PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE IN WEST AFRICA: ECOWAS PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA, 1989-2003

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to interrogate the peace and security architecture in West Africa in relation to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in Liberia between 1989 and 2003. Peacekeeping, developed during the Cold War to resolve conflicts between states is a major apparatus of the UN in conflict resolutions. However, the nature of post-Cold War conflicts precipitated a dramatic shift in the United Nations and multilateral peacekeeping structure. Peacekeeping activities became far more complex, incorporating more non-military and peacebuilding elements to ensure sustainability. Using Human Security Theory as its framework, this study argues that peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions have helped to end some armed conflicts and reduced the recurrence of some civil unrest in West Africa. It further argues that the military has played an important role in addressing the challenges posed by protracted conflicts in West Africa. The paper analyses the peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the UN in bringing an end to the first and second civil unrest in Liberia. It outlines the basic principles that should guide the planning and conduct of peacekeeping operations in Africa. The study contends that there is a need to address the root causes of multidimensional and interrelated threats to human security in West Africa. It concludes that regional security apparatus, like the ECOMOG, is a sine qua non to regional peace and security in West Africa.

Keywords: War, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, ECOWAS, Human Security

Introduction

The end of World War II ushered in a period of increasing inter and intra-state conflicts. Such conflicts rose sharply during and at the end of the Cold War. It was a period in which the Communist and the Capitalist blocs took advantage of the decolonisation process in Africa and Asia and ignited some ideologically oriented conflicts. It was also a period in which the third-

world countries struggled to break free from the shekels of colonialism. Most importantly, it was a period in which individuals and groups in the third-world countries, especially in Africa struggled for ethnic, political, class, or religious supremacy. In any case, the forgoing generated some arms conflicts of unprecedented order which called for international and regional interventions. Such was the case of Liberia, a country on the West Coast of Africa. According to Rothstein, the period had contradictory effects; while pushing some nations to armed conflicts, it led others to peace.[1] The outbreak of armed conflicts throughout Africa in the post-colonial era threatened the very survival of the continent. Particularly, the outbreak of the Liberian civil war in 1998, a few years after the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, prompted the *Africa Confidential* to describe the year as an *annus horribilis,* a year of horror.[2]

Nevertheless, these intrastate conflicts otherwise known as 'contemporary conflicts' or 'new wars' have been defined by Mary Kaldor as 'deep-rooted', 'intractable', and 'protracted social conflicts' that are often difficult to suppress, contain, or even resolve.[3] Thus the UN, through the mandate of its Security Council (SC), placed at the top of its agenda, the continuous promotion of global cooperation and maintenance of international peace and security. In fulfilling this responsibility, its activities cover the principal areas of conflict prevention, peace-making, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding. This paper focuses on two of these operations, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding in relation to the ECOWAS intervention in the Liberian civil conflict, 1989-2003. Thus, it is the basic contention of this study to examine the civil wars in Liberia and to analyse the employment of ECOWAS and UN-led peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations under the authorisation of the United Nations Security Council.

Theoretical Construct

This study adopts the Human Security theory to explain the scope of the military in the peace and security architecture in West Africa. It uses the ECOWAS-led peacekeeping and peacebuilding

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[1] R. L. Rothstein, "In Fear of Peace: Getting Past Maybe," in Robert L. Rothstein (ed.), *After the Peace: Resistance and Reconciliation* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), 1–25.

[2] See Patrick Smith, "USA/Africa: Battle Lines in Washington and Africa," *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 40, No. 7, 1999, 1.

[3] Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), 6.

operations in Liberia as a case. 'Human Security', officially introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 1994 *Human Development Report,* provides a new way of thinking about the range of challenges the world faces in the 21st century and how the global community responds to them. It argues that security for many people means protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crimes, social conflicts, political repressions, and environmental hazards. Hence, human security identifies and addresses the root causes of these threats, insecurities, and vulnerabilities at the global, regional, national, individual, and community levels. It also establishes a comprehensive framework of responses that generate positive externalities that are targeted and impact for the affected community. To this effect, the UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations have all expanded upon this vision of human security to provide lasting peace and security in the global polity. Nevertheless, human security assists the UN, and governmental, and non-governmental organisations in assessing, developing, and implementing integrated responses to a broad range of issues, particularly insecurity.[4] Not only does it manage and assess threat issues, but it also reviews the protection and empowerment strategies needed to help prevent and mitigate the recurrence of insecurities. By so doing, it moves away from a state-centric approach to tackling insecurity from an individualistic-centric perspective. The human security strategy encompasses seven key dimensions of security: economy, food, health, environment, persons, community, and politics.[5]

However, human security has come under a great deal of criticism amongst scholars in varieties of fields concerning its conceptual ambiguity, lack of a precise definition, and the argument that its pathologies and disempowers weak and undeveloped states. Khong argues that, by broadening the concept of security to encompass anything from environmental degradation and pollution to homelessness and unemployment, one ends up prioritising everything, then by definition, nothing is, if everything is prioritised.[6] For Newman, the concept is normatively

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[4] See the General Assembly Resolution 66/290 on 10 September 2012 on the application of human security as an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people.

[5] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 22.

[6] Y. F. Khong, "Human Security: A Shotgun Approach to Alleviating Human Misery?" *Global Governance,* Vol. 7, No.3 (2001), 232.

attractive but analytically weak.[7] Duffield and Waddell argue that, by linking security and development, division occurs between those who have and those who do not have- states that can provide human security for their population and those that cannot.[8] Despite these criticisms, human security offers security from both violent and non-violent threats and also gives an integrated approach to the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by providing emancipatory, humanitarian, and development assistance to vulnerable and war-torn societies.

Historicising the Liberian Civil Crises vis-à-vis ECOWAS Intervention

The immediate cause of the conflict in Liberia took place on 12 April 1980 with a coup d'état, when President William Tolbert was overthrown and assassinated by Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe, on the charges of corruption, neglect of the military, and mismanagement of public funds.[9] Many political figures fled the country while others were imprisoned. Shortly after the coup, Doe assumed the rank of general and established the People's Redemption Council (PRC). Thus, he became the first non-Americo-Liberian leader of Liberia, ending the 133 years of Americo-Liberia rule. The coup received the support of most Liberians, who were dissatisfied with the domination and injustice of the minority but dominant Americo-Liberians in the socio-political and economic landscape of the country.[10]

However, the sentiment soon took an ethnic turn as Doe embarked on filling key government positions with members of his Krahn ethnic group. His rule was also characterised by a high level of totalitarianism, corruption, and favouritism towards his native ethnic Krahns which led to growing opposition from the public. The United States government took advantage of the ethnic rift in Liberia and supported an opposition movement against the government of Samuel

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[7] Edward Newman, "Critical Human Security Studies", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, No.1 (2010), 82.
[8] Mark Duffield and Nicholas Waddell, *Human Security and Global Danger: Exploring a Governmental Assemblage* (University of Lancaster: Department of Politics and International Relations, 2004), 18. See also Tara McCormack, "Power and Agency in the Human Security Framework", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No.1 (2008), 114.
[9] See Florence Iheme, "The Role of ECOWAS in Conflict Management", in S. G. Best (ed*.), Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2006), 252-272.
[10] See O. Oche, "The Changing Forms of Conflict in West Africa and Issues in Regional Security" in Akindele, *Civil Society, Good Governance, and the Challenges of Regional Security in West Africa* (Vantage, 2003).

Doe. Consequently, several coups were mounted against Doe with vicious reprisals. In December 1989, the First Liberian Civil War (1989-1996) began, when Charles Taylor's anti-Doe National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), comprising mostly of Gio and Mano ethnic groups, invaded Liberia from Ivory Coast to outcast the Doe-led government.

The conflict soon became a regional problem, spilling into neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. To end the war in Liberia, ECOWAS sent a peacekeeping force into Monrovia in August 1990. The force, known as the Economic Community Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), was made up of troops from several West African countries. Its mandate was to maintain law and order, protect life and property, maintain essential services, provide security to the interim administration, observe elections, and conduct normal police duties in Liberia.[11] Advocates of sub-regional forces argue that these groupings when compared to non-regional interveners, have both political and military advantages.[12] In its efforts towards achieving a peaceful settlement in Liberia, ECOMOG took over the roles of humanitarian actors. They shared food with many starving civilians, encamped and disarmed the warring factions, and mediated a series of peace accords, which became the basis for the peace plan of November 1990. This also included the establishment of an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) under the leadership of Amos Sawyer. The interim government was set up under the Banjul Resolution of 1990.

In September 1990, Doe was captured, tortured, and murdered by Prince Johnson, leader of the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) – a breakaway faction of Taylor's NPFL, and his INPFL forces. This however renewed the intensity of the conflict among the various factions. Consequently, ECOMOG changed its mandate from peacekeeping and assumed the peace enforcement role to enforce an immediate cease-fire.[13] More troops were brought in to help in enforcing the peace. In November 1990, all parties to the conflict signed a cease-fire agreement; however, there was still constant fighting between the warring factions. On 30 October 1991,

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[11] Festus Aboagye, *Peacekeepers, Politicians, and Warlords: The Liberian Peace Process* (New York: United Nations University Press, 1999), 103.

[12] Herbert Howe, "Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping", *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 3, (1996), 145-176.

[13] Abiodun Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1998), 55.

ECOWAS brokered the Yamoussoukro IV Accord which outlined steps to implement the peace plan, under the supervision of an expanded ECOMOG, as well as the establishment of transitional institutions to carry out free and fair elections. Although Sergeant Doe and Prince Johnson agreed to accept the ECOMOG intervention, Taylor was opposed to the intervention. Despite this, ECOMOG achieved some measure of success as it facilitated the signing of a peace agreement between the major factions that resulted in the general elections of 1997 that brought Taylor into power as the President of the country.

The UN supported the efforts of ECOMOG by providing humanitarian assistance to the affected areas in Liberia through coordinated activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the UN Population Fund (UNPF), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP). The SC called upon the parties to the conflict to respect the cease-fire agreement and maintained that the Yamoussoukro IV Accord offered the best possible framework to end the conflict. [14] The SC also adopted Resolution 788 which imposed an embargo on the delivery of all weapons and military equipment to Liberia, except those for the sole use of the peacekeeping forces of ECOWAS.[15] The United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) was also created to support the efforts of ECOWAS in the first Liberian Civil War. It carried out logistical work, while ECOMOG provided security and undertook public information campaigns to educate voters. Upon the departure of ECOMOG in 1998, it negotiated peace accords and cease-fires, disarmed rebels, evacuated expatriates, and created conditions for transparent elections. Buoyed by its success in Liberia, ECOWAS sent peacekeeping forces to other countries in turmoil. It further proposed the formation of a stand-by crisis response force and the creation of a permanent mechanism for conflict resolution.

The peaceful era was short-lived as Taylor in his quest to make Liberia the regional power, supported rebel groups such as the Rally of Democratic Forces of Guinea in the RFDG Insurgency and the Revolutionary United Front in the Sierra Leone Civil War. In retaliation, the governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone backed some anti-Taylor rebel groups like the Liberians United for

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[14] Katariina Simonen, *The State versus the Individual: The Unresolved Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2011), 167.
[15] *Ibid*.

Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). The Second Liberian Civil War (1999-2003) began when LURD invaded northern Liberia and began advancing towards the capital, Monrovia.[16] In early 2003, a second anti-Taylor rebel group, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), invaded southern Liberia, leaving only a third of Liberia under the control of Taylor. Liberia was now engaged in a three-way conflict with Sierra Leone and the Guinea Republic. Despite the ongoing peace talks, the conflict was still intense. On 29 July 2003, LURD declared a cease-fire. ECOWAS sent two battalions of Nigerian peacekeepers to Liberia. The first was detached from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and the second came from Nigeria itself. Subsequently, Taylor resigned and fled to Nigeria in August 2003 ahead of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which formed the negotiated end to the war.[17] The war resulted in the deaths of over 50,000 people and the internal displacement of thousands. Both Taylor and LURD made extensive use of children as either soldiers or ammunition porters. In September 2003, the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) was sent to Liberia. The UNSC approved the conversion of ECOMIL into a UN International Stabilisation Force. Then, in October 2003, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established by the SC to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process. They were assigned to protect the UN staff, facilities, and the civilian population. They also supported humanitarian and human rights groups and assisted in national security reforms, particularly in training and restructuring the military. The UNMIL completed the transfer of security responsibilities to Liberian authorities in June 2016 and successfully completed its mandate in March 2018.[18] In a statement, UNMIL's Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General stated that "the withdrawal of UNMIL signifies that we are leaving behind a country whose citizens can now enjoy relatively peaceful lives. Liberia has a great potential to achieve lasting stability, democracy, and prosperity."[19]

Conceptualising Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

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[16] Mark Huband, *The Liberian Civil War* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 52.

[17] Jo Becker, *Campaigning for Justice: Human Rights Advocacy in Practice* (California: Stanford University Press, 2012), 115.

[18] Kjetil Larsen, "Promoting Peace through the International Law of Peace Operations", in C. M. Bailliet (ed.) *Research Handbook on International Law and Peace* (Glos: Edward Elgar, 2019), 352 – 372.

[19] United Nations, United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) (2018) https://unmil.unmissions.org/unmil-completes-its-mandate-now-peaceful-liberia (accessed, 18 December, 2022).

Peacekeeping entails the international effort involving an operational component to promote the termination of armed conflicts or the resolution of longstanding disputes.[20] It involves the deployment of a peacekeeping force, which is composed of the military, police, and civilian personnel, to a conflict zone to monitor, and prevent the resumption of fighting following a conflict and to maintain a ceasefire or peace agreement. The peacekeeping force may also provide humanitarian assistance, protect civilians, and help to establish the conditions for lasting peace. Although peacekeeping operations do not address the underlying causes of violence or work to create societal change as peacebuilding does, it has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to the UN to assist host countries in navigating the difficult path from conflict to peace. The UN has evolved through three generations in its peacekeeping activities; the first generation (1948-1990), the second generation (1990-2000), and the third generation (2000-present).[21] There are three basic principles of UN peacekeeping to guide personnel, they include the consent of the main parties to the conflict, impartial implementation of mandates by the UN peacekeepers, and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. These principles are mutually reinforcing and apply in all peacekeeping planning, implementation, and conduct.

In essence, peacekeeping has always been highly dynamic and evolving in the face of new challenges; moving its focus from national security to human security through peacebuilding.[22] Thus, Kofi Annan established a 17-member High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations, headed by Lakhdar Brahimi, to make a comprehensive assessment of the conduct of UN peace operations, in an attempt to strengthen and revitalise these operations, and to make specific recommendations for change.[23] He also pointed to the need for peacekeeping forces to

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[20] Paul F. Dieh, *International Peacekeeping* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 4.

[21] The first generation was the traditional or Nordic peacekeeping missions for inter-state conflicts, the second was the involvement of the UN in highly unstable intra-state conflicts, and the third involves the contemporary multi-dimensional operations. See P.T.Boroh, "Nigeria's Peace Support Operations and the National Interest: An Appraisal in Peace Studies and Practice," *Journal of the Society of Peace Studies and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2013), 1-25.

[22] O. Ramsbotham, T. Woodhouse and H. Miall (eds.), *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 134.

[23] See *The Brahimi Report* (formally the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations), issued in 2000 to address the past weaknesses and failures of the UN regarding peace and security, recognized the importance of regional and sub-regional organisations in the establishment and maintenance of peace and security and outlined the need for strengthening the UN's capacity to undertake a wide variety of missions.

find new capabilities by offering 'positive inducements' by supplementing military containment and humanitarian relief roles, promoting civic action to rebuild communities economically, politically, and socially, to gain support for peacekeeping mandates among populations in conflict zones, instead of coercion.[24] Reliance on coercion alone in Peacekeeping Operations is insufficient, as coercion can only restrain violence temporarily but cannot promote lasting peace; rather, a better option is influencing the behaviour of people in conflict situations by the use of the carrot rather than the stick.

The term, 'peacebuilding' was first coined by Johan Galtung who classified approaches to peace into three categories: Peacekeeping, Peace-making, and Peacebuilding.[25] In his analysis, peacebuilding is more than just a post-accord reconstruction, it entails creating sustainable peace by addressing the root causes of violent conflict; structures that remove the causes of wars must be found and must also offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur.[26] It involves external efforts to build up all sorts of structures such as social services, a judiciary, and government.[27] It calls for long-term commitment to establishing an infrastructure across the levels of society, an infrastructure that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within the society and maximises the contribution from the outside.[28] Peace is not the mere absence of violence and war, but the presence of elements of justice, security, law, and order. It involves an institutionalised governing structure for sustainable peace.[29] Hence, it is important to not just focus on deploying a neutral third-party military force to a conflict zone to monitor and maintain a ceasefire but to also ensure the conditions for long-lasting peace are met through rebuilding and transforming the structures and underlying factors that generate deadly conflict.

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[24] See Kofi Annan, "Peace Operations and the UN," Paper presented at the Conflict Resolution Monitor 1, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford (1997), 25-32.

[25] J. Galtung, "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding," in *Peace, War and Defense: Essays in Peace Research II* (Copenhagen: Christian Elders, 1976), 292-304.

[26] *Ibid.*, 297-298.

[27] John C. Polanyi, "The United Nations and Peacekeeping", in M. Bruce and T. Milne (eds.) *Ending War: The Force of Reason*, (London: Macmillan, 1999), 140.

[28] John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace Press, 1997), 16.

[29] Maria Cristina Azoona et al, *Open Letters to the World Leaders* (Elgin, IL: Cook Communication, 2022), 74.

Most post-conflict societies are unstable and run a great risk of relapse, as many conflicts have self-sustaining dynamics of their own. Moreover, most peace agreements collapse, and peace processes fail or reach an impasse, setting off new cycles of rivalries and tensions. Boutros-Ghali argues that peacebuilding refers to actions that assist the establishment of indigenous capacity to resolve conflicts peacefully and to identify and support structures that will tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid the outbreak of, or relapse into, conflict.[30] These actions include: assisting in disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, mine action, electoral assistance, Security Sector Reform (SSR), the facilitation of national dialogue and reconciliation, protection and promotion of human rights, assisting in restoring the rule of law, the protection of civilians, the promotion of social and economic recovery and the development and support of the restoration and extension of State authority.[31] In Cambodia, for example, UN peacekeepers were expected not only to focus on ceasefire monitoring missions but to perform more robust and broader mandates like creating and maintaining all conditions necessary for peaceful and fair elections including political, social, military, legal, human and administrative rights.[32]

The Need for African Solutions to African Problems

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two interrelated approaches, in that, they are both important components of efforts designed to address conflict and promote peace; they however differ in their goals, methods, actors, and forms. While peacekeeping focuses on maintaining a ceasefire towards the creation of conditions for sustainable peace and also to facilitate peacebuilding processes, peacebuilding is future-oriented and aims to address the underlying causes of conflict, together with building institutions and infrastructure needed for lasting peace.[33] Although Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding are not explicitly provided for in the UN Charter, the foundation document for all the UN works, Chapter VII permits the SC to determine the existence of any threat to the peace,

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[30] See Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1992), 21.

[31] United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines", (2008), https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/capstone_eng_0.pdf (accessed, 20 December, 2022).

[32] See the keynote speech given by Professor S. Jayakumar, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, Singapore in *The Nexus between Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Debriefing and Lessons: Report of the 1999 Singapore Conference* (London: Kluwer Law International, 1999), 12.

[33] Karin Aggestam and Annika Björkdahl (eds.*), Rethinking Peacebuilding: The Quest for Just Peace in the Middle East and the Western Balkans* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 1.

breach of the peace, or act of aggression and to also make recommendations and decide what measures shall be taken under Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.[34] Regional members are empowered under Chapter VIII to maintain or restore peace in their sub-regions.[35]

Thus, UN Peace Support Operations are deployed based on mandates from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Whilst these mandates of missions vary from situation to situation, depending on the nature of the conflict and the specific challenges it presents, there is a considerable degree of consistency in its geopolitical tasks. Among such tasks is to ensure that local conflicts do not escalate or spill over across borders and invariably, cause instability in the international system. In the new millennium (the year 2000), the spectrum of contemporary peace operations has become increasingly broad and complex. To respond to these developments and challenges, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, 2018, launched the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, to refocus and renew the individual and collective commitments of Member States to strengthen peacekeeping operations on the ground with more targeted mandates.[36] At the then high-level meeting, member states collectively declared their shared commitments toward enhancing the collaboration and planning with relevant international, regional, and sub-regional organisations and arrangements, including the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU).[37]

Beyond simply monitoring and stabilizing conflict situations after a ceasefire, peacekeeping operations today involve peacebuilding and state-building activities. Succinctly, the military, identified with the use of a UN blue helmet or beret and a badge, forms the backbone of most peacekeeping operations, comprising the army, police, and civilian personnel, voluntarily

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[34] United Nations Secretary-General, "Codification Division Publications: Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs", Supplement No. 7 (1955), page number? https://legal.un.org/repertory/art1.shtml (accessed, 14 December 2022).

[35] P.T. Boroh, "Nigeria's Peace Support Operations and the National Interest: An Appraisal in Peace Studies and Practice," *Journal of the Society of Peace Studies and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2013), 1-25.

[36] United Nations Peacekeeping, "Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)", (2023), https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p (accessed, 3 January 2023).

[37] United Nations, "Action for Peacekeeping: Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations" (2023), https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p-declaration-en.pdf (accessed, 2 January 2023).

provided by UN Member States. Today's multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations involve UN-led operations, regional blocs like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), European Union (EU), and in some cases, a coalition of single states. Although many Peace Keeping Operations have failed to achieve their objectives, and are criticised for mismanagement, failure to intervene promptly, human rights abuses by peacekeepers, and poor planning, has been ineffective overall. In 1988, the UN Peacekeeping Forces were awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

According to Lise Howard, if one looks systematically across the record of the completed missions since the end of the Cold War, two-thirds of the times, peacekeepers have been successful at implementing their mandates and departing and have been effective in curbing death and destructions arising from civil conflicts[38]. To this end, most UN peacekeeping missions around the world are in Africa. It is recorded that more than fifty thousand troops are deployed for UN operations in Africa and tens of thousands more deployed for regionally led missions in countries where civil wars and insurgencies have killed civilians and threatened to destabilise surrounding regions.[39]

Consequent to the number and nature of African conflict, there has been a renewed call for 'African solutions to African problems.' Such solutions call on African states to take personal responsibility for preserving peace and stability on the African continent. Thus, Boutros-Ghali emphasised the importance of improving the preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa. He envisaged the need to prioritise humanitarian interventions and advocated the use of regional and sub-regional security arrangements in taking the lead role in the prevention and settlement of conflicts and assisting the UN in containing them.[40] Kofi Annan buttressed this view by stating that the UN lacks the capacity, resources, and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa. Thus, the international community should strive to

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[38] See Lise Howard, *Power in Peacekeeping,* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2019), i-ii.

[39] C. Klobucista and D. Renwick, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa: A Backgrounder" (2021), https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa (accessed 12 September 2022).

[40] UN Secretary General, "Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa: Report of the Secretary-General", Document A/50/711 and S/1995/9111 (New York: UN, 1995), para. 4.

complement rather than supplant African efforts to resolve Africa's problems.[41] Indeed, African States have also recognised the grave threats to their security and are well aware of the UNSC's efforts to stabilise the continent, hence, have resolved to develop a continental capacity for peace operations by taking on a greater degree of responsibility for promoting durable peace, sustainable development, and security in the continent, while receiving coordinated assistance of all kinds from the UN.

Conclusion

This study attempted an interrogation of peace and security architecture in West Africa: ECOWAS peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Liberia between 1989 and 2003. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two crucial strategies for restoring stability and fostering sustainable peace in conflict-affected regions. The new demands being made on Peace Keeping Operations call for the need to not only stabilise conflict zones and separate warring parties but to also protect civilians, assist in the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of former combatants, support the organization of elections, protect, and promote human rights, and assist in restoring the rule of law. In this light, this paper examined peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, using the civil wars in Liberia as a case study. It highlighted the importance and the key roles played by the United Nations and other regional bodies in helping countries make the difficult, but early transition from conflict to peace. The evidence from this study indicates that ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia is a clear example of a regional peacekeeping mission that required not just additional international support to achieve its objectives, but also the support of the parties to the conflict. Drawing upon this analysis, military personnel, regardless of their heterogeneity, are united in their determination to foster peace and advance their multidimensional mandates by strengthening national capacities for conflict management and laying the foundations for sustainable peace.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Africa has come of age to be independent from the neo-colonial shackles of the West by instituting and maintaining its security and peacebuilding architecture. The workability of such security and peace apparatus has been seen, not only in in the case of Liberian civil conflicts, but also in the civil crises in Sierra Leone, Mali, Gambia, and

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[41]UN Secretary-General, "The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa: Report of the Secretary-General", Document A/52/871 and S/1998/318 (New York: UN, 1998), para. 41.

other parts of West Africa. Thus, there is a clarion call for African countries, with their subregional blocs to develop their regional security architecture that can help in peacekeeping, peace-making, and the implementation of sustainable peace in the continent. Regional peace-making and peacebuilding networks can further be utilised to suggest a lasting solution to issues of military intervention in civilian governments in places such as Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Such a peace-making structure can be extended to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to proffer solutions to civil conflicts in places like Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic. The same can apply to other protracted tensions within the African continent such as the Sudanese conflicts as well as the Ethiopian, Eritrea, and Somaliland crises.