An Assessment of African Union Security Architecture in the Management of Conflicts in Africa: Case Study of Somalia

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Abstract

Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents in the world due to social dislocation, international politics and compelling internal contradictions. Research shows that towards the close of 1966, almost half of the war-related deaths in the world were located in Africa accounting for over 8 million of the 22 million refugees across the globe. The Rwanda genocide claim over 800,000 deaths in 1994, over 4.5million death occurred in the last decade of the 20th century in other conflict zone in Africa such as Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Uganda etc. this work interrogate the AU security architecture APSA in the management of Africa conflicts. APSA is the collective term for a number of specific capability areas intended to strengthen Africa's ability to respond to the peace and security challenges facing the continent. The work uses the Somalia conflict as a case in study. It identifies the strengths and weaknesses of APSA however, it concludes that APSA perfumed creditably well in Somalia but call for deeper commitment by member states to the cause of Africa development and integration.
Keywords: APSA. Conflict, peace keeping, peace enforcement, Protocol, AMISOM

Introduction

The evolution of the African states has been riddled with conflicts, conflicts resulting from social economic dislocation, colonial impositions and the challenges of identity. A few elements have been implicated in this conflicts in Africa, they includes; "potent ambition of socio-economic dislocation, IMF structural adjustment programmes characterized with burdens of debt, the pressure of continental human insecurity and the challenges of democratization, including the contradiction of forces of exclusion, marginalization, extraversion and the demands for empowerment" (Ikuru 2014). The conflict in Africa includes ethno/religious conflict, communal conflict, border conflict, and civil wars such as we had in Rwanda, Liberia, Uganda, Lesotho, Somalia, Zaire, Burundi, Sudan and Nigeria. State /rebels conflicts in Serra Leone, Cote D' Ivoire and Guinea Bissau and genocide in Somali. The prevalent of conflict in Africa necessitated the declare of fifteen complex emergencies by United nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs in late 20th century out of which eight was from Africa (Umozurike, 2005).

Research has shown that towards the close of 1966, almost half of the war-related deaths in the world were located in Africa accounting for over 8 million of the 22 million refugees across the globe (World Refugee Survey, 1998). The Rwanda genocide claim over 800,000 deaths in 1994, over 4.5million death occurred in the last decade of the 20th century in other conflict zone in Africa such as Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Uganda etc. (U.S. Library of Congress 2005).

The 1980s, recorded nine prominent wars in Africa, with pockets of instances of large-scale violent conflicts, coupled with kaleidoscope riots, coups, and demonstrations. These exacted greatly on the death toll in Africa causing social dislocation, cultural damage, economic disruption, and lost investment opportunities. Out of these nine wars, five were located in Angola, Sudan Ethiopia, Mozambique and Uganda. These wars had death toll ranging from 60000, 100000 to 1000000. Unfortunately the greatest victims of this catastrophe were children and women. Western Sahara had three wars scattered between Chad and Namibia, with a resultant death toll of about 10,000 to 20,000 range. For Somalia not less than 50000 to 100000 people were killed generating over 350000 refugees who fled to neighboring Ethiopia (Africa Watch Committee, Somalia, 1990).

The West Africa region also had its share of conflict. This area covered Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. This area constitutes the Mano river basin defined in terms of an emergent political jurisdiction, other than a unified ecological zone. Its ecology shows a wide variety of topographical conditions, covering the undulating plateau and hills of the northwestern, the savannah grasslands and the mangrove swamps along the Atlantic coast, beautiful beaches and the tropical rainforest in the South and Southeast.

Post-colonial governance in each of the state mentioned was characterized by the influence of internal and external contexts. Such as the nature of the colonial experience, the dynamic interplay among internal actors and the structure of the regional and international system within which they operate coupled with the quality of leadership in each country which constitutes the major factor. The role of the leadership is important in shaping

the direction of the state drawing from the pattern and success in the alignment with diverse interests among various elites, predispositions, and leadership strategies adopted by the leaders which have elicited both internal and external response.

The carnage and plunder that has characterized conflict in Africa is such that has attracted the international community especially the United Nations. With the ending of the Cold War, the Africa continent have become vulnerable with most recent conflicts located in resource struggle, ethnic dichotomy and religious dogmas. Also disgruntled opponents of regimes employ opportunistic characteristics and wealth-seeking leaders collaborated with individuals to wield the blade of disloyalty by engaging on social mobilization along the part of division. The internal character of the African regimes and their interactive patterns (often personalized friendships and bitter antagonisms) created an environment of complex intrigues and mechanizations.

However, there have been regional effort in managing conflict in Africa, The tasks of managing or resolving conflict have been profoundly difficult. (Akpuru-Aja, 2011) . West Africa sub regional group ECOWAS successfully managed the conflict in West Africa, SADC had in the past made some input as well in the management of conflict in south Africa nations. African Union (AU) which is the Africa regional group have tried with varying degree of success in managing some of the conflicts within the Africa region in line with the Charter 33 of the United Nations. It is in line with this premise that this work seek to assess the AU security architecture in the management of African conflicts.

Theoretical Discuss
Cosmopolitanism
An emerging cosmopolitan approach insists that the maintenance of truly stable international peace and security requires a particular way of understanding, organizing and conducting peace operations. Cosmopolitanism is regarded as a political alternative to nationalism, and cosmopolitan values are perceived to stand in opposition to identity politics and other exclusive ideologies. Within the international community, cosmopolitanism has gained interest as an alternative approach to deal with many of the security threats of the contemporary world that cannot be solved within national borders, such as international terrorism, transnational crime, and the proliferation of small arms, light weapons and weapons of mass destruction, human rights violations and violent conflicts (Bjorkdahl 2005).

Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham have called for the development of cosmopolitan peace operations where the operations should be conducted by a standing UN Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS) comprising specially trained military and civilian personnel capable of protecting civilians from harm and implementing the full range of the UN human security agenda (Woodhouse 2011).

It can be argued that cosmopolitanism is more inclusive in terms of tasks and capacity of peacekeeping missions in complex security situations like Somalia. Cosmopolitanism aligns with the contemporary complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions where effective peacekeeping requires competent, well-trained and well-equipped troops in sufficient numbers to maintain a secure environment in which peace-building efforts can move forward (Durch, et, al 2003).

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)
At its formation one of the challenges inherited by AU was the preponderance of conflict in Africa, in response to this challenge the AU instituted a comprehensive "peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace enforcement mechanism" called, The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This architecture was designed to manage the multiplicity of conflict within the region. The mechanism was constituted within the framework of the AU 'Constitutive Act' and it's Protocol on the 'Peace and Security Council' (PSC). This is a comprehensive AU peace keeping design that will engage the conflict in the continent with the task of providing a peaceful environment for development and integration.

However, the Constitutive Act is limited by the doctrine of non-intervention, born out of the respect for state sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of member states (Murithi, 2008). This clause prevented OAU from intervening in conflict situations in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Somalia in the 1990s. The Constitutive Act states that the "AU shall promote peace, security and stability on the continent…, democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance". However, the limitation is silent on Humanitarian and Human right abuses. (Hanson, 2009). The point of departure from the old order (OAU) is that the AU Charter authorizes the intervention in civil wars within member states especially when there are indications of human right abuses. OAU charter clearly prohibited the organization from intervening or interfering in the internal political affairs of any member country. The AU's right of intervention is derives from the ideal of 'Pan-Africanism and the principle of non-indifference'. The principles of the constitutive Act task the African countries on the logic of indifference to conflict and suffering that occurs in their neighborhoods, and that the responsibility of establishing and maintenance of the peace and security of the continent is theirs while hoping for wilder collaboration from the

international community. (Murithi, 2009). This protective responsibility falls under the mandate of the AU's security organ, called the Peace and Security Council (PSC). The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union entered into force on 26 December 2003, it was established as the nerve centre of the APSA and to serve as a standing decision making Organ of the AU. It is to be supported by the AU Commission, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an African Standby Force (ASF) and a Special Fund. The functions of these as mandated in the Protocol underscore the importance of interdependence and synergy between and among the pillars.

APSA is the collective term for a number of specific capability areas intended to strengthen Africa's ability to respond to the peace and security challenges facing the continent. The APSA capabilities are specifically mentioned in Article 2 of the 2002 Protocol establishing the African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC) and thus form important building blocks for the organization (PSC Protocol 2003).

The APSA is intended to give the AU the necessary instruments to fulfil the tasks set out in the Constitutive Act and the Protocol establishing the PSC. APSA is firmly anchored within the AU's new Strategic Plan that was approved in May 2013 and, to varying degrees, is reflected in the strategic plans of the sub-regional organisations.

APSA is located within a peace and security terrain in Africa that continues to evolve. There continues to be violent conflict on the continent and there are a number of countries that remain decidedly fragile. Many more still need to consolidate their democratic institutions and other governance arrangements. Elections pose serious risks for incumbents and are often manipulated as a result. Since 2008, coups have taken place in Mauritania (August 2008), Guinea (December 2008), Madagascar (March 2009), Niger (February 2010), Mali (March 2012), Guinea-Bissau (April 2012) and Central African Republic (2013). The Arab Spring also resulted in a series of regime changes across North Africa from 2011, to which the AU and the sub-regional organisations concerned have often struggled to find a coherent response.

This work takes a look at the mandate of AU in confronting the conflict in Somalia.

The Somalia case

Within the ambit of the AU Constitutive Act,   (Article4 (h) of the AU Constitutive Act...the AU has The Right to Intervene in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Africa Union has engaged on several interventions program in other to mitigate the scourge of conflict. AMISOM is one of these interventions program to help restore peace to Somalia

In accordance with the AU 'Peace and Security Council (PSC) decision of 19 January 2007 and the UN Security Council Resolution 1744(2007) of 20 February 2007', the African Union (AU) established a mission in Somalia (AMISOM), AMISOM is a peace enforcement mission that had troops drawn from Burundi, Kenya, Djibouti, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. The principal objective was to provide support to the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) whose mandate expired in August, 2012 following the establishment of a new Government in Somalia.

Somalia crisis

The crises in Somalia can be   traced to the collapse of the state as a result of the fall of President Siad Barre in 1991, following the coup that toppled his government with the aid of external support culminating in a civil war , particularly in the south and Centre of the country, and numerous warlords and militias contested control over Mogadishu and its hinterland. In the north, the region now known as Somaliland sought to insulate itself from the mayhem by unilaterally declaring independence, which did not receive international recognition.

By 1992 the Somalia state has become increasing unstable and the Humanitarian crisis had doubled considerably. These developments lead to the UN Security Council to mandate the deployment of a small Peacekeeping mission, UNOSOM I. which was superseded in December 1992 by UNITAF, a multinational force comprising some 37 000 peace keepers under the US command,

The mission fulfilled their mandate and the task appeared to have been successfully accomplished and was accompanied by negotiations that led to the conclusion of a peace agreement in Addis Ababa in March 1993. UNITAF successful accomplishments lead to the coming of UNOSOM II, whose mandate extends to the additional task of supporting national reconciliation and reconstruction. Unfortunately the 1993 peace agreement degenerated due to the ambitions of the numerous warlords and their business partners and UNOSOM II gradually lost it bearing amidst intra clan war.

The civil war in the ethnically homogenous country of Somalia, led the PSC to establish the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with the purpose to stabilize the situation in the country and to promote dialogue, facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance and create conditions for a long-term peace. The mission did not undertake any urgently needed confidence-building measures and in 2007, AU revealed the weakness of its peacekeeping mission to Somalia and inadequacy of the mission regarding the complexity of the situation (Marangio, 2012; Pavši, 2013).

However, AU's missions were confronted with limitations. AU faces financial barriers engendered by extreme poverty among its member as well as dearth of technical capacity. In 2006 only 12 countries paid their yearly contributions. Infact, some countries are too poor and too internally devastated by their own conflicts, and cannot afford to participate in other conflicts. Indeed, African political economy is largely characterized by socio-economic and political instability; conflicting religious, regional and ethnic interests and unbridles corruption. AU heavily relies on the political and economic support from the regional institutions and the international community who also has limited resources and is often too slow in decision-making and rigid in their decisions about funding. This is largely because AU's peace and security machinery cannot focus effectively on more than one trouble spot at a time. For instance, with conflicts in Cote D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad and Somalia it will be difficult for AU mechanism to respond to all of these crises at the same time because of the aforementioned reasons. Hence, almost all AU missions were later taken over by the UN and none of the AU missions identified here succeeded without the UN's assistance.

An important feature of the Somalia conflict has been the emergence of a variety of Islamist movements seeking to establish an Islamic state in Somalia and at the same time pursue a regional or global agenda (Bradbury and Healy 2010).

Origins of AMISOM

The origin of AMISOM can be traced to the IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia IGASOM, a mission designed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in 2005. The IGASOM was unable to deploy successfully mainly due to lack of funding and challenges with the neutrality of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) given that most of the potential TCCs were Somalia's immediate neighbours. IGASOM was also seen as US backed western means to curb the growth of Islamic movement. These setbacks led the AU to embark on a new initiative and the result was the birth and deployment of AMISOM's on January 19, 2007, and by October 2013 the troop strength stood at approximately 18,000 with uniformed personnel drawn from Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

However, the mission continued to face challenges in defeating and eradicating al-Shabaab completely and restoring peace and security in Somalia. Al-Shabaab capitalized on the presence of non-Somali troops in Somalia to create disaffection among Somali population and in effect gain support as well as recruit followers among sections of the population. This phenomenon including the fact that A-Shabaab has also been bolstered by a foreign jihadi contingent among its ranks and whose motivation might be different from that of the Somali population continue to pose a serious challenge to the success of the AMISOM (Tariku 2009).

Mandate

One of the ways of assessing the success of AMISOM is an incisive interrogation of its Mandate; in other words the objectives for which the mission was established. Since its deployment in 2007, the mandate of AMISOM was changed to reflect the new model outlined in an African Union Peace and Security Council Communiqué and in a UN Security Council Resolution 2124. AMISOM was authorized to take all necessary measures as appropriate to carry out its mandate. Among others, the mandate of AMISOM include: supporting the Somali government and its institutions in their efforts to stabilize the country, advancing the process of dialogue and reconciliation, facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance, and creating conditions for long-term stability, reconstruction and development in Somalia.

Evaluation of APSA in Somalia

One of the gains of AMISOM was the drastic change in the security situation in Somalia. What had been achieved by AMISOM laid strong foundations for the restoration of peace and security. Some of this gain was the improved democratic process which resulted in the moving from a transitional government to an elected central government. This was the first election to be held inside the country after nearly 21 years. In addition, local administrative structures in parts of the country, particularly in areas liberated from al - Shabaab, by the Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF) with the support of AMISOM, was established.

However, there were pockets of obvious challenges such as the inadequate response to humanitarian crises by the government of Somalia, this was largely part of inadequate funding by the government (Wiklund 2013).
Moreover, the achievement of AMISOM could best be discussed under the three components of AMISOM; – military, police and the civilian.

Military

AMISOM worked with the FGS and other partners to undertake the training of a new corps of junior officers to assume Platoon and Company command positions in the SNSF. This training included junior officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) who successfully completed a platoon Commander and Senior NCOs training

course run by AMISOM at the newly refurbished Jazeera Training Camp in Mogadishu (chairperson of the commission report 2013). Generally, Since 2009, the military component has supported the training conducted by the European Union Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM) of 4,500 soldiers of the SNA in Uganda. However, the bulk of troops trained were mainly from the rank and file thus leaving gaps in junior and middle leadership positions and resulting in a critical vacuum in terms of command and control of the SNA. These gaps necessitated the category of AMISOM training in Jezeera to fill the vacuum created in junior leadership.

However, with current force strength, and without critical multipliers and enablers such as a guard force and air assets, AMISOM was constrained in its ability to expand its area of operations. The UN requested the African Union to increase the troop strength of that regional peacekeeping body from 17,731 to a maximum of 22,126 uniformed personnel as part of overall efforts to combat the increasingly asymmetrical tactics of al-Shabaab rebels in the country.

Police

AMISOM police Component has the mandate to guarantee the rule of law in the city of Mogadishu and to improve the capacity building of the Somali Police Force (SPF) with the aim of transforming it into a credible body that can provide security for the population. AMISOM police component continues to support the reform, restructuring, reorganization and professionalization of the SPF. AMISOM police, including the Formed Police Units (FPUs), worked closely with the SPF at various police establishments in Mogadishu to mentor, train and advise Somali police officers on a wide range of policing issues, including human rights and the management of crime. However, the mandate of AMISOM police was to extend its deployment to the other Sectors in order to provide support to the SPF (Report of the African U.nion Commission 2013.)

Civilian

The component has political, humanitarian and public information units. The political unit monitors, interprets and reports on political and other developments throughout Somalia, as well as providing advice on political processes. It is responsible for the implementation of political decisions on Somalia taken by the Africa Union Peace and Security Council and is helping build up the capacity of the nation's public service. The Civilian Component was committed to encouraging the launch of civil reconciliation initiatives with a view to seeking political inclusiveness and representation (Neus 2013).

The humanitarian unit worked closely with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, the UN Children's Fund, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Program (WFP) and other UN agencies as well as Somali and international NGOs to establish coordination mechanisms and the sharing of information. It also collaborates closely with the relevant Somali government agencies and ministries. AMISOM's exit strategy was closely tied to the development of the institutional capacity of the Federal Government of Somalia. There was the need to ensure that all the key state institutions, and especially those charged with providing security, were established and well functioning to ensure maintenance of rule of law, effective governance and provision of basic public services.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have clearly established that APSA through it mechanism AMISOM in its debut in Somalia in 2007, has made incredible impact and substantial contributions to the reinvention of security in Somalia, this lead to the defeat and ejection of the militant al-Shabaab group from the capital city in Mogadishu in 2011. Today after over 20-years of civil strife, Somalia has a functioning central government and its populace is slowly re-building their shattered lives.

The study has pointed out that the achievements of AMISOM, in Somalia was made possible by the technical implementation of a robust mandates, conducive political climate and goodwill within and outside Somalia, and the support from the international community. In addition the willingness and commitment of the Somali population to end the strife and to see the re-birth of their country propel the success of AMISOM in Somalia.

This study has likewise identified various challenges that face AMISOM, and its partners, in their quest to enhance security and enhance peace in Somalia. The challenges were diverse and range from the latent threat of the al-Shabaab manifested in sporadic acts of violence within and out Somalia, the question of legitimacy of the central authority/government, humanitarian crisis manifesting in large number of internally displace persons and refugees, lack of and uncertainty of guaranteed provision of resources among many other challenges

AMISOM initiative has demonstrated that as a continent Africa Security architecture APSA has come of age and is well capable of confronting the security challenges of Africa state.

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