



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BY THE AFRICAN UNION IN THE REGION

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Abstract

The concept of globalization in its scholarly definitions implies that the world has shifted from the era of bipolarity based on the influence of the two major world powers (US and USSR) and their allies and another group who stood neutral against them (the nonaligned movement) to a new era influenced by the information and communication technology. The advocates of globalization have made it extremely enticing to their benefit and the detriment of the developing countries. It is in this context that many scholars are revisiting the conceptual meaning of globalization and its implications on developing countries. This paper is focusing on African countries as a group of developing countries affected by globalization; and to see the extent to which Western demonstrate interest on Africa with respect to resolution of conflicts. The expectation is that the paper will help to strengthen the efforts of the African Union (AU) on conflict management in this epoch of globalization. The paper relied on secondary data for analysis. Data on AU management of conflict in Africa, the contribution of both the UN and the Western countries were assessed. The paper examined peace keeping operation (PKO) and their shortcoming, as well as the effort of the West on conflict resolution in Africa. The paper concludes that for peace to reign African States should ensure good governance, and ensure the implementation of the NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism.

Keyword: African Union, Conflict Management, Globalization, Crisis.

Abstrait

Le concept de mondialisation dans ses définitions savantes implique que le monde est passé de l'ère de la bipolarité basée sur l'influence des deux grandes puissances mondiales (États-Unis et URSS) et de leurs alliés et d'un autre groupe qui s'est tenu neutre contre eux (le mouvement des non-alignés) à une nouvelle ère influencée par les technologies de l'information et de la communication. Les partisans de la mondialisation l'ont rendue extrêmement séduisante à leur profit et au détriment des pays en développement. C'est dans ce contexte que de nombreux chercheurs revisitent la signification conceptuelle de la mondialisation et ses implications sur les pays en développement. Ce document se concentre sur les pays africains en tant que groupe de pays en développement touchés par la mondialisation ; et de voir dans quelle mesure les Occidentaux manifestent de l'intérêt pour l'Afrique en ce qui concerne la résolution des conflits. On s'attend à ce que le document contribue à renforcer les efforts de l'Union africaine (UA) sur la gestion des conflits à l'ère de la mondialisation. Le document s'est appuyé sur des données secondaires pour l'analyse. Les données sur la gestion des conflits par l'UA en Afrique, la

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contribution de l'ONU et des pays occidentaux ont été évaluées. Le document a examiné les opérations de maintien de la paix (PKO) et leurs lacunes, ainsi que les efforts de l'Occident sur la résolution des conflits en Afrique. Le document conclut que pour que la paix règne, les États africains doivent assurer la bonne gouvernance et assurer la mise en œuvre du mécanisme africain d'évaluation par les pairs du NEPAD.

Mot-clé : Union Africaine, Gestion des conflits, Mondialisation, Crise.

Introduction

The concept of globalization implies that the world has shifted from the era of bipolarity/(sm) in which the world was sliced up into two. The powerful groups included the US and the USSR with their allies. The Non Aligned Movement consisted of developing countries that refused to belong to any of the powerful groups. Globalization began to get root at the advent of information and communication technology, and the fall of the Berlin wall. The preachers of the gospel of Globalization have made it extremely enticing to their benefit and to the detriment of the developing states. As such, one may want to revisit the conceptual meaning of globalization and its implications on African crises in order to evaluate Western attitudes to the developing world's conflicts, particularly Africa. The outcome can help to draw conclusion on the interest shown by the North in terms of the dialogue of resolution of conflicts with the South, and its effect on Africa in particular. It can also strengthen the efforts of the African Union on conflict management given the influence of globalization. The study relies mostly on data available on AU's conflicts management in Africa, the contributions of both the UN and Western countries, for analysis.

Based on the specific objectives, the paper is structured into themes including the AU's conflict management, the challenges of conflict management, and the future of conflict maintenance in Africa. Thereafter, the paper offers suggestions on how to manage conflict in Africa within the context of the globalized world.

African Union and Conflict Management in Africa.

Africa is endowed with a wealth of resources, both human and natural. Without peace, these resources cannot be fully and optimally harnessed to ensure the much needed development on the continent. Indeed, the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the continent. The recognition that without peace, development is not possible, has made the AU to put in spirited effort to solve conflict in Africa. Both regional and sub-regional mechanisms including the United Nations (UN) have been involved.

In this epoch of globalised world, it is a truism that many African countries are small and uncompetitive. The most important agenda of the African Union, and indeed, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), is the promotion of regional and continental integration. This position is also inspired by much richer nations in the world which have found it necessary to embrace integration for bigger markets and production lines as well as social and political stability. In order to achieve integration, the continent must be cured of incessant conflicts. Peaceful conditions in Africa, brought about by Africa in collaboration with the international community, would ensure a peaceful qualitative quality population. It can enhance global demand for international trade, migration, and an expanded world economy. The benefits in



development will be enormous, not only Africa but the entire humanity. The benefits would be much higher than under the current status quo where Africa's contribution to international trade is a paltry 2% and where the current development assistance to Africa has not created the necessary effect.

Regional Efforts at Peace

There is a desire and commitment, on the part of AU and the international community, to resolve conflicts on the continent. This desire and commitment are well expressed in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and in the current collaborative efforts with the international community. An examination of regional efforts towards long lasting peace in Africa reveals a mixture of success and failure. Where the conflicts have persisted, the problem has been lack of implementation of agreed positions because of various reasons, including external interference, and internal constraints. The synopsis of the regional efforts for peace is given in the following paragraphs.

The Democratic Republic of Congo

The conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) started years back during the military and counter military coups in the country, but the escalation of the conflict came in 1998 when the rebel decided to confront the government of Congo, by launching attacks from the neighbouring countries. There were outcries of invasion of the DRC. Efforts by regional body resulted in the Lusaka Peace Agreement that addressed the concerns of the rebel armed groups and those of the neighboring countries. Consequently, forces from the neighbouring countries withdrew and eventually, elections were held in the DRC. However, while the internal concerns were addressed leading to elections, it was not clear whether the concerns of neighbouring countries remained were adequately addressed. For instance, Rwanda, was concerned about the DRC's continued harbouring and supporting of Ex-FAR/Interahamwe, who committed genocide in Rwanda in 1994, and was taking refuge in the DRC.

The inability of the Lusaka Peace Agreement to address external concerns like that of the Rwanda government, to a large extent, explains the continuous conflict in the Great Lakes Region. Indeed, it is only recently that Congo decided to do what it should have done in 1998. The government of both countries have formed a Joint Task Force and agreed to take up arms against the Ex-FAR/Interahamwe since February/March 2009. The same applies to the DRC and Uganda, with the participation of Sudan, in the joint operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the DRC in February/March 2009. This joint operations signified a new spirit of regional commitment and cooperation. The Tripartite plus Joint Commission involving Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and DRC played a key role in building confidence and trust among these countries and paved the way for peace and development in the Great Lake Region.

Burundi

In Burundi, regional efforts, under the chairmanship of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, delivered the Arusha Peace Agreement of 2000. It was facilitated by the late President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and later, late President Nelson Mandela of South Africa strengthened the implementation of the Peace Accord. The immediate past president of South Africa,



President Jacob Zuma, did not renege in making sure that the Peace Accord is implemented to the letter. It was these consistent regional efforts that eventually brought on board the two remaining armed groups; namely the National Council for the Defence of democracy (CNDD) and the FNL/Palipehutu of Burundi. The existence of Peace in Burundi remained a classic example of the success of regional efforts, and also an example that incremental progress can build into a concrete solution. Burundi is now enjoying relative peace, although grappling with challenges of post-conflict reconstruction. As a the existence of remarkable peace in the country could show, Burundi has even contributed peacekeepers towards the Africa Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), using their experience to drive home the point for peace.

None of the conflicts in the Great Lake Region can be resolved without reference to the other(s). This is because of the intertwined nature of the conflicts in the region. In this context, therefore, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region was launched in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2004. The Conference was supported by the international community, who also developed a master plan for lasting peace in the region. The Conference did not only come up with regional mechanisms that address every body's concerns, but also planned to address post-conflict reconstruction and development needs in conflict areas. The letter and spirit expressed in the final document of the Conference confer obligations on the regional countries and demonstrate a model partnership with the international community during and after the conflicts. The challenge that remains is to deliver on the commitments, taking into recognition that conflicts can reoccur if the post conflict phase is not handled effectively and efficiently.

The Conflict in Sudan

This conflict in Sudan is concerned the marginalization of Southern Sudanese people. In what started as internal conflict, it has attracted external supporters, and formation of armed groups in the region. Neighboring countries, including Uganda, have been adversely affected by the conflict. The heinous crimes committed by the LRA in Northern Uganda, in Southern Sudan and in Eastern DRC are as a result of the support the LRA were receiving from the Government of Sudan. The internal conflict had to be resolved; and the region stood its ground.

Under the auspices of the regional organization, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) negotiated and concluded the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The CPA resolved the internal differences in Sudan, which helped, hopefully, to bring to an end, the external dimensions. Current efforts are devoted to its post-conflict reconstruction and development. The challenges that were seemingly difficult ranged from those related to border demarcation, sharing of oil revenue, the status of Abyei, operationalization of the Joint Integrated Units, elections and the referendum (to decide whether Southern Sudan remains part of Sudan or secedes) have all been resolved today, except the dispute on how to resolved the Abyei, the 10,546 km² or 4,072 sq mi that is rich in oil.

Besides South Sudan, there is another conflict in Darfur which, which has turned protracted. Peace efforts jointly spearheaded by the United Nations and the African Union have not yet yielded a resolution to the conflict. It is possible that the design of the mediation remains wanting; but also, many other issues have come in to make the Sudanese parties cling to their hard positions. These include the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of President Bashir, who is required to account for alleged human rights violations in Darfur. The position



of the African Union on the ICC indictment is not to condone impunity; but also to strike a balance between accountability and reconciliation in Sudan, in general.

Somalia

Somalia is another conflict that the region has been handling. Under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the warring Somali parties negotiated and signed a Charter in Nairobi in 2006, for power sharing. This brought in the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and other Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) including the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP). In another agreement signed in August 2008, the Djibouti Agreement, brought in a new opposition armed group (The Alliance for the ReLiberation of Somalia) and the establishment of a new Government. The change of Government in the circumstances, was democratically done.

The new President of Somalia, Sheikh Sherif Sheikh Ahmed, has committed himself to the promotion of dialogue with the insurgent groups that are still outside the peace process and fighting the government. The main challenge, however, is that of a weak government with weak institutions. Like the DRC, Somalia needs urgent assistance to strengthen its state institutions, especially those in the security sector. This can be done alongside humanitarian assistance being provided to the victims of the conflict.

Two other conflicts in the Horn of Africa are unique in the sense that they are purely inter-state. But they have other ramifications. The conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea is in a stalemate; but has the potential to re-erupt violently, though it is solvable provided good will emerges. Another one is the conflict between Eritrea and Djibouti, has the ramification of a proxy war between Eritrea and Ethiopia on Djiboutian soil. The proxy war is also threatening the peace process in Somalia, as there is now evidence that Eritrea is actively supporting the insurgents in Somalia on the pretext that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is there on behalf of Ethiopia.

Some countries in the region have not been supportive of the regional and international efforts to stabilize Somalia. In fact the AU has requested the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on these countries for undermining the regional efforts aimed at stabilizing Somalia. It is hoped this will bring pressure to bear on them to embrace regional peaceful processes (Kutesa, 2009). In order to keep the peace, the African Union (AU) has taken initiative to deploy troupes for peace keeping operation in crises affection states and regions in Africa. These deployments are summarised in table 1

The first deployment was to Burundi, following the Arusha peace agreement of August 2000. The operation became two-tiered, with South Africa starting it by providing a VIP protection contingent, while in 2003 the AU deployed a peace support mission (AMIB) that consisted of up to 3,500 soldiers for an initial period of one year. AMIB was placed under South African leadership and South Africa was expected to contribute the bulk of the force itself. The other troop contributors were Ethiopia and Mozambique.

AMIB has been described as a model for future ASF operations, as it took place under African leadership, consisted of African troops and had the primary objective of preparing for a future UN peace support operation. The mission's primary task was to oversee the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and to support the DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) process, as well as to create favorable conditions for the



deployment of a UN mission. There was considerable prestige tied to the operation. It was the first such operation launched by the new AU. In June 2004, AMIB was thus turned into a UN mission under the French acronym ONUB. The operation in Burundi showed the importance of having the requisite finance in place before deployment. Ethiopia and Mozambique had refused to deploy troops because of financial constraint; as such South Africa decided to take up the burden of deploying troops as well as taking up the expenses of Ethiopia and Mozambique. Subsequently, the AU had to establish a peace fund.⁴

Tale 1: AU Peace keeping mission

S/N	Country	Acronym (Period)	Countries that contributed group
	Burundi	AMIB (April 2003 – May 2004)	South Africa, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Mali & Tunisia
	Sudan	AMIS (June 2004 – December 2007)	Nigeria, Rwanda, Egypt, South Africa, Senegal, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Mauritania, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Lesotho, Uganda, Madagascar, Burundi, Cameroun and Mauritius
	Darfur	UNAMID (January, 2008 – July, 2021)	Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Egypt, South Africa, Senegal, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Nepal, and Pakistan
	Somalia	AMISOM (January, 2007 – August 2021-)	Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania and Sudan
	Comoros	AMISEC (March 2006 – June, 2006)	South Africa, Rwanda, Nigeria, Mozambique, Congo Brazzaville, Egypt, Madagascar, and Mauritius

Source: Royal Danish Defence College. Additional source: peaceoperationsreview.org

Legend:

- AMIB:** African Union Mission in Burundi
AMIS: African Union Mission in Sudan
AMISOM: African Union Mission in Sudan
UNAMID: African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
AMISEC: Au Mission to Support the Election In Comoros

When civil war broke out in Darfur (Sudan) in 2003, the AU quickly became involved, initially playing the role of a mediator (Bogland, Egnell, & Largerstrom, 2008). Following the



signing of a very fragile and contested ‘humanitarian ceasefire’ agreement between the government and some of the Darfurian rebel groups in April 2004, the AU accepted the task of monitoring its observance and dispatched observers and a small troop contingent of around 300 men to protect them – sometimes referred to as AMIS-1. By October of the same year, however, this had to be expanded into a fully-fledged peacekeeping mission, AMIS-2, first mandated to number around 3,000 troops, but subsequently expanded (as of January 2007) to 596 military observers, 5,210 troops and 1,425 police officers.

Whereas the peacekeepers were unable to stop all the killings or the forced displacement of civilians, the AU probably did as well as anybody else would have done under almost impossible conditions and with a casualty toll of almost sixty troops killed. The operation was hampered by the fact that the AU was pressured to undertake it before its security architecture was in place. Hence, the deployment took place outside institutions that were still under construction, the troops being provided by willing states. The operation experienced mission creep, a lack of capacity, and a serious discrepancy between its mandate and the means available to it. South Africa was the only participant to provide its own military equipment, while the other troop contributors depended on equipment provided and financed by international donors. Moreover, AMIS never reached its planned 8,000 troop strength because the AU found it difficult to get its members to provide the troops. Part of the problem was, and still is, that reimbursement to states from UN missions was higher than from equivalent AU missions, thus suggesting that it was more economically attractive for states to provide forces to the UN.

Another problem was the very restrictive mandate, which placed rigid constraints on the ability to use force to protect vulnerable groups. By the end of 2007, AMIS had partly been merged with the UN’s mission in Sudan, creating an unprecedented hybrid mission, UNAMID (UN-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur). As of February 2009 UNAMID included 12,421 troops and 2,510 police officers plus civilian staff, of whom the overwhelming majority were Africans.

The fourth AU deployment was to Somalia (African Union Mission to Somalia, AMISOM). It was deployed in 2007 following the Ethiopian invasion of the country and was intended to replace the Ethiopian troops in protecting the Transitional Federal Government (TNG). By the end of 2008, only Uganda and Burundi had deployed troops, and the future of the mission appeared very uncertain. In early 2009 negotiations between the AU and UN were ongoing regarding how to strengthen the operation. The AU expected that the UN would replace the AU mission, but it seemed very unlikely that this was going to happen. AMISOM has to a large extent been affected by the reluctance of AU members to commit the required troops, and the limited size of the operation meant that AMISOM initially had a quite limited capacity to do anything apart from protecting itself, and therefore focused on the protection of selected official buildings and installations in Mogadishu.

The fifth AU mission was to the Comoros, where in October 2005 the government requested the AU to monitor the upcoming election, which was eventually held in May 2006. The AU established an AU Mission to Support the Elections in the Comoros (AMISEC) composed of military and civilian officers, predominantly from South Africa. The election resulted in a constitutional crisis, which in March 2008 had escalated to such a disturbing level that the AU launched an offensive operation led by 1,300 troops from Tanzania



and Sudan (supported by France and Libya) joined by 400 Comoron forces who were responding to a request from the national government to quell the rebellion. It was the first time the AU took offensive military action in support of the government of a member state. The military side of the operation was a success, but the mission itself was controversial, as some African leaders would have preferred a political solution to the problem.

All the examined efforts of the African Union and its attempts to curb political crisis in this age of globalization has had several challenges which a few were overcome and others left in controversy and the rest in failures (Bogland, Egnell, & Largerstrom, 2008). These challenges will be detailed in the subsequent section of this paper.

Challenges Facing the AU's Conflict Management Delay in Intervention

The delay in intervention by the AU and UN has contributed to the metamorphosis of African crisis to complex conflict situations. For example after the break out of the Rwandan conflict in October 1990, it took one year before the OAU deployed the NMOG, and three years for the UN to set up the UNAMIR. In the same way when the Security Council adopted the resolution to deploy UNAMIR II, after the world expressed its indignation at the attitude of the UN in Rwanda, it took more than 3 months to have the first batch of troops on the ground. The delay in decision-making and implementation of the decision are mostly responsible for the escalation of violence. As the Brahimi Report noted the response to the crisis was late, and the response very ineffective, thus resulting to several loss of life. In order to forestall this, the UN has introduced several initiatives to enhance rapid deployment and intervention. These include some improvement in its standby Arrangement System, the formation of multinational brigade sized force by member states, the development of on-call list and Strategic Development Stocks as well as programs to assess the readiness of troops pledged to the UN prior to their deployment. However, most of these initiatives are still not developed and are not operational in the African region with the AU. Thus the UN would need to assist the AU and other regional organizations to develop these initiatives.

Weak Structure of AU Mechanism.

The OAU mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (MC PMR) like its previous mechanisms has not improved the organization's capacity in handling conflicts. This, in effect has a negative influence on intervention in African societies. Some scholars have argued that a stronger AU would easily influence and lobby the UN to intervene in African conflicts before the situation becomes complex. The apparent lack of capability to manage conflicts by the AU is due to lack of funds and other inherent weaknesses. As Makinda (2007) observed, the OAU now AU mechanism was a victim of caution, compromise and conservatism that have too often become part and parcel of the decisionmaking process within the AU.

The other weakness is that financially, the AU mechanism has to rely on the UN or donor nations, because very few nations pay their contribution to the peace fund. This critical area of funding would need to be revisited by AU member states in view of the current trend of regionalization of Peace Keeping Operations (PKO). Furthermore, the UN would need to consider increased funding to the AU organization in order to empower the AU's conflict resolution mechanism which will ultimately enhance the maintenance of international security



order. The truth is, in the era of globalization which we live in, any conflict prone or ridden society in one part of the world would affect the peace of those living in order parts of the world since the shift into globalization. For Instance, the recent Japanese tsunami, though a natural disaster, has to a large extent affected the entire world especially those that have relations, be it social, cultural, political, diplomatic, economic, etc. with Japan. Thus the UN and the AU would need to cooperate in the area of funding for conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts in Africa, to enhance the peaceful environment of not only the African continent, but the entire world.

The Poor Attitude of the West.

This is perhaps another core area of this study as it sees the attitude of the West to African conflict as complete politics of interest. The West seems to show concern to African conflicts in relations to what it stands to gain. So many evidences have proven this selfish, inhuman and business-like interventionist exercise of the West towards African conflicts. Drawing examples from historical evidences and recent ones, it is clear that Western attitude to African conflicts has diminished to a very large extent since the Rwandan genocide. It is recorded that it took the West about four years to intervene in Rwanda while so many people were being annihilated by genocide. The analysis is that the lukewarm attitude was because there was no business to do in Rwanda and / or no raw materials as gains of war. To support this opinion, the recent ongoing Libyan political unrest divulged how swiftly the West (British Government, NATO, and the US government) intervened because indulging in in the Libyan oil business seems lucrative. President Obama of the US in a speech during the Egyptian crisis declared that ‘the future of any state lies in the hands of the citizens to decide’. This is of course true, but looking at the age where we live (Globalization), the Egyptian conflicts affected the whole world by socio-cultural economic, political and diplomatic relations it shares with the rest of the world, and therefore, the US President’s statement was a very well-articulated diplomatic statement with selfish notions. During that crisis, diplomatic relations of all countries in Egypt were temporally cut, Trade relations and tourism, political and economic relations all seized due to the level of interconnectedness that joins states together in this period of globalization.

The shock provoked by the images of Western bodies dragged on the streets of Mogadishu badly affected the perception of the Western public in the involvement of their troops in peacekeeping operation in Africa (Makinda, & Wafula 2007). Consequently, the West has become reluctant to involve in finding solution to the continent’s crisis. It may have been the reason behind the former US Secretary of Defence, William Cohen, once declaration that —no American soldier will be involved in peacekeeping operations in Africa. Some Western countries have also towed this line unofficially as they limit their involvement to PKO in Africa to the provision of funds while some provide medical and logistic support. This contradicts the great Western interest and presence in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

Globalization in its original sense denotes the integration of virtually everything. The integration should not be limited to only the period of peace, but also inclusive in the period of crisis with the full attention of the West in making provision for both financial and human resources. The Western world would have to abandon their recent indifferent spirit and treat the mission in Africa like those in Europe in order to achieve the desired result.



Credible Public Information Capability

In some parts of the developing world today, illiteracy rate is high. Therefore, in conflict areas where the dominant population is illiterate and rumor mongering is rife, opposing factions usually exploit this situation and tend to wage campaigns of misinformation in order to perpetrate strife and violence, or to cause fear and panic among the civil population. In the conflict in Rwanda for example, the Hutu-dominated government was reported to have peddled rumours and so widely misinformed the civil communities that mass exodus of refugees to neighboring countries ensued. The challenge of the AU is that of building a credible public information capability so that in such circumstances peacekeeping forces could quickly neutralize any adverse effects. AU Peace keeping missions need to be proactive and develop effective public information systems which could regularly be broadcast to the local people and inform them of what is going on.

Effectively Manage of Conflicts in Africa by the AU Without Violating the Principles of State's Sovereignty

This is perhaps the most pertinent part of this study as it addresses the lacunas that have not been tackled by scholars in available literatures. It is germane to state that the principle of non-interference of state's sovereignty has been the Achilles Hills that propels the lukewarm attitude of the AU in most of the crisis bedeviling the African states. The principle of noninterference implies that States have the jurisdictional right to maintain law and order within its territory without the interference of other states or organization. As we would note, this possess a big problem to the organizations such as the UN and AU who now can be compared to a David in front of a Goliath having the theoretical adumbration of —to box out of the wringl the forces of conflicts in the continent, but not having the right sharp stones and revitalizing energy to hit the forehead of Goliath (conflicts) to break the camel's back.

It is equally germane to state that International organizations such as the UN, EU, AU have come to understand this problem, and attempts have been made to readjust the principle though not well spelt out, but the concept of —The Responsibility to Protect (TRP) has come to reduce the power of state's sovereignty. The study therefore, proposes this concept as the most pertinent measure that would to a reasonable extent diminish the power of States Sovereignty since it cannot be absolute. SUC TRP seeks to open doors for AU quick intervention in crisis perceived states. It is pertinent therefore, to clearly state and explain this concept in detail.

The Responsibility To Protect (TRP)

The phenomenon of 'Responsibility to Protect' states that Sovereign States have the obligation to protect their citizens during crisis situations such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, but however, if they fail to satisfy the conscience of the International Community with regards to this obligation, then International political organizations such as the UN, AU, EU, etc. now has the moral duty to intervene in such a situation. This phenomenon has already been adopted by some of these International Organizations, such as the UN, and EU but it is still underdeveloped within some other organizations like the AU in view of some short comings encountered by the organization in some situations, including lack of fund and a standing army (Aning & Atuobi, 2009).



The question may be asked what is the best way to develop TRP norms in Africa? Collaborative ventures between the African Union (AU) at the continental level, the regional economic communities (RECs) at the sub-regional level and the UN at the global level are the best options for deepening TRP norms. The AU's attempt to solve the continent's problems will continue to be thwarted by its lack of political will and the weakening of its norms and principles by some member states.

Since its birth in 2000, the AU has been taking steps to do things differently from its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU). It has established a set of norms and principles that mirror the tenets of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) concept as agreed by the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit. These norms and principles coupled with the AU's peace and security architecture make it proactive in conflict prevention and the management of crisis situations on the continent. The world is experiencing a unique moment of opportunity in the relations between the UN and (sub) regional organizations broadly and the AU specifically.

The inclusion of Article 4(h) in the AU Constitutive Act gives the clearest indication that the organization is prepared to protect the population of Africa against war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Additionally, the AU security architecture is a further demonstration of the organization's commitment to create solid institutional backing to the Constitutive Act.

The Continental Early Warning Systems and the African Standby Force are among the institutions or organs that will enhance the AU's capacity to prevent conflict and deal with humanitarian crises on its own, or with minimal support. It is now clear that Sovereignty of states cannot be absolute hence. This paper proposes the 'Responsibility to Protect' as the nail that will penetrate the hardwood of state's sovereignty in order for the AU to effectively manage conflicts in Africa.

Impact of African Organization in Conflict Management

The stress on conflict management is a reflection of a major weakness in the AU's approach to peace and security in Africa. A more proactive approach would focus on conflict prevention rather than conflict management. The latter is more expensive to manage, but has less guarantee of positive outcome(s). On the other hand, conflict prevention, while much less costly (in terms of both resources and loss of lives and livelihood, necessarily requires vigilance, constant monitoring and, above all, in-depth understanding of the dynamics of conflict (including identifying potential conflict spots and preventing the possibility of relapse into conflict after an initial settlement. Several of these functions are better performed by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). CSOs can thus assist in redressing the balance between conflict prevention and management in the activities of the AU. These gaps could easily be filled if the AU were to utilize more fully the resources available to it through CSOs (in both Africa and the diaspora) active in the area of peace and security.

Civil Society, Peace and Security In Africa

Civil society involvement in peace and security in Africa currently occurs at two levels: Conceptual and analytical work, and practical peace building activities.



(a) Conceptual and analytical work: A number of African CSOs are active in analysis, research, publication and advocacy. They have contributed substantially to conceptualization and design of new security architecture for Africa. Analyses of conflict issuing from such indigenous sources have tended to have a different thrust from those of foreign scholars and think-tanks. Several of these think-tanks have also made positive and practical contributions to policy development at both the regional and sub-regional levels, through active collaboration with the AU (and OAU before it) and other sub-regional bodies. The formulation of the Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP), policy on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Early Warning System and terrorism among others were executed with the active support of a number of African CSOs. Security sector reform (SSR) is emerging as a key focus of peace building and good public expenditure management. Several African CSOs and think-tanks are building considerable capacity in this area. Such think tanks can be mobilized to conduct research for, and on behalf of the AU in current and potential conflict zones. As important, they can help to disseminate the work of the AU among key constituencies through their publications and other outreach activities.

(b) Practical peace building activists: a number of African civil society organizations, in particular grassroots organizations, continue to play various important roles in promoting peace. In Angola (and Mozambique even earlier), churches spearheaded calls for peace and national reconciliation, and helped to create the bridges upon which peace was eventually constructed. In Sudan, civil society groups have spearheaded some of the most significant advances towards peace, in particular at the local level. In Sierra Leone, CSOs have also been important in the peace process and the formulation of the country's security sector policies. One can also cite the role of CSOs in the negotiations leading to the transitional government in the DRC, as well as in the peace negotiations in Somalia. The role of women's groups in conflict mediation in South Africa, Somalia, Mozambique and the Mano River Union (where the Mano River Women's Network has played a pivotal role in spearheading peace efforts) deserves particular mention. CSOs have also played more diffuse roles in peace education, curriculum development, early warning, delivery of relief, and disarmament activities (Aning & Atuobi, 2009).

The Future of Conflict Management in Africa

Ever since the founding of the AU, let alone its predecessor, there has been a wide gap between the solemn declarations of intent and actual activities and achievements. For instance, given that Africa remains the most conflict-ridden region of the world and that quite a few African governments have little control over their own territory, it strikes many observers as quite bizarre to contemplate and negotiate anything like a government for all of

Africa. There seems to be a divide among African governments between 'realists' and 'idealists', quite similar to the divide between the Monrovia and the Casablanca groups at the founding of the OAU. Many of the actual disagreements are being concealed by the typical consensus agreements adopted by AU summit meetings. One possible reading is that the realists, such as South Africa, accept what they regard as utopian but harmless suggestions, in return for which they obtain the approval of the AU for gradualist and pragmatic schemes such as NEPAD. On the other hand, the idealists, such as Libya, accept the gradualist schemes only if they are packaged as contributions to, and steps towards, the higher goals. Some would argue



that it is preferable to have very ambitious goals, manifested in detailed plans and an elaborate institutional structure, even though the available resources do not allow for all the institutions and offices to be properly staffed and equipped, thus enabling them actually to implement their mandates.

Having the ‘blueprint’ available may allow the gaps to be gradually filled as resources become available. Other member states of AU have disagreed with such a strategy, which almost inevitably leads to under-achievement, and would prefer the formulation of less ambitious, but actually achievable goals. For instance, severe problems may appear with regard to the envisaged role of the RECs within the overall African Security Architecture. While it seems entirely realistic that ECOWAS will be able to meet the demands placed on it in West Africa – assuming that Nigeria remains reasonably stable – it is less likely that the other RECs will be up to the task. Depending on South Africa’s continued willingness to take the lead and shoulder the main burden, SADC may be able to meet the demands placed on it; but whether the other members of the organization will accept South African leadership (or even hegemony) will depend, to a large extent, on how the Zimbabwean crisis unfolds. It seems more unlikely that IGAD will be able to meet the security challenges in East Africa or the ‘Greater Horn of Africa’, both because the crises in Somalia and Sudan are very demanding, and because of the lack of any state that could serve as a leader, let alone be accepted as such.

In both Central and North Africa, the sub-regional organizations or RECs (ECCAS and the AMU, respectively) are obviously completely incapable of playing any significant role in the foreseeable future, which has resulted in the security structures being created outside the existing regional economic communities. What proves to be realistic in the future will depend to a large extent on the continued willingness of the rest of the world (e.g. the G8, the EU and the UN) to contribute financially and otherwise to AU initiatives and activities. It seems likely that they will continue funding AU peacekeeping missions such as those in Darfur and Somalia, as this is much cheaper than comparable UN missions and does not morally oblige countries from the West to contribute troops. Continued funding may, however, assume that the AU does not conspicuously fail with such missions as they are almost bound to do in Somalia – and, even more importantly, that the organisation is not perceived by the West as supporting the ‘wrong’ side. For instance, the widespread opposition to the indictment by the International Criminal

Court of the Sudanese president, Omar al-Bashir, is likely to make Europe somewhat less eager to support the AU (Makinda & Wafula, 2007).

Continental Early Warning System (CEWs) and Its Relevant to Conflict Management

Article 12 of the PSC Protocol provides for the establishment of a Continental Early Warning System (CEWs) of conflicts in Africa. This is in order to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts. As stipulated in article 12 (2) of the Protocol, the CEWS shall consist of:

- (i) an observation and monitoring centre, to be known as ‘the Situation Room’, which is located at the Conflict Management Division of the African Union and is responsible for data collection and analysis; and (ii) the observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, which shall be linked directly



through appropriate means of communication to the Situation Room and which shall collect and process data at their level and transmit the same to the Situation Room.

The Governmental Experts meeting on early warning and conflict prevention, held in South Africa in 2006, adopted the Framework for the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), which was subsequently endorsed by the 10th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held in Addis Ababa, in January 2007. The Council requested the Commission to take all the necessary steps for the timely and full implementation of the Framework, including the mobilization of the financial and technical resources required from both AU Member States and partners, the speedy recruitment of the human resources needed and other relevant steps, within a timeframe of three (3) years, to ensure that the CEWS is fully operational by 2009. In order to implement the CEWS, the following steps have been designed

The Framework has three major components: Data collection and analysis; engagement with decision makers; co-ordination and collaboration with the Regional Mechanisms. As a follow-up to the decision of the 10th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and in order to put in place the requirements outlined in the Framework, the Conflict management Division (CMD) is expected to take two major actions. These include (i), data collection and enhancing the capacity of the Situation Room; (ii), carrying out data analysis with emphasis on Strategic Conflict Assessments (SCAs) Methodology, at that will enable the CMD to monitor and assess conflicts on the continent. However, due to the limited number of analysts, it is currently unable to provide up to date analysis and response options.

Resolving African Conflict in the Present Globalized World

It is pertinent to state that the benefits of globalization cannot be extracted in a conflict ridden environment. Globalization requires stability to work, and therefore African states would have to work hard to ensure a stable environment in order to maximize the gains of globalization. To achieve this, it is germane to state therefore, that the issue of good governance should rest at the core of the African Union. It is the lack of good governance or bad leadership that facilitates most of the conflicts that exist in Africa, such as the recent Cote d'Ivoire crisis, Egyptian revolution, Tunisia and Libyan revolts. Given these observations, this paper suggests at the continental level, the NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism as a tool of conflict management in Africa in the following ways:

All members of the African Union should be compelled to be members of NEPAD. NEPAD should not be a voluntary exercise. It is a notorious fact that dictators always shun becoming voluntary members of any institution where the observance of basic and fundamental human rights is strictly enforced and monitored. Put bluntly, dictators thrive in an environment that is not transparent and also in an environment that does not have any serious punitive measures against public officials who abuse basic human rights. The crucial tool of NEPAD is the African Peer Review Mechanism. This tool should make African leaders commit themselves to behave responsibly when it comes to the observance of democratic values, sustainable economic management and conflict resolution. This study strongly advocates that NEPAD should make it compulsory for other African countries to interfere in undemocratic political systems.



Of course, dictators will always raise the argument of National Sovereignty. The view of this work is that national sovereignty is not and cannot be absolute. There are basic standards and norms of good governance to which every member of both the African Union and NEPAD should be made to adhere. Hence, the NEPAD should be made an integral part of the African Union. If a country is a member of the African Union, it should also become automatically a member of NEPAD and thus; submit itself to the African Peer Review Mechanism. Anything short of this will make NEPAD a complete white elephant. This procedure will help to intensively and extensively curb the problems associated with leadership and political crisis in Africa.

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