



The African Union's Small Steps toward the Promotion and Protection of Peace:

(Myth and Reality of Building a Continental Public Policy of Peace)

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ABSTRACT

Among other factors, the quest for the liberation of the African continent from the colonial yoke prompted the creation by African leaders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, which became the pioneer African multilateral organization. The failure of the said organization in some of its missions and the advent of new challenges in the continent pushed African leaders to replace it with the African Union (AU) in 2002. How far has the African Union corrected the ills of its predecessor, especially in the field of the preservation of peace on the continent? The present article evaluates the actions taken by the African Union in the realm of continental peace since its creation in 2002. Addressing this fundamental issue of peace as a strategic approach, it is deemed necessary for the paper to be evaluated in two main parts. Part one regards the promotion and protection of peace by the African Union as a possible challenge construction. The difficulties, challenges encountered by the African Union have contributed to its failures in certain aspects relating to continental peace. In this perspective, part two elucidates the failures of the African Union towards continental peace. Still in this part, the way forward for better consolidation of peace is defined.

Keywords: *Organization of African Unity, Public Policy of Peace, Myth.*

INTRODUCTION

The circumstances surrounding the creation of the African Union cannot be traced without making a reference to the defunct Organization of African Unity. The OAU came into existence on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This happened when representatives of 32 African states endorsed a charter for the formation of the organization.

The Organization of African Unity was therefore the pioneer African multilateral organization of independent African states. It was called to:

- Defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of members,
- Enhance unity as well as development,
- Dismantle all forms of colonialism,
- Promote international co-operation and co-ordinate member's economic, diplomatic, educational, health, welfare, scientific and defense policies.

Due to the colonial situation at the time of its formation, the major preoccupation of the OAU was the liquidation of colonial rule and autonomy from colonial domination as well as oppression not forgetting the extinction of racism and the Apartheid Regime in South Africa. On this note, decolonization became one of the priority tasks of the OAU.

With respect to Article 2 of the OAU charter, the said organization was guided by two main principles in the execution of its missions: The principle of sovereign equality of all member states and non-interference in the affairs of states. Implemented to suppress western domination of the black continent in the name of colonialism, the afore-mentioned principles affected the African continent negatively on grounds that African leaders used these principles to defend dictators or despots against their own

people. The OAU relied on the principle of non-interference even when it had to address insecurity in the continent. As a result of this, it put in place mechanisms that embraced soft power such as mediation and persuasion to promote peace by pacific resolution of differences. The OAU Commission of Mediation, Conciliation, Arbitration and the Conflict prevention, Management resolution mechanism were put in place and they remained impotent thereby earning the organization severe critics.

Besides its role of liberation of African countries that were then under the grip of colonialism, it was confronted with a series of conflicts which afflicted many countries in the continent shortly after their independence from Great Lakes Regionⁱ to the Horn of African and virtually all the regions of the continent. It was hit by border conflict, secessionist movements, aggression or subversive activities by states against each other and the collapse of order in member states. Many of these conflicts were orchestrated by struggles for political power, territorial acquisition, religious supremacy and ethnic domination; others were based on the denial of popular participation in governance coupled with the truncation of democratic process by military intervention in political affairs.ⁱⁱ

The OAU woefully failed in the promotion of peace in the continent with respect to crisis and conflicts that plagued the continent especially in the 1990s following the end of the ideological conflict that opposed two victorious powers of the Second World War. It is worth recalling that the organization was erected when the cold war was at its peak between the capitalist headed by the United States of America and the communists headed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic present day Russia³. In order to increase their sphere of influence, each of the super powers convinced newly independent African states to share their ideology and they did so by investing in the form of economic and military support for the survival of friendly regimes. As a result, instability became the order of the day since accountability to domestic populations diminished and governments embraced arm races at the detriment of socio-economic development. The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the rise of a single super power brought confusion in a good number of African states which had survived thanks to super powers.

The OAU recorded successes in its primary mission of liberating the continent from colonialism with the help of international actors when finally, in 1994, a new government anchored on one person, one vote became a reality in South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. Contrary to expectation, the OAU woefully failed in the aspect of monitoring and policing the affairs of its own member states. This became obvious as a result of its inability to remedy violent conflicts, poor governance, economic mismanagement, gender inequality, human rights abuse and poverty in the region. Liberia imploded in 1989, Somalia collapsed in 1991 and the government in Ethiopia tumbled in 1991. A good number of these were intra-state conflicts and they menaced peace and security in Africa with the most devastating being the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

Although in 1993, the OAU established a mechanism for conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, this instrument was ineffective due to its failure to prevent chaos in the continent. It is sad to discover that the Rwandan genocide underlined above happened shortly after this mechanism became operational. In the same vein, it was also after the operation of the said mechanism that the conflict leading to the collapse of Somalia and violent conflicts that led to the death of millions of Africans in Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone emerged.

The failure of the OAU in the realm of peace and security in Africa is based on its attachment to the principle of non-interference with the sovereignty of the member states. Indeed, this confusion came from the ambiguity as regards the preamble of the OAU charter of 1963. While the charter as outlined by the member states committed them to collectively maintain and sustain peace and security of the continent, it was later interpreted to mean non-intervention in the affairs of member states. It is worth recalling that the year 1996 alone saw 14 African countries involved in armed confrontation. Due to pressing challenges as well as limited assistance from the rest of the world, African leaders acknowledged the need to engage in African solutions to African problems⁴.

Acknowledging the weakness of the OAU, African leaders began discussion which led to the renewed commitment to a new vision in the African renaissance. During this time, Africa took an early lead in the fight against terrorism. The year 1994 was characterized by the adoption of a declaration on extremism and terrorism in Tunis-Tunisia. On the basis of this, the Convention against Terrorism was adopted in 1999 in Algiers. Africa's desire to seek lasting solutions to African problems was equally felt by the total liberation and democratization of the continent. Namibia ascended to international sovereignty in 1990 and the world witnessed the end of racial discrimination, the shift from apartheid regime to a democratic government in South Africa with NELSON Mandela at its helm in 1994 as mentioned above. Taking advantage of its economic power and political clout, South Africa accelerated the new impetus towards a common destiny and setting the stage for a new vision of the continent comprehensively captured in the Constitutive Act of the AU

In July 2000 in Lome, the constitutive Act of AU was adopted during the 36th OAU summit after which the OAU member states signed the protocol for the ratification of the AU. The year 2002 was a landmark in the history of Africa. It marked the launching of the African Union in South Africa. The Durban summit that launched the AU made bold decisions that would

shape the peace and security architecture of Africa. For example, the summit adopted the protocol relating to the peace and Security Council of the AU and equally accepted to have a common African Defense and Security Policy.

There is no doubt that since the transformation of the OAU into AU, It is showing an encouraging pro-activeness in terms of its preparedness to address the continent's peace and security challenges and generally contributing to issues that have to do with the achievement of peace and security in the continent. As stipulated in the preamble to the AU Constitutive Act, one of the factors underlying the establishment of the AU was the fact that the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment or barrier to the socio-economic development of the continent and of the need to promote peace and stability as a pre-requisite for the implementation of our development and integration agenda⁵.The promotion of peace and security in Africa is therefore, a major objective or preoccupation of the African Union.

I-PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF PEACE IN AFRICA BY AFRICAN UNION: A POSSIBLE CHALLENGE.

This part deals with the efforts or contributions of the African Union as well as challenges faced in the promotion and protection of peace and security in Africa since its inception in 2002.

A-African Union's efforts towards the promotion and protection of peace in Africa

The African Union has since 2002 been carrying out practical actions to make sure that peace reigns in Africa. We can cite among others; the fight against terrorism and maritime piracy, the management, settlement and resolution of African conflicts, Election monitoring, etc.

1-Combatting Terrorism and Maritime Piracy.

The word terrorism is commonly understood to refer to acts of violence that target civilians in the pursuit of political or ideological aims.

In 1994, the General Assembly Declaration of the United Nations on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, set out in its resolution 49/60, that terrorism include criminal acts or acts calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes and that such acts are in any circumstances unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them.⁶

The human cost of terrorism has been felt in virtually every corner of the globe including Africa. Terrorism is perpetuated by the Islamic sect Boko Haram in countries like Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. Other terrorist organizations within the African continent include; the masked ones of Algeria, the Lord Resistance Army of Uganda etc. We can also include acts of maritime piracy especially in the Gulf of Guinea. The AU is not indifferent to these terrorist acts. It was at the origin of the coordination of the conception of the Multinational Joint Task Force as well as the Lake Chad Basin Commission. It was mandated to bring an end to Boko Haram insurgency.⁷

Since the emergence of terrorism in the Gulf of Guinea, the African Union has multiplied strategies to suppress it. This is often justified by the multiplicity of summits and conferences aimed at coordinating efforts to fight against it⁸.In 2014, AU summoned in Addis-Ababa, a Fund-Raising Conference aimed at raising funds to finance the Multinational Joint Intervention Force. During this conference, the international community donated the sum of 250 million dollars.

For the eradication of terrorist acts, state representatives gathered at Lome and adopted the Lome Charter. The said charter aims at fighting against insecurity in the maritime milieu perpetuated in many zones of the continent especially in the Gulf of Guinea.⁹ Still on terrorism, the AU has not been indifferent to the activities of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA)¹⁰. In August 2009, the AU General Assembly called upon countries hit by the said terrorist group to double efforts in order to neutralize it. There had been strategies at the regional level but the zeal of countries previously at the fore front of this initiative including; Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo had dropped drastically. As there was no regional organization in the Central Africa region with sufficient legitimacy and geographic coverage to effectively engage with all countries concerned in this regionalized conflict, the African Union provided a solution. The ministers of defense and security of Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Central African Republic including representatives from South Sudan resolved to get rid of the LRA problem via regionally coordinated initiative, including a regional coordinated military force and the appointment of an AU envoy.

The AU authorized a peace operation and set up a Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA) on November 2011. Under the RCI-LRA, the military operations are coordinated through the Regional Task Force (RTF) as separate part of the RCI-LRA. The participating countries jointly appointed the senior Force Commander of the RTF and provided the military personnel for the RTF. On his part, the AU chairperson appointed an AU Special Envoy for the issue of the LRA in 2012. The envoy was charged with the implementation of the RCI-LRA mandate, coordination and mobilization of overall support for the mission but has no direct leadership over military operations. The decision to launch the RCI-LRA as an AU mission facilitated coordination between the LRA-affected states¹¹. In the fight against terrorism just like any other activity geared towards peace, the AU faces financial challenges thereby making it to rely on external donors which at times delay or influence the process. The AU has also embarked on conflict management, settlement and resolution in the continent in a bid to enhance peace.

2-The position of Conflict management, settlement and resolution in Africa.

Unlike the OAU that upheld the principle of non-interference in the internal issues of its member states, AU acting through the Peace and Security Council (PSC) has since 2004 been making efforts to arrest and address the insecurities in the continent by deploying its missions to conflict zones such as Burundi, the Comoros, Darfur; Somalia etc. As regards conflict management, the first attempt of the AU was recorded in Burundi in 2003. At the commencement, the union put in place a multi-disciplinary African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB). She deployed about 3000 soldiers to provide security, demobilize armed groups and to assist in peacekeeping.¹² The AMIB mobilized the United Nations to support the rebuilding of state capacity and later on, the AU handed over her mission in Burundi to the UN within the framework of the United Nations Operation on Burundi (ONUB)¹³. The UN helped to round up the AU efforts by demobilizing numerous armed persons which contributed enormously to relative normalcy by 2009. In Darfur, the AU played a preponderant role in the management of the crisis at the beginning. AU mediation team and the Abuja Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks enforced negotiations that led to the conclusion of the Ndjamena Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement dated 8 April 2004 as well as the Darfur Peace Agreement between the government of Sudan and Sudanese People's Liberation Army.

Again, the civil war in Somalia led the PSC to establish the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). African Union troops supported the Comorian armed Forces to topple the self-proclaimed president, Mohammed Bacar from power in Anjouan in March 2008. AU did so at the request of Abdallah Sambi, the president of the Union of Comoros.¹⁴ Still on conflict resolution, management and settlement, it is important to cite the overwhelming role of the AU in attempting to resolve the crisis in Central African Republic in the year 2013. Faced with the said crisis and in line with the decisions of the PSC of the AU reached on 16 April 2013, it challenged the president of the AU Commission to initiate consultations with stakeholders concerned especially the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with regards to the resolution of the crisis. Consultations were in view of the creation of the International Contact Group on Central African Republic (ICG-CAR). In keeping with the consultations, the ICG-CAR, convened its first meeting in Congo Brazzaville on May 3, 2013. The ICG-CAR main objective was anchored on collective efforts to the restoration of constitutional order in Central African Republic by aiding the country to realize the 18 months transitional period. ICG-CAR worked with the transitional authorities. This led to the protection of civilians, humanitarian assistance to the population etc.

Since the inaugural session, the ICG-CAR summoned seven other meetings on the situation of the CAR. During the 6th meeting of the International Contact Group on the CAR on April 11, 2014, Denis Sasso Nguesso, the AU designated mediator in the said crisis, was mandated to extend the transition by 6 months up to August 2015. In late 2014, following the outbreak of violence after the conclusion of cease fire agreement involved in the Brazzaville accords, the AU alongside the crisis mediator, Sasso Nguesso underscored the importance of including previously excluded or sanctioned actors in the peace process. On this premise, former CAR leaders, Francois Bozize and Michel Djotodia began negotiations in Nairobi under the auspices of Kenyan authorities. These negotiations were concluded by a peace deal signed on 14 April 2014 by both Bozize and Djotodia in Nairobi-Kenya. It was faced with critics on grounds that the transitional government headed by Catherine Zamba Panza was not informed over dispute concerning the candidate for the nomination to the post of the premiere and the initiative came only from AU and its mediator.

AU intervened in this crisis. The Mission for the Consolidation of peace in CAR which was operating under the auspices of ECCAS was latter replaced by the African Union mandated African-led International support Mission in the Central African Republic¹⁵. It had 3500 uniformed personnel, 2475 for the military component and 1025 for the police component and 152 civilians. As a result of persistence violence and the degrading humanitarian situation in the CAR coupled with the inefficiency of the efforts of African Union mandated African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic and the Sangaris forces from France, the United Nations decided to introduce a UN peacekeeping mission within the framework of the United

Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic to take over from AU. September 15, 2014 marked the effective transfer of competence.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1998 between the government of Congo and armed rebel groups spread to neighboring countries including Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia. There were outcries of invasion of DRC by the neighboring countries. The parties to this conflict sat later together in a regional effort and considered all internal and external dimensions to the conflict .The resultant Lusaka Peace Agreement addressed the concerns of the rebel armed groups and those of the neighboring countries. Consequently, forces of neighboring countries withdrew and eventually, elections were held in the DRC. It should be noted that the Tripartite plus joint commission involving Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and DRC mediated by the AU played a preponderant role in building confidence and trust among these countries. ¹⁶ The table below shows AU peace operations between 2002- 2015.

Table 1: An Analysis and Assessment of African Union peace operations since 2002.

Location	Mission and Acronym	Period	Contributors		Size
			Main	Others	
Burundi	AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB)	2003-2004	South Africa, Ethiopia, Mozambique.	Burkina Faso, Gabon, Mali, Togo, Tunisia	3,250
		2006-2009	South Africa		750
Comoros	AU Military Observer in the Comoros (MIOC)	2004	South Africa		41
	Democracy in Comoros.	2008	Tanzania, Sudan.		1,350
Sudan (Darfur)	AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS)	2004-2007	Nigeria, Rwanda, Egypt, South Africa, Senegal, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya	Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Lesotho, Uganda, Madagascar, Mauritius, Cameroon	7,700
	UN-AU Mission in Sudan (UNAMID)	2008	Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal, Egypt, South Africa, Gambia, Kenya	Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan,	23000
Somalia	AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)	2007	Uganda, Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone	Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia	22,126
Mali	African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA)	2012-2013	Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Chad	Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia	6000
Central African Republic	African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic	2013-2014	Burundi, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda		6500

Source: Adapted from Ndubuisi Christian Ani, 2016.

The above table shows that the AU has since its creation in 2002 been working enormously to ensure that peace reigns across the continent using its tools including mediation, peace keeping operations, peaceful negotiations, etc

3- African Union as an Election Monitoring organ.

From the historical standpoint, elections in Africa have often been marked with tension, before, during and after the electoral process. AU in the battle to maintain, consolidate peace and security on the continent has not been indifferent in this domain. Electoral promotion has become a relevant platform for preventive diplomacy by the AU and Regional Economic Communities (REC’s) in conflict-prone context especially when high-level pre-electoral missions are deployed in combination with short and long-term election observation missions. In most cases, AU and REC’s follow similar patterns and engagements towards elections via pre-election and election observation missions in violent conflicts.

In its aim in achieving this mission, it has dispatched observers to monitor elections in a series of African countries including Somalia and Sudan and has equally resolved post election violence in Kenya. The table below details AU Election Observation Missions (AUEOM) from 2012 to 2019.

Table 2: African Union Election Observation Missions from 2012 to 2019

Mission	Location	Duration	Size	Main Task
AUEOM	Sierra Leone	2012	40	Election Observation
AUEOM	Ghana	2012	40	Election Observation
AUEOM	Togo	2013	32	Election Observation
AUEOM	E.Guinea	2013	41	Election Observation
AUEOM	Kenya	2013	69	Election Observation
AUEOM	Tunisia	2014	11	Election Observation
AUEOM	Mozambique	2014	35	Election Observation
AUEOM	Mauritania	2013	32	Election Observation
AUEOM	Madagascar	2013	50	Election Observation
AUEOM	Malawi	2014	52	Election Observation
AUEOM	Swaziland	2013	19	Election Observation
AUEOM	Rwanda	2013	30	Election Observation
AUEOM	Zimbabwe	2013	60	Election Observation
AUEOM	Nigeria	2015	84	Election Observation
AUEOM	Lesotho	2015	84	Election Observation
AUEOM	Comoros	2015	16	Election Observation
AUEOM	Benin	2016	15	Election Observation
AUEOM	Seychelles	2016	26	Observation Mission
AUEOM	Zambia	2016	75	Election Observation
AUEOM	Gambia	2017	30	Election Observation
AUEOM	Mauritania	2019	35	Election Observation

Source: Adapted from Segun Joshua Faith Olanrewaju, 2017.

Such Missions are often urged to provide an accurate and impartial assessment of elections including the degree to which the holdings of elections meet regional, continental and international standards for democratic elections. They are equally challenged to give recommendations for improvement of future elections based on the findings and to demonstrate AU interest to

support elections and democratization process to ensure that genuine election contributes to the consolidation of peace and stability.¹⁷

It should be noted that in certain cases the AU faces contestation of election results which continues to pose a threat to continental peace. However, AU encounters numerous challenges in the promotion and protection of peace in the continent.

B-PEACE MAINTENANCE IN THE AFRICAN CONTINENT BY THE AFRICAN UNION: AN ISSUE OF NIGHTMARE.

This section examines the challenges the AU faces. Within the framework of this exercise, challenges are those things which block or slow the AU efforts in the task of contributing to the promotion and protection of peace and security. Despite the impressive, but grandiose normative and institutional frameworks of the regional body, the AU is faced with shortcomings. In view of this, there is a huge gap between the ambitions and accomplishments of the AU¹⁸. Such challenges include:

1-Lack of political will.

The capacity of the AU to undertake any conflict management initiative relies on the capacity and willingness of its various member states to provide necessary influence and commitment. Discouragingly, powerful African States that are expected to play significant roles within the Union such as Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia and Libya are ravaged by internal weaknesses.¹⁹ Poor political will of African leaders is seen as challenge and this makes the Peace and Security Council slow in decision making when a crisis is identified²⁰.

With respect to the 2011 Libyan crisis, the AU-PSC set up an Ad Hoc High- Level Committee composed of five countries notably; Mauritania, Mali, Republic of Congo, Uganda, South Africa.²¹ Agreeing on a policy was halted by the conflicting interest among AU members. According to Mahadew, the slow intervention in Libya by the AU was attributed to Ghadafi's influence over the union. He had a strong influence over the AU. This was by virtue of his charisma coupled with the fact that he was the union's principal budget contributor²². The AU was divided between countries that had enjoyed Ghadafi's generosity and political support and those that had been grieved from his interference including Ethiopia, Sudan and West African states like Nigeria. Indeed, Tunisia and Sudan supported the National Transition Council (NTC) in Benghazi. Sudan aided rebels with ammunition, weapons and direct military support and the Islamic led government in Tripoli.²³ The decision by the PSC to pursue a political negotiation resolution was hindered by conflicting interest of external actors mostly channeled via the UN and its resolution

It should be noted that the slow intervention of the AU in the crisis that rocked Libya in 2011 had neo-colonial implications on Libya in particular and Africa at large. One of the neo-colonial manifestations was the west such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the UN, UK, US as well as France. They all failed to respect the political dialogue approach conceived by the AU in the resolution of the conflict. NATO enforced airstrikes over Libya despite the AU dictate against it and despite pronouncement of the no-fly zone against Libya. The rebel forces of NTC were empowered by airstrikes to have access to the country's capital, Tripoli in the month of August 2011 and had recorded military successes on the ground.²⁴ This showed that NATO and the Security Council saw the AU as being unable to manage its own affairs and needed the assistance from external powers.²⁵

Regional peace operations in Africa suffer from poor commitment from member states due to the preference for UN peace operations²⁶. This is due to the fact that African states preferred to send their troops to participate in well- funded, prestigious and secure UN peace operations unlike in the case of regional peace operations, where they, as member states, have to contribute to the upkeep of their troops. In such cases, the commitment and political will of African leaders to solve African problems and bring peace seems to be a dream.

2-Financial obstacles

The notion of financial challenge has been a great threat in the promotion and protection of peace in the African continent. AU relies heavily on the political and economic support from the regional institutions and the international community. Reliance on external financial funding leads to reliance on budgetary allocations from donor countries and alterations in donor policies²⁷. It is worth recalling that external funding enhances domination by foreign interest. As underlined by Cedric de Coning, at the continental level, countries and regional organizations have to comply with the demands and preferences of their benefactors. Donors can determine the duration of a mission and can influence a mission's mandate by placing terms and conditions on continued funding or by withdrawing funding if they no longer agree with the scope of the mission²⁸.

The abovementioned AU shortcomings were felt in the crisis that rocked Central African Republic in 2012. In the said crisis, AU relied on financial support from both multilateral and bilateral actors especially the European Union (EU) which

donated the sum of 125 million Euro. One thing is common with respect to foreign donation. It hardly arrives on time and it is often used to influence AU peacekeeping operations as seen in the Central African Republic crisis.²⁹

3-Lack of human resources, institutional capacity as well as difficulties in planning and limited logistics

The AU lacks the needed human resource and institutional capacity to conduct effective peace operations and peace-making initiatives. For example, the PSC suffers from limited personnel. It lacks translators, dedicated legal experts etc.³⁰.

Apart from the issues at the PSC, AU commission also lacks effective management system, human resources, etc.³¹The absence of adequate personnel also affects the Capacity of the AU for immediate response to crises as was seen in Mali despite the early warning. In addition to the aforementioned problem, is AU capacity to organize the military assets and personnel for peace keeping missions. In the opinion of Paterson, although the AU mission in Darfur, Somalia as well as Burundi were commendable, they demonstrated the AU logistical limitations in view of training, coordination, transport and equipment³². To overcome this major challenge, the union depended on external source for personnel, equipment, funding and training. A glaring example is the situation the Burundian forces encountered in AMISOM.

Generally, the military equipment the AU lacked in Somalia and Sudan, all tensed military situations included attack and utility helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles, night vision goggles, armored personnel carriers, communications and intelligence equipment³³.This hindered peace. The abovementioned challenges are responsible for certain shortcomings or failures of the organization in the realm of peace in Africa.

II- FAILURES OF AFRICAN UNION TOWARDS PEACE AND THE WAY FORWARD FOR DURABLE PEACE IN AFRICA

This second part handles the failures of the organization. It also defines the way forward for durable peace in Africa.

A-African Union failures in the realm of peace

Some of these AU failures resulting from its challenges include: sluggishness and mismanagement of the quick resolution of certain African conflicts and non-functioning of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

1-AU's sluggishness and mismanagement of the quick resolution of certain conflicts in Africa.

When we analyze the AU efforts in the management, settlement and resolution of conflicts in Africa, we discover that it has mismanaged certain conflicts. A glaring example is the 2010 Ivorian post electoral crisis. The AU mismanaged the quick resolution of the said crisis by not supporting the ECOWAS position on intervention. When the crisis erupted, the AU reacted by dispatching Thabo Mbeki to the troubled country. The AU choice to send Thabo Mbeki to resolve the problem between Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara failed for two reasons; Thabo Mbeki did not combine efforts with ECOWAS. Again, South Africa was viewed as peacemaker that often opted for a pro Gbagbo approach. In addition, another AU mediator, Ralia Odinga compromised his neutrality as a mediator when he supported military action before confirmation by ECOWAS.The visit of President Bingu Wa Mutharica to Ivory Coast to salvage the declining role of the AU failed. The president of Equatorial Guinea, Teodore Obiang Nguema who embarked on a journey of the same magnitude was considered too controversial to be involved in the resolution of the crisis due to his questionable human rights credentials.³⁴There is a great degree of sluggishness in decision-making. Although, the AU intervenes in some crisis for the restoration of peace and security, it takes the PSC a long time to take a decision after a crisis has been identified.

Moreover, despite the early warning from continental early warning system about the outbreak of conflict in Guinea-Bissau and Mali in 2012, the PSC did not take preventive action against the conflict.³⁵ The AU actions were contrary to the principle that called for the right of the Union to intervene in a member state in case of grave circumstances such as crime against humanity, war crimes, genocide.

2-Non-functioning of the African Peace and Security Architecture

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is incomplete and the question of effectiveness of their actions is equally posed, for the AU contributions through it APSA have not led to durable peace by preventing conflict in the continent. Early Warning Systems have not succeeded in the prevention of conflicts in any of the countries concerned because the regional early warning systems are not sufficiently developed to enable the various countries to send reports back to the headquarters, thus it has received little support from individual member countries. Institutions like the Military Staff Committee which is supposed to play paramount roles in advising the AU PSC on military affairs rarely hold meetings and it has so far been unproductive.

The RECs are expected to play significant roles in the APSA by addressing the conflicts in their regions under the leadership of the AU³⁶. Notably ECOWAS and Southern African Development Community (SADC) have been prominent in engaging in peace operations in West and Southern Africa respectively. The intervention of ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s cannot be forgotten. Since early 2000, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been playing a preponderant role in East Africa as a mediator. The three regional organizations, SADC, IGAD and ECOWAS have made bold steps in operationalising a standby force. However, the RECs in North and Central Africa have weaker and marginal influence to contribute effectively to the AU grand initiative for sub-regional organization to play leading roles in requesting or establishing an African-led peace operation. In the case of North Africa, the African Maghreb Union (AMU) established in 1989 had not been effective in advancing the capabilities of northern African states.

We equally observe lack of professionalism as witnessed in December 2013 when a group of Burundian Forces newly deployed to the CAR under MISCA opened fire on a Chadian unit, killing three peacekeepers. The question of professionalism in AU troops is posed when the UN broadcasted that Chadian troops had open fire in a crowded market in Bangui on 29 March 2014 in an unprovoked attack that claimed the lives of 30 people and injured 300. This among other concerns made Chad to withdraw more than 800 of its troops from MISCA.

It is also important to mention that the terrorist sect, Boko Haram has continued with insurgency despite the presence of the AU which claims to be fighting against terrorism. In June 2019, the said terrorist organization in the Extreme North region of Cameroon wiped out several Cameroonian forces of law and order leading to the declaring of the day of national mourning by the president.

The failures or shortcomings of the AU in the realm of peace and security as depicted above are attributed to the challenges that the Union encounters in the said domains.

B-The way forward for durable peace in Africa.

The African Union has been a motor for cooperation as well as enhancement of peace and security throughout Africa. However, it encounters numerous challenges and continues to have limited influence with respect to some strategic decisions dominated by multilateral co operations and western power. In order for the African Union to play its role smoothly, certain perspectives are worthwhile. They include;

1-The AUPSC must be independent.

The Security Council of the African Union in terms of peace and security is not independent in the execution of its affairs with respect to intervention in case of conflict or crisis. It depends on the General Assembly of the said union which is championed by Heads of states and governments. In fact, principle 8 of the union stipulates the right of the union to interfere in a member state pursuant to the decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crime against humanity as well as a serious threat to legitimate order to restore peace and stability to the member state of the union upon the recommendation of the peace and security council

This means that in case of any intervention, the council cannot go directly. It is challenged to submit recommendations to the Assembly which can either refuse or authorize. The Security Council's reliance or dependency on the Assembly raises the risk of inaction. This can be testified by the history of African leaders' reluctance to involve the OAU in an internal conflict for fear that it would do the same in the event of conflict in their own countries. We advocate for the independence of the Security Council, for this will permit it to act very fast in the restoration of peace and security in case of any conflict.

2-African governments must redress the unemployment problem plaguing the continent.

The AU should come out with new strategies that will address the root causes of conflict in Africa. For example, the establishment of infrastructure should become a priority and employments should be readily available. Unemployment is rampant on the continent and this promotes conflicts.

This may be justified by the frustration-aggression theory propounded by Ted Robert Gur. Based on the said theory in his masterpiece, *Why Men Rebel* discontents due to the gap between expectation and achievement leads to aggressive acts³⁷. When the state and its institutions do not fulfill people's basic needs, the state loses its authority and legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens leading individuals and groups to suspect that they are marginalized in the system. Without reliable places to express their grievances, aggrieved citizens and interest groups resort to any means to articulate their political ideology and interest. Disloyalty and rebellion could be the order of the day, threatening peace.

In addition, aggrieved masses could also be easily manipulated or recruited by rebel groups in the name of salvaging the state. In Somalia for instance, the poor economic policies of political elites provoked widespread discontent and oppositions towards Barre's regime. This contributed to a state collapse in 1991.

3-The necessity to place a limit on presidential mandates

Some African leaders are willing to use every means possible even if it entails tearing the country apart to remain in power. The conditions that lead to the breakdown of order in Africa is the authoritarian nature of its states and their rulers. Some leaders in Africa have designed national constitutions to suite their interest. In times when the constitution seems to hinder their interest, they call for constitutional amendments or contravene the norms inscribed in the constitution.

Between 2000-2015, 16 African countries attempted constitutional reform in a bid to extend presidential term limits and ten of the states were successful. In Burundi for instance, the quest to sit tight in office made president Pierre Nkurunziza to run for a third term in office in defiance of the Arusha Accords and disregard to the opposition and protest against such move. In this, there tend to be no decisive opposition leaders in the country because power is concentrated in only one political party as in numerous African states. With insignificant opposition parties, one political party system in Africa tends to run the State as their personal property. In some countries like Gambia, Cameroon, Chad, Togo, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, etc., there is no term limits' thus making it possible for incumbent rulers to sit tight in office. Under this one-party system, the leaders rule as dictators under the guise of democracy with unlimited, unopposed and unchecked power and are bound to be corrupt by power. Lord Action says power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely. Absolute power is unlimited, unopposed and unchecked power.

Since independence, most African leaders are either forcefully overthrown or assassinated in military coups. The military juntas that succeeded the civilian African leaders claimed to be messiahs emerging to address the social ills of their predecessors. Yet, they became worse than the civilian regimes.³⁸ African so-called civilian leaders have shown a sign of unwillingness to abdicate power and this has contributed to many conflicts in contemporary Africa. The Arab Spring in North Africa which is said to have commenced when Aziz Bouziz, a destitute student in Tunisia set himself on fire in demonstration against Tunisian leadership led to widespread rebellion in North Africa extending to some Arab states in the Middle East. Thus, North Africa joined the rest of Africa in a bid to transform from one-party state system to working democracies. Between January and February 2011, Tunisians and Egyptians deposed presidents, Ben Ali and Mubarak's regime respectively and the Libyan leader was murdered in the same year with assistance of NATO forces. The Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso post-election crisis coupled with pre-election crisis in Burundi in 2015 portray the difficulties in having peaceful transition of civilian leadership in Africa. Recently, the regimes of Omar Bashir of Sudan, Abdelaziz Bauteflika of Algeria have been forcefully dealt with by the people.

Other African leaders have remained victorious irrespective of contestations to their leadership. This is justified by the length of leadership of some incumbent leaders: Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, president of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has been in power since 1979. In addition, Idriss Deby of Chad has been in power since 1990 after ousting president Hissene Habre. Also Togo's president, Faure Gnassingbe has been in office since 2005 after his father GnassingbeEyadema died in 2005 having ruled the country for 38 years. Dennis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo has been in power since 1997 after the civil war where his forces toppled president Pascal Lissouba but he had earlier served as president in 1979. Nevertheless, Paul Biya of the Republic of Cameroon has been in power since 1982.

These leaders are ready to do anything even if it means tearing the country apart to remain in office. Some seek external assistance to gain access to material elements to remain in power. As observed by scholars such as Brown, violent opposition are likely to erupt if a state adopts oppressive or violent measures against its people. In a bid to arrest opposition movements and impact fear on their citizens in the name of peace, tyrannical African regimes end up fostering and strengthening rebellious movements that are willing to do all it takes to destroy such regime³⁹. This threatens peace that AU is out for. So we suggest that the Union should take this into account and adopt a law that limits presidential term of office in Africa. One might interpret this call to limit presidential term of office for the sake of peace as a violation of state sovereignty but it is not the case. It is worth recalling that in a bid to achieve continental peace, security and stability, the AU works or functions in keeping with certain principles. The right to intervene in a member state is one of such principles.

CONCLUSION

From the end of the Cold War to the first decade of the 21st century, the African continent was rocked by a multiplicity of conflicts. These conflicts warranted urgent changes to the way of doing things. In view of this, numerous African leaders became aware that it was necessary to find away to revive the idea of Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism was again taken to another level with the erection of the African Union. The African Union, AU was instituted in the year 2002 during the Durban Summit held in

South Africa. It came in replacement of the Organization of African Unity, OAU which was created in 1963. With the promotion of peace and security in the war-torn African continent being the overall objective of the Union, it has since its creation been struggling to achieve the afore-mentioned goals.

It has contributed in the putting in place of instruments. They include; Solemn Declaration on a common African Defense and Security Policy, African Union Non- Aggression and Common defense Pact, Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, the common African position on the proposed Reform of the United Nations, African Union's constitutive Act, etc. It has equally contributed in the putting in place of principles notably; Sovereign equality and interdependence among member states of the union, respect of borders on achievement of independence, Participation of African peoples in the activities of the union, Peaceful resolution of conflicts among member states of the union, the right of the union to interfere in a member state, promotion of self reliance within the framework of the union, Promotion of gender equality-Respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance, Promotion of social justice, Respect for the sanctity of human life, condemnation and rejection of impunity and political assassination, acts of terrorism and subversive activities, restraint by any member state from entering into any treaty or alliance that is incompatible with the principles and objectives of the union, Prohibition from any member state from allowing the use of its territory as a base for subversion against other member states. These instruments and principles guide AU actions in the realm of peace and security by providing legal basis for intervention

For the implementation of these instruments and principles, the AU has put in place the APSA which is made up of institutions both at the regional and continental levels. At the continental level there are institutions such as; the Assembly, Executive Council, Permanent Representative Committee, Peace and Security Council, Pan-African parliament, etc. With respect to the regional level, there are institutions such as; the Economic Community of West African States, Southern African Development Community, Inter-Governmental Development Authority, the Economic Community of Central African States, the African Maghreb Union, etc. Thanks to the said instruments, principles as well as institutions, the AU has stepped up efforts in the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in the continent in the areas of; the suppression of terrorism and maritime piracy, management, settlement as well as resolution of African conflicts, Promotion and protection of human rights for just peace, Partnership with other international organizations for the reinforcement of peace in Africa as well as election monitoring, etc.

However, it is worth mentioning that the performance of the AU in the sphere of peace and security has been challenged and limited in the face of increasing devastating conflicts, reliance on the external world or economic dependence, corruption, lack of institutions, inadequate internal funding, limited capacities and expertise in the conduct of mediation, lack of political will, etc. This contributes enormously to its sluggishness and mismanagement with respect to disputes in the continent. Thus, in order to ensure and achieve more giant strides in the realm of peace and security, African Union must address those factors that impede its strategic goals and weaken African voice in the global politics and multi-lateral decision-making bodies such as the UNSC.

The AU should; place a limit on presidential mandate, address financial and logistics barriers, adopt new strategies to address the root or cause of the conflict in Africa such as combating unemployment with leaders in the continent. In addition, the AUPSC should be independent and governance too should be improved upon

ENDNOTES

¹Countries in the Great Lakes region are; Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

ⁱⁱShinkaiye, K. "Nigeria and the African Union: Roles and expectation", in B. Akinterinwa (Ed), Nigeria and the development of the African Union, Ibadan, Vantage publishers, 2005, p.76-97.

³ Monica Juma, compendium of key documents relating to peace and security in Africa, Pretoria university law press, 2006, p.1-17.

⁴The maxim "African Solutions to African Problems" allows for a broader understanding and debate on implemental and conceptual aspects of solutions applied to solve Africa's problems. It also provides opportunities for African oriented approaches to be negotiated at the global arena irrespective of the actor that leads the solution attempts. It is important to note that the maxim does not reject external solutions. Rather, these differences are made to understand Africa's disposition towards the resolution of challenges. It is equally noteworthy that the African problems referred to by the maxim encompass political, social and economic issues although we dwell only on the conflict challenges in the continent.

⁵The preamble to the AU Constitutive Act

⁶Resolution 14/60 of the General Assembly Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, 1994.

⁷Musa Sagir, Multinational Joint Task Forces and Host community, Sahara Reporters, January, 2015

- ⁸Aba Angue Ondua, La lute contre le terrorisme dans le cadre de l'Union Africaine: cas du Golf de Guinée, dissertation presented in view of the award of a masters' degree in International public Law, university of Yaoundé II, 2006-2007 p.96
- ⁹<https://www.google.com/search?client=ms-opera-mini-android=African+maritime+security+safety+and+development>. Consulted on 21 June 2019
- ¹⁰The Lord's Resistance Army or Movement was a rebel group which was later termed by the AU as terrorist group. Headed by Joseph Kony, the group operates in Northern Uganda, South Sudan, the CAR, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was also listed as a terrorist group by the United States, though it has since been removed from the list of designated active terrorist groups.
- ¹¹Sophie Desmidt, Volker Hauck, conflict management under the African Peace and Security Architecture: Analysis of conflict prevention and conflict resolution interventions by the African Union and Regional Economic Communities in violent conflicts in Africa, discussion paper, 2017, p.16
- ¹²Interview with Ambassador Mamadou Bar, the AU interim chairman's special envoy, Bujumbura, April 2003. Available from :<http://www.irinnews.org/q> and 2003/04/30(Accessed 2 March 2016)
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- ¹⁵<http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/MISCA>. consulted on Wednesday 26 June 2019 at 6:37 am
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- ¹⁷See the following African Union instruments; the African Union Guidelines for Election and Monitoring Missions, AU Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights as well as the African Charter on Democracy and Governance.
- ¹⁸Moller Bjorn, The African Union as Security Actor: African Solutions to African Problems? Danish Institutes for International Studies, Regional and Global Axes of conflict, Working paper no.57, crisis state working papers series No.2.
- ¹⁹Sharamo and Ayagafac, The state of Human Security in Africa: An Assessment OF Institutional preparedness. Institute of Security Studies, Addis Ababa; Central printing press, 2011, p.85
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