THE CHALLENGES OF PEACEKEEPING IN COMPLEX INTRASTATE CONFLICTS, THE AFRICAN UNION MISSION (AMISOM) IN SOMALIA

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Abstract: This article engages in the discourse of peacekeeping missions in Africa and the role Regional organizations have had in organizing such operations in the continent of Africa. Specifically, this paper purports to examine the the paper shall highlight some of the success of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and discuss the future of The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in resolving conflicts in Africa. The AU's approach to the resolution of the Somalia conflict was a multi-level one, which incorporated the UN and the RECs with the AU. The AU preferred to utilize the IGAD to initiate and direct the peace negotiations in Somalia. AMISOM as a peacekeeping operation was a multilateral undertaking backed by the UN through resolutions UNSCR 1725 and UNSCR 1744. This paper finally highlights some lessons learnt from the mission in the Horn of Africa and how the African Union can facilitate the initiation of negations for peace even in some of Africa's most conflictual situations.

Keywords: Peacekeeping, Peace, Security, Conflict, AU, Somalia.

I. INTRODUCTION

The African continent has witnessed disproportionately high levels of conflict since independence, especially during and in the aftermath of the Cold War (Caparini, 2016). The conflicts experienced by African countries are considered historical in origin and current, especially in terms of perpetuation. Historically, pundits contend that the Berlin Conference (1884-5) which paved the way for the colonization and partition of Africa into existing African states was quite illogical and resulted in arbitrary national borders with dire consequences for social and political stability for most African countries (Dowde, 2008; Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011). These national borders did not take into account cultural and religious diversities of the native populations, thereby providing a recipe for conflict in the post-independent state (Kinfe, 2006; Tull, 2016; Menkhaus, 2009; Freear & de Coning, 2013).

It is also argued by several analysts that the post-Cold War period has provided a scenario in which weak African states have had to grapple with a plethora of developmental issues including intense political, ethnic and religious fragmentation, illiteracy, poverty, lack of enough resources and weak institutions among others, that have precipitated, perpetuated and exacerbated the conflicts (Menkhaus, 2009). Some analysts consider Africa's conflict problem to be the outcome of immature integration of the continent into the global capitalist order (Abrahamsen, 2013). The post-Cold War epoch has proved to be particularly deadly and according to a recent data from Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), the continent was the most violentin the world between 1989 and 2014 (Melander, 2015). Williams (2016) observes that between 1989 and 1999 Africa accounted for 76% of global fatalities from armed conflicts and 93% of world fatalities arising from deliberate use of organized violence against non-combatants and civilians.

As such, Africa has continued to be associated with conflict, human rights atrocities and insecurity. In the 1990s, Robert Kaplan's (1994) nightmare vision of "the coming anarchy" epitomized Africa's perceived affinity for atavistic and senseless violence, ethnic animosity and hatred as well as environmental dystopia. Jeffrey Gettleman also conjured a similar view asserting that Africa's wars "never end" but spread "like a viral pandemic" (Gettleman, 2010). Similar views

have been portrayed by academics and analysts as conflict has been the main issue of policy focus, with economic and developmental issues taking the second place (Abrahamsen, 2013). Several African countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Mali, South Sudan, Central African Republic are still experiencing armed conflicts (Tull, 2016). Civilians and non-combatants in these countries are in constant need of protection (Melander, 2015). Perhaps, as a result of the consequences such armed conflicts precipitate to human life, property, political fragmentation, overall stability as well as individual state's failure to protect, multilateral peace operations have been constantly endorsed as having the potential to provide protection of civilians and result in sustainable peace in specific African countries.

Currently, an unprecedented number of peacekeeping operations are deployed in several parts of Africa under the guardianship of the United Nations (UN) and in several instances, in collaboration with regional and sub-regional organizations like the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) among others (Bessada, 2009). Caparini (2016) considers the African continent as the principal operational theatre for global peace support operations (PSOs). In mid-2016, it was estimated that nine out of the sixteen UN peacekeeping initiatives were being undertaken in Africa. The continent accounted for 99,424 civilian and uniformed personnel out of 119,523 deployed in peacekeeping operations. As such, Africa accounted for 83% of all UN peacekeepers deployed around the world (Caparini, 2016).

Such PSO missions in Africa include but are not limited to; UN mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), UN Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO), UN Mission in Siera Leone (UNAMSIL) (Tull, 2016; Caparini, 2016; Guéhenno, 2016; Bessada, 2009). Presently, PSOs are an integral component of the continent's security landscape. These peacekeepers are involved in vital missions such as providing stability in countries plagued by violence, facilitating humanitarian assistance, protecting civilians, pacifying illegal armed groups, supporting the rule of law and public security as well as running elections (Bessada, 2009). If effectively managed, such peace operations often facilitate transition into peace from war (Caprini, 2016). Conversely, peace operations in the African continent are defining expectations concerning the role, capacities and legitimacy of the of multilateral organizations to manage armed conflicts and facilitate sustainable peace in specific African regions and in particular countries (Caparini, 2016).

Latest PSO's have focused on two particular regions of Africa, that is; one, the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa comprising thetroubled countries of the DRC, Burundi and the Central African Republic (CAR) and two, the greater Horn of Africa (HoA) comprising especially of Sudan, Eritrea, South Sudan and Somalia (Caparini, 2016; Demeke, 2016). The HoA is the most volatile and conflict-ridden region of African and one of the most dangerous places of the world (Kinfe, 2006). It has been described by several security and political pundits as the "hot-bed of the world" (Demeke, 2016:249). As such, the region is considered to be the epitome of religious violence, piracy, insurgency, cattle rustling, terrorism, and state-sanctioned violence (Menkhaus, 2009). Several issues that are considered to be the cause(s) of conflict and which (while not unique to the region as they are also found at the root of causes of conflicts in Africa and the rest of the world) are more pronounced in the HoA.

According to Markakis (2003) and Demeke (2016) the underpinning causes of conflict in the HoA include political fragmentation, absences of democratic political institutions, poverty and illiteracy, natural disasters (famine and drought) and general political turmoil. Somalia has been the archetype of civil war, political instability and state fragility in the HoA and the rest of Africa and to a great degree the world (Menkhaus, 2009). Since 1991, when the despotic regime of General Siad Barre collapsed, the country has been characterized by political chaos, extreme violence, religious extremism or terrorism, banditry, insurgency and piracy that have precipitated an intermittent civil war with devastating costs in terms of human life and property (Kinfe, 2006; Menkhaus, 2009; Freear & de Coning, 2013). Thousands have died and hundreds of thousands have been displaced by the intermittent conflict in Somalia necessitating the intervention of the UN and the AU through the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (Demeke, 2014).

II. THE GENESIS OF THE CONFLICT

Somalia is Africa's easternmost country located in the Horn of Africa. It borders, Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the Indian Oceana and the Gulf of Eden, to the West, South, the NorthWest, the East and the North respectively. The country has not known peace since the collapse of the despotic regime of General Siad Barre in 1991 (Dahre, 2011). A systematic analysis

of literature on the political history of Somalia would reveal the major events and issues that have mutually reinforced in precipitating the current explosive state of things in Somalia and such an analysis predates the Barre regime and focus in the epoch from 1884 during the colonial rule.

According to Dahre (2011), Britain had controlled northern Somalia since it established the British Somaliland Protectorate in 1884. From 1884 to 1896, the British colonial government concluded multiple treaties with local Somali clans living in modern Somaliland, Djibouti and Ethiopia gaining control over some of these territories (Jama, 2011). The most popular was the treaty with the Ogadeni people (currently living in Ethiopia) that ended in British colonial government promising Ogadeni people protection from Ethiopia (Dahre, 2011). However, as Dahre (2011) notes the British reneged on this promise and ceded control of the Haud and Ogadeni territory to Ethiopia in what has become known as the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreements of 1897 (Menkhaus, 2011; Jama, 2011). A similar situation also transpired in Kenya, where just before the country's independence, the British colonial government conducted a referendum in which they sought to determine whether Kenya's Somalis preferred to be part of an independent Kenya or Somalia (Menkhaus, 2011).

However, despite popular preference by Somalis to be part of Somalia the British included the former Northern Frontier District (NFD) as a province of independent Kenya (Harper, 2012). These developments are important because they have affected both the conduct and agenda of domestic politics in Somalia as well as how Somalia relates with its neighbors. According to Dahre (2011) the pre-independent machinations of the British and the Italians (who controlled southern Somalia from 1883) resulted in the division of the Somali people (a single nation) into five administrative regions paved the way for post-independent political agenda depicted by the adoption of the five-pointed star in the Somalia flag. According to Jama (2011), between 1969 and 1991, A precedence for conflictual Somalia was established despite having undergone a peaceful power transfer from President AdanAbduller Osman to Dr. Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke in June of 1967.

In just two years after the power transfer, President Sharmarke was assassinated in Las Anod on 15th of October, 1969 and was succeeded by General Mohamed Siad Barre through a bloodless coup d'état (Menkhaus, 2011). Upon takin power, Barre established an authoritarian regime in which political deviance was not tolerated and could land one in jail or detention without trial (as it did the former President, two former Prime Misters and the police commander (Jama, 2011). At the same time, Barre suspended the constitution, banned all political parties, trade unions and the Supreme Court and went ahead to replace the National Assembly with Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) (Menkhaus, 2011; Jama, 2011). At the same time, Barre explored and exploited clan differences and successfully created mistrust among clans. Clannism and nepotism replaced meritocracy in public appointment and the public property became Barre's own, to be deployed at Barre's command to advance a political agenda (Jama, 2011).

These developments therefore crystalized in the minds of Somalia that constitutionalism could be abrogated at will. Descent to Barre's despotic regime led to his own disposal in 1991 by the Ethiopia-backed United Somali Council (USC) (Stamford, 2011). Jama (2011) and Menkhaus (2011) contend that the clan tensions that Barre had successfully created persisted as a dominant element for political mobilization in the post-Barre epoch. Ethiopia is said to have also exacerbated the clan animosities in its bid to stir up instability in Somalia and to derail Somalia's irredentist claims over its Ogaden territory (Stamford, 2011). The anarchy and violence that emerged with the overthrow of Barre made Somalia virtually ungovernable as warlordism emerged with each warlord (often linked to a clan) seeking to ascend to power (Gettleman, 2010).

It also opened the country to Islamic fundamentalism as international terrorists such as the Al-Shabaab gained a foothold in the country as base for planning clandestine regional and global terror operations (Aganda, 2008). Thus, chaos and anarchy fueled by clan-based warlordism and supported by regional actors such as Ethiopia and Eritrea defined much of the events in Somalia throughout the 1990s. From the early mid 1990s onwards Somalia started to dominate regional and international debates on peace. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) comprising of regional countries and as part of the African solutions to African problems conceptualized with the AU agenda initiated attempts to negotiate peace between the warring factions in Somalia (Abukar, 2015; Knezevic & Smith, 2015).

The move by regional and international actors including the IGAD and the UN was necessitated by the recognition of the growing strain the anarchy in Somalia was placing in regional stability and international security (owing to presence of international terror organizations in the country) (Abukar, 2015; Menkaus, 2011). In the year 2000, several Somalia

political groups agreed at a conference held in Arta in Djibouti to establish a Transitional National Government (TNG). Being Somali-driven, the Arta Agreement presented an aura of legitimacy for the TNG and reasonable acceptance among the Somali warring factions. However, the agreements main misgiving and one which had dire repercussions for its legitimacy and effectiveness was its exclusion of the warlords and some other significant actors in the Somalia conflict such as the youth and women (Dahre, 2011). By 2004, the weaknesses of the TNG and with it the Arta agreement had become apparent necessitating another round of new negotiations (Menkaus, 2011). In 2004, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established.

The agreement was mediated by the UN-backed IGAD and resulted in the Mbagathi agreement (having been conducted at Mbagathi in Nairobi, Kenya). The Mbagathi conferences created a more accepted and relatively legitimate TFG. Considered as the 'conference of the warlords' the conference brought the warlords to the negotiation table and was effective in bringing a ceasefire in Somalia especially as far as the warlord's overt participation in violence was concerned (Dahre, 2011). Nonetheless, the Mbagathi conference concentrated so much on the war lords and Menkaus (2011) argues it lacked the crucial participation of the civil society and the clan leaders thereby becoming intrinsically directed towards failure. The failure of the TFG to address the interests of all the major players in Somalia resulted in the emergence of even more powerful and violent groups, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU).

The ICU quickly gained control of Somalia especially in the South and were responsible for orchestrating insurgent attacks in Mogadishu. In response, as Menkhaus (2011) and LeSage (2005) posit, the TFG sought the assistance of international actors especially the African Union and Ethiopian forces. At a conference in Djibouti in 2008, dubbed the Djibouti Peace Talks that was conducted between the top representatives of the TFG and moderate Islamists, the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), it was agreed that the Ethiopian troops should withdraw from Somalia. According to Dahre (2011), the term of tenure of the TFG was to end in 2011 (Abukar, 2015). In the following year in 2012, the newly composed Federal Parliament of Somalia elected Hassan Sheikh Mahamoud as the country's first President in 40 years (Abukar, 2015).

III. THE NATURE OF PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS.

Peacekeeping operations suffer from a lack of political-will; which becomes evident because of: inadequacy of contingents; as regards to their numbers and the amount of financial contributions raised by those contributing sovereign states; inability of headquarters to provide adequate and timely logistical-support; mismatched contingent sizes and logistical-equipment; and complexity of peacekeeping-missions that are mismatched with the existing capabilities needed on the ground. When consent breaks-down completely, peacekeeping-forces are left with the options of: either withdrawing the peacekeeping-troops; or converting soldiers to become peace- enforcement forces. Converting ordinary soldiers to peace-enforcement tasks must be well planned and deliberated. Further, peace-enforcement must be accompanied by infrastructural-changes, dependent of the mandate, capability, and commitment, of the force assigned for the peace-enforcement. Mission-Creep' is an unplanned move from peacekeeping to peace enforcement. This can be very dangerous to the troops involved in such missions; as peacekeeping forces need to be trained and adequately equipped for different types of missions.

Enforcement should only be contemplated as a last resort solution; when all other options have been exhausted. Full scale peace-enforcements are usually very costly. In 1993, in Somalia, for example, for every dollar spent on humanitarian assistance, ten dollars was paid for military protection purposes. In principle, enforcement is legitimized; if the UN-Security-Council decides that the nature of a given conflict constitutes threats to international peace and security. Any peacekeeping-force that causes terror; or intimidates masses by using force is likely to fail. Likewise, it runs the risk of being regarded as an occupation-force. Therefore, at a time when peace-enforcement is considered as the best optional approach; it is essential to ensure that this force is perceived by the civilian-population as an entity organized for: providing humanitarian- aid; disarming-combats to end any perpetuating violence; and provide viable room for diplomatic-intervention.

Before an enforcement-action is taken, at least the following four preconditions must be met: to show a political will to cooperate by those troop contributing nations; to accept and bear the human-costs for their respective military-forces deployed for a given enforcement-action; to show the will and to have the capability of meeting the financial costs; and lastly to readily avail troops that will be adequately prepared and equipped for the enforcement-action. In any case, all of the above four preconditions are very costly. Where there is limited or no consent, a peacekeeping-mission can be

considered to be very close to actual military combat. However, at times, use of a capable military force becomes a necessary precondition in order to pressure conflicting parties to resolve their differences; through nonviolent means. Some nations will only contribute to peacekeeping with the condition that it is not a peace enforcement-operation. When use of force is expected, then military officers usually plan for a reserve-force; which can be used when extra-reinforcement is needed within the bounds of a conflict area. However, this is a concept that is unheard of within the UN-operations to date. A force also needs to be able to carry out its mandate. The mandate also needs to be realistic and clear. Challenges will be faced when external political alliances and internal political circumstances and military realities causes the troops actions to shift from the mandate.

In the course of fulfilling their mandate, some peacekeeping operations have evolved and found themselves in a situation known as the 'gray zone'. A grey zone is the space between traditional peacekeeping and all-out war fighting. The tendency to slide from peacekeeping to enforcement actions and then back again has proved to be very dangerous with disastrous consequences as was seen in the case of Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. No effective mechanisms have been devised to respond to the challenge of the gray zone. When peacekeepers find themselves in the vulnerable position of the gray zone, it is usually complicated by sentiments of the public opinion; who usually do not understand why peacekeeping military contingents are not responding to aggressive actions and acts of violence towards innocent civilians.

IV. AMISOM IN SOMALIA

In 2006, through Resolution 1725, the UN Security Council (UNSC) approved the intervention of African Union (AU) forces in Somalia. UNSCR 1725 authorized a limited deployment of troops from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and AU deployment in and around the Somalia town of Baidoa to protect the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) which was headquartered there owing to sporadic insecurity in Mogadishu (Somalia's Capital). In the following year, in 2007, UNSR adopted resolution 1744, which further legitimized AMISOM's deployment of troops (Murithi, 2009). AMISOM has played a vital role in peace operation in Somalia especially in helping reduce the level of conflict in the country (Freear & de Coning, 2013). However, despite the presence of UN-backed AMISOM, Somalia remains a country in a state of insecurity (Murithi, 2009; Gowan, 2008).

The inability of AMISOM to provide sustainable peace in Somalia raises concern over the effectiveness of the mission. Caparini (2016) has argued that transformations over the past two decades have shaped the manner in which PSOs are deployed as tools of conflict management. Hence, understanding these changes as well as the intricate dynamics that shape them and constrain peace operations is essential. Somalia provides an instance in which the dynamics that shape PSOs in Africa and the effectiveness of PSO in the continent can be examined. Despite much publicity about the AMISOM in the media, very limited academic attention has gone into the examination of the success or failure of the mission. In fact, a lot of attention to Somalia as argued by Murithi (2009) has been accorded the assessment of the conflict in the country and not AMISOM's mandate and role in peacekeeping.

V. LESSONS LEARNT

The lessons learnt from UNITAF and UNOSOM I & II and AMISOM revealed that peacekeeping can be better managed by: matching mandates to needs, communicating the purpose of the mission to the local community and the international media, troop contributing countries focusing on preparing their citizens psychologically for some of the high risks in peacekeeping operations, Having a unified command using the appropriate response for circumstances where the use of force is inevitable in self-defence or where the use of force may be counterproductive.

Ensuring the timely troop deployment and Proper planning and coordination. Overall, peacekeeping operations will not be managed successfully if there is lack of the political will. The findings further demonstrated that traditional peacekeeping remains the most developed response mechanism to conflict. In principle, peacekeeping is more likely to succeed when there is an agreement to keep; when there is consent, impartiality and when non-use of force reigns except in self-defense. Enforcement measures are extremely complex and should be employed with caution under very exceptional circumstances. Enforcement should only be contemplated as a last resort solution; when all other options have been exhausted. Full-scale peace-enforcements are usually very costly.

The presence of peacekeeping forces in Somalia will contribute towards resolving the conflict situation in Somalia. Peacekeeping after civil wars was found to be a contributing factor to attaining peace and stability. However, peacekeeping cannot guarantee real peace. The risk of renewed conflict is still high even after the fighting has been

stopped through military intervention. Military activities tend to reduce the damage of the crisis; while at the same time, creating room for diplomatic and humanitarian actors to address the underlying causes of the conflict. International forces can use coercive means to gain stability; but attaining real peace rests mainly on the locals. Military personnel cannot guarantee real peace; but they can establish a framework; in order to allow the local and international community to do what is necessary to resolve conflicts.

VI. CONCLUSION

If it were not for AU peacekeeping forces and the Ethiopian troops, Al-Shabaab would not be in its weak position. Nonetheless, the youth who are the future hope for Somalia are turning their hands to weapons and losing confidence with the government. In addition, the Al-Shabaab militant jihadist ideology is quickly spreading among the Somali youth both locally and abroad. The sooner the government is able to take control over the security situation, the more beneficial it will be for the country as well as for the region. The Al-Shabaab has retreated but has not yet been defeated. The group is still capable of operating from outside Mogadishu and has since increased its suicide bombings and assassinations The time has come when the international community needs to let Somalis take charge of their political determination. The international community can however assist by providing training to the police force as well as to the military troops; and finance development and humanitarian projects whose funds are accounted for. The Somali government needs to step up and do what meets the expectations of good governance. When Somali population stabilizes business people can invest; which will lead to economic growth; which will in turn enable ordinary Somalis to improve their livelihoods in peace.

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