UNITING AFRICA
Daniel Tômouï
&
Ella Agnes Amani

For educating me to understand and appreciate
the more important things in life – family
Uniting Africa
Building Regional Peace and Security Systems

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ASHGATE
## Contents

*List of Figures and Tables*  
ix

*Acknowledgements*  
xi

*Acronyms and Abbreviations*  
xii

## Introduction

1. **Struggle for Unity in Africa: The Dream and the Realism**  
   - Introduction  
   - Pan-Africanism and African Unity  
   - Kwame Nkrumah and the ‘United States of Africa’: The Dream and Realism  
   - Establishment of the Organisation of African Unity: A Concrete Symbol of Pan-African Unity  
   - From Addis Ababa to Lusaka: The Realism of the African Union  
   - Conclusion  

2. **African State System: The Bane of Disunity**  
   - Introduction  
   - Defining and Theorising the State in Africa  
   - Characteristics of the State System: Crisis and Mythology of the African State  
   - Failure, Collapse and Reconstruction of the African State: Implications for Building Regional Peace and Security Systems  
   - Conclusion  

3. **Africa at War Against Itself: Civil Wars and New Security Threats**  
   - Introduction  
   - Wars and Armed Conflicts in Africa: Mapping the Conflict Scenario  
   - Conflict Analysis and the Generations of Wars and Armed Conflicts in Africa  
   - New Security Threats in Africa  
   - Conclusion
Uniting Africa

4 Regional Organisations and Humanitarian Intervention in Complex Political Emergencies in Africa

Introduction
Typology of Interventions and External Peace and Conflict Stabilisation Mechanisms Prescribed for Africa
Fire Next Door: Regional Security Complex and the Challenges of Complex Political Emergencies in Africa
Humanitarian Intervention in Complex Political Emergencies in Africa
Security Regionalism and the Emerging Regional ‘Responsibility to Protect’ in Complex Political Emergencies

5 OAU – African Union: Experiment in Regional Security, Peacekeeping and Peace Support Operations

Introduction
The OAU and Regionalism in Africa: A Framework for Regional Order, Peace and Security
OAU Architecture for Peace and Security: The Adventure into Peace Support Operations
OAU-United Nations and Sub-regional Organisations Co-operative Security for Peace and Security
From Inherited Failure to the New African Union: Emerging Structure and Norm for Peace and Security
Regional Hegemons and the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa

6 New Theatre of Wars and Civil Conflicts: Evolution of Security Regionalism and Peacekeeping Capacity in West Africa

Introduction
Political Economy of West Africa
ECOWAS Economic Integration and Coping with Regional Security Threats
ECOMOG Experiment in Peacekeeping and Conflict Management in West Africa
Building a Regional Peace and Security System: ECOMOG as a Permanent Mechanism for Regional Peacekeeping and Conflict Management

Conclusion
## Contents

7 Promise and Disappointment: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems in Southern Africa 181
- Introduction 181
- Political Economy of Southern Africa 183
- Regional Security Threats: Building Regional Architecture for Peace and Security 188
- Institutionalising Regional Systems for Peace and Security: SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security 192
- SADC Coalition of Willing States Peacekeeping and Conflict Management in the Democratic Republic of Congo 196
- SADC’s Regional Conflict Management and Resolution: Problems, Challenges and Opportunities 204
- UN-OAU / AU-SADC Co-operative Peacemaking and Peacebuilding in the DRC 209
- Conclusion 212

8 From Famine to Sustainable Peace: Building Regional Peace and Preventive Diplomacy Systems in the Horn of Africa 215
- Introduction 215
- Political Economy of the Horn of Africa 216
- From Famine to Regional Peace and Security Architecture: Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) 222
- IGAD and Preventive Diplomacy in the Horn of Africa: Peacemaking in Sudan and Somalia 225
- Lessons From IGAD’s Civil War Peace Settlements and Preventive Diplomacy 232
- United Nations, African Union and External Actors in IGAD-led Peace processes in the Horn of Africa 235
- Conclusion 237

Bibliography 245
Index 265
List of Figures and Tables

Figure 3.1 Conflict-related Casualties by Region 1990-99 69
Figure 3.2 Conflict Analysis 73
Table 4.1 Peacekeeping Operations in Africa 109
Figure 4.1 Illustration of Patterns of Africa’s Security Complexes 114
Table 5.1 Sub-regional Hegemons and Hegemonic Pretenders in Africa 146
Table 6.1 Basic Indicators for ECOWAS Countries 156
Table 6.2 ECOMOG Force Commanders Since 1990 165
Table 7.1 Basic Indicators for SADC Countries 201
Figure 7.1 Structure of SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation 209
Figure 8.1 Distribution of Chronically Food Insecure Population in the Greater Horn (Percentage of Total in Region, mid-1990s) 235
Table 8.1 Basic Indicators for IGAD Countries 238
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David J. Francis
Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAF   Allied Armed Forces
AAFC  Allied Armed Forces of the Community
ACOTA African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance
ACRI  African Crisis Response Initiative
ADF   Allied Democratic Forces
ADFL  Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
AEC   African Economic Community
AFRC  Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AMIB  African Mission in Burundi
AMIS  Inter-African Mission in the Darfur Region of Sudan
AMU   Arab Maghreb Union
ANAD  Accord de Non-Aggression et d’Assistance en Matiere de Defence
AOF   Afrique Occidentale Francaise
APC   All Peoples Congress
APRM  African Peer Review Mechanism
ASAS  Association of Southern African States
AU    African Union
BMATT British Military Advisory and Training Teams
CEAO  West African Economic Community (Francophone)
CEWARM Centre for Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CMF   Commonwealth Monitoring Force (Zimbabwe)
COMESA Common Market for East and Southern Africa
COMIC OAU Observer Mission in the Comoros
CONSAS Constellation of Southern Africans
CPEs  Complex Political Emergencies
CPLP  Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries
CPMR  Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
CSSDCA Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa
DDR   Disarmament, Demobilisation and Re-integration
DFID  Department for International Development (UK Government)
DoP   Declaration of Principles
DPKO  Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>EACSO</td>
<td>East African Common Services Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EASBRIG</td>
<td>Eastern African Standby Brigade</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Africa (UN)</td>
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<td>EC-ACP</td>
<td>European Community-African Caribbean Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMIL</td>
<td>ECOWAS Mission in Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOSOCC</td>
<td>Economic, Social and Cultural Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIPC</td>
<td>Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELF</td>
<td>Eritrean Liberation Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARDC</td>
<td>Forces Armes de al Republique Democratique du Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLN</td>
<td>Front de Libération Nationale (Algeria)</td>
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<td>FLS</td>
<td>Front Line States</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPI</td>
<td>Front Populaire Ivorien</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRELIMO</td>
<td>Frente de Liberacao de Mozambique (Liberation Front of Mozambique)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Free Trade Area</td>
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<td>GPOI</td>
<td>Global Peace Operation Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICISS</td>
<td>International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<td>IFIs</td>
<td>International Financial Institutions</td>
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<td>IFOR</td>
<td>Implementation Force (Bosnia)</td>
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<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Authority on Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGADD</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGAPSSOM</td>
<td>IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>IGNU</td>
<td>Interim Government of National Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>IISS</td>
<td>International Institute for Strategic Studies (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMATT</td>
<td>International Military Assistance Training Team (British)</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGOs</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>INPFL</td>
<td>Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPF</td>
<td>IGAD Partner Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISDSC</td>
<td>Inter-State Defence and Security Co-operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>JMC</td>
<td>Joint Military Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAFTA</td>
<td>Latin American Free Trade Association</td>
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<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>LURD</td>
<td>Liberians United for Reconstruction and Democracy</td>
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MAP  Millennium African Programme
MCPMR  Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
MINUCI  United Nations Mission in Ivory Coast
MINURCA  United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic
MINURSO  United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MISAB  Inter-African Force to monitor Implementation of Bangui Agreements in Central African Republic
MJP  Movement for Justice and Peace
MNCs  Multinational Corporations
MODEL  Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MONUA  United Nations Observer Mission in Angola
MONUC  United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MOT  Military Observer Team (OAU in Rwanda)
MPCI  Movement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire
MPIGO  Ivorian Popular Movement for the Far West
MPLA  Movimento Popular de Liberacão de Angola
MRU  Mano River Union
NAI  New African Initiative
NATO  North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEPAD  New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NFLA  National Front for the Liberation of Angola
NGOs  Non Governmental Organisations
NMOG  Neutral Military Observer Group (OAU)
NPFL  National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC  National Provisional and Ruling Council
NRM  National Resistance Movement
OAU  Organisation of African Unity
ODA  Official Development Assistance
OECD  Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLF  Oromo Liberation Front
ONUB  United Nations Operation in Burundi
ONUC  United Nations Operation in the Congo
ONUMOZ  United Nations Operation in Mozambique
OMIB  Observer Mission in Burundi (OAU)
OMZ  Regional Observation and Monitoring Zones
OPEC  Organisation for Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE  Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAFMECSA  Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central and Southern Africa
PAIGC  African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PDCI  Parti Democratique de Côte d’Ivoire
POLISARIO  Saharawi Arab Democratic Front
xvi

Uniting Africa

PSC  Peace and Security Council (AU)
PSI  Pan-Sahelian Initiative
PTA  Preferential Trade Area
RCD  Congolese Rally for Democracy
RECAMP  Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities
RENAMO  Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
RPF  Rwanda Patriotic Front (Front Patriotique Rwandais)
RUF  Revolutionary United Front
SACU  Southern African Customs Union
SADC  Southern African Development Community
SADCC  Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference
SAF  Sudanese Armed Forces
SAPs  Structural Adjustment Programmes
SFOR  Stabilization Force (Bosnia)
SGSR  Secretary General’s Special Representative
SHIRBRIG  United Nations Standby High Readiness Brigade
SLPP  Sierra Leone Peoples Party
SMC  Standing Mediation Committee
SNF  Somalia National Front
SNRC  Somalia National Reconciliation Conference
SPLA/M  Sudan People’s Liberation Army and Movement
SR  Special Representative
SSA  Sub-Saharan Africa
TANU  Tanganyika African National Union
TNG  Transitional National Government
UEMOA  Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
ULIMO  United Liberation Movement for Democracy (Liberia)
UN  United Nations
UNAMID  United Nations Mission in Darfur
UNAMIR  United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNAMSIL  United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNASOG  United Nations Strip Observer Group
UNAVEM  United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNCTAD  United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF  United Nations Children’s Fund
UNITA  União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UNITAF  Unified International Task Force in Somalia
UNMIBH  United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNMIL  United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOG  United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office
UNOMIL  United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNOMSIL  UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
### Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>UNOMUR</td>
<td>United Nations Observer Mission to Uganda and Rwanda</td>
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<td>UNOSOM</td>
<td>United Nations Operation in Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNTAG</td>
<td>United Nations Transition Assistance Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPDF</td>
<td>Ugandan Peoples Defence Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAEMU</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASP</td>
<td>West Africa Stabilisation Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZDF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Defence Forces</td>
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Introduction

Africa today is faced with a stark choice, either unite or perish.¹ But this choice is not a simple matter because it involves complex decisions about the future of the continent and the pooling of sovereignties by states. Contemporary Africa is portrayed as synonymous with perennial wars and armed conflicts, political instability, criminal violence; in a state of ‘permanent humanitarian emergency’ due to forced migrations, massive refugee flows and internally displaced persons; at the mercy of natural catastrophes such as famine, drought, and floods, and ravaged by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with over 40 per cent of the population living below the poverty line and on less than US$1 a day. The continent, according to socio-economic and development indicators, has moved from the periphery to the ‘periphery of the periphery’ in the international division of labour and the international division of power. These portrayals have led to the pejorative description of Africa as the ‘Hopeless Continent’, a representation of Joseph Conrad’s ‘Heart of Darkness’ and the ‘Coming Anarchy’.² According to Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, ‘Africa is a pessimist’s paradise, a place where the Hobbesian hypothesis that in the absence of a political Leviathan, life for individuals will be nasty, brutish, and short seems to be widely manifest in everyday life’.³ These stereotypical representations of Africa fundamentally miss the contradictory elements of progress and development in Africa, in that the continent exhibits both reversals, depicted as ‘hopeless continent’, and renewal in the form of advances in democratic consolidation and constitutional rule, home-grown regional efforts in preventive diplomacy, in particular, peacekeeping and conflict management to maintain regional peace and security, and some spectacular economic growth rates in some African countries portrayed as the ‘African Renaissance’.

A major development is that Africa, at the dawn of the new millennium, has become the focus of demonstrable international political good will to assist the continent to resolve its many problems and challenges. The range of international

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¹ This is a controversial view not shared by some academics and policy practitioners. But based on the author’s extensive field research to more than 29 African countries, the single most important message presented by civil society organisations, grassroots social movements and local community groups is the fact that Africa is faced with a stark choice – either to cooperate and attempt to solve its many problems or remain divided and underdeveloped.


diplomatic initiatives and developments include the European Union (EU) African Peace Facility to the African Union; the British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s *Commission for Africa*, the G8 Africa Report on Poverty, Conflict and development; global governance institutions such as the UN-Commissioned Jeffery and President George W. Bush of United States US$15 billion aid package for the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa. All these international initiatives and political goodwill culminated in the G8 Gleneagles US$ 50 billion aid package to Africa in July 2005. Despite the international media diversion caused by the war in Iraq since 2003, Africa remains firmly on the international agenda. The international political goodwill and the relative, albeit limited, progressive developments on the continent, have led to the much-touted debate by Afro-optimist describing the new millennium as the African Century. The view is that the so-called African century should be about building viable and sustainable structures, and values for durable peace and security, owned by African peoples and communities, and should serve the public goods of the continent. But this statement of intent or normative perspective is more difficult to achieve in practical terms. There is growing doubt about the capacity of contemporary Africa to constructively respond to its multiple problems and challenges. However, and more than ever before, the new millennium, driven by neo-liberal globalisation, has forced on Africa the indivisibility of peace, security, conflict and development. The UN high-level Panel Report of February 2005 is unequivocal about this indivisibility in that:

... in the twenty-first century, more than ever before, no state can stand wholly alone. Collective strategies, collective institutions and a sense of collective responsibility are indispensable. The case for collective security today rests on three basic pillars. Today’s threats recognise no national boundaries, are connected, and must be addressed at the global and regional as well as the national levels.

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The teething problems and challenges faced by contemporary Africa have led to the debate on why the continent should unite, and whether the imperative for unity is more urgent than at any time in the post-colonial history of the continent. But what kind of unity are we talking about? Unity ‘for whom’, ‘by whom’ and for ‘what purpose’? The operative words or key elements in the definition of unity are ‘join together’, ‘co-operation’, ‘agree to become one’, ‘forming a complex whole’, and ‘agreement in feeling, ideas or aims’. Derived from the Latin word \textit{unitas}, the oneness, i.e. \textit{unus}, is emphasised together with ‘agreement’, connoting the voluntary nature of unity. Unity has a normative underpinning in that it is assumed to be desirable and for the ‘common good’, and as such, tendentially perceived as an end in itself. But the contrary view is that unity is a means to an end, the end being collective action to achieve the common good in terms of durable peace, long-term stability, social progress and sustainable development. In addition, the notion and practice of unity is not unproblematic or problem-free. The practice and process of unity is driven by the perpetual amity-enmity, co-operation-conflict, and peaceful co-existence and mutual hostility dynamics. It is not a static relationship, but dynamic, and influenced by or susceptible to both domestic and external forces.

Applied to Africa, there is the emerging view that it is impossible to achieve unity in Africa because of the lack of the essential ingredients conducive to unity such as common language, culture and race. In fact, the heterogeneous nature of Africa is the genie of disunity. This perspective is based on the view that diverse ethnic, religious and historical backgrounds and colonial territorial boundaries are obstacles that divide Africa. In addition, that the 53 independent states make up a diverse and vast continent with important ecological, demographic, racial, socio-cultural, ethno-religious and political differences. There are, for instance, wide racial and cultural differences between the Maghreb north and sub-Saharan Africa. There are also striking demographic differences as reflected in the population and size of states such as Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria on the one hand, and on the other, micro-states like The Gambia, Lesotho and Swaziland. There is also vast disparity in resource endowment as illustrated by the mineral-rich states of Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Libya, and South Africa, contrasted with the resource poor countries on the continent. Furthermore, there is a huge gulf between the stable and relatively prosperous states like Botswana, Cape Verde, Mauritius and Tunisia and the economically weak and war-torn countries such as Sierra Leone, Angola, DRC, Liberia, Somalia and Sudan. These differences are in themselves major obstacles to unity in Africa. However, these perspectives on the heterogenous nature of Africa down play the relevance of socio-political unity in diversity. In spite of these differences, African states, at independence, shared important commonalities that were to serve as the stimulus for unity. The newly independent states shared the common experience of having been subjected to slavery, colonialism and imperialism. On securing political independence as sovereign states, they were thrust into an international economic and political system, in which the rules and

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regulations were not designed by and for them, and were called to participate on terms disadvantageous to their progressive development. Their collective historical experiences and memories of marginalisation and socio-cultural and racial affinities developed a collective solidarity – a sense of oneness and the consciousness of belonging to Africa. This became a powerful mobilising and unifying force for African peoples and societies rooted in Pan-Africanism.

Pan-Africanism became a driving force, from its origins at the close of the 19th century and was mobilised as a potent political force to ‘kick out’ the colonialists and secure the political liberation of the continent. As a political and ideological force, and as a social movement, the discourse of Pan-Africanism was both an ideational and interactive process, and this provided the drive for the creation of the continental organisation, the Organisation of African Unity in 1963. As a socio-political and ideological force, Pan-Africanism became not only a mobilising force, but also a basis of legitimacy for action and solidarity. But the newly independent African states (except Egypt, which achieved its independence in the 1920s, Ethiopia (briefly colonised by Italy) and Liberia – which was never colonised) and the continental political organisation, were born into Cold War ideological hostilities marred by conflict and competition. There were serious concerns and legitimate fears about the survival of the newly independent African states in the harsh world of the international system. Concerns about security threats and the balkanisation and marginalisation of Africa led to calls for unity and collective solidarity as the *dues ex machina* for the maintenance of continental peace, security and development. The President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, warned about the need for unity in that ‘salvation for Africa lies in unity . . . for in unity lies strength, and as I see it, African states must unite or sell themselves to imperialist and colonialist exploiters . . . or disintegrate individually’.

The devastating effects of the Cold War on Africa, and in particular the post-Cold War multiple problems and challenges faced by contemporary Africa, have again renewed the debate and imperative for unity in Africa. The dominant view is that a divided and marginalised Africa is grossly incapable and not in a position to respond to the complex and varied problems of wars, civil conflicts, terrorist activities, disease, economic crisis, increasing poverty and underdevelopment, and the traumas of globalisation. Out of this seemingly hopeless situation, has emerged a new debate on the future of Africa in the 21st century. At the start of the new millennium, we see the emergence of African indigenous approaches to solving some of the continent’s problems, as illustrated by some of the regional peacemaking, peacekeeping and conflict management interventions in West, Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa. These home-grown efforts to maintain peace and security on the continent, despite their limitations and challenges, have been framed as the ‘Try Africa First’ approach, i.e. African solutions to African problems. The emergence of assertive regionalism, in particular the use of economic groupings in Africa as structures for regional peace and security, are perceived as part of the African renaissance, that is the revival and

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renewal of the continent on the eve of the 21st century. Despite the limitations of the contents of the African renaissance, the transformation of the OAU into the African Union, and the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) have led to the view that these coherent and comprehensive programmes and frameworks for Africa’s renewal and hope for a better future for the continent, would put Africa in a strategic position to ‘claim’ the 21st century. Afro-optimists allude to the vision that Africa’s time has come and that the 21st century, according to President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, ‘will be the African century’, a century whereby the continent will establish genuine and stable political order, democratic governance and sustainable development. In fact, the vision of the new African Union is committed to the need for the peoples of Africa to own the integration and unity process, for without the driving force of the people, there can be no integration and viable unity. This would require the maximum use of all of Africa’s resources, both human and natural, and the imperative for the continent to assume responsibility for its own future. According to the new chairperson of the AU, former President Alpha Konaré of Mali, the African Century is driven by ‘an Africa which cannot afford to wait until tomorrow to have its problems resolved’. But these aspirations and normative intentions are not matched by the practical realities in contemporary Africa.

However, the foundations for the African unity project epitomised by the AU had been established in the form of the creation of the OAU and its Charter; the Lagos Plan of Action of 1980 that desired the creation and achievement of an economic community by 2000 (a vision not achieved); the establishment of regional economic integration and co-operation groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), The East African Community (EAC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Arusha Declaration of 1990 on popular participation in development; the African Economic Community Treaty of 1991; the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) of 2000 and its ‘Four Calabashes’ including collective security, stability based on rule of law, good governance, human rights and democracy; development based on promotion of economic integration; and joint co-operation and collective action; the AU and its Constitutive Act, and the establishment of NEPAD as the blueprint for Africa’s economic recovery and development. This discernible strategy has been based on establishing African unity on the building blocks of regional integration. The building blocks approach to African unity is also geared towards strengthening the role of the African state based on the view that only a strong, viable and modern state system can lend itself to the ‘demands’ of peace and security and the aim of continental unity. The Constitutive Act of the AU commits member states to political

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integration in the form of federation or confederation in future, a representation of what Nkrumah advocated in the 1960s. Once again, Africa is putting its faith in the potential of regional integration and co-operation as the catalysts for Africa’s renewal, despite the available evidence that more than three decades of regional economic integration and co-operation have had no discernible positive economic and developmental impact on the lives of ordinary people and the regions. However, the renewed focus on the potential of regionalism is based on the possible role and contribution of regional integration to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. In the face of failing and collapsed states in Africa, regional possibilities are explored for the critical role they could play in the future of the continent. But regional groupings can only play meaningful roles if they are based on strong, viable and modern states. The contradiction is that Africa has shown that it is possible for quasi- and weak states to lend themselves to regional collective efforts on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and conflict management interventions, though not without serious financial and socio-economic difficulties for the member states.

But the preoccupation with the role and contribution of regionalism and regional systems to peace, security and development is not unique to Africa. International integration has been a common feature of the Post-World War II international order, experimented with in different regions of the world. Regionalism as a foundation for world peace perceived geographical contiguity not as a source of conflict, but as a ‘stepping stone’ to peace and world order. The view was that regional integration and micro-economic groupings would foster peaceful co-existence and the potential for ‘islands of peace’, in particular, the opportunities to mitigate, contain, manage and prevent armed conflict within states and between regions. The post-war peace, stability and economic development in Europe have been partly attributed to the European integration project. The academic and international policy preoccupations with the potential contribution of regionalism to a peaceful world order have a long history and have generated an increasing body of literature. David Mitrany’s *A Working Peace System* explored the relevance of unity through ‘world state’ or through functional evolution, and the possibility of peaceful social change through functional co-operation across national borders that would involve the pooling of sovereignty. Joseph Nye’s *Peace in Parts* examined the relationship between international regional organisations, international integration theory and their contributions towards a peaceful world order. Ernst Haas’ *The Uniting of Europe* explores the political and socio-economic integrative process in Europe within a regional structure. In Africa, there have been some limited attempts (though

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Introduction

a recent preoccupation) to explore the relationship between peace, security and regional integration mainly through international conferences.\textsuperscript{12}

\section*{Organisation and Core Arguments of This Book}

\textit{Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems} critically explores the role and contribution of regional peace and security systems in the development of a viable future for the countries of Africa. A primary focus is on the potential contribution of the resurgence of regionalism to a peaceful regional and continental order in Africa, in particular, whether regionalism has created or has the potential to create ‘islands of peace’.\textsuperscript{13} In addition, the focus is to explore the emerging capabilities for regional conflict prevention, management and preventive diplomacy mechanisms, and how the building of regional peace and security systems has contained or regulated both intra-state and inter-state conflicts. \textit{Uniting Africa} is about how African states, faced with multiple and complex problems and challenges in a globalised world, are now prepared (though with varying degrees of amity-enmity or conflict-co-operation) to pool their sovereignties or have a stake in collective regional peace and security, and make ‘peace divisible’\textsuperscript{14} – the engine or foundation for political stability, social progress, democratic consolidation and sustainable development.

Conceptually, the book is based on a regionalist perspective of Africa’s international system and continental order, and its place in the post-Cold War international security structure. The view is that ‘the regional level stands more clearly on its own as the locus of conflict and co-operation for states and as the level of analysis for scholars seeking to explore contemporary security affairs’.\textsuperscript{15} The regionalist approach embraces both neorealist (i.e. state-centric power politics and distribution of material power) and globalist (i.e. the ‘deterritorialisation of world politics’) perspectives.\textsuperscript{16} The security interdependence and vulnerabilities faced by post-Cold War Africa have simultaneously foisted and created the incentives for states to explore and implement more co-operative security mechanisms and policies. Contemporary developments in Africa underscores the point as to why regions matter. The relational dynamics of security demonstrate that ‘no nation’s security

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Nye, J. p.3.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p.17.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Buzan and Waever., \textit{Regions and Powers}. 2003. pp.6-10.
\end{itemize}
is self contained’, in particular, dysfunctional, failing and collapsed states have produced spill over effects on neighbouring countries, and also threatened regional peace and security. The regionalisation of domestic instability and civil wars has forced more regional co-operation and collective interactions on peace and security issues. Regional Security cannot therefore be separated from domestic (national) and international security. In Africa, the international security constellation is simultaneously and inextricably played out at five different levels, i.e. domestic level of the state; non-state levels and relations (including sub-national groups and non-state actors such as war lords, insurgency movements, MNCs, INGOs and NGOs, civil society organisations, grassroots social movements, informal economy and transnational criminal networks); inter-state relations; inter-regional interactions; and the interplay between the local, regional and global security. The four central arguments of *Uniting Africa* are based on the following:

Radical reinterpretation of some critical issues relevant to the understanding of peace, security, conflict and development in contemporary Africa, such as the nature of the state system, conflict analysis and developmental regionalism or regional integration and co-operation in Africa. In the reconceptualisation of these critical issues, the book moves beyond the traditional and mainstream interpretations and dominant discourses used to explain politics and development in Africa. It looks at the application and utility of these dominant paradigms in Africa, their limitations and concludes with a refreshing interpretation of politics, security and development that draws from the African realism.

1. Argues the relevance of regional approaches to peace, security and development problems and challenges in contemporary Africa. It posits that based on the regionalisation of civil wars and armed conflicts in Africa or the phenomenon of ‘Fire Next Door’, and in particular, the ‘strategic overstretch’ of the UN and its inability to maintain peace and security in Africa, assertive regionalism in the form of regional peacekeeping, conflict stabilisation and management, has emerged as a viable mechanism for the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. Of particular relevance is the increasing role of sub-regional hegemons or Lead-nations and external pivotal states in regional peace and security, and how they hinder or facilitate peacekeeping and conflict stabilisation. This is the first book that comprehensively looks at both the continental and regional attempts to build viable institutional mechanisms and architecture for peace and security in Africa. The book highlights the dangers and opportunities provided by the UN-regional organisations co-operative peacekeeping in Africa.

2. Drawing from the above and based on extensive research on conflict and development interventions in Africa’s weak states and complex political emergencies, the evidence suggests that national intervention efforts to stabilise,
manage, contain and resolve a domestic civil war may not necessarily secure the fragile peace and security, and that the neglect of the regional dimensions most often provide the context for relapse into further war. This book, therefore, attempts to show that in conflict and development intentions in Africa’s weak states and complex political emergencies, regional and international agencies and institutions should adopt a peace-security-development nexus approach, i.e. the policy, conceptual and intervention practice that perceives peace, security and development as inextricably linked.

3. Thinking seriously about the future of peace and security in Africa, the book revives the controversial issue of unity or Pan-African Unity and its relevance in post-Cold War Africa. The book advances a new interpretation of unity in contemporary Africa framed as ‘co-operative peace and security’ driven by notions of collective security, but one that is simultaneously underpinned by the co-operation-conflict, amity-enmity dynamics. It recognises the Afro-pessimists and Afro-pragmatists interpretations of contemporary Africa, but concludes, based on extensive research and field visits, that the continent is changing and therefore invites researchers, policy practitioners and development interventionists to critically engage with these new developments in 21st century Africa.

These critical issues are explored in depth, both conceptually and empirically, in eight chapters. To provide a critical foundation for these issues, Chapter 1 examines the struggle for unity in Africa, focusing on the dream and the harsh realism in the attainment of such a vision. The chapter chronicles the history of the African unity project based on Pan-Africanism, the establishment of the OAU as a concrete manifestation of the African unity project, its transformation into the African Union, and the securitisation of unity based on the post-Cold War problems and challenges faced by the continent. Chapter 2 explores the critical role played by the African state system in the attainment, or lack of it, of the Pan-African unity dream, and ‘why and how’ African states, despite their weaknesses and peripheral role in the international system, are forging together and building regional peace and security systems. The chapter outlines the characteristics of the African states, and the attempts to restore or re-constitute some of Africa’s failed and collapsed states. To understand the imperative for building regional peace and security systems in contemporary Africa, it is important to appreciate the nature of wars and armed conflicts and the new security threats faced by Africa. These are the critical issues discussed in Chapter 3. The chapter also gives an in depth overview of generations of conflict analysis in Africa and their theoretical interpretations. Chapter 4 begins with setting the scene for the role and contribution of regional organisations in humanitarian interventions in complex political emergencies in Africa. This is followed by an overview of the relationship between the United Nations and regional organisations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The chapter further outlines the variety of external and intra-African interventions and peacekeeping and conflict management forces deployed in and prescribed for Africa. It also critically explores
the nature of security complexes in Africa, and the conceptualisation and application of humanitarian intervention in complex political emergencies in Africa. Chapter 5 examines the OAU / AU experiment in regional security, peacekeeping and peace support operations in Africa. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the problems and challenges of building a continental architecture for peace and security, the relationship and co-operation between the OAU / AU and sub-regional peace and security mechanisms, and the role of sub-regional hegemons and the distribution of power amongst member states in the pursuit of regional peace and security. An important aspect of this chapter is the definition and conceptualisation of terms relating to regionalism and regionalisation. The chapter concludes with an overview of the transformation to the AU, the novelty of its Constitutive Act in relation to peace and security, and the potential contribution of NEPAD and its Peer Review Mechanism to the future of governance in Africa. Chapter 6 critically engages with the evolution of security regionalism, peacekeeping and conflict management capacity in West Africa. The chapter begins with a political economy analysis of West Africa and the security threats and challenges faced by the sub-region, and its foray into regional preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and conflict management in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire. An important focus is the development of a co-deployment model between the UN and West African peacekeeping and intervention force, ECOMOG, in the maintenance of regional peace and security, and in particular, efforts to build a permanent regional system for peace and security. The primary purpose of Chapter 7 is to critically outline the building of regional peace and security systems in Southern Africa. The chapter begins with a political economy analysis of Southern Africa, and a review of the creation of regional integration and co-operation mechanisms in the form of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and its expansion into the peace and security domain with the establishment of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security. The chapter also examines the SADC ‘coalition of willing states’ peacekeeping and conflict stabilisation intervention in the Great Lakes region, and the co-operation with the UN in preventive diplomacy in the region. Chapter 8 explores how the Horn of Africa is gradually transforming its image from a region of ‘permanent emergency’ to establishing the rudimentary foundations for sustainable peace by building regional peace and preventive diplomacy mechanisms in the form of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The chapter examines the peace making role of IGAD in the Horn, in particular the political and diplomatic efforts in facilitating peace processes in the region and civil war peace settlements in both Sudan and Somalia, in partnership with the AU, UN, the Arab League, and the lead-nation role played by Kenya and external partners such as the IGAD Partners Forum, the EU and America.
Chapter 1

Struggle for Unity in Africa: The Dream and the Realism

Introduction

The establishment of the African Union (AU) in July 2001 to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the leading political body in Africa, is generally regarded as a concrete manifestation of the emerging new African order in the Post-Cold War era. But the struggle for unity in Africa dates back to the colonial era and the immediate post-independence period when Pan-African unity was utilised as a political instrument and ideology in the struggle for decolonisation in Africa. During this period African unity, rooted in Pan-Africanism, was regarded as the locomotive to solve the myriad of problems faced by the newly independent African states. Political leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana had the dream of creating a United States of Africa and used the ideology of Pan-Africanism to mobilise the continent in the fight against neo-imperialist forces.

However, the vision of uniting Africa faced a mélange of obstacles. Less than a decade after the independence euphoria, Pan-African unity was nothing more than mere political rhetoric used by the majority of African leaders to justify everything in the pursuit of realpolitik interests. Though it may appear, five decades after independence, that Pan-African unity was a mere dream, the debate and political vision of uniting Africa has re-merged with new vigour in the post-Cold War era. The resurgence of the project of uniting Africa was given concrete expression by the creation of the African Union. This chapter, therefore, explores the struggle for unity in Africa and engages with the debate that diverse security threats have foisted on Africa the imperative to unite and survive, or perish, within the context of the transformation of global political and economic systems.

Pan-Africanism and African Unity

The end of the Second World War precipitated the creation of the majority of independent states in Africa. Most of the colonial powers including Britain and France were weakened and devastated by the war and, therefore, relinquished the majority of their colonies in Africa. In addition, colonialism became internationally regarded as inappropriate in the post-World War II era. Earlier, President Woodrow Wilson’s 14 Point Plan after World War I (1914-18) included self-determination for
subject or colonised peoples. This ideology of self-determination became a major thrust of the anti-colonial policies of the United States of America after the Second World War. The ideology of self-determination became enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as an international norm. However, beneath the surface of this progressive liberal ideology of self-determination was the harsh reality of economic self-interest. Jeff Haynes argues that the United States government policy of anti-colonialism in the immediate post-World War II era was partly motivated by the desire to ‘remove the colonial powers’ economic control of their colonies, so as to facilitate access for the country’s emergent transnational business corporations anxious to expand their trade links’.  

It is important to recognise that some of the states in North Africa (e.g. Egypt) had secured their political independence after the end of the First World War. In the post-World War II political environment, nationalist leaders in Africa such as Nkrumah of Gold Coast (Ghana), Azikiwe of Nigeria and Kenyatta of Kenya became increasingly confident in their demand for decolonisation. Furthermore, the thousands of African soldiers who had fought on behalf of the British and French colonial powers against the German and Japanese totalitarian rule now returned home after the war. They had fought alongside European troops and came back home with the myth of European invulnerability destroyed. These soldiers now added to the pressure of the nationalist politicians to ‘kick out’ the colonial administration and to secure self-rule. The wave of decolonisation started with the independence of Sudan in 1956, and was rapidly followed by the freedom from colonial rule of more than 30 states.

Independence ushered in a variety of countries at the rudimentary stage of state formation and nation building. A common feature shared by almost all of these states was considerable optimism, some would say unrealistic or misplaced, about their political and economic development prospects. Political independence was considered the foundation for progressive socio-economic development. The independence optimism and euphoria was to be translated into an ambitious project of African unity. Some African leaders perceived political unity as the solution that would solve all the many and varied problems faced by independent Africa.

The concept of African unity that developed during this period was rooted in Pan-Africanism. In effect, Pan-African consciousness and identity were the ideological motivations for African unity. As a concept, Pan-Africanism dates back to the 15th century during the period of the slave trade and later, the conquest of Africa. Some political analysts however argue that the idea of Pan-Africanism ‘came earlier in the eighth and ninth centuries, when Arab and African Muslims traversed parts of Asia and Europe spreading the message of Islam and creating new empires’. However, the 20th century marked the greatest manifestation of Pan-Africanism in terms of African

2 Ibid, p.23.
Struggle for Unity in Africa

consciousness and black African global identity. Pan-African congresses were held in Paris (1919 and 1921), London (1923), New York (1927) and Manchester (1945). It is instructive to note that none of the Pan-African conferences were held in Africa for a variety of reasons. The reasons included the role of the different colonial governments in preventing or accommodating a continental gathering of educated Pan-Africanists—often perceived by the colonial administration as subversive and anti-colonial forces. In addition, the colonial period lacked the critical mass of educated, mostly highly educated, liberal and sophisticated intelligentsia resident in the continent. Those who played leadership roles in the Pan-African movement were mostly resident outside of Africa, western-educated, with access to resources and liberal political and social institutions that supported their cause. This explains, in part, why the Pan-African movement was initially cut off from ordinary African peoples and hence perceived as a movement of the African intelligentsia.

It was the London Pan-African congress of 1921 that established a formal political dimension of Pan-Africanism. The International African Service Bureau established in 1937 was later to produce the Pan-African Federation and the Pan-African Congress Movement which conceived of Pan-Africanism as the platform to ‘promote the well-being and unity of African peoples and peoples of African descent throughout the world’ and also ‘to strive to co-operate between African peoples and others who share our aspirations’. The 1945 Pan-African Congress in Manchester established the link between Pan-Africanism and African nationalism with the aim of the total liberation of the continent from colonial rule. In effect, Pan-Africanism as a political ideology was imported into Africa through the influence of such personalities as Henry Sylvester-Williams of Trinidad, William DuBois of America and George Padmore. Marcus Garvey’s ‘Back to Africa’ movement also played an influential role in raising the consciousness of African nationalism rooted in Pan-Africanism. In addition, Africans studying in Europe, in collaboration with their counterparts in the Caribbean and America, became the mobilising and organisational force for the African nationalist struggle in Europe. These emerging African intelligentsia were later to lead the nationalist struggle in Africa. As a political instrument, the methods of Pan-Africanism were based on the ‘Ghandist technique of non-violent non-co-operation, in other words, the withholding of labour, civil disobedience and economic boycott’.

However, Pan-Africanism itself is not a homogenous concept. The fact that it was imported into Africa means that one would expect different strands or persuasions of the Pan-Africanist ideology. There has been the debate about ‘who is’ or ‘is not a Pan-Africanist’; whether, in fact, Pan-Africanism is the preserve of Africans in Africa or Africans and people of black origin in the diasporas. In most recent times, there has been a feminist attempt to deconstruct the male-centred approach to Pan-

Africanism. In spite of the controversies, there is general agreement on the need for an inclusive identity and commitment to the development of Africa and Africans or people of African descent in the Diasporas.

African unity based on Pan-Africanism became a mobilising political, ideological and social discourse. Discourse is used here to convey the notion of a set of ideas and as an interactive process. According to positivist and constructionist approaches, discourse as a set of ideas is used to represent the necessary conditions for collective action and also to define the political and socio-economic conditions. As a set of ideas, it embraces the language, narratives, communicative action and frames of reference which serve to construct actors’ understandings of their interests, identities, norms, values, and collective memories of the world around them. On the other hand, discourse as an interactive process, embraces how the construction of ideas forms the basis for collective action, identity and a mobilising force. As an interactive process discourse is closely connected to how individuals and groups form ‘advocacy coalitions’ by putting ideas into action, and using these ideas to ‘mediate’ interests for groups and communities. It also focuses on the ‘rhetorical dimensions’ of discourse in that it serves both as a ‘legitimising factor and justification for action’, and also as a ‘rallying or mobilising force’. The interactive dimensions also include ‘studies of the use of ideas in the process of public policy persuasion’, use of ideas to mobilise mass participation, and ‘when politicians translate the ideas developed


Struggle for Unity in Africa

by policy elites into political platforms’ and programme activities. Therefore, Pan-Africanism as a discourse has been manifested in both its ideational forms and as an interactive process, notable from its early origins and internationalisation, to the creation of the OAU as a concrete symbol of the African unity project.

Immanuel Wallerstein, writing in the 1960s, gives a social analysis of the political discourse of African unity, both as an ideal and as an objective reality. Wallerstein explains that virtually all Africans, irrespective of political persuasion, religious, ethnic and cultural differences, favour unity, though there is much controversy as to what form it would take or how it could look. Some non-Africans are tendentially sceptical of the African unity idea in terms of its practicality. One may also add that Africans, nearly six decades after political independence, are equally sceptical about the possibility and practicality of African unity, though still holding on to the ‘dream’ of African unity in general terms. Wallerstein also perceived the African unity project as a social movement rooted in the history of slavery and colonial experiences, and the accompanying sociological and psychological underpinnings of racism which presented a distorted, and often Eurocentric view of Africans as a nonentity, with a ‘fog perspective’ – to use Nietzsche’s phrase.

The attempt by Africanists to revive interest in the pre-colonial history of Africa eventually created the ‘intellectual aura of Pan-Africanist sentiment’, which in turn fostered liberating ideas, particularly amongst politically conscious Africans, and eventually led to the creation of Pan-Africanism as a continental movement, a mobilising force and a platform for solidarity of Africans. African history has up to this period been portrayed by racist and Eurocentric historians as nothing more than, according to Professor Egerton at the University of Oxford, ‘blank, uninteresting, brutal barbarism’, and decades later, by another Regius Professor of History at Oxford, as ‘unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe’. But it was the upsurge of African nationalism and the struggle for decolonisation that created mass movements driven by Pan-Africanist sentiments and a drive towards African unity. Wallerstein outlines two different perspectives of unity, often in dialogue and conflict. Firstly, the concept of unity as a movement, a revolutionary movement for the unity of African peoples and as a rallying point. Secondly, the concept of unity as an alliance of nation-states to strengthen participation in world politics, and to advance their interests, in particular, in the areas of peace, security, conflict management and development. These two mutually reinforcing conceptions and practices of unity have been at the heart of much of the debate and controversy about the African unity project. The primary view is that unity should not be just an idea or an abstraction, but must be translated into meaningful projects and programmes to affect the lives of ordinary people in Africa.

The alliance of state conception of unity has perceived the African unity project, through regional integration and cooperation, not as an end in itself, but that unity should be a means to an end, the end being the achievement of continental peace, security, stability, economic growth, social progress and sustainable development.

Kwame Nkrumah and the ‘United States of Africa’: The Dream and Realism

Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana is credited with the development and popularisation of Pan-Africanism in Africa. Nkrumah himself was a leading member of the Pan-African Congress in Europe and of the West African National Secretariat. It was Nkrumah who converted the idea of Pan-African unity from a mere vision into a practical possibility through the project of African unity. However, before Nkrumah’s prominence, Pan-Africanism had been developed into a coherent ideological perspective under the intellectual guidance of DuBois and Padmore who advocated African unity as a political response to racial oppression and colonial domination.\textsuperscript{12} Kofi Hadjor argues that since the early nationalists were removed by circumstances from involvement in mass politics they lacked the opportunity to give the Pan-Africanist ideology a practical and organisational shape.

The election of Nkrumah as president of the newly independent state of Ghana gave the Pan-Africanist project a new momentum as he immediately set about exploring the practical dimension of Pan-Africanism in Africa. The obvious conclusion was that the project of uniting Africa would be the most practical manifestation of Pan-Africanism. In his seminal book \textit{Africa Must Unite} (1963) Nkrumah advocated African unity as the only viable mechanism for addressing the diverse problems facing independent Africa. In Nkrumah’s view, the geographical territories carved out as states in Africa by the colonial powers were a hindrance to the development and social progress of Africa. He noted that,

> The intention is to use the newly independent African states, so circumscribed, as puppets through which influence can be extended . . . The creation of several weak and unstable states of this kind in Africa, it is hoped, will ensure the continued dependence on the former colonial powers for economic aid, and impede African unity. This policy of balkanisation is the new imperialism, the new danger to Africa.\textsuperscript{13}

In another major publication, \textit{Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism} (1965) Nkrumah exposed the negative effects of the workings of international monopoly capitalism in Africa. He also revealed how the stranglehold of foreign monopolies perpetuated dependency, poverty and underdevelopment in the midst of abundant natural resources in Africa.\textsuperscript{14} According to Nkrumah, the only solution


\textsuperscript{13} Nkrumah, \textit{Africa Must Unite}, 1963, p.179.

was the unification of Africa and the formation of an All-African Union government. Without continental unity, in his view, the balkanisation of Africa would turn the continent into diverse spheres of influence for external powers and effectively block unity because African states would end up having closer links with foreign powers than with each other. Nkrumah opined that: ‘we are Africans first and last, and as Africans our best interest can only be served by uniting within an African community. Neither the Commonwealth nor a Franco-African Community can be a substitute.’ The term balkanisation of Africa refers to the break up of the old Turkish Empire into diverse, competing and dependent states by the great powers, and hence the fragmentation of the Balkan Peninsula. Nkrumah’s fear for the balkanisation of Africa into small, weak and artificial states was that it would sow the seeds of societal discord, perpetual political strife and conflicts. He argued that the legacy of these artificially engineered states would perpetually relegate Africa to stagnation, poverty and international marginalization. Kofi Hadjor revealed that the publication of Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism was unwelcome news in the US State Department. Hadjor explained that a strong note of protest was sent to Nkrumah and US$35 million of American aid to Ghana was cancelled by the administration of President Johnson. This was not surprising because Nkrumah’s socialist policies and anti-capitalist views were strongly opposed by the majority of western governments. Nkrumah’s Convention People’s Party government was later overthrown by what was alleged to be an American CIA-backed coup in 1966. What is important is that this was to determine the kinds of obstacles in the path of the African unity project and the malleability of the modern African States.

In promoting the project of African unity, Nkrumah opposed the creation of regional blocs in Africa because he saw them as a new mechanism for partitioning the continent into political, economic and strategic spheres of influence. The only solution for terminating neo-colonialism, according to Nkrumah, was through African unity with a continental government that would protect the interests and sovereignty of all the African states. In addition, there was a general awareness that the newly independent states had weak bargaining power in the international system. The desire for a collective bargaining bloc within the context of Cold War politics was to serve as a strong motivation for African unity. The security of Africa – external security threats – and, to some extent, concerns about regime survival, were very much at the heart of Nkrumah’s drive for African unity. He aptly captures his security concerns in that ‘I see no security for African states unless African leaders, like ourselves, have realised beyond all doubt that salvation for Africa lies in unity . . . for in unity lies strength, and as I see it, African states must unite or sell themselves to imperialist and colonialist exploiters . . . or disintegrate individually.’ This seminal warning by Nkrumah became manifest in the Cold War conflict and competition played out in Africa – an issue analysed in Chapter 2.

In an attempt to translate the African unity project into concrete reality, Nkrumah spearheaded a series of conferences and regional initiatives. The first conference of Independent African States that met in Accra in 1958 established Nkrumah’s Ghana as the base for the development of Pan-Africanism in Africa. The subsequent meetings of the All-African People’s Conference in December 1958, attended by nationalist organisations, and of the All-African Trade Union Federation in November 1959, including the African labour movements, confirmed Ghana’s prominence as the centre of Pan-Africanism and the struggle for decolonisation in Africa. Nkrumah’s closest ally on the project of African unity was the socialist prime minister of Congo, Patrice Lumumba. In 1960 a secret agreement was signed between Nkrumah and Lumumba, which committed both governments to work for the establishment of a union of African states. But the overthrow and murder of Lumumba by the western puppet regime under Col. Mobutu in 1961 dealt a serious blow to the Pan-African unity project. Hadjor therefore argued that ‘Lumumba’s overthrow anticipated Nkrumah’s own downfall. These two events showed that the pursuit of real Pan-Africanism was a dangerous business. The enemies of this goal both inside and outside Africa were too strong to make any serious headway’. In spite of these difficulties, Nkrumah was instrumental in the creation of regional political unions, which were to serve as the foundation for a United States of Africa. In particular, the Ghana-Mali-Guinea Union established in 1961, with the name the Union of African States, was important because it was envisaged that it would serve as the nucleus of the United States of Africa. Article 3 of the Charter stated;

To strengthen and develop ties of friendship and fraternal co-operation between the member states politically, diplomatically, economically and culturally; to pool their resources in order to consolidate their independence and safeguard their territorial integrity; to work jointly to achieve the complete liquidation of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa and the building up of African unity.

By 1961, it was becoming obvious that the majority of the newly independent states, in particular the conservative governments of the former French colonies, were profoundly hostile to the Pan-African unity project. Nkrumah’s federalist vision of a United States of Africa was a politically scary project for some African leaders. They did not see the need for a single continental government as the basis for unity, after having struggled for a long time to achieve political independence. Some, especially amongst the conservative Pan-Africanist group, such as Tubman of Liberia, Boigny of Ivory Coast and Senghor of Senegal, dismissed what they described as the megalomaniac ambitions of a single man, Nkrumah. Also, Nkrumah’s dream of Pan-African unity distracted his attention from appreciating the meaningful contribution of regional groupings as building blocs in the gradual process of uniting Africa.

18 There were only 8 independent African states at this time, and these were Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco and Ethiopia.
In his defence however, Nkrumah was a visionary ahead of his time because the international environment of the 1960s was hostile to any meaningful and sustainable project of African unity. It was in this visionary spirit that Nkrumah in 1963 outlined a four-point programme for African unity.

1. A common foreign policy and diplomacy for Africa. In effect, a platform to speak with one voice on international affairs and at the same time overhaul the negative effects of a divided Africa.
2. Common continental planning for economic and industrial development in Africa.
3. Common currency, a monetary zone and a central bank.
4. Common defence and security system with an African High Command to ensure the security and stability of Africa. That is, an all-African military force to secure the liberation of colonial territories and to replace foreign military bases in Africa.

On the eve of the formation of the OAU, four different views and attitudes to African unity were prevalent. Firstly, the recognised imperative for an all-African organisation with a single charter based on broad principles to which all African states could subscribe. Secondly, the view that promoted the creation of a loose association of African states based on a Declaration of Principles within an All-African organisation modelled on the Organisation of American States. Thirdly, the relevance and creation of regionalism as an intermediate step to African unity by establishing regional integration and co-operation groupings, as the driving force for African unity in practical terms. Finally, the view advocated by Nkrumah for a Union Government of Africa, with an all-African institution within a federal political union, modelled on the US and USSR federal constitutions. In the environment of the 1960s, any suggestion of giving up or surrendering the newly won political independence by African states in the name of African unity was dismissed. Hence, the views presented by President Nasser of Egypt that ‘African Unity cannot be achieved overnight’ and President Nyerere of Tanzania’s caution for a ‘step-by-step’ approach to African unity became the dominant influences on the creation of the OAU. The gradualist approach to Pan-African unity was in the majority. The project of African unity, symbolised in the creation of the OAU, was further hindered by the division of the newly independent African States into blocs such as the Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville groups. One of the key issues that all African leaders

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were agreed on was the inviolability of the colonial boundaries as expressed by President Modibo Keita of Mali in that: ‘The colonial system divided Africa, but it permitted nations to be born. Present frontiers must be respected and the sovereignty of each state must be consecrated by a multilateral non-aggression pact.’ This doctrine became enshrined in the Charter of the OAU. Though Nkrumah’s Pan-African unity project, in the form of a continental government, failed to materialise in the divisive international environment of the 1960s, the vision of uniting Africa still remained relevant for contemporary Africa.

A variety of obstacles were responsible for the failure of African unity in the immediate post-independence period and some of these problems plague post-Cold War Africa today. The problems that hindered the Pan-African unity project included the legacy of colonialism, the Cold War politics and external interventions, Africa’s diversity, inter-state and intra-state wars and armed conflicts, the state and the nature of domestic politics, political rivalry and the radical ideology of Pan-African unity. These issues are treated in detail in chapters 2 and 3. Internally however, African leaders who inherited the colonial state, subverted the Pan-African liberation struggle and African unity project. Some Pan-Africanist leaders such as Sekou Touré of Guinea and Nkrumah ended up being dictators, eschewing all attachments to the Pan-African principles of justice, freedom and tolerance in their own states. Even warlords such as Jonas Savimbi in Angola and Charles Taylor of Liberia have spouted the rhetoric of Pan-Africanism and African unity. Walter Rodney, writing some 25 years ago, maintained that ‘Pan-Africanism has been so flouted by the present African regimes that the concept is dead for all practical purposes such as travel and employment’.

The nature of domestic politics in the majority of the post-colonial states, based on political clientelism and patrimonialism, whereby loyalty was to the leader or strong man of the state or the ruling one-party government, took precedence over the institutions of the state in this situation. The African leaders, therefore, became the very purveyors of injustice and repression against their own people. By destroying the very principles of Pan-Africanism, Pan-African unity became a mere rhetoric for most of these leaders. It is argued that the state and the nature of domestic politics contributed to the deformity of the project for African unity. Furthermore, political rivalry and disunity on the project for African unity amongst the newly independent African leaders also wrecked the African unity project. Nkrumah’s Pan-African unity project was opposed from both within and outside Ghana. Some of the newly independent leaders were hostile to any discussion of Pan-African unity because they favoured the status quo ante that ensured close links with former colonial masters.

group was named after the Monrovia Conference, and included conservative governments and countries such as Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon, Dahomey (Benin), Ethiopia, Liberia, Malagasy Republic, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). The Brazzaville group consisted of mainly Francophone countries that met in December 1960 to reaffirm their commitment to close co-operation with France, and they also opposed communism in Africa.

Struggle for Unity in Africa

Other political leaders perceived any challenge to the colonial state in Africa as not only an unrealistic ambition, but also a recipe for chaos because it would undo all their struggles to create independent sovereign states. The reality of the so-called political independence was that in most of the ex-colonies, the former colonial powers were still able to influence and manipulate puppet regimes. To this breed of African leader, Pan-African unity was a mere dream.

The opponents of Pan-African unity in the form of a United States of Africa dismissed the project as the delusion of Nkrumah, who wanted to become president of Africa. During this period the wave of independence of some 20 new states undermined the earlier optimism for African unity as serious divisions emerged between African states over what common foreign and security policies they should adopt relating to inter-state and intra-state conflicts, such as the war in Belgian Congo, Algeria, and over Morocco’s claim to territories in Mauritania. These deep divisions effectively fragmented the project of African unity into four rival camps. The Casablanca or radical independent states, the Monrovia or conservative group, the Brazzaville group and the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMECSA). The Casablanca and Monrovia groups were divided on the *modus operandi* for achieving African unity. The Monrovia group favoured regional economic co-operation and functional integration as the basis for gradual continental unity. The Casablanca group, however, advocated direct political unity in the form of a United States of Africa with a supranational authority. What is more, Nkrumah’s allies within the so-called Casablanca bloc did not share his vision of a United States of Africa with a common foreign policy and a military high command. The political rivalries and disunity on the approach amongst African leaders considerably undermined the effectiveness of their message for uniting Africa.

Establishment of the Organisation of African Unity: A Concrete Symbol of Pan-African Unity

It is to the credit of the post-independence leaders that in spite of the myriad of obstacles faced by the continent, they endeavoured to forge ahead with the creation of an umbrella political organisation, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. The OAU became the concrete symbol of Pan-African unity. But why would these new African states form a unified political entity in the face of their almost insurmountable differences? The realisation of their weak bargaining power in the international system partly served as a strong motivation in the quest for African unity. Also during this period, the majority of the new states started to diversify their foreign economic policies away from their former colonial powers in favour of inter-African partners and other middle-ranking powers in Asia, Latin America and Europe. The pursuit of determined foreign economic policies led to co-operation

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with the Caribbean and Pacific countries and subsequent trade and commercial relations with the European Economic Community (EEC), known as the European Community-African Caribbean Pacific (EC-ACP) relations. Another motivation was that the Third World ideology of collective solidarity which gave the new states the political consciousness of wanting to belong to a collective bargaining bloc. The new African states, therefore, joined the Third World group to flex their political and diplomatic muscles at the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). During this period, the oil wealth of states such as Nigeria, Libya and Algeria became a powerful political weapon and considerably enhanced the diplomatic bargaining power of these states.

The new states, therefore, started to experiment with the creation of regional political unions and economic integration and co-operation arrangements. Regional political unions were regarded as confidence-building and conflict management mechanisms to address the political tensions and inter-state disputes created by the artificial colonial boundaries, which lumped diverse groups of nations into a state. For example the Via-speaking people of the Gola forest in Sierra Leone were separated from their kith and kin in neighbouring Liberia. Similarly, the Ewe-speaking people of Ghana were separated from their ‘relatives’ in Togo, whilst many ethnic Somalis were dispersed into Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia. The ensuing border conflict between many African states diverted millions of dollars from national development to expanding and equipping their armed forces. These inter-state border conflicts and wars, such as between Somalia and Ethiopia were to create the opportunity for external interventions in Africa.

The attempts at regional political unions included the union of Ghana and British Togoland in 1957, Italian and British Somaliland in 1960, Southern Cameroon and the Republic of Cameroon in 1961, and Tanganyika and Zanzibar union in 1964. However, other attempts at political union ended in failure such as the Mali federation, the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union, the East African federation, the Greater Maghreb union, the federation of former French West African colonies of Senegal and Soudan (Mali), and the Senegambia confederation. After the dissolution of the Afrique Occidentale Francaise (AOF), the successor states, with the exception of Guinea, which severed links with France in 1958, met in the Senegalese capital, Dakar, with the primary objective of establishing a federation. The Mali federation failed largely due to internal political differences, institutional incompatibility and the lack of a ground swell of public opinion in favour of federation. Similarly, the fear of the erosion of political power as a result of the creation of a political union also contributed to the failure of the East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to form a federation in 1963. These countries had been closely linked to the East African High Commission in 1947 and its successor, the East African Common Services Organisation (EACSO), since 1961. It was, therefore, not surprising when in January 1961 Julius Nyerere, the leader of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), announced that he would be willing to delay the date of Tanganyika’s

Struggle for Unity in Africa

independence in order to enable it to join Uganda and Kenya in an independent East African federation. Internal political differences effectively destroyed an historical context conducive to federation. By 1964 all negotiations to establish a federation had collapsed.28

Out of the failures and limited successes of the attempts at regional political union in Africa emerged the vision to establish regional functional organisations. The new states in African were influenced by the examples of regional economic integration and co-operation groupings in other parts of the world such as the EEC and the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). The majority of the organisations established in Africa during this period were primarily economic, developmental and technical agencies, most with long survival records. The 1970s in particular marked the zenith of the growth of regional economic integration and co-operation groups as a development strategy in Africa. The regional political and economic co-operation schemes were important because they provided the forum for political and economic dialogue and initiatives in the attempts to respond to the pressing developmental and security problems faced by Africa. The African ‘palaver hut’ mentality also created the need for peaceful resolution of inter-state disputes and the need for peaceful co-existence.

The attempts at establishing regional political unions and economic co-operation groupings laid the foundation for the creation of the OAU. In May 1963 a new conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was attended by 30 independent African states. The outcome was the agreement to form the OAU as the main continental political organisation. The formation of the OAU was in itself a compromise version of Nkrumah’s vision of Pan-African unity. The OAU Charter, in Tordoff’s view, was a compromise document to accommodate all the divergent views of the Casablanca, Monrovia, Brazzaville and PAFMECSA groups. It was a compromise needed to forge some form of a loose political organisation that would keep the member states together as well as serving as a political bargaining bloc in the international system. For instance, the Casablanca group only accepted the Charter’s principles on respect for political sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs on the condition that their concerns for non-alignment in the Cold War and anti-colonialism, in particular priority being given to assisting the liberation struggle against apartheid South Africa, were included. Catherine Hoskyns, therefore, argues that the OAU Charter was ‘a curious hotch-potch of principles and purposes, which combined rather conservative statements designed to protect the status quo in inter-African relations with radical commitments towards the outside world’.29

Briefly, the OAU Charter was based on the principles of self-determination, respect for political sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-interference in domestic affairs of member states. However some of the principles of international


society, such as sovereignty, non-intervention and self-determination, have emerged over the years as obstacles to development and the project of Pan-African unity. In particular, the concept of self-determination, constructed as meaning the right to political independence from colonial rule, was later to become a major obstacle for the newly independent states, as secessionist movements used this principle to break away from what they regarded as an ‘unhappy’ union of states. The Eritrean war of liberation with Ethiopia has been a classic example.

The formation of the OAU was the most important manifestation of African unity rooted in Pan-Africanism. According to Hoskyns, the OAU was a ‘strong continental commitment to unity, based on racial consciousness and the common experience of colonialism’. Since the creation of the OAU, it has emerged as the custodian of the project of unifying Africa and has evolved over the decades as the principal continental forum for the articulation of the principles and norms that govern interstate relations and diplomacy. But even after the creation of the OAU, the majority of the member states paid scant attention to the consolidation of African unity or, at best, they paid lip service to the project of Pan-African unity. The immediate military and security problems faced by the newly independent African states such as the Belgian orchestrated civil war in the Congo, army mutinies in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, and inter-state disputes between Kenya and Somalia were all resolved by external interventions, largely through the initiative of the former colonial powers, rather than through African interventions. This created a crisis of confidence in the OAU’s ability to resolve Africa’s conflict and security problems and further seriously undermined the vision of Pan-African unity.

From Addis Ababa to Lusaka: The Realism of the African Union

The OAU has registered some limited successes in that the organisation provided the political platform for African leaders to dialogue and to conduct inter-African diplomacy. The OAU assisted in the creation of regional integration and cooperation groupings in collaboration with the UN-sponsored Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The continental organisation mediated, and in some cases tried to settle, inter-state disputes. The OAU’s support for liberation movements had helped to secure decolonisation on the continent. However, the OAU, over a period of more than 30 years, has been hampered by numerous problems and thus failed to achieve most of its objectives. The cumbersome institutional structure which hinders quick decision-making, the failure of member states to pay their financial contributions, the lack of popular continental support for the organisation, the tendency to formulate economic plans without realistic prospects of fulfilling them, the preoccupation of member states with domestic issues, and the excess of politics at institutional and summit level, were some of the teething problems responsible for the weakness of

the continental organisation.31 Also, the OAU principles of respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs have in most cases rendered the continental body impotent and, in other situations, provided a convenient excuse for inaction or the ‘do-nothing’ syndrome. Some member states have also flouted the principles of the Charter with impunity. A comprehensive and analytical discussion of the OAU is presented in Chapter 5. But suffice it to say that the project of Pan-African unity and collective solidarity was in shambles. More to the point, the majority of African political leaders just did not want to discuss Pan-African unity, unless it was politically convenient to do so.

However, with the end of the Cold War the diverse and pressing problems faced by post-Cold War Africa have once again forced on African leaders and peoples the imperative for unity. Just as the problems of the independence era of the 1960s forced the project of Pan-African unity on African leaders as the only viable solution for survival, so the post-Cold War problems and challenges are forcing African leaders to reconsider the imperative for unity. What we are seeing emerging is a return to the notion of securitising unity in Africa.

The recent call for Pan-African unity in the form of an African Union has come from what some observers and political commentators would describe as the most unlikely quarter. The creation of the African Union, like its predecessor the OAU, was fraught with political and realpolitik difficulties, the clash and accommodation of strategic self-interests and foreign policy postures of the major actors inside and outside Africa: such as the jostling for political leadership and prominence by the sub-regional hegemons and pivotal states like Nigeria, South Africa, Libya and Algeria. A critical analysis of the politics of establishing the African Union will illustrate that a range of interests and actors, often in pursuit of the traditional ends of politics, were crucial to the creation of the new continental organisation. From the Algiers Summit in 1999 that considered two separate reform strategies for the OAU based on the foreign and strategic self-interests of the two pivotal states in Africa, i.e. Nigeria and South Africa, the eventual continental union produced in Lusaka was a compromise or forge accommodating divergent interests.

The Libyan head of state Col. Muammar Gaddafí has been in the vanguard for the creation of an African Union as a concrete manifestation for the political willingness to unite Africa in the post-Cold War era. It is obvious that a variety of realpolitik interests have provided the opportunity for the Libyan leader to champion the cause of African unity. Libya, under Col. Gaddafí, has been treated by the majority of western governments as a pariah state and an alleged supporter of terrorist activities. The UN-backed international sanctions on Libya after the Lockerbie bomb that killed 270 people, increased the international isolation of Col. Gaddafí. President Reagan of America once described the Libyan leader as the ‘Mad dog of the Middle East’. With

the end of the Cold War, the Libyan leader has made strenuous efforts to rehabilitate himself in the international community as a legitimate statesman to do business with. In an attempt to repair his battered international image, Gaddaffi even handed over the suspects involved in the Lockerbie bombing for trial at The Hague and also paid out compensation to the family of the police officer, PC Yvonne Fletcher, killed in London during a shoot out at the Libyan embassy in the 1980s. At every opportunity, Col. Gaddaffi has tried to burnish his tarnished international reputation as a supporter of terrorist activities and rebel movements. In the post 9/11 changed international environment and the war on terror, in particular the US-UK-led invasion of Iraq that led to the overthrow of the regime of Saddam Hussein in April 2003, Col. Gaddaffi redoubled his efforts to rehabilitate his international image. Earlier, he had agreed on a financial deal as settlement for the Lockerbie bombing, by agreeing to pay the sum of US$2.7 billion, with the condition that 40 per cent of the amount would be paid after the lifting of UN sanctions against Libya, a further 40 per cent paid after the ending of US sanctions, and the remaining 20 per cent paid when Libya is removed from the US terrorist list. The strategic relevance of Libya as a major oil and gas producer meant that the west would not continue to ignore Col. Gaddaffi’s efforts. In early 2004, the Libyan leader urged states ‘worldwide, especially in the Middle East and Africa, to end weapons of mass destruction programmes. We will help build a world free of mass destruction weapons and terrorism’. The international efforts by Col. Gaddaffi led to the symbolic visit of the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in March 2004. It seems the rehabilitation of the Libyan leader into the international community of ‘civilised and freedom loving’ states is complete. The Anglo-Dutch oil conglomerate, Shell has signed a US $1 billion gas deal with the government of Col. Gaddaffi.

But why turn to Africa and backroll the African Union project? Gaddaffi’s diplomatic offensive to rehabilitate himself into the international community initially targeted the Arab world, using the Maghred Union as a platform for leadership in the Arab world. This initial overture and rapprochement was rejected and, in some cases, politely rebuffed by the Arab world. Gaddaffi therefore had to turn his attention to Africa and the African Union project provided the perfect opportunity to launch his ‘charm offensive’ to ‘legitimise’ him as an international statesman. By all indications, Gaddaffi’s promotion of the African union project as a political instrument had both public and private faces. He used the African union project to serve the general interest of Africa, but, at the same time, his vested interests. It seems the only credentials Gaddaffi has to lead the African Union project are his renowned anti-imperialist and quasi-socialist views, his high international profile as a controversial leader and the huge financial resources he is willing to spend on such a programme.

Struggle for Unity in Africa

Other analysts, however, portray the view that the role of Col. Gaddafi in the creation of the African Union is often exaggerated. Thomas Kwasi Tieku, in fact, argues that the creation of the African Union was a product of the clash and accommodation of interests of the most important actors in Africa. The emergence in 1999 of Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki as presidents of two dominant states in Africa played a major role in the establishment of the African Union, and further explains the speed with which the new continental body was created – barely two years from negotiation to adaption and signing by African States. Some political analysts even expressed surprised with the speed of launching the African Union and dismay about the potential impact on the effectiveness of the union. If the speed in the creation of the African Union is ‘unprecedented in African history’, what specific roles did the presidents of the two pivotal states or sub-regional hegemons play? Both presidents came to power with a continental political vision to reform, what they regarded as an ‘outdated’ and unsuitable continental organisation – the OAU, to the challenges of contemporary Africa. Nigeria in particular had played a dominant role in African inter-state diplomacy and international relations, and that has often been described as the ‘big brother of Africa’. In an attempt to break out of the negative image of its apartheid past, President Mbeki and his predecessor, Nelson Mandela, had sought to play a pivotal and constructive role in inter-African diplomacy. Both presidents Obasanjo and Mbeki, therefore, came to power with a reform package of the OAU, designed to serve their new foreign, security and economic interests. The clash and complex accommodation of the interests of the key players was therefore inevitable.

President Mbeki and his predecessor Mandela, realised that the future of post-apartheid South Africa acting as the economic giant of the continent lies in a peaceful and stable Africa. It was, therefore, assumed that it would be in the best interest of democratic South Africa to promote African political and economic liberalisation based on neo-liberal policies. The foreign and economic policy perspective, therefore, focused on strategically positioning South Africa to attract and maximise foreign direct investments. In May 2005, Barclays Bank concluded a US$6 billion investment deal in South Africa with the tacit support of the Mbeki government – the largest foreign direct investment in Africa. In addition, Mbeki has been widely


37 For further details on analysis of democratic South Africa’s foreign, economic and security policies, see the following: Vale, P. and Maseko, S., ‘South Africa and the African
described as a philosopher president and visionary leader. His African renaissance doctrine, therefore, influenced his views on the need to radically reform the OAU, an institution that has been described by international media commentators as a ‘dictators’ club’.

But what about Obasanjo’s Nigeria – a former military leader? Since the 1990s, General (Rtd) Obasanjo had played constructive leadership role in promoting governance and civil society participation in democratic consolidation and economic recovery in Africa. Through his African Leadership Forum initiative, he developed collaborative networks with key African and Western donor governments and intergovernmental institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Organisation for Co-operation and Security in Europe (OSCE). This culminated in the establishment of major continental initiatives driven by the Obasanjo agenda such as the Kampala African Leadership Declaration and the Conference for Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) – all of which designed to develop a ‘strategic vision’ for post-Cold War Africa. Therefore, when the two leaders were elected in 1999 and met at the Algiers Summit, both Mbeki and Obasanjo had a clear vision about the imperative to reform the OAU. Both leaders were agreed on the central principles of the reform of the continental body, i.e. stable, peaceful, democratic and accountable Africa, based on civil society participation, progressive leadership, good governance, respect for the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, and sustainable development based on good economic policies and management. Both Mbeki and Obasanjo recognised how much they needed each other to provide the leadership and sustained political will to drive the reform process. Both, therefore, agreed that it was in their mutual interests to support each other and merge their two reform packages of the OAU into a single project of reform. In addition, given the divisive nature of African politics and the dynamics of geopolitics, both Obasanjo and Mbeki realised that they could not, on their own, successfully drive the process of reforming the OAU. So when Col. Gaddaffi suggested to host an extraordinary summit in Sirte, Libya in 1999 to ‘discuss ways and means of making the OAU effective’ both Obasanjo and Mbeki were quick to seize the opportunity, given Gaddaffi’s track record of opposition to their ideas on recommendations


Struggle for Unity in Africa

for the reform of the OAU. President Obasanjo and Mbeki saw in Col. Gaddaffi a potential ally for their project to reform the continental body and, most importantly, the opportunity to underwrite the huge financial costs involved in creating a new institution. But it meant that they had to deal with and accommodate Gaddafi’s proposal for a ‘United States of Africa’. The eventual final product – the new African Union – was in effect, a forge and compromise, accommodating divergent strategic interests and competing proposals.

The Zambian capital, Lusaka, became the end of the road for the OAU as we know it. In July 2001, the African leaders at the OAU summit established the African Union (AU) to replace the OAU. It had been a long and tortuous journey from Addis Ababa to Lusaka on a path littered with optimism, disappointment, disillusionment and renewed optimism. It is hoped that the new organisation fashioned on the model of the European Union (EU) will gradually provide the basis for political and socio-economic unity in Africa. Just as Nkrumah was vital in bringing about the OAU so have Gaddaffi, Obasanjo and Mbeki been crucial to the formation of the AU. But the creation of the AU took two years to materialise after delicate political negotiations, and economic and financial concessions to opponents of the AU project as promoted by Col. Gaddaffi and the pivotal states of Nigeria, South Africa and Algeria. The Libyan leader surprisingly revived Nkrumah’s vision of Pan-African unity at the extraordinary OAU summit in Sirte, Libya in 1999. At this summit, Gaddaffi proposed the creation of a unified political and economic union. The Sirte Declaration proposed the creation of an African Union to replace the OAU. The Constitutive Act of the AU was formally adopted at the OAU summit in Lomé, Togo in July 2000. The Lusaka summit, therefore, implemented the Sirte Declaration by establishing the AU. The Constitutive Act of the AU was signed by all the 53 member states and, according to the Assembly of the heads of state and government, they decided to ‘proudly declare the establishment of the African Union by the unanimous will of the member states’. The former Foreign Minister of Côte d’Ivoire, Amara Essy, was elected as Secretary General of the new AU.

The OAU had been forced to transform itself because of the monumental changes taking place in the post-Cold War era and also because of the challenges of rapidly changing globalisation. In response to these challenges, the OAU had earlier established constructive programmes such as the Treaty of the African Economic Community (AEC) in 1991 in an attempt to integrate Africa into the global market economy and, in 1993, the OAU created the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution to respond to the many civil wars and inter-state disputes on the continent. According to the report of the OAU Secretary General Salim Salim, the creation of the AU,

Has the ultimate objective of enhancing unity, strengthening co-operation and co-ordination as well as equipping the African continent with a legal and institutional framework, which would enable Africa to gain its rightful place in the community of nations . . . The cardinal
motivation behind the establishment of the African Union was the desire to deepen and enhance the cohesion, solidarity and integration of the countries and peoples of Africa.\footnote{Report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of the Sirte Decision on the African Union EAHG / DEC. 1 (V), Lusaka, Zambia, 2-7 July 2001, p.2.}

The institutional provisions and innovations of the AU are extensively discussed in Chapter 5, but suffice to say that the establishment of the AU is regarded as the continuation of the efforts of the African states and peoples in the search for unity, security and development. An important addition or component of the creation of the African Union, is the creation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) as the blueprint for the continent’s economic recovery and development. The politics of the establishment of NEPAD, its impact on the new African Union, and role played by external pivotal states and multilateral institutions such as the G8 and EU are extensively explored in Chapter 5.

In spite of all the odds stacked against Africa, the creation of the AU demonstrates that the dream of Pan-African unity was not a mere historical interlude in the experience of African peoples at the dawn of independence in the 1950s and 1960s. In several respects, the creation of the African Union is part of the emerging African new order and a manifestation of the enduring appeal, if not relevance, of Pan-Africanism and the attempt to give Pan-African identity a concrete expression. The new thrust of Pan-African unity, as represented by the AU, is to rise to the economic, development and security challenges facing Africa framed as Afro-responsibility. The realisation is that mere political freedom, in the sense of independence, is of limited value without economic emancipation and societal stability. If the claim is being made that in the post-Cold War era Africa is left to its own devices, then the AU is an attempt to begin to take responsibility for the continent’s destiny. It would, however, be premature and naïve to conclude that the mere creation of a new organisation will significantly enhance the project of uniting Africa or strengthen the capacity of states to respond to peace and security issues on the continent. There are real and serious problems facing Africa in the 21st century such as civil wars, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, illiteracy, poverty, underdevelopment, political instability, resource scarcity and environmental degradation. Mere institutions and declarations will not solve these problems. But the creation of the right kind of institutions and responding to the failures of the past would definitely impact on the new direction of Pan-African unity.

Conceptually, the creation of both the OAU and the AU evidently demonstrates the problems, challenges and opportunities inherent in inter-state co-operation within a regionalist framework. Both the OAU and AU illustrates that despite the divisiveness, mutual hostilities and suspicions, divergent pursuit of strategic national self-interests, and in some cases, open enmity and conflict, the African states have consistently demonstrated that they are able to agree, within a problematic co-operative ethos, to establish sub-regional and continental structures and mechanisms for peace, security and development. The politics of the creation of both the OAU
Struggle for Unity in Africa

and AU have been underpinned by notions of Pan-African Unity, but simultaneously driven by the co-operation-conflict and amity-enmity dynamics. In addition, the conflict-competition dynamics manifested in the creation of both institutions raises some fundamental issues about politics, peace and security in Africa. The nature of the compromises and forges that produced these continental institutions account for the failure of the OAU in peace and security and there is not much hope for the AU either. What is more, the establishment of institutions is only the beginning, and judging by the performance record of other African institutions, the real challenge is how to operationalise and translate all the normative intentions of the new AU into practical realities. Furthermore, given the weakness and dysfunctional nature of some of the states in Africa, it is difficult to see how they will be able to lend themselves to the practical projects of continental peace and security.

Conclusion

The struggle to unite Africa has come a long way from the vision of Pan-African unity to the concrete symbols of the OAU and the AU. The problems and challenges that bedevilled the OAU are still present in the post-Cold War era. If anything, the problems seem to have considerably multiplied thus exposing the inability of Africa to resolve its own problems without external interventions. Just as the problems at the dawn of independence in Africa forced on the new leaders the imperative for unity, so are the post-Cold War problems and challenges driving the debate on Pan-African unity. The multiplicity of problems such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty, underdevelopment, debt burden, civil wars, state collapse and societal fragmentation, resource scarcity, and environmental degradation have again forced the project of unity as the only viable solution for Africa’s survival in a globalised world in which Africa is increasingly marginalized. The formation of the AU in the face of mounting difficulties is a manifestation of the capacity of Africa to revive itself and take control of its own destiny. But it would be premature to glorify this political initiative to move closer to Nkrumah’s vision of continental unity; it is but a small step in the right direction if Africa is to remedy the negative image painted as the ‘heart of darkness’.  

Chapter 2

African State System:
The Bane of Disunity

Introduction

It is argued that the majority of the conflict and security problems faced by contemporary Africa can be attributed to the failure of the post-colonial state. According to this perspective, the state system in Africa is the Frankenstein’s Monster that is challenging the unity of the continent and undermining the capacity to build viable regional mechanisms for peace and security. The inherited colonial legacy, predicated on Westphalian sovereign statehood, is often ‘blamed’ for much of the crisis of nation building and division of African peoples into non-viable entities called states. In much of post-colonial Africa, the subversion of the state system by the ruling and governing elites to ensure regime survival and serve their vested interests has led to power struggles and rebel insurgencies fighting for control of state power and access to its patrimonial resources. The internal contestations and external factors have coalesced to precipitate the malleability, failure and collapse of the state in Africa. Despite the trials and tribulations of the African state system, the state in the 21st century is here to stay. If this is the case, then there is a need to understand the peculiarity of the African state in a globalised world.

There is a general debate that the state system in Africa, to a large extent, is different from what the conventional study of International Relations assumes the state to be. The ‘state’ in Africa is in a state of flux. The state system not only provides an important insight into the actual working of international and domestic politics, but is also the main actor in the public domain in Africa. This is not surprising because the state is one of the most important constituents of the structure of global power.¹ The literature on the African state is suffused with adjectives and epithets describing the post-colonial state such as ‘quasi-state’; ‘weak state’; ‘failed state’; ‘collapsed state’; ‘soft state’; ‘vampire state’; ‘overdeveloped’ or ‘swollen state’; ‘shadow state’; ‘fictive state’ ‘garrison state’ ‘prebendal’ or ‘neo-patrimonial state’, ‘lame leviathan’, ‘belly politic’ or ‘kleptocratic state’ and many more.² These

pejorative descriptions point to the fact that something is fundamentally wrong with the African state system. Contemporary political history reveals that the continent has the weakest states in the world. States in Africa, or put differently, ‘legal fictions’ or ‘geographical expressions’ such as Somalia, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, etc. have virtually ceased to be ‘states’ in the empirical sense and are unable to demonstrate and perform their domestic sovereignty. Therefore, the real questions are not only why African weak states persist, but also why and how these weak and quasi-states lend themselves to the African unity project and the building of regional peace and security systems. Given the challenges faced by contemporary Africa, I have endeavoured to engage with some of the critical issues, namely; what kind of states will continue to exist in Africa and to what extent will they lend themselves to the difficult and complex task of long-term peace and security. Furthermore, I argue that it will be misleading to talk in terms of ‘the state’ in Africa as a homogenous entity. Evidence across Africa illustrates that ‘the state’ in Africa is not a unified entity, but rather different types of states exist in different parts of Africa, but all of them are struggling for survival in the ‘harsh’ environment of international politics. Despite the weakness, dysfunctional and quasi-nature of most of the states in Africa, why are some able to lend themselves to the problems of sub-regional peace and security as in West Africa and Southern Africa?

Defining and Theorising the State in Africa

The dominance and centrality of the state in world politics means that its definition is bound to be a subject of controversy. The Oxford Dictionary of Politics defines the state as a ‘distinct set of political institutions whose specific concern is with the organisation of domination, in the name of the common interest, within a delimited territory’. This definition embraces both the broad and specific dimensions of the state and is thus bound to be not only an unsatisfactory definition for some people, but also problematic in terms of application in some societies or polities. The state broadly defines a set of institutions that possess the means of legitimate coercion and with the monopoly over the use of force, exercised over a defined territory and population, and has international recognition. The state, as the authoritative decision making entity with jurisdiction over territory, is vested with the responsibility to provide a variety of essential functions including the provision of welfare, peace,
order and security for its people. Three interrelated functions of the state are evident. Firstly, the state as the sovereign authority, the recognised and accepted source of authority to organise decision making; secondly the state as an institution vested with the authority for decision making and, hence, an intangible symbol of identity; and thirdly, the state as primary security provider for a populated territory. The state exercises control over rule making within its territory through the medium of organised government. The terms ‘state’ and ‘government’ are sometimes used interchangeably to mean the same thing. Government, as distinct from the state, describes the process of governing, the exercise of power by structures and people who occupy the positions of authority in a state. Government describes the conditions of ‘ordered rule’, the manner, method or system of governing a society, and the structures and arrangements of offices as they relate to the governed. Government is said to constitute three distinct branches of power: legislature, executive (sometimes referred to as ‘the government’), and the judiciary. Nation, on the other hand, describes a constituted population within a territory, sharing common culture, language, and ethnicity with a strong historical continuity, and sharing sentiments of collective and communal identity.

Statehood, according to Barry Buzan, is a social construct, i.e. the ‘idea of the state’ is ‘constructed’ in the minds of those who form and govern the state. This constructed idea of the state provides legitimacy in a variety of forms. It provides territorial legitimacy, i.e. the consent of a population to live within a demarcated territory because of shared values and identities, and the right of the state to exercise authority and control over all the territory allocated to it by international law. In addition, it provides governmental legitimacy in that it serves as the basis for constituted authority, and has the right to act on behalf of its citizens through agreed constitutional means. But this idea of governmental authority differs considerably between states and within states in terms of the concept of the ‘rulers’ and the ‘ruled’. The idea of the state, according to Christopher Clapham, also provides external legitimacy, i.e. international recognition of the state as a legal and equal member of the international community of states. The exercise of external legitimacy or juridical sovereignty makes it possible for states to participate in international relations and transactions in an increasingly interdependent modern world. Clapham, therefore, argues that: ‘The power of rulers derives not only from the material resources and ideological support of their own people, but equally from their ability to draw on the ideological and material resources provided by other states, and also non-states, such as transnational religious organisations or business corporations.’

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conceptions of the state in world politics and much of the academic literature include the ‘state as might’ in the sense that ‘might is right’, as propounded by theorists such as Machiavelli. There is the conception of the state as the legitimate structure of domination, i.e. ‘state as law and order’ as interpreted by theorists such as Weber and Hobbes, the construction of the state as a basis for legitimacy (Hegel), and as the embodiment of hierarchy (Monarchism and Corporatism), the liberal construction of the state as a reflection of individualistic social order, and the state as an ‘embodiment of community’ as advanced by Durkheim.10

The application of the different approaches and conceptions of the state in Africa has been problematic. According to Clapham, the attributes ascribed to states by the mythology of statehood do not reflect the reality of statehood in Africa.11 Each and every attribute of the state has either been contested, appropriated or subverted by the different elements or institutions or sets of institutions within the state. For instance, in much of Africa, there is a huge gap between the exercise of external sovereignty and domestic sovereignty. Robert Jackson describes this phenomenon as quasi-statehood, in that these are states which are recognised as sovereign independent entities by other states within the international system, but are not able to exercise the demands of ‘empirical’ or domestic statehood that require the capacity to exercise effective power within their own territories or are able to defend themselves from external attack.12 Such states have ‘negative’ or juridical sovereignty, in that sovereignty is ascribed to them by other states and they only exist by the fiat of the international system. They do not possess the ‘positive’ sovereignty which derives from effective control of the state.13 Jackson, therefore, argues that the sovereignty regime became a device for weak states in Africa and other parts of the world to

African State System

African State System

protect themselves against strong states or domestic contestations of the state. It has been used, subverted and abused to serve the vested interests of those who control the ‘official’ state.

The state, as it has come to exist and operate in post-colonial Africa, is different from the conventional Western-centric understanding. The post-colonial state in Africa is comprised of sets of entities or institutions struggling for survival in the international system.\textsuperscript{14} Leonardo Villalón and Phillip Huxtable, therefore, outline five different faces that characterised African states: a client status; a personalised identity or monopoly status; a centralised or overdeveloped morphology; a prebendal or rentier nature; and an extractive impulse.\textsuperscript{15} What type or types of states do we have in Africa? To what extent do the western-centric construction and theoretical explanations of the state provide adequate understanding of the realism of the state or state system in Africa? It is evident that the application of, for example, Max Weber’s territorial ‘monopoly of legitimate violence’ – the foundation of modern state – is problematic in Africa. In Africa, the majority of the weak and quasi-states do not have monopoly over violence. In fact, the dominance and hegemony of the state is constantly contested and challenged by a range of sub-national groups and non-state actors such as war lords, transnational criminal networks and insurgency groups. In addition, some of the illegitimate governments, in an attempt to consolidate regime survivals have privatised violence through the creation of para-military forces, private armies, and pro-government civil militias. The state could, therefore, hardly be in a position to have monopoly over legitimate violence, nor authority and control over its territorial borders. When we therefore talk about the state in Africa, we are, in effect, describing a different entity or ‘beast’ all together – and very different from the Western modern state derived from the Westphalian project. ‘The State’ in Africa, for want of a simple descriptive phrase, is a complex and differentiated set of institutions (and personnel) that have appropriated all the trappings of the Westphalian statehood when it serves their vested interests. In addition, the state or states in Africa have uniquely adapted all the basic elements, institutions and components of what ‘a state’ is supposed to be, to the particular environment it is operating in. The African state is, therefore, not a static entity, but one that is dynamic and constantly evolving in response to its domestic and external environments. This is a point often missed or down-played by some political analysts and media commentators whose views are often tainted by their western-centric world view of state and statehood.

\section*{Characteristics of the State System: Crisis and Mythology of the African State}

Why is the state what it is in Africa? Put simply, why has the state system failed to work in Africa or why has it failed to function according to the traditional Westphalian expectations? At independence, it was blindly assumed by liberal theorists and neo-
Marxists that everyone knew the direction in which the ‘post-colonial state and society would develop: that of modern, secular frameworks with all the familiar functional checks-and-balances and appropriate administrative technologies’.\textsuperscript{16} The state was ‘decorated’ with high expectations as the main channel of development. In Clapham’s words, ‘African independence launched into international politics a group of the world’s poorest, weakest and most artificial states’. There was little awareness about how unclear, uncertain, and precarious were the efforts of the post-colonial African state to define and develop its role and position in relation to society. These high expectations were accompanied by painful disillusionment about the role and capacity of the state in Africa. The distinctive features of the African state are that almost all, excluding Liberia and Ethiopia (briefly colonised by Italy), are former colonies; they are the latest entrants into the state system and as such are at the earliest stage of state formation and nation building; they are the most evidently challenged domestically and the most peripheral members of the global economic system.\textsuperscript{17}

A dominant feature of the post-colonial state in Africa is that the continent is littered with small states (both in terms of size and population), which are faced with, or are critically challenged by, a vast array of security vulnerabilities and threats. Some of these micro-states have been carved out primarily to serve the political, economic and strategic self-interests of the colonial powers and, at independence, were granted the ‘legal fiction’ of sovereign statehood. These states include The Gambia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, and Guinea Bissau. These micro states have demonstrated increasing vulnerability to security risks and some are not able to cope with or manage diverse security threats.\textsuperscript{18} The malleability of some of these states has threatened regional peace and security, and compounded the problems and challenges of building viable regional mechanisms for dealing with peace, conflict and security issues. However, some of these micro-states have demonstrable records of political stability, economic growth, sustainable development and social progress. Some media commentators and political analysts often portray the view that all states in Africa are weak, failing and underdeveloped. Neil MacFarlean asserted in the 1980s that: ‘There is hardly a state in black Africa which appears more viable today than it did on the eve of independence.’\textsuperscript{19} The media generalisations and assertions made by analysts such as MacFarlean do not reflect the objective reality because there are examples of viable, strong and modern states in Africa such as Botswana, Tunisia, South Africa,

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\item \textsuperscript{18} For a comprehensive conceptualisation of the security risks faced by small states in contemporary world politics see the Commonwealth Report on \textit{A Future for Small States: Overcoming Vulnerability}. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1997.
\end{itemize}
Egypt, Namibia etc. These generalisations and assertions gloss over, or deliberately underestimate, the problems and challenges of state formation and nation building in Africa, which are barely six decades old.

Though the project of the modern state is derived from the West, some political communities or entities in pre-colonial Africa approximate, in a rudimentary form, to the Westphalian conception of statehood. In fact, according to Caroline Warner, ‘the various types of political communities which existed in Africa before colonialism present problems for our use of the term state’. The variety of traditional political structures, modus operandi and organisational forms of some of these pre-colonial communities in Africa do have aspects of what we regard as statehood. The vocabulary is rich with terms describing these pre-colonial communities in different regions of Africa including ‘city-states’, ‘kingdoms’, ‘autocracies’, ‘vice-royalties’, ‘confederations’, ‘peoples’, ‘theocracies’, ‘empires’, ‘sultanates’, ‘dynasties’, ‘nomadic confederations’, ‘pastoral communities’, ‘clans’, ‘tribes’, ‘warlords’, ‘semi-autonomous vassal states’, ‘tributary states’, ‘sub-dynasties’, ‘sub-kingsdoms’, and ‘stateless societies’. These examples demonstrate that the state system is not a new project in Africa, and that what is new is the imposition of the Westphalian model of statehood through the colonial project in Africa. The colonial project, therefore, had a devastating and fundamentally transformative effect on what we know as the modern project of state formation and nation building.

Nearly six decades after independence, state formation and state building is still problematic in Africa. We have seen the evolution of some African states from weakness to disintegration and collapse. It is important to recognise that state collapse is not a phenomenon peculiar to Africa. It exists in different forms in Third World regions, the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But it is in Africa that

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23 State building, according to Keith Jagger, is defined as a ‘state’s ability to accumulate power. State building is the process by which the state not only grows in economic productivity and government coercion but, in political and institutional power’. Jagger, K., ‘War and the three faces of power: War making and state making in Europe and the Americas’, Comparative Political Studies. Vol. 25, No. 11, 1992.
the state formation process has been most problematic, hence the emergence of different kinds of states. According to Villalón and Huxtable, the African state is at a ‘critical juncture’. But what explains the crisis of the African state and how do we characterise the state system in Africa? A variety of external and internal factors are responsible for the contemporary nature and position of the African state. They range from colonial legacies, to the fiction of juridical sovereignty and Cold War politics, to the over-extended role of the African state and the nature of domestic politics and patronial decline.

**African States: A Colonial Imposition**

The state in Africa is a creation of European colonialism. European colonialism and its legacies bequeathed African ‘proto-states’, a crumbling foundation for the creation of a post-colonial political order. It is important to emphasise that colonialism was not a homogenous project of conquest and domination. Different European states colonised territories in Africa in different ways, hence one would reasonably expect different degrees of colonial penetration and impact across Africa. It is therefore reasonable to talk in terms of ‘colonial legacies’ in Africa. Mohamed Ayoob argues that colonialism led to the creation of administrative units by the imperial powers without regard for their population’s pre-colonial affinities and loyalties. Arbitrary and cavalier construction of colonial political boundaries in the mid-1880s cut across ethnic, tribal, religious and linguistic ties, dismembered established political units; and lumped diverse pre-colonial political entities into uneasy administrative unions. Ayoob further suggests that colonial rule delayed the transformation of African colonies from backward to modern economies through what would have been natural processes of economic development; stunted the growth of social classes, especially the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, and derailed the evolutionary process of economic development by introducing discontinuities in the economic spheres through a shift from food to cash crop production. This colonial capitalist exploitation set the stage for the way and manner in which post-colonial African states were to be integrated into the global market economy. The colonial inheritance, therefore, provided the recipe for the eventual disintegration

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24 Martin Doornbos describes state formation as a set of ongoing processes which: ‘... include the establishment, growth and differentiation of state structures, and the redefinition of the position of various social and political groups, and organisational networks within the wider context. These processes lie at the heart of the dynamics of state-society relationships.’ Doornbos, ‘The African State in Academic Debate’, p.181.


and fragmentation of the post-colonial state in Africa, because the ‘state’ in Africa is a product of a different history, a history of conquest.\textsuperscript{27}

Colonial powers, in order to maintain control over subject peoples, introduced indirect rule. However, different colonial powers, such as the British, French, and Portuguese implemented different sets or strategies of colonial administrative control. Indirect rule organised colonial power based on two distinct authorities, i.e. one civic/civil law enforced by colonial authority and the other, customary law, enforced by native authority which was ethnicised. The colonial powers did not create a unified customary law or administrative system for all natives. The result was the existence of two different forms of state, i.e. the colonial civic state and the native state to which the people owed loyalty. The policy of indirect rule as practised by the British utilised traditional structures for the exercise of colonial bureaucratic authority. This introduced impediments to the creation of modern authority structures based on rational principles and legitimacy. Post-colonial African states, therefore, had to compete with these traditional authority structures for the loyalty of their population.\textsuperscript{28} Ali Mazuri is of the view that this medium of colonial political authority ‘... aggravated the problems of creating a modern nation-state after independence. The different groups in the country maintained their separate ethnic identities by being ruled in part through their own native institutions ... different sections of the population perceived each other as strangers, sometimes as aliens, increasingly as rivals, and ominously as potential enemies.’\textsuperscript{29}

Even the concept of sovereignty on which the Westphalian system is predicated is fundamentally different within the African context. According to Jeffry Herbst, pre-colonial sovereignty is not the same as the imposed post-colonial concept of sovereignty. The view is that political control in large parts of Africa was exercised over people rather than land or territory. Land, which was in abundance, was not the constraining resource, exercising political power primarily meant control over people. In Herbst’s view, pre-colonial African practices were thus not that different from feudal Europe.\textsuperscript{30} In effect, the concept and practice of European and post-colonial African states as territorial entities are fundamentally different from pre-colonial Africa. Furthermore, sovereignty in pre-colonial Africa tended to be shared, in that communities were predisposed to have nominal obligations and allegiances to more than one political centre. The exercise of political authority was not defined spatially and few political centres could hope to wield unquestioned authority. Drawing from the example of the Ashanti Empire, Ivor Wilks argues that though the land belonged to the Asantahene, people owed allegiance not only to

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\item\textsuperscript{28} Ayoob, \textit{The Third World Security Predicament}. 1995, pp.36-37.
\end{itemize}
the ruler, but also to the Fante and the British Governor. This limit on territorial authority and shared sovereignty in pre-colonial Africa was similar to the practice in medieval Europe where sovereignty was shared between the church and various political units. This pre-colonial conception differed from the modern nation-state system imposed on Africa with its focus on sovereign control of defined political territory. Herbst further argues that pre-colonial Africa, with its diverse political organisations such as villages, chiefdoms, city-states, nation-states, kingdoms and empires was superseded by the formal colonial project in Africa and replaced the diversity of forms with the European model of national state. In Herbst’s view, the ‘imposition of territorial states by colonial authorities was thus a severe disruption of African political practices’. Furthermore, whilst the nations made the state in Western Europe, post-colonial Africa was faced with the difficult and complex task of building states out of diverse nations. But even in the case of Europe, it was not a simple case of nations making states. European state formation process illustrates that it was a difficult and complex process, and in some cases, nations failed to make states. Even where they succeeded in doing so, it was sometimes ephemeral, for example, in the case of the break up of former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union.

Post-colonial African leaders inherited a colonial state system predicated on control based on extraction of resources and domination of society. With limited options and in a haste to consolidate their grip on state power, the independence leaders merely replicated colonial bureaucratic authoritarian control. The imposed state system in Africa and its associated Western-style institutions, such as parliament, political parties and bureaucracies, have brought spectacular difficulties for African governments. They find it difficult to measure up to the standards for the exercise of political control propounded by Montesquieu, Rousseau, Locke or Weber. Therefore, in most African countries, the post-colonial state has not been able to overcome its colonial legacy or legacies. It could be argued that Africa’s underdevelopment can be traced to the fact that the state-system imposed was flawed. Therefore, policies, no matter how correctly designed, are bound to face problems in terms of the state institutions responsible for their implementation.

If this is the case, why did the independent political leaders not look for or develop an alternative to the inherited colonial state? Could the Pan-Africanist project of unity have offered a viable conception and structure for political organisation and authority in post-colonial Africa? Warner argues that Pan-Africanism could not have provided a viable political organisation and authority even as a powerful continental mobilising force because it took on different forms and was subjected to different

33 Ibid, p.120.
34 Ibid, p.129.
interpretations. It could be said that the colonial legacy and the dominance of the western system of sovereign states did not afford the newly independent African states the opportunity to explore or experiment with alternative political structures and forms of organisation. Faced with the increasing demands to provide welfare, security and ‘fast-track’ development, the newly independent African leaders did not see replacing the colonial state as a priority. A more serious obstacle was the fact that the international system would not have recognised any political structure other than a sovereign state as the basis for political organisation. The instrumental utility of sovereign statehood and all its trappings and semblance of legitimacy for the newly independent African leaders meant that they were not predisposed to meaningful exploration of alternatives to the colonial states. Sovereignty, according to James Mayall, was secured ‘on the cheap’ in that the political leaders did not have to demonstrate external (juridical) or internal (empirical) sovereignty. It is, therefore, not surprising that post-colonial African leaders are the most vociferous and zealous defenders of the idea of sovereignty, even though they constantly rant against colonialism and imperialism.

An interesting argument is the view that established colonial structures, institutions and organisational forms left a fundamental imprint on the post-colonial state, hence the mentality or psychology that the state is, in effect, ‘here to stay’, and thus an obstacle not only to exploring alternatives, but also to the post-colonial project of Pan-African unity. Warner critically engages with the debate about the extent to which the onset of colonialism and colonial institutions ‘froze’ pre-colonial existing political arrangements in Africa. She offers three critical explanations. Firstly, that if colonialism ‘froze’ pre-colonial political institutions, then Pan-Africanism was doomed to failure because it had neither the material resources nor the ideological means to bring about the unification of the diverse and disparate polities or entities. Secondly, that if colonialism did not ‘freeze’ pre-colonial political institutions, then the argument is that it was a strategic and instrumental policy to discourage unity within each colonial state in order to prevent or reduce challenges to colonial rule. Thirdly, that pre-colonial institutions were not ‘frozen’ under colonial rule, but that the colonial state did not implement any significant changes for the simple reason of cost. Warner’s conclusion, therefore, is that, ‘Whatever the exact character of transformation effected by the colonial powers on the pre-existing African polities, the Pan-African movement faced enormous obstacles to unity’.

The inalienable nature of the colonial state boundaries bequeathed at independence also forestalled any prospect for alternative political structures or forms of organisation of authority in post-colonial Africa. Any meaningful project in this direction would have involved some change in territorial boundaries. The political boundaries inherited at independence have remained largely unchanged.

except in the case of Ethiopia and Eritrea. The OAU enshrined in its Charter the inviolability of inherited colonial boundaries in an attempt to prevent Africa from disintegrating into generalised chaos due to border conflicts and wars that would inevitably emerge. In terms of cost-benefit analysis, the potential security risks and dangers inherent in such a venture were regarded as far too great and costly for the newly independent states.

In addition, colonialism divided Africa into Francophone, Lusophone, and Anglophone entities. The colonial legacy pre-determined the foreign security and economic policy directions of most of the newly independent African states. The vast differences between the Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone systems of administration in the newly independent states also posed a major hindrance to the project of African unity, as the majority of the citizenry and political leaders in these entities were more inclined to aspire to the values of their former colonial masters. The colonial legacy ensured that at independence the majority of African states had closer economic, and in some cases military, ties with external states than with other African states. In the majority of these new states the former colonial powers remained the principal commercial, economic and financial partners and also fostered close socio-cultural links. For instance, the Francophone African states, with the exception of Guinea, maintained close relations with France. However the point should be made that some of these colonial differences and commonalities are features identified in newly independent states not only in Africa but also in other parts of the world such as Asia and Latin America. Notwithstanding, the colonial legacy was, and is still, a major hindrance to the Pan-African unity project and, to a considerable extent, has hindered the building of viable regional peace and security systems.

*Time: A Luxury not Afforded to African States*

Whilst state building has evolved over centuries in Europe, the Westphalian project imposed on Africa at independence is barely six decades old and has evolved in a very different and changed international environment. The processes of state building and national integration have been constrained by limited time and the lack of a ‘free hand’ to persuade and coerce diverse peoples and nations to accept the legitimacy of political authority, institutions and state boundaries. State building in post-colonial Africa is not different from what obtained in the early stages of state building in Western Europe. Charles Tilly argues that the ‘. . . building of states in Western Europe cost tremendously in death, suffering, loss of rights, and unwilling surrender of land, goods and labour . . . Most of the European population resisted each phase of the creation of strong states’. 39 The state building process after four centuries emerged in Western Europe with strong states that enjoyed ‘habitual obedience of their populations, secure in the legitimacy of their

borders and institutions (although borders were never entirely free from challenge), and, therefore, positioned to respond to societal demands since those demands no longer ran counter to the accumulation of power in the hands of the state’.

This was not to be the case with post-colonial African states. African states could not afford the luxury of time or meet the contemporary demands of the international society with established modern states. Ayoob, therefore, posited that systemic pressures and demonstration effects made it obligatory for African states to establish viable political communities within the shortest possible time or risk international ridicule and permanent marginalisation within the international system. Whilst Western nation-states in their evolution over centuries were given the time to solve some of the difficult and complex problems of state building before they faced the challenges of mass politics, post-colonial African states had no such time and luxury. The process of decolonisation engendered mass politics. The difficult task of state building went hand in hand with pluralistic politics and all its diverse demands on the polity and its new leaders. The state in Africa was to provide the space for participatory politics, generate economic development and at the same time maintain social and civil order and exercise political control over its territory. The demands and expectations of state building, both domestic and international, within such a short period of time in post-colonial Africa, were almost impossible tasks to accomplish. Whilst the evolution of the state in Western Europe was slow, post-colonial African states at independence were called upon to exercise all aspects of modern sovereignty at once. In many early European countries local notables were still responsible for arresting criminals (the Sheriff’s posse or posse comitatus) and providing social services, long after the modern state was created, because the state did not have the capacity to carry out these functions.

It would be difficult to see how Western modern states could have achieved their level of statehood and positive sovereignty in less than six decades. History shows that they would not have done. If anything, post-colonial African states have done relatively well in terms of state building in just a few decades. Six decades of state building in Africa have seen an overload of the political, socio-economic and military functions and capabilities of the state because of the speed with which the state responded to domestic and international pressures to demonstrate both empirical and juridical statehood. It could be argued that the present malleable, dysfunctional, collapsed and fragmented nature of the state system is partly the result of the enforced process of state formation in Africa. Ayoob, therefore, states that this ‘... disequilibrium lies at the root of the chronic instability that we witness in most Third World states today. Instability, in turn, engenders violence and insecurity, as state-making strategies adopted by state elites to broaden and deepen the reach of the state clash with the interests of counter-elites and segments of the population that perceive the extension of the state authority as posing a direct danger to their social,

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41 Ibid, p.30.
economic, or political interests’. In effect, state building is a drawn-out process, not a quick-fix project with set deadlines. The quick-fix approach, largely as a result of the multiple and immediate demands on the state, is what has been at the heart of the problems of state building in post-colonial Africa. But the fundamental question is how to explain the relatively successful process of state building in countries such as South Korea and Taiwan in less than five decades? Is limited time the most serious factor hindering state formation and nation building in Africa?

Charles Tilly has argued that ‘war makes states’, when explaining the patterns of state formation and nation building in Europe. In the case of Africa, wars, in particular intra-state wars, have led to state failure, implosion and disintegration. By all indications, the war making activities associated with the so-called ‘new wars’ in Africa have led to the extraction of resources, not for state building but for personal enrichment of warlords and ruling elites with links to MNCs, international financiers, arms smugglers and drug traffickers. Furthermore, instead of enhancing control of the state over its territory, these asymmetrical wars in Africa thrive on lawlessness, disorder and the destruction of legitimate authority and state governing institutions. Therefore, Georg Sorensen turns Tilly’s argument on its head by arguing that war making in the Third World has frequently led to state breaking, in particular in Africa, unlike the case of Europe. The only example whereby war making has led to state making in Africa is in the case of Eritrea after 30 years of secessionist war with Ethiopia.

**Cold War Politics and the Relevance of Juridical Sovereignty**

African states were born into the Cold War politics of the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Independence converted Africa into a battleground for East-West Cold War rivalry. This affected the nature and performance of post-independence African states because their policy options and alternatives became limited, and were constrained by an international system in which they were pawns and, as such, they could play only a marginal role. The Cold War partitioned Africa into ideological spheres of influence and proxy wars played out in Somalia and Ethiopia in the Horn, Angola and Mozambique in Southern Africa and Guinea and Ghana in West Africa. After the initial Cold War proxy war in the Congo, the decision by the Soviet Union to render

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assistance to selected liberation wars and movements in Africa led to a counter response from both the Nixon and Ford administrations in America, in the form of covert military assistance and financial aid to anti-communist forces in Africa, for example, the support for UNITA and NFLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola). The proxies of the superpowers, such as apartheid South Africa and Cuba, became embroiled in destructive wars in Africa. With the emergence of the Marxist-Leninist regime of Col. Mengistu in Ethiopia, the Carter administration decided to ‘draw a line in the sand’ at the Horn. It initiated an encirclement strategy intended to confine ‘Marxist-Leninism’ in Africa to Ethiopia’.\(^{47}\) The Cold War ideological rivalry between the communist East and the capitalist West had a considerable impact on Africa as it divided the continent into ‘hostile’ ideological camps. For instance, those states that promoted what the leaders called African socialism or Marxist-Leninist socialism had considerable political differences from those who shared other political systems or ideologies such as capitalism. The East-West superpower rivalry created puppet regimes in Africa and provided military, economic and development assistance to ensure that those states that shared their political ideologies remained within their spheres of influence. The proxy or limited wars fuelled by the superpowers and their allies became a common feature of the continent during the decades of the Cold War period. The divisive politics of the Cold War, the destructiveness of the proxy wars and the ideological hostilities virtually made unity in Africa an impossible proposition and further battered the viability of African States.

Furthermore, the strategic interests of the superpowers and their allies effectively established a stranglehold on the newly independent African states because of their strategic minerals. The exploitation of strategic minerals such as cobalt, uranium, copper, gold, diamond, chrome ore, iron ore, bauxite, zinc, manganese ore, rock phosphate, rutile (titanium dioxide), chromium, platinum, nickel and oil converted Africa into a battleground for Cold War politics and external interventions. These are minerals of strategic interest to the survival of the automobile, aircraft, satellite and telecommunications, weapons and nuclear industries in both the East and the West. The availability of these strategic minerals and their industrial outputs created not only huge employment opportunities, but also vulnerabilities due to scarcity or lack of access. This led to the establishment of ‘client states’, propped up by the superpowers and their allies. But beneath the ideological rivalry between the superpowers was the intense economic and commercial rivalry to secure access and control of Africa’s strategic minerals. The former Soviet premier, Leonid Brezhnev once stated: ‘It is our intention to deprive the West of its two main treasure troves; the oil fields of the Persian Gulf and the strategic mineral resources of Central and Southern Africa’.\(^{48}\) Therefore, any Soviet-sponsored liberation or revolutionary


movement in Africa was perceived as an attempt to monopolise, and block access for the West to these strategic resources. It is argued that the economic and strategic self-interests of the superpowers and their allies became a stumbling block to the struggle for unity in Africa. In fact, some foreign powers have actively worked to subvert the goals of African unity. The Cold War political, economic and strategic struggles in Africa produced violent civil wars such as in Congo, Mozambique and Angola. The superpowers and their allies supported insurgency and secessionist groups to wage wars against legitimate governments. The Cold War period effectively arrested the development and progress of African unity and the state system.

The shifting alignment and power relations amongst and between the Cold War superpowers and their allies diminished Africa into a mere pawn in the Cold War conflict and competition. The combined effect of this on Africa and African states was that it kept the continent permanently divided, and any talk of Pan-African unity became a pipe dream. This divided nature of Africa effectively crippled the ability of the continent to develop and mobilise co-operative mechanisms to respond to problems of security and conflict.

In addition, the Cold War bullied and intimidated African states into subservience and laziness, to the extent that they could not even build viable regional peace and security mechanisms to respond to conflict situations. It was widely accepted that any such collective regional peace and security mechanisms would not be relevant or needed because, firstly, the Cold War firmly placed the lid on the simmering conflicts in Africa, hence the impossibility of widespread internal conflicts with regional effects. Secondly, African states developed the complacent attitude that the superpowers and their allies would always provide security and protection for the states and, in particular, regimes that had close relations and were of strategic interest for Cold War politics. It was assumed that in situations of serious domestic conflict, with potential for humanitarian emergencies, unilateral intervention by Cold War allies would help provide security. Thirdly, given the mutual suspicion and tensions inherent in the dynamics of Cold War conflict and competition played out in Africa, any collective regional security mechanism or coalition of willing states responding to regional conflict situations would have been viewed with displeasure through the lens of Cold War ideological hostilities. The Cold War, therefore, held hostage any meaningful attempt by African states to unite and develop regional peace and security systems. It is important to recognise that African political leaders, including the ruling and governing elites, were willing players in the Cold War ‘divide and rule’. African leaders knew that it was in the interest of the superpowers and their allies to keep Africa permanently divided, but the majority were happy to play along, though some unwillingly. Those African leaders that were described by the superpowers as...
unco-operative and recalcitrant were assassinated, such as Capt. Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso.

What is more, decolonisation bestowed the Westphalian concept of sovereignty on the newly independent African states without demonstrating positive sovereignty. The least viable political entities then had conferred upon them formal negative or juridical sovereignty largely due to the pressure of decolonisation within the context of the Cold War rivalry which propped up these weak entities. This contrasted with the traditional practice wherein ‘states historically were empirical realities before they were legal personalities.’ According to Buzan and Waever, ‘Africa turned this formula on its head’. Membership of the international society of states, predicated on juridical sovereignty, secured the international legal existence of these weak post-colonial states in Africa as fully-fledged members of the international system. This situation produced what Sorensen described as ‘secure insecurity’ of post-colonial states where external recognition brought with it a non-reciprocal and unequal relationship in the international system: in that post-colonial states were perpetually at the receiving end of economic and political conditionalities as a pre-requisite for any relationship, while at the same time attempting to retain some semblance of autonomy. In effect, post-colonial weak and micro-states have been preserved by the fait of international society.

Post-colonial African states appeared on the scene when the rules and institutions of international society were already established. The norms and institutions of international society have, therefore, served, according to Peter Lyon, as ‘post-imperial ordering devices’ for new African states. Juridical sovereignty in effect, stifled or froze any search for an alternative political system in post-independence Africa. Jackson and Rosberg argue that international society, by enforcing juridical statehood, inevitably became capable of perpetuating the underdevelopment of empirical statehood in Africa because of its support for some corrupt and incompetent governments in post-colonial Africa, such as Mobutu of Zaire, Siad Barre of Somalia, William Tubman of Liberia, Idi Amin of Uganda, Bokasa of Central African Republic, Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone and many more.

The Cold War power-political rivalry discouraged any threat to sovereignty and the African state system because they were strategically important in the superpower competition. The newly independent states organised themselves into power blocs such as the Non-aligned Movement and Group of 77. The superpowers needed the support of African states in the UN and international inter-governmental organisations. The countries of the South, therefore, used their strategic importance to extract economic and military concessions from both the East and the West. The

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OAU with its principle of respect for norms of international society\textsuperscript{53} legitimised the colonial frontiers inherited by African states, and hence created an effective block to any federal unions in Africa. African states themselves, or at least the leaders, and international society looked with disapproval on any idea that undermined legal sovereignty or involved the redrawing of colonial international boundaries. The ideology of sovereignty came to serve the interests of particular groups domestically and internationally. Christopher Clapham is of the view that the Westphalian ideology of sovereignty has both public and private faces, in that while it purports to promote the general welfare of society, it may also serve to enhance the authority, power and wealth of particular people and groups.\textsuperscript{54} Clapham further argues that the practical experience of the transfer of the Westphalian state system to Africa was problematic because of the subversion of sovereignty to serve the private agendas of the post-colonial state elites in their struggle to control state power and its patrimonial resources. Post-independence leaders, lacking any real source of power to legitimise their authority and to protect themselves in the anarchical international system, were quick to exploit the benefits of sovereign authority accorded to them by international society. In Clapham’s words, ‘sovereignty as a doctrine of state power serves the interests of people who control states’.\textsuperscript{55} The utility to which the ideology of sovereignty was put by both domestic and international actors explains why, in spite of the glaring examples of the inability of most post-colonial states to exhibit empirical statehood, they have still been propped up by the tenets of juridical sovereignty. Recent events in Eastern Europe, i.e., former Yugoslavia and former USSR, empirically demonstrate that Africa is not the only region where the assumptions of the universal replicability of juridical sovereign statehood have been exposed.

Another problematic aspect of sovereignty, according to Jeffry Herbst, is that the ‘current static state system in Africa has institutionalised weakness and decline’ because the international society’s focus on the principle of sovereignty paid little attention to the state’s treatment of its population and often had an insignificant bearing on its international position. The recognition of the inviolability of state boundaries removed incentives for ethnic accommodation where force was a justified means to crush secessionist and separatist threats and civil disorder. The disassociation between post-colonial African states’ economic and political performance and their sovereign status by the international community amounted to a ridiculous pretence when poor and extremely weak and fragmented states continued to be accorded sovereign legitimacy. Herbst argues that if dysfunctional states such as Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone or Zaire had existed in pre-colonial Africa, they would have fallen apart or been conquered, making way for more viable state structures to be created.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{53} The OAU Charter confirmed the territoriality and Westphalian sovereignty of post-colonial African states.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid, p.4.
\textsuperscript{56} Herbst, ‘Responding to State Failure in Africa’ 1996/1997, p.131.
War politics conferred on post-colonial African states a disproportionate level of juridical statehood compared to the domestic reality. The crucial question that still remains is what is the use of ‘states’ juridical rights’ when they cannot demonstrate that right? Right is only meaningful if it can be demonstrated, for example, one has to be alive in order to claim and demonstrate right to life.

State Survival and the Politics of Decline

External factors have played a considerable role in crises of state formation and nation building in Africa. But what have the Africans themselves done to the state system? Why has it not been developed, using Africa’s abundant resources, to unify the peoples and nations into a collective force for peace, security and sustainable development? We may blame external factors for Africa’s underdevelopment and instability, but what about characters such as Idi Amin of Uganda, Charles Taylor of Liberia, Foday Sankoh of Sierra Leone, Emperor Bokassa of Central African Republic (CAR), Mobutu of Zaire, and Savimbi of Angola? Though propped up by Cold War politics they are, first and foremost, Africans who have brought misery and destruction on their own peoples and have desecrated all the fundamental principles of Pan-Africanism and African unity.

Internal factors are therefore important explanatory variables in understanding the state in Africa. The standard expectation that post-colonial African states would gradually develop features of modern Westphalian statehood through the process of development has not come to pass. Instead, we have seen a plethora of collapsed, disintegrated, fragmented, soft and weak states in Africa, largely due to the struggle for control of state power by the ruling and governing elites. Max Weber’s sociological conception of state, according to Jackson and Rosberg, is that of ‘a corporate group that has compulsory jurisdiction, exercises continuous organisation, and claims a monopoly of force over a territory and its population’. The majority of post-colonial African states can be described in Weber’s term of ‘statelessness’ because they do not have monopoly of the use of force throughout their territorial jurisdiction. Persistent internal instability, emergence of insurgency movements and warlord politics clearly demonstrate that they do not pass the test of empirical sovereignty.

In the struggle to control state power and consolidate regime survival, political authority in post-colonial Africa became increasingly personalised rather than institutionalised. Ethnic and religious divisions have often produced political tensions and conflicts thereby affecting national integration, political and civil order and the capacity of governments to exercise control. Jackson and Rosberg argue that the capacity of governments to exercise control is determined by the level of domestic

legitimacy or authority, the apparatus of power and how it aids governance, and economic circumstances.\textsuperscript{59} These are crucial ingredients that the majority of post-colonial African states lack. With underdeveloped state institutions, coupled with the fact that the colonial institutions erected were insufficiently viable to withstand the pressures of transition to independence, state power became personalised in post-colonial Africa. Personalised rule became predicated on patron-clientelistic networks and patrimonial accumulations in which the leader or strongman controls a web of informal networks within which resources emanating from command of state apparatus are distributed to supporters. Access to state power and its patrimonial resources became the basis for the acquisition of political office. Corruption, graft, nepotism and personal accumulation became the norm for those in control of states. Control of government in the majority of states in post-colonial Africa became less preoccupied with public good, serving rather as a reservoir for patrimonial enrichment, power and prestige. Most of the post-colonial regimes have survived largely due to their control over means of private accumulation through patronage networks. This personalised rule did not maintain any distinction between public and private realms of the state, for example Moi’s Kenya, Kamusu Banda’s Malawi, Mobutu’s Zaire, Houphouët-Boigny’s Côte d’Ivoire, Taylor’s Liberia, Abacha’s Nigeria, Stevens’ Sierra Leone etc. In effect, the public face of state building was perverted by state elites to serve the private interests of what William Reno describes as the ‘shadow state’. Clapham argues that the practical experience of the transfer of the Westphalian state system to Africa had seen the subversion of sovereignty to serve the private agendas of the state elites in that: ‘The state, and the ideology of sovereignty which upheld it, became in effect the playthings of those who ran it . . . ‘.\textsuperscript{60} In view of the fact that in most post-colonial African states there was hardly any viable basis for the establishment of a Weberian system of rational-legal, bureaucratic governance, it was inevitable that post-independence leaders, lacking any real source of power, would subvert the public face of state sovereignty in order to serve their private interests. The ‘shadow state’ as represented by a select few or predatory class became a ‘Vampire’, sucking the resources of the nation with impunity.

The demands for political participation and economic redistribution have further complicated the process of state building because of the pressures and strains it puts on the post-colonial states. Ayoob posits that: ‘This contrasts with the situation of early state makers in Europe, who could single-mindedly pursue their goals of accumulating power and extracting resources without being distracted by demands for economic redistribution and political participation except by small segments of the privileged strata of society.’\textsuperscript{61} Thus, Charles Tilly argues that: ‘The European state-makers constructed, then imposed, strong national governments before mass

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, p.265.

\textsuperscript{60} Clapham, ‘Degrees of Statehood’, 1998, pp.4-5.

politics began. In the new states in Africa, both processes with all their inherent tensions and contractions occurred simultaneously.

The classic dilemma then was/is how to satisfy popular demands and the imperatives of state building at the same time, and how to use coercive authority to maintain domestic political and social order without it being unacceptable to a population influenced by notions of human rights, political participation and social justice. The governance dilemma predisposed many African leaders towards pleasing or placating the urban population because they posed a serious threat to political stability and regime survival. Rural constituencies were encouraged to be loyal to the regime through informal patron-clientelistic networks. The state governing institutions, such as the military and security apparatus, became instruments in the hands of the ruling and governing elites to coerce consent and to clamp down on opposition. The state, according to Mohamed Ayoob, became a source of threat to the security of the people.

The African state, ‘privatised’ and subverted in such a fashion, can hardly be expected to demonstrate any semblance of empirical statehood. Domestic politics became characterised by the establishment of prebendal or rentier states whereby the ruling or governing class creates clientelistic networks to ensure regime survival. The extractive basis of the economies of post-colonial African states (mineral and natural resources), incorporated the states into the international patron-clientelistic networks of the global market economy. Extractive states such as Sierra Leone (diamond), Nigeria (oil), Angola (diamond & oil), Niger (uranium), Zaire (diamond & copper) concentrated development on extractive activities whilst failing to build the capacity for economic development and infrastructural integration. The malleability, ‘inversion of the state’ and disintegration can be partly attributed to the nature of domestic politics and the privatisation of the state by the ruling and governing elites. In an attempt to survive the harsh realities of the international system, African leaders have to invent strategies for domestic and international survival. Clapham, therefore, argues that: ‘... the evident weakness of the African states did not reduce them to a state of inertia, in which their fate was determined by external powers. On the contrary, it impelled them to take measures designed to ensure survival, or at least improve their chances of it.’ The above analysis demonstrate the types of state that exist in contemporary Africa, and in particular, the states that will continue to exist in Africa and their ability, or lack of it, for cooperative peace and security projects.

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Failure, Collapse and Reconstruction of the African State: Implications for Building Regional Peace and Security Systems

The combination of both internal and external factors have led to the failure and collapse of some states in Africa. State collapse, according to William Zartman is, firstly, when the basic functions of the state can no longer be performed; secondly, when the authoritative decision making and organising body has become paralysed and inoperative; thirdly, when the state has lost its powers of control over society and can no longer provide security and welfare functions for its citizens and finally, has not only lost its political legitimacy and right to rule, but also its socio-economic apparatus is destroyed. This breakdown of governance, law and order, and loss of control over political and economic space is accompanied by societal fragmentation. Therefore, state collapse is not ‘a short-term phenomenon; not a crisis with few early warnings; nor simply a matter of a coup or a riot. State collapse is a long-term degenerative disease’. But state failure and collapse are not new phenomena in Africa. Early versions of state collapse included Congo in the 1960s, Uganda and Ghana in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and Chad in the early 1980s. However, the crises of the African state system have become more apparent in the post-Cold War period, as demonstrated by countries such as Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, DRC. The prolonged economic crises experienced by many African states and their repercussions for government revenue bases and provision of social services, the proliferation of arms and the militarisation of marginalised groups in society, the decline of international rentier resources and the outbreak of civil wars revealed the degree of failure and fragmentation of the post-colonial state.

It would be erroneous to generalise that all states in Africa are weak, failing or collapsing. The situation is that contemporary Africa ‘represents a picture of heterogeneous state formation’. Herbst argues that the international community, in its response to failed states in Africa, has refused to acknowledge the structural factors at work even though empirical evidence abounds that loss of sovereignty is becoming a pattern in much of Africa. The classic response is that there is no alternative to the current state system. Reconfiguration of the political order and establishment of governing institutions have been the favoured response by the international community to state disintegration in Africa. Post-Cold War Africa is, therefore, poised between ‘disintegration and reconfiguration’.

The international response to failed and collapsed states in Africa has focused primarily on reconstituting, resurrecting and saving them. In West Africa, we have seen the ‘reconstitutive intervention’ of external forces such as ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone; the American-led UN intervention in Somalia; and the Zimbabwean-led SADC intervention in DRC. All these are attempts to save and restore failed and collapsed members of international society as a means of

maintaining the conservative international system and the state-centric status quo. We are yet to see any revolutionary response to state failure in Africa that will change the prevailing fixation with maintaining existing units and norms of international society.

Even though the North-South Roundtable in 1995 on *Revitalizing Africa for the 21st Century* accepted the fact that the ‘great institutions of the state have failed woefully’, no alternatives to the African state system were meaningfully explored. In fact, Ayoob argues that eliminating the centrality of the state is not a viable option for the Third World. For him, such fundamental change is difficult because of the commitment to the maintenance of the state system by political elites.69 The state, as part of the international system, gives the elites and the states they rule a greater degree of autonomy from external pressures, what Ali Kazancigil describes as the ‘dialectic of dependence and autonomy’.70 In principle, therefore, the Third World states are free to opt out of the Westphalian state system altogether, but cannot complain of being relegated to secondary status in the system.71

The impressive Anglo-American and Africanist literature on failed and collapsed states, whilst recognising the need for change in the nature of the nation-state, has mainly focused on reconstituting the state. Zartman therefore presents the view that: ‘It is better to reaffirm the validity of the existing unit and make it work, using it as a framework to give adequate attention to the concerns of citizens and the responsibilities of sovereignty, rather than experimenting with smaller units, possibly more homogenous but less broadly based states . . . In general, restoration of stateness is dependent on reaffirmation of the precollapsed state.’72 Robert Jackson is of the view that given the conservative nature of the international system ‘there is little evidence to suggest that the rules of this sovereignty game will not continue to be generally observed in the future as they have in the past’ 73

The rationale for the reconstruction of failed and collapsed states is primarily to maintain the status quo of the international society which, according to Clapham, needs effective and viable states for smooth operation and for the maintenance of international co-operation; something which the international community, African governments and populations also desire.74 Reconstructing or reconfiguring the state is, therefore, a mechanism to strengthen the pillars, i.e. order, representation, protection and development, on which the public justification for Westphalian sovereignty was based. Such reconstruction has often focused on reconstituting national politics to the national territory and restoring national economic flows throughout the territory.75 The pivotal role of the state in the politics and development of African countries explains

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why it is difficult to find alternative to the state system. Even in the most abject cases of political fragmentation and chaos, there is still the tendency to recognise such disintegrated political communities as states, for example, Somalia. Villalón and Huxtable conclude that there is no obvious alternative to the African state and as far as they are concerned, ‘In whatever form, the state seems here to stay’. They argue that African states have ‘left their marks on their populations, giving a measure of reality to their artificial existence’. The conclusion, both in theory and practice, seems to suggest that there is no obvious alternative to the state system.

However, if we are then stuck with the state system, our primary concern in the reconstruction of collapsed or failed states should not only be about mapping out the contours of a viable state, but also how to break out of, or be less restricted by, the prevailing global political economy characterised by neo-liberal hegemony; a hegemony that privileges a particular value system, i.e. Western liberal political and economic value systems. State reconstruction, according to Joshua Forrest, is not merely replication of modern Western state structures, but ‘may represent a hybrid authority system combining aspects of pre-colonial, colonial, and contemporary leadership structures in ways that more accurately reflect the existing social and political bases of rural societies’. The emerging reconstituted states are likely to be characterised by profound decentralisation and such decentralised structures may parallel the decentralised states and empires of pre-colonial Africa. This is evident in reconstituted states such as Sierra Leone, Uganda and Mozambique and is suggested for Somalia. These reconstituted states put premiums on decentralised control and inclusive political participation.

I have endeavoured to consistently argue that the African state or states in Africa are fundamentally different from the western-centric understanding of state and statehood. In addition, the state in Africa is dynamic, incorporating indigenous and traditional norms of governance with the trappings of the Westphalian modern state project. If the state system in Africa has not been able to lend itself to the African unity project with the capacity to build viable mechanisms to respond to the many and challenging problems of peace, conflict, security and development on the continent, the answer lies in a complex combination of both domestic and external factors.

**Conclusion**

The concept and practice of, or experiment of, the ‘state’ and the state system in post-colonial Africa has been problematic or, at best, Africa has responded unconventionally to the state system bequeathed to it by colonialism. Afro-pessimists who have discussed the imminent demise of the African state have to concede the resilience of the African state and its capacity to adapt to the multiple and complex demands of modern statehood and in particular its tenacity for reconfiguration and reconstruction after collapse. Therefore, the current ‘state system’ in Africa

77 Ibid, p.54.
is marked by numerous ‘states’ in which rule based upon violent accumulation creates archipelagos of control rather than hegemony over a contiguous territory’. 78

We, therefore, see the emergence of new political organisations and of what Reno describes as ‘warlord politics’. Reno argues that rulers who survive in this situation have developed alternative, rational forms of political organisation suited to Africa’s marginal position in the changing global economy’. 79

The optimism and disappointment generated in the African states by the end of the Cold War have led to new realities; in that the state system, despite its failings and limitations, has a meaningful role to play in building the foundations for durable peace, long-term security and sustainable development. This complex process should involve meaningful participation and ownership by the people and civil society. In the West, and in particular within modern states, civil society has played a constructive role in state formation and legitimate democratic governance. This has not been the case across much of Africa. Civil society in Africa, as in other parts of world, is a diverse collection of groups with often divergent interests. In the post-Cold War period, civil society played some constructive role in promoting economic reform and political pluralism in Africa. However, it will be a misplaced expectation to assume that civil society will continue to play this constructive role in post-Cold War Africa. What has become evident during this period is that civil society is not only serving as ‘checks and balances’ on the state and government, but rather it also exhibits all the instincts of prebendal politics and patrimonial accumulation. There is an increasing debate on whether the embattled world of civil society or ‘uncivil society’ could play a meaningful and constructive role in state formation and nation building.

It is also evident that the project of state reconstruction and restoration, largely driven by international actors and community, seem not to have learned the lessons of the crisis of state formation and nation building in Africa. The international efforts to restore and reconfigure failed and collapsed states have largely neglected the role and potential utility of indigenous institutions and traditional societal resources. 80

This international approach only re-confirms the perception amongst the majority of Africans that ‘the state’ in Africa is an alien entity, not rooted in the African realism. To demonstrate this, the majority of African peoples straddling the artificial colonial borders operate an ‘invincible border mentality’ because they criss-cross and transact their daily lives across state boundaries as if the official borders never existed. One would therefore expect that any project of state reconstruction will recognise the need to root the state project in the realisms of African peoples and communities.

The international neglect of traditional institutions and indigenous societal resources such as sodality institutions such as *Poro* and *Sande* secret societies, traditional and religious rulers, grassroots social movements, and the informal economy, would potentially stack up new problems and challenges of state authority and legitimacy for the restored and reconfigured state. Though I cannot make the claim that traditional institutions and indigenous socio-cultural resources are unproblematic, the central argument is that any international effort to reconstruct and restore failed states in Africa should explore the potential value and utility of these resources in Africa.81

The Commonwealth report on the vulnerability of small states firmly concluded that the long-term security of micro-states in Africa lies in regional security systems because of the potential of regionalism to bolster the operational capacity of these states, and thus enhance their peace and security. The multiple problems and challenges faced by the state system in Africa have, paradoxically, led, in some situations, not only to the malleability and collapse of the state, but also to the resilience and re-invention of the state system. These multiple and complex problems and challenges have foisted on to the African state system not only the imperative for commitment to the Pan-African unity project (even only in normative terms), but also the desire to develop new capacities that would enable it to lend itself to building viable regional peace and security systems.

Chapter 3

Africa at War Against Itself: Civil Wars and New Security Threats

Introduction

With the dawn of the 21st century, Africa has once again captured, if not simultaneously fascinated and disillusioned, the international community because of the myriad socio-economic and political problems and challenges it faces, in particular, the many wars and armed conflicts raging on in the continent. The phenomena of Africa’s ‘new wars’ and intra-state wars are increasingly becoming regionalised, warranting intervention by neighbouring states in the form of regional military interventions. The multiplicity of internal warfare in post-Cold War Africa and the devastating consequences wreaked on the states and societies have led to the reputation that the ‘continent is perpetually at war against itself’.

The London-based *The Economist* magazine described the bloody and violent civil wars in countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, Algeria, Angola, and DRC as the ‘Hopeless Continent’ and a reflection of primordial barbarism and savagery.

Robert Kaplan presents a rather apocalyptic perspective of post-Cold War Africa, with the West African sub-region reflecting the ‘coming anarchy’ and ‘strategic danger’ posed to international security.

There is a tendency to generalise about Africa. It is important to recognise that Africa is not a homogenous entity, but a diverse and complex continent with different sub-regions, ecological settings, histories, linguistic variations, different levels of state formation and nation building, and even foreign and economic policies. Despite the heterogeneity of Africa, there are certain commonalities, experiences and themes that ‘unite’ and link the sub-regions of the continent. Therefore, any attempt to understand the sources of conflict in Africa has to critically consider the diversity, complexity and commonalities of Africa.

This chapter will, therefore, map out the conflict scenario in contemporary Africa, its consequences and how wars and armed conflicts in Africa have been explained through a conflict analysis and typology perspective. It will also explore the nature of the new security threats faced by Africa, in particular the non-military

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dimensions and sources of threat to security, and the potential to instigate armed conflicts. In addition, the chapter will examine how the regionalisation of wars and armed conflicts has hindered or facilitated the building of a regional peace and security system in Africa. The chapter will conclude with a critical exploration of the link between peace, security, conflict and development in Africa.

Wars and Armed Conflicts in Africa: Mapping the Conflict Scenario

The post-colonial political landscape of Africa has been dotted with both inter-state and intra-state wars and armed conflicts. A brief overview of the conflict scenario in Africa will illustrate that internal wars and civil conflicts constitute the dominant pattern of warfare in Africa, in particular the post-Cold War period of the 1990s (see Figure 3.1). In 2002, there were 18 active wars and armed conflicts in Africa, at different levels of intensity or at different stages in the process of war-to-peace transition. The majority of these wars were being fought in some of the world’s poorest countries. Civilians have become the main targets and victims in these civil wars, accounting for more than 90 per cent of the casualties.⁴ According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2002 an estimated 3.6 million people were killed in internal warfare in the 1990s and half of all civilian casualties were children, with an estimated 200,000 child soldiers in Africa, out of a total figure of 30,000 worldwide.⁵ In addition, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons grew by 50 per cent.

By all indications, the civil wars in Somalia, DRC, Angola, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire and Sierra Leone have led to state collapse and societal fragmentation. Attempts have been made to negotiate civil war peace settlements and the deployment of multinational peacekeeping forces, both regional and United Nations. But the attempts at peace making and conflict management have not produced the desired effect, except in the case of Sierra Leone, where the fragile peace settlement and democratisation process seem to be holding. Liberia’s return to war after a semblance of fragile peace between 1997 and 1999, threatened the peace and security of neighbouring Côte d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Protracted civil wars, such as the Casamance separatist conflict in Senegal, Sudan, Uganda, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Western Sahara and Burundi, have all negotiated various cease-fire and peace agreements but these have not been respected by all parties to the conflict. The death of the UNITA rebel leader, Jonas Savimbi in February 2002 led to positive developments in resolving one of Africa’s longest running civil wars, but it would be premature to conclude that this may lead to a lasting peace settlement in Angola. The recent Eritrea-Ethiopian inter-state war led to the deployment of the UN Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) and has strengthened the durability of the peace between both countries. In addition, low-intensity ethno-religious and political

⁵ Ibid, p.11.
conflicts in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, Egypt, Mauritania and Central Africa Republic continue to undermine the peace and stability of the continent.

![Casualties by region 1990–99](image)

**Figure 3.1 Conflict-related Casualties by Region 1990-99**


The widespread wars and conflicts in Africa have wreaked devastating consequences on the continent, and are the main reason for poor socio-economic performance and political development. With sub-Saharan Africa as the most conflict-torn region in the world, wars and armed conflicts have led to depressing social and development indicators and the human costs are enormous. In this internal warfare, human life is no longer sacrosanct, with appalling violence, mutilations,
rape, gross violations of human rights and terroristic tactics perpetuated against the civil population, in particular the most vulnerable groups such as women, children and the elderly. In the Congolese (DRC) war alone, an estimated 2 million people were killed or died due to war induced famine and disease in the nearly six-year old war. These violent conflicts have led to massive internal displacement, forced migration, refugee flows and uprooted communities.

In economic and development terms, wars and conflicts have reversed decades of development efforts achieved in the post-independence period by disrupting economic and commercial activities, dislocation of agricultural production and denial of access to land, due to landmines, damaging the export capacity of national economies. The constant warring environment, in turn, has led to capital flight and lack of foreign direct investments. African economies are blacklisted as high risk areas for potential investment. War-affected economies chronically suffer from unstable market prices and production, increasing poverty and serious threats to food security. In addition, the insecure business environment has also led to the exploitation of war economies through strategic alliances between local commercial entrepreneurs, warlords/warring factions and MNCs. The deliberate destruction of basic social, economic, transport and communications infrastructure has eroded the capacity of the national economy to function properly. The destruction of schools, hospitals and religious institutions has had a devastating impact on education and access to health care. The growing number of uneducated and unemployed youth provide fertile ground for recruitment to fight and sustain the wars. Wars and armed conflicts have seriously dissipated the social and productive capital and physical infrastructure of African countries. Frances Stewart et al posit that: ‘War in general, and civil war in particular, is one of the main causes of human suffering and economic underdevelopment.’

Furthermore, wars and armed conflicts in Africa have escalated military expenditure thereby diverting scarce resources from investment in social development and also led to an increase in the national debt burden. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons has led to general insecurity, increased criminal violence, privatisation of violence and security in the form of proliferation of mercenaries, private military companies and paramilitary outfits. The wars and armed conflicts in Africa have led to the militarization of societies and the replacement of the rule of law with gun law, i.e. guns and brute force are the only conflict resolution mechanisms. The corrosive effects of wars have not only aggravated the failure and collapse of states in Africa, but have also strengthened the international image and reputation of the continent as being the ‘worst place to live in the world’.

Conflict Analysis and the Generations of Wars and Armed Conflicts in Africa

The emerging debate in both the academic and international policy community is concerned with understanding the sources of the wars and armed conflicts that have caused so much destruction in Africa. In the shadow of the Cold War, many of the wars fought in Africa were explained and categorised as colonial liberation struggles, secessionist wars and Cold War proxy wars. The post-Cold War period in particular, with the growth and intensity of intra-state wars in Africa, has led to the labelling and pigeon-hole analysis of African conflicts as identity/ethnic-based wars or resource-based wars. This classification and simplified analysis of causes of conflicts in Africa have not only led to an inadequate understanding of the root causes of African conflicts, but have also resulted in inappropriate international policy responses to manage and resolve these civil wars.  

Abeboyo Adedeji asserts that: ‘It is quite simplistic to regard conflict, civil strife and political turmoil as merely post-colonial teething problems of independent states and to resort to stereotypic and facile analysis of dumping everything at the door of ethnicism and tribalism.’  

There is growing interest, in both academic and international policy communities, in constructive investment in conflict analysis in Africa. The emerging consensus is that understanding the causes, dynamics and complexity of conflict in Africa is important because it would potentially provide indicators and strategies on how to respond to a particular conflict situation, and the potential to manage and resolve the conflict and to build the peace. Describing the problems and challenges posed by the inadequate understanding of African conflicts, the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, is convinced that the international community has failed ‘by not adequately addressing the causes of conflict; by not doing enough to ensure peace; and by our repeated inability to create the conditions for sustainable development’.  

In fact, the problems and challenges faced by both African and western governments, as well as international development and donor agencies responding to conflict situations and complex political emergencies in Africa have led to the development of a framework for strategic conflict assessment as a tool to evaluate the risks and negative effects of conflict on development and crisis intervention programmes. A particular focus is also on how policies exacerbate conflict, and how to improve the effectiveness of development interventions in contributing to conflict prevention and reduction.

But what is conflict analysis? Conflict analysis is simply described as a means of developing a comprehensive, multi-dimensional and multi-level understanding of the causes, nature, dynamics and complexity of conflicts, as well as the potential

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and capacities for peace. The important aspects of this definition are relevant in that conflict analysis is not only about understanding the factors or reasons for conflict, but also about evaluating the capacities or opportunities for peace. Conflict analysis is important as a tool to assist conflict interveners to influence the ‘trajectory of the conflict’, prevent further escalation by providing opportunities to ‘work on conflict’, and, in situations of protracted socio-political conflict, to provide understanding of the sensitivity, dynamics and complexity of conflict and the opportunity to work more effectively ‘in conflict’. What conflict analysis does is to provide in-depth understanding of a conflict situation that goes beyond the simplistic and pigeon-hole analyses, by focusing on the diverse causes, structures, actors and dynamics of conflict. It is about a more ‘dynamic profiling’ of a conflict with a particular focus on ‘actors, and incentives and triggers for violent conflict’.\textsuperscript{11} It is also about demonstrating that conflict everywhere in the world is rarely about a simple or single cause. The DFID Conducting Conflict Assessment: Guidance Notes (2002) has developed a simple and adaptable methodology in conducting conflict analysis. The table below illustrates the interplay between structures, actors and dynamics that converts latent conflict into open and violent conflict or intensifies on-going armed conflict.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Dynamics</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of long-term factors underlying conflict:</td>
<td>Analysis of conflict actors:</td>
<td>Analysis of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Security</td>
<td>• Interests</td>
<td>• Long-term trends of conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Political</td>
<td>• Relations</td>
<td>• Triggers for increased violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Economic</td>
<td>• Capacities</td>
<td>• Capacities for managing conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social</td>
<td>• Peace agendas</td>
<td>• Likely future conflict scenarios</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.2 Conflict Analysis**


Understanding the causes of conflict in Africa has recently preoccupied the attention of social scientists, development practitioners and media commentators.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p.7.
Luc van de Goor et al’s edited book *Between Development and Destruction* (1996) categorised the causes of conflict into four distinct areas, namely; the crisis of state formation and nation building, in particular, the factors contributing to the failure and disintegration of the post-colonial state; cultural factors with a specific focus on the manipulation of ethno-religious and nationalist identities; socio-economic factors; and the availability and proliferation of weapons. The DFID report of *The Causes of Conflict in Africa* (2001) further classified the causes of conflict into three areas. Firstly, the root causes of conflict, i.e. fundamental grievances including political, economic and social inequality between groups within a country. In particular, where political power and economic resources are controlled and dominated by one group to the perpetual marginalisation of other groups and the privatisation of the ‘official state’ by predatory ruling and governing elites and the eventual collapse of the state. Furthermore, the root causes of conflict may include perennial economic decline due to poor economic management and performance, natural catastrophes such as famine, drought and flood. In addition, the particular historical context of a country, especially in situations where political violence and historical patterns of violence are entrenched, and the struggle over control of natural resources, either in terms of resource abundance as in Sierra Leone, Angola, and DRC, or resource scarcity, as in access and control over grazing and water rights for nomadic people in the Horn of Africa. Secondly, those causes that fuel and sustain conflict, including high levels of unemployed young people lacking educational and other socio-economic opportunities. In addition, the politicisation, abuse and mobilisation of identities such as ethnicity, religion and nationalism, democratisation and democratic transition, and the availability and proliferation of small arms and light weapons to start, fuel and sustain conflict. Thirdly, causes that hinder the resolution of conflict including the regionalisation of internal warfare through spillover effects. These tertiary causes may include protracted conflict cycles whereby warring factions benefit from sustaining low-intensity conflict, instability in the international economic system and its negative repercussions on war-ravaged countries. Furthermore, the causes may include lack of credible external guarantors to facilitate peace processes and invest in peacebuilding after war weariness or ‘hurtful stalemate’, inappropriate and inadequate external mediation providing the climate for relapse into further war, and the misuse of humanitarian relief assistance by warring factions to intensify and prolong conflict.

Reference to and use of DFID’s conflict analysis publications does not amount to or imply endorsement of categorisation explaining the causes of conflict in Africa.


There is already a growing literature critical of these publications.\textsuperscript{14} Given the nature and complexity of African conflicts, it is difficult to see how causes of conflict can be neatly categorised into root causes, secondary and tertiary factors. Based on field research for this work, what may be a root cause or fundamental grievance for an armed conflict does not remain static for the duration of the conflict. In examples such as DRC, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, the actual war and armed conflict has been used by different groups and interests to instigate new wars and armed conflicts. It becomes evident that the causes of war are not static but dynamic. Hence, it will not only be helpful to recognise that all wars have multiple causes, but most importantly, wars and armed conflicts should be understood on a case-by-case basis.

\textit{Theoretical Interpretations}

Diverse theoretical interpretations and labellings have been used to explain and describe wars and armed conflicts in Africa, in particular the post-Cold War conflicts. They have been variously described as ‘protracted social conflict’ (Edward Azar, 1990), ‘asymmetrical warfare’ (Paul Rogers, 2000), ‘civilian-based civil wars’ (Mary Anderson, 1999); ‘international social conflict’ (Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham & Tom Woodhouse, 2000), ‘regional security complex’ (Barry Buzan, 1991), ‘fire next door’ (David Francis, 2000), ‘complex political emergencies’ (World Bank, 1998), ‘new wars’ (Mary Kaldor, 2001), ‘ethno-religious wars’ (Oliver Furley, 1995), ‘retreat from modernity’ (Ali Mazrui, 1995), ‘new barbarism’ (Robert Kaplan, 1994, Martin van Creveld), ‘greed and grievance’ (Mats Berdal & David Malone, 2000, Paul Collier, 1999), ‘guerrilla/insurgence warfare’ (Christopher Clapham, 1996, Steven Metz, 1994), ‘low intensity conflict’ (Mike Smith, 2003), and ‘unconventional warfare’ (Andrew Janos, 1963).\textsuperscript{15} It is important to note that these terms are used to


identify different aspects of the same conflict and sometimes used interchangeably by different political analysts and media commentators depending on the context. There is also growing academic and international policy focus on the interpretations of these conflicts. The ‘new wars’ or unconventional wars are mainly internal warfare, or factional wars without defined military fronts. They depend on opportunistic strategies and are fluid in nature. These asymmetrical wars rely on low technology weapons and small arms (AK47 and Kalashnikov rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, landmines, and machetes), with the capacity for massive disruption. They are often less costly wars to start and are sustained by control over resources and external support. Civilians are the main targets and combatants often rely on terrorist tactics to destroy the morale of civilians, government forces and other warring factions.

But the phenomenon of non-state insurgence and sub-state threats and the security risks posed by violent non-state actors or sub-national groups is not new. They have been part and parcel of the political landscape of the Cold War period and much of the history of post-colonial Africa. The labelling and description of internal warfare creates definitional difficulties and confusion. Mike Smith contends that:

... terms like ‘guerrilla warfare’ and ‘low intensity conflict’ are fundamentally flawed. They do not exist as proper categories of war. Often they constitute inappropriate distinctions that impede intellectual understanding of internal war phenomena, which has in the past had a negative impact upon policy making. The usage of these terms in strategic studies literature does not facilitate understanding but rather undermines the attempt to comprehend the complexity of warfare as a whole.16

Harry Summers, in highlighting the potentially negative effect on policy making by use of the term ‘low intensity conflict’, asserts that it ‘obscures the nature of the task and obfuscates what needs to be done’.17


The ‘sudden intensity’ in the academic preoccupation with interpreting internal war or low intensity conflict has led to a vast array of literature and perspectives. Ali Mazrui poses the question as to whether the bloody and violent wars in Africa are a ‘retreat from modernity’. He asserts that:

There are occasions when development and modernisation are mutually reinforcing. There may be other occasions when modernisation (the quest for efficiency) and development (the quest for relevant skill and human well-being) pull in divergent directions. Both processes carry the risk of conflict, especially in post-colonial societies.¹⁸

The internal violence, state failure and collapse, in Mazrui’s view, are part of the difficult and challenging process of state formation and nation building, an often violent and bloody process which Europe and other regions of the world have to go through as well. He, therefore, concludes that: ‘. . . in some African countries political development begins with political decay. Some degree of dis-modernisation gets underway. It may be a matter of regret. However, political development began with the painful decomposition of the old colonial structures.’¹⁹

Some post-conflict countries in Africa, such as Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, and Eritrea are examples to illustrate the degree of political development after some period of ‘dis-modernisation’ or ‘retreat from modernity’. The resource-rich country of Sierra Leone, after a decade of violent and bloody civil war, that resulted in societal fragmentation and state collapse, has in the post-conflict political order organised its first peaceful, free and fair democratic elections in its 40 year political history. The country is making considerable progress in re-building state governing institutions based on the rule of law and democratic accountability. It is therefore important to understand the factors that contribute to the ‘retreat from modernity’ and the potential for re-building new institutions and political communities from the ashes of the old colonial state.

The horrifying brutality and primordial violence perpetuated in these internal wars have led to the facile conclusion by some analysts that this is nothing more than ‘mindless violence’ and new barbarism, i.e. ‘violence driven by environmental and cultural imperatives’.²⁰ I have contended that the new barbarism thesis is an inadequate and misleading interpretation of the causes of conflict in Africa.²¹ Linked to the new barbarism thesis is the ‘new racism’ interpretation, which focuses on cultural differences and perceives such differences as a source for social disruption,

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violence, antagonism and conflict. New barbarism, argues Mark Duffield, tends to emphasise one aspect of the new racism discourse, i.e. the primordial, innate and irrational cultural and ethnic identity. The new barbarism discourse has been influential in the interpretation of conflicts in Africa and also in media portrayals of the continent, hence the justification for disengagement from Africa, leaving the Africans to their primordial and destructive devices and antics.

The multiplicity of civil wars and the political economy of violence in Africa has also led to the general description of these post-Cold War conflicts as ‘new wars’. These new wars are broadly low- and high-intensity armed conflicts ranging from identity-based wars instigated by ethnicity, religion and nationalism to conflict over resources. They are in part a product of the negative effects of economic globalisation and the marginalisation, exclusion and radicalisation of dispossessed segments of the population, the erosion of state authority and welfare/security provision capacity, and the resulting internal resistance that have led to state collapse and societal fragmentation. But what is new about the ‘new wars’? The new wars describe the multiplicity of internal armed conflicts in the post-Cold War period involving states, non-state actors and sub-national groups fighting as a result of contested identities, and a struggle for access and control over state power and its resources, but simultaneously taking advantage of the opportunities provided by economic globalisation and war economies. Civilians have become the main targets and casualties of the new wars. Describing the political economy of diamond resources and the regionalisation of the civil war in Sierra Leone, I have illustrated how the civil war has linked warlords, political elites, regional leaders, MNCs, the international diamond industry and trading centres, the arms trade, drug trafficking, Al Qaeda terrorist operatives, and money laundering in a strategic military economic and commercial alliance.

A distinctive feature of the new wars is not only how they are financed, but also their regionalisation. The contagion effects or the ‘fire next door’ dynamics have led to the spreading of armed conflicts into neighbouring states, warranting regional interventions. The Liberian civil war of 1989 eventually spread into neighbouring Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire. It also led to the deployment of a regional intergovernmental collective peacekeeping force, ECOMOG to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire. The DRC war has led to the intervention of eight belligerent countries in the Great Lakes and Southern Africa regions, and the ‘informal partitioning’ of DRC into spheres of political, economic and strategic interests. The long-running conflicts in Sudan and Angola have developed strong

23 Ibid, p.110.
regional dimensions, and in 2002, the government of Sudan formally accepted the intervention of the Ugandan armed forces into southern Sudan in military pursuit of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) rebels fighting the Museveni government in northern Uganda. The interlocking nature of the new wars in Africa and the regionalisation of these conflicts have led to the informal re-drawing of the territorial boundaries in the exploitation of the war economics. The Charles Taylor (President of Liberia) -backed Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel faction in Sierra Leone, at the height of the civil war, controlled the diamond–rich territories in eastern and southern Sierra Leone. The territorial borders of Liberia were, therefore, informally extended into Sierra Leone. The privatisation and economic exploitation of the DRC war by both Rwanda and Uganda inevitably led to the extension of the borders of both countries into eastern Congo. Another feature of the new wars is the use of factional forces and civil militias by conventional forces in the pursuit of their military, strategic and economic interests.

I contend that there is nothing new about these so-called ‘new wars’, in that the Cold War proxy wars such as in Angola and Mozambique and secessionist conflicts such as the Biafran civil war in Nigeria and Congo have some of the features and elements of the so-called ‘new wars’ in Africa. However, it is important to recognise the relevance of the following and their considerable impact on and facilitation of the new wars: the changed international environment of the 1990s and the changing nature of wars and conflicts, and the exploitation of forces of economic globalisation by all parties to the conflict. It has become evident that sub-state groups and non-state actors involved in and instigating internal warfare have simply adapted the classic Clausewitzian dictum of war as ‘a continuation of political and economic intercourse, carried on with other means’ to achieve their diverse goals. Mike Smith is however sceptical about the ‘sudden’ academic interest in internal warfare or asymmetrical wars, describing them as a ‘new’ phenomenon. He asserts that:

For this to inspire exhortation about the appearance of ‘new wars’ is itself an indication of the Eurocentric mindset of much contemporary security studies posturing. Vicious civil wars sustained by identity politics, supported by diasporas and waged by paramilitary gangs with a sideline in pecuniary crime have rumbled on from one decade to the next. For all practical purposes, the end of the Cold War has been meaningless for most of these wars as any number of continuing violent struggles, including those in the Basque Country, Burma, Kashmir, Northern Ireland, Sudan and Zaire, provide testament. The truth is that these wars and numerous others like them have always constituted the predominant form of warfare post-1945 and even pre-1945 . . . The key intellectual distinction is that this salient fact was ignored in mainstream strategic studies and international relations thinking for much of the Cold War . . . Now, by seeking to reconstitute this false category

of war under different headings such as ‘new war’, ‘ethnic war’ or ‘complex emergencies’, writers merely reveal their own limited grasp of the history of warfare.28

Generations of Conflict Analysis in Africa

A starting point for the categorisation of conflict is a basic definition of the term ‘conflict’. A conflict arises between individuals or groups with incompatible interests and objectives. Hugh Miall outlines four features that define a conflict, i.e. perception amongst parties that a conflict exists; incompatible views regarding interests, values, objectives or hostile interaction must lie at the root of a conflict; the parties may be either states or non-state actors or sub-national groups within the state; and the outcome of conflict must be considered important by the parties.29 When parties to a conflict engage in hostile interaction and use of force with the aim to control, injure or destroy the opponent, this is regarded as armed conflict. However, it is important to recognise that conflict is an intrinsic aspect of human existence. It is the inability to resolve incompatible interests and differences that leads to violence. Peter Wallensteen and Karen Axell have developed a casualty criterion to categorise armed conflicts into three classifications:

1. Minor armed conflict: where battle-related deaths during the course of the conflict are below 1000.
2. Intermediate armed conflict: where there are more than 1000 battle-related deaths recorded during the course of the conflict, and where more than 25, but less than 1000 deaths, have occurred during a particular year.
3. Wars: where there are more that 1000 battle-related deaths during the course of one particular year.30

The classification of armed conflict into distinct categories is problematic when applied to contemporary intra-state wars in Africa for a variety of reasons. It is not only difficult to secure reliable statistics on battle-related casualties, but these ‘civilian-based’ internal warfares have also induced starvation, disease and appalling human misery, resulting in deaths. The civil wars also constantly swing from ‘low’-


to ‘high-intensity’ warfare. The low-intensity period may sometimes last two to three years with less than 25 battle-related deaths for a variety of reasons, including ceasefire, an on-going peace process and a relapse into further war. With this in mind, the generation of conflict analysis outlines the distinct types of wars and armed conflicts in Africa and their conceptual interpretations. The taxonomy of wars also attempts to illustrate the history of regionalisation of wars and armed conflicts in Africa.

Wars of National Liberation

Wars of national liberation, or anti-colonial wars were common between the 1950s and 1980s. The primary objective was to secure national self-determination or self-rule and the end of colonial domination through armed rebellion. They have been variously described as wars of national self-determination or revolutionary wars. These are wars in which societies seek to establish their own state through a war of ‘national liberation’ or it may ‘involve resistance by various peoples against domination, exclusion, persecution, or dispossession of lands and resources, by the post-colonial state’.

The wars of national liberation were mainly fought against European colonial rule. The end of the Second World War and the weakness of European empires precipitated decolonisation in colonised territories in Africa. Whilst in the majority of Africa, decolonisation was by peaceful transfer of power, in some countries, armed struggle became the only means of ending colonial rule. These wars of national liberation included Algeria between 1954-62, Angola, 1961-74, Guinea Bissau, 1962-74, Mozambique, 1964-75, Zimbabwe, 1965-80, and Namibia, 1966-90.

But colonial domination and national self-determination has not only been a European affair. Eritrea had to fight a 30-year war of national self-determination against Ethiopian domination and finally secured its political independence in 1994. The Saharawi people, under the political umbrella of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Front (POLISARIO) since 1975, are still fighting a war of national liberation from Moroccan domination.

The wars of national liberation were also coloured with the Cold War ideological conflict and competition, and the majority of the wars of self-determination were interpreted as communist/socialist-based insurgencies against the capitalist west. The majority of the anti-colonial wars not only received political, military and economic support from communist and socialist regimes, but also some of the post-independence governments established were based on socialist ideologies such as the MPLA government in Angola, FRELIMO (Frente de Liberação de Mozambique) in Mozambique, PAIGC in Guinea Bissau, and FLN in Algeria. The OAU made it a policy to ‘eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa’ and the continental political organisation, therefore, promoted and supported decolonisation of all of

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Africa, though this was soon to conflict with its principle of the inviolability of territorial borders of African states.

Wars of national liberation have been different in the various sub-regions and colonial spheres of influence. The British fought a bloody and protracted battle with the Mau Mau in Kenya, and the French in Algeria. The former Portuguese colonies of Guinea Bissau, Angola and Mozambique fought a long drawn out war with the Portuguese government and, after the fall of Salazar’s regime in 1974, the colonies secured a rather chaotic transfer of power. In the Horn of Africa, the Somalis’ attempt to create a ‘greater Somalia’ was unsuccessful. In Southern Africa, the national liberation wars in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia (South West Africa) were affected by the former apartheid South Africa’s policy of regional destabilisation of the ‘frontline states’.

The wars of national liberation were not only about self-determination, but also about fundamental grievances and complexities, which in most cases, the nationalist leaders utilised as a mobilising force against colonial rule. This had serious implications for post-independence political settlements and the nature of domestic politics.

Two evident conclusions could be made with reference to wars of national liberation. Firstly, the potential of the regional dimensions of these wars of liberation were limited by the context of the Cold War. This is not to say that there were no regional effects or spill-over from these wars of self-determination. Secondly, the majority of the newly independent states were less concerned with the creation of sub-regional peace and security systems. Their primary concern was the establishment of a continental political and economic body which became manifest in the OAU.

**Cold War Proxy Wars**

During the Cold War, Africa was a strategic sphere of influence for the superpowers, due to a variety of political, ideological, economic and military interests. The Cold War ideological confrontation converted Africa into a hostile battleground, and the rivalry played out on the continent ensured support for opposite sides of the East-West divide. The Cold War context, and in particular, the strategic imperative to have allies in Africa and to contain the ‘threat of communism’ saw the outbreak of proxy wars orchestrated by both sides of the Cold War divide. Cold War competition in Africa directly instigated conflicts in Angola in 1975 and Somalia in 1977. Apartheid South Africa’s intervention in Angola to prevent the communist-based MPLA from taking power led to the deployment of 12,000 Cuban troops in support of the MPLA government. The perception of communist threat and spread in Southern Africa, not only intensified conflict in Angola, but also instigated another Cold War proxy war between FRELIMO and RENAMO. In addition, it also reduced western pressure for political reform in apartheid South Africa.

The Cold War conflict and competition, and the virtual partitioning of Africa into ideological spheres of influence, led to the support for client states, and the propping up in power of brutal, anti-democratic and authoritarian regimes that owed
allegiance and their very survival to the superpowers. Corrupt and tyrannical regimes in states such as Siad Barre’s Somalia, Mobutu’s Zaire, Mengistus’s Ethiopia, and Stevens’ Sierra Leone were maintained in power to serve the vested interests of the superpowers and their allies. The Cold War security dictum was based on maintaining order and stability in client states. Former President George Bush Sr. is noted to have described the brutal dictator of Zaire, the late Mobutu Seseko, as ‘America’s greatest friend in Africa’ whilst Ronald Reagan once described the tyrannical UNITA leader, the late Jonas Savimbi as a ‘freedom fighter’.

In some of the more strategic regions of Africa, crucial to the interests of the superpowers, such as the Horn and Southern Africa, there were dramatic increases in arms supplies and military expenditure. According to a DFID report, ‘In 1988 alone, at the end of the Cold War, they amounted to more than US$4 billion’. There was also a substantial increase in aid flows and development assistance in support of these puppet regimes. This led to large-scale armament and the growth of military and paramilitary forces in Africa. The end of the Cold War and the down-sizing of the militaries, have led to the proliferation of Cold War weaponry and free-lance ‘soldiers’ fuelling wars in many regions in Africa.

The Cold War proxy wars instigated by superpower rivalry and security frameworks in Africa undermined the political development and stability of the continent. With the end of the Cold War, support for client states ended and the removal of Cold War patronage led to the collapse of puppet regimes, and the simmering conflicts, previously contained by the Cold War, now exploded into bloody civil wars. Luc van de Goor et al, therefore, argued that: ‘As long as the global political system was characterised by the East-West divide, most armed conflicts could be successfully explained by the tension between the superpowers.’

The notion of proxy war is not only limited to the Cold War period. New types of proxy wars have emerged and limited to the so-called new wars in the post-Cold War period. Former President Charles Taylor of Liberia’s surrogate war in Sierra Leone through the RUF-backed rebels, and both Presidents Museveni of Uganda and Paul Kagame of Rwanda’s orchestrated wars in the DRC are examples of these post-Cold War proxy wars. The distinguishing feature of these post-Cold War proxy wars is that they have turned the Cold War dictum on its head. During the Cold War, the principle was based on maintenance of order and stability at all cost in client states. Now, the ‘perverted’ principle is disorder and instability at all cost in ‘client states’ or spheres of territorial control for maximum resource exploitation and accumulation.

Secessionist Wars

The arbitrary partitioning of Africa into colonial territorial units at the Berlin Congress of 1885, lumped together disparate communities and peoples into
an uneasy administrative entity called a state. It was inevitable that this kind of arbitrary arrangement of peoples would lead to ethno-nationalist wars and secession, and this was aggravated in the post-colonial period by the domination, exclusion and disposition of land and resources of particular communities in the new political entity. The secessionist war in Congo between 1960-65 was the beginning of the shape of things to come, hence the OAU enshrined the inviolability of the inherited colonial borders into its Charter.

Wars of secession to create self government and independent states occurred in the following countries: Sudan 1955-1972, Nigeria, 1966-69, Namibia, 1999 (Caprivi strip), Senegal, 1982 to present (Casamance), and Somalia, 1984-89 (North West). The majority of these secessionist wars failed because the OAU and the international community strongly opposed the break-up of the post-colonial state because of the generalised chaos that would ensue from the contestation of colonial boundaries in Africa. In effect, the secessionist wars affected state formation and nation building, and in some cases, such as Eritrea, it prevented ‘state making’ until 1994. These secessionist wars, often with external support, shifted between periods of violence and attempts at political negotiation and settlement. But how different are secessionist wars from wars of national liberation? The claim could be made that secessionist wars have occurred in the post-colonial states protected by the OAU charter recognising the inviolability of colonial inherited boundaries. The principle of self-determination was never assumed to apply to post-colonial states. Self-determination was understood and applied by nationalist leaders in a limited sense, i.e. only to external European colonial domination. But this principle was later appropriated by nations and political communities who found themselves in an ‘uneasy and artificial’ colonial union. These nations, therefore, used the same principle of self-determination to secede from the post-colonial state.34

Inter-state / Conventional Wars

Conventional wars are conflicts between states and are fought with regular armed forces and sometimes, paramilitary forces, along defined military fronts. The primary targets are military and strategic installations, the forces use expensive military technology and armoury such as jet fighters and heavy artillery. These are costly wars and, hence, increasingly limited in Africa. The analysis of inter-state wars has dominated the strategic studies literature, and received not only more international media attention but was also treated as an important academic pursuit in the 1970s and 1980s, unlike the so-called low-intensity or unconventional warfare.


These wars are normally a result of conflict over contested inter-state borders, in particular when the territory in question has strategic resources such as the Nigeria-Cameroon conflict over the Bakasi peninsular. The attempt to annex, or the annexation of, disputed territory or territorial claims have often led to inter-state conflicts. In addition, the interference in the internal affairs or domestic politics of a neighbouring state by supporting dissident groups or separatist movements, has also sparked off inter-state conflict. However, the official justification for war often hides the root cause of the conflict, and it may be in some cases due to fundamental political, ideological and personal differences between the political leaders of both countries, or a history of hostile community interaction and inter-state relations. This often resulted in the desire by one state to effect regime change in another, for example, President Nyerere of Tanzania’s war against Uganda in 1978 to ‘kick out’ the brutal military dictatorship of Idi Amin and to install his friend and socialist ally, Milton Obote.

Identity-based Wars

Ethnic (previously described in much of the literature as tribal) and religious wars and armed conflicts are broadly conceptualised as identity-based wars in terms of the threat perception to core identities and values and how they create a mobilisational force for armed conflict. Ethnicism and contested identities have dominated the literature on the analysis of conflict and have come to represent the stereotypical images of Africa. Identity constitutes, but is not limited to, the following: race, ethnicity, religion, language, nationalism and cultural/common heritage. Political ethnicity, religious fundamentalism and virulent nationalism have led to the emergence of assertive identity politics with the capacity to mobilise public support for its cause, exploit the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation, and the capacity to instigate violent conflict. The growth and intractability of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Algeria and Liberia, has re-focused academic and international policy attention on the subject. But ethnic-based conflict and genocide is not a new phenomenon in Africa. The exploitation of ethnic differences was a common feature of colonial rule in Africa. In Rwanda (1960-64) and Burundi (1970-74) there were outbreaks of ethnic strife and genocide. In Rwanda alone, the 1994 genocide claimed an estimated 1 million people. These ethnic, or identity-based, wars rely on low technology weapons such as machetes, knives, spears and small arms. The perception of enmity is fuelled by a centrally directed and planned propaganda against the so-called ‘enemy’. It involves the dehumanisation of the ‘enemy’ or ‘opponent’, for example, the Hutu government and Interehamwe militia’s propaganda media in Rwanda described the Tutsis as ‘cockroaches’ that must be killed. The eventual ethnic and genocidal fighting rapidly spread into a conflagration involving forced migration, massive displacement and huge numbers of civilian casualties.

Identity-based violence, in particular ethnically motivated armed conflict, is emerging as a common feature in Africa. In fact, ethnicity and tribalism have been
popular interpretations of conflict in Africa. Oliver Furley asserts that: ‘Ethnicity in fact has often been a major cause of African conflicts and it continues to be so.’  

There is ample evidence to show that ethnicity does kill, i.e. the simple fact of belonging, or the perception of belonging, to a particular ethnic group has led to countless instances of people being killed and whole communities massacred. Stephen Ellis gives a vivid account of the killing and extermination of whole communities in Liberia for the simple reason of belonging or being seen as a Khran, Gio, Mandingo.  

In conflict situations, ethnicity sometimes becomes the only banner of protection or ‘safe haven’ as people are killed or spared simply by belonging to a particular ethnic group, irrespective of political or ideological views. Ethnic solidarity provides a sense of protection, and a rallying force to kill the perceived ‘enemy’. It is, therefore, not surprising that ethnicism has been used to explain conflict and genocide in countries such as Nigeria and Rwanda. Donald Horowitz’s book was influential in simplifying the explanation of civil wars in ethnic and tribal terms by asserting that: ‘In divided societies, ethnic conflict is at the centre of politics…Ethnic conflict strains the bonds that sustain civility and is often seen as the root of violence.’  

But some crucial questions need valid and critical answers. ‘Is ethnicity the root cause of conflict in Africa?’ ‘Does ethnicity kill?’ Why do some multi-ethnic states disintegrate into civil war and others, despite ethnic pluralism, have not faced wars and armed conflicts? Are all conflicts not in some ways about identity or the contestating of identities? It is argued that the ethnic and identity-based interpretation of conflict in Africa is not only simplistic, but also problematic because ethnicity is not just the composition of language, culture and history, but also about perception of identity by groups, family and community or attribution by outsiders. Language, in fact, is a poor guide to ethnic or tribal identity because the deliberate effort to promote good ‘neighbourliness’ has led to the speaking of several tribal languages in many regions of Africa. Equally, dress mode and skin-colour do not provide an objective criteria as to ethnic origin. Adebayo Adedeji explains that decades of Tutsi migration at different times from Rwanda and Burundi to neighbouring countries has led to the emergence of a new ethnic group, the Banyanwanda, in both Uganda and DRC.  

Because ethnicity is socially constructed, it is not a static concept, but rather dynamic, as it is constantly mutating and is reconstructed over time. The valid argument is that ethnicity is not so much the problem, but rather is the politicisation, exploitation and manipulation of ethnicism by the political elites and governing  

class. The political class, in the desperate attempt to secure state power and its patrimonial resources, has often demonstrated remarkable recklessness and a total lack of restraint in manipulating ethnicity by peddling stereotypes and prejudices against opposing groups. The pursuit of political office, personal ambition and the interests of the political elites are framed in ethnic terms to mobilise ethnic solidarity. The political contest, even within the rules of democratic politics, becomes a fight between ‘us’ versus ‘them’, with clearly dividing fault-lines. Ethnicity, in this context, is therefore politicised, manipulated and mobilised to instigate violence, and the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality mobilised, often degenerating into ‘tribe-to-tribe’, ‘ethnic-to-ethnic’, ‘people-to-people’ violence and pogroms as in Rwanda. The fact is that political parties, military establishments, the ruling and governing elites are largely regionally and ethnically based; the politicisation of ethnicity, therefore, provides avenues for regime consolidation, survival and access to state resources. The multi-ethnic character of most African states creates the circumstances for violent politicisation of ethnicity. Rival communities, with the perception of threat to their survival (real or imagined) see the control of the state and its resources as the only means of survival.

If ethnic homogeneity were to promote durable peace and stability, then the Hutus and Tutsis would not be killing each other nor would Somalia have disintegrated into chaos in the 1990s. The fact is that the Hutus and Tutsis speak the same language, and share the same territory and cultural traditions. Similarly, Somalia is unique in terms of its ethnic homogeneity in that its people share the same ancestral origin, language, religion, culture and nomadic heritage. Furthermore, if ethnicism were to be at the heart of the violent conflict and internal warfare in Africa, then one would want to know why is it the case that the majority of multi-ethnic polities have not degenerated into civil wars, but rather are making relative progress in state formation and nation building? The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, therefore, posits that:

The words ‘ethnic’, ‘religious’, ‘tribal’ or ‘factional’- important as they may be in intergroup conflict – do not, in most cases, adequately explain why people use massive violence to achieve their goals. These descriptions do not, of themselves, reveal why people would kill each other over their differences. To label a conflict simply as ethnic war can lead to misguided policy choices by fostering a wrong impression that ethnic, cultural or religious differences inevitably result in violent conflict and that differences therefore must be suppressed.39

Braathen, Bøås and Sæther’s edited book makes an important contribution to the debate. Though they acknowledge the role played by ethnicity in most conflicts in Africa, in terms of how ‘ethnic affiliation often structures the composition of armed factions’, they argue that it is important to understand the socio-economic, historical and geographical context in which ethnicity suddenly becomes a relevant

and divisive issue. Chabal and Daloz make a valid case for the need to focus on unravelling ‘why’ and ‘how’ ethnicity becomes politically exploited. Braathen, Bøås and Sæther raise the pertinent question ‘Why is the outbreak of war in the western hemisphere seen as a result of a number of interactive factors while the outbreak of the Somali civil war is seen as a result of Somali culture, something that lies in the ‘Blood and Bone’ to quote a title from Lewis (Lewis, 1994)? As in every war, the Somali case also has distinct aspects, but this cannot explain why the tribal arguments constitute a paradigm in one case while it is left out in others. War signifies the struggle over the distribution of power, wealth and the representation of identities everywhere. The above authors, therefore, argue that the dominant Eurocentric discourse such as cultural evolution, narratives such as the ‘white man’s burden’ of civilising ‘primitive and savage’ African tribes, colonial rule and the mapping of societies into native authority, have created, re-inforced and perpetuated ethnic and tribal stereotypes. What may superficially appear as ‘ethnic conflict’ is in reality a complex conflict rooted in the political, socio-economic and historical context of the polity. Braathen et al, therefore, view the instrumental utility of ethnicity or identity as serving strategic interests and goals as a conflict instigating factor, rather than ethnicity per se. This accounts for the departure in the recent literature on the civil war in Rwanda that does not buy into the simplistic interpretation of the war as an ethnicity conflict, but instead tries to understand the conflict based on fundamental political, socio-economic grievances and conditions faced by the country in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In Rwanda, as in other war-torn countries in Africa, increasing poverty and exclusion from the economic and political processes of the majority of the populace or certain segments of the polity, have provided a breeding ground for instigating politically motivated ethnic conflict.

But the politicisation, exploitation and mobilisation of ethnicity to serve particular interests is not a unique phenomenon in Africa. The examples of genocide in the Balkans in the 1990s, the ethno-religious violence in the Indonesian province of Aceh, Nazi pogroms from 1938-44, and the extermination of Armenians by the young Turks in 1915 are illustrations of this global phenomenon.

Conceptually, three competing schools of thought have dominated the interpretations of the link between ethnic solidarity and the propensity of conflict. Firstly, the primordialist see ethnicity as historically rooted and embedded in peoples way of life and culture, and re-inforced by social institutions, collective myths and memories – developed from early socialisation, and hence likely to persist over

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41 Ibid, p.5.
time. Secondly, instrumentalists perceive ethnicity as a front for the pursuit, mobilisation, exploitation and manipulation to secure self-serving or vested interests by individuals or groups. Thirdly, social constructionists perceive ethnicity as an invention of the human imagination, an intellectual construct devoid of objective reality.

In addition, serious research has demonstrated that there is no positive correlation between ethnic pluralism and violent conflict. What is more, most ethnic conflicts are not necessarily violent. There is also the tendency to excessively focus on the dysfunctional aspect of ethnicity rather than highlighting the positive ‘functional integrative’ role played by ethnicity in nation building.

**Resource-based Wars**

In the 1980s and 1990s, increasing academic attention focused on the political economy analysis of civil wars in Africa, in particular, how the nature of domestic politics or prebendal politics creates the sources for violent conflict in Africa. The most recent version of this political economy analysis is the ‘greed and grievance’ thesis put forward by Paul Collier and others as the cause for wars in Africa. The nature of domestic politics based on patron-clientelistic systems in much of Africa had been driven by informal networks through which state resources were appropriated to support and consolidate regimes in power and their followers. Political clientelism, as a system of governance, was a ‘mechanism of exchange: by recognising private interests and using the machinery of state to purvey private benefits to groups and individuals, in the process giving them vested – and purely instrumental – interest in the maintenance of the state itself’. Linked to the politics of clientelism are

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patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism, which are extensions of the patronclientelistic nature of domestic politics in Africa. Patrimonialism, as a basis for governance and exercise of political power, entailed the lack of distinction between public and private relationships and the general privatisation and informalisation of political life.\textsuperscript{49} In Jean François Medard’s view, ‘public authority has been made an object of appropriation by the formal office holders, functionaries, politicians, and military personnel, who based their strategies of individual ascendency or family ascendency on a private usage of the \textit{res publica}’.\textsuperscript{50} Patrimonialism involves a high degree of personalised rule, in which the ‘strongman’, including the ruling and governing elites, are able to extract and redistribute patrimonial resources along regional, ethnic, religious and familial lines in order to consolidate political power and ensure regime survival. This nature of prebendal politics in countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, DRC, Angola, Mozambique, Côte d’Ivoire, and many others converted the state into a ‘market’ where office holders competed for the acquisition of material benefits and accumulation. The clientelistic and neo-patrimonial politics in Africa produced immobility, inefficiency, unbridled corruption, illegitimacy and exploitation. The privatisation and informalisation of the state progressively weakened the political, legal and economic governing institutions of the ‘official state’, and were subverted to serve the vested interests of the ruling and governing elites who control the ‘shadow state’.\textsuperscript{51} In the majority of the extractive-based economies in Africa, a rentier state was to emerge with an excessive dependence on external rents from MNCs, international financial institutions and western governments and donors.

The rentier nature of the economy and the ‘allocation state’ in these circumstances totally failed to formulate any sustainable economic and development policies. The corrosive effects of this nature of domestic politics created the conditions for weak and collapsing states that could hardly respond to the basic imperative of statehood. The crisis of patrimonialism in the post-Cold War period, the agitation for political liberalisation and democratisation, and the global economic recession and its devastating effects on the prices of commodities and strategic resources, meant that the patrimonial system was starved of vital resources needed to maintain and prop up clientelistic politics. Patrimonialism and the rentier mentality in much of Africa created widespread impoverishment, dilapidated social services and infrastructure, poor educational systems and badly managed economies, and the marginalisation and exclusion of the majority of the populace from the political and economic processes

in the country. The widespread political and socio-economic discontent provided fundamental grievances and the breeding ground for armed rebellion.

Neo-patrimonial politics, to some extent, explain the ethnicisation and militarisation of politics in Africa. Mass politics are reconstructed along clientelistic and ethnic relationships, with the increasing propensity to use state-sponsored violence and repression as a means to extract legitimacy from the governed. The militarisation of political and socio-economic relations amongst competing elites creates the impetus for the social mobilisation of ethnic identities.

Paul Collier and the World Bank-sponsored research programme on *The Economics of Civil War, Crime and Violence*, have been influential in promoting and popularising the latest version of the political economy/resource-based analysis of African conflicts, in particular, how economic agendas are the primary cause of conflict in Africa. Collier’s approach makes a distinction between ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’, and concludes, based on research findings, that greed is the most important cause of violence. He argues that: ‘A country with large natural resources, many young men and little education is very much more at risk of conflict than one with opposite characteristics.’ The argument is that economic proxies such as DRC, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, and Sudan, with high dependence on primary resources (i.e. lootable products) provide the motivation and driving force for violent conflicts. Collier, therefore, concludes that the ‘true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance but the silent force of greed’. He further asserts that since both greed-motivated and grievance-motivated rebel organisations will embed their behaviour in a narrative of grievance, the observation of the narrative provides no informational content to the researcher as to the true motivation for rebellion. According to Collier and others, the availability of primary export commodities provides the opportunity to instigate conflict as an ‘income-earning opportunity’, and ‘create economic opportunities for the majority of actors even as they destroy them for the majority, economic agendas therefore ignite and sustain these wars’. For David Keen, these civil wars could better be understood as the continuation of ‘economics’ by other means.

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52 In February 1999, the World Bank established a new research programme on the economics of civil wars, based at Cambridge University, with Paul Collier as director and a linked journal.


55 Ibid, p.92.

56 Ibid, p.91.

Collier and other adherents of this ‘greed and grievance’ thesis have been criticised for simplifying the causes of conflict in Africa and, in particular, neglecting the importance of fundamental grievances such as socio-economic inequality, political repression and social fractionalisation of communities. In the so-called proxy economies such as Sierra Leone, DRC and Angola, contrary evidence emphasises the importance of grievances as the root cause of conflict rather than ‘greed’. There is no denying the fact that ‘lootable resources’ fuel and prolong wars in Africa. Economic resources and agendas, in particular the violent entrepreneurial motives of political leaders, warlords and warring factions, create an environment for illegal business practices and commercial opportunities for a vast array of actors and entrepreneurs at local, national, regional and international levels. These interests, therefore, become entrenched in war economies and the war continues because of the profits and as a way of life and livelihood. According to Mary Anderson, ‘Conflicts often embody elements of both principle and self-aggrandisement. Sometimes the initial purposefulness of war changes, and the war itself becomes the reason for future fighting’. Though greed plays a role in fuelling and prolonging wars in Africa, the relationship is not as simple as Collier claims, and in fact to conclude that greed is the cause of conflict is to miss the key point in conflict analysis, i.e. no single interpretation can explain conflict situations in Africa, or anywhere else for that matter. The focus on the criminalisation of leadership, economic opportunities and profit from organised violence is not the same as the root causes of conflict.

In fact, Adyumobi contends that Collier and others peddling the greed-based analysis of conflicts in Africa are confusing the causes of war with the issues involved in war. Both are very different, and affect wars in different ways. Furthermore, the link between greed and grievance is far more complex than merely financing, rent-seeking and predatory motivations of warlords, political leaders and warring factions. I have argued elsewhere that the popularisation of the ‘greed and grievance’ thesis has been unhelpful in conflict analysis in Africa and using one of the proxy economies, Sierra Leone, I raised pertinent questions to erode the validity of the thesis in that, ‘in countries such as Sierra Leone, why is it the case that though diamonds were discovered in the 1930s, the country did not degenerate into violent regionalisation of conflicts and war economies in Africa, see: Shaw, T., ‘Regional Dimensions of Conflict and Peacebuilding in Contemporary Africa’, Journal of International Development. Vol. 15, 2003, pp.487-498; Campbell, G., Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World’s Most Precious Stone. Boulder: Perseus, 2002; Cilliers, J. and Dietrich, C. (eds.), Angola’s War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds. Pretoria: ISS, 2000; Global Witness, A Rough Trade: The Role of Companies and Government in the Angolan Conflict. New York: Global Witness, 2000; Klare, M. Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001.

civil war in the pre-1990s era? Does this not undermine the economic exploitation, resource-based interpretation of civil wars as the primary cause?  

It is also argued that the relationship between resources, economic agendas and civil wars is nothing new. For example, the Cold War proxy war in Angola had all the elements of Collier’s analysis, but could not be simply categorised as the cause of the conflict in Angola. The secessionist wars in Nigeria, Western Sahara, and Zaire were also about armed struggle to control strategic resources. With the end of the Cold War patronage, commercial and economic interests within the context of globalisation now become the new strategic consideration.

Two important observations need to be emphasised from the taxonomy of conflict analysis in Africa. Firstly, that identity-based and resource-based analysis of conflict have demonstrated the greatest potential for spill-over effects of civil wars or the regionalisation of domestic armed conflicts. From a negative perspective, both identity and resource-based post-Cold War conflicts have generated devastating regional consequences, and in some cases, instigated new wars in neighbouring states. However, from a positive perspective, these identity and resource-based wars have forced on weak and quasi-states the imperative to build regional peace and security systems. Secondly, the generations of conflict analysis, and in particular, the identity and resource-based categorisation reinforce the need to develop and focus on a case-by-case understanding of conflict. No two conflicts are ever the same, despite some commonalities. For example, the war in Sudan could be variously described as war of secession (South seceding from rest of country), identity (Islam North vs. Christianity South, Arab vs. black Africans) and resources (oil, political power)-based conflicts. Similarly, the DRC war could also fit into the description of some of the generations of conflict analysis such as proxy war, identity and resource-based war, and secessionist conflict (Mayi Mayi nationalist rebellion).

The diverse theoretical interpretations and generations of conflict analysis underscore the multi-dimensional and multi-level nature of conflict and its causes in Africa. Any analysis of the causes of conflict in Africa should involve an exploration of the root causes, and secondary and tertiary causes, the historical legacies and particular conflict situations, and external factors. This analysis should be combined with an analysis of the structures that predispose communities to violent conflict, in particular, the perceptions and meanings attributed to these institutions, events and policies, and how these are mobilised to instigate conflict. In addition, analysis of the causes and structures should also include analysis of the actors, i.e. individual, group, community incentives and motivations at local, national, regional and international levels, and the dynamics of conflict, i.e. the changing nature of conflict and its destructive process, and how this reshapes perceptions of causes of war, transforms relations and serves as a trigger for new armed conflict, or creates opportunities for resolution of conflict.

Two important elements relevant to conflict analysis are the role played by external factors and the link between poverty, underdevelopment and conflict. External factors

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continue to play considerable and, sometimes, decisive roles in instigating violent conflicts in Africa. The development paradigms prescribed for Africa, in particular the latest stage of neo-liberal development orthodoxy, the ‘Washington Consensus’ Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), have instigated or exacerbated conflicts in Africa. The imposition of SAPs and its negative effects sparked off, and in some cases, fuelled conflicts and hastened the collapse of states in Sierra Leone, Liberia, DRC, Somalia and Côte d’Ivoire. The international economic environment has in most cases aggravated the problems of these weak economies in that unfavourable trade restrictions and lack of access to the world market for primary producers, fluctuating terms of trade, increasing debt burden and debt service obligations have all contributed to the poor performance and devastation of African economies. This has inevitably produced increasing poverty and depressed social and development indicators.

Therefore, developmentalists see a positive correlation between conflict and the nature and dynamics of underdevelopment, hence the only way to prevent and reduce armed conflict and its ‘associated pathologies of crime and terrorism’ is to respond with development programmes to remedy the underdevelopment malaise. Duffield posits that: ‘The association of underdevelopment with high risk of conflict is now a core assumption within the development discourse.’ Similarly, many development agencies and analysts draw a positive correlation between poverty and the risks of conflict. Despite varying interconnectedness, development analysts also acknowledge that there is no direct causal relationship between poverty and conflict. It is argued that, in several respects, there is no automatic relationship between poverty and conflict, though poverty and underdevelopment do have conflict instigating aspects. Some of the countries listed at the bottom of the UNDP Human Development Report 2003 such as Burkina Faso, Malawi, The Gambia, Benin and Tanzania have not degenerated into armed conflict due to poverty and underdevelopment. Also, some middle-income regions such as the Balkans are mired in conflict. Therefore, ‘poverty does not cause conflict, it only increases its probability’.

64 Ibid, p.121.
65 Ibid, p.126.
New Security Threats in Africa

The widespread wars and armed conflicts in Africa illustrate the dominance of the traditional conception of security, i.e. equated with the protection and safety of the state, and the management and use of military force. The perception of security in terms of external threat has dominated the thinking in the Cold War period and International Relations, based on the realist and neo-realist paradigms. But security itself is a ‘contested concept’ in terms of definition, interpretation and specification. Barry Buzan outlines twelve different definitions of security to illustrate the problematic nature of the concept. Put simply, security is a ‘condition of being or feeling safe from harm or danger’.\(^6\) The interpretation and specification of the ‘condition’ of ‘being safe’ from who or what, and the nature and type of ‘danger’ and the normative elements, are part of the problematic of the conceptualisation of security. Other international relations theorists perceive security as the defence, protection and preservation of ‘core values’ and the ‘absence of threats to acquired values’.\(^6\) But, even at the height of the Cold War in the 1980s, the traditional conception of security focusing on national security, interests and power, with the state as the primary referent object of security, the condition of anarchy in the international system, and the military use or threat of force, was criticised by various scholars as not reflecting the nature and complexity of security.\(^6\) The emerging sources of threat to security could not be explained within the framework of the traditional conception of security. For example, the OPEC (Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) oil price rises in 1973 due to the Arab-Israeli war highlighted the relevance of economic security and the role of strategic resources in national security. Richard Ullman was critical of the ‘militarisation of the concept of security’. Together with other scholars, Ullman advocated a redefinition of the concept of security and the broadening of the security agenda to take on board the non-military dimensions of security such as the environment, migration, disease, transnational crime, natural disasters, global wealth and poverty divisions, ethno-religious and nationalist identities and the dangers of cybercrime and terrorism. The non-military/non-traditional threats to security have led to the broadening of the reference objects of security to include individuals, non-state actors and sub-national groups.\(^6\)

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In Africa, non-military dimensions of security such as environmental degradation, poverty, resource scarcity, ethno-religious and nationalist identities, crime, drugs, diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, natural catastrophes like drought, famine and flood, and mass migration of people, have all threatened individual and societal security and survival, and even national security. These non-traditional sources of threat to security affect life, health, status, wealth and freedom of individuals, societies and states, and in some cases have created the conditions for conflict and violence in societies in Africa. The non-military security threats or risks are largely internal rather than external. What is important about these emerging non-military challenges to security and stability is that they emanate from a range of non-state, sub-state actors and factors and are trans-state in character. Also, the dangers and challenges posed by these non-traditional military security threats are not confined to a particular state or geographic region. Terriff et al therefore assert that these new security challenges cannot be managed by the traditional use of force and defence policies alone, but their management will require a range of non-military approaches as well. Their conclusion is that, the: ‘Non-traditional challenges . . . represent dangers which are diffuse, multidimensional and multidirectional . . . these new concerns suggest that individuals as well as states are endangered.’

It is, therefore, not surprising that the non-military challenges and threats to security in Africa are increasingly emerging as a key focus for policy- and decision-makers, and analysts. The African Leadership Forum asserted that: ‘The concept of security goes beyond military consideration. It embraces all aspects of the society including economic, political and social dimensions of individual, family, community, local and national life.’ With Africa being the least developed region of the world, it is understandable why the non-traditional sources of threat to security, within the context of widespread wars and conflict, are increasingly attracting the attention of national, regional and international leaders. The UNDP Human Development Report 2002 gives a depressing picture of development, economic and social indicators. During the 1990s, the number of people living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) rose from 242 million to 300 million. In comparison, extreme poverty was reduced in South Asia by 7 per cent during the 1990s. In SSA, the estimated

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Causes of Acute Conflict’, *International Security*. Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1991, pp.76-116. The redefinition of security has led to ten different conceptions of security including: security dilemma, national security, international security, collective security, security community, security regime, common security, societal security, human security and global security/environmental security. The militaristic focus of security led to the development of Strategic Studies with a primary focus on the military aspects of the Cold War such as nuclear strategy and deterrence, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the nature of war, revolution in military affairs, the use and threat of force to achieve political objectives, and the strategic balance between the superpowers.

number of people living on less than US$1 a day by the end of the 1990s was 46.7 per cent. In addition, per capita income shrank by 0.3 per cent in SSA in the 1990s, while there was an appreciable increase in annual growth in per capita income of 3.3 per cent in South Asia.

But it is necessary to recognise that within Africa there are different sub-regional dimensions of threat to security, for example, desertification in North Africa; famine, drought, and flooding in the Horn and Southern Africa. Desertification in parts of West Africa, the Horn and Southern Africa is threatening human security. In addition, deforestation and overgrazing undermine land productivity, on which the livelihoods of the people depend. Scarce water and land resources in some parts of Africa undermine the security and the very survival of peoples and the preservation of core values of communities. In addition, Africa is emerging as the world’s ‘soft-underbelly’ for global terrorism, as witnessed by the Al Qaeda bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, terrorist attacks in Mombassa, Kenya in 2002, and Morocco in 2003, and Islamic fundamentalist bombings in South Africa. The conflict zones, state failure and collapse, weak law and state governing institutions, porous borders, the corruption and ‘privatisation’ of the security and banking institutions, and the radicalisation of disaffected populations, have made Africa a safe-haven and recruiting ground for terrorist organisations. Therefore, terrorism, whether state-sponsored, group or individual, is a serious threat to human, societal and national security.

Furthermore, two non-military sources of threats to security in Africa that warrant some discussion are HIV/AIDS and migration. Perhaps the greatest security threat faced by contemporary Africa is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Though the disease is a global problem and regarded as a ‘global security threat’ as outlined in the UN Security Council Resolution 1308 in January 2000, it is not given the urgency that it deserves in some regions of Africa. Those countries that are seriously affected by the disease have now considered it as a ‘national security threat’. Wars, political instability, internal displacement, mass migrations and refugee movement are intensifying the spread of the disease in Africa. By the end of 2000, an estimated 22 million people had died from AIDS, 13 million children lost one or both parents to AIDS, and more than 40 million people were living with HIV, of which 75 per cent are in SSA. In Botswana, the most HIV/AIDS affected country, more than a third of adults have the disease and life expectancy has dropped to from 60.2 years to 44.4 years and was projected to drop to 36 from 2000-2005. More than 20 countries in Africa have a 4 per cent HIV adult prevalence rate. The life expectancy in the 35 worst affected countries in Africa is estimated at 48.3 years. The impact of HIV/AIDS on development and economic growth is devastating. In Botswana, the income for the poorest quarter of households will drop by 13 per cent over the next 10 years as a result of HIV/AIDS. A Zambian study shows that two-thirds of

74 Ibid, p.11.
urban households that have lost their main breadwinner to AIDS experienced a loss of income of 80 per cent. Zambian lost 1,300 teachers due to AIDS in the first ten months of 1998, the equivalent of two-thirds of all the new teachers trained annually. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that in the 27 most affected African countries, 7 million agricultural workers have died from AIDS since 1995, thereby aggravating the food security problems. Women make up 58 per cent of people living with HIV/AIDS in SSA.

Some African countries are making progress in tackling the pandemic. Uganda, described in the 1980s as the possible scene for an AIDS apocalypse, has reduced HIV prevalence from 14 per cent in the early 1990s to around 5 per cent by the end of 2001. AIDS is not only the number one killer in Africa, but is also attacking the most productive segment of the population. According to Mark Malloch Brown:

AIDS is devastating in terms of creating and deepening poverty, reversing achievements in education, diverting meagre health budgets away from other priorities. And by cutting deep into all sectors of society, HIV/AIDS undermines vital economic growth – perhaps reducing future GDP in Africa by a third over the next 20 years. Moreover, by putting huge additional demand on already weak, hard to access public services, it is setting up the terms of a desperate conflict over inadequate resources.

Migration, i.e. the voluntary and involuntary movements of people within states and across national borders, is emerging as a major security threat in Africa. The primary causes of recent migration and population movements in Africa have been wars and armed conflicts. The widespread wars have led to forced migration and massive refugee flows, i.e. ‘push-factor’. Ethno-religious persecution, political oppression, in search of economic and employment opportunities (the ‘pull factor’), environmental degradation, and natural disasters such as a flood, drought and famine have led to large-scale migrations. An estimated 13 million people are internally displaced in Africa, with 4 million in Sudan. Population movement and refugee flows have created insecurities and also threatened the peace and security of the continent. In several cases, it has led to violence and tensions between communities and threatened the economic security of the recipient state, with a huge burden on domestic social services and infrastructure. In other cases, refugees and migrants threatened the security and stability of the state by taking up arms, using refugee camps for military training operations, and providing recruitment opportunities for dissident groups and warring factions as in the regionalised conflicts in West Africa and the Great Lakes region.

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75 Available at www.unaids.org.
76 Available at www.undp.org.
77 Available at www.idpproject.org.
Conclusion

The widespread wars and conflicts and their devastating effects, and the threats posed by the non-military dimensions of security have all contributed to converting Africa into the least developed region in the world. The on-going conflicts, depressing economic, social and development indicators and the weak political governance, the phenomenon of state collapse, coupled with the external economic and political environment have serious implications for the capacity and ability of the continent to promote and sustain the project of African unity and, in particular, the capacity to build viable regional peace and security systems. However, these pressing problems and challenges provide the opportunity for continental and regional co-operative security and solidarity to collectively respond to both the military and non-military sources of threats to peace, security and development. A helpful approach is to depart from the usual pigeon-hole and simplistic interpretations of conflict in Africa. The conflict analysis framework argued in this chapter provides a useful tool to assist conflict and development interveners and the international community in developing appropriate policies and strategies needed for the management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.
Introduction

The regionalisation of conflict management in Africa is emerging as a major feature of post-Cold War Africa. At the same time, a variety of approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution, both forcible and non-forcible interventions, continue to be prevalent in Africa. The common feature of the interventions is that they predominantly take place in complex political emergencies; this invariably complicates the prospects for the management and resolution of the conflicts. This chapter, therefore, outlines and critically engages with the emerging phenomena of co-operative security, co-deployment and burden-sharing between the UN and regional organisations in conflict management and resolution in Africa, the regional security complex which the states are locked into, and the nature and dynamics of humanitarian intervention in complex political emergencies.

The chapter builds on the generations of conflict analysis outlined in Chapter 3 to illustrate and apply the typology of conflict management and stabilisation interventions that have taken place in Africa. The core issue explored is the contention that whether some of these conflict interventions could be described as humanitarian interventions. The analysis of the so-called humanitarian interventions in African conflict situations reinforces the amity-enmity dynamics inherent in regional collective peace and security efforts. Military interventions, even for human protection purposes, further reinforce the rule, i.e. lack of consensus and conflict over use of force amongst regional actors. Several pertinent issues are, therefore, explored in this chapter including the often controversial role and interest of sub-regional hegemons or pivotal states in leading military interventions cast in humanitarian or for human protection purposes; the role and strategic considerations of external lead-nations in conflict stabilisation, and how this constrains the success of conflict stabilisation military interventions.

Wars and armed conflicts in Africa have provided the opportunity for a variety of interventions, to manage, resolve and keep the peace, including unilateral interventions mainly by former colonial powers; key western or socialist countries (during the Cold War); coalitions of willing states led by a sub-regional hegemon; multilateral interventions such as UN peacekeeping; regional organisations, such as the OAU/AU, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and SADC; and mercenaries and private military companies. But the UN and its peacekeeping and peace support operations have been the dominant form of intervention to stabilise, contain, manage and resolve conflicts in Africa and those conflicts perceived as threats to international peace and security. Table 4.1 gives an outline of peacekeeping and peace support operations’ interventions in Africa. However, a parallel development in the post-Cold War period is the emergence of security regionalisms by regional economic groupings expanding into the security domain in Africa. But what is the relationship between the UN and regional organisations?

The UN Charter explicitly recognises the regionalisation of conflict management and the pacific settlement of regional disputes. The Charter outlines the legal and institutional framework for co-operation with regional organisations on international peace and security issues. Article 33 (1) stipulates the role of regional organisations and arrangements in the maintenance of peace and security in their respective regions, in particular, any dispute endangering international peace and security. In delegating this responsibility, the article states that any such regional organisation or arrangement ‘shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice’. Article 52 (1) reinforces the priority of the use of regional arrangements for the peaceful settlement of disputes by clarifying that ‘Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies from dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action . . .’

The Charter, therefore, specifically mandates regional arrangements as the first level of intervention or response mechanism to any regional dispute or conflict, before referring to the Security Council, the primary organ responsible for international peace and security. The Charter recognises the delegation of regional peace and security issues to regional arrangements and agencies. However, it does not confer on them the authority for enforcement action, except in pursuit of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, as stipulated in Article 51. Furthermore, the Charter clearly states that no enforcement action shall be undertaken by any regional arrangement or agency without the specific authorisation of the UN Security

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2 Ibid.
Regional Organisations and Humanitarian Intervention

Council. But at the same time, the Charter expresses the desire to utilise regional organisations or agencies under its authority, for enforcement action. In fact, Article 54 spells out the need for Security Council oversight of activities undertaken by regional organisations for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter, therefore, clearly demarcates the nature of co-operative security, the level and scope of delegation in the maintenance of international security. The specific understanding is that any regional agency that undertakes enforcement action without Security Council authorisation or neglects the oversight role of the council is deemed to be in breach of the Charter. The vexed question is, given the protracted nature of Security Council resolutions and the divisive politics of authorising enforcement action, is it prudent or morally right for any regional organisation to use force to stop mass killings or genocide in complex political emergencies even without Security Council authorisation? I endorse the position of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in that African states and the international community should not sit and watch whilst mass murder and genocide is taking place. The valid point is that even without UN Security Council authorisation on the use of force or enforcement action, a coalition of willing states or a regional ‘collective’ peace and security effort should militarily intervene in situations of genocide and mass murder or for human protection purposes.

Boutros Boutros Ghali’s *Agenda for Peace* (1992) firmly recommended a greater role for regional organisations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The former UN Secretary General argues that;

Under the Charter, the Security Council has and will continue to have primary responsibility for international peace and security, but regional action as a matter of decentralisation, delegation and co-operation with the United Nations efforts could not only lighten the burden of the Council but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratisation in international affairs ... Regional arrangement and agencies have not in recent decades been considered in this light, even when originally designed in part for a role in maintaining or restoring peace within their regions of the world. Today a new sense exists that they have contributions to make.³

The supplement to the *Agenda for Peace 1992*, issued in 1995, outlined the nature and form of the emerging co-operative security between the UN and regional organisations, including consultation, preventive diplomacy, diplomatic support, operational support, joint operations and co-deployment.⁴

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⁴ Co-deployment is described as a military deployment or deployment of a field mission in conjunction with regional peacekeeping forces specifically authorised by the UN Security Council with a mandate to assist in the restoration of peace and security to a country in conflict within a particular region. Co-deployment covers a variety of operational activities beyond peacekeeping such as training and monitoring local police, protection of safe havens and keeping open humanitarian relief corridors, organising and monitoring elections, delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, care of refugees and internally displaced persons, monitoring
Since 1993, the UN has actively cultivated co-operation and co-ordination with regional organisations in the maintenance of international peace and security, within the context of Chapter VIII. This has led to the establishment of a Joint Special Representative for conflict in Africa and a UN liaison office with regional and sub-regional organisations. Kofi Annan’s 1998 report on *The Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa* reinforced the concept of burden-sharing and delegation of responsibility on peace and security issues with regional organisations by affirming that

Within the context of the United Nations primary responsibility for matters of international peace and security, providing support for regional and sub-regional initiatives in Africa is both necessary and desirable . . . Such support is necessary because the United Nations lacks the capacity, resources and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa.⁵

In the same report, the Secretary General is, however, critical of delegating responsibility for maintenance of peace and security to regional and sub-regional organisations and agencies because ‘the impartiality and neutrality of their Member States may be questioned, for historical reasons or for political and economic reasons . . . . Judgment and caution must be exercised in associating the United Nations with regional, sub-regional and multinational efforts, but the potential for positive co-operation should continue to be explored’.⁶ However, the same criticism could be levied against non-African countries involved in UN peacekeeping forces and even the troop contributing countries. This view sometimes accounts for the selectivity or lack of urgency in responding to conflict situations in Africa.

The emerging relevance of regional organisation in conflict management and resolution is based on the fact that the UN is vastly over-burdened by a variety of responsibilities and its capacity to fulfil its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security in the post-Cold War era is considerably limited.


⁶ Ibid.
The increased and new responsibilities and activities undertaken by the UN have led to ‘strategic overstretch’ in terms of resources and capacity to respond to the many demands and challenges faced by the world body. By all indications, the UN does not have the resources, personnel and capacity to respond both quantitatively and qualitatively to the many demands of international peace and security. To give an indication of the scale of the problems faced by the UN, by the end of 1987 there were only 5 UN peacekeeping operations, but by 1994 it had increased to 18, with more than 78,000 personnel serving in UN peacekeeping and peace support operations including humanitarian relief operations, protection and care for refugees, organising and monitoring elections, human rights monitoring, protection of safe havens, keeping humanitarian relief corridors open, and assistance in post-war reconstruction and development. Between 1994-95 alone, the UN’s annual peacekeeping budget rose to US$3.6 billion. In addition, an estimated 1,500 peacekeepers have died over the past half-century while serving in peacekeeping missions.

In the post-Cold War period, the UN and its peacekeeping operations operate in a very changed international and conflict environment, and are required to carry out much more demanding and complex peacekeeping operations, particularly in Africa. The nature of violent intra-state conflicts in Africa, the majority of which are in failed and collapsed states, lacking state governing institutions and with societal fragmentation, where warring factions routinely target civilians and do not generally respect laws of armed conflict or international human rights standards, have all resulted in complex humanitarian emergencies, with devastating effects on regional peace and security. UN peacekeeping interventions in these conflict situations have led to woeful failures and humiliations such as in Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Sierra Leone because the UN is expected to take on a range of responsibilities it is often ill-prepared for and lacks the capacity to deliver. In addition, in these complex conflict situations, the traditional principles of peacekeeping become obsolete as there is often no peace to keep, no cease-fire to monitor, and no legitimate government to give consent, and in this volatile situation, it is impossible for the peacekeeping forces to use force only in self-defence or even remain impartial or neutral.

By 1995, it became obvious that the UN was vastly overburdened with many and diverse responsibilities relating to peace and security. Its peacekeeping capacity was overstretched. After the debacles in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, it was time to rethink the whole notion of UN peacekeeping. This attitude was reinforced by donor fatigue in peacekeeping operations. The resultant effect led to the downsizing of peacekeeping personnel from its ‘peak of 78,744 to approximately 14,500 in November 1998’. These setbacks also fundamentally questioned the credibility,

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9 Ibid.
capacity and primacy of the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security. The *Agenda for Peace* 1992 and the Brahimi report of 2000 are constructive attempts to engage with the changing nature of the UN in the post-Cold War era and the need for the transformation of UN peacekeeping operations.

A parallel development during this period was that whilst the UN was retrenching its peacekeeping operations, there was a corresponding rise in the role, credibility and capacity of regional and sub-regional organisations in peace making, peacekeeping and peace enforcement in Africa, such as the peacekeeping and peace enforcement role of the West African regional multinational force, ECOMOG, and SADC’s Allied Armed Forces peacekeeping in the DRC. In Africa, the emergence of security regionalisms and the expansion into the security domain by regional economic organisations became part of the debate on ‘African approaches to African problems’ and the ‘Try Africa First Approach’ to conflict management and resolution.¹⁰

In effect, the threats posed to international peace and security by complex political emergencies and the myriad of challenges in responding and resolving these conflicts have foisted on the UN and regional organisations the imperative for partnership in maintaining international peace and security in the form of burden-sharing, task sharing and co-deployment as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The emerging recognition for partnership is based on the view that regional organisations have a valuable role to play in maintaining international peace and security.

The view is that regional organisations responding to conflict situations in their respective regions have distinct advantages in that they are not constrained by the use of veto by permanent members in the decisions to intervene in regional conflicts, as is the case for the UN. However, it could also be said that though these regional organisations are not burdened by veto wielding members, they are sometimes limited by lack of consensus due to diverse national interests and divisive geopolitics. An important advantage provided by regional organisations is that they have limited agendas and the capacity to focus on the issue in hand that requires regional action. It is also argued that the regional states have a vested interest in the stabilisation, containment, management and resolution of the conflict because these conflicts directly or indirectly affect them due to spillover effects and the potential for regionalisation of these domestic conflicts. Co-operative security and partnership with the UN provides legitimacy for any co-deployment peacekeeping operations, and potentially lends greater political support for peacekeeping and peace support operations. It is further argued that UN co-operative security with regional organisations provides opportunities for oversight of delegation in the maintenance of international peace and security. Experience has shown that regional organisations can assist in diplomatic efforts in mobilising international support for political settlement of a conflict and for peacekeeping operations, for example, the ECOWAS Ambassadors’ lobby group at the UN headquarters in New York. Co-operation with regional organisations also provides a framework for compromise that could break a stalemate in the negotiation of a conflict and serve as an incentive

Regional Organisations and Humanitarian Intervention

for conflicting parties to co-operate in situations where some warring factions favour the intervention of a regional organisation or where others prefer the involvement of the UN.\(^{11}\) There is the prevalent view that regional organisations supposedly have knowledge of the domestic conflict situation and warring factions or parties to the conflict are familiar with the geographical terrain, the local culture and traditions and even have some linguistic advantages, and may serve as useful sources of information and intelligence, hence their involvement facilitates the effective management and rapid resolution of the conflict. But this assertion is not borne out by the experience of the Nigerian-led ECOMOG intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the intervention of SADC-Allied Armed Forces (AAF) in DRC. Given the proximity of regional organisations to a conflict situation, they normally have the advantage for rapid deployment capacity in terms of troops and other war fighting logistics. Regional organisations’ intervention also creates flexibility in the allocation of resources by member states that have vested political, economic and strategic self-interests in the resolution of conflict. Perhaps the greatest advantage provided by UN co-operation with regional organisations is the opportunity for an exit strategy beyond deployment of peacekeeping forces. The co-operative framework enables the international community to mobilise support and formulate strategies for conflict prevention, management, resolution and post-war peacebuilding. What is important about this framework is that it provides the opportunity for sharing of responsibilities based on comparative advantages, hence complementarity and avoidance of duplication and competition. Some political analysts, however, argue that this form of decentralisation potentially dilutes UN primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security.\(^{12}\)

It should be emphasised that UN co-operative security with regional organisations is not problem free. The experience of regional intervention in conflict situations has shown that these regional arrangements and agencies frequently lack operational expertise and do not have a peacekeeping doctrine, and hence have been involved


in gross violations of human rights in the conduct of peacekeeping. In Africa, these regional organisations are particularly challenged when responding to problems of regional peace and security because the majority of the states are cash-strapped and underdeveloped economies with weak state structures and governing institutions. Lack of resources is, therefore, a key problem in the capacity of regional organisations for effective co-operative security with the UN. The policy discussions on task-sharing and burden-sharing with regional organisations should take into consideration imperatives to match resources to mandates, in responding to peace and security issues. Also, to take cognisance of the fact that each regional organisation is different in terms of resource endowment, membership, Charter, nature of geo-politics, and the role of sub-regional hegemons.

**Typology of Interventions and External Peace and Conflict Stabilisation Mechanisms Prescribed for Africa**

In recognition of the evident deficits faced by regional organisations involved in peacekeeping and peace support operations, a variety of conflict stabilisation, management and peacekeeping capacity development programmes have been advanced by key western governments. This capacity development involves the strengthening of peacekeeping capabilities for African countries through the provision of training and both lethal and non-lethal military equipment. The formal programmes to develop African peacekeeping and peace support operations capacities include the following:

1. The United States *African Crisis Response Initiative* (ACRI) established by the Clinton administration in 1997 to train African armies for peacekeeping duties. ACRI developed out of the *African Crisis Response Force*, which was envisaged as a kind of stand-by military force for deployment in Rwandan-type conflict situations. After the debacle of the UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), *Operation Focus Relief* was created to train and equip battalions of African armies for peacekeeping deployment in conflict zones. The *West Africa Stabilisation Programme* (WASP) and the *Pan-Sahelain Initiative* (PSI) were also floated as capacity development initiatives for peacekeeping and counter terrorism operations. In 2005, within the framework of the US foreign military training and finance assistance, the State Department announced a funding package of US$4.3 billion. A key beneficiary is the US-sponsored African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA). The objective of ACOTA is a training and equipping programme for selected African militaries (meaning only friendly and ally countries)

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to enhance and strengthen their peacekeeping and peace support operations
rapid development in African conflict situations. In addition, the Global Peace
Operation Initiative (GPOI) programme is an extension of support of ACOTA
and Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities (EIPC) programmes.
The focus of the Africa-component of the GPOI programme is to provide
support such as sustainment and transportation during African peacekeeping
operation.14

2. The French developed the Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities
(RECAMP) to train African armies for peacekeeping operations and to
strengthen peace and security on the continent. The creation of RECAMP
was a departure from the French traditional policy of intervention in French-
African countries. It came after the downsizing of the French military presence
in Africa in the mid-1990s.

3. The British International Military Assistance Training Team (IMATT) has
been the focus of the British government’s training support programme for
Africa.15

4. EU-African Peace Facility: The EU-Funded African Peace Facility amounting
to €250 million is a 3-year peace, security and conflict management capacity
building programme for the African Union. The objective is to capacitate
both the African Union and sub-regional organisations to train and deploy
peacekeeping and peace enforcement intervention operations in conflict
situations in Africa. In addition, the Peace Facility Fund is geared forwards
translating into practical terms the African Union’s Constitutive Act which
mandates member states to intervene in another state’s internal affairs in
situations of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.16

In addition, the Nordic countries, in particular Denmark and Norway, have
established formal programmes to develop and strengthen African peacekeeping
capacities. However, a common characteristic of all these initiatives is that they
are developed in response to particular crisis situations in Africa with considerable
international media coverage. They are ad hoc, ‘fire brigade’ type peacekeeping
capacity developments for Africa, often without proper consultation with African
countries, and lacking African ownership. Furthermore, there is the emerging
debate that though Africa is provided support and capacity building programmes
to strengthen the continent’s peacekeeping and peace support operations, there is
the general view that this is a strategy to reduce the humanitarian and peacekeeping
burden on the West.

14 US Department of State. Foreign Military Training: Joint Report to Congress, Fiscal
Years 2004 and 2005. Available at:
15 Ibid.
16 European Commission, Securing Peace and Stability for Africa: The EU-Funded
Table 4.1 Peacekeeping Operations in Africa\textsuperscript{17}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UN Peacekeeping Operations in Africa</th>
<th>African ‘Regional’ Peacekeeping Operations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ONUC (United Nations Operation in the Congo) July 1960-June 1964</td>
<td>• Bamako Ceasefire Commission (Algeria-Morocco interstate conflict) April 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>• MINUSO (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara) April 1991 to present</td>
<td>• Inter-African Force, Chad January-March 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>• UNOMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia) September 1993-September 1997</td>
<td>• ANAD and Benin Observer Commission (Mali and Burkina Faso interstate conflict) January 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• French Peace Support Operation in Djibouti 1991</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Operation Turquoise (French</td>
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\textsuperscript{17} Covers deployment of third-party troops / observer missions.
Table 4.1 gives an outline of the range of interventions that have taken place in Africa. External pivotal states military intervention and conflict stabilisation deployments have taken place in identity and resource-based civil wars, often with excessive international media coverage. For example, the British conflict stabilisation intervention in Sierra Leone, French conflict containment and peacekeeping deployment in DRC’s Ituri region and Côte d’Ivoire, and US intervention in Somalia. Similarly, regional peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations have often been deployed in both identity and resource-based intra-state wars that have led to state collapse. For example, the West African peacekeeping and intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation/Operation</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL (United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone)</td>
<td>October 1999 to present</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONUC (United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)</td>
<td>December 1999 to present</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMEE (United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea)</td>
<td>June 2000 to present</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia)</td>
<td>September 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONUB (United Nations Operation in Burundi)</td>
<td>June 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peacekeeping Operation in Rwanda</td>
<td>1994</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOMOG, Sierra Leone</td>
<td>October 1997-May 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU Observer mission in the Comoros (COMIC), Comoros</td>
<td>November 1997-May 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMOG, Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>December 1998-June 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC Allied Forces (under the auspices of SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security), Peacekeeping in the DRC</td>
<td>1998 to present</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU Observer Mission in the DRC</td>
<td>September 1999-November 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>French-led Peacekeeping in Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>October 2002 to present</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOMICI Peacekeeping in Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>January 2003 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMIL (ECOWAS Mission in Liberia)</td>
<td>August 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU African Mission in Burundi (AMIB)</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>African Mission in Sudan (AMIS)-Nigeria-led African Union Peacekeeping deployment in Darfur region of Sudan</td>
<td>October 2004 to present</td>
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force in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire. However, both the UN and OAU/African Union peacekeeping and peace support operations have been deployed in a range of conflict situations in Africa including; inter-state wars (e.g. Eritrea-Ethiopia war), Cold War proxy war (Congo in the 1960s), identity and resource-based civil wars, and secessionist wars such as western Sahara.

Fire Next Door: Regional Security Complex and the Challenges of Complex Political Emergencies in Africa

The interlocking nature and spillover of African wars, armed conflicts and multiple security threats, in particular the mutual vulnerabilities created by regional interdependence, have led to the view that political communities in Africa are locked into a regional security complex, hence response and interventions in domestic civil wars may require a regional approach to the containment, management and resolution of these conflicts. So why are the region or regional approaches to peace and security important? What constitutes a region or a regional system? The debate on the notion of region, ‘regioness’ regionalisation, and regional sub-systems in Africa is unsettled because of the difficulty of qualifying what constitutes a regional sub-system. Barry Buzan argues that the phenomenon of the regional sub-system has not been adequately analysed and conceptualised in International Relations, though there is considerable literature on regions in the field of regional integration study. In the post-Cold War period regional organisations and agencies have emerged as key actors in international politics, in particular in the maintenance of international peace and security. Regionalism and regional sub-systems constitute one of the key levels of analyses in the international system. Buzan posits that: ‘Because security is relational, one cannot understand the national security of any given state without understanding the regional and international pattern of security interdependence in which it is embedded.’

It is, therefore, important to understand how regional security sub-systems work: the regional patterns of change, geo-political dynamics, the role of intrusive or external actors, how the regional level mediates the interactions between states, non-state actors and the international system, and the effects of internal conflicts on regional peace and security.

Contemporary Africa is replete with several regional security complexes. One could arbitrarily divide the continent into the following regional security entities, namely, West Africa, Great Lakes region, Horn of Africa, Southern Africa, East and Central Africa, and the Maghreb or North Africa including the Sahel and the Middle East. Buzan and Waever have outlined the following as comprising the patterns of regional security in post-Cold War Africa; Southern Africa, West Africa, Horn of Africa, Central Africa (including the Great Lakes) and the Middle East, comprising North Africa. Buzan defines a regional security complex as a ‘group of states

whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another’.  

Applied to Africa, though, there are some commonalities in terms of regional security threats and perceptions: the states are differentiated in terms of security threats, both internal and external, impact of non-state actors, external actors, and the level and intensity of intra-regional security interdependence. But at the sub-regional levels, the states and peoples are locked into a geographical proximity with each other, which often creates the motivation and propensity for establishing regional organisations and collective security mechanisms. The geographical proximity and other factors such as socio-cultural, historical, racial, linguistic ethnic and ideological perceptions, also induce patterns of mutual security interdependence or vulnerability, of amity in terms of friendship and dependable expectations of peaceful co-existence, and enmity in terms of potentially hostile, suspicious and distrustful relationships.

Buzan emphasises that security complexes often exhibit interdependence of rivalry as well as that of shared interests. Geographical proximity and interactions amongst states in a specific geographical area inevitably bind the states and peoples together into a common security threat, and produce distinct threat perceptions to security and feelings of vulnerability. For example, the common perception in the West African sub-regions is the view that violent intra-state wars and civil conflicts are a serious threat to the very survival of states and people – hence feelings of mutual vulnerability.

The hostile international environment of the Cold War era drove African States into quasi-regional security regimes. The security constellations faced by Africa in the post-Cold War period, in particular the devastating effects of domestic civil wars on the region, are driving states into building regional peace and security systems. The interlocking nature of intra-state wars in Africa has led to the regionalisation of domestic civil wars. This is what I have described as the emergence of a ‘Fire next door’ phenomenon in Africa. It has become evident that in the respective geographical regions, states and peoples are bound together into military, political, and ethno-religious security threats. For instance, the military security of the Tutsi in Burundi is linked to the security of the Tutsis in Rwanda. Equally, the national security and political stability of Sierra Leone is now inextricably linked to the security and stability of neighbouring Liberia, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire. Furthermore, the national securities of the seven neighbouring states of DRC are inextricably linked to the security and stability of that country. Post-Cold War Africa, therefore, possesses several security complexes. For example, the West Africa proto-security complex is further complicated by the existence of sub-regional and micro-security complexes such as the insurgency warfares in the Mano River tri-states of

20 Ibid, p.190. A more advanced definition of the theory of regional security complex states; ‘a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from one another’ (Quoted in Buzan and Waever, 2003, p.44).

Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Similarly, the Southern African security complex is complicated with sub-regional security complexes and conflict formation in the Great Lakes region. The proto-security complex of the Horn of Africa is enmeshed with that of the Southern tip of the Middle East, including Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the standard security complex of North Africa (including the Middle East) is enmeshed with the sub-regional security complex including southern Europe (Spain) and Morocco. See Figure 4.2 for illustration of Africa’s security complexes in the post-Cold War period.

In contemporary Africa, a security complex is not so much about power projections and security dilemmas (aux Realist interpretations of International Relations), though there are several examples on the continent, but essentially about the nature, dynamics and complexity of domestically directed security threats with regional consequences. Though there are general and sometimes serious concerns, some states do not necessarily worry about the ascribed hegemonic role of, for example, Nigeria in West Africa, Egypt in the Maghreb region, and South Africa in Southern Africa. As long as the ascribed hegemonic or pivotal role is directed for the collective interests of the region. If anything, these so-called regional ‘big brothers’ or hegemons are courted within the context of regional organisations or regional intergovernmental collective security organisations to play a positive role. It is the perception of ‘shared values’, threat perception, ‘real or imagined’, to regional peace and security that often motivates and ‘legitimises’ regional collective interventions in a particular regional state or in each other’s security affairs.

It is important to recognise that security complexes in Africa operate within a wider international system and the contradictory impact of globalisation. The roles of non-state actors, sub-national groups, external actors and colonial legacies are relevant to the understanding of a particular regional security complex. The view is that these are not self-contained regional security complexes.

Conceptually, the ‘fire next door’ is an attempt to apply Buzan’s regional security complex to a specific context in Africa, i.e. situations of civil war and state collapse and the ensuring regional conflict formation, threat perception and vulnerability. In particular, how violent civil wars and the devastating regional consequences have inevitably locked African states into a mutual security vulnerability, to the extent that one country’s security is now invariably linked to peace and stability in a neighbouring state. There is the perception of a ‘fire next door’. But this ‘fire next door’ perspective only applies to particular generations of conflict, such as identity and resource-based intra-state wars. In addition, ‘fire next door’ could be both a reactive and pre-emptive intervention, i.e. reactive intervention by regional collective organisation when civil war breaks out or pre-emptive intervention to contain the outbreak of a potentially deadly civil war, and in the process, limit the consequences.

22 Power projection, security dilemma and inter-state disputes and wars have involved many neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Cameroon, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan, Ghana and Togo, Sierra Leone and Liberia, Tanzania and Uganda, and Rwanda and Uganda.
on regional peace and security. Based on the above, the ‘fire next door’ strategic thinking potentially develops a foreign and security policy of pro-intervention. This frame of thinking plausibly explains Nigeria’s propensity for military intervention in African conflict situations, and the understandable negative regional reactions.

The regionalisation of domestic conflicts has further aggravated the problems of regional interventions in Africa. The nature of these complex political emergencies illustrates the limitations of regional agencies in mediating, managing and resolving these conflicts. But how do we conceptualise and provide an understanding of complex political emergencies? Complex Political Emergencies (CPEs) is one of the fashionable or designer terminologies that emerged in the 1990s. It was coined
by the UN to describe the proliferation of major crises, the majority of which were intra-state conflicts that emerged after the end of the Cold War. It describes this ‘new’ category of conflicts of the 1990s as multi-causal and requiring multi-dimensional international responses including a combination of military intervention, peacekeeping and peace support operations, humanitarian relief programmes, high-level political intervention and diplomacy. Jenny Pearce is of the view that it is not clear whether the term was ‘intended to be anything more that a descriptive term rather than an analytical concept. The majority of the wars and armed conflicts in Africa are described as complex political emergencies and are characterised by large-scale human suffering and civilian casualties, and the crises themselves are multi-dimensional. Often, the root causes of the conflict are embedded in political and socio-economic grievances (i.e. human-instigated conflicts), sometimes complicated by natural disasters such as drought, famine and floods. The conflict is often followed by, or triggers, state failure and collapse, with societal fragmentation, large-scale destruction of infrastructure, forced migration and internal displacement and weakness or collapse of state governing institutions. The multiple crises creates a humanitarian emergency and hence the imperative for international intervention to save lives and alleviate or ameliorate human suffering. However, state collapse also triggers complex political emergencies.

The method of warfare in CPEs is a clear departure from conventional military security forces and involves civil militias, child soldiers and paramilitary forces. Often they are wars of attrition which become not only an ‘extension of politics by other means’ (i.e. struggle to gain access and control over state power), but also an extension of economics by other means (i.e. exploitation of war economies and struggle for access and control over state resources). The majority of these conflict-torn societies are peripheral economies, and the inefficient political and economic management of the state has undermined its capacity to provide welfare and security. Therefore, complex political emergency is a continuum describing the conditions immediately before, during, and after conflict or escalations of hostility, and requiring immediate intervention or response. The intervention often takes the form of humanitarian relief, security and military operations and a range of nation-building intervention programmes. The majority of the wars and armed conflicts in Africa have been described as complex political emergencies. It is evident that


the deployment of any military intervention in these CPEs is bound to face diverse problems and challenges.

**Humanitarian Intervention in Complex Political Emergencies in Africa**

It is because of this volatile CPE situation that a range of military interventions have been deployed to contain, stabilise and manage conflicts. Some of these interventions are cast in terms of humanitarian intervention, though it is difficult to see how and why some of these interventions could be labelled ‘humanitarian’. This humanitarian labelling or framing further complicates the problems of regional collective peace and security efforts. Military interventions of one kind or another have dominated the political history of post-colonial Africa. The dominant forms of intervention in Africa have been external military operations by either former colonial masters or a dominant power in pursuit of political, economic, military and strategic self-interests. Intra-African interventions have not, however, received similar international and academic attention. There have been three dominant forms of intervention in contemporary Africa, namely, unilateral individual state’s intervention, regional multinational intervention, and the All-African intervention force such as the OAU-led Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements in the Central Africa Republic (MISAB) in 1997. Hughes and May have categorised military interventions in Africa as ‘regime supportive’, i.e. providing military assistance to a threatened government or regime, normally within the framework of a bilateral military or defence pact; ‘regime oppressing’, i.e. active military support to destabilise or overthrow a government or regime; and ‘state survival’, i.e. military support or intervention to prop up a beleaguered regime or ensure survival of a state threatened by civil war or external aggression.26

But the nature and complexity of intra-state conflicts in the post-Cold War period means that these rather neat categories do not apply to the complex conflicts and multiple interventions. Oliver Furley and Roy May, in outlining the multiplicity of intra-African interventions, included; state-sponsored rebel insurgency forces against the state (Apartheid South African and support for RENAMO); support for rebel groups inside a state (Uganda and Rwanda in DRC, Charles Taylor’s Liberia’s support for the RUF in Sierra Leone); support for different warring factions in a civil war (DRC, Somalia and Guinea Bissau); regional organisations’ peacekeeping, peace enforcement, pro-democratic interventions and peace support operations (ECOMOG in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire, and SADC in DRC); intervention to prevent ‘ethnic-based’ cross-border military attacks (Uganda and Rwanda – Interrehamwe in DRC), and bids for regional hegemony (Nigeria in West Africa, Zimbabwe in Southern Africa).27

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interventions to manage and resolve African conflicts has led to increasing intra-African interventions within the framework of regional intergovernmental collective security. The majority of these interventions are cast in terms of, or labelled, humanitarian intervention. There is also the counter debate that these interventions, whether humanitarian or not, are in breach of the charters of the OAU and the UN, in particular the fundamental principles of international society, i.e. respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs of another state. Another controversial debate challenges the nature of humanitarian intervention in complex political emergencies in Africa.

But what is humanitarian intervention? Wil Verney defines humanitarian intervention as the

... threat or use of force by state or states abroad, for the sole purpose of preventing or putting a halt to a serious violation of fundamental human rights, in particular the right to life of persons, regardless of their nationality, such protection taking place neither upon authorisation by relevant organs of the United Nations nor with permission from the legitimate government of the target state.28

Broadly speaking, humanitarian intervention is the application of force in order to end genocide or other comparable atrocities. The term is also widely used to describe delivery of humanitarian relief supplies to deprived populations. Oliver Ramsbotham explains that ‘whereas in classic terminology, ‘humanitarian intervention’ means ‘forcible self-help by states across international borders to protect indigenous human rights’, under the re-conceptualisation, ‘humanitarian intervention means cross-border action by the international community in response to human suffering, made up of (i) ‘forcible humanitarian intervention’, an expanded version of the classic concept to include collective action as well as self-help and no longer confined to human rights abuses by governments, and (ii) ‘non-forcible humanitarian intervention’.29 Ramsbotham further divides both forcible and non-forcible humanitarian intervention into the following categories: (i) coercive governmental humanitarian intervention, comprising coercive military forcible humanitarian intervention (use of military enforcement actions), and non-forcible humanitarian intervention (imposition of sanctions); (ii) non-coercive governmental humanitarian intervention, comprising non-forcible humanitarian intervention such as UN and regional organisations’ peacekeeping, and humanitarian relief operations; (iii) transnational intergovernmental and non-governmental humanitarian intervention including media, and operations of UNHCR, UNICEF, ICRC, WFP and INGOs such as Médecin Sans Frontières and OXFAM.

It becomes evident that humanitarian intervention has a long history in Africa, but the controversy and debates still remain unsettled. Generally, the concept represents, on one hand, a conflict between concepts of sovereignty, order and non-intervention – for intervention would potentially undermine world order. And on the other hand, that of human rights, justice and intervention – in that the pursuit of these norms are more important, and that issues of sovereignty, world order and non-intervention should not render the international community impotent in situations of mass murder, genocide and gross violations of human rights. Humanitarian intervention also represents conflict between two ‘clusters of values’ reflected in the UN Charter, ‘state system values’ and ‘human rights values’, which ‘intersect with each other and which sometimes work at cross-purposes’.  

But what has been the traditional practice of humanitarian intervention in Africa? The issue of humanitarian intervention in Cold War Africa has been a vexing problem. The ‘primitive’ respect and adherence to the norms of international society, in particular respect for political sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs of members states, even in the face of gross violations of human rights and mass murder, has been the guiding principle. In addition, the label of humanitarian intervention has been a pretext for hiding the political, economic and strategic self-interests of sub-regional hegemons or pivotal states, external powers and actors intervening in Africa, for example, Belgian intervention in the Congo crisis of 1960, the US-Belgian intervention in Congo in 1964, South Africa in Angola in 1975, Tanzania in Uganda in 1978-9, and France in Central Africa in 1979. The case of Tanzanian intervention in Uganda warrants some attention because it was one of the few interventions during the Cold War that could be classified as humanitarian intervention. The brutal and repressive military dictatorship of Idi Amin of Uganda resulted in mass murder and gross violations of human rights, but the OAU and other African states were impotent to do anything about it because of the norms of international society that underpin the OAU Charter. There was also a personal feud between Amin and the Tanzanian President, Julius Nyerere. Amin’s military attack on Tanzanian territory provided the opportunity for a full-scale invasion of Uganda that led to the overthrow of Idi Amin. While Nyerere justified this invasion as a legitimate military humanitarian intervention, the OAU and other African states perceived it as a disturbing precedent. This view of African states is understandable given the context of Cold War politics and the fact that the majority of the regimes had limited or dubious legitimacy. The only protection was the principles of international society. Even Nyerere, who justified his invasion on humanitarian grounds was quick to reaffirm respect for sovereignty. Ramsbotham argues that ‘Although Third

30 Ibid, p.446
World opposition to the ‘Western’ predilection for humanitarian intervention is often noted, the three most cited examples of humanitarian intervention from the Cold War period were all by Third World countries: India, Tanzania and Vietnam’.  

The post-Cold War period and the multiplicity of complex political emergencies have impacted on the debate on humanitarian intervention. These complex political emergencies have devastating humanitarian implications and have often led to increasing forcible and non-forcible interventions in Africa in the 1990s, such as Nigerian-led ECOMOG in West Africa, the US-UNITAF in Somalia, French-led forces in Rwanda in 1994 and Bunia-DRC in 2003. The view is that in these complex political emergencies, sovereignty is contested, in full retreat or irrelevant, characterised by state collapse and societal fragmentation, and in a Hobbesian ‘state of nature’. In such a situation, the norms of international society are implacable or could not be enforced, hence the need for international intervention. Ramsbotham and Woodhouse critically engaged with the dilemmas and relevance of the concept in contemporary international society. The classic dilemma is how to respond or whether, in fact, to intervene on humanitarian grounds when faced with human rights abuses and unacceptable human suffering in internal conflicts. Whether response should be through unilateral intervention by a regional or sub-regional power, a coalition of willing states. What strategy should be developed by the international community as a collective mechanism for preventing or ameliorating humanitarian disaster?

There is an emerging norm of intervention in situations of gross violations of human rights, genocide, war crimes and state collapse. Humanitarian intervention in Africa is opening a debate on the retreat of sovereignty in situations of human rights abuses, mass murder and state collapse. The emerging norm is based on the view that sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct, and that the international community will increasingly be prepared to set aside the principles of inviolability of national borders and non-intervention, in situations of Rwandan-type genocide, state collapse and gross human rights abuses. In contemporary society, it is accepted that the domestic conduct of government, in particular treatment of its citizens, is now open to scrutiny by other governments, INGOs and international institutions. During the Cold War, the threat of the use of force to save victims of human rights abuses was interpreted as a violation of the UN Charter. Nicholas Wheeler, therefore, argues that it is ‘This gap between commitment and instrument that allows governments to abuse human rights with virtual impunity . . . ‘Doing something’ to rescue non-citizens facing the extreme is likely to provoke the charge of interference in the internal affairs of another state, while ‘doing nothing’ can lead to accusations of moral indifference’.  

Kofi Annan’s seminal statement underpinned the fundamental shift in the understanding and practice of the concept of sovereignty when he stated that ‘The sovereignty of states can no longer be used as a shield for gross violations

Regional Organisations and Humanitarian Intervention

of human rights'. The UN Secretary General has even gone further to state that the world should not sit back and watch another Rwandan-genocide occur. Kofi Annan has urged the international community to act in defence of human protection purposes even with UN Security Council authorisation.

Other political analysts and media commentators are not agreed on what constitutes ‘humanitarian’ and whether such criteria should or have been consistently applied over time. Also, there is the unsettled debate as to the purpose and motives for ‘intervention’, and what type of intervention would be effective, whether forcible or non-forcible, or a combination of both. During the Cold War, the debate was dominated by the restrictive definition of humanitarian intervention focusing on violations of international human rights in states; not providing for non-military humanitarian activities of states and NGOs. In the Post-Cold War period, the focus of the debate has been shifted by the counter-restrictionists who add to the violations of human rights the critical elements of breaches of international humanitarian law on war crimes and conduct of warfare and international humanitarian assistance to alleviate gross deprivation and humanitarian disaster. There is also the emerging call for clarity on what constitutes purpose, agency, target, force level, context and legitimacy of humanitarian intervention. Wheeler has argued that the debate on the legitimacy of military humanitarian intervention is generally divided between two schools of thought, i.e. the pluralist / realist international society theorists and the solidarist international society theorists. Broadly, the pluralist and realist international society theorists are of the view that humanitarian intervention is a breach of the principles of international society put in place to provide international order amongst states sharing different concepts of justice. This school of thought privileges states and not individuals as the bearers of rights and duties in international law, and argues that states are limited when developing agreement beyond a minimum ethics of co-existence. In fact, the view is that humanitarian intervention is a front in the pursuit of political, economic and strategic self-interests by states. On the other hand, solidarist international society theorists accept that there exists the moral possibility of defence of common humanity, and perceive humanitarian intervention as a means to strengthen the legitimacy of international society by deepening its commitment to justice. Rather than perceive ‘order’ and ‘justice’ in perpetual tension, they see the possibility for developing practices that recognise mutual interdependence. Solidarists recognise that states as well as individuals have rights and duties in international

law, and the rights of individuals can be enforced by states. The primary view is that states have a moral responsibility to protect and provide security not only for their own citizens, but also to be the ‘guardian of human rights everywhere’.  

In the post-Cold War period, states are now developing an increasing collective capacity to protect and enforce standards of humanity in complex political emergencies. For example, West African peacekeeping and peace support operations have been cast as humanitarian interventions, but pluralist and realist schools of thought dispute this claim—arguing that the regional intervention was a front for the pursuit of Nigeria’s strategic self-interests. To address these complex issues, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) published a seminal report on The Responsibility to Protect (2001) outlining the main principles of intervention in complex political emergencies and the responsibility to protect. The view is that where a population is suffering serious harm as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the responsibility of the international community to protect. The responsibility to protect includes prevention of root and direct causes of conflict and other man-made crises threatening the security of the population. The responsibility to react to situations of compelling human need should be based on appropriate response measures including coercive measures such as sanctions, international prosecution and, in extreme cases, military intervention as the last resort. Humanitarian intervention should also take the responsibility to rebuild after military intervention, by providing full and sustained assistance for recovery and reconstruction that would address the underlying causes of the war and should be designed to prevent relapse into further conflict. Furthermore, any military intervention should be for humanitarian reason and human protection purposes, such as large scale loss of life, actual or apprehended, relating to genocide, mass murder, ‘ethnic-cleaning’, forced expulsion, acts of terror and rape. Also that military intervention should be justified only as a last resort, when all other non-military options for peaceful resolution or prevention have been explored. In addition, the military intervention must be proportional to the human protection objectives, with reasonable prospect of success in preventing or halting the human suffering which justified intervention. Legitimacy of the intervention must come from the UN Security Council with a clear and unambiguous mandate and rules of engagement.  

The experiments with regional intergovernmental forcible ‘humanitarian’ interventions in Africa in the 1990s have shown how difficult it is to apply these principles in situations of complex political emergencies. These examples demonstrate that the military dimension is not only important in achieving human protection objectives, but also crucial to the success of other non-forcible interventions. Thomas Weiss is, however, critical of the ICISS report, arguing that the conclusions of the

report are not sufficiently forward-looking, that the problem is too little humanitarian intervention rather than too much. He dismisses the fear that the responsibility to protect may become a Trojan Horse in the service of great powers, reforming the UN Security Council; and that it would be more productive to encourage the strategic link between US multilateralism and humanitarian crises. 39

Security Regionalism and the Emerging Regional ‘Responsibility to Protect’ in Complex Political Emergencies

Regional patterns of co-operative security, conflict management and resolution are emerging as a major feature of post-Cold War international politics as demonstrated by intra-African conflict management interventions. Attempts at building regional peace and security systems are perceived as one of several responses to ‘contain the spread of regional conflict through mutual security and collective defence’. The DFID report of 2001 argued that

There is need for simple but reliable structures for security co-operation that can stabilise relations, prevent spillover of conflicts, secure emerging common values and perhaps, lay the foundation for new security regimes. In the absence of effective crisis response structures, regional peacekeeping initiatives will continue to be ad hoc, poorly implemented and driven by the interests of the strongest in the region.40

The challenges of violent intra-state wars and armed conflicts and the problems of complex political emergencies in Africa and against the background of the ‘strategic overstretch’ of the UN, mean that regional organisations will continue to play a dominant role in the management and resolution of regional conflicts. We, therefore, see the emergence of security regionalism, generally defined as security co-operation amongst geographically proximate states, usually acting under the auspices of a regional organisation, with a dominant sub-regional hegemon. Co-operation amongst these regional states may also include increasing economic and political interdependence but simultaneously driven by the co-operation-conflict, amity-enmity dynamics. Security regionalism embraces the notion of building a regional order for peace and stability and enhancing national and regional well-being through collective action, in particular, collective action geared towards addressing problems with destabilising regional effects.41 Implicit in the notion of security regionalism is the view that economic interdependence, sustainable development, democratic consolidation, social progress and durable peace are

impossible in an environment of regionalised wars, armed conflicts and political instability. But rather than always perceive security regionalism in positive terms, it is important to recognise its negative dimensions. Security regionalism is inherently fraught with unequal power relations or asymmetries in that the strong, viable and dominant states often determine or ‘dictate’ the contents, interests and directions of the regional ‘collective’ organisation, mostly at the detriment of smaller and weaker regional members. Given the disparity in the resource capability and endowment of regional states, in the pursuit of regional collective peace and security efforts or interventions, smaller and cash-strapped economies are forced to divert millions of dollars from national socio-economic development to regional peace and conflict management activities. In addition, the power asymmetries ensure the pooling of sovereignties within a regional collective intervention potentially undermines or erodes the political sovereignty of some member states.

However, security regionalism is emerging as part of the global political, economic and social transformation. Muthiah Alagappa is of the view that the emergence of security regionalism is mainly due to the increasing regionalisation of world politics, the collapse of the Cold War security framework, the inability of one state or organisation to manage the post-Cold War multiple security challenges and the emergence of new centres of power in the form of regional powers and non-state actors such as warlords and terrorist groups, the desire of regional states to have greater control over their strategic environment within the context of globalisation, and the corresponding growth of economic regionalism.42

But emerging security regionalism is not a regional collective security mechanism because collective security by definition is a global or regional security regime agreed to by member states, setting the rules of keeping the peace and peaceful co-existence and, most importantly, guided by the principle that a military attack or an act of aggression by any state will automatically provoke a combined military response from the rest.43 This multilateral collective security framework is a liberal project driven by liberal economics to prevent war. This is reflected in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty which states that ‘The Parties agree that an attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all . . . ’44 The emerging phenomenon of security regionalism or region building for peace and security in Africa is not perceived by the ‘region builders’ and main actors as a collective security response protecting member states from external aggression. The main military security threats faced by African states are from internal wars, armed conflicts, criminal violence, terrorist activities and non-military sources of

threat to survival. Therefore, the notion of collective security in terms of protection from external attacks is not applicable to the emerging phenomenon of security regionalisms. From the experience of security regionalisms in Africa, the attempt at building regional peace and security systems is a pragmatic attempt by regional economic communities to respond to the challenges of wars, armed conflicts and how these undermine and hinder the achievement of regional economic integration and development objectives. I have argued elsewhere that the expansion into the domain of regional security by essentially regional economic communities is a reflection of the logic of pragmatic incrementalism, i.e. the recognition that peace and security are indispensable pre-requisites for economic regionalism. The evolution and gradual integration of economic and security regionalism reflects the convergence of political, economic and security motivations, complementarity of elite values and a high level of political support.45 Given the nature and dynamics of regionalisation of domestic civil wars and the fact that African states are inextricably locked into security complexes, the emergence of security regionalisms is a purposeful regional collective effort to ‘do something’ about the multiple security threats and widespread wars and armed conflicts raging in the continent. The nature of these complex political emergencies and their devastating effects on regional peace, security and development have brought home the realisation that conflict anywhere has serious consequences for regional peace and stability, bound to upset the equilibrium of regional peaceful co-existence. The pragmatic incrementalism in the form of expansion into the regional security domain is based on the view that the domestic civil wars are the ‘fires next door’ which must be dealt with by regional collective effort or a coalition of willing states, led by a sub-regional hegemon, to ‘put out the fire’ before it flares into a regional conflagration. What is also emerging is the view that these domestic civil wars represent a ‘clear and present danger’ to the regimes of neighbouring countries, most of which have questionable domestic legitimacy and democratic credentials. The regional efforts to respond to domestic civil wars are therefore a covert attempt by some regimes to protect themselves from a similar fate.

In the 1990s, we saw the increasing propensity of regional organisations to intervene in domestic conflicts often framed as humanitarian intervention. The majority of these regional intergovernmental ‘collective security’ responses present the view that it is their responsibility to intervene because of the proximity of the wars and armed conflicts and also their responsibility to protect not only their citizens trapped in the conflict, but also their African brothers and sisters facing unacceptable human suffering and mass murder.

Conclusion

Post-Cold War Africa is potentially defining the nature, dynamics and implications of co-operative security and co-deployment in the maintenance of international

peace and security as provided for in the UN Charter. But the nature and operational implications of the emerging delegation and de-centralisation of responsibilities in the management of international peace and security between the UN and regional arrangements still need to be worked out for effective operationalisation. What is also worrying is the fact that African states are locked into a sometimes volatile regional security complex and conflict formation. The nature and context of the many complex political emergencies means that the co-operative security framework, through delegation to regional agencies, is bound to be problematic, because ‘humanitarian’ interventions, whether forcible or non-forcible, will potentially operate in conflict zones often with no cease-fire to monitor, no peace to keep and where the humanitarian relief agencies are at the mercy of rival warring factions, who are sometimes complete strangers to the laws of armed conflict and to international human rights norms. This bleak picture has not deterred regional economic communities in Africa from expanding into the security domain for a variety of reasons, often cast in humanitarian terms. The emerging regionalisation of conflict management in Africa is a positive development, thus strengthening the case for complementarity between the efforts of the international community and the ‘Try Africa First’ approach to peace, security and conflict management. I have consistently argued that the potential positive dimension of security regionalism is not unproblematic, and if anything, raises some serious concerns. But equally so, these concerns should not stop or limit the capacity to constructively engage with the potential opportunities provided by the emerging relevance of building regional peace and security systems in Africa.
Chapter 5

OAU – African Union: Experiment in Regional Security, Peacekeeping and Peace Support Operations

Introduction

To understand the nature, dynamics and complexity of the ‘uniting Africa’ project, it is important to critically engage with the existing and emerging structures and architecture for continental and regional peace and security. The central argument is that there is an emerging phenomenon in the regionalisation of conflict management and the sharing of responsibilities for international peace and security between the United Nations and regional intergovernmental ‘collective security’ organisations or coalitions of willing states in Africa. But to understand this emerging trend, we need to critically examine how the OAU and its successor, the African Union, have created the environment for emergence of assertive regionalism in the areas of peace and security. In particular, it is also relevant to explore the delegation or division of labour between the UN and the continental body, the OAU, and how the co-operation between both institutions better provide an understanding of the division of labour between sub-regional continental and the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Africa and the experiments, or adventures, in regional peacekeeping and conflict management provide a range of empirical examples to engage with the theory and practice of the phenomenon of security regionalism in world politics. This chapter will, therefore, present a critical overview of the OAU structures for continental peace and security, in particular its framework for conflict prevention, management and resolution. The lessons learned from this quasi- or ‘rudimentary’ architecture for peace and security, the new African Union and its established structures for dealing with peace, security and conflict in Africa will be discussed. Does the emerging regionalisation of conflict management provide a framework for building regional peace and security systems in Africa? What are the roles and contributions of sub-regional hegemons and hegemonic pretenders in maintaining regional peace, security and stability?

To understand these developments in Africa, it is important to start with the OAU architecture for peace, security and conflict resolution. In general, Africa is often conceptualised as a ‘region’ in relation to other continental regions of the world such as Europe, Asia and Latin America. This macro-regional conception of Africa perceives
it as geographically proximate political entities, with diverse histories, politico-economic structures, identities, resources and orientations, but co-operating (at least sometimes) to achieve common continental interests. The conception of ‘region’ is laden with normative assumptions, i.e. regional order, peace, security, development and provision of collective or public goods. But this normative assumption is silent on the potentially negative effects of regional interactions and interdependence because not all members of a regional grouping will benefit equally, or benefit at all, from the regionalist endeavours. It is also underpinned by subordination, because the weaker members of the grouping will have to follow the ‘dictates’ and strategic preferences of the stronger and more developed members. There is also the tendency in much of the political science, development and economics literature to assume that regions are a ‘given’, and ‘believed to exist ‘out there’, identifiable through material structures, regional organisations and regional actors’. Relevant to this argument is the view presented by new regionalism analysts that regions are not in any way ‘given’ or ‘natural’ or even homogenous entities, but are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed either intentionally or unintentionally in the process of regional and global transformations, by identity formation and collective human action. Hence, the role of region-builders or actors in the social, political and economic construction and reconstruction of regions, and, according to Iver Neumann, ‘the existence of regions is preceded by the existence of region-builders’.

Applied to Africa, the increasing interdependence and intensification of the multiple regionalisation processes have given the perception of ‘regioness’ in Africa, often expressed in the identity of pan-Africanism and African unity and solidarity. The macro-regional conception of Africa also illustrates that there exist several regional sub-systems and micro-regions. The OAU as the continental body has to co-operate and compete with several sub-regionalist projects in Africa.

The OAU and Regionalism in Africa: A Framework for Regional Order, Peace and Security

This brings us to the question as to whether in fact the emerging regionalisms in Africa can provide a viable framework for the maintenance of regional order, peace and security. Analysis of the role and contribution of regional organisations to the maintenance of peace and security in the International Relations literature is often underpinned by neo-realism which assumes that regional security threats exist, hence it is in the interests of regional and sub-regional hegemons to maintain order and stability. The neorealist interpretation of regionalism is based on several

assumptions in that states are regarded as primary actors, that states often form security regionalisms or alliances in response to external security threats, that regionalism becomes a political instrument in the pursuit of national interests or to maximise power and security and that the motivations to join regionalist projects is driven by relative gains, and in some cases, absolute gains. It, therefore, argues that due to the existence of security complexes, regional hegemons may assume the role of security provider or guarantor, and hence control regional stability and order. The regional hegemon may also provide ‘protection’ from assumed security threats, but this inevitably creates power asymmetries because the weaker states in any regional security or military alliance may have to accept subordinate roles. An interesting perspective is that the weaker states may also sometimes rally together in a regionalist project against the hegemon and even use the regionalist project as an instrument to control or tame the perceived (real or imagined) hegemonic excesses or ambitions. Neorealists also assume that the regional institutions have only marginal influence on state action and interstate relations. This assumption is not borne out by the experience of regional organisations in Africa. The emerging economic and security regionalisms have developed an institutional form and life of their own and have demonstrated time and again the ability and capacity to influence states’ actions and interstate relations, especially in the field of regional peacekeeping and peace support operations.

Within the emerging international political economy literature on new regionalism, the state is considered as an important unit in organisation and decision-making, but only one of several actors in international and intra-regional relations. Though elites still continue to play a driving role in the formal regionalisation process, the multiplicity of non-state actors and sub-national actors at the informal levels, including the market and society, are now recognised as key players and drivers in the regionalisation processes. The ‘bottom-up’ regionalisation includes economic, socio-cultural and political regional networks that are very different from formal


5 Ibid.
state-led regionalism. Within this perspective, the new regionalism lends a positive role to regionalism in solving diverse regional problems such as peace, security, conflict, development, economy and environment; hence it is in the interests of sub-regions to promote regionalism that focuses on complementarities between formal and informal processes and actors.

The OAU, in its 39 year history, has endeavoured to establish a peace, security and conflict resolution architecture. In addition, sub-regional organisations have also developed regional peace, security and conflict management structures to maintain regional order, peace and stability. The ‘rudimentary’ architecture for peace, security and regional order is also an attempt to respond to the multiple problems and challenges at regional and continental levels, within the context of a sometimes traumatic transformation of the global political economy. The evolving structures, procedures and quasi-norms and values are an attempt by Africa to find solutions to African problems. But according to the former OAU Secretary General, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, these efforts ‘may not necessarily contribute to a neatly drawn blueprint or architecture for the maintenance of peace and security on the continent’. Two important observations emerge from the phenomenon of regionalisation of conflict management and the efforts to build regional peace and security systems in Africa.

Firstly, the regional and continental efforts and experiments are largely reactive. The peacekeeping/peace support operations and regional conflict management activities have been largely a response to crises and tragedies that have erupted or were about to erupt such as the genocide in Rwanda, the bloody conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, state collapse in Chad, and the devastation and partition of DRC. The West African peacekeeping and conflict management operations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire (Chapter 6), and the conflict management and intervention by the SADC Allied Armed Forces (SADC-AAF) in DRC (Chapter 7) are examples of this reactive approach to regional peace and security. However, there are some peace and security maintenance activities in Africa that are initiated on a proactive basis, i.e. the need to pre-empt and resolve conflict situations that may potentially have devastating regional consequences. The second observation is that this reactive response or ‘fire brigade’ mentality (only respond to emergency situations) has led to regional improvisation and ad hoc arrangements, sometimes not properly thought through, in terms of capabilities, resources, operating procedures and doctrines, and the regional political and foreign policy implications. This observation points to the evident need to consolidate regional mechanisms towards an integrated approach or architecture for peace and security in Africa. But Salim Salim again warns against the tendency for ‘straight-jacketed blueprints’ or ‘politically expedient’ architecture for peace and security because the ‘nature and character of conflicts and the practical realities on the ground tend to be complex and are not amenable to blueprints. This is not, however, to discount or dismiss the need for strategic approaches to conflict prevention, management and

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resolution. Nor does it negate the necessity for improving and enhancing the existing arrangements for promoting peace and security on the continent.’

The mechanisms or broad architecture for maintaining regional order, peace and security in Africa can be generally categorised into the following:

2. Regional / sub-regional approaches including protocols on defence and security, regional economic communities, and the establishment of security regionalisms such as ECOMOG in West Africa, SADC-AAF in the Great Lakes region, and IGAD’s preventive diplomacy mechanisms.
3. Coalition of willing states with proximity to conflict situations and their political and military interventions to maintain sub-regional peace and security, sometimes supported by the OAU and UN.
4. Track II diplomacy by civil society organisations, humanitarian relief agencies, NGOs and INGOs involved in peace making, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding.

**OAU Architecture for Peace and Security: The Adventure into Peace Support Operations**

What does the OAU Charter say about continental peace and security? The Charter recognised the peaceful settlement of disputes through mediation, conciliation and arbitration. The OAU established a Commission for Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, but the protocol prescribed for optional jurisdiction and mediation was limited to inter-state disputes and conflicts. This and other problems made the commission redundant. In response to the security challenges and threat perceptions of the 1960s, the OAU proposed the establishment of an African High Command as a collective security and defence framework. The aims of the African High Command were to ensure protection of territorial integrity, political sovereignty, defence from external aggression, prevention of the balkanisation of Africa, and assistance to liberation fighters against colonial domination. A Defence Commission was proposed in 1965, with troops earmarked from units of each member state. In 1972, the proposed Defence Commission suggested that a practical and realistic mechanism for a collective security and defence framework was the creation of sub-regional defence and security mechanisms. But nothing came of these proposals. However, we have a blueprint for the formation of sub-regional security and peacekeeping mechanisms such as ECOMOG and SADC - AAF. The OAU, therefore, laid the foundation for the establishment of a new regional architecture for peace and security.

The OAU Charter is based on state-centrism, and the framers of the Charter subjected other critical considerations such as respect for human rights, democratic

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7 Ibid.
governance, human security and development to state formation and regime survival. The OAU, therefore, became the custodian of the norms of international society and the protection of customary norms that restrictively defined self-determination, meaning political independence, with reference only to European colonial rule or anti-colonial struggle. In addition to the institutional mechanisms for responding to peace and security, the OAU provided a normative framework for inter-African and international diplomacy. The Charter, therefore, stipulates the principles and norms that govern African diplomacy. The rigid and inflexible adherence to the principles of international society, enshrined in the OAU Charter, seriously undermined the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. The frank view of Salim Salim is critical to the understanding of why the OAU failed to maintain continental peace and security.

Traditionally, a strong view has been held that conflicts within states fall within the exclusive competence of the states concerned. Arising from this basic assertion was the equally strong view that it was not the business of the OAU to pronounce itself on these conflicts and that the organisation certainly had no mandate to seek its involvement in resolving problems of this nature. In consequence, the organisation had to stand by in apparent helplessness as many of these conflicts have torn countries apart, caused millions of deaths, destroyed infrastructure and property, created millions of refugees and displaced persons and caused immense hurt and suffering to innocent men, women and children.\(^8\)

Notwithstanding the rigid adherence to the norms of international society, the OAU’s first pan-African peacekeeping and intervention Inter-African Force, deployed in the Chad conflict from 1981-82, was an innovative attempt to respond to regional peace and security. The Inter-African Force was deployed in a complex conflict situation with no proper ceasefire to monitor, lack of clear political goals, an ambiguous mandate, lack of commitment by warring factions, and differences in opinion by OAU member states about the objective of the peacekeeping and intervention force. Some political analysts and media commentators have described the Chad peacekeeping adventure by the OAU as a complete failure.\(^9\) However, Christopher Clapham argues that it is misleading to describe the Chad intervention in this way. Instead, he argues that it would be helpful to critically analyse the reasons for the failure, such as the multiplicity of actors and goals, the local political

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environment, the limitations and goals of the intervention force, and the interaction between domestic and external actors.  

With the end of the Cold War and the changed international security and conflict environment in Africa, the OAU was forced to adopt a fundamental shift in its appreciation and response to peace and security challenges. The OAU Declaration on the Political and Socio-economic Situation in Africa in June 1990 and the conclusions of the May 1991 Kampala Leadership Forum established the normative principles in redefining security, and the inextricable links between peace, security, socio-economic development, democratisation, human rights and good governance at national and regional levels as the key to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. This continental recognition also explored the imperative to utilise African approaches to African problems, in particular using African resources and traditions in preventing and resolving regional conflicts. The joint OAU-African Leadership Forum Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) in 1991 also focused on the link between security, stability, development, democracy and co-operation as the critical elements for Africa’s socio-economic recovery and progress. In an attempt to develop an integrated approach, the CSSDCA framework proposed four interrelated calabashes on security, stability, development and co-operation.

At the international level, there was the perception of disinterest in African conflicts by the international community. During this period, the limited strategic relevance of Africa in the post-Cold War era and the preoccupation of the attention of the international community with the Gulf War in 1991, made Africa a neglected region. This international neglect forced on the OAU the imperative to respond to on-going deadly conflicts such as that in Liberia in the 1990s. At the OAU Summit in Cairo in 1993, the heads of state agreed to establish a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (MCPMR), and the creation of a specific division within the OAU secretariat, with responsibility for implementation and development of capacity for effective management of conflicts. The OAU-MCPMR was established in 1995, with a Central Organ to provide direction and co-ordination. The Central Organ consulted with parties, to ‘deploy efforts and take all appropriate initiatives to prevent, manage and resolve conflict’.  

The anticipatory and preventive focus of the Mechanism also included close co-operation with the UN and other African sub-regional organisations. An OAU Peace Fund was established with 5 per cent of the organisation’s annual budget allocated to the work of the Mechanism.


\[\text{Peck, Sustainable Peace, 1998, p.164.} \]
In addition to this structure for peace and security, the OAU had other institutional frameworks for responding to problems and challenges to peace and security. The OAU mechanisms for the pacific settlement of disputes included judicial settlement, mediation and traditional peacekeeping. They also include ad hoc Commissions of heads of state on specific conflict situations, normally involving neighbouring states, for example the ad hoc Commissions on Mozambique, Burundi and Comoros. These commissions made some effort in contributing to the political mediation and peace settlements of the civil conflicts in Mozambique and Comoros. The OAU peacekeeping and peace support operations have been deployed in the following. In Rwanda, an OAU military Observer Mission was deployed in 1993 to assist in arresting the collapsing security situation. Margaret Vogt contends that the transfer of the mission to the UN contributed to the genocide of 1994. The argument is that the failure of urgent decision on the part of the UN Security Council, fear of western countries about the safety and security of their troops deployed in a deadly conflict situation, western apprehensions about domestic political fall-out from such deployment, and the lack of basic resources for the UN mission in Rwanda, all provided the enabling environment for the genocide to be possible. Even after the withdrawal of the UN from Rwanda, the OAU component remained in the country.12

In Burundi, an OAU military observer force, though small and under-resourced, remained despite the imposition of sanctions and withdrawal of international organisations and donor governments. The OAU peace support operations include civilian components involving political missions to provide technical management and advisory functions to peace negotiations, constitutional talks, observation of electoral processes and mediation between warring factions for example in Congo-Brazzaville and Sierra Leone. In inter-state conflicts such as Ethiopia-Somalia, and Ethiopia-Eritrea, the OAU used its good offices to facilitate pacific settlements of disputes and even utilised third parties such as respected African heads of state to mediate and resolve inter-state conflicts. The OAU's successor, the African Union has also deployed peacekeeping and peace support operations in the following: Burundi (AMIB) between 2003-2004 and the Nigerian-Rwanda led Inter-African mission in the Darfur region of Sudan (AMIS) since October 2004. The African Union experimental peacekeeping missions in both Burundi and Sudan are far from successful, although the deployments have contributed to some form of containment and conflict stabilisation in the case of Burundi. What is important is the fact that the success or failure of these African Union peacekeeping operations will determine the success or failure of future continental peace and security activities.

The OAU has been criticised for its inability to manage and resolve African conflicts in the past 39 years. There is ample evidence to illustrate that the OAU mechanisms on continental peace and security had no, or were of limited, practical effect on maintaining peace, security and stability in Africa. The OAU was held

to ransom by its own charter, a charter designed, in part, to prevent ‘generalised
chaos’ in Africa. Perhaps the only mechanism that could be regarded as a relative
success was the commission dealing with issues of decolonisation and eradication
of racist regimes. This commission played some role in bringing about the end of
apartheid in South Africa, and decolonisation in Namibia and Zimbabwe, but could
not end colonial dominations in both Western Sahara and Eritrea. It is evident that
the issue is not the lack of an institutional framework for responding to peace and
security challenges in Africa, but one of effectiveness, mainly due to the following:
the majority of mechanisms not being fully operational, resource deficiencies
in financial, human and logistics provision, and lack of strong synergy between
conflict structures, both vertically and horizontally, i.e. no viable and sustainable
operational linkage between continental mechanisms and regional peace and security
structures. 13

**OAU-United Nations and Sub-regional Organisations Co-operative Security
for Peace and Security**

In the post-Cold War period, there has been increasing co-operation between the
OAU, UN and sub-regional organisations on peace and security. This co-operation
has been framed within Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Between 1994-2003, the UN
Secretary General organised five high-level meetings to develop a comprehensive
framework for co-operation between the UN and regional organisations involving
conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and the post-9/11 new security threats. Nine
principles can be discerned as a result of the emerging ‘framework for co-operation’
including; a flexible and pragmatic approach to regional crises with no universal
model for intervention; UN primacy in all crises; clear division of labour between
the UN and regional organisations; regular consultation between the UN and
regional organisations on peace and security issues; mutual support in diplomatic
and operational activities; joint operational deployment/co-deployment where
appropriate, regional impartiality in handling conflicts; common conflict prevention
modalities; and common peacebuilding principles. 14 The underlying principle for the
emerging framework for co-operation is that all peace and security activities must
be within the spirit and letter of chapters VI (pacific settlement of disputes) and VII
(enforcement action) of the UN Charter.

Margaret Vogt, therefore, posits that

... one of the most important innovations in the management of international security in
the post-Cold War era is the concept of shared responsibility between the United Nations
and some regional organisations for the effective management of conflicts within the

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regions of the world. Africa is the first region where extensive efforts have been made recently to formalise the relation between the UN and the regional organisation . . .

The changed international environment and fundamental shift in the security and conflict landscape of Africa have all challenged the OAU’s traditional approaches and mechanisms for peace and security. The tenure of office of Kofi Annan has seen increasing sharing of responsibilities between the UN and OAU on peace and conflict management. The UN established a political liaison office at the OAU to enhance information flow and co-ordination of political activities on peace and security issues. Staff of relevant departments from both institutions have collaborated to lend support in conflict mediation and civil war peace settlements. The increasing co-operation on conflict prevention, management and resolution between the OAU and UN has led to the establishment of Joint OAU-UN Special Envoys to mediate in conflicts, for example in the Great Lakes region. Recognising the limitations of the UN, Kofi Annan has given his seal of approval for the regionalisation of conflict management by regional organisations or regional intergovernmental collective security organisations. He confirms that

The United Nations does not have, at this point in its history, the institutional capacity to conduct military enforcement measures under Chapter VII. Under present conditions, an ad hoc Member States’ coalition of the willing offers the most effective deterrent to aggression or to the escalation or spread of an on-going conflict.16

But the experience of the debacle in Somalia has had a profound effect on the UN’s approach to sharing of responsibility with regional organisations and external pivotal states for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The failure of the OAU to respond to conflict situations in Africa, in particular during the post-Cold War period, provided the opportunity for sub-regional organisations to fill the security and defence gap. They have shown more determination and greater willingness than the OAU to respond to domestic conflicts with potential regional consequences. The philosophy and ideology underpinning the response of sub-regional organisations to peace and security is perceived as part of the ‘Try Africa first’ approach to African problems and the much-touted African renaissance and African century. These sub-regional organisations have to adapt their original economic integration and development mandates and institutions to suit the new security and peace functions.

A general survey of the continent will illustrate that Africa is littered with regional economic communities and security/defence groupings, all of which are geared towards the realisation of the OAU gradual and incremental approach to African unity and solidarity through regional integration and co-operation. In the management

15 Vogt, ‘Co-operation between the United Nations and the OAU’, 1998, p.1. It is important to point out that the organization of American States (OAS) was the first regional arrangement to establish formal relationship with the UN in 1948.

and resolution of regional conflicts, the OAU maintained extensive collaboration and political-diplomatic support for sub-regional organisations such as ECOWAS/ ECOMOG in West Africa, IGAD in Sudan and Somalia, and the SADC Organ in the Great Lakes region. All indications are that the OAU had some comparative advantage in the management of regional peace and security. But critics point to the fact that the OAU was a Cold War creation and thus unsuited for the international challenges and security threats of the post-Cold War era. The view is that the OAU’s traditional approach to inter-state conflict is not suitable for the challenges posed by violent and bloody intra-state wars and armed conflicts. The multi-dimensional nature of complex peacekeeping which requires far greater resources and capacity to cope, also points to the fact that the OAU is incapable of meeting the present peace and security challenge. In these emerging civilian-based civil wars and complex political emergencies, there are several actors in the conflict and the division of labour between the UN, OAU and regional organisations is increasingly blurred. The increasing collaboration and co-deployment efforts in peace support operations between the UN, OAU and sub-regional organisation have led to discussions on the need to develop Africa’s capacity for peace and security, and the imperative for standardisation of training programmes, logistics and resources for peacekeeping and peace support operations.

In advancing arguments for the future of peacekeeping and conflict management within the framework of co-deployment involving OAU, UN and sub-regional organisations, W. Nhara argues that

In graphic terms, and for the purposes of conflict management, the partnership between the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, together with its sub-regional organisations, should be akin to a pyramid. At the top of that pyramid should be the United Nations as a world body, and as the supreme organ for ensuing peace and security, world-wide. At the bottom of that pyramid should be the sub-regional organisations. And between the apex and the base, the OAU should provide the critical link.\(^{17}\)

Mark Malan is, however, critical of Nhara’s peace pyramid in the division of labour for the maintenance of international peace and security. He argues that the regionalisation of conflict management tendentially undermines the legitimacy and efficacy of the UN in peace support operations, and that the hierarchical pyramid suggests subordinate relationships by nation-states zealously committed to respect for sovereign, equality and political sovereignty; hence state actors, rather than sub-regional organisation should form the base, body and apex of the peace pyramid.\(^{18}\)

These challenges mean that;


The prospect for sub-regional collective security or even defence regimes developing successfully in Africa is not considered to be good, exactly because states remain the basic building blocs and decisional loci of multinational security regimes . . . This clearly indicates that we are busy trying to build hollow structures for conflict resolution in Africa – both at the level of the OAU and that of sub-regional organisations. Our attempts to refine the relations between the two are thus also bound to be fruitless.\textsuperscript{19}

Malan’s view, however, does not reflect the objective reality, i.e. what actually happens in inter-state diplomacy at the level of intergovernmental institutions. The experience of efforts by sub-regional organisations in responding to peace, security and conflict management and the building of defence and security architectures in the pre-1999 and post-1999 era, demonstrate beyond doubt that the future of peace and security in Africa lies in the sharing of responsibilities between the OAU, UN and sub-regional organisations. Far from being fruitless in the attempt to ‘refine’ or define the burden sharing relationship, constructive efforts and comprehensive structures are now emerging between the new African Union and sub-regional organisations in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. Furthermore, Malan is either not aware or has chosen to ignore the normative shift which started in 1991 with the recognition by African leaders and peoples that established the link between conflicts, socio-economic development, protection of human rights, democracy, and peace and security. These are issues that potentially transcend the nation state and, in the post-Cold War era, sovereignty and norms of international society are no longer sacrosanct. In addition, the mere inability of the OAU to resolve protracted civil conflicts such as in Burundi, does not amount to the fact that we have to abandon the search for a viable continental peace and security system. What then can we say about the UN and its track record of failure to maintain peace and security in the Balkans and Africa? Can we then assume that just because the world body has not resolved intra-state conflicts such as in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia, that it is meaningless, or that the search for or the efforts to reform the UN to serve its primary function are ‘bound to be fruitless’?

\textbf{From Inherited Failure to the New African Union: Emerging Structure and Norm for Peace and Security}

Cognisant of the legacy of failure in conflict management and resolution, the new African Union and its Constitutive Act are framed to respond to the new peace and security challenges. The Constitutive Act builds on the established OAU structures for continental peace and security. Article 4, sub-sections (e) and (g), establishes the normative and legal framework for the operations and framework of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The Constitutive Act provides a framework for promoting peace and security in Africa, and attempts to ameliorate the critical socio-economic and political dimensions that hinder the maintenance of
peace and security. Article 3 outlines the objective to promote peace, security and stability on the continent. Furthermore, Article 4 stipulates the following:

a) Establish a common defence policy.

b) Pursue peaceful resolution of conflicts among member states.

c) Prohibit use of force or threat of the use of force among member states.

d) Pursue the principle of non-interference by any member state in the internal affairs of another.

e) Promote the right of the Union to intervene in member states pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, genocide and crimes against humanity.

f) Encourage peaceful co-existence amongst member states and establish their right to live in peace and security.

g) Pursue the right of member states to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security.20

The Constitutive Act of the African Union is based on three fundamental normative principles. Firstly, the intention to develop closer collaboration with the many and diverse sub-regional economic communities and security defence systems in the pursuit of continental development, peace and security objectives. Secondly, develop a continental collective security framework based on mutual interdependence and ‘dependable expectations’ of peaceful inter-state relations. Thirdly, develop and strengthen the position of the continent in international economic and commercial diplomacy, in particular, to strategically benefit from the advantages of neo-liberal globalisation.21

Article 4(h) is a paradigm shift in the international relations and political diplomacy of African states. Article 4(h), mandates the African Union and has the ‘right’ to intervene, without consent in a member state in order to ‘restore peace and stability, to ‘prevent war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity’ and to respond to situations that constitute ‘a serious threat to legitimate order’. The genie that has been responsible for the inactivity of the OAU in responding to conflicts in Africa has finally been exorcised. Political sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct, and it is now replaced by the right to intervene in member states in situations of state collapse, war crimes, genocide and for human protection purposes. The African Union is conscious of the problems created by the sometimes ‘primitive’ adherence and loyalty to the respect for political sovereignty, hence the norm of humanitarian intervention is enshrined in the Act of the Union. But the real test for the African Union is the translation of this normative principle into action. The provision on the right to intervene for human protection purposes is an endorsement of the right to


21 See the following in support of the three normative principles: Articles 3c, j, k, 4d, f, h, i and j, and Article 4a, b, g, and e. The African Union, The Constitutive Act, (Addis Ababa 2001: Amendment to the Constitutive Act) Addis Ababa, 2003.
humanitarian intervention. The endorsement raises several critical issues. Firstly, African states, for a variety of reasons, are not and find it difficult to agree on ‘what is’ or ‘what constitutes’ ‘humanitarian’ and ‘humanitarian intervention’. Secondly, the majority of African states, given their own poor record of human rights protection, are wary about the potential use or misuse of a continental right to intervention by dominant states or sub-regional hegemons in pursuit of their own strategic self-interests. Thirdly, the African Union Constitutive Act and the endorsement of a right to humanitarian intervention makes a major contribution to contemporary international relations in that it is fundamentally different from the UN Charter. The UN Charter does not, according to some scholars and diplomats, endorse a right to humanitarian intervention, though the weight of customary international laws illustrates that the UN has condoned unilateral humanitarian interventions.22

In an attempt to mobilise popular participation and ownership of the African Unity project, and economic integration for peace, security and development, the Constitutional Act stipulates 11 organs namely: the Assembly of the Union (supreme Organ of the Union comprising heads of state and governments); the Executive Council; the Permanent Representatives’ Committee; the Pan-African Parliament (comprising representatives of formal African Parliaments) which became operational in May 2004; the African Court of Justice; the Commission of the African Union (Secretariat of the Union); the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC); the African Court of Human and People’s Rights (responsibility to arbitrate and move for implementation of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights); three financial institutions including: the African Central Bank, African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank; 7 Specialised Technical Committees: and the Peace and Security Council (with responsibility for the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, replacing the OAU Central Organ for CPMR as of 1993). It is evident that these organs are largely modelled on the UN, EU, OECD and OSCE frameworks. But, laudable as they are, the real challenge is how to translate these continental structures for peace and security to benefit the lives of ordinary Africans.

In an attempt to develop capacity for peace support operations and the maintenance of continental peace and security, African Ministers of Defence and Security met in January 2004 to conclude the framework document on the establishment of the African Standby Force and a Common Defence and Security Policy. The African Standby Force has been developed as a peacekeeping and peace support operation mechanism for deployment by the African Union. The proposed pan-African

defence force is to be drawn from African armies and authorised for deployment by the Peace and Security Council. The following generic components of the Standby Force were agreed on: planning elements at the African Union Commission and HQs and level of management capability for regional economic communities, mechanisms for strengthening regional centres of peacekeeping excellence, standard operating procedures, establishment of regional logistical bases for the sustainment of missions, establishment of a continental early warning system, and Regional Observation and Monitoring Zones (OMZ). The ministers also agreed on a road map for the implementation of the Common Defence and Security Policy, including a non-aggression pact between African states.  

The African Union cannot be discussed without serious reference and analysis of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). NEPAD was adopted by the OAU Summit in Lusaka in July 2001 as the blueprint for Africa’s economic recovery and development, and has been incorporated within the AU framework, as a socio-economic recovery programme. NEPAD developed out of the merger of presidents Mbeki, Bouteflika and Obasanjo’s Millennium African Recovery Programme (MAP) and President Wade’s Omega Plan, and was initially presented as the New African Initiative (NAI). It becomes evident that NEPAD, like the new African Union is a forge, a compromised economic recovery and development blueprint without input and participation of civil society. The Mbeki-Obasanjo continent-wide leadership became manifest in the politics of the creation of NEPAD. Both leaders played critical roles, with back-up support from presidents Wade and Bouteflika, to secure the support and commitment of Western political leaders. In return for accepting President Mbeki’s leadership on NEPAD, President Obasanjo also benefitted from the international political clout of launching NEPAD in Nigeria in October 2001. Mbeki is bank-rolling the institutional development of NEPAD as evident by the hosting of the secretariat in South Africa, hence creating sources of tension with the African Union over mandate and control.

The precondition for the world’s political and economic leaders – G8/UN/EU – to buy-into the NEPAD agenda was the provision that African states should remain committed to economic and political liberalisation in the form of democratic pluralism, good governance, and a functional and open market. At the heart of NEPAD is the attempt by Western donor governments to further drive and entrench the policies of neo-liberal economic and political reforms in Africa. According to Patrick Bond, the Western donor-driven NEPAD agenda is a repeat of ‘the structural adjustment policy packages of the preceding decades and overlooks the disastrous effects of these policies’. African academics have been critical of NEPAD prescriptions and its

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‘neoliberal Africanism’ agenda.\textsuperscript{25} However, opposition to NEPAD has led to wider mobilisation of African civil society organisations and grassroots social movements against the elitist-driven ‘low-integrity democracy’ and neo-liberal economic agenda of NEPAD.\textsuperscript{26}

An important feature of NEPAD is its commitment to peace, security, democracy and politico-economic governance. In pursuit of this objective, NEPAD has established an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as a self-monitoring process by African governments in the areas of political and economic governance, democratic accountability and corporate governance values. An important contribution by NEPAD is to identify the importance of regions in Africa in maintaining peace, security and development.\textsuperscript{27} The real test for the NEPAD provisions, like those of the AU organs, lies in their ability to affect ‘real issues’ and ‘real people’ in Africa.

**Regional Hegemons and the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa**

Understanding the role and contribution of regional hegemons is important to the emerging phenomenon of regionalisation of conflict management and the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. The role of regional hegemons, either positive or negative, is an important consideration on issues relating to peace and security. But do regional hegemons provide or guarantee security? Is it in their interest to promote the maintenance of regional peace and security? One would also want to know ‘for whom’ and for ‘what purpose’ is the putative security provided? Goldstein defines hegemon as having the ability and capacity to ‘dictate, or at least dominate, the rules and arrangements by which international relations, political and economic are conducted’.\textsuperscript{28} Hegemony is defined and constructed differently by neo-Gramscian scholars. Constructionists focus on the idea of hegemony as a source of power.\textsuperscript{29}


\textsuperscript{27} For more details on NEPAD see www.nepad.org.


A hegemonic situation is when a single great power or state develops a sufficient preponderance of material resources (i.e. military capability, economic and financial wealth, security, power etc.) so that it can dominate. This preponderant position gives the hegemon the ability to promote rules for the whole global/regional system, that protect the hegemon’s own interests. Important considerations for the definition and construction of hegemons include size, population, economic strength, military might, ideas and political will. Derived from the conceptualisation of hegemonic stability thesis, which Kegley and Wittkopf describe as a blend of liberalism and mercantilism. It maintains that, when a hegemon ascends so that the preponderance of military and economic power is held in the hands of a single state, international economic stability based on liberal principles can materialise to alleviate the fear of nationalistic mercantilists. This liberal economic interpretation assumes that order and stability in the global economic order is possible when an all-powerful single hegemon uses its position to enforce free-trade rules, and as such sustains the system through the actions of the dominant economy.

The economic conception of hegemonic stability thesis has been given political and security interpretations in the provision of collective or public good such as peace and security. This essentially realist conception assumes that co-operation to provide a public good is difficult, hence the system needs a single, dominant power - a hegemon - to provide this. The theory suggests the need for leadership of a country that is prepared, according to Charles Kindleberger, ‘consciously or unconsciously... to set standards of conduct for other countries, and to seek to get others to follow them, to take on an undue share of the burdens of the system, and in particular to take on its support in adversity’. It is further argued that co-operation is possible, but not sustainable, and such co-operation becomes ‘positive sum’ because both sides benefit. Relevant to the understanding of hegemonic stability is the role played by regimes, norms, rules and institutions in the maintenance of international peace and security. Robert Keohane, therefore, argues that hegemonic structures of power, dominated by a single country, are most conducive to the development of


strong international regimes, whose rules are relatively precise and well-obeyed. Examples of the provision of hegemonic stability include Pax Britannica in the 19th century and Pax Americana in the post-World War II period. But when the cost of the hegemonic role multiplies and is burdensome, co-operation becomes one-sided and zero-sum.

However, the ‘Declinist’ perspective argues that the burdensome nature of ‘imperial overstretch’ by a hegemon will cause it to fall from prominence. In other words, the status and construction of hegemony is not permanent, but affected by the ever changing global and regional forces. Paul Kennedy advances the view that because of ‘imperial overstretch’, the hegemon runs the risk of being incapable of defending its interests and obligations simultaneously. He, therefore, argues that the power that wants to remain as hegemonic leader requires not just military capability and national will, but a vibrant and efficient economic base, ‘strong finances and healthy social fabric for it is upon such foundations that the country’s military strength rests in the long term’. If the hegemon were to decline, it would cause disorder because hegemonic stability predicts that hegemonic leadership is the ‘cement that holds the system together’; hence decline means instability and disorder.

In Africa, there are several candidates jostling for hegemonic status in the different sub-regions of the continent. Nigeria has used its size, population, military might and oil wealth to play a preponderant role in the West African sub-region and, from time to time, has played a leading role in the politics of Africa, for example the Nigerian-led Inter-African peacekeeping force deployed by the OAU in the Chad conflict. Nigeria has, therefore, been influential in the establishment of regional economic, security and defence systems in West Africa to serve its political, foreign and security policies and strategic self-interests. In Southern Africa, the economic growth and development of South Africa has provided more political leverage and, coupled with its military might, it is generally expected to play the dominant role in peace and security in southern Africa. However, South Africa, though capable, has indicated that it is unwilling for a variety of reasons to exercise its hegemonic leadership. South Africa demonstrates the difference between inability and unwillingness to exercise hegemonic leadership. In such a situation, hegemonic pretenders emerge to fill the vacuum, for example the Zimbabwean leadership of the SADC peacekeeping intervention in the Great Lakes region. In Africa, the preponderance of certain states, such as Nigeria in West Africa, South Africa in Southern Africa, Egypt in North Africa, Uganda in the Great Lakes region and Kenya and Ethiopia in the Horn, have not provided stable regional order. In effect, the dominance of a regional hegemon,

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if ‘powerful’ states in Africa can be truly described as such, may be a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for regional peace and security.

There are generally two types of hegemon applicable to the geo-political situation in Africa. The *alpha* hegemons are states whose combination of size, finance and population, economic development and military might is overwhelmingly preponderant in relation to the sub-region, for example Nigeria in West Africa, Kenya in East Africa and South Africa in Southern Africa (see Table 5-1). The *beta* hegemons are states with considerable political or population status, but with modest economic and military might. The assertive regionalism demonstrated by ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD in peace and security matters is made possible because of the role of sub-regional hegemons that are willing to underwrite the military, political and financial costs. It is also evident that these sub-regional hegemons are limited by geo-political considerations, hence to win the support of the member states on controversial regional issues, they have to use ‘carrot and stick’ resources to entice or coerce states. A variety of considerations have influenced regional states into participating with a hegemon to provide elements of public good, such as peace and security. Regional legitimacy has become a key issue in hegemonic leadership, sometimes judged by democratic quality and political leadership, rather than military preponderance. Also, the reputation of the country, in terms of its regional pretensions or ambitions, is an important factor predisposing regional neighbours to accept its hegemonic leadership. Furthermore, the increasing regional interactions, economic integration, and gradual political and socio-cultural cohesion have created coalitions of states led by a dominant sub-regional hegemon that are willing to intervene in problems perceived as ‘domestic’ regional issues. It is debateable whether hegemons can provide or guarantee security and peace in Africa. The experience thus far illustrates that they have a potential contribution to make to the maintenance of peace and security, and that it is in their interests to do so, even given the nature and complexity of the consequences of the regionalisation of civil wars in Africa. Chapter 5, 6, 7 and 8 illustrate in detail the potential role played by sub-regional hegemons and pivotal states in the maintenance of peace and security.
Table 5.1 Sub-regional Hegemons and Hegemonic Pretenders in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Hegemon/Hegemonic Pretender</th>
<th>Size of Country (million sq km)</th>
<th>Population 2001 (million)</th>
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Sources: Human Development Report 2003
Millennium Development Goals: A compact among nations to end human poverty
http://hdr.undp.org/reports/view_reports.cfm?type=1,
The World Fact Book 2003, The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),

Conclusion

Peace, security, conflict management and sustainable development are the most pressing challenges facing contemporary Africa. For 39 years, the OAU endeavoured to deal with these complex problems, but has been constrained by the norms of international society enshrined in its Charter, and by a lack of resources. The structure and quasi-architecture for peace and security thus established have been found wanting. It is this legacy that the OAU has bequeathed to the new African Union. The African Union and its Constitutive Act have created a fundamental normative shift in the recognition of the deleterious effects on peace and security on underdevelopment, conflict, gross violations of human rights and bad governance. Hence, the AU has enshrined in its Constitutive Act the right of humanitarian intervention in complex political emergencies in Africa. This is an attempt to bring Africa into the 21st century with the necessary structures and mechanisms to respond to the peace, security and development challenges. But the litmus test lies in the translation of these norms into practice.
Due to the failure of the continental body to manage and resolve conflicts in Africa, sub-regional organisations have demonstrated assertive regionalism in expanding into the peacekeeping and security domain, often led by sub-regional hegemons. The identifiable scenario that is emerging is that the future of conflict management and peacekeeping in Africa lies in the sharing of responsibility between the AU, sub-regional organisations, the UN and sub-regional hegemons.
Chapter 6

New Theatre of Wars and Civil Conflicts: Evolution of Security Regionalism and Peacekeeping Capacity in West Africa

Introduction

This section of the book explores the evolution of sub-regional mechanisms for peacekeeping, conflict management and stabilisation capacity. It begins with a focus on West Africa, as the new theatre of violent intra-state conflicts and state collapse in Africa. To understand the imperatives for the expansion of the sub-regional economic entity into security regionalism and the evolution of regional peacekeeping and conflict management capability, it is important to start with a political economic analysis of West Africa. This chapter will engage with the imperatives that forced the originally economic integration and co-operation grouping into developing regional peace, security and conflict management mechanisms, and the experience of peacekeeping and the maintenance of regional peace and security in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire.

The primary focus is on providing an analytical understanding of the emergence of regional peace, security and conflict management architecture in West Africa, in particular, how this has developed from ad hoc improvisation to respond to conflict challenges in the sub-region, the evolution of a co-operative norm underpinned by the ‘Try Africa First’ approach. But is this a permanent norm that will commit West African states, or a coalition of willing states within the sub-region, to ‘do something’ about a conflict situation in a member country, with potential regional consequences, rather than wait for external interventions by former colonial powers or the UN? A key focus will be on how this ‘adventure’ into regional peacekeeping and conflict management has led to the development of co-deployment in peacekeeping and peace support operations with the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security. The chapter will also examine how the expansion into security regionalism and the emerging norm creation has invariably brought to the fore divisive geo-politics of amity and enmity relations, and why cash-strapped and largely underdeveloped economies would prefer to commit scarce resources to regional peace and security rather than economic development and human security programmes. The West African multinational peacekeeping and conflict management efforts in the 1990s have been criticised by political analysts and media commentators as ‘how not to organise peacekeeping outside of the UN framework’, but have also been praised
for saving lives in complex political emergencies and for human protection purposes in the face of reluctant unilateral interventions by former colonial powers and an indecisive UN Security Council.¹

The core arguments of this chapter critically explore how identity- and resource-based intra-state wars and armed conflicts, or the so-called ‘new wars’ and post-Cold War armed conflicts in Africa have created a range of opportunities and challenges for different types of interventions to contain, stabilise and manage these conflicts. They include regional peacekeeping intervention such as ECOMOG, external pivotal state conflict stabilisation deployments including the French, British and American interventions in Côte d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia, and a range of non-state military interventions such as mercenaries and private military companies. These putative interventions sometimes dressed as ‘humanitarian’ interventions or cast as peacekeeping missions, further complicate the regional amity-enmity dynamics, and in addition, lays bare the complex geo-politics in pursuit of regional peace, security and development. Of particular relevance to this chapter is the examination of what actually happens on the ground when peacekeepers are deployed in situations of complex political emergencies.

These complex issues and the implications for building regional architecture for the maintenance of peace and security in Africa are explored in depth in this Chapter.

Political Economy of West Africa

The West African sub-region was portrayed in 1994 by Robert Kaplan as having the potential to become the ‘real strategic danger’ threatening international peace and security.² But why West Africa? The ‘geographical expression’ that is described as West Africa is a geo-political and social construction, occupying a land area of 6.5 million sq. kms., with an estimated population of 235 million (2003), accounting for approximately 32 per cent of Africa’s total population. The geo-political and social construction of West Africa reflects the diversity and complexity of the sub-region. The region comprises sixteen geographically proximate and contiguous states that have emerged as a distinct political and socio-economic entity and a territorial sub-system. The diversity of West Africa is reflected in its political history with an Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone colonial divide,³ socio-cultural,


³ The Anglophone countries include: Sierra Leone, Ghana, The Gambia, Liberia and Nigeria. Lusophone countries include: Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde. Francophone countries
ethnic and linguistic differences. The colonial divide and diversity have often played themselves out in the arena of West African intra-regional and international affairs.

The similarity shared by the majority of West African countries is that they are generally described as least developed or underdeveloped states in terms of their level of economic development and social progress. European imperialism and colonialism in this sub-region left a legacy of external dependence with largely cash crop, agrarian and extractive-based economies relying heavily on MNCs for the exploitation of these strategic resources. Agricultural products are the primary foreign exchange earners for the majority of the countries, whilst others depend on strategic mineral resources such as diamonds, gold, bauxite, iron ore, tin, zinc, copper, uranium, liquefied natural gas and oil (Nigeria is a leading oil producer). In the majority of the countries, the economy is dominated by external economic operators such as former colonial powers, Americans, Lebanese, Syrian, Arab, Indian-Pakistani, and Chinese. Despite the vast mineral resources, the sub-region has not been able to convert its strategic resource endowment into sustainable economic growth and development. In the immediate post-independence period, the majority of the countries in the region had a promising economic development prospect, but a combination of domestic and external forces have turned the region into one of the least developed in the world.

Only three West African countries are in the UNDP (2003) Medium Human Development category, these are Cape Verde, Ghana and Togo, with a GDP per capita of US$5,570, US$2,250, and US$1,650 respectively. The remaining thirteen countries are in the Low Human Development category, with war-torn Sierra Leone as the least developed country in the world, with a GDP per capita income of US$470, and a life expectancy at birth of 34.5. The poverty divide and the depressed social and development indicators are reflected in the development gap between the countries. For instance, in Ghana 44.8 per cent of the population between 1990-2001 lived on less than US$1 a day, whilst in resource-rich Nigeria, 70 per cent of the population during the same period lived on less than US $1 a day. The combination of agrarian and extractive-based economies in the sub-region have also accentuated rural-urban polarisation. In Côte d’Ivoire, 44 per cent of the 16 million population live in urban centres, while in Cape Verde, 63.3 per cent of the population, by 2001, lived in the cities. The depressed social and development indicators are further illustrated by the fact that in Nigeria, only between 0-49 per cent of the population had sustainable access to affordable essential drugs by 1999, 62 per cent had sustainable access to improved water source. The Nigerian government, by 2000, only spent 0.5 per cent of GDP on public health. Mauritania, in 2000, spent the highest amount in West

include: Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Guinea, Niger.

Africa on public health, i.e. 3 per cent of GDP, and Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone, 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively.\(^5\)

The external dependent natures of these countries are illustrated by their excessive reliance on Official Development Assistance (ODA). War-torn and post-conflict countries in the sub-region are heavily dependent on ODA. For example, Sierra Leone in 2001 received a total of US$333.7 million, i.e. 44.5 per cent of GDP, Mali US$349.9 million, i.e. 13.2 per cent of GDP, Guinea Bissau US$58.6 million, i.e. 29.4 per cent of GDP and Côte d’Ivoire, US$187, i.e. 1.8 per cent of GDP.\(^6\)

The external dependent natures of these conflict-prone, war-torn and post-conflict countries in West Africa give the firm impression that their national budgets are largely donor-financed, and this has serious implications for the political, economic and fiscal sovereignty of these ‘reconstructed’ states in the sub-region. The demographic situation in the sub-region describes a large and growing youth population, mostly unemployed, lacking in skills and limited in educational opportunities. In addition, the sub-region itself has limited, and in most cases poor, physical infrastructure. These depressing social and development indicators have a devastating impact on the sustainability of human security, and also provide incentives for the instigation of violence and instability in the region.

The West African sub-region, since political independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, has experimented with a variety of political systems of governance ranging from multi-party democratic politics to single-party authoritarian civilian governments and military dictatorships. In fact, the sub-region has the highest incidence of military coups and interventions in civilian politics.\(^7\) The ‘Third Wave’ of democratisation, due to the end of the Cold War, and the changed international political environment led to the overthrow of military dictatorships and single party authoritarian regimes in West Africa, the majority through the ballot box. However, some of the political leaders simply transformed themselves into civilian presidents through an enforced democratisation process. In some other countries, the combined effects of the end of the Cold War and the negative effects of globalisation, coupled with the nature of domestic politics based on neopatrimonialism, led to state collapse and civil wars as in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Côte d’Ivoire; hence Kaplan’s warning that the sub-region was emerging as the new threat and ‘strategic danger’ to international peace and security.

The multiplicity of violent civil wars and bloody armed conflicts in West Africa and the new security threats and challenges, have led to the view that the sub-region is on fire and, given the regional security complex and interlocking nature and dynamics of wars and armed conflicts in the region, there is always a ‘fire next door’. The dominant analysis of the root causes of the post-Cold War conflicts in West Africa has focused on the political economy analyses within states suggesting that one or all elements are generally the sources of wars and armed conflicts,

\(^6\) Ibid, pp.293-294.
i.e. identity (ethnicity, religion, nationalism), resources (economic agendas) and patrimonial politics. I have argued in *The Politics of Economic Regionalism* (2001) that this dominant approach only provides a partial understanding of the causes and complexity of these so-called ‘new wars’, and even constrained the efforts to manage and resolve these conflicts. Michael Pugh *et al.*, in support of this view, advance two important variables relevant to the understanding and resolution of these asymmetrical conflicts. Firstly, they highlight the impact of ‘regional conflict complexes’, i.e. how regional dimensions of the conflict sustain and hinder resolution. Secondly, the impact of contemporary globalisation, in particular how analysis of these conflicts tends to present the view that they are exclusively driven by domestic factors, rather than a combination of systemic features of contemporary patterns of globalisation.\(^8\)

The nature of conflicts in West Africa demonstrates the importance of understanding the regional security complex and the ‘regional conflict complex’\(^9\) because armed conflicts are not just confined and localised within state borders, but the regional dimensions and dynamics often fuel and sustain these wars through the activities of the shadow economy and ‘peace spoilers’, i.e. those diverse interests that benefit from the war economies and would do anything to ensure the prolongation of war. The involvement in the regionalised war economy by all the warring factions, who exploit the dysfunctional formal economy, the shifting alliances during conflict, and the long-standing regional political affiliations and informal commercial networks, all create major obstacles to the maintenance of regional peace and security and hinder efforts at conflict management and resolution.

The military security threats in West Africa are not only limited to wars and armed conflicts, but also include criminal violence, intra-communal violence, mercenaries or ‘guns for hire’ plying their military expertise in the sub-region’s conflict zones, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons – the ‘war fighting instruments of choice in the region’.

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\(^9\) ‘Regional conflict complex’ (Wallensteen & Sollenberg), ‘regional security complex’ (Buzan) and ‘regional conflict formation’ (Rubin) are concepts that share similar elements in that they generally ‘explain transnational conflicts that form mutually reinforcing linkages with each other throughout a region, making for more protracted and obdurate conflicts’. Quoted in Pugh, Cooper, and Goodhand, *War Economies in a Regional Context*, 2004, pp.24-25.
### Table 6.1 Basic Indicators for ECOWAS Countries

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### ECOWAS Economic Integration and Coping with Regional Security Threats

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has emerged as the most developed and complex sub-regional organisation in comparison with other
New Theatre of Wars and Civil Conflicts

Regional economic communities in Africa. It was originally chartered as a regional integration and co-operation grouping on 28 May 1975 with customs union and common market objectives. ECOWAS comprises fifteen countries at different levels of development and at diverse stages of state formation and nation building. A multiplicity of reasons was responsible for the formation of ECOWAS including economic motivation that perceived ECOWAS integration as a national and regional development strategy. Politically, ECOWAS regionalism was assumed to serve as an instrument for foreign policy and a collective political bargaining bloc, the ideational motivation of the Third World ideology of South-South co-operation and collective solidarity, the historic tradition of functional co-operation in the sub-region, and factors relating to the maintenance of regional peace and security. Since its creation, the focus of ECOWAS integration and co-operation has been driven by developmental regionalism underpinned by market integration based on the liberal economic development strategy.

Collective Security to Respond to Regional Security Threats

Though the primary objective for the creation of ECOWAS was the attainment of regional economic development, the challenges of regional security threats have been a constant concern of ECOWAS countries. The uncertain and hostile Cold War environment of the post-independence period, in which ECOWAS countries were forced to operate and conduct international affairs, was a perennial threat to state security and regime survival. In the 1970s the sub-region was faced with the constant threats of violent and bloody military coup d’etats, inter-state wars, border disputes, the Biafran civil war in Nigeria, extra-regional interventions and foreign-backed mercenary activities, such as in Cape Verde, Benin and Guinea. The international security environment was perceived as a threat to the survival of the regimes of the newly independent states. Therefore, Olatunde Ojo’s analysis of the motivations for the establishment of ECOWAS remains relevant in the 1990s despite the changed international conflict and security environment, because the driving force

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10 ECOWAS initially comprised 16 member states including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, The Gambia, Senegal, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Cape Verde, Guinea, Niger, Guinea Bissau, Burkina Faso and Mali. Mauritania withdrew its membership of the organisation in 2000 for a variety of political and strategic reasons. Clement Adibe advances three plausible interpretations for Mauritania’s action. Firstly, the country has developed a robust self-identification as an Arab state and thus privileges its membership with the Maghreb Union over the predominantly ‘black African’ ECOWAS. Secondly, the uneasy relationship with its black-African ECOWAS members over its alleged human rights violations and treatment of its black citizens. Thirdly, the perceived limited strategic and economic benefits derived from ECOWAS. Adebi, A., ‘Muddling Through: An Analysis of the ECOWAS Experience in Conflict Management in West Africa’, in Laakso, L. (ed.), Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa: Europe, SADC and ECOWAS, University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science, Helsinki, 2002, p.103.
for ECOWAS regionalism remains economic development and regional security. The domestic and external threats to state security and regime survival led to the signing by ECOWAS countries of the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression and the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence. Political leaders such as Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal argued that ‘development cannot be secured in a climate of insecurity’ and hence the imperative that ‘we must among ourselves, establish a genuine West African solidarity pact to guard against external aggression’. Even before the 1978 protocol, the all-Francophone West African Economic Community (CEAO) had in 1977 proposed that ‘if economic integration and co-operation are to be meaningful then they have to be accompanied by a defence and security arrangement’. The recognition of the link between regional peace, security and development led to the establishment of the Francophone mutual defence pact, the Accord de Non-Aggression et d’Assistance en Matiere de Defence (ANAD). We, therefore, see the outline of the West African proto-security complex.

The underlying principles of these defence protocols were, generally, confidence building and regional peaceful co-existence. Article 2 of the Non-Aggression Pact committed member states to non-use of force in inter-state relations, and to avoiding subversive, hostile or aggressive activities against member states. Article 4 (b) of the Defence protocol provided for a collective security mechanism and it was also stipulated in Article 2 that any armed threat or aggression directed against any member state constituted a threat against the entire community. The protocol explicitly established the link between national and regional collective security, and obliged member states to give mutual aid and military assistance for defence against armed aggression, orchestrated from outside the region. The Defence protocol also proposed, in articles 13 and 14, the creation of an Allied Armed Force of the Community (AAFC) to serve as a regional peacekeeping and conflict management intervention force, with the Authority of the Community (i.e. Heads of state and government) given the mandate to decide on the ‘expediency of the military action’. A defence council was also provided for, comprising ministers of defence and foreign affairs to act as an advisory body, and a defence commission constituting the Chiefs of Staff of national armed forces. But this first attempt at establishing a regional peace and collective defence architecture was never put into operation for a variety of reasons. Adebi, therefore, argued that ‘when the moment came in the 1990s when ECOWAS undertook massive diplomatic and military operations to halt the outbreak of the civil conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau, ECOWAS leaders jettisoned the provisions of the Defence Protocol in preference for a new ad hoc

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In 1984, the Francophone ANAD also proposed the establishment of a rapid deployment standby military force to stabilise conflict situations in West Africa, but this *force de paix* was to be deployed under the authority of the UN and OAU and not ECOWAS. The divisive geo-politics were evident as this was a mechanism to dilute the political dominance of Nigeria and to increase French political and strategic military influence in the sub-region. The proposed rapid deployment force was never established, further confirming the view that ECOWAS, like the continental OAU, has never been short of good ideas, but that it was the implementation of these innovations that was the problem.

However, security was perceived by ECOWAS leaders in the traditional framework of military, external security threats to political sovereignty and territorial integrity. The traditional conception of security perceived in external security terms only focused on armed activities and the use, or threat of the use, of military force engineered and actively supported from outside the region, and with the potential to endanger regional peace and security. Domestic security threats from ethno-religious conflicts, bad governance, political repression and insecurity created by the state’s ruling and governing elites, and military and security apparatus, were never considered as part of the threats to national and regional security. In effect, both the 1978 and 1981 defence and military protocols were merely *realpolitik* strategies to serve the interests of ECOWAS leaders and to insure them against both external and internal security threats. This provided a window of opportunity to clamp down, with military assistance from Community members, on internal opposition, coup attempts and to deal with political instability and support for political dissidents in neighbouring countries. Though the case could be made that the defence protocol created the basis for ECOWAS to take on regional collective security and peacekeeping capability it was, in reality, a mechanism for regime security and survival.

*Institutionalising Nigeria’s Regional Dominance: Linking National and Regional Security*

Nigeria, the sub-regional hegemon, was instrumental in the formation of ECOWAS and provided the politico-economic leadership in the efforts to develop a regional collective peace and security system in West Africa. Nigeria’s preponderance in the sub-region in terms of size, population, military, economic and political resources has inextricably linked the country’s national security to regional security. Three important developments have been the driving force for Nigeria’s leadership role in West Africa. Firstly, the Biafran civil war of 1967-70 and the role played by neighbouring countries, in particular, how they were used by extra-regional actors and powers as a staging post for support to the secessionist group. This was viewed by the government as an attempt to dismember or balkanise the country, and led to the realisation that the national security of Nigeria cannot be divorced from regional security and stability. It marked an important turning point in the political history

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of the country as it led to a paradigm shift in its post-independence foreign and security policy of ‘isolationism’ to ‘intervention’ in regional affairs. The post-civil war foreign policy, therefore, focused on three inter-related levels, i.e. promotion of regional security and stability through regional co-operation and integration, and leadership roles in both African and international affairs. An important consideration was the intrusive role of France and the power politics with Nigeria for the dominance and control of West Africa. The French had bank-rolled and provided political leadership for the creation in 1973 of the all-Francophone CEAO. The French President, Georges Pompidou, even justified this by claiming that it was a ‘just equilibrium between the Francophone and Anglophone’ and that it would serve ‘to counter-balance the heavy weight of Nigeria’. The motivation for the creation of ECOWAS was, therefore, to provide an instrument for the promotion of Nigeria’s foreign and security policy in West Africa. In addition, this was an attempt to limit the role of France in West Africa, a region considered by Nigeria as its political, strategic and economic sphere of influence. According to Ojo, ECOWAS was to provide an institutional framework for Nigeria’s Leadership and the erosion of France’s political and economic influence.

Secondly, the discovery of oil and the OPEC oil crisis of 1973, precipitated by the Arab-Israeli war, converted Nigeria into an indispensable oil producer for the West. Oil wealth provided the financial and economic resources to promote ambitious foreign and security policies, and the opportunity to flex its political and diplomatic muscles in regional, African and international affairs. The financial windfall for the federal government had a considerable effect on national revenue. According to Iweyemi, the national revenue rose from a meagre US$758 million in 1970 to US$2.17 billion in 1973, and US$5.8 billion in 1975.

Nigeria’s oil wealth and ‘dollar diplomacy’ provided the opportunity to ‘bribe’ reluctant West African countries to join ECOWAS and benefit from Nigeria as a major oil producer. Nigeria’s financial and oil resources created the perception amongst West African states that there was nothing to fear in Nigeria’s dominance and leadership of the sub-region.

Thirdly, the civil war experience and the oil wealth led to the evolution of a strategic culture in Nigeria’s foreign and security policy predisposed to pro-interventionism in regional affairs. Nigeria perceives any armed conflict in the sub-region as a ‘fire next door’, and hence warranting some sort of reactive or preemptive intervention. I have argued that the dominant interpretations of Nigeria’s foreign and security policies have been based on neo-realist approaches, and have to a very large extent neglected particular domestic motivations and imperatives such as traditions, history, geographical location, values, attitudes, national achievements, and patterns of behaviour, and how all these impact on foreign and security policy-making. I further posit that a variety of Nigeria’s interventions in

West Africa, whether military or non-military, sometimes conflict with its economic and strategic interests, which, therefore, raises the question of the continued validity of the dominant power-political interpretations of the country’s foreign and security policy. In the analysis of Nigeria’s much-touted hegemonic role in West Africa and its leadership in building regional peace and security systems, it is important to consider the impact of strategic culture as an explanatory variable in providing an understanding of how Nigeria has linked its national security to regional security and why it has developed the attitude and behavioural patterns that assume that it is its ‘manifest destiny’ to police and intervene in West Africa. The dominance of the military establishment in the post-independence history of Nigeria and the particular military culture and its predisposition to the threat and the use of force in adapting to its political environment seem to suggest the prevalence of the strategic culture of pro-interventionism in the sub-region. In explaining the pro-interventionist strategic culture of Nigeria, I argue that:

The geographical location of Nigeria invariably means that the country’s national security is tied to the sub-region. This creates the perception of itself as the regional hegemon with the right to intervene in West Africa as and when necessary. The two assumptions of Nigeria’s African-centred foreign and security policy approach, in terms of threat perception are: that regional political instability or an unstable Africa is a threat to national security; and that Nigeria’s security can be subverted by extra-regional powers acting in co-operation with African states.  

 Threats Posed by the End of the Cold War: The 1993 Revised Treaty and the Challenges for Regional Peace, Security and Development

The changed international security environment and conflict landscape following the end of the Cold War posed particular, and in some cases intractable, problems and challenges to the West African sub-region. In the post-Cold War period, there was a perception of international neglect of Africa due to limited strategic relevance, and of general disinterest in unilateral intervention in African conflict situations even by former colonial powers. This created the opportunity for regional hegemons like Nigeria to fill the security vacuum. These developments forced the ECOWAS region to implement institutional reforms to enable the regional community to face the challenges of the 21st century. The 1975 ECOWAS Treaty (Lagos Treaty) was replaced by a revised Treaty of ECOWAS of 1993 in an attempt to develop adequate institutional mechanisms for the region to respond to the changed conflict and security environment and the transformation of the global political economy. The 1993 Treaty (Cotonou Treaty) recognised ECOWAS as the principal economic and political organisation in West Africa for the purpose of economic integration and the realisation of the objectives of the African Economic Community. This recognition

was a statement on the rationalisation of the multiple, and sometimes competing, regionalist projects with conflicting mandates and generally detracted from West African-wide economic integration objectives, such as UEMOA, WAEMU and MRU.

Importantly, the revised treaty recognised the imperative to address, at regional level, and on a long-term basis, conflict instigating factors such as violations of human rights, repressive state regimes, anti-democratic activities, underdevelopment and insecurity. Article 4 of the revised treaty committed member states to social justice, respect for and protection of human rights, democratic governance and consolidation, popular participation and political and economic accountability and governance. The treaty was an innovative attempt to respond to the imperatives of regional peace, security and conflict, but noticeably did not provide for a multilateral security framework or collective security mechanism. By 1993, the traditional enmity and divisive geopolitics had reared their ugly heads and mutual suspicion and competition forced the framers of the treaty to settle for a compromise by de-emphasising ‘high-politics’ in ECOWAS foreign and security policy relations.

**ECOMOG Experiment in Peacekeeping and Conflict Management in West Africa**

It was the violent and bloody civil war in Liberia which started on Christmas Eve in 1989 that forced ECOWAS leaders to face the fact that they could no longer run away from the reality of developing a regional mechanism for peace, security and conflict management. As already analysed in Chapter 3, the Liberian civil war can be categorised as identity, resource and proxy wars. The civil war in Liberia resulted in devastating regional consequences in terms of forced migration and a massive influx of refugees into neighbouring countries, massive displacement of the internal population, gross violations of human rights, mass killings and widespread destruction of property. West African nationals were routinely targeted by all the warring factions for allegedly supporting their opponents. The bloody and violent civil war created a humanitarian disaster that directly threatened regional peace and security.

The outbreak of the civil war was occasioned by the rebel insurgency led by Charles Taylor, leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), against the brutal and incompetent regime of President Samuel Doe. The NPFL invasion militarily succeeded, in less than a year, in controlling more that 90 per cent of the country and by 1990 Liberia had effectively degenerated into a collapsed state, with the authority of the besieged president not extending beyond the reach of the Executive Mansion in Monrovia. But the root causes of the civil war could be traced to the political and economic mismanagement of the state by the decades of corrupt patrimonial rule of the dominant Americo-Liberian ruling and governing elites. The marginalisation, impoverishment and exclusion of the majority of the indigenous population from the political and socio-economic process of the country created the
incentive for civil war. The 1980 bloody military coup against the Tolbert civilian regime continued with the politics of clientelism, ethnicity and underdevelopment, thereby further polarising and fragmenting the state and society. The official state governing institutions were systematically informalised and ‘privatised’ by Doe and his ruling Krahn ethnic group and supporters. The 1989 rebel invasion that led to the outbreak of the civil war was, therefore, a culmination of domestic and external factors.

Charles Taylor’s rebel war was supported by other West African states such as Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and by Col. Gaddafi of Libya. A variety of personal interests, relational contexts, the divisive geo-politics, and political and economic considerations led to the support of Taylor’s war. But the outbreak of the Liberian civil war did not attract immediate intervention by the international community, despite the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe. The US, which had a special relationship with Liberia, was, during this period, preoccupied with leading a UN-backed international coalition in the Gulf war against the territorial aggression of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in 1990/91. The UN was also over-burdened with its new post-Cold War responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. It was this perception of international neglect of Africa that created the opportunity for the sub-regional hegemon, Nigeria, to appropriate political and military leadership in the management and resolution of the Liberian conflict.

Building Regional Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement in Liberia: ECOMOG - UNOMIL Co-deployment

In an attempt to resolve the Liberian civil war, the ECOWAS summit in Banjul, The Gambia, established the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) on the recommendation of the Nigerian military head of state, General Ibrahim Babangida, as a regional mechanism to ‘settle disputes and conflict situations within the Community . . . and to look into inter-state dispute and conflicts which have a disruptive effect on normal life within the member states and on the smooth functioning of the Community’. This ad hoc committee was mandated with the responsibility to mediate the resolution of the Liberian conflict. The beleaguered Liberian president, Samuel Doe, requested ECOWAS intervention and ‘an ECOWAS peacekeeping force was sent into Liberia to forestall increasing terror and tension and to assure a peaceful transitional environment’. It was the decision of the ECOWAS Authority at an extra-session of the Community in August 1990 to accept the request of the embattled Liberian president that led to the formal establishment of ECOMOG. Article 2 of the Authority Decision establishing ECOMOG stipulated an ad hoc military deployment to contain the Liberian conflict, with a military contingent

20 SMC comprised Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, and later included Sierra Leone and Guinea.
drawn from SMC countries to be deployed immediately into the conflict situation, and headed by a force commander. The peacekeeping force was mandated to remain in Liberia to supervise democratic elections and the restoration of constitutional rule. The force commander was ‘entrusted with the powers to conduct military operations for the purpose of monitoring the cease-fire, restoring law and order and to create the necessary conditions for free and fair elections’.

The mandate of ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management was couched in the language of Chapter VI for UN peacekeeping. UN peacekeeping was famously characterised by Dag Hammarskjöld, former UN Secretary General, as a ‘Chapter VI and a half’ operation lying between peaceful management and resolution of conflicts, as prescribed in Chapter VI, such as mediation, peacemaking and fact-finding missions, and enforcement actions, as provided for in Chapter VII, including military intervention authorised by the UN Security Council. Peace enforcement is described as the use of or the threat of the use of force aimed at guaranteeing the implementation of a peace agreement, including monitoring of cease-fire, and forcing warring parties to comply with the terms of the agreement. The use of military force should be part of a comprehensive political and peacebuilding strategy, and must be judiciously designed to induce compliance and not to punish the enemy, thereby creating the environment for post-war peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Peacekeeping is based on the fundamental principles of consent from parties to the conflict before deployment of peacekeepers, impartiality, and the use of force in self-defence only. Furthermore, UN peacekeeping is underpinned by the norms of international society, i.e. recognition of state sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs. But the Charter also asserts that the norms of international society should not ‘prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII’.

The mandate of ECOMOG was framed in the spirit of traditional peacekeeping or First Generation peacekeeping, whereby a peacekeeping force is deployed as a neutral inter-positional force between two opposing national armies or warring factions, acting as a confidence building mechanism to prevent relapse into further conflict.

But the Liberian conflict was a complex political emergency with different warring factions and collapse of the state, in which the very basic functions of the state and its governing institutions could not be performed. Therefore, when the ECOMOG peacekeeping and intervention force landed in August 1990, there was no peace to keep, no cease-fire to monitor and no consent from the main warring faction, the NPFL, and no viable constituted government to grant consent. In such a complex

23 Ibid, p.4.
25 For further analysis see Francis, ‘Peacekeeping in Africa’, 2005.
conflict situation, traditional peacekeeping was of limited relevance, and ECOMOG could not serve as a neutral inter-positionary force. ECOMOG inevitably became embroiled in the conflict. What was needed in Liberia was a Chapter VII peace enforcement mandate because of the multi-dimensional nature of the peacekeeping and peace support operations challenges.\footnote{Multi-dimensional post-Cold War peacekeeping including delivery of humanitarian assistance, protection of safe havens, monitoring and protection of human rights, organising and supervising elections, repatriation of refugees, it has been described as Second Generation peacekeeping or complex peacekeeping.}

In September 1990, President Doe was abducted and killed by the break-away Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), led by Prince Johnson, whilst on an official visit and under the protection of ECOMOG headquarters. The humiliating start of ECOMOG peacekeeping and intervention was to precipitate significant changes in the command structure and strategic thinking of the West African home-grown peacekeeping and conflict management experiment. The Ghanaian ECOMOG Force Commander was replaced by a Nigerian military officer. This was an attempt by Nigeria to establish dominance and a firm grip on the command and control structure of ECOMOG. Since 1990, all ECOMOG Force Commanders have been Nigerian military officers, with direct access to the Presidency. This is similar to the situation whereby the force commander of the Western military alliance, NATO’s Supreme Allied Command, has always been an American military appointee. In an attempt to strengthen the capacity of the intervention force, the size of ECOMOG was doubled and by 1993, it numbered 12,000 multinational troops, the majority of whom were from Nigeria. Also, there was a significant upgrade in ECOMOG’s force structure, equipment and weapon systems with the addition of an air force component, with ground attack aircraft suitable for the geographical terrain of West Africa. The military upgrade signalled a shift to offensive capability and a departure from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement based on the military situation on the ground. The command and control structure of ECOMOG was headed by the Field Commander, but military deployment was under the directive of the Authority of the heads of state of ECOWAS. The Authority was exercised for and on behalf of the current chair person of the Community, therefore the ECOWAS chair was important as it was used by the holder to achieve a variety of traditional aims of politics, i.e. power, prestige and influence. The politics of the ECOWAS chair became a factor in ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management in West Africa.
A question raised by many political analysts and media commentators focuses on the real reasons that motivated the ECOWAS leadership to venture into the difficult arena of regional peacekeeping and conflict management. An important factor to explain this development could be attributed to the relational context of West African politics. President Doe and the Nigerian military leader, General Babangida were personal friends, with strong economic and political interests in common. Babangida’s political and economic leadership and initiative in establishing ECOMOG was an attempt to help his embattled friend through a regional peacekeeping and intervention framework. A more persuasive reason for the ECOWAS unusual regional ‘collective’ peacekeeping or ‘coalition of willing states’, was the threat posed by rebel insurgency to the security and survival of the regimes in the sub-region. Insurgency or guerrilla warfare was a relatively new phenomenon in post-Cold War West Africa. It presented an alternative to military coups and access to state power and its patrimonial resources. Since the majority of the regimes were of questionable legitimacy and democratic credentials, the rally of ECOWAS leaders, under the umbrella of regional collective security and peacekeeping in Liberia, was an attempt to discourage the ‘power of the Liberian example’ and, by the same token, protect and secure the survival of their regimes. The official view was that ECOMOG was acting within its constituted mandate as provided for in the defence protocol, by responding to a request from a member state invaded by ‘foreign-backed’ forces. A more plausible reason was the perceived threat to the national security of Nigeria and the implications for its foreign and security policy. The Nigerian president, General Babangida captured the strategic culture of pro-interventionism in a statement on the Liberian crisis in 1990 when he stated that: ‘When certain events occur in the sub-region depending on their intensity and magnitude, which are bound to affect Nigeria’s politico-military and socio-economic environment, we should not stand by as helpless and hapless spectators.’

Nigeria’s leadership was also motivated by the need to limit, contain and discourage

some Francophone countries that were supporting the NPFL rebel insurgency in Liberia. Always looking for an opportunity to demonstrate its benevolent hegemonic leadership in West Africa, the perceived international neglect of Africa also provided the conducive international environment for Nigeria to develop and put into practice the much-touted ‘Try Africa First’ approach to conflict management and resolution.

As pointed out earlier, the UN was slow in intervening in the Liberian conflict and France had misgivings about Nigeria’s dominance of ECOMOG. To secure the involvement of the UN, the ECOWAS diplomatic offensive was led by the then Nigerian Ambassador, Ibrahim Gambari, and Ghana’s UN envoy Victor Gbebo. Both ECOWAS envoys were instrumental in securing the support of the president of the UN Security Council in making a statement in support of regional efforts to bring peace to Liberia and to put the Liberian crisis on the international agenda. The ECOWAS Group of UN Ambassadors was also instrumental in mounting robust international diplomacy for ECOMOG, which included lobbying for the ‘West African seat’ on the Security Council after the expiration of the Ivorian term in 1992. Nigeria was elected to replace Côte d’Ivoire and Gambari was later elected president of the Security Council, a position he used to put Liberia and conflicts in West Africa on the UN agenda. After the Yamoussoukro Accord of 1991, which provided for the endorsement of the ECOWAS Peace Plan for Liberia, the UN Secretary General appointed Trevor Gordon-Summers as the Secretary General’s Special Representative (SGSR) for Liberia, to enhance UN involvement in the resolution of the conflict. Subsequently, the Security Council Resolution 788 of November 1992 ‘imposed a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia (with the exception of ECOMOG)’. The SGSR Gordon-Summers brokered a cease-fire in Geneva between the warring factions, that was to provide the basis for Security Council Resolution 866 establishing the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). UNOMIL was deployed as a Chapter VI operation with a traditional peacekeeping mandate based on co-deployment with ECOMOG in peacekeeping and conflict management. Part of the mandate of UNOMIL was to ‘support ECOMOG in discharge of its responsibilities without participation in enforcement operations’. In addition, the Cotonou Accord of 1993 signed by all the major warring factions including Taylor’s NPFL, Alhaji Kromah’s ULIMO and Amos Sawyer’s Interim Government specifically provided for the expansion of ECOMOG to include an all-Africa Peacekeeping force from East Africa as a way of neutralising Nigeria’s dominance and to respond to the concerns of some of the warring factions. The Cotonou Accord specified the relationship between ECOMOG, charged with the task of implementing the peace agreement, and UNOMIL-delegated a supervisory

role. The Secretary General gave assurances that ‘UNOMIL and ECOMOG would collaborate closely in their operations’.

The traditional peacekeeping mandate assigned to UNOMIL was not only unsuitable to the conflict situation in Liberia but also reflected a lack of appreciation of the challenges faced by peacekeepers deployed in a complex political emergency. The 368 unarmed observers were clearly not up to the task. This, in itself, immediately created the ‘dangers of co-deployment’ as tensions emerged between ECOMOG soldiers and UNOMIL observers. The ECOMOG soldiers perceived UNOMIL peacekeepers as being on ‘holiday’ in Liberia on a ‘fat’ UN stipend, whilst leaving the mundane and bloody work of war fighting and peace enforcement operations to them, with little or no salary. The warring factions, in particular Taylor’s NPFL, were quick to exploit the tensions and divisions of labour between ECOMOG and UNOMIL to their advantage. This accounted for the strategic military gains made by the NPFL between 1995-6. There are even allegations about the complicity of some ECOMOG soldiers in arms sales with rebels, undertaken just to survive.

The tensions and conflicting mandates forced on both UNOMIL and ECOMOG the need to implement co-deployment through enhanced co-ordination and harmonisation of operational strategies. Co-deployment in this context involves the deployment of UN peacekeeping and observer missions alongside those of a regional organisation. It describes a military deployment or deployment of a field mission in conjunction with regional peacekeeping forces specifically authorised by the UN Security Council, and with a mandate to assist in the restoration of peace and security to a country in conflict within a region. Co-deployment covers a variety of operational activities beyond peacekeeping, such as training and monitoring local police, protection of safe havens and keeping open humanitarian relief corridors, organising and monitoring elections, delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, care for refugees and internally displaced persons, monitoring protection of human rights, and provision of development and reconstruction assistance. These activities constitute multi-dimensional peacekeeping or Second Generation peacekeeping. The important element in co-deployment is the military dimension, as it provides the physical security and stability (however fragile) for the range of other activities to take place. The deployment of a credible military deterrent capability equated with robust peacekeeping makes it possible to keep the peace and enforce compliance with the terms of the peace agreement. The robust peacekeeping posture potentially prevents relapse into further war and general instability that would hinder or undermine other relevant aspects of the peace support operations and post-war reconstruction and development activities.

The co-deployment between UN and ECOMOG created a division of labour based on comparative advantages. UNOMIL and the SGSR mobilised political and


diplomatic activities to facilitate the peace settlement and in support of the ECOWAS Peace Plan and conflict management. In addition, the UN framework provided access to financial and logistical resources, and also provided political legitimacy for ECOMOG’s enforcement activities. Furthermore, UNOMIL provided peace support operations, organising and supervising, together with ECOWAS, OAU, EU and other key western governments, parliamentary and presidential elections. The US provided the sum of US$25 million for Liberian electoral and post-war reconstruction. On the other hand, ECOMOG undertook enforcement operations, disarmament of warring factions, monitoring of borders to police the arms embargo, and provision of security during general elections. The result of this co-deployment experiment, despite its limitations, according to Adebi, was a ‘string of success in every important aspect of the Liberian peace process: diplomacy, disarmament and elections’. The co-deployment strategy provided a new framework for burden sharing and sharing of responsibilities between the UN and regional organisations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Co-deployment peacekeeping in Liberia largely succeeded in stopping the killings, in providing access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and in the disarmament, rehabilitation and re-integration of warring factions. Most importantly, regional peacekeeping intervention created the relative stability and fragile peace for post-war reconstruction efforts to begin. Despite the limitations and dangers inherent in co-deployment, it has been lauded as a model for the future of peacekeeping in Africa. Kofi Annan, in support of the Liberian co-deployment, stated that ‘we developed a new form of co-operation for the resolution of other conflicts whether in Africa or elsewhere’.

The Abuja II Peace Accord led to the formation of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) led by Ruth Perry. Perry’s interim government, in collaboration with UN, ECOWAS, OAU and other key backers, was able to organise general and presidential elections in 1997, which were won by Charles Taylor’s political party. The majority of the 75 per cent who voted for Taylor did so because of fear and war weariness. The new Nigerian military head of state, General Sanni Abacha, was quick to learn that without Taylor in the presidency of Liberia, there would be no peace. Though the elections were certified as free and fair by international observers, the reality was that it was an enforced peace that sacrificed issues of justice, reconciliation and fundamental grievances for the sake of ‘quick-fix’ stability and fragile peace. In explaining the relative success of the ECOWAS-UN peace settlement and co-deployment in Liberia, Adebi outlines the following: the onset of war-weariness, and stalemate with no decisive victory for any of the warring factions; the foreign policy volte face of the dominant player, i.e. Nigeria, after the exit of Babangida who was opposed to a Taylor presidency in Liberia at all costs,

33 Francis, Faal, John and Ramsbotham, Dangers of Co-deployment, 2005.
and General Abacha’s pragmatic inclination to do ‘business with Taylor’, hence, Nigeria’s unusual support for Taylor during the 1997 presidential elections; the involvement of the UN as a confidence building factor which created the perception of neutrality and impartiality, unlike the warring factions’ perception of ECOMOG as an ‘occupation force’, this also helped to reduce the Francophone-Anglophone mutual suspicion and concerns over Nigeria’s dominance. Furthermore, the UN-ECOMOG co-deployment framework provided the opportunity for UNOMIL to avoid coercive activities hence its reputation as a neutral inter-positionary force with fewer ‘enemies’. Most important was the UN financial and logistical support to facilitate ECOWAS/ECOMOG peace settlement and peacekeeping activities.

However, the co-deployment experiment could not function effectively as planned because of the existence of parallel command structures, and though UNOMIL was supposed to act in a supervisory role over ECOMOG, the military exigencies on the ground often dictated the nature of the supervisory role. As long as UNOMIL restricted itself to traditional peacekeeping in a complex conflict situation, ECOMOG as the primary coercive and peace enforcement instrument often held the upper hand and invariably reduced UNOMIL to a secondary position. There was, in effect, no verifiable body to monitor the activities of ECOMOG, thus Adebi laments that ‘the subordination of regional command structures to global authority was neither attempted nor achieved by UNOMIL’.

The estimated cost of UNOMIL operations from September 1995-97 was US$96.63 million and the total estimated cost per annum for Nigeria alone was US$365 million. This also created vast opportunities for prebendal accumulation by the Nigerian ruling military class in the name of regional peace and conflict management.

By 1999 the fragile peace in Liberia unravelled and the situation was further aggravated by the violent and bloody civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone. In an attempt to consolidate his grip on power and exploit the weakness of the Abuja accord, Taylor, in 1997, prevented ECOMOG from carrying out its function to restructure the Armed Forces of Liberia by including other warring factions. This and other high-profile misunderstandings led to the withdrawal of both ECOMOG and UNOMIL. Two new rebel factions, Liberians United for Reconstruction and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), comprising fighters from former anti-Taylor rebel groups, now led the fight to overthrow President Taylor. These rebel groups were alleged to have the support and to be armed by anti-Taylor governments in West Africa, countries such as Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire, who were blamed for sowing the seeds of instability in the region. By the beginning of 2003, the rebels had captured the entire country except Monrovia. ECOWAS’ political and diplomatic mediation led to the involvement of the UN and US to contain the unfolding humanitarian disaster in Liberia. Mounting international pressures led by the US, ECOWAS, AU and other key players on the Liberian leadership led to a negotiated settlement whereby President Taylor was forced to leave office. On 11 August 2003, Taylor handed power to his vice-president

to pave the way for the formation of a transitional government. The Accra Peace Agreement also provided for the exile of Taylor to Nigeria, whilst an international arrest warrant was issued by the UN-backed Special Court for Charles Taylor on war crimes charges in Sierra Leone.

To stabilise the security situation on the ground, US marines and a contingent of ECOMIL (ECOWAS Mission in Liberia) troops were deployed after the exit of President Taylor. With the improved security situation on the ground, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1509 which established a 15,000-strong United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) with a Chapter VII enforcement mandate. The robust peacekeeping and peace enforcement mandate was a recognition of the complex political emergency situation in Liberia and the multi-dimensional nature of the peacekeeping challenges in post-war Liberia. Negotiating the exit of Taylor from Liberia and securing the formation of a transitional government headed by a former businessman, Gyude Bryant, was a diplomatic success for ECOWAS’ peace mediation and political settlement. It demonstrates that the use or the threat of the use of force may not necessarily be the first option, but that it should be combined with ‘carrot and stick’ diplomacy. ECOWAS leaders, including key political leaders in Africa under the auspices of the AU, such as President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and President Chissano of Mozambique made it clear to President Taylor that they were not ready to compromise on his exit from power, and that ECOMOG was on standby for military deployment to enforce the peace in Liberia; that this would include his arrest and potential handing over to the War Crimes Tribunal in Sierra Leone.

The ECOMOG intervention in Liberia to contain and manage the violent civil war demonstrates that the putative advantages of regional military interventions are generally exaggerated. Proximity to the conflict situation did not necessarily give strategic military advantage to ECOMOG peacekeepers, nor did it enhance the rapid deployment capability of the West African intervention force. The ECOMOG peacekeeping intervention could hardly be described as ‘humanitarian’ or peacekeeping. If anything, the above analysis illustrates that intervention in Liberia was driven by strategic self-interests of regional players. In addition, the intervention force was more interested in the exploitation of the war economy than in peacekeeping, to the extent that ECOMOG came to be described by the general populace as ‘Every-Moveable-Object-Gone’. However, the ECOWAS/ECOMOG regional experiment in peacekeeping and conflict management demonstrates that traditional peacekeeping is obsolete in situations of complex political emergency. Furthermore, when ECOMOG peacekeepers were deployed, they were confronted with and forced to deal with a range of non-forcible humanitarian activities such as keeping humanitarian relief corridors open, protection of safe havens, refugees and humanitarian relief staff. These multi-dimensional and complex peacekeeping activities were not part of ECOMOG’s mandate, and hence, were ill-prepared for such operations.
The regionalisation of the civil war in Liberia became manifest in neighbouring Sierra Leone, when the Corporal Foday Sankoh-led Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insurgency launched a rebel war in March 1991, with the stated objective of overthrowing the corrupt and patrimonial regime of the All Peoples Congress (APC) party government under the lame leadership of President Joseph Momoh. For a variety of reasons, the RUF rebellion was directly supported by Charles Taylor’s NPFL, and covertly by other West Africa states such as Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire, and Gaddafi’s Libya. It is from this perspective that the Sierra Leone civil war has been described as a post-Cold War proxy war. The Sankoh-Taylor axis was based on the understanding that the success of the Liberian civil war would be used as a staging post for the overthrow of the APC regime in Sierra Leone, through rebel insurgence, and that strategic mineral resources such as diamonds would be used to finance the war. Charles Taylor in 1990, therefore, vehemently opposed the use of the territory of Sierra Leone to facilitate the military operations of ECOMOG in Liberia. Taylor perceived this as a major obstacle in his bid to secure the presidency in Liberia, and threatened to attack Sierra Leone. It is this perspective that has led to the conclusion that ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and conflict management intervention in Liberia has been ‘blamed’ for indirectly bringing Liberia’s civil war to Sierra Leone. Eric Bernan and Katie Sams argue that there is a positive correlation between ECOMOG deployment in Liberia and outbreak of civil war. It is important to emphasise that the presence of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, as a staging post for peacekeeping operations in Liberia, was not a cause of the civil war in Sierra Leone, rather it provided a strategic military and political opportunity for the Charles Taylor-backed RUF insurgency to commence its already planned military incursion into Sierra Leone. But apart from this ECOMOG involvement and other historical coincidences within the sub-region, the spillover of the Liberian civil war into Sierra Leone reinforces the nature of regional security complexes and regional conflict formation dynamics in the sub-region.

The root causes of the civil war in Sierra Leone have been long in the making and the war is a product of a multiplicity of domestic and external causes including the patrimonial and clientelistic systems of governance in the post-colonial period, whereby successive civilian and military governments effectively impoverished and excluded the majority of the population from the economic and political processes in the country. The ruling and governing elites politicised and ‘privatised’ the state governing institutions, including the military and security apparatus, to serve their

36 See Francis, The Politics of Economic Regionalism, 2001, pp.110-112, for Taylor’s media interview with the BBC Focus on Africa Programme on 1 November 1990 threatening to attack Sierra Leone for allowing its territory to be used for ECOMOG military operations.

vested interests and to secure the survival of their illegitimate regimes. The political economy of diamonds played a crucial role in creating the fundamental grievances for the civil war and the international dimensions that fuelled the causes of the armed conflict. At the outbreak of the civil war, resource-rich Sierra Leone was the least developed nation in the world according to the UNDP Human Development Index Report. Therefore, fundamental grievances created the motivational environment for the outbreak of the civil war and strategic resources provided the fuel that ignited the war and ensured its prolongation. The corrosive effects of bad governance and other domestic and external factors aided the easy overthrow of 24-years of the APC patrimonial regime by the military in 1992, which then formed the National Provisional and Ruling Council (NPRC), led by a 27-year-old Captain Valentine Strasser.

It was the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military coup, led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, in May 1997 which overthrew the democratically elected Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and led to ECOWAS and ECOMOG intervention in Sierra Leone. However, some West African troops were already in the country by 1991, including soldiers from Nigeria, Guinea and Ghana, through military and defence arrangements with these countries.

The AFRC military intervention in civilian democratic politics was domestically and internationally condemned and the \textit{de facto} military government established was not internationally recognised. The ousted President Kabbah was in exile in neighbouring Guinea and was recognised as the \textit{de jure} head of state of Sierra Leone. Kofi Annan, at the OAU summit in Harare in 1997, called on ECOWAS, OAU and the international community to ‘play their part’ in the restoration of constitutional rule in Sierra Leone. The OAU in turn, requested ECOWAS to explore strategies on how to reinstate the democratically elected government. The ousted president invited Nigeria to ‘intervene militarily to restore his government to power’.\footnote{Bundu, A. \textit{Democracy by Force? A Study of International Military Intervention in the Conflict in Sierra Leone from 1991-2000}. Universal Publishers, 2001, p.58.} The Nigerian military dictator, General Abacha, for a variety of domestic and international realpolitik considerations, offered to intervene and reinstate the government of President Kabbah.

During the ECOWAS Council of Ministers meeting in Conakry in June 1997, ECOWAS decided on a diplomatic solution to restore constitutional rule, but also agreed on the option to use force if diplomatic solutions failed. In addition, ECOWAS recommended the imposition of economic and military sanctions against the military junta, and established the ECOWAS Committee of Four, which included Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, and was later expanded to include Liberia, Togo and Burkina Faso. With the failure of diplomatic solutions to resolve the crisis, the ECOWAS Committee of Four and Chiefs of Staff and Council of Ministers met in August 1997 to recommend the establishment of ECOMOG II in Sierra Leone. The Mandate of ECOMOG II was to assist in creating an environment conducive to re-
instatement of the legitimate government in Sierra Leone, to monitor and supervise all cease-fire violations, and enforce all sanctions and embargos instituted against the junta.\textsuperscript{39}

The mandate of ECOMOG II in Sierra Leone was a compromise between peacekeeping and peace enforcement in that some ECOWAS leaders had reservations about Nigeria’s dominance in the Sierra Leone crisis, and also about the use of force to oust another military regime. Close allies of the Nigerian-led intervention, such as Ghana, were amongst those with strong reservations. However, this was understandable given that the then president, Jerry Rawlings, was a former coup leader who came to power in Ghana through the barrel of the gun, and, hence, could not support the precedent of the use of force to oust another military junta.

The Conakry Accord of October 1997 developed an ECOWAS Peace Plan for Sierra Leone, authorising the following: the use of force by ECOMOG to disarm and demobilise the AFRC and RUF, imposing a deadline for the ‘surrender’ of the AFRC junta and the re-instatement of Kabbah’s government by April 1998. At the negotiations, the belligerence and gun-boat diplomacy of the Nigerian Foreign Minister, Tom Ikimi, alienated allies and also irritated the junta. According to Adebajo, Ikimi simply dictated the Abacha government’s terms of ‘surrender’ to the AFRC in that ‘he was not there to negotiate but to reach a timetable for their departure’ failing which the junta should either surrender power or be flushed out of Freetown.\textsuperscript{40} The AFRC, for its part, reneged on an earlier commitment to respect the terms of the peace accord, and even called for the reduction of Nigeria’s role in ECOMOG as a precondition for further political negotiations. By this time it was apparent to the Nigerian military leadership that diplomacy had failed. The response of the Nigerian government was to increase its military deployment from 900 in May 1997 to 4,000 by the end of 1997. The Nigerian-led ECOMOG engaged the AFRC-RUF coalition in February 1998, and by March the AFRC was ousted and the government of President Kabbah was re-instated.

The Nigerian-led ‘pro-democracy’ intervention in Sierra Leone was not only an important development in the political history of West Africa, but also had important implications for the international relations of ECOWAS and Africa in general, because this was the first time that a military junta had been ousted in the name of democracy and constitutional order. The ‘defence of democracy’ in Sierra Leone or the attempt to do an American-style reinstatement of President Aristide in 1994, was nothing more than an attempt to enhance the damaged domestic and international image of Nigeria and in particular its military head of state General Abacha. The Nigerian military leadership under Generals Babangida and Abacha subverted the democratic wishes of the Nigerian populace in annulling the results


of the 12 June 1993 general elections, clamping down on all democratic forces in the country; which led to the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth in 1995. Without democratic credentials and legitimacy, why would General Abacha defend democracy denied in his own country? The Sierra Leone civil war and crisis provided the opportunity for the Nigerian military leader to rehabilitate his battered international image and to establish his domestic democratic credentials. The Sierra Leone pro-democracy adventure by General Abacha was a ploy to further strengthen his international credibility and silence his critics, in particular after the relatively successful political settlement of the Liberian civil war in 1997.

The involvement of the UN became effective after the restoration of constitutional rule in Sierra Leone. However, in October 1997, even before the reinstatement of democratic rule, the UN imposed an international embargo on the sale of arms and petroleum products on the military junta. Francis Okello was appointed as the SGSR, and he worked with ECOWAS to broker the Conakry peace accord. In July 1998, the Security Council passed Resolution 1181 authorising the deployment of the UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The mandate of UNOMSIL was an attempt to replicate the Liberian peacekeeping model, UNOMIL, but with the specific provision to also ‘monitor the role of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone’. This indicates that some lessons were learned and monitoring the role of ECOMOG intervention was an attempt to respond to allegations about the involvement of the ECOMOG soldiers in human rights violations and exploitation of the war economy. As in Liberia, UN observers were hardly the instrument for peacekeeping in such a complex conflict situation. This became apparent in January 1999 when a coalition of RUF and AFRC forces launched a devastating attack on Freetown in an attempt to overthrow the Kabbah government. An estimated 5,000 people were killed in the three weeks of fighting with government and Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces. In the face of unfolding humanitarian disaster, there was a classic UN response i.e. retreat of UN observers and evacuation of foreign nationals and international personnel from Sierra Leone. It was left to ECOMOG to repel the RUF-AFRC attack and restore a fragile security; in the process it suffered heavy casualties. The UN Security Council cannot be absolved from blame for the debacle and the failure to learn lessons from Liberia, in the sense that it would endanger the lives of peacekeepers and observers, deploying them in a complex conflict situation without the mandate to enforce the peace. Liberia taught this lesson, but it was either not learnt, or if learnt, was not applied, or else the politics of peacekeeping deployment and the Security Council’s divisiveness ensured that the lessons were not implemented.

In the aftermath of the January 1999 attack, the UN launched a diplomatic offensive with ECOWAS for a new peace plan for Sierra Leone. The Clinton administration of America nominated Rev. Jesse Jackson as the US Presidential Envoy to assist in the mediation of the civil war. In addition, the western backers of the peace process in Sierra Leone, including Britain, the Commonwealth, and also ECOWAS and the AU, legitimised the RUF as a political party. Its leader Foday Sankoh was released from prison and the death sentence passed by the Sierra Leone government was
lifted, thereby paving the way for his participation in the Lomé peace negotiations. A cease-fire and a new peace agreement were signed in Lomé in July 1999.

However, events in Nigeria, in particular the democratic transition, were causing concerns about the durability and security of the new peace agreement, as the newly elected democratic president, Olusegun Obasanjo demanded the withdrawal of ECOMOG from Sierra Leone. President Obansanjo notified the UN Secretary General of his intention to gradually withdraw 2,000 soldiers each month, of the 12,000-strong Nigerian contingent, commencing in August and ending in December 1999. Despite increased financial and logistical support for ECOMOG by key western allies, the Obasanjo government refused to reverse its decision to end its ECOMOG mission. This forced the Security Council to adopt Resolution 1270 on 22 October 1999 authorising the deployment of the UN mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) with a Chapter VII mandate for peace enforcement, and an operational budget of US $476.7 million in the first year. The resolution ended the mandate of UNOMSIL and brought its forces under UNAMSIL. The mandate also provided for monitoring the adherence by all parties to the ceasefire and peace agreement. Nigeria made available 2,000 of its ECOMOG contingent and was incorporated into UNAMSIL.

The UNAMSIL multinational peacekeeping force was headed by an Indian, Major-General Vijay Jetley, with a total deployment of 7,391 peacekeepers by January 2000. The withdrawal of the Nigerian-led ECOMOG was capitalised on by the RUF, which abducted more than 500 peacekeepers, seized large quantities of weapons and ammunitions and vehicles from UNAMSIL, and in the process, killed 5 peacekeepers. The RUF also refused deployment of UNAMSIL in the diamond territory of Koidu, which was under its control. At this stage, the humiliation of UN peacekeeping was complete. The British government deployed ‘Operation Palliser’ to bolster military support for UN peacekeeping and to evacuate foreign nationals. Nigeria re-deployed 3,000 troops to help stabilise the security situation. By March 2000, the RUF was defeated, and its leader arrested and indicted for war crimes by the UN-sponsored Special Court. The Security Council authorised an increase in the size of UNAMSIL to 17,500, with a mandate for ‘robust peacekeeping’. The politics of peacekeeping and the dangers inherent in co-deployment were partly responsible for the humiliation and debacle in Sierra Leone. By 2001, the disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration (DDR) was partially completed, with domestic and international confidence in the DDR process and that the fragile peace would hold. In May 2002, democratic elections were held and monitored by international observers.


The valuable lesson learnt in the co-deployment between ECOMOG and UNAMSIL peacekeeping and conflict management in Sierra Leone is that the role of Nigeria is crucial in the maintenance of regional peace and security. The peace enforcement role of the Nigerian-led ECOMOG played a critical role in forcing compliance with the peace agreement and even rescuing the UN in Sierra Leone. In addition, the role of extra-regional actors such as Britain and its rapid deployment force to support UN peacekeeping and assist in stabilising the security situation was also a valuable lesson. However, stabilising and containing the bloody and violent civil war in Sierra Leone was not only made possible by ECOMOG, UN and British interventions. Non-state actors’ interventions such as mercenaries, private military companies and civil defence forces like the Kamajors also played critical, though controversial, roles in stabilising and managing the conflict. The controversial military interventions by mercenaries, private military companies and civil militias have been extensively discussed.43

The deployment of UNAMSIL was a major challenge for UN peacekeeping because it was established as a multi-functional peace operation to use ‘all necessary means’, i.e. use and threat of the use of force, to achieve its mandate. This was the first experiment in peace enforcement after the Somalia debacle.44 UNAMSIL suffered from the usual operational and logistical difficulties faced by the majority of UN peacekeeping operations. However, the Sierra Leone peacekeeping experiment is important for several reasons. Firstly, it is the first attempt at what Kofi Annan described as ‘robust peacekeeping’, i.e. an impartial force with a strong military capability and fully resourced force to deter attacks and defend itself and its mandate, should this become necessary.45 Robust peacekeeping was deployed in East Timor, UNITAF, ‘Operation Turquoise’, the American-led intervention in Haiti in 1994 and the NATO-led peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo, with the specific mandate to use ‘all necessary means’ to fulfil its mandate. The experiment with robust peacekeeping in a complex civil war in the case of Sierra Leone was only successful because of the additional roles of Britain, Nigeria and non-state military interventions such as civil defence forces, mercenaries and private military companies. Secondly, the


initial deployment and mandate of UNOMSIL was framed in the spirit of replicating the success of the UN peacekeeping mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) and the Mozambican civil war peace settlement model. The major backers of the peace agreement, i.e. the US and Britain, supported the idea of doing a RENAMO on the RUF by supporting the transformation of the RUF into a legitimate political party and transforming the rebel warlord, Foday Sankoh, into a legitimate leader. Despite reservations from a variety of actors on the applicability of the Mozambican model in Sierra Leone, the main western sponsors and the African regional organisations, including ECOWAS and OAU, turned deaf ears to these criticisms. The humiliation of UNAMSIL by the RUF, and the failure of the power-sharing arrangement, demonstrated not only the limitations of replicating models that worked in a particular conflict situation, but also illustrates a glaring lack of knowledge and understanding of the root and secondary causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone, in particular the factors that ensured the prolongation of the war. Unlike Mozambique, Sierra Leone has vast strategic resources such as diamonds which ensured that ‘spoilers’ would continue to exploit the war economy and prolong the war, including ECOMOG peacekeepers. Thirdly, ECOMOG peacekeepers in Sierra Leone as in the case of Liberia, were confronted with the challenges of multi-dimensional peacekeeping such as protection of safe havens, internally displaced persons camps, keeping humanitarian corridors open and actual delivery of humanitarian supplies to war victims. An illustrative case is the January 1999 AFRC-FUF attack on Freetown. ECOMOG peacekeepers found themselves enmeshed in non-forcible humanitarian relief operations in the territories under their control in Freetown and its environs.

Peacekeeping without a Sub-regional Hegemon in Guinea Bissau: From Peace Broker to Failure of Peacekeeping

The outbreak of the civil war in Guinea Bissau in 1998 dragged ECOMOG into another regional peacekeeping and conflict management adventure. The causes of the armed conflict in Guinea Bissau could be traced to a combination of the nature of domestic politics in the post-colonial period and complex external factors. The post-independence leaders of PAIGC, Amilcar and Luis Cabral, in an attempt to ensure the consolidation of state power and regime survival, developed a highly centralised state and a repressive security apparatus, and were to create a political environment conducive to corrupt partrimonialism. Military coups and counter coups marked the politics and governance of the immediate post-independence period after the end of Portuguese colonial rule in September 1974. President Joao Vieira’s authoritarian regime further polarised the society and subverted the state governing institutions to serve the vested interests of the ruling and governing elites. The situation came to a head when President Vieira sacked his army commander General Mane on

allegations of an attempted coup and weapons smuggling to the secessionist rebel group in the Casamance region of Senegal. These accusations were underpinned by ethnic polarisation and the confrontation between the army commander and President Vieira degenerated into a civil war.

The outbreak of yet another civil war in West Africa threatened the national security of the immediate neighbouring states, i.e. Senegal and Guinea, and also regional peace and security. Both Guinea and Senegal were already hosting thousands of refugees from the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and could not contemplate the consequences of yet another massive influx of refugees from Bissau. Within the relational context of the politics in West Africa, presidents Diouf of Senegal and Conté of Guinea, both supported President Vieira, hence the allegation that ECOWAS was nothing more than a political club to protect the status quo and ensure the survival of the regimes. Senegal in particular had a serious national security concern because of the Casamance rebellion in the south of the country, and the allegations of General Mane’s military support for his Mandingo kinsmen in Casamance were justifications for intervention in the civil war. Both Guinea and Senegal, therefore, intervened to prop up the beleagued government of President Vieira and to help contain the conflict from spreading into neighbouring Francophone countries.

President Vieira asked Nigeria, the then chair of the ECOWAS Authority, for military intervention to help resolve the conflict. In response to Vieira’s request, ECOWAS Foreign and Defence ministers meeting in Abidjan in July 1998 recommended the following: ‘affirmed support of the democratically elected government of President Vieira and the need to restore his authority, employing a combination of dialogue, sanctions and use of force.’ and establishment of an ECOWAS Committee of seven to implement the decisions. By the time the committee could meet in August in Accra, Ghana, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) had already brokered a truce between the warring factions. Subsequently, a joint ECOWAS-CPLP meeting in August in Praia, Cape Verde, led to the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the parties and provided for the deployment of an international observer force to monitor the agreement. The Praia agreement was, however, shattered by continuous fighting for the control of the capital city. The Abuja meeting and agreement of November 1998 agreed on the withdrawal of all foreign forces, i.e. Guinea and Senegal, the simultaneous deployment of an ECOMOG military observer group, formation of a transitional government to conduct presidential elections supervised by ECOWAS and CPLP, and the disarmament of warring factions by ECOMOG. ECOWAS authorised the deployment of 1,450 troops in Guinea Bissau in fulfilment of the Abuja Accord. However, ECOWAS encountered considerable difficulties in deployment of the ECOMOG contingent because the regional hegemon, Nigeria, was reluctant, due to the democratic transition process and, in particular, the way in which ECOMOG operations in West Africa had become a controversial domestic political issue. There

were also reservations in some quarters of the Nigerian military establishment about lending support to the embattled President Vieira, who was accused of not having shown support for ECOMOG operations in either Liberia or Sierra Leone. The Bissau conflict, therefore, became the concern of the president of Togo, Gnassingbé Eyadema, in his capacity as chair of the ECOWAS authority. President Eyadema secured extra-regional support from France which led to the deployment of a relatively small Togolese-led ECOMOG contingent in December 1998, as ECOMOG III, with a Chapter VI mandate. This chapter VI mandate again consistently demonstrate that ECOWAS leaders, together with their UN and western backers, refused to acknowledge the irrelevance of deploying an intervention force with a tradition peacekeeping mandate in a complex conflict situation.

The difficulty in securing troop deployment on the tense Bissau-Senegal border, and the refusal of President Vieira to allow disarmament of his forces as provided for by the Abuja accord, led to a military offensive by General Mane who succeeded in routing Vieira’s forces from the capital. The defeat of Vieira virtually ended the mission of ECOMOG III, as the peacekeeping force refused to intervene in the fight for the control of the capital city or to assist Vieira’s forces. In addition, logistical and financial difficulties prevented the continued deployment of ECOMOG in Guinea Bissau. This paved the way for the intervention of the UN by authorising the deployment of an assistance mission, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea Bissau (UNOGBIS), which became operational in June 1999. The mandate of UNOGBIS was to promote national reconciliation, and assist in organising and supervising parliamentary and presidential elections.48

In Guinea Bissau, the UN only intervened after a rather messy and problematic ECOMOG intervention. The UN appointed a SGSR to work with ECOWAS and, in collaboration with external partners, to organise and supervise elections. The presidential elections were won by Kumba Yala’s PRS. Key western and Asia governments and donor agencies, including the EU, UNDP, ECOWAS, and the OAU have contributed to and facilitated the post-war reconstruction and development in Guinea Bissau. The post-war peace and stability was shattered by ethnic rivalry and armed clashes between the government forces of President Yala and supporters of General Mane. Mane was later killed in one of the armed confrontations in November 2000. Guinea Bissau, like Sierra Leone, is excessively dependent on external funding in the post-war period, and this potentially undermines the foundations for durable peace and security.49 The Bissau conflict was the first attempt by the Francophone states in West Africa to organise and deploy regional peacekeeping and conflict management forces without the involvement of the dominant sub-regional player.


49 By 2000, 60 per cent of Sierra Leone’s national budget was made up of foreign assistance. In the same year, an estimated 80 per cent of Guinea Bissau’s national budget was donor financed (UN Document S/2001/622, 22 June 2001, para. 19).
Nigeria. The failure of ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management in Guinea Bissau has provided valuable lessons, which are addressed in the concluding section of this chapter.

*Côte d’Ivoire: Peacekeeping and Conflict Management in the ‘Oasis of Peace’ in West Africa*

The ‘fire next door’ dynamics and the regionalisation of civil conflict in West Africa became evident in Côte d’Ivoire, long described as the ‘oasis of peace and prosperity’ in a region troubled by armed conflicts and political instability. This once stable and relatively prosperous economy of 16 million people hosted an estimated one-third immigrant population. The root causes of the civil war could be traced to both domestic and external factors. The independence political leader, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, since 1960, had dominated the political scene and established a single party dictatorship under the Parti Démocratique de Côte d’Ivoire (PDCI). The French had created Ivory Coast (Côte d’Ivoire) as a colonial plantation enclave economy of cocoa and coffee. The attempt to ‘Africanise’ and ‘Ivorianise’ the polity under Boigny led to the development of a personalised rule, whereby his home town, Yamoussoukro, was transformed into the political capital of the country. He further constructed a colossal Basilica at an estimated cost of US$300 million. In an attempt to consolidate political control in the post-independence period, Boigny developed a policy of a multi-ethnic Ivorian state that encouraged the migration of millions of West African nationals, in particular from Burkina Faso. The reality of Boigny’s multi-ethnic governance was nothing more than the dominance, according to Jean Pierre Dozon, of the Akan-Baule ethnocracy.50 In contrast, his successor President Henri Konan Bedié’s attempt to replicate Boigny’s patrimonialism failed. Bedié promoted a policy of ethnic-nationalism, defining a new Ivorian nationality described as ‘Ivorianess’ or ‘Ivorite’, which effectively denied citizenship to and disenfranchised millions who had immigrated and settled in the country. This was a political tool to marginalise political opponents, in particular relating to the political struggle with the former Prime Minister, Alassan Ouattara, who is alleged to be of Burkinabe descent.

In December 1999, the myth of the ‘oasis of peace’ was shattered when a military coup was led by the army chief, General Robert Guei, against President Bedié. General Guei, after a period of rule, organised democratic elections and his attempt to rig the result of the elections in his favour led to a people’s revolution that forced him out of power. Laurent Gbagbo of the Front Populaire Ivorien (FPI) was declared winner of the October 2000 general election. There were recurrent political clashes and instability between Guei and Gbagbo’s supporters, which eventually led to a military mutiny in September 2002 and the outbreak of a civil war. The country became divided into two, the pro-government south controlled by government forces and

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supporters, and the North-West controlled by three rebel factions including the main group, Movement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire (MPCI), Ivorian Popular Movement for the Far West (MPIGO, comprising largely Western Yacouba ethnic group) and the so-called New Forces – Movement for Justice and Peace (MJP).

The French brokered peace talks which led to the signing of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord in January 2003 providing for a ceasefire, which was largely favoured by the rebels but not by the government supporters. The peace agreement provided for the formation of a transitional power-sharing government inclusive of both opposition political parties and rebel factions. The ceasefire paved the way for UN Security Council Resolution 1464 authorising the deployment of French troops and peacekeepers under the auspices of ECOWAS. The UN established the UN Mission in Ivory Coast (MINUCI). The mandate of the French-led peacekeeping force and MINUCI was to ensure the protection of civilians and authorised the peacekeeping force to ‘take the necessary steps to guarantee the security and freedom of the movement of personnel’. The French had already deployed 2,500 soldiers to protect foreign nationals and French interests and to monitor the truce. The understanding was that peacekeeping duties would eventually be turned over to ECOWAS.

With the outbreak of the civil war, ECOWAS became actively involved in organising the diplomatic negotiations and political settlement of the war, under the auspices of the Chair of the Authority of ECOWAS, President Abdulaye Wade, and the ECOWAS Executive Secretary Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambers. The ECOWAS Committee of Six on Côte d’Ivoire, comprising Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Togo and Guinea Bissau, was instrumental in collaborating with France to broker the ceasefire agreement in May 2003. The Senegalese Foreign Minister, Cheikh Tidiane Gadio played an influential shuttle diplomacy role on behalf of ECOWAS. The US government also supported the ECOWAS peace mediation efforts and Senegal’s Foreign Minister became the main contact link. The ECOWAS Executive Secretary Ibn Chambers, in justifying the intervention of ECOMOG, warned that the conflict had serious regional consequences and could potentially ‘engulf other countries in the sub-region . . . and threaten the peace and security of the entire sub-region’. In October 2002 ECOWAS agreed to deploy 2,000 ECOMOG peacekeepers to monitor the ceasefire known by its French acronym, ECOMICI. The troop contributing countries were Benin, Togo, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. This was a largely Francophone dominated peacekeeping deployment. A 1,200 strong Senegalese-led ECOMICI peacekeeping force and an increased French military force of 4,000 troops were delegated the responsibility of keeping the peace, in collaboration with the small UN observer mission. As part of the conditions for complying with the terms of the peace agreement, the rebels demanded the resignation of President Gbagbo, withdrawal of all foreign troops, new general elections, moves to address the issue of nationality, and opening humanitarian relief corridors to the north of the country - the primarily rebel-held territories. The government, for its

part, demanded the disarming of rebel factions, granted amnesty to renegade soldiers and re-integrated rebels into the national army.

Both regional and extra-regional actors were involved in the civil war for a variety of reasons. Senegal has serious national security concerns because of the proximity of the conflict and could not afford to have another civil war raging on its border. After the experience of the civil war and the fragile peace in Guinea Bissau, Senegal was determined to stem the consequences of the spillover of the civil war in Côte d’Ivoire, in particular the effects of the armed conflict in southern Senegal. France, as the former colonial power, regarded Côte d’Ivoire as being in its sphere of political, economic and security interests, and was, therefore, committed to either unilateral or multilateral intervention in the conflict. Apart from the French military presence in the country, during the peace negotiations French troops provided protection for both rebels and government representatives attending peace talks. France’s role in the country and its involvement in mediating the resolution of the civil war have come under controversial scrutiny. France provided asylum for the former Prime Minister Ouattara, a Muslim from the north, barred from contesting the presidential elections due to the controversial citizenship laws, and alleged to be the main backer of the rebels from the north. This anti-French sentiment was also shared by the rebels who saw France as the main obstacle to the presidency, just as Taylor and his NPFL in Liberia perceived ECOMOG as the main obstacle to the Executive Mansion in Monrovia. On 21 December 2002, the MPIOG rebel group clashed with French troops and subsequently all the rebel groups agreed that any military attack on any of their fighters would constitute an act of war. The civil war also attracted private military companies and mercenaries. The wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau provided a recruiting ground and ready supply of local mercenaries or ‘soldiers of fortune’ for hire by the rebel factions in Côte d’Ivoire. Angolan fighters have also been recruited by the government in its war against the rebels.

The formation of a transitional power-sharing government has provided the opportunity for a fragile peace and the declaration by the government that the war is officially over. But this rather optimistic perspective is not reflected by the realities on the ground as the peace agreement remains threatened and it is doubtful whether the peace will hold. The rounds of the peace agreement reflected in Accra I, II and III have only produced a deadlock between the government and the warring factions, and the power-sharing arrangement is fraught with accusations and counter accusations. At the time of writing, the rebels have suspended their participation in the power-sharing government, and the UN is threatening sanctions against the Gbagbo government for failure to implement the terms of the peace agreement. In addition, the AU-led diplomacy under the auspices of President Mbeki of South Africa has not led to any meaningful civil war peace settlement.

It is evident that despite the fact that ECOWAS had already ratified a new protocol relating to conflict prevention, management, resolution peacekeeping and security, in 1999, the ECOWAS politico-diplomatic and ECOMOG peacekeeping interventions in Côte d’Ivoire did not seem to have any realistic impact on its peacemaking and preventive diplomacy efforts. This further illustrates the wide gap
between the politics of establishing peace and security mechanisms and the practical implementations of these structures.

Building a Regional Peace and Security System: ECOMOG as a Permanent Mechanism for Regional Peacekeeping and Conflict Management

What is evidently emerging within the framework of ECOWAS developmental regionalism and ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management operations in West Africa, is the evolution of norms underpinning the building of a regional peace and security mechanism. It is generally accepted that ECOWAS integration and security regionalism is fraught with the dynamics of amity and enmity. It is also generally accepted that despite the limitations of ECOWAS’ economic, political and security regionalism, there is a lack of commitment to regional norms as demonstrated by covert interventions in the affairs of Community member states. However, there is the acknowledged view that a norm of mutual interdependence and peaceful co-existence is gradually emerging and that these are inextricably linked to peace and democratic consolidation with the potential to create democratic zones of peace over time. In addition, there is the emerging norm of common identity, the identity of unity as the mechanism or instrument for the resolution of regional problems. The norm of sub-regional unity, despite the perennial problem of the colonial divide, mutual hostility and enmity, provided the opportunity for ECOWAS countries to ‘do something’ about the problems within the region. There is the explicit realisation that the containment and resolution of armed conflicts and violence potentially creates disincentives for violence amongst member states, thereby positively contributing to the reduction of potential conflicts in the sub-region. There seems to be a positive correlation between building regional structures and the opportunities for reduction and prevention of violent conflict. Furthermore, the evolution and building of legitimate regional mechanisms for conflict management and resolution, supported by viable and accountable democratic institutions and governments, will potentially strengthen the sub-region’s common identity, and reduce the risk of both inter-state and intra-state conflicts.

So what has been the experience of the West African sub-region in the post-Cold War period to build permanent structures for the maintenance of regional peace and security? The Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 1999 is the first comprehensive and multi-dimensional architecture for regional peace and security. Article IV, chapters 23 and 24 of the protocol provide for a sub-regional peace and security Observation System or early warning system as a mechanism for conflict prevention, with observation and monitoring zones based at sub-regional zonal capitals of Banjul, Ouagadougou, Monrovia and Cotonou. The development of a conflict early warning mechanism in West Africa is an innovation but, as with the

52 The zonal capitals have responsibilities for the following: Banjul covers Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal; Ouogadougou covers Burkina Faso, Côte
Rwandan war and genocide, the problem in Africa is not one of failure of early warning but lack of and failure of early response to clear indicators of conflict instigating factors and the potential for escalation into armed conflict.

Chapter 17 of the protocol outlines the ECOWAS mediation and security council with the following organs, Defence and Security Commission, Council of Elders and ECOMOG, with a mandate covering conflict prevention, management, resolution and peacekeeping. Chapter 22 stipulates the role of ECOMOG as an observation and monitoring mechanism with responsibilities for peacekeeping and restoration of peace and security in conflict situations, humanitarian intervention in support of human protection purposes and prevention of humanitarian disasters, enforcement of sanctions, including embargos, preventive deployment, peacebuilding, disarmament and demobilisation, policing activities including the control of fraud and organised crime, and ‘any other operations as may be mandated by the Mediation and Security Council’.

Like the provisions of the African Union’s constitutive Act, the ECOWAS peace and security protocol implicitly endorses humanitarian intervention. Chapter 28 constitutes ECOMOG as a permanent peacekeeping and conflict management mechanism, comprising stand-by units from each of the member states’ armed forces. In response to the challenges of complex peacekeeping, Article 31 outlines the composition of unarmed civilian and military personnel to be deployed as an observer mission with armed peacekeeping forces.

The experience of ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management in West Africa has reinforced the need to separate the political dimensions of civil war peace settlement from the military component. This has warranted the provision in Article 32 for the appointment and function of an ECOWAS Special Representative (SR) developed on the model of the UN SRSG to undertake and engineer the politics and diplomatic activities of negotiating complex civil wars. The ECOWAS-SR is appointed by the Mediation and Security Council on the recommendation of the Executive Secretary. This is an attempt by ECOWAS to provide high-level diplomatic support and presence, and also to take away this responsibility from the military commanders, enabling them to focus on military and security issues. By all indications, ECOWAS regionalism has come a long way in developing sub-regional mechanisms for development, peace and security. These are nascent institutions bedevilled by a variety of complex domestic and external factors, and the systems developed are yet to be rooted in a regional norm of peaceful co-existence and non-use of force in inter-state and intra-state relations. Notwithstanding the attempt by relatively weak and quasi-states, with underdeveloped economies to build regional architectures for peace and security is commendable, though the measure of success will have to be determined by the practical dimensions of regional peacekeeping, conflict management and peacebuilding activities.

Conclusion

In evaluating West Africa’s attempt at building regional peace and security systems, and in particular ECOWAS and ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and conflict management experience, there are key issues worthy of consideration, i.e. evaluation of the terms of the ‘mandate criteria’, the ‘humanitarian intervention criteria’, ‘peacekeeping criteria’, and as a ‘security community’. The mandate of ECOMOG interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire was to assist in the restoration of peace and security, prevent regionalisation of conflicts, end the fighting and help restore constitutional order. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, ECOMOG largely succeeded, despite difficulties, in stopping civil war and assisted in the restoration of constitutional democracy, though in Guinea Bissau, ECOMOG was overtaken by events. ECOMOG, however, failed to prevent the spillover of the civil war into neighbouring countries in the region, and some political analysts accuse the regional peacekeeping and intervention force of complicity in the spread of regional conflict. However, given the nature and dynamics of the regional security complex and conflict formation, it would be unjustified to lay the blame completely on the West African intervention force as most of these factors were beyond the operational mandate of ECOMOG and far beyond its ability to address, in particular, regional ‘spoilers’.

As regards the evaluation of ECOMOG, based on the criteria of peacekeeping, it has been discussed above that ECOMOG was deployed as a traditional peacekeeping force in a complex conflict situation that demanded a Second Generation, complex peacekeeping mandate. The unsuitability of the peacekeeping mandate and the improvisatory nature of its development, fraught with logistical and financial difficulties, were largely responsible for the initial failures of ECOMOG as a neutral inter-positionary peacekeeping force. But out of these challenges ECOMOG initiated a new conflict management response in complex conflict situations by employing a peace enforcement mandate based on the military situation on the ground, and enforcing compliance with ceasefire and peace agreements. Based on improvement in the military situation on the ground and its impact on the peace process, ECOMOG then shifted to its traditional peacekeeping role. This innovation led not only to the development of a model of co-deployment with UN peacekeeping forces in West Africa, but also contributed to the management of civil war peace settlements in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and conflict management deployment in West Africa has been cast in terms of humanitarian intervention. The mandate and justification of ECOMOG interventions in West African civilian-based civil wars have been primarily to save lives and, in general, for human protection purposes. There is no denying the fact that the ECOMOG ‘coalition of willing states’, and in particular the sub-regional hegemon, Nigeria, had vested strategic interests and were in pursuit of realist political interests, but this does not detract from the fact that ECOMOG helped saved lives, stopped violent and bloody civil wars, protected civilians, provided protection for humanitarian operations and also provided humanitarian
supplies to war victims, displaced persons and refugees, and at the cost of the loss of
many peacekeepers’ lives. The ECOMOG human protection justification produced
a human protection outcome in all its operational areas in West Africa, though with
different degrees of success.

Furthermore, West African regionalism is far from being described as a
security community, defined by Karl Deutsch as a community of states developing
‘dependable expectations of peaceful change’ in inter-state relations.54 West Africa,
like the majority of underdeveloped and developing regions of the world, lacks or is
in the process of developing the two essential elements of what constitutes a security
community, i.e. liberal democratic politics and economics. However, I have argued
elsewhere that West Africa is potentially evolving as a nascent security community,
ot essentially in the traditional sense, and without strong roots of liberal democratic
politics and economics, or intense intra-regional economic interdependence.55 There
are evolving norms that underpin this nascent security community in West Africa
including non-use of force in inter-state relations, common identity of unity and
Pan-West African solidarity and co-operation, though this has not prevented covert
intervention and support for rebel insurgents by some member states. Furthermore,
there is the evolving determination to respond to regional peace and security problems
through regional means and solutions, and the evolution of a regional peace and
security architecture. The argument is that, despite the geo-political disputes and
conflicts in the region, this does not negate the claim that West Africa is evolving a
nascent security community, because it has demonstrated the capacity to manage and
resolve sub-regional conflicts by both peaceful and non-peaceful means, and develop
peace and security mechanisms, which lay the foundation for conflict prevention and
peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The ECOMOG experience in regional peacekeeping and conflict management
demonstrates the relevance of the role and contribution of sub-regional hegemons in
the maintenance of regional peace and security. Despite reservations about Nigeria’s
preponderance and gun-boat diplomacy, its dominant role is sometimes perceived as
desirable, as in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. Its critical presence and enforcement
operations contributed to the management of the conflicts and the restoration of
fragile stability. However, Nigeria’s absence in Guinea Bissau partly accounted for
the failure of ECOMOG III. In general, the majority of West African states accept or
tend to accept Nigeria’s leadership in regional peacekeeping, but equally do resent
its sometimes unilateral diplomacy. This illustrates that a regional collective security
mechanism, led by a sub-regional hegemon, has to be sensitive to reservations
about threats to sovereignty by member states. In the post-Cold war era the security
vacuum created in West Africa has given Nigeria increasing opportunities to play
a dominant role in the maintenance of regional peace and security. But Nigeria’s
military capability is stretched in foreign deployment and domestic deployments as

54 Deutsch, K., Political Community and the North Atlantic Area. Princeton: Princeton
University, 1957, p.6.
well, to contain ethno-religious instigated conflicts and instability. In addition, the socio-economic conditions and poor management of the economy also weaken the resource base of Nigeria, lessening its ability to play an increased role in regional peace and security. Furthermore, democratic governance in the post-military era of governance has introduced constitutional and democratic accountability constraints. For instance, troop deployment in regional conflicts has to be approved by the House of Representatives. The casualties suffered by the Nigeria-led ECOMOG in regional peacekeeping and conflict management operations have become divisive domestic political issues, and domestic public opinion does not only raise concerns about Nigerian casualties in foreign military operations, but also questions the rationale of diverting millions of dollars from domestic socio-economic development to regional peace and security activities. This also raises the issue of sustainability of regional peacekeeping and conflict management operations by largely underdeveloped and cash-strapped economies.

Given the limitations of resourcing peacekeeping and conflict management operations in the region, external support is key to the support of the regional-led initiatives for the maintenance of peace and security. The US support in Liberia, Britain in Sierra Leone, France in Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire, the UN and other key donor agencies and intergovernmental institutions such as the EU, CPLP and Commonwealth were crucial in negotiating the civil war peace settlement, supporting ECOWAS’ political and diplomatic activities, ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, and post-war peacebuilding and reconstruction in West Africa. In Guinea Bissau, the peacekeeping operations were ill-equipped logistically and, thereby, created excessive dependence on an extra-regional actor, France, with vested self-interests in the region. However, the conflicts of interest of extra-regional actors and western governments involved in the management of civil wars in the region have created obstacles for troop deployment, and reinforcement and logistical support for ECOMOG peacekeeping operations. Despite this, the general consensus at the international community level is that there is a need to support and capacitate Africa-based and led approaches to managing and resolving conflicts on the continent. The prevailing view is that the challenges posed by contemporary globalisation, war on terrorism and the regionalisation of domestic civil wars mean that wars and armed conflicts in Africa inevitably affect or have a resonance on other parts of the world in diverse ways, hence it is in the interest of the west to support African approaches to African problems in peace, security and conflict.

An important development in the West African peacekeeping and conflict management experiment is the development of a co-deployment model of peacekeeping in complex political emergencies and the division of labour with the UN based on comparative advantage as extensively discussed in Chapter 4. However, divisive geo-politics have constantly undermined the effectiveness of ECOMOG operations. The fear of and concerns about of Nigeria’s preponderance and ‘Pax Nigeriana’ by smaller states has been prevalent. Some of the states perceived ECOMOG as an instrument of Nigerian foreign and security policy. This provided opportunities for extra-regional actors, with strategic interests in West Africa, to
discourage some ECOWAS states from participation in the Nigerian-led regional peacekeeping force. General Maxwell Khobe presents a rather typical example: ‘The scenario played itself out in Guinea Bissau where the regime of President Vieira was very lukewarm to ECOMOG until he was overwhelmed by his own political enemies. His desperate effort to secure Nigeria’s participation in the ECOMOG force sent to assist his regime failed.’

In addition, there was a fundamental problem relating to differences in perception on economic and security regionalism amongst ECOWAS countries and this was to present obstacles to ECOMOG operations. The majority of the Francophone and Lusophone states perceived ECOWAS as primarily an economic integration and development grouping and, therefore, had serious reservations about expansion into the regional security and military domain. The Anglophone states, however, perceived ECOMOG as the security and military arm of ECOWAS’ economic and political integration, arguing that collective regional resources should be allocated for the maintenance of regional peace and security. This has led to the perception of ‘Two Ecowas’. To ameliorate the negative effects of the divisive geo-politics on regional peacekeeping and conflict management activities, valuable lessons were learnt from the Liberian peacekeeping and intervention operation. In mediating the resolution of the Sierra Leone conflict, ECOWAS made a sustained effort to engage with the Francophone countries. For example, Côte d’Ivoire played a vital role in negotiating and hosting the first peace agreement for Sierra Leone, the Abidjan peace accord of 1996. Togo had a critical involvement in negotiating and hosting the Lomé Peace agreement of 1999 that formally ended the civil war in Sierra Leone. Burkina Faso was also instrumental in facilitating the involvement of the RUF in the Lomé peace process. The critical engagement with the Francophone group considerably reduced the tensions and divisions in terms of approach to regional peace and security issues, and also concerns about the dominance of Nigeria.

If ECOMOG is to serve as a permanent regional peacekeeping and conflict management mechanism, there are valuable lessons it has to learn from its West African operations. For instance, the ad hoc nature of its deployment did not provide enough time for proper logistical planning and resourcing of the operations. The improvisatory nature of its creations also has implications for the lack of clarity of its mandate, especially relating to peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The 1999 protocol on regional peacekeeping, conflict management and security mechanisms was, therefore, an attempt to respond to the problems, challenges and opportunities arising from the ECOMOG experience since 1990. There is still a wide gap in the implementation of the protocol.

The ‘spoiler’ dynamic is also a critical factor in determining the success and failure of ECOMOG peacekeeping and intervention in West Africa. Allegations of the complicity of some ECOMOG peacekeepers in the exploitation of war economies in both Liberia and Sierra Leone compromised and undermined the success of their

operations. The emergence of the phenomenon of local regional mercenaries or ‘dogs of war’ plying their expertise has had considerable military impact on ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and conflict management operations. These local mercenaries, fighting without ideological conviction or political persuasion, have often collaborated with all parties to the conflict against ECOMOG, thereby undermining the ability of the regional intervention force to police the terms of the peace agreements or monitor ceasefires. Furthermore, the role of extra-regional economic operators and investors in the exploitation of the war economies also hampered ECOMOG’s peacekeeping and conflict management in the region. Some of these external commercial operators and financiers actively supported the prolongation of the war by providing and sourcing war fighting logistics, arms and ammunition for warring factions, as in the case of the Liberia and Sierra Leone civil wars. Some of the warlords have close commercial and political ties with the political leaders in West Africa, with strong economic and commercial interests in the war-torn countries, for example Taylor’s support for RUF’s Foday Sankoh.

In discussing the politics of ECOMOG operations and their impact on regional peacekeeping and conflict management, Maxwell Khobe outlined the following; that the governments of the troop contributing countries exercised considerable political control over their contingents, with deleterious operational implications. He explained that the ECOMOG Force Commander had no absolute operational command and control of the contingents, who were often deployed not according to the military operations appreciation of the Force Commander, but by their home governments. Therefore commanders of each contingent were answerable to both ECOMOG’s Force Commander as well as their own Chief of Defence Staff, often a more powerful voice. Drawing from his practical experience in ECOMOG operations, General Khobe argues that divisive geo-politics meant that troop contributing countries could not agree on the regional approach to peacekeeping and conflict management, for instance, the use of force, or when such force could be used and for what purpose.\(^\text{57}\) This, therefore, led to a situation whereby some ECOWAS countries actively supported rebel factions and even made available their territories for military operations.

As a military intervention force, ECOMOG had difficulties in operating a unified command and control structure due to its ad hoc nature and political elements that created the peacekeeping force. The considerable autonomy of the contingent commanders over the ECOMOG Force Commander, according to Khobe, led to situations whereby ‘contingent units were pulled out of their areas of deployment without the approval or even the knowledge of the force commander, thus endangering the deployment of flanking contingents. Some contingents have also at times refused to come to the aid of other contingents without the clearance of their home governments’.\(^\text{58}\) Such a situation is, by all indications, a recipe for failure of regional peacekeeping and conflict management. But it is also worthy to note

\(^{57}\) Ibid.

\(^{58}\) Ibid, p.6.
that ECOMOG operations have been plagued by all the usual problems faced by multinational peacekeeping and peace support operations, though the problems are far worse in the case of West Africa. These problems include excessive government control and intervention in peacekeeping activities, language difficulties, lack of standardisation of equipment, arms and ammunition, different training standards, doctrines and staff procedures, poor sea and airlift capabilities, absence of vital air-to-ground support assets, in particular, ground attack helicopters more suited to the geographical terrain and guerrilla warfare operations in West Africa, inadequate resources to deal with humanitarian problems, poor liaison with international relief agencies, and inadequate logistical support for some contingents. General Khobe’s seminal conclusion is a valuable statement on the need for building a regional peace and security system in West Africa:

ECOMOG has created an awareness amongst West African Leaders, intellectuals and military experts that the force is a positive security development that requires fine-tuning. Given the growing number of conflicts on the African continent, ECOMOG is a reminder of the fact that the right tool for conflict resolution can be found from within the continent, if African countries are prepared to pool their resources. ECOMOG is therefore a lesson that should not be forgotten, because it also points to the fact that there is no need to wait for outsiders to help if Africa itself can address its problems effectively.

Chapter 7

Promise and Disappointment:
Building Regional Peace and Security Systems in Southern Africa

Introduction

The end of the Cold War and its ideological confrontations, and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa in the early 1990s, generated considerable promise and optimism in Southern Africa about the prospect of a period of sustained regional stability, development and opportunities for building durable peace and security systems, after decades of regional instability and civil wars. By the mid-1990s however, political instability and wars in the region were to usher in a new phase of painful disappointment, as increasing security problems and challenges threatened the stability and progressive development of Southern Africa. These developments demonstrate the inextricable link between peace, security, conflict and development. President Bakili Muluzi of Malawi underscored the mutually reinforcing nexus between regional peace, security and sustainable development, by stating that ‘SADC’s economic goals will be irrelevant unless the region achieves peace and security’.Regional peace and security, therefore, are the prerequisites for economic growth, sustained development and social progress.

The Southern African sub-region has responded by advancing regional integration and co-operation as the strategy for building collective peace and security mechanisms to address the multiplicity of development, conflict and security challenges. Economic regionalism and development, and the role played by regional intergovernmental collective institutions in Southern Africa, have often been held as a positive example of regional integration and co-operation in Africa. But the practical experience of these regional institutional structures in addressing regional peace, security and development issues has been mixed or, at best, limited. The regional mechanisms developed, in particular the primary developmental regionalism structure, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), recognises the primacy of the

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UN and OAU/AU in the maintenance of international peace and security in Southern Africa, and Africa in general. Notwithstanding, however, the region is building its own regional collective security and conflict management mechanisms as the forum for addressing the multiple peace, security, and conflict problems and challenges facing the sub-region.

The focus of this chapter is to examine Southern Africa’s attempt at building regional collective security and the architecture for peace and sustainable development. In delving into these complex and interrelated issues, the chapter will outline the political economy of Southern Africa, and how the ‘region’ and its ‘regioness’ have been constructed, in particular the emergence of a regional security complex. But to understand and appreciate the enormity of the problems faced by the sub-region, and in particular the imperative for a regional architecture for peace and security, it is important to provide an understanding of the traditional security threats in Southern Africa and how they led to the creation of the Front Line States and their regional collective security framework in the form of the Inter-State Defence and Security Co-operation (ISDSC). A key focus of this chapter is an analysis of how SADC’s economic and developmental regionalism have expanded into the regional peace and security domain, and the establishment of a multi-dimensional regional peace and security mechanism in the form of SADC’s Organ for Politics, Defence and Security. To understand the development of the regional attempts to build a region-wide peace and security architecture, the chapter will critically engage with the region’s foray into peacemaking, peacekeeping and conflict management in both Southern Africa and the Great Lakes region.

This chapter further advances the core arguments introduced in Chapter 6 with reference to the West African sub-region and it adventures into regional peacekeeping and security activities. The analysis of southern Africa will illustrate some of the commonalities and stark differences in the response of inter-governmental institutions involved in building and practicalising regional peace and security systems. As in the case of the West African peacekeeping and interventions, the military interventions in the southern African sub-region raises several critical issues. In Southern Africa, there are scepticisms as to whether in fact such military interventions could be described as peacekeeping. In addition, whether in fact the military deployments could be termed ‘interventions’ given the fact that there was some form of consent from the dominant players or de facto presidents as in the case of DRC and Lesotho. Most importantly, the role of external state interventions and non-state actors such as mercenaries, private military companies, civil militias and transnational economic operators, and how all of these further complicate the achievement of regional peace and security. Of particular relevance is the jostling for hegemonic leadership of the sub-region between Zimbabwe and South Africa, and how the contradictory position of South Africa on the use of force, present a different perspective on Nigeria’s role in West Africa. The crucial questions are: will the development of regional collective mechanisms prevent armed conflicts, enhance and secure regional peace and security in Southern Africa? What kind of ‘peace’ and ‘security’ are provided, ‘for whom’
and ‘for what purpose’? These are some of the broader issues that the chapter will attempt to address.

**Political Economy of Southern Africa**

Contemporary Southern Africa, comprising 14 countries, is a geo-political and social construction. The process of region-formation dates back to the late 14th century with the arrival of Europeans in the region and culminated in the struggles with the early kingdoms, over territory, land, race, labour, political, economic and social actors. The construction of the heterogeneous regional space now described as ‘Southern Africa’, according to Fredrick Söderbaum, has been collectively constructed by ‘state, market, society and external actors in a historical perspective’. Certain factors have been crucial to the construction of the ‘region’ of Southern Africa and its ‘regioness’. These include the discovery of strategic minerals such as diamonds and gold in the 1870s and 1880s, the advent of colonialism and the competing scramble for ‘Southern Africa’ amongst the British, Boers, Portuguese and Germans, the dominance of British colonial projects in the region through the economic and commercial enterprise of Cecil Rhodes’ British South Africa Company, the emergence of the National Party in the 1920s and the socialisation of security reactions of the anti-apartheid states in the region. The security, military and politico-economic relations between apartheid South Africa and the rest of the region played a dominant role in the region-formation of contemporary Southern Africa.

The political history of Southern Africa was largely dominated by the struggles for political independence of Angola and Mozambique from Portuguese colonial domination, and the political liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia, on the one hand. On the other hand was the struggle against apartheid South Africa and its policy of regional destabilisation. The policy of regional destabilisation, undermined the evolution of a region-wide co-operative ethos and political cohesion on common security and defence issues in Southern Africa. The anti-apartheid struggle by some Southern African countries inevitably laid the foundation for common solidarity and a co-operative ethos on sub-regional security, military and political issues. The politico-military struggles against the dominant white racist regime created a sense of mutual interdependence, solidarity and common values on how to ‘fight’ against the common enemy. The confrontation and mutual antagonism between apartheid South Africa and the Front Line States established the regional security complex and conflict formation in Southern Africa. Notwithstanding, the dominant security and military threats posed by apartheid South Africa, the region has been affected by both inter-state and intra-state wars and armed conflicts, such as the territorial dispute between Botswana and Namibia over the Chobe river, civil wars in Angola and Mozambique, criminal violence in South Africa, low-intensity political violence in Lesotho and Zimbabwe, and on-going civil war in the Democratic Republic of

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Congo. The efforts by the regional economic institutions to manage and resolve these conflicts have been limited, and the majority of the peace making and preventive diplomacy efforts have been by individual political leaders and mostly out of the SADC regional peace and security framework.

The countries in Southern Africa are at different stages of state-formation and nation building. The heterogeneity of the state formation process is reflected in the disparity of the states in the region. There are strong, viable and modern states such as South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Mauritius and the Seychelles, contrasted with weak and failing states such as Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, DRC and Malawi. Countries in the region have experimented with different political systems such as single party dictatorship, as in Kamusu Banda’s Malawi, Kenneth Kaunda’s Zambia; socialist and communist political systems as in Angola and Mozambique; constitutional monarchies as in Swaziland; and multiparty politics. The post-Cold War period ushered in a wave of pluralistic democratic governance in Southern Africa and led to the transformation of some of the authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes in the region.

What is also revealing about the region is the economic and socio-development disparity amongst the countries. Only one SADC member state, i.e. the Seychelles, is in the high human development category, and six in the medium category, according to the classification of the UNDP Human Development Index of 2003. The GDP per capita in 2001 of countries such as the Seychelles was – US$17,030, Mauritius – US$9,860, South Africa – US$11,290, Namibia – US$7,120, and Botswana – US$7,820. These countries are sharply contrasted with other countries in Southern Africa such as Madagascar – US$830, Zambia – US$780, Malawi – US$570, and DRC – US$680. It is important to acknowledge that in terms of economic growth and development, the majority of Southern African states have fared far better than countries in West Africa.

These rather depressing social and development indicators reveal the disparity between the countries of the region, but also manifest the multi-dimensional security problems and challenges that belie the putative economic growth and development in the SADC area. The life expectancies at birth in 2001 of relatively developed or developing countries such as the Seychelles and Mauritius are 72.2 and 71.6 respectively. This is sharply contrasted with the life expectancy of other relatively developed or developing states in the region such as South Africa – 50.9, Namibia – 47.4, Botswana – 44.7, Swaziland – 38.2 and Lesotho – 38.6. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is largely responsible for the depressing disparity in the life expectancy at birth indicators between these countries. The Southern Africa region is the worse hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa. Of the estimated 25 – 28.2 million adults

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3 These Indian Ocean Islands of Mauritius and Seychelles are part of the SADC region.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid, pp.238-239.
and children living with the disease in Sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 12 million people live in Southern Africa alone.\(^7\) This pandemic raging in Southern Africa has had devastating consequences on economic development, livelihood, governance, national security, and provision of social services. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has also compounded other social and development problems such as food security and poverty. The development indicators are all the more worrying when one looks at the statistics on the total number of people living below the poverty line in some of the low human development category countries. For instance, the number of people living on less that US$1 a day in Zimbabwe is 36 per cent of the total population, in Madagascar – 49.1 per cent, Zambia – 63.7 per cent, and Mozambique – 37.9 per cent.\(^8\) Southern Africa is also challenged by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, private security companies, increasing unemployment, and criminal anarchy with multiple organised criminal gangs and networks including Chinese Triads, Russian Mafia and Nigerian organised crime groups mainly operating from South Africa.

By all indications, South Africa is the economic giant in Southern Africa. According to trade statistics from the SADC Industry and Trade Co-ordinating Division, the estimated 35 per cent of intra-SADC trade in 1995 came largely from South Africa.\(^9\) Though Britain, the US, Japan and Germany remain the main trading partners for the sub-regional economic giant, the Southern African region is emerging as an increasingly strategic and valuable export market. Nana Poku explains that ‘South African capital has been the primary source of investment for the SADC region. The premier position of South Africa in the region gives it a dominant role in controlling the structures of regional finance and credit’.\(^10\) As the economic power house, South Africa, therefore, accounts for an estimated 45 per cent of Africa’s GNP.\(^11\) In addition, economic regionalism and the opportunities provided by globalisation have created renewed interests in regional integration and co-operation in Southern Africa.

Evidently, open regionalism and globalisation have also contributed to the construction of the ‘regioness’ of Southern Africa, in particular the widely held view and international image of this area as the most developed and economically viable region in sub-Saharan Africa. The end of apartheid in South Africa and the Cold War have created an environment of relative political stability in Southern Africa. Therefore, economic regionalism in the post-Cold War period has been promoted by national governments, regional actors and extra-regional actors such as the IMF and World Bank, MNCs, IFIs, donor agencies, the EU and foreign powers. In addition,

\(^11\) Ibid, p.57.
the lead role played by the dominant economic power house, post-apartheid South Africa, in the region has led to the creation of an enabling economic and commercial environment conducive to foreign direct investment. The existing regional economic integration and co-operation groupings in the region are also promoted as the engine for regional economic growth and development. The key actors in the regionalisation process include states, non-state actors, sub-national groups, markets (both formal and informal), civil society and external actors. The economic regionalism project is promoted to attract foreign direct investment and to integrate the region in the global economy. SADC regionalism in the form of ‘The SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) is a way to sell the Southern Africa market as one market’.

An additional dimension is the potential economic and commercial opportunities provided by South Africa’s leadership in promoting the new African economic recovery and development blueprint, NEPAD. Patrick Bond and other political economy analysts argue that South African companies and economic/commercial operators are strategically positioned to maximise the benefits and advantages of the implementation of NEPAD. Bond, therefore, concludes that ‘if Johannesburg corporations profit from NEPAD’s legitimation of neo-liberalism and lubrication of capital flows out of African countries, these flows mainly end up in London, where Anglo-American corporation, De Beers, Old Mutual insurance, South African Breveries and other of South Africa’s largest firms re-listed their financial headquarters during the late 1990s’.

The geo-politics of Southern Africa have been driven by amity-enmity relations – an inherent problem in regional integration and co-operation. Whilst it may foster co-operation, collaboration, mutual interdependence and an ethos of collective security, it may also lead to competition, conflict and mutual suspicion and lack of peaceful co-existence. The personality conflict between former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe flowed into the complex politics of the region, with South Africa emerging as the reluctant sub-regional hegemon, and Zimbabwe as the hegemonic pretender or pivotal state, in effect dividing the region into rival political camps or the ‘two SADCs’. SADC member states are constantly bickering about how to deal with important threats to regional peace and security. For example, SADC cannot agree on a common strategy to deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic, nor have they been able to forge a common regional foreign policy approach to political problems and human rights violations in Zimbabwe.

Table 7.1 Basic Indicators for SADC Countries

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<td>680</td>
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<td>570</td>
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Regional Security Threats: Building Regional Architecture for Peace and Security

The Cold War ideological hostilities played out in Southern Africa and the regional destabilisation policy of apartheid South Africa led to the dominant preoccupation with traditional security, i.e. national security, use (and the threat of use) of force, and preoccupation with military affairs. Western support for apartheid South Africa was couched in the language of Cold War politics – the imperative to contain the ‘Marxist’ and ‘Communist’ threat in Southern Africa, masking the real strategic, economic and defence self-interests. The apartheid policy of regional destabilisation targeting opponents of the regime, and the Cold War proxy wars in the region led to devastating consequences. For example, South African-backed Guerrillas destroyed the Zambezi River Bridge, the main connection network between landlocked Malawi and Mozambique. Nana Poku, in cataloguing the costs of South Africa’s regional destabilisation policy on Southern African states explained that almost all the countries in the region were considerably affected in economic, commercial, communication infrastructure and development terms.  

The security vulnerabilities and regional security complex inevitably led to the building of regional collective mechanisms for defence, security and peace. The mutual vulnerabilities faced by Southern African states led to the creation of Front Line States (FLS) in 1976 as a collection of states that opposed apartheid South Africa and led the anti-apartheid struggle. The Front Line States also functioned as a quasi-collective security regime to assist the political liberation struggles of countries such as Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia (South West Africa). To institutionalise their defence and security co-operation the FLS established the Inter-State defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) to serve as a mechanism to defend the territorial integrity of the anti-apartheid states, and as a security and defence bulwark against apartheid South Africa. The ISDSC became an institutionalised, but informal, forum bringing together ministers responsible for state security, defence, home affairs and internal security to address issues relating to national and collective security and defence.  

Apartheid South Africa was regarded as an adversary and a major threat to the rest of the region. The security interdependence, vulnerability and regional complex in Southern Africa is depicted by Carol Thompson;  

The Frontline States not only survived South African destabilisation, but took the lead in countering Cold War propaganda, especially from the United States, Great Britain and Germany, which sought to characterise the apartheid regime as a bastion against ‘communism’. Because of their history, sovereignty has long been viewed in a regional context, with, for example, every head of state stating that their national security is

16 The FLS comprised Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Tanzania, and Namibia.  
inseparable from regional security. It is worth repeating too that such statements were not mere rhetoric, but were accompanied by economic, military and political support at high costs in terms of loss of life and delayed economic growth.18

An important contribution of the ISDSC and the FLS nation of regional security is that these security and defence mechanisms were to lay the foundation for SADC’s peacekeeping and conflict management interventions in both DRC and Lesotho. However, apartheid South Africa had, in principle, never been averse to the concept of regional security and mutual defence. This was the strategic thinking behind the formation by P.W. Botha of the Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS) in the 1970s with the aim to increase regional interdependence. Prime Minister Botha even talked about the need for ‘a regional order within which real freedom and material welfare can be maximised . . .’.19 The real agenda, however, was that CONSAS was to ensure the dependence of Southern African states on South Africa and to perpetuate the disunity of Africa’s collective opposition to the apartheid regime. Pik Botha talked about a vision of Southern Africa’s security development thus ‘countries of the sub-continent should undertake joint responsibility for the security of the region’.20 But South Africa’s version of regional collective security and mutual defence was primarily based on its own terms, i.e. secure the economic penetration of Southern African states, and neutralise all opposition to the apartheid regime and its policies.

The preoccupation with regional security threats led to the formation of a variety of regional integration and co-operation groupings in the region. Though primarily economic and development oriented, these regional organisations were in several respects anti-apartheid regional collective efforts.

Regional Integration for Peace, Security and Development: From Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) to Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Regional integration and co-operation has been regarded as a vital strategy for the collective development, peace and stability of Southern Africa. This was translated into practical terms as far back as 1909 with the creation of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and in 1969 Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland joined the customs union project. SACU was one of the earliest attempts to formalise regional integration in Southern Africa.21 The most significant development in institutionalising regional integration and co-operation was the establishment of the Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) in 1980 with the

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21 SACU membership comprises South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.
objective to promote regional integration through sectoral development and reducing economic dependence on apartheid South Africa. In 1992, SADCC was replaced by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with the objectives of strengthening regional economic integration and development, poverty alleviation, promotion of regional peace and security, and the development of common political values and institutions.

A combination of domestic and international factors led to the transformation of SADCC into SADC. With the demise of apartheid in sight in the early 1990s and the end of the Cold War, SADCC countries disbanded their previous regional project and agreed on a new treaty establishing SADC based on market integration. This created the opportunity for the inclusion of post-apartheid South Africa and the expansion of the regional reach of SADC to include the Great Lakes state of DRC and the Indian Ocean Islands of Mauritius and the Seychelles.22

The transformation of the global political economy and the changed international political environment raised expectations about the potential of SADC regionalism to usher in sustained development and regional peace and security. The transformation was also driven by the imperative to integrate Southern Africa into the global market economy. It was further perceived that developing a viable regional institution would serve as a mechanism to respond to the multiple regional problems and challenges in a coherent and unified approach. This in itself was a tacit recognition by the political leaders of the inextricable link between peace, security, stability and regional development. SADC’s developmental regionalism is based on a neoliberal development paradigm underpinned by a trade-led strategy for Southern African integration. Like the West African region, Southern Africa also has multiple regional economic integration projects, with sometimes competing mandates and strategies for regional development. There is, for example, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) established in 1993, and developed from the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) customs union created in 1981.

Despite the preoccupation with regional economic integration and development, the relevance of regional peace and security has always been prominent in SADC regionalism. Article 4 of the SADC Treaty commits member states to act in interstate and intra-state relations in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality, solidarity, peace and security, and respect for human rights, democracy and peaceful settlement of disputes. Between 1992 and 1994 serious attempts were made to develop the institutional framework and contents of a regional peace and security system in the SADC region. It culminated in the publication of the SADC Framework and Strategy document in 1992 outlining the imperative to evolve common political values and democratic culture, the creation of a ‘non-militaristic security order’, and development of a regional conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanism. The strategy document further outlined the following mechanisms;

forum for regional mediation and arbitration, ratification by all SADC states of key principles of international law governing inter-state relations, non-aggression treaty, democratic civil-military relations, reduction in military force levels, speedy adoption of non-offensive defence doctrine, and confidence building within a common security regime. In addition, Article 11 (2, f) of the SADC treaty also provided the legal authorisation for the establishment of regional peace and security structures. It stipulated that peace and security are key components of the sectoral areas of SADC regionalisation. On the evolution of a regional security system in Southern Africa, the SADC strategic framework document is unequivocal in that

War and insecurity are the enemy of economic progress and social welfare. Good and strengthened political relations among the countries of the region, and peace and mutual security are critical components of the total environment of regional co-operation and integration. The region needs therefore, to establish a framework and mechanisms to strengthen regional solidarity, and provide for mutual peace and security.

In 1994, the SADC summit approved the establishment of an institutional sector of the Community dealing with politics, diplomacy, international relations, defence and security. Despite progress on institutional development relating to regional peace and security, both inter-state and intra-state political crises are mainly considered at annual summit meetings of SADC presidents and ministers. The SADC summit is, therefore, the highest decision making body, comprising heads of state and government, with an annual summit rotating chair of the Community. In comparison, the ECOWAS region has a formalised approach to regional peace and security, though the Authority of the Community plays a dominant role in mediating and managing inter-state and intra-state conflicts.

A contrary approach to regional peace and security was advanced by the Front Line States within SADC, proposing the creation of a regional security and conflict prevention mechanism, the Association of Southern African States (ASAS). The ASAS proposal was based on informal and flexible modus operandi and operating independently outside of the SADC secretariat. ASAS was however rejected on the grounds that it detracted attention and resources from a region-wide approach to peace and security. The ASAS proposal is reminiscent of the Francophone West African states’ proposal for a regional peace and security framework outside ECOWAS integration.


In laying the rudimentary foundation for building a region-wide peace and security system, the FLS was dissolved in 1994 and its ISDSC was expanded to embrace all SADC states. The ISDSC had operated outside of the SADC framework. With these regional efforts, one would have expected progress on the evolution of a common foreign and security policy in the SADC region. In explaining the lack of common foreign and security policy, Laurie Nathan explains that progress in this direction has been ‘thwarted by the absence of common political values among member states. There are two fundamental lines of division: between democratic and authoritarian tendencies in the domestic policies of the states and between pacific and militarist orientations in the foreign policies. The divisions are so deep and serious that they have given rise to the notion of “two SADC’s”’.

Nathan further argues that the viability of a regional regime depends in the first instance on the existence of common values. In the absence of sufficient normative congruence in the policies of the states in a given region, there is insufficient affinity and trust for these states to surrender a measure of sovereignty to a multilateral organisation that is intended to place constraints on their behaviour. They are unable to act in a consistently unified manner and resolve or transcend their major disputes.

However, the ‘absence’ of common political values has not prevented SADC member states from sometimes agreeing on regional peace and security challenges. Also, Nathan’s claim may not necessarily apply to all SADC member states because the formation of FLS was based on a common political value and orientation based on unity to promote the anti-apartheid struggle and the political liberation of Southern African states from colonial rule. Furthermore, this so-called absence of common political values and foreign and security policy, is in essence what regional integration and co-operation is all about, the dynamics of amity and enmity. For example, ECOWAS integration in West Africa and the *sui generis* regional integration project, the European Union, have all been driven by amity-enmity dynamics, but this has not stopped them from ‘pooling’ their sovereignties when responding to regional peace, security and development issues.

**Institutionalising Regional Systems for Peace and Security: SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security**

The most important development in building regional peace and security systems in Southern Africa was the establishment of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security on 28 June 1996 in Gabarone. The SADC Organ is the first comprehensive attempt to build a regional collective mechanism for responding to peace and security issues. The innovation of the Organ is that it conceptualised security from a multidimensional perspective embracing human, environmental and societal

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27 Ibid, p.63.
security. According to Fredrick Söderbaum, the SADC Organ is a ‘comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach to peace and security’. The key objectives of the Organ embrace issues relating to military / defence, crime prevention, intelligence, foreign policy, human rights and democracy. The Authority of the Organ rests with the Chair, and the authority is exercised based on a Troika including the current Chair of the Organ, the in-coming Chair and the Out-going Chair. President Mugabe was elected as the first Chair of the SADC Organ. The Maputo Summit of 1998 mandated the Organ to ‘intervene in all conflicts arising within the region’.

It became evident that the SADC Organ built on the earlier foundations of developing regional peace and security mechanisms such as the FLS and its ISDSC, in particular, the fact that the mission of the FLS to secure the political independence of Southern African states was completed in the 1990s. Attention therefore focused on the imperative to develop a region-wide collective security regime.

It took nearly five years to secure the key protocol that would institutionalise the operations of the regional collective security mechanism. The March 2001 SADC summit in Blantyre adopted the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation. The summit decision integrated the Organ into the overall SADC structures under the Authority of the SADC Summit. The lack of progress in making the SADC Organ operational since 1992 could be attributed to the geo-politics in SADC and the personality clash between presidents Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The protocol commits member states to a rather strict adherence to the norms of international society, which in retrospect, is at odds with the AU’s Constitutive Act and its limits on state sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs.

The Organ protocol commits SADC states to peaceful co-existence and mutual interdependence, and acknowledges the primacy of the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 2 outlines the objective of the Organ to promote regional peace and security by safeguarding against regional political instability, internal civil wars and inter-state conflicts, and threats from external aggression. The protocol also committed SADC states to promote regional security and defence co-operation, and prevent, manage and resolve both intra-state and inter-state conflict by peaceful means, in particular the Community will consider use of force or enforcement actions only as a last resort or as a mechanism to manage and resolve regional conflicts. An important provision is the mandate to consider the development of regional collective security capacity and a mutual defence pact, and the development of a regional peacekeeping capacity for participation in peacekeeping operations. The protocol mandates the Organ to ‘protect the people and safeguard the development of a Region against instability arising from the


breakdown of law and order, intra-state conflict, inter-state conflict and aggression’. The protocol also lays down the rules on peace enforcement in that the Community should act in co-operation with the UN and any use of force must be authorised by the UN Security Council as provided for in Chapter VII. The protocol further clarified that any decision on enforcement action should be taken by the SADC Summit in response to recommendations from the Chair of the SADC Organ, and that authority to intervene or deploy peace enforcement operations in any conflict situation in the region should be granted by the SADC Summit.

But is the SADC Organ a regional collective security regime? Peter Meyns poses the dilemma that has faced SADC’s attempt to build a regional peace and security system. Meyns argues that:

> It is not quite clear whether the Organ is conceived as a “collective security body” such as the Organisation for Co-operation and Security in Europe, with the prime task of promoting peace and security within the SADC region, or as a defence pact, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, geared to defend Southern Africa against threats from outside, or both.

The protocol refers to ‘collective security’ in articles 2, 2 (h) and 11, 3 (e). Meyns however concludes that, given decision making based on consensus, as provided for in Article 8 (c) on the SADC intergovernmental approach to peace and security, it ‘would seem appropriate to characterise the Organ as a collective security body’.

The SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation was an ambitious attempt to develop a multi-sectoral approach to regional peace and security. The protocol itself has to receive a two-thirds ratification by member states to make it operational. The institutional arrangement of the Organ stipulated that the Organ operates at Summit, ministerial and technical levels, and will co-operate with the ISDSC.

30 SADC, Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation. Gaborone 2001, Article 2, (2 (a)).
32 Ibid.
Figure 7.2 Structure of SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation

SADC Coalition of Willing States Peacekeeping and Conflict Management in the Democratic Republic of Congo

It was the outbreak of civil war in the DRC and its devastating consequences on peace and security in the Great Lakes region, and East and Southern Africa that provided the first opportunity for SADC’s regional peacekeeping and conflict management. Zaire (DRC) had a history of civil wars and political instability. The corrupt patrimonial regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko privatised the state governing institutions to serve his political, economic and strategic self-interests. In 1996, rebel insurgents led by Laurent Kabila of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL) challenged the more than 30 years dictatorship of President Mobutu. For a variety of security, political and strategic reasons, Kabila’s ADFL was supported and armed by both Rwanda and Uganda. By 1997, the corrupt and aging authoritarian regime of President Mobutu was overthrown by Laurent Kabila, who made himself president and changed the name of the country to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

However, the alliance between President Kabila and his allies, i.e. Rwanda and Uganda, broke down and by 1998 a new civil war had started, again supported by Rwanda and Uganda, in an attempt to overthrow the Kabila regime. Kabila, therefore, attempted to kick out his former allies from the DRC. Rwanda alleged that Kabila encouraged the Interehamwe and other dissidents to attack Rwanda and Uganda. Rwanda backed the RCD rebel group or the ‘Goma faction’ (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie), and Uganda supported the RCD-ML (mouvement de Liberation), the ‘Kisangani faction’. The beleaguered President Kabila interpreted the interventions of his former allies as territorial aggression and a breach of the political sovereignty of the DRC. He, therefore, appealed to SADC for military intervention to rescue his embattled regime. President Mugabe, in his capacity as Chair of the SADC Organ, convened an extra-ordinary Summit at Victoria Falls attended by Angola, the DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia to discuss Kabila’s request. However, South Africa, which held the Chair of SADC, was excluded from the Summit mainly due to the political tensions and differences between Mugabe and Mandela. The Victoria Falls Summit set up a task force group to come up with recommendations. The recommendations were subsequently referred to the ISDSC meeting in Harare which declared that SADC had decided to agree to Kabila’s appeal. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola announced the deployment of a peacekeeping and intervention force into the DRC under the auspices of SADC. The coalition of willing states intervention in the DRC gave as justification that their action was a collective defence against external aggression by Rwanda and Uganda. They also claimed that the intervention was authorised by SADC. But according to Laurie Nathan, the SADC Organ was not then operational, and the ISDSC had no mandate to initiate military deployment with only a few states present at the Victoria Falls and Harare meetings. President Mandela even questioned the authority of Mugabe...
to deploy peacekeeping troops on behalf of SADC.\textsuperscript{33} The South African response to the DRC conflict and its regional implications was to facilitate a negotiated political settlement to the war. This position was supported by Botswana, Mozambique and Tanzania. President Mandela, therefore, convened an emergency SADC Summit in Pretoria which Mugabe did not attend. Mandela called for the involvement of the OAU ‘which has an organ for conflict resolution. It is not possible for us to resolve (the crisis) as SADC because we are divided’.\textsuperscript{34} However, at a Non-Aligned Summit in South Africa, and in an attempt to ease political differences with Mugabe and, more so, to present a show of unity in SADC, Mandela stated that SADC supported the military intervention in DRC. He, however, maintained that any South African peacekeeping deployment in DRC should be under a UN peacekeeping mandate.

To understand the nature and dynamics of the implications of the DRC war and its regional dimensions, it is important to analyse the motivations of the intervening states. This raises the question as to whether in fact the SADC intervention could be described as a peacekeeping and conflict management intervention. The intervention in DRC goes beyond mere regional and national security concerns. The view is that the leaders involved in the DRC conflict ‘have wider geo-strategic agendas, which cannot be met without interfering in the internal affairs of their neighbours’.\textsuperscript{35} But what motivated Rwanda and Uganda to intervene in the DRC? Timothy Longman, in explaining the reasons for Rwanda’s intervention in DRC, attributed the motives mainly to security, political and economic factors. The Rwandan government had always been suspicious and hostile towards Mobutu’s Zaire, and his harbouring of dissidents, former militias including the Interehamwé and former Hutu government soldiers who were responsible for the genocide. The intervention was, therefore, motivated by security concerns to eliminate the continuing threats posed to Rwanda by these armed groups operating from Zaire. This was the primary motivation that led to support for Kabila’s rebellion to overthrow President Mobutu. In addition, Rwanda also wanted to protect Tutsis in Zaire, the Banyamukenge-Congolese Tutsi. Domestically, the intervention provided opportunity for the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) to clamp down on internal opposition to the government.\textsuperscript{36}

Uganda had similar security concerns in that it shares a border with DRC. The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and other rebel factions fighting against the government of President Museveni, had used the border territories to launch military operations in the north of Uganda. In justifying the military intervention in the DRC, Brigadier Kale Kayihura explained that ‘Uganda came to the Congo principally, because our adversaries were using Ituri to launch attacks against our country. Indeed, Ituri had become a frontline against

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} Nathan, ‘Organ Failure’, 2002, p.76.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p.77.
\end{itemize}
Uganda'. Burundi had similar security concerns that warranted its intervention in the Congo. Burundi used this as an opportunity to flush out dissident groups and rebel forces fighting against the government – groups that have been given protection and sanctuary in Zaire. The Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi trio desired to install a puppet regime in Zaire. In fact, most African governments and some members of the international community were aware of the Rwanda – Uganda – Burundi backed Kabila insurgency to overthrow the aging and discredited Mobutu. But on securing power, Kabila demonstrated his independence, leading to a public falling out with his former allies. Kabila ordered Rwandan and Ugandan troops to leave the territory of Congo on 28 July 1998.

What about the SADC coalition of willing states? Zimbabwe’s intervention was motivated by a variety of reasons. Martin Rupiya explains that it was widely acknowledged that Zimbabwean officials had prior knowledge on the design by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi to partition Zaire into spheres of security influence in the post-Mobutu era. Rupiya further explained that President Museveni appealed directly to Mugabe, in his capacity as Chair of ISDSC, to intervene in DRC. This request led to the Victoria Falls meetings. But before the findings of the Victoria Falls Task Force group on DRC could be released, Museveni announced his deployment of Ugandan forces in support of warring factions in the Congo. It is alleged that the deployment of Ugandan and Rwandan forces in support of rebel factions, and in particular the western support for the allies fighting in DRC became a worrying concern for President Mugabe. These developments were not only interpreted as imperialist tendencies and territorial aggression, but also as disrespectful to the personal standing of President Mugabe, who had been the leading player in the regional politics of Southern Africa, and the embodiment of the ‘role of African elder statesman and defender of pan-Africanism’. Zimbabwe regarded the intervention of the belligerent states in the Congo as a violation of the SADC Treaty, and thought that the regional intervention was justified by Article 4 of the 1992 treaty which called for military assistance and collective defence against external aggression. In addition, Rupiya argued that Zimbabwe was also militarily capable of undertaking such an intervention because in the post-independence era, the government had integrated its military capabilities and armed forces, and as such the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) could put into the field a brigade-size combat unit, involving air power, tanks and special forces. What is not, however, officially explained in advancing reasons for Zimbabwe’s intervention is the economic and commercial opportunities. It is argued that economic considerations and potential commercial opportunities were the primary motivations for Zimbabwe’s intervention in resource-rich DRC. Subsequent events have reinforced this conclusion because the almost ‘free-for-all’

37 Statement by Brig. Kale Kayihura to the Opening Ceremony of the IPC (Ituri Pacification Commission) Head of Ugandan Delegation on IPC, ND.
39 Ibid.
exploitation of the war economy of DRC has accrued substantial economic benefits to the Zimbabwean ruling authorities and military elites. In addition, given the domestic political and economic difficulties in Zimbabwe, Mugabe’s intervention was a ploy to get rid of large numbers of unpaid and under-resourced soldiers who, in his view, pose a serious threat to the ZANU-PF authoritarian control.

Namibia was motivated by the desire to uphold the principles of international law and the SADC treaty on territorial aggression. In addition, the Namibian government had security concerns in its Caprivi region, in particular the effects of the Angolan civil war on the Caprivi stripe. Angola was motivated by the desire to uphold international legal norms, and perceived the territorial aggression against the DRC as a dangerous precedent. However, Angola had very serious security concerns and saw its intervention in the DRC as an opportunity to pursue its war against Jonas Savimbi, and the deployment in the DRC was regarded as a second military front in the war against UNITA. The geo-strategic location of Angola to the DRC is important. Both share a common border, with the Cabinda region and both have a major oil deposit. Strategic mineral resources have been crucial to the war efforts in both Angola and the DRC. Angola was also concerned about the deployment of troops by both Rwanda and Uganda in the Bas-Congo region, the backyard of Angola, and without Angola’s approval. This only reinforced the view that it was necessary for Angola to deploy troops in the DRC. The aim of the Angolan government was to dismantle UNITA military bases in the DRC, and to stop the rebel group from exporting diamonds in exchange for war fighting logistics. On the Angolan government’s strategy, Thomas Turner stated that the intention was to take the war to UNITA in the DRC, and to block supply routes, protect government oil installations crucial to the economy and war, and maintain a compliant regime in the DRC amenable to the interests of Angola. Before analysing what the Zimbabwean-led SADC peacekeeping and Conflict management achieved in the Congo war, it would be helpful to further outline how the DRC conflict led to Africa’s first continental war.

Africa’s First Continental War: Violent Collision of Strategic Interests in the DRC

The second DRC war divided the Southern African sub-region and became the battleground for ‘Africa’s First World war’. It is from this perspective that I argue that the SADC-led intervention or military deployment to stabilise and contain the DRC ‘fire next door’ could not be properly described as a regional peacekeeping intervention. However, the Zimbabwean-led SADC Allied Armed Forces (AAF) conflict management intervention in the Congo had clear military objectives. The strategy was to protect and safeguard Kabila’s regime and control the strategic region of Kinshasa. The intervention strategy, according to Rupiya, was a calculated political strategy aimed at criminalising other belligerent states intervening in the

Congo war. To achieve this military strategy, the Zimbabwean Defence Forces deployed a preponderant military force including tanks, armoured vehicles, helicopters and fighter ground attack aircraft. The Zimbabwe military deployment was complemented by additional military deployment by Angola and Namibia. Zimbabwe’s decision to deploy the first contingent of 600 peacekeepers into the DRC, codenamed ‘Operation Restore Sovereignty’, was ‘made at the eleventh hour in August 1998’. This eleventh hour decision to deploy a ‘regional peacekeeping’ and conflict management intervention force is similar to the rather hasty decision of the Nigerian military regime to deploy a West African peacekeeping and intervention force into Liberia in 1990. Both the SADC and ECOWAS peacekeeping and conflict management experiments underscore the notion that these regional peace and security efforts are based on ad hoc improvisation. The SADC military deployment itself was strategically flawed because it assumed that the DRC rebels fighting President Kabila were weak, poorly armed and an indisciplined collection of fighters and dissident groups. It was expected to be a quick military victory, to be completed in three weeks. Far from conforming to the military assessment by the intervening forces, the DRC conflict led to ‘mission creep’ and extensive military deployment of an estimated 66,000 soldiers. In comparison, the Nigerian military establishment and ECOWAS also made a similar flawed assessment of the NPFL rebels in the Liberian civil war.

The SADC-AAF force faced stiff resistance from a heavily armed and well-organised military deployment of Ugandan and Rwandan forces. This proxy war led to an all-out fighting between the regular forces of six belligerent states in the Congo, with brief involvement of Sudan and Chad. Rupiya captures the nature of Africa’s first continental war in that:

Six national armed forces, grouped into two camps confronted each other on Congolese territory. Covert action was quickly abandoned as both sides upped the ante and openly deployed their national military assets. These included fighter planes, helicopters, tanks, artillery pieces, and rockets employed by all branches of the armed forces, including air forces, infantry, and naval units. The next six-week period of the war witnessed intense fighting, during which the belligerent states threw everything they had at each other. A number of developments emerged from this activity. While forces from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda had been routed from the environs of Kinshasa, engagements that occurred further afield, and nearer their own borders, resulted in the dissipation of the initial advantage enjoyed by the SADC allied forces. Soon the increasing military hardware brought into play by all sides led to a stalemate, with Angola, Rwanda, and Uganda tending to dominate the areas of geographical contiguity. During this period, the challengers lost valuable equipment and manpower and were, therefore, forced to withdraw.

The immediate effect of the violent collision of strategic national interests and proxy war in the DRC was the effective partitioning or balkanisation of the Congo

42 Ibid, p.94.
into spheres of security and economic and political interests. Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi and their rebel-backed groups controlled the north-east territory of the Congo. The SADC-AAF force, together with the pro-government militia – the Mai-Mai – and government forces, controlled the central and west of the DRC, including the capital city, Kinshasa. The DRC war virtually engulfed the majority of states in Central Africa, Horn, Great Lakes and Southern Africa, with proxies of MNCs, private military companies and western governments.

The SADC-AAF clash with the belligerent states in the Congo heightened political tensions in the region. There was a tense military stand-off between SADC and both the Ugandan and Rwandan forces. SADC allies criticised both Uganda and Rwanda as not interested in peaceful settlement of the conflict. There were allegations that both countries were western proxies with support from ‘powerful countries’. On the deteriorating political situation, the Zimbabwean Foreign Minister, Stan Mudenge reassured the SADC allies that they were not aggressors and ‘we have no plans to invade Uganda and Rwanda. We are not interested in declaring war on the two countries. SADC allied forces are in the DRC to support a legitimate government and to resist aggression, and all we want is peace’. SADC-AAF was, therefore, forced by the military situation on the ground to change its military strategy from defensive to offensive, hence a hurtful stalemate.

The military stalemate led to renewed regional efforts to bring about political resolution of the conflict in the Congo. This led to the signing of the Lusaka Peace Agreement in July 1999 under the auspices of President Chiluba of Zambia, with the support of SADC. The Zimbabwean leadership and other belligerent states in the Congo were desperately looking for an exit strategy, and hence resolved that the only route open was a negotiated political settlement that would respond to all the strategic interests of the intervening states and rebel factions.

In the period immediately following the Lusaka agreement, fierce fighting broke out between the former allies of Uganda and Rwanda in the Congo. But to understand the falling out between Uganda and Rwanda, it is important to briefly explain the history of the relationship between the two leaders and why they needed each other. In explaining the tensions and fallout in one of the closest political-military alliances in Africa, IISS stated that:

Since 1994, Rwanda and Uganda, or rather the ethnic Tutsi leadership of both countries, have collaborated to reshape political order in the region. Museveni’s grandmother is a Tutsi, and his parents were victims of the 1959 Hutu revolt in Rwanda that resulted in the massacre of Tutsis and the flight of large numbers into exile in neighbouring Uganda. While in exile, Tutsis supported Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) in overthrowing the regime of Milton Obote in 1986. After his victory, Museveni placed many Tutsis in his army, including Colonel Paul Kagame who became vice-president of Rwanda in 1994. In return for their support, Museveni helped exiled Rwandan Tutsis

to create the Front Patriote Rwandais (RPF) movement, which with the help of the Ugandan Army took power from the Hutus after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.\textsuperscript{45}

Despite the close personal and political ties between the leaderships of both countries, they do not agree on certain regional issues. For example, Museveni does not share Kagame’s vision of a Tutsi political and military dominance of the region.\textsuperscript{46} In addition, due to the fact that both Rwanda and Uganda controlled nearly half of the DRC, including its strategic mineral wealth, it was only a matter of time before the two countries and their armies would clash due to the competition for the exploitation of the war economy of the Congo. The Kisangani clashes of 7 and 14 August 1999 revealed the cracks and depth of animosity between the two leaders. The tensions between both countries degenerated into an all out war between these former allies on Congolese territory. The Ugandan Defence Minister, Amama Mbabazi, commenting on Rwanda’s accusations against his government, stated that we knew all along that it was the Rwandan government that was scheming to destabilise Uganda from that part of the DRC . . . If Rwanda attacks us directly, we shall fight them ourselves. If they attack us using proxies like they did recently using Lubanga, we shall fight those proxies . . .Our advice to Rwanda is that they withdraw from the precipice to which they are taking the region with their ultimatum.\textsuperscript{47}

Both Rwanda and Uganda had been accused of fighting the war for profit and hence not being keen on a political resolution of the war in the Congo. The leader of the former Rwanda-backed RCD, Wamba dia Wamba (a faction also supported by Uganda) accused both Rwanda and Uganda of looting Congo’s mineral wealth, and claimed that the economic exploitation of the Congo was ‘official state policy’ on the part of Rwanda.\textsuperscript{48} Evidence suggests that all the intervening states in the Congo have benefited from the exploitation of the conflict and have converted the war into a commercial and economic enterprise. Timothy Longman gives the figure of an estimated US$20 million worth of Coltan exported by Rwanda per month. In addition, Rwanda’s export of diamonds increased from 166 carats in 1998 to 30,500 carats in 2000.\textsuperscript{49} Uganda’s re-export of Congolese gold by 1997 was US$81 million. The UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2003) mentioned top government, military officers and commercial entrepreneurs actively involved in the exploitation of the resources of the Congo and hence fuelling of the war. President Museveni, in particular, was criticised for being a front for Anglo-American interests in the Congo.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{45} IISS, \textit{Strategic Survey}, 2000, p.252.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Mbabazi, A., \textit{Statement by Ministry of Defence responding to Rwanda Ultimatum on Bunia of March 2003}. MOD, Kampala, 15 March 2003, pp.2-3.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Willum, G., ‘Rebel Leader Confirms What Western Donors Deny: Uganda Plunders Congo’, \textit{Aktuelt}. 22 January 2001.
\end{itemize}
and the Great Lakes. On Zimbabwe’s intervention, Rupiya argues that economic motivation was not initially a reason for intervention and that ‘whatever economic interests Zimbabwe subsequently acquired in Congo were not part of its initial calculus of intervention’.\footnote{Rupiya, ‘Zimbabwe’s Involvement in the Second Congo War’, 2003, p.97.} This is a plausible explanation common to all intervening forces involved in resource-rich countries and the opportunities for exploitation of war economies. Zimbabwe has had to pay a huge price for its leadership role in mounting a ‘regional peacekeeping’ and conflict management intervention in the DRC. According to Rupiya, ‘Zimbabwe remains locked in a conflict that has so far undermined its domestic political stability, eroded its economic well-being (due to unprecedented unbudgeted expenditure on security), and, finally, stunted its already tenuous military capacity’.\footnote{Ibid, p.98.} However, the problem of Zimbabwe mirrors the difficulties faced by the other coalition members, though to a limited scale in comparison with Zimbabwe. There was the understanding that the costs of the war would be shared from the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Congo.\footnote{Braekman, C., \textit{L’enjeu Congolais: L’Afrique Centrale après Mobutu}, Paris: Fayard, 1999.} The ‘self-financing’ war strategy meant that there was a de facto or informal agreement between the Kinshasa government and its intervening allies to allow them to ‘help themselves’ to the resources of the country to pay for their war efforts and security provision.

The civil war and the wars between other African states fought in the Congo have led to devastating consequences. An estimated 3.5 million people died in the Congolese war, with an estimated 3.4 million internally displaced, and a further 350-600,000 refugees in the neighbouring countries. The conflict has also aggravated domestic and regional problems. Zimbabwe in particular has incurred huge financial costs in leading the ‘regional peacekeeping’ and conflict management venture. However, the political leadership has also used its regional leadership in the DRC to deflect attention from domestic economic and political crises.

What was achieved by the regional peacekeeping and conflict management intervention in the DRC? The SADC-AAF intervention succeeded in propping up and securing the embattled government of President Kabila, though he was assassinated on 16 January 2001 by one of his body guards. The intervention force secured Kinshasa and its environs from being overtaken by Rwandan, Ugandan and rebel factions. The relative stability led to the re-opening and protection of the international airport. The military stalemate led to new diplomatic and political initiatives by Zimbabwe and South Africa, under President Thabo Mbeki, to promote mediation and political settlement of the Congo crisis. The mutually hurtful stalemate amongst the intervening states and the assassination of President Kabila changed the political dynamics in favour of a negotiated settlement of the war. Kabila was replaced by his son, Col. Joseph Kabila who initiated a fundamental foreign policy shift that paved the way for the withdrawal of the all foreign forces and the
deployment of the United Nations Mission to the Congo (MONUC). The Lusaka peace agreement provided for the withdrawal of all foreign forces as a pre-condition for the deployment of UN peacekeeping in the Congo. Most importantly, the SADC intervention helped to save lives and contributed to human protection activities, for example facilitating humanitarian relief operations and providing access to IDPs and war victims. It is lamentable that this aspect is often glossed over by the majority of media commentators in their attempt to point out the limitations of the SADC peacekeeping and conflict management intervention.

SADC’s Regional Conflict Management and Resolution: Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

There is the growing perception in Southern Africa that the SADC peacekeeping and conflict management efforts in the DRC have not been widely acknowledged, despite its limitations. There is an emerging view that SADC, and in particular Zimbabwe, had done a thankless job, given the fact that the UN was reluctant to intervene. It was, therefore, left to the Zimbabwean-led SADC intervention to stabilise the conflict situation and, in the process, incur huge costs in terms of resources and manpower. Despite the international interests in the Congo, the international media coverage largely ignored the conflict, except occasionally reporting incidents of massacres and outbreaks of intense fighting. In Africa the situation was equally deplorable because the ‘regional dominant media, based in South Africa, mounted an unrelenting campaign, portraying the involvement as “illegitimate”, ill-advised, and based on personal quest for enrichment from the gold and diamonds in the DRC’. 53

Another development was that the UK and US governments imposed sanctions on the SADC allies involved in the DRC, in effect, denying the coalition forces vital military logistics. Rupiya, therefore, concluded that the negative internal media coverage largely ignored the conflict, except occasionally reporting incidents of massacres and outbreaks of intense fighting. In Africa the situation was equally deplorable because the ‘regional dominant media, based in South Africa, mounted an unrelenting campaign, portraying the involvement as “illegitimate”, ill-advised, and based on personal quest for enrichment from the gold and diamonds in the DRC’. 53

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I do not, however, perceive nor would describe the SADC conflict stabilisation and intervention as a ‘sterling’ success.

There is also controversy over the description of ‘invasion’ of the DRC by external forces on the grounds that both Uganda and Rwanda were already in the Congo before the outbreak of the Second Congo War. In addition, there is a debate questioning the legitimacy of defending Laurent Kabila’s government from external aggression on the grounds that it was an anti-democratic and repressive regime. It is important to recognise that these assumptions are not only spurious arguments, but

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53 Ibid, p.100.
54 Ibid.
they also demonstrate a serious lack of understanding of the critical issues. Firstly,
there is no denying the fact that both Uganda and Rwanda brought Kabila to power
and thus were already in the Congo. But equally, after the very public falling out
with his former allies, President Kabila requested the formal withdrawal of both
Uganda and Rwanda from the territory of the Congo in July 1998. There may be a
different definition of ‘invasion’ that I do not know about, but suffice to say that the
intervention of both Uganda and Rwanda in the Second DRC War amounted to an
invasion and territorial aggression. Secondly, is Kabila’s repressive regime the first
in African and world history to be propped up in the name of defending territorial
integrity and political sovereignty? I should hasten to say that I do not approve of
such disastrous practices. Thirdly, to uphold international law and defend the treaty
of SADC relating to external aggression is important regardless of whether it is an
anti-democratic or constitutional regime.

Zimbabwe’s contribution to the regional peace and conflict management initiative
has been overtaken by domestic political problems, in particular, the extensive western
media coverage of the political situation in the country. Zimbabwean society also
questioned the rationale of diverting millions of dollars from national development
and investment in social welfare, to regional peace and security intervention. The
Zimbabwean-led intervention became a domestic political issue, with an estimated
US$30 million per month spent on the war effort.55

The SADC regional conflict management and peacekeeping adventure was
fraught with problems. Despite the emerging regional institutional framework, why
has it been difficult to secure a regional consensus on peace, security and conflict
management? The basic problem lies in the disagreement amongst SADC members
on a regional collective approach to peacekeeping and conflict management. Some
member states demanded that the SADC Organ should operate outside of the SADC
framework, based on informal and flexible arrangements, and, hence, actively tried
to prevent institutional building. Others, however, wish the Organ to be a regional
collective security regime formalised within the SADC framework, with institutional
capacity and formal decision making procedures. There is also the lack of commitment
by SADC states to the concept and practice of a common security regime, and this
has led to what Nathan describes as ‘collective inertia and the pursuit by individual
states of parochial agendas in response to intra- and inter-state conflict’.56 In outlining
the problems and challenges faced by SADC in responding to regional peace and
security issues, Nathan alluded to the following; the personal clash and political
differences between Mugabe and Mandela. The dominance of democratic South
Africa in regional politics and the international credibility and profile of President
Mandela which eclipsed the previous leading role of President Mugabe. In addition,
Zimbabwe favoured and insisted on the FLS approach to regional security issues, and
demanded that the Chair of the Organ should be held by the longest serving head of
state, i.e. Mugabe. In fact, Mugabe as Chair of the Organ made it operational without

a legal basis, i.e. protocol approved by the SADC Summit and ratified by member states. The structures of the Organ were not established, and the Chair did not rotate annually nor function as a troika. President Mugabe virtually monopolised the Chair of the Organ to achieve foreign, political and security objectives. Therefore, the decision to intervene and deploy ‘peacekeeping’ forces in the Congo was without legal mandate and the Organ structures were not established. This is similar to the situation in West Africa when the Nigerian-led peacekeeping and intervention force, ECOMOG, was deployed in Liberia without a legal mandate.

The divergent perception of SADC by member states is also part of the problem in that some countries regard SADC as an economic grouping and others as a security and defence forum. It has led to the perception of two rival blocs within the Community. The ‘pacificist’ bloc is led by South Africa and supported by Mozambique and Botswana. They do not approve of SADC military intervention in internal conflicts, but approve of regional collective security and defence responses to external threats to the region. The South African-led ‘pacificist’ group perceived the SADC Organ as a forum for multilateral security co-operation and peace making. However, to describe South Africa as ‘pacificist’ is a misinterpretation of events. Whilst South Africa has refused to sanction the use of force in the particular case of the DRC, it has endorsed and led a ‘coalition of willing states’ in the sub-region to restore constitutional and democratic order in Lesotho. It is safe to say that ‘pacificism’ is not a foreign and security policy of South Africa.

The ‘militant’ bloc led by Zimbabwe, supported by Angola, DRC and Namibia, favours SADC’s military intervention in domestic conflicts with regional consequences. Zimbabwe had long propagated the view that regional security issues should remain independent of SADC, and that the regional integration arrangement should focus exclusively on economic issues, leaving defence, security and political issues to the FLS and its ISDSC. The Zimbabwe-led ‘militant’ group favoured mutual defence and security co-operation in responding to conflict situations with regional consequences. In April 1999, to formalise their mutual defence and security co-operation, Angola, DRC, Namibia and Zimbabwe signed a mutual defence pact.

Furthermore, the SADC format of Summit decision-making also compounded the problem. The decision to allow the Organ to operate outside of other SADC structures compounded the problems of collective regional decision making and a unified approach to peace and security. It gave rise to the situation whereby there were ‘two separate entities at the level of the heads of state being responsible for dealing with intra- and inter-state conflict’. In response to this rather confusing situation, Nathan presents the position of the South African government arguing that:

while this was certainly the principal responsibility of the Organ, it was also a core function of SADC and therefore of the SADC Summit. . . the SADC Treaty includes the promotion and defence of peace and security as one of the organisation’s objectives; it anticipates the conclusion of a protocol on politics, peace and security; and it states that the Summit shall be the supreme decision-making body. During his tenure as the SADC Chair in 1997, President Mandela became so frustrated with Mugabe’s rival authority as the Chair of the Organ that he threatened to resign if the Organ were not properly integrated into SADC and made accountable to the SADC Summit.\textsuperscript{60}

External factors have also played a role in aggravating the divide in SADC. The Clinton administration-sponsored ACRI, promoted as a peacekeeping capacity building strategy in Africa, was supported by President Mandela, thereby distracting political commitment from SADC home-grown ‘peacekeeping’ and conflict management capacity building.

However, SADC’s preventive diplomacy and conflict management strategy in the region has not been consistent, in particular its approach to intra-state conflicts or political instability. It is worthy of note that the majority of SADC peace making and conflict resolution diplomacies have been initiated by the political leaders. On the political violence in Zimbabwe, SADC criticisms have been noticeably muted. Even President Mbeki’s ‘quiet diplomacy’ has been criticised for not speaking out against Mugabe’s state sponsored violence. The explanation is that SADC states have an aversion to interference in domestic conflicts, and that they have, during the anti-apartheid and liberation struggles, evolved common political norms and cultures that avoid public criticisms of each other. These norms are underpinned by the African socio-cultural norm to avoid ‘washing dirty linen in public’. Furthermore, most of the political leaders in SADC have appalling human rights records and dubious credentials in promoting democratic governance and the rule of law. Publicly criticising Mugabe for his deplorable human rights records and subregion of the rule of law would, in their view, set a dangerous precedence, from which they will no longer be immune. This possibly explains SADC’s muted criticism of Zimbabwe.

Apart from the Congo crisis, the Southern African region has seen a variety of interventions in the name of maintenance of regional peace and security. In 1998, the political crisis in Lesotho warranted the intervention of a South African-led coalition of states to restore stability and constitutional legitimacy. South Africa, in consultation with Zimbabwe, Botswana and Mozambique, deployed an intervention force in Lesotho, under the auspices of SADC. The South African-led military intervention raises some interesting issues. In the case of Lesotho, South Africa is perfectly happy to use military force to restore constitutional and democratic order, whilst in the DRC, South Africa’s strategy for the resolution of the DRC civil war is a negotiated political settlement. In contrast to the hegemonic or pivotal role played by Nigeria in West African peace and conflict issues, the consistent approach has been the threat or the actual use of military force framed by a foreign and security

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, p.71.
policy strategic culture of pro-interventionism. This is not the case in terms of South Africa’s leadership in regional peace and security efforts in Southern Africa.

In addition, there is controversy about the claim that South African-led ‘Operation Boleas’ in Lesotho was mandated by SADC. This claim is not supported by field research on this subject. Based on interviews conducted with officials at the South African foreign and defence ministries, the contrary view is that the decision to intervene in Lesotho was made in Pretoria and dressed as a SADC intervention. This is not surprising because this pattern is emerging as a common feature of these sub-regional military interventions masquerading as regional collective peacekeeping intervention mandated by the sub-regional organisation. The debate generated by ‘Operation Boleas’ reflects a similar problem faced by the Nigerian-led intervention in West Africa. However, the Lesotho intervention like the SADC-led intervention in the DRC was without the UN and OAU authorisation for military action.

What has been the role of South Africa in SADC peace making and conflict management? Post-apartheid South Africa regards the Great Lakes, Central Africa and Southern Africa as strategic regions for economic and security influence, and hence crucial to its geo-strategic foreign and security policy. This is based on the conclusion that the security and stability of South Africa is inextricably linked to the peace and security of the regions. In particular, the South African corporate sector had dominated the economic sphere in these regions. It was, therefore, reasoned that regional peace and security would provide the stepping stone for continental economic influence. But the Congo crisis created several difficulties for South Africa. In particular, Laurent Kabila and other SADC allies accused South Africa of not being a neutral and impartial peace broker in the conflict. They questioned South Africa’s arms sales to Rwanda and Uganda, and the alleged moral support to anti-Kabila forces. In addition, South Africa did not publicly condemn the invasion of the Congo by Rwanda and Uganda. However, South Africa had played the reluctant hegemonic or pivotal state role in facilitating the peace process for the resolution of the Congo crisis. South Africa supported the SADC-OAU peace making role of President Chiluba that led to the signing of the Lusaka agreement. In the post-Mandela era, President Mbeki initiated new diplomatic negotiations with Zimbabwe and Rwanda; key brokers for a political settlement of the conflict. The Mbeki-sponsored peace mediation led to the signing of a Ten-point Plan on a negotiated settlement of the DRC conflict. The key elements included the withdrawal of all foreign forces, establishment and deployment of UN peacekeeping troops, creation and deployment of a Joint Military Commission (JMC), and the beginning of an inter-Congolese dialogue that would lead to the establishment of a broad-based national unity government. The South African government committed itself to contributing to a UN peacekeeping deployment and played a critical role in the creation of MONUC. To translate its political commitment into practical terms, the government committed a budget estimate of US$10-14 million to finance the peacekeeping deployment of South Africa, and an additional US$120,000 to facilitate the establishment of the
In April 2001, South Africa deployed its first contingent of peacekeeping troops for MONUC operations.

UN-OAU / AU-SADC Co-operative Peacemaking and Peacebuilding in the DRC

To further understand the role and division of labour in regional peacekeeping and conflict management, it is important to explore the complex, and sometimes tense relations between regional organisations, regional states and non-state actors, the UN and the OAU/AU in facilitating the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa. In March 2001, Ugandan and Rwandan forces started to withdraw, and this convinced an ‘extremely reluctant UN to intervene’. According to the Lusaka peace agreement, the JMC and OAU were entrusted with the responsibility to undertake peacekeeping operations until the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces in the DRC. The Lusaka agreement also called for close co-operation and co-ordination between the UN, JMC, OAU and all the parties to the conflict in the Congo. The OAU, for its part, in close collaboration with SADC, played a key role in facilitating the peace process. The SADC ambassadors at the UN headquarters in New York played a similar role to that of the ECOWAS ambassadors who were instrumental in securing Security Council support for the ECOWAS peace plans for Liberia and Sierra Leone. The SADC ambassadors mounted a diplomatic offensive at the UN and secured the involvement of the Security Council in facilitating a peaceful resolution of the Congo crisis.

But UN peacekeeping deployment in the DRC was only possible because of the initial peacekeeping and conflict stabilisation role of SADC. The strategy of SADC-AAF intervention was to use preponderant force as a means to force the warring factions and belligerent states to the negotiating table. SADC political initiatives to mediate a civil war peace settlement in the Congo were supported by the OAU and UN, and, hence, provided an exit strategy for the intervening states. According to Security Council Resolution 1291 of 24 February 2000 creating MONUC, its mandate was to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. The mandate of MONUC was couched in terms of multi-functional peacekeeping, with a Chapter VII mandate and ‘may take the necessary action, in the areas of deployment of its infantry battalions and as its deems it within its capabilities, to protect United Nations and co-located JMC personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence’.  

With the deployment of MONUC, and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Congo, the security situation on the borders between the DRC and Rwanda and Uganda remained a serious challenge to the peace process. In fact, recurrent

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instability and military clashes on the Ugandan border led to the re-deployment of both Rwandan and Ugandan troops. To address this problem, the UN requested Uganda, with a Chapter VII mandate, to maintain a military force in Bunia for humanitarian protection purposes, in particular, prevent the genocide that threatened the region. Later, in September 2002, the Luanda Agreement was signed between President Joseph Kabila and President Museveni, providing the legal basis for the presence of Ugandan military forces in the DRC, with the specific mandate to provide security in the Ituri region before total withdrawal. A major problem faced by MONUC on the eve of the withdrawal of foreign forces from the DRC was the concern about the security vacuum created. In particular, the withdrawal of Ugandan forces from the Bunia territory created a security vacuum that threatened the peace of the region and the lives of civilians. The overall military commander of the Ugandan Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) in Ituri, Brig. Kale Kayihura, warned MONUC about the potential dangers of the security vacuum created by the withdrawal of Ugandan forces. In a letter to the MONUC Force Commander, Gen. Diallo on 6th May 2003, he warned that:

I many times asked you to give me guidance on how we would withdraw without leaving a security vacuum. ... You remember how, a number of times I approached you on this matter, and you could not give me an answer. I became extremely anxious after the IPC and as the 24 April 2003 deadline approached, and there was no clear replacement plan... My Commander-in-Chief had asked that the UN give us a written document that legalised our position after the 24 April 2003. Otherwise, Uganda would face diplomatic and political problems... You remember how you trivialised the situation by telling me that when UPDF came into the DRC, we did not require written authority, and there was therefore, no need for the written authority for us to continue to carry out security responsibility in Ituri after the 24 April 2003.\footnote{Brig. K. Kayihura, Chief Political Commissar, UPDF & Commander of UPDF Forces in Ituri, pp.1-2.}

This official communication, copied to the SGSR-MONUC, MONUC Sector in Bunia and the Head of MONUC in Bunia, suggests a biting indictment of UN peacekeeping. It indicates that UN peacekeeping had not learnt from the lessons of its humiliation in Sierra Leone in 2000. As discussed in Chapter 6, the security vacuum created by the withdrawal of the Nigerian contingent of ECOMOG from Sierra Leone led to the situation whereby the RUF took advantage of the exit of Nigerian forces to launch a devastating attack on the city of Freetown that led to the massacre of 18 pro-democracy protesters. The official communication by Brig. Kayihura was sent after the formal handover of the security of Bunia to MONUC. Brig. Kayihura’s letter to Gen. Diallo further clarified the situation stating that ‘you know very well that we handed over the security of Bunia to MONUC on the 25 April 2003. Since then the security of Bunia is your responsibility’.\footnote{Letter written to MONUC Force Commander Gen. Diallo, 4 May 2003.} The recurrent fighting and intra-communal violence is partly blamed on the security vacuum and...
MONUC’s inability to keep the peace in the Bunia region. The Ugandan Minister of Defence attributed the problem to the ‘failure by the United Nations and the international Community to either provide an effective force to protect the people and disarm the militias or give Uganda the mandate to do so . . . Uganda was being criticised for staying in Congo and condemned for proposing withdrawal from the Congo’.\textsuperscript{65} The multiplicity of rebel groups involved in the Congo crisis had also compounded the problems of MONUC’s peacekeeping operations as militias had persistently attacked MONUC forces.

The deployment of MONUC has helped to maintain the fragile security and peace process. The South African government facilitated and hosted the Sun City talks in February 2002, which provided the road map for a power-sharing government of national unity involving all the parties to the conflict. The Sun City Peace process led to the signing of the Final Act of the Inter-Congolese Political Dialogue on 2 April 2003. The Final Act provided for a transitional government, based on power-sharing, headed by President Kabila, with four vice-presidents, and a 500 member National Assembly. The interim government would be in place for two years until democratic elections in 2005, in accordance with a transitional constitution. There is an improved security situation in two-thirds of the country, despite recurrent military clashes on the east and north of the Congo. The vice-presidents were sworn in in July 2003 and the process of integrating former rebel factions into the National Army has started, \textit{Forces Armées de la Republique Democratique du Congo} (FARDC). Despite the tensions and difficulties within the power-sharing government, the fragile peace seems to be holding, and there have been attempts at re-building state governing institutions and extending the authority of the government throughout the country. An International Committee in support of the DRC transition has been put in place, including the troika of the African Union, South Africa and Mozambique, in collaboration with the EU and other key western donor governments that are assisting the post-war reconstruction and development of the Congo. At the meeting of the Consultative Group for the DRC, held in Paris in December 2003, donors and IFIs confirmed financial contributions of an estimated US$1.1 billion for disbursement in 2004, and US $1.2 billion in 2005, with further pledges exceeding US$3.9 billion for the years 2004-6.\textsuperscript{66} South Africa is one of the first to benefit from the peace and post-war reconstruction of the Congo. In January 2004, President Mbeki went on a state visit to the DRC, accompanied by government ministers and key private sector representatives. Mbeki and Kabila signed a 30-year multi-sectoral economic co-operation agreement on strengthening and financing the DRC in key sectors such as defence, education, tourism and mining.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Statement to Parliament by Hon. Amama Mbabazi & Minister of Defence on the Situation in Ituri}. 11 March 2003, p.3.


\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
Conclusion

The building of regional peace and security architecture in the Southern Africa region has gone through phases of ‘promise’, ‘disappointment’ and ‘cautious optimism’, often driven by amity-enmity, conflict-co-operation dynamics. There is increasing potential for the prevention, management and resolution of security and conflict issues within a regional framework, led by the hegemonic leadership of the pivotal state, South Africa, or a coalition of willing states. The peacekeeping and conflict management experiment in the DRC, and ‘pro-democracy’ intervention in Lesotho, demonstrate that it can be done, despite the teething problems and challenges. But such interventions are also at considerable financial, economic and politico-security costs involved in these interventions in the name of regional peace and security. There are several lessons to be learned from this emerging regional approach to regional problems. The assertive regional peacekeeping and conflict management adventure by the SADC coalition of willing states in the DRC conflict reinforces the view that in complex political emergencies, the use or the threat of use of preponderant force as a conflict stabilisation, management and prevention strategy is of vital importance. Tapfumaneyi underscored this point by arguing that: ‘All the conflicts that have arisen in Southern Africa since 1989 have shown that it is necessary, at least in the early stages of the conflict resolution and peacekeeping continuum, to apply collective military force, not as an end in itself, but as a catalyst to an effective political resolution.’

The conflict management strategy of SADC mirrors the strategy of the West African peacekeeping and conflict management force, ECOMOG, and its effective use of the combined conflict resolution approach of political diplomacy and use of preponderant force to facilitate political settlement of conflicts.

The SADC ‘peacekeeping’ intervention, like its West African counterpart, is based on ad hoc improvisation; often its deployment is based on flawed military assessment and driven by the amity-enmity dynamic of geo-political co-operation. The SADC intervention was initiated in the name of upholding international law and to defend the territorial integrity of DRC. The allied forces succeeded in ensuring the survival of the embattled regime of President Kabila. This reinforces the perception that regional collective security mechanisms are about protection of the status quo and regime survival. The ad hoc approach to regional peace and security issues also reinforces the reactive mentality of the emerging security regionalism in Africa. President Mugabe famously described the SADC Organ as a ‘fire brigade’ mechanism. What we see is a comprehensive regional effort to build the durable foundations for a regional collective approach to peace, security and conflict issues. But as Peter Meyns argues, ‘as long as the regional security architecture is still in statu nascendi, conflict resolution cannot follow established channels,

but is likely to be tackled in different ways in each specific case’. This explains SADC’s contradictory conflict resolution approach whereby there was disagreement on military intervention in the Congo, and agreement on military intervention in Lesotho.

SADC, like ECOWAS, is externally dependent, and this high degree of donor-dependency is potentially detrimental to the sustainability of building a viable regional peace and security system, and may compromise the principles of ‘African approaches to African problems’. In addition, South Africa, the acknowledged regional hegemon, has been reluctant to play the pivotal role in the building of regional peace and security mechanisms and in the maintenance of regional peace and security. A variety of reasons could be advanced for this. Firstly, democratic South Africa is sensitive about its apartheid history of regional destabilisation, and, therefore, reluctant to convey the perception of dominating and bullying the region, in particular, military interventions or the use of force in Southern Africa. Secondly, the legacy of apartheid had left traditional inward-looking preferences based on decades of international isolation. Furthermore, the post-apartheid development challenges have predisposed South Africa to, first and foremost, focus on domestic issues rather than regional peace and security intervention adventures. Thirdly, South Africa does not seem to focus its political and economic dominance on Southern Africa, but rather prefers the continental arena and international issues affecting the South or, formerly, the Third World.

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70 Ibid, p.154.
Chapter 8

From Famine to Sustainable Peace: Building Regional Peace and Preventive Diplomacy Systems in the Horn of Africa

Introduction

The Horn of Africa has distinguished itself as the epitome of the ‘Hopeless Continent’ or a continent at war with itself because, according to international media coverage of issues and developments in the sub-region, it is an area of famine, drought, poverty and starvation; civil conflicts and inter-state wars; and political instability. John Pendergast describes the Horn as the ‘deadliest conflict cluster in the world’.1 The sub-region hosts some of the longest running civil wars, fought in some of the world’s poorest countries. These wars, and political instability, have produced an estimated 2.5 million casualties, and the ‘push and pull’ factors of migration have also led to massive refugee flows and internally displaced persons, to the extent that the region has the largest number of internally displaced persons in the world. The Horn of Africa is described by the majority of media commentators and political analysts as a region of ‘permanent emergency’,2 and hence is dependent on international humanitarian agencies, relief organisations and UN agencies for crisis and development intervention. The latest in the long history of the region’s susceptibility to humanitarian emergency is the Darfur region in Western Sudan where pro-government Arab militias, the Janjaweed, are accused of perpetuating genocide and a massive humanitarian disaster. The UN has described the problems in Darfur as the ‘world’s worse humanitarian crisis’. Famine, wars and political instability in the region demonstrate the regionalisation of civil wars and natural disasters in the Horn, and how the countries in the sub-region are locked into a regional security complex and conflict formation.

However, the Horn has not been paralysed by the multiplicity of problems and challenges facing the sub-region. Out of these difficult problems, the region has developed mechanisms to respond to humanitarian emergencies and regional peace and security issues, though these nascent, but laudable, efforts have received muted

international praise. Therefore, this chapter will engage with how the political economy of the region provides an understanding of the state of ‘permanent emergency’ in the sub-region. An important focus is on the evolution of the regional environmental and development mechanism in the Horn in the 1990s and its expansion into the regional peace and security domain. To understand the development of security regionalism in the Horn, the chapter will critically analyse the role and contribution of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in facilitating civil war peace settlements in the region, and the role of institutions such as the UN, AU, EU and extra-regional actors in assisting the process of peacemaking and conflict management in the Horn.

The core argument is that the multiplicity of security threats and risks (both military and non-military) and their devastating consequences have forced the region to attempt to build regional peace and security systems to respond to these diverse problems. But this regional response to peace and security challenges raises several critical issues. Firstly, what are the problems involved and why should cash-strapped and underdeveloped economies, the majority of which have dubious democratic credentials, be interested in regional peace and security? Secondly, what has been the role of pivotal states in facilitating regional peace and security efforts, and how is this role constrained or enhanced by the interventions of extra-regional actors, non-state actors, and the complex geo-politics? Thirdly, what do IGAD’s regional peace and security efforts say about the emerging debate on the role and potential contribution of regional, intergovernmental, collective organisations to the maintenance of international peace and security in the post-Cold War era?

Political Economy of the Horn of Africa

The political geography of the Horn of Africa primarily comprises Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Uganda. The Horn is a geographical description of the depiction of the region of north-east Africa on the map. The regional formation and ‘regioness’ of the Horn has been constructed by a variety of natural, internal and external factors and forces. The multiplicity of internal and external problems, and the challenges faced by the sub-region, i.e. civil wars, violent power struggles, warlordism and state collapse, natural disasters and the Cold War conflict and superpower rivalries played out in the Horn, have led to further reconstruction and expansion of the region. The term ‘Greater Horn’ of Africa is used to describe the common problems faced by both the Horn countries and their East African neighbours. With the end of the Cold War, the region of the Horn has also been hegemonically constructed. The description ‘Greater Horn’ of Africa is used in this context to describe the spheres of political, economic, security and strategic self-interest of the United States and western interests in the Horn as well as the East and Great Lakes regions. The Greater Horn of Africa includes ten countries, i.e. the original seven plus the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Rwanda.
From Famine to Sustainable Peace

The Horn of Africa is a reflection of diversity in ecological, political, socio-cultural and economic terms. With an estimated population of over 160 million, the region is characterised by high population growth, with population density varying from country to country. The majority of the population depends on subsistence agriculture and pastoralism. Pastoralism is an important production system in the region. The world’s largest concentration of pastoralist populations is found in the Horn, with Sudan as the world’s largest, and Somalia and Eritrea 3rd and 4th respectively. The primary reason is that 70 per cent of the land is arid and semi-arid. The environmental system of the region is one of diversity, with rich agricultural areas as well as arid land and diverse coastal areas. There is also a high degree of dependence on scarce natural resources, and both the population and national economies depend on the management and utilisation of these resources. The region is affected by famine, droughts and floods. Furthermore, many of the ecosystems and livelihood systems straddle international borders such as the Juba / Shebelle basin shared by Somalia and Kenya, the Maasai pastoral communities straddling the Kenya-Tanzania border, and the Nuer of the Sudan-Ethiopia border. These complex livelihoods and ecosystems have led to situations whereby armed pastoralist groups clash over the use of access to water resources. The region is also affected by environmental degradation including desertification, deforestation, water scarcity and watershed degradation. The pervasiveness of conflicts in the region has also led to serious problems of landmines and their devastating effects on agricultural, economic and commercial activities. The environmental problem is compounded by oil extraction and oil exploration activities in Southern Sudan.

The economic and social development of the Horn has produced a mixed picture with the region, by 1999, achieving a total GDP valued at US$35.9 billion, and a corresponding average income of US$233 per capita. Despite its resource endowment, including substantial oil and gas reserves and diverse ecosystems, the region continues to produce poor economic growth, and the majority of the countries in the Horn have implemented structural adjustment programmes, with varying degrees of success. The diversity in the level of development of the Horn countries is also reflected in their economic and social indicators. According to the UNDP Human Development Index 2003, only Sudan is in the Medium Human Development category, and the rest of the Horn countries are in the Low Human Development category. The GDP per capita of Djibouti at US$2,370 (2001) is sharply contrasted with the GDP per capita of the hegemonic pretender, Ethiopia, of US$810 (2001). In

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addition, the adult literacy rate (age 15 and above) for Kenya is 83.3 per cent which is contrasted with that of newly independent Eritrea of 56.7 per cent (2001).\(^6\)

The region has been portrayed as in a state of ‘permanent emergency’ and plagued by the ‘inevitability of famine’.\(^7\) As far back as the 1960s, Sudan and Eritrea produced massive refugee flows and IDPs due to civil conflicts, and the internationally recognised Ethiopian famine of 1973-4. From the 1980s onwards, the region has produced a variety of humanitarian emergencies. The perennial state of humanitarian emergency of one kind or another has distinguished the Horn as a region of famine. The most celebrated international response to the international media coverage of the Ethiopian famine was Bob Geldof’s ‘Live Aid’ which mobilised international support and humanitarian assistance for the famine in Ethiopia. The perception of the Horn as an unstable region and a ‘disaster relief zone’ is aggravated by the multiplicity of wars and armed conflicts in the region.

The incidents of famine have aggravated problems of political instability and civil wars, and both famine and wars in the region have produced massive refugee flows and IDPs, further threatening the peace and security of the neighbouring regions of the Great Lakes, and the regions of East and Southern Africa. Peter Woodward’s comment is insightful in that the Horn is the ‘stage on which Africa’s tragedy is played out in stark and violent form’.\(^8\) The majority of the countries in the region have been scarred by wars and armed conflicts including the Ethiopia-Eritrea war and protracted civil war and state collapse in Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda. The Horn is a reflection of the complex interconnectedness between intra-state conflicts, and regional and international politics. For instance, colonial rule and its legacy left the people of Somalia divided and shared amongst countries such as Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. This led to inter-state wars and border disputes between Somalia and its neighbours in the 1970s, in an attempt to create a greater Somali land. Eritrea had to fight a bitter 30 years war with Ethiopia in order to secure its political independence. In addition, there have been a variety of military interventions in Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. The countries in the region have also developed the habit of supporting insurgency and guerrilla groups and rebel movements against their neighbours. Famine, therefore, reinforces the link with conflicts, and has aggravated the problem of political stability and, to some extent, contributed to the fall of governments such as those of Haile Selase of Ethiopia and Nimeiri of Sudan.

\(^8\) Ibid.
Another important factor is the position of the three dominant countries in the Horn, i.e. Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, in relation to each other, which also gives an indication of the dimensions and dynamics of the conflicts within the region and within each state. Despite the perception that the region is occupied by weak and failed states, historically the Ethiopian empire had one of the most developed state systems in the world, and Emperor Menelik II developed a modern Ethiopian state system in the early 19th century. Furthermore, nomadic and pastoralist communities distinguish the region and Coptic Christianity and Islam are rivals for dominance of the Horn.

The geo-strategic location of the Horn and its proximity to the Middle East, Arabian Peninsular, and the Islamic world meant that the region attracted a variety of regional and international conflicts. Extra-regional actors have played a divisive and destructive role in the underdevelopment and insecurity prevalent in the Horn of Africa. The different historical experiences and colonial legacies produced diverse political systems and statehoods in the post-colonial period. Three European powers dominated the colonial history of the Horn: France, Britain and Italy. The colonial power politics and scramble for spheres of influence in the Horn varied from intense animosity and violent rivalry to the entente cordiale of 1902 and the French-Italian-British Tripartite Convention on the Horn in 1906, designed to protect their spheres...
of influence. The Cold War superpower rivalries and confrontations played out in the Horn compounded the contemporary peace and security problems in the region. Cold War ideological impacts led to the establishment of different political systems including military dictatorships, and what John Markakis describes as ‘garrison socialism’ in Ethiopia. Cold War rivalry led to the establishment of military bases, and of global communications and intelligence bases and networks in the region. There was an estimated US$7 billion Soviet build-up of arms in Ethiopia in the 1980s while in Sudan US military aid and training amounted to US$1.4 billion. Woodward, therefore, argues that: ‘The superpowers were unmatched in their injection of armaments into the Horn, and they did so for strategic reasons in which their own rivalry grew, culminating in the Horn’s centrality to the ‘arc of crisis’ in the Second Cold War.’ Both the US and USSR and their allies supported dissident groups, and propped up brutal and dictatorial regimes, insurgency groups and liberation movements as long as these were amenable to their strategic self-interests. The Cold War armament of the Horn has led to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and, with the end of the Cold War, the sub-region was awash with arms, further threatening peace and security. The end of the Cold War also changed the political map and conflict landscape of the Horn with the independence of Eritrea in 1993 and the break up of Somalia into warlord fiefdoms and separate nations.

A distinguishing feature of the Horn is its geographical location and how this has influenced its political and socio-economic development. The Horn is a gateway to the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. The Horn has been exposed for centuries to the politics, commerce and security concerns and interests of countries outside the region. In effect, external penetration and influence have determined the course of events in the Horn, but the degree and intensity of external penetration and influence have varied over time. The Horn has been part of the politics of the Middle East, in particular, the emergence and struggle for survival of the state of Israel, to the extent that the Horn is sometimes described as part of the ‘Afro-Middle Eastern sub-region’. Therefore, political rivalries amongst Middle Eastern and North African states, non-state actors and sub-national groups are extended across to the Horn. The influence of Arab North Africa has affected the politics and security problems in the Horn. Egypt has played an influential role in the regional politics of the Horn and provided sanctuary for the Eritrean resistance movement during its war of liberation, in which it was supported by Syria in the name of Arab nationalism and solidarity. Sudan’s Arabism and radical Islamic fundamentalism have affected countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Somalia and Djibouti. The construction of the Horn as part of an ‘Afro-Middle Eastern

11 Ibid, p.149.
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<td>72</td>
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sub-region’ has also led to a regional dimension of Islamic fundamentalism with links to terrorist networks and operations. The oil producing Middle East, the proximity of the Horn to international waterways, the security interests of the state of Israel and the Palestinian people, and the strategic interests of the major powers have all, in diverse ways, and with varying degrees of intensity, affected the Horn and further instigated wars, conflicts and insecurity in the sub-region. The distinguishing feature of the Horn, in terms of conflict analysis, is that the region establishes the inextricable link between food and environmental insecurity, conflicts, bad governance and underdevelopment. Another key feature of the Horn is the regionalisation of wars, armed conflicts, environmental problems and humanitarian emergencies. The spillover effects of the wars and environmental problems are not limited to just one country, but affect the whole region and its neighbours. The proto-regional security complex and nature of conflict formation in the Horn demonstrate the imperative for a regional approach to the problems of the sub-region.

From Famine to Regional Peace and Security Architecture: Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

The environmental and development problems and challenges faced by the Horn countries, in particular the impact on human security, forced upon them the imperative to create a regional system to address these regional problems. This led to the creation of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) in 1986 with a mandate focusing on issues of drought, famine and desertification in the region. IGADD also provided a regional platform for political dialogue on regional peace and security issues. The resurgence of regionalism in world politics in the 1990s caused the political leadership of IGADD to consider the potential benefits from regional economic integration and co-operation, on peace and security issues in the Horn. The consensus amongst the IGADD leadership was that it was imperative to revitalise the regional institution as a serious mechanism to respond to the problems and challenges faced by the region. Therefore, at the 1995 IGADD Extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa, the decision was taken to expand regional co-operation in the Horn, and, at the 1996 Summit in Nairobi, IGADD adopted the agreement establishing the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The four primary areas of focus of IGAD were food security and environmental protection; infrastructural development (transport and communications) and regional conflict prevention; management and resolution; and humanitarian affairs.

The aim of IGAD is to promote regional peace and stability as the foundation for attaining the goals of food security, environmental protection and sustainable regional development. Within this context, regional integration and co-operation in the Horn was to serve as the driving force in achieving the goals of regional peace and security. Article 7 (g) states that the aim of IGAD is to promote ‘peace and stability in the sub-region and create mechanisms within the sub-region for the prevention, management and resolution of interstate and intra-state conflicts through
dialogue’. The Assembly of the Heads of State and Government is the supreme decision making body of the regional mechanism. IGAD is designated as one of the pillars of the African Economic Community (AEC), as stipulated in the AEC treaty. IGAD has made a transformation from narrow preoccupation with environmental protection and development co-operation to expansion into the areas of regional peace and security issues, thereby establishing the link between peace, security, conflict and development.

To institutionalise co-operation on regional peace and security issues, the Protocol on the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) was adopted in January 2002. CEWARN became operational in September 2002 and is based in Addis Ababa. CEWARN has established regional early warning units in each IGAD member state, and IGAD has also created a Committee on Early Warning of conflicts and insecurity in the region. CEWARN’s secretariat is part of the Directorate of Political and Humanitarian Affairs of IGAD. Given the potential sensitivity of the work of CEWARN, Article 13 of the protocol provides for privileges and immunities to protect ‘experts and officials on special mission for CEWARN . . . necessary for the performance of their activities’. The mandate of CEWARN, within its preventive diplomacy responsibility is to ‘receive and share information concerning potentially violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD region’. The functions of CEWARN cover early warning and response, including exchange of information and collaboration among member states based on principles of timeliness, transparency, co-operation and free flow of information; gathering, verifying and analysing information and communicating results to decision makers in IGAD policy organs and national governments of member states; and to respond by taking appropriate action at national and regional levels to prevent, mitigate and manage conflicts.

The debate on the efficacy of early warning has divided both the academic and policy community in that there is a general view that, in Africa, the problem is not a lack of adequate information or early warning about the potential outbreak of a conflict, but rather, the lack of or failure of an early response. From the genocide in Rwanda to the bloody civil wars and state collapse in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, the story has been the same, i.e. not lack of early warning to prevent the outbreak of these conflicts and mass murder, but primarily the failure of and lack of early responses. In addition, analysts question the validity of early warning and the correctness of the associated intelligence. The Iraq War of March 2003, based as it was on ‘faulty intelligence,’ has raised the whole issue of the potential for early warning information or intelligence to be politically driven to serve particular vested interests. Bruce Jentleson, therefore, argues that the problem with early warning is not absence of timely information but sometimes ‘flawed analysis’ of the likelihood of

15 Ibid, p.16.
escalation of conflict or the costs of inaction. Furthermore, IGAD lacks the mandate to force member states to take appropriate action to prevent a potential humanitarian emergency or outbreak of violent conflict. For example, despite credible warnings from international agencies, IGAD could not force the Sudanese government to prevent the humanitarian emergency in the Darfur region. In comparison, CEWARN is similar to the ECOWAS conflict early warning programme in West Africa. But, to date (March 2005), there are no formal institutional interactions or networking between the two regional early warning mechanisms in terms of sharing ideas, expertise, capacity building and learning from commonalities and differences. Both are externally funded programmes.

Conceptually, IGAD’s expansion into the peace and security domain and its attempt to build regional systems is framed within the concept and practice of preventive diplomacy. The term preventive diplomacy was first used by Dag Hammarskjöld to describe UN efforts to ‘keep localised international disputes from provoking larger confrontations between the superpowers’. This rather restrictive definition applies to inter-state conflicts and the need to prevent the escalation of these conflicts that may potentially embroil the superpowers and their allies. The term has been expanded and given a new intellectual focus to describe preventive efforts involving intra-state wars and, in particular, how to prevent or mitigate the regionalisation of localised civil wars. Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace* defines preventive diplomacy as ‘actions to prevent disputes from arising between the parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur’. The Carnegie Commission describes preventive diplomacy as ‘frontline diplomacy’ involving efforts through ‘bilateral, multilateral, and unofficial channels’ to ‘pressure, cajole, arbitrate, mediate, or lend “good offices” to encourage dialogue and facilitate a non-violent resolution of the crisis’. Fen Osler Hampson outlines the key elements of preventive diplomacy as highlighted in the debate; they include mediation and negotiation, i.e. peacemaking efforts to bring hostile parties to negotiate the resolution of conflict by peaceful means; and peacekeeping and coercive diplomacy, including preventive deployment of military force to prevent escalation of conflict. In addition, developmentalist diplomacy includes intervention efforts to address the long-term societal and international problems of a conflict situation; confidence building measures including exchange of military missions, risk reduction centres, information exchanges, and monitoring of regional arms control agreements; and fact-finding, early warning

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and demilitarised zones. The debate on preventive diplomacy has raised several important issues. Hampson argues that political pressures and strategic self-interests may limit the utility of preventive diplomacy interventions. Furthermore, there is the debate that preventive interventions in intra-state conflict are in breach of the norms of international law relating to non-intervention. This debate is associated with the controversy on humanitarian intervention in complex political emergencies, outlined in Chapter 4. Another key debate on preventive diplomacy is that the intervention efforts are normally short-term problem solving, with exit strategy orientation and, as such, not enough attention is paid to the long-term structural problems. With the creation of CEWARN, the debate has centred on whether, in fact, the focus of IGAD should be directed at developing the capacity for early response to conflict situations, rather than early warning. As already discussed above, George reinforces the view that ‘the problem is not a lack of warning but the fact that governments often ignore an incipient crisis or take a passive attitude towards it until it escalates into a deadly struggle or a major catastrophe’.

IGAD and Preventive Diplomacy in the Horn of Africa: Peacemaking in Sudan and Somalia

The IGAD conference on Strengthening the role of IGAD in Regional Peace Initiatives and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in December 2003 in Nairobi considered the expansion of the role of CEWARN not only to cover pastoralist conflicts but also to include the role of member states in preventive diplomacy in the Horn, the role and contribution of the IGAD chair in preventive diplomacy, and the relations between the Special Envoys and the IGAD Authority, including the potential role and efficacy of a ‘lead nation or pivotal state’ or ‘coalition of willing states’ approach to regional peace, conflict and security issues. Article 18 of the IGAD Treaty underscored the commitment of the Horn countries to preventive diplomacy orientations and the building of regional peace and security systems in the sub-region. The article is unequivocal in its commitment that member states should ‘act collectively to preserve peace, security and stability which are essential prerequisites for economic development and social progress’.  


22 IGAD. Agreement Establishing the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Assembly of Heads of State and Government. IGAD/SUM-96/AGRE.Doc, Nairobi,
The pervasiveness of conflicts in the Horn, and their devastating effects, forced IGAD to take an active part in the preventive diplomacy in the sub-region. IGAD’s preventive diplomacy has covered the facilitation of the Sudan and Somalia peace processes and civil war peace settlements, as well as attempted mediation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. The vulnerability of the region to international terrorist activities and networks led to the Khartoum Resolution of January 2002 on Regional Co-operation to Combat Terrorism. However, preoccupation with regional peace and conflict issues has not distracted attention from developing a regional capacity for food security. But progress in these areas remains limited and the prognosis is not encouraging.

The Ethiopia-Eritrean war in 2000 refocused international attention on the region; inter-state wars are increasingly seen as an anomaly in world politics, and if anything, a sign of political underdevelopment and weakness of regional mediation efforts. The war between these two neighbours further aggravated the conflict situation in the Horn. Both countries actively and covertly fomented internal conflicts and political instability in each other’s country by supporting insurgency and dissident groups. Ethiopia actively supported the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and other dissident groups, while Eritrea covertly supported and provided war-fighting logistics for the Ethiopian rebel group, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and other anti-Zenawi rebel factions. The next-door neighbour, Djibouti, was ‘punished’ by Eritrea for its support to the Ethiopian war effort. Eritrea supported dissident groups, which sparked off the Afar ethnic group rebellion in Djibouti. The Ethiopia-Eritrea war further compounded the problems of small arms proliferation in the region. In fact, the UN Security Council resolution banning arms sales to both countries, allowed alternative weapons supplies from former Eastern Bloc countries.

The war itself has been simplified as a border conflict, but the IISS argued that the reasons for the war could be attributed to ‘regime legitimacy, state sovereignty, nation building, currencies and access to port facilities … it involves the personal pride of the two leaders – President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea and Prime Minster Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia…’. The disputed region of Badme in north-west Ethiopia remained a flash point for both countries. IGAD, the AU and the UN were involved in the mediation and resolution of the war, this led to the deployment of the UN Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) peacekeeping force to keep the peace and monitor the peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia. IGAD’s preventive diplomacy in the Horn has focused on the facilitation and mediation of both the Sudanese and Somalian peace processes.

Sudan Peace Process and Civil War Peace Settlement

The civil war in Sudan has been one of Africa’s longest running civil wars and has led to violent confrontations between the Arab Muslim north and the Christian-

21 March 1996.
animist south, the majority of whom are black Africans. But the post-colonial history of Sudan is littered with wars and armed conflicts. Since independence in 1956, Sudan has suffered one form of war and violent conflict after another. In 1983, the Khartoum government imposed Islamic Sharia law across the whole of the country, including the Christian dominated south. This led to the rebellion of the south and the formation of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army and Movement (SPLA/M), demanding independence from the Islamic north. The war in Sudan reflects most of the generations of conflict analysis interpretation outlined in Chapter 3. Some political analysts describe the war as an ethno-religious/identity-based intra-state conflict, whilst others perceive the conflict as a secessionist war or a resource-based conflict, given the fact that the oil in the south of Sudan has been a major factor in the conflict between the north and the south of the country.

Sudan is a major player in the region and the protracted civil war further aggravated the conflict situation in the Horn; in particular, the massive refugee flows produced by the war resulting in an estimated 4 million IDPs in the sub-region. These regional security and conflict formation challenges forced IGAD to act. The involvement of IGAD peacemaking and facilitation of the civil war peace settlement started in 1994, when it mediated the peace talks between the Khartoum government and the SPLA rebel movement. This led to the creation of Front Line States (FLS) comprising Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, mandated with the responsibility to mediate the Sudanese civil war. The Front Line States themselves had low-intensity civil wars, allegedly supported by Sudan, therefore it was in their strategic security interests to mediate and resolve the long-running civil war in Sudan. The IGAD-led 1994 peace talks led to the signing of a Declaration of Principles (DoP) that outlined the importance of national unity under a secular state, and the recognition of the right of self-determination of the south. Disagreement over the DoP led to the withdrawal of the Khartoum government and the collapse of the peace initiative. By 1995, the Front Line States adopted a belligerent approach to the Khartoum government, accusing it of being the main source of regional instability. To illustrate their belligerent posture, the Front Line States backed the UN sanctions against the Sudanese government, and provided covert military and logistical support to anti-government rebel factions, in particular, the SPLA.

In 1997, IGAD initiated a diplomatic and political offensive to revive the peace talks. Kenya played the lead-nation role and the peace talks were chaired by the former President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi. The peace talks led to the establishment of a permanent secretariat on the Sudan peace process based in Nairobi. Kenya provided political leadership, financial and technical support in facilitating the peace process. To ensure active political and diplomatic support, President Moi appointed a Special Envoy to the Sudan peace process. The July 1999 Kenyan-led peace talks created the momentum for the eventual resolution of the civil war. The IGAD peace process

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under Kenyan leadership brought the Khartoum government and the rebel factions into closer dialogue and consolidated the peace process. IGAD impressed on the warring factions the need to address the human suffering caused by the on-going war and this led to the opening of ‘safe corridors’ for the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies.\textsuperscript{25} The IGAD-facilitated peace process created a ‘spirit of dialogue’ and confidence in the possibility of resolution of the civil war.

By 2000, there was a general consensus that the peace process was not making meaningful progress, and that the time was ripe to resolve the protracted civil war. The renewed political and diplomatic efforts led to the signing of the Machakos Protocol in July 2002 between the SPLA and the Khartoum government, which outlined the ‘basic formula for the future of Sudan’.\textsuperscript{26} The Machakos protocol provided for the following: a federal government and a separate government for Southern Sudan, cessation of hostilities and formal ceasefire, non-application of Sharia law in the south, and an interim transitional period of six years that would provide the opportunity for the south to have a referendum on self-determination.

The second round of peace talks commenced in August 2002, but broke down after the SPLA captured the strategic town of Torit. After much political and diplomatic horse-trading and proffering of incentives, the peace talks were restarted in October 2002 at Machakos which led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding providing for the cessation of hostilities during peace talks, and a Verification and Monitoring Team to investigate alleged attacks or breaches of the ceasefire agreement. Further negotiations in February 2003 led to the signing of an agreement on power and wealth sharing and security arrangements during the interim period. The Naivasha Declaration of October 2003 provided the framework for the final peace agreement, and secured the participation of both the Sudanese First Vice-President, Ali Uthman Taha and the SPLA leader, John Garang. After ten years, the Kenyan-led IGAD peace process finally succeeded in negotiating a civil war peace settlement between the Sudanese government and the SPLA on 26 May 2004. The peace agreement provided for a transitional government of national unity based on power sharing, with the SPLA leader as First Vice-President. John Garang was sworn-in as First Vice-President of Sudan in July 2005. He tragically died, three weeks later, in a helicopter crash, sparking violent demonstrations in Khartoum by pro-SPLM supporters.

A joint integrated unit comprising Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and SPLA troops will provide security during the Interim period, and will serve as the foundation for an integrated national army of Sudan. In support of the post-agreement peace deal, IGAD’s secretariat is preparing the outlines for post-war reconstruction and peacebuilding in Sudan. The Sudan peace process and peace agreement has been thrown into doubt with the crisis created by the pro-government Arab militias, the Janjaweed, in the Durfur region. According to the US state development spokesman,

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{26} IGAD, \textit{Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Strategy Final Draft}. Djibouti: IGAD, January 2003, p.22.
Richard Boucher, his government is convinced that the Sudanese government and its militia allies have committed genocide in the Darfur region. However, a high-level UN commission set up to investigate the crisis and humanitarian situation in Darfur concluded that the government of Sudan has ‘not pursued a policy of genocide: although in some instances individuals, including government officials, may have committed acts with genocidal intent’. The debate on whether genocide has taken place in Darfur or not, however, reflects a wider realpolitik and conflict over vested interests by a whole range of actors including the Bush administration and its neoconservative right-wing Christian allies in the US and the putative conflict with the UN Secretary General over the 2003 war in Iraq. The public fallout led to allegations of UN ‘misdeeds’ over the Iraq ‘Oil-for-Food’ programme. In addition, the alleged ‘genocide’ debate also reveals a dimension of US foreign policy approach that attempts to use the ‘charge’ of ‘genocide’ as a strategy to criminalise and punish the Khartoum government of Sudan.

However, and despite the difficulties created by the Darfur crisis, a comprehensive final peace deal was signed in January 2005 between the government of Sudan and the SPLM. The diplomatic efforts by IGAD, the AU, UN, EU and key western and Arab league backers of the Sudan peace process led to the deployment of an AU multi-dimensional peacekeeping mission in Darfur led by Nigeria, South Africa and Rwanda, code named ‘Operation Life Line Sudan’. A recent positive development is the agreement by the NATO alliance to assist the AU’s peacekeeping mission in Sudan by providing logistical support and by airlifting AU peacekeepers into the crisis-torn Darfur region. This is the first-ever NATO mission in Africa.

**Somalia Peace Process: Mediating an Intractable Civil War and State Collapse**

Somalia is distinguished in contemporary world politics because it has existed as a state in name only since January 1991, thanks to the ‘legal fiction’ of juridical sovereignty. The state of Somalia collapsed after the overthrow of the regime of Siad Barre, leaving no functioning state governing institutions, and rival warlords struggling for control of power and fiefdoms. Somalia is also distinguished in Africa because of its myth of homogeneity in that Somalis are considered as one people with a common ancestry, language and religion. Despite these crucial elements necessary for state formation and nation building, political stability and peace has eluded Somalia’s political history. The root causes of the civil war and state collapse derives from the nature of domestic politics under the brutal and repressive military regime of Siad Barre, propped up since 1969 by the Cold War rivalry played out in the Horn; the mismatch between the postcolonial state and the nature and structure

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of Somali civil society based on clan systems of ‘decentralised’ governance and socio-political control; and the effects of the end of the Cold War.\textsuperscript{29} The collapse of the state of Somalia and the outbreak of violent civil war and societal fragmentation in 1991 led to humanitarian emergencies. This warranted the deployment in 1992 of a US-led UN Task Force (UNITAF) code named ‘Operation Restore Hope’ to create safe relief corridors in war-torn Somalia. The deployment of the US-led UNOSOM II eventually took over UNITAF’s operations, with the mandate to disarm the militias and warlords. In 1993, the killing of US soldiers led to the withdrawal of American forces and the closing down of UN operations.

A variety of regional and international peace making efforts have been proposed for Somalia, but peace and political settlement of the conflict remain stubbornly elusive. At the domestic level, localised peace making efforts, facilitated by the traditional clan structure have led to the formation of district councils and enabled development and localised peace to be possible.\textsuperscript{30} North-west Somalia has declared itself a separate state called Somaliland. Although it has not received international recognition, it has, however, demonstrated its empirical sovereignty by establishing a relatively peaceful environment, with a functioning administration (Puntland), and some semblance of stability within the territory over which it claims jurisdiction.

IGAD’s active involvement in facilitating the Somali peace process and negotiating a civil war peace settlement started in 1998. IGAD was disappointed with the lack of progress towards peace and national reconciliation in Somalia, and attributed the problem to the multiplicity of warring factions and warlords not interested in peace and to the opportunity for warlords to benefit from the multiple peace initiatives. IGAD’s preventive diplomacy strategy was to refuse to accept that the Somali conflict was irresolvable. The peace making strategy of IGAD was to broaden the peace process by making it more inclusive of other stakeholders such as civil society, women’s groups, clan and religious leaders, political parties, warring factions and warlords, and the business community. This led to the development of a comprehensive and unified approach involving external actors and avoided duplicating peace initiatives on Somalia. In addition to the Front Line States, the US, Yemen, Egypt, and Italy, for a variety of historic and strategic reasons, became involved in facilitating the Somali peace process. IGAD, in collaboration with the OAU, mandated Ethiopia to facilitate the peace process and reconciliation in Somalia. In 1998, IGAD and its partners held the Rome conference to assist Ethiopia’s peace and reconciliation efforts in Somalia.

Major obstacles to the peace process were the recurrent questions and concerns about the neutrality and impartiality of Ethiopia as an honest peace broker given its involvement in the civil war. The Ethiopian-Eritrean war expanded by proxy into Somalia, with both countries supporting different warring factions and warlords. Ethiopia’s domestic security concerns were a recurrent factor warranting military


incursions into Somalia. In 1996, Ethiopia made a military incursion into the Gedo region in support of the Somalia National Front (SNF) in its struggle with the Islamic fundamentalist group, Alitihad. Ethiopia’s fear of Islamic fundamentalism on its borders and prospects of Alitihad-backed terrorist activities in Ethiopia led to the 1999 military incursion in support of the breakaway SNF faction and to military support to anti-Hussein Aideed factions, Aideed being one of the warlords in Somalia.

To bring uniformity and sustainability to the peace process, IGAD secured the political, diplomatic and financial support of the international community. To facilitate the peace process IGAD secured the support of regions in Somalia committed to peace, stability and national reconciliation. This was to provide incentives for peace and inducement to commit to the peace process. In addition, IGAD proposed, with the financial support of the EU and the US, the concept of a building blocks approach, i.e. establishing regional authorities for decision making at local level to serve as the foundation for a viable nation state. Somaliland (north-west) and Puntland (north-east) were already functioning administrative regions and were perceived as the model for the building-blocks approach in other regions.31

Early peace making efforts included the 1996 Kenyan-brokered peace agreement in Mogadishu that was never implemented, the 1997 Ethiopian-sponsored peace conference attended by all the warring factions and warlords, except General Aideed, and the Cairo conference in late 1997 that agreed on the formation of a national unity government. The peace process was restarted with the involvement of President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti who raised the Somali peace process at the UN Security Council and put forward a proposal outlining the establishment of a transitional charter with a transitional government based on power sharing. IGAD endorsed President Guelleh’s peace proposal. The IGAD-backed conference of 2000 led to the formation of the Transitional National Government (TNG), with Abdikassim Salam Hassan as president. The IGAD Summit in Khartoum in 2001 mandated Kenya to take the political leadership in facilitating the mediation of the Somali peace process. But it was left to the Front Line States committee to organise, under Kenyan leadership, a Somalia National Reconciliation Conference (SNRC) in October 2002 in Eldoret, Kenya. This was the most inclusive forum on the peace process. The Eldoret peace conference agreed on a Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities by 24 signatories, and the structures and principles of the Somalia national reconciliation process that would create federal structures of governance for Somalia. The Eldoret agreement secured the sustainability of the peace process by engaging with all the parties to the conflict and the continued political and financial support of the international community. However, disagreements on the proposed federal charter led to the breakdown of talks and the formation of a parallel authority by 12 factions called the National Salvation Council under the leadership of Musse Sudi. In January 2004, Somali warring factions and civil society signed the Nairobi agreement that would pave the way for the adoption of the Transitional Federal

31 Ibid, p.95.
Charter, with a five-year transitional period of government. Kenya had played the lead-nation role in facilitating the Somalia peace process and appointed a Special Representative to the peace process. After the Safari Park conference of January 2004 and the signing of the declaration on various amendments to the Transitional Federal Charter of Somalia, presided over by President Mwai Kibaki, the third and final phase of the Somalia peace process is now well underway. The road map to the final peace agreement and civil war peace settlement is drawn, but, as usual, paved with difficulties, challenges and the ever-changing dynamics of Somali politics.

Two developments worthy of mention are the efforts to establish a credible government in Somalia and the IGAD-AU effort to deploy a peacekeeping and peace support operation mission in Somalia to strengthen the authority of the new government. The Somali transitional parliament exiled in Kenya elected Abdulahi Yusuf as the new president of Somalia. Efforts to relocate the new government and parliament to Mogadishu have been fraught with difficulties due to continuing instability and a difficult security situation in the country. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU accepted in January 2005 the principle of deploying an AU peace support mission in Somalia. The AU-PSC, in turn, mandated IGAD to deploy the IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia (IGAPSOM), with troops contributed by IGAD member states. The AU-PSC mandate for an IGAD peace support mission included provision of security for the transitional government and federal institutions in Somalia in order to ‘guarantee the sustenance of the outcome of the IGAD peace process and assist with the establishment of peace and security, including the training of the police and army’.

Lessons From IGAD’s Civil War Peace Settlements and Preventive Diplomacy

In the facilitation of the civil war peace settlements and preventive diplomacy in the Horn, IGAD has learnt harsh lessons in responding to regional peace and security issues. The IGAD process and institutional framework provided the regional mechanism to co-ordinate international support and humanitarian assistance in facilitating the peace processes in both Sudan and Somalia. It provided the conduit for a concerted regional diplomatic strategy and international community support and commitment. IGAD has depended on western countries to resource its peace mediation and conflict resolution intervention efforts in the Horn. But a recurrent problem for IGAD has been its neutrality and impartiality in mediation efforts. Sudan in particular, initially refused to accept the mediating role of IGAD arguing that most of the members of IGAD had been involved in the conflict and taken sides with the SPLA. Only Kenya and Djibouti had maintained neutrality in the Sudanese conflict, hence the pivotal role played by Kenya in mediating and facilitating the peace process. This was not only a reflection of the trust of the Khartoum government

in Kenya as a neutral peace broker, but also the perception of Kenya as a regional hegemon or pivotal state, with the political and diplomatic clout, and the financial resources to induce commitment to the peace process and to cajole or coerce parties to the conflict.

In facilitating both the Sudan and Somalia peace processes, IGAD has endeavoured to learn lessons from mediating the civil war peace settlements and their potential applicability in other conflict situations in the Horn. The Sudan and Somalia peace processes are contrasting processes, though mutually reinforcing in terms of lessons learned. In terms of key stakeholders, in the case of Sudan there were only two main protagonists, the government of Sudan and the rebel SPLA/M, though the pro-government Arab Janjaweed militias further complicated the situation. Somalia, by contrast, had multiple warring factions and warlords. Not all the lessons learned in the facilitation and mediation of the Sudanese peace process are, therefore, applicable in the case of Somalia. An important lesson is the imperative to make peace processes more inclusive to avoid 'spoilers' wrecking the process, and to facilitate political dialogue within and between the warring factions and warlords so that they have a feeling of ownership of the post-agreement peace deal and the nature of post-war governance relating to transitional government and constitutional issues.

IGAD has learnt the hard way that mediating civil war peace settlements is not a quick-fix process, but a protracted and gradual one, that needs time-bound objectives and phases in facilitating the peace process. In addition, given the regional security dynamics and conflict formation in the Horn, regional involvement and consensus in support of the peace process is crucial to any final political settlement. IGAD, therefore, set up ministerial and technical committees on each of the peace processes, with an independent secretariat based in the capital of the lead-nation or de facto sub-regional pivotal state, Kenya. In recognition of the proximity of the Horn to the Middle East and Arab politics, IGAD facilitated the involvement of the Arab League, which appointed a Special Envoy to the Somalia peace process. Another important factor is the need for increased co-ordination between the IGAD secretariat and the peace secretariats on Sudan and Somalia, in particular the need to define their working relationship. Though IGAD had secured the support of the region, the AU, UN and Arab League as the only regional framework for facilitating and mediating civil war peace settlements, there is still more to be done to secure the sustained commitment of extra-regional actors in recognising and accepting IGAD as the only regional mechanism for maintaining peace and security. On IGAD’s future role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the strategy document stated that:

IGAD must seek to consolidate its position as the principal mechanism for addressing the problems of conflict within the region and to preserve and enhance its reputation as a neutral facilitator and mediator. In this vein IGAD must give attention to constructing durable architecture for the region including provision for the eventual conclusion of a mutual non-aggression treaty/arrangement among its members that would compel
countries to actively disavow support to groupings engaged in armed subversion into
neighbouring states.\footnote{IGAD. \textit{Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Strategy Final Draft.}
Appendix A on ‘IGAD’s Future Role in Regional Processes for Promoting and Sustaining Peace’, 2003, p.19.}

IGAD’s preventive diplomacy interventions have been hampered by lack of resources, and hence excessive external dependence, and lack of common political values or an ethos of peaceful inter-state co-operation. IGAD member states have not been unanimous on the strategy for mediating and resolving the conflicts in the Horn. The multiplicity of warring factions benefiting from covert support from IGAD states has led to the situation whereby warring groups and warlords profit from ‘forum shopping’, i.e. benefit from seeking alternative channels for negotiation by parties to the conflict. These problems have not only undermined regional political cohesion and common or collective approaches to regional peace and security issues, but also complicated IGAD’s mediation, reconciliation and confidence building efforts. The challenges have eroded the effectiveness of IGAD to intervene in and mediate regional conflicts.\footnote{Assefa, H., ‘A Lack of Visioning Statesmanship and Democratic Leadership’, in Mekenkamp, Van Tongeren, and Van de Veen (eds.), \textit{Searching for Peace in Africa}, 1999, pp.118-119.} As demonstrated by the involvement and facilitation of the peace processes in both Sudan and Somalia, IGAD lacks both the political leverage over warring factions and the resources to induce commitment to peace and disincentives for war. In addition, the lack of resources and the means to enforce, monitor and guarantee peace agreements are serious obstacles to IGAD’s maintenance of regional peace and security. Michael Lund and Wendy Betts argue, therefore, that:

\begin{quote}
IGAD obviously has not been successful in ending current conflicts and bringing stability to the region. IGAD’s inability to foster peace and security co-operation among the countries in the Horn stems fundamentally from the persisting suspicions, geopolitical rivalries, and ideological differences among its members. In Sudan, IGAD is not seen as neutral due to cross-border conflicts between Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. The members’ conflicting political interests have completely precluded any direct action in Ethiopia. The desire to undermine Ethiopia’s natural hegemony in the Horn prevents effective co-operation between Ethiopia and other countries. The animosities among the northern tier countries have precluded IGAD from any serious discussion of inter-state security co-operation such as a regional peacekeeping force. Exacerbating competition among member states is the fact that the states themselves are not consolidated. Their resulting insecurity and fear of threats to their sovereignty intensifies the efforts to strengthen themselves at the expense of others. This regional competition prevents IGAD members from developing a coherent, consolidated approach to security issues.\footnote{Lund and Betts, ‘In Search of Regionalism’, 1999, p.123.}
\end{quote}
Furthermore, the proliferation of small arms, the border disputes and cross-border interventions involving pastoralist communities undermine the regional peace and security interventions of IGAD. Despite the recognition of the IGAD-led peace processes, it did not stop the emergence of parallel extra-regional peace mediation efforts with interlocutors from as far away as Indonesia, Libya and Egypt. These parallel peace mediation efforts were not only a distraction from the regional approach, but also a duplication of effort and waste of scarce resources. But the problems and challenges faced by IGAD are by no means unique to the regional mechanism. They are similar to problems and challenges faced by ECOWAS in West Africa and SADC in Southern Africa. The way forward for IGAD is to learn from the experiences of the other regions in Africa in preventive diplomacy, and in particular, the lessons in regional peacekeeping and conflict management in complex political emergencies.

United Nations, African Union and External Actors in IGAD-led Peace processes in the Horn of Africa

In facilitating and mediating the resolution of conflicts in the Horn, IGAD has recognised the need to maintain ownership of regional peace making efforts and interventions. IGAD’s preventive diplomacy strategy has been framed within the ‘Try Africa First Approach’. The regional peace and security architecture has also been mindful of its own limitations in terms of resources and expertise, and hence has worked in partnership with both extra-regional actors and sub-regional hegemons. Kenya has played the role of the regional hegemon or pivotal state in IGAD’s preventive diplomacy. Kenya’s instrumental role has led to it adopting the lead nation position in mediating the Sudan and Somalia peace processes. Kenya is widely accepted as a neutral peace broker in the region, with the political influence and financial resources to sustain the peace process. Kenya therefore provided venues, financial assistance and technical expertise, and hosted most of the peace talks and secretariats during the peace processes. Its sustained financial commitment and the presence of the peace secretariats in the country helped the Kenyan government to maintain direct control over the peace process and ensured direct intervention to cajole and coerce when necessary. Kenya recognised that the long-running conflicts in both Sudan and Somalia were national security threats and risks to its economic viability and sustainability, hence it calculated that it would be in its best interests to mediate and resolve these conflicts. Even following the change in political leadership from Arap Moi to President Kibaki, Kenya has maintained its political leadership and commitment to the peace processes. The IGAD Partner Forum (IPF) and other donors have also provided political, diplomatic and financial support to Kenya, enabling the country and the political leadership to play the lead nation role in facilitating and mediating the peace processes. In return, Kenya has benefited from achieving the traditional ends of politics, i.e. power, prestige and
influence, and also potential economic and commercial advantage to be derived from the peace dividends in both Sudan and Somalia.

What has been the involvement of the UN, whose responsibility it is to maintain international peace and security? After the debacle in Somalia, the UN was understandably reluctant to be involved in another peacekeeping deployment in the Horn. The UN also learned that peace cannot be forced on a society but has to be won over time. It therefore focused its attention on humanitarian assistance including relief supplies to refugees, IDPs, and democratic support to ensure the transformation of the SPLA/M into a legitimate political party, in preparation for participation in post-peace agreement government. The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, therefore, appointed a Special Envoy to the Horn. After the signing of the Machakos protocol, the UN became actively involved in the Sudan peace process as an observer. The involvement of the UN was important because it was perceived as a neutral and impartial facilitator and peace broker, and its participation was vital to the implementation of any peace agreement. The UN, therefore, facilitated the commitment and support of humanitarian relief agencies and donor communities to assist in facilitating the peace processes. The UN Security Council presidential statement of 10 October 2003 on Sudan mandated the Secretary General to prepare a comprehensive outline of the potential role of the UN in the post-peace agreement implementation phase covering areas such as DDR; de-mining operations; repatriation of refugees and resettlement of IDPs; and security sector reform, in particular training assistance to the military and security forces for the new unity government.

An important peace making strategy of IGAD was to secure the involvement of the OAU/AU in the civil war peace settlements efforts in the Horn. The AU appointed a Special Envoy to the peace process as a means to strengthen the channels of communication and co-ordination between the AU and IGAD in facilitating and mediating the peace processes. At the Maputo Summit, the AU announced the formation of an AU Observer Mission to Somalia and in July 2003 it dispatched a reconnaissance mission to Somalia. Securing the participation of the AU was an important strategy for IGAD, enabling it to demonstrate neutrality and the impartiality of its peace mediation and, importantly, to commit key players instrumental to the implementation of any post-war peace agreement. It was this strategy that led to the involvement of the Arab League. There was also a division of labour between the AU and IGAD that led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Somalia mandating a monitoring role for the AU in Somalia. The AU also suggested the participation of neutral countries from West and Southern Africa in any future peace monitoring developments in Somalia, and that personnel should fly the flags of both the AU and IGAD. The UN-AU and IGAD co-operation projected a coherent strategy in facilitating the peace processes in the Horn and demonstrated that the regional approach was the ‘peace process of choice’.

In the case of Sudan, the US played a critical role in inducing the government of Sudan to commit to the negotiating table. The Clinton government’s foreign policy approach to Sudan secured the international isolation and ostracisation of
the Khartoum government as a pariah state. The US placed Sudan on its list of supporters of international terrorism. In addition, the Clinton administration secured a UN interventional sanction on Sudan, identifying it as a rogue state. The strategic interests of both the Khartoum government and the US became the driving force for this unusual partnership. The Khartoum government wished to get rid of the UN sanctions against Sudan, whilst the Bush administration could see the potential of opening another front in its war on terror in the volatile region of the Horn while, at the same time, securing alternative sources for oil supplies to America. The Bush government, for its part, played a constructive role in supporting, financially and diplomatically, both the Machakos and Naivasha peace process. The negative side of this strategic self-interest in facilitating the civil war peace settlement in Sudan is that the international community, in particular key western governments backing the Sudanese peace process, kept noticeably silent whilst a humanitarian emergency was unfolding in the Darfur region of Sudan, perpetuated by pro-government militias. In addition, the view was that any open and strong criticism of the Khartoum government would have potentially wrecked the peace process with the SPLA/M.

The IPF played a critical role in supporting the IGAD peace processes. The IPF included 20 countries, the UN, World Bank and the EU. The IPF supported IGAD's leadership in preventive diplomacy in the Horn and also strengthened co-operation between IGAD, the AU and the UN in enhancing the capacity for preventive diplomacy in the sub-region. The IPF also established two committees, the Sudan Committee and the Somalia Committee, as the main contact points in facilitating political and financial assistance to the peace making efforts in the Horn. Given the dearth of resources, it would have been impossible for IGAD to maintain the sustained support and commitment of all parties to the conflict without the support and commitment of the IPF.

Conclusion

IGAD has come a long way from being in a state of ‘permanent emergence’ and the ‘cluster of the world’s deadliest conflicts’ to building potentially viable regional mechanisms for peace and security. Developmental and environmental problems and challenges have forced on the region the imperative for regional approaches to common problems, in particular, human security threats such as famine and drought. The perpetual state of food insecurity and scarce resources, such as water and pasture, have not only led to violent clashes between pastoralist communities, but have also instigated civil wars in the countries of the sub-region. The regional environmental and development mechanism, IGAD, has not been able to address the teething problems of increasing poverty, food insecurity, environmental degradation and sustainable development.

However, the on-going wars and civil conflicts in the Horn have also compounded the peace, security and development problems of the region. In particular, wars and political instability demonstrate that sustainable development, economic growth,
social progress and durable peace are impossible in an environment of wars and civil conflict. These imperatives forced the regional mechanism to expand into the areas of peace and security and, in particular, to facilitate and mediate civil war peace settlements in the Horn.

IGAD’s preventive diplomacy interventions have been made possible by the political, diplomatic and financial support of the AU, UN, EU, IPF and pivotal states such as Kenya and the US. The relative success in facilitating and mediating the Sudan peace deal is a manifestation of the relevance and potential of regional peace and security systems in maintaining peace and security. Whether the Sudan peace agreement holds or not, the peace breakthrough has given IGAD the confidence and faith that it is possible to facilitate the maintenance of regional peace and security, and the lessons learned in the process could be applied to the mediation and resolution of not only the Somalia peace process, but also other conflict situations in the Horn. However, given the resource and expertise limitations of IGAD, the ‘Try Africa First’ approach to conflict mediation and resolution would not have led to any meaningful success without the participation and commitment of extra-regional partners. IGAD’s preventive diplomacy, like the peacekeeping and conflict management interventions in both West and Southern Africa, has demonstrated the value of co-operative partnership with extra-regional actors and sub-regional hegemons or pivotal states in the maintenance of regional peace and security. Opinion is divided as to whether IGAD will develop and deploy its own regional peacekeeping and conflict management intervention forces to police peace and security in the Horn. In conformity with the AU’s plan to establish five regional standby rapid reaction or peacekeeping forces, IGAD convened a meeting of East African Chiefs of Defence Staff in Uganda in February 2004 to discuss the establishment of the Eastern African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) as part of the planned African Standby Force for the AU. IGAD is playing an interim co-ordinating role for the establishment of EASBRIG. It is, however, not clear whether EASBRIG will operate under a separate legal framework. The EU Peace Facility aims to sustain resources, to organise, train and deploy peacekeeping, and to enable conflict stabilisation in the Horn of Africa.

Conclusion

Christopher Clapham, writing in 1996, argued that ‘Regions such as the Horn, which were too riven by conflict to have much prospect of developing any plausible regional security structure, were correspondingly unable to develop any regional economic community’.¹ Less than ten years later, the Horn is making some effort, despite teething problems and being ravaged by conflicts, to develop not only regional economic integration and environmental protection mechanisms, but also regional peace and security architecture for the maintenance of peace, conflict management and security in the Horn. Similarly, Morten Bøås, in 2000, was critical of the role and contribution of ECOMOG peacekeeping and conflict management interventions in West Africa in that ‘ECOMOG played a critical role in establishing the warlord political economy of Liberia with its destabilising consequences for the whole region . . . ECOMOG seems to have had more destabilising than stabilising effects’₂. Both Clapham and Bøås’ perspectives are not a reflection of Afro-pessimism, but rather a portrayal of the practical realities evident in Africa. But these perspectives raises some fundamental issues. Firstly, the continent of Africa and its post-colonial history has persistently portrayed a vicious cycle of promise and disappointment – euphoric optimism and painful disappointment or scepticism about the future prospects of Africa – to the extent that sound academics and political commentations are limited in their predictive capacity about Africa and its ability to ‘redeem’ itself from perennial wars, insecurities and underdevelopment. Secondly, the perspectives portrayed by scholars such as Clapham and Bøås tendentially miss or gloss over the contradictory elements of reversals and advancement, that have become the defining characteristics of contemporary Africa. The definable pattern or phenomenon exhibited in one decade may not be the same trajectory in another decade in Africa. This underscores the valid point for the need to perceive developments in Africa with a perceptive ‘eye’ tainted with all the realities of everyday life, but also with a pinch of optimism in Africa’s future. After all, even First World Western Europe had to go through these contradictions of reversals and advancement – only 50 years ago.

There is no denying the fact that the efforts to build regional peace and security systems are faced with Herculean problems and challenges, but to dismiss these


home-grown initiatives as amounting to nothing implicitly conveys the negative mentality and mindset concerning the development and future of Africa. It would be worthwhile acknowledging the fact that the majority of African states involved in building regional peace and security systems are cash-strapped and underdeveloped economies, and marginalised in the international division of labour and the international division of power, yet still, faced with internal wars and security problems, they have managed to develop regional peace and security mechanisms to respond to these problems and challenges.

Furthermore, there is the debate that these emerging regional peace and security systems are essentially about regime survival and the protection of the status quo, and hence dismissed as projects for the attainment of political realist objectives. But what is wrong with saving lives and ensuring human protection, while at the same time pursuing realist objectives? In the post-Cold War international conflict and security environment, in particular the reluctance towards unilateral intervention in internal conflicts and the inability of the UN to maintain international peace and security in Africa, African countries and peoples have recognised that, despite their weaknesses, they have to take their destiny into their own hands and ‘do something’ about the perennial wars, armed conflict and insecurities ravaging the continent. There is some acknowledgement in Africa, even amongst those not described as Afro-optimists, that Africa is criticised for attempting to solve its own problems, but at the same time vilified for failing to do anything about a particular conflict situation. What is not often emphasised is the fact that the African regions involved in peace and security issues, lack the resources, but have the political will, underpinned by the vision of the much-touted African century, to do something about their own problems. Compare this with the *sui generis* EU, comprising strong, viable and modern states with high economic growth and development stability, which has not been able to organise a regional peace and security mechanism to manage and resolve conflicts in its own backyard in the Balkans, and had to rely on NATO and the UN to do its ‘dirty work’.

Implicit in the rather dismissive mindset towards African solutions to African problems is the preference for external solutions and prescriptions for Africa, even by some African states and peoples. This book has critically illustrated the variety of alternative security frameworks prescribed for Africa to solve the continent’s peace and security problems. The majority of crisis and development interventions in Africa are driven by a quick-fix mentality, short-term, and exit strategy-oriented. Often, there is hardly any domestic involvement or consultation, thereby neglecting the huge reservoir of domestic socio-cultural resources and traditional peace and security institutions that could be utilised to win peace and secure development. But is traditional and modern Africa impotent and lacking in resources and expertise to manage and resolve its many problems and challenges? If Africa is universally accepted as the cradle of humanity, then it is reasonable to assume that the continent developed sophisticated political and socio-economic institutions of governance, and endogenous approaches to conflict prevention, management, resolution and peacebuilding, as soon as ‘Africa’ inhabited the earth. Despite the corrosive and
Conclusion

damaging effects of slavery, colonialism and imperialism, some of these traditional resources and institutions remain valid and may have a potential for application to modern conflict situations. Basil Davidson warned that the stereotypical and largely Eurocentric presentation of Africa fails to capture the essence and relevance of Africa’s socio-political unity in diversity. Faced with the complex challenges of contemporary society, some Africanists are urging the international community, including academic and policy practitioners, that there is evident need for more authentic voices of Africa to be heard and incorporated into crisis and development intervention programmes. Michael Brown therefore concludes that ‘it is time that those outside who are concerned about Africa should stop offering answers to our perceptions of Africa’s problems and just listen to Africans for a change’. But this raises the question as to which Africans to listen to and the strategy for such engagement. By all indications, we are talking about progressive and committed African states, leaders, institutions and civil society organisations. Western and extra-African actors are also required to avoid and desist from doing business with unprogressive and authoritarian regimes in Africa.

Pan-African unity and the efforts at building regional peace and security mechanisms in Africa will remain a dream or, at best, unsustainable, if the continent is not able to secure progress on economic development and democratic consolidation. Despite the huge resource endowment of the continent, Africa is still mired in economic crisis and underdevelopment due to a variety of external and domestic factors. Africa’s excessive external economic dependence, perpetually faced with the traumas of the fluctuations and vagaries of world market prices and the international financial systems, all point to the fact that the economic difficulties faced by Africa considerably limit the potential and capacity of the continent to lend itself, on a long-term basis, to the project of African unity and building sustainable regional peace and security systems.

There is a debate as to whether, in fact, the ‘Try Africa First’ African approach to African problems is not in conflict or contradiction with the universalist vision inherent within the UN Charter in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security. I argue that regional approaches to peace and security, rather than being contradictory to the UN universal vision, are actually supporting, complementing and, in some cases, rescuing the world body and enabling it to fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. As this book has consistently argued, it would be unrealistic to argue that the UN, on its own, will maintain, or is in a position to provide, global peace and security, given the multiplicity of peace and security challenges in the 21st century. It is this recognition that forced the debate on the need to reform the UN to make it relevant to the 21st Century. The UN report *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility – Report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2005)* addressed some

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of these critical issues. Regional approaches are positively courted not only as part of the UN strategy of decentralising the maintenance of international peace and security, but also as part of co-deployments with regional organisations in the effort to achieve the UN’s universalist vision on peace and security.

But the progress towards building regional peace and security systems to assist in the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa and, in particular, help to prevent, stabilise, manage, contain and resolve wars and armed conflicts, is already underway and irreversible. Assertive security regionalism in the form of regional peacekeeping, conflict management and preventive diplomacy interventions by ECOMOG in West Africa, SADC-AAF in DRC, and IGAD in the Horn of Africa are pointers to the future directions of peace and security issues. Conceptually, the Post-Cold War debate on the role and contribution of security regionalism to the maintenance of international peace and security, would be incomplete without critical understanding of developments in Africa. Far from being historically a mere object of international relations and politics, Africa is now emerging and, some would say, has emerged as a subject of international politics. But the problems are many; for example, attaining sustainable development for all, and building viable, strong and modern accountable and democratic states could not be resolved in less than a decade. The states in Africa do not yet have the capacity to address themselves, on a long-term basis, to the difficult and complex task of maintaining peace, security, economic growth and sustainable development. If the state system is such in Africa, then building viable and strong regional peace and security systems will be a difficult endeavour, because strong and sustainable regional mechanisms should be based on equally viable and strong states. But, there are promising signs about the future because the majority of the states driving assertive regionalism and conflict management interventions are quasi-, weak and prebendal states. For a variety of reasons, in particular realist calculations, these quasi-states have managed to divert millions of dollars from investments in socio-economic developments at national levels to regional peace and security issues. The real challenge is in transforming these weak and developing states into viable, modern and strong states with the capacity to lend themselves to developmental regionalism and the maintenance of sustainable peace and security.

What are the lessons learned and the future implications in promoting regional peace and security systems as a conflict containment strategy? The peacekeeping, conflict stabilisation, management and preventive diplomacy by OAU/AU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD all demonstrated the need for a regional hegemon, or pivotal state, to take the lead in the maintenance of regional peace and security. Three considerations emerge from this conclusion. Firstly, can regional hegemons or pivotal states maintain peace and security on a long-term basis? For a variety of reasons, we have seen that whilst Nigeria is willing to play the dominant or pivotal role in West Africa, South Africa is reluctant to play the hegemonic role in Southern Africa. It is doubtful whether both Nigeria and South Africa, even with the political will, could play the pivotal role in the provision and maintenance of sustainable peace and security in their respective regions largely because of domestic imperatives.
These so-called regional hegemons are also limited in their ability to respond to the problems and challenges posed by non-military sources of threat to security. However, these pivotal states could use their strategic and dominant position to lead the campaign and responses, within a regional framework or system, to respond to the non-military dimensions to security – the real challenge to the future of Africa.

Secondly, the success of the pivotal state or sub-regional hegemon in any preventive diplomacy interventions would depend on the ability to build a regional consensus on approaches to peace and security issues. Regional cohesion and the development of common political values on peace and security will potentially minimise the divisiveness that often hinders and frustrates regional peacekeeping and conflict management interventions. Thirdly, the role of external or extra-regional actors is of vital importance. The success of the preventive diplomacy interventions in West Africa, the Horn and the Great Lake region has been made possible due to the support and commitment of external actors such as the UN, EU, OSCE, IFIs, World Bank and IMF, and key western, Asian and African states. There is the recognition that some of the support from external actors is framed in the pursuit of strategic interests. Increasingly, African states have recognised that if the ‘African Century’ and the ‘Try Africa First’ approach are to mean anything, then they should work in partnership with well-meaning external actors to establish durable foundations for continental peace and security. However, the view is that Africans ‘demand’ a paradigm shift or mindset that only prescribes what Africa should and must do, in order to develop and have peace and security. The much-touted Afro-responsibility in the 21st century talks about Africans, in partnership with extra-regional actors, taking ownership and responsibility for the future of the continent.
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Bibliography


Uniting Africa

Bibliography


Bibliography


Index
Index