Military instrument for conflict resolution: A study of AU peace keeping missions

By

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Abstract

In the past years, international attention has concentrated on expanding capacity to conduct peace operations in Africa. To this end, African leaders have set upon improving the African Union (AU)'s ability to handle security and humanitarian problems on the continent. The AU has operationalized its Peace and Security Council and has elaborated its plans to develop regional standby forces in cooperation with the sub-regional organizations on the continent. The increasing nature of conflicts in Africa necessitated the need for military instruments for peace-building operations, to broker peace among warring camps and secure human life and property. During the transformation of the OAU to the AU, efforts were made to redefine the principle of non-interference to non-indifference; this gave the AU the impetus for peacekeeping in line with the United Nations Responsibility to Protect. This paper examined the use of military instruments for diplomacy and investigated the AU peacekeeping mission through the African Standby Force (ASF). The study is based on secondary sources of data. The study found that the ASF is a multidimensional force. Since most conflicts on the continent are complex and of long duration, they call for a multifaceted approach and require capabilities to address not only security and military aspects, but also the political, humanitarian, developmental, and legal/institutional dimensions of the conflicts. There is therefore a need for not only military but also police and especially civilian components. This study contends that the ASF is not the solution to African conflicts but it is a fundamental element towards finding a solution. Its success is challenged by, among others, the fact that the capability of the regional economic communities is very uneven and there is no clarity about mandating authority.

Keyword: Africa Standby Force, Diplomacy, Military Instrument, Peace building operation

Introduction

In 1948, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) approved sending UN military observers to the Middle East as part of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to keep an eye on the Armistice agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors (Cilliers, 2008). Intense rivalry and suspicion regularly hindered the Security Council's decision making effort during the cold war, when peacekeeping was initiated. Maintaining and monitoring ceasefires, stabilizing ground conditions, and giving necessary support toward finding political solutions were the primary focuses of peacekeeping during this time. Unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops were typically deployed on such operations in order to increase morale and decrease fear among locals in the areas of combat. First United Nations Emergency Force was the first armed peacekeeping mission in which an African nation participated (UNEF 1). The Suez Canal problems of 1956 necessitated the deployment of this army. In 1960, the UN Operation in the

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Congo (UNOC) was the first large-scale UN Peacekeeping mission, with as many as 20,000 armed soldiers involved (Bwakira, 2009).

Since then, the United Nations has deployed over twenty-three peacekeeping missions across Africa, beginning with the United Nations Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM I) in 1988 and ending with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in 2005. (AU, 2014). United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and the most recent, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), are all important examples (Denning, 2005). Building up Africa's peacekeeping forces has been a top priority for the international community, as African leaders showed commitment to strengthening the AU's capacity to address humanitarian and security concerns on the continent. The Peace and Security Council of the AU has been made operational, and plans have been outlined to create regional standby forces in conjunction with the continent's subregional organizations. The G8 offered financial help to implement the AU's plans at the Sea Island summit in June 2004 through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (Weiss & Hubert, 2011).

The European Union (EU) has taken initiatives to strengthen its supporting role, including ad hoc efforts in the Sudan and the creation of an Africa Peace Support Operation Facility to finance missions. These steps are being taken at the same time that the UN is working to strengthen its administrative infrastructure and create more efficient tools for leading global operations. Africa has experienced a disproportionate share of UN peacekeeping deployments due to its ongoing conflicts, which are mostly the result of political instability leading to widespread insecurity. As a continent, Africa provides a significant number of peacekeepers to the United Nations (Spivak, 2009). Five African countries—Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal—are among the world's top ten contributors, per a 2014 UN report (UN, 2014). The ranking features the world's top 15 countries plus an additional three: Egypt, Tanzania, and South Africa. The research makes it abundantly evident that Africa is a conflict-prone continent and that African governments are eager to make significant contributions to the establishment of peace. These figures are a strong indication of Africa's determination to address its security issues by means of peacekeeping operations. The African Standby Force project can accomplish this on a regional scale.

The African Union suggested the establishment of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises, a new continental rapid-response force, in May 2013. Though the rapid-response force's formation has provided some optimism as a remedy for the continent's inaction in the face of insurgencies like the one in Mali in 2013, it has also been the subject of criticism due to the fact that it appears to duplicate—and thus arguably diverts resources away from—another similar mechanism, the African Standby Force, which has

been in development by the African Union and regional communities since 2003. This leads to a new discussion of the present: It has been noted that while some people prefer the new, ad hoc, slim, and voluntary approach to collective security that the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises provides, others believe that the African Standby Force's established, albeit undeveloped, regionally based, comprehensive, and institutionalized framework should be given greater weight.

Both institutions and the current disputes surrounding them are summarized in this study. It contends that the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises is not redundant with the African Standby Force, despite initial impressions to the contrary. Until the more bureaucratically complicated African Standby Force is fully operationalized, the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises is a commendable interim measure for continental rapid-deployment capabilities. The African Standby Force is not undermined by the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises; rather, the two are extremely complementary. In fact when the African Standby Force is ready for operations in 2015, some of the more effective elements of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises were included into those capabilities. In this vein, this paper investigates the African Union's peacekeeping missions as a case study of the military's use as a weapon of diplomacy.

African peace policymakers will benefit from the study. The study will highlight where they may take the initiative to help strengthen peace and security on the continent, which, for a long time, has been best handled by the United Nations. The African Union (AU) recognized that Africans are in the best position to understand, mitigate, and even prevent such conflicts, so it established a regionally based African Standby Force (ASF) that can be rapidly deployed to any of its regions in response to a possible threat to security, in order to prevent the loss of life and property that can lead to a humanitarian catastrophe. It is hoped that the African Standby Force will be more effective in bolstering peace support operations in Africa when the recommendations from the study have been adopted.

Future academics of International Relations and Conflict Management will be able to take advantage of this work to further investigate the topic. The research will fill a gap in our understanding of the African Standby Force's function in the context of peace support operations in Africa. Since the ASF is the only organization of its kind operating under a global collective security system, studying and comprehending its origins is crucial. A new viewpoint on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa is what ASF offers, given that Africans are the primary cause of their own problems. Future academics and researchers who may need to investigate this topic further may benefit from the data and gaps that are shown by this analysis.

Many wars have been fought on Africa throughout its history (Nathan, 2013). The African Standby Force has been instrumental in reducing conflict in numerous regions, particularly in Africa, by mediating peace agreements and aiding in their implementation (Bassiouni & McKay, 2006). However, not all of these initiatives were successful in gaining traction. This has exacerbated security concerns in and around war zones by creating a new population of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees. Half of all countries that emerge from conflict go back into violence within five years, according to statistics. Most African wars have demonstrated a trend toward contagion, with repercussions felt across the continent even as new conflicts break out. The African Standby Force has failed to fulfill its duties, and its response time is suspect (Hjalte, 2013).

Because of the UN's inability to quickly respond to crises, the African Union has taken the initiative to become a tool for resolving African concerns (Kioko, 2012). New conflicts have emerged, and old ones remain, across the continent. Conflict persists in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, and similar conditions can be found in the Central African Republic, Somalia, Nigeria, Libya, South Sudan, and the politically precarious nation of Burundi (MacQueen, 2012). In light of the fact that wars and insecurity continue to plague the African continent despite previous efforts, this study is predicated on the hypothesis that these problems can be alleviated through the efficient deployment of an African Standby Force. The relative role of military diplomacy to shortening cycles of civil war and violent conflict and stretching or prolonging cycles of peace is unknown, despite widespread agreement on its efficacy for peace and security.

To fulfill the objective of this study, this paper interrogates the significance of military instruments in diplomacy, study provides answers the below stated research questions;

1. How was the use of military instrument for diplomacy before the formation of the African Standby Force?
2. What are the roles of African standby force as a mechanism of the Africa Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and specific strategies used for enhancing peace support operations in Africa?
3. What are the prospects and challenges of African Standby Force and the key factors that influence its capacity for enhancing peace keeping operations in Africa?

The study is guided by the following assumptions:

1. Past efforts at securing Africa applied before African Standby Force were not effective in maintaining peace support operations in Africa
2. African Standby Force as a mechanism Africa Union peace and Security Council significantly influence peace support operations in Africa

3. Adopted strategies significantly influence African standby force in enhancing peace support operations in Africa.

Literature Review

Scholars, legislators, and diplomats, interested in the relationship between the UN and Africa's numerous regional and sub-regional organizations over the years, as described by Kindiki, have had plenty to discuss and argue (Kindiki, 2010). However, little focus has been placed on determining how the connections may be preserved and how they can collaborate in conflict avoidance, which has implications for the developing security architecture on the continent. Due to the ever-changing nature of Africa's most pressing issues, the continent has seen the rise of rival regionalisms and the mushrooming of international organizations across the continent. This has resulted in competition between different sub-regional organizations, with many examples of overlap, division, tense coexistence, regional imbalances, and nationalist impulses (Liu, 2013).

According to Richard, the African Union (AU) has taken significant advances toward harmonizing the continent's many security measures (Richard, 2005). In order to avoid wasting time and resources, the African continent has taken a number of measures, including the establishment of multinational brigades with regional bases as part of an African Standby Force and the decision to limit official cooperation to only seven organizations (Murithi, 2007). The AU has taken significant steps toward establishing a common approach to dealing with peace and security problems in the region of Africa by basing its security architecture on significant regional pillars and incorporating existing initiatives as building blocks and implementing agencies into its continental policy. The UN report emphasizes the need for a novel approach to intervention due to the persistence of Africa's conflicts (UN, 2011). According to Wiseman, the African Union was formed because the United Nations and other international actors had failed to avert hostilities on the African continent (Wiseman, 2012). There have been many attempts, but if the African Standby Force (ASF) is effective, it might serve as a model for the United Nations as a whole and bring an end to wars across the globe (Batware, 2011).

Vanessa and Malan (2013) submit that African states, have shown they are willing to mandate the deployment of peace support operations in a wide variety of environments, from highly complex and volatile conflict settings to more manageable stabilizing ones (Kent & Malan, 2003). In 2013, the international community expanded its involvement in Mali and the Central African Republic by authorizing two new operations and bolstering an existing one in Somalia. Multilateral planning and decision-making mechanisms for multidimensional peace assistance operations involving entities such as the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, the United Nations, and the European Union are the norm and the future.

Future deployments across the continent will likely involve collaborative planning and decision-making based on lessons learned from the past. The African Union (AU) and regional economic communities (RECs) and mediators (RMs) are slowly learning to collaborate in the formulation of joint responses to crisis situations and in the planning and management of peace support operations, drawing on their extensive experience in UN peacekeeping missions. Every year, more and more African nations demonstrate their readiness and ability to send troops to UN peacekeeping missions and African-led peace support operations.

In 2010, the AU was struggling to locate Troop and Police Contributing Countries to join Burundi and Uganda in AMISOM. Just three years later, the Lord's Resistance Army Regional Task Force (LRA RTF) had four, AMISOM five and AFISMA 13 soldier contributing countries, and donors were being lined up for the new operation in the CAR (Lotze, 2013). Also, African countries' contributions to UN peacekeeping operations have climbed gradually, from just over 10,000 per year in 2003 to almost 35,000 per year in 2013. When added together, this has led to more Africans than ever before contributing to activities on the continent in the decade since the ASF's creation (UN, 2013).

When it comes to wars, Africa is hardly lacking in instances. Wars over territory and resources have plagued Africa's traditional communities for as long as anyone can remember, wreaking havoc on people's lives and upsetting the social order (Rikhye, 2012). Conflicts of varying severity have plagued many African countries for decades, wreaking havoc on their economies, governments, and societies and preventing them from realizing their full democratic and developmental potential. Many outsiders believe that only Africans themselves can provide a long-term solution to Africa's issues, as the reasons of the continent's conflicts are as complicated as the challenges of resolving them. Costs and repercussions are undeniable, as are the need and urgency to find solutions if Africa is to fare better in the 21st century than it did in the 20th, a period highlighted by the catastrophic effects of colonialism and its lingering legacies and disruptions in postcolonial societies (Murithi, 2007).

The scale and severity of these wars give the impression that Africa is trapped in a never-ending cycle of carnage (Brown, 1996). Africa has nonetheless not come out worse off than the other continents. More than 180 million people perished as a result of war and other atrocities on the continent in the twentieth century, but when compared to the millions killed in Europe's First and Second World Wars or the bloodshed that accompanied revolutionary Russia and China, these numbers seem little. There was more bloodshed in King Leopold's Congo Free State during the colonial era than in the entirety of the rest of Africa combined in the entire twentieth century (White, 2015). This is not to minimize the devastating effects of Africa's wars, but rather to place them in a broader, historical context (Lyons & Samatar, 2012).

Twenty-first century wars in Africa have its roots in the colonial wars of the previous century, making this the most violent century in human history (Kastfelt, 2002). A long history of colonial violence including slave trading, slave labor, plantation labor, plantation terror, and a violent gun culture is necessary to explain the current situation in the region spanning from the southern Sudan to northern Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Congo. This region has been the scene of brutal civil wars and genocide. Therefore, the origins, dynamics, and outcomes of Africa's wars are intricately intertwined and interdependent. According to the theory put forth by Tiyambe (2004), the various wars that have occurred in Africa since the late nineteenth century can be distinguished from one another based on factors such as their etiology and dynamics, scale and location, duration, perpetrator and combatant composition, weapons and tactics used, effects on military and civilian populations, and so on. The disputes are described here as part of a multifaceted web with far-reaching impacts in many areas of people's life.

Many conflicts raged across Africa in the twentieth century, but the liberation wars were the most destructive. These wars sought to reclaim the historical legacy and independence that had been ruthlessly taken from Africa by European colonization (Marten, 2011). While frantically trying to recover from the devastating conflicts of the last century, Africa is now confronted with a new kind of conflict in the twenty-first. This is the US-led global _war on terror', a crusade that knows no spatial or temporal bounds, spares no expenditure, leaves a trail of wanton destruction, and wreaks havoc on the infrastructures of global order, progress and democracy. The impacts of Al Shabaab, an Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist group, are being felt all the way across the horn of Africa. The threat has had negative impacts on peace and stability across the region, including the social, economic, and political domains, prompting the African Union to dispatch a military mission. With the Boko Haram's continued destruction of Nigeria and its neighboring states, especially Cameroun and Chad, an international army has been called for in West Africa (Marchal, 2009).

Terrorist organizations with ties to ISIL, also known as ISIS, have flourished in Libya due to the country's unstable political climate and its many internal divisions, making it an ideal breeding ground for terrorists (Paul, 2007). Meanwhile, further north in Africa, countries hit hard by the Arab Spring movement are still grappling with the aftereffects of the upheaval (Annan, 2011). Time is wasted waiting for the United Nations Security Council to approve a mission's budget and launch the process of requesting member nations provide troops. Politicians keep trying to find a long-term fix, but history reveals that despite their best efforts, innocent people still die. An immediate military response and intervention to contain the crisis could lessen the likelihood of further fatalities and destruction, allowing diplomatic efforts to focus on finding a permanent political solution. Many believe that the current threat to peace in the continent can be

resolved by establishing a structure of military response forces tailored along regional groupings under the ASF umbrella. The African Union (AU) is currently the primary continental organization tasked with ensuring stability across the continent. Article 4 (e) of the AU Constitutive Act establishes the peaceful resolution of conflicts among African states as one of the AU's guiding principles.

It is clear that the peace and security environment in Africa has altered drastically since the end of the Cold War, as a result of the concerns mentioned above. Not only have conflicts and security rhetoric shifted, but so, too, have diverse attempts done by Africa to establish a lasting peace and security order on the continent. The surprising outcome of this has been the African Union's creation of an African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) (AU). On September 9, 1999, the heads of state and government of the OAU issued the Sirte Declaration (named after Sirte, in Libya) calling for the establishment of an African Union, an idea that had been kicking around since the mid-1990s thanks to the leadership of Libyan head of state Col. Muammar al-Gaddafi.

It was followed by summits in Lomé in 2000, when the African Union's Constitutive Act was adopted, and Lusaka in 2001, where the strategy for the implementation of the African Union was established (Liu, 2011). The African Union (AU) was founded in 2002 to address modern issues in Africa, such as armed conflict. Article 4[h] of the AU Constitutive Act grants the AU the authority to intervene in a member state "with respect to grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity" (Francis et al., 2013).

Past efforts at securing Africa in the absence African standby force

The African Union was officially established in July of 2002, as stated by Francis (2006). The AU is a radical departure from the OAU in terms of how African leaders think, and it was founded by 53 countries (including all of Africa except Morocco). The modern African Union (AU), with its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is better organized and equipped to deal with crises throughout the continent. Despite its emphasis on non-interference and national sovereignty, the OAU lacks the legal authority and resources to intervene in international security issues.

Even while it is committed to international collaboration and acknowledges the UN Charter's supremacy in peace and security, the AU has accepted a more expansive range of engagement choices, including the use of force. The right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a resolution of the Assembly regarding grave circumstances, including but not limited to war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, is set down in Article 4 of the Constitutive Act. the ability of individual nations to seek Union assistance in restoring international stability (Article 4 of the AU Constitutive Act).

Various attempts have been made by African governments to establish peace and security across Africa (Ben, 2010). However, several organizations devoted to maintaining peace and security have been operational for years. African heads of state and government have recognized the role of African regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolution in the upkeep and promotion of peace, security, and stability on the Continent, and have pledged to increase their capacity to address the scourge of conflicts on the Continent through the African Union (Ben, 2010).

In addition, the impact of the illegal proliferation, circulation, and trafficking of small guns and light weapons threatens peace and security in Africa and undermines attempts to enhance the living standards of the people of Africa. The African Union (AU) reaffirmed its commitments during the Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), where it was noted that millions of Africans, including women and children, have been driven into a nomadic existence as refugees and IDPs, stripped of their livelihoods and their basic human rights as a result of armed conflicts (Ben, 2010). Based on this, a framework for implementing choices in the fields of conflict avoidance, peacemaking, peace support operations and intervention, peace building, and post-conflict reconstruction was set up. In doing so, we are acting within the scope of the authority granted to us by Section 5.2 of the African Union's Constitutive Act. To ensure that conflicts involving African forces are managed in accordance with the UN and OAU Charters and the Cairo Declaration of 1993, the Peace and Security Council was established.

African Standby Force Concept and Plan

According to Article 13(1) of the Peace and Security Council Protocol the ASF _shall be composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents with civilian and military components in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice'. The ASF is not the equivalent of a national army for, unlike a national army, it is not a standing force. The standby arrangement is to be achieved on the basis of pledges from member states and preparations by regional economic communities /regional mechanisms. To this end member states identify and earmark military, police and civilian personnel and forward their names and details to the regional economic communities (Ekengard, 2008). On the basis of these pledges each regional economic communities raises and prepares the regional brigade and develops the standby roster. The regional economic communities then forwards all the data on the capabilities they raised and the standby roster they developed to the AU.

While part of the ASF standby arrangement, the identified personnel (contingents) remain in their countries of origin. This means that it is only when a decision is made to deploy an ASF mission will they be called up, assembled at a certain point and jointly deployed to the mission area. However, while on standby they do participate in various pre-deployment activities, including training and joint exercises, which are organised on a regular basis by each regional economic communities to keep them prepared for deployment (Holt & Shanahan, 2005).

The ASF is a multidimensional force. Since most conflicts on the continent are complex and of long duration, they call for a multifaceted approach and require capabilities to address not only security and military aspects, but also the political, humanitarian, developmental and legal/institutional dimensions of the conflicts. There is therefore a need for not only military but also police and especially civilian components. Accordingly, in terms of the policy framework, as well as the Roadmap for the Operationalization of the ASF , to be composed of three components, namely a military, a police and a civilian component (Bwakira, 2009). The ASF is organised into five regional brigades:

i. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) brigade (SADCBRIG)

ii. The East African Peace and Security Mechanism (EAPSM) 23 brigade, which is known as the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG)

iii. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) brigade (ECOBRIG).

iv. The North African Regional Capability (NARC) brigade, which is known as the North African Standby Brigade (NASBRIG)

v. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) brigade (ECCASBRIG), or Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC)

The role and purpose of African standby force

According to Cilliers (2008), the African Chiefs of Defence and Security (ACDS) adopted a document entitled: ―The policy framework document on the establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF) and of the Military Staff Committee (MSC) ―. Shortly after, African ministers of foreign affairs recommended regular consultations to consolidate the proposals contained in the framework document. Their recommendation was endorsed by AU heads of state and government two months later. The result of the ACDS meetings in May 2003 and January 2004 was the adoption of an amended framework document in July 2004.

The protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the associated ASF entered into force in December 2003, only 17 months after being signed. This was a clear demonstration of a seriousness of commitment on behalf of African politicians to the conflict prevention and management initiatives of the AU. The final concept for the ASF adopted by heads of state provided for five standby brigade level forces, one in each of Africa's five regions: North Africa Regional Standby Brigade (NASBRIG); East Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG); Force Multinationale de "AfriqueCentrale (FOMAC); Southern Africa Standby Brigade (SADCBRIG); ECOWAS Standby Brigade (ECOBRIG) supported by civilian police (CivPol) and other capacities (Cilliers, 2008).

On its full establishment, the ASF will consist of standby Multi-disciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components based in their respective countries of and ready for fast deployment in conflict zones anywhere in Africa, and possibly even outside the continent. However, effective command and control of the ASF require the installation of an appropriate Africa-wide, integrated and interoperable command, control, communication and information system (CIS) infrastructure, that would link deployed units with mission headquarters, as well as the AU, planning elements and regions (Ben, 2003). Much of this was set out in the March 2005 document entitled Roadmap for the Operationalization of the African Standby Force that was adopted at an AU experts meeting in Addis Ababa.

The Peace Support Operations Division developed an internal follow-on roadmap document in November 2006, although this document has no formal status. One of the significant developments has been the conceptualization of an ASF rapid deployment capability. The ASF peace support missions within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations are mandated by the Peace and Security Council which is the strategic level decision-making body. Once the missions have been given a mandate, they are placed under the command and control of a Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC), who is responsible for appointing a force commander, commissioner of police and head of the civilian components. The Peace and Security Council is the mandates approving body (Bassiouni & McKay, 2006). Once deployed, ASF forces are placed under AU command and control.

The primary role of the five regional brigades is to generate and prepare forces, the provision of planning, logistic and other support during ASF deployment (Richard, 2006). The military brigade is the largest component and requires most resources of each of the five regional standby forces. The following illustration demonstrates the composition of key resources within one of the regional brigades showing the ASF structure and its associated deployment timelines as informed by six missions and scenarios: regional observer mission co-deployed with UN mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the Peace and Security Council, regional military advisor to a political mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the Peace and Security Council, AU regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the Peace and Security Council, AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping mission – low-level spoilers. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the Peace and Security Council and AU intervention in cases of grave circumstances. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the Peace and Security Council.

Situating African standby Force in the African Security Architecture

The ASF constitutes one of the most important and ambitious elements of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Upon the creation of the African Union (AU), the African peace and security protocol was adopted at the 2002 summit in Durban. As part of the continent's new peace and security architecture, it established the au peace and Security Council as its centerpiece, the continental early warning system, the panel of the wise, the peace fund and the African standby force. A major impetus for the creation of the ASF was the international community's failure during the Rwandan genocide of 1994.

The ASF is by far the most robust component of the APSA. With its military staff committee, the ASF was conceived to conduct, observe, and monitor peacekeeping missions and support operations. Its tasks include operations across the entire spectrum of missions, ranging from peacekeeping to peace enforcement, as summarized in the six mission scenarios. The ASF will be able to draw on both military and civilian contingents.

The ASF does not entail the establishment of a standing multinational force, but is built around a standby arrangement where states earmark and train specific units for joint operations and then keep these units ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice. The ASF comprises stand-by brigades in each of the five regions (south, east, north, west, and central Africa): the Southern African Development Community Brigade (SADCBRIG), the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), the North African Standby Brigade (NASBRIG), the Economic Community of West African States Brigade (ECOBRIG), and the Economic Community of Central African States Brigade (ECCASBRIG) (Charles, 2009).

Each of these brigades is to have around 5,000 members, for an overall strength of 25,000 to 30,000 personnel in the ASF. The five Regional Economic Communities (RECs) serve as regional pillars of the ASF. Many attempts at establishing some sort of Pan-African military force preceded the creation of the ASF. Most of these attempts failed because states felt threatened by the inevitable surrender of some aspects of their sovereignty and control over national capabilities. Through its unique reliance on regional frameworks, the ASF represents a major improvement in this respect. Its decentralized character ties states and RECs into a common framework coordinated by the AU and give them greater ownership in building a continental security architecture (Asanda, 2004). This increases the stakes of all actors involved in the process and creates constructive peer group pressure among them.

African Standby Force as a Mechanism of AU Peace and Security Council

In accordance to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC and in order to enable the Peace and Security Council perform its responsibilities with respect to the deployment of peace support missions and

intervention pursuant to article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act, an African Standby Force was established (AU, 2004). The Force is composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice. For that purpose, the Member States under the provisions has to take steps to establish standby contingents for participation in peace support missions decided on by the Peace and Security Council or intervention authorized by the General Assembly. The strength and types of such contingents, their degree of readiness and general location is determined in accordance with established African Union Peace Support Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which are to be subject to periodic reviews depending on prevailing crisis and conflict situations.

According to Paul (2007) the detailed tasks of the African Standby Force and its modus operandi for each authorized mission is considered and approved by the Peace and Security Council upon recommendation of the Commission. As an approach, the development of the concept of the ASF must be informed by the dynamics of relevant conflict and mission scenarios, the instructive experiences of the existing Mechanism, as well as by the experience of the UN System in peace operations, and by other models evolved outside of Africa. As far as possible, the ASF use UN doctrine, guidelines, training and standards. The concept will also need to be validated against pragmatic conflict scenarios.

The need and utility of the mechanism that is the African Standby Force (ASF) is best appreciated when considered against the political and contextual dynamics surrounding the move to transform the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU). The main priority of the almost four-decade-old OAU was to secure independence for all African states, as well as to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity (Holt & Shanahan, 2005). The sanctity afforded these norms effectively meant that the OAU was not carved out to manage the complex security threats and the international concern for human rights and good governance that faced the continent after the Cold War.

Charles (2009) opine that the tragic scenes of conflict on the continent in the 1990s resulted in the deaths of millions of African men, women and children, and led to mounting criticism and internal reflection on the OAU's inability to intervene adequately in the series of unfolding crises. The genocide of Rwanda, and the conflicts in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), served to motivate African leaders towards the revitalization of the OAU into a body that was more progressive in promoting and achieving democracy, development and the human rights and basic security of African citizens.

The restructuring of the continental body would provide an opportunity for African member states to seek ways of addressing the number of perennial challenges facing the continent collectively whilst, at the same time, promoting the unity of Africa and strengthening its ability to play a more dynamic role in both the

regional and global arenas. During the Extraordinary Summit of the OAU in Sirte, Libya, on 9 September 1999, calls were made for the establishment of the AU. This was followed by the adoption of the Constitutive Act during the OAU Lomé Summit on 11 July 2000. The Act came into force on 26 May 2001 and the inaugural meeting of the AU was held in 2002 in Durban, South Africa, with the convening of the 1st Assembly of Heads of Statesof the Union. At the core of the new continental body was an aspiration towards the achievement of peace and security in Africa (AU, 2014). This was underscored by the AU Constitutive Act, which recognized that —the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the continent and of the need to promote peace, security and stability as a prerequisite for the implementation of our development and integration agenda

In January 2004 it was announced that African Ministers of Defense and Security, meeting at the headquarters of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, adopted a Draft Framework for a Common African Defense and Security Policy. The relevant functionaries also reviewed progress on the development of an African standby (peacekeeping) force, and of an early warning system to detect and prevent potential conflict situations and to ensure speedy humanitarian relief in the event of disasters (Batware, 2011). In July 2004, the AU Assembly (of heads of state or government), meeting in Addis Ababa, subsequently formally adopted the said Framework for a Common African Defense and Security Policy (hereafter common defense and security policy) as Africa's 'blueprint' or conceptual framework in the search for peace, security and stability on the African continent.

The common defense and security policy is based on an understanding among African leaders and functionaries of what is required to be done collectively by African states to ensure that Africa's common defense and security interests and goals, as set out in Articles 3 and 4 of the AU's Constitutive Act, are safeguarded in the face of common threats to the continent as a whole (Svensson, 2008). These developments should be viewed against the background of various calls over a number of years for a macro-policy framework on conflict resolution and peacekeeping, specifically with regard to the role that the AU and sub-regional organizations should play on the continent.

Strengthening African Peace Support Operations; Future of the African Standby Force

Over the last decade, African countries, with the support of international partners, have engaged in a collective effort to develop regional capacities for peace support operations. Under the umbrella of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the African Union (AU), three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and two Regional Mechanisms (RMs) have worked to develop the African Standby Force (ASF) (Solomon, 2004). Major lessons of the past decade that can inform the future development of the African Standby Force:

The ASF concept has contributed to the development of African capabilities for peace support operations, but it has been less useful in terms of deploying these capabilities. The strength of the ASF concept lies in setting common standards for the identification, training and retention of capabilities at the national level which can be deployed when required. The ASF concept has also led to the development of multidimensional planning capabilities at the level of the AU Commission and the regional economic communities planning elements. However, actual deployments have relied on lead states and coalitions of the willing (Anon, 2008). The mission in Burundi (2003 – 2004) was mostly undertaken by a single lead state, all subsequent missions by coalitions of willing member states, often also involving lead states at critical times. As in other multilateral deployment contexts, the willingness of member states to contribute to a particular operation will always be based on considerations of national interest and the prevailing political climate. The AU and the regional economic communities will therefore have to deploy missions using what resources are available at the time, and probably not on the basis of a readily-deployable force from a particular region that can be deployed as a coherent entity.

Theoretical Framework

The constructivist theoretical framework is used in this investigation. Scholarly variables like as military might, commercial ties, international institutions, and national preferences are significant in the Constructivist view not because they are hard facts about the world, but rather because they carry particular social meanings (Wendt, 2000). Scholars need to comprehend this meaning's construction from a complicated and distinctive mix of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs in order to account for State behavior. Constructivists, for instance, claim that the United States responds significantly differently to the nuclear arsenals of the United Kingdom and China, despite their similarities in destructive power (Wendt, 1995). Take China as an additional case in point; Johnston (1995) argues that, historically speaking, China has followed Realist assumptions in international relations, but has done so in accordance with a distinct historical strategic culture rather than the objective structure of the international system.

Constructivists, who place importance on the social framework in which international interactions take place, place a premium on questions of identity and belief (for this reason Constructivist theories are sometimes called ideational). A state's actions are heavily influenced by how its citizens and residents view its treatment of allies and foes, in-groups and out-groups, and fairness and justice. Some constructivists agree that states are self-interested agents acting rationally, but they argue that states' complex identities and worldviews make it impossible for them to desire anything as simple as survival, power, or money.

Furthermore, constructivism recognizes the significance of cultural norms in the conduct of international relations. Constructivists, following March and Olsen (1989), split rationality into two categories: "logic of appropriateness," in which rationality is significantly influenced by social norms, and "logic of consequences," in which acts are rationally chosen to maximize the interests of a State. When it comes to

international affairs, the norm of State sovereignty, according to Constructivists, has had a far-reaching impact, establishing a bias toward non-interference ahead of any cost-benefit analysis that States may perform. These explanations for international cooperation fall under the Institutionalist umbrella, although they are founded on fabricated attitudes rather than the logical pursuit of objective objectives.

Constructivism, perhaps because of its focus on beliefs and ideology, has also placed greater emphasis on the contributions of non-State actors than has been the case with other systems. Experts have observed that transnational entities, such as NGOs and companies, can influence state policies and attitudes on topics including the use of land mines in conflict and international trade. By using rhetoric or other means of lobbying, persuasion, and shame, these 'norm entrepreneurs' are able to alter the behavior of the State (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). The importance of international institutions has also been emphasized by constructivists. The theoretical basis of this research is constructivism, which argues that international bureaucracies may act in ways that are counter to the goals of the States who established them (such as by pursuing free trade or protecting human rights) in order to further their own agendas. The AU adopted the APSA in an effort to establish the norm of conflict resolution and management in Africa, in accordance with the beliefs of constructivists. The African Union has established the African Union to maintain peace in a conflicted society. According to the mandate of the African Union and the rule of Responsibility to protect established by the United Nations, it establishes the standard of democratic peace with respect to the right of citizens (R2P).

Methodology

This study is doctrinal based; qualitative data was collected from secondary sources which include UN, OAU and AU documents as well as other official sources where appropriate. Other sources will include; academic journal articles, publications and books containing commentaries on and analyses of those topics introduced above, produced by respected authors in their respective fields. The unit of analysis is therefore the African Standby Force peacekeeping capability in terms of the time dimension. While the period of analysis stretches back to the formation of the OAU in 1963 and further looks ahead to what the future may hold for the AU's peacekeeping capability, the findings is written from the perspective of the present using both descriptive and content analysis

Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be argued that the use of military instrument for diplomacy is a long time practice in Africa. It was used by the OAU, as adhoc mechanism; however, AU institutionalized and developed partnership with the regional economic communities as the building block of the ASF. Thus, AU and the regional economic communities have emerged as important actors in the deployment of peace support operations on the continent. To make better use of the capacity which has been developed, and to continue to strengthen this

role, it would be appropriate to adjust the ASF concept, and to make investments along the lines of the nine lessons highlighted.

The ASF is not the solution to African conflicts but it is a fundamental element towards finding a solution. Its success is challenged by, among others, the fact that capability of the regional economic communities is very uneven and there is no clarity about mandating authority. Furthermore, given that the ASF is organized along the lines of five regional brigades, its capabilities are raised and developed by the regional economic communities that form part of the building block of the APSA. This gives rise to political and organizational challenges. Notwithstanding the memorandum of understanding signed between AU and regional economic communities on their general relationship, there is nothing that specifically regulates their respective roles and powers with respect to the use and authorization of ASF capabilities.

As a result, there is lack of clarity about whether the AU needs to negotiate with regional economic communities on the use of the brigades that they have raise and maintain. If that is going to be the case, there is no doubt that it will complicate matters. Finally, some of the regional economic communities have a rich experience and an advanced level of capability but others do not, and it is not clear whether the AU is able to provide the necessary guidance to bring all brigades up to standard.

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