Towards a New Pax Africana: Africa's Conflict Management Techniques and The Architects of Convergence

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Abstract

The African Standby Force (ASF), has certainly taken on a different form in intervening in regional conflicts. Initiatives such as the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) developed a largely state-driven process without the regional economic community viewed as the focal point. The Southern Africa Brigade mainly led by South Africa and included Tanzania and Malawi, contributed 3,000 troops for a Neutral Intervention Force (NIF), which was authorised to conduct offensive peacekeeping, protect civilians, and neutralise armed groups, namely the rebel March 23 Movement (M23), which operates primarily in the North Kivu region. In November 2012, Goma – the regional Congolese capital – fell into the hands of M23 rebels, despite the presence of 6,000 armed peacekeepers under the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The UN Security Council ordered the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) into action, and the UN Security Council authorised its first ever offensive UN force in April 2013 with the key responsibility of neutralising armed groups. Africa's troubled states had to scramble resources together in order to address the major conflicts, but the parochial interests of the state are moving towards the forefront in prioritising regional security. This chapter is thus concerned with the conflict management techniques deployed and the African Standby Force (ASF) – its progress, problems and prospects for achieving the objectives of a continental brigade, which has been conceived as a troop contribution from five regional economic communities (RECs). The African Union (AU) has conceptualised how the ASF can assist the continent achieve peace and security. This chapter poses two fundamental questions: What have the AU and Africa's RECs achieved in their efforts towards security convergence? And what are the important actors and factors promoting or hindering regional security?

Background

Born out of a pan-African ideology, Ghana's leader Kwame Nkrumah noted the importance of seeking a political union for the continent. Whereas the rest of Africa's independent states sought functional regionalism through regional organisations that were to become economically and politically independent through freer trade and interlinking customs unions in order to build strong economies. The Maghreb Federation in May 1945 included three independent states in that grouping – Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. This was a region until April 1958, when Algeria's National Liberation Front (FLN) joined the Federation. More states joined the Federation as they gained independence, including Libya, Mauritania, the French Sahara, and Spanish North Africa. At the 1958 All-African Peoples' Conference, Nkrumah discussed the idea of an African High Command. However, this idea dissipated with divisions among African leaders.

Among them, the Monrovia group comprised of Liberia, Nigeria, Togo, Senegal, Benin (formerly known as Dahomey), Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Burkina Faso (formerly known as Upper Volta), Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, and the Central African Republic (CAR). Members of the Monrovia group called for the establishment of a joint defence command gradually, in order to strengthen the political and economic bases of member states.

While the Casablanca group – Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Mali, and Morocco – called for the establishment of a joint high command as expeditiously as possible.[1] With states jealously guarding their newly established sovereignty and steering away from any form of supranational power, Nkrumah's idea did not take root. It was also against the background of pan-Africanism that the East and Central African states formed the Pan-African Movement for East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) in Tanganyika in 1958. The PAFMECA grouping, which later included the Horn of Africa states, Somalia and Ethiopia, fought white supremacy in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia by supporting the liberation movements of South Africa, as well as those of South-West Africa (now Namibia), Northern (Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Mozambique.[2]

In 1963, the idea of an African military resurfaced under the concept of the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) Charter as a Defense Commission.[3] The reality, however, was that Africa's states were troubled with Cold War rivalries and proxy wars, fighting colonialism, and tackling white supremacy. Africa's leaders were not fully committed to the notion of a Pan-African solidarity that encompassed security. Most states on the continent were challenged by regional conflicts. Tanzania, for example, was instrumental in assisting with the liberation movements of Southern Africa. Also, Tanzania, Angola, and Mozambique became active participants in the group of Front Line States (FLS) and the liberation movements and struggled against white supremacy and racism. Angola joined the Alliance Members of Southern African States after independence in 1975. During the 1960s, Mozambique found a safe haven in Dar es Salaam for its Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO). In the 1970s, Angola and Mozambique were still under Portuguese colonial control. However, the independence of Angola and Mozambique brought about violent regional conflict and war that provoked nervousness in the racist South African government, which feared that a Marxist power could be unleashed to dominate the entire region, jeopardising its apartheid ideology.[4] Radical members of Angola's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) supported Zaire's secessionist forces by invading Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC]) twice, in 1977 and again in 1978, which effectively destroyed relations between the leaders of the two countries. Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko responded with support from his Western allies, the United States (US), France, and Belgium, and within Africa, from Morocco.[5]

The OAU's first ever mission was mandated and deployed in Chad in December 1981 after years of addressing the country's civil war, and the organisation had no assistance from the UN. In June 1982, the OAU peacekeeping force had to be withdrawn due to a host of problems mainly related to logistics and financial shortages, as well as instability in Chad. Africa has long realised that it needs its own response mechanism.[6] Africa's current conflicts call for robust and effective deployment of well-resourced, efficient, and effective peacekeeping missions. But as this chapter later shows that although efforts are being made to create a continental troop-contributing force – the African Standby Force (ASF) – the parochial interests of states such as – South Africa, Uganda, and Rwanda and among others – makes it most unlikely that a continental brigade will eventually be fully formed or fully operational. Nevertheless, the ASF was developed at the 2002 Durban Summit of the AU, and established as part of the AU's Protocol Related to the Peace and Security Council (PSC), in February 2004. The protocol further provided for a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an eminent Panel of the Wise, a Military Staff Committee and a Special Peace Fund, together forming the main pillars of the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The ASF, though, is the most critical element of APSA and, therefore, must ensure that it delivers interventions timeously, promptly, and robustly. Such interventions also require the political will of its member states.

The Role and Mandate of the African Standby Force

The African Standby Force was established in 2002 as one of the pillars of APSA, and was intended to become operational in 2010. The main idea of the ASF is to strengthen the capacity of sub-regional brigades for peace support operations, enhancing the capacity of national defense forces and training civilian police for peace support missions.

The AU provides a roadmap for its five brigades and Planning Element (PLANELM) – a framework guided by operationalising six scenarios and missions. Scenarios 1 to 4 are aimed at deployment required within 30 days from an AU mandate resolution, and further outlined as follows: scenario 1 – AU/regional military advice to a political mission; scenario 2 – AU/regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN mission; scenario 3 – stand-alone AU/regional observer mission; and scenario 4 – AU/regional peacekeeping force for peacemaking and preventive deployment missions. Scenario 5 involves an AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions, whereby the African Standby Force is required to deploy within 30–90 days. Scenario 6 involves deployment in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly, and it is envisaged that the AU would have the capability to deploy a robust military force within 14 days. Furthermore, it was envisaged that as a first phase, scenarios 1 and 2 would be complete by June 2005; and phase two by June 2010. The AU at this stage would have developed the capacity to manage complex peacekeeping operations, while the RECs/regions would continue to develop the capacity to deploy a mission headquarters for scenario 4 involving AU/regional peacekeeping forces.[7]

It took the continent almost five decades to consider the establishment of a continental African force – the African Standby Force – but this force has not been operationalised.[8] The ASF has become the most important mechanism for addressing Africa's conflicts. These security mechanisms are outlined in the Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act of 2000, and under Article 2 of its Peace and Security Council protocol, which came into force in January 2004. Also formed – was the AU's comprehensive African Peace and Security Architecture. In June 2008, a further memorandum of understanding between the AU and sub-regional bodies was agreed, binding Africa's eight main regional economic communities – the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Arab Magreb Union (AMU); the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD); the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); the East African Community (EAC); and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) – to cooperation in the area of peace and security and five regional brigades.[9] But the matter of member states belonging to more than one regional economic community has become equally unwieldy; and the multiplicity of member states is indicative of this fact. Of the AU's 55 member states, 26 are members of two RECs and 20 are members of three RECs. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) belongs to four RECs. Of the 14 regional integration groupings in Africa, there are two or more groupings in other sub-regions.

The lack of a legal framework that binds member states further allows these states to criss-cross regional communities to serve either their economic interest or a security one regardless of how this would impact on a continental brigade since the regional brigades are the first step in the formation of the larger ASF. Owing to the lack of political will among states resulting from major political tensions seen within regional brigades and the RECs to which they belong are all evident. These tensions are also synonymous to the lack of convergence of the African Standby brigade. Take Ethiopia and Egypt for example, the Ethiopian government has had several disputes with Egypt, such as that over the Nile River dam, and Egypt's deployment of troops in South Sudan and its signing of a bilateral cooperation agreement with South Sudan have further estranged Ethiopia from South Sudan. Rwanda and Uganda's conflicts in the DRC have also kept the DRC from joining or sharing any regional mission with states, while rebel groups were supported by Rwandan and Ugandan forces in the DRC. The DRC, Rwanda and Uganda's inter-state conflicts or the political indifferences of Morocco with Western Sahara for that matter that has led to several tensions with Morocco been estranged from the North African regional economic community's bridgade (NASBRIG), after it was booted out of the regional institution owing to its major indifferences and conflict over Western Sahara and its territorial dispute there (but subsequently, Morocco was brought back into the AU fold in 2017 after 33 years). All these tensions prevent and delays the processes of establishing regional brigades.

Already in the late 1990s, based on a recommendation of the AU's predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) decided to have a 5,000 to 6,000 brigade size as a standing regional peacekeeping force for deployment on peace and humanitarian missions (but not peace enforcement). However, the restructuring of SADC and the AU overtook events.[10] Over the years, peacekeeping in Africa has become more and more complex, and moved beyond conflicts between states to wars within states.

Peacekeeping has evolved into a multidimensional operation that calls for operations that are able to assess the political, social, and economic dimensions of both inter- and intra-state conflicts.

Operationalising the African Standby Force: Assessing Progress

The large number of peace operations that have been conducted by sub-regional organisations has been a source of concern for the AU. Since1992, peace operations have been conducted by RECs such as ECOWAS, SADC, and ECCAS. However, during the period 2003 to 2012, three major missions were: the 2002 African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS); the AU-led 2003 African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB), and the 2007 African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)[11] Both Nigeria and South Africa have the longest record of peacekeeping on the continent due to the nature of intra-state conflicts and also their inherently large economies. The ASF, therefore, is relying heavily on the regional hegemons, South Africa in SADCBRIG and Nigeria in ECOBRIG, to support logistics and to compensate for weak members with lesser infrastructure and with smaller economies.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development had been overseeing the East African region's interim efforts to establish its standby brigade. In September 2004, the first meeting of EASBRIG adopted a draft policy framework to establish its standby brigade, comprising 13 member states: Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. In July 2005, the regional planning element was adopted. In September 2005, the chiefs of defence staff met to discuss the operationalisation of the AU Roadmap and Planning Element; the skeleton brigade headquarters; the establishment of an independent coordination mechanism, EASBRICOM; and the deferment of the operationalisation of the logistics base until the AU had finalised the logistics concept. By 2007, the EASBRIG structure had made some progress and was planning to complete the AU's roadmap for operationalisation of the ASF, which it envisaged to be brigade-ready by 2015 (also a missed deadline).[12] The brigade was set up amid severe regional conflicts, notably the aftermath of the Ethiopia and Eritrea border conflict of 1998–2000; Kenya's 2012 electoral crisis; Somalia's ongoing violent conflict; the Ethiopia–Sudan Nile river water dispute;[13] as well as the water conflict between Tanzania (EAC and SADC member) and Malawi (SADC member) over Lake Malawi.[14]

In August 2007, the SADC brigade was launched in Lusaka, Zambia.[15] The concept and design of security in Southern Africa includes a wider concept of human security in its policy documents. The 2007 SADC Summit launched its SADC brigade as a regional and multi-dimensional peace support operation guided by its Protocol on the Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation (OPDSC) for peaceful cooperation, enhanced mutual security, and management of humanitarian disasters.[16]

The OPDSC Protocol indicates that security should be approached through peaceful cooperation, enhance mutual security, and manage humanitarian disaster.[17] Southern Africa's collective security arrangement was put into place by its Mutual Defence Pact of 2004. This is a collective defence arrangement for its members from external aggression that is guided by the policy framework provided by the 2001 and 2011 Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO) for security cooperation in the region.[18] By August 2008, eight SADC member states signed the Mutual Defence Pact policy: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, and South Africa.[19] The SADC brigade, along with the other four standby brigades of the African Standby Force, will perform observations and monitoring missions, peace support missions, and interventions for peace to restore regional security. The SADC brigade will also serve as a preventive deployment mechanism in order to prevent conflicts from escalating. Besides peacekeeping, other duties would entail post-conflict reconstruction activities, such as disarmament and demobilisation of militia or ex-combatants, and providing humanitarian assistance to countries' civilians in war-ravaged areas.

Approaches to peacekeeping must have well-synchronised military operational procedures in order to achieve sufficient impact. An unnecessary delay in providing logistical support can escalate violent conflict or place peacekeepers at risk, as was the case when South Africa's paratroopers were left stranded in the Central African Republic's war zones and dense forests, with no airlift capacity in 2013, which led to the deaths of 13 soldiers, when the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) assisted in CAR and in the Bangui conflict.[20] Civilian police have become an important component of peacekeeping operations. The ASF protocol has provided 240 police officers for peacekeeping missions.

Tsepe Motumi (former deputy director-general, chief of defence policy and planning, in the secretariat of the South African defence department) highlights the importance of having a joint planning component that must be well synchronised.[21] Peacekeeping is expensive, as made evident in June 2003, when former South African president Thabo Mbeki announced in parliament that South Africa's peacekeeping effort in the DRC was costing R820 million over a 12-month period.[22] The costs of South Africa's mission in Burundi were estimated at R783 million.[23] For the past decade and a half (2000–2015), the South African National Defence Force has deployed about 5,000 personnel to UN-led regional peacekeeping missions. South Africa is also making available R44 billion, 1.6 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), for regional security.[24] In support of co-member states, the SANDF has pledged a parachute battalion, engineering capability, sanitation, a field hospital, patrol boats, signal capacity, drivers, naval support vessel, and air transport to fill the resource and capacity gaps that other SADC members may lack.[25]

Besides civilian police, of critical importance to any peacekeeping mission are logistics and capacity, which are often neglected. Conceptualising logistics in a military setting involves aspects such as design and development, storage, movement, distribution, maintenance, evacuation and disposition of material and facilities, evacuation and hospitalisation of personnel, construction, and acquisition and furnishing services. In essence, lack of proper logistics and capacity support can make or break a peacekeeping intervention. Peacekeeping is complex: there is often a lack of resources and infrastructure in areas where deployments need to take place, thus timely transport of infrastructure and resources to such areas is important, and can affect the mobility of military forces.

According to the AU's logistics concept paper,[26] in SADC, the South African National Defence Force has been tasked to develop a road and rail strategic lift concept; while the Algerian National Defence Force has been requested to develop air and sea lift capabilities for the North Africa brigade. However, the AU and its RECs still need to address acquisition of resources and mechanisms for operationalising these initiatives. The SANDF undertook training exercises in August 2015 in Lohatla, in the Northern Cape in South Africa, codenamed Young Eagles, during which three soldiers perished. The minimum requirement for combat helicopters is between 12 and 18, and no country has been able to supply the United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) with these resources. Hence, in September 2007, the attack on the peacekeepers in Darfur cost the lives of ten soldiers because of the considerable time that was taken to move the injured (eight hours). This can be avoided in future if the appropriate resources are in place. Overall, peacekeeping operations undertaken by the AU and the RECs have faced serious difficulties in Burundi, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan.

Key Challenges Facing the African Standby Force

Progress to date has been slow and the ASF has not become brigade-ready. To strengthen Africa's security architecture, a comprehensive review of the ASF was undertaken which provided clear recommendations based on two meetings: the AU heads of state and government meeting that was held in Addis Ababa in January 2013, and the ninth ordinary meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety, and Security (STCDSS), which was held in April 2013, also in Addis Ababa, with attempts made at both meetings to address the issue of the incomplete ASF. These two meetings put in place an independent panel of experts to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the ASF. The four-member panel comprised a multi-disciplinary team and conducted a four-month assessment of the ASF between July and December 2013. A panel of experts concluded that it was unlikely that the ASF would gain brigade-readiness and have full operational capacity by December 2015. Aside from the lack of political will by member states, governments are also placing parochial interests first and committing to those RECs where political support can be garnered (as expanded on later).

Africa's RECs were mainly created for economic reasons, thus the divergence from their initial objective to security came in response to the major conflicts they faced on the continent. For example, between 1960 and 1990, West Africa experienced 37 military coups. Beginning in the 1990s, civil wars took place in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea-Bissau. There was no provision made for political and defence areas in the ECOWAS treaty; this was agreed to only much later, even though it was identified in its 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence.[27] ECOWAS's Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s received widespread praise as a first real attempt by African countries to solve African conflicts.[28]

The AU must more firmly consider the concept of variable geometry, whereby brigades that have achieved the ASF's roadmap for operationalisation guidelines are integrated much sooner into the ASF than the slower brigades, instead of waiting for all five regional brigades to gain readiness before operationalising the ASF. Instead of applying the principle of variable geometry, the ASF is based on the principal of its weakest link (the brigades), at the pace of its slowest and weakest brigade. It is possible that these brigades will never become ready, therefore, the AU must not allow hegemonic powers like South Africa to "go it alone" and dominate continental security. Although the design of peacekeeping in Africa has evolved into a more holistic framework incorporating a multi-dimensional approach, peacekeeping operations need to identify the kinds of support structures that can help consolidate peace and provide a sense of confidence among Africans through cooperation with regional bodies and organisations.[29] The 1994 genocide in Rwanda, during which 800,000 people were killed, was primarily owing to the absence of a peacekeeping force. The new thinking about Africa's peace and security architecture is to adopt a multilateral approach by incorporating regional peacekeeping efforts that are comprehensive, systematic, and practical from a sub-regional level to the continental and global levels. The Rwandan genocide pushed Africa to devise a clear intervention strategy and create the AU Peace and Security Council in 2004, but the United Nations must also provide support as the world body overseeing global peace.

The UN has been ineffective in fulfilling its mandate adequately. Dating as far back as 1992, former Egyptian UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali published a landmark report on addressing peacekeeping, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping*.[30] At a meeting in April 2008, on the topic of peace and security in Africa, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1809 to increase UN engagement with the AU. This resolution also led to the adoption of the Prodi panel report that provides the modalities of strengthening peacekeeping engagement between the UN, and the AU and Africa's RECs.[31] The African Union's PSC has had several annual meetings with the UN Security Council since 2007, alternating between New York and Addis Ababa. In March 2015, the two bodies met for the ninth time to exchange views on strengthening cooperation between them. Moreover, the inability of the African Union to provide a comprehensive framework or an integrated defence mechanism for the continent has been a disappointment. Furthermore, the ASF concept is entirely based on ideas imported from the Nordic model – the Standby High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) and cannot work in an African context given the latter's different conflict complexities, government structures, and dynamics – mainly since Nordic countries have more advanced military equipment and are further ahead of the African continent. The ASF is aiming to establish a 40,000-strong[32] force of peacekeepers, though the deadline of 2015 has been missed. Peacekeeping is costly and the AU has experienced enormous difficulties in funding peacekeeping missions, such as Burundi, Rwanda, Comoros, and Darfur.[33] For example, MONUSCO had an approved budget of $1.33 billion for the period from July 2015 to June 2016 for an operation comprising 23,438 troops (including 481 military observers and 1,178 police), 840 international civilian personnel, 2,725 local civilian staff, and 450 UN volunteers; in 2017 these figures changed somewhat, and MONUC had an approved budget of $1.2 billion for an operation comprising 16,215 military personnel, 660 military observers, 391 police, and 1,050 personnel of formed police units.[34]

Further difficulties between the AU and the RECs are also apparent. The AU coordinates peacekeeping activities, but links among member states of regional economic communities have progressed much faster than the AU in terms of their peace and security agenda. While the UN and the AU have strengthened their capacities, similarly, tensions among Africa's RECs and the UN during missions have increased. Nigerian scholar Adekeye Adebajo posits that organisations like ECOWAS and SADC are far ahead of the AU in establishing security mechanisms and that, even though a memorandum of understanding on security engagement was drawn up in 2007, contact between ECOWAS and SADC has been limited. The UN also has failed to fully acknowledge the role of Africa's RECs during peacekeeping missions, and has maintained tight political control over these missions. Adebajo argues that "tensions became apparent during the ECOWAS peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone during the 1990s when the UN deployed military observers alongside much larger ECOWAS forces, but refused to provide the financial and logistical muscle to strengthen the regional peacekeepers".[35]

The Political Will of AU Member States: Defining Geostrategic Interests

This section thus now turns to the second question posed at the start of this chapter of understanding what the actors and factors are that are preventing or promoting the formation of the ASF. The argument in this chapter is clear: that the national interests of the state set the pace for the ASF agenda and *not* the African Union. Such state interests are guided by their own domestic conditions of an outward-looking state strategy that projects a nationalist-approach to dealing with domestic affairs. In support of this discussion the analysis is premised on the theory of "neorealist security convergence" and is expanded from the concept of "neorealist" that define a hegemonic state as a powerful state with a strong economy that has the power and authority of setting the rules of the game, the hegemon acts out of self-gain, and has a greater advantage over its partner states, and is able to exert such power. However, the neorealist concept comes short, and does not adequately explain how convergence of regional militaries and one that is based on parochial interests of their governments.

Indeed, the theory of "neorealist security convergence" adequately shows that a state with immense political clout and authority within a regional bloc – and one that has both military strength but, has also domestic socio-economic concerns – will set the rules of the game for its own benefit. Moreover, such a state will only have the political will of militarily intervening in assistance of regional states and will address those regional security concerns on condition that it gains ultimately. This observation directly points to a number of examples that are directly linked to these countries such as, South Africa, Uganda, and Rwanda – and their domestic problems owing to their socio-economic, political or security conditions that they face by using the region's security agenda. Hence, such states are able to converge national brigades; such as the Neutral Intervention Brigade; or ACIRC for that matter or intervene unilaterally, or are contributing troops elsewhere and intervening in hybrid missions (for example, South Africa's 3000 troops in the DRC), and this further diverge the ASF brigade and its operationalisation agenda. This section of the chapter is therefore concerned with gaining an understanding of what the real actors and factors are that are prohibiting the operationalisation of the ASF brigade and its convergence.

Having that said, if such powerful states are only intervening militarily based on parochial interests, it is thus inevitable that such states – based on their own interests – will partner with security mechansims of those states who are able to contribute towards fulfilling their parochial needs. Therefore, the linking of national militaries in a regional setting to intervene within regional conflicts (be it intra- or inter-state) will result in the "coming together" of security mechanisms or military brigades and hence create the conditions for convergence of regional security and such examples are abound.

Take the Great Lakes Region for example, the most violent conflicts on the continent directly and indirectly involve the states of the Great Lakes region such as Burundi, the DRC, and CAR. With neighbouring states such as Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda having made no attempts to involve the African Union, South Africa has taken a lead on these conflicts. The states instead prefer to rely on their own strategies and security mechanisms, by using the regional platforms as a medium of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) where they are able to exert greater power and in the case of South Africa, it is SADC Summits. For example, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni was the chair of the ICGLR from December 2011 to December 2013, On its part, South Africa has used the SADC Summits as its platform to create conditions for intervening militarily. For example, at a June 2016 SADC extraordinary double summit of the troikas of both its heads of state and of the Organ met in Botswana to discuss the instability in Lesotho. As one of the spin-offs of the Summit June 2016 meeting, the decision was for South Africa's Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa to be SADC's chief mediator and continue mediating the crisis in the kingdom of Lesotho, which is also a major water resource for South Africa's Gauteng province. Notably in 2015 Tshwane (Pretoria) secured a total contract of R11.2 billion with the Lesotho government to build a hydro-power plant to generate electricity for the country, hence, the government has a direct domestic interest in Maseru. Moreover, domestically, South Africa suffered a loss of R400 billion to its economy between 2008 and 2015.[36] According to the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),[37] South Africa's economic growth decelerated in recent years, slowing to 1.5 percent in 2014 and plummeted to 0.8 percent growth in 2017.[38] While, in the DRC, in mid-2015 South Africa secured 2,500 megawatts of hydro-electricity from the Grand Inga 3 project, through a contract with the DRC – an African Development Bank (AfDB) and World Bank projects – approved $141 million towards preparation of the $141 billion project.[39]

The presence of the South African National Defence Force troops in the UN mission in the DRC gave South Africa a special role in SADC in trying to resolve ongoing conflict there. In 2017 South Africa was again to take over as chair of SADC and host its annual meeting.[40] Africa's continental peacekeeping has become squarely linked to the weak socio-economic conditions of the state. The majority of Africa's states (like Angola, the DRC, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda) are also still attempting to remedy decades of socio-economic challenges and have therefore become selective and more strategic in their security interventions, given the costly nature of such interventions. Thus, issues concerning regional security have become a monopoly for governments which have the military to use the region as an enabling mechanism to service national interests. As noted by Mark Malan[41] the nature of peacekeeping has also started shifting emphasis in promoting privatisation of peacekeeping, and hence states are profiting from complex conflicts.[42] For example, South Africa's arms exports totalled R2.7 billion in exports with 125 South African companies registering as arms exporters in 2015, as was outlined in the South African National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC) report. Having that said, the state's national interests thus become the driving force in dealing with regional security challenges that is centred on realism and its ideals whereby the political economy of the state trumps security. It is therefore clear: In such instances it is clear: that the hegemon has the ability to converge the security apparatuses of other member states within a regional bloc.

It has also become a major interest of some states such as Uganda and Rwanda to remain engaged in conflict with the DRC. Consider the Great Lakes conflicts and the examples provided in several UN reports, directly relate to mineral resource exploitation that have been ongoing without resolve.[43] Three tonnes of minerals mined in the DRC have been smuggled across borders to Burundi (and Rwanda and Uganda), including gold, diamonds, cobalt and copper, as reported in 2015.[44] Uganda exported seven tonnes (7,000 kilogrammes) of gold in 2006, which was 318 times its official production figure of only - 22 kilogrammes that year. During this same period, Uganda also acted controversially by fueling conflicts and deploying its military troops to assist the South Sudanese president, Salva Kiir Mayardit, against the opposition leader, Riek Machar of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO), a former vice-president that was sacked by President Kiir. The AU, through its Peace and Security Council, tried to remedy the violent situation in the Great Lakes and deploy the African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU) to end the violence and promote genuine political dialogue among the conflicting parties. But, the majority of the AU's PSC members in that current term were also member states of ICGLR, and thus, most governments did not approve the MAPROBU intervention to deal with the violent conflict in Burundi in 2015–2016. The AU ended up shelving its proposal of sending 5,000 troops to Burundi when the country's president, Pierre Nkurunziza, objected to the intervention, citing it as an encroachment of state sovereignty. Hence, the AU also ended up being in contravention of Article 4(h) of its own constitution.[45]

A division of labour among the continent's five regional brigades could enhance the plan for an African Standby Force. But, the South African National Defence Force has also been remiss in not assisting Nigeria adequately in its fight against the Boko Haram rebel movement in that country. The prospects of a new *Pax Africana* being realised for the continent's security architecture seem to be limited. South Africa has no strong economic ties with Nigeria like it has with Lesotho and the DRC. The Nigerian government, instead, has secured contracts with South African mercenaries who are largely linked to the old security guard – the South African Defence Force (SADF) of the former apartheid government. These mercenaries were previously involved in offensive attacks in Angola and elsewhere in the region during the 1970s and 1980s, and during South Africa's regional destabilisation efforts.[46] According to *Business Day Live*, the South African government noted that "[w]e do not have military deployment in Nigeria" and was vehemently opposed to its troops being sent to Nigeria. Pretoria (Tshwane) further indicated that "any citizens fighting Boko Haram would be regarded as mercenaries and might face prosecution for violating the nation's laws".[47]

Funding the AU's Peace and Security Architecture

Africa's convergence of its regional security brigades have been further afflicted and derailed by powerful dictates such as the US and the European Union (EU) and largely influenced by their financial contributions. Similarly, to Africa's parochial needs, and to protect the business interests of the US in the DRC,[48] and also one of the five penholders on the UN Security Council, ordered its UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) into action, and the UN Security Council authorised its first ever offensive UN force in April 2013 with

the key responsibility of neutralising armed groups.[49] The AU received $1 billion for its peace and security architecture from the EU since 2008. The funding are also linked to artificial timeframes set by the AU to have all five brigades operational by 2010 that are linked to funding objectives and directives.

For instance, the 2008–2010 deadlines prescribed by Brussels was under the EU-Africa strategy, and Africa in turn have forced these timeframes on the regions to be brigade ready by 2010 regardless of whether they are brigade ready and to prevent the AU to lose out on the €300 million that had already been secured from the EU. These pressures were thus seen playing itself out in February 2010, when the pressure was turned on by the European Commission in its meeting with the African Union in Addis Ababa to ensure that the ASF was on track and funding criteria were being adhered to.[50] The European Commission at the February 2010 meeting addressed the main objectives of the first set of measures to be funded from the second African Peace Facility (APF) under the tenth European Summit on its Defence Fund (EDF), which provided increased financial resources to the APF of €300 million for the period 2008–2010. The funding packages from 2011 to 2013 primarily focused on the "New Deal" adopted at the fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan. The New Deal entail a framework that takes a comprehensive approach to peace, security, and post-conflict state-building.

The 11th EDF (2014–2020) will ascertain which way the pendulum will swing for Africa's peace and security initiative. The New Deal framework has clearly added no value to the establishment of the ASF, and remains incomplete. At the regional levels, further funding was secured for the continent that were linked to parochial interests of the EU and again the ASF appears to be shelved and suitable frameworks and objectives in support of establishing and or getting the ASF off the ground lacks a funding priority. For example, aside from the AU's funding support by Europe, the EU is also providing funds to COMESA and SADC for maritime piracy, and in 2014, SADC as well as COMESA received substantial EU funding. COMESA for example, received €37.5 million of EU's funds to implement a comprehensive programme to fight piracy in the Indian Ocean.[51] Such funds are important to the US and EU's continental trade commitments, such as those linked to economic partnership agreements (EPAs) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) agreements among other bilateral trade commitments, and have received up to 90 per cent of regional trade volumes transmitted by maritime transport. It is therefore critical that trade shipping cargo is secured and funding provided to key regional blocs to deal with regional efforts of fighting piracy on the shores of Kenya, Seychelles, Madagascar, and Mauritius.

Conclusion

In summary, the inability of most African states and governments to implement effective policies at both national and sub-regional levels alongside the parochial geopolitical interests of powerful states with a strong military contingent, will derail any attempts of creating an effective regional and continental security brigade such as the ASF. More optimistically, if smaller regional mechanisms such as ACIRC are formed and others such as the NIF, these troop contributing countries are also in some way or another assisting with the regional security gap. However ambitious the agenda of the AU might be, operationalisation of the African Standby Force is important for achieving continental stability and regional security. The AU cannot easily dispose of its role in building the ASF, nor abandon the idea, no matter how slow the pace of operationalisation. The AU must look to adopt an approach that allows for the slower member states to also come on board. Relying too heavily on an already over-stretched United Nations has not been to Africa's advantage.

Africa should also call on external donors and the international community to assist in post-conflict reconstruction such as humanitarian assistance; supporting refugees; revitalising repatriation; revitalising political, economic, and social structures; and most important, disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration of ex-combatants and militia groups back into local communities. However, such initiatives must contribute towards the completion of the ASF. Beside peacekeeping initiatives, Africa should find ways and strategies to involve the UN in effective peacebuilding interventions that address the root causes of conflicts and deal with their triggers for those instances where countries relapse back into war and back into conflict, such as the DRC and Sudan. The 2015 report of the UN High-Level Panel on Peace Operations notes: "UN peace operations have proven to be effective and cost-efficient tools when accompanied by a political commitment to peace."[52] To echo this report, this chapter has outlined that a new *Pax Africana* can be achieved only when African leaders, regional economic communities, and the African Union create the ASF, which on paper is an effective security architecture model that can deal with conflict-ridden states like the DRC, South Sudan, and others, that are tied to both the internal and the extra-

regional economic interests of powerful states, and to construct the assessment of security around such frameworks. Resource-based conflicts have major spill-overs that involve rebel groups, and corruption by both business and the state in which it operates, as well as abuse of women and children, and these must be taken into account when member states are involved in decision-making processes of a regional security nature.

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