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THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS IN AFRICA- A FOCUS ON SUDAN

[1]Akwara, Azalahu F., [2]Akpan, Nse Etim, [3]Ibiam, Egwu Okechukwu, & [4]Arua, Christopher

[1,3&4]Department of Political Science, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu
Alike Ikwo. Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria.
[1](akwara.francis@funai.edu.ng; +2348038032062; +2348072412414)
(Corresponding author).

[2]Department of Political Science, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State,
Nigeria. *E-mail: nseakpan04@yahoo.com*

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 discusses 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 conceptualizes peacekeeping, adopts 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 has led to half-baked results in such African operations. The study highlights the challenges and the prospects of these operations, recommends 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 concludes that the UN has the capacity to surmount these challenges if adequate support is given to it by member countries.

Key words: peace keeping; intervention; monitoring; evaluation; mandate; conflicts.

Introduction

The United Nation Organization (UNO) has undertaken about sixty three peacekeeping missions between 1948 and 2009 with over a quarter (25) 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 most of them. Within the continent are a plethora of conflicts which heighten the degree of insecurity, itself a clear manifestation of yet another phase in the political evolution of Africa.

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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 remained 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, 2000:11)

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 their ugly heads 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 (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, 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 troubled 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, 2005:22). 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 (1990:11), "the tool of peacekeeping has proved to be the UN's most direct contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in the world".

Statement of Problem

The African continent 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 as required for peacekeeping remains a daunting one. Similarly, each conflict situation wears a different character as no two conflict situation can really be the same even when they have similar issues afield. Thus, the UN is opened to some great task in the planning and execution of peacekeeping operations. However, the problem arising from this development which motivated this study is the fact that the UN faces numerous problems and challenges in 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 adopts the theory of collective security as a theoretical framework. In doing this, it realizes 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, 1977:149).

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 defence 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, 1977:149).

Collective security is one of the most promising approaches for peace and a valuable device for power management on an international scale. Cardinal Richelieu proposed a scheme for collective security in 1629, which was partially reflected in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. In the eighteenth century, many proposals were made for collective security arrangements, especially in Europe. The concept of a peaceful community of nations was outlined in 1795 in Immanuel Kant's Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch. Kant outlined the idea of a league of nations that would control conflict and promote peace between states. However, he argues for the establishment of a peaceful world community not in a sense that there would be a global government but in the hope that each state would declare itself as a free state that respects its citizens and welcomes foreign visitors as fellow rational beings. His key argument is that a union of free states would promote peaceful society worldwide. Therefore, in his view, there can be a perpetual peace shaped by the international community rather than by a world government (Yost, 1977:149).

One of the most active and articulate exponents of collective security theory during the immediate pre-war years was the Soviet Foreign Minister, Maxim Litvinov. However, there are grounds for doubt about the depth of Soviet commitment to this principle, as well as that of Western powers. After the Munich Agreement of September 1938 and the passivity of outside powers in the face of German occupation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 it was shown that the Western Powers were not prepared to engage in collective security against aggression by the Axis Powers together with the Soviet Union, Soviet foreign policy was revised and Litvinov was replaced as foreign minister in early May 1939, in order to facilitate the negotiations that led to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Germany, signed by Litvinov's successor, Vyacheslav Molotov, on August 23

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of that year. The war in Europe broke out a week later, with the German invasion of Poland on September 1 (Sharp, 2008:155).

Organski (1960:461) lists five basic assumptions underlying the theory of collective security. These according to him are: (i) in an armed conflict, member nation-states will be able to agree on which nation is the aggressor (ii) all member nation-states are equally committed to contain and constrain the aggression, irrespective of its source or origin (iii) all member nation-states have identical freedom of action and ability to join in proceedings against the aggressor (iv) the cumulative power of the cooperating members of the alliance for collective security will be adequate and sufficient to overpower the might of the aggressor and (v) in the light of the threat posed by the collective might of the nations of a collective security coalition, the aggressor nation will modify its policies, or if unwilling to do so, will be defeated.

International co-operation to promote collective security originated in the Concert of Europe that developed after the Napoleonic Wars in the nineteenth century in an attempt to maintain the status quo between European states and so avoid war. This period also saw the development of international law with the first Geneva Convention establishing laws about humanitarian relief during war and the international Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 governing rules of war and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The forerunner of the League of Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), was formed by peace activists William Randal Cremer and Frédéric Passy in 1889. The organization was international in scope with a third of the members of parliament, in 24 countries with parliaments, serving as members of the IPU by 1914. Its aims were to encourage governments to solve international disputes by peaceful means and arbitration and annual conferences were held to help governments refine the process of international arbitration. The IPU's structure consisted of a Council headed by a President which would later be reflected in the structure of the League (Claude, 1961:219).

At the start of the twentieth century two power blocs emerged through alliances between the European Great Powers. These were the communist (East) and the capitalist (West) blocs led by both the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) respectively. It was these alliances that came into effect at the start of the First World War in 1914, drawing all the major European powers into the war. This was the first major war in Europe between industrialized countries and the first time in Western Europe the results of industrialization (for example mass production) had been dedicated to war. The result of this industrial warfare was an unprecedented casualty level with eight and a half million members of armed services dead, an estimated 21 million wounded, and approximately 10 million civilian deaths (Claude, 1961:220).

By the time the fighting ended in November 1918, the war had had a profound impact, affecting the social, political and economic systems of Europe and inflicting psychological and physical damage on the continent. Anti-war sentiment rose across the world; the First World War was described as "the war to end all wars" and its possible causes were vigorously investigated. The causes identified included arms races, alliances, secret diplomacy, and the freedom of sovereign states to enter into war for their own benefit. The perceived remedies to these were seen as the creation of an international organization whose aim was to prevent future war through disarmament, open diplomacy, international co-operation, restrictions on the right to wage wars, and penalties that made war unattractive to nations (Claude, 1961:220).

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After World War I, the first large scale attempt to provide collective security in modern times was the establishment of the League of Nations in 1919-20. The provisions of the League of Nations Covenant represented a weak system for decision-making and for collective action. An example of the failure of the League of Nations' collective security is the Manchurian Crisis, when Japan occupied part of China (which was a League member). After the invasion, members of the League passed a resolution calling on Japan to withdraw or face severe penalties. Given that every nation on the League of Nations council had veto power, Japan promptly vetoed the resolution, severely limiting the League of Nation's ability to respond. After one year of deliberation, the League passed a resolution condemning the invasion without committing the League's members to any action against it. The Japanese replied by quitting the League. However, the 1945 United Nations Charter, although containing stronger provisions for decision-making and collective military action than those of the League of Nations, it does not represent a complete system of collective security, but rather a balance between collective action on the one hand and continued operation of the states system (including the continued special roles of great powers) on the other (Kegely and Wittkopf, 2001:559).

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 and Wittkopf, 2001:559).

Collective security appears to exist as 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 and Wittkopf, 2001:560).

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, 1992:28).

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

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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 the military, which have 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 and McMillan, 2003:400).

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 labeled peacekeeping evolved as a way of limiting the scope of a conflict and preventing it from escalating into a full scale war or military struggle or confrontation. Peacekeeping operation 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, 2004:172).

In the post-Cold War era, UN peacekeeping has expanded to address different types of conflicts and takes 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 nonmilitary 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 as was the case 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, 2004:173).

Peacekeeping was originally an operation that involves military personnel but 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 operations 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, 2003:12).

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There is also the concept of peacemaking which is the first sequence for finding peaceful solutions to international conflicts. Peacemaking in diplomatic parlance means achieving a truce or ending hostilities. It is the process of diplomacy, mediation, negotiation or other forms of peaceful settlement that arranges and ends disputes. Peacemaking is aimed at resolving issues that led to conflicts. Equally, there is the concept of peace enforcement which was elaborated by the former UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali (1992:12) which he said unlike traditional peacekeeping operations involves the use of force under the aegis of the international organization to deal with the aggressor. Peace enforcement is thus the application of military force or the threat of its use to compel compliance with resolutions and sanctions aimed at maintaining or restoring peace and order. The stage for peace enforcement operations was set by his bold 'agenda for peace' where he proposed the creation of standing UN "Peace Enforcement Force" mandated to take coercive action against belligerents to enforce a ceasefire if either party violates it.

Peace building remains another concept in the series of peacekeeping and involves the creation of conditions that make war unlikely. These are predominantly post conflict actions, diplomatic and economic actions that strengthen and rebuild governmental infrastructure and institutions such that the recourse to armed hostilities is avoided. Peace building is also a positive continuous cooperative human endeavour which builds bridges between belligerents that enhances understanding and communication. Inspired by the liberal principle that improving the quality of peoples' lives can reduce the need for military arsenals, the UN is increasingly involved in managing ethnic warring parties, human rights violations, forced migration, world hunger, political instability, humanitarian needs, the equality of women, protection of children and a host of other world problems that influence the quality of life and serve as potential wellsprings for aggression (United Nations, 1992:4).

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 Germany 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 and Karns, 2000:24).

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 that called for a UN force (the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda, UNAMIR) to monitor the ceasefire. Large-scale violence was to erupt less than a year later, following the death of the Rwandan President in a plane crash, with Hutu extremists in the Rwandan military and police slaughtering minority Tutsis, resulting in 750,000 Tutsi deaths in a ten-week period. UNAMIR was not equipped to handle the crisis, and despite its commander's call for more troops, the UN Security Council failed to respond until it was too late. Eventually, UNAMIR did establish a humanitarian protection zone and provided security relief-supply depots and escorts for aid convoys while its personnel performed reconstruction tasks. But the mission is clouded by its initial failure (Mingst and Karns, 2000:24).

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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 amongst 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, 2009:76).

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 between 1914-1918. 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 and Ekoko 1993:78).

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 in Chapters 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 by empowering the Security Council to:

> ……take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such actions may include demonstrations, blockades, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of members of the United Nations" (UN Charter,1945).

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

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were then the two super-powers in the world. This cold war frustrated the application of the principle of collective security in which the permanent members of 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; and the use of troops contributed by its members (Basu, 2009:77).

The UN mounted its first peace mission, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Palestine in 1948. UNTSO comprised of unarmed military observers deployed to supervise the truce during the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Then in 1956, the UN deployed 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. In 1960, following the Congo crisis, the UN deployed armed peacekeepers to the country and to suppress the secessionist bid of the Katanga Province under Moise Tsombe, the UN forces had to carry out peace enforcement in order to preserve the territorial integrity of the Congo. Thus, between 1948 and 1964, the UN had deployed peace missions that carried out unarmed observer mission, armed peacekeeping and peace enforcement (Vogt and Ekoko, 1991:53).

As the years rolled by, and conflicts got more destructive and bitter, the UN introduced other methods like election conduct and supervision, reconstruction of infrastructure, temporary administration of states in conflict, mediation between belligerents, rehabilitation of social services like health and education among others. New concepts arose to describe these various new methods such as confidence building, peace building, peacemaking etc. All these now constitute what is regarded as peace support operations. It is a new concept which grew out of peacekeeping operations of the UN. Although the concept of peacekeeping began under the UN and metamorphosed into peace support operations, such measures aimed at maintaining international peace and security have not stopped at the world level of the UN because the UN charter made provisions for regional and bilateral arrangements (Vogt and Ekoko, 1991:53). In fact, Article 32 of the charter states inter alia:

> "Nothing in the present charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies from dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations" (UN Charter, 1945).

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has clearly spelt out the task of any peacekeeping mission as:
1. Deploy to prevent the outbreak of conflict or spill over of conflict across borders.
2. Stabilize conflict situations after a ceasefire to create an environment for parties to reach a lasting agreement.
3. Assist in implementing comprehensive peace agreement
4. Lead states or territories through a transition to stable government based on democratic principles, good governance and economic development (Oguntomisin, 2004:33).

From the above, one can conclude that whatever the concept of peacekeeping and its transformation are, the mission mandate of any peacekeeping operation whether those with direct military activity

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or non-military activity, enforcement of outright intervention or mere physical presence of UN force to mitigate conflict, they all come under peacekeeping operations. Therefore, peacekeeping has to be with the consent of conflict-affected states. It must be under the mandate of the UN or with the authorization of the UN for a state actor or regional body to undertake any peacekeeping operation as was the case with ECOMOG in Liberia. The UN has been in the business of preventing wars and alleviating human suffering for the past 60 years and significant numbers of these efforts are in Africa. UN peacekeeping in Africa out-number peacekeeping operations in any other continents of the world. It has undertaken the following peacekeeping operations in Africa:

(i)   United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)
(ii)   United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA)
(iii)   United Nations Angola Verification Mission 111 (UNAVEM111)
(iv)   United Nations Angola Verification Mission 11 (UNAVEM11)
(v)   United Nations Angola Verification Mission 1 (UNAVEM1)
(vi)   United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB)
(vii)   United Nations Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI)
(viii)   United Nations Mission in Central African Republic (MINURCA)
(ix)   United Nations Aouzou Observer Group (UNASOG)
(x)   United Nations Operation the Congo (ONUC)
(xi)   United Nations Operation Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL)
(xii)   United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)
(xiii)   United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)
(xiv)   United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR)
(xv)   United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)
(xvi)   United Nations Operation in Somalia 1(UNISOM 1)
(xvii)   United Nations Operation in Somalia 11 (UNISOM 11)
(xviii) United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT)
(xix)   African Union-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)
(xx)   United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)
(xxi)   United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)
(xxii)   United Nations Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) (www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/info/mission).

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, 2004:34).

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 is what this section of our study intends to address.

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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 itself. 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, 2007:33). Due to the rise in conflict spots in Africa, it has been difficult for the UN to generate, recruit and deploy the number of personnel required for these operations. Thus, the peacekeeping operations in Africa have been suffering from personnel deficit which obviously affects their operations negatively. The rise exponentially in peacekeeping missions also affects the cost and equipment for operations. This has rightly been observed by Susan Rice (2007:30) when she stated that:

> The 2000 reforms did not anticipate that nine years later, UN peacekeeping operation would operate a fleet of 270 aircrafts and 17,350 vehicles, consume 1.75 million dollars litres of fuel and 11 million litres of water every day, or more than 17,000 procurement transactions valued at some 1.4 billion dollars in 2008 alone.

Regrettably, UN peacekeeping missions in Africa suffer the most in comparative terms to other missions in other continents because of the strain arising from the rise in the numbers of peacekeeping around the world.

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. After five years, the implementation of the CPA remained incomplete and at a precarious stage as parties continued to disagree over issues of power sharing, wealth distribution, and boundaries setting. UNMIS continue to depend on key international and regional actors to encourage the parties to abide by their commitments and address outstanding issues that could have grave implications for the future of Sudan (Alan, 2009:11).

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. Provision of key supplies to UNMIS had equally been difficult as Sudan has a single port, Port Sudan, on the other side of the country from the UN mission's headquarters in El-Fasher. MINURCAT Chad also faced similar challenge of troop shortfall and logistics as the mission functioned from remote locations and was deployed at 46 percent, with European Union forces bridging the gap; while the , MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has not fully attained its target deployment as authorized by the UN Security Council (Rice, 2007:31).

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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. Recently, the Security Council gave a very ambitious mandate to peacekeeping operations in Africa, such as protecting civilians under threat of physical violence, including sexual violence in vast and populous territories with limited infrastructure, faltering peace processes, and ongoing hostilities (Galadima, 2008:11).

As observed by Galadima (2008:11), mandates for peace support operations are not usually clear, realistic and practicable and do not provide for the necessary means for implementation. A confusing mandate he maintained, would only lead to confusion with nothing coming out of it. The initial UN operations in Somalia, Sierra Leone and Liberia suffered mandate confusion just like Sudan as peacekeepers were equipped originally for traditional peacekeeping only to later realize that the operation was primarily to first enforce the peace among the warring parties.

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 UN, national and ideological interests are seriously taken into consideration. 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 manifested in the Security Council's resolution for UNMIS as it suffered several hurdles because of China's insistence on the removal of some clauses in the resolution before it could assent. In addition, internal politics in the UN prior to declaring and passing a peacekeeping resolution, causes delay which impacts negatively in the mobilization, deployment and operations of peacekeepers. This was glaring in the attempt to assemble UN troops for UNMIS (Abubakar, 2009: 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. Similarly, in the case of Somalia, Tamara Duffey (2000:142) argues that, while the multiplicity of troop-contributing countries and the disparate organizational cultures of the military and civilian components produced some obstruction to UN peacekeeping there, the most significant problems were those resulting from the failure to understand Somali culture. According to him, there was lack of cultural understanding from the highest level of decision-making at the UN to the troops deployed to Somalia, as many contingents arrived in the area without knowledge of Somalia, its history, culture and the conditions on ground.

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Thus, peacekeeping needs to be culture-sensitive for it to be widely acceptable by the people it was meant to serve.

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 (2008:10), 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. Attacking in small groups, using camouflage and often captured weapons of the enemy, the guerrilla force constantly put pressure on its foes and diminishes its numbers, while allowing escape with relatively few causality. 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 when their rules of engagement are not as clearly defined as that of a "fighting force". Often times, UN peacekeepers have found themselves being ambushed by rebel forces. This situation applied seriously to Sudan and led to Nigeria's loss of seven members of her troops in UNMIS to rebel ambush who opened fire on them while on patrol and injuring others. In fact, the Sudanese case was aided by the inability of the peacekeepers to distinguish between combatants and non combatants, especially as rebel groups do not wear uniforms and often use women and children for cover or shield.

Following the above closely is the challenge of inadequate intelligence prior and during peace operations. Here, while the UN system has the tentacles of its development agencies in nearly all member states, it hardly used these advantages to source vital information that will be useful in times of likely UN peacekeeping intervention. The UN, perhaps, because it is not a direct state actor in the international system, as a result has no interest in intelligence gathering on member states particularly vulnerable states in Africa. This development played out in Sudan as the lack of information on that country contributed to the troops spending more time to restore peace and to bring the conflict to an end. UN peacekeeping operations in Africa have suffered dearly from its inability to gather adequate intelligence before and during operations. The world body has tended to underestimate intelligence particularly military-security intelligence of conflict areas before the deployment of peacekeepers, and even when they are deployed, much attention is not paid to such intelligence need (Abubakar, 2009:44).

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. Garang held Sudan hostage as leader of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and became Vice President of Sudan between July 9, 2005 and July 30, 2005 when he died in a helicopter crash. The continent is also abreast with the activities of Sergeant Doe and Charles Taylor in Liberia, Foday Sankoh of the blood diamond fame in Sierra Leone, Germain Katanga and Laurent Nkunda in DRC who was accused of taking part in the Rwandan Genocide, Callixte Mbarushimana in Rwanda equally accused of

participating in the conflict in the DRC, Joseph Kony in Uganda among others. 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 (2005:66) observed that the troops that operated in Sudan had little or no self sufficiency in both equipments 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. As a result, contingents are expected to deploy with 90 days of stock. This does not take into account re-supply pipeline time and if, for instance, there is a 14 day ordering, processing, and pipeline time (order ship time) from member nations' depots, it would be prudent for contingents to deploy with additional stocks to cover this time lag (Galadima, 2008:12). 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 on 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, 2007:34).

There is also the challenge of civil-military relations among UN peacekeepers in Africa. Military and civilian component of UN peacekeeping often had different perception of the mission and their roles. While the military believe that their primary responsibility is to secure the environment, a military role which would indirectly assist humanitarian agencies and view the humanitarian agencies as having supporting role, the UN agencies and NGOs, however, believe that their responsibility is primary and more expedient, as the military is there in a supplemental role, to support their humanitarian efforts. Because of the ill-defined roles, the respective organizational cultures of the military and civilian agencies they adopt disparate and uncooperative attitudes towards each other which strains their relationship with a detrimental effect on coordination. In fact, it is on this ground that the UN established a Civil-Military Operation Centre to deal with this noticeable lapse. Several joint trainings have been organized to close the gap between civilians and the military to ensure hitch-free and successful operations in missions (Christopher, 2005:67).

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 impacts negatively on the command and control of troops in the missions. Command and control is a major challenge that reduced the UN's effectiveness because some contingents would not work with or cooperate with others (Alli, 2012:53).

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 a 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. Instead of looking for diamonds and gold or things to loot in their areas of operation, the forces would concentrate on their primary assignments of peacekeeping. The misappropriation of the allowances of Nigerian soldiers that served in Liberia and Senegal under the UN by their commanding officers turned out to be very bitter for some members of the troops that protested over such behavior. This Nigerian case led to a protest by the soldiers involved in their Akure Cantonment and about 28 of them were later arrested, court-martialed and sentenced for life though the sentence was reduced to seven years imprisonment and later to a amnesty (pardoned) and finally to compulsory retirement on pardon after about three years in jail. This behavior by the commanding officers kills the morale of soldiers and perhaps leads the combatants into immoral acts in their areas of operation. There were also reports of the commanding officers using their men for private enterprises in their areas of operation while on peace keeping.

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 it 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 motorable roads, few functioning court system, prisons or municipal governments while under conflict. The lack of these basic governance infrastructures impede UN peacekeeping operations in these countries and extends the duration of conflicts unnecessarily (Alli, 2012:53).

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. With the prevalence of conflicts in Africa, the UN peacekeeping has greater prospects in the continent. The universal character of the UN and the unique legitimacy with which it carries out its mandate has given the United Nations wide acceptance by majority of African people and governments. The UN political and development tools which it has used over the years has reduced any potential of UN peacekeepers being perceived as occupiers, rather, most Africans in conflict-affected states and even their governments have always preferred the presence of the UN in their countries.

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 ceasefires. Their deployment can help limit or stop the escalation of armed conflict and stave off wider wars. 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

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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 operations 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

This 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 lessons 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. The UN must deal and address expressly the fears of some member states. The UN and its member states particularly those of the North, must ensure that the UN maintain the face of a common humanity. These they can do by not only supporting the UN peacekeeping in Africa with only logistics and materials, but by contributing their own troops to participate in the mission fields in Africa. They 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.

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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. Finally, UN peacekeeping must be an equal playing field for member states including those contributing troops and those providing logistics and material support. The powerful and rich member states must also make commitment to contribute their troops to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa to reflect the common humanity that the UN represents.

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