Book Review:
Kuwali, D. (Ed.). (2022). The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, 619 p.

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Рецензия на книгу:
The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa / ed. by D. Kuwali. Palgrave Macmillan, 2022. 619 p.

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The story of Africa's peace and security is complex, and many at times attracts praises and criticism in equal measure. *The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa* (Kuwali, 2022) finds itself in this conundrum and thus attempts to systematically interrogate the thorniest issues of Africa's peace and security agenda. In other words, the book is a deliberate intellectual and practical attempt to comprehensively diagnose and address the perennial and contemporary peace and security challenges in Africa in the context of globalization. The Handbook is timely and comes out at a time when Africa is facing a plethora of peace and security challenges. Sudan, Libya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Somalia, and South Sudan remain hotbeds of conflict. Climate insecurity, proliferation of foreign groups and transnational organized crimes and democratic deficit characterized by coups and term elongation continue to be reported in the continent.

The Handbook divides its thematic areas into six parts: conceptualising sustainable peace and security in Africa; a regional focus to peace and security in Africa; emerging threats to peace and security in Africa; perennial problems to peace and security in Africa; strategies for sustaining peace and security in Africa and securing sustainable peace and security in Africa. Through these broad thematic areas, the Handbook dovetails methodologies, ideas, concepts and

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provides scintillating discussions on the various peace and security issues. In essence, the Handbook "observes behind, remains aware of the present whilst looking forward" (Kuwali, 2022, p. viii). I dare add that like the proverbial *African sangoma,* it foretells the future solutions to the discussed challenges. In 34 chapters, the Handbook dissects the philosophical underpinnings as well as delves into in-depth elucidations of structural threats to peace and security. It concludes by providing practical and sustainable solutions to the identified challenges in line with the mantra of African solutions to African problems.

The first part of the handbook that contains four chapters debunks the concept of sustainable peace and security within the African context. This part relies mainly on historical antecedent to debunk the concepts. A lot of emphasis is placed on colonialism and its concomitant ally, liberalism and their influence in shaping and preserving the Leviathan. By invoking the African ideologies such as negritude and Ubuntu and weaving them with the aspects of colonialism and its discontents, one develops an afro-centric impression that colonialism and external dominion are the *principium et finem* of Africa's peace and security challenges. Whilst there is an iota of truth to this, one can argue that colonialism can no longer be an excuse for Africa peace and security crisis. Some of the emerging structural factors to conflicts and security are as a result of Africa's internal contradiction coupled by elite factionalism and what I would call insatiable appetite for primitive accumulation. Africa therefore needs to recuperate from the colonial hangover and look into its belly for practical solutions to emerging peace and security challenges. Some of the solutions as proffered by the authors in Chapter 1, entail adopting good governance and democratic principles (Kuwali, 2022, p. 31).

The last chapter in this section focuses on the African Union Agenda for Sustainable Peace and Security. The chapter provides in-depth analysis of contemporary peace and security challenges including terrorism, electoral conflicts, drug and human security and the vagaries of climate change. This last chapter also delves on the

African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Union (AU) institutions and how they have been structured to address some of the highlighted challenges. However, the discussions under this chapter do not take cognisance of the institutional changes dubbed "Kagame reforms" that commenced in 2017. Thus, some rhetoric questions emerge at this point: is the Kagame institutional reform, for example, impacting on the APSA framework? Is it impacting on how the AU responds to the contemporary peace and security challenges? Suffice to mention that the reforms seek to realign AU institutions, manage the AU efficiently at both political and operational levels and ensure self-financing.

Dan Kuwali's argument on the need for actionable early warning system in the form of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) is compelling and should be vitally important in conflict prevention, however, Dan Kuwali's discussions does not take into account the emerging focus within CEWS and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on structural vulnerabilities and the development of structural vulnerability and resilience assessment tools and methodologies such as the COMESA Conflict Early Warning System Structural Vulnerability Assessments (COMWARN SVA) and the AU Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA) approach. These unique approaches that are predominantly data driven and theory informed reflect the new paradigm in conflict prevention at both continental and regional levels. So far, the AU, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have institutionalized the SVA methodology in their respective early warning systems.

Part two provides a bird's eye view of the peace and security imperatives from a regional perspective. It delves on the dynamics and challenges in West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and South Africa regions.

Firstly, part two is critical in the overall discourse of peace and security in Africa in that it makes the reader appreciate the complex and multifaceted nature of the challenges, the linkages

between the region and the need for collective and deliberate efforts to ameliorate the emerging challenges. A common thread in this part of the Handbook is that the regions are intertwined — insecurity in one region affects security in the other region.

Secondly, the authors argue that the RECs, in this case, ECOWAS, the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) are still ill prepared to deal with contemporary peace and security threats.

Thirdly, the RECs predominantly depend on donors; the implication is that they cannot own their own peace and security agenda. With specific reference to ECCAS for example, Peter J. Mugume, in Chapter 8, avers that "the ECCAS member countries need to consider reducing reliance on external partners including UN, EU, the USA, and France" (Kuwali, 2022, p. 140). Part two, however, pays little attention (if any) to the Horn of Africa region. An audit of the dynamics in the Horn would have provided a holistic context. The Horn of Africa is considered the "hotbed of conflict" in Africa.

Part three of the Handbook interrogates a catalogue of contemporary and emerging peace and security challenges in Africa. The authors in this section further proffer solutions to some of the challenges identified. In Chapter 12 for instance, Dan Kuwali succinctly outlines what he calls the 'ten Cs' strategy for combating violent extremism. Whilst the section has discussed quite a number of emerging issues, it is however limited in terms of interrogating some of the emerging transnational organized crimes, one can argue that Mlowoka Noel Kayira does justice to the Handbook by delineating the issues in Chapter 18, however, the chapter does not discuss crimes such as firearms and organ trafficking that are becoming a menace to Africa's peace and security. Besides, part three and specifically Chapter 12, fails to provide the nexus between transnational organized crimes (as discussed in Chapter 18) and proliferation of violent extremist groups in place places like Nigeria, Horn of Africa and Sahel-Sahara region. There is empirical anecdotal evidence that the emerging transnational organized crimes have given impetus to the rise of extremist groups in these regions. Another important issue missing in this section of the Handbook is the emerging phenomena of mercenaries.

While Bright Nkuruma provides titbit of it in Chapter 7, the discussion, however, is anchored on historical perspective and the focus is on the why question — there is little (if any) discussions on the phenomena of mercenary as a security dilemma in Africa. This section and other related sections in this Handbook do not pay attention to the emerging challenge of children in armed conflict. It goes without rhetoric that Africa has the highest children living in conflict zone. According to Save the Children (2023), there are approximately 183 million children living in conflict zones with West and Central Africa with the highest number of children recruits. The above sheer numbers puts this issue at the epicentre of any academic or policy discussions in the context of Africa.

The Handbook in part four unpacks the structural factors that continue to drive conflicts and insecurity in the continent. Human rights abuses, poor governance and leadership, corruption coupled with maladministration, mismanagement of natural resources, the vagaries of piracy, and the contribution of ethnicity to electoral violence are discussed with much academic rigour. Certainly, it is applaudable to agree with the diagnosis and possible remedies proffered, nevertheless, this sections pays lip service to the issue of aid and its ramification on Africa peace and security. The aid-dependent economic model has exacerbated some of the perennial factors discussed under this section. The multiplier effect is that Africa peace and security has been compromised in many fronts — akin to what Dambisa Moyo calls 'dead aid.' Discussing this aspect and how it is intertwined with the other perennial challenges would have added the academic oomph and provided a much better panoramic appreciation of the issues discussed. In terms of organization and structure, part four would have come before part three. This, I submit would have provided I clear historical leakages of the issues under discussion. It would have further helped the reader to appreciate how the

peace and security issues/challenges have morphed overtime.

Part five with ten chapters forms the climax of the Handbook. It builds on the discussion in part three and four by proffering practical solution to both structural and contemporary challenges. This part of the Handbook is anchored on the faith and hope that the practical solutions would assist African countries build resilience, therefore, effectively deal with the endemic peace and security challenges that continue to manifest. Some of the solutions proffered under this section included addressing the blight of youth unemployment, professionalizing the military, adherence to the rule of law, dealing with corruption and more importantly promotion of an all-inclusive society where, each individual takes responsibility and remain accountable.

Part six summarizes the journey of the handbook. In this section, Kuwali provides closing remarks and highlights recommendations aimed at building a peaceful future for generations. Indeed, *The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa* is a comprehensive masterpiece that takes the reader through Africa's peace and security life journey. The Handbook aptly reminds the reader that Africa is not a problem to be solved but a voice to be heard.

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