

A member of Madagascar's security forces takes up position as the army storms a barracks housing dissident officers aiming to overthrow Andry Rajoelina, 20 November 2010.
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Ethos of Exploitation

INSECURITY AND PREDATION IN MADAGASCAR

INTRODUCTION

In 2001 Madagascar stepped back from the brink of probable civil war. The country's new leader, President Marc Ravalomanana, seemed poised to pave the way for long-term stability and economic prosperity. The international community provided widespread support as prospects appeared to improve, but Ravalomanana had built his power on fragile foundations. In the years that followed, opposition grew from key economic, military, and political stakeholders, and, by late 2008, Ravalomanana's power base began to unravel. A series of disturbing events ensued—including a mutiny at an army barracks and the massacre of civilians by presidential security forces on the main square in the capital, Antananarivo—precipitating a political crisis that continued through late 2010. By that time, international donors had largely suspended their non-humanitarian assistance.

Madagascar is a deeply impoverished country. In the absence of financial support from and oversight by the international community, the 'transition' government is signing unfavourable contracts, primarily with Chinese and other Asian investors, who are gaining unchecked access to the island's wealth of resources. The extraction and transportation of these resources—including timber, seafood, beef and rare animal species, coal, uranium, gold, diamonds, and other precious stones—allegedly relies on the tacit cooperation and collusion of members of the country's security forces. Moreover, rates of armed robbery, often committed with military weapons, appear to have risen sharply since 2008, as has the presence of international criminal networks. Research suggests that these networks are taking advantage of the political disarray to turn Madagascar into a hub for regional and global trafficking—predominantly of drugs.

Madagascar's security sector has always been weak, undermined by external influence and, since independence in 1960, instrumentalized by successive heads of state and their entourages. As a result, the military, gendarmerie, and police forces do not constitute effective units with a clear vocation; instead, the regular forces are severely underpaid while a hugely inflated number of high-ranking officers are pursuing their own political and economic agendas. Combined with Madagascar's strategic location, lack of basic infrastructure, difficult terrain, and porous borders (see Map 6.1)—which attract predatory actors who plunder the natural resources and engage in illegal trafficking—a dysfunctional security sector has generated the conditions for armed violence of worrisome proportions.

This chapter offers an analysis of Madagascar's insecurity, with a special focus on the role of security sector actors. Policy-makers and researchers have largely ignored the fragile relationships between the Malagasy state and its security forces and between political stability and economic predation. Information on these topics is extremely limited and fragmentary, often historically inaccurate, and frequently contradictory. To offer a critical and more coherent perspective on political violence on the island, the United Nations Office of the Resident Coordinator in Madagascar commissioned a Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment in early 2010; the study built on nearly 200 key informant interviews, background papers, and a preliminary survey of security perceptions in Antananarivo and environs (Jütersonke and Kartas, 2010). This chapter draws on all of the source material developed for that assessment as well as additional desk and in-country research.

This chapter's principal conclusions include the following:

- To a large extent, Madagascar's inability to develop effective state security forces can be attributed to its colonial heritage and strategic location. As a result, the main rationale for a career in the military or gendarmerie is the pursuit of personal gain.
- Since their politicization and instrumentalization in the 1970s, Madagascar's armed forces have constantly been embroiled in struggles over political power and economic access to the country's wealth of resources.
- Today, Madagascar's security sector is characterized by severely underpaid and ill-equipped regular forces, far too many high-ranking officers, and a mushrooming of special intervention units with questionable mandates.
- Collusion between elements of the country's security sector and both foreign and domestic business interests has sharply intensified since the political crisis of early 2009. In the resulting security vacuum, armed criminality is on the rise, rural banditry has expanded, and Madagascar is gaining in importance as an international trafficking hub.
- The state administration has encouraged the organization of neighbourhood watch initiatives and village self-defence groups; it has also turned a blind eye to the operations of highly aggressive indigenous private security companies that hunt down rural bandits.

The chapter has two main sections. The first section reviews the historical context and development of the security sector in Madagascar, noting the specific ways in which the armed forces have continuously been subject to strategies of dispersion and co-optation by colonial and post-colonial governments. Not only has this process led officers to abuse their positions in the pursuit of personal gain, but it has also transformed Madagascar's armed forces into pawns of predatory actors seeking to further their own political and economic agendas. The second section analyses



Rebel soldiers loyal to Andry Rajoelina take over one of the presidential offices in downtown Antananarivo, 16 March 2009.
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the sources of current political instability and the dynamics of today's dysfunctional security sector. It considers three main types of insecurity: armed criminality, large-scale rural banditry, and international trafficking networks on the island. In so doing, it focuses on the role of state security actors either in failing to prevent insecurity or in perpetuating it.

FROM COLONY TO COUNTRY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Madagascar's political process and its administrative, societal, and economic institutions and practices were all shaped by the impact of colonial politics on traditional society. Yet while Madagascar is thus a classic 'imported state' (Badie, 2000), the island features a series of structural particularities. In fact, Madagascar's plight cannot be grasped without an understanding of the historical dynamics that have led to the blurring of national interest and private benefit—and, ultimately, to the country's dysfunctional security sector.

Map 6.1 Madagascar



The emergence and co-option of a politico-military elite

In the later decades of the 19th century, the Imerina Kingdom—and its people, the Merina—conquered roughly three-quarters of the Great Island and rose from a small 'principality' to become the isle's imperial master (Allen, 1987, p. 135). This rise to power was the result of an alliance between the royalty and resourceful *bova* family clans that had helped to finance the king's war. In return, successive kings and queens had provided the clans with forced labour and a regulatory system to build irrigated rice fields and marketplaces. Crucially, the military expansion of the Imerina Kingdom depended on trade: the export of rice and slaves and the import of textiles and firearms.¹

France encountered Imerina dominance when it invaded the island and subsequently took control of Antananarivo in 1895. The *bova* plutocrats had effective control over a highly repressive kingdom that had 'colonized' the other people of the Great Island through merciless forced labour and the slave trade. Thus, the French colonizers sought to 'pacify' an island experiencing constant anti-*bova* insurgencies and civil strife on the one hand, and worked to contain the

power of the plutocrats on the other. By co-opting the kingdom's administrative structure, France adopted a divide-and-rule strategy between the Merina, emblematic of *bova* domination, and the people from the coastal regions (the so-called *côtiers*), thereby emphasizing ethnic differences between them (Deschamps, 1972, pp. 244–47; Allen, 1987, p. 137; Rajoelina, 1988).

The Merina *bova*, who began organizing themselves politically to restore their dominance and oust the new colonial power, expressed their claims in nationalistic terms. In contrast, the emerging 'non-*bova*' middle class (*côtiers* and less privileged Merina and Betsileo) placed their support behind the French, whose rule was less repressive than the Imerina Kingdom's had been and provided some opportunity for social and economic advancement.

The 1947 insurgency provided France with the opportunity to weaken Malagasy aspirations for independence (see Box 6.1). The colonial administration supported pro-French political forces for a future transfer of power but relied on Merina and Betsileo officers for the build-up of indigenous forces (Razafindranaly, 2000, p. 253). From the French perspective, with the election of Philibert Tsiranana, a *côtier* teacher, as president of the First Republic and the parallel consolidation of the Parti Social Démocrate (Social Democratic Party, PSD), the necessary conditions for maintaining a neo-colonial regime after independence had been met.

Box 6.1 Major episodes of political violence in Madagascar

Late 18th century As the Imerina kings and queens unify the island with the help of the British, thousands of people lose their lives in a series of rebellions and resistance movements from rival kingdoms and chieftaincies (Razafindranaly, 2000; Rasamoelina, 2007; Stadelmann, 2009).

1890s Following the two Franco-Malagasy wars (1883–85 and 1895) and the establishment of a French protectorate, Gen. Joseph Gallieni is sent to Madagascar in 1896 to 'pacify' the island based on his experience in Indochina. The insurgency ends in 1898 with more than 50,000 dead from the fighting and related famine and disease (Covell, 1995, p. 141; Rabinow, 1995).

1940s Malagasy nationalism and calls for self-government surge again in the 1940s. The resulting crackdown by the colonial administration in March 1947—and the subsequent state of emergency upheld until 1956—lead to a death toll that continues to be contested to this day, with estimates ranging from 11,200 to 100,000 people (Deschamps, 1972, p. 269; Covell, 1995, p. 212).

1971 The gendarmerie, headed by Col. Richard Ratsimandrava, ruthlessly crushes a regional revolt over tax collection with the support of the prime minister's Israeli-trained Force Républicaine de Sécurité (Republican Security Force, FRS). Between 500 and 1,000 people are reportedly killed. Famously, the Malagasy armed forces decline to participate in the operations (Schraeder, 1994; Rakotomanga, 1998; Archer, 1976, p. 49).

1972 In response to student protests, the FRS raids the University of Madagascar, sparking the May Revolution. Once again, the FRS fires into the crowd at the Hôtel de Ville in Antananarivo, while the gendarmerie and army refuse to shoot at the demonstrators (Rakotomanga, 1998; Althabe, 1980).

A French military convoy prepares to leave for a reconnaissance mission during violent rebellions that led to innumerable casualties, 25 September 1947. © AFP Photo



Neo-colonial foundations of the security sector

Madagascar did not gain independence through armed struggle, and there was no liberation army to unite popular sentiments. Instead, the basic structure of the security forces of the First Republic were those inherited from the colonial system—in particular, the tripartite system of army, gendarmerie, and police (Rakotomanga, 1998, p. 12; see Box 6.2). Moreover, according to the cooperation agreement, France continued to guarantee Madagascar's external defence and internal security (Covell, 1995, p. 73). In the state administration, French technical assistants still played a key role; in the military, they continued to be the dominant force.

At the time of independence in 1960, Madagascar had only ten Malagasy officers, all of whom had previously been active in the French armed forces; two of them had trained at the famous St. Cyr academy. Practically all of them were drawn from Merina aristocrats or *bova* families.² Tsiranana kept the defence portfolio under the control of the presidential office and appointed the then highest ranking officer, Gabriel Ramanantsoa (a descendant of the royal family), as head of the joint staff, with the task of organizing the military (Rakotomanga, 1998, pp. 12, 32, 39). The first regiments were soon created, made up of indigenous soldiers equipped with antiquated MAS-39 and MAS-49 rifles.³



1985 The practice of martial arts is banned after members of the 'Kung Fu' movement attack a state-run youth association that was widely believed to have been involved in street crime and informing the security police about political dissidents. President Didier Ratsiraka's security forces launch an attack on the movement, killing the leader, Pierre-Michel Andrianarijoana, and several hundred members (Gow, 1997).

1991 After fraudulent elections in 1989 and 1991, students initiate a new protest movement. On 10 August 1991, more than 400,000 people participate in the 'Great March' towards Ratsiraka's presidential palace. When the crowd reaches the 'red zone' around the palace, members of the presidential guard opened fire, killing about 130 people (Covell, 1995, p. xliv).

2001 The presidential candidates—Ratsiraka and the mayor of Antananarivo, entrepreneur Marc Ravalomanana—accuse each other of election fraud. Ratsiraka responds by blockading the capital along the roads linking the highlands to the coastal regions. Both sides supply reservists and civilian supporters with weapons, and several hundred people are killed in episodic clashes along the blockade over a six-month period (Rakotomanga, 2004, pp. 66-67; Vivier, 2007, pp. 60-65).

2009 Antananarivo's young new mayor, Andry Rajoelina, a former disc jockey and the owner of an entertainment business, demands the resignation of President Ravalomanana. Supporters of Rajoelina storm and set fire to the national broadcasting company and loot the Magro shops of the President's Tiko Group. The riots spread to several other cities and claim more than 70 lives. Ravalomanana then removes Rajoelina from office, and, in a subsequent demonstration in the capital on 7 February 2009, presidential guards shoot into the crowd, killing at least 30 people and injuring more than 200 (ICG, 2010a, p. 5).

Fearful of the possibility of a military coup, Tsiranana sought to control and counter-balance the power of the military through two principal measures. First, he ordered the minister of the interior and the secretary-general of the PSD, André Resampa, to create the Force Républicaine de Sécurité (FRS), a paramilitary police force trained and armed by France and Israel and recruiting exclusively non-Merina men.⁴ Second, Tsiranana placed the former French gendarmerie (Zandarmaria Nasionaly) directly under his authority. It was commanded by a separate, special joint staff headed by the French Col. Bocchino and placed hierarchically above the army's joint staff (Rakotomanga, 1998, pp. 34–37). At the time, the gendarmerie was a much-feared tool of French colonial oppression, serving as the main security and policing force with the broadest coverage of the territory (Razafindranaly, 2000, pp. 253–57). Its soldiers were thus hardly trained to perform regular policing duties, a fact that continues to haunt Madagascar's security system today (Milburn, 2004).

French technical assistants continued to be present at all levels, especially in the president's special staff. Two factors explain France's high interest in Madagascar during the cold war. First, the island's long coastline offered a privileged position for military reconnaissance, notably for submarines; Soviet bases on the island would have been a major threat to Western naval forces. Second, with the demise of Portuguese colonialism in 1974–76 and the simultaneous rise of socialist, nationalist regimes in Mozambique and Angola, the anti-communist buffer between Central and Southern Africa disappeared. The ports of Mozambique were a

Box 6.2 State security actors in Madagascar

Not only did Madagascar inherit the French political system of presidential republicanism, but it was also bestowed with the French security triad of the army, the gendarmerie, and the police, which remains in place today.

The **Malagasy Army** (Armée Malgache) churns out enough high-ranking officers per year to cater to an army of several hundred thousand soldiers (Rakotomanga, 2004, p. 71),⁵ far more than its 12,500 troops actually need (IISS, 2009, p. 309). Although Madagascar is an island, it has no navy, no functioning air force, and its battalions are built around materiel (such as tanks and artillery) that the country happened to acquire, rather than on what it needs to fulfil its operational functions. In practice, a career in the military is seen as a path to social status, political influence, and personal self-enrichment.

As is the case in France, the **national gendarmerie** (Gendarmerie Nationale) in Madagascar constitutes a branch of the armed forces that is tasked not with the defence of the country against external attack but with the maintenance of law and order—predominantly in rural areas. Yet, unlike in France (or Italy), there is no effective system of civilian oversight or, consequently, public accountability. The gendarmerie is characterized by an inflated proportion of high-ranking officers, a meddling in domestic politics, and entrepreneurial enrichment—as is the army. The 8,100 gendarmes are ultimately an ineffective service of public order on the island's vast territory (IISS, 2009, p. 309).

Madagascar's **national police** (Police Nationale), by contrast, has generally tried to distance itself from the political scene. That aim, however, is hampered by the fact that its *directeur général* is, together with his counterparts from the army and the gendarmerie, subordinate to the Mixed National Operational Joint Staff (Etat-major mixte opérationnel national, EMMONAT). It is further undermined by the gendarmerie's insistence on having a substantial presence in the island's urban centres. The result is direct competition among security services, rather than effective collaboration.⁶

Since the events of 2009, the theoretical division of labour in the triad has been undermined further with the creation of the Special Intervention Forces (Forces d'intervention spéciales, FIS) by the current transitional head of state, Andry Rajoelina. Composed of elements from the military and the gendarmerie, the FIS was supposedly tasked with combating rural banditry (*Madagascar Tribune*, 2009). In reality, the FIS has become a prominent actor in urban centres, notably the capital, where it is perceived as a security arm of the Rajoelina regime. Crucially, the existence of the FIS has not led to a reduction in the multitude of special forces operating in Madagascar. Instead, it constitutes another instance of an unconstitutional arrangement set up to reward officers who were instrumental in Rajoelina's coming to power (Rajaofera, 2010a).

major access point for weapon supplies in the so-called Frontline States, which were supporting nationalist movements such as the South West Africa People's Organization in Namibia, the African National Congress in South Africa, and the two Zimbabwe African National Union factions (Verrier, 1986; Leys, 1995).

Recognizing Madagascar's strategic position, external and internal forces alike actively impeded the armed forces from evolving into an effective and independent entity (Allen, 1987, pp. 145, 152–53; Milburn, 2004). This containment resulted in one of the most striking features of Madagascar's armed forces: the complete lack of a navy or operational coast guard. Indeed, even today, Madagascar's armed forces are not equipped for (or even reflect strategically about) defence of the territory from external threats (Jütersonke and Kartas, 2010, p. 68).

In short, the neo-colonial character of Madagascar's security sector not only undermined the formation of accountable, disciplined, and independent forces, but also sowed the seeds of division between Merina notables and *côtiers* aspirants.⁷ Since the 1960s, internal disunity and external influence have been the fundamental characteristics of Madagascar's armed forces, exposing the army and gendarmerie to instrumentalization and co-option and, ultimately, transforming them into pawns in a political power struggle (Rakotomanga, 2004, pp. 71–84; 1998, p. 116; Rabenirainy, 2002).⁸

The politicization of the military and its control through dispersion

The division and competition among and within the different security forces were further strengthened with the demise of the First Republic in the early 1970s. Student revolts in May 1972 forced Tsiranana to hand over power to Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa and a transitional military government. Although Ramanantsoa accepted political power only reluctantly, officers soon recognized the establishment of a military directorate as an opportunity to remove the French technical military assistants and create new positions for young Malagasies (Allen, 1987, p. 162). The armed forces became highly politicized as a result (Archer, 1976, pp. 58–60).

The assassination of Col. Richard Ratsimandrava and the mutiny of the Groupe Mobile de Police (the successors of the FRS) under Col. Brécharad Rajaonarison in February 1975 once again highlighted the continual tensions and political bickering that were splitting the armed forces into rival factions. On 15 June 1975, the military directorate nominated Frigate Captain Didier Ratsiraka as the new head of state, with the additional title of head of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (*Conseil Suprême de la Révolution*) (Archer, 1976, p. 155). Yet, despite all his rhetoric about socialist revolution and civilian government, Ratsiraka, who had come to power thanks to the armed forces, feared that a military coup would be his ultimate downfall if the top brass were not pleased with the benefits they accrued from his rule. Indeed, an effective separation of the armed forces from the civilian state administration would have forced many officers to return to their normal military functions and (lower) salaries, a change they wanted to avoid at all costs (Rakotomanga, 1998, p. 90).⁹

As a result, Ratsiraka did not opt for civilian oversight of the armed forces but sought to control the military through dispersion. Proclaiming himself 'admiral' in 1983,¹⁰ he followed a three-pronged strategy to rid his presidency of any contestation of his rule from the ranks of the military (Rabenirainy, 2002, pp. 90–92). The first consisted of a 'banalization' of the military establishment through a redefinition of the armed forces as 'militants in uniform' fighting for the socialist cause. The second entailed a major restructuring of the army into three new joint staffs (*état-majors*), all of which had a primarily domestic orientation.¹¹ A general joint staff within the presidential office superseded these joint staffs, and a defence ministry was created simultaneously—but without clear lines of command or accountability. Ratsiraka's third strategy involved caring for the long-term careers of his high-ranking officers, who received high posts in the military development committee, the national revolutionary council, the state administration, and the

Madagascar does not have a navy or operational coast guard.

nationalized enterprises. Indeed, a National Military Office for Strategic Industries (Office militaire national pour les industries stratégiques, OMNIS) was set up for this purpose, and officers deemed potentially subversive were sent for training to the Soviet Union and North Korea, the new ‘cooperation partners’ (Galibert, 2009, p. 80; Rabenirainy, 2002, p. 91).¹²

This was the setting the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank encountered when Madagascar began negotiating structural adjustment loans in the 1980s. No attempt was made to restructure and reform what had, by this time, become a completely ineffective and fragmented security apparatus. In fact, a variety of special armed units mushroomed, such as the much-feared General Directorate of Information and Documentation (Direction générale de l’information et de la documentation, DGID), a secret political police force created in the early days of Ratsiraka’s rule. Instead of inter-agency collaboration, the national police entered into increasing competition with the gendarmerie in policing the urban centres (Rakotomanga, 1998, p. 90; Gow, 1997, pp. 417, 425). In contrast, rural areas—characterized by numerous *zones rouges* (red zones) to which the security forces had no access due to a lack of transportation and road networks—remained severely under-patrolled. The paradox of rising insecurity in a bloated police state reflected the highly centralized administration that had lost its capacity to govern in the periphery.

A Third Republic—but still no security sector reform

The student and civil servant movement of 1990–92, a result of the failed economic policies of Ratsiraka, paved the way for a new, liberal Third Republic, accompanied by great hopes for a democratic awakening of Madagascar. Next to the Malagasy Council of Churches, the military and retired generals were instrumental in negotiating the transfer of power to the Forces vives of Albert Zafy, who was proclaimed president of the High State Authority (Haute Autorité de l’Etat) in August 1992, before winning the presidential elections against Ratsiraka in February 1993. This intervention of military actors only demonstrated again, despite all claims of impartiality, just how deeply they continued to pursue their own interests in the national political and economic spheres (Rakotomanga, 1998, p. 116).

The 1992 constitution of the Third Republic, which set itself the task of creating a parliamentary regime focusing on a devolution of centralized power, soon transformed into a semi-authoritarian pres-



With Madagascar on the brink of civil war, forces loyal to Marc Ravalomanana patrol the area around the town of Ambilobe, 2 July 2002. © Mike Hutchings/Reuters



idential system through constitutional reform projects in 1995 and 1998 (Jütersonke and Kartas, 2010, pp. 46–50; Marcus, 2010, pp. 123, 128). The reform of the security forces remained largely unaddressed. No prerogatives were introduced for civilian leadership of the military and gendarmerie, for the separation of external defence and domestic security, or for parliamentary control of the armed forces. Generals Désiré Ramakavelo and Marcel Ranjeva introduced a number of changes under the Zafy administration, among them a White Book, which affirmed the neutrality of the armed forces, avoided all references to ‘the citizen in uniform’, and defined new aims adapted to global threats. Yet all of this was lip service rather than the start of an actual process of restructuring (Rabenirainy, 2002, p. 92).

The dynamic businessman Marc Ravalomanana became president in 2002, vowing to reform and depoliticize the armed forces (Rakotomanga, 2004, pp. 46–47).¹³ But it was largely business as usual in the security sector. Above all, the lead-up to his presidency had placed serious doubts on the credibility of any reform pledges. When Ravalomanana proclaimed himself victorious after a first round of elections in February 2002, Ratsiraka declared martial law, came to an agreement with five of the country’s six provincial governors, and designated the port city of Toamasina provisional capital (BBC, 2002b; Vivier, 2007, pp. 48–53). He also set up a physical blockade of Antananarivo, in what amounted to an economic embargo of the highlands (Raison, 2002, pp. 124–28). Madagascar was on the brink of civil war.¹⁴

The armed forces were split down the middle into Ratsiraka’s *loyalistes* and Ravalomanana’s *légitimistes*. Faced with a bloated officer corps and a lack of trained soldiers, each side had to resort to reservists, militias, and civilians, who received weapons and fought by proxy along the barricades (Rakotomanga, 2004, pp. 65–68; Vivier, 2007, ch. 8). In fact, instead of constituting a usable fighting force, soldiers and gendarmes profited from the blockades and the resulting chaos by colluding with criminal gangs to loot and rob the island and residents (Rakotomanga, 2004; Raison, 2002, p. 123).

Foreign pressure eventually prevailed, and Ravalomanana was confirmed as president, but his rhetoric in favour of democratic control of the armed forces was incompatible with his immediate need to assuage the *légitimiste* camp of the military to prevent a reunited army from turning against him (Rakotomanga, 2004, pp. 46, 56, 129). Any attempts to reform the corrupt and inept security forces would

have required fundamental changes, threatening the personal interests of its officers. Instead of actively pursuing security sector reform, therefore, he tried simply to ignore and trivialize the armed forces during his first term in office. High-ranking officers eligible for promotion waited in vain, while other, lower-ranking officers jumped ranks when it suited Ravalomanana.¹⁵

By the time Western consultants had begun elaborating a sensible security sector reform package in late 2007, the army and gendarmerie were already so resentful of Ravalomanana's top-down style that any notions of reform were met with downright animosity.¹⁶ Indeed, it was finally the mutiny of officers at the CAPSAT¹⁷ army barracks in Antananarivo that forced him to hand over power to a military directorate in March 2009; those same officers then coerced the directorate into nominating Andry Rajoelina as the president of the High Transitional Authority (Haute Autorité de la Transition, HAT) that has ruled the country into 2011 (Rajaofera, 2010b; ICG, 2010a, p. 6).

The 2009 coup

The process by which President Marc Ravalomanana lost power in March 2009 is illustrative of the ways in which the security sector has itself become part of Madagascar's security challenges. Technically, Ravalomanana was not overthrown by a violent military coup but simply lost control of the security apparatus. The protest movement led by Andry Rajoelina had been brutally repressed on 7 February 2009 and the military and gendarmerie, under the direction of the joint staff, EMMONAT, had successfully quelled the riots in the capital. Andry Rajoelina quickly



Two men take cover as police fire tear gas and warning shots to disperse anti-government crowds, 16 February 2009. © Walter Astrada/AFP Photo





It remains unclear exactly how many people died when security forces guarding the presidential offices of Marc Ravalomanana opened fire on protesters, 7 February 2009. © Walter Astrada/AFP Photo



lost momentum again, not least because his protesters did not emerge from any sort of popular movement, but were recruited from the poor neighbourhoods and rural suburbs of Antananarivo in exchange for small sums of cash. The ‘regime change’ from Ravalomanana to Rajoelina and the HAT was only made possible by a mutiny of non-commissioned officers of the CAPSAT barracks on 8 March, a mutiny brought about by those whose business interests had been made to suffer under Ravalomanana’s rule (*Midi Madagasikara*, 2011).

A few days before the mutiny, CAPSAT soldiers had refused to leave the barracks to perform patrol duties, as they had not received their regular allowances, which were being cashed in by high-ranking officers seeking to profit from the political turmoil. As an International Crisis Group report and confidential interviews had already hinted at in early 2010 (ICG, 2010a, p. 5, n. 41),¹⁸ and as was recently confirmed by two leading figures of the CAPSAT unit (Rajaofera, 2010b; Razafison, 2011), a number of commissioned and non-commissioned officers received substantial amounts of money from economically influential individuals close to Rajoelina. These officers set up barricades on the main road leading up to the barracks, claiming that the presidential guard was planning to storm their base. A paralysed military, already at loggerheads with Ravalomanana following a reshuffling of the highest ranks, failed to act, and the emboldened CAPSAT mutineers went out to occupy the (empty) presidential palace.

On 17 March 2009, Ravalomanana resigned and handed over power to a military directorate, led by Vice Admiral Hyppolite

Ramaroson, loyal to Ravalomanana. Yet the directorate was short-lived. On the very day the presidential decree granted power to Ramaroson, the mutinous group ‘kidnapped’ the members of the military directorate in front of the rolling media cameras, shoved them into a van, and drove them to the CAPSAT barracks, where they were ordered to transfer all powers to Rajoelina (*Courrier de Madagascar*, 2010; YouTube, 2009).

Madagascar is at risk of becoming a major hub for international trafficking.

The 2009 coup shed light on how predatory economic actors exploit a security sector that does not, on the whole, identify with the state and society that it is meant to serve. The fact that the country’s government is a highly centralized apparatus, without effective control of large parts of its territory, facilitates rent-seeking in a country abundant with natural resources. Indeed, foreign and domestic businesses have always relied on their privileged access to the presidency and its ineffective administration to protect their market interests. Since the demise of the First Republic and the politicization of the military, the state administration has also constituted a major resource for an officer’s economic and social advancement. In 2009, with the collusion of ‘rent-maximizing’ economic and military actors, the state itself finally became the central agent in an ethos of exploitation.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND RISING INSECURITY

As a result of the events of 2009, Madagascar’s state apparatus has effectively been incapacitated. As a 2010 World Bank report starkly illustrates, public expenditures have shifted towards the HAT presidency, while all government ministries, with the notable exceptions of the armed forces and the ministry of internal security, have faced drastic budget cuts (World Bank, 2010). For the better part of two years, all democratic institutions, including the parliament, have been mothballed, and an already struggling media sector has been further curtailed. The international community has also suspended the vast majority of its funding and development programming (Jütersonke and Kartas, 2010, pp. 52–60; ICG, 2010b, p. 2). Meanwhile, the rent-maximizing continues unabated, to the detriment of the country’s ecology and internal security.

This section explores the major repercussions of this dynamic—armed criminality, rural banditry, and international trafficking. These troubles are not new, but they have been exacerbated by the events of 2009. The triad of a dysfunctional security sector, a lame state apparatus, and dynamic predatory actors is at the heart of these inter-related phenomena.

Armed criminality

Comprehensive crime statistics do not exist for Madagascar. Interviewed officials hint that available data is regularly manipulated when it is deemed useful for relations with the international community or to secure institutional funding for training or equipment.¹⁹ Nevertheless, media reports and preliminary surveys suggest that the use of firearms in violent crime is on the rise (see Box 6.3). Moreover, there appears to be a high degree of under-reporting, either because victims do not contact the security forces or because the security forces are themselves directly or indirectly involved in the criminal acts committed. Indeed, interviews conducted with *chefs de fokontany* (elected neighbourhood representatives) in the port city of Toamasina and elsewhere paint a disturbing picture of groups of bandits wreaking havoc at night, without police intervention. This trend has led to the formation of neighbourhood watch initiatives—*andrimasom-pokonolona*, or self-defence units—which have taken the provision of security into their own hands (Rasoanaivo, 2010; *Express de Madagascar*, 2010). The scope and scale of these initiatives, however, remain unclear.

Box 6.3 The mismanagement of weapons stockpiles

Small arms are circulating freely in Madagascar, adding to the fragility of an already dire situation. The state's security forces undoubtedly represent one source of these weapons. A complete lack of small arms stockpile management is one of the most striking features of contemporary Madagascar's security sector. Assault rifles regularly disappear from arsenals during times of political crisis—never to be returned, as was the case when reservists and militia forces were armed in 1991 and 2002 and, again, according to confidential interviews, during the events of 2009 (Rakotomanga, 2004, p. 69; Hauge, 2005, p. 14; Rabako, 2010, p. 14). Interviews conducted with members of the military, gendarmerie, and police corroborate media reports that many officers rent out firearms while off duty to supplement low salaries. Indeed, a recent investigation undertaken by the gendarmerie reportedly found proof of such misconduct (*Les Nouvelles*, 2010a).

The incidence of armed robbery appears to be on the rise. Media reports compiled for this study reveal that, during the month of May 2010, attacks with firearms made up around two-thirds of all crimes reported, constituting an increase of more than 40 per cent compared to the previous year. Yet while automatic pistols and assault rifles are reportedly being used in criminal activities, the majority of arms being seized by custom officials at Toamasina, Madagascar's largest port, are hunting rifles (Rabako, 2010, p. 14). Given Antananarivo's thriving black market for small arms—where anything from a revolver to an AK-47 can be bought or rented—allegations over the widespread involvement of current and former members of the state's security sector appear quite credible (Rabako, 2010, p. 15; Andriamarohasina, 2010b; *Midi Madagasikara*, 2010). According to confidential sources, more than 1,500 permits for civilian firearms have been issued in the inner city of Antananarivo alone, with eligibility criteria becoming less, rather than more, stringent.

A full-scale survey on armed violence and security perceptions in Madagascar has yet to be designed and conducted. Only a small, preliminary (and unpublished) survey was commissioned in early 2010 as part of the UN's Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment. Questionnaire interviews (n = 80) and a number of informal focus groups were conducted in 15 *fokontany* of Antananarivo and in two *fokontany* of the small highland town Ambatolampy, apparently the island's main site of craft production of small arms. Of the respondents, 71 per cent said that they lived in insecurity and social disorder, and 67 per cent named political instability as the main source of this turmoil. Three-quarters of the respondents stated that the situation was deteriorating. While the sample is small and unrepresentative, it matches insight generated by a survey of Antananarivo that was also conducted in early 2010, in the context of the UN Multi-Cluster Rapid Assessment Mechanism. According to this survey, 50.7 per cent of households (n = 500) consider the lack of security a major concern (UN, 2010).

In this context, it is troubling that, as one high-ranking informant exclaimed during an interview in early 2010, 'Madagascar has no security but many securities!' Indeed, today's Malagasy security forces are characterized by a dizzying array of special units geared towards muscular interventions, while the day-to-day activities of enforcing law and order—and, above all, *preventing* crime—are largely neglected. In the capital, the national police created a rapid intervention group, an anti-gang service, a special intervention unit, and a special intervention brigade, each with its own mandate and territorial jurisdictions. Many such entities can also be found in France, where some members of these elite corps have been trained (*Midi Madagasikara*, 2005; Rakotomanga, 1998; 2004).²⁰ Regular forces, by contrast—be they police, gendarmerie, or army—are under-represented. As Organès Rakotomihantarizaka, minister of internal security, pointed out in September 2010, Madagascar has one police officer for every 3,000 citizens—while the international norm is three well-equipped police officers for every 1,000 citizens (*Les Nouvelles*, 2010b).

The rural quagmire: zones rouges and dahalo

Insecurity in Madagascar is far more than an urban phenomenon. Indeed, Madagascar's population is still predominantly rural, and, in the face of large-scale cattle rustling and with an increasing number of economic predators taking control of parts of the island's territory,



A one-year-old famine victim cries at a feeding centre in Amboasary, southern Madagascar, 1992. Famine continues to haunt parts of the island in 2011. © Alexander Joe/AFP Photo

rural communities are the ones suffering most from the current lawlessness. While the gendarmerie and specially designed military units are operating in rural areas, they may be poorly equipped, lack means of transportation, or even collude with attackers. Regularly undermined by spontaneous road-blocks, the *routes nationales* have become so unsafe that travel along certain sections is now only permitted in a convoy that is escorted by the gendarmerie; bus passengers are prohibited from using their mobile phones, in order to avoid tip-offs (Andriamarohasina, 2010a).

It is remarkable to what extent Madagascar continues to present an inhospitable terrain for any force trying to patrol and control it. These *zones rouges* encompass large areas of territory that are inaccessible to security personnel. Providing disaster relief is thus extremely difficult for the Malagasy state apparatus, with famines breaking out in the south of the island and cyclones hitting the eastern shoreline with devastating regularity.²¹ But even on a day-to-day basis, Madagascar's topography, coupled with a fragmented road network of dirt tracks that is unusable during the rainy season, makes the provision

of rural security a daunting affair. The most persistent source of insecurity continues to be the *dabalo*, the Malagasy word for bandit, typically used to designate the rustlers of zebu, the local hump-backed cattle.

While cattle theft is a crime punishable by severe penalties,²² *dabalo* raids are a daily occurrence in many parts of the country. A 2001 survey on insecurity in rural areas estimated that 1.78 zebus were being stolen per week per commune; extrapolating that figure to Madagascar's 1,392 communes yields almost 130,000 stolen zebus per year (Programme ILO, 2003, p. 2). In 2006, 3,668 cases of cattle theft were brought before penal courts created specifically to deal with *dabalo* activities (Ignace, 2010). More recent media reports suggest raiding has increased further since the crisis of 2009. In the region of Mahajanga alone, media accounts have documented more than 160 *dabalo* attacks, with more than 3,000 zebus stolen between May and July 2010. It also appears increasingly likely that the *dabalo* phenomenon involves collusion with elements of the armed forces and international organized crime (*Madagascar Tribune*, 2010).²³

Some have sought to downplay the importance of the *dabalo* by arguing that their activities constitute a ritualized form of cattle raiding that has been part and parcel of certain regions of Madagascar for centuries—similar to the practices observed with the Karimajong in northern Uganda. Indeed, studies have shown that for the Bara people in the south of the island, the stealing of zebu belonged to a complex system of reciprocal village rituals to channel aggression, secure the rite of passage from boy- to manhood, and fulfil the preconditions for marriage.²⁴ Moreover, the *dabalo* phenomenon must be understood in the larger historical context and the push and pull factors explaining the rise or decline of banditry in Madagascar. The *dabalo* are a modern type of criminal armed group that did not emerge out of traditional rites of passage (although young men might indeed find their path into banditry through these rites); specifically, they developed as a consequence of the oppression of the population under the Imerina Kingdom and its extensive reliance on forced labour and the slave trade to consolidate its rule (Rasamoelina, 2007, pp. 64–67, 94–98).

Today, the escalation of *dabalo* criminality and the resulting insecurity in rural areas is linked to the appropriation of cattle theft into a modern large-scale venture, with the capacity to launder the documentation of cattle, stock the cattle (sometimes for years) in the herds of influential and wealthy cattle owners (some have herds of more than 10,000 animals), and organize their transportation to the main harbours for trafficking (McNair, 2008, p. 16; Fauroux, 1989, p. 72).²⁵ In contemporary Madagascar, cattle raiders play an important role in trafficking dynamics and the circulation of weapons on the island. The largest and most powerful *dabalo* groups provide assault rifles (mainly AK-47s) and ammunition to all their members (*Madagascar Tribune*, 2010). They escort, in broad daylight, large herds of stolen cattle, carrying their guns openly over several hundred kilometres while crossing entire regions and provinces of the island. As many interviewees pointed out in 2010, these illiterate *dabalo* would not have the organizational, logistical, or financial capacity to conduct such operations without the support of influential networks reaching high into the echelons of the state administration. A new trend witnesses bandits operating in larger units of about 30 men, rather than the small groups of five to six that were common previously. They are now conducting veritable raids, taking women and children as hostages and burning down houses (*Madagascar Tribune*, 2010).

The escalation of the *dabalo* phenomenon is emblematic of the fragmentation and co-option by economic interests of Madagascar's security sector. It seems beyond doubt that many gendarmes and soldiers accept bribes to turn a blind eye, rent out their firearms, and collaborate directly with the *dabalo*. Since the famous Keliberano case of 1989 (in which *dabalo* were sentenced to death for the killing of 11 people), it came to light that military figures were involved in cattle rustling operations and connected to arms trafficking. As noted in the *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1989*:

The presiding judge [in the Keliberano case] called for an investigation and a hearing on these charges. On November 15 the court of Fianarantsoa rendered light sentences of 6 months to a year for those involved in supplying the weapons used in the Keliberano killings (USDOS, 1990, p. 196).

As a result, security forces are not keen on having *dabalo* testify in court. Such verdicts may also explain why special gendarmerie and army units, when they are sent out to hunt down *dabalo*, tend to gun down their targets on the spot, rather than attempting to capture them alive.²⁶

The main impediment to substantially reducing the recurrence of cattle raids continues to be the lack of policing, investigative capacities, and means of transportation of the security forces. None of the gendarmerie outposts have helicopters or functioning four-wheel-drive vehicles at their disposal. Catching a *dabalo* is thus a tricky endeavour,

Cattle raiders play an important role in the circulation of assault rifles.

made even more ineffective by the fact that the detainee must then be marched on foot to the nearest courthouse, often several days away. There is thus ample opportunity for the detainee to escape or be freed by his group. Even if that does not happen, collusion with the local administration often results in the prisoners being acquitted in court or being allowed to escape from prison.

In an effort to counter its incapacity, the state administration has in the past decade not only encouraged the organization of village self-defence groups but also tolerated the operations of indigenous private security companies, called *zama*, hired by the villages to hunt down *dabalo* 'illegally' (Hogg, 2008). The backlash to this aggressive and highly punitive approach has been the *dabalo*'s radicalization and increasing reliance on firepower.

Illicit trafficking by sea

Despite more than 5,000 km of shoreline, the Malagasy state apparatus still has no navy or coast guard, nor functioning helicopters with which to patrol its borders. The remote beaches and small coastal hamlets and villages are littered with large quantities of foreign-looking waste—such as cans and plastic water bottles. The trash comes not from locals trudging through the bush and onto the beach, nor from the small trickle of eco-tourists who are still brave enough to visit. The litter comes from people arriving by sea.

Madagascar and, in particular, smaller adjacent islands, such as Ile St. Marie, have for centuries been a refuge for pirates and smugglers (Stadelmann, 2009). It has also, given its location, been a place of geo-strategic importance for numerous regional and global powers (Allen, 1987). Spotting a foreign ship in

Illegal drugs and counterfeit bills are often seized together, as here in Antananarivo, September 2010. © Moncef Kartas





Box 6.4 Madagascar's 'rosewood massacre'

One of the few contemporary issues facing Madagascar that has caught the attention of the global public is the rampant illegal logging of rosewood, often in the country's nature reserves. The island is blessed (or cursed) with more species of rosewood than any other place in the world, with most of them unique to the island and dozens still unnamed and in need of urgent taxonomic work—the first step in efforts to save them from extinction.

The trafficking of precious woods is not a new phenomenon in Madagascar; but at no point has it reached the scale witnessed since the political crisis in early 2009. Commentators thus rightly speak of a rosewood 'massacre', with Global Witness estimating that the illegal Malagasy timber trade may be worth up to USD 460,000 per day (Global Witness, 2009; Schuurman and Lowry, 2009). According to the non-governmental organization Vakan'ala, 100,000 hectares of the island's forests—estimated at a total of 8.5 million hectares in 2005—are currently being lost per year (Vakan'ala, 2010; Muttenter, 2010, p. 15). Of greatest concern is the disappearance of the eastern rainforests, home to most of the island's endemic species of flora and fauna. According to statistics of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the annual rate of primary forest loss in Madagascar is 0.65 per cent, three times higher than in Indonesia (EIA, 2010).

This massacre is organized, armed, and conducted with the direct and indirect collusion of elements of the current transitional regime. The trade is allegedly financed with advance payments from Chinese buyers and by loans from several international banks with branches in Antananarivo (Gerety, 2009). Heavily armed 'militias' are regularly reported to be operating in the rainforests, threatening park staff and villagers, and escorting the logs to makeshift ports on Madagascar's uncontrolled coastline, most notably at Vohémar (York, 2009). The identity of these militias remains a mystery, though there was widespread consensus among individuals interviewed that members of the country's armed forces are collaborating with the exporters. One undercover investigation quotes the commander at a military post at the entrance to the Masaola Nature Reserve as saying: 'I do not work for the government. I am an independent' (*GEO Magazin*, 2010). In September 2010, it was reported that a foreign journalist was arrested by the police and, in the presence of rosewood traffickers, forced to delete images of timber stockpiles from his camera (Wild Madagascar, 2010). And, in December 2010, a military truck carrying 50 rosewood logs was reportedly intercepted by police forces in the south of the island (Limbira, 2010).

In early 2010, the environment minister, Edelin Callixte Ramiandrisoa, was cited in the media as proudly proclaiming that, in the space of just two months, the state's coffers had received MGA 30 billion (USD 15 million) from the sale of 300 containers (roughly 30,000 logs) of rosewood (Rabary-Rakotondravony, 2010). These were supposedly legal exports derived from trees that had been brought down by cyclones or taken from old, existing stocks. But the 'cyclone' currently sweeping over the island is man-made. As long as the current political impasse is not overcome, ecological impunity will reign supreme, and armed actors willing to engage in coercion and violence to protect their economic interests will continue to fuel insecurity and hollow out the state's capacity to safeguard and promote the well-being of its people.

its territorial waters has always been commonplace for the Malagasy living on the island's picturesque shores. Yet, in the political vacuum that has flourished since early 2009, the odd ship sighting has given way to a veritable invasion.

Apart from naval vessels, the 'illicit' ships that skirt the Malagasy coast can be placed into three rough categories: fishing trawlers, container ships, and regional oil tankers. To simplify somewhat, the first raid Madagascar's seafood stocks, the second cart away the island's natural resources, and the third, it is claimed, use their half-empty hulls to transport stolen cattle and other such commodities around the island.

What do ships bring with them when they arrive to cart away rosewood (see Box 6.4), lemurs, tortoises, and precious stones and metals? Speculations abound in Antananarivo, but one reoccurring rumour is that Madagascar is fast becoming a major hub for the global drug trade. Indeed, the allegation that the island is a transshipment point for heroin has been around for a while (CIA, 2010; Hübschle, 2008). 'Drug mules' are regularly caught by the authorities (*La Gazette de la Grande Ile*, 2010). While they have no proof, many locals suspect the government's involvement through collusion or tacit cooperation.

The political economist Ronen Palan has coined the term 'antisovereign spaces' to describe some of the conditions favouring international criminal networks (Palan, 2009, p. 36). Such operations are very much territorially oriented: they thrive in areas where central authority is weak but where the means of capital accumulation is still the traditional one of slowly amassing ill-gotten

The small port of Vohémar is alleged to be one of the main shipping points for rosewood trafficking. © Toby Smith/EIA/Getty Images





profits (as opposed to the focus of the modern economy on anticipated future earnings). As a result, their operations seek to prolong a fragile state's competitive advantage as a transshipment hub for illicit sectors by co-opting elements of the regime and the security forces. For every day that Madagascar's political crisis is not solved and that the dysfunctional security sector prevails, criminal actors will continue to consolidate their position on the island.

CONCLUSION

Since the island's independence in 1960, a host of factors have prevented the Malagasy armed forces from becoming a professional and disciplined security apparatus. Regional strategic considerations of the former colonial masters generally outweighed calls for the establishment of security forces that could meet the needs of an island defined by long coastlines and difficult terrain. As a result, the hypothetical division of labour and jurisdiction between the army, gendarmerie, and police were never upheld in practice, and, instead of precisely delineated activities, the security sector became increasingly embroiled in the political and economic spheres. Indeed, the military was never tasked or equipped to perform its constitutional mandate of defending the territory from external threats. It has been confined to a purely domestic role and, in the absence of a sense of duty, personal gain became the ultimate rationale for joining and pursuing a career in the security forces. Not surprisingly, such venality has attracted—and has relied on—political and economic predators who are eager to pursue their own interests.

A striking feature of post-independence Madagascar is that it has never been possible to address instability or public discontent through party politics. Instead, the armed forces were increasingly drawn into the void left by an ineffective polity; unprepared and internally divided, however, they lacked the discipline and unity to act as a stabilizing force. Since the politicization and instrumentalization of the armed forces, consecutive governments and the state administration have fallen prey to military careerists and the economic interests of both domestic and foreign actors. Yet the lack of state capacity to enforce the law, to protect and guard the island's coasts, and to put an end to the continuous outflow and misuse of small arms from its arsenals has not been a major impediment to doing businesses—quite the contrary. With the current transitional government not internationally recognized, the lines between legal extraction and illicit trafficking begin to blur; when faced with charges of buying and reselling raw materials that were not extracted according to international or national regulations, foreign companies react by showing officially stamped documentation legitimizing the transaction.

Madagascar's media reports appear to intimate that the government, the security sector, and major business interests have all merged into one. The distinctions between public and private and between legal and illicit seem to have evaporated. Armed robbery, often committed with military weapons, illicit trafficking with probable state assistance, and vigilantism are increasingly common (Andriamarohasina, 2010c; *Les Nouvelles*, 2010c). Meanwhile, the armed forces are prospering. To celebrate 50 years of independence in June 2010, Rajoelina raised the retirement age for the armed forces by a year, giving its top brass an additional bonus (Ranjalahy, 2010). In December 2010, a further 29 officers were promoted to the rank of general (Iloniaina, 2010).

As of this writing, with a few exceptions, the majority of bilateral and multilateral development programmes remain suspended (ICG, 2010b, p. 2, n. 8). Such work, it is said, requires a legitimate national partner. Just as in 2002, when the country was on the brink of civil war, the international community has adopted a wait-and-see strategy, sitting out the crisis and hoping for the return of an elected government so that its development cooperation can recommence. In the meantime, abuse of power, economic predation, ecological degradation, and a suffering population continue to be the key characteristics of the world's fourth-largest island. ■

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPSAT	Corps des personnels et des services administratifs et techniques (Army Corps of Personnel and Administrative and Technical Services)
EMMONAT	Etat-major mixte opérationnel national (Mixed National Operational Joint Staff)
FIS	Forces d'intervention spéciales (Special Intervention Forces)
FRS	Force Républicaine de Sécurité (Republican Security Force)
HAT	Haute Autorité de la Transition (High Transitional Authority)
PSD	Parti Social Démocrate (Social Democratic Party)

ENDNOTES

- 1 Stadelmann (2009); Covell (1995, pp. 225–26); Prou (1987, ch. 3); Allen (1987, pp. 134, 137).
- 2 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 3 Confidential author interview, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 4 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010; see also Archer (1976, p. 49); Rabenoro (1986); Rakotomanga (1998, p. 32).

- 5 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 6 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo and Toamasina, 2010.
- 7 While there is no real ethnic conflict between Merina and *côtiers*, the distinction has long been exploited for political or career ends; see Archer (1976, pp. 24–26).
- 8 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 9 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 10 In declaring himself admiral, Ratsiraka became the highest-ranking officer in the history of Madagascar (albeit with no navy to command).
- 11 These new joint staffs were the *armée de développement, forces aéronavales*, and *forces d'intervention*. Rakotomanga (1998, p. 89); Archer (1976, p. 160); Gow (1997); Rabenirainy (2002).
- 12 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 13 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 14 See also BBC (2002a); Randrianja (2005, p. 17).
- 15 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo and Berlin, 2010.
- 16 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, Berlin, and Munich, 2010.
- 17 CAPSAT stands for Corps des personnels et des services administratifs et techniques (Army Corps of Personnel and Administrative and Technical Services).
- 18 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 19 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 20 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 21 In December 2010, the US Agency for International Development gave USD 3 million in emergency food aid to southern Madagascar, where, according to UN predictions, 720,000 people will probably be affected by severe drought. Indeed, more than half of the island's children are stunted as a result of chronic malnutrition, a situation that is worse only in Afghanistan and Yemen (McNeish, 2010).
- 22 The law against cattle theft dates from 1960, the year of independence (Madagascar, 1960). Depending on the severity of the attack (as determined by factors such as the number of bandits, whether the raid was violent, whether it resulted in injury or death, whether it took place at night or during the day, and whether it involved false documents or the unauthorized use of uniforms), penalties range from five years to life-long forced labour or even the death penalty.
- 23 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.
- 24 Beaujard (1995, p. 572); Fauroux (1989, p. 67); Rasamoelina (2007, p. 223); McNair (2008).
- 25 Confidential author interview, Antananarivo, 2010. As early as 1985, the media reported that cattle were being smuggled to the Comores, Mauritius, and Reunion with the collusion of various levels of the 'civil and military hierarchies' (*Le Monde*, 1985; cited in Rasamoelina, 1993, pp. 29–30).
- 26 Confidential author interviews, Antananarivo, 2010.

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Principal authors

Oliver Jütersonke and Moncef Kartas