Regional Security in Africa The Dynamic and Challenges

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Abstract

This article examines the idea of how the African Union (AU) and its aspects of security agency in Africa including APSA in dealing with the issue of security. As it is the fact that many countries in this region have experienced conflicts either within state or intra states. The data says that about 64 percent of the nations in this continent had engaged in conflicts or wars in the last fifty years. Therefore, there is a notion mentioning that Africa should solve their problems through its regional security. On the other hand, there is an opposite argument saying that the AU should not be left alone because they have no sufficient resources, fund and peacekeepers to conduct their missions. Thus, this paper argues that partnership between the regional security in Africa and the international agency like the United Nation (UN), the European Union (EU) will be one of alternative solutions for African problems. This partnership can be seen from some missions such as the deployment of troops in Burundi in which it was funded by the UN, while the AU provided troops coming from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique. Another partnership between the AU and an international agency can be looked at the mission in Darfur Sudan which was funded by the EU.

Keywords: *the AU, regional security, peacekeeping, conflicts*

A. Introduction

Africa has a long history of conflict either civil war or military conflicts. The data shows that for the last 50 years there were approximately 30 countries or equal to 65 percent of the states in this continent had armed conflicts. Some of these wars were prolonged for many

years; 64 percent of them ended after five years or less of protracted battles, while 22 percent out of the total ended after 11 or more years of war (Vines, 2013: 93-94). The examples of those long wars were happened in Sudan which was started in 1983 and resolved in the early 2005 (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 75), Angola, Somalia and conflict in Ethiopia (Vines, 2013: 93-94; Buzan and Wever, 2003: 245).

Another data depicts that from 1955 to 2009 it was estimated 40 percent of war in the world took place in Africa, this included ethnic conflict and revolutionary war. In 2000, 67 percent of the total revolutionary war around the world was in this continent. Moreover, during the period 1990 to 2009 Africa was the home of more than one third of ethnic conflicts in the world (Williams, 2011: 17-18). Even, in the recent years, Africa has still experienced several wars, for instance in 2011 there were three wars and in 2012 there were 4 wars including two military coups (Vines, 2012: 93). Those conflicts were happened mostly within a state rather than intra state wars. But, some of those crises had spilled over into the neighbouring countries. For example, a conflict in Rwanda affected other conflicts in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Uganda (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 75). This had created situation more complicated and added the existing condition worse.

Those problems of insecurity in Africa had become both international and regional attention since the tension broke out. A number of peacekeeping missions have been sent to the ground either by the United Nation (UN) or regional security operation such as The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organisation of African Union (OAU) or African Union (AU). Some of those interventions were successful; meanwhile others did not work well and left with some serious destructions. For instance, the UN mission in Rwanda war, they were not able to protect civilians from the genocide done by the conflicting parties (Yorke, 2001: 78). In addition, the UN mission in Somalia was failure and in this mission 24 UN Pakistani peacekeepers and 18 US servicemen were killed (Yorke, 2001: 79; Findlay, 2002: 143-150). Besides, the AU failed to deal with the conflicts in Cote d'Ivorie in late 2010 and early 2011. The AU was also unable to take over the NATO intervention over Libya (Vines, 2013: 89).

The failure of the UN peace operation in the African war and some important changes in the world politic like the end of cold war and the political aspect of African countries as one of the causes of conflicts becomes major self introspection in the UN Security Council regarding their intervention in that region (York, 2001: 83). In 1998, Kofi Annan, the UN secretary general, mentioned that "Africa must help itself". This means that Africa has to handle their problems. However, this notion of regional security specifically in Africa has been debated by many scholars. On the one hand some scholars agree that the regional problems should be solved by their own people and government as a phrase "African solution for African problems" (Wagner, 2013: 41). This means that Africa will handle their issues of insecurity with their own strength and resources including providing troops and funding for its operations. This is based on the argument that local people have more understanding on the problems and local values, so that their solutions will be more suitable for the crisis. Besides, Africa has the African Union (AU) with its Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) as well as other peace institutions (Makinda and Okumu, 2008; Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 70-72). On the other hand, other scholars criticise this idea due to the fact that such regional security has lack of capabilities and limited fund as well as limited military resources to support their missions on the ground (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: Vines, 2013). Therefore the regional security in Africa should not be left alone.

Based on the above description, this essay argues that partnership between an International agency and a regional security would be better rather than leaving Africa alone to solve the conflicts in that region. This is because the AU has its knowledge on the problems that can be benefit for the conflict resolution process, but they are unable to deploy its mission without support from the international community because of a lack of human capacity and resources. For example, the AU mission in Burundi, Darfur and Somalia were funded by the United State of America (USA), Canada, Australia, EU, Japan, and China (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 118). This paper will discuss about the AU and its aspect of security including the APSA and other agencies, how the dynamic of this organisation in responding several wars in Africa including the case of Libya, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, and how the relationship between the AU, the UN and the NATO during peace operation on the ground.

The OAU/AU and the birth of APSA

A regional security institution in Africa like the AU is not the only one organisation in the world. There are several similar institutions were built in other regions such as the NATO in Europe, the League of Arab States (LAS) and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) in the Middle East, the Organisation of American States (OAS) and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in America, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and the Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) in Asia, in Australasia there is the commonwealth and the Australia New Zealand and US security treaty (ANZUS) (Fawcett, 2013: 356).

The birth of those regional securities is an evident of the need of security in each region. It was stated that the aims of creating such organisation are to prevent social, political and economic conflicts in certain areas, because security of a state is also influenced by external security such as trans-borderland and local safety (Fawcett, 2013: 356). This idea is related to the definitions of regional security given by Buzan (2003) that says a regional security as a group of states who have common concern on the security issues of the region because they realise that a nation's security cannot be separated from other nations (Buzan, 2003 as cited in Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 72). In the African context, there are several examples related to the connectivity of a within state conflict that then spilled over into the neighbouring country such as Somalia and Sudan, Ethiopia and Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, Uganda and Rwanda, Rwanda and Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zaire/DRC and Angola (Buzan and Wever, 2003: 232).

Another purpose of the regional security is to answer the international demand on security, and in this sense regional security institutions have played an important role on providing peacekeepers that cannot be provided by the UN mission (Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 74; Fawcett, 2013). The existence of such regional institution might also play as a balance power, so that there will minimize the domination done by the UN (Fawcett, 2013). Indeed, both the UN and regional security agencies might share responsibility to keep and to maintain world-wide harmony (Malan, 2001:112).

The emergence of the African Union was also a response toward several challenges on the security issues and to find solution for these problems. As described by Makinda and Okumu (2008) that there are several factors which influenced on the process of AU formation such as the end o f the cold war, high demand of human rights enforcement, some tension among the political leader of African countries. Besides, AU is the continuation of the OAU that was preliminary created in 1990s which aimed to guard the sovereignty and security as well as the integrity of the state, to build a network and solidarity among state members of the union (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 23).

The OAU had several peacekeeping missions sent to the ground. For instance, in 1991 there were peacekeeping operation in Western Sahara-Morocco, in 1991-1993 there were military observer team and monitoring group sent to Rwanda, from 1993-1996 an observer mission in Burundi, in 1999-2000 an observer mission in Democratic Republic of Congo, and 2001-2002 a military mission in Comoros, as well as from 2000 to 2008 a liaison mission in Ethiopia-Eritrea (Williams, 2011: 151).

The AU was formally established in 2002 with the principles adopted from the OAU namely; sovereignty, equality, and interdependence as well as respecting the existing boundaries (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 37). This principle is related to the traditional definition of security in which security is referred to the issue of territory, state borders and national security (Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 76). This definition seems to be a military basis of security, but after the end of cold war the OAU began to use a broader explanation of security including non military aspects (Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 76).

To implement the principles, the AU has a board for peace and security called the Peace and Security Council (PSC) officially formed in 2004. The members of PSC are based on the equality and there is no permanent member with a veto power (Williams, 2011: 158). The PSC has tasks to promote peace and security among member states of the union, this is stated in the AU charter under article 3 (f). In addition, the AU using article 5(2) created a Common African Defence and Security Policy in order to back up the PSC (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 87).

The PSC is the authorize body of the AU who has objectives as follows; to anticipate and to prevent conflict, to manage ongoing tension, and to promote peace and security. To implement this notion, the AU has structure and mechanism called the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) (Vines, 2013: 97). This is incorporation between the PSC and a number of different bodies in the AU including political and economical board such as; (a) the African standby force (ASF); this body is designed to provide troops whenever a military deployment is needed on the ground, (b) the Continental early warning system (CEWS), they monitor and observe as well as analyse the political, economic, social and safety situation, then they inform the collecting data to the PSC. Therefore, this early warning information can be used to prevent conflicts to be happened. (c) The Panel of wise (POW), this is a board consisting five honourable people who give several recommendations and opinion regarding the conflict situation. (d) The African peace fund (APF); it is a board who provides fund for the peace mission (Vines, 2013:98-99; Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 87).

The AU peace mission in Africa; the dynamic and challenges

As mentioned before that the AU has its own system and mechanism of peace and security for Africa (APSA), however during the action this body cannot be separated from the intervention of international agencies. It is the fact that the AU has significant contributions to the conflict resolution process in several wars and conflicts in Africa as from 2003 to 2008 the AU sent about 15,000 troops to the battle zone in Burundi, Sudan, the Comoros and Somalia (Soderbaum and Tavares, 2009: 78). But, some of them were in cooperation with other international peace actors. For example, the first peace mission deployed by the AU was in Burundi (AMIB) from 2003 to 2004 which was sent before the creation of the PSC. This deployment consisted of troops from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique with two years mandate and then it was taken over by the UN. After that, this African operation was under the command of the UN and funded by the UN (Sturman and Hayatou, 2010: 70:71). This mission was then called the UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB), and later in 2007 the AU sent military force to Burundi for assisting the realization of

Dar es Salaam peace agreement between the government and the opponent named "Palipehutu-FNL" (Soderbaum and Hettne, 2010: 22).

The next mission was in Darfur Sudan (AMIS). In this operation, the AU deployed 100 observers to Darfur in 2004. Then, in 2005 the AU sent 7000 troops to this country (Makinda and Okumu, 2008: 118; Soderbaum and Hettne, 2010: 22). This operation was almost fully sponsored by external donation such as from 2003 to 2007 the European Union (EU) donated € 250 million for this mission. After that, this AMIS changed into the UN-the AU mission in Darfur (UNAMID), in 2008 the EU gave another grant for the mission for about € 300 million (Engel and Porto, 2010: 4).

Although the AU has the APF for financing its operation, in most of peace mission done by the AU was backed up financially by the donors such as the EU, the USA, China and other agencies. For example, the EU had financially contributed to the military or civilian operation in Africa as follow; € 7 million given to DRC Artemis mission in 2003, € 4,3 million to police mission in Kinshasa DRC from 2005-2007, € 8,3 million to Somalia operation from 2008 to present, € 5,6 million to action in Guinea-Bissau from 2008 to 2010. Moreover, the EU allocated approximately € 299 million and provided large number of troops for peacekeeping action in Chad and CAR from 2008-2009. The EU also has offered both military training and fund for mission in Somalia about € 7 million from 2010 up to now (Siradag, 2012: 177-178).

The providing of financial support from the EU is not a new story since some of the key factors in the EU, France, Britain and Belgium, have long history of colonization over Africa. These countries might still have any interest on Africa either in terms of politic and economy (Cleaver and May, 1998: 60). For example, the economic interest of the EU's states can be seen from how they sold weapons to African countries like France, Italy, the UK and Germany who are the major exporter of weapons to Libya. In 2009, the EU's weapons trade to Libya was equal to € 347.7 million (Siradag, 2012: 178). Another example, in 2010 France exported their product to Africa which was amounted to € 20 billion. Besides, the EU built a partnership with the AU in the political aspect as they launched a strategy for Africa on security and development (Siradag, 2012: 178).

In addition to the difficulties on the economic element, the deployment of force by the AU had faced other challenges such as the availability of troops. For instance, the AU's mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which started in 2007 was aimed to facilitate dialogue and conflict resolution as well as providing safe haven place for civilian. In 2008 this mission got chapter VII mandate from the UN and was expected to have 8000 troops, but there were only 1800 army from Uganda and Burundi (Soderbaum and Hettne, 2010: 22).

Another challenge faced by the AU/APSA is the war in Libya, Mali and Cote d'Ivori. In these three countries' war, there are complicated problems. Beside, in these conflicts, there are several international interveners which to some extent make the ongoing conflicts either worse or resolved. In this case, NATO was one of them; in 2011 NATO lead by French gained permission from the UN Security Council to intervene in Libya war. They were initially given a mandate to provide humanitarian aid and to protect civilians from the Gaddafi's strike and also to set up no-fly zone (Zunes, 2013:24; Kuperman, 2013: 108-114). For the first of two weeks, NATO was success to implement such mandate. However, after the escalation of the tension on the ground between Gaddafi's army and the rebels, NATO started to use force attacking the Libyan troops and trying to overtake the regime. What NATO did was supported by its allies such as the US air force, Saudi Arabia and Qatar as well as Egypt; Qatar sent an antitank missile from French to the rebels in Eastern Libya and Egypt provided weapons to the insurgents (Kuperman, 2013: 108-114). This

intervention had affected approximately 8000 people dead and prolonged the conflict into 36 weeks (Kuperman, 2013: 108-114).

The intervention of NATO in Libya was far from "the responsibility to protect" civilians. The NATO used air strike and bombing against the government force, for instance in October 2011 NATO launched approximately 9,700 bombing mission. From the early NATO operation in Libya, there were about 26,324 air military forces in which about 9,658 air strikes had been conducted. These air attacks had caused not only Libyan army but also thousand of Libyan people death (Horace, 2012:77). The objectives of the main contributing countries like France, Britain and the US, in the NATO mission were no longer to guard the people, but they wanted to remove Gaddafi from the presidential position. The reasons that underpin such action were to protect their economic interest on oil in Libya. Regarding this matter, although African people and the AU did not support the regime of Gaddafi, they mostly criticized and condemned against what the NATO wrongdoing (Horace, 2012: 78-79). Besides, some of the African leaders argue that the AU should handle and become the main actor in managing and resolving conflicts in Africa. The AU/APSA has to reject the interventions from the outsiders too (Vines, 2013: 89).

Another European country's intervention in African war was France who deployed its army in Mali. This state gave a quick response toward the demand of the peacekeeping mission since there is a slow reaction from both an international and a regional organisation in which the UN said that the earliest possible deployment is in September 2012 (Paul, 2013). Meanwhile, the involvement of France in Mali was started since 12 January 2012 not long after the clash between government and *Jihadis* or *al-Qaeda* broke out (Tramond and Seigneur, 2013). During the operation, France was backed up by Britain, another NATO's country, who provides military-transport airplane and other military equipments like a C-17. Moreover, the US supported France in this operation as well (Paul, 2013). Then, in July 2012 the PSC approved the economic community of West African State (ECOWAS) to intervene in Mali's crises. Later, in 13 November 2013, the PSC agreed the formation of the African-lead mission in support of Mali (AFISMA); this is a peace support operation for Mali (Vines, 2013: 105-106). The international intervention in African conflict was also happened in Cote d'Ivorie; for instance, the UN and member of NATO specifically France. The AU/APSA together with ECOWAS was part of the UN peacekeeping operation (UNOCI) in such country (Bangura, 2010:227-228).

In relation with above description, the AU and APSA are likely hard to do peace operations by themself. This is because they cannot pay for their own mission and at the same time they are lack of human capability and military equipment. Therefore, it will be hard to deal with all African problems without the help from the international institutions (Williams, 2011: 195). A partnership with other organisations can be an alternative way for APSA to fill their weaknesses. Sharing the cost and cultural understanding of the conflict area as well as knowledge transfer from different peace institutions will facilitate the mission more functional (Fawcett, 2013:370). In addition, intervention from the non African organisation have not always benefited African country such as NATO in Libya which made the condition worse and caused huge number of people died. Furthermore, sometimes the UN faces difficulties during the operation in Africa due to various reasons such as cultural boundary and limited number of available troops. This can be seen from the failure of the UN mission in Rwanda and Somalia (York, 2001: 85; Williams, 2011: 196). Hence, each of the organisations can fill the gap of other's weak point for example the APSA might provide troops and the UN and other International actors might supply fund, military equipment and knowledge.

Conclusion

The emergence of the AU/APSA is one of the proposals to solve African problems by African country. This is a great idea because some of peace mission conducted by the UN or NATO have difficulties dealing with African conflicts and left the countries with several disappointments. The AU/APSA has sent several troops for peace operation in various war zones in Africa along with other peacekeeper from other continents. As previously mentioned that the AU/APSA has inadequate fund for paying their operation, lack of military tools, and lack of human capacity, so that partnership with other international actors is needed in order to success the mission.

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