

## Call for Papers

### **Territorial Origins of African Civil Conflicts**

**Conveners:** The Ohio State University Center for African Studies, Columbus, Ohio, USA  
The University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

**Location:** University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

**Dates :** January 29-30, 2010

The **Center for African Studies at The Ohio State University** will sponsor a conference on the territorial origins of African civil conflict and conflict-alleviating institutions that integrate localities into national political and economic development processes. The conference will take place at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, January 29-30, 2010. The University of Kwazulu-Natal will cosponsor the conference.

The conference will examine the extent of sub-national regional inequality in present-day Sub-Saharan Africa, assess the extent to which sub-national regional disparities play a role in armed conflicts, review the extent to which African systems of governance currently address and redress territorial differences and grievances, and review and analyze peace accords in Africa in which decentralization, civic engagement, and citizen empowerment play a role.

The focus of the conference on sub-national regional disparities distinguishes it from approaches to conflict that focus primarily on class, ethnic, or religious disparities in the study of civil war. Many of the recent civil wars are struggles over in-situ natural resources while others arise from regional grievances regarding central government decisions, often involving claims on central government resources. Many regional conflicts have their origin in colonial policies where some regions were favored over others. While civil wars are clearly matters of national security, they are also matters of international security. In the Great Lakes region, the Horn, and areas of West and Southern Africa, economically lagging border regions have served as staging grounds for rebel forces, threatening security in neighboring countries and contributing to conflicts among countries. A number of conflict-ridden and post-conflict African countries have established reconstruction plans aimed at redressing economic deficiencies in regions where civil war has already occurred. However, reconstruction plans generally do not address regional inequities in other regions where “the next civil war” might occur. Institutions for addressing subnational, interregional inequality may be a viable way to reverse political and economic marginalization, reduce social unrest and armed conflict, and expand political, economic, and social freedoms. A goal of the conference is to identify strengths and weaknesses of existing institutional solutions for interregional inequality and to identify directions for the future.

The Center for African Studies, The Ohio State University and The University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa welcome the participation of academics, policymakers, civil society leaders, and foreign aid professionals. **Those interested in presenting a paper at the conference should submit an abstract by September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to the Center for African Studies (OSU) and to the School of Politics (UKZN).** E-mailed electronic files are preferred but abstracts may also be faxed or mailed. A detailed description of conference themes will be posted on the Center’s website, <http://cas.osu.edu> . Submissions should be directed to:

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### **Working Conference Timeline**

Proposed dates for seminar: 29-30 January 2010 (Friday & Saturday)

Deadline for receipt of abstracts: September 25

Notification of successful abstracts: September 30th

### Planning Committee Membership

Prof. John Moolakkattu (UKZN)  
Ufo Okeke-Uzodike (UKZN)  
Dave Kraybill (OSU)  
Kelechi Kalu (OSU)  
Laura Joseph (OSU)