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**The African Union's Foray into Peacekeeping: Lessons from the Hybrid
Mission in Darfur**

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Abstract

The African Union (AU) was officially inaugurated on July 2002, and a year later it had already deployed its first peace operation in Burundi. The AU subsequently deployed peacekeeping missions in Darfur, in 2004, and in Somalia, in 2007. This article will examine the AU's foray into peacekeeping which appears to have been hasty, erratic, and not carefully planned. The article will also assess the extent to which what the AU has been doing can be defined as peacekeeping using the Brahimi Criterion for the deployment of operations. The article will briefly assess the AU's operations in Burundi and Somalia before focusing on the joint AU-United Nations (UN) hybrid mission in Darfur. The article examines whether the hybrid mission represents a paradigm shift in peacekeeping, based on the way that it was launched and how it is currently operated. The article examines whether the hybrid mission fulfils the Brahimi Criterion, and whether it can serve as a model for future peacekeeping operations in Africa. The article concludes that the AU has a better chance of success when it undertakes a concise and focused operation with a clear mandate and the modicum of logistics to ensure its effective implementation, as demonstrated by its experiences in Burundi. The AU's efforts in Somalia has left it mired in an open-ended complex emergency with no easy remedy. The organisation's joint effort with the UN in Darfur is similarly constrained by the absence of a peace to keep. The hybrid mission therefore falls short of the Brahimi Criterion and suggest that UN intervention following an initial AU peace operation is not necessarily a panacea to the continent's peacekeeping challenges.

Peacekeeping in Context

The 1992 *An Agenda for Peace*, published by the former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, argued for proactive peacemaking and humanitarian intervention.¹ The report outlined suggestions for enabling inter-governmental organisations to respond quickly and effectively to threats to international peace and security in the post-Cold War era. In particular, four major areas of activity were identified: preventive diplomacy; peacemaking; peacekeeping; and post-conflict peacebuilding. Preventive diplomacy strives to resolve a dispute before it escalates into violence. Peacemaking seeks to promote a ceasefire and to negotiate an agreement. Peacekeeping proceeds after the out-break of violence and involves 'the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well.'² These initiatives ideally are coordinated and integrated in order to ensure post-conflict peacebuilding, which includes the programmes and activities that will sustain the peace and prevent any future outbreak of violent conflict, and may include addressing diplomatic, political, social, military issues as well as reforming the security sector and consolidating economic development.

Therefore, peacekeeping is very clearly defined as part of the international community's repertoire for consolidating peace in war-affected countries. According to the *Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations* 'peacekeeping is based on the principle that an impartial presence on the ground can ease tensions between hostile parties and create space for political negotiations'.³ The Handbook further notes that 'peacekeeping can help bridge the gap between the cessation of hostilities and a durable peace, but only if the parties to a conflict have the political will needed to reach the goal'.⁴ The realities on the ground have required the evolution of peacekeeping to include both military tasks such as monitoring ceasefires and patrolling buffer zones between hostile parties, and non-military tasks such as civilian policing; oversight of political and civil affairs; monitoring and protecting human rights; ensuring the promotion of the rule of law; providing access for humanitarian assistance; supporting reconstruction; undertaking public information; and gender mainstreaming.

Richard Gowan argues that the UN is confronted with a 'systemic crisis' because its traditional framework for guiding deployment as well as 'many of its assumptions about transitions from war to peace have been shown wanting in cases from Afghanistan to the Democratic Republic of Congo'.⁵ The UN has 'stumbled into a series of missions in an increasingly ad hoc fashion' the consequences of which have been the inability to effectively plan, prepare and deploy effective peacekeeping operations on the ground.

The Brahimi Criterion of Peacekeeping

To remedy this perceived crisis in peacekeeping the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, published a report issued by a panel chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, former Foreign Minister of Algeria and an erstwhile UN Under-Secretary-General. The Brahimi Report made recommendations on strategic, political and operational improvements to ensuring more effective peacekeeping operations.⁶ Among the numerous suggestions issued by the Brahimi Report, are five key recommendations which can be postulated as the minimum criteria for peacekeeping operations. These include:

- The international community must ensure that peacekeeping is an appropriate option, given the nature of the conflict;
- There must be peace to keep. The parties to a conflict must be willing to cease fighting and pursue their objectives through political and other non-violent means;
- All key parties to a conflict must agree to the UN's involvement and its role in helping them resolve their conflict;
- The peacekeeping operation must be part of a more comprehensive strategy to help resolve a conflict by taking into account its regional dimension, and addressing the political, economic, developmental, institution-building, humanitarian and human rights aspects;
- The UN Security Council must ensure that the mandate is achievable. This includes authorizing the deployment of an appropriate number of troops to implement a mission's mandate and the provision by member states of adequately trained and equipped troops.

While these five recommendations are not representative of the complete range of suggestions proposed by the Brahimi Report, they constitute what one could define as the lowest common denominator for all peacekeeping operations. In other words, these five recommendations can be conceived as embodying the minimum 'Brahimi Criterion' for peacekeeping operations.

Even though on the surface of it the Brahimi Criterion might appear restricting in a world where at a given point in time politics is the art of what is possible, it is still a necessary minimum standard to ensure the successful implementation of peacekeeping operations. The reality of contemporary international politics is that even this minimum Brahimi Criterion is not always met when undertaking peacekeeping missions. The Brahimi Criterion describes what peacekeeping missions should aspire to rather than what they currently embody. In this sense, the Brahimi Criterion is an idealised vision of peacekeeping in a disordered world.

The African Union's Framework for Peacekeeping

The conflicts that afflicted the African continent from the end of the Cold War to the first decade of the twenty-first century demanded that urgent changes be made to the way of doing things at a regional level.⁷ It became increasingly clear to many leaders on the African continent that it was necessary again to find a way to revive the spirit of Pan-Africanism as a vehicle to resolve urgent problems. Pan-Africanism was again taken to another level with the launching of the African Union, first as an idea at pen-ultimate Summit of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) convened in 1999, in Sirte Libya. Subsequently, the Constitutive Act of the African Union was signed, in Lome, Togo, on 11th July 2000. This paved the way for the official inauguration of the African Union, as the successor to the Organisation of African Unity, in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. In effect the African Union replaced the OAU and took on all its assets and liabilities.

The AU Peace and Security Council was established in 2004 through the Protocol Relating to the Peace and Security Council, of 2002.⁸ The AU's 15-member Peace and Security Council is mandated to conduct peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The Peace and Security Council is composed of 15 member countries (ten elected for a term of two years and five for a term of three years). The Chairperson of the African Union is assisted by a Commissioner in charge of Peace and Security to provide operational support to the Peace and Security Council as well as deploy efforts and take the necessary steps to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. When called upon to do so a Military Staff Committee provides the Council with advice with regards to situations on the ground. The Peace and Security Council initiates any peace operations by analysing a potential or existing crisis situation, which if necessary is followed by the deployment of fact-finding missions to the trouble spots. The Council then makes a decision or recommendation to authorize and legitimize the AU's intervention in internal crisis situations. Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act affirms the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State with respect to crisis situations. In specific, Article 7, item (e), of the Protocol on the Peace and Security Council, states that the Council can 'recommend to the Assembly (of Heads of State), intervention, on behalf of the Union, in a Member State in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, as defined in relevant international conventions and instruments'.⁹

To reinforce this provision the AU is working for the establishment of an African Standby Force by 2010 to cooperate where appropriate with the United Nations and sub-regional African organizations in conducting peace operations. The ASF will be comprised of five brigades from each of Africa's subregions: Southern, East, Central, West and North. The ASF will be in theory operational in 2010 with a standby capability. However, there are still a range of modalities that are required so that the ASF can tailor itself to address the peacekeeping and peace enforcement demands of the African continent. For example, the African Standby Force can only be effective if there is much closer coordination and co-operation between the AU's defence and foreign affairs ministries, and if a stable source of funding is found for the force. The AU has also established a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and a Panel of the Wise (PoW) to ensure an effective framework for conflict prevention, mediation and peacemaking on the continent.

In terms of the specific modalities for launching an AU peace operation, the decision comes from the AU Peace and Security Council, which meets regularly at the level of ambassadors based at the organisations' headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Council can also meet at the level of Ministers and Heads of State and Government expedite vital decisions on the need to intervene in a member state to prevent human rights atrocities or manage a conflict situation. Operationally, after the Peace and Security Council has taken the decision, then the AU Commission on Peace and Security implements the decision with inputs from AU member states. Specifically, the Peace Operations Support Division (PSOD) within the Commission's Directorate of Peace and Security oversees the logistical and operational issues pertaining to the deployment missions.

AU Peace Operations in Burundi

Burundi has been oscillating in a cycle of violence since it gained independence in 1962. There had been pogroms between Tutsis and Hutus in 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988 and 1991.¹⁰ In August 1993 between 100,000 and 200,000 people were killed in internecine violent conflict which prompted the United Nations to intervene in an effort to broker a peace agreement. Both former President Nyerere of Tanzania and President Mandela of South Africa facilitated peace talks between groups. In 2001 a transitional government was established but the situation remained precarious.¹¹ In yet more than a decade later Burundi was still on the brink and required an externally driven peacekeeping and peacebuilding initiative to be deployed.¹² The immediate concern for the international community was to prevent the genocidal tendencies that had so devastated the Great Lakes region from re-surfacing in this country. However, the UN was not prepared to deploy to Burundi because there was no consensus on whether there was peace to keep. The AU decided to initiate a peace operation in Burundi, in 2003, also known as the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB).¹³ This was the AU's first operation wholly initiated, planned and executed by its members. In this regard, it represented a milestone for the AU's in terms of self-reliance in operationalising and implementing peacekeeping. AMIB was mandated to build peace in a fluid and dynamic situation in which the country could potentially relapse back into violent conflict.

In April 2003, the AU deployed AMIB with more than 3,000 troops from South Africa, Ethiopia, and Mozambique to monitor the peace process and provide security.¹⁴ The AU appointed Mamadou Bah as its Special Representative to Burundi to oversee the peacekeeping and peacebuilding effort. One of the tasks of the AU force was to protect

returning politicians who would take part in the post-conflict transitional government. Other peacebuilding tasks included opening and operating secure centres and supervising the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of former militia back into their local communities. AMIB was also involved in creating conditions that would allow Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees, based in the eight Burundian provinces and three refugee camps in Tanzania, to return to their homes.

AMIB also had the task of establishing conditions which would lay the foundation for a UN peace operation to deploy to the country. As noted earlier, the UN was reluctant to enter into a situation in which there was the potential for a relapse into conflict. AMIB's role in this case was a vital and crucial one in creating conditions through which peace, albeit a fragile one, could be built in the country. By the end of its mission AMIB had succeeded in establishing relative peace to most provinces in Burundi, with the exception of the region outside Bujumbura where the Forces Nationale de Liberation (FNL) armed militia remained active. In the absence of the AU Mission Burundi would have been left to its own devices which probably would have led to an escalation of violent conflict. AMIB was therefore engaging in classic peacekeeping and peacebuilding predicated on the prevention of violence and the establishment of the conditions for reconciliation and reconstruction. Throughout its period of operation AMIB succeeded in de-escalating a potentially volatile situation and in February 2004 a UN evaluation team concluded that the conditions were appropriate to establish a UN peacekeeping operation in the country.

A whole host of challenges remained in the country, as the UN planned to take over, including the reintegrating of IDPs and refugees back into their communities. This included ensuring that returnees would have access to land in order to provide for themselves and ensure their own livelihood. Following the UN Security Council Resolution 1545, of 21 May 2004, to deploy a peacekeeping mission in Burundi, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General appointed a Special Representative, Ambassador Berhanu Dinka, to head the mission on 1 June 2004.¹⁵ The former AMIB troops belonging to the African Union were incorporated into the UN Peace Operation in Burundi (ONUB). By October 2006 some 20,000 militia and military personnel had been demobilised, but many still lacked the necessary economic opportunities and could pose a potential security threat.¹⁶ Therefore, peacebuilding challenges persisted in Burundi.

The United Nations Mission in Burundi (ONUB) was transformed in December 2006, into the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) currently coordinates international assistance. The UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) which was launched in June 2006 also adopted Burundi as one of its first focus countries, together with Sierra Leone. Some of the issues that BINUB and the UN PBC subsequently focused on included ensuring that there was adequate technical assistance for the development of a comprehensive Security Sector Reform Plan which includes the training of the Burundi National Police and army. These UN agencies have also been working to complete the demobilisation and integration of former combatants, as well as providing training for employment and access to micro-credit schemes.¹⁷ Even though the UN took over from the AU, the case of Burundi demonstrates that the continental body can in fact make useful, albeit limited, contributions in terms of peacekeeping interventions. The work is not yet complete and the AU, UN and its partners will of course need to continue with their concerted effort to ensure that peace prevails in Burundi.

Peacekeeping Operations in Somalia: A Brief Historical Context

The collapse of the central government in Somalia in 1991 came after decades of dictatorial rule by Siad Barre and three years of civil war. The coalition which succeeded Barre became embroiled in its own internal strife which led to increasing factionalisation in the country. The UN intervened to address the insecurity in the country with the deployment of the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in May 1992. The feuding clans made it virtually impossible for UNOSOM to deploy effectively and uphold its mandate. Consequently, the UN drew upon Chapter VII of its Charter and deployed what was thought to be a more robust mission in the form of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), ostensibly led by the United States of America (USA) and dubbed 'Operation Restore Hope'. UNITAF was to set the scene for another UN peacekeeping operation, known as UNOSOM II, which was tasked with undertaking disarmament of the warring factions as well as peacebuilding. However, the obstacles encountered by UNOSOM I resurfaced and the mission gradually became discredited and withdrew entirely from Somalia in 1995.¹⁸

After 18 years (1991-2009) of difficult peacemaking and peacekeeping initiatives Somalia is still in a state of insecurity. The persistence of violence in Somalia has caused tremendous damage and loss of life and prevented effective humanitarian intervention and relief work. In terms of regional security the continuing instability in Somalia has created a fertile ground for a range of armed militia, which are often clan-based, to wield significant power and control over sections of the country. Regional and international security has been affected in terms of the spill-over of refugees and armed militia into neighbouring countries particularly Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as the hijacking of sea-faring vessels in the Indian Ocean.

A peacemaking initiative led by the sub-regional organisation the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to the signing of an agreement in October 2004, in Nairobi, Kenya, between the main Somali clans to establish Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) including a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) which would strive to re-establish peace in the country. On 14 October 2004, the IGAD-led initiative laid the foundations for the election by members of the Somali Transitional Federal Parliament of President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as head of the TFG. The TFG subsequently went on to draft the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) which was adopted in November 2004. While a number of Western governments recognised the TFG as legitimate, it has yet to receive universal acclaim within Somalia's borders. Currently, the TFG governs from Baidoa, which is temporarily serving as the administrative capital of Somalia.

IGASOM's False Start

In February 2005, the AU authorised IGAD to send a peace mission to Somalia to provide security for the TFG to establish itself in the country. In March 2005, the IGAD defence chiefs adopted a plan to deploy 10,000 peacekeepers to Somalia in April of the same year. The idea was to utilise the peacekeeping mission to oversee the voluntary disarmament of the militia. However, this plan was misconceived largely because the IGAD member states lacked the necessary political will to see through the initiative. In addition, IGAD at the time did not possess an in-house capacity and framework to rapidly deploy peacekeepers to member states. Above all IGAD's Charter did not have a provision for the deployment of a

peace operation. Furthermore, there was no consensus among the various Somali factions about the appropriateness of a peacekeeping force in the country. However, on 6 December 2006 UN Security Council Resolution 1725 authorized 'IGAD and Member States of the African Union to establish a protection and training mission in Somalia' which was dubbed IGASOM. IGASOM never deployed to Somalia for all of the reasons stated above.

The African Union Mission in Somalia

Following a Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Somalia and the evaluation and recommendations of the AU Military Staff Committee the AU Peace and Security Council decided to authorize the deployment of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on 19 January 2007, for an initial period of 6 months with the mandate to:

- i. provide support for the TFIs (Transitional Federal Institutions) in their efforts towards stabilization of the situation in the country and the furtherance of dialogue and reconciliation;
- ii. facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance; and
- iii. create conducive conditions for long-term stabilization, reconstruction and development in Somalia

On 20 February 2007 UN Security Council adopted SC Resolution 1744, which further legitimized AMISOM's deployment. The UN is supporting AMISOM through an assistance cell to the AU in Addis Ababa primarily through the provision of military planners. The UN Security Council met with the AU Peace and Security Council 16 June 2007 and discussed the modalities for deeper collaboration. In particular, both bodies discussed the importance of stabilizing Somalia.

AMISOM was officially launched in March 2007 with 1,700 Ugandan troops. Burundi also deployed troops to bolster AMISOM. Towards the end of 2008 Nigeria pledged to deploy additional troops to buttress the Ugandan presence. Ghana and Malawi have also pledged to deploy troops to AMISOM however this has not yet materialised, and AMISOM is yet to reach its authorised strength of nine battalions. The PSC decision indicated that 'the concept of logistic support for AMISOM shall be based on the model of the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB).¹⁹ This effectively meant that the AU Commission would 'mobilize logistical support for the [Troop Contributing Countries] TCCs, as well as, funding from AU member states and partners to ensure that TCCs are reimbursed for the costs incurred in the course of their deployment, based on AU practice'.²⁰

AMISOM initially attempted to stabilise parts of Mogadishu and Baidoa in which it established its operations. AMISOM also sought to create the security conditions to enable the complete withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia. AMISOM further attempted to support national dialogue and reconciliation. The European Union (EU) initially supported the deployment of AMISOM with 15 million euros as well as providing planning assistance to several potential troop-contributing countries and logistical support for the AU military cell in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia invaded Somalia in 2006 with a view to buttressing the support for the fledgling Transitional Federal Institutions. This only inspired local armed militia to emerge to confront

this perceived occupation, which further fuelled instability and heightened the level of instability in the country. In January 2009, Ethiopia withdrew its 3,000 troops from Somalia. In addition, in December 2008, President Abdullahi Yusuf resigned stating that Somalia had been overrun by armed militia and that he could not legitimately exercise power or control, which are key attributes for a state that claims to have sovereignty over a particular territory. The multifarious groupings of insurgents have effectively assumed control of most of southern Somalia outside the capital Mogadishu and Baidoa, where the parliament sits. AMISOM troops have therefore been essentially restricted to their barracks and are unable to effectuate any significant transformation in the country in the absence of political consensus among the warring factions on how to reconstitute the Somalia. A communiqué issued by the AU Peace and Security Council, at its 163rd meeting held at a ministerial level, on 22 December 2008 condemned 'all acts of violence perpetrated against civilians and humanitarian workers, in violation of international humanitarian law, as well as attacks on AMISOM personnel and positions'.²¹ The country today remains on a precarious footing with no central sovereign authority or the local will and means to consolidate any form of authority.

AU Peace Operations in Darfur AMIS I

In February 2003 the Darfur region on the border of eastern Chad and western Sudan was afflicted by violent conflict initially between the Sudanese government and a pro-government militia known as the Janjaweed; and two rebel movements, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).²² The conflict resulted in widespread atrocities committed against civilians and uprooted people from their homes generating displaced populations. To date there are close to 2.7 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and another 4.7 million people affected by the conflict and in need of humanitarian assistance. As of early January 2009 only 65 per cent of the affected population was accessible by humanitarian agencies.

Following the violence in the Western Darfur region of Sudan, which begun with the armed resistance groups the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attacking government outposts in response to a history of socio-economic and political marginalisation,²³ the AU has deployed a protection force to Darfur in June 2004, also known as the African Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). However, the ability of the AU to achieve and fulfil its mission in this situation would always depend on its capacity to mobilize the political will of its Member States. Therefore a political process was also vital in ensuring that there was a bona fide peace to keep. AU-led mediation talks were convened in 2004 which led to a Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement in N'djamena, Chad, which was signed on 8 April 2004. Subsequently, the Protocol on the Security Situation in Darfur; the Protocol on the Improvement of the Humanitarian Situation in Darfur; and the Declaration of Principles for the Resolution of the Sudanese Conflict in Darfur were all signed on November 2004.

The initial mandate of AMIS I was to assist the parties in conflict to reach a political settlement. It was also tasked with monitoring and observing compliance with the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement; undertake confidence building; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance; assist internally displaced persons (IDP) in their camps and eventually facilitate their repatriation; and promote overall security in Darfur.

AMIS I started with 80 military observers in April 2004. It was coordinated by the Darfur Integrated Task Force based at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa and had an operational base in El Fasher, Darfur. AMIS I was deployed with the support of the UN; European Union (EU); North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); as well as on a bilateral level by the Government of Japan and South Korea. The initial Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) included Gambia; Kenya; Nigeria; Rwanda; South Africa; and Senegal. The Civilian Police Contributing countries Cameroon; Gambia; Ghana; Mauritania; Nigeria; South Africa; and, Zambia.

While AMIS presence occasionally deterred violence against civilians it did not entirely eliminate the prevalence across the Darfur region. Indeed, it was incapable of achieving such a feat largely due to its limited mandate and also due to its lack of capacity and adequate resources. Therefore, the AU's monitoring mission left much to be desired and a more robust peacekeeping force was required to effectively dissuade the silent genocide that was unfolding in Darfur.²⁴

Analysis of the Failure of AMIS II

The AU had a rather weak mandate in Darfur to effectively monitor the humanitarian crisis in the region and coordinate efforts to advance the cause of peace. A Technical Assessment Mission was conducted from 10 to 22 March 2005 with the participation of the UN, EU and United States. The mission concluded that AMIS should be strengthened. Therefore, a more enhanced mandate was issued and an expanded AU mission was authorised in October 2005 and includes civilian police units to protect refugee camps. AMIS II consisted of 3,320 personnel including 2,341 military personnel, 450 observers, 815 and civilian police personnel. The number of AMIS II personnel increased to 6,170 military personnel and 1,560 civilian police by the end of 2005. AMIS II was similarly mandated to monitor and observe compliance with the ceasefire; provide security for humanitarian relief; and facilitate the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

At the same time, the AU's peacemaking initiative in Abuja, Nigeria, under the tutelage of former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, led to the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in May 2006. On 5 May 2006 the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed, in Abuja, Nigeria, between the Sudanese government and the faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by Minni Minnawi. Other factions of the SLA refused to sign the agreement as well as the other armed resistance group the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The fact that only the Minni Minnawi faction of the SLA signed the agreement meant that the DPA was by no means a comprehensive peace agreement in the mould of the South Sudan agreement. This also indicated that the conflict was not over and that there is no durable ceasefire. Subsequently, the various insurgencies and armed resistance groups began to fight each other, and the situation deteriorated into a military, political and diplomatic conundrum.

The AMIS operation was due to wind down and be replaced by a more robust UN peacekeeping operation. However, the Sudanese government had systematically rejected efforts to convert the AU mission into a UN mission and requested the AMIS mission to terminate its operations by 30 September 2006. The stubborn stance adopted by the Sudanese government based on its appeal to the strictures of sovereignty and the principle of non-

intervention in the affairs of member states. Therefore the AU mission continued to struggle to maintain security in the region.

The AU mission floundered primarily because the Sudanese government was obstructionist and prevented its effective functioning. The Government of Sudan was quite adept at manoeuvring against the establishment of a UN peacekeeping force on its territory. The Khartoum regime under the tutelage of President Omar El-Bashir categorically stated that the presence of a UN force would be tantamount to the recolonisation of Sudan. However, AMIS I and II also failed to fulfil their mandates because they had insufficient troops, inadequate equipment and training.

The efficacy of AMIS was also due to the fact that since the conflict began in 2003, the situation in Darfur has descended into confusion with the increasing factionalisation of the initial armed resistance groups. The key armed factions include the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) – Abdul Wahid faction, SLA – Minni Minnawi faction, SLA – Free Wing faction, SLA-Unity faction, the United Resistance Front composed of a Justice Equality Movement Collective. The SLA – Minni Minnawi and the SLA – Free Wing factions have signed up to the Darfur Peace Agreement of May 2006.

Comparing and Contrasting the AU's Experiences in Burundi and Somalia

Prior to assessing the AU's experiences in Darfur, it is worthwhile to compare and contrast the AU's experiences in Burundi and Somalia. It is evident that both the Burundi and Somalia experiences demonstrate the political commitment of the AU to intervene to prevent conflict and to manage precarious situations. However, this propensity to intervene has not been based on the AU's capacity to do so but rather on political considerations. The first emerging insight in this regard is that the AU has in both of these cases chosen to exercise its right to intervene and does not lack the will to do so. However, the more pertinent observation is that there is a disconnect between the AU's willingness to intervene and its ability to do so. The Burundi intervention was considered more 'successful' than the on-going Somalia experience partly due to the fact that a strategy had been put in place to hand over the mission to the UN. In effect, the UN bailed out the AU from what could potentially have been a long and drawn out intervention. The UN's ongoing engagement with Burundi through its Integrated Mission Office in Bujumbura indicates that the post-intervention challenges in the country have not yet been addressed. Furthermore, the AU's intervention in Burundi was relatively focused and concise in its objectives, whereas the Somalia initiative was conducted in a context that was threatening, and still threatens, to escalate into more violence. This is in fact still a challenge in Somalia. Ultimately however, the AU's foray into peacekeeping in Burundi and Somalia suggests that the continental body will be called upon in the future to stabilize countries that are afflicted by the scourge of violent conflict. There is therefore an urgent need to bolster the capacity of the organisation to deploy and successfully conduct peace operations autonomously without always relying on UN intervention, which in any case may not always be an option as the Somalia case demonstrates. This theme will be revisited later in this article after assessing the AU's experiences in Darfur.

The Trajectory of UN Engagement in Darfur

UN Security Council Resolution 1706 requested 'the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to strengthen AMIS through the use of existing and additional United Nations resources with a view to transition to a United Nations operation in Darfur.'²⁵ In the lead up to the deployment of UNAMID, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) was already supporting AMIS through its UN Assistance Cell in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the AU headquarters. More specifically, DPKO and the AU's Peace Support Operations Division had signed an agreement to develop a joint action plan. In July 2006, the UN created a dedicated integrated capacity to oversee the implementation of this action plan. This integrated capacity will involve the 'collocation' of UN staff within the AU Commission in Addis Ababa. This innovative approach of embedding UN staff within the operational structures of a regional organization represented an attempt at forging a hybrid partnership. The UN was at pains to reaffirm that this was not an asymmetrical partnership, but an entirely new arrangement established through the mutual consent of both parties. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter is not explicit on the possibility of establishing such a hybrid partnership, and there is significant leeway to operationalise such a relationship if both the UN and the regional organization are compliant. Article 52 in fact states that 'the Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council'. Therefore the legal basis for embedding UN staff within the AU could be made.

As far as the efforts to deploy a UN peace operation was concerned 'the Sudanese government followed a strategy of obstructionism, initially taking advantage of the language of Resolution 1706, which "invites the consent" of Khartoum as a precondition for deploying UN peacekeepers'.²⁶ The Sudanese regime's intransigence meant that a UN mission which was supposed to have been deployed in 2006 was ultimately delayed. In effect, 'Sudanese obstruction has demonstrated how easy it was to manipulate and undermine the UN's mandate and operational machinery'.²⁷ The Sudanese government's relative success in disrupting the peacekeeping system has provided succour for would be intransigent regimes which will undoubtedly deploy similar tactics in the future.

Deployment of the Joint AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Through persistence the UN Security Council Resolution 1769 officially authorised the deployment of UNAMID in July 2007. The plan was that UNAMID would incorporate AMIS personnel, but also be buttressed by additional UN heavy and light support equipment and machinery. At full strength UNAMID was expected to have 19,555 military personnel including 3,772 police and 320 observers. As of October 2008 the total strength of UNAMID uniformed personnel was 10,537, including 8,579 military personnel (8,142 troops, 285 staff officers, 113 military observers and 29 liaison officers), and 1,948 police personnel (1,808 individual police officers and one formed police unit of 140 personnel).²⁸ The mission had also recruited 2,564 civilian staff (including 645 international staff, 1,704 national staff and 215 United Nations volunteers). A full staff complement has not yet been recruited in Darfur, and UNAMID expected to increase its numbers to 14,823 personnel by the early 2009, which is the equivalent of 60 per cent of the total authorized staff complement.²⁹ Staff members were drawn from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda,

Senegal and South Africa. Its anticipated budget was US \$ 1.7 billion for fiscal year 2008 to 2009, which is the largest in the history of UN peacekeeping operations.

Despite the security challenges UNAMID conducted confidence-building patrols, provided convoy protection and facilitated humanitarian access. UNAMID in partnership with 'a number of United Nations funds and programmes, conducted a series of training and capacity building workshops for 119 members of the rebel police forces, 90 sheikhs and *umdas* (traditional elders) and 295 internally displaced persons on the subjects of human rights, gender, and community-policing'.³⁰ In addition, the Civil Affairs section within UNAMID engaged 'civil society and women's groups, the local administration, the academic community, and other segments of the Darfur society on the peace process and local conflict resolution initiatives'.³¹

As far as the political process is concerned, a new African Union-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, Djibrill Bassolé, was appointed in August 2008. Bassolé is charged with revitalising the stalled mediation process and crafting a political solution to the crisis in Darfur. The UNAMID efforts could become completely reversed if the violence persisted and escalated. Specifically, violent confrontation has been ongoing between the Government of Sudan troops and the government-backed militia also known as the Janjaweed. There is sporadic violence in northern Darfur where the Sudanese regime is engaging the Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid faction. On the 25 August 2008, Government security forces surrounded an internally displaced persons (IDPs) camp in Kalma, which accommodates approximately 80,000 people, ostensibly to search for weapons and other contraband, and opened fire killing 33 IDPs and wounding 108, including 25 women. UNAMID was eventually able to access the camp and evacuate the wounded.³²

Challenges Facing UNAMID

UNAMID was confronted with similar problems that beset AMIS I and AMIS II. Since July 2008 Darfur has experienced a deterioration of the security situation. In particular, the violence 'included high levels of banditry, occasional military engagements, ethnic clashes and deadly attacks on UNAMID forces on 8 July which resulted in the deaths of five peacekeepers'.³³ The Government of Sudan continues to send sorties on aerial bombardments to parts of Darfur and conduct military offensives which are resulting in the death of civilians. Gender based violence remains a common occurrence in the region. In addition, humanitarian workers are being abducted and reporting incidents of violence. The food security situation in the region remains precarious.

In addition, UNAMID faces key challenges in terms of its ability to transport personnel and equipment using ground transportation which is still limited in capacity. In addition, 'the environment of heightened insecurity had a direct impact on UNAMID efforts to move contingent-owned equipment into Darfur'.³⁴ Air transportation is being provided under the auspices of the group known as the Friends of UNAMID, which is dominated by the logistical support from the United States government. The Friends of UNAMID have specifically been assisting with the airlifting of troops and contingent-owned equipment directly from troop-contributing countries into Darfur. According to the UN Secretary-General, Ban-Ki Moon, 'UNAMID, despite its broad mandate for the protection of civilians

and assistance to peace implementation, is not designed to create a sustainable solution to the Darfur crisis. That is the responsibility of the parties to the conflict'.³⁵

On 14 July 2008, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan for war crimes, in line with the mandate of the body, following a request by the UN Security Council to assess whether war crimes had been committed in Darfur. The ramifications of this indictment on the operational effectiveness of UNAMID in terms of its impact on its working relationship with the Government of Sudan is yet to be quantified. Subsequently, in the 12 November 2008, the Sudanese Government declared a ceasefire in Darfur and pledged to disarm all of its allied militia, notably the Janjaweed. However this declaration was met with suspicion by the armed groups in Darfur. The Sudanese Government is notorious for using ceasefire periods to consolidate its position, regroup with a view to launching a subsequent military incursion. The situation in Darfur therefore remains fairly precarious.

UNAMID and the Brahimi Criteria

The basic conditions required for an effective peacekeeping operation based on the Brahimi Criterion were absent in Darfur. Specifically, there is no peace to keep and 'the Government and the parties continue to pursue a military solution to the conflict'.³⁶ It was therefore not clear whether the UN Security Council mandate was achievable in the circumstances that prevailed in the region. The UN Secretary-General has acknowledged that as far as the situation in Darfur was concerned 'the effectiveness of a peacekeeping operation was largely contingent upon the commitment of the parties to the peace process, without which peacekeepers can be vulnerable themselves'.³⁷ This was a tacit acknowledgement that the Brahimi Criterion has not been met with regard to the design, deployment and operationalisation of UNAMID. Grignon and Krosiak argue that peacekeeping has taken on the trajectory of seeking to protect civilians in war-affected areas without ensuring that there is a political process in place to actually address the fundamental problems that are the source of the conflict.³⁸ This is not unique to the Darfur operation, and similar experiences are being confronted by previous and current UN peace operations in other parts of the world notably in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, and Afghanistan.

In terms of the joint AU-UN peacekeeping mission, 'Sudan's blocking tactics not only delayed the force but damaged peacekeeping's wider political credibility, creating a political (rather than "simply" operational) systemic crisis'.³⁹ There is therefore a need to return to the Brahimi Criterion, because it is evident from the Darfur experience 'that peacekeeping must be more political – in the sense that there is no point in deploying troops and police where there is no peace agreement or diplomatic process to support'.⁴⁰ With reference to peacekeeping, Lakhdar Brahimi and Salman Ahmed note that 'the current geopolitical landscape is far more fragmented than in the immediate post-Cold War "honeymoon" period ... as a result, recent operations have deployed not only without the benefit of a comprehensive peace agreement in place, but also without the necessary leverage in hand to overcome political deadlock during the implementation phase'.⁴¹

Assessing the AU's Foray into Peacekeeping

The AU efforts to deploy missions have been defined by the absence of a fully articulated framework for peacekeeping. This issue of a lack of capacity and ability to effectively undertake peacekeeping was evident in the AU's intervention in Burundi, Somalia and Darfur. All of its missions to date have been under-funded, ill-equipped, and therefore inadequately deployed. Specifically, it is evident that the AU PSOD has a limited capacity to deploy effective peacekeeping operations at this point in time. Whether the much anticipated African Standby Force, due to be operationalised in 2010, will remedy this situation remains to be seen. The comparison of the Burundi and Somalia experiences earlier in this article yielded some interesting insights in terms of the need to have focused and concise operations which are adequately staffed and equipped. Specifically, the Burundi, Somalia and Darfur experiences suggest that the AU needs to bolster its capacity to deploy and successfully conduct peace operations autonomously. There are on going efforts to enhance the professional efficiency of the AU Commission and confront some of the administrative bottlenecks that are affecting the ability of the organisation deploy effectively.

The AU did intervene in Burundi to building peace and enable the establishment of a more robust UN peace operation. Perhaps the fact that it was not criticised overtly for undertaking that mission is in large part due to the fact that there were no additional demands on AMIB to extend its mandate in Burundi. With regards to Somalia, the AU is embroiled in a complex situation which defies any simplistic solutions. The UN's historical experiences in Somalia have made it 'allergic' to intervening in the country. The escalation of violence by militia groups within Somalia has further complicated the political efforts to find a solution to stabilising the country. However, the experience of the hybrid mission in Darfur also indicates that the involvement of the UN is not necessarily a remedy to solving the prevalence of violence, the targeting of civilians and the maintenance of peace, since the region is still afflicted with these challenges. Therefore, the AU should not consider a hand over to the UN as a panacea to solving the continent's problems. Apart from the Burundi operation, the AU's foray into peacekeeping has been more akin to a foraging exercise, a search for ways to address the multiple peace and security concerns on the African continent. However, in the absence of a committed international community which is prepared to genuinely engage in building internal capacity in Africa, it appears that the AU will have to continue foraging in order to solve Africa's intractable security problems. This is aptly demonstrated by the AU's current entrapment in Somalia.

The reality is that the AU's initial foray in to peacekeeping was in many respects the only alternative to a dithering, detached and disengaged international community. Paradoxically, it is only when the situation gets even more untenable that the international community, mainly under the tutelage of the UN, comes in to 'mend' the broken continent. Perversely, the financial resources that are deployed to conduct these missions (for example the US \$ 1.7 billion) would have been more wisely spent strengthening the continental mechanisms for preventing and resolving conflict at an early stage, prior to the outbreak of violent confrontation. This discrepancy in the UN's security agenda has to ultimately be remedied if the world is to witness fewer complex humanitarian calamities like the situation in Darfur.

The prevailing level of detachment demonstrated currently by the international community is an allergic reaction to dealing with the Somalia situation. It is therefore clear Africa will in

the majority of instances have to resort to its own structures and resources, apart from conflicts in which the international community has a discernible interest in intervening like in the resource-rich DRC. So it would appear that there is no option but for the AU to continue deploying peace operations on the continent where they are necessary. However, in order to do so more effectively the AU will have to internalise the positive lessons from its past experiences, as well as acknowledge its past mistakes as it continues with its concerted effort to strengthen its capacity to deploy peacekeeping operations on the continent.

Interrogating Hybridity: A Critique of UNAMID

As far as UNAMID is concerned even though the nature of the AU-UN partnership appears to be evolving in a new direction, it is important to interrogate what this new relationship represents. Is the hybrid partnership in effect a hybrid form of paternalism - where AU troops and personnel do the basic and dangerous work on the ground guided by the all-wise and 'fatherly' coterie of UN advisors? Does UNAMID and this evolution in the AU-UN partnership represent a paradigm shift in relations between both organisations, or is it a case of old wine in new bottles? Certainly, it still remains an asymmetric relationship due to the fact that the UN is a much older institution, with more resources and experience compared to the AU. Therefore, in this relationship the advice and resources are more likely to be unidirectional – flowing from the UN to the AU. Naturally, as the regional organisation the AU has a comparative advantage in terms of being in close proximity to the continental crisis situations and therefore it has an important role to play in orienting efforts in a way that respects local sensibilities. However, it is not clear to which extent it can declare total ownership of the conceptualisation, design, planning and implementation of its peace operations, when 'collocated' UN personnel maintain a dominant presence in its affairs. As of early January 2009, it is still too early to pass definitive judgement on this emerging hybrid partnership. The AU has to remain vigilant to ensure that it does not descend into a form of hybrid paternalism. In particular, the AU should guard against allowing the UN's historical paternalism to re-manifest under a new guise, with UN brawn being used to direct African bodies on the ground.

Enhancing the AU's Capacity to Deploy Peacekeeping Operations

In terms of financial viability of the AU's peacekeeping operations, the AU has drawn up an annual budget of US \$62 million for its peace and security activities (out of a total institutional budget of approximately US \$160 million). The AU acknowledged that there were constantly insufficient funds for its operation in Darfur.⁴² The EU's African Peace Support Facility contributed about US \$250 million to continental peacekeeping efforts, and currently supports the AU's peacekeeping mission in Darfur. Ultimately, the operational capacity of the AU and its financial and logistical limitations illustrate that the organisation needs to source adequate funds if its objectives are to be achieved. The AU also needs to further enhance the level of efficiency and eradicate the administrative bottlenecks that hinder the rapid deployment of its peace operations. In this regard, the AU will need to establish a permanent institutional framework for training its civilian and military personnel to function more effectively in peacekeeping operations.

Conclusion

The article discussed the AU's limited success in deploying peacekeeping operations. It assessed whether what the AU is doing could be described as peacekeeping in the strict sense of the term. The AU made an effort to conduct peace operations, notably through AMIB in Burundi, after which the UN took over the peace operation. The Burundi mission was the AU's first official foray into peacekeeping and it met with mixed outcomes. On the one hand AMIB's mission was relatively concise and focused, based on what has subsequently followed suit. In addition, there was an understanding that the considerable resources and experience of the UN would eventually be deployed to stabilise Burundi which is still the case with the involvement of the organisation in the country. The limitations of the AU's fledgling institutions have been exposed by the entrapment and limited functionality of AMISOM in Somalia as well as in the complex humanitarian situation in the Darfur region of Sudan. The experiences of the hybrid mission in Darfur suggest that the UN 'adoption' of an AU peace operation is not necessarily a panacea to the continent's peacekeeping challenges. Using the Brahimi Criterion to assess the hybrid AU-UN hybrid operation in Darfur, reveals that the foundations for UNAMID are precarious not least because there is no peace to keep. While the hybrid construct offers useful insights into the AU's attempt to undertake peacekeeping operations, albeit jointly with the UN, a strict application of the Brahimi criterion suggests that the hybrid operation falls short of what is expected in the planning, operationalization and execution of a peacekeeping mission. However, it is also the case that very few ongoing peacekeeping operations would meet the Brahimi Criterion, given the imperfect political processes that establish them. Evidently, this excuse cannot be used to perpetually permit a 'business as usual' approach within the peacekeeping field. It is worthwhile to note that the hybrid mission has rewritten some of the principles of peacekeeping. Specifically, the hybrid mission embodies a paradigm shift in the way peacekeeping operations are inaugurated, in terms of the joint AU and UN decision making process, and the way it is operationalised. There are nevertheless political constraints in ensuring an effective collaboration between the UN and the AU, particularly when there is insufficient communication between the political leadership of both organisations. If adopted as a future model of peacekeeping, particularly in Africa, it would herald a novel approach to managing the continent's intractable crises. Ensuring that this conceptual paradigm shift coheres with the reality on the ground will be the challenge confronting future AU-UN partnerships in peacekeeping operations. In particular, at a strategic decision-making level there would need to be more dialogue and open communication between the AU and the UN. While at the tactical and operational level there would need to be a convergence in terms of in-house capacity to implement. In the absence of this conceptual and operational coherence the AU's foray into peacekeeping may continue to appear as a foraging exercise and an elusive quest for continental security.

Notes

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