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Strategies for Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa

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Abstract

Building a lasting peace in a post-conflict environment is one of the most daunting challenges to global peace and security. Peacebuilding requires sustained international supports for national efforts across the broadest range of activities. These include monitoring cease-fire, demilitarizing, demobilizing, and reintegrating combatants, assisting the return of refugees and displaced persons, helping to organize and monitor elections of the new government, enhancing human rights protection and fostering reconciliation, etc. The United Nations has been at the center of expanding international peacebuilding efforts in all the continents of the world. These UN efforts have paid off handsomely, with Africa being one of the greatest beneficiaries. This paper examines the strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa. It raises questions on the conception, logic, origin, ideology, and practice of post-conflict peacebuilding in the continent. It argues that extant peacebuilding in Africa is wrongly embedded in peacekeeping, and some of the present peacebuilding efforts on the continent are geared

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toward negative rather than positive peace, and in most cases, it is usually influenced by actors outside the continent. It concludes that the existing logic and practice of peacebuilding in Africa is aimed at 'stability' (especially at the macro level) rather than change and security rather than lasting peace.

Keywords: Conflicts, Security, Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, African Union.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War in the 1980s brought with it the spirit of cooperation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the international community with a historic opportunity to address the number of violent conflicts, particularly internal conflicts, which were on the rise. At the center of these efforts was and continues to be the United Nations, which has found itself at the forefront of a highly complex and demanding task: developing innovative tools and strategies to respond effectively to crises around the world.

This enormous task informed the establishment within the UN system of new structures and mechanisms in the area of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance to victims of conflicts. During the period, the concept of peacebuilding emerged as a combination of efforts by various players and actors to help war-torn countries or societies avoid a relapse into conflict and to establish the condition for sustainable peace.

Paris (2004) notes that civil wars accounted for 94% of all armed conflict in the world in the 1990s and that between 1989 and 1999, at least 14 peacebuilding missions were launched to consolidate peace in Angola, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Liberia, among others. Moreover, the UN has launched over 71 peacekeeping operations since 1948, of which over 20 began after 1990 and at least 30% have been underway since 2003 (Dobbins, 2003).

In interrogating peacebuilding in Africa, post-conflict reconstruction, mediation in violent conflicts, and how government dysfunctions reshape the boundary of powers, functions, size, and domineering roles of the state in agenda-setting are explored. The proper sphere of intervention includes the rebuilding of

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institutions and society, the interests that drive interventions, and the intervener's relationship to specific places and times. Additionally, various scientific methods of intervention aimed at guaranteeing peace and security are integrated into this framework. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Africa has a troubling record, accounting for 19 out of the 57 armed conflicts globally between 1990 and 2001 (SIPRI, 2006).

Moreover, armed conflict and their threats of insecurity have sharply demonstrated the umbilical links between security and development in the continent. However, recognizing the existence of conflict and the need for post-conflict peacebuilding exposes and illuminates several interesting and important paradoxes, e.g., between stability and change, peace and security, reform and transformation, and entrenchment of liberal peace. Meanwhile, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction are components and phases in the peacebuilding continuum that overlap with, but do not equate to, peacebuilding. As such, the transformative goal of peacebuilding involves, but transcends, the rituals of cleansing, right-sizing (downsizing), or invention of bureaucracies. It is the submission of this paper that traditional and expanded peacekeeping (*peace support operations (PSO)*) and institutional re-engineering represent only technical and administrative tasks designed to prevent a relapse into what Galtung titled "direct violence" (Duffield, 2000; Fukuyama, 2005; Galtung, 1990).

Conceptualizing Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a process of attempting to address the sources of current hostility and build local capacities for conflict resolution in an area. It is aimed at fostering social, economic, and political institutions and attitudes that will prevent these conflicts from becoming violent. Conceptually, conflict resolution and peacebuilding are generally geared toward engendering development. It involves the development of constructive personal, group, and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries. It is concerned with resolving lingering injustice in a peaceful manner and transforming the structural conditions that generate violent conflict.

Peacebuilding includes early warning and response efforts, violence prevention, advocacy work, civilian and military intervention, humanitarian assistance

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in ceasefire zones, and the establishment of peace zones. Peacebuilding consists of physical, social, and structural initiatives that are often an integral part of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. Peacebuilding emerged within the framework of the United Nations, following Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report titled 'An Agenda for Peace,' which defined peacebuilding as 'an action to solidify peace and avoid a relapse into further conflict.' It was a change in international behavior, as the importance of human rights and justice and the foundation for peace and security were brought to the fore. In 2007, the UN Secretary General Policy Committee defined peacebuilding as "a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels of conflict management and to lay a foundation for development" (Ghali, 1995).

The term 'peacebuilding' was a coinage of a Norwegian sociologist, Johan Galtung, in 1975. He believed that building peace is different from peacekeeping or peacemaking and therefore, through proposals, envisaged a mechanism that will totally eradicate war and its causes and offer alternatives to war should it occur. His work emphasized the bottom-up approach that decentralized social and economic structure, calling for a shift from the structures of force and violence to a culture of peace. Peacebuilding involves the use of diplomatic and political means to remove sources of conflict by building democratic institutions (Galtung, 2011).

Even though peacebuilding is a post-Cold War concept, it has come into the nomenclature of conflict and peace practice. Lederach likened peacebuilding to the metaphor of building a house, a process requiring different components and stages. It includes a vision usually contemplated in the architectural design, the structure and its details, sourcing for materials, a strong foundation with strategically placed pillars, cross-cutting beams, and boards to strengthen the structure, detailed finishing, maintenance, etc. He provides what he calls a 'comprehensive framework' for peacebuilding that should incorporate structure, process, relationships, resources, and coordination. Peacebuilding is not a one-off event that can be started and completed after which its main stakeholders walk away believing it has been achieved; it's a continuous process (Lederach, 2001).

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From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a complex business, as it draws in many actors, not just the operation mandated by the UN Security Council, but also the vital work of the United Nations agencies, funds, and programs of the regional organizations, NGOs, and partners. The goal is to build durable peace in societies shattered by war. The UN peacekeeping operation was developed during the Cold War to generally resolve conflict between states. As set out by the *UN Charter*, it deployed unarmed or lightly armed military personnel from a number of countries under *UN* command to keep peace in the warring country (www.un.org).

The end of the Cold War precipitated a dramatic shift in the UN's multilateral peacekeeping operations. With the change in conflict paradigm from inter to mostly intra and in the spirit of cooperation, the UN Security Council established the *UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)* in 1992 to support the increased demand for complex peacekeeping. Following the recommendation of the then UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in 1992, the UN introduced the term "post-conflict peacebuilding" into its operations. The goal was to identify and support structures that tend to "strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict." It complemented the three terms the UN has been using previously, i.e., preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping (Mani, 2000).

The promise of the new peacebuilding agenda was that the international community would intervene collectively as a 'third party' to help resolve violent conflict and civil wars and that external actors would actively support the process of rebuilding the affected countries without the shadow of Cold War politics. The impetus of peacebuilding came from multiple sources but found its strongest expression in the United Nations. Throughout the 1990s, the UN provided both the rationale and the operational principle for post-conflict peacebuilding (Archibugi, 2008).

Methodology

The paper adopts the narrative and descriptive method of data analysis in examining the strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa. The paper critically assesses the concept of peacebuilding and how its application in mediating, transforming, resolving intractable conflict, and building confidence among conflict parties in Africa has been effective using relevant books, reports, and journal articles. Using content

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analysis, the paper sourced opinions from respondents on peacebuilding measures in Africa.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopts the liberal/democratic peace theory to discuss the strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa. As an offshoot of neoliberalism, the theory believes that democracies are hesitant to engage in armed conflict with others. The theory explains war engagement as a result of a lack of internal cohesion among states or in states. The lack of democratic apparatus within a state can engender state-sponsored violence/conflict within and among states globally. Some theories prefer terms such as "mutual democratic pacifism" or "interdemocracy non-aggression hypothesis" to clarify that a state of peace is not singular to democracies, but rather it is easily sustained between democratic nations and states (Small and Singer, 1976).

Proponents of this theory see the following factors as the motivator of peace between liberal states:

- i. Democratic leaders are forced to accept culpability for war losses or crisis eruption to a voting public.
- ii. A publicly accountable statement is more inclined to establish diplomatic institutions for resolving inter- and intra-state tension.
- iii. democracies are less inclined to view countries with adjacent policies and governing doctrine as hostile.
- iv. Democracies tend to possess greater public wealth than other states and therefore eschew war and crisis to preserve infrastructures and resources.

According to Doyle (1983), the idea was that the majority of the people would never vote to go to war unless in self-defense. If all nations were republics, it could lead to the cessation of war and conflict since there would be no aggressor. The theory, from all indications, has challenged the realist theory of balance of power in international relations to ensure peace and stability. Meanwhile, the criticism about this theory is that it focuses solely on methodology. Despite the criticism, it has been proven that with the requisite institutions, rule of law, vibrant bureaucracy, and social integration to cater to the well-being of the citizens, it will be very difficult for a leader/citizen to go to war or engage in conflict to the point of destruction of lives and

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properties. Democracy has made it possible for nations to manage conflict through the instrument of conflict management, prevention, early warning signs, etc.

Categorizing Approaches to Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding can be categorized into three main types: (1) Negative peace vs (2) Positive peace vs (3) Just peace. In turn, these three types of peace correspond to these primary types of violence: - (1) Direct violence vs (2) Structural violence vs (3) Cultural violence.

Negative Peace: Direct Violence

"Negative peace" refers to the absence of direct or hot violence, whereas it refers to acts that impose immediate harm on a given subject or group. In this sense, negative peace building (aimed at negative peace) intentionally focuses on addressing the direct factors driving or mitigating harmful conflict.

Positive Peace: Structural Violence

"Positive peace" refers to the absence of both direct violence and structural violence. Structural violence refers to the ways that a system or institutions in a society cause, reinforce, or perpetuate direct violence. In this sense, positive peacebuilding (aimed at positive peace) intentionally focuses on addressing the direct factors driving or mitigating harmful conflict.

Just Peace: Cultural Violence

Just peace is the absence of all three types of violence enumerated above. Cultural violence refers to aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence including the ways in which direct or structural violence look or feel right according to the moral fabric of the society. In this sense, just peacebuilding (aimed at just peace) intentionally combines the methods of positive peacebuilding (as described above) with a special focus on building and transforming sustainable relationships among conflicting sectors and cultures in such a way that promotes more alignment between each culture's mores (Galtung, 1990).

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Components of Peacebuilding

The activities included in peacebuilding vary depending on the situation and the agent of peacebuilding. Successful peacebuilding activities create an environment supportive of self-sustaining, durable peace, reconcile opponents, and prevent conflict from restarting. It integrates civil society, creates rule of law mechanisms, and addresses functional structures, emotional conditions, social psychology, social stability, rule of law, ethics, and cultural sensitivities.

Barneth et al. (2007) divide post-conflict peacebuilding into three dimensions that is, stabilizing the post-conflict zone, restoring the state institutions and dealing with the socio-economic issues. Activities within the first dimension reinforce the state stability in post-conflict and discourage former combatants from returning to war (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, or DDR). Second-dimension activities build state capacity to provide basic public goods and increase state legitimacy. Programs in the third dimension build a post-conflict society's ability and promote socio-economic development.

From the Lederach analogy, it can be seen that at the state level in Africa, some of the above-mentioned ingredients of peacebuilding are lacking, and this analogy can be attributed to the weak security architecture of countries on the continent. For example, in Nigeria, building a sustainable peace between farmers and Fulani pastoralists has been a herculean task considering the multiplicity of factors involved. The conflict is driven by several significant issues, primarily climate change, which has increased pressure on natural resources, a growing population, and the ongoing migration of Fulani pastoralists into wetlands for grazing. These issues have in turn affected agricultural production due to insecurity caused by the clashes between farmers and herdsmen, thereby frustrating the country's efforts at self-sufficiency in food production (Best, 2011).

Post-conflict peacebuilding strategies in Africa

The strategies adopted in peacebuilding vary depending on the environment, situation, and the agents of peacebuilding. Successful peacebuilding activities create an environment supportive of self-sustenance and durable peace, reconcile opponents, prevent conflict from restarting, integrate civil society, involve the traditional/indigenous methods, create rule of law mechanisms, and address

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underlying structural and societal issues. Through systematic dialogues, peace builders mediate transformed conflicts, engage in peace education, sensitization, advocacy, and a lot of community outreach. Actors and players in peacebuilding advocacy in Africa ranged from local or traditional mediators to national, regional, and continental actors; *Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)*; *International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs)*; *Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)*, etc. Depending on their mandate or core value, they can perform duties such as conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and transformation, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, and post-conflict reconstruction (Galtung, 2011).

The Local or Traditional Methods

The locals constitute an integral part in peacebuilding in Africa, as their efforts at building peace, especially after crises, are critical in ensuring peaceful co-existence. In some communities in Africa, there are extant methods of resolving conflict that cannot be taken for granted, especially in communities with strong and recognized cultural practices. It has been demonstrated in some African societies that through mutual understanding, some intractable conflict can be resolved or managed to forestall further hostilities.

In Nigeria's Plateau State, the traditional method of dispute resolution involved the collaboration of indigenous kings and the Fulani leaders (Ardo) to build peace between the indigenous farmers and Fulani herdsman. An example involves an indigenous farmer in Shendam whose crops were damaged by cattle owned by Baya. Instead of reporting the damage, the farmer chose to loot Baya's property. The indigenous ruler intervened, ordered the property of Baya to be returned, and the farmer was compensated for his damaged crops, and a fine was imposed on Baya for disobeying the king's order (Fwatshak, 2020).

Speaking further, Fwatshak opined:

The British allowed the herders to come to the Plateau because the farmers needed cattle on the Plateau to fertilize the soil. Following complaints by the farmers of the destruction of farms by the cattle, he was advised by Jos, the divisional agricultural officer, not to allow the Fulani to bring all their cattle to the plateau. During the period, whenever the cattle destroyed farmlands, they were made to pay

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compensation. The colonial government allowed not more than 200,000 to 300,000 on the Plateau, and the rest were sent back to Bauchi, Gombe, and other places (Fwatshak, 2023).

In the post-conflict Rwanda after the genocide, the traditional *Gacaca* justice system was used in communities during the post-conflict peacebuilding and it worked effectively, as it facilitated national reconciliation and peaceful co-existence. In post-Apartheid South Africa, the concept of *Ubuntu* was used in peacebuilding efforts, as it believed in the expression of human rights. African traditional societies believe that all human belong are members of the larger society (Murithi, 2006).

The Irigwe and Fulani Internal Peace and Security Committee in Miango, Bassa Local Government Area in Plateau State, Nigeria, was another local method of peacebuilding. It was set up by the Irigwe Traditional Council and included the indigenes and the Fulani pastoralists as members. It was supervised by the *Plateau State Peace Building Agency (PPBA)*, where all the lingering conflicting issues were resolved and managed, including grazing at night and destruction of farmlands, killings and rustling of cows, and grazing in cultural areas (PPBA, 2021). Commenting on this, the Bra-Irigwe explained:

To end the problem, as the chief, I brought Fulani leaders into the traditional council as members so that any problem between farmers and herders will be resolved amicably. To some extent it has worked, except for the killer herdsmen who do not live among us. When this arrangement was put up, there was peaceful coexistence between my subjects and the herders; we went to farms without attacks, the Fulani controlled their cattle, and there was no destruction of farmlands. We have been having meetings with them any time the government calls for it (Ronku, 2023).

Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Actors at the National Level

Beyond the reintegration of the Igbo into the Nigerian state after the Nigerian Civil War in 1970 through the policy of reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction (RRR), another significant post-conflict peacebuilding initiative was the amnesty proclaimed for repentant militant youths in the Niger Delta by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2009. This program represented a practical effort at stabilizing the region by promoting socio-economic, political, and broader social transformation. It sought

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to address longstanding inequalities, systemic injustices, human insecurity, and human rights violations that had fueled unrest. Among its notable outcomes were the training and rehabilitation of former militants, as well as their engagement in productive activities through educational scholarships and skills acquisition programs (Ikelegbe, 2006).

The Role of Regional Organizations

Regional blocs such as *ECOWAS*, the *Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)*, *SADC*, the *Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)*, and the *Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)* have responsibilities for securing and building peace in their regions. The responsibility to protect, a key principle outlined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union's peacebuilding framework, empowers regional organizations to intervene in conflicts within their respective areas. The responsibility for peacebuilding is to enhance the principle of subsidiarity, which aims to build capacity in regions for peace to thrive. No other continent in the world uses this method in peacebuilding (Adibe, 2003).

Some regional blocs in Africa have not been able to show capacity in shouldering the responsibilities of peacebuilding due to challenges. Some of these challenges are:

- i. The AU regional bloc's coordination in peacebuilding in Africa showed uneven performance, with some showing maturity in handling responsibility in building peace in their region. Examples can be seen in *ECOWAS*, *SADC*, and *ECA*, who have been coordinating peace activities in their region with decorum, while other regional blocs such as *ECCAS*, *Communaute Economique et Monetaire des Etas de l'Afrique Central (CEMAC)*, and *AMU* could not. This happens because there is no hegemon to shoulder responsibilities like Nigeria in the West, South Africa in the South, and Kenya in the East with strong financial muscle and forthrightness. Just like the responsibility to protect is approved by the *UN*, the *AU* Constitutive Act requires a hegemon who will shoulder the responsibility of building capacity and enforcing peace in the regions (Zondi, 2017).

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- ii. The failure of the *AU* to develop mechanisms to coordinate the implementation of its decisions at the regional levels and to assist the regions in spreading ideas to the people has frustrated cohesion and interface among envoys.
- iii. Coordination and harmonization among regional blocs in Africa are low-key because of no resounding peacebuilding successes. This is probably because of interest among the regional partners or countries who mediate in conflicts in the region (Zondi, 2017).
- iv. Some don't have well-developed institutional mechanisms to carry out the responsibility of peacebuilding, which includes a standby force, capacity to mediate in conflict, and the structures for carrying out regional post-conflict reconstruction. For example, while ECOWAS established a Mediation Support Division in 2015, other elements of peace architecture were lacking, and this showed in the Malian crisis, where early warning capability, a rapid military response force, and post-conflict peacebuilding remained a work in progress (Odigie, 2016).

International Actors and Organizations

The UN has been at the forefront of peacebuilding not only in Africa but globally. With its 1992 Agenda for Peace after the Cold War, it has created a robust platform of engagement in peacebuilding in Africa. In partnership with continental and regional organizations, the UN has created a lot of institutions and frameworks to build peace around the world. With the assistance of its agencies and partners, it has collaborated with the *African Union* in the funding, mediation, confidence building, etc. among conflict parties in African countries over the years. The *UN* architecture for peacebuilding includes, among others, the *Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)*, the *Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)*, and the *Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)*. The job of coordinating all peacebuilding efforts lies with *PBC*, while that of managing peacebuilding funds is under the supervision of *PBSO*, and they have been administering these funds to countries that have just come out of violent conflict (AU, 2010).

Since its inception in 2001, the *AU* has steadily expanded its normative frameworks and political missions across the continent. Through its Constitutive Act,

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it has adopted a non-indifference principle rather than the non-interference of the *OAU* in its peacebuilding approach in Africa, and this approach was adopted in 2000 in Lomé, Togo. By virtue of the Constitutive Act, the *AU* has vowed, inter alia, to promote peace, security, and stability on the continent and to accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent. To succeed, the act lays down governance principles and also promotes respect for human rights and peaceful coexistence on the continent. With the support of the member states, the *AU* legal authority has been supported to intervene in some member states in grave circumstances, namely, war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity (AU, 2000).

Peacebuilding Cases in Africa

Sierra Leone

The conflict started in 1991, and in 1999, the *UN Security Council* set up the *UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)* to help in the implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord and to supervise the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration plan. By 2000, *UNAMSIL* was expanded and given the mandate to ensure security, demobilize all the ex-fighters, and ensure freedom of movement of its personnel. The Truth and Reconciliation Committee and special courts were set up to address cases of serious war crimes and crimes against humanity by the former government, and by 2003, the final reports were written. This allowed for the peacebuilding commission to come on board in the country. The *PBC*, upon resumption, set up the *Peacebuilding Fund* to boost economic activities in the country. In the end, Sierra Leone's peacebuilding efforts impacted the citizens positively, as they did not only reconcile the conflict parties but also created socio-economic programs through job creation and agricultural revolution with excellent welfare packages. There was also collaboration among local actors and players in the management of their affairs through African ideas and initiatives (Adams and Olutade, 2021).

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Sudan

The AU peacebuilding efforts in Sudan happened in phases: the first phase was *AMIS*, April-September 2004; the second phase was October 2004-March 2005; and the third phase was September 2005 onwards. From the beginning, AU took the initiative of engaging all conflict parties from the government, militias, and other rebel groups, in continuous political dialogue, confidence building, and post-conflict reconstruction. The AU intervention was led by President Idris Déby of Chad in 2003, which eventually led to the Abéché Agreement signed by the main rebel group, *Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM)*, and the government for humanitarian purposes. The 2004 ceasefire agreement was brokered by the then AU Chairperson, President Alpha Konaré of Guinea, for humanitarian purposes between the government, *SLM*, and Justice and *Equality Movement (JEM)* in 2004-March 2005. The negotiation led to the Darfur Agreement of 2006. (Murithi, 2008: 81-82; Toga, 2007: 214-244).

The AU mission in Sudan, like in other countries in Africa, suffered from poor planning, delay in the deployment of troops, weak supplies, and logistical deficiencies. These deficiencies made AU rely on Western donations and funding in its peacebuilding approach. By 2007, a hybrid *AU* and *UN* peace effort called *UN-AU Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)* replaced *AMIS* to strengthen military operations, and it proved very effective as it ensured humanitarian assistance, the return of refugees, the resumption of economic activities in some communities, and the prevention of escalation of the conflicts (Toga, 2007: 221).

Somalia

Peacebuilding missions in Somalia were cumbersome because of the total collapse of governance in that country during the period. In the 1990s, the country had become a den of militia and warlords spearheaded by the dreaded Al Shabaab militant group. By 2003, when the AU decided to mediate in the conflict, it realized that it had to restore normalcy in the country first, and this led to the establishment of a transitional government. Following the *UN Security Council Resolution 1725* of December, 2006, the AU formally established the AU Mission in Somalia (*AMISOM*) in January, 2007, with the mandate to continue in political dialogue, confidence building, and peace and

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security reforms in the country. The difficulty in fulfilling its task made it resort to the UNSC to grant IGAD-AU a mandate with international backing.

Consequently, the UN in 2009 deployed troops of about 1700 to the country to at least secure political dialogue and protect the fragile transitional government in the country and also contain the menacing security threat of Al Shabaab. According to the *AU Peace and Security Council Report (2015)*, AMISOM struggled to build peace in Somalia because there was no condition for peace and therefore concentrated on managing security, the reconstruction of societal systems, and the rebuilding of political processes in the country (Murithi, 2008: 81).

Burundi

Peacebuilding efforts in Burundi involved de-escalating the crisis, using good offices, peace envoys, and mediators such as former President Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela to build confidence among the conflict parties. The intervention led to power sharing agreements among the conflict parties in 2001, leading to a three-year transitional government. In 2003, *the African Union Mission in Burundi (AUMB)* was established, with the deployment of troops from Ethiopia, Mozambique, and South Africa to provide security and assist in the demobilization of armed groups. A 42-member observer team tasked with the monitoring and implementation of the agreement was set up. A diplomat Mamadou Bah was appointed to ensure coordinated peacebuilding efforts between the parties in the conflict (Muyangwa and Voigt, 2000).

According to Murithi (2008), *the AU* built confidence in the conflict parties before the UN took over the Burundi peacebuilding initiative in 2003. By 2005, following the UN takeover of the peace mission, it was renamed *UN Operation on Burundi (ONUB)*, with greater efforts, resources, and expertise in the processes of demobilization and reintegration of the security apparatus in the country. These UN efforts helped complete the effort started by the AU, and by 2009, relative peace returned to the country, where there was a power-sharing formula in government following the Arusha agreement.

The Challenges to Peacebuilding in Africa

Peacebuilding requires long-term commitment at local, national, and international levels/partners. Peacebuilding in Africa leads to short-term goals due to domestic

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politics or donor agencies and partners, and this cannot enhance sustainable peace. In most of the peacebuilding cases mentioned in Africa, experience relapses because of the short-term goal. Also, it has been argued that the amnesty for the Niger Delta youths in Nigeria was aimed at making the region conducive for crude oil production by the *IOCs* and *NNPC*, and this can be seen as ‘negative peace’ (Galtung, 2007).

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons led to the emergence of warlords, ethnic militias, and insurrection in a lot of African countries, as it moved conflict from the interstate to the intrastate level. It led to the introduction of irregular warfare with the extensive use of these weapons during conflicts. It led to the use of child soldiers during conflict in Africa and Fulani herdsmen carrying arms while rearing cattle in most African countries. In the *2000 Millennium Report to the United Nations General Assembly*, the then *UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan*, harped on the effects of *SALW* in conflicts and the concerns of the United Nations in stemming the flow. According to him,

The death toll from small arms dwarfs that of all other weapons systems... Small arms destruction is not merely a security issue; it is also an issue of human rights and of development. The proliferation of small arms sustains and exacerbates arms conflicts. It endangers peacekeepers and humanitarian workers. It undermines respect for international humanitarian laws. It threatens legitimate but weak governments, and it benefits terrorists as well as perpetrators of organized crime (Anan, 2000).

The proliferation of small arms hinders and prolongs peacebuilding in Africa, as it leads to the temptation to commit crimes. The rampant use of small arms has led to the killings of aids/humanitarian workers in Africa during peacebuilding, thereby frustrating it.

Another notable challenge in building peace in Africa is funding, as can be seen in all the peacebuilding cases mentioned earlier. Africa relies on external funding in all her peacebuilding, and this is why the UN, through its partners, has always been involved in all the peacebuilding efforts in Africa. The early deployment of troops in conflict requires funds, logistics, and expertise in the demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants after conflict. Mobilization and deployment of troops require substantial resources, which the African Union (AU) lacks. As a result, the AU must rely on the United Nations (UN) or donor agencies for support.

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Peacebuilding involves the use of a lot of actors and partners, and some of these actors have an interest in the politics of the country they help. It can be organizational or national depending on the sponsors, and when this happens, the sponsors determine who takes charge as presidents/prime ministers. For example, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia, Alassane Ouattara in Ivory Coast, etc., as the international community influenced their emergence through a competitive and recognized process (democratic elections). The belief that it is only those who worked outside the continent, in the case of Sirleaf and Quatarra, who worked with the World Bank and IMF, respectively, that can manage post-conflict nations in Africa is questionable. It can be seen that where there are multiple actors/sponsors, it can lead to parallel interests in those environments, as it can make peacebuilding efforts more complex.

The Way Forward for Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa

Firstly, all member states of the African Union and regional bodies on the continent should establish a normative framework to prevent conflict. Africans should eschew negative values or undemocratic governance that will promote corruption, whether political or economic; rather, they should emphasize inclusiveness in women's and youth's involvement in governance. Regional blocs such as *SADC, ECOWAS, ECA, and AMU* should galvanize their resources toward promoting democratic norms and internalizing them in their region. Conflict has its trends and dynamics; therefore, early warning mechanisms and early responses should be taken seriously to prevent drivers from conflicts in the volatile regions on the continent.

Secondly, the beneficiaries of post-conflict peacebuilding are the communities in the state and nation, as the *UN* and international community and partners only play a supporting role. Therefore, efforts should be made at the national level to eschew stigmatization among people who have just come out of armed conflict and minimize all forms of stereotype that can make the combatants lose confidence in the process. In the formation of post-conflict peacebuilding governance, they must be included to ensure that they are all pacified and anything that can lead to relapse is taken care of by the leaders and organizers of the program.

Thirdly, the need to make peacebuilding in the continent people-centered should be taken seriously. The local communities should be the primary beneficiaries

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of the programs and policies for the implementation of job creation, empowerment, political participation, training, and education. They should be trained to be an active participant in the design, build local capacity, and implement the stages of the program since they are the direct beneficiary of the initiative. Not involving the locals in the process of peacebuilding in their locality will amount to trying to impose the policy on them, and this will make them show apathy, as there will not be any commitment on their part.

Lastly, total dependence on natural resources has engendered conflict rather than mitigated it in Africa, as can be seen in the case of Nigeria, where the national government and the Niger Delta youths have always been at loggerheads over how the resources should be managed. The country relies on crude oil as the mainstay of the country's economy, and anything that affects the industry always generates tension and problems in the country. Another country that relies so much on natural resources is Liberia, as its overdependence on diamonds made the country neglect the establishment of industries for the incoming generations. Just like Nigeria, the natural resources in the country have brought a lot of suffering to the citizens because there is no diversification, thereby leading to the scrambling of it.

Conclusion

It is an indubitable fact that peacebuilding has come to stay in the nomenclature of peace and conflict studies globally. It goes beyond the unconventional peace-making and peace-keeping to create the normative framework for mediation, confidence-building, democratic norms, and post-conflict reconstruction. It is not a one-off event that can be started and completed. It involves both civilian and military intervention and humanitarian assistance. It includes responding to conflict early warning signals and ensuring inclusiveness of women and youths in governance. Africa has experienced its fair share of peacebuilding mechanisms and approaches, and the strategies have helped in no small measure in building relative peace on the continent. Even though peacebuilding expertise and support have always come from the UN, its partners, and donors, the AU and the regional blocs have learned from this expertise and collaboration. It is hoped that with a robust democratic norm, a vibrant economy,

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and people-centered political and social programs, Africa will move beyond the level of a hub of conflict in the world to a peaceful and a prosperous continent.

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