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African Union – United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID): A New Template for Future Peacekeeping Operation?

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Abstract:

The number of conflicts across the globe continues to increase both in intensity and complexity far beyond the ability of the United Nations to cope. In response, a greater role for regional organizations in security management was advocated with the belief that it would ease the financial burden placed on the UN, provide more intimate knowledge of regional conflicts and result in more rapid deployment.

The establishment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) on 31 July 2007 marked a breakthrough in the United Nations/ Regional Organizations' collaborative efforts in peacekeeping and timely response to the changing dynamics of modern conflicts.

This paper critically examines the paradigm shift to determine whether it constitutes a template for future UN peacekeeping operations and concludes that future UN peacekeeping missions will necessarily take a hybrid form due to the comparative advantage and complementarity of the two organizations. The paper recommends that the United Nations should give great attention to critical areas such as command and control, troops training and acquisition of modern equipment by troop-contributing countries to ensure quality and maximize the full benefit of hybrid operations.

Keywords: Hybrid operation, regional organizations, peacekeeping, UNAMID

1. Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa has been the epicenter of violent conflicts which have directly or indirectly caused the deaths of millions of civilians and, have contributed substantially to the low levels of human security on the continent (Bowd and Chikwanha, 2010). These conflicts, their changing dynamics, and the catastrophic humanitarian corollaries have virtually crippled the continent's development efforts while poverty continues to ravage the continent so much blessed with immeasurable natural resources. Certainly, the continent cannot emerge from this present quagmire of poverty, ignorance, and disease so long as it has not been able to wriggle its way out of civil conflicts.

As part of international efforts to deal with these violent conflicts, and promote peace and security in Africa, an unprecedented number of peace operations and political missions have been launched on the continent by the United Nations- the world body responsible for global peace and security. However, despite firm commitment, the United Nations appears completely overwhelmed by the numbers and complexity of these conflicts, which have overstretched it financially and drastically put the huge cost of conflict resolution far beyond its capacity, prompting a profound search for new initiatives that would lessen its burden.

Unable to meet this ever-increasing demand for new peacekeeping missions, the United Nations actively explored task-sharing and cooperation initiatives with other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as coalitions led by major global and regional powers. Thus, regional institutions (regional arrangements and agencies) are being increasingly looked upon as one way of addressing the growing gap between demand and supply and reducing the burden on the United Nations. (Alagappa 1997:421). Furthermore, peacekeeping itself has been experiencing tremendous reforms as well as profound flexibility to reflect the changing political and strategic environment where they occur.

Paradoxically, the United Nations call on regional organizations to play a major role in peacekeeping also coincided with the resolve by many regional organizations to be more engaged in settling conflicts within and around their respective regions. Perhaps, the combined effect of the UN withdrawal from Somalia, and its failure to stop the 1994 genocide in Rwanda brought about a growing recognition among Africans themselves that the continent must look inward for a mechanism that will help them resolve conflicts within its borders. Alagappa, 1997:427), argues that the termination of the cold war reinvigorated the United Nations and simultaneously reinforced the trend towards security regionalism with many regional organizations visibly expressing renewed interest in security architecture within and around their respective regions. These factors, coupled with the growing geopolitical dynamics and other operational challenges encountered by the United Nations, have paved the way for burden-sharing initiatives with regional organizations. The establishment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) therefore, not only brings to the

fore the compelling need for greater involvement of regional organizations in peacekeeping but has also showcased how their comparative advantage and complementary role could help resolve conflicts around the world and lessen the burden on the United Nations.

2. The Darfur Conflict in Perspective

The Darfur region of western Sudan occupies one-fifth of the area of Sudan comprising approximately 250,000 kilometers. It is larger than Egypt and equals the area of France. Geographically it is made up of plateau some 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level. The volcanic Jebel Marra mountain range runs north to south for some 100 miles, rising to between 5,000 and 6000 feet. It borders Libya to the north-west, Chad to the west, and the Central African Republic to the south-west. (Hoile, 2005). The region mainly consists of four main climatic zones. Firstly, the rich savannah in the south with average rainfall between 400 mm to 800 mm per year; the rainy season extends between 4 to 5 months. Secondly, the poor savannah in the middle of the region, with an average annual rainfall that ranges between 200 to 400 mm and a rainy season ranging between 3 to 4 months. Thirdly, is the arid zone which occupies the middle of the northern parts of the region. The fourth zone is the desert zone and it is characterized by a lack of rainfall and high temperatures during the summer. (Ateya, 2004).

Attempting to unravel the root causes of conflicts in any African nation is as difficult as providing solutions because of their complex and multifaceted nature coupled with the difference in the historical development of these countries. However, there is a consensus amongst scholars and researchers on the Darfur conflict that a combination of decades of drought, desertification, and overpopulation as well as the failure of traditional systems for the allocation of land and water resources are among the causes of the Darfur conflict. (An-Naim, 2004). This failure, he argues, is exacerbated by a combination of drastic ecological changes and cynical human manipulations, emphasizing that, as the ability of local communities to cope with drought and famine declined over the last two decades, and the capacity of their traditional systems of conflict mediation over rapidly diminishing resources became overwhelmed, opportunistic politicians took advantage of the situation. Hoile (2005) describes Darfur as an ecologically fragile area that had already seen growing –and often armed – conflict over natural resources between some 80 tribes and clans loosely divided between nomadic and sedentary communities. Lobban and O' Fahey as cited by Hoile (2004), share the same opinion and stressed that the conflict is a function of persistent ecological crises of increased desertification and lack of production and limited grazing lands among the pastoralist and agricultural peoples. O'Fahey (2004) further succinctly submits that desertification accelerated by droughts led to pressure on water and grazing resources as the camel nomads were forced to move southward; thus, conflicts over wells that in earlier times had been settled with spears and mediations became more intractable in an era awash with guns. Desertification and drought had forced several tribal migrations from the 1970s onwards and by the late 1980s, as noted by Ahmed (1999) the migrant groups increased in numbers, and in the absence of social harmony, tribal factions developed and culminated in violent conflicts.

However, the present Darfur conflict began in February 2003 when two rebel groups the Sudan Liberation Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) took up arms against the government citing discrimination against the black tribes. What began as a small rebellion transformed into a conflict of massive proportions, involving other countries and organizations from the region and beyond. The roots of the violence are complex, stemming from a mixture of ethnic tensions, a struggle for scarce resources, and a general breakdown of traditional systems of governance in a country that has been on the verge of fragmentation since it gained independence in 1956. The conflict is thus, said to be part of a wider and complex conflict that has dragged on for generations. (Kimani, 2004) The Rebels began their attacks on the government and army posts in April 2003. Some of the major attacks were on military bases and airports in Darfur, where rebels killed hundreds of soldiers and destroyed several aircraft, helicopters, and other military equipment. The rebels used pick-up trucks to attack their enemies at 'high speed and with frightening surprise' (Tar, 2006).

The Sudanese government responded by mobilizing and arming local militia from the Darfur's 'Arab' ethnic groups, particularly those without traditional land rights, to fight against the 'African' rebels. The Sudanese army supplied the militias with weapons and equipment and supported their attacks on the rebels and civilians with military intelligence and air bombings. (Prunier, 2005). The government decided to use local militias in Darfur since a large part of the regular army was deployed in southern Sudan at the time the rebellion broke out. Another reason to rely on the 'Arab' militia's notes Prunier: 2005 was the fact that a significant part of the Sudanese army was made up of recruits from Darfur's 'African' tribes whom the government did not 'consider trustworthy' to be used in the conflict. Also, using the 'Arab' militias to fight the rebels, according to de Waal and Flint (2008) was intended to portray the conflict as a centuries-old 'tribal warfare' and not a conflict over basic human needs. Prunier (2006) argues that the Khartoum government saw the armed rebellion in Darfur as 'the ultimate threat - a revolt of its Muslim margins that had to be dealt with once and for all with the utmost violence.' Slim (2004) believes that Khartoum decided to respond in full force because many members of the government 'feared that Darfur insurgency had the potential to become the vanguard for a widespread northern movement for regime change that could easily unravel' the regime. From the government's point of view, the counterinsurgency in Darfur was 'rational,' since the rebellion threatened its existence and had the potential of spreading to the rest of the country. (Prunier 2005).

While it is certainly not the first conflict the region is witnessing, and while traditional conflict resolutions mechanisms were used to reasonably settle such conflicts, the present conflict in Darfur however represents the conflict that profoundly transcends all traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution. The question being asked therefore is what was it that turned limited, low-intensity conflicts between the pastoral and arable farming groups in Darfur into a well-organized, well-armed, and well-resourced insurrection?

3. Regional (African Union) and International Response to the Conflict

Taking exception from the Organization of African Unity (OAU's failure at properly responding to conflict on the continent, the African Union (AU) adopted a more interventionist stance through its legal frameworks and institutions. For instance, the African Union established a Peace and Security Council (PSC) modeled on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to serve as 'collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflicts as well as promote and implement peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. Like the UN Security Council, the Peace and Security Council is headed by a Commissioner who provides operational support to the Peace and Security Council as well as deploy efforts and take the necessary steps to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. (Murithi, 2001)

Perhaps, one significant development in the revitalized regional organization is the normative shift by the AU towards preventive diplomacy by adopting a position that non-interference in the internal affairs of another state should not be equated with indifference. In this regard, Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the AU states that although non-interference by any member state in the internal affairs of another should be upheld, the AU has the right to intervene in a member state pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Thus, Article 4 (h) of the AU constitutive Act affirms the right of the AU to intervene in a member state in a crisis. Specifically, article 7 (e) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council states that the PSC 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. (Murithi: 2007). It is against this backdrop that when conflict broke out in the Great Lakes nation of Burundi, African Union saw it as an opportunity to experiment with its new resolve to take an interventionist approach to resolve conflict in the continent. By February 2003, the PSC authorized the deployment of 3,500 military and civilian personnel for the AU's first fully-fledged peace operation, the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB)(Feistein:2007). The African Union Mission in Burundi was no doubt a success story for the continental body's attempt at peace operation. Aboagye (2007) remarks that AMIB played an important part in securing and effectively managing the conflict transition in Burundi as it was able to stabilize the country to an extent that the UN was willing and able to deploy. The AU is credited with providing troops to protect leaders returning to the country so that they could take part in the peace process and eventually help form a government. In this way, AMIB supported the political settlement of the conflict. This illustrates how a relatively small AU mission can make a significant contribution to both the military and political management of violent conflict, even when the UN is unable or unwilling to do so. As such, the AU has proved itself a valuable partner for the UN in managing difficult and dangerous conflict situations on the continent. (Rodt: 1012)

Spurred by the ice-breaking success of the Burundi experiment in conflict management, the regional body did not hesitate to initiate another effort at intervening in Darfur with the view to resolve the conflict that carried with it the capacity to reverse the gains made in ending the North-South war with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Thus, taking advantage of Chapter VI (Article 33, (I) and VIII of the United Nations Charter which authorized member states to, as a first resort, attempt to settle disputes through regional agencies or arrangements before approaching the Security Council, African Union on the 8th April 2004, facilitated the signing of a Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (HCFA) by the Sudanese parties on the Darfur conflict and a Protocol on the Establishment of Humanitarian Assistance in Darfur (AMIS, 2006). The parties also reached agreement to establish a Ceasefire Commission, followed by the signing of an Agreement on the Establishment of the Ceasefire Commission and the Deployment of Military Observers in the Darfur Region. This Agreement paved the way for the deployment of 60 African military observers and 300 MILOB protectors as well as observers from the Sudanese parties with the European Union and the United States as Advisors. With the establishment of a Ceasefire Commission and deployment of Military Observers, African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was born as a ceasefire monitoring mission.

4. Regional organizations' Advantage in Conflict Resolution

Several writers have supported increased involvement by regional organizations in peacekeeping claiming that they have the advantages of proximity and cultural understanding making them better able to respond to crises Others such as Dorn (1998) have strongly criticized peacekeeping by regional organizations arguing that power politics and lack of adequate resources on the part of regional organizations point more to failure more than otherwise. While there is no consensus as to whether regional organizations play a positive or negative role in conflict resolution, the experience of the last decade however supports the argument for the engagement of regional security mechanisms, preferably as a matter of first resort in attempting to prevent and manage conflict. Certain comparative advantages associated with regional organizations have placed them in a position to effectively intervene in conflicts within and around their domains.

4.1 Proximity

Regional Organizations are always closer to the theater of conflict and can swiftly respond to crises to avoid its spread that may endanger the entire region; a case of helping to put off fire burning your neighbor's house before your own house is consumed by the inferno. Moreover, regional organizations are aware that it takes the United Nations a long time to respond to an outbreak of conflict especially those in areas that are of less geostrategic relevance to the big five permanent members. This gap permits monumental damage to be done to lives and property. For instance, During the April to July 1994 massacre in Rwanda, it took the expanded UN force until February 1995 to fully deploy its troops in Rwanda (Clerk 1996). This delay caused a refugee crisis in neighboring states and allowed ethnic violence to spread into Burundi. Thus, partly due to the fear of bearing the cost of providing for refugees with the entire humanitarian and security implications, members of a regional organization have a vital interest at stake in preserving regional stability. It is

perhaps considering this fact that during the Darfur conflict, President Idriss Deby of Chad facilitated the signing of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (HCFA) with the assistance of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the 08th April 2004. Already, President Deby was battling with security issues relating to Sudanese refugees in Chad and felt the need to intervene to free his country from being a theater of regional conflict. Thus, many scholars are of the strong opinion that members of a regional organization are likely to have a direct interest in seeing tensions reduced and the conflict ended given the likelihood of the spillover effects of economic uncertainty, voluntary and involuntary flows of refugees, cross-border incursion and other forms of security threats.

Also, members of a regional organization are guided by the fear that conflicts in neighboring states would leave them with the burden of the refugee crisis and their states ending up as sanctuaries for insurrectionist actions, making them spend more on defense, and bear the cost of reduced economic growth when foreign corporations decide the area is too risky for investment. Therefore, members of a regional organization have a vital interest in preserving regional stability. This vital interest often translates into greater political will to see the problem through to a solution. The United Nations' inability to deploy peacekeeping missions until the conflict has spiraled out of control, along with the delays caused by bureaucratic infighting has led many nations to take peacekeeping into their own hands. (Encalade 2008)

4.2. A Better Understanding of the Root Causes and Dynamics of the Conflict

Due to their proximity, regional organizations are credited with a better understanding of the root cause of conflicts around their physical environment, including their dynamics. Also, because of proximity, most members of a regional organization share some political and cultural affinity which affords them a better understanding of the conflict and what better mechanisms would better resolve them. Additionally, the regional peacekeeping forces' understanding of the conflict provides them more legitimacy with the local population. The greater support bestowed on regional forces as opposed to a multinational force like the UN is 'based on the notion that people and governments in a region have a natural affinity with those in that region and an inherent suspicion of what is perceived as an outside intervention. (Diehl 1993). Legitimacy allows regional forces to operate more efficiently and effectively, cooperating with the local population.

4.3. Shared Culture and Tradition

During Sierra Leone's protracted conflict, Members of Parliament from the Kissy tribe from Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia, often met to explore strategies of resolving the Sierra Leone conflict. The driving force behind such an innovative approach to conflict resolution was the shared cultural affinity between members of this tribe who were found in these three different countries that made up the Mano River Union.

Nongi (1998) argues that regional countries share much of their culture, traditions, and geography, and sometimes, have the same history, the same religion, and similar military training and weaponry. Once again, the example of the Sierra Leone conflict confirms this assertion. Several of Sierra Leone and Liberian military officers had their military training in Nigeria, the lead country in the ECOWAS/ECOMOG operations in these two countries. They both shared orientation and affinity and concern for whatever happens in the other state. This affinity becomes a vital resource to be used by negotiators and peacemakers.

4.4. Consensus Building

The ease with which consensus can be built seems to be the hallmark of regional organizations. One of the UN's greatest peacekeeping failures is its inability to rally member states to authorize a peacekeeping deployment. Regional organizations have an advantage over global organizations because their membership is more homogenous (Diehl 1993). States in a regional organization are more likely to be at the same development level, have similar historical roots, share some ethnic or tribal roots and have similar outlooks flowing from facing common regional problems' – all of which makes consensus probable. Also, increasing the likelihood of consensus is the possibility of spillover effects. Conflict in the region could destabilize other countries by causing spillover effects or an influx of refugees (Marnika 1996).

5. African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)

Even with the establishment of AMIS, the expectation had been that the UN would fold AMIS forces into a more robust UN-led mission, such as the UN's role with the mission in Burundi. The Sudanese government however thwarted this plan for years by withholding consent to deploy additional peacekeepers in Darfur arguing against any role for non-Africans in resolving the conflict and denouncing international efforts as interference in the country's domestic affairs. (Andrews and Holt, 2007). However, on 16 November 2006, the UN Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission co-chaired a high-level consultation in Addis Ababa with the five permanent members of the Security Council, the AU PSC members, the Government of Sudan, other African countries, the EU, and the League of Arab States, and agreed on re-energizing the political process, strengthening the ceasefire, and a three-phased approach to peacekeeping, namely; Light Support Package (LSP) to AMIS, Heavy Support Package (HSP) to AMIS, and finally, AU – UN Hybrid Operation (Anyidoho, 2009). The Light Support Package was designed to support AMIS in the establishment of an integrated command and control structure and to increase the effectiveness of its operations. The implementation of the LSP began in January 2007 with the transfer of UNMIS personnel to AMIS while the Heavy Support Package increased logistics and other enablers such that by the time the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1769 establishing the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, there were enough structures on the ground for the mission to take-off.

While the LSP and the HSP were designed to deliver critical capabilities that would enhance the mobility and effectiveness of AMIS, the issues of adequate and predictable funding, as well as long-term logistical sustainability of the Mission remained unaddressed. Based in part on these concerns, the Addis Ababa conclusions recommended that an AU-UN Hybrid Operation be deployed in Darfur and that the United Nations provide funding for it (AU, 2007). Consequently, on 31 July 2007, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) at its 5727 sessions unanimously passed Resolution 1769 formally establishing the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The establishment of the Mission was based on the conclusions of the Addis Ababa high-level consultation on the situation in Darfur of 16 November 2006 as endorsed in the communiqué of the 66th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union held in Abuja on 30 November 2006 as well as the communiqué of 79th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on 22 June 2007. The Security Council called for all parties to facilitate the immediate deployment of the United Nations Light and Heavy Support Package to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and a Hybrid operation in Darfur, for which back-stopping and command and control structures would be provided by the United Nations. The Hybrid operation was to have a predominantly African character and the troops should, as far as possible, be sourced from African countries. At full deployment, UNAMID was to incorporate AMIS personnel and the UN Heavy and Light Support Packages to AMIS shall consist of up to 19,555 military personnel, including 360 military observers and liaison officers, and an appropriate civilian component including up to 3,772 police personnel and 19 formed police units comprising up to 140 personnel each making it the largest UN multilateral peacekeeping force ever deployed. Some important and unique features of the hybrid missions include the following.

- The Joint Special Representative shall be jointly appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, after consultations as per the practice.
- The Force Commander, who should be an African, shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
- The Mission shall benefit from United Nations backstopping and command and control structures.
- The size of the force shall be determined by the African Union and the United Nations, considering all relevant factors and the situation on the ground, as well as the requirements for it to effectively discharge its mandate.

The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur was a product of political exigency- a compromise settlement to break the stalemate created by Khartoum's refusal to allow the deployment of UN peacekeepers to Darfur. But it also reflects the continuous efforts by the UN to reform peacekeeping operations to make it more rapid in response to conflicts, ease the UN of obvious challenges and fill the gap between demand and supply in peacekeeping operations based on comparative advantages possessed by the two organizations. The mission is an experiment whose success or otherwise will dramatically change the face of global security management and has the potential to revolutionize collective security management architecture far beyond the dominant role hitherto played by the UN. Aboagye (2007) strongly believes that hybridization is one of the direct consequences of disengagement from direct participation in UN peacekeeping operations by the international community leaving the UN with no other option but to explore innovative ways of coping with Africa's intractable conflicts. Whatever may be the case, this, coupled with the overwhelming increase in the scope and complexity of peacekeeping since the second half of the 1990s as well as the way they are comprised, driven and funded, it is not surprising therefore that hybridization has suddenly assumed profound significance in the United Nations efforts to stem the current wave of conflict. This, according to Neethling: (2009) further increased the quest for burden-sharing between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the African Union. One can conveniently say that hybridization has already become a common feature of UN-organized peacekeeping operations not only in Africa but globally. A system referred to by Kofi Annan as 'an interlocking system of peacekeeping capacities that will enable the United Nations to work with relevant regional organizations in predictable and reliable partnership'. (Annan, 2006) For the African continent and its regional body, the African Union, the hybrid operation presents a veritable platform whereby its voice on the continent's issues, particularly its role in continental conflict resolution is not only acknowledged but also respected. There is therefore a nexus between the UN's search for burden sharers and regional organizations' sudden interest in security management within their areas.

There is no doubt that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur was well-intentioned by the UN Security Council as the best form of collaborative arrangement that would end the Darfur conflict given the prevailing dynamics at that time. It carries the potentials to succeed, and to that extent, it was greeted with high expectations globally but especially across the entire Darfur region particularly among the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) community. The expectations were predicated on the obvious premise that the UN is a better organized, better resourced, and much stronger organization than the African Union and would, therefore, solve the Darfur security problems overnight. The expectations perhaps were also based on the UN Secretary General's pronouncements immediately after the signing of Resolution 1769 establishing the Mission. After the signing of Resolution 1769, the UN Secretary-General stated to the Security Council that the establishment of UNAMID was sending a clear and powerful signal of the Security Council's commitment to improve the lives of the people of the region and close this tragic chapter in Sudan's history, calling the decision a historic and unprecedented, but warned that it was only through a political process that a solution to the conflict could be achieved. For the IDPs in Darfur region, their frustration with the ill-equipped, under-resourced, and out-gunned AMIS would now be a thing of the past.

The establishment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) no doubt represents a major paradigm shift in global security management with the potential to shape the face of the global peacekeeping operation. Some researchers have even referred to the hybridization of peacekeeping as the last bus stop in the search for cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in peacekeeping operation. However, the UNAMID

experiment has also revealed several challenges that must be adequately addressed in the concept, design, and implementation of similar missions if the experience is to be used in other peacekeeping missions.

5. Conclusion

United Nations peacekeeping has gone through tremendous challenges over the last decade and a half. The world body is thoroughly overstretched and overwhelmed by the number and complexity of current conflicts around the globe with its huge financial and logistic implications. The end of the Cold War also marked the end of traditional peacekeeping where peacekeepers simply carried light weapons and did no more than observe ceasefire compliance and monitor buffer zones. With intra state conflicts comes comprehensive peacekeeping that places huge demands on peacekeepers and requires different expertise. Today peacekeepers find themselves doing a whole lot of things ranging from maintenance of peace and security to facilitating the political process, protection of civilians, assisting in the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants; providing support for the organization of elections, protection and promotion of human rights and assisting in restoring the rule of law.

The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as we know, is a child of convenience. According to Bah and Jones (2009), capacity and legitimacy considerations played significant roles in the negotiations that gave rise to the establishment of UNAMID marking the first time in the over 60 years of UN history that command and control of a peacekeeping operation have been shared with another international body, noting also that the unprecedented arrangement is a product of dire necessity, created only after the Sudanese government rejected proposals for a standard UN. Although several reforms involving the UN's relationship with regional organizations have developed through temporary responses to operational needs rather than through long-term planning, it is evident from the establishment of UNAMID that the relationship is gradually being formalized and consolidated.

It is crystal clear from this study that greater involvement of regional organizations in security management will define future UN peacekeeping operations and that 'hybridization' as epitomized by UNAMID will certainly constitute a reference point for a future peacekeeping operation. That being the case, the concept needs to be improved upon to position it to be a bridging solution to the yawning gap between demand and supply in UN peacekeeping. The provision of support for regional and sub-regional initiatives, argues Annan 1998, is regarded as necessary and desirable; necessary because the UN lacked the capacity, resources, and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa. The African Union on the other hand possesses substantial advantage to address African regional problems on account of the proximity of its member states and knowledge of the root causes of most of these conflicts ravaging the continent. However, the experiment has made it very clear that the following areas need to be strengthened.

5.1. Capacity Building and Support for Regional Organizations

Since hybrid operation will continue to be a feature of the peacekeeping landscape it should be welcomed and used as an important contribution for managing costly conflicts. Therefore, the UN should work with, and strengthen regional organizations' capacity to be equal partners in any hybrid arrangement. One advantage with this arrangement is that wherever one organization finds itself, perhaps unpredictably barred from responding (e.g., NATO in Lebanon, the UN in Darfur and Chad) another will have the full capacity to take its place (like the AU did in Darfur). (Bah and Jones, 2009). So far, most capacity building initiatives by the western countries seem to be on a short-term basis aimed to either address some humanitarian emergencies or help them fight their geostrategic interest. For instance, the US so much talked about ACRI seems to be aimed at dragging African countries into its war against terrorism. Any form of assistance meant to build the capacity of African countries to be able to reasonably address the myriad of conflicts on the country should be long and should be UN driven to be more objective and result oriented. A Ghanaian Scholar, Oboe Hutchful, quoted by Thoe Neethling argued that given the many problems and weakness that characterize African armies, focusing on 'raising the peacekeeping capacity' of African armies seem an excessively narrow, and ultimately futile agenda. The notion of plucking a few units out of otherwise decaying military institutions and elevating them into 'centers of excellence' for executing peacekeeping tasks seems to be somewhat quixotic. (Neething, 2009)

Within the context of the United Nations' primary responsibility for matters of international peace and security, providing support for regional and sub-regional initiatives in Africa is both necessary and desirable. Such support is necessary because the United Nations lacks the capacity, resources, and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa. It is desirable because wherever possible the international community should strive to complement rather than supplant African efforts to resolve Africa's problems. In recent years there have been several new African initiatives to resolve disputes that have long plagued areas or to tackle new conflicts before they can expand and escalate beyond control. While not all those endeavors have been successful, the political leaders of Africa have persevered, and the peoples of Africa deserve the support of the international community.

5.2. The Hybrid Arrangement Should Not Absolve the UN of Its Primary Responsibility for Peace and Security

The hybrid arrangement should support rather than absolve the UN of its primary responsibility for peace and security. Two elements constitute the main engine of a PKO; the huge amount of money to be spent, which African countries will not be able to provide, and personnel which they do have. Even if one has 3 billion dollars, he will not be able to maintain peace if he does not have the personnel. So, the UN should not absolve itself simply because it provides the money needed for peacekeeping. On the other hand, too, even if the deployment of troops was opened, the American or Brits will not bring the troops needed. Africa countries will still have to contribute the personnel – Nigeria for example has lost over 30 personnel since the start of UNAMID. America lost nine in Somalia and pulled out and eventually changed its

policy regarding entire peacekeeping operations. However, Nigeria remains one of the top troops contributing countries to UN and regional peacekeeping operations. Complementarities should be the essence of the hybrid arrangement. Once the UN retains the operational responsibility everything is done according to UN standards, rules, and regulations. African countries on the other hand have worked very hard and deployed more energy and time because they knew the stigma of low capacity was there hovering on them.

5.3. The Political Process to Receive Priority Attention

Peacekeeping is no substitute for the political process. An all-inclusive political process to secure consensus from all stakeholders on the way forward can only be wished away at the peril of the peacekeeping operation. The Brahimi report emphatically established that peacekeeping cannot substitute for an effective political process. This point is made quite laconic by Bah who notes that the performance of peacekeeping must be judged in the context of wider political engagement. Political issues, He argues, not only underpin peacekeeping, but are key to determining the overarching strategy for – and most appropriate form of – UN engagement, emphasizing that in the absence of viable political framework, UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed with high expectations, but without real chances of success. (Bah,2008)

The above scenario succinctly describes the situation that prevailed in Darfur under UNAMID where much more attention was given to the deployment of troops and logistics than a well-articulated, well-driven peace process. Few efforts made in this direction were replete with confusion and lacked focus. There were initially two Special Envoys for the UN and AU in the persons of the Swedish Diplomat Jan Eliasson for the UN and Salim Ahmed Salim respectively Former OAU Secretary-General for the AU. The two were different both in their personalities and approaches to critical issues. Besides, their views and approaches on critical issues reflected the positions of the entities they represented. For instance, while the UN favored the position of the International Criminal Court on the indictment of President al Bashir, the AU loudly voiced its condemnation of indicting a sitting president. There were indications too that discrepancies existed in the ideology, strategy, and execution of diplomatic efforts as far as the peace process for Darfur was a concern. This situation perhaps informed the abolishing of the setup and in its place, a Joint Special Mediator was appointed in the person of the Burkinabe Diplomat, Jibril Basole.

5.4. Greater Involvement of Regional Organizations in the Conceptualization and Planning of Hybrid Missions

Regional organizations should be involved in the conceptualization, planning, and execution of any hybrid mission. Fortunately, in the case of UNAMID, the AU was involved right from the start. Most planning meetings took place in Addis, co-chaired by Kofi Annan and Alpha Konare the then UN Secretary-General and Chairman African Union Commission, respectively. It was even during one of such meetings that the idea of a hybrid mission was born and the suggestion that the LSP and HSP should dovetail into the hybrid operation was adopted. The final approval of the concept of the hybrid operation was approved in Abuja; a classical example of a regional organization and a global organization jointly addressing peace and security issues in a particular country.¹ The emphasis on involvement stems from the need to avoid an asymmetric relationship that would make one partner feel inferior and another superior. Already some African experts are asking if the hybrid partnership is in effect a hybrid form of paternalism in which the AU troops and personnel will do the basic and dangerous work on the ground guided by the all-wise and fatherly coterie of UN advisors. (Murithi,2008). But if an Asymmetric relation existed, it was because the African Union did not take advantage of the partnership to assert its position when it mattered most. The leadership of the African Union who, in principle, owned the mission did not play a very active role in meeting its obligations. If anything, Sudan was more forceful in safeguarding its interests and positions. For instance, Khartoum continually insisted on the African character of the mission. This not only guaranteed that the leadership of the mission was always African, but Khartoum also determined which nationalities should send troops to Darfur and what caliber of weapons to be used.

One important point to note, however, is that the UN is a much older institution with more resources and experience than the AU. The African Union, despite the enthusiasm and good intention, lacked the expertise in mission planning and resource mobilization. Enthusiasm, therefore, had to be matched with capability. To this extent, the African Union must be excused for not acting as expected by many people. It was easy therefore because it is the dog that wags the tail, not the tail that wags the dog. However, greater African involvement in the planning and execution of peace operations, argues Ibrahim Gambari brings political dividends, arguing that if you are an African country, this will tie you more into committing to it... plus it will be difficult for an African government to kick out a mission that is authorized by both the AU and UN. (Freshman, 2010).

5.5. Command and Control

Of all the challenges faced by UNAMID from the onset of the mission, issues bordering on command and control topped the list. Although many of the fears that the hybrid arrangement would have the challenges faced by ECOWAS in Liberia have largely been addressed by joint appointment of the mission's leadership and clear lines of communication, one other issue that may be a flashpoint for confusion is the dual reporting lines for the mission. As a joint mission, UNAMID's leadership reports to both New York and Addis Ababa. There are oftentimes divergent views between New York and Addis Ababa on very critical issues that leave the mission's leadership in a rather precarious position in the day-to-day running of the mission. For instance, the indictment of the Sudanese President Al Bashir by the International Criminal Court (ICC) brought out this divergence of opinion between New York and Addis Ababa. At the recent AU summit in Libya, it was decided by African leaders that the continent would collectively ignore the warrant. While AU seems to

take sides with President Al Bashir, or at worst favor a suspension of the indictment, the UN seems to believe there should be no impunity for certain crimes that border on crimes against humanity no matter whoever is involved. Because of this difference, President Bashir remains recalcitrant since one partner in the hybrid arrangement seems to, not only support him but fight his cause publicly. The then Chairman of the African Union Commission Jean Ping announced publicly that the AU was more interested in peace in Darfur rather than pursuing the indictment of President Al Bashir, a position that has been adopted by the new Chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. Recently, at a forum of former African heads of state in Pretoria, Zuma was quoted as saying 'It is important to get peace in Sudan, especially in Darfur, President al- Bashir has to be part of that, it is more important to get peace in Sudan than to rush for an arrest.' (Zuma, 2012)

Theoretically, the dual reporting line is not a plus. And because it was adjudged that it would not be a plus, there was a clear cut agreement, that whereas UNAMID would be a hybrid operation, it was agreed at the strategic level that the command and control, the standard in terms of rules and regulations and day-to-day running of the mission would be in the hands of the UN including the deployment of troops/ mission, policy issues regarding the operation of the mission, generating troops and employment of senior management with adequate input from AU. Structurally and operationally, there appear to be clear accountability lines enough to keep the mission going. The Joint Special Representative (JSR) is the head of the mission, supported by two DJSR's for Political and for Operations and management, while the Force Commander reports to the JSR on policy matters. However, as stated by Bah and Jones (2008), although resolution 1769 reiterates that command and control and backstopping will be provided by the UN, issues of backstopping could be liable to different interpretations. Command and control issues should, therefore, be ironed outright at the planning level with flexibility to avoid gaps and confusion during deployment.

5.6. The Mandate

The mandate of a hybrid mission like that of any mission should be clearly defined; it should also consider whether the mission to be established is in a failed or functional state. That would determine its robustness to be able to cope with obstructionist tendencies on the part of the government. Also, the mandate should not give the government so many powers to veto any arrangement that does not serve its whims and caprices. UNAMID is deployed in a functional state, where there is no peace to keep and where the mission lacks the robustness to enforce peace. Furthermore, the mandate provided Sudan with the veto powers which it has used effectively to obstruct UNAMID activities. For instance, Sudan determines which countries should deploy in Darfur. This was almost singularly responsible for UNAMID's inability to deploy substantially even two years after its establishment. UNAMID mandate should have been based on the responsibility to protect (R2P) principle in which sovereignty issues would have been suspended substantially giving the fact that the government was a major party to the conflict in which crimes against humanity and violations of the international humanitarian law were blatantly committed. Since this was not the case Sudan used its obstructionist policy to incapacitate the mission from effectively carrying out its mandate.

5.7. A Mechanism to Strengthen Hybrid Arrangements

No matter how much care is taken to make the hybrid arrangement functional, the fact that two organizations or three, with different levels of development and different organizational cultures, are hybridizing, there are bound to be some form of misunderstanding. There must be a mechanism for resolving such underlining issues without upsetting the arrangement. For UNAMID, the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM) was established to facilitate communication between the UN and AU on matters relating to the mission. There was also the Tripartite Mechanism (TM) between the UN, AU, and Sudan which helped smoothen relations between the three stakeholders.

According to Alison Giffen, the Deputy Director of a US think tank, the Henry L Stimson Center's Future of Peacekeeping Operation Program in Washington DC, both the UN and AU had learned valuable lessons in tactical and logistical cooperation from UNAMID. 'The experience has also strengthened Africa's ability to manage and deploy peacekeeping forces... 'but at this point, I would say that UNAMID is still producing 'lessons learned' than 'best practices.' For Ibrahim Gambari, 'we still have to prove that UNAMID is indeed a much better model than pure peacekeeping operation.' (Freshman, 2010)

Whether UNAMID turns into a template for future peacekeeping operations, however, depends on several factors such as political, security operations, logistics, and economics. Some of these factors straddled the entire life of UNAMID and posed real challenges to the success of the mission. Notwithstanding all these challenges, there is no doubt that UNAMID's experience will greatly influence future UN peacekeeping operations. Already two new peacekeeping missions mounted after UNAMID, the UN missions in Mali and Somalia exhibit all the qualities of hybrid missions after the order of UNAMID. There is a Joint Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and the League of Arab Nations in the person of Lakhdar Brahimi who took over from former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, while the African Union and United Nations are operating in Somali conflict theatre under one unified command and control exhibiting all the qualities of a hybrid operation.

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