

CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS AND THE TRAITS OF EFFECTIVE MEDIATION IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is endemic in African states in particular and the international system in general. All conflicts are eventually resolved by Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM). Prominently there are six CRM techniques and these are: Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation, Arbitration, Adjudication and Conciliation. Negotiation and mediation are the most popular CRM while conciliation serves the dual purpose of being a means as well as an end in the CRM process. At the individual level African statesmen such as Olusegun Obasanjo, Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela, Daniel arap Moi, Samora Machel etc. have contributed enormously towards the restoration of peace in Africa through CRM. The objective of study is guided by the following research questions viz: What is the meaning and types of conflict resolution mechanisms? Why is conciliation the orbit on which all conflict resolution mechanisms revolve? What are the traits of effective mediation in conflicts ravaging African States? The Complex Interdependence Theory as propounded by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye is the theoretical framework of the study. The qualitative research methodology was adopted for the study. It consists of content and documentary analysis whereby data was gathered mainly through secondary sources and reviewed. The study found out that forceful mediation was the most effective conflict resolution mechanics for conflicts in Africa. The study recommends that mediators should be neutral and sincere in their mediation. In reciprocity warring factions in a conflict should desire peace and respect agreements that have been reached in a negotiation or mediation.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict resolution mechanisms are geared towards conciliation. Negotiation is the oldest mechanism for conflict resolution but the most effective and most widely adopted mechanism is mediation. African states have been embroiled in several conflicts but all the conflicts have been resolved at one time or the other by conflict resolutions mechanisms especially negotiation and mediation. The objective of study is guided by the following research questions viz: What is the meaning and types of conflict resolution mechanisms? Why is conciliation the orbit on which all conflict resolution mechanisms revolve? What are the traits of effective mediation in conflicts ravaging African States?

The Complex Interdependence Theory as propounded by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye is the theoretical framework of the study. Complex interdependence theory is of the view that the numerous and complex interdependencies and transnational connections between states and groups were increasing. The complex interdependence was a crucial booster to liberalism in international politics and its various strands because of its perception of cooperation among states in the international system. This was diametrically in opposition to the disharmony of interest worldview of realist. Nye and Keohane postulate that the increase in economic and other forms of interdependence would simultaneously increase the propensity towards cooperation among states which would lead to the decline of military force and coercive power as major tools in international politics. (Keohane and Nye 2011), Buell (1985)

In recent times states in the international system have been working together in combatting issues on pandemic diseases, environmental challenges, crimes against humanity,

terrorism, curtailment of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction etc. which has enhanced a web of relationship and cooperation or complex interdependence. There is intense interdependence and interconnectedness amongst states because of the collective promotion of economic growth, peaceful coexistence, stability, development and prosperity by relying on collective efforts and energies. The cobweb model of world politics creates a condition of complex interdependence because states are drawn into cooperation and integration by diverse forces especially the network of trading and other economic relationships. (Heywood 2011), (Jeong 2010)

The theory of Complex Interdependence focuses on the rise of international regimes and institutions and the new importance of welfare and trade in foreign policy matters. It places high premium on the complex ways in which sequel to growing ties, the transnational actors become mutually dependent, vulnerable to each other's actions and sensitive to each other's needs. This theory envisaged what is now known as Globalization (Waheeda 2015). Complex Interdependence assumes that states are not the only important actors because social welfare issues share centre stage with security issues on the global agenda, and that cooperation is a dominant attribute of international politics as well conflict (Genest 1996). Robert O. Keohane and Joseph Nye (progenitors of the theory) said that interdependence should not be defined exclusively as conditions of evenly balanced mutual dependence but "asymmetries in dependence that are most likely to provide sources of influence for actors in their dealings with one another" (Keohane 1977).

The qualitative research methodology was adopted for the study. It consists of content and documentary analysis whereby data was gathered mainly through secondary sources and reviewed. The article is divided into five sections. We are already in the first section which is the introduction. The second section would discuss the meaning and types of conflict resolution mechanisms while the third section would discuss the inexorable link between negotiation and conciliation. Section four deals with the traits of effective mediation in Africa and section five is the conclusion and recommendation.

MEANING AND TYPES OF CRM

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM) are the methods and processes for curbing a conflict and restoring peace. Conflict Resolution Mechanism (CRM) is sometimes mistaken for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and used interchangeably. There are similarities but they are different because CRM encompasses all conflict/dispute resolution mechanism or techniques while ADR "refers to other mechanisms of solving conflicts outside the courts environment" (Buchanan 2000). In simplest terms ADR are techniques of resolving disputes devoid of litigation (i.e. Arbitration and Adjudication) while CRM is the sum total of informal settlement mechanisms (mediation, negotiation, facilitation and conciliation) plus formal institutionalized mechanisms (arbitration and adjudication).

Prominently there are six CRM techniques and these are: (1) Negotiation (2) Mediation (3) Facilitation (4) Arbitration (5) Adjudication and (6) Conciliation. The choice of the technique to use, is dependent on a couple of factors which include: (a) the nature of the dispute (b) the relationship between the disputant (c) the sensitivity of the issues involved in the dispute and (d) cost and nature of the technique. Most times, conflict resolution starts with the least and progresses to the climax.

NEGOTIATION AND CONCILIATION

All the conflict resolution techniques are geared towards conciliation and negotiation is the oldest mechanism for conflict resolution. **Negotiation** is a veritable conflict resolution mechanism whereby adversaries identify the major contentious issues and are willing to directly participate in a bargaining process to lower tension and reach an agreement which should restore peace

through compromise. Bargaining has the potential of testing the interests of contenders and exploring commonly agreeable solutions. The purpose for negotiating is to achieve something by changing the status quo. "If both parties are satisfied with the way things are, there is nothing for them to negotiate about" (Kheel, 2001, p. 14).

Negotiators need to weigh the prospects and constraints of a conflict and make concessions accordingly to pave way for a win-win agreement that would sustain peace. A negotiator's evaluation may concentrate on the variation in the expected price to be paid for the concession in relation to the expected gains. The final calculus should be the summation of the most desirable and non-negotiable. If there are outstanding benefits in a win-win agreement the negotiation is successful. A case in point was the dispute between Australia and East Timor over sea-territory. In the negotiation East Timor agreed to share half the oil revenue of the continental shelf in contention and conceded the ultimate desire of exclusively gaining ownership. The compromise gave rise to a win-win agreement with mutual-cooperation and benefits.

Each party has the potential of satisfying some of the desires of the other party by controlling a new opportunity or developing a new relationship. The negotiation process consists of major activities such as the proposal stage, discussions, clarifications, proposals, bargaining, compromise and collective agreement. Negotiations aimed at the reconciling parties engaged in violent conflicts are predominantly challenging due to the need to involve confidence-building measures. A case in point was the communal violence in Northern Ireland where the British and Irish governments played essential roles in reconciling varied interests between the Unionists and the Republicans (Jeong 2010).

Long term sustainable meagre-benefits may be considered in negotiations to assuage the desire for short term inordinate gains as was the case in the territorial dispute between Saudi Arabia and Oman in 1975. Oman agreed to cede some land with oil-producing potential with a sea corridor to Saudi Arabia obviously because of some long-term sustainable benefits of friendly relationship with highly strategic and more powerful Saudi Arabia.

A number of factors promote successful negotiation and these include: A shared desire or interest in mutual survival and peaceful coexistence. This enhances successful negotiation as was the case with the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) and Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START) between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. SALT and START embody the effort to control the joint susceptibility of the ensuring arms race by negotiating bounds of weapons build-up and the reduction of the stockpile in their arsenals. Negotiation is possible because parties have shared interests. In a bargaining relationship, one party has something desired by the other thereby making persuasion the key (Jeong 2010).

Avoidance of the gruesome consequences of war in a power imbalanced setting. In a power imbalanced setting an opponent is motivated to negotiate instead of been completely destroyed by the stronger opponent. Few inducements are offered, but a weaker party may accept to negotiate under coercion. This was the case in the negotiation that preceded the Mexico v US war (1846-1848) when Mexico had to cede Southern California and New Mexico to the US in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo after its defeat (Jeong 2010).

(3) Half bread is better than none conception. The thought of gaining something by the disputing parties has the tendency of enhancing negotiation. Several important categories of bargaining points are scattered between the spectrum of the most desirable goal and the option to walk away due to the deal's implications for the loss of wealth, pride, or status. In its dispute with Australia over sea territory, East Timor accepted sharing half the oil revenue from the disputed continental shelf while giving up their maximum desire of gaining the exclusive ownership. The compromise was acceptable since the deal improved their original situation (i.e., getting nothing).

Motivational actions and concession making. This has the potency of promoting successful negotiation. Motivational action and concession making are legitimate strategies in negotiation to enhance collective agreement. The purpose of negotiations is defeated if it fails to

reach an agreement and sometimes concessions facilitates the process and should not be viewed as humiliating. A typical case in point is the Iranian Nuclear Programs negotiations where the European Union offered concession and motivational packages to arrive at an acceptable agreement.

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The Constraints of successful negotiation are: The physical and psychological sceneries of a negotiation can promote awkwardness or have other elusive effects on the process. This was manifest in the armistice negotiation between North Korea and US in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950-1953) where the North Koreans gave the American negotiators lower chairs to reduce inferiority complex caused by size since they were far shorter in size in comparison with the Americans. This scenario played-out when it was their turn to host the negotiation meetings.

Procedural matters like agenda setting, protocol, proposals, participants etc., sometimes impinge on successful negotiations with respect to protracted conflicts like civil wars and insurgency. Finding participants or representatives for fractured civil wars and insurgency at the formative stages of a negotiation can be a herculean task because some other group may arise to discredit or denounce the negotiations of a considerate group. This was the case in the Liberian Conflict (1989-1993)

Manipulation of Facts and Factual disagreement - This is a major obstacle that can constrain successful negotiation. Manipulation of facts and factual disagreements plays out the most if concessions are too strategic and capable of posing major security challenges. After the Six-Day War of June 1967, Israel seized a couple of territories including the Golan Heights from Syria. Negotiations have been ongoing to release the Golan Heights but the agreement was not successful because of factual disagreement of actual border between the two parties. The facts on ground indicates that there was boundary demarcation in 1923 between French Syria and the mandate of British Palestine and Israel clings to the boundary as the authentic or factual tool for negotiation. However, Syria is insisting that Israel should return to status quo before the Six Day War and the borderline before this war was based on the 1949 demarcation sequel to the Arab-Israeli War. This factual discrepancy is stalling successful negotiation. Israel is obviously clinging tenaciously to the factual presentation of 1923 because of strategic and security reasons. Using the facts of the 1949 presentations by Syria would mean direct unrestrained access of Syria to the Sea of Galilee which poses so much security challenge to Israel (Lesch, 2008).

Take-it-or-leave-it conception - This is a major barrier to collaborative bargaining which can degenerate into a deadlock. In the Cyprus conflict in the 1960s, the bargain between the Greeks and the Turks scuttled at the pre-bargaining stage because each of the parties developed a take-it-or-leave-it approach insisting that their own proposal should be the basis for discussion.

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Conciliation is the conflict resolution mechanism for sustaining peace in a post-conflict scenario. Conciliation serves the dual purpose of being a 'means' as well as 'end' of conflict resolution mechanisms. It is a means because reconciliation is like recuperation – for a patient that resuscitated from coma. If abandoned the patient may die or be critically ill again. For this

reason, reconciliation should be achieved and sustained. It is an end because the ultimate goal of facilitation, negotiation, mediation and other conflict resolution mechanism is to achieve reconciliation or resolve a conflict.

Like a recuperating patient, the conflict resolution process would not just stop when an agreement for compromise is achieved but allowed to stabilize. A patient that was resuscitated from coma is not expected to be discharged immediately by doctors but allowed reasonable time to recuperate. In a similar vein, the traumatic experiences and emotional residues of conflict is dispelled by reconciliation as a conflict resolution mechanism by building trust for overcoming past wounds and atrocities. This would control vengeful mindset that can ignite hostilities and degenerate into another conflict.

Conflict is fraught with injuries, emotional trauma and pain brought about by the killing of beloved family members, the shock of exposure to atrocities, broken social bonds, as well as the loss of highly valuable properties. Difficulties in the suppression of grief and fear often result in strong desire for justice and revenge. The remnant of deep divisions among communities based on anger and fear creates major challenges which requires reconstruction and resetting for enduring peace. Reconciliation overcomes conflicts by building peaceful relations and thus a prerequisite after every successful negotiation or mediation.

Helping rivals appreciate their common humanity is the rudimentary condition for coexistence coupled with accepting a former adversary as a member and beneficiary of the reconciliation. More significantly, acknowledging impairments and empathizing with the damages should lead to exploring truth and cautiously redressing injustices. The entire gamut of reconciliation involves psychological reorientation and perpetrators' expressing contrition, repenting and apologizing. Victims are also expected to forgive and relinquish bitterness. In sum, reconciliation is a restorative practice for peace building through enlightenment, social work, counselling, dousing of tensions, pacification of vengeance, proactively building new relationship and repairing harm done by the conflict. (Aureli 2000)

TRAITS OF EFFECTIVE MEDIATION IN AFRICA

Although negotiation is the oldest mechanism of conflict resolution it is not as effective as mediation. It is also the most successful mechanism of conflict resolution in Africa. Mediation is a conflict resolution mechanism whereby a neutral third party, acceptable to the contending parties, presides over deliberations that enables parties to reach a negotiated settlement. In practice, the mediator is a third party permitted to assist the parties negotiate a settlement or agreement. The third-party must be neutral and accepted by both parties. Mediation is a form of assisted negotiation or a catalyst for negotiation. (Touval and Zartman 2001).

Mediation enhances communication between adversaries and is highly supportive to communication hampered conflict by aiding their communication. "Active mediators tend to interpret information, make tentative suggestions (even at a limited level), inject opinions, make recommendations, evaluate preferences and demands of the parties and propose solutions and modifications" (Jeong 2010).

The most important function of mediation is to keep the communication flow balanced, fair, and productive through the prudent adoption of skills which may commence by open contact and continue with carrying of messages, supply of missing information, clarification of meanings and the development of a rapport. The communication may take the shape of a brainstorming session that would reveal the areas of agreement and disagreement. Highly emotional and turbulent sessions can be managed through separate caucus-meetings with each of the parties (McCorkle and Reese, 2005). The desire to be an instrument of change, to improve prestige and status, regional interest, geostrategic interest, the need to salvage a political interest and the yearning to be a peace maker are the motivations for mediation.

Mediation has some vital advantages over direct negotiation. The advantages are as follows:

- (a) Indirect talks through an intermediary can help diffuse criticism of domestic opponents.
- (b) In the event of failed mediation, an intermediary can be used as a scapegoat.
- (c) A conciliatory move by one party may not be interpreted as weakness when it is suggested by a mediator.
- (d) The parties reduce political risks in such situations when even contact with an enemy creates uproar among their constituents and when concessions are inevitable during negotiations.
- (e) In keeping negotiation going, a mediator can serve as a buffer as well as maintaining communication.
- (f) The use of the intermediary or mediator helps the adversaries not to lose face or look weak.
- (g) Parties can protect their image by using an intermediary for unpopular concessions.

We would at this stage look at the elements, attributes, characteristics, features or nature of mediation. They are: Triadic dynamics – which entails a triangular relationship created – as a mediator bridges the two sides of an adversarial relationship

Neutrality – the mediator should be a neutral, unbiased and impartial arbiter that should meet at least the minimum expectations of adversaries. Although it is expected that the mediator should produce an outcome desired by all the parties, some level of bias is acceptable if it can be compensated by effective negotiation. A good example is the dispute between Syria and Israel. Considering the strong ties between Israel and the US, Syria may have preferred a more neutral mediator but because Syria knows that the US has more capacity to alter Israel's positions than any other country, it accepted the mediation of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in the 1973 Yom Kippur war. This was also the case when the Soviet Premier Kosygin was accepted by Pakistan and India to mediate the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war despite the perceived closeness of India to the Kremlin.

Less intrusive – A mediator should not be intrusive or have the tendency of undue interference when the parties have not reached a compromise. Being intrusive implies using force to enforce a decision or line of reasoning that is not a collective agreement as was the case in the fiasco of the Indian intervention in the Sri Lankan conflict in the late 1990s between the Tamil Government and the Tamil Rebel Forces (Tamil Tigers). The Indian peacekeeping forces were brought in to enforce compliance but it was a quagmire. Conversely a good example of a less intrusive approach is EU's mediation and monitoring missions in bringing to conclusion the decades-old Aceh conflict in Indonesia. (Augsburger 1982)

The factors that Promote Successful Mediation are: High expectation about the benefits of a mediation – This encourages the desire to end a dispute or conflict. In 1979, the US government used the promise of provision of aid in the form of financial and military assistance to persuade the Israeli and Egyptian governments to accept its mediation. A compromise was reached in the mediation and an agreement signed between Israeli Prime Minister Begin and Egyptian President Sadat signed in March 1979. Thereafter Israel received \$3 billion and a large quantity of sophisticated weapons systems while Egypt was given military equipment and \$1.5 billion in aid over a period of three years.

Personality and quality of the mediator – Successful mediation is enhanced if the mediator possesses exceptional qualities. The exceptional qualities of President Jimmy Carter gave rise to the successful mediation between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in the 1978 Camp David Summit. The clout and personality of Jimmy Carter, commands the interest and appreciation of people and his approach had a psychotherapist effect on his audience. Carter was conveying positions and impression back and forth like a messenger as well as impacting on the conscience of the leaders and his proactive mediation strategy gave rise to successful mediation tagged the Camp David Accord. Invariably

a mediator must be proficient in the management of adversarial relationships to reach a successful agreement.

Impasse in conflict and stalemate in negotiation – This makes mediation very desirable because the adversaries are subtly seeking for peace without looking weak or losing face. The India v Pakistan conflict over Kashmir is a good example of how impasse in conflict can promote mediation. The Soviet Union was happily accepted as mediator in 1965 by the warring factions when it offered to do so.

There are a host of mediation strategies or tactics and they include: Persuasion and Compromise Tactics – This is the most common and widely used tactics for mediation. Mediators working in a private capacity adopt this tactic to influence compromise for a collective agreement by persuasion and not pressure. They may not have the capacity for compensations but make their assessment based on merit.

Forceful Mediation or Coercive Mediation Tactics – Blatant use of force to reach an agreement is sometime adopted when a negotiation tarries for a long time without compromise and one of the parties in the conflict is too adamant and aggressive thereby given rise to protracted conflict. This was the case when US mediation efforts in the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict degenerated into forceful settlement. Peacekeeping missions that degenerate into peace enforcement fall into this category. United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) 1960 thru 1964 was under the command of General Aguiyi Ironsi and transcended to coercive mediation. This was also the case with ECOMOG operations under the leadership of Nigeria. ECOMOG under the command of Major General Joshua Dogonyaro and Major General Adetunji Olorin restored peace in Liberia through coercive mediation. ECOMOG under the leadership of Nigeria also adopted coercive mediation in the restoration of the regime of President Tejan Kabbah who was toppled in the 1997 military coup of Major Johnny Koroma. Also the democratic regime of Fredrique de Menezes of Sao Tome and Principe that was overthrown in a military coup was restored to power because of the intervention of Nigeria. The same was applicable to the democratic regime of Kumba Yala of Guinea-Bissau who was toppled in a military coup but coercive mediation of Nigeria saved the situation and restored the regime. Early this year perilous political crisis tilting towards a full-blown conflict ravaged the Gambia when President Yahya Jammeh decided to hold onto power after suffering defeat in the December 1, 2016 election. The coercive mediation of Nigeria's led ECOMOG saved the situation and to the successful swearing-in of Adama Barrow on 19th January 2017. In this coercive mediation, Nigeria's Chief of Naval Staff – Rear Admiral Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas deployed Nigeria's newest warship - NNS Unity to Gambia for action in case Jammeh decides to challenge the will of the people.

Muscle mediation – Some mediators are very powerful and influential and can use their vantage position to make authoritative proposals which would be respected by the parties in a dispute. This was the case when Nelson Mandela was Mediator in the Burundi (2001). There was political impasse at a stage in the mediations as the warring factions couldn't arrive at a compromise but Mandela proposed that the incumbent Pierre Buyoya should lead the first 18 months with a main Hutu group leader, Domitien Ndayizeye, as his deputy and his proposal was unanimously backed by the Organization of African Union summit as well as the leaders of the Great Lakes region thereby making it binding. Also, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo exercised muscle mediation by scolding Laurent Nkunda (Congo's Tutsi Rebel Leader) for violating a cease-fire which had been in place since the first round of peace talks in the middle of November 2008, where Obasanjo served as UN chief mediator.

High Pressure Tactics – Mediators that are statesmen of powerful countries are very influential as they command much respect and authority. Their vantage position enhances high pressure tactics. Jimmy Carter is a very good example of a mediator that wield much respect and authority. At a stage in the Camp David Summit, President Sadat of Egypt wanted to opt out but the high-pressure tactics of Jimmy Carter as mediator saved the situation and eventually gave

rise to a successful mediation – The Camp David Accord. Also, high pressure tactics played out in the negotiation of 1979 between rebel forces led by Robert Mugabe and the White-Government. When stalemate was imminent, President Samora Machel of Mozambique applied high pressure tactics to buffer the British position and Mugabe succumbed. The reason was that the Mozambican government led by President Machel provided the support base for Mugabe's military operations as a freedom fighter.

Fair Deal Compromise – This is one of the best tactics of settling disputes but the negotiator must be very powerful for it to be effective. The mediator must also have very high intelligent quotient and capability in assessing the disputants' arguments about a fair deal. A good case in point was the mediation of Pope John Paul II on Chile and Argentina in the Beagle Award of 1984. This was a prototype fair deal as it confirmed Chile's sovereignty over all the islands and granted Argentina free access to the territorial water as well as equal participation in resource exploitation, scientific investigation, and environmental management by creating an ocean area known as the Sea of Peace.

Mediation by Proxy – This is a mediation tactics that is indirect as the mediator would not participate in face-to-face meetings with the adversaries but by different communication channels. A case in point is the Falklands War of 1982 whereby the US Secretary of State Alexander Hague developed separate communication channels with Britain and Argentina. This was also the case with a series of broad prisoner swaps mediated by Germany in June 2008 between Israel and Hezbollah.

Treats of Sanction – This can also enhance successful mediation. Treats of sanctions may not necessarily come from the mediator but from states in the international system interested in the peaceful resolution of a conflict as was the case in the late 1990s when neighbouring regional states threatened to impose sanctions on the governments of Sudan and Burundi prior to a drop in their uncompromising positions which served as an obstacle to the conflict resolution. This cajoling and coaxing tactic is effective if it is not coming directly from the mediator or if the mediator is very powerful. (Augsburger 1982),

Broadly there are two types of mediators and these are State Mediators and Non-State Mediators.

(1) State mediators – this category has the advantage of bringing tangible resources for reconciliation purposes and consists of:

(a) Individual States - as was the case of the Soviet Union mediating the conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir

(b) Global International Organizations – The different mediations under the umbrella of the United Nations

(c) Regional International Organizations – The different mediations under the umbrella of the African Union and other regional international organizations

(d) Sub-Regional International Organizations – The different mediations under the umbrella of ECOWAS and other sub-regional international organizations

(2) Non-State mediators

(a) Individuals – Highly respected individual in the society at the domestic and international levels. Individual mediators rely heavily on their communication skills. Renowned political figures and statemen like Jimmy Carter (former US President) Martti Ahtisaari (Finnish President) can muster more resources due to personal prestige and ability to easily obtain institutional endorsement of their initiatives. Also (especially in the African context) Julius Nyerere (former President of Tanzania) Daniel arap Moi (former President of Kenya), Olusegun Obasanjo (former President of Nigeria) have contributed greatly in mediation at the international level.

(b) Groups – like non-governmental organizations, churches and peace organisations. Religious leaders carry moral and persuasive ability. Especially active in international mediation have been

the Quakers and Brethren. The World Council of Churches made major mediation moves in the Sudanese war for humanitarian purposes in 1972. (Jeong 2010), (McCorkle 2005)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the years Africa has been ravaged by conflicts but peace is restored after a period with conflict resolution mechanisms especially negotiation and mediation. At the individual level African statesmen such as Julius Nyerere (former President of Tanzania) Daniel arap Moi (former President of Kenya), Nelson Mandela (former President of South Africa) Samora Machel (former President of Mozambique) Olusegun Obasanjo (former President of Nigeria) have contributed enormously towards the restoration of peace in Africa through conflict resolution mechanisms.

At the collective level the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have contributed immensely towards conflict resolution. ECOMOG has become a prototype regional collective security apparatus because of its great successes in forceful mediation. ECOMOG restored peace in Liberia. ECOMOG under the leadership of Nigeria also adopted coercive mediation in the restoration of the regime of President Tejan Kabbah who was toppled in the 1997 military coup of Major Johnny Koroma. Also, the democratic regime of Fredrique de Menezes of Sao Tome and Principe that was overthrown in a military coup was restored to power because of the intervention of Nigeria. The same was applicable to the democratic regime of Kumba Yala of Guinea-Bissau who was toppled in a military coup but coercive mediation of Nigeria saved the situation and restored the regime. Perilous political crisis tilting towards a full-blown conflict ravaged the Gambia when President Yahya Jammeh decided to hold onto power after suffering defeat in the December 1, 2016 election. The coercive mediation of Nigeria's led ECOMOG saved the situation and to the successful swearing-in of Adama Barrow on 19th January 2017.

Conflict resolution is becoming challenging by the day and mediators need to be equipped with essential tools. According to McConnel (2009) "it is a challenging role, not least because the nature of conflict and peace-keeping has changed in recent decades." The study recommends that mediators should be neutral and sincere in their mediation. In reciprocity warring factions in a conflict should desire peace and respect agreements that have been reached in a negotiation or mediation

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