of the case and its resultant public outcry, a 5-member high-level fact-finding committee under the chairmanship of Honourable Mrs Justice Georgina Theodora Wood, Justice of the Supreme Court, was charged on 04 July 2006 by the Minister of Interior to investigate the exact quantity of cocaine that was on-board the *MV Benjamin/Adede II*, the whereabouts of the remaining goods, origins of the goods and the people behind the importation of the cocaine into the country. The committee

began work two days after its institution (06 July 2006) and submitted its findings to the Minister of Interior on 22 September 2006 (GNA, 22 September 2006a). As part of its work, the committee was also charged to investigate the alleged payment of some \$200,000 bribe to police officials in a separate case involving the seizure of 588.0 kg of cocaine at the East Legon suburb of Accra on 25 November 2005. According to the final report of the committee (hereafter referred to as the Georgina Wood Committee report) and court documents on some of the cases that emerged from the committee's recommendations, Sheriff Asem Darkei, Captain Hwak (of the *Adede II/MV Benjamin*), Chief Engineer (of the *MV Adede II/MV Benjamin*), and Kwak Yeo Seong (aka "Killer") a Korean, masterminded the importation of the cocaine and were therefore owners of the consignment (Dawson v The Republic, 2011).

In February 2006, Sheriff Asem Darkei rented the *MV Benjamin* from one Joseph Kojo Dawson, managing director of Dashment Company Limited, owners of the vessel on a bareboat charter basis. After some repair works on the vessel, it set sails from the Takoradi harbour to the high seas of the Atlantic ocean on 09 March 2006 under the captainship of Hwak. Other members of the crew included Philip Bruce Arhin (mechanic), Isaac Arhin (second officer), Cui Xian Li (Engineer), Luo Yin Xing (sailor) and James Kingsley Koomson (cook). On its 14 days journey to the high seas, the name of the vessel was changed from *MV Benjamin* to *MV Adede II* and retained the new name for the rest of the journey until it re-entered Ghana's territorial waters. According to the account of the crew to the Georgina Wood Committee, after the 14 days sail they arrived at a turbulent point on the high seas between Cape Verde and Venezuela. Two vessels then met them and discharged 77 parcels of cocaine into the *MV Adede II* in an operation lasting about an hour. Each of those parcels weighed about 30.0 kg. Occupants of the vessels that brought the cocaine were described as foreigners looking like

Venezuelans but with the smallish stature of Koreans. On their way back to Ghana, the identity of the *MV Adede II* was changed back to *MV Benjamin*, evidently to outwit law enforcement officials who might be tracking the vessel. With the 77 parcels on-board, the vessel docked at the breakwaters of the Tema harbour around the early hours of 26 April 2006.

About two hours later, two canoes approached the *MV Benjamin* and docked beside it. Seventy-six (76) out of the 77 parcels of the consignment were then offloaded from the vessel into one of the canoes. Under armed guard by men in the other canoe, the canoe with the 76 parcels of cocaine transported the consignment to a landing site at Kpone, a small fishing village about 7 km east of Tema, where the consignment was offloaded from the boat into a waiting van driven by a Korean. Sheriff Asem was also waiting at the landing site. The 12 fishermen who assisted the transfer from the boat into the van took about an hour and were paid a fee of \$5,000. According to their testimony to the committee, they did not know the content of the parcels even though they knew the consignment was not fish. Acting upon a tip-off, a sergeant of the Ghana Police Service, Detective Sergeant Samuel Yaw Amoah, was the first law enforcement official to arrive at the Kpone landing site. Sheriff Asem told him plainly that the cocaine consignment had already been transported from the scene and that he (Sheriff Asem) would like to keep Sergeant Amoah as a friend. The sergeant then accompanied Asem to his Tema Community 5 house where a bribe of \$3,000 was paid to him (Ghanaian Times, 2007). Later investigations by NACOB showed that the same house had housed the cocaine after it was transported from the Kpone landing site. Cocaine packaging accessories such as facemasks and weapons including a pistol, ammunition and a pump action gun were found in the house (Wood, 2006:20). The whereabouts of the 76 parcels remains a mystery as the cocaine went missing. The captain and engineer of the vessel named as

co-consignees of the cocaine also evaded arrest. The *MV Benjamin* mysteriously caught fire days after the incident.

5.2.4 ACP Kofi Boakye and four Ghanaian drug barons

Following the massive popularisation of the *MV Benjamin* case in the Ghanaian media, a leaked recording of a secret meeting between the then Director of Operations of the Ghana Police Service, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Kofi Boakye, and four Ghanaian drug barons (Alhaji Issah Abbas, Kwabena Amaning alias Tagor, Kwabena Acheampong and Kwadwo Ababio) started circulating in the media. The meeting had been organised by ACP Kofi Boakye with the sole motive of clearing his name and also finding out from the barons as to those behind the importation of the 77 parcels of cocaine into the country, in order for all of them to get their share (Ghanaian Times, 29 March 2007). A transcript of discussions at the meeting shows that during the course of the meeting, each of the four barons made a great deal of incriminating confessions on drug dealings in the country despite the ACP's presence. Tagor and Issah Abbas, especially, confessed to their involvement in the importation and sale of several kilogrammes of cocaine in Ghana and exports to the US market, as indicated in the following excerpt of the transcript of exchanges at the meeting.

Tagor: We bought some goods from you. First of all, I didn't know you were introduced to one by Yaw Billa that you are a strong man. I called you and said you could arrange something from some Columbians. In the first place, the people brought many and I matched them because I didn't know them. So I didn't want to put too much in it.

Kofi Boakye: Was it three tons?

Alhaji Issah Abass: Leave him to speak. We are talking about that 100 kg, so stop the story you are narrating.

Kwabena Acheampong: The 800 kg is past, so leave that one.

Tagor: When they came, they said we should buy 100 kg and credit another 100 kg. I again matched then on another 100 kg but Alhaji didn't know that. I went to Alhaji and told him that I wanted to credit 100 kg and that he should also credit some so that we could sell but he said he could not afford.

Alhaji Issah Abass: That 100 kg, you didn't give me a pesewa.

Tagor: Oh Alhaji, you are ungrateful: on that same business, I dashed you \$40,000. Ask Yaw Billa. Have you forgotten?

Alhaji Issah Abass: Tagor, speak the truth because you are a young man in the business.

Tagor: If you do that, then I will know that you are not a good man.

Alhaji Issah Abass: Yes, am not a good man because you use my name for the business.

Tagor: Of the 200 kg, we credited 100 kg and bought 100 kg. In all this, you Alhaji didn't want to credit because you know **I can pay when it goes bad**. That's why you gave it to me. **After credit, we realized that the thing was not going as the way was not clear.**

Alhaji came and said the Columbians were worrying you and so anytime he called me, he wanted to see the goods and I also didn't want you to know where I keep the goods [...] The goods were supposed to leave the next day but because of the pressure from Alhaji, I arranged for him to be paid in Holland for what we credited. It was this that the goods left the next day. I didn't understand the whole thing" (GhanaWeb, 8 August 2006b) – *Emphasis added*.

On his part, ACP Kofi Boakye confessed to his involvement in the drugs trade and corruption by saying that:

Kofi Boakye: [...] I am in this case because my name has cropped up but I know nothing about these goods. Alhaji once called me about a case I never understood. About five days ago, he told me that his friends had informed him that there was some business in town and that if I knew where the goods were, **I should come and seize them so that he could also get his share as a mediator.**

[...] I got to know you in 1994 during Kanka's funeral. That very night, we had dinner together and as at that time, I knew nothing about you but you have been very nice to me and me too I have been nice to you. There have been so many cases in which you have intervened, which I have let go.

[...] For me I know that I can eat (get money) from you. I beg you people you can say that you have sold your goods and given me \$10,000 but I don't do business with you. If I say I will arrest you, I can do that. **Look the whole Ghana it's only one person I have arrested since I came even that one I arrested him because he was a bluff.**

I arrested him and he brought Okudzeto to solve the problem. He went and came and I arrested him. He was bluffing. It was Yaw Billa who came to his rescue. **So I told him to look for something for the boys.** At that time Issa and Yaw Billa were not on talking terms. Since I came to this it's only one person I have arrested because I know if I arrest the person and collect money he will say it so I don't arrest. However if **I am there and you give me something like say take 1000. For example I was there one day when Issa came here and gave me £500. That was a lucky day for me.** Do you remember it on that day Barry White and

[...] **When the Columbians and Venezuelans brought some goods to Ghana and you bought houses at Airport, Manet and Sakumono, I monitored the vessel from Togo before we arrested the wife of the Venezuelan on the boat and that information was kept amongst us. Apeatu later arrested them.**

[...] You are a private man but I am a Public Officer because if someone says I, Director of Operation is involved, that's bad. The two of you will agree that I have no knowledge of this matter. **So I was surprised when Alhaji called me about this fact that there are some goods in town and that I should do the operation, so that they can get something from it. It was then that I had information from Tema. I even called Alhaji** (ibid) – Emphasis added.

Upon detecting that certain Colombian owners of the missing cocaine would be in town to confront the Ghanaian barons suspected of having interfered with the consignment, the ACP promised, “when the Columbians get naughty I can sort them out” (bid).

Following the recommendations of the Georgina Wood Committee, 13 arrests were made, including the four self-confessed barons who met at the ACP's house, three members of the MV Benjamin's crew and five police officers. After several high profile marathon court cases, Tagor and Abbas were sentenced to 15 years each with hard labour on the basis of their confessions at the meeting in Kofi Boakye's house. Interestingly, ACP Kofi Boakye whose confessions evidently also amounted to collusion with the barons was treated as a state trial witness and was not charged. According to leaked cables from the US embassy in Accra, some sources believe Kofi Boakye was not charged because he is privy to various forms of incriminating information about the drug situation in the country and could have spilled the beans if pushed to the wall (Bridgewater, 2007c).

Of those prosecuted, self-confessed drug barons Tagor and Alhaji Issah Abass who were jailed for 15 years each in 2007 were released in 2009 following the quashing of their sentence by an Accra Appeals Court in a unanimous decision by three judges. The judges argued that the trial of the barons on the basis of the secret recording was erroneous. According to the ruling of the Appeals Court, the

convictions were outrageous as they were not based on any known and accepted principles of criminal law that attract the sympathies of [our] criminal jurisprudence. In fact, the appellants should not have been called upon under any circumstances at all to answer the alleged charges preferred against them as contained on the charge sheet, since the charges themselves were legally defective (The Republic v Amaning & Another, 2009).

The ruling further argued that

[W]hat the appellants and the others who met in ACP Kofi Boakye's house said in their private conversation about things that they allegedly did in the past in the midst of quaffing liquor, without any further proof that what they were alleging or bragging about ever took place, did not [therefore] amount to confession or admission of guilt of any offence [...]

therefore, the whole trial was a nullity as it was based on defective charges that are not known under [our] criminal jurisprudence. The convictions and sentence of the appellants on all the charges constitute a cancerous tumour in our legal anatomy that should not be made to eat into and infect our lower courts. They need to be flushed out from the system and confined to the waste bin (The Republic v Amaning & Another, 2009).

5.2.5 Cocaine turned corn dough case

Police at Old Ningo, a town near Accra, were tipped-off in the afternoon of 21 May 2006 about a van loading items suspected to be drugs along the beach. In response, the police mounted a roadblock along the Ningo-Prampram road with the sole aim of identifying and impounding the said van and its content.

Not long after the roadblock had been mounted, a navy-blue Mercedes van with registration number GW 1243 X approached. Attempts to get the driver of the van to stop by police failed. The driver initially slowed down as if heeding to police waves to stop and then sped off. The police at the roadblock pursued the van and also called for reinforcement from the Tema Police. The van was eventually intercepted at the Prampram-Dawhenya road. The driver of the van told police that he was transporting a consignment of fresh fish to the market. Upon a search of the vehicle, however, 67 large cartons of cocaine were found among 28 cartons of fresh fish. Each of the 67 cartons in turn contained 30 packets of cocaine. A search of the beach area led to the discovery of an abandoned Toyota salon vehicle containing an amount of \$10,000 on the Ningo road. According to a Daily Graphic newspaper report on the bust, police believe the consignment of cocaine arrived at the beach on a fishing vessel and was helped to shore by the fishing folks, some of whom later alerted the police about the arrival of the cocaine (Daily Graphic, 22 May 2006b). The suspect behind the consignment, Kenneth Urgah, a 42-year-old Nigerian who was the driver of the van was taken into custody at

the James Fort prison to assist investigations. A search of his house showed samples of the material used in wrapping the cocaine and another van suspected to be used for the same business. The intercepted cartons of cocaine were logged at an exhibit room located on the sixth floor of the police CID headquarters in Accra.

Whilst in custody, Kenneth Urgah, fell ill and was subsequently granted bail of \$31,000 by a High Court presided over by Justice Anthony Abada on 25 June 2007 and scheduled to reappear in court on 11 July 2007. The granting of the bail was in contravention of a government directive after the MV Benjamin case for drug suspects not to be granted bail (Daily Graphic, 2008b). Urgah jumped bail and absconded. A number of questions were subsequently raised by the Ghanaian media as to why the suspect, despite being found in possession of cocaine, was not immediately arraigned before court in May 2006 and only appeared in court after more than a year later, on 25 June 2007 (Daily Guide, 2 February 2008). On 28 January 2008, 12 slabs of one of the 67 cartons in which the cocaine exhibits were being kept in the police exhibit room was found to have been substituted with corn dough. Another box (# 46), containing 30 slabs of cocaine, was missing. This was discovered following a request by the new head of the CID, Mr. Frank Adu-Poku, for exhibits in storage to be re-tested (The New Crusading Guide, 17 August 2012a).

The subsequent media pandemonium, which ensued after the discovery of the situation, led to the setting up of a fact-finding committee by President John Kufour on 01 February 2008. Known as the Kojo Armah Committee, it was charged with the primary responsibility to find perpetrators of the substitution and to make recommendations on the prevention of similar situations in the future (ibid). After three months of sitting, from 05 February - 24 April 2008, the committee submitted a report of its findings to the president. The report was based on extensive interviews of 44 witnesses including past

and present high-ranking officials within the police and CID.¹³⁴ Despite concluding that it was unable to find anyone directly responsible for the substitution, the committee noted that the key to the exhibit room was used in the swapping process and also that perpetrators must have taken advantage of lapses in closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance of the facility due to frequent power outage. They also tampered with the CCTV facility. The committee also noted serious command and control lapses in relation to the arrest, transportation, handling of exhibits and the investigative role of the organised crimes unit of the police service. It also noted personality clashes between the head of the organised crime unit, Chief Superintendent Alphonse Adu-Amankwah, and the director of CID, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCOP) David Asante-Appeatu; and between the latter and the IGP Mr. Patrick Acheampong. These made the head of the organised crime unit do things on his own. The committee, among other names, therefore recommended criminal investigations into the activities of Chief Superintendent Adu-Amankwah and the prosecution of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Patrick Akagbo, who personally kept the key to the exhibit room, even when on leave (Daily Graphic, 16 April 2008a).

Based on the findings of the Kojo Armah Committee, the Ghana Police Service tasked a police enquiry committee, known as the Cobbina Committee, to review the findings of the Kojo Armah report and to conduct further investigations into matters arising, where necessary. According to a Crusading Guide newspaper report on 17 January 2012, an internal memo from the Management and Advisory Board of the police also provided

¹³⁴ People interviewed by the Committee include Mr. Patrick Acheampong, former Inspector-General of Police (IGP); DCOP David Asante-Appeatu, former Director-General, CID; DCOP Frank Adu-Poku, former Director-General, CID; Chief Superintendent Alphonse Adu Amankwah, Ex-Head, Organised Crime Unit; DSP Patrick Akagbo, Ex-Head, Violent Crimes Unit; and Chief Inspector Paul Brenya Bediako, Investigator, among others. See details in The New Crusading Guide. 2012. BNI report on 2008 'cocaine turned corn dough. *The New Crusading Guide*. 17 August 2012. Available: <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201201/79953.php> [2013, December 26].

commentary on the report on 21 May 2008. Subsequently, at the time of leaving office in 2008, President Kufour had appointed a presidential review committee to look into the findings of the Kojo Armah report and the reaction of the Ghana Police Service.

During the 2008 presidential and parliamentary election campaigns in Ghana, the nature of the issue and its implications on the police were a major campaign issue by the then opposition, NDC. Upon winning power, President John Atta Mills of the NDC promised the institution of a presidential commission of enquiry into the matter. Media reports later indicated the presidency's preference for an independent investigative body, hence tasking the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) to investigate the whereabouts of the missing cocaine exhibit. Details of the outcome of the BNI's probe are yet to be made public almost eight years after the incident took place. DSP Akagbo was taken into custody on 28 January 2008 on the orders of the Director-General of the CID, DCOP Frank Adu-Poku, but was released on bail on health grounds on 7 May 2008 (Daily Graphic, 12 May 2008d). The whereabouts of the missing cocaine is yet to be determined.

5.2.6 Cocaine turned washing soda (sodium bicarbonate)

This is one of the most publicised narcotics cases in Ghana's recent experience with the narcotics trafficking phenomenon. According to the records of proceedings of the case in an Accra Circuit Court presided by Judge Eric Baffour on 13 February 2011, a taxicab was intercepted by a team of four police officers at the Nyaho clinic area of Accra on 22 August 2008. The operation was based on a tip-off that the occupants of the taxi were dealing in narcotics. Upon the interception of the taxi, one Nana Ama Martins and another person, named as Andy, were indeed found to be carrying a slab of cocaine estimated to weigh 1020 grammes. In the process of taking the suspects to the police

station, Andy absconded (Republic v Martins, 2011). Ama Martins was arraigned before Circuit Court '1' in Accra and charged with the offence of possession of narcotics under PNDCL Law 236. She was remanded in police custody and later in prison pending full investigation and trial.

A year later, 05 November 2009, the accused was granted bail by a High Court presided by Justice Oforu Quartey. After jumping bail, the accused was arrested and a Circuit Court remanded her despite the High Court ruling granting her bail. The Circuit Court order was later, on 15 September 2011, quashed following an application by the accused arguing that a lower court has no jurisdiction to overturn a High Court decision. Proceedings on the case resumed on 24 August 2011. During the proceedings that followed, the counsel of the accused requested a re-testing of the 1020 grammes of the cocaine exhibit tendered in court on 27 September 2011. Results of the re-testing proved negative to a chromatography test, even though earlier tests upon the arrest of the accused had proven positive. Mr Kwabla Senanu, the defence counsel, then argued for no case against his client. Based on the facts of the case, the trial Judge, Eric K. Baffour, aborted the trial and went ahead to acquit and discharge the accused. In his ruling, he noted that

[I]f prosecution feels strongly that the substance it found on accused was cocaine and somebody has changed it as it **was in the custody of police for more than three years** with the prospect of trial almost impossible, then [I] urge or call on the IGP to as a matter of urgency institute a service enquiry to determine who might have tempered or changed the drug they alleged they found on accused and prescribe the necessary sanctions. Since if their allegation is true it is a serious indictment on the effort of the law enforcement agency to curtail the drug menace (Republic v Martins, 2011) – *Emphasis added.*

A joint petition by the police CID and NACOB to the Chief Justice for an investigation into the conducts of the Circuit Court and the trial Judge culminated in the establishment

of a committee of enquiry under the chairmanship of Justice Agnes Dordzie, a Justice of the Court of Appeal on 14 December 2011. The committee's remit was to "establish the roles played by the trial Judge and other court officials including the Registrar and the court clerk in the matter and other matters related thereto." Between 15-20 December 2011 the committee interviewed 11 key witnesses¹³⁵ and concluded in a 187-page report that the substance tendered in court was not cocaine and so "if there were any swapping of the cocaine with any other substance it was done before the substance was tendered in court on the 27 September, 2011" (Dordzie et al, 2011:1,183).

The committee also found that as per a directive from the Chief Justice, the suspect was to be put before Circuit Court "1" for the purposes of keeping her in custody during investigations. Once investigations were complete, the police were to forward a duplicate docket to the Attorney General for advice in deciding on the appropriate court to hear the case.¹³⁶ However, the directive was flouted and instead Nana Ama Martins was put before Circuit Court "1". The case was abandoned in Circuit Court "1" for about 3 years during which there "was no communication between the police and the Attorney General's department. During this hiatus, the accused was granted bail by the High Court principally because of the delay in the prosecution of the case and must have given ample time for tempering of evidence and exhibit (ibid).

The committee also noticed administrative lapses such as the failure of the court clerk to inform the registrar of the court about the fact that the exhibit was being kept in a steel cabinet in the Judge's chamber and the fact that the clerk was in sole control of an exhibit

¹³⁵ The witnesses included Thomas Anyekese – 1st Investigator; Joseph Owusu – 2nd Investigator; DSP Kofi Adjei Tuadzra – Head of the Narcotics Unit of Police CID; Stella Arhin – State Attorney, Attorney Generals Department; Daniel Nyatsidzi – Court Clerk Circuit Court, Accra; Seidu Yusif – High Court Registrar, Cocoa Affairs, Accra, Court; Frederick Tetteh Kudjonu – Registrar Cocoa Affairs, Accra, Court; H/H Eric Kyei Baffour – Circuit Judge, Circuit Court; Accra; Kwabla Senanu – Counsel for the accused person; David Agyeman Agyin – Police Forensic Expert; and D.S.P. Dery – Police Prosecutor.

¹³⁶ The committee's report indicates that the High Court was to hear the case.

as bad practice. The committee recommended, among others, for “the practice of making an order to destroy narcotic substances immediately on the day that it is tendered” in court to be discouraged. Rather “narcotic substances tendered in court should have field tests in open court on the very day they are tendered” (ibid). Investigations by the BNI ordered by the government to ascertain the whereabouts of the missing cocaine further found enough

circumstantial evidence that the cocaine was swapped with the active assistance of, and facilitation by, DSP Mrs Gifty Mawunyegah Tehoda, the deputy head of the commercial crimes unit, CID headquarters who had nothing to do with the investigation under review, but took the suspect out of cells on nine (9) occasions under the ruse of ‘further investigations’ and spent, on the average, two (2) hours with her in her office on each occasion (GNA, 11 January 2012a).

Within this scheme, the report also discovered evidence that “agents of the accused tried unsuccessfully to influence the court officials with an amount of GH¢50,000.00” (\$25,000) which clearly illustrates the extent they were ready to go to influence the outcome of the court case (ibid). The report observed that it was within the context of desperate moves that agents of the accused swapped the cocaine with the assistance of DSP Tehoda. The nature of handling of the evidence was also questioned. According to the report, the exhibit stayed in the court premises from 27-29 September 2011 and must have been swapped within that period. The BNI blamed DSP Tehoda and DSP Kofi Adzei-Tuadzra who had primary responsibility for the security of the exhibit for their roles in the swapping of the cocaine. DSP Tehoda was interdicted on 18 January 2012 and arraigned before court for her alleged involvement in the swapping of the cocaine. On 28 June 2012, an Accra Circuit Court discharged her case unconditionally following the failure of prosecution to start the case. She was later tried by a police adjudicating team and dismissed from the force on 10 October 2012 (GNA, 2012b). She has since

petitioned¹³⁷ the presidency on the basis of unfair treatment by elements within the police service (Ghanaian Times, 19 October 2012; The New Crusading Guide, 9 November 2012b).

Despite their varied narratives, the six cases above have at least three things in common. First, each of them illustrates certain important aspects of the existing dynamics surrounding the complex underworld of drug trafficking in Ghana. As such the issues and actors in each of the cases are typically representative of the contemporary nature and operations of the animators of the drugs trade in the country. The second commonality is the extent to which the inherent issues in each case straddle the public and private spheres. Thus, portraying either the confrontation between the state and narco-trafficking or the collusion between the two. It also shows the links and interactions between various domestic fragilities and the international dimensions of the narcotics trafficking phenomenon. This is reflected not only in terms of the supply routes of the narcotics in each case in or out of the country, but also the interesting twists and turns surrounding the collaboration between various foreign nationals and local barons in the drug underworld. Lastly, there is general acceptance in Ghana among various political actors and citizens, that these cases typically represent the nature of the bigger underworld of drug trafficking in the country, hence the establishment of ministerial committees in some of the cases to investigate happenings with the sole aim of preventing future occurrences.

¹³⁷ See details of her petition indicating her objection to the allegations against her in a republished copy of her petition to the presidency. See The New Crusading Guide. 2012b. How CID boss sold cocaine exhibit in open market – DSP Tehoda reveals. *The New Crusading Guide*. 9 November 2012. Available: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=255790> [2014, January 04].

5.3 State Weakness as Driver of Drug Trafficking in Ghana

This section examines the above six (6) cases in search of the cause-effect relationships surrounding drug trafficking in Ghana. It reveals the fact that a number of factors facilitated the onset and growth of the phenomenon in and through the country's territory.

5.3.1 Incapacity of the Ghanaian state

First is the incapacity of the Ghanaian state to detect and intercept narcotics consignments. In this direction, six (6) variables have individually and collectively made the state incapable. Key among them is *endemic corruption* in the police and judiciary to the extent that drug traffickers are able to pay for safe passage or induce officials to look the other way for trafficking activities to persist. In the MV Benjamin cocaine case, for instance, the only police officer who appeared at the Kpone landing site accepted a bribe of \$3,000 instead of acting in his professional capacity to represent the state. Consequently, the state failed to intercept the 77 parcels of cocaine entering its territory. The failure did not only expose the weakness of Ghana, but also projected it as incapable of dealing with narcotics flows into its territory even when fed with the necessary intelligence to aid interception. Similarly, by associating with drug barons, accepting monetary donations from them and not effecting their arrests, ACP Kofi Boakye denied the state of its interception, arrest and prosecutorial capacity. Endemic corruption in state institutions, in the cases examined, evidently interfered with the will of state officials to perform their primary role of law enforcement and eventually caused their inability to act on behalf of the state. By their inability to represent the state, the country was rendered incapable of preventing drug flows in and out of its territory.

Another weakness evident from the MV Benjamin cocaine case is *the lack of requisite equipment* to enable state institutions implement tip-offs. NACOB, the main anti-narcotics body, was unequipped to track the cocaine vessel on its own. It had to seek the assistance of the Ghana Navy and Air Force. Unfortunately, the Navy and Air Force also had challenges with equipment. The only sea-worthy navy vessel was docked in Sekondi, a 12-hour sail away from Tema. Likewise, rather than an aircraft suited for marine operations, the Air Force had to use a general duty helicopter in a situation where the appropriate equipment would have made a difference. According to the Georgina Wood Committee's report, the two operations lacked basic provisions including night vision equipment (Wood, 2006:24–25). The overall effect of the lack of appropriate equipment was the inability of the state to intercept the cocaine consignment despite receiving detailed intelligence from its British counterparts.

An ill-equipped judiciary as was the case in the Nana Ama Martins case led to clash of jurisdictions between the High Court and Circuit Court. Instead of arraigning the case before Circuit Court “1” during investigations and then seeking the advice of the Attorney General's office on the appropriate court to hear the case, as directed by the Chief Justice, the prosecutor rather put the case before the Circuit Court for hearing. When it came to bail request, the clash of jurisdictions emerged when the Circuit Court quashed the bail granted by the High Court. The clash ultimately benefited the accused by prolonging her trial. After more than a year of no hearing of her case, she managed to gain a bail even though narcotics offences are non-bailable. It also made it possible for her to arrange for the swapping of the exhibit. The clash also exposed the inefficiencies and weaknesses of the Ghanaian judiciary in terms of communication between the police and the Attorney General's department as well as between courts and overall commitment to clearing the backlog of cases. If there were a system of electronic

referral, cases assigned by the Attorney General's department would have been properly communicated to all courts. It would have therefore made it possible for courts to check the history of the case before taking it on, thereby preventing inter-court clashes and confusion. The case would have also enjoyed speedy hearing rather than being left for more than a year before hearing began in the wrong court against the directive of the Chief Justice.¹³⁸

The cases examined also show *lapses in inter-agency collaboration* among the different institutions that are at the forefront of Ghana's fight against drug trafficking. Whereas NACOB told the Georgina Wood Committee of having communicated the need to intercept the *MV Adede II* to the Ghana Navy on 24 April 2006, the navy leadership told the committee that the information got to them the next day. The resultant lapse in the inter-agency coordination of state capacity resulted in a delay in state response. If NACOB had enough capacity to carry-out the interception by itself, the incapacity of the state could have been avoided. *Lapse in the internal command and control* structures of the Ghana Police Service was another major weakness. Interpersonal clashes between the head of the organised crimes unit and the director of CID, as well as between the latter and the IGP, was a cause of failure in oversight over arrests, handling of exhibits and storage of exhibits. Eventually, the lapse was exploited by cartels and criminal elements within the police service thereby resulting in the swapping of more than 40 kg of cocaine meant to serve as exhibit in the case against Kenneth Urgah. Kenneth Urgah eventually managed to secure bail in the course of the delay in his trial and with it jumped bail. The granting of bail to him was even in direct contravention of the government directive for narcotics cases to be non-bailable. Lapse in internal command and control, in this case,

¹³⁸ Wrong court here is used to refer to the situation where the case began in the Circuit Court instead of the High Court as directed by the Attorney General's department.

denied the state an opportunity to demonstrate effectiveness and strong oversight in the war against drugs in Ghana.

Meddling by DSP Mawenyegah Tahoda into the investigations of the Nana Ama Martins case establishes the extent of *unprofessional conduct* among law enforcement officials. This sometimes informs the readiness of some elements in state institutions to flout established professional/institutional norms, even in cases with enormous state interest. The overall impact is a weakening of the capacity of the Ghanaian state to establish institutional norms that provide the necessary operational frameworks for dealing with organised criminality, including narcotics trafficking. There are situations where the Ghanaian state has been incapable of acting because of *systemic infiltration* of law enforcement agencies by individuals deeply corrupted by the proceeds of criminality. As a result of this and other acts of misconduct within the Ghana Police Service, as many as 947 police officers were dismissed between 2009 and 2012 (GNA, 25 April 2012c). Corrupt police officials are usually established channels of collusion through which traffickers manage to incapacitate the state. Such elements are predictably ready to look the other way for illegal activities to happen. Most of them are also moles who share information about imminent law enforcement operations and schedules of law enforcement activities on trafficking routes with criminals. In the conversation between ACP Kofi Boakye and the four barons, it became clear that the barons had access to information from sources within the police and NACOB.

The incapacity of the Ghanaian state created by the six systemic weaknesses has been manifesting in two major forms. There are practical operational challenges encountered by state institutions in responding to crimes. This was exemplified by the logistical challenges that hampered the operations of the Ghana Navy and Air Force in the MV

Benjamin case. Ghana's incapacity also manifests sometimes in the form of lack of political will to act. This is particularly so in cases where corrupt actors are in positions of oversight and are unwilling to act against their interests. The relationship between Kofi Boakye and the self-confessed drug barons exemplify the second manifestation.

By their collective influence, the above variables define the incapacity of Ghana and their manifestations constitute aspects of the *systemic rot* in the institutions of the country. The individual influences of each of the variables therefore outline the link between systemic rot and the incapacity of the state to deal with organised criminality in its territory.

5.3.2 Absence of the Ghanaian state

There are two ways in which state absence in relation to drug trafficking is felt in Ghana. First is the *physical absence* of law enforcement at the many unapproved entry and exit points along the country's borders. Second is the *functional absence* of the state. In the MV Benjamin case, the functional absence of the state came about as law enforcement representation through Detective Sergeant Samuel Yaw Amoah was bribed by Asem to look the other way. In the Amoateng case, the lack of development and provision of social amenities in his area constituted another form of functional absence, which he took advantage of. Through philanthropic activities, scholarships for the needy, interest-free loans to the rural folks and contributing from his narcotics largesse to development activities in the area, he did not only endear himself to the extent that people did not care to question his source of wealth, but actually capitalised on the absence of the state to create a socio-political enclave within which his illegal activities were condoned by beneficiaries.

The absence of the state in these two forms across Ghana has facilitated drug trafficking in a number of ways. In most cases of major drug hauls into and out of the country, including those discussed in this chapter, traffickers have attempted to evade the state by making use of geographical areas with little to no state presence. As a result of this, drug hauls into Ghana have often happened along the coast. Examples of this include the Kevin Gorman, MV Benjamin and the Kenneth Urgah cocaine cases. Absence of the state has also provided an atmosphere of no obstruction to illegal activities in certain parts of the country. In remote areas, particularly, it has made it easy for “narcopreneurs,” such as Amoateng, to substitute the state through philanthropic activities. In some worse cases, the resultant proliferation of illegality has facilitated the emergence of socio-political enclaves within which the criminalisation of trafficking by the state is in confrontation with the socio-economic and functional benefits of the drug economy. A key example is Amoateng’s constituency where people marched on the streets in his support with placards some of which read, “Cocaine or No Cocaine Amoateng Is Still Our MP.” Despite his incarceration in the US and the subsequent public knowledge about the illegal source of his wealth, his constituents honoured him for his contribution to development in the area.

5.3.3 Prevalence of activity sanctuaries

Apart from its absence from geographical spaces as elucidated above, law enforcement presence of the state in Ghana is sometimes absent from certain activity clusters, such as fishing, thereby making such activities easy fronts for criminal activities. As of 1992, for instance, about 8,688 canoes were estimated to be operating in the artisanal fishing sector along Ghana’s 550 km coastline. These canoes were hosting an average of 97,500 fishermen making use of some 306 landing sites. Similarly, by 1999, the coast was hosting about 156 semi-industrial vessels and 6,500 semi-industrial fishermen operating

eight major landing sites (Van Waerebeek and Ofori-Danson, 1999:2–5). Such a situation presents a great deal of security vulnerability. This is not only in terms of ease of finding collaborators for offloading contraband consignments, as was the case in the MV Benjamin and Gorman cocaine hauls, but principally the ease of utilising fishing as an activity sanctuary for fronting trafficking activities. As the cases discussed in this chapter illustrate, fishing and shipping activities along the coast of Ghana have become a major haven for illegal activities. The many unapproved landing sites along the coast have also become a major conduit for drug flows in and out of the country.

The use and exploitation of *activity sanctuaries* are facilitated by the ease with which foreign barons are able to find local collaborators ready to front for them with locally registered businesses. On paper, Kevin Gorman, was managing director of Tema-based shipping company, Tuna To-Go Limited. In practice, however, he was trading in narcotics. The cover granted him disguise for his consignments and diverted law enforcement attention from him till he was busted based on tip-off. Such situations in the country have facilitated drug trafficking by providing *activity sanctuaries* within which the supply and demand of narcotics is camouflaged. Under the cover of legitimate businesses, law enforcement penetration becomes limited and challenging. It also offers a cover for an easy transition into crime for people in legitimate businesses desperate to give their businesses a sudden boost with the proceeds of crime; as well as criminals seeking to launder their gains.

5.3.4 Muffled deterrence of the judiciary

The use of judicial institutions in sentencing criminals is an important component of efforts to curb drug trafficking anywhere in the world. According to Justice Atuguba of the Supreme Court of Ghana, every sentence meted out by a country's judicial institution

serves “a five-fold purpose, namely, to be punitive, calculated to deter others, to reform the offender, to appease the society and to be a safeguard” to the state (Kamil v The Republic, 2010). In Ghana, however, apart from the corroding influence of corruption within the judiciary, which has had wide-reaching implications on the course of justice in many cases, the use of the judiciary as an instrument in fighting drug trafficking grapples with a number of dynamics.

First, judicial processes are slow. Of the 667 drug cases logged before courts in the Ashanti region between 2001 and 2004, for instance, only 33.6% had by 2005 been dealt with (US Department of State, 2005). The slow pace is directly attributable to the huge backlog of pending cases, under-equipped judicial institutions and the lack of mechanisation of court processes. The impacts of these challenges are manifested in cases such as Nana Ama Martins and the Prampram cocaine cases. In these cases, the accused persons were able to secure bail after several years behind bars, even though narcotic cases are non-bailable in the country. The slow process also allowed for tempering with exhibits against them. Slow prosecution of narcotics cases in Ghana increasingly jeopardises justice, as the process becomes exposed to corruption and exhibits become increasingly vulnerable to tampering. In some cases, poor investigations and changes in prosecutors have had implications on the strength of the state’s cases against accused persons owing to the associated loss of institutional memory. In the case against DSP Mawenyegah, for instance, the inability of the prosecution to start the case led to her unconditional discharge. Loss of exhibits and even entire case dockets are common in Ghana (The Enquirer, 22 October 2007; Daily Guide, 16 August 2011; GNA, 25 October 2007).

Secondly, in cases where accused persons have been jailed, inconsistencies in sentences are sometimes notable. In the case of Kwabena Amaning (Tagor) and the other three self-confessed barons, the trial judge sentenced the accused persons based on their confessions in a recorded conversation, without any proof of their actual involvement. The case subsequently raised many political and legal questions (The Republic v Amaning & Another, 2009; Ghanaian Times, 29 March 2007b). The minimum sentence of 10 years prescribed by PNDC Law 236 for the unlawful possession of narcotics in the country raises a number of questions. There are concerns surrounding its severity as a punitive measure for drug users to whom the whole drug menace may constitute a health issue, compared to barons who are the principal economic profiteers of the phenomenon. There is also a concern about the fact that despite the massive economic returns on a kilogramme of cocaine and heroin, for example, the law and sentences for their cases do not take into account their relative profitability in meting out punishments. In the context of the nature of corruption in the judiciary and police service therefore it is far easier for heroin and cocaine barons to influence rulings in their favour than the many functional users of cannabis.

Additionally, in Ghana those who end up facing the law for drug trafficking charges are usually not the senior members of trafficking rings. This is because law enforcement operations often end up with people at the lower ends of the demand and supply chain of narcotics in the country. As such, peddlers and couriers are mostly the ones punished because they are the ones who are usually physically intercepted whilst transporting or peddling drugs. With the ease with which new members at the lower end of the supply chain are recruited, the inability of law enforcement to clampdown on the activities of kingpins is synonymous with pruning the branches of a problematic tree instead of cutting down the tree itself.

5.3.5 Elitism in state response

Another major challenge in Ghana is that the fight against drug trafficking remains elitist and the principal preserve of law enforcement officials. There is therefore a disconnect between state security priorities and local community involvement. Whereas law enforcement authorities clearly know what substances are being pursued in the fight against narcotics, local communities sometimes have no idea what those substances are and why they are outlawed. In the context of their ignorance of the fact of what those substances are, therefore, there are many people in the country who are ignorant participants in the supply and demand chain of the narcotics trade. In cases where drug consignments have landed in remote villages along the beach, for instance, traffickers have sought the services of local people in offloading consignments into waiting vans, without those local people knowing the nature of the substances they are dealing with. In the case of Amoateng, for instance, the local people who were paid to stuff the ceramics with heroin only got to know of the nature of the substances they were handling after news broke on radio stations in the country about the arrest of the MP (The Enquirer, 22 September 2008b).

The impact of the disconnect on drug trafficking in the country is enormous. On the part of the local communities, many have ended up becoming ignorant facilitators of drug trafficking in the country. The state is likewise denied citizen intelligence and citizen participation in law enforcement. People who could have been key informants at the forefront of the fight against narcotics in the country do not report because they do not know what those drugs are. Given the fact that most key interceptions in Ghana are a result of tip-offs received from citizens, the lack of information from citizens implies less state capacity. Ultimately, traffickers benefit because it is easy for them to evade state authority without fear of tip-offs by locals to police.

The disconnect is largely as a result of the lack of mass education by state security agencies about the nature of narcotics and the role of local communities in addressing the menace. In places like Serkwa, however, the massive proliferation of cannabis cultivation and its economic benefits to the people is the main motivation for not cooperating with law enforcement authorities. In some cases, such as Amoateng's heroin trafficking case, disengagement from the state owing to its functional absence was the basis for the disconnect.

5.3.6 *The nature of Ghana's political space*

As already highlighted in chapter 4, Ghana's political space is currently characterised by intense competition for power among various political and economic elites. This is partly as a result of the democratic and open nature of the political space in the country as well as the winner-takes-all political contest. Political actors are therefore unwilling to leave happenings and outcomes of elections, particularly, to fair play. Apart from vote buying, the country is witnessing massive cheap political propaganda and misinformation from political actors with the sole aim of winning the hearts and minds of voters. In the consequent mud-slinging that has characterised the political landscape, there is no consensus on the *non-politicisation of key national security issues*, including drug trafficking. Trafficking of narcotics is therefore a major issue around which smear campaigns are done. Rather than agree in condemning the drugs trade, both incumbents and opposition parties seek political capital from happenings. It is such that instead of finding solutions, incumbents spend time distancing themselves from narcotics cases; whilst the opposition concentrates on spinning happenings through the lens of politics in order to score political points. At the end of the day, the state is denied the requisite political consensus among the various political actors in its war on drug trafficking.

Honourable Amoateng became a beneficiary of such lack of political consensus. In the Amoateng case, spin doctors of the opposition NDC swung into action when agents of NACOB questioned Honourable Albert Kan Dapaah regarding dealings between his foundation and one George Owusu initially suspected to have been the same person who assisted Amoateng in smuggling the heroin consignment out of Ghana (The Enquirer, 26 November 2008c). Despite later indications that the George Owusu involved in the dealings with the Kan Dapaah Foundation was different from the one in the Amoateng case,¹³⁹ the NDC still continued its spin and politicisation of the alleged link between the Communications Minister and the Amoateng case (GNA, 20 March 2009; The Ghanaian Chronicle, 20 March 2009). President Kufour worsened the politicisation of the case by appointing Kan Dapaah the Minister of Interior with direct oversight responsibility over NACOB. The president's move raised a number of questions about the alleged involvement of Kan Dapaah in the Amoateng case. To date, it remains unclear whether President Kufour's choices in the reshuffle were coincidental, calculated to silence the NDC from further politicisation of the issue, or was a direct attempt to suppress law enforcement endeavours to uncover NPP politicians dealing in drugs on the basis of the trigger provided by the Amoateng case. At the end of the day, Amoateng's assets were not confiscated as required by PNDC law 236. If there had been political consensus resulting in a bipartisan approach to dealing with the case, a more thorough investigation could have been done on the Ghana side of the case. Such a move would have benefitted the state in its war against narcotics. By politicising the case, however, political

¹³⁹ The George Owusu behind the goods shipped to the Kan Dapaah Foundation from the US was later found to be the Country Manager of Kosmos Energy. He sued the Enquirer newspaper for implying his involvement in the Amoateng heroin trafficking case. See Ghanaian Chronicle. 2009. Ghana: FTC gives default judgment against Enquirer. *Ghanaian Chronicle*. 20 March 2009. Available: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200903200921.html> [2013, December 24]; Also see GNA. 2009. AMA: Cosmos Goes to Court. *Ghana News Agency*. 20 March 2009. Available: <http://www.ghanadistricts.gov.gh/news/?read=24018> [2013, December 24].

sentiments were elevated to the core of the political will needed for responding to the drug menace in an apolitical manner.

In a similar way, despite being recommended for prosecution by the Georgina Wood Committee on the same basis that Kwabena Amaning (Tagor) and the other self-confessed barons were jailed, ACP Kofi Boakye was never made to answer his alleged involvement in drugs before any court.¹⁴⁰ Some people have argued that the decision to make him a state prosecution witness instead of attempting to prosecute him, apart from the fact that the state needed to build a strong case against the barons, was probably also a political move to prevent the incrimination of many influential people in the country (Bridgewater, 2007c). On the eve of his exit from power in 2008, President Kufour granted presidential pardon to ACP Kofi Boakye, thereby entrenching the suspicions about the alleged complicity of some NPP elements in the perceived attempt to cover up ACP Kofi Boakye's deeds for parochial political party interests.

The politicisation of narcotics trafficking in Ghana is such that apart from being a major 2008 presidential and parliamentary campaign issue, the NDC reopened investigations into some of the cases. Commencing new investigations was a direct expression of doubt about the findings of previous efforts thereby further politicising the outcomes of those investigations and discounting the credibility of state institutions involved, particularly the BNI and police. Such use of state institutions, as the NDC did, is possible in Ghana because of the entrenched presidential patronage system by which the leadership of key state institutions are direct appointees of the president (see Chapter 4).

The terms of office of the leadership of key institutions in the country, such as the police

¹⁴⁰ It should be noted that the sentence of Tagor and others was later quashed by a Court of Appeal on the basis of the use of the tape recording as evidence. This implies therefore that even if ACP Kofi Boakye had been prosecuted on the same basis, his appeal may have ended up with a similar ruling as that of Tagor because a case against Kofi Boakye would have been based not on hard evidence but the recording of his conversation with the four barons.

service, are co-terminus with that of the president. Hence, such leaders are at the beck and call of the president of the day. Apart from the patronage aspect of such a situation, it has directly politicised some state institutions. Leaders in such institutions therefore hardly embark on operations and investigations likely to tarnish the incumbent.

Another means by which the nature of the political landscape in Ghana has created vulnerability is through the massive monetisation of politics, otherwise known in Ghanaian political parlance as “*monecratisation*” of democracy or “*monecracy*.” This is at the level of expensive political campaigns, buying of votes across the country and the entrenchment of patronage by politicians as means of securing power. For political parties, this has made them vulnerable to the temptation of financing by people with questionable characters without due process to establish their sources of wealth. State financing of political parties remains a debate not policy. As such, the sources of funds by political parties remain grey in the country. The high cost of electioneering campaigns and maintaining power through patronage for individual politicians in turn opens them up for illegal sources of funds. In the case of Amoateng, not only did he enter politics by influencing people with his narco-wealth, he also sought to replenish the money lost to political campaigns by trafficking heroin after winning the 2004 parliamentary elections. Politically, the majority in parliament’s decision to vote against Amoateng’s suspension from parliament amounted to the creation of a political enclave within which he was shielded.

Collectively, these six (6) factors provide the domestic social, institutional and political infrastructure manifested as weakness of the Ghanaian state. The external factors elucidated in Chapter 3 plugged into this context and/or vulnerability to facilitate the emergence and growth of the illicit drugs industry in Ghana. The next section

conceptualises how the factors interacted in the creation of a favourable environment for the onset of drug trafficking in Ghana.

5.4 Rot, Enclaves and Disengagement (RED) in Ghana

By juxtaposing the six weaknesses discussed above, the history of drugs in Ghana, and the nature of the Ghanaian state elucidated in Chapter 4, a cocktail of complex factors emerges. The intricacies of the cause-effect relationships within the cocktail of factors are important in understanding how the above weaknesses of the state collectively explain the emergence of organised criminality in Ghana.

Along the entrenched political patronage in Ghana's political space exists the over-politicisation of the Ghanaian socio-political landscape, and the creation of political clienteles who benefit from and perpetrate corruption to the merit of themselves and their patronage networks. This has created an *inclusion-exclusion dichotomy* around patronage networks in the race among citizens for access to national resources, power and influence. For one to benefit from the state, membership of a patronage network is necessary. Unfortunately, these networks usually exist at the behest of political parties and elites who control the mechanics and dynamics at the centre of the state, where national resources, power and influence exist. Against the backdrop of the freedom of speech and association mantra of the country's current political dispensation, there is the proliferation of political networks. These include various Veranda Boys and Girls Associations of political parties and many party-affiliated groups such as the Alliance for Accountable Governance (AFAG), the Committee for Joint Action (CJA), the Tertiary Education Institutional Network (TEIN) of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the Tertiary Students Confederacy (TESCON) of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), among others. This has generated a *centre-periphery* political divide in the country in

addition to the existing gap between the haves and have-nots. Citizens caught up in this context thus feel either represented (*included*) or marginalised (*excluded*). The ensuing struggle among citizens for inclusion at the centre has led to two major phenomena in the country.

First is a contest for the centre by political and economic elites who feel excluded by virtue of the winner-takes-all nature of politics in the country. This has increased the keenness of political competitions. The second phenomenon is created by a section of the population who are disgruntled by virtue of their perception of marginalisation (exclusion) on the basis of their ethnic, religious or political affiliations. For the many who cannot seek inclusion through political participation, their awareness of the extent of *structural rot* in the country has provided the basis for the erosion of legitimacy and subsequently their *disengagement* from the state. Many citizens do not believe anymore in the functionality of the state in the midst of the increasing weaknesses of state institutions and exploitative political environment.

Inevitably, citizen disengagement has in turn resulted in *self-helpism*. Self-helpism has contributed to increased exploitation of the state, as actors involved with the state pursue benefits (from the state) and not contributions (service) to the state in the interest of the collective good of all citizens. In the case of MPs, for instance, this has implied that in the passing of sensitive legislation for the sale of state assets, they can be bribed by corporate bodies in order to secure approval. In the case of the sale of Ghana Telecom to Vodafone Group, each MP was paid a bribe of \$5,000 (The Al-Hajj, 28 November 2013). Kickbacks are demanded for government contracts. Dubious procurement processes are common. Looting of the state by both politicians and civil servants occur in government ministries and departments without regard to their impact on the stability of the country.

For instance, at the end of every political era, state property particularly land, houses and vehicles are sold out to exiting or incoming politicians at ridiculously low prices. Others, such as the Honourable Amoateng, use the state as cover for illicit activities. For the police, customs officials and elements within the judiciary therefore there is a perception that their corruption is only part of a general “*kalabule*” culture and is only a little contribution to the bigger evils at the top.

For those who are not in the position to exploit the state, the consequence is explicit *social legitimisation* of state exploitation and economically profitable organised criminality, such as “*sakawa*”¹⁴¹ and trafficking of drugs, as far as those activities are done in response to the prevailing harsh economic situation and the need for survival. Such forms of social legitimisation in the name of survival permeate the social consciousness of young people, particularly in urban areas. Such thinking is unconsciously expressed in many facets of interactions among people including music. Lyrics of contemporary music by various popular Ghanaian musicians are illustrative of this situation. In a popular highlife tune titled “*sika*” (money) by Ghanaian musician Charles Kwadwo Fosu (aka “Daddy Lumba”), he asks cynically in the Akan language “...*sika wɔhɔ yi ebi ye fi?*” which literally translates, “...*is there anything like dirty money?*” A popular hip-hop tune by Ghanaian rapper, Sarkodie, titled “pizza” outlines the extent of public perception of rot in Ghanaian institutions, economic hardships and suffering in the country in the following lyrics:

Lyrics in Akan (twi)

[...]

Mo a mote “bank,”
 mo a mote parliament
 Mo a mote nkyobo

Lyrics in English (direct translation)

[...]

Those of you who sit in banks,
 those of you who sit in parliament
 Those of you who cheat

¹⁴¹ In Ghana, “Sakawa” refers to internet-based advanced-free fraud. It is often referred to as “419” in Nigeria.

a motumi de ma “government”
 Mo a mohye France,
 mo a mote barrier
 Mo a mo aye moho se
 mompɛ oman no “betterment”
 Mo nhwɛ no yie oo,
 na Anas ɛba o
 [...]
 Polisini a wote ewiase a sika nti
 sɛ obi nyɛɛ hwee koraa na wore gyailioo
 yoo medeɛ deɛ mahunu ena mereka oo
 ɛkom de me nti na mani abre yi oo
 CEPSfuɔ a modi amanfuɔ doo
 yɛn boto mu sika
 na mode koyɛ mmaa show
 [...]
 Daa yete fifire still kapre
 Nipa tumi nante fiti anopa kopim anadwo
 Na “one one” sisi koraa still yɛ srɛ
 Joe, “corruption” nko ara;
 Asofo no nso “anointing” nko ara
 ennye mo “fault” oo, ekonomi no ara
 Sika nni kurom
 nti kronobo nko ara
 Nti omanpanyin mesrɛ pɛ adwuma
 Na yɛn nya sika mfa ebi mfra ntoma
 Wo anye no saa deɛ a worete akoma
 enye saa so deɛ a ligalisi sakawa
 ’kos ɛkom no ano ye den
 [...]

and give it to the government
 Those of you in France,
 those who sit at the barriers
***Those of you who work
 against the progress of the nation***
 You have to be careful,
 because Anas¹⁴² is coming
 [...]
 The Police officer who
 jails innocent people just for money
 Truly, what I have seen is what I am saying
 I am hungry that is why I am this serious
 Customs officials spending people’s money
 You use our hard-earned money
 for extravagance
 [...]
 We struggle always but are penniless
 Man can walk all day long
 And still have to beg for a single cedi
 Joe, it’s all corruption;
 the pastors are also full of “anointing”
 It’s not your fault, it is the economy
***There’s no money,
 so there is theft everywhere***
So president please get us jobs
So we can make money to cloth ourselves
If you don’t, you are punishing us
Else, legalise “sakawa”
Because we are starving.
 [...]

[Translation and emphasis mine]

Apart from providing interesting insights into the public perception of rot and dysfunctionality of state institutions, the lyrics also grant a stunning glimpse into the unconscious reflection among the youth, particularly those with the contemporary *hiplife*¹⁴³ subculture in the country, about the state of the Ghanaian state, systemic rot of state institutions and their explicit legitimisation of crime on the basis of economic hardship and survival (see highlights in stanza 3). In this situation, it is clear that

¹⁴² “Anas” here refers to Anas Aremeyaw Anas, a Ghanaian investigative journalist who is popular for conducting anti-corruption investigations across the country and beyond.

¹⁴³ “Hiplife” is a contemporary Ghanaian music genre generated through the fusion of the country’s traditional highlife rhythm with modern American hip pop or rap. Apart from being a popular genre in the country, it is accompanied by an existing subculture among the young people.

excessive rot in the Ghanaian society has led to citizen disengagement from the state, which in turn has repercussions.

In the midst of the duality of the Ghanaian state and its correlate dual systems (modern and traditional) and dichotomy of “legal” regimes, citizen disengagement has resulted in the emergence of attachments to alternative non-state social entities where acceptance and social security is provided on the basis of belongingness, collective identity and sometimes blood ties. Here, attachment to individual *ascribed identities*¹⁴⁴ has emerged in some cases in the country. The creation of *attained identities*¹⁴⁵ such as professional associations, political groups, ethnic associations and religious associations, has also increased against a backdrop of the freedom of association in the country. So have the formation of networks on the basis of collective criminal identities become easy. In the MV Benjamin case, the meeting among the four (4) drug barons in the house of ACP Kofi Boakye signified the existence of some loose bond among them around their collective involvement in the cocaine trade in Ghana. From the perspective of organised criminality, such a context has not only exposed citizens to “criminal depredations” but has effectively become a situation in which citizens find it necessary “to resort to criminal acts to meet their needs” (Plekhanov, 2005:65); thereby providing the needed *social infrastructure* for organised criminality to thrive. This is because *social enclaves* within which organised criminality are socially legitimised on the basis of economic hardships has emerged in the country.

¹⁴⁴ Ascribed identities are identities those that are inherited at birth and, thus, are deeply rooted, relatively ancient, largely unchangeable or do not easily allow attainment across space and time. This category includes gender, kinship, ethnicity, language, race and region. This source of identity, often referred to as primordial, is either exclusive or inclusive. See detailed analysis of this in Atta-Asamoah, A. 2012. *Overview paper on the management of diversity in Africa*. UN Special Office for Africa (UNOSA). Available: http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/reports/Diversity%20in%20Africa_final%20version.pdf [2013, August 20].

¹⁴⁵ Attained identities are identities formed across different identities on the basis of shared values, beliefs, concerns and experiences and can therefore be modified at some time in life (ibid).

The existence of social enclaves in turn has made it easy for organised criminal groups to find havens for recruitment, disguise and activity sanctuary. This is the case that exists in cannabis hubs such as Serkwa in the Brong Ahafo region, where the prevalence of cannabis production is no more frowned upon and so not reported to state law enforcement agencies.¹⁴⁶ In an interview with Mr Richard Blankson, Deputy Executive Secretary of NACOB, he observed that some barons in Ghana are even traditional leaders whose insertion into the society, social standing and influence make them practically untouchable.¹⁴⁷ Another case is that of the NPP MP Amoateng. Whilst incarcerated, Kwesi Aning notes that his community honoured him and consistently mobilised in his support both because he is a son of the Nkoranza area and also because of his contribution to development in the area. According to a report by the Statesman newspaper, cited by Kwesi Aning (2010:7), some traditional leaders in the area enjoined others to emulate his good behaviour in the area despite the popularity of the former MP's criminal records. Such an explicit praise of a jailed criminal amounts to an endorsement of crime and encouraging young ones to follow his footsteps.

The mutually-reinforcing interaction between the *systemic rot*, its consequent *disengagement* of the citizen, and the resultant emergence of criminal *social enclaves* within which criminality is legitimised and shielded, then collectively define what can be termed Ghana's *RED cocktail situation*, manifested in the forms of the six weaknesses discussed in the previous section. This cocktail of issues are important in understanding the relationship between the state-making challenges discussed in Chapter 4 and manifestation of weaknesses as driver of Ghana's drug trafficking phenomenon in this chapter. First, it is important to appreciate that the elements of this complex RED

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Akraasi Sarpong, Executive Secretary of NACOB, Accra, 15 February 2013.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Nii Lante Blankson, Deputy Executive Secretary of NACOB, Accra, 15 February 2013.

cocktail are directly linked to the country's weaknesses in state-making and therefore are indicative of inherent challenges in the state-making process. Secondly, the RED cocktail provided the domestic criminal infrastructure within which the drug trafficking phenomenon could thrive and persists. This implies therefore that the weaknesses of the state preceded the emergence of the activities of traffickers. By this, then, the emergence of the drug trafficking phenomenon was directly symptomatic of Ghana's weaknesses along the lines of the six key factors elucidated in the previous section. Thirdly, the ability of the drug trafficking phenomenon to create weaknesses within the Ghanaian state only came after actors within the phenomenon had cashed in on the existing weaknesses. This implies then that some form of internal factors in relation to the state are important in the predisposition of the state to the activities of traffickers.

5.5 Drug Trafficking as Driver of State Weakness in Ghana

If the above weaknesses of the Ghanaian state facilitated the onset of the drugs trade and are key to understanding how the illicit drugs industry thrives in the country, to what extent has the onset of the phenomenon in turn facilitated the weaknesses of the state? Generally, Ghana is increasingly confrontational of the activities of drug traffickers in and through its territory. This is evident from the numerous attempts made by law enforcement officials in most cases to intercept consignments where information is available either from tip-offs or collaboration between other partners, particularly the DEA and the British intelligence. Mindful of the disruptive nature of the state's response, cartels and traffickers in Ghana intensely try to avoid the state mainly through disguise and activity sanctuaries as elucidated earlier. Where avoidance is not possible, however, they employ any of four (4) primary strategies in their dealings with the Ghanaian state.

5.5.1 *Corrupting state agents*

The most preferred strategy in cases where avoidance of the state is not possible is to attempt to corrupt state representatives, by initiating payment of bribes often referred to in Ghanaian parlance as “*settlement*.” This is common among police and customs officers on scenes of consignments delivery as well as those with law enforcement oversight over specific geographical areas. The readiness of traffickers to pay bribes sometimes partly explains why they characteristically carry huge sums of cash on them at points of clearing consignments.¹⁴⁸ Traffickers also pay bribes to selected law enforcement officials with the idea of getting those officials to shield them from the state as well as from other cartels who might want to employ violence to resolve disputes. In the MV Benjamin case, Tagor and the other barons strategically courted a relationship with ACP Kofi Boakye so that he could use his law enforcement influence to watch their back. In situations where busts are made and judicial procedures are initiated, traffickers pay bribes to key officials with the aim of influencing justice. In the Nana Ama Martins case, the BNI found that her agents were ready to part with up to \$25,000 to facilitate the swapping of the 1020 grammes of cocaine exhibit so as to traverse justice. Indeed, the fact that her attempt to swap the exhibit materialised, implies that her agents must have ultimately succeeded in corrupting someone either within the police service, judiciary or both.

By these three purposes for which perpetrators of drug trafficking in and through Ghana pay bribes, two forms of narcotics-related corruption (narco-corruption) in the country can be conceptualised. There is the case of *instance bribes* in which one-off payments are

¹⁴⁸ It should be noted that the primary motivation for carrying cash is that most of the transactions in the narcotics underworld in Ghana avoid state attention by transacting in cash, since bulk electronic transfers through the banking sector are easily tracked and can open up trafficking activities for law enforcement monitoring and interception.

made to law enforcement and customs officials to facilitate the passage of hauls. Such payments are not always followed by subsequent payments once the consignment is allowed passage. Detective Sergeant Samuel Yaw Amoah in the MV Benjamin case, for instance, was a one-off beneficiary of Sheriff Asem Darkei's bribe.

The second form emerged in the same case when Asem Darkei requested the detective's friendship. In some cases, barons cultivate friendship with influential law enforcement officials through *continuous bribes*. In some jurisdictions, this amounts to situations where law enforcement officials are kept on the payroll of trafficking rings. The clearest reported example of this in Ghana is the ACP Kofi Boakye case in which he received tip from the barons from time to time. The Georgina Wood Committee found Sheriff Asem Darkei had consciously cultivated access to the IGP. The IGP admitted having ever received fish donations from Alhaji Issah Abass (Wood, 2006:33–35). This can be seen to have been an attempt by the baron to cultivate and/or maintain a relationship with the IGP with the probable intention of exploiting it in case of any possible brush with the law. The second form of narco-corruption ultimately amounts to direct collusion between those officials and drug rings as the officials end up becoming regular beneficiaries and/or stakeholders of trafficking activities. A cash-cow scenario, as conceptualised by Peter Lupsha (1996:21-48), in which some law enforcement officials enrich themselves through the activities of trafficking rings then emerges.

By these moves, traffickers in Ghana have *reinforced* existing corruption and general "*kalabule*" culture in state institutions thereby contributing directly to its worsening. In other cases where enforcement officials have initially not intended to ask for bribes, there are indications that cartels have *initiated* bribes thereby creating a channel for the emergence and growth of corruption in those institutions. In the Nana Ama Martins case,

it is clear that her agents initiated corruption to succeed with the swapping of the exhibit. The most visible direct impact of narcotics-related bribes in Ghana is state incapacity to disrupt the flow of drugs in and out of the country. More broadly, it has led to state absence by the refusal of state security officials to represent the state in the face of drug flows. It has also directly contributed to impunity on the part of organised criminals, as was the case with Asem Darkei who expressly told Detective Sergeant Samuel Yaw Amoah at the Kpone landing site that the cocaine had already left the scene. The confession of the four barons about their involvements in drug trafficking activities in the presence of ACP Kofi Boakye is another example. In both cases, the criminals did it without fear of the authority the police officers represent thereby constituting impunity.

Comparable to Colombia's experiences, narco-corruption in Ghana has ended up affecting the "political status quo" by disrupting government "functions in the political, judicial and law enforcement spheres and thereby negatively impact the legitimacy of the state" (Fukumi, 2005:85). The Ghana police lost a lot of respect in the eyes of Ghana's citizens following cases of missing and swapping of cocaine exhibits. According to evidence from Afrobarometer surveys, about 86-96.0% of Ghanaians perceive public office holders in the country to be corrupt. Not only do these people believe that the corruption is pervasive, there is an upsurge in their overtime trend of perception (see Table 5; Armah-Attoh, et al., 2014:6). As the credibility of institutions is key to the vertical legitimacy of the state, corruption by cartels in the country is indirectly impacting the legitimacy of the Ghanaian state, a crucial variable for measuring its weakness (Holsti, 1996:82-98). Ghana's experience thus directly agrees with Max G. Manwaring (1994:392) who notes that "the level of corruption of the political, economic, social, and security organs of a nation-state is closely related to the degree of weakness of the state government." Such a conclusion in the Ghana case is possible because the

degree of ease of initiating corruption by organised criminals is directly related to the degree of ease of incapacitating the state for their activities.

Table 5: Perception of Corruption among Public Officials in Ghana

	2002	2005	2008	2012	2002/05 -2012
President and officials in his office corrupt	47	56	70	88	+41
MP corrupt	-	59	74	90	+31
Government officials corrupt	-	66	77	92	+26
Local government councillors corrupt	-	60	71	86	+26
Tax officials corrupt	-	70	79	91	+21
Police corrupt	79	81	86	94	+15
Judges and Magistrates corrupt	70	72	79	90	+20
DCEs	-	-	-	89	-

Source: Armah-Attoh, et al, 2014

5.5.2 Intimidation through violence and incrimination

The second major strategy for preventing disruption is intimidation. Whilst in places like Colombia this amounts to the use of direct violence, such as the assassination of incorruptible state officials, so as to make way for drug trafficking activities, the Ghana case offers a slightly different scenario in their dealings with the state. In Ghana, widespread violence by cartels was not evident from the cases examined and reports consulted. However, there is evidence of threats and intimidation for the same end. Honourable Amoateng unambiguously threatened Nii Okai to take full responsibility for the crime or risk never seeing his family (Amoateng v USA, 2009). The association of armed gunmen in the offloading of the MV Benjamin cocaine consignment, firearms found in the house of Kevin Gorman, and fears among the barons in the ACP Kofi Boakye case about the possibility of the Colombians killing them are all indications of the use of violence and the display of readiness to use violence as a strategy of intimidation by cartels operating in Ghana.

In all the cases, however, the primary visibility of readiness to use violence was in the direction of inter-cartel dealings rather than against state security officials. With regards to law enforcement officials, a different level of law enforcement intimidation exists in Ghana. According to some sources within the Ghana Police Service, there have been instances where junior officers on patrol have insisted they do not want to have anything to do with the interception of huge quantities of narcotics. Their reason being that they do not want to be involved in the complexities surrounding such interceptions. One police source quizzed, “doesn’t it raise questions that in most of the big cases, police officers on site end up with a lot of questions to answer?”¹⁴⁹ The rhetorical question by the source points to suspicions among junior ranks of the police about collusion between some senior officers and drug cartels. Avoiding interceptions for fear of incrimination directly amounts to fear originating from intimidation from the way cases are handled in the country. Such a situation has dire implication on the boldness and readiness of law enforcement officials on patrols to intercept drug consignments and achieves the same end as violence.

The possible use of violence in Ghana’s case is, however, an area worth a separate in-depth study because there are indications that they do exist, especially among different smuggling groups. This is evident from the threats received by the four barons from the Colombians in the ACP Kofi Boakye case. It does, however, appear that even in cases like Colombia, some cartels make use of violence towards state authorities only when attempts to corrupt fail and hence the popular statement by the Cali cartel¹⁵⁰ leader,

¹⁴⁹ Non-attributable telephone interview with a Ghana police source, 26 December 2013.

¹⁵⁰ The Cali Cartel was active between the 1970s and 1990s in the Santiago de Cali city, Colombia. Headed by Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela and his brothers, the group was noted for marijuana and cocaine trafficking to the US and Europe. Compared to its rival, the Medellín Cartel, which made extensive use of violence, the Cali Cartel was noted for its preference for bribery rather than violence in dealing with the state. See the New York Times. 1989. The Cali cartel: Colombia’s smoother drug gang. *The New York Times*. 19

Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, that “we don’t kill judges or ministers, we buy them” (Lee, 1995:208). In Ghana where narco-corruption is essentially effective and cheap, direct violence against state law enforcement officials may not be widely preferred or manifesting because corruption does the job. If at all the use of violence in their dealings with the state will rise, its trajectory will first see a rise in inter-cartel violence in the country before the use of violence against state representatives. There is however a danger that with the increasing confrontation of the state and the existing visibility of readiness to use violence on the part of cartels in the country, there could emerge a situation where violence will become part of the intimidation against state representatives. Violence among cartels for the purposes of access to external partnership and market might also increase as there are already media reports pointing to struggles among Latino cartels for the use of Ghana (Aning, 2010:6; The Enquirer, 12 December 2008a).

5.5.3 Capture of the state

The third major strategy is state capture. This is the situation where barons have taken up official state positions so as to shield themselves with the power, privileges and influences that come with that office or seek the use of the state as a cover for their criminal activities. The most prominent case illustrating this was the attempt by MP Amoateng to invoke diplomatic immunity when he was arrested in the US. By that move, he clearly illustrated his understanding of and intention to use and, indeed, his exploitation of the privileges of his political position as a sitting MP to cover up his illegal activities. This is also the context within which the use of the VIP section of the

September 1989. Available: <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/09/19/world/the-cali-cartel-colombia-smoother-drug-gang.html> [2014, April 30].

Kotoka International Airport by traffickers and wielding of fake Ghanaian diplomatic passports by others such as Raymond Kwame Amankwah can be explained.

The extent of state capture for drug use in Ghana is difficult to assess. It is however a factor of the nexus between the country's politics and narcotics which is clearly exemplified by the Amoateng case. The fear expressed by President John Atta Mills to the effect that some of his ministers and people within his government could be trafficking drugs is a direct reflection of the apprehension within the presidency about the extent of state capture. Perpetrators of this strategy either pursue political positions, as Amoateng did, or contribute to the financing of political parties and/or party candidates so as to secure for themselves the requisite influence within government. Whenever there is change of government, such political connections get disrupted; so are drug flows based on such networks.

5.5.4 *The “Poron”¹⁵¹ phenomenon in Ghana*

Ghana experiences another form of state capture, which takes the form of either the infiltration of state law enforcement institutions by means of buying officials or the existence of law enforcement officials deeply involved in or operating trafficking rings themselves. Within the Ghana police, the latter is reflected in the emergence of police turned barons (*“Porons”*). In the meeting between ACP Kofi Boakye and the four barons, he made a statement suggesting that he was not only rent seeking from the barons but was also sometimes the source of goods sold by Alhaji Issah Abass. Whilst addressing Alhaji Issah Abass, ACP Kofi Boakye said, “[Y]ou Alhaji but I give you goods to sell for me. If I have goods worth one billion, I would have stopped this

¹⁵¹ The term *“Poron”* is coined here to refer to the phenomenon whereby police officers are barons in themselves and therefore are either critical linchpin in trafficking rings or are in charge of drug trafficking operations.

business so we will stop worrying. I have been telling you this everyday” (GhanaWeb, 8 August 2006b). By being a source of goods for Alhaji Issah Abass, a self-confessed baron, the ACP was not merely complicit in the drugs trade but could be seen as a “*poron*” who operated by proxy through Alhaji Issah Abass. This exemplifies the “*poron*” phenomenon that exists at the core of attempts by cartels to criminalise state structures.

The Ghana police therefore face challenges around various acts of misconduct some of which are criminal in nature and include the activities of “*porons*.” As of August 2012, for instance, such misconducts had resulted in the dismissal of 947 policemen and women from the force over a period of three years (GNA, 2012c). There are many instances in which police officers have diverted drugs intercepted for sale elsewhere instead of presenting the case before superior officers for the appropriate action. In 2007, for instance, nine police officers were interdicted for diverting confiscated narcotics from two Nigerians in Accra (Ghanaian Times, 30 April 2007a).

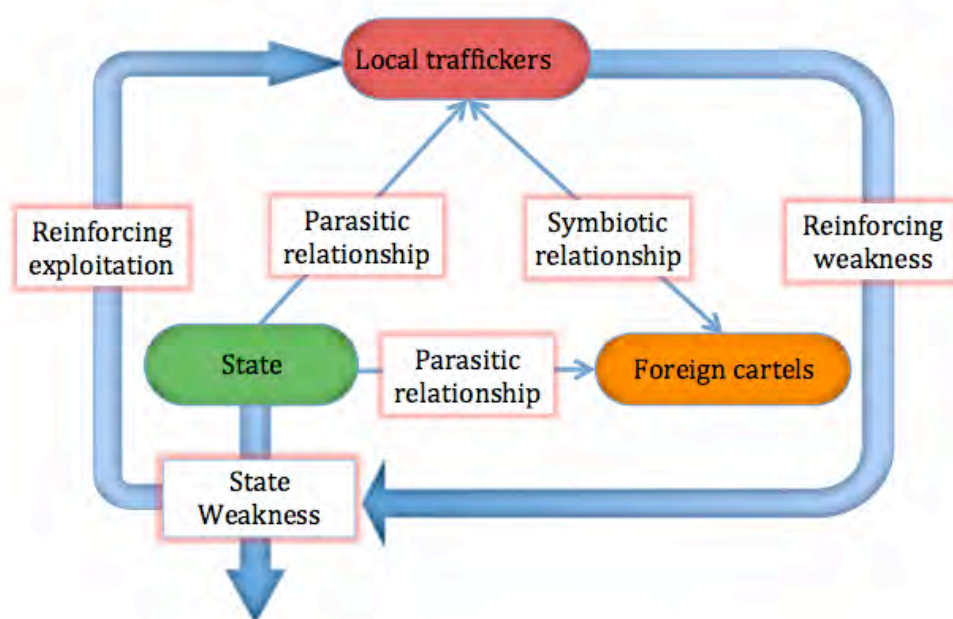
By these strategies, traffickers operating in and through Ghana primarily aim at achieving ease of operation. Attaining that has however implied making the state incapable of responding to their illicit operation. Incapacity is, however, the character of weak states. By extension therefore traffickers primarily aim at weakening the state in order to operate. The reason is that the freedom of traffickers to operate and the capacity of the state are indirectly related – a capable state implies less freedom of operations for traffickers and vice-versa. Either traffickers make use of avoidance through disguise or any of the above strategies to achieve less disruption, it is clear that the weaknesses of the state is key in getting their operations to start and thrive. In a context of the state’s weaknesses, traffickers are able to avoid the state or have their way through the above

strategies. The activities of traffickers in Ghana are thus opportunistic in nature because it capitalises on the existing weaknesses of the state. As such, even though their activities ultimately weaken the state, their weakening attributes are only possible in the context of the inherent weaknesses of the Ghanaian state. Traffickers therefore only easily reinforce existing weaknesses rather than start new ones, as they are consistently on the look out to avoid the disruptive capacity of the state against their activities.

5.6 State – Narcotics Nexus in Ghana

The interaction between state weaknesses as drivers of Ghana’s drug trafficking experiences and drug trafficking as a driver of Ghana’s weaknesses results in what can be referred to as a *weakness-legitimacy cycle*. This cycle is hinged on the triangular relationship between the state, local cartels and foreign cartels (Figure 30) in creating and reinforcing the weaknesses of the state, on the one hand, and the centrality of legitimacy to the definition of the strength of the state, on the other.

Figure 30: Conceptual Relationship between the State, Local cartels and Foreign Cartels in Ghana



Source: Author

Whilst the relationship between local cartels and foreign cartels, especially Latin Americans, are symbiotically beneficial to both, that between the local cartels/traffickers and the state, as well as between foreign cartels and the state are parasitical and exploitative. As a result, the state is on the losing end of the cost-benefit ratio of the triangular relationship between the three actors. Ultimately, the weaknesses of the state are important in facilitating the activities of local cartels and their foreign counterparts. But by capitalising on those weaknesses, the cartels do not only exploit it, but also practically reinforce them by serving as the oil for animating those weaknesses such as corruption – thereby reinforcing the weaknesses and worsening them through their parasitic activities.

So far, the relationship between the Ghanaian state and traffickers/cartels in the country is largely based on avoidance. Where a consistent relationship of collusion exists, it is a practical example of Peter Lupsha's (1996:21- 48) elite-exploitation model in a Third World situation. This is exemplified by the "*poron*" phenomenon within the Ghana Police Service. In this case, there exists elites within the structures of the state who are consciously exploiting known cartels, barons or traffickers as cash cows. This form is however not general and does exist only as an underground illicit criminal activity by rogue and corrupt law enforcement officials. There are indications that some rogue elements at certain levels of law enforcement command and control structures pass on portions of their monetary benefits up the ranks.¹⁵² The evolution of organised crime and state relationship in this context is not likely going to follow the path of the state-evolutionary model in which the current parasitic and exploitative state of the relationship would easily give way to a symbiotic relationship resulting in more capture

¹⁵² This is not to imply that all superiors are involved or condone such activities. In the sense used here, this refers to rogue elements above lower ranks that may be directly involved in rent seeking from cartels and traffickers.

of the state. The reason is that such a trajectory is possible in cases where there are uninterrupted operations of traffickers and cartels, as is the case in Guinea Bissau. From Ghana's current response to the drug phenomenon, the country's situation is most likely going to take the form of an arrested state of confrontation and avoidance, as is currently the case. In such a situation, the activities of cartels and traffickers will continue to exist outside the state and underground, with limited interaction with the state through corruption, collusion and infiltration by "*porons*" whose activities will continue to constitute a brush with the laws of the country.

5.7 Statehood and Drug Trafficking in Ghana

Of the many functional attributes of the Ghanaian state, the one directly impacted by drug trafficking is state institutional capacity at the level of law enforcement, judiciary and political order. The incapacities created in these areas by the activities of drug traffickers in turn have wide-reaching implications on the opinions and beliefs among citizens about the appropriateness of those institutions for the functioning of the state. In this direction, the wide publicity surrounding the activities of "*porons*" and bribery within the judiciary, customs and police as well as the perceived nexus between contemporary Ghanaian politics and drugs following Amoateng's case has had negative repercussions on the legitimacy of the Ghanaian state. There is a section of the Ghanaian population who believe that majority of politicians are either soiled by drug money or corruption. Similarly, police and judicial processes are generally perceived to be corrupt (McConnell, 2008). This has raised a number of questions about the appropriateness of those institutions as functional pillars of the state.

Since state legitimacy is evaluative and is heavily based on citizens' assessment of effectiveness and appropriateness of institutions, the erosion of confidence in the police,

customs and judiciary as a result of the activities of drug traffickers is a direct erosion of the legitimacy of the Ghanaian state. By undermining legitimacy, the functional ability of the state to get citizens to follow orders regarding narcotics through the acceptance of the rightfulness of the state's criminalisation of narcotics, considered belief in the moral authority of the state to enforce PNDC Law 236, and recognition that they (as citizens) need to obey the state are all negatively impacted (Barker, 1990:11; Fukumi, 2005:86; Gilley, 2006:500–503, 2009:3). Against such a backdrop, the rise in the number of Ghanaians involved in the trafficking of narcotics in direct contravention of the laws of the land and at the expense of the international image of the country can be seen to constitute some form of loss of legitimacy in the eyes of those citizens about the state's moral authority and rightfulness to criminalise narcotics trafficking as a business. By manifesting these aspects of loss of legitimacy, Ghana has become functionally incapacitated as the state is seen, in some circles, as no longer assuring security in the fight against narcotics and “provisionment” in its function of providing adequate goods and services to all citizens as manifested in Amoateng's constituency (Zartman, 1995:5). Functional paralysis in relation to drug trafficking due to loss of legitimacy has in turn become a capacity vulnerability, facilitating criminality and further weaknesses as discussed in the conceptualisation of the country's RED cocktail in this chapter. This has ended up constituting what can be termed a *weakness-legitimacy cycle* directly feeding on and fuelling Ghana's RED cocktail situation.

Ghana's experience shows that state incapacity in addressing the drug menace also has juridical implications at two levels. The first is peer perceptions of weakness and incapacity, which has repercussions on international image, bilateral relations and the ability of representatives of the state to be recognised for what they represent. Since the Amoateng case, some Ghanaian politicians have sometimes been subjected to searches at

certain airports, which fundamentally raises questions about the respect the country they represent commands in the eyes of its peers. This is also the case with the way Ghanaians travelling to destinations in Europe and America are treated. Direct flights from Accra to some parts of the US have also been restricted for security reasons. Secondly, by its struggles with the drug menace, the ability of the Ghanaian state to maintain control over its territory and monopoly over the use of force, as a sovereign entity, is being questioned by the activities of traffickers.¹⁵³

The nature of the state that emerges is one that is increasingly confrontational of the activities of traffickers but whose incapacity is evidently eroding its legitimacy domestically. It is then viewed internationally as incapable, hence the need for increased external support from donors and development partners to enable it become functionally relevant in the war on drugs as is the case with operation Westbridge and the many undercover DEA operations in the territory of Ghana. The fact about the drug situation in Ghana is that external assistance has played a crucial role in the modicum of success that the country has achieved. However, some of the activities of DEA in Ghana have been without the extensive involvement of Ghanaian law enforcement authorities. In the case of the arrest of the Afghan heroin traffickers, Nasrullah Safiullah and Mohammed-Omar, in Ghana for the trafficking of 100.0 kg heroin and their subsequent extradition to the US for trial in 2007, the operation was done by the DEA with the knowledge of few people in the office of President Kufour. According to leaked communication from the US embassy in Accra to Washington, few people in the office of the Ghana president were informed due to security concerns that someone within the government could tip-off traffickers involved (US embassy in Accra, 2007). The nature of the operation on

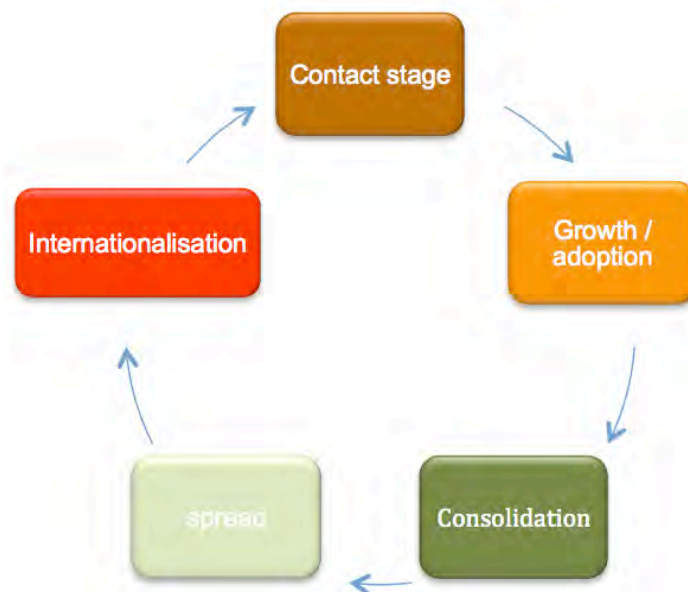
¹⁵³ This is not a deduction that is exclusively a problem to Ghana alone. Even for bigger countries like the US where state capacity is generally strong, the country's struggle with smuggling cartels raises questions about the absoluteness of the concept of territorial control. This issue is discussed in chapter 2.

Ghanaian soil and the limited sharing of information directly illustrate the perception of the US about Ghana's capacity in dealing with certain narcotics cases.

5.8 Ghana's Experience with the Transnationalisation of security challenges

A closer scrutiny of Ghana's experience with drug trafficking, and indeed illicit drugs in general, shows four key evolutionary stages as summarised in Figure 31, which are not mutually exclusive of each other. There is first a *contact stage* where the drug is introduced to the country by way of transiting or for local consumption. In the case of the contemporary cannabis history of Ghana, the contact between Sierra Leonean ship crew and Ghanaians at the coast and later by returning WWII veterans, illustrate the contact stage.

Figure 31: Adoption and Transnationalisation of Narcotics in Ghana



Source: Author

Contact easily gives way to *growth or adoption* of the drug either for domestic use, for trafficking, local production or all of these. In the case of cannabis, this stage was facilitated by the adoption of the use of the drug by returning WWII veterans and

particular subcultures who became the initial nucleus from where its use, production or trafficking gradually spread out in response to internal and external demands. The gradual spread within and across sub-classes invariably raised local demands for the drug and made people ready to perpetrate the associated drug culture either through production or trafficking. Rise in growth and adoption is facilitated by the lack of state attention and anti-demand programmes.

The next two steps involve *consolidation and spread*, respectively. These are the stages where elements and groups in Ghana became sucked into the drug enterprise and formed the basis for the emergence of the country as a significant player in the trend of cannabis in West Africa, and on the global stage. Regional perpetrators consequently *internationalised* their operations along the trajectory of multinational corporations in response to existing and emerging demands elsewhere.

5.9 Conclusion

Juxtaposing the factors that predisposed the state to the onset and growth of drug trafficking with the weakening strategies of drug traffickers, the relationship between the two can be summed simply as *mutually reinforcing*. Without the numerous weaknesses of the Ghanaian state expounded above, drug trafficking would not have thrived in its borders. However, by adopting strategies to enhance their operations, trafficking rings in the country have reinforced the susceptibility of the country to more trafficking activities and organised criminality in general. In effect, the emergence of drug trafficking in Ghana in the mid-1980s and its growth in the 1990s and 2000s were a practical reflection of the existence of certain exploitable weaknesses in the state. Since taking off in the country, the phenomenon has also emerged to represent the existence of state weakening factors that require urgent solutions. Taking Chapters 3, 4 and the cases in this chapter

into account, it is evident that Ghana's state-making weaknesses provided a favourable environment exploited by foreign cartels (initially by Nigerian traffickers and later by Latin Americans) in partnership with Ghanaian traffickers. This establishes the interaction between domestic and external factors in the transnationalisation of narcotics trafficking as a major transnational security challenge in contemporary discourse on global security.

By demonstrating that state weakness is central to the emergence and onset of drug trafficking in the developing world, the findings of this chapter provide basis to argue that there is a fundamental weakness in the direction of the global war on drugs, at least, in the developing countries such as Ghana. This is precisely because if drug trafficking is symptomatic of existing weaknesses and is a major weakening factor in itself, efforts to address trafficking should focus first on addressing the weaknesses of the state as a primary preventive measure, rather than supply and demand reduction as is currently the primary focus in Ghana.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

Taking advantage of the recent provenance of the drug trafficking phenomenon in Ghana, this study set out to investigate the cause-effect relationships in the onset and impact of the phenomenon, as a transnational security challenge, and statehood in Africa.

Within this, the study proposed to advance the following three main central arguments:

- *The rise in the activities of organised criminals, and drug trafficking in particular, is more of a symptom of existing weaknesses and structural fault lines in the state than an initiator of state weakness;*
- *That the ability of organised criminal activities to weaken the state is a product of internal and external factors in relation to the state; and that organised criminals are opportunistic in their activities and merely capitalise on and mutually-reinforce existing weaknesses of the state.*
- *Even though transnational security challenges undermine statehood, they require the complicity of state structures.*

Following an extensive and in-depth analysis of available quantitative and qualitative data collected from multiple sources and cases in the preceding five chapters, this study concludes as follows.

6.1.2 *The rise in transnational organised criminality in West Africa*

The emergence of West Africa as a player in the global flow of narcotics is not a result of a consistent attempt targeting the region. Rather, it is a product of the fact that states in the region found themselves in the confluence of two key categories of factors. First is rise in the demand for narcotics in Europe and North America as well as improved law enforcement on traditional routes supplying those markets. The second category is internal weaknesses related to state making in the individual states in West Africa. As a

result, foreign cartels, particularly Latin Americans, found West Africa's proximity to demand centres in the global North, the existence of domestic organised criminal infrastructure, and the inability of the average state to disrupt organised criminal activities, as ideal conditions for their operations. Consequently, the greater percentage of drug hauls reaching West African shores are meant for the American, European or Asian market. Over time, however, this trend has enhanced domestic organised criminality through partnerships and opened the region up for active contribution to the trafficking of drugs across the world. West African nationals have thus gained worldwide notoriety for trafficking and peddling narcotics, particularly in Europe and America. The use of the region has also led to rise in domestic consumption of hard drugs in many of its countries.

West Africa's experiences demonstrate that the existence of African states in the confluence of the interaction between internal and external factors makes them easy host to narcotics transshipment activities and eventually consumption in significant quantities. Once a state becomes a significant demand destination, it then becomes a target destination around which cartels aiming to meet the demands of that market plan operations. Despite the emergence of significant consumption in many African countries, however, there is currently preference for the global North because of the high returns per unit quantity of narcotics delivered to those markets.

6.1.3 Factors facilitating trafficking

Of the two sets of factors, internal factors in states are the most crucial because they are key to attracting foreign organised criminal groups who might be looking for new routes to their preferred destinations. Organised criminal groups usually pursue new routes when law enforcement presence on old ones increase. Internal factors determine whether

the initial contact between a given territory (state or region) and the activities of a particular cartel will lead to the emergence of a thriving local organised criminal infrastructure. Thus, internal weaknesses determine the extent of domestication of a regional challenge and/or the eventual exportation of a particular domestic threat. Ghana's experience shows that the transnationalisation of issues is a factor of regionalisation of the underlying internal vulnerabilities on which the challenge thrives. Thus, transnationalisation of a security challenge is dependent on the prior internationalisation of its underlying vulnerabilities. More broadly, this implies that the existence of a regional weakness complex (RWC) is a pre-requisite for the emergence of a regional security complex (RSC).

State incapacity was the key internal factor that facilitated the eventual emergence of Ghana as a major transshipment point. The country's incapacity is caused by under-equipped state institutions, lapse in coordination within as well as between state institutions at the forefront of the fight against drug trafficking, unprofessional conduct in state security institutions, and infiltration of state institutions by people involved in organised criminality, particularly police turned barons ("porons"). These issues constitute the systemic rot in the country's institutions and define the incapacity of state institutions to address the drug trafficking phenomenon. The physical and functional absence of the Ghanaian state in important parts of its territory, particularly the coast, prevalence of activity sanctuaries, the muffled deterrence of the judiciary, elitist state response, and the vulnerable nature of the country's political landscape are the other variables that define the country's vulnerability to drug trafficking. All these variables have interacted in a complex way in the creation of a RED cocktail situation within which organised criminality thrives in the country. Weaknesses of the country, as such, have become the key driver of the drug trafficking phenomenon in diverse ways. This

has manifested in the major cases of drug hauls intercepted on their way to and from the country.

Despite the existence of the external factors at the regional and global levels, the country's internal weaknesses provided the primary driver to its eventual emergence as a key transshipment point. However, the weaknesses on which the phenomenon thrives in Ghana do not have their primary roots in the emergence of the drug trafficking phenomenon itself. They rather have their roots in the challenges associated with the country's state-making experiences. In terms of sequencing, therefore, Ghana's weaknesses existed before the onset of drug trafficking. The existence of exploitable weaknesses was crucial to the emergence and development of the drug trafficking phenomenon in the country. The exploitation of Ghana by particularly Nigerian, Latin American and Asian cartels was a direct result of the opportunities the country's weaknesses offered for uninterrupted or minimal disruption in their operations. The activities of traffickers in this case were purely opportunistic. It is clear that the absence of those weaknesses in the Ghanaian state would have challenged the initial contact and made it difficult for the organised criminal groups to operate in the country. A clear prove of this is the extent to which improved law enforcement at the Accra airport since the launch of operation Westbridge has led to decrease in the use of that route.

The Ghanaian state is generally confrontational of the activities of traffickers. In their attempt to prevent disruption to their activities, traffickers in Ghana use corruption, intimidation, state capture and infiltration. By these, traffickers have in turn extended the incapacity of the state to certain activity domains, cases and institutions where it never existed. In their dealings with the state, traffickers aim primarily to prevent the state from having the capacity to disrupt their activities. By extension, traffickers in the country aim

to either keep the state perpetually weak or make it incapable of achieving its desired strength.

From Ghana's experience therefore organised criminality, particularly drug trafficking, requires certain state weaknesses to be able to emerge and thrive. Upon emerging, traffickers and cartels work to support those weaknesses, worsen them if necessary and/or initiate new forms of it. This makes state weakness a fundamental variable around which the onset and existence of transnational drug trafficking revolves. Without exploitable weaknesses, organised criminality cannot exist and become transnational in their activities. A particular pattern of weakening could also give indications about the existence of organised criminal enforcers such as traffickers and trafficking cartels. Drug trafficking is, thus, a symptom of some form of state weakness. In Ghana, rising drug trafficking trends is directly symptomatic of the country's incapacity to contain advancing transnational security challenges. Once it took off in the country, it has also risen to indicate the existence of certain factors weakening the state.

Drug trafficking in Ghana is closely related to other forms of criminality, particularly money laundering, forging of identity documents and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. In the cases involving Kevin Gorman and the MV Benjamin, the association of small arms handling with the traffickers is a clear indication of the relationship between the two. By patronising the illicit flows of small arms in the country, drug trafficking contributes to its proliferation and reinforces the bigger challenge of its impact on the Ghanaian society, in general.

6.1.4 Statehood and drug trafficking

By their weakening impact on state institutions, drug trafficking indirectly erodes the functional and juridical attributes of the state. This is principally by virtue of the link between citizen perceptions of the appropriateness of those institutions for the functions of the state and the evaluative impact of such perceptions on the legitimacy of the state. The loss of legitimacy domestically then has direct implications on the weaknesses of the state and its functional attributes in relation to state presence and the provision of goods, services and security as expected by citizens for meaningful engagement and/or attachment to the state.

Rising perceptions of functional incapacity eventually has implication on juridical attributes. This is because juridical attributes are hinged and dictated predominantly by international perceptions about the capacity of the state. State weakness is, thus, key to the ability of drug traffickers to impact the functional and juridical attributes of the state. Though drug trafficking can impact the juridical attributes of the state, they cannot fundamentally alter the juridical nature of the state to the level they can of the functional attributes domestically. This is because whilst functional attributes are directly dependent on state capacity in relation to provisionment and security, juridical attributes are legal in nature and therefore are more of an *end* than a *means to an end* and are largely *de jure*; rather than *de facto*.

Even though drug trafficking can directly affect functional attributes, it is only capable of impacting juridical attributes through their corrosive effects on the functional attributes of the states. Functional incapacity is thus an intervening variable between drug trafficking and the erosion of juridical attributes. Sustained domestic and international functional incapacity has direct implication on the juridical attributes of the states. This is

essentially because juridical attributes are dependent on the forces of diplomacy at the bilateral and multilateral level. By pushing massive hauls into Ghana's territory in the face of limited interception capacity of the country, drug trafficking activities have succeeded in raising questions about the ability of the country to maintain sovereign control over its territory. This has implication on the country's ability to wield sovereignty as a capable member of the international system; but not enough to take away the existence of the state as an actor, albeit weak, within the international system.

Against the foregoing, this study accepts the central hypothesis that internal weaknesses of the state predispose it to the activities of organised criminals generally, and drug traffickers in particular. Accordingly, the study sustains two of its three main central propositions and thus argues that, the rise in the activities of organised criminals, and drug trafficking in particular, is more of a symptom of existing weaknesses and structural fault lines in the state than an initiator of state weakness by itself. However, upon emergence, traffickers relate to the state with the primary aim of weakening the state to the extent permissive of their operations. The onset and existence of transnational organised criminality is thus an important indicator of the existence of certain forms of state weaknesses and weakening factors requiring urgent responses.

It also argues that the ability of organised criminal activities to weaken the state is a product of internal and external factors in relation to the state; and that organised criminals are opportunistic in their activities and merely capitalise on and mutually-reinforce existing weaknesses of the state. The external factors¹⁵⁴ could be regional or global in nature but can only capitalise on internal situations. A strong state can thus effectively offset the impact of the external factors. Weak states are easily sucked into

¹⁵⁴ In a more intricate usage, external factors could also be sub-state issues external to the structures of the state.

external threats thereby making it easy for the emergence of regional security complexes (RSCs). The strength of a state can thus be measured by its ability to contain advancing transnational security challenges as argued by K. Holsti (1996:15).

Transnational security challenges thrive on domestic weaknesses. Therefore for a security challenge to spillover across any given region, it requires states in that region to have identical weaknesses. It is then the case that the emergence of *regional security complexes (RSC)* as popularly theorised by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever (2003:40–83) in their work on “*Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security,*” requires the existence of a *regional weakness complex (RWC)*. This study theorises RWC as a situation where the individual weaknesses of states in a given geographical area are so identical that their interconnectedness transnationalises their associated security challenges. In other words, RSCs are symptomatic of RWCs. The emergence and/or existence of RWCs forewarn the possible development of RSCs.

The study had proposed to also argue that *though transnational security challenges undermine statehood, they require the complicity of the state structures*. However, the proposition is not wholly sustainable from the findings of a comparative analysis of Ghana and Guinea Bissau. In both cases, this study found that the triangular relationship between the state, local cartels and foreign cartels, as illustrated in Figure 30, is parasitic to the state. Both foreign and local cartels exploit the weaknesses of the state to be able to thrive. However, by thriving on the basis of those weaknesses, their capture of state institutions sometimes end up criminalising the state as is typically the case in Guinea Bissau where attempts by people in authority to benefit from the drugs trade have effectively criminalised the state in many dimensions. In Ghana, a similar situation has manifested through the activities of “porons.” In both cases, statehood is adversely

impacted. The difference in the Ghana case however is that the overall will of the state to oppose drug trafficking in the country is intact. There is therefore a consistent action of resistance by the state against its criminalisation. The state's resistance has culminated in increased state attempts to deal with criminal elements in institutions, as part of its response to corruption and systemic rot in the country. Despite the existence of some level of state capture through infiltration by elements such as "porons," therefore, there is not yet a consistent criminalisation of the state. There is still distinct difference between the national position against drug trafficking and its willingness to contain it as expressed by successive governments and the generality of state institutions in the fight against drugs; and the efforts of criminal elements within state institutions bent on exploiting the incapacity of the state. Ghana is thus a country in conflict with organised criminals than one in bed with it.

Comparing the two, it is evident that transnational security challenges can still undermine statehood without the wilful complicity of state structures. It is however evident from the Guinea Bissau case that state complicity enhances the ability of transnational security challenges to undermine both functional and juridical attributes of statehood. Where transnational security challenges achieve wilful and unhindered complicity of the state, the impact of transnational security challenges on juridical attributes of the state is direct because of its express impact on the erosion of international legitimacy among a country's peers in the comity of states.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Restructuring the war on drugs

From the foregoing, it is established that organised criminality and drug trafficking in particular is a symptom of state weakness(es). This implies that a reliable and sustainable response to drug trafficking should consider the strength of the state not only in terms of law enforcement capacity to intercept but more broadly in terms of functional capacity in the provision of public goods and the physical presence of the state. The war on drugs in Ghana, and other African countries, has however been primarily focussed on drug supply reduction through law enforcement action. However, law enforcement capacity is not the only weaknesses on which the phenomenon thrives. A more comprehensive approach to state capacitation will have to aim at eliminating the weaknesses on which organised criminality in the country thrives. For instance, providing the requisite field kits against cocaine trafficking, for instance, without an improvement in the overall living conditions of law enforcement officials at NACOB and the Ghana Police Service will still expose officials to corruption. Addressing the systemic rot in institutions, making the presence of the state felt, dismantling existing activity sanctuaries and eliminating loopholes in the political landscape are all important in making the desired impact in the war on drugs. A comprehensive approach to addressing the question of drug trafficking should therefore not be formulated outside the broader question of national development in areas where the lack of it has contributed to the emergence and/or worsening of organised criminality.

6.2.2 Equipping state institutions

Ghana's experience shows that political will is important in containing the drug trafficking phenomenon. However, political will without capacity is counter-productive as the MV Benjamin case proved. Despite the political will to intercept the consignment and to arrest the people behind it, equipment issues at the level of NACOB, the Ghana

Navy and Air Force made the state incapable of intercepting the consignment. Political will in the fight against the drug menace in Ghana should lead to institution-building, capacitation and the granting of the appropriate legal backing for institutions to be able to perform their duties. NACOB lacks prosecutorial powers and is basically a coordinating body. This places grave limitations on the capacity of the Board to perform its role. Capacitating NACOB with the requisite institutional, legal and technical capacity is key to enhancing its role in the fight against drug trafficking in Ghana.

6.2.3 Elevation of demand reduction

Ghana's experience has also shown an extent of over-securitisation of the war on drugs in the developing world thereby leading to an over-legalisation and militarisation of the response to the phenomenon. There is therefore an over-victimisation of the users of drugs such as cannabis in the country, some of whom are functional users. Many are therefore languishing in jail. There is the need for a public health dimension to the fight against narcotics. This implies taking public health issues into consideration in existing demand reduction responses apart from the existing public education programmes. This should also include supporting existing health centres with specialty units dealing with the rehabilitation of drug users in the country and improving the functions of correctional facilities.

6.2.4 Capacity building

Lapses in the command and control structures of state institutions as well as unprofessional conduct on the part of some officials are key contributors to the weaknesses of Ghana's state institutions. Training of law enforcement agencies in the proper handling of intercepted narcotics consignments, investigations and other related issues are important to achieving professionalism in relation to dealing with sensitive

issues such as drug trafficking. Capacity-building of state security institutions regarding their respective roles in inter-agency operations is important in preventing lapses in joint operations as well as in cutting down the bureaucratic bottlenecks that delay operations.

6.2.5 Citizens intelligence gathering

The use of mass education in Ghana currently focuses on schools and the prevention of drug use. It is important that in the fight against drug trafficking in the country, local communities are brought on-board the pursuit of consignments. There is the need for all citizens to be educated on what the war on drugs is and the role of the average citizen in helping the government deal with the menace. This will improve the readiness of citizens to provide leads for the arrests of drug trafficking kingpins and hauls. By bringing them on-board, state security agencies at the forefront of the war on drugs would end up extending their presence through citizen intelligence.

6.2.6 Establishment of crime hubs

For Ghana, and other Africa countries, to be able to actively monitor progress in addressing the challenge of drug trafficking, the establishment of a Crime Hub tasked with the collection of data, monitoring of trends and review of progress will be useful. Its usefulness will not only be in terms of monitoring actual progress, but particularly in the area of planning and resource allocation which are vital for maximum use of limited resources in a developing context, such as Ghana. This could take place at the national level with regional offices.

6.2.7 Situational weakness theory

In relation to the application of the weak state theory to transnational organised criminality in Africa, this study notes an over-generalisation of the situations of weaknesses of states. States are made up of different sectors and therefore strong states

are functional along those lines of the different sectors. Weaknesses of the state are therefore reflected along sectorial lines. States, unless failed, are rarely completely weak in all sectors. The higher the number of sectors affected, the higher the weaknesses of a given state. Whenever a given state is weak in all the known sectors of established statehood that state would be a failed state and cannot be considered just weak. In this sense state weaknesses, as often used, should in fact be considered in relation to particular sectors of the state.

This study proposes the concept of *situational weakness*, which places emphasis on the weaknesses of particular sectors of the state rather than a blanket generalisation of the weaknesses of a given state. States such as Somalia, for example, have failed in all the major indicia of statehood and can be effectively considered a failed state. To describe Somalia as weak would be a gross under-estimation of the reality of the state of the state. However, even in Somalia, there are sectors such as the economy, which are still relatively strong and booming despite the apparent collapse of all other sectors. States like the US, effectively considered strong by all standards, have not succeeded in all sectors. With particular reference to organised crime, for instance, the proximity of the US to major trafficking hubs has dealt the world's superpower a huge blow. The US can therefore be considered *situationally weak* in dealing with the scourge of organised crime, but overall strong.

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