

# AFRICAN-CENTRED SOLUTIONS

Building Peace and Security in Africa



**Editors**

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**INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES**  
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**African-Centred Solutions**  
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## Table of Contents

### *Chapter One*

Introduction by Sunday Angoma Okello ..... 1

### *Chapter Two*

Interrogating the Concept and Ideal of African-Centred Solution to African Peace and Security Challenges By Amadu Sesay ..... 21

### *Chapter Three*

Enriching the African-Centred Solutions Concept: Reflections on AU-led Peace Support Operations in Sudan and Somalia By Dawit Yohannes ..... 47

### *Chapter Four*

South Sudan: Exploring African-Centred Hybrid Sustainable Peacebuilding and Security By Evelyn Mayanja ..... 75

### *Chapter Five*

Statehood, Small Arms and Security Governance in Southwest Ethiopia: The Need for an African-Centred Perspective By Mercy Fekadu Mulugeta ..... 103

### *Chapter Six*

Understanding Peaceful Coexistence from an Urban Refugee Perspective in Africa: The Case of Uganda By Brenda Aleesi ..... 135

### *Chapter Seven*

Civil Society in Conflict Transformation: Key Evidence from Kenya's Post-election Violence By Caleb Wafula ..... 161

### *Chapter Eight*

Boko Haram Insurgency and Sustainable Peace in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region: AU-MNJTf's Intervention By Naeke Sixtus Mougombe .. ..... 193

### *Chapter Nine*

Conclusions By Mesfin Gebremichael ..... 219

Annex: Replace with AfSol First Workshop Report ..... 227

## **Preface**

This publication is a product of the African-Centred Solutions in peace and security (AfSol) workshop held 6 – 7 March 2015, and the preceding ones in 2013 and 2011. This is the first effort on the continent to establish the scholarship around how Africa can develop systemic and synthesized models for addressing peace and security issues and challenges. This book sets a theoretical foundation for exploring and investigating the AfSol concept. It also offers examples and applications of AfSol practices aimed at addressing peace and security challenges using peaceful, coordinated and integrated processes of peace operations and peacebuilding.

The workshops and the initial stage of the publication of this book were funded by GIZ. The preparation of the 2015 workshop, the rigorous review process, selection and printing were made possible by the efforts and robust commitment of the leadership of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) and its Research and Policy dialogue team. The support of other departments in the Institute, especially, the IPSS management, communications and finance and operations, was crucial to the success of this publication process.

We at IPSS hope that this book will set a foundation for developing a significant body of scholarship and knowledge on the topic. This book already set the stage for establishing two sister mechanisms for a continuous investigation and synthesis of AfSol as a scholarly and practical process of peacebuilding in Africa: The AfSol Journal and the AfSol Network. Together, we hope that these mechanisms will entice scholars and practitioners of peace and security in Africa to pursue the notion of AfSol with the deserved rigour and vigour.

Amr Abdalla  
Senior Advisor on Policy Analysis and Research  
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## **List of Abbreviations**

AAU – Addis Ababa University

AfSol: African-Centred Solution to African Peace and Security Problems

AGA – African Governance Architecture

AMIS: African Union Mission in Sudan

AMISOM: African Union Mission in Somalia

APSA: African Peace and Security Architecture

ASF: African Standby Force

ASI – African Solidarity Initiative

ATM- African Traditional Mechanisms

AU: African Union

AU-MNJTF: African Union-Multinational Joint Task Force

BPFA: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

CBOs: Community-Based Organization

CCP: Concerned Citizens for Peace

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CMD: Centre for Multi-Party Democracy

CPA: Comprehensive Peace Agreement

CSA: Central Statics Agency

CSOs: Civil Society Organizations

DIY: Do-It-Yourself

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

ECA: Economic Communities of Africa

ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States

ECOMOG: The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West Africa

EES: Eastern Equatoria State

EPSA: ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture

ESF: ECOWAS Standby Force

EU: European Union

FATF: Financial Action Task Force

FBO: Faith-based Organizations

FCFA: Focus Group Discussions

HCFA: Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement

HIV/AIDS: Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Disease Syndrome

ICC: International Criminal Court

IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons

IFI : International Financial Institutions

IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IGASOM: IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia

IMF: International Monetary Fund

IPSS: Institute for Peace and Security Studies

JEM: Justice and Equality Movement

KANU: Kenya African National Union

KNHR: Kenya Human Rights

KPTJ: Kenyans for Peace, Truth and Justice

MISAHEL: AU mission to Mali

MITF: Mali Integrated Task Force

NARC: National Rainbow Coalition

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

OAU: Organization of African Unity

ODM: Orange Democratic Movement

PADEAP: Pan African Development Education and Advocacy Programme

PNU: Party of National Unity

PoC: Protection of Civilians

PSC: Peace and Security Council

PSOs: Peace Support Operations

RECs: Regional Economic Communities

RLP : Refugee Law Project

SADC - Southern Africa Development Cooperation

SLM/A: Sudan Liberation Movement/Army

SNNPR: Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Region

SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army

SRS: Self-Reliance Strategy

TCCs: Troop-Contributing Countries

TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organization

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNITAF: United Task Force

UNPOS: UN Political Office for Somalia

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution

UNSOM: UN Operation in Somalia

YARID : Young African Refugees for Integral Development



## Chapter One Introduction

### Sunday Angoma Okello\*

African-Centred Solution to African peace and security challenges (AfSol) has in it many veins retaining Pan-African ideology, concepts and objectives on which the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was formed. The transformation of OAU to African Union (AU) normative and institutional peace architecture, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) ushered substantive changes to rethinking on how to deal with the post-Cold War realities of internal conflicts in Africa. Unlike the OAU, the AU has had to engage in peace and security challenges more energetically in deploying its principles and institutions. AfSol concepts, principles, practices and policy are intertwined.

In normative terms, the shift from strict adherence to the OAU Charter anchored on Article 3 emphasises the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs but reserves the right of the AU to intervene (Kioko, 2003), or what some have called the principle of non-interference was a radical shift from previous policies (APSA Handbook, 2014: 28). Institutionally, the transformation heralded the emergence of an ambitious and proactive African Peace and Security Architecture commonly referred to as APSA (APSA Handbook, 2014: 28).

Moreover, for over 50 years, AfSol discourses were simply understood in universal terms implicating the economic, political, social and cultural inclusion to addressing the pressing issues of post-colonial Africa.

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This has made the discursive political foundations of AfSol become more problematic especially where African states have failed to act decisively to tackle issues of peace and security in the continent. African leaders have played into the hands of the Great Powers and international community that have demonstrably and understandably envisaged an “Africa fatigued” search for own solution. Wallensteen (2005) argues that Africa is responding to a natural response, to the fact that the international community, especially the United Nations (UN), already has too much in their hands to cope with.

Today, the framing of, defining, popularizing and implementing AfSol principles in Africa requires that Africans look inwardly to their inherent value of developing own initiatives. The search has led to general conceptual discussions and refining principles of AfSol to proactively engage in policy decision-making in the continent. Africa’s contemporary realities in dealing with peace and security have become pivotal to the primary question of defining AfSol. However, the realities Africa faces are also juxtaposed by conflict dynamics and complexity of “African contexts informing Africans”. Attempts are being made to interrogate if conceptual underpinnings of AfSol have linked concepts incognisance to the practical realities present in the continent.

Decisive actions to operationalise AfSol underpin the externalising of African conflicts, which provides entry points for the Great Powers to meddle in the affairs of Africa. While AfSol failures are blamed on Africa’s colonial legacy, present initiatives, agreeable conceptualisations and principles have increased the quest for AfSol. There has been increased and improved cooperation between AU member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) bringing AfSol to national,

sub-regional and international attention.

The needs to have decisive actions have put pressure on AfSol's principles, clarity on the concept and fundamental operationalisation. Moving away from fire-fighting response mechanisms with little, late or no hands-on solutions has challenged AfSol's principles of ownership, shared-values and commitment. These principles are cornerstones for enhancing operationalisation of APSA, cooperation between AU and regional bodies, enacting initiatives and providing clarity on the working definitions of AfSol.

Sesay and Omotosho (2011) suggest an alternative framework for locally owned effective peace and security mechanism informed by lessons learnt from experiences. They make three important considerations: first, the continuing centrality of conflict in the continent now and in the foreseeable future, with its debilitating impacts on the socio-economic and political development of Africa; second, the expectation that the AU would be working towards qualitative and proactive approach which is different from that of its predecessor (OAU) in tackling the continent's numerous politico-security challenges; and third, defining AfSol with a fundamental approach considering the different levels of analysis of individuals, states, regions and continent. This third alternative suggests an inclusion of the institutionalisation, reconstitution, restitution and focusing on major thematic issues of peace and security in Africa with AfSol.

Amadu Sesay, in chapter two, interrogates AfSol in depth alluding to the continental concerns that AfSol has, indeed, posed an intellectual challenge. He argues that the intellectual challenge in search of AfSol needs to follow on the consistencies and uniqueness of Africaness of

the social, cultural, economic and political characteristics of Africans. Sesay brings in the distinctive nature of “Self-help” or “Do-it-yourself” in Africa as local efforts that promote acceptability and sustainability. These are the realities that underlie AfSol and have been in practice for many years.

The establishment of the AU and its African peace and security architecture (APSA) emphasises the provision of “African-Centred Solutions”. In this vein, “solutions” are to be, more precisely, those interventions being developed and implemented by African institutions and decision makers. These would then contribute to, amongst other traditional mechanisms, ownership, shared values, and commitments. “Try Africa First” concept can be emphasised as a basis for intellectually putting foundational approach to AfSol. Elsewhere, Sesay and Omotosho (2011) argue that finding local solutions to Africa’s conflicts was a strategy that aimed at warding-off the meddling tendencies of the superpowers during the Cold War, with some measures of success.

Many still believe that AU interventions are inadequate and failing to provide sufficient “added-value” in terms of impact and sustainability. A similar blame is now targeting African professionals and institutions that they are not bold enough to design proper debate and actionable researches. While the past has been conceived to rate AU harshly, mostly based on lack of implementation of AU declarations, protocols, summits and conventions, AfSol has its positive seeds to be nurtured. There are many who carry “Afro-Pessimism” about AfSol from the outlook of having “Africa as a pessimist paradise” (Buzan and Wæver, 2003).

The AU is essentially a “work in progress” (Sesay and Omotosho, 2011: 10). These pessimists seem to understand AfSol as making Africa

absolutely conflict-free. Rather, Sesay argues that a prosperous Africa will be a respected and credible ally of the international community in the enduring search for global peace and development, which is now complicated and has become more elusive by the resurgence of terrorism in some key African countries.

AfSol connotes geographical continuity, broad cultural affinity and identity among the peoples and countries. It may be misleading to rely on Western-led solutions for peace and security in Africa since they [Western-led solutions] have had a pre-selection approach on the country-specific contexts and backgrounds of past colonial rulers. The country-context specific needs and aspirations of Africans have always possessed uniqueness but diverted into Western-led foreign policy or interests.

The nature by which African brotherhood and good neighbourliness operates in Africa is very much of the continent's traditions conducted with the collective problem solving approach. Sesay cautiously argues for AfSol to rely on the political will of African member states and the facilitative role of AU/RECs in finding and committing to an all-encompassing approach that adheres to key principles of AfSol (ownership, shared values and commitment). The ideal African institutions should be careful of overloading AfSol concepts while overemphasising Western-led approach so as to develop African-centred priorities and reforms without impositions and insubordinations.

AfSol is an incongruity between theory and practice. The feasibility of AfSol relies on the desirability of what needs to be integrated in the future and what may be relevant to domesticated purposes. Sesay's caution expands to accept the impending challenges of poor

funding and dependence on external assistance created by the delay in operationalisation of APSA, low socio-economic and political development in Africa, and many others. Such constraints can be overcome by making prevailing political and economic environment utilise an incrementalists' approach to the AfSol ideal. AfSol can be conceptualised in segments by emphasising, for instance, a pivotal role for African initiators, initiatives and overwhelming participation via troop contribution and other complements in peacekeeping or other military interventions authorised by the AU and RECs.

For the good and the bad, AfSol should be fully operational with AU's and RECs' leading roles, to continue making decisive roles in maintaining peace and security issues in Africa through their legitimising, bridge-building, unifying and fund-raising roles. The context-specific and political will (incentives) of AU member states will present the best perspectives to assess the capacity and feasibility of the numerous African countries, which is already providing ideal conditions for framing the overarching future of AfSol. "Try Africa First" is on offer to the validation of alternative frameworks in the 54 African countries. Incrementalists' or step-wise hands-on approach and strong Pan-African doctrine tailored with AU/RECs and academic institutions and political will (incentives) will strengthen the processes and institutionalisation of AfSol in the long-term.

The nexus between alternative frameworks suggested by Sesay and Omotosho (2011) and that of the AU-PSC, and APSA goes beyond stimulation of intellectual discussions with the hope of promoting common ground for responses. AfSol requires supportive roles of strategic decision-making institution, in-country needs through timely

assessment, programming, partnerships and development.

In chapter three, Dawit Yoahannes offers a more solidified but argues for an additional dimension for AfSol, beyond its most common conception as an elitist mantra often employed to garner popular support around issues of greater interest to the wider African community. Dawit argues for practical preconditions for establishing institutions dealing with AfSol and translating them into initiatives by testing and subjecting the concepts and principles to case studies we already have at hand. For him, such tests can provide both ad-hoc and hands-on responses to defining, refining and delivering practical solutions to AfSol.

The view is relevant in that it can provide for analytical elbowed space for the concept of partnership within the conceptual framing and practical implementation of AfSol. Dawit's thesis dissects the challenges of the practicality of an absolutist and perhaps idealist understanding of AfSol from the exclusive African ownership and self-sufficiency principles.

Of course, such approach comes with potential perils of entrenched state-centric conception of sovereignty towards realising the implementation strategy. The contention is that, state sovereignty seen as an international norm tends to depart from the assumption that the search for collective AfSol poses challenges especially from the state-centric conceptions of sovereignty that favour collective regional security approach. Once collective regional security is overemphasised, AfSol may sidestep the issue of sovereignty. The bill to pick and pay for is how AfSol directly infringes on the principles of ownership and shared values. In order to reinforce the vitality of sovereignty discourse that may have been overlooked at the relative "ease" of conducting African peace operations, case studies must form part of the analysis. In the case studies, peace

support operations in Sudan and Somalia become quite interesting in the event that state institutions have largely failed and effective state sovereignty is no more an issue.

Against the evidences from the two cases, which have comparatively strong state adherences to the notion of state sovereignty, and with serious peace and security challenges, there are strong and enriching dimensions of AfSol's principles of shared values and ownership. Further, the empirical cases depicting the vitality of partnership and sovereignty do speak strongly to the notion and principles of AfSol.

Evidences compound dearly into the discursive applications of AfSol in that the African contexts in peace and security have streamlined policy-making institutions in a more normative nuances. The conceptual dearth of AfSol is sequenced with conceptual deficit and sometimes overload in practice. The link is in the institutionalisation of AfSol and the principles of ownership and shared values that have remained constant in Sudan (Dafur) and Somalia (African Union Mission in Somalia - AMISOM), for example.

Evelyn Mayanja argues in chapter four that the institutionalisation of AfSol should explore an African-centred hybrid form of sustainable peacebuilding and security. The complexities we are experiencing in South Sudan's conflict today necessitate hybridised African-centred solutions. The hybridity should interface between the local and international approaches, agents, ideas, practices and structures to reconstruct peace (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012: 1). By so doing, state institutions can be strengthened for sustainable peace and security. This is seen in the case of Rwanda in the post-Genocide regime, where the international legal framework was challenged in its application. Her conceptualisation

of hybridity lies in the liberal peace paradigm where East Timor tends to have moved on quite acceptably to the local population. The liberal peace state-building project and test to alternatives of the liberal-local hybrid peace are needed in South Sudan. This unique form of approach to AfSol ensues that strategies, institutions and norms of international approaches network with people's everyday lives to build peace.

By promoting hegemonic and monolithic caricatures of powerful liberal institutionalism, South Sudan's case can fuse peace and security and attract locally generated social reconciliation with national and international consent. Mayanja argues that using hybridity lens and agency theory, AfSol conceptualisation helps in the reconstruction of peace and security approach. The hybridity required in South Sudan needs a combination of neoliberal peace and African approaches to devise Africanised solutions to South Sudan's crisis. The combined neoliberal-local hybrid can be used to visualise the interplay of processes and agency fundamental to rebuilding South Sudan institutions as effective relationships between citizens with secure state.

Mayanja's model includes issues of good leadership, power and governance with clear checks and balances. While the international norms and institutionalisation requires compliance mechanisms, networks and structures with the local, local actors' ability to present and maintain indigenous frameworks, structures and networks may be imbalanced in its implementation, notwithstanding understanding "hybridity" in practice.

South Sudan has undergone many years of war, but in its post-independence peace and state building, engaging the silenced local voices, networking with all sectors of the society and including structures

of women, youth and grassroots citizenry approach have been neglected. This is to say that hegemonic liberal peace aped and followed in Africa, and for this case, the emerging state of South Sudan is no longer tolerable. South Sudan can be kept in its cycle of civil war if it is not principled to the hybridity norms, ethically adjusted and tuned to the stewardship of responsible leadership whose full service to exercising political state power must be for the common good of its citizens.

Mayanja argues that international compliance mechanisms in governing institutions are not enough. However, local actor's ability to present and maintain indigenous/localised frameworks and its epistemology and philosophy maintains Africa's loss of shared values and commitments. Africa's forms of transitional justice and forgiveness question liberal peace modus operandi in engaging only the belligerents. Africa should, therefore, live to its vision enshrined in the AU's vision of an "integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens" (AU, 2011).

Mercy Fekadu Mulugeta, in chapter five, brings out the issue of statehood, small arms and security governance into the debate of AfSol, in which there are, once again, incompatibilities of euro-centric state models to that of African countries. Like Mayanja, Mercy argues that Western models ignore African traditional governance mechanisms, their values and current role in governing the continent. The provision of security and small arms proliferation is the role of the state but in Africa's civil wars, it is the same state that neglects some of its citizens or even perpetuates killings against them.

There are volumes of growing scholarly works that strive towards understanding the African state instead of evaluating it in a case study like that of the Nyangatom people of southwest Ethiopia lying in part of

the Karamoja cluster. Mercy identifies a security governance model that blends modern state governance and traditional institutions, which lies in the promotion of contextual pragmatic models than in the duplication and emulation of common narratives of contemporary peace and security discourses.

In the case of Nyangatom, a cluster riddled with small and light weapons proliferation, security governances and the question of statehood has been contentious for many decades. The levels of socio-political cohesion and poorly developed structures of government, loosely understood as pre-modern states, are low. Mercy finds that the problem poses direct implication for AfSol on state building and security governance. This is also the problem of following strict normative frameworks in Africa. The state becomes alien to its own citizens, sometimes behaving in a predatory manner towards the traditional transformation systems.

Unlike having a hybrid-local peace, re-traditionalisation of keeping the traditional leaders and their systems at bay and altering policies of local governance has brought more controversies than solutions to peace and security in Africa, in this case, the Nyangatom. Like many African countries and communities, the Nyangatom still have traditional systems and structures that support traditional institutions and systems for bringing peace, security and social reconciliation. This has posed direct opposition to the Westphalian state model of statehood and governance.

Mercy brings in the unique case of the Nyangatom traditional institution, which is equipped with traditional leaders and beliefs, youth in arms use and in control of the systems' modes of governing their own society. The system has gone from past generations over many years to today's "modern" state system. The system has been faced with

security problems, with and without government. The Nyangatom have survived without relying entirely on state security provision, since the system has been embedded in their traditional apparatuses, security governance, statehood and self-help in terms of social responsibility.

In effect, the Nyangatom have exhibited AfSol's principles of committing to maintaining ownership of their security by mediating state's security arrangements with their system and with police and militia in their *woredas*. Where state actors have proved ineffective, they bridged the gap of governance; statehood and peace by helping the state overcome its security deficit (Schmeidl and Krokhaile, 2009). Even if Ethiopia's federal government does not recognise this mediated state concept of AfSol, a unique state-society relation in dealing with security exists. There exists a non-state armed group that is more or less replacing modern state system, although both systems are interacting, in a contractual manner, mediated at an AfSol local, federal and central levels.

In chapter six, Brenda Aleesi examines the situation of refugees who settled in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. The "urban refugees", so called, present a unique case and the initiatives taken in the form practicing AfSol. Uganda hosts several refugees from the Great lakes region and the Horn of Africa, but the country allows refugees to choose to reside in the urban areas especially in the capital, Kampala. The UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) continues to provide basic assistance for refugees in some settlements; other implementing partners and refugees can live in the urban areas in Kampala. While Kampala offers opportunities of self-help in terms of social responsibility to refugees, refugees face language barrier and in some cases discrimination. However, there is also a tremendous form of

peaceful coexistence in the principles of shared values and commitments to Uganda's initiatives to be part of the country's educational, cultural, social, economic and health system. The initiatives are left to the ownership of the beneficiaries of the programme and commitment from the stakeholders towards refugee cause.

The AfSol pillar in this case relies on the manner in which peaceful coexistence of any society becomes important in the development and provision of good platform upon interventions. The good platforms for intervention have aimed at promoting peace, good governance, the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), service delivery and poverty reduction. Peaceful coexistence has become AfSol's principle of sharing values from the members of Uganda society with the participatory role of refugees so as to provide better initiatives and solutions to problems that both the host and the refugees face on a day-to-day basis.

Many actors in the continent and international community have called upon Uganda to share its best practices that have worked in the country to be replicated elsewhere. For Alessi, coexistence between the host community and the refugees has shared value principles of AfSol. There is conformity with Uganda's multicultural and elicitive model of hosting refugees within AfSol's principles in that Uganda recognises diversity, the worth or value of other suffering people, and deploys non-violent approach to living with refugees.

The model also recognises the causations to refugees in which peace, security, democracy, governance and failure to respect human rights had been disparaged in the community. Therefore, an AfSol lens has to address these issues in different ways - by peacefully coexisting with refugees. The model has adapted the culture of peace education

through tailored programmes for refugees and their children to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudinal change in the new “urban” society they live in.

Refugees are provided with the forum to speak their rights through educative curriculum, and in reference to Uganda’s Refugee Act 2006. Most aspects of livelihood of refugees pertaining to socio-cultural, health and economic life have deployed AfSol lenses in consideration of the urbanisation and globalisation issues of refugees. There is, therefore, a direct link between AfSol’s principles of shared values and committing refugees and the host community to practicing models of peaceful coexistence.

In chapter seven, Caleb Wafula dissects the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in conflict transformation with particular evidence from Kenya’s post-election violence of 2007-2008. While many viewed Kenya’s long democracy largely as an icon and island of peace in the region, the violence proved the contrary (Modi and Shekhawal, 2008). The 2007-2008 post-election violence exposed the developmental implications and its underlying imperative of the long hidden failure to find solutions.

Lack of timely solutions to the many years of accumulated grievances created shortage of ideas in Kenya. Kenya began to witness violence with generative initiatives to address socio-economic challenges. The conflict quickly erupted, but bringing the peace back became more of an intense debate than working with AfSol’s principles to be committed to, take ownership and identify shared values.

However, Kenya's CSOs took up the conflict transformation initiatives rooted in local views to end the conflict. The initiative lacked systematic analysis of the extent to which to deploy AfSol in bringing about sustainable peace and stability in the post-conflict Kenya. CSOs in Kenya identified initiatives rooted in the shared values of a Pan-African conviction espousing "African-Centred Solutions" (AfSol) and relying on solving own problems. Wafula discusses the role of civil society that exhibited the AfSol framework which contributed to sustainable post-conflict transformation. This was possible because of the historical analysis of Kenya's long-term peace and pan-Africanism by the civil society.

The CSOs in Kenya brought out a sphere of voluntary actions that was distinct from state, political, private and economic spheres. They [CSOs] kept in mind the practice that the political land demarcations between the social sectors involved in the conflict was blurred and complex. The CSOs organised the society in a more voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting, autonomous way from within the state that was bounded by legal framework. By way of shared-values, the CSOs were able to relate to the public and involve citizens to act collectively and address the issues confronting the society.

The CSOs created spaces for exchanging information, advanced local interests for peace, and put passions and ideas together with the sole aim of achieving mutual goals for peace. The state was also involved, but making it clear that those state officials who were behind the conflict generation be accountable.

Wafula brings in the mature role of CSOs in contributing to AfSol through transformative growth of CSOs in Kenya. CSOs have transformed other

CSO initiatives whose radical and conservative ideology has become moderate. Kenya's National Civil Society Congress and the Kenya Red Cross are such string forums where the local voices are heard at the national level. They provide networks and enable other stakeholders to alert and provoke government responses.

This is not say that CSO in Kenya do not face challenges. Some became conduits of politicians of fostering violence, overplaying social grievances and fomenting rumours. Some human rights groups were unable to remain completely neutral and non-partisan in election related violence. Some of the bottlenecks have made CSO work become ad hoc and acted with the slogan of "slaughtered justice at the altar of temporary and deeply uneasy calm".

It is critical to follow the case of Kenya's CSOs, and not to limit the conceptualisation of CSO and AfSol operationalisation because that will narrow down the contributions of many actors including academics, religious groups, elders, local government officials, and community-based organisation (CBOs). CSOs give the communities, the state and international communities the sub-consciousness that AfSol's principles desire today in our African society. Africa's peace and security challenges are growing, so must the solutions become a dynamic exercise.

Naeke Sixtus Mougombe cautions Africa to address new security threats that are emerging fast in the continent, particularly the Boko Haram Islamic sect in Northern Nigeria. In his chapter seven, the intervention of African Union-Multinational Joint Task Force (AU-MNJTf) in combating Boko Haram is discussed.

The radical Islamic sect, Boko Haram, in Nigeria and across the borders of countries around the Lake Chad region has provoked the intervention of a regional force to combat and neutralise the sect. The current intervention, so much seen as an AfSol initiative by regional peacekeepers, reinforces the high degree to commit and own initiatives to jointly fight terrorism. The joint countries that are fighting Boko Haram are from the Lake Chad Basin under the AU-MNJTF.

The regional intervention approach has demonstrated commitment to ownership of the process and to what the local and regional bodies have shared in their concerted values in the process. Nigerian government has tried to defeat Boko Haram but it has repeatedly displayed lack of capacity to deal with the spate of violence and terrorism.

The case of Boko Haram puts the AfSol concept to test by demonstrating how ownership and commitment to the spirit of African citizenry, the African Union (AU), has initiated supportive actions like the AU mission to Mali (MISAHHEL) in Boko Haram-affected countries. It has also tested AfSol's principles to check the implementation of the AU counter-terrorism framework (AU/Dec.536 XXIII) amongst others.

Sixtus argues that African intervention actions are being hindered because of internal politics of the affected countries. The problem is not with AfSol concept per se, but the slow involvement of local indigenous population in the process particularly where the AU-MNJTF operates. There are failures to effectively involve local indigenous communities and traditional institutions in the continental processes alongside with the regional MNJTF intervention. The continuous support and mobilisation by indigenous groups to generate proactive actions aimed at combating Boko Haram.

The response of Nigerian government has been slow and operation restore order and operation safe havens were underplayed by enormous problems in the northern part of Nigeria. The establishment of Almajiri schools in the northern part of the country only provided recruiting grounds for Boko Haram. Street children, unemployed youths and socially disconnected citizens in the north all became targets of Boko Haram's easy recruitments. They became ready-made army that can be recruited to perpetrate violence.

The Nigerian government tried to offer amnesty to ameliorate conflict perpetration, but the radical nature and ideology behind Boko Haram defied the odds amnesty intended to achieve. The influential leadership could not tackle Boko Haram using diplomatic means - preventive diplomacy, especially to release the abducted Chibok girls. This was considered as a failure of the preventive diplomacy and lack of leadership from the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan.

Although the AU-MNJTF has had the capacity and potential to successfully onslaught the Boko Haram, enduring peace might still require continuous mirage to prioritising AfSol in Nigeria and its neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Benin, Niger and beyond.

To its best, the AU-MNJTF has provided an Afrocentric solution to the Boko Haram insurgency. The manner in which the joint voluntary contributions of soldiers from neighbouring states were quickly pulled together explained the commitment, shared values and ownership of dealing with Boko Haram. AU-MNJTF owned the process of intervention, decision-making and full engagement. In Cameroon, the government embarked on engaging traditional leaders using the spirit

of shared problems and shared responsibility. Local vigilante groups and regional task groups had full sense of shared values to work with local institutions to combat Boko Haram.

The practice of AfSol in combating Boko Haram has been two-fold. One is the lesson learnt to combat a newly trending security problems in Africa, terrorism, by challenging policy-makers, exposing bad leaderships in Africa and engaging in committed process that shares the value of bringing peace. Secondly, the military approach by Western interventions championed by foreign machineries dwindled and made little difference compared with the grand intervention by AU-MNJTF. AU-MNJTF had a unique Afro-centric approach from command, leadership of operations and mechanism of designing the future while conducting joint operations.

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## Chapter Two

### Interrogating the Concept and Ideal of African-Centred Solution to African Peace and Security Challenges

Amadu Sesay\*

“African Solutions for Peace and Security”, AfSol, is in many ways akin to what has been described elsewhere as “Try Africa First”<sup>1</sup> more than three decades ago, and in that sense it predated the creation of the African Union, AU, in 2002. Arguably, if the concept connotes “Self-help” or what we often call “Do-it-Yourself”(DIY), in common parlance, then AfSol is in fact not a new phenomenon. “Communal self-help” is practiced in many societies and communities in Africa. At the village level in Sierra Leone, for instance, “community self-help” groups consisting of young men and women take turns to work for one another at every stage during the farming season: slashing and burning, sowing, weeding, harvesting, etc. until everyone that is willing to till the land is enabled to have his/her own farmstead. That way, the community ensures that everyone is directly and indirectly empowered and by so doing, they maintain their individual and collective self-reliance and dignity. All things being equal, there would be no need for anyone to seek assistance outside the community to meet basic needs such as food and clothing.

In the more developed societies, individuals are encouraged to and do engage in DIY activities as a pastime and as a means of putting aside some money to meet other pressing needs. For this purpose, there are special DIY shops where one can purchase one’s needs to suit each type

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of DIY activity. Of course, some individuals are more proficient than others in carrying out DIY chores. For instance, while some car owners can only change engine oil, others can do complete car service at home. That way money that would have been paid at the mechanic's workshop would be put into some other use. Those who can effectively do DIY would not have to rely on an external third party to do such sundry chores at their homes. No doubt, sometimes self-reliance is the best policy or approach to pressing challenges and needs. Besides, one is assumed to be better placed to appreciate one's needs and limitations than some external actor or artisan.

It is arguable that local efforts and ownership also promote acceptability and sustainability. However, as will be made clear later in the chapter, DIY, like AfSol, has its own limitations, which may be due to several factors. In the particular case of DIY, one major limitation is competency, knowledge and/or capacity. For example, it is possible for one to have the capacity, the means—the money—time, determination, etc, while knowledge and proficiency are lacking. Under such circumstances, DIY will be a dismal failure if attempted. However, even when all the factors identified above are in sufficient supply, some DIY tasks just cannot be done alone without external assistance from say, family member(s) or neighbour(s), as the case may be, to perform the task successfully. Under such a scenario, however, timing in terms of the task undertaken may depend on the availability or convenience of the third party. Many other limitations can be identified but what is important for this purpose is to stress that there is great affinity between AfSol and DIY conceptually. With particular reference to “African Solutions for Peace and Security,” AfSol, or “Try Africa First”, the two concepts underscore the determination of African leaders and their multilateral continental

body, the African Union, to be the first to search for local ways and means of tackling issues of peace and security on the continent. It is only when it is not possible to “go it alone” that they would seek external assistance as a last resort.

Several realities underline the AfSol concept. In the Cold War era, “Try Africa First” admonished OAU members to refrain from externalising African conflicts so as not to expose them to the Cold War global arena with all possible negative consequences. As such, the OAU was to be given the first option of refusal in the search for lasting solutions to African conflicts and security challenges at the time. It was widely believed, and rightly so, that external involvement in local conflicts would be counterproductive in the prevailing Superpower rivalry and global order, because every local conflict was perceived in globalist, and not regionalist terms. Moreover, it was believed, and it still is, that African countries (and the OAU) knew where the shoe pinched most and were/are in a better position to tackle their peace and security challenges. Externalising African conflicts would only provide an entry point for the Great Powers to meddle in the affairs of Africa because the outcome is unpredictable.

To minimise the risk of external interference in African conflicts and enhance indigenous solution there to, the then newly independent African states took a bold step in 1964 to address one of the thorniest issues in post-independence Africa. At the Cairo summit of OAU, Heads of State and Government endorsed the inherited arbitrary colonial boundaries, which were to remain inviolable. However, AfSol has been associated much more with, and made popular by the African Union. What can be described as “AU activism” in conflict prevention,

management, peacekeeping, and peace support operations is also reflected in the Constitutive Act and APSA. This development may not be unconnected with the different external and domestic environments in which the OAU and the AU have had to operate. For example, while the OAU functioned in a tight bi-polar international system in which its members were compelled to be protégés of the Great Powers, the AU came into being in a multi-polar world in which there is a predominance of domestic, as opposed to inter-state conflicts, among its members.

The peculiar domestic environment in which the AU has had to operate arguably compelled it to search for inward-looking solutions to its members' security and developmental challenges. Majority of these afflictions like the civil wars in Liberia [and Sierra Leone] in the 1990s, did not seize the attention of powerful external actors, including the UN, until several years later. Not surprisingly and unlike the OAU, the AU has had to engage these challenges more energetically in its principles and institutions. While the OAU was hamstrung by Article 3 of the Charter that eulogised non-interference in the domestic affairs of Member States, Article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act of the AU empowered the organisation to intervene in Member States in the event of serious threats to national, continental and global peace and security such as crimes against humanity or genocide. "African Solutions for Peace and Security" therefore represents a renewed mandate for the AU and a commitment by African leaders to take primary responsibility for tackling threats to peace and stability on the continent. By so doing they hope to enhance the AU's institutional authority, integrity and shield potential or real conflicts from externalisation, which could exacerbate them and cause more human suffering in the affected counties.

It is from such a perspective that AfSol and “Try Africa First” could be conceived as veritable mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement by the AU. Since the early 1990s, ECOWAS has assumed primary responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in West Africa, following its successful interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone. From such a perspective, AfSol and “Try Africa First” are veritable and complementary templates for assuring peace and stability in Africa, which are as valid today as they were in the Cold War era. AU’s preoccupation with local ownership of conflict prevention and management processes is reflected in the elaborate and expensive African Peace and Security Architecture, APSA, which includes “...early warning and preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacebuilding...humanitarian action and disaster management”.<sup>2</sup> APSA also provides for an African Standby Force, ASF, which is to interface with regional standby forces, RSFs such as the ECOWAS Standby Force, ESF, which is part of the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture, EPSA. The AU partnered with the West African regional body in the Mali Integrated Task Force, MITF, to contain the rebellion in Mali in 2012 and succeeded in protecting the territorial integrity of that country.<sup>3</sup> The AU’s Peace and Security Council set up in 2003, is the apex body entrusted with ensuring a more proactive local approach to conflict resolution on the continent.

The rest of the chapter interrogates the numerous assumptions that inform AfSol, the challenges and its future. It makes a clear distinction between AfSol as a conceptual ideal presented briefly in the preceding paragraphs, and AfSol at the operational level. The discussion on AfSol at the operational level focuses attention on its practicality based on experience thus far at both the continental and regional levels. At the

operational level of analysis, some central questions also beg for answers. How practical is AfSol in the light of the continent's present political, economic and technological challenges? In a world that is experiencing unprecedented processes of globalization, which have turned the world into a global village of sorts, is it realistic or desirable for Africa to "go it alone" in finding lasting solutions to its security dilemmas? How compatible is AfSol with the UN's mandate as an organisation vested with primary responsibility for world peace and security? How compatible is "African Solutions for Peace and Security" with the continent's partnership agreements with powerful external non-state actors such as the European Union? Do such agreements strengthen or undermine AfSol in practice? What are the practical requirements for effective local ownership and domestication of AfSol for enhanced capability and competence in conflict management and prevention? What are AfSol's challenges in interfacing with regional economic communities? Finally, what is the future of AfSol in the light of its current and past challenges? What steps have the AU and RECs taken, if any, to enhance cooperation? These questions have been posed not because they will all be answered in this chapter, but more as pointers to the complexity of AfSol in today's equally intricate and highly interconnected international system.

### **Unravelling AfSol's Underpinning Assumptions**

What does "African Solutions for Peace and Security" mean in theory and practice? What are the underpinning assumptions of the concept? In the previous section, the conceptual ramifications of AfSol have been discussed. This section seeks to track and illuminate the "realism", historical, geographical and identity questions embedded in AfSol. Understanding them will shed light on the challenges to its ownership

operationalisation.

AfSol is predicated on what can be described as the “hardnosed realism” that connects with the history, geography and identity of Africa, Africans and their multilateral organisations. In broad terms, it connotes first and perhaps most significantly, a determination and commitment by African leaders, the AU and RECs, to be in the driving seat in tackling the conflict and security dilemmas facing the continent. This determination was born in part, out of the realisation that the African continent is stricken by debilitating conflicts, violence, political and economic instabilities that gravely undermine human security and development. It is, indeed, a vicious circle for without development there would be no peace and security and without peace and security there would be no development.<sup>4</sup> It is believed that building a credible African capability for preventing and managing local conflicts will promote sustainable peace and stability on the continent, which are indispensable for economic growth, prosperity and general wellbeing of the African people. As a corollary, a prosperous Africa will be a respected and credible ally of the international community in the enduring search for global peace and development, which is now complicated and made more elusive by the resurgence of terrorism in some key African countries.<sup>5</sup>

With regard to its history, AfSol goes well beyond “Try Africa First” in the OAU era. It underpins shared historical experiences such as excruciating slavery and slave trade, abhorrent colonialism and colonial domination, culture and nation building and developmental challenges among others. In more recent history, AfSol is a positive reaction to the bitter experience of West Africa and Africa in general, for instance, in Liberia when the country was abandoned to its fate by the Great Powers

including the US, its acknowledged benefactor. Also since 1993, there is increasing reluctance by Western powers to deploy their troops in African conflict situations, now euphemistically referred to as “no boots on the ground”. As an alternative they will, when necessary, provide “treasury” – money – while the AU and RECs to provide the “blood” – African troops – for peacekeeping and peace support operations in various parts of the continent. Happily, African countries have not hesitated to do so when called upon. It is within the above context that “African Solutions for Peace and Security” is best understood and appreciated as a commendable collective endeavour to wean the continent and its constituent units from the apron-strings of former colonial masters in particular, and external actors in general, which for long dictated the pace and outcomes of conflict situations on the African continent, sometimes in ways that are not in the overall interests of African states and people.

At the continental and regional levels, AfSol represents the hallowed African traditions of collective problem solving championed by elders in the spirit of “African brotherhood” and “good neighbourliness”. It is in line with such tried and tested traditions of collective self-help that the AU constituted the Council of the Wise, while ECOWAS has a Council of Elders for use in their conflict prevention and management efforts.<sup>6</sup> In a sense, then, AfSol represents a clear effort by the AU and RECs to modernise widely accepted African customs dating back to time immemorial. It is, therefore, a commendable initiative that is aimed at taking ownership of, and domesticating age-old African conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms at the continental and regional levels to suit contemporary needs and challenges.

In such a context AfSol is arguably, but understandably, hinged on the irrefutable logic that African countries and peoples have shared historical, political, economic and cultural affinities and experiences which include debilitating slavery, demeaning colonisation and devastating colonial and post-colonial wars, conflicts, excruciating poverty and economic stagnation and reversals, among others. For such cogent reasons and more, the AU and RECs are believed to have unique competences that may not be readily available to external actors or partners, no matter how good their intentions are, or how endowed they may be with critical financial and logistical resources, because African people know where the “shoe pinches most”. Accordingly, Africans must take full responsibility for peace and stability on their continent. AfSol encapsulates Africans’ appreciation of Africa’s “predicament”, “condition” and place in global politics and rising up to address those challenges.

From such a standpoint, “African Solutions for Peace and Security” need not even be successful at all times, just as “American”, “British”, “French” or “UN” conflict resolution mechanisms and interventions do not always achieve the best desired outcomes, after all. Examples abound US interventions in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Middle East – between Israelis and Palestinians – Somalia in Africa, etc. In other words, even at the practical level, AfSol simply connotes collective self-help on matters of peace and security in Africa and does not pretend to predict the final outcomes of such efforts. What is obvious in AfSol is a determination by the AU and RECs to minimise, as much as practicable, direct foreign involvement in African conflicts, and African countries have never shied away from such a laudable ideal, including deploying young African men and women in conflict situations like those in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d’Ivoire in West Africa, or Burundi in

Central Africa, etc. AfSol or “Try Africa First”, therefore, mirror a spirited attempt at institution and capacity building within the AU and RECs, a reflection of the increasing awareness among African leaders and citizens, of the need to move away from old-fashioned state-centric security concerns in favour of human security which in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, places the well-being of the citizens centre stage as *raison d’état*. Hence, AfSol reflects the imperative of institutionalising home-grown solutions to local conflicts.

Lastly, AfSol connotes geographical contiguity, broad cultural affinity and identity among African peoples and countries. AfSol reflects and reaffirms the fact that geography and identity are not only inseparable but also reinforce one another. Geographically, AfSol’s boundaries are defined by the “space” or “area” on the map globally referred to as “Africa”, and recognised as an autonomous and active sub-system of the international system with unique features, needs, priorities, challenges, and people with distinct physical attributes that are generally referred to as “Africans”. As an independent actor in the global system, Africa has unique aspirations, rules, sanctions and regimes of which the AU and RECs are the custodians. In such a context, AfSol is exclusionist and restricted to countries, people and multilateral organizations that are located in the geographical space globally acknowledged as “Africa”. Thus AfSol’s efforts and initiatives are necessarily limited to peace and security issues affecting Africa and surrounding islands clearly delineated on the world map. Hence, the map of Africa is incomplete without the Island of Madagascar.<sup>7</sup>

The point must be stressed though that there is no unanimity on the logic of a common identity based on shared geographical space. There

are two broad tendencies represented, on the one hand, by exponents located on the North of the Sahara exemplified by the late Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and on the other hand, Ghana's late Kwame Nkrumah from Africa, South of the Sahara. Using three circles to establish Egypt's identity, Nasser submitted that the Arab nation is the "...most important and most closely connected to us...". He said that Egyptians are Africans only because they "...are in Africa", in a physical entity comprising of some 34 independent nations.<sup>8</sup> Nkrumah recognised the contending identities in Africa as "Arab Africa", "Black Africa", "Islamic Africa", "Non-Islamic Africa", "Mediterranean Africa" and "Tropical Africa".<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the former Ghanaian leader acknowledged the common thread that tied the contending tendencies together noting that "...the Sahara is a bridge uniting us...an entity symbolised by our united African personality...(and) by our Africanism."<sup>10</sup>

A critical question that must be answered at this juncture is if AfSol, as presently conceived and operated, is an appropriate response to the security challenges confronting Africa and by implication, the rest of the world. This question is important because if Africa does not put in place the right responses or mechanisms to tackle its peace and security conundrums, the expected outcomes would remain elusive, and could result in psychological defeatism akin to that trailed the failed OAU peacekeeping force in Chad in 1982.<sup>11</sup> This point is worth emphasising because new potent threats to peace and security like terrorism certainly defy solo or "go it alone" solutions, which AfSol implies at a level of analysis as noted above. Besides, devastating and humbling pandemics like Ebola or HIV/AIDS are of regional and global concerns that require an all-inclusive response by stakeholders across the world. However, AfSol is superficially and realistically exclusivist. Thus, depending on

the perceived threat, it is inevitable that AfSol would have to interface with efforts across the world, especially with those coordinated by the UN family and aimed at tackling threats to African stability that have serious implications for global peace and security. Experience has shown, from next section of the chapter, that the AU and ECOWAS have had to partner with the UN and other development partners when it was no longer rewarding to “go it alone” as situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Burundi, DRC, etc. clearly testify to this dilemma.

### **AfSol at the Operational Level: Concerns and Challenges**

This section does not pretend to discuss in any detail peacekeeping or peace support operations mounted by either the AU or regional bodies. Rather, it simply highlights the incongruity between theory and practice in the application of AfSol. While AfSol is admirable as a concept and in its logic, its operationalisation in real conflict situations has been fraught with severe challenges. To their credit, African leaders cannot be accused of not demonstrating the political will to make difficult decisions in response to challenges to peace and security on the continent. That is perhaps to be expected because of the “realist” assumptions that underpinned AfSol. Since the end of the Cold War, threats to peace and security in the continent have assumed an increasingly “domestic” character and tended to weaken African leaders’ hitherto strong emotional attachment to state sovereignty. In the prevailing circumstances, there is a growing belief that the AU and RECs may be more effective guarantors of regime and territorial security than external actors.<sup>12</sup> Pertinent to this, the AU and RECs have the backing of the UN whose security architecture also stresses the regionalisation of security arrangements and more partnerships between itself and regional bodies.<sup>13</sup> The cumulative effect of this rethinking and re-strategising is that Africa’s continental and

regional agencies have made conflict management a prime concern and mandate. This proactive shift is mirrored in continental and regional deployments in Burundi, Sudan and Mali by the AU and by ECOWAS in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Mali respectively. The AU is also encouraging RECs to develop regional standby forces for effective deployment as and when required. For now, however, only ECOWAS has fully institutionalised its Standby Force with clear modalities for collaborating with the AU in conflict situations in West Africa and other regions of the continent.<sup>14</sup> The partnership was tried in Mali although it was not seamless. A report on the experiment noted: "...ECOWAS expected (the AU) to cede leadership of the crisis resolution to ECOWAS in its 'zone of primary responsibility'...The AU had different ideas and motives and, on occasions, subjectively interpreted the principle of 'subsidiarity' to mean 'subordination'".<sup>15</sup> Consequently, ECOWAS was left fretting and was let down by AU's insensitivity.

Several important constraints of cross-cutting nature stand in the way of continental and regional efforts in effective local conflict management in Africa. They range from chronic poor funding to limited basic logistics for effective peacekeeping and peace support operations.<sup>16</sup> Added to these debilitating limitations is the almost total absence of local lifting capacity for timely deployment of troops. From experience dating back to the OAU peacekeeping force in Chad in 1982, many troop-contributing states have had to rely on the US, UK and France to lift their troops to the theatre of operation. This expectedly resulted in long delays in troop deployment and lack of element of surprise which is important in peace enforcement operations.<sup>17</sup> Some, if not if not all, of these limitations were evident in Burundi, Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Mali.

These perennial constraints are not surprising because African multilateral organizations like the AU and ECOWAS are notorious for their shoe-string budgets. Added to that is the reality that most African armies are also poorly funded and equipped and can hardly operate outside their national borders without external backing. ECOWAS, noted for its deployments in West Africa, has admitted that it “...lacks the requisite strategic, military, logistical and financial base for autonomous action during violent conflicts...”<sup>18</sup> Poor funding of missions has led to loss of local ownership, frustration and marginalisation especially after “rehatting” of the African troops by the UN in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Sudan respectively. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, the UN simply took over the operations and “claimed the credit for restoring peace and stability in the two countries”. ECOWAS and Nigeria that had done the “dirty work” were side-lined.<sup>19</sup> Poor funding and dependence on external assistance has been blamed for the delay in fully operationalising APSA. Poor funding would not disappear soon given the parlous state of African economies, and casts doubts on the prospects of wholly locally owned and sustained “African Solutions for Peace and Security” at the regional and continental levels.<sup>20</sup> African peacekeepers are often poorly equipped to carry out their mandates efficiently.<sup>21</sup> Presently there is considerable reliance on external powers and organizations like the EU, UN, US, UK, etc., for the success of African military operations.<sup>22</sup>

Mission mandates have also been noted for their lack of precision and robustness, which also hampered the operations in the past and in some instances even prolonged the hostilities. The ECOMOG mission in Liberia was notorious for its malleable mandate and was partly responsible for prolonging the civil war in that country. Sometimes Missions have no clear entry and exit strategies with troops bogged down in long drawn

operations with the attendant loss of morale.<sup>23</sup>

These observations raise several important questions for the AU and cast doubts on the practicability and effectiveness of AfSol. First, how realistic is AfSol given the current low level of the continent's socio-economic and political development? Second, is it feasible to pursue Afrocentric conflict resolution policies and strategies, no matter how desirable that may be in an international system that is characterised by unprecedented globalisation processes that have turned the world into a global village? African States have played active roles and will continue to do so in finding peaceful solutions to threats to global peace and security in diverse ways, and most certainly, through multilateral peace keeping operations under UN auspices. Thus as desirable as AfSol is, it must not be used to promote Africa's isolation, or more importantly, as a placebo by the international community to leave Africa to its fate in times of serious local emergencies. By advocating a policy of "African solutions to African problems" without the requisite capability to "go it alone" in the post-Cold War era, African leaders could easily play into the hands of the major powers and harden their policy of "no boots on the ground" in Africa irrespective of the gravity of the challenges. After all, experience has shown that "African Solutions for Peace and Security" are never fully autonomously undertaken. AfSol may, in fact, be accused of ignoring the reality of today's intricately interconnected world, which Africa may not be able to influence in any significant way in the immediate future.

At another level of analysis, strict adherence to "African solutions to African problems" even if that were possible, presumes that African conflicts and security challenges are of purely local or domestic origins

and are easily amenable to “neighbourhood” solutions. However, such a perception may be politically naive and ignores the reality that many African conflicts are traceable to the continent’s troubled historical past. AfSol may also have ignored the centrality of the national interest in state action. Where an external actor’s national interests are threatened and it has the requisite capability, it may resort to self-help to address the situation. This was certainly what France did in Mali in Operation Serval in January 2013.<sup>24</sup> AfSol may also have been predicated on the false assumption that Africa has the military power to “go it alone” in securing peace and stability on the continent. The truth is that the AU relies, to a large extent, on moral opprobrium to get compliance of its decisions even by its members and external actors, which is not always the case especially if core national interests are at stake.

### **Prospects for the Future**

The future looks bright on paper because “African Solutions for Peace and Security” is arguably a long term ideal. As well, threats to peace and security are ever present in the domestic and international environments. Even the developed and advanced democracies have had to grapple with threats to peace and security because disgruntled and “marginalised groups” do resort to self-help violence, posing serious danger to national and in extreme cases, regional and global peace and security. If the AU and RECs are to take more responsibility for the peace and security of the continent, what are the normative and objective requirements for effective and sustainable “African Solutions for Peace and Security”? What must the African Union and regional bodies do to realise the broad objectives of “Try Africa First” in the sphere of multilateral conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding? What

capabilities—institutional and material—must the AU and RECs acquire and consolidate to actualise AfSol? If wholly “African solutions” are not practicable at the moment, what are the most practicable alternatives?

Answers to these key questions are inseparable from the future of AfSol in the short, medium and long term. They raise pertinent issues bothering on local ownership, affordability, sustainability, and “doability” of peace interventions by the AU and its regional partner organizations. Clearly, continued dependence on external development partners casts serious doubt on African capability and sustainability of AfSol. Sadly, the inevitability of long term cooperation with, if not dependence on, external actors is boldly captured in the elaborate 2007 Africa-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement.<sup>25</sup> Given such a reality, can there ever be completely locally owned and sustained “African Solutions for Peace and Security” now or in the long term? Without prejudice to the answers to these important questions, it is imperative for the AU and RECs to develop capability to “sustain multiple deployments in at least two theatres complete with Mission Headquarters”. Humanitarian assistance is still haphazardly done and most of the time relief materials are provided by foreign organizations like the Red Cross, Save the Children, Medicines sans Frontier, UNICEF, etc. This is certainly an area that needs urgent attention. The “absence” of local humanitarian NGOs in service delivery seriously undermined the rationale for intervention in many theatres in the past.

In the light of the foregoing, perhaps there is need for now, at least, to redefine the concept to accommodate contemporary realities, without losing sight of AfSol’s long term goals. The slow operationalisation of APSA is a reflection of the current realities in Africa and by implication those

of AfSol. In short, the prevailing political and economic climate suggests an incrementalist approach to the AfSol ideal. AfSol should, perhaps for now, be conceptualised in segments emphasising, for instance, a pivotal role for African initiators, initiatives and overwhelming participation via troop contribution and other complements in peacekeeping or other military interventions authorised by the AU and RECs. In this new conceptualisation of AfSol what is critical is full and active African participation and involvement in all critical decision-making processes and related activities. This will leave room for appropriate external participation to fill in critical strategic and financial gaps. The “revised conception” also makes room for hybrid arrangements with the UN that will protect the African presence and contribution to missions domiciled in the continent.

Expectedly, command and control of such missions would be in African hands, regardless of the nationality of the commander and in line with global best practices. This alternative conceptualisation of AfSol stresses institution building in the AU and regional communities to enhance predictability, competence and effectiveness. Of course, the need for strong political will and commitment on the part of African leaders cannot be overemphasised. Political will and commitment should elicit regular payment of annual contributions to AU and RECs budgets, which is presently not the case. To underscore commitment to AfSol, the AU and RECs should embark on vigorous fund raising drives in support of AU and regional Peace Funds. Alternatively, Peace Endowment Funds could be set up at the continental and regional levels to which donations would be made. Donations to the Funds could be solicited from citizens at home and abroad and from Africa’s friends. As well, major local and foreign corporations that benefit immensely from

local and global peace dividends should be made to contribute a fraction of their annual profits to the Peace or Endowment Funds to fund their peace support operations across the continent. In respect of the Peace Endowment Fund, a Board of Trustees comprising reputable Africans and “friends of Africa” should be appointed to manage it in accordance with best practices. Finally, the AU and RECs could borrow a leaf from the highly successful fund raising campaign of then Senator Barak Obama, now President of the US, in 2009. No donation would be too small as cumulatively, the “little drops” could make a lot of difference in terms of effective local funding of peace operations in Africa.

Also important is the imperative of functional communication channels between the AU and RECs to avoid confusion, misinformation, suspicion and undue rivalry between them during planning and troop deployments as was the case between the AU and ECOWAS in Mali.<sup>26</sup> Above all, the AU and RECS should work closely “...towards a better definition, clarification, and application of the principles of ‘subsidiarity’, comparative advantage and burden sharing underpinning the MOU between the AU and RECs/RMs”.<sup>27</sup> That way, RECs would not feel they are being treated as a junior partner especially if a mission is in their own “backyards” or “neighbourhoods”. By ignoring the principle of subsidiarity, in Mali the AU did not encourage ECOWAS to have a sense of ownership or belongingness in the operation and was, therefore, eager to disengage. As well, there is a need to standardise best practices in peacekeeping and peace support operations between the AU and RECs, on the one hand, and among RECs, on the other. It is important for RECs/RMs to initiate consultations among themselves “...to formulate and harmonise positions on peace and security, and ensure transparent and mutually beneficial relations with the AU”.<sup>28</sup> It is also imperative

for the AU and RECs to democratise their procedures and institutions to enhance popular support. This is necessary since the AU and RECs are still largely perceived as “associations of African leaders and elites”, which does not improve civil society support for multilateral peace and security initiatives on the continent. This situation cries for increased partnerships and consultations between the continental AU and regional agencies and civil society groups. If properly informed and mobilised, civil society groups could be effective avenues for building a culture of peace in their respective countries in particular and the continent in general by drumming up support before, during and after peace and security operations.

Many of the violent post-Cold War conflicts that necessitated military deployments in Africa are traceable to governance deficits in Africa. It is, therefore, necessary for the AU and regional communities to put in place measures for deepening democracy and good governance in Member States as a more sustainable approach to conflict prevention and management. As former UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan, rightly advised, African states and leaders “must prize democracy” if the continent and its people are to enjoy peace, stability, development and prosperity. This is unavoidable because as the popular refrain goes, “prevention is always better than cure”. Happily, the AU and some RECs have put in place measures and mechanisms to institutionalise zero tolerance of non-democratic changes of government in Africa. The AU’s Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, on the one hand, and the Revised ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, on the other, are welcome developments in the right direction. Both Organisations have also adopted elaborate sanctions on regimes to deal

with defaulters, a move that has thus far deterred flagrant interference with constitutional and electoral processes by Member States. The revised ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, adopted by the Authority of Heads of State and Government in April 2015, has added stringent sanctions on the existing regime to deter and ultimately rid the region of anti-democratic tendencies.

Also African people are becoming increasingly emboldened to reject sit-tight leaders and undemocratic manipulations of constitutions and electoral processes, as witnessed in the Arab Spring in North Africa in 2011, the forced exit of Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso in October 2014, and violent demonstrations in Burundi—still on-going at the time of writing in July 2015— against President Pierre Nkurunziza’s bid for a third term in office, contrary to constitutional provisions. Significantly, also is the recent ECOWAS leaders’ expression of intent in December 2014 to limit presidents to a two-term limit in the region<sup>29</sup>. Finally, whether AfSol becomes fully operational or not, the AU and RECs will continue to play decisive roles in maintaining peace and security issues in Africa through their legitimising, bridge-building, unifying and fund-raising roles as appropriate, from time to time. It is even possible for them to play several of these roles at the same time depending on the circumstances and nature of the conflict. Briefly, as “legitimisers”, the AU and RECs could back peace initiatives, agreements or mission in any member country as the need arises. Such endorsements would enhance their legitimacy and “quarantine” them from spoilers. As bridge builders, the AU and RECs could partner with local and external stakeholders during peace talks to broker agreements and act as guarantors of any agreements so reached to end hostilities in a member state. ECOWAS played such a role admirably in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The AU and

RECs could engage and have also engaged factions in a conflict to sheath their swords to end hostilities peacefully. This has been done behind the scenes using “quiet” or “presidential mediation” strategies and “shuttle diplomacy” to persuade rival factions to come to the peace table and settle their differences. This was recently (June 2015) demonstrated in the peace agreement between the government of Mali and the Tuaregs in the Northern part of the country to bring the long conflict and violent struggle to an end. The AU and ECOWAS would need to constantly monitor compliance with the Mali peace agreement so that it does not unravel. Lastly, and as discussed in an earlier section of the chapter, the AU and RECs could be versatile sources of fund raising and mobilisation in support of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace support operations on the continent. If such a role is played effectively, it could provide invaluable resources for the actualisation of AfSol’s mandate at the continental and regional spheres.

## Notes

1. Amadu Sesay, Olussola Ojo and Orobola Fasehun, *The OAU After Twenty Years*, Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1984
2. Lt. General (rtd) Louis Matshenyego et al; *African Peace and Security Architecture, 2010 Assessment Study*, Addis Ababa: African Union, 2010, p18
3. For details on the challenges that ECOWAS had in Mali in respect of the Peace Support Operations and its relations with the AU during the mission, see *The After-Action Review of ECOWAS Initiatives and Responses to the Multidimensional Crises in Mali*, Abuja: ECOWAS Commission, November 2013 to February 2014. The author facilitated the Review.
4. This connection was eloquently made by the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, in his address at the Cairo Summit of the OAU Heads of State and Government, June 1991
5. The countries that are worst hit presently are Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia in North Africa and in Sub-Sahara Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Somalia.
6. For more on this, see *Revised Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, (Henceforth Revised Mechanism, Abuja: ECOWAS Commission, April 2015.
7. See the map of Africa and the map of the world for the fine details on Africa's geographical features and location on the world map.

8. For details of his argument, see Nasser, G.A. *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, London: Smith, Keynes and Marshall, 1959, pp 62-74
9. Nkrumah is the most vocal advocate of a United States of Africa comprising North Africa and Africa South of the Sahara. He made the speech at the opening ceremony of the First Conference of Independent African States, in Accra, Ghana. For details, see Colin Legum, *Bandung, Cairo and Accra: A Report on the First Conference of Independent African States*, London: The African Bureau, 1958, p23.
10. *Ibid*
11. For details on this peacekeeping fiasco, see Amadu Sesay, *The Limits of Peacekeeping by a Regional Organization: The OAU Peacekeeping Force in Chad*, Fredericton: New Brunswick, Conflict Quarterly, Vol. XI, No.1, winter 1991, 007-26.
12. See Amadu Sesay, *Fighting Bushfires: ECOWAS and Peacemaking in West Africa*, Abuja: ECOWAS Commission, forthcoming October 2015. The book chronicles the ECOMOG military interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau
13. See *Agenda for Peace*, the Brahimi Report and High Level Panel Report on the role of the UN and regional arrangements in securing the world; 1992, 2000, and 2004 respectively; New York, UN Department of Information.
14. *Revised Mechanism*, op.cit.
15. *The After-Action Review of ECOWAS Initiatives and Responses*

- to the Multidimensional Crises in Mali, *op.cit*, p21
16. For glimpse of some of these challenges and the implications for AU peacekeeping and peacemaking missions, see Amadu Sesay; “From the OAU in Chad to the AU in Darfur: The Limits of Peace-keeping by Africa’s Regional Organizations” in Bola A. Akinterinwa (ed.), *Organization of African Unity/African Union at 50; Volume One: Challenges and Prospects of Self-Reliance in Africa*, Lagos: NIIA, 2013, pp401-432
  17. The Togolese Police Contingent to the ECOWAS Mali operation could not be deployed until the end of the operation for lack of airlift capability. See *The After-Action Review of ECOWAS Initiatives and Responses to the Multidimensional Crises in Mali, op.cit.*
  18. *Ibid.* P24
  19. See Amadu Sesay, *Fighting Bushfires, op.cit*
  20. Lt. General (rtd) Louis Matshenyego et al; *African Peace and Security Architecture, 2010 Assessment Study*, Addis Ababa: African Union, 2010, p65
  21. See Amadu Sesay, *From the OAU in Chad to the AU in Darfur op.cit*
  22. Lt. General (rtd) Louis Matshenyego et al; *African Peace and Security Architecture, 2010 Assessment Study*, Addis Ababa: African Union, 2010,p65
  23. The protracted civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but especially the latter, were blamed on the poor mandate of ECOMOG

24. The Operation was named after an African Cat. For details, see Wikipedia, accessed on 20/07/2015
25. See Osita Eze and Amadu Sesay (eds.), *Africa and Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Lagos, NIIA, 2010. See in particular, Amadu Sesay, "The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement and Self-Reliance: Matters Arising."
26. *The After-Action Review of ECOWAS Initiatives and Responses to the Multidimensional Crises in Mali*, op.cit., p26
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid; p. 45-46
29. See Communiqué of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, 46<sup>th</sup> meeting, Abuja, December 2015. The decision was inserted in the Revised Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, in March 2015 for consideration by the Heads of State. Unfortunately, however, the matter was referred to a Committee of the Heads of State and Government Summit meeting in Accra, Ghana, in April 2015.

## Chapter Three

### **Enriching the African-Centred Solutions Concept: Reflections on AU-led Peace Support Operations in Sudan and Somalia**

**Dawit Yohannes\***

African-Centred Solutions to African Peace and Security Problems (AfSol) is another buzzword, or rather a loosely-defined concept gaining a wider currency in contemporary African politics. Irrespective of its contested origin, the concept of AfSol is increasingly pervading both common parlance as in popular discourses as well as the domain of African policy-making. Notwithstanding, at this juncture, it is not entirely clear whether AfSol as a concept is becoming more, rather than less, meaningful; thus justifying the ongoing quest for conceptual clarity. Ostensibly, there is a need to solidify the different dimensions of the concept beyond its most common conception of AfSol as an elitist mantra often employed to garner popular support around issues of greater interest to the wider African community.

In an effort to define and further refine the concept, an African expert workshop in 2014 organised by IPSS identified three different dimensions of AfSol, namely, shared values, commitment, and ownership as common ground to future discussions and researches. Within the context of finding clarity to AfSol, this paper seeks to contribute to a more concrete understanding of the concept especially pertaining to its application to policy implementation. It does so by subjecting the concept of AfSol to analytical and empirical scrutiny from the vantage point of its two major

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pillars, namely, ownership and shared values.

The paper interrogates the specific dimension of ownership considered as a critical component of the concept of AfSol. By taking different cases of African peace operations and their glaring limitations in terms of financial, material, and human resources, the paper eventually establishes the need for analytical elbow space for the concept of partnership within the conceptual framing and practical implementation of AfSol.

By arguing this way, the paper also challenges the practicality and desirability of an absolutist and perhaps idealist understanding of AfSol as an exclusive African ownership and self-sufficiency (Gelot, 2012). In addition, the paper also examines to what extent some of the African PSOs are underpinned by shared values or principles, which constitute the normative dimensions of AfSol. This examination is premised within the assumption that AfSol needs to be both actor-centred and contingent in specific areas of peace and security institutional engagements. To this end, the paper employs empirical cases to further the argument for fine tuning and contextualizing the different dimensions of AfSol within specific areas of APSA's institutions and underlying policy frameworks.<sup>1</sup>

The paper is structured as follows. In the coming section, AfSol's various discursive and conceptual applications are briefly explored. This is followed by an examination of how AfSol was incorporated into African peace and security policy making and implementation. The third part reinforces the preceding sections by showcasing two African peace support operations often conceived as practical manifestations of AfSol. The paper concludes by critical assessment of the two cases from the vantage point of ownership and shared values underscoring the need

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<sup>1</sup> APSA refers to the Africa Peace and Security Architecture.

for further reconceptualisation of the AfSol notion.

### **Discursive Applications of AfSol**

At a very broad level of abstraction, AfSol appears to be employed in the context of African peace and security policy-making largely in its normative and explanatory dimensions and of late as a little understood but potentially cogent implementation strategy. Such taxonomy seems to resonate well, for instance, with the on-going efforts of defining AfSol as a policy, as a concept, as an ideology, as a philosophy or as pure practice (Institute for Peace and Security Studies, 2014).

Its normative and explanatory utility as a successor to the ideals of Pan Africanism and “Try Africa First” highlights what African interventions should look like against the bleak background of failed interventions by non-Africans. The normative dimension appears to be more dominant than AfSol

as an implementation strategy and is symbolised by the belief that “African governments bear the primary responsibility for these conflicts and, hence, should take the lead in responding to them” (Williams, 2008: 2). In its positive sense, the “African solutions” approach here represents a normative defence of the pluralist conception of international society and a rejection of neo-colonial enterprises (ibid.).

Its normative application appears to be more or less related to its explanatory dimensions, namely, the desire to interpret, give meaning, categorise, and legitimise certain political and military interventions to Africa’s problems as being “African solutions”. AU’s interventions in Sudan and Somalia were presented as African responses to specific

crises. The legitimizing rationale of AfSol emanates from the clear and demonstrated international disengagement in the face of grave peace and security crises of the 1990s justifying Africa's own responses. The normative and explanatory application of the concept can be construed as having cross-cutting implications as largely rallying tools for political mobilisation and policy making in the face of certain "African problems".

The third dimension is AfSol as an implementation strategy, which is an evolving concept embedded in deliberate efforts of refining the concept and employing it increasingly within various peace and security policy making and implementation efforts, albeit with little clarity. The Peace and Security Council of the AU at times defines its activities as geared toward providing African Solutions to African Problems in matters related to peace and security.<sup>2</sup> At its most basic level, an operational definition of AfSol as an implementation tool can be made as diverse and practical forms of contemporary interventions in peace and security undertaken by African regional organizations or states acting on their behalf.

The point of departure for the chapter is premised within the conceptual dearth surrounding the notion of AfSol. The consequential need to engage with a conceptual deficit is a practical one which infringes on the implementation or realisation of any given concept. The (dialectical) interplay between any form of conceptual gap and its resultant practical manifestation was succinctly captured as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> See for instance AU PSC Communiqué (PSC/MIN/BR. 1(CCCLXXXVII)) which states the main obstacles to the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF) are funding and inadequate logistic capabilities eventually impacting ability of the AU in providing *African solutions to African problems* in the management of conflict situations on the continent.

Recognizing, understanding and managing the many “conceptual gaps” that exist in the global arena is one of the main challenges for political leaders, diplomats and observers of global affairs. These conceptual gaps not only contribute to misunderstandings in the international arena, but also to the emergence and escalation of international crises and conflicts (Keukeleire and Pang, 2015: 105).

The contention surrounding AfSol as a concept can be directed to the diagnosis side of AfSol (meaning African Problems) as well as to the suggested remedy (African solutions) undergirded by different questions. The first side of the interrogation refers to the need for conceptual clarity around what is meant by African solutions. Here African solutions can be problematised from two distinct angles, namely, (i) the need to define what is meant by solutions and how to achieve these “African solutions” (ii) the questions of agency, namely, who signifies the “African” within the “African solutions” responsible for finding these solutions. Similarly, AfSol can be interrogated from the vantage point of what stands for African solutions engendering questions on the nature of the alluded solutions. Further, the idea of African Problems is equally problematic particularly from the vantage point of the “Africanness” of the alleged African peace and security challenges (Gelot, 2012) and the element of African agency in causing and sustaining these problems.

While the above are legitimate questions worth engaging with, this chapter reverts to certain conceptual gaps surrounding AfSol’s two dimensions, namely, ownership and shared values.<sup>3</sup> Emanating from these conceptual gaps, the paper argues that while existing conception of ownership and shared values are necessary parameters for benchmarking

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<sup>3</sup> Even though the IPSS AfSol workshop identified ownership, shared values, and commitment, I will be focusing on the first two pillars throughout this paper. Please refer to the IPSS workshop report for full discussion and conceptualisation of the three pillars.

what constitutes AfSol, they are not sufficient in and for themselves. In order to transform “African solutions” from a mere normative context/input (Gelot, 2012) to an implementation strategy, the conception of AfSol needs to be refined utilizing the “lived” and practical experiences of existing AU-led interventions largely in the realm of peace operations.

### **Contextualizing AfSol within African Peace and Security Policy Making and Implementation**

AfSol as a norm is getting a more nuanced use in policy circles since the 1990s given the disengagement of the international community from the continent amidst grave peace and security crises. Nonetheless, the transformation of the OAU to the AU, itself born out of the need for peace and security (Moolakkattu, 2010), was an important caesura in the gradual crystallisation of the idea of AfSol. The enormity of Africa’s security challenges at the turn of the new century, doctrinal bottlenecks and OAU’s evident capacity constraints in combination necessitated the underlying need for reforming the institutional approaches of tackling the continent’s security challenges.

Following the transformation of the OAU into the AU, a number of steps were taken in view of realizing the Pan African dreams of fostering African integration and attempting to go beyond the OAU’s limited achievements in its various sectors (Sithole, 2012). In the specific case of peace and security, the transformation translated into two major developments. First, the AU was accorded a much more robust mandate of promoting peace and security. Second, a concomitant overhaul of the continental approach was undertaken to execute the AU’s revitalised peace and security mandate by establishing the APSA as an operational structure thereof (Engel and Porto, 2010). Such an operational structure

is envisaged to be an implementation arm of the AU tasked with the effective execution of “the decisions taken in the areas of conflict prevention, peace-making, peace support operations and intervention, as well as peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction” (ibid: 3). In this vein, the operationalisation of APSA appears to have practically encapsulated the above two major developments by encompassing both the establishment of new institutions as well as endorsement of norms and rules which govern African states’ interaction on matters of peace, security, and development (ibid.).

The operationalisation of APSA also provided the ground for the gradual crystallisation of some of the existing lofty ideals and norms which otherwise were too ideal and abstract to ensure their implementations. Cases in point are the notions of Pan-Africanism and “African Solutions for African Problems”, which were incorporated as the guiding principles behind the operationalisation of Africa’s security structure (ibid.). More specifically, upon this transformative moment, “African Solutions to African Problems” became one of those norms incorporated in the AU’s emerging stature guiding the institutional approaches of dealing with peace and security in Africa (Gelot, 2012).<sup>4</sup>

Since then, AU has taken an increasingly growing posture to intervene in some of the conflicts in the continent. Most notably, in an apparent demonstration of its newfound role as an agent in the field of peace and security, AU authorised multiple interventions in the form of peace

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<sup>4</sup> According to Linea Gelot (2012: 52), the AU comprises seven constitutive norms (1) sovereign equality (Article 4a of the Constitutive Act); (2) non-intervention Article 4g; (3) African solutions to African problems; (4) territorial integrity or ‘uti-posseditis’ Article 4b (5) non-use of force or peaceful settlements of disputes (Article 4e, 4f, 4i); (6) condemnation of unconstitutional changes of governments (Article 4p); (7) the AU’s right to intervene in a member state in grave circumstances or ‘non-indifference’ (Article 4h).

operations including those in Burundi (2003-4), in Sudan (2004-7), in the Comoros (2006, 2007, 2008), and in Somalia (2007-present). Whether in popular discourses or in some of the official AU communiqués, some of these interventions were framed as “African Solutions to African Problems”.

### **African Interventions in Sudan and Somalia: Signifying AfSol as Implementation Strategy and Showcasing the Conceptual Limitations African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS)**

Since 2003, the Darfur region has become the site of a civil war that has continued to date. Contrary to popular perception on its immediacy, the Darfur crisis was underlined by a history of conflict and is characterised by three overlapping dimensions, namely, centre-periphery marginalization, inter-communal fighting, and flurry of political violence.<sup>5</sup> The conflict assumed a new dimension in 2003 when rebels from Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) jointly launched attacks against government facilities. Following the escalation of the conflict, the Sudanese government responded heavy-handedly to the military advances of the rebels triggering a sustained bout of attacks and counter-attacks.

What resulted was massacre, displacement and famine, an overall death toll probably exceeding 200,000, the deepening distrust between Darfurians and the political leaders in Khartoum as well as the fragmentation of Darfurian society (de Waal, 2007).

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<sup>5</sup> Some of the root causes and drivers of the conflict that preceded the existing ones include loss or severe disruption of traditional livelihoods, weakened traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, impunity and weak rule of law, weak or absent State administrations in rural areas, prevalence of arms and armed militias, lack of trust between and within communities, manipulation of social divisions, and cycles of retaliatory violence (UNSC 2014: Paragraph 3).

The African Union approved the deployment of AMIS in 2004. Implementation took place following the signing of the N'Djamena Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (HCFA) between the Government of the Sudan, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in April 2004 and the follow-up agreement of 28 May 2004 (UNSC, 2007: §3).<sup>6</sup> The signing of the HCFA is accorded an important place in the genesis of AMIS and is considered as a source of the “initial mandate or the legal authority for the deployment of AU monitors in Darfur” (Apiah-Mensah, 2005: 30).<sup>7</sup>

AMIS was established initially as a 120-person Ceasefire Monitoring Commission and with more than 5,000 AU peacekeepers (Neethling, 2009). Initially, the Mission was tasked by the AU to carry out two objectives, namely, i) to monitor the ceasefire and report violations of the HCFA and ii) to protect itself (O’Neil and Cassis cited in Ekengard, 2008: 25). Later, the AU PSC in its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting on October 20, decided the enhancement<sup>8</sup> of the Mission as well as the expansion of its mandate<sup>9</sup> to include assisting the process of confidence building; and contributing to a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief and the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes (AU PSC, 2004: §4). AMIS

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<sup>6</sup> The signing of the HCFA is attributed an important place in the genesis of AMIS. The HCFA stipulated the agreement of the signatories with regard to the cessation of hostilities, the establishment of a joint commission and a ceasefire commission for the implementation of HCFA, release of prisoners of war, facilitation of the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and the creation of a team of observers with an attached protection force to monitor the ceasefire (Ekengard, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> The HCFA stipulated the agreement of the signatories with regard to the cessation of hostilities; the establishment of a joint commission and a ceasefire commission for the implementation of HCFA; release of prisoners of war; facilitation of the delivery of humanitarian assistance; as well as the creation of a team of observers with attached protection force to monitor the ceasefire which was later named the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) (Ekengard, 2008: 14).

<sup>8</sup> Which meant, inter alia, an increase in the military strength to 2,341 troops and the introduction of a civilian police (CIVPOL) component of 815 police (Ekengard, 2008: 9).

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed critic of the insufficiency of AMIS I and ambiguous nature of AMIS II, refer to Ekengard 2008.

reached over 7,000 personnel in 2007; including 5,197 protection force personnel, 946 military observers and 1,360 civilian police (UNSCa 2007: §3), albeit failing to end the cycle of violence in Darfur.

AMIS' capabilities were severely hampered by a combination of factors both institutional and non-institutional, i.e., complexities surrounding the conflict. Some of the major institutional factors include the insufficiency of its mandate,<sup>10</sup> financial and material resources constraints;<sup>11</sup> lack of sufficient number of peacekeepers in relation to the size of Darfur (Kreps, 2008), absence of logistical infrastructure to handle and manage bulk and urgent purchases worth millions of dollars (Neethling, 2009), force generation issues, and overdependence on partners (Appiah-Mensah, 2007). Capturing the above predicament, it was generally concluded that "AMIS was too small to reach its objectives" (Ekengard, 2008: 5).

Besides the factors mentioned above, which are internal to AMIS, the mission also operated in a very complex and dynamic socio-political and security milieu. Failure to disarm the Janjaweed militia; continued ceasefire violations by all sides of the conflicts; indiscriminate air bombardment by the Sudanese government; series of attacks on IDP camps and humanitarian workers; worsening humanitarian situations characterised the deterioration in the security situation in Darfur (Adebajo, 2011). In addition, proliferation of mediation efforts by different actors as well as regional rivalries among the neighbouring countries<sup>12</sup> lessened the Mission's potential contribution towards the resolution of the Darfur conflict. As de Waal (2007: 1041) observed, the AU Mission lacked or (would have been improved if it had) "a stronger

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<sup>10</sup> Ademoa Abass (2007) also *characterised* AMIS as having a tepid mandate.

<sup>11</sup> Including strategic airlift capabilities; armoured forces or high mobility infantry units; lack of data management system early warning or advanced information (Kreps, 2008: 69).

<sup>12</sup> Between Chad and Sudan or the involvement of Libya under Gadafi regime;

mandate, a more realistic concept of operations, larger numbers and better logistics, and better finance". Given these challenges, AMIS was deemed to be failing in terms of meeting its objectives (Neethling, 2009) leading to calls<sup>13</sup> for the transition of AMIS into a more robust UN peacekeeping force that might be better equipped and to deal with the violence in Darfur. At the forefront of the call for AMIS' transition into a UN force were USA and UK, the former largely propelled by the power of NGOs and other activists warning of an impending and/or on-going genocide in Darfur.

The stated rationale for the transition was "the UN would do a better job and that "blue-hatting" of AU missions had worked in the past (e.g. in Burundi)" (de Waal, 2007: 1042). In short, a UN takeover of AMIS was meant to address the sustainability of the mission and its funding underscoring the lack of ownership by Africans in terms of committing the material and human resources required for executing the mission's mandate.<sup>14</sup>

### **African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)**

The downfall of Mohammed Siad Barre who ruled the country from 1967 and was defeated by clan-based armed opposition groups in January 1991, marked the beginning of what is commonly referred to as the Somali civil war. Since then, Somalia passed through trying

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<sup>13</sup> In late 2005, the EU announced that it would no longer fund AMIS, and Brussels, along with Kofi Annan (and the department of Peacekeeping Operations), pushed for a UN force to replace the AU mission (John Bolton cited in Adebajo, 2011: 207).

<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding, the transition of AMIS into a UN force failed to take effect prominently due to the intransigence of Sudanese government, which was opposed to the presence of a stronger UN force in Sudan. Sudanese resistance was also seconded by Russia and China, strong forces, as it would be a violation of Sudanese's sovereignty (Kreps, 2008). Instead, the idea of a hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping force was proposed and accepted as a compromise among the different sides. Consequently, AMIS was transitioned into UNAMID in 2007.

times including a complete state collapse, Balkanisation of the country, war-lordism, immense humanitarian crises, massive displacement of its populace and of late a jihadist terrorist insurgency. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was deployed in 2007 against the backdrop of a protracted crisis that can be broadly categorised along three major periodisation of Somalia's conflict trajectory between 1991 and 2007, particularly from the vantage point of external interventions.

The first period from 1991 to 1995 refers to the immediate years after the collapse of Siad Barre's regime, characterised by clan-based violence that led to Somalia's civil war. This was followed by successive international interventions none of which succeeded in stopping the violence (Centre on International Cooperation, 2011). Some of these major international interventions include the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I), the Chapter VII mandated US-led multinational force called United Task Force (UNITAF), and UNSOM II. This era culminated with the withdrawal from the country of the UN mission in 1995 leaving a limited UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) based in Nairobi for security reasons (Wiklund, 2013).

The second period from 1995 to 2000 was characterised by the absence of significant international interventions whether in the form of major peace processes or international or regional peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, the violence and fighting continued throughout Somalia. The country went through a period where no group managed to take control of the entire country and without any form of government (*ibid.*).

The period from 2000 to 2007 marked an era of renewed interests by external actors on Somalia. This was mainly reinforced by the 9/11 attacks in the US and the subsequent fears that anarchic territories might

provide safe haven for al-Qaeda (Burton and Williams, 2014). At a very broad level of generalization, this period featured at least two major peace talks,<sup>15</sup> a proposed but never materialised IGAD force as well as Ethiopia's 2006 military incursion into Somalia.

The deployment of an African peacekeeping force in Somalia thus came in the wake of this turbulent historical context (*ibid.*) marked by rivalry among the warring factions in Somalia, multiplicity of peace processes, a lapse in international interest to resolve the crisis, as well as interference from Somalia's neighbouring countries. Within this broad context, the deployment of AMISOM specifically appeared to be propelled by three immediate factors, namely, IGAD's inability to deploy Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Peace Support Mission to Somalia (IGASOM), the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the international community to deploy peacekeepers to Somalia, and UN's concern about Somalia being captured by radical Islamic groups after Ethiopia's departure (Dersso, 2010).

AMISOM's mandate, which was initially for six months, broadly covered three major areas, namely, (i) providing support to the TFIs (Transitional Federal Institutions) in their efforts towards the stabilisation of the situation in the country and the furtherance of dialogue and reconciliation, (ii) facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance, and (iii) creating conducive conditions for long-term stabilization, reconstruction and development in Somalia (*ibid.*). Within the rubric of its mandate, the mission was also authorised to undertake different tasks. These include

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<sup>15</sup> Namely, the Arta Peace Process in XX and the Somali Reconciliation Conference, in Eldoret, Kenya in November 2002. The latter culminated in the establishment of Transitional Federal Government (TFG) led by Abdullahi Yusuf.

supporting dialogue in Somalia; providing protection to TFIs; assisting in the implementation of the National Security and Stabilisation Plan of Somalia; providing technical and other support to the disarmament and stabilisation efforts; monitoring the security situation in areas of its deployment; facilitating humanitarian operations; and protecting the mission's personnel and equipment (AUPSC, 2007: §8).

In order to execute its mandates and tasks, AMISOM was initially authorised with a troop strength of 8,000 which included 9 infantry battalions of 850 personnel, each supported by maritime, coastal and air components, as well as an appropriate civilian component, including a police training team (*ibid*:§9). In addition, the mission was also meant to have 270 civilian police and a civilian component (Gadin, 2012). Uganda and Burundi were the initial troop-contributing countries (TCCs) during AMISOM's early days. The mission underwent subsequent enlargements of authorised troop levels from 8,000 to 12,000, then to 17,731 and finally reaching 22,126 in 2014. This was following the UNSC Resolutions 1964 (2010), 2036 (2012), and 2124 (2013). The actual level of troop deployment in terms of military component reached 22,056 in 2014. Likewise, its police and civilian components respectively stood at 514 and 52 in February 2014 (*ibid.*). AMISOM's mandate was extended to November 30, 2015 following UNSC Resolution 2182 (2014).

Initially, the troop-contributing countries (TCC) were envisaged to ensure self-sustenance of their logistical support with the understanding that reimbursement for costs would follow once the AUC secure logistical support and funding from AU member states and partners (AUPSC, 2007: §9). In terms of the much needed financial and logistical support, the mission's deployment was reliant on the contribution of other

stakeholders, namely, AU member states, the League of Arab States, the European Union (EU) and its member states, the UN, and other AU partners (*ibid.*: §12). To this end, financing of AMISOM featured different forms including the UN Assessed Peacekeeping Budget, the UN Trust Fund for AMISOM, the UN Trust Fund for Somali Security Forces, the AU Peace Fund, the AU/AMISOM partners, and most importantly the EU, which paid the allowances for AMISOM's uniformed personnel (Williams, 2008). As its engagement deepened in Somalia, AMISOM was also accorded UN logistic support paid through the UN assessed contribution and the Voluntary Trust Fund.

In authorizing AMISOM, AU was unequivocal about the transient nature of AMISOM. As stated in the PSC Communiqué (LXIX), the mission was deployed with a clear understanding that it would evolve into a United Nations operation that would support the long term stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia (AUPSC, 2007:§9). Nonetheless, the transition to a UN force was not realised as this chapter was being written, albeit the repeated extension of its mandate.

AMISOM's scope of engagement evolved though time reflecting the changing context in Somalia and international response to the country's problems (Williams, 2008). AMISOM's initial Concept of Operations (CONOPS) provided for a 4-phase expansion throughout the mission area and an exit strategy in the form of a UN handover. Its current force posture was configured around the deployment of troops in six sectors.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sector 1 comprised the regions of Banadir and Lower Shabelle and was under the command of Ugandan troops; Sector 2 comprised Lower and Middle Jubba and Kenyan forces were responsible for it; Sector 3 comprised Bay and Bakool as well as Gedo (Sub Sector 3) and it was under Ethiopian command; Sector 4 covered Hiiraan and Galgaduud regions and the Djiboutian forces were in charge of it; Sector 5 comprised the Middle Shabelle region and was under the responsibility of Burundian forces; Sector 6 covered Kismayo including the port city and its environs under it was under the command of Sierra Leone forces (AMISOM, 2015).

To say the least, AMISOM was a mission striving to achieve a complex and challenging mandate. It was a mission beset with a number of challenges which could be broadly categorised as those related to its operating environment, its capacity and resource constraints, inter- and intra-institutional coordination.

In terms of its operating environment, AMISOM was dealing with a resolute enemy, al-Shabab, which was adept at changing its tactics as well as forming alliances including with international terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda. This was also compounded by the persistent Somali political crises within TFI, thereby reducing the reliability of the mission's local partner (Williams, 2008 ).<sup>17</sup> The mission was also facing various capacity and resource constraints impacting its capability to finance its operations, timely force generation, and the ability to plan, deploy, and manage its missions. AMISOM also faced various forms of coordination challenges such as internal coordination problems between the mission's component parts (ibid.), between AMISOM and TCCs, between AMISOM and the different UN bodies in Somalia, as well as uncoordinated partner funding and support (AU Commission, 2013a ).<sup>18</sup>

Notwithstanding, the mission was able to register some gains in terms of battling the enemy, expanding its territorial control, as well as supporting the Somalia peace process banking on internal mission enablers and external conditions and circumstances (Wiklund, 2007).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Some of the internal political crises were pitting the budding central government in Mogadishu with some of the regional governments.

<sup>18</sup> Other challenges internal to AMISOM, especially during the early stages include an insufficient mandate and unclear concept of operations and command structures and underdeveloped doctrines for how to conduct PSOs within the AU framework (Hull and Svensson, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> The AMISOM military component has been instrumental in helping Somali National Security Forces push the Al Qaeda-affiliated terror group, al Shabaab, out of much of Southern Somalia including most major towns and cities. It has created a relatively secure environment which

The latter include internal changes within AMISOM (revised mandate change in the scope of engagement and increase in troop size); an international support structure featuring the contribution of the UN, EU, and individual states; internal weakening of al-Shabab; and security interventions by Ethiopia and Kenya (ibid.).

### **Critical Assessment of the Two Cases from the Vantage Point of Ownership and Shared Values**

In the foregoing section, two cases were systematically introduced to signify African-centred solutions in peace and security as commonly understood both by policy makers and in popular discourses. The two cases were interventions in the form of peace support operations in which the AU took the lead in legitimating, generating resources, and implementing these operations. In the forthcoming section, the two cases, sometimes referred to as African Solutions to African Problems,<sup>20</sup> will be examined from the vantage point of ownership and shared values, which were considered as two of the three pillars of AfSol.

#### **Ownership**

The AfSol workshop report introduced an extensive conception of ownership that covered the gamut of financial ownership and wide-ranging inclusivity. At the most basic level, the conception of ownership was embedded in Africa's capacity to conduct interventions in "doing it in one's own way" but was not about success (Institute for Peace and

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has allowed the Somali peace process to take root, gave the local population the opportunity to establish an accountable local governance institutions that can deliver services as well as rebuild the local economy and create linkages with the national economy and government. (<http://amisom-au.org/mission-profile/military-component/>).

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, (AMISOM, 2014) at <http://amisom-au.org/2015/05/africas-success-story-is-intertwined-with-somalia-says-au-special-envoy-to-somalia/>.

Security Studies, 2014). Besides, the workshop's understanding of the dimension of wide-ranging inclusivity locates ownership at different levels of the public as well as various stages of crafting solutions and participating of the populace as well as the leaders (Institute for Peace and Security Studies, 2014). Particularly, these twin conceptions of ownership will inform the examination of the cases as follows.

In both cases, lack of material, logistical, and financial capacity to deploy these missions is a self-evident but crucial factor that infringes upon the autonomy, success, and vitality of the interventions. In the case of Darfur, AMIS hobbled due to lack of resources starting from its inception. In fact, the issue of financial and material-resource constraints was one of the major factors that propelled its doomed transition into UNAMID, itself shrouded with the challenges and complexities of African ownership. Somalia's case also illustrates the classic case of ambition-resource gap in which AU embarked on an ambitious undertaking of pacifying Somalia in the face of insufficient resources. AU's mission in Somalia was too reliant on others for various aspects of its operations including its logistics, troop allowance, training, etc. For instance, while the UN provided for a logistical support financed from Assessed Contribution for peacekeeping from UN member states, EU provided for troop allowance.

The two cases also demonstrate the limitations in terms of other dimensions of ownership, namely, inclusivity at various levels. At the most basic level, contrary to the wider understanding of ownership introduced above, these interventions were demonstrations of the leaders' but not the peoples' ownership. In terms of locating ownership at various levels, the case studies underline the importance of the need

to enhance wider inclusivity in the design, process, and practice of these “solutions”. Understandably, these interventions are matters of “high politics” which were usually deliberated within the domains of high levels of decision making at the national, regional, continental, and global levels. Notwithstanding, the importance of devolved ownership and participation remained a crucial element impacting the success of these interventions. The Somalia case may illustrate the relevance of a national interlocutor to assist the stabilisation process, which seems ambivalent in the case of AMISOM.

In the same vein, the case of Darfur also featured the proliferation of multiple and contending initiatives of finding solutions at different levels, marked with on-going confusion but little ownership. This can be exemplified, for instance, by the various peace processes that accompanied the peacekeeping process, first during AMIS’s tenure and later after its transition into UNAMID. Within in these multiple peace processes, both the AU and UN were playing increasing roles in mediating the conflict in Darfur. In one of the mediation initiatives, the AU was criticised for instance, for not showing full ownership and little commitment to the joint AU-UN mediation under Bassole to which it was one of the guarantors. The critic largely emanated when the AU appointed the Mbeki Panel, which was considered a parallel and competing initiative to the existing AU-UN mediation (cf. Banseka 2012).

### **Shared Values**

At the discursive level, various normative aspects of African shared values constituting AfSol can be proposed. It is in this vein that the AfSol workshop introduced a number of shared values including tolerance, solidarity, collective security, responsible leadership and citizenry

committed to justice, practical solutions and human rights (IPSS, 2014). A contextual analysis of the two cases from the vantage point of these shared values is beyond the scope of this paper. However, one may observe that, to a certain extent, the two cases of peace operations illustrate the enactment of some of these shared values albeit selectively and inconsistently. At the very least, the cases symbolise the attempt by AU to be the pole bearer of collective security, which is one of the shared international security norms, in a continent where it is needed most.<sup>21</sup>

Leaving aside the search for conformity to some of these shared values mentioned above, the two cases demonstrate inconsistent application of some of the basic shared values and norms that are specific to the realm of peacekeeping. Among the plethora of existing and emerging norms, the African context of this debate can be illustrated using the specific norm of the Protection of Civilians (PoC).

Protection of Civilians is one of the peacekeeping norms currently guiding the tasks of any given peace operation. At its most basic conception, PoC refers to the measures to be undertaken by a peacekeeping mission to ensure the security of civilians. PoC has increasingly become one of the fundamental tasks of peace operations in the contemporary conflicts “where civilians constitute the overwhelming majority of the victims and targeting them has become a primary objective of the warring parties” (Appiah-Mensah and Eklou-Assogbavi, 2012). Out of the two cases, AMIS did have an explicit PoC mandate and was able to “achieve modest achievements in the area of civilian protection,

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<sup>21</sup> The AU PSC Protocol indicates that the PSC shall be a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa - See more at: <http://www.peaceau.org/en/page/38-peace-and-security-council#sthash.tQs5aD7g.dpuf>

mostly due to initiatives at the lowest level of the AMIS hierarchy” (Ekengard, 2008: 34). This is, albeit acknowledging that large-scale displacement and violence against civilians continued throughout the AMIS existence (*ibid*). On the contrary, AMISOM was clearly lacking an explicitly stated PoC mandate and was tasked with the protection of the AMISOM personnel, installations and equipment, including the right to self-defence. According to Solomon Dersso, the omission of PoC mandate resulted “in a failure to impress on AMISOM troops the need to balance their protection of the TFIs with the requirement of avoiding civilian casualties” (Dersso, 2010: 13). In summary, the PoC is a leading norm in peacekeeping globally. Despite its wide acceptance, the cases of AMIS and AMISOM symbolise the lack of shared understanding and application of the PoC, which can be considered as one of the shared values and norms in peacekeeping in Africa.

### **Concluding Remarks: Fine-Tuning the Notion of AfSol**

At least, two common trends are discernible within the two case studies featured in this paper. In both cases, AU deploys a mission with the expectation that a UN takeover would follow. While transition of AU mission into a UN blue helmet operation materialised in the case of AMIS, it has not taken place in Somalia yet. This casts doubt on the longevity of the different interventions dubbed as AfSol in both cases. After all, African solutions should not be intermediate or preparatory measures for interventions to be taken by non-Africans. A second trend common to both cases is the obvious lack of material, logistical, and financial capacity to deploy these missions. The ensuing reliance on non-Africans to deliver some of these resources infringed on the ownership and the autonomy of these interventions. Far from being its full incarnation, the two interventions in a way, embody the spirit of AfSol

writ large reflecting some of its dimensions, namely, African ownership and shared values albeit with little clarity and coherence. Besides, the two cases also illustrated the absence of common understanding of approaches to peace operations. This view can be reinforced, ten years after its establishment, by the failure to apply the African Standby Force (ASF) concept and doctrine, true to its letters, within African PSOs in some of the crises in Africa (Lotze, 2015) or by “the absence of a well-developed doctrine for peace and security, including conflict prevention and resolution and PSOs” (World Peace Foundation, 2015: 13). To the extent that we agree that these interventions signify AfSol as a strategy in action, we are also compelled to note their limitations in terms of certain aspects of ownership and shared values as conceptualised earlier (cf. IPSS, 2014).

Currently any analysis of Africa’s peace and security dynamics as well as the measures being undertaken would not fail to notice the relevance of forging cooperation with external actors. As illustrated by the two cases, non-Africans provided the bulk of the resources and expertise in the sustenance of the various AU missions. Given the on-going reliance on non-Africans, it can be argued that AfSol, whether as normative concept or as a policy in action, did not keep up pace with the nuances in the evolving nature of the international security architecture and is in need of conceptual reframing. In this new architecture, partnership between the UN and African regional organizations is featuring as an integral part of a new networked pattern in which international and regional organizations are increasingly working in close partnership to further regional and international political and security interests (Boutellis and Williams, 2014). In reframing AfSol, thus, we have to be cognizant of the pivotal role of partnership with external actors as a corollary to and

without relegating African ownership.

There is also a vital need to redefine AfSol in a manner that is context-specific and contingent on particular actors in the continent. Ongoing attempt by IPSS of zooming on African-centred solutions in peace and security is a first step towards the redefinition of AfSol, but it needs to be buttressed with further refinement. The question of who signifies the African in AfSol remains unanswered and invokes the need to render AfSol “actor-centred” and context-specific definition. Rather than an open-ended conception that embraces everything and eventually nothing, at least for now, AfSol should be further refocused toward specific institutional domains of peace and security and on AU as an agent and referent thereof. Admittedly, the choice of these two variables as the locus of AfSol is far from the ideal solution but justified through the contemporary and pragmatic exigencies of Africa’s realities. APSA, with its various institutions and underlying policy frameworks, has the potential to serve as pivotal platform of operationalising AfSol. Accordingly, AfSol’s three pillars shall still serve as broad benchmarks of African responses within the remits of APSA and its institutions but fine-tuned to the specificities of the various areas of interventions. In other words, the notions of ownership, shared values, and commitment should be further contextualised in ongoing intervention areas of APSA with their essence redefined accordingly. Better avenues for future investigations in this regard are articulation of ownership, shared values and commitments, for example, in search of “the operational elements of an African PSO doctrine” (World Peace Foundation, 2015) or refinement of African approaches to mediation and reorganisation of support structures to this approach.

Short of these inherent adjustment to its conceptualizations, AfSol risks becoming one of the many notions emptied of content and of little practical relevance in terms of operational reality.

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## Chapter Four

### South Sudan: Exploring African-Centred Hybrid Sustainable Peacebuilding and Security

Evelyn Mayanja\*

The process of building sustainable peace and security in South Sudan (SS) is one of the pressing challenges facing Africa, requiring contextualised social, political, structural, economic and mental reconstruction to address the root causes to make peace and security irreversible. Before independence in July 2011, SS was ravaged by over 20 years protracted conflict, bloodshed and destruction (Johnson, 2011). In December 2013, armed conflict started when President Salva Kiir and his former deputy Riek Machar fell out. Between January 2014 and March 2015, five peace agreements had been signed. The proliferation of peace accords could not end the violence, let alone creating sustainable peace. The 2015 Fragile State Index, ranked SS first out of 178 (Messner et al., 2015). Continued armed conflict with little sign of ending makes SS a disturbing pattern of a “conflict trap” (Collier et al., 2003), where armed conflicts recur despite the peace accords mediated by Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

This paper “seeks” to conceptualise the reconstruction of peace and security by combining liberal peace and African approaches, a liberal-local hybrid, to devise Africanised solutions to SS’s crisis. The paper argues that sustainable peace and security in SS will result from a hybridised interplay of the international and local agencies, processes and knowledge to constitute an effective, stable and peaceful state. These

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include: (1) leadership, power and governance with checks and balances to foster peace and development necessary for state reconstruction; (2) international compliance mechanisms, networks and structures; (3) local actors' ability to present and maintain indigenous frameworks, structures and networks; and (4) engaging the silenced voices, networks and structures of women, youth and grassroots citizenry. Sustainable peacebuilding, durable peace and security ensue when the elements of liberal peace network with local actors, culture, needs, interests and knowledge to transform relationships, and societal institutions prevent, and transform conflicts (Mac Ginty, 2010).

The term "local" is used to denote the indigenous cultural knowledge, socio-political and economic practices, and approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding that are specific and meaningful to the Sudanese today. I use "seek" because there is no generic formula for transforming protracted armed conflicts into durable peace and security. The complexity of peacebuilding makes it difficult to imagine a simultaneous " social transition from internecine fighting to peace, a political transition from wartime government to post-war government, and an economic transition from war-warped accumulation and distribution to equitable, transparent post-war development that in turn reinforces peace" (Paris and Sisk, 2009b: 1).

The paper first delineates hybridity and liberal peace. The second part analyses the conflict context in Southern Sudan and the reasons for failing peacebuilding and security. The third part examines the components of hybrid approaches to envisage sustainable peace and security.

## **Conceptualizing Hybridity and Liberal Peace**

Hybridity is the process of “shared interface between local and international” approaches, agents, ideas, practices and structures to reconstruct peace (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012: 1). Rather than promoting only the hegemonic and monolithic caricatures of the powerful liberal internationalism, a fusion of peace and security is created. For example, in the peacebuilding process, Sudanese local mores and practices of reconciliation would be integrated with the international norms and practices such as the rule of law, democracy, and institutions that enable the state to function effectively. The combination is crucial because the sole implementation of Western approaches to peacebuilding and state reconstruction is failing in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan, with international actors considered “intrusive, no matter how well-meaning” they may be (Paris and Sisk, 2009a: 305). Equally, local approaches should not be romanticised because they “can be flawed, counterproductive, and ineffective” (Mac Ginty, 2011: 47).

Hybridity combines the strength of the local and the international. For example, in the wake of the genocide in Rwanda, the legal system was overwhelmed. Recourse was made to community-based Gacaca courts or tribunals that tried lesser cases while the UN sponsored International Tribunal for Rwanda dealt with high-level cases. Mac Ginty (2011) notes the authenticity, effectiveness, and meaningfulness of Gacaca courts before the international donor interferences. In addition, the liberal-local hybrid East Timor’s peacebuilding and state reconstruction are presented as quasi success stories because of reinforcing local ownership, participation and empowerment (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012; Wallis, 2012). Hybrid peace engineers social changes that address structural,

relational, cultural and socio-psychological issues and constructs mechanisms that foster meaningful and durable levels of change necessary for peaceful and secure coexistence (Botes, 2003; Lederach, 2005). Wallis (2012: 761) argues that SS's gaining independence and relapsing into conflict two years after, "suggests that there are good reasons to challenge the liberal peace state-building project and to test alternatives, such as the liberal-local hybrid peace".

Liberal peace is defined as "the dominant form of peacemaking and peacebuilding" propagated by international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union, International Financial Institutions (IFI), and global powers (Mac Ginty, 2010: 391). Liberal peace, considered as a panacea "ideology upon which (all) life, culture, society, prosperity and politics are assumed to rest" (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2007: 493), is premised on the belief that political and economic activities including peacebuilding and security should be framed according to universals rather than particularities. Whether led by the UN, the AU, or IGAD, liberal peacebuilding propagates "the hegemony of Western epistemologies" that silence "indigenous people's worldview" (Walker, 2004: 530). Liberal peace, presented from top-down, with a "checklist" of an array of one size fits all tasks, often aligned according to the interests and demands of the "global North" at the expense of survivors, is ineffective (Jeong, 2005; Newman and Richmond, 2006). This approach springs from the superciliousness that considers the "global South" especially Africa as uncivilised terra nullis.

Particularities are important because peace is not a universal concept. Individuals and societies have unique understandings of peace, its indicators and how it is achieved. Peace methodology and ontology is

based on time and place; culture; ethnicity; social, economic, and political variations; as well as varied actors (Richmond, 2005). The following section explores SS's crisis.

### **Contextualizing the Crisis**

South Sudan became independent in July 2011 and relapsed into an armed conflict in December 2013. The quagmire of a protracted conflict is between President Salva Kiir and his former vice president Reik Machar. How did a nation that held such high hopes at its birth sink into a deadly conflict? Following a series of disagreements among the political elite, thirteen political figures were imprisoned, accused by the president of attempting a coup under the leadership of the estranged Machar. Mamdani (2014b) argues that the coup claim denies the reality that top government leaders called for "a vote of no confidence" in the president's leadership. Machar's intention was not personal ambition but "an attempt at political reform" through constitutional observance of presidential term limit and the removal of articles that give the SPLM leader "power to nominate five percent of members" including the legislature (Mamdani, 2014a).

The conflict is also attributed to an ethnic struggle between the Dinka and the Nuer, and personal power struggle in the leadership (Mamdani, 2014b). When top leadership split, the army split along ethnic lines. Fighting began in the barracks and continued, targeting civilians along ethnic lines. However, Pinaud (2014) argues that capitalizing on the two ethnic groups neglects the myriads of other ethnic groups and their grievances. Fighting continues with the president supported by the Ugandan army and "an increasingly embarrassed international community" (Pinaud, 2014: 192).

The deadly conflict is devastating lives; displacing over 1.9 million people; millions are taking refuge in the neighbouring countries; hundreds of children are being recruited as child soldiers; women and girls are raped; and thousands die due to war and related consequences (Oxfam, 2014). The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS, 2014) reports evidences that both government and rebels are committing crimes against humanity including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, murder, rape, and attacks on hospital and UN facilities. While the population lacks the basic needs, the government buys ammunitions worth \$38 million from China (Gridneff, 2015). The supporter/s and military spending of Machar remains unknown.

Between January 2014 and March 2015, five peace agreements have been signed without striking a peace deal with IGAD, the principal mediator. Among the resolutions reached so far is power sharing. How can there be power sharing between the warring parties without the restoration of constitutional confidence and effective institutions to reinforce checks and balances on those in power? South Sudanese analyst Jok Madut Jok suggests that “what is needed is not just removal of individuals (or power sharing) but an overhaul of the system” (Wudu and Zeitvogel, 2015). Mamdani (2014b) observes that calling for power sharing ignores the central fact that “the conflict resulted from a split in the power. So the problem is how to reconstitute that power.”

If the conflict persists for another five years, national economic costs are estimated between US \$22 and \$28 billion, an amount that would have financed the country’s education budget for 85 years, would fund health care plans four times, and pay twice the costs of antiretroviral drugs for

people living with HIV worldwide (Frontier economics, 2015). Frontier economics further notes that the neighbouring economies of Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda are projected to lose US\$53 billion, while the international community could save close to US\$30 billion if the conflict ends by 2015. No value can quantify the suffering that people endure and the lifetime psychological/mental impact. The levels of hatred and hurt between communities are unimaginable, with chances for further conflict.

SS's conflict can only be comprehended by unearthing its historical roots that predate its independence struggle. From 1947, SS was against the Anglo-Egyptian unitary policy of the colonial overlords that coerced the South to unify with the North (Kebbede, 1997; Woodward, 2006). Because of rejecting the policy, war broke out in August 1955, and it continued for the next 17 years, erupted again from 1983 to 2005. Thus in a span of 50 years between 1955 and 2005, only 11 years were peaceful in the South (1972 to 1983), when a peace agreement was observed. This implies that 39 out of those 50 years were characterised by deadly wars and impoverishment during which the rulers in the Khartoum government employed the divide-and-rule strategy that broke the unity of the South by recruiting some ethnic groups into militias to fight against SPLM/A (Woodward, 2006). The result was ethnic politicisation and frequent fighting among the Southern ethnic groups, leading to a culture of violence. The psychological impact of this situation on the people is irrefutable. Former SPLM/A leader John Garang is quoted saying: "These people don't understand anything but the barrel of the gun" and negotiation is viewed as weakness (Johnson, 2011: 59). Bar-Tal (2013: 289) contends, when societies are involved in protracted conflicts, a significant portion of the members acquire "conflict-supporting beliefs"

and “collective memory” as foundations for a “culture of conflict.”

When SS became independent, the majority of its youth had known only war, violence, and the gun/war culture which facilitates agent provocateurs to stoke the fires for personal interests (Baffour, 2014). A newspaper proprietor interviewed by Baffour in Juba notes that:

The long years of war mean that the only skill acquired by our people is the skill of war. And I shudder to think that these young men of war are now sitting under trees with nothing to do. The devil finds work for idle hands, and our idle hands are hands of war. It is a frightening situation which needs a quick resolution by the government, by way of job creation – and multitudes of them. Else, who knows who will offer war jobs to these young men who have only one skill, the skill of war... the situation is scary. ...It is the environment in which they grew and live. And sometimes this is exacerbated by outside pressures (Baffour, 2014).

Sustainable peace is not feasible without transforming the culture of war and violence into a culture of peace (Bar-Tal, 2013; Boulding, 2000) and addressing the structural causes. Wars and conflicts in SS must result into radical changes and a new social order (Deng, 2011a).

### **Why do peacebuilding and security efforts fail?**

There are various explanations why peacebuilding efforts are failing. De Waal (2014: 347) argues that SS became independent as “a kleptocracy—a militarised, corrupt neo-patrimonial system of governance” where the political elites sought personal gains in the entrenched political culture of corruption and ethnic politics. Some scholars argue for the failure to address the root causes, including the unresolved tensions of the 1990s after the split in the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA)

and the elite manipulation of the ethnic differences (Johnson, 2014); the leadership crisis in the SPLM/A, “neopatrimonial politics”, and “the legacies of violence from the previous wars” (Rolandsen, 2015: 163). Failure to address past violence and atrocities through reconciliation and transitional justice, coupled with transgenerational transmission of trauma (Volkan, 2001); and failure to pacify the next generation especially the youth whose interests may not be met when they remain confronted with economic hardships, political marginalization, memories and trauma of past atrocities (McEvoy-Levy, 2006) contribute to failed peacebuilding and security.

Failed peacebuilding is also attributed to confused state formation, failed state building, institutional decay and poor governance (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012; Richmond, 2014a). Basing on the examples of protracted conflicts such as in Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan, Mac Ginty (2011) argues that peacebuilding fails because powerful nations, international organisations and financial institutions propagate hegemonic liberal approaches and neglect local actors, indigenous knowledge, cultures, practices, needs and interests, engaging only the technocrats who reinforce continued demand for foreign ideologies, elites’ expertise and primacy. Without criticizing technocracy per se or disputing that technocrat interventions can be fair and effective, technocracy in peacebuilding has a reputation of framing conflicts to ensure permanent demand for technocratic responses and solutions (Mac Ginty, 2012). Peacebuilding and security should not remain a prerogative of technocrats in “positions of prominence on the peacebuilding landscape” (Mac Ginty, 2012: 287), collaborating only with actors in the prominent political positions in the bureaucratic corridors without consulting grassroots actors, survivors, and involving local/non-liberal approaches.

The hegemonic liberal peace, aped and followed in Africa is no longer tolerable. Western solutions seldom work in Africa. The conflict in SS requires a liberal-local hybrid approach to construct African-centred solutions to peace and security.

### **African-Centred Liberal-Local Hybrid Forms of Peace and Security**

Constructing hybrid forms of peace and security must address the failures of peacebuilding and security, combining bottom-up top-down approaches, and the local and the international collaborating as equals. It also necessitates researching back to rediscover local African cultural wisdom, worldviews and the principles that led to peace and security. African solutions require that Africa stop the “copy-cat” mentality of foreign systems and think critically and innovatively. The suggested hybridity involves: (1) leadership, power and governance with checks and balances; (2) international compliance mechanisms, networks and structures; (3) local actors’ ability to present and maintain indigenous frameworks, structures and networks; (4) local and regional actors’ ability to adapt or resist and ignore liberal interventions; and (5) the inclusion of the silenced voices, networks and structures of women, youth, and grassroots citizenry.

#### 1. Leadership, power and governance with checks and balances

What keeps SS embroiled in civil war and backwardness is the lack of principled, ethical, steward leadership and the understanding of political power as service for the common good. When SS became independent, the “political marketplace was so expensive” to the extent that “national revenue was consumed by the military-political patronage system, with almost nothing left for public services, development or

institution building” (de Waal, 2014: 347). Before signing the January 2000 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the civil war between the Khartoum government and the SPLM/A, the Commander, Salva Kiir Mayardit said:

There is no code of conduct to guide the Movement’s structures... I would also like to say something about rampant corruption in the Movement. At the moment, some members of the Movement have formed private companies, bought houses and have huge bank accounts in foreign countries.

I wonder what kind of system we are going to establish in South Sudan considering ourselves indulged in this respect.<sup>22</sup>

With leaders impoverishing the state for personal gains and commanding absolute power without checks and balances, the state becomes weak with military coups and armed incursions as the only source of altering power and governance (Utas, 2012). The accumulation of wealth, corruption and lack of accountability in the public sector illustrate governance without commitment to democratic principles, political leaders’ failure to serve public interest aggravated by weak social and political institutions. John Hayford, a Ghanaian writer cited by Shahadah (2012), notes that “Africa’s biggest problem today lies with the leadership. They are so removed from the people that they are looked upon as foreigners. They are driven by self-interest, so excessive that their peoples’ interests are forgotten - hardly different from the colonial masters.” Van Wyk (2007) questions whether African leaders are “Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers.”

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<sup>22</sup> The notes of the meeting recorded Salva Kiir talking to the Commander in chief, John Garang, at the meeting with the SPLA commanders. Sudan Tribune, ‘TEXT: minutes of historical SPLM meeting in Rumbek 2004’, 12 March 2008, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article26320> Accessed 3 February, 2015.

In addition, power is a major cause of political conflicts and wars in Africa because of the prevalent practice that the winner takes all and the unwillingness of African leaders to relinquish or share power. Politics is the source of absolute power, a lucrative business for personal aggrandisement rather than service to people. Instead of empowering the institutions especially the judiciary and the legislature to reinforce constitutional observance, leaders bolster “extractive institutions”, leading by hook and crook, manipulating systems including the constitution to retrench their power (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012: 369). Leader’s manipulation of ethnic differences to polarise the population and excluding some from political and economic participation, while establishing themselves as life presidents with absolute power is detrimental (Utas, 2012). When certain ethnic groups are excluded from political participation and the spoils of political power, they resort to rebellions to wrestle power or secede as in SS. Ending autocracy and engendering democracy in the African sense is a fundamental challenge requiring serious African interventions without which SS’s conflict is liable to escalate. Power needs to be decentralised and given back to people, who should demand accountability from the leaders. Individuals who do not foster national unity and have committed war crimes must not be involved in national leadership.

What adjustments are needed in SS to get the policies right, ensure good governance, and establish appropriate use of power and functional institutions? Reinventing leadership is urgent in SS (as it is throughout Africa). It is crucial that SS researches back into its traditions to extrapolate positive leadership practices to enrich today’s leadership. Leadership and governance, as they were implemented in Africa since the colonial era, “ become a part of the problem” requiring adjustment from that model

and designing African models that focus on “transformative rather than restraining institutions” (Noman and Stiglitz, 2012: 31). Okafor (2006: 121) suggests the creation of “an Afrocentric/Africa-centred theory of leadership and political integration” to reinforce political stability and nation-state cohesion. Leadership values found in indigenous traditions of SS need to be revived and integrated with modern approaches. SS’s predicament requires a leader who will foster dialogue in accordance with the African tradition and not military muscle. Needed are political reform, honest apology and authentic reconciliation that redress old wounds to reconstruct peace and security. Mamdani (2014a) suggests that a “meaningful reform” would start with “the rebel coalition’s demands, starting with a two-term limit to the presidency, voting by secret ballot, an end to presidential powers to appoint members to the legislative organ and the constitution of an independent electoral commission.”

Plato, cited by Wren (2007: 20) suggests that leadership is invented in response to societal challenges. The challenges faced by SS must dictate the leadership that is urgently required and the five political goods: “safety and security; rule of law and transparency; participation and respect for human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development” (Rotberg, 2013: 174). The constitution must be made with strong checks and balances to counteract absolute power and the governance of the state like a personal business. No one should be above the law as is the trend of “Big Manity” in Africa (Utas, 2012) with the leader controlling all institutions including the judiciary and having security organs at his other beck and call. Instead, the rule of law must control the leader’s absolute rule.

Entrusting citizens' lives to regimes that have committed crimes against humanity poses insurmountable challenges. Can the leadership of either President Salva Kiir or leader Riek Machar be trusted with leading SS towards state reconstruction? How can either of the duo foster national unity, peace and security when they have polarised and decimated some ethnic groups? How do we expect the citizens to feel the sense of belongingness to a nation that has failed to protect them? No good leader would subject people to war regardless of ethnic or political ideological difference. The mediation processes engaged so far, focus on power sharing with no mention of people's wellbeing. Is there any concern about people's livelihood and security or just about power? Checks and balances on the leaders not to assume absolute power are crucial. This is where the liberal approach of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is important. Who will hold leaders and governments accountable for crimes against humanity if not the ICC (although some African leaders want to withdraw from the ICC)?

## 2. International compliance mechanisms

In today's modern state, indigenous approaches may not succeed in disciplining leaders who are often above the law and control governing institutions, with power to silence the judiciary and/ or even commit grave crimes with impunity. Promoters of liberal peace have networks and structures to mobilise through force, sanctions and globalised free markets to reinforce conformity and discipline against deviance (Mac Ginty, 2010). These include heavily militarised security, stabilisation programmes, enforced democratic government and elections, the ICC and sanctions. The enforcement of these mechanisms in Africa is important, without which African citizens remain at the mercy of their

unscrupulous leaders. For example, in Kenya's post-election violence, the ICC is subjecting perpetrators to trial. In SS, the call to end violence by the UN Secretary General must be observed (UNMISS, 2014). Crimes against humanity, both by the government and dissidents, must be investigated and perpetrators brought to justice.

However, the ideology and implementation of these mechanisms require urgent rethinking and "a significant shift ... if international state building and peacebuilding projects around the world are to contribute to peace and lead to reconciliation while also engaging with international standards for democracy and human rights" (Richmond, 2009: 3). It is crucial to ensure that compliance mechanisms do not propagate imperialism and punish innocent civilians. Local options must be sought including strengthening the judiciary and legislature to operate independently from the executive. Regional and continental mechanisms such as the African Union and the African Court of Human and People's Rights need to be strengthened and availed to all people. Civic education is crucial for grassroots citizens to know their rights and duties and how to utilise existent compliance mechanism.

### 3. Local actors' ability to present and maintain indigenous/localised frameworks

Hybridisation requires the interrogation of local/indigenous philosophies and epistemologies to search for home-grown forms of peace and security, instead of propagating the international hegemonic approaches as "the only game in town" (Mac Ginty, 2010: 403). Unique and durable forms of peace and security arise when "the strategies, institutions, and norms of international, largely liberal -democratic, interventions collide with the everyday lives of local actors affected

by conflict” (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012). African forms of conflict resolution, peacemaking and peacebuilding that draw from African wisdom exist in all communities, and “can offer a corrective to the failings of the Western” approaches (Mac Ginty, 2008: 139). The time proven indigenous approaches include the Palaver in Liberia, ubuntu used during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, Gacaca in Rwanda and Matoput in Uganda. There are as many of these approaches as there are ethnic groups in SS. The contribution of every ethnic’s epistemology is important, and must be integrated into national processes. This presupposes soliciting indigenous knowledge from elders. Since the number of elders is gradually diminishing, such knowledge must be researched, documented and made a component of the education curriculum.

Loss of African values such as communalism contributes to the conflict trap. Societal order and values that “were reinforced by emphasizing communal unity and solidarity, with a strong sense of personal and collective dignity and pride in the culture and its social order” (Deng, 2011b, p. viii) are being ravaged by wars and globalization. It is the essence of African wisdom/philosophies that must be revived in reconstructing peace. For example, unity is encouraged by the use of proverbs such as “Eva kumugendo yefuka kasa” meaning one who separates from the group becomes the rebel, (among the Baganda of Uganda) or “Umuryambwa aba umwe agatukisha umuryango” meaning if one member of the family or village has eaten dog-meat, all the members are disgraced, (among the Barundi of Burundi). The wicked conduct of one member disgraces the whole family, clan or village, for “When the eye weeps, it makes the nose weep too” (Bujo, 2001: 87). Analogies of this type need to be sought among SS communities and

used in reconstructing peace.

African indigenous conflict resolution approaches such as the Matoput in Northern Uganda takes a dialogic form between the mediator, the disputants, and the community affected by the conflict. As it takes a village to raise a child, it takes the village to resolve a conflict affecting the community. Thus, conflict resolution should not be understood merely as a matter of ridding the disagreement between the disputants but it is about repairing estranged social relationships. Talks about the conflict should take place among the common people at the village level, not just among the elites in hotels. This challenges the approach in SS where belligerents travel to Addis Ababa, Arusha and Nairobi to discuss their issues, totally isolating ordinary Sudanese from knowing what is happening.

Traditional African jurisprudence emphasises communal healing, peace, and restoring social harmony rather than punishing the guilty in isolation. This form of transitional justice and forgiveness questions liberal peace modus operandi in engaging only the belligerents. The search for peace and solutions to conflicts requires cultural understanding of aspects that “determine how individuals, families, groups and nations perceive themselves and others” (Osei-Hwedie and Abu-Nimer, 2009). SS needs to rediscover the local indigenous approaches to peace and security. For instance, within traditional systems, societal values of communal unity and solidarity with a strong sense of collective dignity and pride in local culture and its social order were sacrosanct (Deng, 2011a). Through rites of passage, the individual learned communal wisdom, transmitted through symbols, art, stories, proverbs, poems, myth, wise sayings, riddles, and theatre. Beneath utterances is wisdom. For example, the

proverb “borrowed water does not clean one sufficiently” (among the Bakiga of Uganda) illustrates that foreigners will never deliver sufficient peace.

Discovering African approaches to peacebuilding entails “researching back”, to investigate that knowledge with the African lens. The purpose is not to romanticise African philosophical approaches to peacebuilding as panaceas, but to retrieve the values in them that are fundamental to establishing an alternative perspective of peacebuilding and security. Discovering African indigenous peacebuilding approaches should be a key research agenda and the findings must become part of the education curriculum for youth to know the wisdom that is unique to SS.

#### 4. Engaging the silenced voices of women, youth and grassroots citizenry

Where are the women in IGAD’s peace negotiation processes? Sudanese women have been active agents of peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the liberation struggle but their roles remain unrecognised, categorised as victims of sexual violence with no agency springing from their resilience (Bubenzer and Stern, 2011). Women play formal and informal roles, mothers are breadwinners and household heads when men go to war (Deng, 2011a). Before the colonial era, South Sudanese women held religious, political and clan leadership and were, therefore, involved in decision making (Beswick, 2000). A gendered perspective of peace and security is critical since women and men experience war and peace differently. Women have proven, time and again, their unique ability to unify communities. So why are they not at the negotiation table? Hunt and Posa (2001: 38) assert, “allowing men who plan wars to plan peace is a bad habit.” Why are women’s experiences, contributions,

and knowledge not valued?

Article 20 of the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan, 2005 and Article 16 of South Sudan's Constitution of 2011 recognise women's civil, political and economic rights, equal dignity with men, and encourage all levels of government to promote women's participation and to enact laws that combat customs and traditions that harm women. The Ministry of Gender is mandated to "mainstream gender throughout government institutions", establish women's empowerment initiatives and to create national policies to be implemented at local levels of government (Arabi, 2011: 197). Women's voices and contribution are important in peace negotiation, peacebuilding and nation reconstruction.

African leaders signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA); and regional instruments including the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women, and the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality. It is over 14 years since the passage of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in 2000. These documents must be implemented. Women will play their roles in peace processes and national reconstruction if empowered with education, have access to financial resources, and are not stereotyped as possessing competence limited to the kitchen and child bearing.

Youth constitute largely untapped resources for ingenuity, stability and economic growth. They are involved in war through direct recruitment or when taken as child soldiers, but lack active involvement in political activities, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Because of social and political exclusion, economic impoverishment, identity threats, trauma and experiences of varied forms of violence and displacement, the

youth are vulnerable to participating in armed conflicts (McEvoy-Levy, 2006), and can easily be swayed “by dogma and rhetoric to form collective reigns of terror” (Hendrixson, 2003: 5). The youth are susceptible to unscrupulous politician’s manipulation especially when they are unemployed, economically impoverished and have grown up in the harsh environments of war as in SS. Helgerson (2002: 4) notes that states’ inability “to adequately integrate youth populations is likely to perpetuate the cycle of political instability, ethnic wars, revolutions, and anti-government activities.” Youth contribution is a sine qua non for sustainable peace. If women and youth comprise more than half of the SS population, are they not also half of every solution? Policies that exclude them need to be transformed to become inclusive and empowering.

The vision of the AU is “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens” (AU, 2011). How engaged are the Sudanese people in designing the laws, institutions and practices that constitute the national policies? In many African states, citizens’ engagement with state governance remains poor. The state and its operations remain alien to grassroots citizens. Citizens and civil societies must engage in governance, to counteract power abuses. From the above discussion, it is clear that liberal-local hybrid approach to peace and security must engage several actors and not just the technocrats.

### **Concluding Remark**

South Sudan’s case illustrates the need for a liberal-local hybrid approach to peace and security that combines several actors to design contextualised, sustainable and comprehensive strategies. African philosophy and local peoples’ contribution is crucial. Peace and security are inextricably linked to leadership and governance that makes pro-

people policies; respects human rights and dignity; guarantees human security by improving people's livelihoods through education, health care, employment, economic security; and transforms systemic and cultural violence that disempowers citizens. Liberal practices must accommodate and empower local practices to design African-centred solutions to the crisis.

Rebuilding peace and security in SS is a complex, non-linear, and multifaceted process that requires the involvement of local, regional and international actors, as well as spoilers. It requires the moral imagination - "the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist", with determination to "speak to the hard realities of human affairs" (Lederach, 2005: ix-x) and integrate the local culture. The onus is with the Sudanese to create meaningful processes and institutions that elicit commitment, ownership and shared values for peace and security.

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## Chapter Five

### Statehood, Small Arms and Security Governance in Southwest Ethiopia: The Need for an African-Centred Perspective

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The African state has different faces to different spectators. For most Africans, the state is an alien institution prying over their life while for foreign observers it is a feeble formation with weak control of its territory. Although African-Centred Solutions to African Peace and Security Problems (AfSol) has a growing body of knowledge on regional institutions and growing integration (see other chapters of this book), this in no way disregards states as both procurers and providers of peace and security solutions. The emphasis on non-state actors should represent neither the disappearance nor replacement of statehood with something else.

This chapter gives special emphasis to the “challenge” the state faces in terms of the monopoly of the means of violence and provision of security to its (usually bulky) territory. After presenting several pictures of the African state, found on the extremes of the non-linear spectrum of statehood, this chapter resorts to a compatible and pragmatic view of statehood with implications to AfSol. The selected case study deals with the Nyàngatom people, an agro-pastoralist group in southwest Ethiopia.

The relationship between the Nyàngatom traditional security system and the “modern” state apparatuses calls for the study of a broader governance linkage between the traditional institutions and “modern” state institutions.

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The chapter will introduce this broad governance interface and make inquiries on the main security architecture of the Nyàngatom people. Ensuing recent studies on statehood and governance and examining the case study, this paper argues that traditional institutions can complement “modern” state apparatus, producing a different breed of statehood, while also risking transformation and even extinction in the process of doing so.

The case study of the Nyàngatom people illustrates how the state security apparatus has been supported by and even negotiated with the traditional leadership and security system forming what seems a state mediated between multiple stakeholders.

The case study selection reflects Tornay’s (1979: 114) claim that the Nyàngatom are a good example of an “armed nation”. The Nyàngatom, whose name means “yellow guns” were once known by the name Nyàmatom, meaning fresh-elephant-meat eaters; reverse of their ancestral brothers the Tosa<sup>23</sup> (later changed to Toposa). The anecdotal story told by the local people is that the two, the Nyàngatom and Toposa, migrated northwards from Uganda. They were separated during their search of pasture at a time of starvation. They were forced to eat elephant meat, fresh and dried, from which their names were coined. According to Gulliver (1951) the Nyàngatom are “an offshoot of the Toposa” and Tornay extends the argument “this separation probably occurred around 1800” (Tornay, 1979: 98). However, there is a slight difference in their records. For example, Guliver (1952) recoded that the Toposa broke away from the Jie and the Kotido and later the Nyàngatom broke away from them. Tornay’s record of the situation (1979; 1980) is slightly different.

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<sup>23</sup> Tosa means dried meat eaters

He records that the Nyàngatom broke away from their “related paranilotes” on their own, at about the same time as the Toposa. It is difficult to put a definite claim as to why the Nyàngatom migrated to the lower Omo valley. Rainer Voßen (1982: 63) mentions some of the reasons as the Turkana northward expansion, epidemic and famines.

The Nyàngatom are uniquely placed for a study on small arms and security governance. They are found at the Illemi triangle, a place that is both national and international, governed by traditional institutions, state policies, and international agreements. The Illemi triangle, based on past and present actions of the countries and the pastoralist communities, is better described as a disputed place among the pastoralists in Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan rather than the countries themselves. Culturally the Nyàngatom are among the large collection of pastoralists in peripheries of Ethiopia, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda known as the Karamoja cluster or the Ateker.

They are located in the arms infested Omo valley along with 15 other pastoral communities, who among other things, are known for their cultural diversity and long history of peripheral status, both geographically and politically (Clapham, 2002). An extensive literature review has shown that the Nyàngatom are the least researched of the groups in the Karamoja cluster on the issue of small arms. For instance, publications by the Small Arms Survey<sup>24</sup> and Institute for Security Studies<sup>25</sup> are focused on Sudan/South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya; the Ethiopian side has clearly been neglected.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.issafrica.org>

## **Statehood and Security Governance**

The nature of state and the monopoly of the instrument of violence is a discussion that has been going on since the emergence of modern statehood. The Weberian model has been seen as a one size fits all concept to states around the world; many researchers and political analysts have scrutinised African states with Weberian criteria. While many recognised the conceptual Euro-centrism in this approach and sufficiently criticised its application, derivative concepts such as state failure and weakness continue to lead the academic and policy agenda in Africa. Diverse terminologies such as “failed, weak or fragile states ... global borderlands, frontiers, and zones of exception...” have come to describe, “the contested limits of state control over territory and population” (Stepputat, Møller and Andersen, 2007: 5).

Such an approach originates from the understanding that “nation-states exist to provide a decentralised method of delivering political (public) goods to persons living within designated parameters (borders)” (Rotberg, 2010: 2). The ability of the state to deliver such public goods to its people, the most important of all being security,<sup>26</sup> determines the “performance of the state” deciding whether it is weak, failed or collapsed (Rotberg, 2010). In this frame of reason, the state aspires to monopolise the means of violence because of its ambition to rule and its responsibility to act on behalf of the good of the people (Börzel, 2010).

Buzan and Wæver (2003: 22) argue weak states “have less claim to stateness.” They go on to criticise harshly, “[weak states] are more likely to be forums in which a variety of sub-state actors compete for their

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<sup>26</sup> Here security is used in the narrow sense, where safety from military threats is a main component.

own security, and/or to capture the state” (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 22). These authors, in addition to strong/weak state classification, use the modern state as a reference to create three types of states: postmodern, modern and pre-modern. They argue that most states in Africa and Central Asia, because of their “low levels of socio-political cohesion and poorly developed structures of government,” can be “loosely” placed in the category of pre-modern states (Ibid.: 24) and like many other discussants of the nature of African states, refer to them as weak states where:

Some of them are pre-modern in the sense that they aspire to modernity, and are headed in that direction, but have yet to consolidate themselves sufficiently to qualify. Others are failed states, where the colonial state transplant has broken down, and there is little other than external recognition to sustain the myth of statehood...Sub-Saharan Africa contains predominantly pre-modern states. (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 24).

Such normative frameworks have proved problematic for the analysis of African states. In many ways, African states have tried to, at least in appearance, resemble western States, but have failed to do so in many ways because of their “unique features.” According to the ordinary African, the state is a predatory one, an instrument of exploitation for the rulers of the land. According to IMF (2001), developing countries are characterised by “low taxpayer morale,” a fact that is reflective of the citizens’ attitude of the state and state power. Ali Mazrui pointed this out three decades ago, linking it with the colonial legacies of African states:

The colonial regime was alienated from the people, not only because it was in foreign hands but also because it was artificial and newly invented and so it lacked legitimacy and sense of government property, therefore, lacked respect. It became

almost a patriotic duty to misappropriate the resources of the government. After all, since the regime was foreign, it was like stealing from a foreign thief and stealing from a foreign thief could be an act of heroic restoration. Well, “have African attitudes to government property changed since independence?” ...there has not been much of a change since those old colonial cases.<sup>27</sup>

The state is easily identified as an alien in colonial and post-colonial Africa because of the way it was imposed and its brutish nature. However, a closer look at the long history of human civilisation suggests that states are “a relatively new phenomenon” not only in Africa but also in Europe (Stepputat, Møller and Andersen, 2007: 6-7). This might oblige one to question the finality of the state system as the “best” way for human security and survival (Stepputat, Møller and Andersen, 2007).

In the immediate aftermath of colonialism, both the state and traditional leaders were viewed as an extension of the colonial rule. The colonial systems were said to have “incorporated traditional leaders as an extension of colonial regimes in order to extract human and natural resources and curb organized resistance” (Stepputat, Møller and Andersen, 2007: 1). As a result, while for the ordinary African, the state represented by the post-colonial westernised African elite is an extension of the colonial rule, the post-colonial elite accused traditional leaders of the same by pointing out their contribution in upholding the colonial system during colonialism. Meanwhile, this new African elite argues for the importance of western education to uphold its claim to rule. Ekeh (1975: 104) writes, “To treat education as a guarantee of success is ... an ideological invention of the Western educated bourgeois class to

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<sup>27</sup> The Africans: A Triple Heritage. Ali Mazrui. Documentary. 1986. Produced by the BBC and the Public Broadcasting Service (WETA, Washington) in association with the Nigerian Television Authority. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnr42v3xBN4>

legitimate its rule, based on colonial education, vis-a-vis the legitimacy of the traditional chiefs.”

Nevertheless, corrupt predatory character does not characterise the African state fully. African societies have a traditional, more entrenched governance system that needs to be explored. Ekeh (1975), in his article *Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa*, explains the emergence of two distinct public realms. One is a realm where the morality of the private realm also exists (known as the primordial space) while the other is a “civic space” that is extremely amoral leading to broken work ethics and corruption. Here, people draw their identities and owe their allegiance to their “primordial space” reflecting the mistrust and lack of ownership they feel towards the post-colonial state (Ekeh, 1975).

The transformation traditional institutions went through because of colonialism is debated among scholars and among policy makers. In some places, “the colonial state invented chieftaincies and imposed hierarchical rule on its subjects. In some cases, the ‘invented’ chiefs used their power to enrich themselves and upon differentiating themselves from their communities, they subverted traditional political values” (ECA, 2007: 6). In others, especially in centralised<sup>28</sup> traditional systems, leaders resisted (and rebelled) or submitted to colonial rule, thus being incorporated into the colonial state system. Some argue that colonialism made these chiefs “mere civil servants of the colonial state” while others disagree by noting the chiefs’ ability to maintain legitimacy in their community and mediate (even intercede) between the colonial authorities and their people suggests otherwise.

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<sup>28</sup> Among the broad categorizations of traditional institutions are Decentralised and Centralised systems. Decentralised systems comprise the likes of age systems where consensual decision-making is practiced; centralised systems are known for having monarchs that make decisions. (ECA, 2007)

Despite these factual and theoretical differences in understanding the role of traditional institutions in the colonial period, the following is evident:

Many of Africa's nationalist, first-generation leaders, such as Houphouet Boigny, Sekou Toure, Leopold Senghore and Kwame Nkrumah saw chiefs as functionaries of the colonial state and chieftaincy as an anachronistic vestige of the old Africa that had no place in the post-colonial political landscape. (ECA, 2007: 8)

Until the "retraditionalization" of the 1990s, the post-colonial state (Kyed and Buur, 2007) tried to keep traditional leaders and systems at bay. Following this period, many African countries have altered their policies and are trying to benefit from the role traditional institutions can play especially in conflict resolution and transformation. Withstanding the controversy, traditional institutions continue to function in large parts of Africa, and many Africans continue to be governed willingly under traditional institutions.

### **Ethiopia: The "Anomaly" of Africa<sup>29</sup>**

Ethiopia, a country of almost 90 million people is the only African state that has not been colonised by a European power. This remains a source of pride and identity, but surprisingly, Ethiopians cannot boast over much else. The above consequences of colonialism, such as the existence of two spaces and an attitude of the state as a predatory institute also exist in Ethiopia. The alienation of traditional leaders from government apparatus until the 1990s and the existence of a "civic space" dominated by educated westernised Ethiopians are evident. Wood (1983: 509) claims, "although never colonised by a European power, Ethiopia exhibits many

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<sup>29</sup> Title adopted from the article entitled "Ethiopia: The 'Anomaly' and 'Paradox' of Africa", by Teshale Tibebu (1996)

of the problems as a result of internal colonization.” Calling the process in Ethiopia internal colonisation could be contested because of the sharp difference between the natures and rationale of colonial powers and northern Ethiopians. It is also important to note that the discussion on Ethiopia as a colonising power has taken a form of a political debate than an academic one.

Although the similarity and difference between Ethiopia and other African countries requires further research, one can still suggest that feudal Imperial Abyssinian state played the same role as the colonial state in the rest of Africa. This is not a case peculiar to Feudal Ethiopia but is also seen in Europe, where feudalism “form[s] the historical background,” when the countries “advance to modernity” (Ekeh, 1975: 93). The predatory nature of the state can be traced back to the 16th century Europe. The modern Ethiopian state emerged in a feudal structure that imposed the traditional monarchy of northern Ethiopia on much of the country. Likewise, Markakis (2011: 6) asserts, “the exploitation of these resources was based on a system of accumulation that depended on coercion and closely resembled Western feudalism”.

After examining the close link between state making and war making, Tilly (1985) employs an analogy of War Making and State Making as Organised Crime. Tilly discusses the similarity between state making and organised crime and suggests an alternative to the explanation of state making as a social contract. Tilly found that citizens, as willing procurers of the services of the state, contradicted with the practice of European state makers than coerced people to be governed through war making (Tilly, 1985: 169). Tilly (1975: 73) noted, “preparation for war has been the great state-building activity”. The Abyssinian Emperors were

very aware of the vital role arms could play in the making and defending of the Ethiopian state.

The expansion of the Abyssinian Empire into southern territories was welcomed by some and rejected by others. Traditional institutions that welcomed the monarchy were allowed to remain leaders of their communities, as long as they pledged allegiance to the Emperor, for example, Jimma Abba Jifar II of the Kingdom of Jimma. Others like the Kingdom of Wolaita and the Kingdom of Kaffa were incorporated into the Ethiopian state, having turned into the fiefs of a feudal lord appointed by the Emperor. In the case of the Nyàngatom people, the emperor appointed feudal lords from among the Nyàngatom – inventing a position that did not exist in the traditional structure. The newly appointed feudal lord's main task was to collect tax for the emperor. In some cases, the Nyàngatom complained that the newly appointed lords used the opportunity to enrich themselves, much like leaders appointed by colonial powers.

Following the Imperial period, the trend of forming “modern” state institutions parallel to the existing traditional institutions continued. While establishing and legitimizing “modern” state institutions, the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution (Article 34 (5)) recognises traditional law, and encourages people to use customary and religious laws for personal, marital and family rights. Following this, Article 78 (5) of the Constitution states, “Pursuant to sub-Article 5 of Article 34, the House of Peoples’ Representatives and State Councils can establish or give official recognition to religious and customary courts. Religious and customary courts that had state recognition and functioned prior to the adoption of the Constitution shall be organised on the basis of recognition accorded

to them by this Constitution.” Apart from the above provisions and increased interest in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, the interface between traditional and modern state institutions in governance and public good provision has been ignored.

### **Governance By, With and Without Government**

Different researchers have established how the Westphalian state model should not be used as a one size fits all model to states all over the world (Ballve, 2012). Africa is not the only place where territorial control is challenging. “Most of the world’s current states such as Brazil, Indonesia and China contain “areas of limited statehood” (Börzel and Risse, 2010: 119). Likewise, “in Africa, the vastness of territories and the scarcity of population represented barriers to state building and to the projection of power beyond the urban areas” (Stepputat, Møller and Andersen, 2007: 8–9). Territorial control in such condition was and is extremely expensive. Furthermore, the inability of African states to monopolise the means of violence and the consequent emergence of non-state armed groups will transform a state from weak to failed and (with degree of severity) to collapsed state. However, among others Raeymaekers, Menkhaus and Vlassenroot, (2008) argue that “anarchy” is not the simple explanation to conflicts in Africa. They theorise the existence of non-state governance that rises in the face of protracted conflict.

A body of literature on the mediated state is emerging with case studies on Northern Kenya, Somalia and Somaliland (Raeymaekers, Menkhaus and Vlassenroot, 2008; Arieff 2008; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, 2008). These are models where there are plural political institutions; and one of them is local traditional institution like clan leaders in the case of Somalia. Although some claim that mediated statehood has its roots in

Europe, it is not used here to explain anything imported or imitated. As Raeymaekers, Menkhaus and Vlassenroot, (2008) put, “Mediated models of state government are already an unspoken practice in much of the Horn of Africa.”

In most cases, what fails to be mentioned is that these systems did not emerge to compensate for loss of formal hierarchy. They were here as the formal hierarchies before the introduction of “modern” state system. Obviously, these are not groups assembled through incentive as shown in the discussion by Börzel and Risse (2010). In fact, the “modern” state apparatus needs an incentive to engage in governing these societies.<sup>30</sup> The Nyàngatom are a pre-state armed group and a society with a pre-state governance body.

The Nyàngatom fit the definition of a typical non-state armed group that existed before the modern state (Anderson, 2013). In line with this Davis (2010: 28) argues, “To a certain extent, elements of this situation hark back to medieval, absolutist, and pre-modern periods before successful state formation.” After the emergence of the modern state, the state is tremendously affected by conflict involving armed non-state actors such as pastoralists, and the pastoralists are in turn shaped by the “states in which they take form” (Krause and Milliken, 2009: 1).

### **Nyàngatom’s Traditional Institution**

The traditional leadership system of the Nyàngatom is a generational system. The system is equipped with traditional leaders, traditional beliefs (as enforcement mechanisms), Nyàngatom youth and their arms.

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<sup>30</sup> Currently the motivating factor in governance is the extensive ‘unused’ land in these pastoral lowlands, appealing for Large Scale Agricultural Investments.

This generation system depends on the initiation (aspan – recognition as Sons) and succession or transition (accession to the status of Fathers). The founders of the Nyàngatom are known as “beginners of the country” (Ngiseukop). Their sons constitute the second generation and each generation gets a turn to become a leader, that is, to become “Father of the country” as Tornay (1998) names it. Each generation is named, usually after an animal. The most recent generations of the Nyàngatom are the Mountains, Elephants, Ostriches, Antelopes, Buffalos and the yet “unnamed” Sons of Buffalos. Power succeeds from one generation to the other twice in a hundred years. Currently the Mountains have passed away, their Sons, the Elephants, are the last groups given aspan (initiated, recognised as Sons).

Table 1 – A “hypothetical reconstruction of the Nyàngatom generation system” as illustrated by Tornay (1998).

<b>Generation Name</b>	<b>Date of Appearance</b>	<b>Period in Power</b>	<b>Date of Extinction</b>
Country Beginners	?	Around 1700	?
<i>Wild dogs</i>	1600	1730-1780	1830
<i>Zebras</i>	1650	1780-1830	1880
<i>Tortoises</i>	1700	1830-1880	1930
<i>Mountains</i>	1750	1880-1930	1980
<i>Elephants</i>	1800	1930-1980	2030
<i>Ostriches</i>	1850	(?)1980-2030	(?)2080
<i>Antelopes</i>	1900	(?)2030-2080	(?)2130
<i>Buffalos</i>	1950	(?)2080-2130	(?)2180

The ceremony to initiate the Buffalos as Sons took place this year. The ceremony took place in South Sudan, at the end of 2014, because part of

the Nyàngatom people are located there, some young Buffalos travelled to South Sudan for the ceremony, one of whom was the Deputy woreda<sup>31</sup> Administrator.<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, there is a different generational categorisation known as rank. This system depends on the generational system described above. It divides all the generations as followers of either “Fathers of the country” or “Sons of the country”. Each group will have on its side its grandchildren, for example, the Mountains and the Ostriches on one side and the Elephants and the Antelopes on the other. Because of the discontinuity of the aspan ceremony, the country is now being led by the Rank system. The Ostriches assumed de facto leadership because of their association with the Mountains and the Antelopes assumed Sonship because of their association with the Elephants. These changes make the Nyàngatom system an endangered one but this does not represent a total breakdown. Tornay records a story that took place in 1995:

One month after the Toposa and the Nyàngatom raided the Dassanech settlement and killed one person, took a boy prisoner, and seized 25 cattle, the Nyàngatom elders at Nakua disapproved the raid and required the raiders to return the cattle. The cattle were then returned. This shows that the authority of the elders still exists and that the Nyàngatom have not yet entered the era of outlaw gangs, a development which cannot, unfortunately, be ruled out for the Turkana and the Jie (Tornay, 1998: 114).

The people recognise the traditional leaders for their leadership and spiritual capabilities, since spirituality is crucial to the Nyàngatom as

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<sup>31</sup> woreda (District) is the third-level administrative division of Ethiopia. They are composed of a number of kebeles or neighbourhood associations, which are the smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia.

<sup>32</sup> Interview, Nyangatom woreda Administration, Nyangatom woreda, Ethiopia, 25 August 2014

a society. For example, when a Nyàngatom commits an offence, he is taken to the traditional leaders, who are to listen to the issue and pass judgement. Once the person, for instance, who has stolen is asked to return the item, the person will do so immediately. The enforcement mechanism behind this decision is the fear that the person will be cursed in case of disobedience.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, if raids are to be undertaken under the disapproval of the traditional leaders, the youth believe that the disobedient will return either wounded or dead.

Nyangatom Youth armed with AKs and other machine guns assume the responsibility of protecting the Nyàngatom from their “enemies” (emoit). The Nyàngatom refer to the Daassanech, Turkana, Surma and other pastoralists around them as “enemies” with whom they are involved in violent conflicts, usually as a result of culture of cattle raiding. Although decision making as described above is in the hands of the elders of the generation set that is in power, the youth hold the executive power, defending the wellbeing of their people, especially women and children. The livelihood of the Nyàngatom as pastoralists is cattle rearing. Protecting the cattle from the youth of non- Nyàngatom pastoralists depends on the youth who are also shepherds. On the other hand, fetching water for household use and carrying it from deep waterholes is the responsibility of women and children. These water holes are often found in border areas, so the youth take the responsibility of accompanying them and providing physical security.

### **“Modern” State Institutions**

The security structure of the Nyàngatom is currently composed of the traditional and the modern apparatus. The modern state structure

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<sup>33</sup> Interview, Nyangatom woreda police, Nyangatom woreda, Ethiopia, 19 August 2014

draws its authorities from the regional constitution which requires the woreda administration to “ensure the peace and security of the woreda” in “consistence with federal and regional constitutions and other laws” (SNNPR Constitution 46 (2)). So the woreda administrative council is responsible to “safeguard peace and security of the inhabitants of the woreda; direct the police and security forces of the woreda; coordinate and supervise their activities” (SNNPR Constitution 98 (1)). The woreda “lead[s] and supervise[s] over the security and police force established with the view to maintain law and order so that peace and wellbeing of the inhabitants of the woreda concerned would be safeguarded, as a result.” (Ibid. 100 (2)). The police, security and administration office and militia under the state structure constitute one wing of the apparatus in the woreda.

Currently, the woreda Administration has 20 kebeles<sup>34</sup> under it. Each kebele and woreda has its chairperson (liqemenber) and executive secretary at the top of the administrative chain. In all the kebeles, Ostriches (the de facto traditional leaders) and their Fathers, the Elephants, are the ones elected into office. Although the government wishes to substitute them with politically engaged educated people, it is impossible to bring someone like that into leadership because legitimacy lies with the traditional system.

In principle, these kebele administrators can object to decisions made at the woreda level, which mostly are echoes of decisions made at federal and regional level. In reality, the government will take time to “convince” the traditional leaders. In the words of the deputy woreda

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<sup>34</sup> A kebele is the smallest administrative unit of Ethiopia similar to a neighbourhood or a localised and delimited group of people.

administrator,<sup>35</sup> “the person sent to the kebele to introduce a project carries the responsibility of convincing the people, we are not going to stop sending the person until they are totally convinced. Their disapproval will not cancel our programme; we will work together with whoever is on-board.” Ensuring the efficacy of the process is the kebele administrator’s secretary, who is a politically active educated Nyangatom, one of those young men that can challenge the decisions of the elders systematically.

Therefore, when the government has a project, it first discusses it with the administrators. It is easy to convince the rest if the administrator is convinced. Decisions are usually communicated from the federal and regional level through this method. Although elections take place in the Nyàngatom woreda, its validity is questionable because of the application of a similar method to communicate who and how the people should elect. Government officials follow their persistent persuasive approach to forward their agenda. Even if there comes an equally persistent rejection, according to the deputy administrator of the woreda, the government will “do it anyway”. A government policy that is planned to be implemented through these channels and mechanisms is arms registration and disarmament. This project by coincidence is matched with another government project in the area, namely, “large scale agricultural development” widely criticised as “land grabbing.”

### **Security By, With and Without Government**

The Nyàngatom do not rely on state security provision. Currently the security organs are composed of both traditional and modern apparatuses. Nyàngatom herders, when going to grazing lands, have

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<sup>35</sup> Interview, Deputy administrator of Nyangatom woreda, Nyangatom woreda, Ethiopia, 25 August 2014

the habit of scanning the area for danger. In a somewhat naïve manner, the local police appreciated, “No one trained the pastoralists to protect the border, they do it naturally. When there is a problem, it is not the police or the militia that intervene. The people themselves handle it.”<sup>36</sup> Although the strategy and plan lacks precision on specific steps of border protection, the implementation and rationale are clear. The Nyàngatom watch the place (that is now named a “border” in the language of the state) because it is where their cattle graze.

The police have divided the 20 kebeles in the woreda into 9 zones. Eight of them were allocated with five police officers, 40 police officers for a total population of 25,252 (Central Statistical Agency, 2008). This would mean approximately one police officer for 632 people, with the assumption that all of them were on duty. In many occasions, the police were not in the kebele the researcher visited. They were allocated to other kebeles where there has been an increase in violent incidents. In some cases, the woreda security bureau claimed to have assigned police in kebeles, but the researcher would travel to the kebele to find out that the people do not know of him or her.

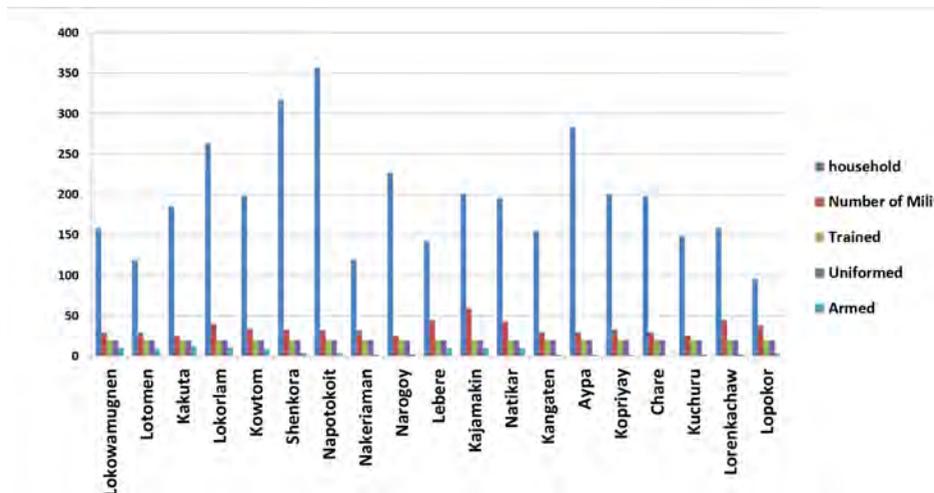
The militia and police in most cases are not small in number but are untrained and unarmed. For example, in Lopokor, one of the kebeles, there were 30 militiamen, newly recruited to address the need in the society, but all were neither trained nor armed.<sup>37</sup> The following graph<sup>38</sup> shows the distribution of militia in the kebeles, with the exception of one, Nawoyape, excluded for absence of data.

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<sup>36</sup> Interview, Lomo Naske, Nyangatom woreda police, Nyàngatom woreda, Ethiopia, 19 August 2014

<sup>37</sup> Interview, Losi Lima, Officer in the Militia recruitment and training office, Nyàngatom woreda, Ethiopia, 27 August 2014

<sup>38</sup> Retrieved from the woreda Militia Bureau, Recruitment and training office, as of August 2014



The low level of safety and security provided by the government is well expressed by the discussions in focused groups. Six out of eight Focus Group Discussions (GDs) unanimously agreed that the government plays no role in protecting the Nyàngatom. Only one concluded that they feel protected by the government while members of the other were further divided into two sub-groups, one arguing that the government tries to intervene in the event of clashes, and the other debating that only prevention should count as protection. These two FGDs were conducted in Northern kebeles, neighbouring the Kara, an area where clashes are milder compared to the rest.

The security need and expressed grievance of the people increase as one travels southwest. In the southwestern kebeles, a man, eager to explain how the government's role was minimal complained:

The number of police men deployed in this kebele is two. They sometimes go to the city for shopping. The militiamen deployed are also two. One is here (he was present in the focused group

discussion) and the other one is in the community now. How do you think these people protect us? They cannot. We protect each other we have no other keeper.<sup>39</sup>

When asked to rank security providers, the armed young men of the Nyàngatom were always first, even according to the woreda administrator. Nevertheless, the FGD participants were mindful of the role played by the government when it comes to post-conflict mediation and arbitration. They attribute the decrease in the incidence of conflict with some of their former enemies, such as the Hamar and the Kara, to the mediation efforts of the government.

In addition to the police and militia, there is a special unit known as the "Special Force" that was deployed in the woreda in 2007 after an extensive lobbying by the then woreda administrator. They were there to mainly guard the border and control cattle raiding, but they were facing challenges attempting both. The Special Forces consisted of 30 soldiers with no vehicle or telephone network but with only one radio communication facility.<sup>40</sup> Despite these challenges, the Special Forces need approval from the regional government to use their arms. The local people remain the primary security providers because, as the administrator of one of the kebeles said, "If the Special Forces had the authority to defend whenever there is an attack, they would have helped but now they are just sitting there. We do not wait for any order to defend ourselves".<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> FGD 3, Men in Lakereman *kebele*, Ethiopia, 21 August 2014

<sup>40</sup> Interview, Special Force, Nyàngatom *woreda*, Ethiopia, 24 August 2014; Interview, Special Force, Nyàngatom *woreda*, Ethiopia, 24 August 2014

<sup>41</sup> Interview, Lopiding Lokuwa, *kebele* Administrator, Kajamakin *kebele*, Ethiopia, 26 August 2014

The irony of the cooperation between the Special Forces and the community is the reversed tasks the two have assumed. The Special Forces are there to guard the border and, by de facto, the society within the border. Nevertheless, because of their incapability the Turkana have attacked them several times. In May 2014, there was an incident where the Turkana, at a water hole, attacked two of the Special Forces and the local people came to their rescue. According to the FGDs conducted in the area, the incident was not exceptional.

In addition to the unique arrangement discussed above, the Ethiopian border is protected by the Nyàngatom. Thus, the Nyàngatom do not pose a challenge in the state building process but, in fact, provide service. The police explain, "The number of police and militia is very limited and we cannot reach everywhere; the pastoralists need to protect the border using own arms."<sup>42</sup> The existence of such armed groups in a modern-nation state would, "pose a challenge to longstanding institutions of sovereignty structured around citizen and armed force loyalty to the modern-nation state and state society social contract" (Davis, 2010). Nonetheless, closely observed, all armed groups are not a challenge to the modern system, as anticipated. The need to protect the border area more effectively is recognised by the federal government but the strategy is fashioned at the *woreda* level to fit the context of local reality. According to the Deputy Inspector of the *woreda*, some strategies have been harmonised with specific situations in a given locality. The federal strategy does not say the local people should protect the border, but "given the situation of the area, we made the pastoral community protect itself and the border as well."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Interview, Deputy inspector in Nyàngatom Police Station, Nyàngatom *woreda* Administration, Nyàngatom *woreda*, Ethiopia, 19 August 2014

<sup>43</sup> Interview, Nyngatom *woreda* police, Nyàngatom *woreda*, Ethiopia, 19 August 2014

Neighbouring pastoralist communities in South Sudan live in similar conditions as the Nyàngatom. The Small Arms Survey conducted a study in 2009 in Eastern Equatoria State (EES) and concluded that the areas were “the most volatile and conflict-prone states in Southern Sudan” (Small Arms Survey, April 2010: 1). Eastern Equatoria has been at the centre of the Sudan Civil War from 1983-2005. This time coincides with the narrative of the Nyàngatom on how they acquired automatic rifles from South Sudan in 1988, leading them to revenge former raids by their neighbours, especially the Turkana and the Dassanech (Small Arms Survey, April 2010). Like the Nyàngatom, Eastern Equatoria is governed by traditional leaders and traditional security providers.

[In Eastern Equatoria] respondents cited traditional leaders (clan elders and village chiefs) as the primary security providers in their areas (90 per cent), followed by neighbours (48 per cent) and religious leaders (38 per cent). Police presence was only cited by 27 per cent of respondents and the SPLA by even fewer (6 per cent). (Small Arms Survey, April 2010: 1)

Another survey by Lokuji, Abatneh, and Wani (2009) indicates that traditional leaders are more credible in South Sudan. Torit (located in Eastern Equatoria) was one of the five locations the survey covered. The above reserchers have shown that there were three security actors in these localities. The most trusted were the traditional leaders while the other two governmental security providers, the police and the SPLA, were incompetent, ill-equipped, ill-trained and often clashed with each other. The researchers added, “the survey data show that many people see the security forces themselves – including the police, the SPLA, and other armed groups – as major sources of threats to their security, and as perpetrators of crime and human rights abuses” (Lokuji, Abatneh, and Wani, 2009: 5).

## The Mediated State

Although there is a security arrangement installed from the woreda to the kebele level, it works in negotiation with the traditional security system. The traditional leaders expect the woreda to resolve conflicts and facilitate compensations, and sometimes return of cattle after raids, by communicating with the “modern” administrations of the conflicting communities. On the other hand, the woreda seeks assistance from the Nyàngatom youth for the day-to-day provision of security. The woreda police and militia also recruit and continue to recruit from the local youth to build their capacity. In fact, there are several places where non-state actors “help the state overcome its security deficit” (Schmeidl and Krokhaile, 2009: 117). Examples can be drawn from Uganda (Karamojong) in Africa (Mirzeler and Young, 2000) and Afghanistan in Asia (Schmeidl and Krokhaile, 2009), where the role of the tribal police in providing security is giving rise to a wide range of relations between armed non-state actors and states. In Uganda the Karamojong are even “fighting against government enemies when called upon in times of national crisis,” a phenomenon once unimaginable (Mirzeler and Young, 2000: 420).

Likewise, in Ethiopia, although unrecognised by high officials especially at the federal level, a unique state-society relation in the security dimension has been in place for a long time. The Nyàngatom youth seem to take the bulk of the responsibility in security provision. One of the police officers explains the reasons saying, “It is very recently that the woreda became independent. In addition, the police have a budget deficit and the militia have very few people so we cannot protect all the people. Their wealth (meaning cattle) are so many and they go very

far for grazing land.”<sup>44</sup> For now the officer continues, “Everyone (all Nyàngatom) needs to become a militia and we will equip everyone to become a protector. That is the only way we can protect them. We cannot provide security with what we have now”. Hence, the approach is to help the people protect themselves; something they have been doing for more than a century.

The relationship between Nyàngatom’s traditional security system and the “modern” state apparatuses shows a broader governance linkage that exists between the two. Ensuing recent studies on statehood and governance and the above discussion, one can see that traditional institutions can complement “modern” state apparatus, producing a different breed of statehood, while also risking transformation and even extinction in the process of doing so. The case study of the Nyàngatom illustrates how state security apparatus has been supported by and even negotiated between the traditional leadership and security system forming what looks like a state mediated between multiple stakeholders. This advances the discussion already started by Menkhaus and several others who believe “whether the mediated state is an obstacle to state-building or a possible route to state-building is an intriguing question in contemporary zones of weak and collapsed state authority” (Menkhaus, 2008: 30).

The Nyàngatom fit the definition of a typical non-state armed group that existed before the modern state (Anderson, 2013). In most cases, what fails to be mentioned is that these systems did not emerge to compensate for loss of formal hierarchy. They were here as the formal hierarchies before the introduction of “modern” state system. Obviously, these are

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<sup>44</sup> Interview, Deputy inspector in Nyàngatom Police Station, Nyngatom woreda Administration, Nyàngatom woreda, Ethiopia, 19 August 2014

not groups assembled through incentive as depicted by Börzel and Risse (2010). The Nyàngatom are a pre-state armed group and a society with a pre-state governance body. In fact, “modern” state apparatus needs an incentive to engage in governing these societies.<sup>45</sup>

Such traditional institutions and other non-governmental bodies interact in different ways with each other. According to Krause and Milliken (2010: 1) there can be three options in the states approach to traditional structures, one, replacing or reforming them; two, out-coopting them for local loyalty; and three, coopting and using them as local governance contractors. In many parts of Africa, there are informal institutions of governance that attempt to deliver public goods like security. While the state could still provide a shadow of hierarchy<sup>46</sup> to ensure compliance with international human rights and human security standards, the activity delegated to the traditional institution could depend on the gaps the state is facing.

Currently the approach reflected in Ethiopia is of the third one where the state uses traditional institutions as local governance bodies. Keister (2014), discussing the benefit of such an approach, argues saying, “By building on existing authority structures, co-optation can harness alternative authorities’ lower costs and higher benefits of rule.” Keister also argues that the approach, on the other hand, has its own risks. One risk is that “such approaches can favour some local apparatus or actors over others, threatening the interests of those not chosen, thus inducing uncertainty and contestation” (Ibid.) In Nyàngatom woreda, although empirical data suggests co-optation, it is still not clear what the

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<sup>45</sup> Currently the motivating factor in governance is the extensive ‘unused’ land in these pastoral lowlands, appealing for Large Scale Agricultural Investments.

<sup>46</sup> A situation where “a strong state looms in the background [and]... sees to it that non-state actors contribute to the provision of collective goods.” (Börzel and Risse, 2010, p.114)

outcome of such process of introducing modern structures of traditional rulers might be. The process risks the transformation of the traditional institutions through time, i.e., the intrusion of “modern” government organs might interfere in the functions of the traditional institutions, thus, disturbing the legitimacy of the institution. Although it would be premature (for this chapter) to forward recommendations, opting for the preservation of the traditional institution would not be allowing a non-governmental body to take the responsibilities of a government that is not functioning well. It is recognizing and allowing a governance system that has been there for centuries (Börzel, 2010) to continue. However, to allow the Nyàngatom to continue to provide security through the traditional governance mechanism would mean to allow them to remain armed.

AfSol should not disregard what Africa and the rest of the world has achieved in terms of peace and security by bringing back traditional governance mechanisms. It, however, should recognize new achievements and traditional governance mechanisms that have overcome the test of time. Both policy makers and academicians consistently overlook these good practices. Often hidden in plain sight, African traditional institutions have governed the people of Africa before, during and after colonialism. It suggests a change not in the nature but rather in the understanding of state and possible change in policymaking. Furthermore, not all non-state armed actors are a threat to security and AfSol should recognise such informal security providers as important contributors. It especially recognises indigenous practices not just because they are native to the continent but because they are owned and accepted by society and are grounded in local realities. Thus traditional governance bodies should be studied and examined in the context they function today - not yesterday.

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## Chapter Six

### Understanding Peaceful Coexistence from an Urban Refugee Perspective in Africa: The Case of Uganda

**Brenda Aleesi\***

This chapter examines the initiatives that the urban refugees have taken towards ensuring their peaceful coexistence with the host population amidst multiple hindrances and how these initiatives relate to the pillars of African-Centred Solutions to African Peace and Security Problems (AfSol), namely, commitment, ownership and shared values. It aims at stimulating discussions on initiatives that are useful in promoting peaceful coexistence among the urban refugees living in Kampala, the capital of Uganda.

This chapter first introduces the urban refugee phenomenon and analyses peaceful coexistence in Kampala. Second, it examines the peaceful coexistence initiatives and then moves on to discuss their relationship with AfSol. Finally, it highlights the significance of peaceful coexistence in advancing the knowledge and practice of AfSol.

Urban refugees are vulnerable group of people forced to encounter a sudden mix of cultures and values in host communities, and as victims of armed conflict face challenges in the process of peaceful coexistence. Some of these challenges include language barrier, unemployment, lack the basic necessities of life and discrimination. It is imperative to examine the initiatives that the urban refugees in Kampala have taken to peacefully coexist with host population amidst the grappling problems they face in trying to make ends meet in a foreign country.

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## **Plight of Refugees in Kampala**

Uganda has been and continues to be a major destination and habitat for refugees from the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa (Hovil 2001: 4). Refugees have fled their countries of origin primarily because of violence, conflict, war and persecutions, while others escaped natural disasters like famine and drought (Murithi 2005: 54). Uganda has been a host to several refugees from the time before its independence in 1962 until today. During the Second World War, it hosted Europeans displaced by war mainly of Polish origin who were accommodated in camps for the duration of the war (Lomo, Naggaga, and Angela, 2001: 3). Sudan has generated a number of refugees from as far back as the Anglo-Egyptian wars. This influx was followed by refugees fleeing unrest caused by struggles for independence, for example, Kenyans during the Mau Mau rebellion, Sudanese fleeing the conflict after independence, Rwandese fleeing the Civil war of 1995 and Congolese after the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961 (Lomo, Naggaga, and Angela, 2001: 3). During the same time, Uganda received refugees from Ethiopia and Somalia. It should be noted that any instability in any of the neighboring countries always generates refugees for Uganda. That was what happened as a result of the 2007 Post-election violence in Kenya, the continued power struggle in South Sudan and the recurring insurgency and control of Eastern DR Congo by different militia groups.

According to Uganda Refugee and Asylum Seeker Statistics (2014), there are 420,989 refugees in Uganda; these come mainly from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, among others. Kampala is host to more than 72,000 refugees that are broadly classified into registered refugees,

unregistered refugees, asylum seekers, and refugees on the urban caseload and self-settled refugees (Macchiavello, 2003:3). Refugees have arrived in different ways through the rural settlements, directly from their country of origin or via transit countries such as Kenya (Mihoko and Nagujja, 2014: 7).

The urban refugee issue gained prominence in 1993 after a major influx of Somali refugees (Huff and Kalyango 2002: 6). The sudden increase in urban refugees illustrates the understated shift in the nature of refugee populations in Sub-Saharan Africa. During the 1950s when African states had started gaining independence and decades shortly after that, majority of the Africans and refugees in Sub Saharan Africa were agriculturalists. It was upon this fact, that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) executed policy and practice in relation to refugees considering them all as farmers. However, situations have changed as a result of urbanization; and armed conflict has displaced people from towns in neighbouring nations.

Many of these refugees find life in the rural settlement incompatible with the lifestyle they have been accustomed to, and thus head to Kampala in search of employment and other sources of livelihood. Refugees are scattered throughout Kampala slums, with the Somali concentrated in Kisenyi and the Congolese in Makindye, Katwe, Nsambya and Masajja living alongside Ugandan urban poor (Mihoko and Nagujja, 2014: 7). Kampala is no exception when it comes to urbanization; migrants including refugees to the city are faced with unemployment, shortage of housing, and lack of services (electricity, running water, waste disposal) and thus live in deplorable situations characterised by poverty and bad

sanitation. Such severe conditions make the refugees predisposed to outbreaks of water borne diseases, for example, cholera and typhoid. According to Huff and Kalyango (2002), these problems do affect the urban poor, however the situation of the urban refugees is made severe due to a number of issues, choosing to live outside the rural settlement excludes them from the protection of UNHCR and the government of Uganda and they easily become target of xenophobic tendencies, hostility and discrimination.

The problems of urban refugees are worsened by the fact that the government of Uganda and UNHCR do not provide basic assistance to them and this applies to those in Kampala as well. Basic material assistance is provided to refugees residing in rural settlements with the exception of those on the urban case load - those with serious security concerns and health problems (Bernstein, 2005: 8). Demands for basic assistance are met with calls for them to return to the rural settlements that have basic assistance pegged to them. Urban refugees have to ultimately fend for themselves and provide for their children, women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. Attempts to force refugees to live in the rural settlements constitute a violation of the international standards of human rights like the Uganda's Refugees Act 2006, the 1981 African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees.

Among the urban refugees, women and children are most vulnerable because of the experiences they endure within the country of origin, during transit and in the host country. Armed Conflict has a profound effect on the refugee women causing loss of property and unsafe community life followed by death of their husbands, fathers and

brothers. It left many women traumatised and still grieving (Refugee Law Project, 2014). Rape in recent times has been used as a weapon of war in Africa depriving women of their dignity and self-worth (Murithi, 2005: 54). A number of women have been sexually abused, discriminated or forced into sexual transactions to survive during conflict, flight or later in Kampala. As a result of sexual violence, many have reported personal traumatic experiences and reproductive health problems like chronic lower back pain and failure to conceive (Bernstein, 2005: 8).

Refugee children are vulnerable, first as children then as refugees (Dryden, 2003: 3). Conflicts in the countries of origin have troubled children as they have witnessed the violent murder and rape of their parents, relatives and gone through the difficult experience of displacement. Some refugee children have fled the conflict unaccompanied by an adult; with younger siblings to take care of (Refugee Law Project, 2014). Amidst the sadness and grief at the loss of their parents, children have lost their childhood and taken on parenting roles. However, the situation in Kampala is not any better. Children experience violence when they try to coexist in urban situations, discrimination and sexual gender-based violence directed at girls (Bernstein, 2005: 24).

Urban Refugees are one of the most neglected groups of citizens and are rarely a subject of research. They represent a population that arguably has rights but rather denied exercising them because of their urban setting. Urban refugees are victims of armed conflict, human rights violations, political oppression and dictatorial regimes. As refugees, they carry into the host states fresh wounds of war that are eventually translated as psychological problems. A change in environment and population is enough to destabilise a refugee with traumatic experiences

of conflict. As result conflict, misunderstandings or even violence is bound to occur. Peaceful coexistence provides that avenue through which social interaction can take place amongst the urban refugees and the host population.

### **Coexistence as Shared Value**

African communities have always lived together despite their differences in culture. Uganda has a history of armed conflict and violence and its citizens have in one way or another been affected by the war (Lomo and Hovil, 2004: 4). Receiving refugees fleeing conflict across Uganda's borders presents a complicated situation for nationals who are recovering from the effects of the previous conflicts. Against this background, peaceful coexistence plays a vital role in helping societies move away from violent interactions and preservation of non-violent mechanisms of conflict resolution within communities.

Abu-Nimer (2001) defined coexistence as development of cooperative modes of interaction between the minority and majority in order to realise the potential between the two groups. Peace, in fact, is not necessarily absence of violence or war but rather absence of structural violence and inequalities, human rights violations and injustice (Hicks, 1988: 8). In other words, peace is characterised by good governance, equality, justice and respect for human rights. Drawing from the above descriptions, peaceful coexistence is a situation in which two or more groups of people with diverse backgrounds in terms of ethnicity, language and culture put aside their prejudices and sentiments through learning to accept or tolerate each other's differences and choosing to resolve conflict using non-violent means. Khaminwa (2003) observes that peaceful coexistence prevails when communities and individuals actively accept

and embrace diversity or merely tolerate each other. Coexistence varies depending on the intensity of interactions as two entities communicate and respond through language and gestures to affect one's behavior or thinking (Ferrante, 2003: 142). Peaceful coexistence provides a means for building relationships among diverse communities. According to Khaminwa (2003), the basic tenets are:

- Recognition of diversity
- The worth or value of the other person
- Non-violence

The multicultural social theory and the elicitive model are used to advance the peaceful coexistence initiatives developed by and for the urban refugees in Kampala.

### **Multicultural Social Theory**

The peaceful coexistence initiative is instructed by the Multicultural Social theory proposed by Sociologists George Ritzer and Douglas J. Goodman. The multicultural social theories place emphasis on the marginalised and thus tend to level the playfield in society (Ritzer and Goodman, 2003: 222). Multicultural theories have several traits explained below. They seek to empower those who lack influence thus a rejection of the universal or classical theories that support those in power. In most African societies, children, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and in recent years refugees are considered to be vulnerable in various aspects. Multicultural theory empowers the most vulnerable in society by providing voice to those who lack power. This theory seeks

to be inclusive thus offers a theory on behalf of many of those without power. It can be said that inclusive implies participation of minority groups within the social fabric irrespective of whether they have power or not. However preference is given to those who lack power and have no say when it comes to governing a particular society. They seek to make the social world more open and diverse. Multicultural theories acknowledge that societies have different cultures and traditions. The central tenets of this theory are narrowed down to three issues, namely:

- Advocating and promoting equality in society by empowering vulnerable persons.
- Encouraging participation of social groups in the social structure
- Embracing diversity across the cultural and social group divide.

### **Elicitive Model**

This model proposes and encourages the emergence of resources, initiatives or ideas from a particular setting and responding to the needs in that context. The emphasis is on empowerment and seeking ideas, and is rooted in the cultural context (Lederach, 1995: 55). The model works towards identifying what people already have in place and what they already know about conflict resolution. Diligence in respecting and building from the cultural context is paramount because it places emphasis on the participants designing, discovering together and naming the conflict resolution model. This model revolves around exploring what to do, providing a process for people to engage in what they know and build from that knowledge. In the context of urban refugees, the discussion will involve obtaining information about their

needs, challenges and suggestions on what would best facilitate their peaceful coexistence in Kampala. This model is of great importance to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that deal with refugees especially when it comes to designing training programmes aimed at facilitating peaceful coexistence in urban areas. The central premise of this model lies in its participatory nature because it provides room for finding and forming ideas and concepts through education.

From the analysis of the multicultural social theory and the elicitive model, the underlying elements of peaceful coexistence initiative have been drawn and are characterised below.

- The Initiative asserts that society is governed by values that can apply to many contexts or are defined by a given context.
- Deviation from the values inevitably leads to conflict in varying scales and adherence leads to conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence.
- Peaceful coexistence calls on humanity to embrace and celebrate diversity in culture.
- It advocates for equality across gender, ethnicity and vulnerable persons.
- Consensus and participation of everyone is the key to achieving peace.

## **African-Centred Solutions**

Urban refugees have developed several peaceful coexistence initiatives that have been derived from shared values rooted in the fact that Africans have a history of colonialism. Urban refugees have also encountered conflict on both sides (their side and the host country's side). Africa is a continent with diverse ethnicities and cultures across the board and peace has always been central to its communities. As a result, communities, even before colonialism, had values that enabled them to coexist amidst diversity in, for example, hospitality to strangers, respect for life and the elderly, and communalism and solidarity. These values were reinforced by our traditional political systems and social traditions at that time. However, after independence, many African states, Uganda included, took on political institutions of their colonial masters and sidelined our traditional political institutions together with the shared values. It should be noted that the colonial political systems suited the colonialists' interests on the continent but lacked African flair which was deliberately left out. African shared values are amalgamation of universal values, democracy and governance principles and others such as solidarity, consensus and communalism that are seen as deeply-rooted in African culture.

Refugees arise from failure of member states to adhere to the principles stipulated in African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and other conventions. The African Union adopted the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which emphasises the significance of good governance, popular participation, rule of law and human rights as stipulated below in its obligations to state parties.

- State Parties shall commit themselves to promote democracy, the principle of the rule of law and human rights.
- State Parties shall recognize popular participation through universal suffrage as the alienable right of the people.
- State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure constitutional rule, particularly constitutional transfer of power.
- State Parties shall ensure that citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights taking into account their universality, interdependence and indivisibility.
- State Parties shall eliminate all forms of discrimination, especially those based on political opinion, gender, ethnic, religious and racial grounds as well as any other form of intolerance.
- State Parties shall adopt legislative and administrative measures to guarantee the rights of women, ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons and other marginalized and vulnerable social groups.
- State Parties shall respect ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, which contributes to strengthening democracy and citizen participation (Articles 4, 5, 6 & 8, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance).

## **Peaceful Coexistence Initiatives**

Peaceful coexistence initiative takes into perspective the realities that accompany urbanization, the input from the urban refugees, the CSOs and the government of Uganda. The initiative was drawn from urban refugees operating as individuals or as a group and refugee-related CSOs. It focuses on ensuring that refugees deal with conflict-related problems arising from the country of origin while making adjustments to survive and deal with other challenges they find in the host nation. This initiative is based on good governance, democratic principles and shared values. It should be noted that absence of good governance and democracy reflected in armed conflict, human rights violations and abuse of the rule of law in countries of origin of the refugees, is what caused their flight. However, the country of refuge (Uganda) has to some extent achieved good governance and democracy in certain areas but the challenges of governance still remain at large. As a result, participation of the urban refugees in the peaceful coexistence initiative is important. The shared values that arise from peace, African culture, governance and democracy provide the basis for peaceful coexistence. The peaceful coexistence initiative constitutes inherent values that we consider African in nature like solidarity, communalism, hospitality, respect for authority and the elderly, respect for religion and sacred and peace or universal values like understanding, tolerance, democratic participation, equality between men and women and respect for all human rights.

Peaceful coexistence has its basis on peace values, governance and democratic principles. The peaceful coexistence initiatives that have succeeded, and can be improved upon have been divided into four

aspects, namely, a culture of peace through education, socio-cultural, and economic and health aspects. There has been commitment at various levels toward promoting the peaceful coexistence initiatives. This section also discusses how peaceful coexistence relates to the three pillars of African-centred solutions, namely, commitment, ownership and shared values.

### **A Culture of Peace through Education**

Education plays an important role in advancing a culture of peace because it provides a form of stability for children affected by conflict and helps them to peacefully coexist with the rest of the host population. According to Douglas Roche, a culture of peace is an approach to life that seeks to transform the cultural roots of war and violence into a culture where dialogue, respect, and fairness govern social relations. The culture of peace uses education as an instrument in fostering attitudes supportive of non-violence, cooperation and social justice. The UNESCO Constitution states, ...Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed. This form of education relies heavily on peace values thus the term Peace education.

Peace education is one of the programmes that refugees have developed to help their children cope with lack of school fees to attend formal school. The peace education programme of Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID) is a typical example. Peace education is a process that encourages refugees to continually acquire values, knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for coexistence in the host community. Even after conflict, peace education provides window of opportunity to promote peace while the horrors of war are fresh on

people's minds and patterns of life disrupted.

Speak your rights curriculum, an initiative of Refugee Law Project by a CSO dealing with forced migrants has enabled urban refugees acquire knowledge about basic human rights whilst becoming conversant with their rights as human beings and as refugees. The content of the curriculum was drawn from Uganda's Refugee Act 2006 and other human rights instruments. In addition to human rights education, conflict resolution skills, for example, negotiation, cooperation, reconciliation, mediation among clashing parties is necessary for continued existence (Miller and King, 2005). Education provides knowledge and skills development that strengthens the capacity of refugees to be agents of transformation and is essential in understanding and promoting peaceful coexistence.

The urban refugees have wholeheartedly taught their children and those of others in the host community peace education in absence of funds. The CSOs like Pan African Development Education and Advocacy Programme (PADEAP) and Refugee Law Project (RLP) have programmes committed to alleviating the suffering of urban refugees, in particular that of vulnerable persons like children, women, elderly and persons with disabilities. The CSOs in coming up with these programmes identified crucial needs among refugees and elicited what resources or skills the refugees required to start the programme. The CSOs identified the major concerns of urban refugees through information gathering techniques such as brainstorming, focus groups, participant observation and interviews to discover the interest of the involved groups (Kusek and Rist, 2004: 59). It has been noted that engaging refugees in a participatory manner in issues affecting them helps build consensus and commitment to the desired outcome of the initiative. The government of Uganda has

shown commitment by ratifying conventions committed to promoting a culture of peace as stipulated below.

State Parties undertake to implement programmes and carry out activities designed to promote democratic principles and practices as well as consolidate a culture of democracy and peace. To this end, State Parties shall:

Promote good governance by ensuring transparent and accountable administration.

Strengthen political institutions to entrench a culture of democracy and peace.

Create conducive conditions for civil society organizations to exist and operate within the law.

Integrate civic education in their educational curricula and develop appropriate programmes and activities.

State Parties shall take measures to ensure and maintain political and social dialogue, as well as public trust and transparency between political leaders and the people, in order to consolidate democracy and peace" (Article 12&13, African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance).

### **Socio-Cultural Aspect**

This aspect covers learning a new language, sports and play and respect for gender equality. Refugees from Francophone countries face difficulty in peaceful coexistence because of language barrier. English Literacy class was developed by Refugee Law Project to help urban refugees learn basic English for communication. Language and verbal communication fostered good human relations within a community and African languages transferred cultures, traditions and customs that were unique to a particular community. The other non-verbal communication used to promote peaceful coexistence is sports and play. Sport is any physical activity that can contribute to physical fitness, mental and social interaction. Sport is a universal language that bridges divides in society

and promotes core values of peace. The report on sports, recreation and play (UNICEF, 2004) highlights the importance of sports among children in the practice for life, playing for peace and levelling the playing field among children who have been sidelined like the refugees. During sport and play among children and adolescents, cultural differences and political agendas dissolve paving way for peaceful coexistence.

Gender equality promotes peaceful coexistence through empowerment of women and elimination of violence against them. Women and girls are part of society yet they have less opportunity, fewer resources, less power and influence than men and boys. Displacement makes women more dependent than men because of their inability to have control over resources for survival (Refugee Law Project, 2014). Everyone is entitled to basic human rights irrespective of one's gender and age. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, in its commitment to advancing gender equality calls on state parties as follows.

State Parties shall recognize the crucial role of women in development and strengthening of democracy.

State Parties shall create the necessary conditions for full and active participation of women in the decision-making processes and structures at all levels as a fundamental element in the promotion and exercise of a democratic culture.

State Parties shall take all possible measures to encourage the full and active participation of women in the electoral process and ensure gender parity in representation at all levels, including legislatures. (Article 29, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance).

## **Health Aspect**

Sexual exploitation of women and girls makes them vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. HIV/AIDS awareness is one tool used by refugees to combat infection by the virus amidst urbanisation in Kampala. HIV/AIDS still carries stigma and awareness helps urban refugees to take precaution and eventually coexist peacefully with the host community.

The initiatives aimed at addressing trauma and psychological problems of refugees in urban areas especially of women and children. Failure to address such problems has resulted in hostility, alcoholism and substance abuse. PADEAP a local NGO provides counselling sessions; urban refugees speak about their grief and effectively express their anger, pain and bitterness. Adolescent girls may nonetheless suffer in silence after trauma of sexual exploitation and would rather keep quiet about their emotional problems such as feelings of worthlessness, rejection and self hatred (Refugee Law Project, 2014: 10). Therapy addresses those problems adolescents and other women face especially if the counsellor is of the same gender. After such sessions that take time, women and girls have changed their perspective towards life and have learned to hope again.

## **Economic Aspect**

Majority of the refugees displaced by war and residing in Kampala then came from urban centres in Eastern DR Congo and elsewhere. As result they were highly skilled with some of them educated up to university level. Refugees are drawn to Kampala because of availability of opportunities to trade, offer services to rich city residents, and explore

business opportunities. The urban environment is viewed by refugees as conducive to achieve self-sufficiency and enjoy respect for their skills. Income generating activities and other forms of livelihood foster peaceful coexistence because one is able to earn a living and meet the basic needs of survival. Most refugee men of Congolese origin in Kampala have taken to hair dressing and tailoring to make ends meet. The Somali community is into business especially dealing with petroleum products. The refugee women from DRC, Rwanda and Burundi normally engage in vending Bitengi (African Print material), jewellery and shoes for survival. Others have taken to domestic work, baby sitting for money among host communities (Refugee Law Project, 2014: 4). The income generating activities inadvertently provide opportunities for urban refugees to interact and engage with host population on what they have to offer and also sharpen their language skills. The business activities of urban refugees clearly reflect acts of resilience to cope with situation at hand. Refugees have started sending their children to schools usually free of charge because they cannot afford school fees.

OPM and UNHCR introduced the Self Reliance Strategy (SRS) in 1999 as developmental response to refugee management and the strategy promised benefits to both refugee populations and hosts. SRS sought to find ways to integrate services provided to refugees into regular government structures and policies in rural settlement. This strategy towards peaceful coexistence was extended to the urban refugees in a quite different context to enable them cope with economic challenges they face in the city. Urban refugees are not farmers as presupposed by the strategy because land was given only to the rural refugees to starting farming. However, despite the setbacks, the SRS has ensured commitment by government of Uganda to facilitate peaceful coexistence

of the urban refugees amongst the host population.

The Kampala declaration on refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons in Africa, adopted by the African Union in the Special Summit on Refugees, Returnees, and Internally Displaced Persons in 2009, called upon member states to ratify conventions and charters related to human rights and refugees including the OAU Convention Governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The above conventions when ratified would avert the problems that cause refugees and other displaced persons and promote peaceful coexistence throughout the continent of Africa because principles of democracy and good governance will be upheld.

Peaceful coexistence has enriched the knowledge and practice of AfSol through its basic tenets, namely, recognition of diversity, the value of another person and non-violence. The activities of the urban refugees and the CSOs towards peaceful coexistence and shared values are in a way means of implementing AfSol through ownership and commitment of the actors involved.

Recognition of diversity is important in advancing the knowledge and practice of AfSol. Active embracing of diversity provides a safe window to look in depth at the culture and perceptions of other individuals or groups of people during the process of peaceful coexistence (Abu Nimer, 2001: 236). When Africans learn to embrace diversity, they gain understanding of why certain social groups have different cultures from their own and start to see culture through the lens of those individuals or social groups of a particular culture. At this point, prejudices get watered down; stereotypes are reduced as communities become culturally

sensitive and understanding.

One's value is narrowed down to the shared values held by an individual, a community, a state or a continent and this means respect for life, justice, equality, solidarity, communalism and age, among others. Cultivating African shared values, for example, participation in governance, basic freedoms and adherence to the rule of law breaks individuals and communities away from violence and leads them to social cohesion thus facilitating peaceful coexistence. Values play an important role in shaping one's view of reality

Peaceful coexistence initiatives were drawn from urban refugees to address the needs they face in the host community. This is illustrated in the following example. The urban refugees realised they could not afford to send their children to school. They started programmes to address issues of language barrier and trauma problems amongst their children. The exchange of information among refugees and the host communities about the law of refuge in the country helps facilitate peaceful coexistence. Human rights education provides the avenue by which refugees obtain knowledge about their rights, duties and obligations and the institutions that provide services to them.

This chapter highlights the importance of grassroots activities or home grown initiatives in the promotion of shared values like tolerance and governance in achieving peace. Studies about the problems of refugees in Africa have tended to adopt a top-down approach towards solutions and refugees have rarely been given due attention. A case in point is that the UNHCR and OAU proposed three durable solutions for the issue of refugees, namely, voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement in a third country. Refugees fleeing armed conflict

are usually unprepared for what they will find on the ground in the host countries. What happens when a refugee finds conditions in the settlements difficult and opts to return to the country of origin that is still in conflict? Voluntary repatriation loses its legitimacy as solution to refugee problems when the country of origin is still plagued by war. Local integration remains as a possible option alongside resettlement in a third country which takes a long time. For Local integration to become a viable solution, participation and consensus of the refugees and the host communities in Kampala would be instrumental for fostering peaceful coexistence.

The need to adapt to the changing trends of society has been proposed in this chapter. AfSol should consider the aspects of urbanisation and globalisation when drawing solutions to African problems. For example, policy and practice of refugees in the 1950s assumed that refugees were agriculturalists because most African people lived in rural areas. There now is a need for states, Regional Economic Communities and the African Union to draft a policy on Urban Refugees taking into account the reasons they choose to reside in the urban centres and also accommodate the challenges that the refugees and host communities are facing as a result of urbanization.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The discussion revealed that peaceful coexistence is in itself a shared value, thus one can conclude that Uganda's urban refugees have adopted a creative African solution to cope with the challenges they face. Peaceful coexistence is facilitated by grassroots activities that promote tolerance and harmony among diverse people. Participation and consensus is important in developing these initiatives. Peaceful coexistence has

occurred through social interaction and engagement of the urban refugees with the host population across four sectors, namely, education and a culture of peace, economic, socio-cultural and health. Within education and a culture of peace, the initiatives are peace education, human rights education and conflict resolution. The socio-cultural aspect covers gender equality, learning English and sports and play. The health aspect addresses psychological issues and HIV/AIDS awareness among refugees. The economic aspect documents the resilience and income generating activities. These initiatives are founded on the pillars of AfSol, namely, ownership, commitment and shared values.

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## Chapter Seven

### Civil Society in Conflict Transformation: Key Evidence from Kenya's Post-election Violence

**Caleb Wafula** \*

For many years since independence, Kenya had largely been considered as an island of peace within a region ravaged by protracted conflicts (Modi and Shekhawal, 2008) although it was eventually bound to catch the bug of instability.<sup>47</sup> The events that followed the disputed 2007 general election exploded the myth that Kenya is one united nation and threw the state into the landscape of countries characterised by violence which has been referred to as the 2007/2008 post-election<sup>48</sup> violence (CIPEV, 2008).<sup>49</sup> The conflict had serious developmental implications and it was imperative that long lasting solutions were sought. In this relation, there was no shortage of ideas in the sense that the country has witnessed initiatives from different actors that have played a frontline role in

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<sup>47</sup> Kenya is the gateway to the East and Central Africa (the Great Lake region) and the Middle East. Neighbouring countries rely on Kenya's infrastructure links (particularly the port at Mombasa) for main imports as well as export routes.

<sup>48</sup> The genesis of the Kenya's PEV is well established, so this study neither attempts to rehearse it nor analyze the number of peace processes conducted and/or stalled there. Nor, for that matter, can it look at the interventions which international justice venues (International Criminal Court) undertook to investigate the countless international crimes perpetrated during the conflict. However for details on the general electoral process see Independent Review Commission (IREC) on the 2007 elections (Kriegler Commission). Nairobi: Government Printers, 2008. Debate is yet to be settled on what exactly happened in 2007. For further details on some of these debates, see for instance, a Special Issue of the Journal of Eastern African Studies: Election Fever: Kenya's Crisis, Vol. 2, No. 2 of 2008. See in particular Cheeserman, Nic (2008); Mueller, Susanne, D. (2008); and Throup, David (2008). On problems around the vote count, see also Gibson, C.C., Long J.D. (2009).

<sup>49</sup> CIPEV stands for Commission of Inquiry on the Post-Election Violence report, popularly referred to as the Waki Commission (named after Justice Philip Waki who chaired it); Other sources include Andreassen et al. 2008; Obonyo, 2008; Dagne, 2008; HRW, 2008; Bayne, 2008)

addressing the socio-economic challenges that related to the conflict and worked hard to bring the country back on the road to recovery and peace, more broadly, which have given rise to intense debate. The story goes on to say that among these actors were Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), whose conflict transformation initiatives were rooted more in local views.

While not disputing these new developments, the problem with this new narrative is its lack of systematic analysis of the impact these initiatives would have in bringing about sustainable peace and stability in post-conflict Kenya. Particularly, it is significant to examine if these initiatives are rooted in the pan-African conviction that “African-Centred Solutions to African Peace and Security Problems” (Afsol) can more reliably solve Africa’s peace and security problems (Touray, 2005). In this regard, this paper asks the perhaps provocative questions of how effective CSOs are, as mid and grassroots actors, in conflict transformation process. What are the limitations of CSOs involvement in conflict transformation? And lastly, what are the issues of sustainability and the best practices needed to strengthen the civic forces in conflict transformation?

In answering these questions, we consider how civil society, within the framework of AfSol, has contributed towards sustainable post-conflict transformation. We do this by looking at the meaning of the key concepts of the paper, civil society and its history in Kenya. Without such a historical analysis, the proper role and place of civil society in conflict transformation cannot be captured. Later the paper will seek to offer recommendations and strategies on best practices for enhancing the civic society forces in conflict transformation and in the wider AfSol framework.

The research methodology was unique and valuable in itself because it brought together insights from different leading civil society organizations and development agencies, with different degrees of involvement in conflict transformation. This greatly helped analyse the conflict transformation process from different points of view.

### **Conceptual Clarity: What is Civil Society?**

In the increasingly globalizing world, the term Civil Society Organisation (CSO) has become a mantra,<sup>50</sup> in the liberal, political and intellectual discourse that few would dare dispute, but poses a number of concrete analytical, operational, and normative questions: What is Civil Society? Better still, what constitutes the Civil Society sector? By way of elaborating these questions, there has been a global ubiquity to the concept of civil society, with these questions having long been debated upon, yet continue to plague scholars and planners alike as the whole concept remains ambiguous, identified more by their origin, mode, agenda and characteristics than by explicit definition and may, therefore, vary in different jurisdictions (Bebbington et al., 1997).

It is not the purpose of the paper to engage in detail with the complex definitional debates about the meanings of civil society, which have been summarised effectively elsewhere by the likes of social capital theorist Robert Putnam (1993) who has made a significant contribution to the corpus of literature on civil society, argued that civil society is composed of horizontal solidaristic groups which cross-cut vertical ties of kinship and patronage. Similarly, according to Merkel and Lauth (1998) cited in

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<sup>50</sup> Civil society is the 'darling' of everybody. International organisations like the World Bank, the United Nations and all its specialised agencies court it, continent organisations like the African Union (AU), and African Development Bank (ADB) adore it, while the state has been forced to now tolerate, if not respect it.

World Bank (2005), civil society has recently gained prominence as a tool to check the excess use of power by the state and to reduce its potential to oppress its citizens and interfere in the exercise of individual freedoms.

Paffenholz (2010.), whose work has been highly influential in shaping the civil society debate, provided a more broad definition by referring to CSOs as “a sphere of voluntary action that is distinct from the state, political, private and economic spheres, keeping in mind that in practice the boundaries between these sectors are often complex and blurred. It consists of a large and diverse set of voluntary organizations – competing with each other and oriented to specific interests – that are not purely driven by private or economic interests, are autonomously organised, and interact in the public sphere.” Thus, according to Paffenholz (2010), civil society is independent of the state and the political sphere though interacts with the state and the political sphere.

To this end, it is very clear that the term civil society remains, to a large extent, ambiguous and fluid as a concept, referring to a multiplicity of interests, groups and motivations equally and synonymously. Consequently, the definition of civil society adopted by this paper is the one put forth by Larry Diamond and used by many Africanist scholars such as (Mamdani 1996; Ndegwa, 1996; and Wanyande, 1997). Commonly referred to as the “conventional view;” Diamond (1994) defines civil society, “as the realm of organised social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.” Civil society relates to public and not private interests that “involve citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on

the state, and hold state officials accountable.” (Ibid)

It is with this understanding that civil society<sup>51</sup> can play a significant role in conflict transformation; owing to inter alia the fact that it is set distinctly from state, the family and the market and as such occupies a position that makes it instrumental in peacebuilding, by speaking for the voiceless, for instance, through advocacy. At the same time, CSOs have the capacity to interrogate conflict issues through research, issue early warning signs and offer independent advice without bias since they have no vested interests as do the conflicting parties. Their position can also allow them to engage and mediate between conflicting parties since they are not particularly tied to any party. Further to the above, they can involve themselves in various humanitarian activities constitutive of building blocks for sustainable peace. These dimensions will be discussed later.

### **Theoretical Framework: Conflict Transformation Theory**

Conflict transformation theory is a distinctive and relatively new theory, ascribed to Lederach (1995; 1997) with the most deep-reaching and holistic conceptualisation from the earlier theories of conflict escalation, conflict management and conflict resolution. According to Lederach, Conflict transformation is a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict. Constructive conflict is seen as a vital agent or catalyst for change. People

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<sup>51</sup> There is a good deal of discussion about the different types of organizations within this particular sector of civic organizations; for a useful discussion, see Uphoff (1993); London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society at [http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what\\_is\\_civil\\_society.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm)

in the conflicting parties, in the society or region affected, and outsiders with relevant human and material resources all have complementary roles to play in the long-term process of peacebuilding. This suggests a comprehensive and wide-ranging approach, emphasizing support for groups within the society in conflict rather than for the mediation of outsiders. It also recognises that conflicts are transformed gradually, through a series of smaller or larger changes as well as specific steps by means of which a variety of actors may play important roles. To this end, does this conceptualisation of the conflict transformation theory help capture how CSOs are involved in the conflict transformation process?

We note that, the above theoretical excursion reveals various perspectives for the appreciation of the conflict transformation process. Notably, each of the perspectives may be perfunctory, deficient, incomplete and restrictive but in sum, they are illuminating and complementary. As such, the conflict transformation theory is apt and relevant to the appreciation of CSOs involvement in the conflict transformation particularly, how the CSO initiatives are rooted in the pan-African conviction that Afsol can more reliably solve Africa's peace and security problems (Touray, 2005) based on the principles of ownership, shared values and commitment to demand for processes that are people-centred.

### **Background to Civil Society Movement in Kenya**

To start with, the paper posits that, sometimes due to historical connectness of events, the present may not be fully comprehended unless the past is brought into perspective. Similarly, it may also be impossible to completely divorce the future from both the present and the past. Locating the link between the past, present and future becomes even more relevant when one wishes to analyse a current event that in reality

is a culmination of preceding historical state of affairs. Essentially, the paper offers a synoptic presentation of the trajectory of Kenya's CSOs by bringing into perspective their history and the wider socio-cultural, economic and political realm in which they function.

In this regard, numerous literature sources show encouraging indications that the country has seen an explosion of CSOs and today, though it is impossible to tell the number, it is safe to say that the past decades have seen a significant increase in CSOs, their resource base and their influence. To illustrate, CSO growth has been truly staggering: in 1974, there were only 125 NGOs in Kenya. 1990, there were over 400 registered with the government, soaring to nearly 3200 in 2004, and well over 4200 by 2007 (National Council of NGOs 2003, quoted in Gugerty, 2010).

Since 1963, the beginning of Kenya's history as an independent country, after an extremely violent Mau Mau liberation war,<sup>52</sup> the government of Kenya has encouraged the development of indigenous not-for-profit organizations, locally called harambee groups – self-help societies or community-based organizations (CBOs).<sup>53</sup> “The most common manifestations of this programme were harambee schools and clinics; a local community would gather the resources to build a school or a clinic, and the government would step in and provide teachers, administrators, nurses and clinicians” (Brass, 2010: 8). Not a single sector of the economy is without the presence of CSOs (Fowler, 2000).

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<sup>52</sup> Kenya waged the famous Mau-Mau rebellion against British rule (1952-1959). The rebellion was to a large extent motivated by the desire to regain land confiscated for European settlement, the nature of which was compared by Elkins (2005) to the Gulags of Josef Stalin. For details of the colonial transgression, see Francis, 2006; Blanton, et al., 2001; Ayooob, 1995

<sup>53</sup> Harambee, which literally means, “Let's pull together” in Swahili, was the rally cry of Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta, and it became the country's motto.

However, in 1981 Kenya was not spared from the debt crisis of the 1980s that swept across the African continent and had to adopt the neo-liberal Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) which were developed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as part of debt-restructuring. SAPs prompted donors to gravitate towards civil society as the preferred conduit for development assistance, away from the state (Chegge, 1999; Campbell, 2008).

The reallocation of foreign assistance, which comprised a larger proportion of public revenue in Kenya as elsewhere in the developing world, complicated civil society's relations with the state throughout the 1980s and onwards. For many governments, it was a loss of a funding source important for building political support and staying in power (Bratton, 1987). This, along with the positioning of CSOs as advocates for more accountable governance by holding state institutions to account, led some governments to perceive the organisations as political opponents and economic threats which needed to be contained (Kameri-Mbote, 2000). CSOs were also seen by donors as capable to improve governance in Africa. It was indeed during these times that social movements such as Bunge la Mwananchi were established to address socio-economic inequalities, corruption and repressive leadership (Gachihi, 2013).

In this political environment, the Kenyan government enacted the NGO Act of 1990 that introduced restrictive monitoring, regulations and taxes for NGOs, and even deregistered some with the purpose of controlling and limiting NGOs, as Ndegwa (1996) states. In response, the civil society started to oppose Moi's regime and fiercely fought and sustained internal pressures against the one-party repression. All this, coupled with international demand for multi-party elections in the quest

for democratisation led to intense struggles for a return to multi-party democracy in the early 1990s (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Githongo, 2013).

In providing leadership in the democratisation initiatives, civil society organizations and groups played a significant role; where in many instances, they acted as the training ground for opposition politics and political leadership in general. The first leaders of opposition politics in the 1990s had a strong civil society background. This organic relationship with opposition politics continued throughout the 1990s until early 2000 when civil society urged and facilitated opposition parties that were keen on reforms to form a coalition so as to defeat the ruling party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which had been in power throughout the post-independence period. Civil society and opposition parties hoped to pursue democratic governance reforms once they got KANU out of power. It is this alliance of parties and civil society that won the December 2002 general election.<sup>54</sup>

The coming to power of a new government with a strong civil society backing had several consequences for civil society. Some civil society leaders dove headfirst into the new government, either as elected/nominated to parliamentarians, advisors, or foot soldiers). The new government also recruited experienced leaders from civil society. As stated elsewhere, the cooption of many of the leading lights of civil society who had sharpened skills for advocacy, lobbying and mobilising for reforms into politics depleted the sector of experienced leadership developed over many years (Githongo, 2013). While a much more

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<sup>54</sup> For the first time since the reintroduction of multi-party democracy in 1991, a Kenyan President was elected with an absolute majority. Refer to Maupeu, H. (2005); Murunga and Nasong'o, (2006); Mueller, (2008); Amutambi, (2009) for further details on the formation of the NARC government:

youthful leadership took over, it lacked experience to immediately lead the sector in the new political environment. Further, the government began implementing reforms and undertaking activities similar to those that CSOs were undertaking. The government spoke the language of rights, justice, and equality and again recruited more people from the civil society into the new human rights and governance state institutions. This hastened the formulation of several policies and enactment of legislation that would promote and protect rights. At the same time, cooptation of civil society into the new institutions reduced the sector's ability to play a watchdog role. In short, CSOs activities were paralyzed by the coming to power of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government.

Along the same line, many of the envisaged national reforms were predicated on the existence of NARC as a coalition government. Interestingly, the coalition itself was fragile. It was formed for the purpose of defeating KANU. Once this goal was accomplished, conflict emerged among the parties, essentially over the sharing of power. The President's party reneged on the pre-election pledges and agreements, in which they were to conclude the constitutional reform process that had started in 2001; and instead continuing to resort to the centralised system of government inherited from the previous government, thus further marginalizing one of the major parties that had assisted the coalition to win the election. Factions developed and divisions widened. A new draft constitution was developed amid these differences but the side that was marginalised mobilised against the draft.<sup>55</sup>

Eventually the coalition split into two distinct political parties in

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<sup>55</sup> Other pledges that were not honoured include creation of 500,000 jobs in order to reduce unemployment among the youth and zero-tolerance to corruption. Biegon, (2009) for details

preparation for the 2007 General Election. The split was acrimonious. The divide was similarly wide and relations between the two were confrontational. Their constituencies were differentiated along ethnic as well as ideological lines. This is the context that informed the violence accompanying the 2007 General Election (Kanyinga, 2010).

This context strengthens the need and cause to examine the role of CSOs in conflict transformation. Specifically, how effective are CSOs, as mid and grassroots actors, in Conflict transformation? What are the limitations of CSOs involvement in conflict transformation? Lastly, what are the issues of sustainability and the best practices needed to strengthen the civic forces in conflict transformation? The answers to this set of questions are central for us to properly understand the empirical details of the CSOs which are critical to understanding the role of CSOs in conflict transformation in Kenya within the AfSol context.

### **Civil Society in Conflict Transformation in Kenya**

From the onset, a cardinal observation from a large number of recent research publications by highly regarded scholars and leading Civil society advocates and activists appear to suggest that the heterogeneous nature of Kenya's civil society impacted on how the sector responded to the violence and the political crisis following the 2007/2008 Post-election Violence (Kabeberi, 2008; and Kanyinga, 2010).<sup>56</sup> As further evidenced by, Kanyinga (2010) who has written extensively on this sector, CSO groups were distinguished by what they considered as the core problem that required priority attention. The values for which many of the organisations were formed and how they articulated their concerns on important national issues also shaped their approaches toward the post-

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<sup>56</sup> This section borrows heavily from these great works.

election crisis. On the one hand, there was the “conservatives” group, perceived as supporters of Party of National Unity (PNU) position, that preferred the idea of status quo on election results by insisting on peace as an end in itself, while on the other hand was the “progressives” group seen as articulating the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) position that demanded actions and other forms of accountability on the election results and the violence as a foundation for sustainable peace.

Staying with Kanyinga (2010), the conservative group largely comprised Faith-based Organizations (FBO) and the church in particular. Although their major strategy for peace was endless prayers in places of worship and in the media, they nonetheless played a crucial role in getting the attention of international donors and governments to bring pressure to bear on the two parties to resolve the crisis. Informing and influencing this strategy was the church’s role in politics before the December polls. The church and religious organisations in general had taken partisan positions during the elections. Senior clerics or their associates used civic education, prayer meetings and other occasions to directly or indirectly campaign for their preferred parties and candidates. Some even vied for electoral posts. This weakened the church’s moral authority and legitimacy to command, from the pulpit, an end to the violence. This eroded the church’s social authority to provide leadership. Perceptions of bias and partiality in favour of one or the other party made it difficult for religious leaders to develop pragmatic approaches towards peace. In fact, it is reported that over 300 churches were burned during the violence (Kilonzo, 2010).

However, the church still participated in the mediation initiatives. Through the Serena mediation process, the church began to re-invent

itself. Worth emphasizing here is that, among the conservatives, there were moderates too, who comprised high profile retired senior army officers, former diplomats and a number of peacebuilding researchers and peace-workers who articulated their demands for peace through Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP)<sup>57</sup> and the Women's Caucus among others. As Kanyinga (2010) calls them - these were "conflict entrepreneurs" who had made a career in conflict mediation through their deployment in peacekeeping missions in Somali, Sudan, and Rwanda. He further addresses the important question of how specifically the CCP and its associated networks urged for peace through the media. They called for restraint to allow dialogue between the parties to take place. Other than urging the conflicting parties for dialogue, the group established an "Open Forum" where members and others interested in assisting to bring normalcy and peace met every day and developed a programme strategy detailing what should constitute an agenda for peace. The programme strategy emphasised building trust among principal actors, election closure, formation of a government of national unity and other initiatives that would bring peace.

There was another noteworthy civil society initiative; under the auspices of Kenyans for Peace, Truth and Justice (KPTJ), a grouping of over 30 organisations largely drawn from the governance and human rights sector, that deserves a mention. This group had gained public recognition, working in solidarity with other like-minded organizations which were assisting in monitoring the election outcome, the evolving violence, and

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<sup>57</sup> [http://www.rightlivelivelihood.org/fileadmin/Files/PDF/Literature\\_Recipients/Dekha\\_Abdi/Concerned\\_Citizens\\_for\\_peace.pdf](http://www.rightlivelivelihood.org/fileadmin/Files/PDF/Literature_Recipients/Dekha_Abdi/Concerned_Citizens_for_peace.pdf). Further details of the origins of Concerned Citizens for Peace are well elaborated in George Wachira with Thomas Arendshorst and Simon M. Charles. *Citizens in Action: Making Peace in the Post-Election Crisis in Kenya - 2008*. Nairobi: Nairobi Peace Initiative - Africa (NPI-Africa).

other problems around the disputed elections. In terms of strategies, KPTJ adopted flexible strategies in line with the continually changing conflict context such as demand for a recount of votes, which they later abandoned due to the hard-line position of the conservatives. They also worked extensively in documenting and exposing the egregious human rights abuses and widespread atrocities committed on either side of the conflicting camps. Other noteworthy attempts included condemning the use of live ammunition on “demonstrators” and gender-based violence (GBV) atrocities such as rape, which was prevalent in the conflict hot spots including Kibera and Mathare slums.<sup>58</sup>

The high point of the CSO advocacy seems to have been when KPTJ visited and made presentations to the United Nations in New York, the United Nations Office for Human Rights in Geneva, the United States Senate and Congress, and the European Commission. At the African Union (AU), KPTJ made presentations to the Peace and Security Committee and met representatives of several countries, where they urged the international community to facilitate international mediation, ensure that all solutions focused on accountability and justice for victims, and that truth be known about what happened to the election and those behind the wave of violence. KPTJ also called for power sharing for a period of no more than two years during which preparations for a new election would be concluded. The group requested an end to the humanitarian crisis and restoration of fundamental rights and freedoms that the government had curtailed and which seemed to deepen the crisis.

In addition, KPTJ membership formed support groups to protect human

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with KPTJ representative, April 2013 For more details on KPTJ , see [http://www.africog.org/kptj\\_homepage](http://www.africog.org/kptj_homepage)

rights workers and provided relief to those in distress. Working in collaboration with the main humanitarian agencies such as the Kenya Red Cross, the human rights networks gave assistance to many families who were evicted from their farms or homes. Through these initiatives, civil society ensured that there was objective data to inform decision making to support various PEV interventions. Dissemination of such data through the media also ensured that the public was informed about the unfolding dynamics. The organisation had since continued to monitor and engage with all mechanisms and processes arising from the crisis, with a particular focus on establishing truth and justice about the elections and the violence.

In another development closely related to the above; there were other civil society initiatives that complemented either the radicals or the conservative-cum-moderates. Women's organisation formed an inter-ethnic caucus known as the Vital Voices that sought to add the woman's voice and unite in calling for peace. Ordinary citizens formed Citizens for the Recounting of Votes, while the Centre for Multi-Party Democracy (CMD), a political party's formation, formed the National Salvation Forum to advise and buttress the political parties' efforts. Some of these groups coalesced around the progressives or had their efforts subsumed by the above initiatives. There were other groups that existed before the crisis. They too participated in responding to the crisis. Examples to cite were the National Civil Society Congress and the Kenya Red Cross, among others (Kabeberi, 2008).

In order to address other community conflicts as well, they provided the necessary network which enabled other stakeholders such as government and international humanitarian organizations to reach the

displaced families and offered urgent humanitarian assistance to help ameliorate the suffering of thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). More broadly, CSO interventions by specific organizations such as Pamoja Trust and Umande Trust focused on providing psychological support to address trauma, first aid, re-union of the lost ones with their families, group debriefing sessions, referrals for specialised care or treatment for the victims of the violence.<sup>59</sup> Another noteworthy CSO initiative that could be seen as a very innovative and interesting approach was a digital civic campaign called Ushahidi, which provided a technological platform to map incidents of violence occurring in the country, as shared by citizens via SMS or e-mail detailing acts of violence and trouble spots. This helped spread awareness about the PEV crisis by informing others on the happenings on the ground, alerting authorities, and enabling faster humanitarian response.<sup>60</sup>

From a general perspective, civil society had created enough pressure for peace through CCP and non-governmental development groups. Civil society also created demand for justice and truth through KPTJ, the National Civil Society Congress and the Women Consortium. They had successfully managed to lobby the international community to recognise that sustainable peace depended on justice and truth. Objective analysis of the social political situation proved that advocacy and lobbying at the international level was useful. To further clarify this, at the beginning of the mediation, the parties formed the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation, a forum for dialogue, under the chairmanship of Kofi Annan. Civil society contributed to the dialogue in several ways. The moderates and radicals engaged regularly with the Panel of Eminent African Personalities.

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<sup>59</sup> Interview with respective organizational representatives, April 2013

<sup>60</sup> Information available on the organization's website <http://kenya.ushahidi.com>

Again KPTJ brought evidence-based analysis to inform the various positions they presented to the team. Similarly, CCP engaged regularly with the panel and like KPTJ, identified critical issues for the mediation to focus on. While CCP focused on strategies to end violence and normalise the country, KPTJ, the National Civil Society Congress and the Vital Voices (the women's consortium) underlined the importance of justice and truth. However, this time round, discussions on truth had assumed a new dimension. Civil society observed that the country was more deeply divided than ever before and, therefore, reconciliation and healing would only take place if issues of impunity and lack of accountability were addressed. The significance of this was that it gave momentum to discussions on Truth, Justice and Reconciliation (TJRC) (Kanyinga, 2010).

It is important to reiterate that CSOs prepared the ground for the actual resolution of the conflict, called for restraint to allow dialogue between the parties, advocated for broad-based participation in the negotiation process and focused on sustainable "positive peace". According to this thread of argument, the value of having representatives of the conflicting sides together at the same table, and the realisation that they were still able to talk to one another was uniquely significant in terms of its impact on societal attitudes on all sides of the conflict. This was achieved by drafting memorandums that were presented to the negotiating panel with recommendations that the team address long-standing issues such as constitutional reform, land distribution, historical inequities and security sector reforms.

With inputs from civil society and other stakeholders, in the end, the negotiating parties agreed to fulfil four agenda items. The first concerned

undertaking actions to end the violence and at the same time restore fundamental rights and freedoms. The second sought addressing the humanitarian crisis and promoting healing and reconciliation. The third was the foundation agenda item; it emphasised the need for both parties to share power and entrench the principle of consultation and consensus as well as compromise in order to move the country forward. The fourth focused on long-standing issues that had remained unresolved and which had contributed to the crisis. These included addressing constitutional, legal and institutional reforms. Attention was given to Judicial and Police reforms, among others.

With the adoption of new constitutions and greater awareness of individual rights and wider democratic space, the CSOs have re-engineered and tried to reclaim the pedestal they once had so that even traditional institutions develop into strong civil society actors that are able to confront the state through judicial and quasi-judicial systems. Recent examples from Kenya include the Mau Mau War Veterans Association who won the right to sue the British government for human rights abuses during the last years of colonial rule (Pflanz and Blair, 2013). Another example is the ruling by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights condemning the expulsion of the Endorois people from their ancestral land for tourism development around Lake Bogoria in Kenya.<sup>61</sup>

### **Challenges Facing CSOs in Conflict Transformation**

Reading the available reports produced by different CSO forums, one cannot help asking: What would the situation be like now if there

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<sup>61</sup> See, CISA (ND), Landmark African Commission ruling on indigenous land rights.

had been no civil society? However, despite the positive premises, the civic space has yet to be fully owned and harnessed for conflict transformation. In this regard, it is important to point out that civil society is not a homogeneous group and has its weaknesses - ambivalences and credibility issues. This partly accounts for the generally retarded pattern of the third sector development as it impedes CSOs from fully exploiting their capabilities in conflict transformation.

In this regard, some CSOs were culpable of fostering and promoting violence, by overplaying differences and keeping social interactions limited to people of their own groups, fomenting rumours and accusations, and inciting violence. The Kenya Human Rights (KNHR) report accuses the media for political polarisation, particularly vernacular radio stations with commercial and political interests, for having influenced or facilitated the influence of communities to hate or to be violent against other communities. Through live phone-in programmes, the stations were particularly notorious for disseminating negative ethnic stereotypes, cultural chauvinism and the peddling of sheer untruths about the political situation or individual politicians (KNCHR, 2008).

In line with the above argument, some human rights groups have been unable to remain completely neutral and non-partisan in the run-up to the past two multi-party elections, a fact that points to some level of institutional failure and partly explains the lack of strategic direction within the human rights movement. On the religious front, as alluded earlier, partisanship of some Faith-based Organisations (FBOs) dominated by one ethnicity had become apparent during the 2007 election campaigns where the religious community took ethnic

inclinations along with its leadership that took sides in the elections, hence becoming a trigger factor in the violence that followed the disputed presidential elections of the year. Therefore, it is not surprising that some churches were not only burnt but also lost the credibility and legitimacy necessary for them to be impartial arbiters of the PEV as they simply chose to defend the positions of the ethnic communities with which they were associated.

Other questions of credibility issues continue to linger: Several malpractices have spilled over into the field of conflict transformation with damaging effect both to the idea of conflict transformation and to the societies themselves, not to mention the people who initiated or took part in them. The effectiveness of the CSOs was significantly compromised in the sense that issues of transparency and accountability continued to trail considerations of how much CSOs spent on conflict transformation, how funds were spent (criteria) and what the ethical guidances were for CSO interventions. The conflict transformation value of such initiatives – even that of the successful ones – was thus eroded in the eyes of the local population.

There was lack of synergy in CSO conflict transformation initiatives which means that conflict transformation efforts took an ad hoc rather than a systematic manner. Although, there are networks and umbrella organizations, the overall sectorial coordination of CSO initiatives remained low and largely fragmented. The emerging collaborations were only on a case-by-case basis and there were no structures or mechanisms for sustained collaboration. This hindered the CSO movement from having a united and collective voice when engaging in the conflict transformation process; instead there was a lot of duplicity

and replication which served to reduce the general effectiveness of the CSOs initiatives.<sup>62</sup> In addition, repeated initiatives led to misconceptions about conflict transformation: if doing the same thing over and over again does not yield results, it must mean that peace is impossible.<sup>63</sup>

John Githongo, a prominent civil society activist, notes that the tyranny of peace messaging has led many to feel Kenya slaughtered justice at the altar of a temporary and deeply uneasy apparent calm.<sup>64</sup> In his much published article, Githongo goes on to note that many of the pioneer civil society leaders who had sharpened skills for advocacy, lobbying and mobilising for reforms allied with or joined government. This severely weakened the sector making it vulnerable to manipulation from outside forces such as the political class. The fact that they also were in government made it hard for them to criticise it, since they became the same fabric and denied the masses a chance to voice their (masses'') authority over the conduct of government. The new younger generation that took the reins of leadership in civil society had limited impact in the promotion of democratic values such as tolerance, non-violence and transparency; holding the state accountable; informing the people and educating citizens while the older generation either retreated as a result of being in the government, or chose to keep their peace.

Furthermore, much of the efforts of CSOs tended to concentrate disproportionately on human rights and democracy promotion as part of their conflict transformation approach, as well as a tendency to address both the causes and the symptoms of the conflict (promoting dialogue, forums, meetings and workshops) issues to the detriment of other

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<sup>62</sup> Expert Interview, July 2014

<sup>63</sup> Ibid

<sup>64</sup> John Githongo "Whither Civil Society?" Nairobi Star, April 6,2013, [http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-115523/whither-civil-society\](http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-115523/whither-civil-society)

equally important development issues.<sup>65</sup> Githongo argues that in the Kenyan imagination, “civil society” does not mean non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in sanitation, water, health, famine relief, etc. “Civil society” to most people refers to those mainly foreign funded NGOs involved advocating for rights, tackling corruption, clamouring for and promoting the constitution – generally in the area that speaks the way Kenya is governed.<sup>66</sup>

The narrow categorisation of civil society often sidelines the contributions of important actors such as academia. This further resulted in lack of analysis, research and documentation to enable CSOs draw from concrete experience and demonstrate more effective service approaches. Most CSOs were mainly activity-driven and rarely took time to reflect and document their achievements and challenges. There was no mechanism or opportunity for learning, cross-sharing of experiences, ideas and resources, and reviewing the impact of conflict transformation-related activities. The sector, therefore, stood the risk of benefiting from inappropriate theoretical framework to guide the analysis and understanding of the conflict problems.<sup>67</sup>

The paper highlighted that the grassroots engagement has been minimal and no real efforts have been made to connect the grassroots to the peace process and top-level actors. The Conflict transformation potential of Community-based Organizations (CBOs) remains untapped, despite their location deep in communities and being the closest to local communities and theatres of conflict.

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<sup>65</sup> Expert Interview, July 2014

<sup>66</sup> John Githongo “Whither Civil Society?” Nairobi Star, April 6, 2013, <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-115523/whither-civil-society>

<sup>67</sup> Expert Interview, July 2014

Although CBOs appear to be more participatory, flexible in their responses and possess better local knowledge about ways of promoting peace in local communities, yet they were hardly involved in CSO-sector discussions and planning for pro-peace interventions and thus gave communities the subconscious message that involvement in conflict transformation is not open to all.<sup>68</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks and Recommendations**

From the preceding findings, although CSO remains largely an ambiguous and fluid concept; nevertheless, we cannot belabour the important truism that CSOs represent a strong force and strength behind the conflict transformation process in Kenya. CSOs have proved to be not only agents of change but also an arena where virtually all conflict transformation initiatives are carried out. Sustaining such collective energies and consolidating the progress that has been made is crucial to the achievement of a sustainable (positive) peace based on fundamental changes in structures and relationships. What remains problematic, however, is how the objectives of conflict transformation are to be achieved, which remains a pipe dream if the above challenges are anything to go by in the sense that even where there is a return to peace, deep-seated issues such as ethnic hatred still remain to be resolved. There was also emergence of new security threats such as acts of terror that made peace in the country fragile. Such situations point to how imperative it is for scholars and practitioners to devise better methods and proposals for conflict transformation. This leads to the question: What are the issues of sustainability and the best practices needed to strengthen the civic forces in conflict transformation? What is civil society supposed to do? While there is no straightforward answer

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid

to these questions, of major concern is how policies and proposals can stimulate enhanced civic forces in the conflict transformation process. Building on the conference presentation and discussions, in order to reach its full potential, the paper highlights a range of innovative strategies that if implemented will reorient and re-engineer CSOs' thoughts and actions to be more rooted in the pan-African conviction that "AfSol can more reliably solve Africa's peace and security problems (Touray 2005), based on the principles of ownership, shared values and commitment to demand for processes that are people-centred as shown below:

- In committing themselves to deeper engagement in the conflict transformation process, CSOs could concentrate on the involvement of wider sectors of society in social and political changes, thus actively promoting the values, norms and attitudes that cement inter- and intra-ethnic cohesion, foster trust, reciprocity, co-operation, solidarity, mutual respect and tolerance of one another.
- CSOs could work closely with official structures to improve the policy legislative frameworks that affect their activities, as well as local legislation that encourages unity, solidarity and greater public participation in local decision-making.
- It is important to promote local community voices and interests by applying bottom-up approaches and integrating grassroots movements so as to tap their creative "home-grown" solutions, which are based on consensus, reconciliation and unity at household and community levels. This experience can help prepare communities for peaceful coexistence in the wider society.

- CSOs should strive to promote inclusive development principles and approaches more generally, ensuring that all people are integrated into conflict transformation programming, reflecting the pluralist nature of the conflict-affected society. For such efforts to be successful, a participatory approach in which beneficiaries feel a high degree of ownership over both the process and the outcome is required
- Networking and alliance building would contribute to conflict resolution. This implies the need for a more systemised approach to conflict transformation by working with other organisations at strategic, operational and tactical levels from the public, private and non-profit sectors. This helps CSO tackle complex multi-faceted conflict issues, avoid duplication of efforts and services, increase synergies, enhance their effectiveness by speaking in unison, scale up proven approaches, and engage in sharing and learning around successes and challenges.

## **Future Research**

The paper further concludes by pointing out a few areas that are still understudied, if not entirely terra incognita, even in the vast body of work on Civil Society and conflict transformation that now has appeared:

- a) The first lacuna concerns cross-country comparative assessment of the role of civil society in conflict transformation and the larger AfSol context and the kind of indicators to be used to assess and measure these processes
- b) Another neglected issue is the improved methodologies and instrument implementation to measure the role of civil society in conflict transformation.

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## Chapter Eight

### Boko Haram Insurgency and Sustainable Peace in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region: AU-MNJTF's Intervention

**Naeke Sixtus Mougombe\***

This research topic aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the countries around the Lake Chad Basin. The study presents past interventions to defeat the radical Islamic sect and describes the reasons for the Nigerian government failing to arrest the situation which necessitated the intervention of other neighbouring countries and the African Union Multinational Joint Task Force (AU-MNJTF) to restore the peace and security of the sub-region and prevent the expansion of the sect activities in the entire region. The main argument of this study is that the AU-MJTF intervention demonstrates the commitments, shared value and ownership of the conflict and that it has the potential to combat Boko Haram if its mission were effectively managed.

This topic relates to the fundamental ideas of African-Centred Solutions to African Problems (AfSol) because it serves to provide a platform to test AfSol against an ongoing problem threatening the peace and security of Africa with the propensity of becoming global. The specific angles of this analysis is to demonstrate the spate of violence caused by the Boko Haram to Nigeria and the neighbouring states, and explain why past interventions by the Nigerian government failed to yield success. Informed by this, this paper attempts to put forward how the AU-MNJTF, as the main actor(s) in the approach that demonstrates an

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Afrocentric solution and assumes a central role in defeating the Boko Haram insurgency, has to be guided. To this end, in advancing the understanding and utility of AfSol in combating the radical Islamic sect, the researcher highlights questions such as, what conditions have been fulfilled for the AU-MNJTF, as a regional counter-terrorism intervention, to reflect and propagate the core principles and approaches of AfSol.

- (a) When intervention preparation is considered serious, what is the role of traditional/local indigenous leaders and institutions in the de-radicalisation programme? and,
- (b) When political rhetoric has been followed by observable political will of states seen in action - decisions engaging other non-state actors as key players - how should one promote Afrocentric solutions to combat the Boko Haram?

Boko Haram's abduction of the 200 school girls at the Nigerian town of Chibok in the state of Borno, provoked worldwide activism on social media (Bring Back Our Girls) and brought the activities of the terrorist group to unprecedented international limelight. However, the radical Islamic sect (Boko Haram) has been in existence since 1995. The group was then known, in the local Hausa dialect, as Ahlu Sunna Wal "jama" ah hijra. It is, therefore, worthwhile to present in brief the historical evolution of Boko Haram.

### **The Evolution of Boko Haram**

From the over six long years of attacks by the terrorist group, thousands of people have been killed especially civilians and millions have been displaced. The recent attacks by the radical Islamic group have confirmed a change of tactics - using young children and the mentally disabled

in carrying out suicide bombings. The localities of Damaturu and Maroua of the far northern areas of Cameroon border to Nigeria have seen hundreds of people dead and thousands homeless (The Telegraph, 2015). Boko Haram has witnessed changes at the helm of its leadership, name and tactics (Mhajirun, Yusufiyah sect changed to current name Boko Haram, purporting that “western education is sin.”) This follows on the philosophies of Orthodox Islam (Boyle, 2009).

The leadership of the sect has also changed over time. It is believed the radical Islamic sect took its leadership root from Abubakah Lawan who abandoned the group and travelled to Saudi Arabia to pursue further studies at the University of Medina (Eyituoyo, 2013). Thereafter, the leadership was controlled by Muhamed Yusuf killed while in detention in 2009, and then went to the current leader, Abubarkah Shekau (Taiwo and Olugbode, 2009). While it has been acknowledged that the attention of many scholars has been focused on the cause and scope of Boko Haram as limited to Nigeria, it is important to note that both the methodology and operation of the group has gone beyond the Nigerian borders with a potential to emerge as a threat to the peace and security of the global community if effective measures are not taken.

Many scholars have identified factors that led to the rise of Boko Haram on issues ranging from the Nigerian state failure to meet the needs of its citizens, to the rise of former president Olusegun Obasanjo, a Christian southerner who came to the helm of leadership of the country in 1999 and 2003 (Cook, 2011), and the institutionalisation of the Sharia law across Nigeria. It is not the interest of this study to explore factors that led to the rise of the sect, but the focus is on local intervention to curtail the rise and why the interventions failed, and informed by this, the potential of the

current AU-MJTF intervention to succeed in combating the Boko Haram sect. It is common in many academic forums for scholars describing the sect to look at it from different facets such as religious, economic, cultural and political views. Be it as it may, the underlying worries of the states of Nigeria, Cameroon, the Lake Chad Basin and the international community have been the radicalization, mass killings, operational expansion and the links of Boko Haram with dangerous terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Before attempting the analysis of the Nigerian government intervention to defeat Boko Haram and the reasons why, for over six years, the country failed to curb the insurgency that necessitated the intervention of the AU-MJNTF, it will be important to briefly discuss the concept of terrorism.

### **The Concept of Terrorism**

Terrorism, according to Alao (2012: 18), is a term that derives from a Latin word “terrere” which basically means instil fear. Based on the difficulty in providing a succinct definition generally accepted of terrorism, Hoffman (1998: 3) is of the opinion that:

If one identifies with the victim of the violence, for example, then the act is terrorism. If, however, one identifies with the perpetrator, the violent act is regarded in a more sympathetic, if not positive (or, at the worst, ambivalent) light; and it is not terrorism.

In other words, Hoffman implies that the discourse of the word “terrorism” lies on one’s perspective, depending on whose side he or she stands, the side of the victim or that of the terrorist.

According to Sederberg (2003), there are three different conceptions

of terrorism. The first has to do with a situation whereby terrorists are considered as enemies of the state with the agenda of destabilizing it. Thus, the state must react militarily to defeat the enemy. He argues that such an approach has been tested in some open democracies (Ebere, 2014). The second approach considers terrorism as something which cannot be easily eradicated but must be maintained. In this light, appropriate institutions like the courts, must play their role in sanctioning perpetrators found guilty of terrorism. Lastly, terrorism is seen as a serious disease like any other that requires the diagnosis of its symptoms and provision of gradual treatment to it. Moreover, Alao and Oladimeji (2012) contend that activities such as kidnaping, assault, bombing, assassinations, among others, qualify to be defined as terrorism.

Moreover, considering that terrorism as a concept has been one of the most contentious topics that has not yet achieved a common consensus among authors, some have attempted to define it based on the distinction between acts of terrorism launched by individuals and those orchestrated collectively by a group or groups of people. Single or “lone wolf” type of terrorism as defined by Bourton and Stewart (2008), a lone wolf act of terrorism is considered as “a person who acts on his or her own without orders-from-or even connections to-an organization.” It should be noted that this nature of terrorism has gained enormous recognition over time. For example, the Anders Breivik’s Oslo and Utøya attack in 2011, and the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination by Yigal Amir are among the many cases of acts of terrorism carried out by individuals either independently or in cooperation with groups having religious sentiments (Bakkar and Graaf, 2009).

There seems to be a consensus among experts on what qualifies as an act of terrorism. That is what this paper tries to illuminate. One of the characteristics of terrorism is violence. Violence has been described as an absolute tool many perpetrators of terrorism use to destabilise their victims. Sometimes this takes forms beyond the physical violence and involves psychological and symbolical aggression that has the propensity to affect a broad political environment (Marcial, 2008). The 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015 terrorist attack in Paris that killed about 127 people and left many injured is a clear demonstration to the continuous expansion of operation and threat by terrorist groups to the world peace and security.

Furthermore, as difficulty continues in the definition of the concept of international systems (Barry and Little, 1994), so does the concept of terrorism become complex and difficult in obtaining a clear and acceptable definition. This is because two primary issues are born from what is understood as international systems: sovereignty and hierarchy. It is believed that as the international community engages in providing a space for respect to state sovereignty implying the common notion that there is no state higher or lower than the other, there comes to mind the issue of lack of hierarchy of states. Thus, it appears that an absence of state power over the other provides an avenue for state anarchy.

From the above perspectives on the concept of terrorism, Barry and Little (1994) conclude that sovereignty and anarchy coexist within the international system and with this, some degree of insecurity is a precondition of maintaining sovereignty in an anarchical political environment leading to what is considered as act of terrorism.

The above definition of the concept of terrorism gives the researcher the leverage of analyzing the different regional interventions that have been aimed at combating Boko Haram. The discussion in the following paragraphs will attempt to analyse the regional interventions, first starting with the Nigerian government “laudable” but failed response to defeat the Boko Haram and then moving on to the current AU-MJTF intervention so as to assess the leadership, shared values, commitment and ownership of the crisis.

### **The Nigerian Government Response**

By the year 2009, the spate of violent activities perpetrated by Boko Haram had escalated. This was manifested through the bombing of Christian churches, public places and diplomatic buildings that led to the loss of lives and properties. The Nigerian government military intervention against Boko Haram took place in a series of operations under the former president, Goodluck Jonathan. The operations had different appellations such as “Operation Restore Order”, “Operation Safe Haven”, etc., all culminating in failure and prompting criticism against President Jonathan of failing to take leadership actions. Later, shortly after the 2015 February election was postponed, the President made a statement that he wanted an end to the Boko Haram in the three months that followed. However, according to Ebere(2014), that was a dream and it never came true. Then he was outvoted by General Buhari. To be frank, the military efforts in fighting the radical Islamic sect was unsuccessful as was confirmed by Brigadier General Attahiru who said, “nobody is going to say the entire campaign being executed is a very simple operation. It is quite complicated ... The entire process of fighting terrorism cannot be oversimplified because essentially, it is

an asymmetric warfare. But one thing with warfare is that you cannot run away from challenges.” The Jonathan administration, in attempts to eradicate the Boko Haram sect, also made use of non-military interventions as discussed below.

### **The Establishment of Almajiri Schools in the North of the Country**

The Almajiris have been described as Boko Haram’s easy sources of recruiting its followers. The Almajiris are street children under Islamic teachers learning about Islam. They are involved in begging money to support the institution. A large number of the uneducated and unemployed youths in the northeast of the country are said to have been brainwashed with the philosophies of Boko Haram. Against this background, the Nigerian government embarked on the creation and modernisation of Almajiri schools to defeat the sect as part of its non-military confrontation (Danjibo, 2009). Danjibo describes the Almajiris as “ready-made army that can be recruited to perpetrate violence”. A total of about four hundred modern Almajiri schools were established in all the northern states of the country. This mode of intervention by the Nigerian government, as argued by Kumolu (2012), was aimed at changing the Qur’anic system of education into the conventional Nigerian educational system. Although the exuberance and sheer adventurism initiative of the government to revamp the Almajiri schools as a non-military approach to combat the radical Islamic sect was received with hopes, it could not stop the Boko Haram from growing stronger both in size and its radical operations.

### **The Granting of Amnesty**

As part of initiating a process to ameliorate the conflict perpetrated

by the radical Islamic sect, the Nigerian government yielded to many calls, especially from some groups in the north like the Muslim Rights Concern, to pardon the sins of members to the Boko Haram group. Despite government attempts to dialogue with the sect, as was the case with the Niger Delta militant group (Olajide, 2012) to peacefully end the spate of deadly attacks, this time around the deal for amnesty with the Boko Haram group failed. Some scholars claim that the reason for the failure was partly due to the fact that one of the plights of the sect was based on religion, i.e., targeting Christians, who consequently were openly opposed to the fact of granting the sect amnesty because they felt it was not in the best interest of justice. In the meantime, the problem, from being a Nigerian issue only, became sub-regional with Boko Haram's expansion to the "peaceful" neighbouring countries like Cameroon and other states of the Lake Chad Basin. This necessitated a regional intervention to arrest the wave of violent attacks by the radical sect and also to prevent its further expansion.

### **Specific Leadership Failure**

According to many political pundits, despite discussions of tackling Boko Haram were narrowed to the North-South and Muslim-Christian divide, some southerners saw it as a manipulation by the northerners to seize back the political control of the country. It is underscored that some northern elite class, though condemned the activities of the sect, also saw this as an opportunity to spread the much debated expansion of the Sharia law which was operational in 12 of the 19 northern states. Moreover, the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan was criticised and considered as failure in the leadership to address the crisis.

The failure of the president to comment timely on the abduction of

the Chibok girls, and also on the Baga saga have been considered as leadership failure by president Jonathan in combating the Islamic insurgency (Bala-Mohammed, 2015). Moreover, the claim in 2012 by President Jonathan that there were, without mentioning names, some in-house sympathisers to the sect within the government was considered by critics as a vague excuse or weakness on the part of leadership. Further, it has been acknowledged that it took the Jonathan administration three weeks to make an official statement about the abducted girls. This clearly established the Nigerian government's lack of strong commitment to address the Boko Haram crisis which did not only require external support from a regional perspective (AU-MNJTF), but also gives a lesson that holds for the regional force, if they are to succeed in combating the insurgent group.

Further to leadership failure by the Nigerian government in dealing with the Boko Haram problem was a public statement made by the then president's wife (Patience Jonathan). Her claims that the story about the kidnapped Chibok girls was a mere political game to discredit her husband's administration exposed the government's lack of concern and coordinated approach in combating the Boko Haram (Maiangwa and Olumuyiwa, 2015: 125).

In addition, the inability of government leadership to tackle corruption on funds allocated to combat Boko Haram was considered as another failure in the strategy to curb the radical Islamic group. This is because over 1.55 billion Naira (US 7796794.5000) was reportedly invested in 2013 in the procurement of heavy weapons to fight the sect. However, frontline soldiers still complain about lacking heavy weapons to fight effectively while it is alleged that the terrorist group makes use

of weapons more sophisticated than those of the Nigerian military (Samson, 2013: 73). The failure of the Nigerian government in combating the Islamic insurgency demonstrated, according to Rotberg (2003: 20), state fragility particularly in the area of governance. As confirmed by Cilliers and Sisks (2014: 8), poor governance facilitates the inability of the state to provide the basic necessities to its citizens leading to poor standards of living. Uzodike and Maiangwa (2012) also confirm that the inability to provide basic social and economic amenities to its citizens was an important factor why the Nigerian government under Goodluck Jonathan was unable to deal with the Boko Haram problem. Statistics from the Mo Ibrahim African Governance ranking (Ibrahim Index of African Governance, 2014), classified Nigeria at the 37<sup>th</sup> position out of 52 countries in the governance scale of that year, an indication of the role played by poor governance by the Jonathan's administration in its failure to win the war against Boko Haram.

However, it is important to mention that despite the efforts and methods employed by the Nigerian government under Jonathan's leadership to combat the radical insurgent group, which failed to yield real success, the postponement of the last Nigerian presidential election from February to late March 2015 was only a strategy. The intervention, according to media reports (Aljazeera news, 2015), was aimed at defeating the radical Islamic sect and providing an atmosphere of peace and security during the election process. This attempt registered enormous success because during such time, both the Chadian and Nigerien armies successfully took back the towns of Malam Fatouri and Damasak that were under Boko Haram's control. Thus the decision to postpone the election dates did not only produce an electoral process free from violence but also sent Boko Haram away from its base as was confirmed in a statement by

one member of the Niger army who said, “we have kicked the enemy out of these areas and they are now under our control” (Aljazeera news, 2015).

In general, however, despite all efforts by the Nigerian state to successfully combat Boko Haram, it was not possible thus making the intervention of a regional force (AU-MNJTF) necessary to help address the problem.

### **Regional Intervention**

The inability of Nigerian government to onslaught Boko Haram necessitated regional intervention so as to put an end to the spate of violence. More so, it is worthy to state at this instance, that the regional intervention to defeat or deter the radical Islamic sect has been largely coercive. Thus, in attempting an analysis of the regional intervention in light of the fundamental pillars of AfSol, this study will further distil some best examples on how there could be a synergy between the military (AU-MNJTF) intervention and the support of the citizenry for the on-going process.

### **The AU- Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTFs)**

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) seeks to demonstrate Africa’s shared commitments in the fight against atrocities inflicted by the Boko Haram’s radical Islamic sect and its expansion to the states around the Lake Chad Basin thereby restoring peace and security. Approved on 24 November 2014, at a meeting on peace and security called by the African Union (The National Mirror, 2015), the task force gained support of over 28 countries of the continent during the Yaoundé Declaration of heads

of state on counter terrorism. Drawing on the support from foreign countries and institutions like the United States of America, France and the United Nations, from a cursory view point, it could be said that the AU-MNJTF is a force with the capacity and potentials of putting an end to the Boko Haram saga.

The AU Commission chief, Nkosazana Zuma, in her statement said: “The continued attacks in northeastern Nigeria and the increasing attacks in the Lake Chad Basin along the border with Chad and Cameroon, and in the northern provinces of that country, have the potential of destabilizing the entire region, with far-reaching security and humanitarian consequences.” (Aljazeera News: January 30, 2015). This statement illustrates the enormity of the Boko Haram insurgency and that the regions share ownership and commitment through MNJTF to maintain peace and security in the sub-region. The potential of the joint task force to succeed forms the basis of discussion in the next paragraphs.

### **The AU-MNJTF: Symbolic or Substantial?**

In line with the guiding questions mentioned earlier, analysis of the current regional intervention which propagates and represents the core principles of AfSol, includes the nature of preparation of the multinational joint task force that seeks an Afrocentric solution to the crisis. Some political commentators have described the MNJTF representation as substantial demonstrating the political will of states in action-decisions of engaging in the process. According to Ali Kaya (2015), the contribution of the 8,700 strong force comprising determined men and women from member states of the LCBC, (Figure at the time of writing), illustrates a substantial shared commitment of the regional

intervention to combating the radical Islamic group.

In the area of leadership in the activities of the joint force, the rotational operation in the command and control of the force goes way forward to demonstrate the shared ownership and responsibilities of the crisis by member states of the LCBC. Against this background, other experts on peace and security, during the second AfSol meeting of 2015 in Addis Ababa, were unanimous with this writer in that when the responsibility for the command and control of the AU-MNJTF is rotational and non-hegemonic in terms of prior institutional basis, there are strong possibilities and hopes for success in destabilizing Boko Haram's strong holds in the region. This is because the movement of leadership of the force among the contributing states will not only instil the African spirit of working together towards a common purpose, but will also avoid problems of division that may result at creating different camps in the joint force.

### **AU-MNJTF Current Report Book**

At the time of writing, the joint force has received praises from many in the continent and beyond for the braveness and successes recorded in recapturing many of the Nigerian towns that were under Boko Haram's control. The increase in size of the joint force from 7,500 to 8,700 and the current AU endorsement of 10,000 strong African men has been considered as a clear success that demonstrates the continent's willingness to take ownership of the crisis and provide common solutions thereof.

There are best examples that could illustrate the AU-MNJTF capacity in defeating Boko Haram. On 17 February 2015, the Chadian army

took back the Nigerian town of Dikwa from Boko Haram's control. The successes recorded by the Cameroonian army in its January, 2015 air strikes against the sect at the Sambisa forest and the regain of control by the Nigerian army of the town of Baga northeast of the country are some of the substantial achievements of the joint task force.

In terms of acquiring the necessary finances to support the joint task force to succeed in its objectives, measures taken were remarkable. Previously, when conflicts occur in Africa and a common action is to be taken by African states to restore peace and security, pledges are fast sent to foreign countries for financial support. However, in the case of the AU-MNJTF, though financially assisted by only some countries out of the whole continent, as mentioned earlier, members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) immediately created an emergency fund which succeeded in raising 50 billion FCFA (US 81335.5000) to support the mission of the MNJTF. Furthermore, upon request by the Peace and Security Council, the AU Commission was given the mandate to mobilise funds within the continent and from other partners beyond. These are some of the many strives of the MNJTF expressed in light of AfSol principles to curtail Boko Haram's insurgency in the region though it is still an ongoing process. In the next paragraphs, the discussion will focus on how the AU-MNJTF intervention to defeat Boko Haram relates to the pillars of African-centred solutions of commitment, ownership and shared values.

### **The AU-MNJTF Reflection on the Pillars of AfSol**

Guided by the desire to provide an Afrocentric solution to the Boko Haram insurgency, the AU-MNJTF intervention reflects the core pillars of AfSol in many ways. To summarise the intervention mentioned

above, elements of commitment as one of the pillars of African-centred solutions have been evident from the region especially from member states of the LCBC and Benin. First and foremost, the joint voluntary contribution of soldiers by neighbouring states of the Lake Chad region illustrates the commitments demonstrated by states, as an African spirit in coming together to the assistance of a neighbour facing crisis.

In the area of ownership, the intervention of the AU-MNJTF has been an opportunity to show how the region has expressed ownership of the crisis by action in decision-making and engagement in the course. It is important to note that complete sacrifice of military troops from neighbouring countries clearly demonstrates how responsibility is shared to express countries taking ownership of the Boko Haram insurgency. The statement made by President Idris Derby of Chad promising hell to the radical Islamic sect, does not only demonstrate strong leadership to the course, but also portrays an element of shared ownership of the crisis by leaders of the region.

The intervention of the AU-MNJTF in ensuring peace and security in the region is manifested through shared values as one of the pillars of AfSol aiming at defeating the Boko Haram. To this end, the intervention of the joint task force from its organization to guidelines in the decisions of the operation has been impacted with elements of shared value among member states of the LCBC and Benin in particular, and states of the entire region. Furthermore, the recent deployment of 300 US troops (The Independent, October 15, 2015) to Cameroon to support the MNJTF as surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance operation is an effort that is expected to boost the capacity of the regional force to combat Boko Haram.

In addition, based on the strategic nature of the Lake Chad Basin to the region's economic, social and environmental conservation, member states of the region, particularly those bordering Nigeria and facing direct attacks from Boko Haram, have realised the importance of local indigenous leaders and institutions in the de-radicalisation programme of the radical Islamic sect. In the process of demonstrating shared values through the inclusion of local indigenous institutions as support to the AU-MNJTF, the Cameroon government has embarked on engaging traditional leaders in sensitising their subjects to be on alert to suspected activities of the radical Islamic group in their locality (DW News, September 14, 2015). Moreover, through this process, local vigilante groups have been created in north Cameroonian villages that have been under severe attacks by Boko Haram. Therefore, the setting up of vigilante groups as local institutions working in synergy with the regional task force is an attempt to arrest the spate of violence perpetrated by Boko Haram. This is a good example of paradigm shift in the MNJTF approach now making use of local indigenous institutions to demonstrate the shared value in the process.

### **The AU-MNJTF and AfSol**

This paper has attempted to present the different angles of intervention, particularly from an Afrocentric lens, to onslaught Boko Haram's insurgency. The analysis provided a description of the different ways the Nigerian government attempted to deal with the insurgency but failed thus requiring the support of external forces (neighbours and the USA). It also presented the AU-MNJTF intervention in the crisis and examined its capacity to defeat Boko Haram and restore peace and security in the sub-region and in the entire continent. Moreover, it explored the

reasons why the Nigerian government was unable to handle the Boko Haram crisis and identified lessons that the MNJTF could learn from the situation and contribute to the knowledge, advancement and practice of AfSol.

Firstly, the analysis of the AU-MNJTF as an Afro-centric solution to curb the Boko Haram's insurgency provides sound contributions in the practice of AfSol in that it will serve as a guide on how AfSol can be tested. Based on this premise, the paper demonstrated in the analysis that maintenance of peace and security cannot be limited to a particular country or sub-region. Thus, the coming together of countries of the region as a common body, and particularly those of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, demonstrates commitment, ownership and shared values as pillars of AfSol.

Secondly, this paper contributes to advancing the practice of AfSol in that it, through the lessons learned on the organization, shared responsibility and contributions of the intervention by the AU-MNJTF, currently supported by the US, has analysed situations and appreciated that AfSol has registered remarkable successes thus far, though not conclusively at this instance that it has the potential to combat Boko Haram. Moreover, this lesson will advance the practice of AfSol in two ways: one, it would challenge policy makers and African leaders to always engage with commitments and demonstrate shared ownership of peace and security crisis arising on the continent. Two, unlike several other cases where military interventions to restore peace and security in Africa were championed by foreign mercenaries, the AU-MNJTF is a unique Afrocentric approach that commands and leads the operation even though with support of external forces in the process. The implication of

this is that African citizenry and their leaders would learn from the ongoing successful experience of the joint task force, initiated and owned by Africans, how future attempts to ensure peace and security on the continent should go.

Finally, the contribution of this chapter to the AfSol process is that it informs scholars and practitioners on possibilities of complimenting military and other forms of intervention (for example including local indigenous institutions) in resolving conflicts on the continent taking into account African value systems. This last statement is based on the premise that the paper distils some recommendations for use of soft interventions in resolving conflicts in Africa, for example, the use of traditional institutions discussed above, among others. Some recommendations will form the focus of discussion in the next paragraphs, to guide the AU-MNJTF intervention process and policymaking.

### **Concluding Remarks and Recommendations**

Although the AU-MNJTF intervention continues to demonstrate commitments, ownership and shared values, and its capacity as currently supported by the US troops, to surmount the Boko Haram insurgency, this study concludes that still more needs to be done to finally realise the success of the MNJTF intervention. The study submits that in order to realise sustainable peace and security in Nigeria and in the countries around Lake Chad region, the successes should not be limited to recapturing towns that were under Boko Haram, but other relevant factors linked to the matter should be addressed.

First, it is potent to consider the high level of unemployment in the countries affected by the sect's radical activities. This is because most

of Boko Haram's recruits are not only illiterates from the Almajiris as aforementioned, but are also frustrated army of unemployed graduates in these countries. Poor governance and the breakdown of the rule of law in the countries must be addressed as a matter of urgency if the joint task force is to succeed in its mission of combating Boko Haram. As observed by (Clapham, 2002: 200), "the breakdown of law and order in African states was basically the result of the legacy of bad governance." To this extent, leaders of the countries affected by the sect's radicalisation, particularly Nigeria and now Cameroon, must be able to demonstrate clear commitments in implementing good governance to ensure sustainable peace and security in the sub-region.

Second, the study recommends the engagement of local indigenous people and their institutions in places where the AU-MNJTF operates. Obviously, the joint task force intervention was necessary because there were cracks particularly in most traditional institutions and, to an extent, in religious bodies that were not unanimous on how to engage their subjects or followers in the fight against Boko Haram. This is particularly true in the north eastern regions of Nigeria and the Muslim inhabited northern regions of Cameroon that share common borders with Nigeria. Therefore, the joint task force must focus more on engaging the civil society as has been the case in Cameroon.

However, local traditional institutions and their leaders should be considered as key actors in the process. Furthermore, care has to be taken in the operation of the MNJTF avoiding any act of human rights violation by the task force and the local indigenous population. Committing such violations provokes a feeling of frustration leading to failure by the the local people to see the Boko Haram group as a common enemy to

their peace and security. More so, most of the traditional institutions in the countries affected by the radical sect, still control much influence on their subjects who fear being expelled from the community if found in activities that contravened the law. The case of Botswana in using its traditional institutions to compliment modern forms of governance has been largely successful in maintaining peace and security in the communities. Therefore, to this end, the use of traditional regulatory institutions should be synergised with the AU-MNJTF to combat the Boko Haram.

Finally, the continuous radicalisation of the Boko Haram sect was possible because of the financial support from some either internal or external sources. There have been ongoing speculations by commentators that some northern governors and former presidents of Nigeria were the financial mercenaries to the radical Islamic sect. The external sources of funding are terrorist groups like al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda (AllAfrica News, 2011) that have similar objectives with it. However, to date, sources of financial support to Boko Haram lack concise evidences and they are thus beyond the analyses of this paper. Therefore, with the current speculative funding sources of the radical Islamic group, it is of crucial necessity for the African Union to provide a systematic mechanism on how to restrict illicit financial flows that possibly fund terrorist groups like the Boko Haram. Thus, as mentioned in the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1373) in 2001, on financial measures to combat terrorism, the AU must work in collaboration with the UN Financial Action Task Force (FATF/OECD, 2008), in finding ways to identify financial transactions that aim at sponsoring terrorist activities particularly the Boko Haram group. The study concludes that it is important to identify and restrict the financial sources of Boko

Haram to render the group unable to sponsor its future deadly attacks, as a way forward to the success of the AU-MNJTF mission in defeating the radical Islamic sect.

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## Chapter Nine

### Conclusions

#### Mesfin Gebremichael\*

African-Centred Solutions to African Problems (AfSol) has become a compelling saying of the African Union, sub-regional institutions and the leading member states. The idea applies to a wide range of issues including development, education and health but it is used most often in relation to peace and security.<sup>69</sup> Leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah recognised AfSol as early as the 1960s but it got much attention later for different reasons. First, the struggle to end colonisation has created a sense of ownership among African leaders and this helped them develop interest to solve their own problems in their own ways. Second, after the end of Cold War, western countries withdrew from many conflict management practices as shown in the conflicts of Somalia after the state collapse in 1991 and the Genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Third, the rise of African regional and sub-regional institutions also encouraged African leaders to deploy their own forces in different peace support operations.<sup>70</sup> It is with this background that the AU made much focus on managing its conflicts using its own institutions and in partnership with external forces to foster shared values on good governance, democracy and the rule of law as stipulated in the Tripoli Declaration in 2010.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Laurie Nathan, Professor and Director of Centre for Mediation in Africa an der university of Pretoria, *WeltTrends, Zeitschrift Fur international politik*.92. September/Okttober 2013.

<sup>70</sup> Mays, M.T. (2003) African Solutions for African Problems: The Changing Face of African-mandated Peace Operations, *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol.23, No.1

<sup>71</sup> Tripoli Declaration, 3rd Africa EU Summit, (Tripoli, 29/30 November 2010)

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) gathered a group of experts for a workshop on AfSol from 26 to 27 September 2014. The objective of the workshop was to define and refine the concept of AfSol through research and deliberations in the continent. Hence, as noted above, though the concept of AfSol has a range of dimensions, a common understanding was reached in the workshop to focus on the main principles of AfSol: shared values, ownership and commitment to peace and security.<sup>72</sup> It was also believed that continuous engagement is required to explore lessons that can enrich the principles of AfSol in the context of the sub-regions of Africa. A workshop in which different case studies were presented was organised in March 2015 and it has led to the selection of the chapters in this edited book.

The chapters covered a wide range of issues including peace operations in Somalia and in South Sudan, challenges of refugee integration to the urban population of Uganda, the role of civil society organizations in conflict transformation, challenges in defeating Boko Haram, and the role of indigenous institutions in providing security at grassroots levels. A cross cutting issue which has emerged in all the chapters of the book is that the principles of AfSol including shared value, ownership, and commitment are highly interrelated to each other at conceptual and policy levels. The existence of shared values in peace and security actors brings a sense of ownership that contributes to establishing common institutions such as the AU, which is a result of the shared value of Pan-Africanism. At the same time, when peace and security actors have a sense of possession of the common institutions, they can commit themselves to providing the required resources that enable them to implement their shared values. However, though institutions and countries may have

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<sup>72</sup> IPSS workshop report, 26-27, September 2014

some shared values, that does not mean, in practice, they have equal responsibilities and commitments in operationalizing AfSol. Their role still depends on social, economic, political, environmental and geopolitical factors, which affect countries and institutions at different levels. Thus, the principles of AfSol can be examined in relation to each other. However, it may be relevant to address each principle separately to emphasise the main findings of each chapter.

### **The Principle of Shared Values**

African peace and security issues are primarily related to lack of democracy, good governance and rule of law as emphasised by Sesay, Mongombe and Mayanja in this book. A common finding which came out from the chapters by these authors is that African actors should appreciate, in the first place, the sustainable long-term solutions for African security threats such as lack of appreciation of democracy, good governance, rule of law and inclusive development, and poor implementation of these in the diverse contexts of the countries. Hence, African actors should develop an inward looking attitude to their own problems as President Obama clearly said in the speech he made at the AU during his visit to Ethiopia last Summer. This understanding requires not only conducting fruitful peace support operations but also formulation of comprehensive peace and development policy interventions including respect for human rights and dignity, and guarantee for human security. This kind of peace and development policies will help transform systemic and cultural violence by improving people's livelihood through education, health care, employment and economic security.

If we see most of the case studies presented by the contributors, African peace and security problems are predominantly related to lack of democracy, good governance, rule of law and inclusive development practices. Mongombe extensively discussed the case of Boko Haram in the context of Nigeria and Mali, primarily in relation to high level of unemployment though the radical movements carry religious flags. According to Mongombe, most of the Boko Haram recruits are not only illiterates from the Almajiris in Nigeria, but also comprised frustrated unemployed graduates. Thus, countries affected by radicalism, should give more focus to inclusive development activities which can create employment opportunities for the youth as a matter of urgency. In addition, the political deadlocks of Madagascar are primarily related to lack of capacity in the government and poverty, which have become obstacles to the process of rebuilding the country.<sup>73</sup> The conflicts in Burundi are also related to a desire of leaders to control power for indefinite period. Hence, as Sesay stated, African actors should give priority to maintaining rule of law so that they have to put zero tolerance for non-democratic changes of government, undemocratic manipulations of constitutions and electoral processes.

Moreover, as demonstrated by Aleesi, refugee integration into the urban areas of Uganda should consider peaceful coexistence as an aspect of shared value of African-centred solutions to African problems. Thus, peaceful coexistence of refugees has to be promoted through education, facilitation of means of income generation, provision of health facilities and so forth. This can also be more explored in relation to international forced migration which is a cross cutting issue to all African countries.

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<sup>73</sup> Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Peace and Security Council Report, Issue 75, November 2015.

## **The Principle of Ownership**

The shared values relating to democracy, good governance and rule of law can be implemented if there is a sense of ownership among African actors on peace and security problems and if continental, regional and national institutional capabilities are strengthened to address the problems. In other words, the shared values of AfSol can be actualised by enabling the AU and RECs to take more responsibility for the peace and security in the continent and reduce continued dependence on external development partners. Hence, a network of continental institutions will play a major role in implementing the ideals of AfSol. Moreover, APSA with its various institutions (Peace and Security Council, Continental Early Warning System, African Standby Force, Panel of the Wise and Peace Fund) and underlying policy frameworks has the potential to serve as pivotal platform of operationalising AfSol. AU and RECS will continue to play a decisive role to maintain peace and security in Africa by legitimizing, bridge-building, unifying and fund-raising, as applicable from time to time.

One of the important points that emerged from the discussions in the chapters is the need for African ownership of critical peace initiatives such as peace negotiation and peace keeping. In other words, African institutions have to generate ideas and be able to control the decision-making processes that lead to peace support operations. For this to happen, clear functional communication channels between the AU and RECS are required. Regional groupings and rivalry between institutions and countries always undermine collective ownership and expose the countries and their intergovernmental institutions to dependency on foreign agencies.

Ownership as an ideal of AfSol is also related to acquiring local CSO organizations, which can promptly act on humanitarian assistance and post-conflict transformation. As ascertained by Wafula in the case of Kenya, CSO organizations can play a major role in conflict transformation by promoting the shared values, norms and positive attitudes that cement inter- and intra-ethnic cohesion, foster trust and cooperation and solidarity between communities and ethnic groups. They can encourage bottom-up initiatives and promote inclusive development principles and approaches. They can be engaged in networking and alliance building between former conflicting parties and actors of conflict transformation. They can closely work with official structures to improve the policy legislative frameworks that affect their activities. However, it may be relevant to conduct further study to explore the best practices needed to strengthen the role of civil societies in conflict transformation as there are different policy environments and practices in different counties.

The idea of ownership is also related to continental and regional capabilities to learn from best practices and disappointments in addressing continental peace and security issues and deployment of peacekeeping forces in different sub-regional settings. This kind of learning process helps African institutions to standardise best practices, develop capacity of subsidiarity, burden sharing and so forth. In doing this, the roles that ECOWAS played in Mali and IGAD played in South Sudan can be taken as good examples. As Yohannes put it, such a learning process helps the institutions to develop a sense of common understanding and approaches in peace operations and this not only develops continental and sub-regional capacities but also helps to engage external actors in a more productive way.

Ownership also creates more participation at grassroots levels by utilizing local knowledge and institutions. As noted by Mayanja, the engagement of grassroots level institutions is not only useful to promote democratic practices but also relevant to combating terrorist groups such as Boko Haram in West African countries. Traditional institutions not only complement modern forms of governance as seen in the case of Botswana, but also serve as an instrument to provide security at local levels. They are the most trusted institutions by the local people. They, as emphasised by Mulugeta in her chapter, have a lot of local knowledge and practical expertise in managing conflicts and providing security even when the modern institutions do not exist or fail to accomplish their mission.

However, ownership, whether as normative concept or as policy in action, can be implemented with partnership of the UN organizations and other external actors. International organizations may have their own narratives about the causes and solutions of conflicts in Africa but it will be useful to create strategic partnership, which enables African actors to design contextualised, sustainable and comprehensive conflict management strategies. Lack of this kind of understanding can create misunderstanding in the role that international and regional organizations can play in peace operations, as happened in the case of South Sudan and Somalia. It can also result in total disengagement of the external actors, which can be followed by inadequate supply of equipment and inefficient use of resources in peace support operations.

### **The Principle of Commitment**

The principles of AfSol can be materialised when there is some level of commitment to provide resources. In fact, decisions made can be

effected when there is full control of budget and fulfilment of annual contributions of counties to AU. Sesay suggests that some innovative activities can be used to reduce the financial dependencies of the continental and regional organizations on external actors. For example, Endowment funds can be established and multi-corporations can be asked to support the endowment funds, as they are beneficiaries from the peace dividend achieved by the efforts of the continental and regional institutions.

The commitment of countries should be extended to monitoring illicit financial flows, which undermine the activities of the continental and sub-regional organizations. For this, countries are required to monitor corruption and illegal border trades, which contribute to the financing of terrorism.

In sum, AfSol, as a long-term peace and development project, has to be refined and conceptualised in relation to promotion of democracy, good governance, rule of law and inclusive development to address the structural causes of conflicts in Africa. AfSol can be understood as a policy in action and this can be implemented by creating organizational and logistical capacities of the continental and regional institutions that should forge strategic partnerships with international actors so as to develop better capacities which enable them to play a better role in the contexts of the sub-regions of the continent. AfSol also uses local institutions and creates local participation to provide security at grassroots level.

## Annex

### **African-Centred Solutions for Peace and Security (AfSol): First Workshop Report, 26 – 27 September 2014 Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) Addis Ababa University (AAU)**

#### **Executive Summary**

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) assembled a group of experts for a workshop on African-Centred Solutions in Peace and Security (AfSol) from 26 to 27 September 2014. The objective of the workshop was to define and refine the concept of AfSol through presentations followed by in-depth discussions and debates. Each expert presented on at least one of the questions forwarded by the IPSS research team. The discussions led to a common understanding on certain issues while, in others, it unveiled new dimensions of AfSol and pointed to areas of further research. The areas where the experts have reached on a common understanding namely: ownership, commitment and shared values, will serve as common ground to future discussions and researches.

#### **Background**

African Union Heads of States and Governments adopted the Tripoli Declaration on the “Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace” in 2009. In the declaration, the Heads of States further recognized peace and security as an “intellectual challenge”. Following the mandate extended to IPSS by the African Union Executive Council Decision (AU) (EX.CL/567 (XVI)) and the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two, the Institute became committed to train, research and promote African ownership by developing

approaches better adapted to African realities. Since then, IPSS is offering a platform for critical debate on the concept of African-Centred Solutions and its practical implications.

Africa has been a free continent for over 50 years. However, colonialism's footprints are still prevalent in today's social, cultural, economic and political institutions. The Organisation for African Unity (OAU) was formed in 1963 as a solution to the challenge of colonialism. Africa's united struggle against colonialism and apartheid followed a pan-Africanist ideology, which was also the basis for the formation of the OAU as well as the discussion around African-Centred Solutions. OAU's attempts to re-define its agenda in the 1980s embraced World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) frameworks. The frameworks have dealt with few middle ground attempts of individual African states. They prioritised state's sovereignty, free market economy and structural adjustment reforms. Such attempts were widely accused of being inexpedient Western solutions for the continent.

To this day, poverty, undemocratic political systems, corruption and several intrastate conflicts haunt the continent. Nine of the 20 most corrupt countries in the world are African. According to Transparency International, all African countries, except five, have scored less than 50 in a scale of 0 to 100 (Corruption Perceptions Index, 2012). Although Africa is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity, it is the home to over 25 'ethnic based' conflicts. Africa struggles to find suitable solutions for these and other peace and security challenges. The lack of clarity on the meaning and implications of AfSol has created divergent views; while several people treat AfSol as an idea to be advanced and others a creed to be followed, some argue that it is a meaningless (if not harmful) myth

to be avoided.

With the transformation of OAU into African Union (AU) in 2002, new sets of objectives under the African Union Peace and Security Council stressed the need to define and find new African-Centred solutions for peace and security in the continent. While the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has been operational with a meagre budget, a bigger vision is emerging to urge the AU to focus more on the interface between peace and security and governance. This is making the search for African-Centred solutions in peace and security more complex and broad since the solutions have to include elements of governance, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Furthermore, the debate has to be placed in the context of the framework of AU Agenda 2063 and the new AU initiatives in peace and security.

There are many underlying assumptions in the discussion surrounding AfSol. Primarily, it supposes the existence of shared African identity and values that can be reflected in the solutions. There is also a prevalent agreement over who these Africans are and their efficiency in tackling peace and security challenges 'if' they own the processes. Further debate on these issues has laid the discussion on a clearer route to conceptualize AfSol. Beyond concerns for peace and security, there is a need to address the appalling conditions, in which Africans have to live, such as poverty, undemocratic political systems, corruption and nepotism. Therefore, undemocratic governments may come under questioning. According to Vince Musewe, "this term has been abused by Africa's leaders to avoid scrutiny, to hide corruption and protect political vested interests." He argues, "We must therefore create a new narrative that says we will adopt world-class solutions to our problems because we are educated

and informed. We really should not care where the solution comes from, especially in this information age. We can bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries.” Abukar, on the other hand, questions the African essence of important peace and security solutions in Africa, like peace negotiations and peace support operations. He argues that while APSA of the African Union is an “acronym” that connotes a timely and efficient result, most, if not all operations that are veiled with the “romantic motto”, have proven that they are not indigenously conceived, funded or driven.

Financial ownership is an important aspect of AfSol. The recent AU Malabo Summit reflected the significance of the issue. In the summit, a budget of just under US\$522 million was approved for the AU for 2015, which includes US\$144 million for operational costs and US\$380 million for programmes. Although this is a considerable increase from the US\$308 million budgeted for this year, a big chunk of next year’s budget is still funded by outside organisations like the European Union and other donors, as was the case in the year before. Yet, calls for African-centred Solutions from African leaders are frequently echoed. These demands are echoed because of the continued limitations of African institutions to deal with its own conflicts and finance its own interventions. The African Solidarity Initiative (ASI), launched at the July 2012 AU Summit, is a prominent example. The ASI, gives an opportunity for member states to respond to post conflict needs of other African countries, both financially and in kind.

Another stream of discussion focuses on “African Traditional Mechanisms (ATMs)” and its perceived indigenous origins. The ATM approach suggests that those involved in local conflicts know their best

solutions, thus prefer to use the term “home-grown solutions”. ATMs are practical mechanisms that have strong roots in localised settings. They have persisted through colonialism, to an extent that hybrid solutions are being formulated. Hybrid solutions are encapsulated in discourses functioning from a special “platform” and “writing new narratives”.

The depth and complexity of the issues raised above makes the journey of conceptualising AfSol challenging and stimulating. More so, African-centred Solutions are difficult to categorise. Therefore, the workshop has tackled the questions of whether African-centred Solutions are a policy, concept, an ideology, philosophy or pure practice.

## **Procedure**

Selected key scholars and personalities who are knowledgeable on the subject matter were given the task to streamline and dissect the historical discourse, process and develop conceptual underpinnings of AfSol. A format based on brainstorming, presentations and discussions aimed to start the process of conceptualisation and, contribute to unpacking the notion of African-centred Solutions.

The workshop was developed with the aim of building a core expert group that encompasses experts from all over Africa coming from various educational and professional backgrounds. During the workshop, several students and IPSS staff, contributing towards the furthering of the AfSol discussion in different dimensions and levels, joined the core expert group.

The group was tasked with defining and shaping the AfSol concept by presenting points of discussion on the research questions identified by

the IPSS research team. The first of the questions was concerned with identifying why defining AfSol was important. After establishing the need for AfSol, presentations on the historical origin of AfSol followed. The first day was concluded with presentations on the underlying assumptions and actors of AfSol.

The second day started by experts attempting to categorize AfSol. Building on all the previous discussions the subsequent presentations tried to define AfSol directly and indirectly, by illuminating the things AfSol is 'not'. All presentations were followed by extensive discussions that led to common understandings in some areas, and exposed topics for further research in others.

### **Major discussions**

The first question, which determined the necessity of all further discussions, was 'why do we need AfSol?' According to several participants, the answer lays in the uniqueness of the African socio-cultural and political settings that requires special analysis. African states are young and in the inside of state building processes. Limited capacity, lack of good governance, fragile institutions and complex security challenges have been addressed by foreign led solutions that sometimes have been arbitrary, impractical and destructive. With regards to economic policies, constant pressure for restructuring and adoption of models that are not contextually adjusted illustrate the need for AfSol.

The participants pointed to "Try Africa First" initiative, which is a part of the book "OAU after 20 years" (1984), when attempting the inquiry on 'the origins of AfSol'. "Try African First" seeks to encourage Africans to prevent and manage African conflicts. It has been highlighted that AfSol

should not be seen as giving Africans exclusive say in peace and security but it is to provide a framework for Africans to assist one another before resorting to external actors. The historical perspective of AfSol looked in to the shared historical and contemporary experiences.

Elements of AfSol were instilled in the objectives and principles of the OAU in the advent of the establishment. For instance, the 1960 Cairo declaration contained the concept of negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration; though they were not practiced. Even if the historical perspective in defining AfSol was impeccable, contemporary security threats like Ebola appeared as a topic of discussion as well.

In drawing the background of the concept, the participants tried to define African identity. The attempts by several African personalities such as Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Nkrumah to answer the question of who an African is was cited by many experts.

The experts explored the range of African identities such as Arab-Africa, Black Africa, Tropical Africa, Caribbean Africa, and so on. Exploration of these identities made the participants question if AfSol is a one size fit all template or if it is an issue specific solution.

The participants cautioned the general usage of AfSol, for it should not be mistaken for a jargon. Instead, they highlighted innovative approaches integrating collective African action with global domain. The participants stressed that political autonomy; capacity building (logistics and finance) and good diplomacy are the ways to build an effective AfSol. The need for strong media outlets that enables African voice to be heard was also mentioned to be crucial.

Furthermore, the participants successfully identified 'what the underlying assumptions of AfSol are'. Tackling the problem of dependency and the practical need to finance AfSol are among the underlying dimensions. Key points of controversy were mentioned in this session. One of which is the presentation of some solutions, such as democracy, as a one shoe fits all solutions. Another controversy is the setting of priorities, with regards to basic human needs such as food and clothing versus physical infrastructure.

The existence of shared value system is one of the underlying assumptions that the participants discussed. They raised the need to build concrete value system that defines AfSol. The experts pointed out that lessons could be learned from unexpected actors in this regard. For instance, the colonial project had a certain philosophical foundations on which was built a system that works to this day.

Next, the participants aimed at understanding 'Who defines AfSol for whom'. The discussion recognized the role of African people and the importance of institutions and legal systems as actors and instruments for defining and executing AfSol. For example, the immunity clause that is clearly stipulated on African Charters on Human Rights and International Criminal Protocol was discussed.

Because of discretions to higher officials to change government unconstitutionally without accountability, the number of unconstitutional changes of government determines the duration and number of constitutions in a country. There has to be laws that make leaders accountable for the crime of unconstitutional change of government. This approach is an example of the manifestations of AfSol through legal systems for African governments and citizenry.

Moreover, the experts tried to place AfSol in a suitable classification by presenting and discussing on the forwarded question; that is, 'Where do we categorize AfSol?' The participants reached in a consensus on the following point:

- AfSol is an ideology that dates back to the time of pan-Africanism.
- AfSol is a philosophy, which dates back to the Nkrumah's idea of political kingdom.
- AfSol is a policy in the making
- AfSol also has a nature of practice, which is also a work in progress.

Consequently, AfSol was placed in the category of Idealism but with a blend of realism. The former refers to AfSol as an aspiration, a desire that reflects an incomplete project still under work. The latter is reflected in Africa's collective self-help in peace and security. To make AfSol's aspiration a reality, key conditions were put forward for discussion. These were good governance, economic cooperation, consideration of the gender dimension and a feasible bottom-up approach at all level. Moreover, sustainable economic growth, youth empowerment, effective state building and price adjustment on food and energy supplies are some of the issues mentioned.

Finally, the participants addressed the questions 'What is AfSol?' and 'What is NOT AfSol?' If not categorized and redefined AfSol implies 'nothing' since it runs the risk of being "everything". However, this discussion, shaped AfSol systematically into a strategy in action, based on African conviction of Pan-Africanism, ownership and determined action through concerted efforts. Although the scope of 'African

Solutions' can be broadened beyond peace and security by increasing the levels of analysis and spheres of examination, this discussion on AfSol specifically concerned with peace and security. Therefore, the aim of these discussion and the following workshops will focus on 'African-centred Solutions in Peace and Security'.

AfSol has several components. For instance, a solution might not fit a criterion of AfSol solely for being designed by African leaders. This is because solutions will not make AfSol unless they are inclusive of other actors, especially the African public. This entails ownership of the designing, process and practice. The experts agreed that AfSol is beyond collectively agreed solutions but extends towards accommodating diversity.

The participants acknowledged the need for shared values to define or redefine AfSol. The solutions should be sensitive to these values that Africans share. They observed that some values are not fully shared and are, in some cases, contradictory. This is often reflected in our institutions. In an ideal world, APSA should take over from where AGA has successfully delivered, based on clearly thought-out and articulated "Shared Values". Not having a strong integration between the Constitutive Act, the Shared Values and AGA is what keeps the Department of Peace and Security consumed and unable to address the root causes of conflict. There is also a need to reflect on the possibility of integrating AGA and APSA, in order to have one single, more effective instrument.

The participants raised the risks of losing African values through global influences. Experience on the surface shows the double life Africans live at home and in the office. The point was demonstrated by the example of

traditional names changed to 'modern' names of western origin.

### **Common Understandings on AfSol**

After reaching a consensus in using "AfSol" as the abbreviated name for 'African-centred Solutions', the participants agreed that there is a need to define the concept. AfSol is usually met by numerous reactions ranging from pessimism to optimism. While the negativity comes by discussing the 'hopeless' continent with so many plights, the optimists celebrate the uniqueness of African values and practices.

The workshop participants embraces the notion of Ubuntu (collectivism) where "one sees oneself through others" as Bishop Desmond Tutu has rightly put it. The workshop discussion took off with this spirit of optimism as well as with some caution not to romanticize the concept. Remembering the tendency of formulating decorative abbreviations (NEPAD, AGA), the participants warned against diminishing AfSol to a fashionable cliché to be replaced by another with no or little practical implication.

As a key point, the experts recognized that, AfSol is a strategy in action based on the conviction of philosophy, ownership and leadership, determined through a conceptual framework and tools that are being developed. The common understandings established in the discussion have been dissected into three pillars recoded as follows. The second pillar, the commitment of Africans at all levels, supports the first pillar, ownership. Both adhere to a set of shared values that is the third and final pillar of AfSol. The major findings can possibly develop and guide further research in the following three major practical strategies:

- An alternative way of doing things in the continent
- Identify and mobilize African intellectual knowledge
- Guiding principles that defines and shape policy

Nevertheless, the aim is for the AU and African countries to take the lead in defining the nature of the continental peace and security issues, making suggestions on what strategies and policies are required to address conflicts.

a. Ownership and Commitment

The participants agreed that African Ownership is not about success but about doing it in one's own way. Africans are able to tackle their own problems best because they are more familiar with their problems than external actors. AfSol is a home grown approach where Africans are 'their own-brothers' keepers' using relevant mechanisms.

An important principle embedded in the discussion of ownership is inclusiveness. The experts have agreed that African ownership has to be located at several levels ranging from public ownership of the design, process and practice of solutions to the leading role played by political institutions and CSOs. African ownership does not represent the narrow dominance of African leaders in ownership of decision-making, but the ownership of the African people.

The responsibility for each other and for the challenges Africa faces is the starting place of ownership. In AfSol, Africa should challenge the tendency to blame others for 'African problems.' Instead, AfSol should create a situation where Africans take responsibility of negative contributions and acknowledge best practices. A sub-principle of

constant evaluation and validation for the achievements and limitations can be drawn from it. Overcoming challenges that depict Africans as victims, which has been the case in the past, will transform the global image of Africa.

Africans should be proactive in the process of developing AfSol. AfSol should not only own African problems of conflict management and deployment of peacekeeping missions. It should also be concerned with long-term solutions and conflict prevention mechanisms that are more inclined to good governance. This rests on political will and, commitment of leaders, academia and the African people.

Financial ownership is one of the areas where commitment is detected, easily yet surely. More than 80% of the AU Peace Fund Budget comes from external funding. AfSol, if turned in to a working strategy, which requires finances to be developed, promoted and implemented.

Ownership at various levels can only emanate from the commitment of actors at all levels. Commitment of leaders at national, regional and continental level is crucial to the promotion of good governance. The role of citizens in shaping good governance lays in their commitment to elect appropriate leaders by being active participants of the process. Governance is basic in AfSol since it will bring African solution to bad African leadership.

Moreover, the experts discussed the role of a robust think-tank, committed to educate citizens on the essence of AfSol. Their primary commitment would be to work in harmony with each other and with external partners since all are working on the same objectives and goals.

Building strong African institutions and overcoming the challenge of finding a common ground is another element of commitment, often referred to as institutional commitment. Africans still face the challenge of missing a common ground for unity and action because of the lack of strong pan-African institutions and systems. In this argument, the group of experts acknowledged the existence of traditional systems that can work better than the “modern” can. The Gacaca established for the genocide trial in Rwanda is an illustration of the reality.

For this reason, the workshop participants expressed the need to trust and formalize the African traditional legal system after thoroughly researching the systems. After decolonialization, African countries, with the exception of Ghana and Botswana, established legal systems that were a direct replica of their colonizers. African traditional legal systems remained secondary and informal to the formal structure transplanted from western systems.

#### b. Shared Values

The experts have extensively discussed the issue of shared values. These values are the basis for commitment and ownership of African peace and security challenges. Each individual state has its own values, some of which it shares with its neighbouring states at the regional level. Africa is a platform where the shared values of each region form a ground for an Africa wide identity.

Shared history, geography and identity are the basis for shared values. Africans have a shared history that goes back to experiences such as slavery and colonialism. The experts have identified geography as the defining element of an African identity. Geographically states in Africa

are African. This identity creates a longing for Africans to create a peaceful and united Africa. All stakeholders, government, think tanks, citizens and the diaspora share this responsibility.

This does not mean that AfSol only represents solutions agreed or acceptable by all Africans unanimously. Instead, acknowledgement of diversity and willingness to accommodate and even embrace different actors in the process of decision-making is critical to AfSol.

To achieve this goal the shared values should encompass tolerance, solidarity, collective security, responsible leadership and citizenry committed to justice, practical solutions and human rights. These values are not based on romanticizing the past; instead making practical and realistic links between tradition and other 'adopted' systems. This can be done with commitment, ownership and the determination to build common African values, since Africa is in the making and is not something established. This will be based on the understanding, that value systems change over time and, therefore, values demand constant revision.

A very important point raised by the group of experts at the end is the need to consider other value systems. Africa exists with the global system therefore its solutions should be cognizant of the similarity or contradiction it has with these global values systems, not necessarily to conform with it but to handle the situation with understanding.

## **Way Forward**

Although the principles and major shared values have been outlined in this workshop the praxis is yet to be explored. Case studies on contemporary issues will give the experts a chance for in depth

discussions in the following workshop. The participants long to continue the workshop series to come up with concrete solutions to the challenges of AfSol. The next workshop will provide the participants with data that could be used as a foundation for further discussion for concrete solutions. Moreover, these will be the areas of further research:

- Recording of best practices: What has worked and why?
- Critically examining shared values and filling the gaps
- Further exploration of working traditional models
- Practical directions on consolidating ownership
- The challenges of Human Rights threats in Africa
- Areas to enhance citizen's participation and capacity

In the end, AfSol has been depicted as a multi-stake holder approach where Africans, especially the public engages in shaping the direction of the continents peace and security agenda by participating in good governance and having the boldness to speak against bad governance. For this to be practical, the connection between the academia, practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders is essential.

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## Index

African-Centred Solutions: 4, 8, 15, 47, 63, 69, 84, 95, 103, 135, 144, 147, 162, 193, 207, 208, 219, 222, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 237

African Union:

APSA: 1, 3, 4, 6, 24, 25, 34, 37, 48, 52, 53, 69, 223, 229, 230, 236

ASF: 25, 50, 68, 223

AU-MNJTF: 6, 17, 18, 19, 193, 194, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214

PSC: 6, 25, 50, 55, 60, 61, 66, 207, 222, 223, 229,

AMIS: 54, 55, 56, 57, 64, 65, 66, 67

AMISOM: 8, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 67, 73

Boko Haram: 16, 17, 18, 19, 193, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 220, 222, 225

Burundi: 29, 32, 33, 41, 54, 57, 60, 61, 90, 136, 152, 222

Chad: 17, 18, 31, 33, 56, 193, 196, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211

China: 57, 80, 113

Citizenry: 10, 17, 65, 76, 84, 92, 204, 211, 234, 241

Civil society: 14, 15, 16, 40, 143, 149, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 212, 220

Cold War: 1, 4, 23, 25, 32, 35, 40, 219

Colonization: 111

Colonial legacy: 2,

Colonial powers: 111, 112,

Commitment: 3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 17, 18, 24, 27, 38, 47, 51, 65, 69, 85,  
95, 135, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 153, 156, 166, 184, 193,  
199, 202, 204, 205, 207, 208, 210, 211, 212, 220, 221, 225,  
226, 227, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241,

CPA: 85

Conflict:

Conflict Prevention: 23, 25, 28, 36, 40, 43, 53, 68, 239,

Post-conflict reconstruction: 53, 61,

Conflict Transformation: 14, 15, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166,  
171, 178-186, 220, 224,

Democracy: 13, 14, 40, 41, 77, 86, 89, 144, 145, 146, 149, 150, 153,  
169, 175, 181, 219, 221, 222, 223, 226, 229, 234

DRC: 32, 136, 152

Development: 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 24, 27, 32, 35, 37, 40, 52, 53, 59, 75,  
76, 84, 116, 119, 135, 140, 147, 148, 150, 152, 161, 163, 167,  
168, 175, 176, 178, 179, 182, 185, 219, 221, 222, 223, 224,  
226, 243, 244

Do-It-Yourself (DIY): 4, 21, 22

Ebola: 31, 233

ECA: 107, 110

ECCAS: 207

ECOWAS: 25, 28, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 224

- ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture: 25
- ECOWAS Standby Force: 25
- ECOMOG: 34, 44, 45,
- Egypt: 31, 233
- Election: 40, 88, 119, 144, 145, 149, 150, 153, 161, 168-175, 179, 180, 199, 203,
  - Post-election violence: 14, 89, 136, 161, 171, 172,
- Elite, African: 40, 79, 82, 83, 91, 108, 201
- Ethiopia: 10, 12, 59, 61, 63, 81, 103, 105, 110-112, 116-120, 122, 123, 125-127, 136, 221,
- EU: 26, 34, 37, 57, 61, 63, 64, 78, 219, 230
- Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs): 172, 179
- France: 33, 36, 205,
- Funding: 50, 57, 60, 168, 213,
  - Local funding: 39,
  - Poor funding: 33, 34,
  - External: 62, 213, 239,
- Gender: 92, 93, 143, 145, 150, 151, 235,
  - Gender equality: 149, 150, 156,
  - Gender-based violence: 139, 174,
  - Gender parity: 150,
- Ghana: 31, 240
- Grassroots: 10, 76, 83, 84, 89, 92, 94, 154, 155, 162, 171, 182, 184, 220, 225, 226

- HIV/AIDS: 31, 151, 156
- IGAD: 59, 75, 78, 80, 92, 199, 224
- IGASOM: 59
- IMF: 107, 168, 228
- Insurgency: 18, 58, 136, 193, 194, 196, 202, 203, 205, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211
- IDPs: 55, 153, 176
- ICC: 88, 89, 161
- International Financial Institutions: 78
- IPSS: 1, 47, 49, 64, 103, 219, 220, 227, 243,
- JEM: 54, 55
- John Garang: 81, 85
- Juba: 82
- Kenya: 14, 15, 16, 59, 63, 81, 89, 105, 113, 136, 137, 161, 162, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171, 173, 175, 176, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 222
- KANU: 169, 170
- KNHR: Kenya Human Rights 179
- KPTJ: Kenyans for Peace, Truth and Justice 173, 174, 176, 177
- Kiir, Salva: 75, 79, 85, 88,
- Lake Chad: 17, 193, 196, 201, 204, 205, 208, 209, 210, 211
- Liberia: 24, 25, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 41, 90,
- Machar, Riek: 75, 79, 80, 88,

- Mali: 17, 25, 32, 33, 36, 39, 42, 222, 224
- MISAHEL: 17,
- Multi-party: 168, 169, 175, 179,
- NARC: 169, 170,
- NGOs: 37, 47, 57, 151, 167, 168, 182,
- Nigeria: 16, 17, 18, 34, 108, 193, 194, 195, 196, 199-207, 209-214, 222,
- Nkrumah, Kwame: 31, 110, 219, 233,
- Nyàngatom: 10-12, 31, 103, 104, 105, 112, 114-117, 119-128,
- OAU: 1, 3, 23, 24, 27, 31, 33, 52, 137, 153, 154, 228, 229, 232, 233
- Ownership: 3-5, 7, 8, 12-14, 17, 18, 22, 25, 26, 28, 34, 37, 39, 47, 48, 51, 57, 63-65, 67-69, 77, 95, 109, 135, 147, 153, 156, 166, 184-185, 193, 199, 205-208, 210, 211, 219, 220, 223-5, 227, 230, 235-242
- Partnership: 7, 8, 26, 32, 33, 37, 40, 48, 68, 219, 225, 226,
- Peace
- Hybrid peace: 9, 77, 78,
  - Liberal peace: 9, 10, 75-78, 84, 88, 91,
  - Peace Support: 24, 28, 32, 33, 39, 42, 47, 48, 53, 59, 63, 219, 221, 223, 225, 230,
  - Peacebuilding: 6, 8, 25, 36, 53, 75-78, 82-4, 89-90, 92-3, 165-166, 173,
  - Peacekeeping: 6, 24, 25, 28, 31-33, 38, 39, 42- 44, 45, 57-59, 61, 64-67, 173, 224, 239,
  - Peacemaking: 25, 42, 78, 90, 93,

- Sustainable peace: 8, 15, 27, 75, 76, 82, 94, 162, 165, 172, 176, 192, 211, 212, 227,
- Protection of Civilians: 66, 67,
- Political will: 5, 6, 32, 38, 194, 205, 239,
- Poverty: 13, 29, 137, 222, 228, 229,
- RECs: 2, 26-30, 32, 33, 36-42, 155, 223
- Refugee: 12, 13, 14, 55, 135-156, 220, 222,
- Security governance: 10-12, 103, 105, 106,
- Shared values: 10, 13, 14-15, 18-19, 47-48, 51, 63, 65-69, 95, 135, 144, 146, 147, 153, 154, 156, 166, 184, 199, 207-211, 219-221, 223-224, 227, 236, 237, 240, 241-245, 247, 248,
- Sierra Leone: 21, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33, 34, 41, 44, 61,
- Small arms: 10, 103, 105, 124,
- Somalia: 8, 29, 47, 49, 54, 57-59, 60-65, 67, 83, 113, 136, 219, 220, 225,
- South Sudan: 8-10, 75, 79, 80, 85, 92-94, 105, 115, 116, 124, 136, 220, 224, 225,
- EES: 124
- SPLM/A: 79, 81-83, 85, 93, 124,
- Statehood: 10-12, 103, 104, 106-107, 113, 126,
- State
- Building: 9, 11, 78, 83, 89, 111, 113, 123, 126, 232, 235,
- Fragile: 75, 106,
- Weak: 106, 107,

Sub-Saharan Africa: 107, 137,

Sudan: 8, 33, 34, 47, 49, 54-57, 81, 105, 124, 136, 173,

Darfur: 54, 55, 56, 57, 64, 65

SLM/A: 54, 55,

Troop-Contributing Countries (TCCs): 60, 62,

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): 90,

Uganda: 12-14, 60, 61, 79, 81, 90-92, 104, 105, 125, 135-138, 140,  
144, 146, 148, 152, 155, 220, 222,

Women: 10, 21, 29, 76, 80, 84, 92-94, 117, 138, 139, 141, 145, 146,  
148, 150-152, 173, 175-177, 205,

Youth: 10, 11, 18, 76, 82-84, 92-94, 114, 117, 125, 170, 200, 222,  
235,



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