The impact of leadership on governance and security in Ghana and the Central African Republic from 1993 - 2013

The actions and policy choices of African leaders shape security, governance and sustainable development outcomes. As a multi-causal social process, political leadership is characterised by interactions between the political leader (head of state) and followers (groups, institutions, state structures) which influence the security of persons. Ghana and the Central African Republic (CAR) present similar, yet different, processes and outcomes of political leadership. On the one hand is Ghana, hailed as the beacon of effective leadership, good governance and democracy in Africa. Yet the CAR has suffered greatly from failures of governance and internecine violent conflict which are further exacerbated by deficits in the quality of leadership. This paper compares political leadership in both cases, to establish critical nexuses with the social causation of conflict and insecurity. It analyses how leaders get things done (process), what they achieve (results), as well as what they fail to get done and the implications for security. A requisite quality of leadership is to respond to human needs and address threats to security. The paper examines how the pattern of interaction between the political leader and governance processes shapes the peace and security narrative, and what criteria are needed for the political leadership that will yield security outcomes.

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