

AFRICAN UNION (AU) AND PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

By

Abdulkadir Mubarak Ph.D*

Abstract

This paper focuses on the African Union's (Au) initiatives for peace building in post conflict situation in Africa. This paper finds that in legal frame work, the AU's approach to peace building is unique and qualitative unlike that in the OAU charter. This paper concludes that even though the AU to some extent has recorded successes in terms of peace building in the African continent, it still faces some challenges that need to be addressed. The AU's over-reliance on external forces for peace building in Africa is one of the challenges facing the union that should be curtailed for its undermining effort of the union and hindering African brains from initiating ways for self-reliance in resolving African internal issues.

KEY WORDS: African union (AU), Armed conflict, Conflict resolution, Peace building

1.0 Introduction

African history since the beginning of the African slave trade in the 17th century and the subsequent colonization of the region by European Powers in the 18th and 19th centuries, has been marked by a long struggle against colonial rule. Following the First World War, the educated minorities in many African countries began the Process of working towards the eventual liberation of their countries.

Many African states found that upon independence in the 1950s and 60s, their countries comprised diverse and divided populations.

* Department of Jurisprudence and International Law, Faculty of Law, University of Abuja FCT; **Email:** aamubarak@hotmail.com / aa_mubarak@yahoo.com; **Phone Number:** +234 8034609366, +234 8035665932

The author is a senior lecturer at the above-mentioned department in the University of Abuja. He published some books on Law. He teaches International Humanitarian law, Islamic Law, and other fields of Law.

Further, they had to confront the legacy left by their former European rulers, who had often played different ethnic groups against one another, so as to create a situation in which rule could be in the form of deep ethnic tensions, in economic and power imbalances between ethnic groups, and in open civil conflict.

Decolonization itself was often characterized by violence, especially in countries with settled white minorities. Though it became apparent following the Second World War that independence for African colonies was inevitable, many colonial powers were loath to let influence and resources associated with colonial control go. Moreover Africa, had sizeable European minorities, who were very afraid of the black majority rule they saw coming with independence. The result was the creation of racially segregated police states in South Africa and Rhodesia.

The 1990s have witnessed many dramatic mega political developments, from the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, to the abolition of apartheid in the South Africa, to name but a few examples. In their place, the growing emergence of intra-state conflicts, with a concomitant requirement on the viability, credibility and practicality of using force to settle disputes and to maintain peace and security have been witnessed. This has been especially prevalent on the African continent.

In 1990, it seemed reasonable to predict that the end of Cold War conflict would lead to a substantial reduction in warfare in Africa. In two major regional theatres of warfare, Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa, the breadth and duration of local conflicts had been amplified and extended by the external support received by various governments as a consequence of great power rivalries. The capacity of African states for war making was vastly enhanced through their role as Cold War proxies. The end of international bipolar geostrategic competition in Africa should logically have reduced such capacity. Instead, its consequence has been an overall weakening of African states and an intensification of rebellions against their authority.

This paper describes trends of conflict and instability in Africa since the end of the Cold War. It also examine the role of African Union (AU), as a mechanism of regional-level governance with respect to conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and more especially

peace building. The paper shall briefly touch upon the transition from OAU to AU, interface of the AU with other regional organizations and the challenges ahead of its key role in maintaining peace and security on the African continent. No other regional organization has the peace matrix high on its agenda as the AU. While most other regional organizations have emerged after eliminating the possibility of war or after creating, in some cases, 'security communities', the AU itself is borne out of the need for peace and security, especially human security, as a necessary pre-condition for addressing the development-related problems of the region. Africa is considered to be low on all welfare indices such as Human Poverty Index, Human Development Index, Physical Quality of Life Index and Global Peace Index. No single African country can address the issues of conflict, refugee flows, the conscription of child soldiers, bonded labor, human trafficking, the massacre of civilian populations, drug trade, money laundering, illicit small arms trade and underdevelopment in isolation. With the persistence of armed violence and insurgency in some African states, the challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in the continent are daunting.

2.0 The Nature of human being in pre-colonial Africa

In peace time, during the pre-colonial era in Africa, relations between the authorities of the various states depended on the exchange of messages between sovereigns and on the establishment of diplomatic relations. As in all ancient civilizations, foreigners who passed through or stayed were hospitably treated. The emperor of Mali, Kankan Moussa, had diplomatic relations with the Moroccan sultans and with Cairo.

After a pilgrimage to Mecca, he brought back architects, poets and Arab scientists, all captivated by the Mali sovereign's humanity as well as by his wealth. The Songhay emperor, Mamadou Toure, developed cultural relations with North Africa and the Arabs to the east by exchanges of teachers and Arab scientists. Several universities and cultural centers existed in his empire-Djenne, Timbuktu, Oualata. In these empires and the kingdoms which succeeded them, great importance was attached to human values.

The ease with which frontiers could be crossed was most notable in the border regions of kingdoms and principalities where the populations

held the same values, making greater understanding between sovereigns easier and contributing to the elimination of conflicts.

In any state, the village and the family were the main constituents. Land counted for little and it was for that reason that, for African states, borders were something mobile and indefinite.¹

The rights and obligation of the individual at that time must be seen in that collective context and in terms of the traditional obligation to the family and the village. Humanitarian questions, human rights and rights of the individual of that time cannot be understood out of the group context. They were always of a collective of "human rights at large" nature.²

The community comprised all the families which had a head. The unity of the community and the distribution of harbor depended on the African family spirit. The head of the family, like the sovereign at a higher level, ensured the continuity of the human race, the family and the whole community with the basic concern to enlarge it. In the first place the members of the family had to be protected and in the second place those who were outside the family circle were to be brought in. As a result there was, in times of conflict and war, a humanitarian atmosphere intended to protect not only members of the family but also those who might increase it.

Private ownership developed within and on the basis of common property, hence the apparition of state authorities differing from those in Europe. There was a form of monarchy which was limited and decentralized, leaving the local. A prisoner of war who was not ritually sacrificed became a slave, often with some right to own property, and soon integrated into family which owned him.³

¹ - Westermann, D. H. *The African To-day and To-morrow*, 3rd, London and New York, 1949, pp. 28 and 129.

² - Mazrui, Ali A., *Towards a Pan Africana. A Study of Ideology and Ambition: Essays on Independent Africa*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1967, pp. 118 and p. 135.

³ - *General History of Africa, I. Methodology and African Prehistory*, Ki-Zerbo, J. (ed), Paris, Unesco, Berkeley, The University of California press, London, Heinemann, 1981. 740-741.

3.0 Armed Conflict in Independent Africa

A study of the conduct of conflicts in pre-colonial Africa shows that before the outbreak of conflict the parties tried to settle the dispute peacefully. In Togo such attempts were entrusted to nobles of the two adversary groups; in Burkina Faso to the imperial guards; in Burundi and Rwanda to notables; and in Uganda and Kenya to the elders. Only when all efforts to achieve conciliation had come to naught did the parties resort to force⁴.

There were rules also governing the start of hostilities. It was announced by the beating of drums or the blowing of horns, or by a warning volley of arrows.⁵ In theory, hostilities did not start until the adversary was aware of the intention to attack and of the reasons for it. Thus, as in most ancient civilizations, war was preceded by a declaration delivered by messengers: the griots (wichdoctors-eumminstrels) in Senegal and Burkina Faso, the notables in Mali. War and the defense of the realm were the privilege of nobles, the highest social class. A veritable ethical conduct in war was taught to the young nobles before they took part in the fighting. The conduct of war was considered as noble, conforming to rules and principles. Some of these rules of honor applied to the conduct of war and the behavior of the warriors; others were concerned with the treatment of non-combatants and their belongings. Tradition forbade the use of weapons considered to be too dangerous. A traditional Bantu saying in East Africa is "you hit but do not kill". This brings to mind the definition of superfluous injury, drafted in 1973 by a group of experts: "... if a combatant can be put out of action by injury, he should not be killed..."⁶ The prohibition against weapons likely to cause unnecessary suffering included the ban on poisoned arrows or spearheads in war.⁷ There were also restrictions on methods of combat. A fallen enemy should not be killed, a disarmed enemy should not be struck, and the fight should always be face to face.

⁴- Diallo, Y., *African Traditions and Humanitarian Law*, Geneva, ICRC, 1978. pp. 2-3

⁵ -. Ibid

⁶ - International Committee of the Red Cross: *Weapons that may cause Unnecessary Suffering or have Indiscriminate Effects*. Report on the work of a group of experts, Geneva. ICRC, 1973, para., 23, p. 13.

⁷ - Diallo. Y., *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

Bello. E., *African Customary Humanitarian Law*, Geneva, ICRC, Oyez Publishing Ltd., 1980, pp. 20-21.

Elsewhere, in forest countries for instance, there was no tradition of clemency. The enemy was slaughtered. Fighting was interrupted by truces during harvest and sowing times. Any person who sought refuge during wartime in a place of asylum became sacrosanct.

However, these regulations were often limited to fighting between adversaries of the same ethnic group. They applied only within the same branch since the African mentality has a need for the feeling of solidarity with one's groups, family, tribe or race.⁸

So far as treatment of non-combatants was concerned. The ethical code of war ensured respect and protection for women, children and old people. Respect for women was imperative: they represented the "origin", the "source" of life. The child represented innocence, while the elderly were considered to be close to the spirits of ancestors.⁹

In Burkina Faso custom forbade the killing of persons taking no part in the fighting. The Wounded of both sides had to be cared for. The dead had to be respected and were entitled to a decent burial.

In other tribes, civilians-the non-combatants-were left with no protection and they were treated like prisoners of war. Some tribes promoted the assimilation of civilians from the adversary by encouraging marriage between young warriors' women of the enemy camp.¹⁰

It is interesting to consider the role played by the Tallensi women who participated in conflicts by bringing water to the warriors, removing the wounded and the dead from the battle field and shouting encouragement to the combatants. They took an active part in fighting even though they did not carry weapons. As they had often originated from the adverse party, they could sometimes be impartial or at least not too enthusiastic in their support for either side.¹¹

The treatment meted out to prisoners of war depended on their social status and their function in the group. Depending on regions and tribes,

⁸ - Diallo, Y., op. cit., p. 17.

⁹ - Diallo, Y., op. cit., pp. 5-7.

¹⁰ - Bello, E., op. cit., pp. 34 ff.

¹¹ - Ibid., pp. 35-36.

prisoners of war were reduced to Slavery, ransomed or Killed.¹² Others, as already mentioned, were assimilated into the population.

Such assimilation of the prisoner is a manifestation of the respect for the human being, for man, the image of his creator who transcends everything: the dignity of man as the basis of the family, the community and of society was recognized. His position had to be consolidated, safeguarded at all times, in peacetime and in war.

In traditional Africa there were innumerable sacred places (trees, ancestral huts, shrines in which fetiches were kept, places where initiation ceremonies were held, and so on). There was therefore respect for places of a religious nature, of culture and art.

For the Tallensi, looting for personal gain and taking home objects stolen from an enemy was forbidden, but that did not prevent them from eating an enemy's food or destroying his property.¹³

As in other ancient civilization, the question of reparation arose with the end of a war. It was usual for the two chiefs to meet, in the presence of a member damage suffered.¹⁴

As in every war. Slaughter had breaches of humanitarian rules were inevitable, but these were exceptions confirming the rule that human beings must be protected. Humanity included, and was understood to mean, solidarity and the recognition of common traits in the human species which longed for happiness and justice.

Of course, the rules were not the same or applied uniformly throughout the continent. They varied with region, civilization, ethnic group and religion. The lack of source material does not permit definite conclusions. The history of Africa is being written and future research will reveal more details of our picture of humanitarian law in Africa.

The widely varying application of humanitarian rules and the many examples of their violation have led some writers to take an unfavorable view of African tradition in that field.¹⁵ Yet humanitarian

¹² - Ibid., pp. 28-33

¹³ - Ibid., pp. 36-37

¹⁴ - Ibid., pp. 33 ff

¹⁵ - Bello, F., op. cit., p. 50.

rules for the conduct of war in all ancient civilizations-Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Assyrian, and European-were also marred by as many, if not more, breaches. The humanization of war is a process. Its ideal is to eliminate war and the use of force from human society. If that ideal cannot be achieved, efforts to eliminate the worst consequences of recourse to force must be continued. We subscribe to conclusion that "many principles expressed in the Geneva Conventions are to be found in the law of war in pre-colonial Africa. It was only after the introduction of slavery and the inroads of colonialism into Africa south of the Sahara that traditional societies began to disintegrate, causing the code of honor to fall into disuse in war. However, the memory of this code of honor is kept alive in the narratives of the story tellers, and the code perhaps could be revived as a means of humanizing present-day conflicts. Perhaps Africa will remember, now that it is reviving its own cultural values, that this sense of humanity is one of its permanent values and that it must accept the obligation not to let those values be forgotten."¹⁶

4.0 The Beginning of Desecrating Human Life in Africa: The Colonial Era

Colonization broke up the historical pattern and cut the geographic, economic, legal and humanities with the empires which preceded it. One consequence of this break was that Africans did not look upon international law as a product of their own tradition but as retrograde colonial interference. It is therefore important to study more thoroughly the history of Africa and to demonstrate that inter-state law was peculiar to Africans, to their traditions and to their history.

The colonization of Africa reduced to naught the continents' participation in international life, preventing the development of

See also Adda B. Bozzeman: Death is inflicted without regard either for human suffering or for such demographic effects as depopulation. Practices of war that are condemned elsewhere as needless atrocities, such as the razing of villages, the killing or mutilation of prisoners and the slaughter of women and children, are condoned here as natural sequential corollaries of an original military thrust, and as integral aspects of a sacerdotal code in which the shedding and use of human blood have profound symbolic importance. (Bozzeman, Adda B., *Conflict in Africa, Concepts and Realities*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 207).

¹⁶ - Diallo, Y., *African Traditions and Humanitarian Law: Similarities and Differences*, Geneva, ICRC, 1976, p. 16.

political ideas, concepts and principles. This stagnation prevailed from the end of the 18th century until the 1960. It was a period of colonial aggression which relegated humane feelings to the background. The traditional concept that human life was sacred was derided. The new state system showed a different face, keeping its distance from the individual and the family spirit. It was there for no other purpose than to crush, dominate and destroy the Africans. Respect for human dignity meant respect for the white man. The dominating values were western. Another form of aggression was developed: members of a community and even of a family were often in opposing camps fighting, without knowing it, to consolidate the foreign power. In such circumstances societies and families were disorganized. It was the end of a belief in human values, sowing doubt in the mind by profaning man and destroying the natural order.

In every civilization religion is important to humanitarian ideas. Christianity, although pure in essence, appeared during the colonial era to be the religion of the dominator, a prop to a policy of inequality, and representative of the political power. Islam was different. Those who had brought it had left and the African converts to it entered it in their own way, while maintaining their traditional values.

Jomo Kenyatta stressed the demoralizing impact of European aggression and colonization in Africa. While tribal wars had affected relatively few people. War waged by Europeans with little or no regard for law and human suffering, resulted in the loss of many innocent human lives. That had unsettled the harmony and stability of the African way of life.¹⁷ Bello gives many examples of such devastating effects of colonization: the Nuer people, the Arusha society in the face of German colonization, the encouraging of inter-tribal fighting for causes quite alien to the African people and which destroyed their solidarity (arms deliveries, attacks on civilian populations).¹⁸ It was in that way that the French colonialists, wishing to obtain slaves, gave the Moors weapons and encouraged them to cross the Senegal River to attack the tribes, capture slaves and slaughter those who resisted. The British and the Germans fought whoever would not submit to their domination. That is why, like Kenyatta, we must ask whether it would not have been better to leave the Africans to their tribal warfare instead of

¹⁷ - Kenyatta Jomo, *Facing Mount Kenya*, London, Secker and Warburg, 1956, pp. 212 ff.

¹⁸ - Bello, E., *op. cit.*, pp. 24-27.

imposing on them "the so-called civilizing missions which meant the subjugation of the African races to a perpetual state of serfdom".¹⁹

4.1 African Values in the Post-Colonial Era

One century of foreign domination, however, was not enough to destroy the bases of African values. From the first decade of political independence, the fundamental idea emerged and spread throughout Africa was to return to traditional values and to African institutions, the sole foundation for the future of African society.

Africa will recover its unity only in the restitution and rediscovery of its moral and cultural values, and in the return to that humanism which is an inalienable trait of the African personality.

With few exceptions (e. g. Egypt and Ethiopia), African countries took no part in drawing up rules of the law of war. Their voice was heard resoundingly for the first time during the procedure leading to the reaffirmation and development of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts, beginning at the International Human Rights Conference in Teheran from 22 April to 13 May 1968.²⁰ The Geneva Diplomatic Conference which met in the years 1974-77 became the forum at which the states of the "Third World", and hence of Africa, were able to express their fundamental concern for the development of humanitarian law.²¹

Uppermost in the minds of the African states represented at that conference were wars of national liberation, civil wars and the employment of mercenaries.

The states of the "Third World" called for wars of liberation to be recognized as international armed conflicts. Their demand was met: at

¹⁹ - Kenyatta Jomo, op. cit., p. 212. "The so-called civilizing missions which meant the subjugation of the African races to a perpetual state of serfdom".

²⁰ - Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights. Teheran, 22 April to 13 May 1968, New York, United Nations, 1968 (doc. A/Conf. 32/41), particularly resolution IV on the treatment of persons who oppose racist regimes and resolution XXIII concerning the respect of the human rights in armed conflict.

²¹ - Official record of the Geneva Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, Geneva, 1974-77, 17 vols, Berne, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. 1978

the first session of the Diplomatic Conference, Committee I approved Article 1 (paragraph 4) which says that "armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States" are included in the situations referred to in Article 2 common to the Geneva Conventions which defines armed international conflicts. This had unquestionably been a fundamental problem and it was raised at the beginning of the Conference in the opening address by the president of Mauritania, in which he expressed the hope of the "Third World" countries that the Conference would take their lawful rights into account.

Concerned to protect the victims of non-international conflicts while safeguarding their recently acquired national sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, the African states supported the simplified draft of Protocol II.²² In that way it was possible to reach a compromise and avert the danger that a protocol on internal conflicts might not be adopted.

Taking some conflicts into account, the African states were concerned by the phenomenon of mercenaries – representing colonialist regimes and racial repression. In the Organization of African Unity efforts had resulted in the adoption of a convention in 1972. In the United Nations several resolutions have condemned as a crime the employment of mercenaries by colonial and racist regimes against liberation movements struggling for their freedom and their independence of the colonial yoke and foreign domination.²³

On the initiative of Nigeria, the 1974-77 Diplomatic Conference adopted Article 47 of the Additional Protocol I. This defines the mercenary and denies him combatant or prisoner-of-war status.²⁴

²² -The draft was submitted by Pakistan to the 49th plenary meeting of the conference (doc. CDDH/427 and Corr. 1).

²³ - Resolution 2395 (XXIII) of 29 November 1968; 2456 (XXIII) of 20 December 1968; 2548 (XXIII) of 11 November 1969 and 3103 (XXIII) of 12 December 1973.

²⁴ - At its 35th session, the UN General Assembly adopted on 4 December 1980 resolution 35/48 on the drafting of an international convention against the

African states actively participated in the drafting of the new humanitarian law. They approved it and several have since ratified these new instruments, the 1977 Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions. Therefore, International humanitarian law as it stands today is not a law which is alien to Africans. It is in line with their most ancient values and humanitarian traditions. It reflects the concerns which Africans shared and the constructive efforts to which they contributed.

Many African notables, however, are disturbed by the breaches of humanitarian rules committed in the conflicts which ravage the continent. The modern soldier is trained to kill, in both international and non-international armed conflicts. The only way to avoid breaches is to apply the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law which must be known in order to be applied.

But in order to attain this end it is not sufficient for sovereigns to promulgate new laws. It is essential too, that they make these laws known among all people, so that when a war is declared, the men called upon to take up arms to defend the causes of the belligerent States, may be thoroughly impregnated with the special rights and duties attached to the execution of such a command.²⁵

5.0 Emerging Independence in the African continent

In the 1960s, the newly independent African states inherited the colonial demarcated boundaries, together with the challenge that legacy posed to their territorial integrity to their attempts to achieve national unity. The challenge was compounded by the fact that the framework of colonial laws and institutions which some new states inherited had been designed to exploit local divisions, not overcome the understandably, therefore, the simultaneous tasks of state-building and nation building preoccupied many of the newly independent states,

recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries. A 35-member ad hoc drafting committee was appointed.

²⁵ - The Laws of War on Land. Manual published by the Institute of International Law at Oxford, 9 September 1880. Resolutions of the Institute of International Law, Scott, J. B. (Ed), New York, Oxford University Press, 1915, p. 26. The Laws of Armed Conflicts: A Collection of Conventions, Resolutions and Other Documents, Edited by D. Schindler and J. Toman, 3rd revised and complete edition; Dordrecht, Martinus Nijhoff publishers, Geneva, Henry Dunant Institute, 1988, p. 37.

and were given new momentum by the events that follow the outbreak of the secessionist fighting in the Congo. Too often, however, necessary building of national unity was pursued through the heavy centralization of political and economic power and suppression of political pluralism. Predictably, political monopolies often led to corruption, nepotism, complacency and the abuse of power.

The era of serious conflict over states boundaries in Africa has largely passed, aided by the 1963 decision of the then organization of African unity (OAU) to accept the boundaries which African states had inherited from colonial authorities. However, the challenge of forging a genuine national identity from among disparate and often competing communities has remained.

The birth of the OAU in 1963 heralded the beginning of the end of Africa's colonial era. At its inception OAU had 32 independent member States which later became 53. From the beginning, the OAU recognized the imperfections of national boundaries. It made the choice that, if Africa was to remain stable, the boundaries that existed at independence should remain inviolate. This principle was enshrined in a 1964 resolution and has remained OAU policy since then²⁶.

As a founding principle, the OAU signaled its intention "to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa". Many African countries fought hard to gain their independence. In the former Portuguese colonies, the struggle was both lengthy and bitter. The overthrow of the Salazar regime in the mid-1970s created a power vacuum. In Angola, the collapse of weak transitional arrangements left three liberation movements in armed competition. In Mozambique, Frelimo had only partially consolidated its authority in the North of the country when it found itself in power. Both countries became victims of a cold war proxy confrontation and a South African campaign fought by the

27--"Resolving Conflict in Africa", Africa Policy and Economics Department, Department for International Development, Cabinet Sub-Committee on Conflict Prevention in Africa

The causes of conflict in Africa – consultation document – March 2001 3
94 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5JL- UK.

former apartheid regime, which sought to destabilize the “front line” states.

However, most countries in Africa went through a relatively smooth transition to independence. Adherence to OAU principles guaranteed a high level of national stability within the continent. The majority of newly independent countries defined the role of the state in development terms, seeking to harness national resources towards ensuring economic growth.

The structures and institutions of the state, however, remained relatively undeveloped through the 1960s, the focus being on building those institutions that allowed for the exploitation and management of resources. There emerged an African leadership system, based on centralization of power and patronage networks that allowed little popular involvement in government at national or local level.

The Horn of Africa was an exception. The Somalis never accepted their externally imposed borders and for decades unsuccessfully pursued the vision of a greater Somalia. The UN's acquiescence when Ethiopia ended the federation with Eritrea compounded the problems of the region. The continuing problems of Sudan also arise from failure to establish a political structure that adequately reflects the real differences of the South²⁷ until after the last referendum which paved way for establishing the Southern Sudan as a sovereign state. The inability to resolve some of these issues has sustained conflict at different levels of intensity for many years.

6.0 Post Cold War Armed Violence in Africa

Non-international armed conflict or internal wars remain the dominant form of conflict in Africa. However, the number of wars has halved since the 1990s and the nature of the conflicts has changed significantly with the lines between criminal and political violence becoming increasingly blurred. As the World Development Report 2011 states, ‘the remaining forms of conflict and violence do not fit neatly either into “war” or “peace”, or into “criminal violence” or “political

²⁷ - Ibid

violence”²⁸. The 2011 Global Burden of Armed Violence, therefore, challenges compartmentalized approaches to armed violence. It provides a global overview of different forms of violence, tries to understand how violence manifests in various contexts and how forms of violence interact with one another.²⁹ Scott Straus in the year 2012, provides the following crisp summary on the changing nature of conflict: ‘Today’s wars are typically fought on the peripheries of states, and insurgents tend to be militarily weak and factionalized.’³⁰

The latter part of the Cold War was a particularly violent period characterized by protracted proxy wars fought by protagonists in Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa and South-East Asia over several decades. According to both the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)³¹ and the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer,³² there were steady increases in the number of armed-conflict incidents, casualties and civilians affected during this period.

After the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, some previously frozen conflicts in Africa reignited violently, including those in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). After this pent-up conflict pressure was released, a steady decline ensued. In a number of instances, insurgencies that had been externally funded before, and therefore had benefitted financially from the Cold War, turned inward for resources. They used diamonds (UNITA and the RUF in Angola), coltan (various factions in the eastern DRC), coffee and cacao (in Côte d’Ivoire), and even charcoal (in Somalia) as alternative sources of revenue. Generally, these ‘resource-based insurgencies’³³ were unable to grow into large-scale fighting forces and lacked the strength to challenge the dominant party in the capital. However, there have been exceptions in recent years, such as the

²⁸ - World Bank, World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development, 2011, 2.

²⁹ - Geneva Declaration Secretariat, Global burden of armed violence 2011, 5f.

³⁰ - Scott Straus, Wars do end! Changing patterns of political violence in sub-Saharan Africa, *African Affairs* 111(443) (2012), 181.

³¹ - Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), www.ucdp.uu.se/database.

³² - HIIK, Heidelberg Conflict Barometer 2011.

³³ - Jakkie Cilliers, Resource wars – a new type of insurgency, in Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich (eds), *Angola’s war economy, Peace, profit or plunder?* Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2000.

extreme cases of Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR), where the weakening of the armed forces was significant.

In the armed conflict in northern Mali, previous allies, Tuareg and Islamist rebels, fought each other in the latter stages of Operation Serval in January 2013 when French forces recaptured Mali's north. Also, in the eastern provinces of the DRC, the M23 rebel movement split into different factions ahead of the decision to deploy a neutral intervention force as part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC.

Therefore, scholars recognize 'the reality of a messy empirical record in which non-state groups are frequently racked by internal differences and struggles'³⁴ which complicates the picture of state versus non-state actors.

In addition, several of today's insurgent groups have strong transnational characteristics and move relatively easily across borders and between states. However, few present a significant military threat to governments or are in a position to seize and hold large strips of territory. Some fight on the periphery of fairly well-consolidated states, as in Senegal, Mali and Nigeria, whereas others exploit the weak central authority of countries such as the DRC.³⁵ Another well-known example is al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, which originally fought to overthrow the Algerian government while consolidating its activities across the Sahel region, particularly in northern Mali.

7.0 The Basis of African Union (AU) Peace Building in Africa

When the AU was born, conflict patterns were starting to change from inter-state towards greater incidence of intra-state conflict³⁶. New key factors of conflict also emerged, such as: ethnicisation of political and power struggles, competition over scarce resources and access to state

³⁴ - W. Pearlman and K.G. Cunningham, Non state actors, fragmentation, and conflict processes, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(1), 4; Straus, *Wars do end!*, 181.

³⁵ - Straus, *Wars do end!*, 181–182; I. Salehan, *Rebels without borders: transnational insurgencies in world politics*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009.

³⁶ - Olympio F.K.N. 2004. *Transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)*

power, violence fuelled by proliferation of small arms, armed groups influenced by politico-religious ideologies, and secession-seeking groups who wished to leave their nation states³⁷.

This revealed the underlying problem of the failure of the African state to protect and provide for its population. It became a state that was fragile and without full control over the whole of its territory. Rebel groups and militia could thrive outside protected capital cities and resourced towns.

It turned out that this state was elitist, factionalist, tribalist, militaristic and autocratic, implicated more in oppressing and brutalizing its people than offering social and economic development or ensuring security or building peace.¹ It is in this context that the AU refined and expanded the OAU experience with peace missions, to build its approach to peace building, but this remains a work in progress.

The continental peace architecture provides an institutional framework for implementing the concept of a comprehensive peace that encompasses conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. At the pinnacle of this architecture is the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) established in 2004 with ten members elected for two-year terms and five for three-year terms in order to provide some stability and continuity to the Council's leadership. The focus of the PSC is similar to that of the OAU Central Organ, i.e. to prevent and resolve conflicts by monitoring potential security threats throughout the continent³⁸. It sends fact-finding missions and can authorize AU interventions in the form of peace envoys, observer missions, mediators, good offices, technical support teams, and armed forces to keep peace after agreements. Article 7(e) of the Protocol Relating to Establishment of the Peace and Security Council operationalizes the AU Constitutive Act's principle of non-indifference by empowering the Council to recommend military interventions for authorization by the AU Assembly in cases of crimes

³⁷ - Bujra, Abdullah. 2002. African conflicts: their causes and their political and social environment. DPMF Occasional Paper 4, Addis Ababa, pp. 5-6. Available from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.678.4533&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

³⁸ - Baregu, Mwesiga ed. 2011. Understanding obstacles to peace: Actors, interests, and strategies in Africa's great lakes region. Kampala, Fountain Publishers.

against humanity, genocide and war crimes³⁹. This is a new dynamic in Africa's peace agenda – a continental decision-making platform for peace building plus the principle of non-indifference towards violence within states. Its success will be related to whether and how the continent manages to undo the curse of Berlin which infects the states, the economies and society in general. Otherwise, this architecture will be remembered only for its great promise rather than its actual effect on the ground.

7.1 AU and the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

The African regional economic communities which serve as regional standby force consist of five regional brigades and enables the AU to intervene in a coordinated fashion in a conflict situation. In this regard:

- 1- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).
- 2- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
- 3- The Southern African Development Community (SADC).
- 4- The Economic Community of Central African States (ECASS).
- 5- The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).

They all have responsibilities to make, secure and build peace in the regions. In this way, the AU framework for peace building encourages regions to take responsibility for peace building in conflict situations; thus, the AU implements the principle of subsidiarity in order to build the capability of the regional economic communities to ensure peace in the regions⁴⁰. No other continent in the world uses regional structures for peace building in the same fashion.

The SADC role in successful peace processes in Madagascar, Lesotho and Zimbabwe is a case in point. It took the lead in facilitating mediation processes, in deploying security forces in the case of Lesotho to secure peace, and in peace building measures like training,

³⁹ - African Union (AU) 2002. Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council. Available from: <http://www.au.int/en/treaties/protocol-relating-establishment-peace-and-security-council-african-union> [Accessed 2 April 2014].

⁴⁰ - Adibe, C. E. 2003. Do regional organizations matter? Comparing the conflict management in West Africa and Great Lakes region. In: Bouldon, Jane ed. dealing with conflict in Africa – The United Nations and regional organizations. New York, NY, Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 105–114.

confidence building and humanitarian assistance. Its leaders reported regularly to the AU/ PSC where they also sought endorsement of their peace building efforts and looked for refreshed mandates; and the AU relied heavily on the ability of the region to provide political, security and financial resources to these peace processes. As a result, the burden of supplying resources shifted to the regional organization whereas in many other peace missions, the AU shoulders the bulk of the burden with the help of outsiders. The analysis shows that this devolution of peace building responsibilities strengthened the capacity of the regional organization to respond swiftly to prevent, manage and resolve conflict for purposes of building permanent peace⁴¹. The work of the EAC in bringing peace back to Burundi in 2015⁴² and the IGAD role in facilitating South Sudan's peace negotiations after a devastating civil war in 2016 vindicate the AU approach of devolving responsibility for peace building to regional organizations closest to the situations. In all occasions, the impact is, among others, a stronger capacity to building peace at the regional levels. It is an approach that is designed to help strengthen regions and promote a regional integration that transcends the limitations of involved nation states with their logics of power as dominance rather than cooperation⁴³.

But there is uneven performance and effect in the AU-RECs vertical coordination for peace building with some RECs, like SADC and EAC, showing signs of maturity in taking responsibility for peace in their respective regions, while others, like ECCAS and Comminute Économique et Monétaire des États de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC), struggle in the absence of a willing and capable state or two to underwrite regional agency. Of course, the AMU remains moribund as a result of the broader geopolitical contestations over the Mediterranean and the Saharawi question. The pursuit of opportunities arising from the principle of subsidiarity in the AU Constitutive Act requires a willing and able set of leaders motivated by common good, but not all regions have this advantage. Secondly, the AU-RECs

⁴¹ - Zondi, Siphamandla and Busisiwe Khaba 2014. The Madagascar crisis, SADC mediation and the changing Indian oceanic order. *Africa Insight*, 43 (4), pp. 1–17.

⁴² - International Crisis Group (ICG) 2016. Insights from the Burundian crisis (III): Back to Arusha and the politics of dialogue. *Commentary/Africa*, 7 July 2016. Available from: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/burundi/insights-burundian-crisis-iii-back-arusha-and-politics-dialogue>.

⁴³ - Adejumbi, Said 1998. The crisis of elections and democracy in Africa. *Africa Quarterly*, 38 (2), pp. 29–53.

interface still suffers from poor coordination, the AU having failed to develop mechanisms to coordinate implementation of its decisions at regional levels and to assist regions to communicate their interests to the AU⁴⁴. The envoys now exchanged between the regions and the AU have poorly defined roles, and very little of this is about ensuring cohesion between the two levels of governance. Thirdly, there is still limited horizontal coordination and harmonization among RECs and as a result there is no notable case of REC-REC coordination of a peace initiative. Fourthly, the RECs require well-developed institutional mechanisms to deliver on the promise of regional responsibility for peace, which includes the full operationalizing of standby forces, institutions for political coordination of peace efforts, capacities for mediation and peace-making, and structures for driving regional post-conflict rebuilding. For instance, while ECOWAS established the long-awaited Mediation Support Division in the ECOWAS Commission only in 2015, other elements of the peace architecture – as the Mali crisis of 2012 showed – including an early warning capability, a rapid military response force and post-conflict peace building, remain work in progress⁴⁵.

There is room for building the capacity of RECs to take on the responsibility for peace in regions and between regions, but this is not yet a major consideration in the upper echelons of the AU Peace and Security Architecture. Part of the reason for this is that Africa is battling to overcome the curse of Berlin that is manifest in what Ngugi wa Thiong'o called dimemberment and what Mazrui called fragmentation of the African polity⁴⁶. Until these weaknesses are remedied, the AU will be forced to rely on UN peacekeeping forces or former colonial powers like France to respond effectively to urgent security crises as it happened recently in Mali. Under these conditions, there can be no neocolonial peace. A lasting peace must accompany the building of

⁴⁴ - Obuoga, B.O. 2016. Building regional capacity for conflict prevention and peace building in the Great Lakes Region. Conflict Trends, 1. Durban, ACCORD. Available from: <http://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/building-regional-capacity-conflict-prevention-peacebuilding-great-lakes-region/>.

⁴⁵ - Odigie, B. 2016. The institutionalisation of mediation support within the ECOWAS Commission. Policy and Practice Brief 042. Durban, ACCORD.

⁴⁶ - Mazrui, Ali 2010. Black Berlin and the curse of fragmentation: From Bismarck to Barack. In: Adebajo, A. Ed. The Curse of Berlin: Africa after the cold war. Scottsville, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. Mignolo, Walter and Arturo Escobar eds. 2010. Globalization and the Decolonial Option. London, Routledge.

national unity, regional cohesion and continental integration – a set of conditions opposite to those arising from the curse of Berlin.

7.2 AU and the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework

Many of the lessons learned from various experiments in peace building during the latter years of the AU were integrated into the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework whose development began when in 2002 the implementation committee of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) decided that Africa's peace building approach would be an all-embracing strategy including a) restoring security; b) managing political transition; c) anchoring socio-economic development; d) promoting human rights and justice; and e) resource mobilization⁴⁷.

These five dimensions are designed to be mutually reinforcing and complementary. The AU believes that there is no need to place these in a sequence, because it does not accept the logic that you need one element to be fully in place before the next phase kicks in, as is often the case with the UN and Western approaches to peace building. It is assumed in the mainstream literature that conflict prevention, conflict resolution, reconstruction, peacekeeping, and peace building form a linear framework that must be followed in that order. Therefore, the actual implementation of this AU policy differs from one conflict situation to another. The need to be context-specific and flexible in implementing this policy is an important feature of the AU approach to peace building. Central to the policy is the need to pursue security, development and peace simultaneously at all times. Yet, in practice the AU follows the Western and UN approaches that assume the sequencing of interventions from prevention to post-conflict reconstruction as both the 2003 Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council (Art. 20) and the policy framework referred to above suggest. Actually, the failure to deploy troops to quell terror attacks on Mali in 2013⁴⁸ and the failure to send troops alongside mediators in the Central African Republic illustrate the pitfalls of the commitment to a

⁴⁷ - New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) 2005. African post-conflict reconstruction policy framework. Midrand, NEPAD Secretariat.

⁴⁸- Aning, Kwesi 2016. African Agency in R2P: Interventions by the African Union and ECOWAS in Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Libya. *International Studies Review*, 17, pp. 120–133.

linear process of sequencing interventions⁴⁹. In this approach, the underlying sources of problems, including the inherited violent neo-colonial state, economy and organization of society, are maintained, giving Africa only temporary respite from violence and/or a merely fragile peace. More than a decade ago, the literature already pointed to shallow peace processes that failed to transform the state and society so that they become pillars of peace and development⁵⁰.

7.3 Uniqueness of the AU Peace Building Approach

‘Unique’ describes and specifies an approach to peace building which is particularly African and born out of the African experience. This does not mean features that cannot be found in some form in peace building outside Africa. But it does mean that these features are from Africa’s contribution to thinking and practice about peace building. What is principally unique about the AU approach to peace building is its historical genesis from peace initiatives driven by the OAU and then the AU. Part of it has to do with the contextualization of central tenets of the UN’s Agenda for Peace. Methodologically speaking, we have learned from the writings of Archie Mafeje⁵¹, Georges Nzongola-Ntalanga⁵², Tiyaambe Zeleza⁵³, Molefi Asante⁵⁴, Ngugi wa Thiong’o⁵⁵ and Paulin Hountondji⁵⁶ that the authenticity of what is African arises from the fact that Africa’s unique history presently produces particular

⁴⁹ - AU Election Observation Mission 2016. Preliminary Statement on the 30th December 2015 Presidential and Legislative Elections in the Central African Republic. January 2. Addis Ababa, AU PSC.

⁵⁰ - Baregu, Mwesiga and Christopher Landsberg eds. 2002. *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s evolving Security Architecture*. Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

⁵¹ - Mafeje, Archie 2000. *Africanity: A combative ontology*, CODESRIA Bulletin, 2 (1 & 2), pp. 66–71.

⁵² - Nzongola-Ntalanga, Georges 1987. *Revolution and counter-revolution in Africa*. London, Zed Books.

⁵³ - Zeleza, Paul Tiyaambe 2006. *The study of Africa: Volume 1: Disciplinary and interdisciplinary encounters*, Dakar, CODESRIA Books

⁵⁴ - Asante, Molefi K. 1990. *Kemet, afrocentricity and knowledge*. Trenton, Africa World Press.

⁵⁵ - Wa Thiong’o, Ngugi 1981. *Writers in politics*. London, Heinemann.

⁵⁶ - Hountondji, Paulin ed. 1997. *Endogenous knowledge: Research trails*. Dakar, CODESRIA Books.

African realities, thought patterns, approaches and orientations. This is true of all areas of public policy and politics including peace building.

No serious study of an African idea or reality can avoid the historical evolution of today's realities.

7.4 Key Tenets of the Particular AU Approach to Peace Building

The AU approach has benefitted from the comprehensiveness of the conceptual basis of its peace interventions. This mirrors the Agenda for Peace conceptual framework that sees four key pillars of the peace agenda (prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building) as interconnected, interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The AU sees peace as linked to development as the basis of this framework. Therefore, the AU approach has benefited from this holistic approach to thinking about peace and this leads to comprehensive peace interventions.

In line with the comprehensiveness of the conceptual framework, the AU peace interventions are multi-disciplinary in the sense that they include capacities to anticipate, de-escalate, secure, monitor and support post-conflict development. The capacities to prevent conflict, to resolve on-going conflict, to protect peace processes and to build new and peaceful societies are central to the AU approach. Where there is a strong leadership on the ground in the form of a Special Representative or peace diplomat, and where there is strong coordination among key players in an AU peace mission, the chances for success are much enhanced. Challenges have arisen, however, when the AU peace intervention is undertaken after conflict has broken out but before any meaningful peace process takes root, because it then gets translated into an endless peace enforcement intervention.

7.5 Legal Justification of AU intervention in domestic affairs of African states

The qualitative difference between the OAU and AU approaches to peace building is in the legal framework. Unlike the OAU Charter, the AU Constitutive Act permits intervention in member states in cases of crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. This removes the old problem where the pan-Africanist ideal of peace and prosperity is hampered by the Westphalia principle of non-intervention in national

affairs. On this basis, having formally adopted the principle of non-indifference in Sirte, Libya, in 1999, two years before the idea of Responsibility to Protect was proposed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, Africa is the first region to provide the legal framework for setting aside the principle of non-intervention in specific circumstances, before the international community adopted the principle of Responsibility to Protect. Therefore, the AU Constitutive Act, the Protocol establishing the PSC and other decisions of the AU on peace provide a conducive legal-political environment for comprehensive AU peace missions. This brings the AU's concept of peace building closer to the ideals of the Responsibility to Protect – towards which the world has been working.

7.5.1 It forms part of a Comprehensive African Peace Architecture

The establishment of a continental peace and security architecture with the PSC at the center is an outcome of lessons learned in the latter years of the OAU when the Central Organ on security was established with positive effect in all major OAU peace interventions. The African Standby Force and its regional brigades in all five regions of the AU are meant to enable the AU to respond timeously to incidents of violence defined in Article 3 of the Protocol establishing the PSC. This provides the necessary institutional framework for the support of the peace building interventions.

7.5.2 It promotes AU-UN Cooperation for Peace Building

Clearly, the cooperation between the UN and the AU in peace building in Africa is positive for building and strengthening African capacity for peace building as well as for boosting the UN interface with regional organizations in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity. The AU approach is to lay the ground for such cooperation through comprehensive peace missions of its own, focused on anticipating conflict hotspots, confidence building and peacekeeping. This is essential for African ownership of hybrid missions as well as for building African capacity for peace building. The challenge is to develop a shared conceptual framework for the AU and UN. In spite of AU unconcern, its peace building is supported by effective peace initiatives from below.

The AU policies and protocols pay lip service to enabling citizen involvement in the implementation of AU programs. The Post-Conflict Development and Reconstruction policy does the same. As a result, efforts from below function mainly because citizens pursue them rather than because governments enable them. African civil society interventions for peace are many and various. The most notable include the women-driven efforts that helped transform the situation from conflict to a peace process in Liberia when organizations like the Women in Peace building Program (WIPNET), the Mano River Women of Peace Network (MARWOPNET) and Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-A) created a peace movement that politicians and rebel groups could not ignore. These formations remained vigilant enough to support social efforts to reintegrate demobilized fighters, build community centers for normalizing community relations, provide counselling for the affected, engage in post-war community rebuilding, and convene dialogues to keep peace alive⁵⁷ UNIFEM; Ecoma⁵⁸; WIPSEN-Africa⁵⁹. Such peace building initiatives from below have enjoyed the support of intra-African and extra-African civil society networks as well as structures of the UN like the UN-INSTRAW and UNWOMEN⁶⁰. They have become crucial for pursuing the full implementation of UN Resolution 1325. This is all part of efforts at attaining peace from below, involving organs of civil society where women's formations play a prominent role – efforts which have increased in number, scale and impact. This is in spite of a political, security, and legal environment that discourages the

⁵⁷ - United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) 2007. Liberian women articulate priorities for the reconstruction of the country. 12 February, Forum on Symposium on Gender and Development in Liberia in Washington, D.C. Available from:

http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=557.

⁵⁸ - Ecoma, Alaga 2009. Gender perspectives on security sector reform process in West Africa – case studies of Liberia and Sierra Leone. Geneva, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF).

⁵⁹ - Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi 2009. Something torn and new: An African Renaissance. New York, Basic Books. Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa) 2009. Workshop on indicators of peace consolidation from a gender perspective: The case of Liberia including SCR 1325 & SCR 182. February 19–20, Monrovia, WIPSEN-Africa.

⁶⁰ - Hendricks, Cheryl and M. Chivasa 2008. Women and peace building in Africa. Workshop Report, 24–25 November, Pretoria. Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies.

involvement of formations from below in AU-driven peace building projects⁶¹.

7.6 AU's Challenges for Peace Building in Africa

Even though the AU to some extent has recorded successes in resolving conflicts in some African countries and is still trying in terms of peace building in the continent, like the role it played for peace building in Sudan and Burundi, it still faces some challenges that need to be addressed. Some of the main challenges hindering progress of the AU's initiatives in resolving conflict in Africa can be outlined in the following paragraphs.

7.6.1 Over-reliance on External Funding

The reliance on former colonial powers and other external forces (like China) for financial and technical resources seriously undermine the AU's peace building. 'Borrowed waters do not quench one's thirst' is an African proverb that supports the pan-African ideal of self-reliance. Thus, dependence on external financing of peace building defeats the very purpose of the AU approach. We have shown that the AU approach is founded on African renaissance and on the ideals of decolonizing the world; but these ideals cannot be achieved while allowing Western powers space to influence what Africa thinks and does to this end. The failure of the AU to finance its programs generally and the inability of many of its member states to finance their regular budgets is a major threat to the second decolonization of Africa and its aim to finish the incomplete process of liberating the continent. This resource problem points to a fundamental weakness in the post-colonial African condition, and is a serious contributor to the post-colonial realities of deferred dreams, shattered expectations and illusions of change. Over-reliance on generous European Union funding mainly and other external donors means that AU's peace building is not sustainable and cannot be considered to be fully sovereign and African. Assistance from the UN is better because the UN is an inclusive global organization, but it still can be a conduit of imperial designs of the few dominant powers in the world, as happened when the UN played a

⁶¹ - Maphosa, L.B., L. DeLuca and A. Keasley eds. 2014. Building peace from within: An examination of community-based peace building and transitions in Africa. Pretoria, Africa Institute of South Africa.

problematic role alongside France in Côte d'Ivoire's coup and violence that brought the current government into power⁶².

7.6.2 The Obsession with Saving the Inherited Neo-colonial State

It is clear that like the states that constitute it as an intergovernmental organization, the AU is still trapped in state-centric approaches to peace, focusing more on rebuilding the state that was never authentic in the first place, than on transforming society as a whole. It has been about establishing the semblance of a functioning nation-state in the form of governmental institutions for providing services and security rather than re-orienting citizenry or boosting indigenous civil society structures that form part of social capital for peace and development. Such rebuilding should ideally be linked to institution building, leadership development, citizenship enhancement, economic rejuvenation. At a practical level, the conflict-resolution and peacekeeping components must be seen as the start to the post-conflict reconstruction and development process. Post-conflict does not mean that interventions start after conflict has ended, but that the focus of intervention is measured by what happens after agreements are implemented fully.

Conclusion

The AU approach to peace building has evolved from the terrible experiences of the early OAU years to improved interventions in the later years of the OAU. The AU inherited the lessons learned and improvements begun under the OAU, but benefitted also from UN-driven ideas of holistic and comprehensive pursuit of peace and development. This has produced the following features that now characterize the particular nature of the AU approach to peace building:

It is based on a holistic concept of peace that embraces all the elements of the UN Agenda for Peace (conflict prevention/anticipation, conflict

⁶² - Zounmenou, David (2016). Côte d'Ivoire's Post-Conflict Challenges. Available from:
<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:rp7QAc7zqOsJ:mercury.et hz.ch/serviceengine/Files>

resolution/peacemaking, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction.

It comprises a comprehensive peace architecture that ranges from early warning capacity to post-conflict rebuilding for peace, but this remains underdeveloped mainly due to resource constraints and lack of political will on the part of African governments.

It uses a peace building framework anchored on balance between continental leadership and regional responsibility for peace; but not all regional economic communities are ready to give effect to this both in terms of capability and in respect of political will to act.

It benefits from the growing participation of non-state actors in supporting state-driven peace processes; though this is far from enthusiastic on the part of governments and still suffers the weaknesses to do with donor-driven civil society initiatives, neo-colonial suspicions, imposing models from Euro-American history, and a bias towards technical interventions.

Factors that undermine the uniqueness of African peace building include:

- *Limited horizontal coordination and interface both among RECs and among individual countries in building sustainable peace;

- *Over-reliance on external resources for peace building, thus limiting African ownership of initiatives;

- *Failure to transform the inherited colonial state and economy as a necessary condition for building the fundamentals of post-colonial peace.

AU interventions have been relatively successful in de-escalating conflict and restoring the authority of the state, but they have not been successful in transforming the conditions that lead to an elusive colonial type of peace in Africa. Until the very idea of the modern nation-state on African soil is resolved, Africa will remain a mortuary where beautiful concepts and models of peace building die, failing to bringing about lasting peace. The colonial state and modern society as inherited are founded on the paradigm of war, a logic of violence that

does not die at independence. It is this underlying colonial/neo-colonial structure of violence that must be overcome for a truly authentic peace paradigm to emerge. In the meantime, the AU peace building efforts need to encourage the interface between efforts from below and those from above, between state-driven and community-driven interventions, and between Eurocentric and Afrocentric peace building models. Research is needed to explore this in some detail.