ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ДОСЬЕ:
Новые параметры регионального миротворчества

THEMATIC DOSSIER:
New Modalities of Regional Peacekeeping

The African Union and Peacekeeping in Africa:
Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract. Africa continues to suffer from outbreaks of conflict, with evidence pointing to an increasing number of violent armed incidents. The establishment of the African Union (AU) heralded (or so it was hoped) a new era in how African conflicts are managed and resolved. Since 2003, the AU has mandated a number of peace support operations including the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB), the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as a means to manage conflicts on the continent. In more recent times, the organization has also authorized three operations dealing with non-state armed groups namely the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Boko Haram and the Sahel Region Jihadists. Whilst some of these peace support missions recorded successes in meeting their mandates, generally all of them faced or are facing a number of challenges including funding, and logistical inadequacies among others. At the same time, the AU's engagement in peacekeeping in Africa has occasioned opportunities for the organization including: increasing its capacity building in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution; adoption of initiatives like "Silencing the Guns" aimed at lessening the outbreak of conflicts; and establishing its own funding mechanisms on how to support its mandated and authorized peace support missions among others.

Key words: African Union, funding, logistics, peacekeeping, Peace and Security Council, peace support

Африканский союз и поддержание мира в Африке:
вызовы и возможности

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Африка по-прежнему страдает от вспышек конфликтов, свидетельствующих о росте числа насильственных вооруженных инцидентов. Создание Африканского союза (АС) ознаменовало (по крайней мере на

это надеялись) новую эру в урегулировании и разрешении африканских конфликтов. С 2003 г. в качестве средства управления конфликтами на континенте АС санкционировал ряд операций по поддержанию мира, включая миссии в Бурунди, Судане и Сомали. В более позднее время организация также утвердила три операции в отношении негосударственных вооруженных групп, таких как Господня армия сопротивления (ЛРА), «Боко Харам» и джихадисты региона Сахеля. Хотя некоторые из этих миссий добились успехов в выполнении своих задач, в целом все они столкнулись или сталкиваются с рядом трудностей, в том числе с проблемами финансирования и материально-технического обеспечения. Чтобы ослабить давление на свои ресурсы, организация начала санкционировать миротворческие миссии самопомощи, а именно: многонациональную совместную целевую группу, где объединены в основном военные из Бенина, Камеруна, Чада, Нигера и Нигерии, и объединенные силы «Сахельской группы пяти», в состав которой входят военные Буркина-Фасо, Мавритании, Мали, Нигера и Чада. В то же время участие АС в миротворческой деятельности в Африке открыло для организации новые возможности и повысило ее потенциал в области регулирования и разрешения конфликтов. Таким образом, АС принял стратегию предотвращения возникновения конфликтов с помощью таких инициатив, как «Заставить оружие замолчать», направленных на уменьшение случаев возникновения конфликтов и создание собственных механизмов финансирования, в частности для оказания поддержки своим санкционированным миссиям по поддержанию мира.

Ключевые слова: Африканский союз, финансирование, материально-техническое обеспечение, миротворчество, Совет мира и безопасности, поддержание мира

Introduction

Conflict remains rife in Africa [Ferim 2013: 149]. Since independence, many African countries have been ravaged by war. In many of these, the chief perpetrators of violence have been leaders against their own citizens. Africa's wars have cost the continent dearly in many respects. Whilst there are the obvious direct costs of armed violence — medical costs, military expenditure, the destruction of infrastructure, and the care for displaced people — which divert money from more productive uses; the indirect costs from lost opportunities are even higher [Hillier 2007: 3]. More people, especially women and children, die from the fallout of conflict than die in conflict itself. In concrete terms, for example, it has been estimated that between 1998 and 2018, violent conflicts in African resulted in the death of as many as 5 million young children — 3 million of them are infants[1].

In financial terms, one estimate has suggested that these wars have cost Africa well over USD 700 billion in damages since 2000 alone [Williams 2011: 1]. The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), OXFAM International and Saferworld have noted that Africa loses around USD 18 billion per year due to wars, civil wars, and insurgencies [Hillier 2007: 3]. On average, armed conflict shrinks an African nation's economy by 15 % by conservative estimate. According to Rita Abrahamsen, Africa's wars never end but spread like a viral pandemic, making quiet places the lonely exceptions [Abrahamsen 2013: 1].

Partly as a result of the conflict landscape in Africa, the African leadership decided to transform the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that had been established in 1963, into the African Union (AU). The Charter of the OAU established the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states which meant that when internal conflicts arose, the organization could not react. The OAU's limited ability to provide a regional response (especially in preventing, managing and resolving internal conflicts) to the many problems facing the African continent, resulted in questions being raised about its sustainability in the circumstances of contemporary Africa.

Earlier in 1990, the OAU Assembly had adopted the Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the

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[1] Aizenman N. The Hidden Toll of Conflicts on Kids // NPR. August 30, 2018. URL: https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/08/30/643410295/the-hidden-toll-of-conflict-on-kids (accessed: 07.08.2020).

World, which formally brought all conflicts — even civil wars — under the organization's mandate [Brubacher, Damman, Day 2017: 279]. However, many Africans continued to see the OAU as "an increasingly expensive irrelevance"[2] as far as conflicts in Africa were concerned. Thus, at the beginning of the new millennium of the 21st century, the OAU was transformed into the AU.

The AU was meant to be a tool to provide "African solutions to African problems". The notion of African solutions to African problems "implies a resurgence of African renaissance… indicating a commitment by Africa leaders to retake control of the continent and being instrumental in influencing the socio-political and the economic affairs of the continent" [Ferim 2013: 143].

This article discusses the role of the AU in managing African conflicts through the peacekeeping / peacemaking tools[3]. In the context of the AU, peacekeeping is the deployment of an AU presence in the field, normally involving AU military and / or police personnel and frequently civilians as well[4]. Peacemaking on the other hand is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in the AU legal instruments [Boutros-Ghali 1992]. The overall argument of the article is that whilst opportunities abound for the AU as it deals with conflicts in Africa through the mechanism of peacekeeping, numerous challenges remain including: funding, logistical inadequacies and the continued outbreaks of new conflicts in member states among others.

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[2] Audit of the African Union // Security Council Report of the AU. 2007. URL: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/RO%20Audit%20of%20the%20AU.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[3] Note that the AU is also undertaking preventive diplomacy which is defined as "action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur".

[4] This is a modified definition from that of the UN as stated in Boutros Boutros-Ghali's Report. See: [Boutros-Ghali 1992].

Context

The Constitutive Act of the AU was drafted with the issues of peace and security on top of the agenda. Part of the rationale behind dismantling the OAU and replacing it with a new AU was precisely to establish a more coherent set of conflict management mechanism [Williams 2011: 153].

In general, the major change under the AU has been a renewed emphasis on building a continental security regime that is capable of managing and resolving African conflicts [Arthur 2017: 8]. The Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (hereinafter Protocol) establishes a peace and security architecture called the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) comprising structures that are supposed to promote peace and security on the continent. These include the AU Commission, Peace and Security Council (PSC), Panel of the Wise, Continental Early Warning System, African Standby Force / Military Staff Committee and Peace Fund. The Regional Economic Communities / Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), the Common Security and Defence Policy and the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) are also integral tools of the APSA. The APSA is a coherent structure which includes norms and mechanisms to effectively and capably deal with the underlying causes of conflict and their non-conventional nature and consequences [Arthur 2017: 8].

The Protocol establishes that one of the objectives of the PSC is to anticipate and prevent conflicts[5]. In circumstances where conflicts have occurred, the PSC shall have the responsibility to undertake peacemaking and peacebuilding functions for the resolution of these conflicts. Also, the Protocol established as one of the functions of the PSC as to conduct "peace support operations and intervention, pursuant to

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[5] Article 3 (b). See: Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union // African Union. URL: http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-protocol-en.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

article 4 (h)[6] and (j)[7] of the Constitutive Act"[8]. Peace Support Operations (PSOs) are a function and tool of the PSC and Article 7 (1) (c) and (d) of the Protocol gives the Council powers to "authorize the mounting and deployment of peace support missions" and "lay down general guidelines for the conduct of such missions, including the mandate thereof, and undertake periodic reviews of these guidelines"[9]. PSC operations are also authorized by the UN Security Council in accordance with the UN Charter, chapter VIII, Article 53 (1) which establishes that the Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority[10].

The sixth Secretary-General of the UN Boutros Boutros-Ghali argued that regional organizations peacekeeping has several advantages[11].

Firstly, they can render great service if their activities are undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the charter. In some conflicts, regional organizations can provide enhanced legitimacy and sensitivity borne of a greater working knowledge of the relevant circumstances. Moreover, their geographical proximity should allow them to deploy and supply peacekeepers relatively quickly. According to Williams, this was the case in several West African missions during the 1990s and in Mali and CAR in the 2010s where African states from the sub-region assumed the role of first responders before UN missions took over [Williams 2017].

Secondly, regional organizations can also bring additional resources to peace operations beyond those available from the UN. In some cases, regional peace operations may be the only realistic option in conflicts where the UN declined to deploy peacekeepers. In this sense, regional arrangements can help fill some of the gaps in international conflict management left by the UN Security Council's selective approach. For example, African organizations have responded with peace operations in the absence of UN action: Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, and Liberia in the 1990s and Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, and Somalia in the 2000s.

Thirdly, regional organizations can also bring additional capabilities. The EU, for instance, has provided approximately 2 billion euros to African peace operations since 2004 through its African Peace Facility [Williams 2017]. Similarly, NATO has sometimes been crucial in conducting airstrikes (e.g. in Bosnia) and providing strategic lift capabilities to deploy African peacekeepers in a variety of theatres, including Darfur and Somalia.

Fourthly, in some instances, parties to a conflict may prefer the involvement of regional actors rather than the UN or other external bodies, hence the frequent calls for Arab, African, or Asian solutions to regional problems. This argument about regional legitimacy "relies on the notion that the people and governments in a region have a natural affinity with those in that geographic area and an inherent suspicion of what they perceive as outside intervention" [Diehl 2007: 541]. This has certainly been the case in a variety of conflicts, such as those in Darfur, where for four years Sudan would only

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[6] It states: the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. See: Constitutive Act of the African Union // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[7] It states: the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security. See: Constitutive Act of the African Union // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[8] Article 6 (d). See: Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union // African Union. URL: http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-protocol-en.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[9] See: Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union // African Union. URL: http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-protocol-en.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[10] See: UN Charter // United Nations. URL: https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/ (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[11] A discussion on the advantages of regional peacekeeping are ably presented in Williams's article "Global and Regional Peacekeepers: Trends, Opportunities, Risks and a Way Ahead" [Williams 2017]. See also: [Boutros-Ghali 1992].

permit African, and not UN, peacekeepers, and in the Caucasus, where Russia was ready to utilize the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peace operations but was sceptical of UN missions.

Lastly, the region's proximity to the crisis in question means that its members have to live with the consequences of unresolved conflicts. Therefore, regional arrangements are more likely to sustain long-term peacekeeping operations.

It is within this context that the AU has undertaken / or is undertaking peacekeeping/ peacemaking in Africa. In fact, PSOs have become a major area of endeavor for the AU and its member states [Guicherd 2007: 2].

AU Peacekeeping / Peace-support Missions

Since 2003, nine AU-mandated peace support operations have been deployed including: the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB, 2003—2004), African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS, 2004—2007), the African Union Mission Support to the Elections in Comoros (AMISEC, 2006), African Union Electoral and Security Assistance Mission to the Comoros (MAES, 2007), African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM, 2007 — today), the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA, 2013), and the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA, 2013—2014). Whilst some have been declared a success (AMISEC and AMIB), AFISMA and MISCA were transformed into UN missions, while AMIS became a hybrid mission with the UN.

Currently, the AU is singly running only one peace support mission — AMISOM, and partners with the UN to run the United Nations — African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). In addition, the AU has authorized the establishment of three missions namely: the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram; the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the AU-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA). Generally, the AU mandated and authorized peace missions have faced similar challenges that the author highlights.

Challenges

The AU's involvement in peacekeeping / peace-support operations is part of the fulfillment of the notion of "African solutions to African problems". Nevertheless, generally both AU mandated and authorized missions have suffered from similar challenges including funding; logistics and outbreaks of new conflicts as the old ones are managed[12]. We deal with the challenges in turn.

Funding

Since the 1960s, financing African integration projects including the peacekeeping / peace-support agenda has been problematic. The African integration agenda has been characterized by a low commitment of the AU members to finance the organization's budget and the heavy reliance on external sources [Apuuli 2019: 82]. The challenge of finance has been acute especially with regard to peacekeeping. To illustrate the extent of the problem, the author cites three examples of AU peace-support missions: AMIB, AMISOM and AMIS.

As part of its efforts to monitor the ceasefire agreements provided for under the Arusha Agreement, the OAU's Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution established AMIB in February 2003[13]. The mission was subsequently inherited by the AU when it became operational. AMIB was generally mandated to oversee the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreements;

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[12] Feldman has expounded on other challenges facing African pace-support missions including: use of many languages and possession of different cultures; inadequate firepower; equipment diversity; limited intelligence and communication capabilities; limited effective counter-terrorism / counter-insurgency capabilities; disease; and poorly disciplined soldiers; and Bamidele enumerates the challenges facing African peacekeeping to include: lack of coordination; insufficient soldiers in the field; misconduct by the peacekeepers; complex multidimensional operation mandates; and hostility (sic) and complex conflicts. See: [Feldman 2008; Bamidele 2013].

[13] Ninety First Ordinary Session of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at Ambassadorial level. Communiqué. Central Organ/MEC/AMB/Comm. (XCI), Addis Ababa // African Union. April 2, 2003. URL: https://www.peaceau.org/ uploads/comapr03.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

support disarmament and demobilization initiatives, and advise on reintegration of combatants; strive towards ensuring that conditions favorable for the establishment of a UN Peacekeeping mission; and contribute to political and economic stability in Burundi[14].

AMIB was the AU's first experience in the deployment of peace operations [De Carvalho 2016: 169]. Ethiopia, Mozambique, and the Republic of South Africa were the main contributors to AMIB, with Burkina Faso, Gabon, Mali, Togo, and Tunisia also providing military observers. Whilst the total budget of the AMIB operation was estimated at USD 110 million[15], by late 2003, only USD 20 million had been made available [De Carvalho 2016: 174]. According to Jackson, "international support to AMIB was minimal, thus increasing the burden on the mission" [Jackson 2006]. Generally, it has been observed that AMIB "would have been virtually impossible to establish" without the scale and flexibility of external support/funding (USD 12 million from the US and UK combined) [Bachmann 2011: 29]. Partly due to continuing financial difficulties, AMIB was succeeded by the UN operation in Burundi (ONUB) in June 2004 [Jackson 2006].

AMISOM was the fourth peace-support operation to be launched by the AU in 2007. The mission was mandated to inter alia support Somalia's fragile peace process and protect individuals involved in it; help the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to consolidate is authority in Mogadishu; and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the repatriation of displaced persons. Between 2007 and 2011, Uganda and Burundi were the main contributors to the mission but were subsequently joined by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sierra Leone[16]. Nevertheless, from the very

beginning the AU struggled to finance AMISOM [Apuuli 2019: 79].

In fact, according to the think tank International Crisis Group (ICG), "financial uncertainty dogged the mission"[17]. As a result, the organization relied on the financial assistance of the European Union (EU), several Western states and later the UN [Apuuli 2019: 79]. Between 2007 and 2015, the EU funded the AMISOM operation to the tune of not less than 1 billion euros, and has forked out a further 180 million euros annually for the cause since then [Mills, Obasanjo, Biti, Herbst 2019: 209].

Nevertheless, the AMISOM funding mechanism has been very problematic. For example, the EU has taken several decisions about how it pays AMISOM's allowances by placing a cap on the amount it pays, and adopting measures to reduce its financial risks in case the AU does not comply with the EU financial standards [Apuuli 2019: 80]. In January 2016, the EU reduced AMISOM troops allowances by 20 % per month [Apuuli 2019: 80]. Moreover, delays in the payment have resulted in some AMISOM peacekeepers going without pay for months.

Lastly, the AMIS was established in the Darfur region of Sudan in 2004, and at the time became the largest AU peace operation [Williams 2009: 101]. In early 2003 two rebel movements, the Sudan Liberation Movement / Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), launched a series of attacks against Sudanese government targets in Darfur. The government retaliated by conducting a counterinsurgency campaign against the rebels and their supporters wherein its troops were supported by a variety of militia forces popularly referred to as the *janjaweed*.

By early 2004, the war in Darfur had left thousands dead, hundreds of thousands displaced from their homes, and pushed millions into the UN's category of "conflict affected people" [Williams 2009: 101]. Throughout 2004,

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[14] Ninety First Ordinary Session of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at Ambassadorial level. Communiqué. Central Organ/MEC/AMB/Comm. (XCI), Addis Ababa // African Union. April 2, 2003. URL: https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/comapr03.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[15] Williams [2009: 101] observing that AMIB's total cost was USD 134 million.

[16] Due to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014, Sierra Leone withdrew from the mission.

[17] The Price of Peace: Securing UN Financing for AU Peace Operations. Africa Report No. 286. January 31, 2020. P. 18 // International Crisis Group. URL: https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/286-price-of-peace-un-au-financing_0.pdf (accesses: 07.08.2020).

Darfur's conflict was characterized by large-scale and systematic war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated primarily by the government's forces and the *janjaweed* militias it supported [Williams 2009: 101]. Because the government of Sudan did not consent to a UN peace operation in Darfur it was left to the AU to play the leading role on the ground.

AMIS was mandated to monitor the N'Djamena Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement that was concluded on 8 April 2004 between the Government of Sudan, the SLM/A, and the JEM. Whilst the mission was comprised of military observers and a small Protection Force, by 2006 its numbers on the ground peaked at around 8,000 uniformed personnel [Williams 2009: 102]. From the word go, AMIS's operations were hampered by perennial shortages of funds, a fact that prompted one commentator to observe that the initiative was 'mission impossible' [De Waal 2008]. On the whole, the AMIS operation was undermined by inter alia its "total dependence on external donors in terms of funding" [Bachmann 2011: 30].

Logistical Inadequacies

Guicherd has noted that "the element of logistics is the backbone of PSOs" [Guicherd 2007: 16]. Logistics is defined simply as "the activity of organizing the movement, equipment, and accommodation of troops". The lack of logistics capacity by AU peace-support missions must be understood in the context of the general set-up of armies in Africa. The fact is that most African countries armies were not set up to confront external threats but rather to deal with internal stability concerns [Bachmann 2011: 39]. As a result, for example, strategic heavy air and sea lift capabilities have not been deemed a necessity.

A 1997 USA government study concluded that five out of twenty African armies had no logistics at all; another eight had logistics networks that could not even support company-level units beyond their barracks, and six (small) states had limited battalion-level capabilities to perform within their home state [Neethling 1999: 39].

In effect, many African states cannot deploy in any mission outside their jurisdictions, without external help. Uganda's deployment under AMISOM is a very instructive example. When the country decided to contribute troops to AMISOM, it could only deploy them with the help of Algeria that provided transport planes [Apuuli 2013: 84]. Burundi troops serving under AMISOM were able to deploy in theater with the logistical help (including training and transport) of the USA, Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Germany [Williams 2018: 56].

In summary, therefore, the failure to build national logistics capabilities by armies in Africa, reflects the reality that "most African states relied upon foreign intervention to protect their sovereignty and external security during two or three post-independence decades — including at times against their own national armies" [Bachmann 2011: 39]. The AU peace-support missions are thus reaping the fruits of member states failure to invest in these capabilities.

Continued Outbreaks of Conflicts on the Continent

As of July 2018, the AU had identified 21 current conflicts in the 55 AU member states[18]. The identified major conflict zones include: the Mano River region; the Great Lakes region; the Horn of Africa region; and the Sahel and Maghreb regions[19]. The AU has observed that the prevalence of conflicts and instability in Africa is attributed to seven causes namely: poverty; disruptive transitions including transitions from autocracy to democracy; lack of democracy or democratic accountability; population imbalance, and social and economic exclusion especially of the youthful population whose education levels are low; continuous violence whereby a country that has experienced large scale violence is susceptible to more of the same; bad neighborhood effect with countries

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[18] The African Governance Report: Promoting African Union Shared Values. 2019. P. 59 // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36843-doc-aga_report_-_english_-_online.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[19] The African Governance Report: Promoting African Union Shared Values. 2019. P. 59 // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36843-doc-aga_report_-_english_-_online.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

bordering those experiencing violence also being exposed to the same; and prevalence of poor governance[20].

The continued outbreaks of violence has meant that AU's peace-support / peacekeeping institutions and initiatives are always under stress. As one conflict is managed, others break out leading to the AU always acting as a fire-fighting institution. According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), by 30 November 2019, 21,600 incidents of armed conflict had been recorded in Africa, an increase of 36 % at the same time the previous year[21].

Opportunities

First of all, the AU has established a track record on how to conduct peace-support / peacekeeping operations. Under the APSA[22] in general, since 2004 the PSC has sent or authorized the deployment of over 64,000 uniformed peacekeepers (army and police) to missions on the continent[23]. Thus the organization is well equipped to handle any emerging situation that requires the intervention of peacekeepers.

Secondly, the conflict landscape in Africa has changed. It has been observed that "since 2001, the scope, scale and nature of armed conflict and violence in Africa has undergone change"[24]. Large scale wars have declined in proportion to population growth[25]. Inter-state wars that were typical in the 1970s and 1980s (for example, the border conflicts between Ethiopia and Somalia; Algeria and Morocco; Somalia and Kenya; Chad and Libya; Uganda and Tanzania; and Eritrea and Ethiopia among others) have now become a thing of the past. Moreover, formal declarations of an end to hostilities between some of these conflicting states has been achieved. For example, in 2018, Eritrea and Ethiopia formally declared an end to their border dispute that began in 1998.

Thirdly, one of the flagship projects under the AU's Agenda 2063 is "Silencing the Guns by 2020"[26] which aims at ending all wars, civil conflicts, gender-based violence, violent conflicts and preventing genocide in the continent by the year 2020. The project was adopted by the 21st Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government of the AU in May 2013 as part of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration[27]. Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 is the collective responsibility of African states that should ultimately culminate in states that can enhance dignity, prosperity, and security in national, regional, and continental domains [Khadiagala 2015: 2].

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[20] The African Governance Report: Promoting African Union Shared Values. 2019. P. 59 // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36843-doc-aga_report_-_english_-_online.pdf (accessed: 07.08.2020).

[21] Allison S. Conflict is Still Africa's Biggest Challenge in 2020 // ISS Today. January 06, 2020. URL: https://issafrica.org/iss-today/conflict-is-still-africas-biggest-challenge-in-2020 (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[22] APSA as enshrined in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU (2004), embraces an expanded and comprehensive agenda for peace and security that includes (direct and structural) conflict prevention, early warning and preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacebuilding, the encouragement and promotion of democratic practices, as well as intervention and humanitarian action and disaster management. APSA is structured around the following pillars: African Union Commission (AUC), the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF) / the Military Staff Committee (MSC), the Panel of the Wise, the Peace Fund, the regional economic communities/ regional mechanisms (RECs/RMs), the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy; and the Common African Defense and Security policy.

[23] Renwikc D. Peace Operations in Africa // Council on Foreign Relations. May 15, 2015. URL: https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/peace-operations-africa (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[24] The African Governance Report: Promoting African Union Shared Values. 2019. P. 61 // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36843-doc-aga_report_-_english_-_online.pdf (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[25] Ibid.

[26] The others are: Integrated High Speed Train Network; African Commodities Strategy; African Continental Free Trade Area; The African Passport and Free Movement of People; The Grand Inga Dam Project; Single African Air Transport Market; African Economic Forum; African Financial Institutions; The Pan African E-Network; African Outer Space Strategy; African Virtual and E-University; Cyber Security; and Great African Museum.

[27] 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration // African Union. 2013. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36205-doc-50th_anniversary_solemn_declaration_en.pdf (accessed: 08.08.2020).

The peaceful resolution of wars will contribute significantly to the goals of the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Africa Agenda 2063, both of which seek to reclaim Africa's ownership and leadership of its own development trajectory and reinvigorate the spirit of pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance that has, thus far, inspired Africa's political development and integration [Khadiagala 2015: 2]. As part of implementing the project, the AU has taken the following measures: adopted a Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silencing the Guns in Africa; declared the month of September as 'Africa Amnesty Month' for the surrender and collection of illegally owned weapons / arms; and appointed a High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa[28]. These measures, which have been declared "steps in the right direction"[29], should provide a fertile ground to lessen conflict on the continent.

Lastly, the reforms (especially financial) that are underway at the AU should result in the better management of conflicts on the continent. The June 2015 AU Summit in South Africa decided that going forward, the AU members would strive to finance the AU budget as follows: 100 % operational; 75 % program and 25 % peace operations. Subsequently, the Kigali Summit in 2016 agreed to a 0.2 % levy on eligible imports from outside Africa that would initially result in rising USD 400 million in the year 2020 [Apuuli 2019: 77]. The Republic of Mauritius entered a reservation on the decision.

The Kigali decision was aimed at doing the following: provide reliable and predictable funding for continental peace and security though the Peace Fund; provide an equitable and predictable source of financing for the Union; reduce dependency on partner funds for implementation of continental development and integration programs; and relieve the pressure on national treasuries with respect to meeting national obligations for payment of assessed contributions of the Union[30]. The 0.2 % levy, if implemented by all the fifty five AU members, would generate up to USD 1.25 billion per year.

However, as of September 2019, there were only sixteen member states collecting the levy[31], meaning that thirty nine are yet to start implementing the AU decision. The good news is that as of February 2020, fifty states had contributed USD154 124 812 to the AU Peace Fund[32] (out of the USD 400 million target by 2021); by February 2019 they had contributed 79 % of the funds assessed to them in 2019 towards the Union's Regular Budget[33]; and since 2018, member states are now financing 100 % of the AU's operational budget[34]. Thus the financial reforms, it has been noted, "have led to various significant realizations at the AU, including… a substantial increase of the share of AU member states contribution to the budget compared to partner funding"[35]. Whilst it is still early to make concrete conclusions, it appears the AU is on the road to financial stability, which in turn may result in the organization supporting its peace support operations better.

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[28] Ramtane Lamamra of Algeria was appointed in by the Chairperson of the Commission in October 2017.

[29] Alusala N., Paneras R. Silencing the Guns by 2020-ambitious but Essential // ISS Today. March 14, 2018. URL: https://issafrica.org/iss-today/silencing-the-guns-by-2020-ambitious-but-essential (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[30] What is Financing of the Union // African Union. URL: https://au.int/en/what-financing-union (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[31] Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development // AU Handbook. February 9, 2020. P. 210. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/31829-doc-au_handbook_2020_english_web.pdf (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[32] Decisions, Declarations, Resolution and Motion // Assembly of the Union Thirty-Third Ordinary Session. February 9—10, 2020. P. 15 // African Union. URL: https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/38180-assembly_au_dec_749-795_xxxiii_e.pdf (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[33] Ibid.

[34] Crucial Months Ahead for the AU Commission to Implement Reforms // PSC Report. June 23, 2020. URL: https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/crucial-months-ahead-for-the-au-commission-to-implement-reforms (accessed: 08.08.2020).

[35] Reforms in Management of Financial Resources in Africa Are Inevitable // African Union. October 14, 2019. URL: https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20191014/reforms-management-financial-resources-africa-are-inevitable (accessed: 08.08.2020).

Conclusion

The greatest challenge facing the African continent is to reverse the trend of outbreaks of conflicts. As an answer to this challenge, the AU has evolved the tool of peacekeeping / peace-support under the APSA. The AU mandated its first peace support mission in Burundi in 2003, which proved to be successful. Subsequently in the following years, the organization felt confident enough to mandate other missions in countries such as Sudan, Mali, and Central African Republic. The record of these peace support missions is chequered with all of them having suffered the challenges of funding difficulties and logistical inadequacies among others. As a result of this, the organization came to realize that it could not continue mandating peace support missions. To relieve the pressure on its resources, the AU started authorizing self-help peace missions namely: the MNJTF, the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the RCI-LRA. Nevertheless, even the authorized peace mission have suffered from similar challenges as the mandated ones. Thus, the AU has adopted the strategy of preventing the outbreak of conflicts through initiatives such as silencing the guns, aimed at lessening instances of conflicts outbreaks.

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