Ethnicity, natural resources, hardship and external interests

Armed conflicts in Africa in 2026 — a case study and its comparison with the statements made by the Tibetan

Research paper

Foreword: Scope, Sample and Methodology

This study focuses on twelve armed conflicts on the African continent — Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger/Sahel, Mozambique, Somalia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mali/Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Senegal and Libya. This selection is illustrative, not exhaustive: depending on the criteria applied, conflict observers worldwide count between 50 and 60 active armed conflicts, with a strikingly high proportion on the African continent itself — according to some estimates, more than 35 concurrent armed conflicts in Africa alone, from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa. The twelve cases discussed here are therefore representative of a significantly larger population of comparable crises, not only in Africa but worldwide. The recurring patterns evident in these twelve examples can therefore be interpreted as an indication of a broader structure — not as a complete picture, but neither a mere coincidence.

The initial question of the study was: Since when, and for what reason — even if that reason is merely a pretext — have raw materials or food resources been involved in armed conflicts, civil wars and uprisings? The decisive factor for including a case was not the label (‘war’, ‘uprising’, ‘gang crime’), but the actual presence of armed violence between groups.

The study proceeds in three stages: a summary provides an at-a-glance overview of the current level of violence and the religious dimension of each case. A detailed analysis examines each case individually. A concluding analysis synthesises the twelve cases into overarching patterns and compares the resulting picture for the year 2026 with statements formulated by the Tibetan (D.K., via Alice Bailey) for the period up to 2025 — including the possible consequences of failure as outlined by him.

As in the previous research paper on the mechanisms of capital, the same methodological distinction applies here: the empirical findings are developed independently on the basis of

documented sources. The comparison with the Tibetan's statements is made only at the end, as a distinct and explicitly marked section, rather than being intermingled with the main text.

The overview: Status of the twelve conflicts

1. Armed violence between groups — currently yes or no

- Sudan — yes, active and highly intense. Civil war between the SAF and the RSF; massacre in El Fasher in October 2025.
- DR Congo — yes, active. M23 holds Goma and Bukavu; fighting with the FARDC and its allies continues.
- Niger/Sahel — yes, active, multi-layered. The uranium conflict itself is legal and political in nature; alongside this, active jihadist violence (JNIM, ISSP) is taking place, resulting in thousands of deaths annually.
- Mozambique — yes, active. ISM is carrying out ongoing attacks; state forces (FADM) are also committing acts of violence against civilians.
- Somalia — yes, active and escalating. Al-Shabaab has recaptured several districts since the ATMIS withdrawal gap at the end of 2025.
- Nigeria — yes, active on several parallel fronts (ISWAP, farmer-herder violence, banditry).
- Ethiopia — yes, active on several fronts (Tigray, Amhara/Fano, Oromia/OLA).
- Mali/Burkina Faso — yes, active and escalating; major offensives by JNIM and the Azawad Liberation Front in April 2026.
- Central African Republic — yes, with renewed ethnic escalation despite the July 2025 disarmament agreement.
- Cameroon — yes, ongoing since 2016/17 (Anglophone crisis), with attacks continuing until February 2026.

- Senegal — no, effectively over. Peace agreement of February 2025 with disarmament progressing.
- South Sudan — yes, escalating rapidly since late December 2025, relapse into full-scale war.
- Libya — no, strictly speaking. A frozen conflict with an active political crisis; no large-scale hostilities since 2020.

2. Religious dimension — central, secondary or of no significance

- Sudan — present, but secondary. Religiously disguised as a claim to ethnic superiority (Arab vs. non-Arab); Islamism as a legacy of the Bashir regime; churches as collateral targets.
- DR Congo — dual structure, separate. M23 religiously neutral (ethnic/geopolitical); ADF as an independent, clearly Islamist group (loyal to IS) in the same area.
- Niger/Sahel — yes, central. Religion is the explicit main driver of the violence itself; the uranium conflict runs separately.
- Mozambique — present, but secondary. A religious framework has been superimposed on primarily socio-economic causes.
- Somalia — yes, central, with its own origins (al-Qaeda affiliate); clan marginalisation as an additional recruitment factor.
- Nigeria — varies by sub-conflict: central in the north-east (Boko Haram/ISWAP), exaggerated in the Middle Belt, non-existent in the Niger Delta/south-east.
- Ethiopia — of little significance. Lines of conflict are ethnic-political, not religious.
- Mali/Burkina Faso — yes, central, with independent intra-jihadist rivalry (JNIM vs. ISSP), which is itself partly motivated by resource-based factors (grazing rights).
- Central African Republic — yes, inextricably linked to the issue of resources — a finding unique to the study period.
- Cameroon — not central to the main narrative (the Anglophone crisis is linguistically and colonially rooted); religiously central only in the separate Boko Haram sub-conflict in the north.

- Senegal — unifying rather than divisive across communities; the MFDC leadership is a mix of faiths (Christians, Muslims, Awasena).
- South Sudan — not significant; the line of conflict is ethnic (Dinka/Nuer), not religious.
- Libya — indirectly significant via external alliances (UAE/Egypt against political Islam, Qatar/Turkey with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood), not as an internal Libyan line of conflict in itself.

Sources: ACLED; UCDP; Geneva Academy; Council on Foreign Relations Global Conflict Tracker; International Crisis Group; and the sources listed individually in the detailed analysis.

Detailed analysis

1. Sudan — Raw materials as a source of war funding for both sides

The conflict that erupted in Sudan in April 2023 began as a power struggle within the ruling military junta between General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (Sudanese Armed Forces, SAF) and General Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo ('Hemedti', Rapid Support Forces, RSF). Even before the war began, both factions were competing for the country's gold reserves — the struggle for control of these gold assets was one of the drivers of the conflict, not its consequence. The RSF is financially independent thanks to revenue from gold mines; most Sudanese gold ends up, either directly or via neighbouring countries, in the United Arab Emirates, which serves as a financial hub for both warring parties.

The scale of the crisis: up to 400,000 dead, over 12 million displaced — the world's largest displacement crisis. The massacre in El Fasher following its fall in October 2025 is regarded by researchers as the largest mass killing of the 21st century. The religious dimension is present, but secondary to the main ethnic divide (Arab versus non-Arab) — both warring parties are predominantly Muslim; an Islamist undercurrent (the legacy of the Bashir regime) runs as a separate factor, as does the destruction of churches as collateral damage.

Sources: Council on Foreign Relations Global Conflict Tracker; UN Security Council reports; WHO/UNICEF situation reports, January 2026; Reuters.

2. DR Congo — Global supply chain entanglement with an unresolved dispute over the facts

The Great Lakes region supplies 30 per cent of the world's coltan. Since April 2024, the M23 has controlled the Rubaya mines and levied taxes on around 120 tonnes of coltan per month, which is exported via Rwanda and thus effectively 'laundered' — making it saleable to buyers who are formally obliged to source conflict-free minerals. Rwanda increased its mineral exports from 772 million to 1.1 billion dollars between 2022 and 2023, whilst the DR Congo, according to its own figures, loses almost a billion dollars through smuggled raw materials.

However, some academic literature expressly warns against treating the economic explanation as absolute: the Rubaya takeover took place more than two years after the start of the uprising and cannot therefore be its immediate trigger. The underlying ethnic conflict between Bantu farmers and Nilotic herders dates back to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. From a religious perspective, a dual structure is evident: the M23 itself is religiously neutral, whilst the ADF — an independent group loyal to IS — is exploiting the security vacuum created by the M23 to carry out its own, explicitly religiously motivated attacks, such as those on churches in Ituri province.

Sources: Council on Foreign Relations; UN Panel of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Global Witness; Reuters.

3. Niger/Sahel — A symbol of sovereignty and parallel religious violence

The 2023 coup in Niger and the break with France provided the junta with an opportunity to present uranium as a symbol of a broader grievance. In June 2025, the Somair mine was nationalised and around 1,150 tonnes of uranium were seized. However, the hoped-for outcome failed to materialise: most of the uranium remains unsold, physically locked away and legally frozen — even the new partner, Russia, is now quietly sourcing its uranium from elsewhere, and a World Bank ICSID tribunal has prohibited Niger from selling it until a decision has been reached on Orano's claims.

The uranium dispute itself is being conducted peacefully between the state and the corporation, yet a completely separate, highly intense form of religious violence is operating in the same region: between January and December 2025, JNIM and ISSP recorded 3,737 security incidents in the Sahel region, resulting in 9,362 deaths. JNIM specifically recruits from among marginalised Fulani herders and Tuareg separatists, exploiting existing tensions

between herders and farmers to deepen social divisions and recruit through cycles of revenge — ethnicity is deliberately instrumentalised here as a vehicle for a religious movement, not the other way round.

Sources: ICSID; Reuters; ACLED Sahel data 2025/26; Le Monde.

4. Mozambique — Resource extraction as a trigger through displacement

The violence in Cabo Delgado is closely linked to the discovery and development of the region's gas reserves. Local communities did not benefit from the gas projects, whilst the government expropriated communal land and restricted access to the sea for fishing — this displacement contributed to the radicalisation of the local population. More than 6,100 people have been killed since the start of the insurgency, and over 2.3 million displaced; TotalEnergies' $20 billion LNG project has been postponed until at least 2030.

Analysts regard the religious framing of the Ansar al-Sunna group ('corrupt Islam') as secondary to the actual causes — unemployment and inequality. An additional, self-reinforcing dynamic is that indiscriminate attacks by the country's own armed forces (FADM) on civilian fishing boats are fuelling further resistance against the state.

Sources: Wikipedia, Insurgency in Cabo Delgado; European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights; UNHCR.

5. Somalia — Natural resources as a secondary source of survival funding

Unlike in the previous cases, al-Shabaab did not emerge from a conflict over natural resources, but from the collapse of the state after 1991. The resource (charcoal) only became secondary to the main funding structure: an estimated 100 to 200 million dollars annually from taxation, extortion and charcoal exports, making al-Shabaab the most financially lucrative group in the entire al-Qaeda network. An ecological feedback loop exacerbates the situation: drought drives desperate herders into charcoal production, which intensifies deforestation, which in turn contributes to future droughts — at the end of the chain, an insurgent movement is funded whose ideological origins are genuinely jihadist, not economic.

Since the withdrawal of the African Transition Mission (ATMIS) in mid-2025, al-Shabaab has rapidly moved into the vacuum left behind and recaptured at least five districts by the end of 2025.

Sources: Combating Terrorism Centre, West Point; Climate-Diplomacy case study on Somalia; UN Security Council.

6. Nigeria — Coexistence of multiple conflicts without a unified axis

Nigeria is simultaneously home to several largely independent conflict structures: Boko Haram/ISWAP in the north-east (religious-jihadist), the farmer-herder conflict in the Middle Belt (resource-based, with an ethno-religious framework), the oil conflict in the Niger Delta (a classic resource issue without a religious component) and secessionist movements in the south-east (IPOB) and south-west (political, unrelated to natural resources).

A key methodological finding concerns the Middle Belt: Equating the predominantly Muslim Fulani violence against predominantly Christian farmers with jihadist violence has led to misperceptions of a supposed 'Christian genocide'; the research itself classifies this equation as misleading in most years — a reminder to exercise caution regarding obvious religious framing, which also applies to the other cases in this study.

Sources: Atlantic Council; Small Wars Journal; Human Rights Watch World Report 2025; The Soufan Centre.

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7. Ethiopia — A political-ethnic power struggle without a dominant resource axis

Ethiopia is organised federally along ethnic regional lines — ethnicity here is not merely a line of conflict, but the constitutional organising principle of the state itself. According to estimates by the African Union, the Tigray War (2020–2022) claimed the lives of around 600,000 civilians; despite the 2022 Pretoria Peace Agreement, fighting broke out again at the end of January 2026. At the same time, the Amhara–Fano conflict (at least 7,700 deaths between April 2023 and April 2025) and the Oromia–OLA conflict continue — three distinct ethnic lines of conflict within the same state.

Resource scarcity (drought, changes in herders' migration patterns) acts as a chronic exacerbating factor in the background, but is not the underlying cause. Religion plays virtually no role ; the country is religiously diverse, yet this factor does not shape the conflict. Ethiopia thus provides the clearest counter-evidence to the initial hypothesis of this study.

Sources: The Conversation; Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect; International Crisis Group; UK Home Office Country Policy Note 2025.

8. Mali/Burkina Faso — Extortion and transit blockades rather than control of property

Mali is one of Africa's largest gold producers, yet gold here is not primarily controlled as a form of property, but rather monetised through hostage-taking and extortion: in April 2026, JNIM abducted four Chinese nationals from a gold mine and attacked another mine in January 2026. Even more potent is the blockade strategy: by besieging Bamako and preventing the transit of fuel, JNIM has disrupted public services and put pressure on the state itself.

Even the internal jihadist split (JNIM vs. ISGS) can be traced in part to land disputes — direct evidence that resource issues (in this case: grazing rights) even help to shape religious fragmentation itself. On 25 April 2026, the separatist, non-religious Azawad Liberation Front launched a major offensive alongside JNIM — a tactical alliance between an ethno-nationalist and a religious movement that highlights the instability of such alliances. Burkina Faso recorded over 6,000 jihadist-related casualties in the first eight months of 2024 — a record high since 2015.

Sources: Atlas Institute for International Affairs; Wikipedia, Mali War; Counter Extremism Project.

9. Central African Republic — Symmetrical dual exploitation with an equal blend of religions

Following the Séléka coup in 2013, armed groups used violence to gain access to diamond-rich areas; up to 300,000 people depend directly on the diamond industry. The Séléka's original grievance was sectarian (the marginalisation of the Muslim population); the Anti-Balaka movement, which emerged in retaliation, explicitly formulated its objective as a dual goal: the expulsion of the Séléka in order to gain control of resources, AND the eradication of Islamic rites — a unique combination, during the study period covered by , of resource and religious objectives being given equal weight within the same strategic programme.

The suspension from the Kimberley Process (aimed at curbing the trade in conflict diamonds) imposed in 2013 did not lead to disarmament, but rather to a shift towards smuggling — the UN Panel of Experts found that even the state-run purchasing agency Sodiam was inadvertently co-financing Anti-Balaka members. Despite the disarmament agreement of July 2025, the UN Panel of Experts warns of new, coordinated attacks on the

Fulani community — a repetition of the Sahel pattern of persecution in a different context, involving Russian mercenaries.

Sources: International Relations Review; Global Witness; IMCTC; Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

10. Cameroon — Colonial linguistic and administrative legacy as the main factor, without natural resources as the trigger

The Anglophone crisis is rooted in the marginalisation of the English-speaking minority (20 per cent of the population) by the French-speaking-dominated central government, with its origins in the colonial partition of 1919–1961. The outflow of resources (particularly oil) is cited as a cause for complaint, but is a symptom of the narrative of marginalisation, not its trigger. More than 6,500 people have been killed since 2016; in 2025, President Biya rejected a mediation attempt by former African heads of state.

A second, smaller conflict in the north of the country (Boko Haram) follows the religiously centred Sahel pattern directly across the border. A separate revelation concerning large-scale gold smuggling via Dubai (44 tonnes between 2021 and 2025, compared with the officially declared 148 kilograms) also highlights a problem of corruption that is largely independent of the Anglophone crisis.

Sources: Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect; BTI 2026 Country Report Cameroon; International Crisis Group; Cameroon Intelligence Report.

11. Senegal/Casamance — A shift in the driving force over four decades

West Africa's longest-running separatist conflict (since 1982) exhibits a dual process of self-renewal, as described by the researcher Wagane Faye: from a movement based on popular grievances in the 1980s, through a proxy conflict involving neighbouring countries in the 1990s, to a resource-driven movement after the turn of the millennium , financed by the smuggling of cannabis and timber to China. On 25 February 2025, the Senegalese government — with the former mayor of Ziguinchor, Ousmane Sonko, as Prime Minister — signed a peace agreement with the MFDC.

Religion plays an unusual, unifying role: the MFDC leadership has always been religiously diverse (Catholics, Muslims, followers of the Jola religion Awasena) — a cross-community element of identity rather than a divisive line of conflict. Over a period of more than forty

years, the conflict claimed over 5,000 lives; landmines claimed a further 870 lives between 1988 and 2023.

Sources: GlobalSecurity.org; Foreign Policy; ISS Africa; Wikipedia, Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance.

12. South Sudan — Oil revenues as an instrument of ethnic distribution

South Sudan is the exact mirror image of Sudan: instead of two independently funded warring factions, the resource (oil, accounting for around 90 per cent of state revenue) is concentrated in the hands of a single government faction, which uses it as an instrument of ethnic patronage — Dinka-dominated armed forces control the oil fields, whilst Nuer groups are systematically excluded. The first civil war (2013–2018) claimed the lives of around 400,000 people; since the end of December 2025, the country has relapsed into a new civil war, with around 280,000 newly displaced people.

There is a direct economic link to the war in Sudan: the disruption of oil pipelines through Sudanese war zones has caused South Sudan's exports to fall by around two-thirds and triggered a severe liquidity crisis. The two neighbouring conflicts are thus destabilising one another.

Sources: Council on Foreign Relations; Egmont Institute; International Crisis Group; The Soufan Centre.

13. Libya — A frozen proxy conflict as a stable state

Libya represents a final stage not reached in any of the other cases: the conflict is no longer characterised by acute violence, but has solidified into an institutionalised division — the Government of National Unity in Tripoli (backed by Turkey) versus Haftar's Libyan National Army in the east (backed by Russia, the UAE and Egypt). Both administrations are channelling oil revenues into their own pockets rather than fighting for control of them — which reduces the incentive for reunification rather than increasing it.

Foreign powers are actively ensuring that no single faction dominates, because a divided but stable Libya is more convenient for most external actors than a united country with its own agenda. A UN expert report from March 2026 documents ongoing violations of the arms embargo via the UAE, with tacit acquiescence from European actors for fear of new waves of migration.

Sources: Defcon Level; Council on Foreign Relations; Foreign Affairs; Arab Center DC; Congressional Research Service.

Cross-cutting analysis

1. The stratification: ethnicity, natural resources, distributional hardship, external interests

The twelve cases cannot be explained by a single cause, yet a recurring pattern is clearly evident in nine of the twelve: at the root lies, in most cases, an ethnic fault line that is often centuries older than any modern issue relating to natural resources — Arab/non-Arab in Sudan, Dinka/Nuer in South Sudan, Bantu/Tutsi in the DR Congo, the imperial structure of Tigray/Amhara/Oromo in Ethiopia, the marginalisation of the Tuareg in Mali, and pre-colonial group identities in the Central African Republic.

Natural resources tap into these existing fault lines, reinforcing and monetising them: coltan fuels pre-existing tensions in the Congo; in South Sudan, oil becomes a tool for distribution along the lines of an already existing rivalry; in Sudan, gold finances a conflict whose deepest roots lie in the centuries-old hierarchy in Darfur. Unequal distribution and hardship act as an additional lever for mobilisation, not as its source: displacement caused by gas projects in Mozambique, youth unemployment in the Sahel — hardship alone would probably not have led to armed mobilisation; it merely facilitates mobilisation along the lines that already exist. External interests and the pursuit of profit are the final, additive layer — the UAE in Sudan and Libya, Russia in Mali, the Central African Republic and Libya, Qatar and Turkey in Somalia and Libya, and China as a buyer in Senegal and the Congo. None of these external actors created the original division; they exploit and prolong an already existing conflict architecture for their own purposes.

Two cases deviate from this layering and, precisely because of this, bring it into sharper relief: Cameroon exhibits a colonial rather than a pre-colonial fault line (the language boundary of 1919–1961), whilst Niger presents a confrontation between the state and its former colonial power rather than a core ethnic divide. Both indirectly confirm the basic rule: where no old ethnic line exists, another, equally historically deep-rooted fault line takes its place — but never raw materials or external interests alone.

2. Methodological self-correction as a guiding principle

On several occasions — in the case of Nigeria's Middle Belt, and the distinction between the M23 and the ADF in the Congo — the specialist literature itself has warned against uncritically adopting an obvious narrative framework. This is no coincidence, but a recurring structural feature: the simplest narrative available — a war over natural resources, a religious war — is almost always the most widespread, but rarely the complete one. This self-correction also applies to the present study: none of the twelve cases can be reduced to a single cause without losing something essential.

3. The demographic dimension

It is only through their human dimension that these abstract mechanisms take on real significance. In Sudan alone, some 33.7 million people will require humanitarian aid by 2026 — around two-thirds of the country's population. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25.8 million people are affected by acute food insecurity; in South Sudan, 10 out of 14 million inhabitants require food aid. Across the Sahel region as a whole, 55 million people will face a hunger crisis or worse during the lean season from June to August 2026.

A cautious, necessarily rough overall estimate — with explicit reference to the risk of double-counting in the case of cross-border movements of displaced people — suggests that, for the twelve conflicts discussed here, the total number of people directly affected by the humanitarian crisis is in the region of 100 to 150 million. This roughly corresponds to the combined populations of Germany, France and Spain. Across the entire African continent, over 40 million people have been forcibly displaced — more than the population of Angola, Ghana or Morocco — and, worldwide, over 204 million people live in areas under the full or disputed control of armed groups, beyond the reach of state institutions and basic services.

As the twelve cases examined here, as explained at the outset, represent only a subset of around 50 to 60 comparable active conflicts worldwide, the actual global total of people affected is considerably higher than the subtotal calculated here.

Final comparison: The situation in 2026 and the Tibetan's statements for the period up to 2025

The Tibetan identifies two mutually exclusive paths for the period up to 2025. On the one hand, there is the principle of sharing with one another as the absolutely defining guiding principle of a new civilisation, in which the Earth's natural abundance belongs to all of humanity and economic justice puts an end to competitive struggles. On the other hand is what he bluntly describes as capitalist greed and exploitation — a clear threat to world peace as long as there are 'wealthy' and 'impoverished' nations.

The twelve conflicts examined here allow for a sober assessment of which of the two paths will actually be taken by 2026.

The state of affairs in 2026

Of the conditions for peace set out by the Tibetan — an economic community of nations that controls sources of raw materials and establishes a sensible distribution system — not a single one has been realised in the cases examined. On the contrary: where an international standard for fairer distribution did in fact exist — the Kimberley Process for diamonds in the Central African Republic, the UN arms embargo on Libya, the UN resolution against the Somali charcoal trade — it was undermined in all three cases by smuggling, misdeclaration or the tacit acquiescence of external actors. The capitalist greed against which the Tibetan warns is evident in concrete and documented terms: in the centralisation of oil revenues for the benefit of a single ethnic group in South Sudan; in the channelling of Libyan oil revenues into private coffers rather than the state treasury; and in the targeted recruitment of desperate population groups by armed actors from Mali to Mozambique.

The 'haves' and 'have-nots' nations, which the Tibetan describes as incompatible with lasting peace, can be directly discerned from the population figure of 100 to 150 million people directly affected, as established here — not as an abstract category, but as counted individuals without secure access to food, water or safety, whilst elsewhere on the same continent gold smuggling routes to Dubai, coltan supply chains to Asia and oil revenues flowing untouched into private accounts continue unabated.

The Tibetan's stages of escalation in light of the findings

The Tibetan identifies four possible consequences of failure, and it is possible to assign the status determined here to these four stages without blurring the distinctions between them.

- The first, most extreme stage — a devastating world war and physical annihilation — has not been reached according to the findings presented here. None of the twelve conflicts has escalated into a global war between major powers, even though the involvement of external actors (the UAE, Russia, Turkey, Qatar, China) is real and documented in virtually every case.
- The second stage — a new era of suffering characterised by widespread repression —, on the other hand, accurately reflects the situation as identified. The figures speak for themselves: over 40 million Africans forcibly displaced, several civil wars that have already lasted for decades (Senegal for forty years, Cameroon for eight years, Sudan in its second major phase), and several cases (South Sudan, Mali) of a relapse into previous states of war that were thought to have been overcome. This is precisely the picture of a painful detour rather than a direct path — a process of discipline brought about by bitter experience, not by insight.
- The third stage — spiritual and mental death, a night in which life loses its meaning — can be recognised in individual, particularly extreme episodes of the ‘ ’ investigation: in the El Fasher massacre, which researchers describe as the largest mass killing of the 21st century; the explicit dual objective of the Anti-Balaka in the Central African Republic to pursue both control of resources AND religious extermination simultaneously; and orders from individual militia leaders in South Sudan to ‘spare no lives’. This stage has not been universally reached, but is already a reality in certain localised instances.
- The fourth stage — the shift towards a slower approach, with reforms introduced only laboriously and incrementally — probably best describes the overall situation that emerges from the twelve cases. The only clear progress identified in the entire study — the peace agreement in Casamance, Senegal — took forty years and three fundamental shifts in the underlying driving force to succeed. This is the slow method in its purest form: painstaking progress in a single location, whilst in eleven

other parts of the same continent the situation is simultaneously deteriorating or, at best, remaining in a frozen, unresolved state, as in Libya.

A concluding assessment

The Tibetan maintains that the divine plan and the ultimate triumph of good are inevitable and absolutely certain — yet that the time-factor is determined by the free will of humanity itself. The empirical findings presented here provide neither a refutation nor a confirmation of this in the strict sense, as no empirical verification of such a statement is possible. What can be stated with precision, however, is this: Judged by the Tibetan's own criteria — economic community rather than competition, sharing rather than the preservation of vested interests, distributive justice rather than greed — the world of 2026, as far as the twelve cases examined here show, is not moving towards the desired path, but remains predominantly on the path which the Tibetan describes as the cause of tension and hostility. Measured against this yardstick, humanity has not seized the opportunity held out by 2025 — with the consequence that the Tibetan himself identifies as the result of such a failure: not the end of evolution, but its delay, brought about by self- ly created karma in the form of the suffering that this study has documented in figures and individual fates.