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The Challenges and Prospects of United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

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Abstract

The political evolution of Africa is replete with conflicts which have unfortunately gone beyond the capabilities of the continent to resolve without resort to foreign assistance especially in the critical field of military assistance. This study discussed the concept and practice of the United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa, the challenges facing such operations as well as the prospects of resolving them. It conceptualized peacekeeping, adopted the collective security paradigm in discussing the changing operational environment that has transformed UN traditional peacekeeping operations to the contemporary peacekeeping methods and the challenges that have led to half-baked results in such African operations. Qualitatively driven with reliance on secondary sources of data, the paper recommended an improvement in the quality of preparation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the processes by the Security Council, adoption of clear and actionable mandates by the UN, proper coordination between the Security Council and countries contributing troops, good risk analysis and transparency across the chain of command among others as necessary steps to address the challenges. It concluded that the UN has the capacity to surmount these challenges if adequate support is given to it by member countries.

Key Words: Conflicts, Evaluation, Intervention, Mandates, Monitoring, Peace-keeping

Introduction

The United Nations Organization (UNO) has undertaken about sixty-three peacekeeping missions between 1948 and 2009 with over a quarter of these operations in Africa. Today, current United Nations peace keeping operations stand at fifteen missions with Africa having seven of these on-going peace keeping operations (www.un.org/peacekeeping). The above shows clearly that Africa is an important case study for the analysis or evaluation of UN peacekeeping operations and also highlights the level of conflict engulfing the continent. The United Nations was established on the 26th of June 1945 with the charter signed in San Francisco, the United States of America. All African States are members of the world body, the formation of which predates the independence of each of them. Within the continent are a plethora of conflicts which heightens the degree of insecurity itself, a clear manifestation of yet another phase in the political evolution of Africa.

During the 1950s and 60s, the people of Africa were united by their common struggle against foreign domination with their overriding interest being the total independence of these states from the shackles of colonialism and domination from a common enemy. These were the foreign colonial powers that were seen as not only dominating the people of the continent, but also exploiting the continent to their unfair advantage. While the situation in Namibia and South Africa remains a painful thorn in the flesh of the continent, the completion of the decolonization process in Africa threw up a new challenge of nation building which replaced the struggle for liberation. Perhaps one of the most critical developments in this process has been the extent to which internal differences, tensions and conflicts surfaced once the common bond of the struggle against a common enemy was loosened by the attainment of independence. These conflicts have unfortunately expanded in scope beyond the continent, thus, entailing a new form of dependence on foreign powers especially in the field of military assistance and peacekeeping (Onimode, 2000, p.11)

The African Heads of State had frowned seriously against what they viewed as the grave issue of foreign intervention in the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit at Libreville in 1977, but since then the problem seemed to have intensified as more conflicts tend to rear its ugly head within the continent instead of abating. As members of the United Nations Organization, African States are committed to the provisions of the UN charter, Article (1), which demands members "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace" and it is binding on them, therefore, when they suffer severe conflicts they have to resort to the instrumentality of the world body in resolving such conflicts particularly where the state in question lack the capacity to manage the conflict internally.

However, such resort to third party intervention is not out of place as it remains one of the core objectives of the UN, to maintain international peace and security. This the UN does through the use of peacekeeping missions in trouble spots all over the world. The peacekeeping instrument projects the UN as an arbiter with the capacity to promote collective security and maintain a world based on international law instead of the authority of weapons (Basu, 2005, p. 22). The UN peacekeeping mission also ensures the enforcement of the collective will of the UN, instead of the partial interest of the most powerful of nations. As observed by Alan James

(1990), "the tool of peacekeeping has proved to be the UN's most direct contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in the world" (p. 11).

Statement of Problem

The continent of Africa has been plagued by incessant conflicts arising from numerous factors some of which includes the struggle for resources, boundary disputes, despotic and undemocratic leadership, and military intervention in governance as well as sit-tight leadership syndrome of most African leaders. It is therefore stating the obvious that most African states lack the ability and capacity to contain these conflicts, thus, they often resort to the UN for assistance in resolving them. Again, the task of assembling a multinational force such as required for peacekeeping remains a daunting one. Similarly, each conflict situation wears a different character as no two conflict situations can really be the same even when they have the same issue field. Thus, the UN is opened to some great task in the planning and execution of peacekeeping operations. However, the problem arising from this development and which motivated this study is the fact that the UN faces numerous problems and challenges at the course of intervention in these conflicts which demand some investigations. This study remains one of such efforts in bringing to the fore, these challenges and discussing them extensively in the context of the African peacekeeping experience.

Theoretical Orientation

This study adopted the theory of collective security as a theoretical framework. In doing this, it realized that the entire idea of peacekeeping is founded on the basis of collective security which entails the coming together of troops from different countries of the world with the sole aim of defending and restoring peace to restive nations. Collective security remains a system by which states have attempted to prevent or stop wars. Under a collective security arrangement, an aggressor against any one state is considered an aggressor against all other states, which act together to repel the aggressor. This is primarily the basis for peacekeeping by nations in the international system. Collective security arrangements have always been conceived as being global in scope; this is in fact a defining characteristic, distinguishing them from regional alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In fact, both the League of Nations and the United Nations were founded on the principle of collective security (Wight, 1977, p.149).

Collective security can be understood as a security arrangement, political, regional, or global, in which each state in the system accepts that the security of one is the concern of all, and therefore commits to a collective response to threats to, and breaches of, the peace. Collective security is more ambitious than systems of alliance security or collective defense in that it seeks to encompass the totality of states within a region or indeed globally, and to address a wide range of possible threats. While collective security is an idea with a long history, its implementation in practice has proved problematic. Several prerequisites have to be met for it to have a chance of working (Yost, 1977, p.149).

This is one theory that explains the use of international forces through the ambit of the United Nations and other International Governmental Organizations (IGOs). It is a security regime created by the great powers that set rules for keeping peace. The theory is guided by the

principles that an act of aggression by any state or group of states will be met by a collective response from the other states. It stipulates that effective collective measures would be taken to assist any state under aggression by another member or group of states. Collective security is based on some basic tenets. The first is that all states would avoid the use of force except in self-defence. The second rest on the general agreement that peace is indivisible, while, the third is the pledge by all states (or members of the IGO) to unite against aggression and restore the peace. Indeed, members must keep their alliance and commitments to the group and agree on what constitutes aggression. Lastly, they also must pledge to contribute resources (material and personnel) to form a collective security force to fight the aggressor(s) and restore the peace (Kegely & Wittkopf, 2001, p.559).

Collective security appears to exist as a goal in that its application at the international level is limited by problems. Most glaring is the unwillingness of countries to subordinate their sovereign interests. It is not often that when a powerful state commits aggression against a weaker one that other powerful states go to war over the issue as it can be quite costly to suppress a determined aggressor. This is to say that the collective security system does not work against aggression by great powers. In fact, only the UN's intervention in Korea (1950-1953) and the Persian Gulf (1990-1991) appear close to fulfilling the idea of collective security (Kegely & Wittkopf, 2001, p. 560). In recent years, the concept of collective security has been broadened and by the end of the cold war, the liberal premises of international community and mutual state interests provided the foundation for a new idea called common security or 'mutual security'. This is the notion that the security of all states is mutually interdependent; therefore, the insecurity of one state makes all other states insecure. This new notion was aimed at solving the security dilemma because if a state threatened another state, its own security interest would be diminished (Palme, 1992, p. 28).

Peacekeeping: A Conceptual Analysis

Peacekeeping generally is an intervention by a third party to separate and pacify participants in a conflict. The United Nations has performed peacekeeping operations since 1948, when it sent military observers to Kashmir, to oversee the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and the Middle East, in the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Fifty years later the UN peacekeepers still had presence in these regions. The number of UN peacekeeping operations has increased rapidly since the end of the Cold War, with involvement in Somalia, Rwanda, the Balkans and Kuwait, amongst others. Peacekeeping has tended to involve the introduction of military which has the job of observing the implementation of ceasefire agreements and providing a buffer between combatants. There has been debate as to the extent to which peacekeeping forces could or should be involved in the active enforcement of ceasefires, the possibility and practicality of neutral intervention, and the balance between upholding the status quo and acting to change the strategic situation in order to enhance the prospects of conflict resolution (McLean & McMillan, 2003, p.400).

Of the issues the United Nations confronts, none is as vexing as peace and security. During the Cold War, the structure of the Security Council (requiring unanimity among the five permanent members) prevented the United Nations from playing a major role in issues directly affecting those members. A new approach labelled peacekeeping evolved as a way to limit the scope of

conflict and prevent it from escalating into a Cold War confrontation. Peacekeeping operations fall into two types, or generations. In first-generation peacekeeping, multilateral institutions such as the UN seek to contain conflicts between two states through third-party military forces. Ad hoc military units, drawn from the armed forces of non-permanent members of the UN Security Council (often small, neutral members), have been used to prevent the escalation of conflicts and to keep the warring parties apart until the dispute can be settled. These troops operate under UN auspices, supervising armistices, trying to maintain ceasefires, and physically interposing themselves in a buffer zone between warring parties (Mingst, 2004, p.172).

In the post-Cold War era, UN peacekeeping has expanded to address different types of conflicts and take on new responsibilities. Whereas first-generation activities primarily address interstate conflict, second-generation peacekeeping activities respond to civil war and domestic unrest, much of it stemming from the rise of ethno-nationalism. To deal with these new conflicts, second-generation peacekeepers have taken on a range of both military and non-military functions. Militarily, they have aided in the verification of troop withdrawal such as the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, and have separated warring factions until underlying issues could be settled as was the case with Bosnia. Sometimes, resolving underlying issues has meant organizing and running national elections, as were the cases in Cambodia and Namibia; sometimes it has involved implementing human rights agreements, such as in Central America. At other times UN peacekeepers have tried to maintain law and order in falling or disintegrating societies by aiding in civil administration, policing, and rehabilitating infrastructure, as in Somalia. Peacekeepers have equally provided humanitarian aid, supplying food, medicine, and a secure environment in part of an expanded version of human rights, as followed in several missions in Africa (Mingst, 2004, p.173).

Peacekeeping was originally an operation that involves military personnel but that over the years, modern peacekeeping has now evolved to a point where economic, political and social issues are involved. Accordingly, this new trend is popularly described as peace support operations (PSOs), an expression used to describe the total gamut of plans, policies and actions geared towards preventing, managing operations and resolving conflict as well as restoring and maintaining peace in a conflict environment. PSOs began with military observation (or observer mission) and were later expanded to cover every facet of peacekeeping (Gbor, 2003, p.12).

UN peacekeeping has had successes and failures, as illustrated by the two African cases of Namibia and Rwanda. Namibia (formerly South-West Africa), a former German colony, was administered by South Africa following the end of World War 1. Over the years, pressure was exerted on South Africa to relinquish control of the territory and grant Namibia independence. Though the process of disengagement was tough because South Africa refused to consider change, citing security concerns, as long as Soviet-backed Cuban troops occupied neighbouring Angola, the UN Transition Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) played a vital role in managing the move from war to ceasefire and then to independence. The operation in Namibia became the model for UN peacekeeping in Cambodia in the early 1990s and in East Timor in the late 1990s ((Mingst & Karns, 2000, p.24).

But not all UN peacekeeping operations have been successful. Rwanda is an example of where a limited UN peacekeeping force proved to be insufficient and where genocide subsequently

escalated as the international community watched and did nothing. Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi have seen periodic outbreaks of devastating ethnic violence between Hutus and Tutsis since 1960s. The trend of conflict continued despite the 1993 peace agreement called for a UN force (the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda, UNAMIR) to monitor the ceasefire (Mingst & Karns, 2000, p. 24).

The Evolution of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

The level of development of African states and their incapacity to effectively manage and resolve conflicts among themselves is largely responsible for their eliciting for external interventions in their crises. Following the excellent performance of Nigerian led ECOMOG Peacekeeping Forces in stabilizing and restoring peace, law and order in Liberia between 1990 and 1997 which led Liberians in gratitude to God to coin the cliché "thank God for ECOMOG, the involvement of African states in peacekeeping operations have known no bounds. In fact, this singular expression by Liberians tells volumes about the relevance and positive impact of peacekeeping missions globally (Basu, 2009, p.76).

Prior to the emergence of the United Nations in 1945, there were no previous practices of peacekeeping. The world powers had other methods of trying to maintain international peace and security. These methods were however localized to regions and carried out by a collection of few powerful nations and their Kings mainly on ad hoc basis. For example, the concert of Europe as well as the League of Nations helped in no small measure to enforce peaceful co-existence amongst nations. These ad hoc measures did not however do much to maintain world peace and security, and was proven by the outbreak of the First World War between1914-1918. At the end of this war, the League of Nations was established as mankind's first attempt to internationalize the mechanism for maintaining world peace and security. The league had the principle of unanimity to guide and determine its actions against aggressors. This principle crippled the league as it could not control the aggressive tendencies of its ambitious members especially Germany. This inability of the league to tame aggressors in its rank paved way for the Second World War in 1939-1945 (Vogt & Ekoko 1993, p.78).

It was after this war in 1945 that the victorious powers (USA, USSR, France and Britain) established the United Nations Organization to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to ensure by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods that armed force shall not be used save in the common interest (UN Charter, 1945). With these solemn words, the UN took up as its primary objective and responsibility "to maintain international peace and security" (UN Charter, 1945). The strategy for pursuing and achieving this objective was collective security enforcement action as enshrined generally in chapter VI and VII of its charter and specifically in Articles 41 and 42. However, the powers of the UN in this direction begins in Article 39 which empowers the UN Security Council to assess threats to international peace and security while Article 40 enables the Security Council to commence the processes of intervention which may be preventive diplomacy as a first step. Article 41 specifically empowers the Security Council to impose sanctions against an aggressor.

The collective security principle means that when a UN member fails in its treaty obligations to settle disputes with other members peacefully and opts instead for the use of force, the UN as a body will invoke its charter provisions and take military action against that member state.

But no sooner had the UN charter came into effect that the cold war began between the US and defunct USSR which were then the two super-powers in the world. This cold war frustrated the application of the principle of collective security in which the Security Council had to block any military action by the UN against themselves and their allies. The UN therefore decided to embark on peacekeeping method as an alternative strategy for maintaining international peace and security, through the use of troops contributed by its members (Basu, 2009, p.77). The UN started with its first peace mission, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Palestine in 1948. This was followed by the deployment of its first armed peacekeeping force, the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to the Suez Canal to interpose between Egypt and Israel during the Suez Canal conflict which led to the occupation of the Canal by French and British military forces. It equally intervened in the Congo crisis in 1960 and since then the world body has not relented in its peacekeeping efforts with recent interventions in Democratic Republic of Congo and Western Sahara (Vogt & Ekoko, 1991, p. 53).

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has also clearly spelt out the task of any peacekeeping mission as part of its mandate. However, in Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Senegal provide most of the uniformed personnel in the last seven UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. UN peacekeeping remain primarily one of the strategic instruments for preventing wars and alleviating the suffering of war-affected persons in Africa. Due to the complex nature of current wars, the UN is increasingly utilizing regional and sub-regional governmental groupings in Africa for the purpose of peacekeeping (Oguntomisin, 2004, p.34).

The Challenges of UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa

The UN peacekeeping has no doubt gained prominence as an instrument of providing hope of peace for the people and governments of African States. However, the organization has suffered fundamental flaws arising from some challenges its operations have faced and are yet facing in the African continent, especially in Sudan, our case study as well as in Somalia, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Chad among others. These challenges are what this section of our study intends to address.

The first challenge faced by the operations in Sudan is the exponential rise in the number of UN peacekeeping missions in Africa. In recent times, the number of UN peacekeeping operation has witnessed unprecedented sharp rise beyond the expectation of actors in the international system including the UN system. This sheer volume and growth of peacekeeping has put the UN and its mission under intense constraints in the continent, a development which affects its operations in these countries as the number of personnel needed for peacekeeping operations has been drastically reduced by the fact of their spread to conflict spots in Africa. In less than seven years, the UN has launched eight missions in rapid succession. In fact, currently there are about seven peacekeeping missions in Africa alone and as at 2003, the UN had about 36,000 uniformed personnel deployed around the world including Sudan although the number has risen to about 100,000 (Rice, 2007, p.33).

The next challenge is the lack of cooperation from African governments and their seeming hypocrisy in dealing with UN mission. This challenge is not only peculiar to Africa but

extends to other missions all over the world. The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has directly faced this challenge because of the Sudanese government's unwillingness to cooperate with the UN mission. UNMIS was established to assist in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended long years of war between North and South Sudan. Repeatedly, the government of Sudan had failed to cooperate with UN peacekeepers and other humanitarian workers by denying them freedom of movement and access, refusing visas for needed personnel and at times blocking the delivery of logistic support for the success of UN mission (Alan, 2009, p.11).

Closely following the above is the challenge of over ambitious and at times ambiguous mandates from the UN Security Council. With the nature of conflicts in the international system, particularly, its frequency and recurrence, and the UN as the only global body charged with the responsibility for international peace and security. The UN has found itself in a situation where it is being asked to take on harder, riskier and ambiguous mandates that their success levels are immeasurable. Member states of the UN especially the Five Permanent Members (P5) of the Security Council are often quick to rush the UN into peacekeeping mission without necessary support and capabilities it needs from the members (Galadima, 2008, p.11).

The next challenge is that of internal UN politics and its negative impacts on mobilization, deployment and operations of UN peacekeepers. Here it is discovered that the UN is the single largest organization with a collection of sovereign states as its members all with their different political, socio-cultural and ideological interests. Consequently, before resolutions are reached in the world body either at the General Assembly or the Security Council, members often consider several factors, particularly those that directly or indirectly affect their national interest. As such, whenever a state in Africa is experiencing conflict that requires immediate deployment of UN peacekeepers to avert humanitarian disaster or complete erosion of state authority, member states deal with such matter as a normal game of international politics. This was glaring in the attempt to assemble UN troops for UNMIS (Abubakar, 2009, p.43).

There is also the problem of culture and language for UN peacekeepers in Africa. Here cultural and language differences do pose severe challenge to UN peacekeeping operations not only in Africa but in other continents where they are deployed. This issue of cultural and language differences became an obstruction to peacekeeping operation in Sudan as members of the troop failed to understand the prevalent language and culture in that country, a development which led to operational delays and other bottlenecks. This also happened in Somalia as many contingents arrived in the area without knowledge of Somalia, its history, culture and the conditions on ground. Thus, peacekeeping needs to be culture-sensitive for it to be widely acceptable by the people it was meant to serve (Duffey, 2000, p.142).

The next challenge is that of unconventional warfare and rules of engagement. Nearly all theatres of conflict in Africa are characterized or engaged in non-conventional or asymmetric warfare. As observed by Galadima (2008, p.10), asymmetric warfare operations typically include a variety of attacks on transportation routes, individual groups of police or military installations and structures, economic enterprises and targeted civilians. To him, the aim of such attacks is not only military but political aiming to demoralize target populations or governments, or goading an overreaction that forces the population to take sides for or against the guerrillas.

He concluded that with this kind of warfare, the theatre and actors of conflict are ill-defined and the method unconventional, a development which makes it difficult for UN peacekeepers to achieve results especially that their rules of engagement are not as clearly defined as that of a "fighting force".

The next challenge remains that of warlords and the inability of UN peacekeepers to deal with peace-spoilers. The activities of acclaimed warlords in African conflict environment have gained prominence with the UN system and international community according them so much relevance in peace negotiations. It is a known fact that these warlords have impeded the peace processes and committed gross violations of international humanitarian law. In fact, the activities of John Garang de Mabior and Omar al Bashir in Sudan cannot be forgotten in a hurry. Equally, the roles of Sergeant Doe and Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh, Germain Katanga and Laurent Nkunda in Liberia, Sierra Leone and DRC cannot be forgotten in a hurry. Surprisingly, these men are usually celebrated and given wider press coverage by the international press, a development which encourages them to continue in the path of human right abuses and conflict.

There is equally the challenge of logistics for UN peacekeepers in Africa. This has direct bearing to UNMIS as Manuel Christopher (2005, p.66) observed that the troops that operated in Sudan had little or no self-sufficiency in both equipment and material supplies. Originally, UN standard of operation requires contingents from troop contributing countries to be self-sufficient for 60 days, and may require, or agree to fund, nationally held in-theatre stocks for 30 days (Galadima, 2008, p.12). But most African troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping missions can hardly afford contingents self-sufficiency for the first 60 days before main supplies begin to flow.

The inability of most UN peacekeeping missions to effectively bring peace and successfully transit to host governments in Africa is yet another challenge. Most UN peacekeeping missions in Africa hardly complete their mandate to hand over to host government without the likelihood of a relapse to conflict. Sudan and UNMIS paints a vivid picture of this contention as the effort of UNMIS almost went in futility as Sudan relapsed into conflict leading to the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the subsequent break-up of the country with the independence of South Sudan in 2011. The above is so because host government often lack the security and rule of law capacities needed to take over from the departing UN peacekeepers and face the danger of relapsing into conflict (Rice, 2007, p. 34).

Training, doctrine and the problem of command and control comes into focus as one of the challenges of UN peacekeeping in Africa. The UN peacekeeping operations consist of a multinational force with troops and personnel drawn from different countries that have different military training and doctrine. These differences manifest in operation field and impact negatively on the command and control of troops in the mission. Command and control are a major challenge that reduced the UN's effectiveness because some contingents would not work with or cooperate with others (Alli, 2012, p.53).

The misappropriation of the allowances of troops serving under the UN mandate by their commanding officers is another obstacle to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. The UN should therefore device means by which the soldiers get their allowances paid directly to them

into their bank accounts by the UN itself instead of their home country governments as this will boost the morale of soldiers serving under its auspices.

Finally, there is the challenge of poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment which is applicable to all African countries where UN peacekeeping operation has taken place or is ongoing. With these issues confronting states in the continent, peacekeepers find extremely difficult to patrol and provide security for those in the hinterland. In DRC, Liberia, Sudan, Darfur, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad and Central African Republic (CAR), there are scanty motor-able roads, few functioning court system, prisons or municipal governments while under conflict. The lack of these basic governance infrastructures impedes UN peacekeeping operations in these countries and extends the duration of conflict unnecessarily (Alli, 2012, p.53).

Prospects for UN Peacekeeping in Africa

Having elaborated on the challenges of UN peacekeeping in Africa, it is pertinent for us at this juncture to look into the prospects for successful peacekeeping operations in the continent. The United Nations as the main organization charged with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security is uniquely able to mount multifaceted missions. Drawing from the expertise of personnel from member states, the UN can pull political, diplomatic, military, police, human rights, electoral and development activities together under the leadership of a single individual that is the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SPSG) or the Force Commander in a mission field.

Although warlords and peace-spoilers abound in African conflicts, the UN can provide the political and practical reassurances warring parties need to agree to and implement ceasefire. Their deployment can help limit or stop the escalation of armed conflict and stave off wider war. UN peacekeeping offers millions of people in Africa the prospect of a more secure, prosperous, and dignified future. With the help of UN peacekeeping, war-torn African states are able to better provide for their citizens and meet international obligations, and commitments including protecting their borders, policing their territories, halting the flow of illicit arms, drugs trade and denying sanctuary to international terrorist groups and transnational organized criminal groups.

In spite of the challenges facing peacekeeping in Africa like other peacekeeping missions, the UN being aware of its limitations has in-built mechanism and out-sourced mechanism to help check the effectiveness of its operations. Realizing that current realities tend to overwhelm its operation beyond expectation of the Brahimi reform, the UN is coming up with a reform agenda particularly on peacekeeping operations. It hopes to make relevant reforms that will make peacekeeping more effective and in tune with realities on the ground.

UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa: The Way Forward

The study recommends the following measures to be adopted by the UN if it must overcome most of the challenges encountered by its peacekeeping missions in the African continent:

(i)   That the UN should come up with a clear and actionable mandate with benchmarks for all peacekeeping operations in Africa

(ii)   The UN should improve on the quality of preparation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of operations

(iii)   Adequate information flow between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop contributing countries should be given priority.

(iv)   The UN should ensure an effective strategic oversight to overcome resource constraints, poor documentation and as well implement lesson learnt from previous operations

(v)   There should be an improvement in the Security Council's military expertise, risk analysis and transparency across the chain of command.

However, the prospects of UN peacekeeping in Africa are dependent on human value and its universal underpinning. A global body with a global mandate must resist selective and discriminatory peacekeeping in any mission field wherever such operation is taking place whether in Europe, Asia, Middle East, Pacific or Africa. It should also ensure that their troops whenever deployed to Africa are subject to a unified common command and control of such UN operation.

Conclusion

It has been realized from all of the above that most states in Africa are yet to get their good governance in place and the politics of conflict resolution between the different groups and their interests is still remote. The continent is likely to be experiencing more conflicts as some states suffer implosion (internal wars) and probably explosion (regional war effects) with the prospects of UN intervention via peacekeeping. Africa is very important to the existential relevance of the UN; equally, the UN especially with regards to its peacekeeping operations in Africa is the oxygen that has ensured the survival and relevance of several African states. Most states in Africa would have been extinct by now but for UN peacekeeping.

Finally, despite the challenges, it is glaring that with the internal mechanism (self-check) to identify and address its problems on ground, the UN has the capacity and ability to right the wrong and keep up with the pace of peacekeeping operations. As reforms is being carried out particularly to ensure actionable and measurable peacekeeping mission mandates, there is hope that these challenges will be overcome particularly if this is matched with enough material and logistical resources.

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