The United Nations, Security and Peacekeeping in Africa
Lessons and Prospects

October 2008
The United Nations, Security and Peacekeeping in Africa

Lessons and Prospects

With contributions by

Kwesi Aning
Linnea Bergholm
Andreas Mehler

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
Uppsala 2008
The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation pays tribute to the memory of the second Secretary-General of the UN by searching for and examining workable alternatives for a socially and economically just, ecologically sustainable, peaceful and secure world.

In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld’s integrity, his readiness to challenge the dominant powers and his passionate plea for the sovereignty of small nations and their right to shape their own destiny, the Foundation seeks to examine mainstream understanding of development and bring to the debate alternative perspectives of often unheard voices.

By making possible the meeting of minds, experiences and perspectives through the organising of seminars and dialogues, the Foundation plays a catalysing role in the identification of new issues and the formulation of new concepts, policy proposals, strategies and work plans towards solutions. The Foundation seeks to be at the cutting edge of the debates on development, security and environment, thereby continuously embarking on new themes in close collaboration with a wide and constantly expanding international network.

Critical Currents is an Occasional Paper Series published by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. It is also available online at www.dhf.uu.se.

Statements of fact or opinion are those of the authors and do not imply endorsement by the Foundation.

Manuscripts for review should be sent to secretariat@dhf.uu.se.

Series editor: Henning Melber
Language editor: Wendy Davies
Layout: Karim Kerrou
Design: Mattias Lasson
Printed by X-O Graf Tryckeri AB
ISSN 1654-4250
Copyright on the text is with the authors and the Foundation.
Contents

Preface ........................................................................................................................................... 5

Kwesi Aning
The UN and the African Union’s security architecture:
defining an emerging partnership? .......................................................................................... 9

Linnea Bergholm
The UN and the AU: a co-dependent relationship
on matters of peace and security ............................................................................................ 25

Andreas Mehler
Positive, ambiguous or negative?
UN peacekeeping in the local security fabric ........................................................................ 41
The origins of the United Nations’ role in peacekeeping operations, as this testimony of a close staff member in his office confirms, are inextricably linked with the organisation’s second Secretary-General. The initial two involvements of direct UN presence in precarious local settings preceding them were military observer missions, which monitored a truce in Palestine and in Kashmir respectively. With the Suez crisis in 1956, military observers were no longer enough. It was then that the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces in larger numbers came about. By resolutions 1000 and 1001 of 5 and 7 November 1956 respectively the United Nations General Assembly established the practice of this kind of intervention, thereby actively assuming already in broad terms what more recently has been termed the ‘responsibility to protect’, albeit in a slightly different context. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was subsequently created to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities under a commander appointed by the Assembly.

He was under the direct command of the Secretary-General. UNEF became the first force under a command with purely international responsibilities.

With the Congo crisis emerging in 1960 (as a direct result of which Hammarskjöld sacrificed his life in September 1961 during his efforts to find a negotiated solution) the UN peacekeeping mission deployed within a matter of weeks a veritable military contingent, seeking to stabilise the deteriorating situation: ‘We flew in 3,000 soldiers in three days and another 10,000 in two weeks. They simply arrived and got between people who were likely to be killing each other.”

Since then, peacekeeping operations by UN forces have become a regular feature and steadily increased. Since the turn of the century, the number of peacekeepers in operation has almost trebled. African missions have over the years absorbed increasing capacity and funds. Currently, some 90,000 peacekeepers are deployed in 17 missions worldwide, of which eight – with staff outnumbering by far the total of all other missions – are

---


2 Ibid.
in African countries. The current costs of UN peacekeeping missions are estimated to exceed US$ 6.5 billion a year with the missions in Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo absorbing almost half of the budget. But operations suffer from lack of funds, remain overstretched and become increasingly unable to accomplish their missions: ‘Critics argue that the Security Council appears to have little problem sanctioning peacekeeping missions but finds it difficult to stump up the resources to carry out their mandate.’

The beginning of this century also resulted in a shift in continental African policy paradigms from the holy principle of non-intervention into sovereign states under the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) towards more collective responsibility, as reflected in the Constitution of the African Union (AU). As a result, a new security architecture has been emerging, which involves the active engagement of African states to solve conflicts in AU member countries. African governments are now willing to provide means for peacekeeping operations jointly with the UN. While this is a positive development, its first results have been rather mixed: ‘The AU’s experience in Burundi, Darfur and Somalia suggests that the organisation has much to do to improve its ability to deliver peace and security to African citizens. However, it goes without saying that the AU’s peace and security architecture will be a vital component of Africa’s strategy to consolidate order and stability on the continent.’

Dag Hammarskjöld would have welcomed the willingness by African states to share the burden of peacekeeping and security operations with the UN and to take over increasing responsibility for the operations. There remains however much to be improved, to achieve maximum effect for the benefit of the people. The three contributions in this issue of our Occasional Paper series Critical Currents seek to provide useful insights, with the aim of improving future operations. We trust that this is a humble mission accomplished, thereby honouring the legacy of Dag Hammarskjöld constructively and with relevance for today and tomorrow.

**Henning Melber**

---

The UN and the African Union’s security architecture: Defining an emerging partnership?

Kwesi Aning

There is no doubt that since the transformation of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), this new institution is demonstrating an encouraging proactiveness in terms of its preparedness to tackle the continent’s peace and security challenges, and generally contributing to issues relating to the attainment of international peace and security. This has resulted in the establishment of new mechanisms and institutional frameworks for resolving conflicts in Africa. This is best exemplified by the increasing number of resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the frequency and regularity of matters considered by the African Union’s Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) that are subsequently referred to the UNSC. The frequent communications between these two bodies, the mentioning and discussion of Africa-specific security matters and the deference of Africa-related security issues by the UNSC to the AU PSC signal not only a deepening recognition of the role that regional organisations and especially the African Union can play, but also its growing influence and potential role in contributing to the attainment of international peace and security.¹

¹ A/47/277-S/24111, para. 64.

Kwesi Aning is currently head of the Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution Department (CPMRD) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana. Until January 2008, he served as a Senior Consultant to the UN Department of Political Affairs and wrote a UN Secretary General’s report on ‘The relationship between the UN and regional organisations, particularly the African Union on peace and security’, which has been submitted to the UN Security Council. He was recently awarded a Non-Resident Fellow position by the Centre on International Cooperation, New York University.
But the AU’s most promising achievements are usually attained when they engage in collaborative ventures that have interesting perspectives and yield fruitful outcomes. While these are encouraging, one must, however, accept that there are still serious challenges in designing an effective peace and security architecture that can avoid bottlenecks and respond rapidly and effectively to the multiple security challenges faced by Africa. As a result, partnerships that are satisfactory to the AU and its collaborative institutions are increasingly being established, especially with the European Union (EU) and in November 2006 with the Organisation of American States (OAS). Although this paper is not about the AU’s partnership arrangements, it is important that in the discussion one fully explores the multiple interfaces where such collaborative ventures best compliment each other.

This paper seeks to do three things. First, it explores the deepening efficacy of the AU, especially in matters relating to peace and security and its institutional efficacy in eliciting member states’ compliance with respect to their responsibility to protect, and therefore focuses especially on its peace and security architecture and its broader relationship with the international mechanisms for attaining peace and stability. Second, it explores how the UN can contribute to improving its partnership with the AU and offers a tentative explanatory framework for some of the difficulties that bedevil this relationship. Third, it examines the opportunities that have been created for networks of specialised agencies to support the AU in its endeavour to tackle issues of peace and security on the continent.

In this paper, I argue that collaborative ventures between the African Union (at the regional level), the regional economic communities (RECs) (at the sub-regional level) and the UN (at the global level) are the best options for resolving some of the continent’s most challenging human security dilemmas. The world is experiencing a unique moment of opportunity in the relations between the United Nations and (sub)regional organisations broadly and the AU specifically. It is imperative, therefore, that (sub)regional organisations, in areas of proximity to conflicts, should be empowered and supported to take necessary actions to restore peace and security. However, in defining how such cooperative and collaborative relationships should be established, it is also imperative that regional organisations broadly, and the African Union especially, should not be viewed in isolation; rather, it needs to be recognised that the AU’s supporting mechanisms and infrastructure, the RECs, all have roles to play in attaining overall global security.

Towards the African Union’s peace and security architecture

In this section, I describe how the African Union has established institutional mechanisms to support its role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, particularly through the establishment of its Peace and Security Council (PSC) in March 2004. This is the most critical institutional component of the African Union’s peace and security architecture. More important is that the AU’s new security regime is premised on several norms, which are both old (based on the Charter of the OAU) and new (emanating from the Constitutive Act). These core norms, which I argue form the central planks of the AU’s security regime, are:
• Sovereign equality of member states (Article 4a)
• Non-intervention by member states (Article 4g)
• African solutions to African problems
• Uti possidetis (Article 4b)
• Non-use of force/peaceful settlement of disputes (Articles 4e, 4f, 4i)
• Condemnation of unconstitutional changes of government (Article 4p)
• The AU’s right to intervene in a member state in grave circumstances (Article 4h)

A combination of these values and norms plus the institutional mechanisms has given the AU an institutional vibrancy that creates opportunities for proactive responses to some of the continent’s security challenges. A core document that defines the principles and objectives of the AU’s security policy is the Constitutive Act of July 2002. In its preamble, it states that member states are:

Conscious of the fact that the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the continent, and [recognise] the need to promote peace, security and stability as a prerequisite for the implementation of our development and integration agenda.

Prior to the adoption of the Constitutive Act, several processes had begun to establish a collective African security regime. This began with the establishment of a Peace and Security Council in July 2002 as a standing decision-making organ of the Union. Subsequently, the Protocol establishing the PSC became effective in December 2003 after the required ratification by 27 member states.

The PSC, which comprises 15 member states of the AU, is ‘a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa’. Furthermore, the PSC is the single most powerful institution within the peace architecture of the AU. In consultation with the Chairperson of the AU, the PSC:

• Undertakes peacemaking and peace-building functions to resolve conflicts where they have occurred
• Authorises the mounting and deployment of peace support missions
• Recommends to the assembly of Heads of State and Government intervention within a member state in respect of severe circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity
• Institutes sanctions whenever an unconstitutional change of government takes place in a member state
• Implements the common defence policy of the AU
• Follows up the progress towards the promotion of democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect of the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law by member states
• Supports and facilitates humanitarian action in situations of armed conflicts or major natural disasters
• Coordinates and harmonises continental efforts in the prevention and combating of terrorism.

2 See for example Chapter IV (b), Article 16 of the Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP).
3 See also Chapter IV, Article 15 (b) and Article 3 (e) and Introduction, CADSP, point 3 of the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy. Here, it states clearly that, the PSC shall ‘implement the Common Defence Policy of the Union’.
In addition to the PSC Protocol, the peace and security architecture includes the African Union Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact, adopted by the 4th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Abuja, Nigeria, in January 2005; the Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP), adopted by the Second Extraordinary Session of the Union, held in Sirte, Libya, in February 2005; as well as other security instruments of the Union, such as the Treaty establishing the African Nuclear Weapons Free-Zone (the Pelindaba Treaty) and the Convention for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. While previous efforts concentrated on conflict resolution, the new peace and security architecture provides for a holistic approach to the promotion of peace and security in Africa. Furthermore, as part of the broader framework for establishing this security architecture, the PSC is supported by a host of institutional arrangements, including:

- The **Commission of the African Union** through the Chairperson and the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Directorate for Peace and Security. This department, in terms of Africa’s peace and security issues, is the most critical. The core divisions are: (a) Conflict Management, (b) Peace Support Operations, (c) Defence and Security, (d) Darfur Integrated Task Force (DITF), and (e) the Secretariat to the Peace and Security Council.

- A five-member **Panel of the Wise** consisting of ‘highly respected African personalities’ selected on the basis of regional representation and appointed for three years to serve as a proactive conflict prevention team. This team comprises:
  - Salim Ahmed Salim, former secretary-general of the Organisation of African Unity (East Africa)
  - Brigalla Hlope Bam, chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (Southern Africa)
  - Ahmed Ben Bella, former president of Algeria (North Africa)
  - Elisabeth K. Pognon, president of the Constitutional Court of Benin (West Africa)
  - Miguel Trovoda, former president of Sao Tomé and Príncipe (Central Africa).

- The **continental early warning system** (CEWS), the aim of which is to ‘facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts’ on the continent. It is made up of a Situation Room at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and linked into the early warning mechanisms of the regional economic communities; of these, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has established its own conflict early warning and response mechanism – CEWARN – which primarily focuses on small-scale pastoral conflicts. In this particular case, the PSC Protocol makes provision for and authorises the Commission ‘…[to] collaborate with…research centers, academic institutions and NGOs, to facilitate the effective functioning of the Early Warning System’.

---

• An *African Standby Force (ASF)*, made up of five regional brigades. The ASF has the technical support and backing of a Military Staff Committee (MSC) whose role is to provide technical suggestions and solutions to issues relating to military issues and to provide expert opinions to the PSC before military decisions are made. Furthermore, there is recognition that ‘in undertaking [its] functions, the African Standby Force shall, where appropriate, cooperate with …regional organizations, as well as with national authorities and NGOs’.

• The RECs, which, according to the PSC Protocol, should help the PSC perform its functions by ‘…hold[ing] informal consultations with parties concerned by or interested in a conflict or a situation under its consideration, as well as with Regional mechanisms, international organizations and civil society organizations as may be needed for the discharge of its responsibilities’.

• A Special Peace Fund.

---

6 Among some of the functions that the ASF shall perform are: (a) observation and monitoring missions; (b) other types of peace support operations; (c) intervention in a Member State in respect of grave circumstances or at the request of a Member State in order to restore peace and security, in accordance with Articles 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act; (d) preventive deployment in order to prevent (i) a dispute or a conflict from escalating, (ii) an on-going violent conflict from spreading to neighbouring areas or States, and (iii) the resurgence of violence after parties to a conflict have reached an agreement; (e) peace-building, including post-conflict disarmament and demobilisation; (f) humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of civilian population in conflict areas and support efforts to address major natural disasters. All these duties are in Article 3, (a) to (g).


8 Ibid, Article 11.

---

In the face of the challenges posed by conflicts to the attainment of the integration agenda, the need to establish a common defence and security policy for the continent was recognised.

Towards this end, at a meeting of Heads of State and Government in Sirte, Libya, in February 2004 the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy was adopted. The fundamental philosophical idea underlying this document was that of human security. It went on to identify 23 different categories of threats to Africa. The CADSP introduces a new concept into African defence and security thinking which is both fascinating and creates options and new niches for contributions by civil society organisations (CSOs). This is borne out by the argument ‘…that each African country’s defence is inextricably linked to that of other African countries, as well as that of other regions and, by the same token, that of the African continent as a whole’.

The identified common security threats span both inter-state and intra-state conflicts/tension, unstable post-conflict situations and other factors that engender insecurity, namely refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), use of landmines and unexploded ordinance, illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking in small arms and light weapons, pandemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, environmental degradation, violent and other crimes, including organised and cross border crimes,
human trafficking, drug trafficking, money laundering.\textsuperscript{11} The expansive nature of the identified threats generates opportunities for different expert groups to make contributions both to the policy formulation and the implementation processes of the AU.

Added to these identified ‘common threats’ are areas of a Common African Defence and Security Policy, in relation to child soldiers, peace-building and peacekeeping as well as post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction including demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration.\textsuperscript{12} Furthermore, the document stated the objectives and goals of the policy, the principles and values underlying the CADSP, which I argue represents the adoption of a multidimensional notion of security and thus provides a more encompassing and holistic approach to identifying and responding to security threats. According to Golaszinski (2004) a combination of the CADSP, the PSC Protocol and other documents ‘provides a framework for a regular review and close monitoring of the implementation of all instruments relevant to Africa’s efforts to promote peace and security’.

\textsuperscript{11} CADSP, Article 8 (1-4). The document further defines what it perceives as ‘common external threats. These ‘refer to external challenges to Africa’s continental security, which may engender or have the potential, either directly or indirectly, to constrain individual and collective efforts to achieve continental security goals’. These include among others, mercenarism, international terrorism and terrorist activities, weapons of mass destruction, cross border crimes such as drug and human trafficking et al. See Article 8 (a) to (h) of the CADSP.

\textsuperscript{12} Article 10 of the CADSP.

\textbf{From rhetoric to reality: normative commitments and political issues}

While the RECs, which are the building blocks upon which the AU is established, CSOs and other organisations are working hard to stymie conflicts, the AU as the principal regional organisation has undergone a normative shift from its earlier position under the OAU by positing that non-interference does not mean indifference (Konare 2004). On this basis, the AU has moved towards a more preventive, principled and coercive role. The complexity of challenges faced by the African continent has contributed to a ‘novel idea’:

The notion of non-interference must be revised because it must never be associated with indifference. And this non-indifference must lead to coercive measures, to well-adapted and active policies.\textsuperscript{13}

In whatever sense one examines this statement, this is a radical departure from the nature of traditional African international relations since 1963. It is important to appreciate the context within which the AU is developing such specific ‘principles’ and norms to guide community action. What can be deduced is that by emphasising issues of security (among a panoply of other issue-areas), the AU is developing into a regime with specific rules, norms and principles as enunciated in Article 4 of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC. Its functions are spelt out in Article 6 and powers of execution in Article 7. The collective impact of these in-

\textsuperscript{13} Konare (2004: 2), emphasis added.
institutional mechanisms is to give operational expression to the ‘new culture of peace’.

Rules, in this sense, ‘relate to the written rules and guidelines within the specific issue area that the signatory states essentially have voluntarily accepted to uphold’. Furthermore, and in the same vein, ‘principles are the results of the development of a common understanding and collective interpretation of reality of individual incidents…that affect member states’.

To that end, several questions arise, which will need to be disaggregated and examined:

- First, what explains this radical shift in approach and methodology?
- Second, what is the level of bindingness, understood as the level of political willingness of structural commitments that member states have made to employ such coercive measures?
- What role, if any, have epistemic communities played in bringing about this critical change in policy?
- Finally, what set of occurrences will elicit responses that demonstrate the characterisation of the African Union as ‘exist[ing] and keep[ing] its promises of rebirth’ (see Aning 1998: 1), which are the issues of security, defence and economic development?

It is important to understand the normative framework within which the AU’s peace and security regime is situated. Various situations and issues are identified as potentially warranting coercive measures. These are:

- cases where there have been constitutional illegalities or changes of government
- the demarcation of boundaries
- genocide and gross human rights abuses
- the issue of the fairness of elections (see Konare 2004: 3).

In the Constitutive Act, the AU has ‘the right to intervene in a Member State pursuant to decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances: namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity’. These principles were given further acceptance with the adoption of the Ezulwini Consensus, which is presented by the AU as Africa’s endorsement and incorporation of the responsibility to protect principle.

The above, therefore, is the extent to which the idea of non-intervention but responsive-


16 See also Article 23 (2) of the Constitutive Act. A further addition to Article 4(h) gives the AU the right of intervention in cases of a serious threat to legitimate order to restore peace and stability in the Member State of the Union upon the recommendation of the Peace and Security Council.

17 Although Articles 4 (h) and (j) exist, there are as yet no specific operational mechanisms for guiding decision-making, apart from the ones taken by the PSC. See African Union (2005), ‘The Common African Position on the Proposed Reform of the United Nations – “The Ezulwini Consensus”,’ Executive Council, Ext/EX.CL/2 (VII) especially Section B, paras 1 and 11.

14 For further exposition, see Aning (1998: 48ff).
ness should be seen. Although the concept, as has been enunciated, will be challenging in praxis it is not impossible to implement. However, what is critical in this discussion is the extent of the political will to apply coercive measures when it becomes imperative. Not only that; there might arise a situation where there is the need to disaggregate the type of coercive measures that are anticipated in terms of state size, power and influence. Although this issue has not yet arisen, it is critical that there is thinking about how best to respond to any challenge that arises from having to respond coercively to a large and powerful state.

From theory to praxis: Togo, Mauritania, Darfur, Somalia and Somaliland

However, since 2004 these norms, values and principles have been unevenly applied to states that have fallen foul of them:

- In the case of Togo, for example, it took the combined leadership of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and the AU to bring about a reversal of the palace coup d’état that took place after the death of the president in February 2005.

- In Mauritania, the blanket application of sanctions after the coup d’état did not bring the desired change and a reversal of the military take-over, despite the suspension of its membership by the AU and broader international efforts to encourage a return to democratic government. However, Mauritania has managed to hold free and fair elections, with a democratic regime in place now.

- Darfur presents a unique and particularly tough challenge as to how such developing norms and principles should be applied. Here, it is obvious that both the AU and the wider international community have so far failed to change Sudan’s behaviour.

- In the case of Somalia, the establishment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the reluctance of African states to contribute troops to the mission demonstrate the chasm between rhetoric and reality.

- Recognition of Somaliland by AU member states as an independent member of the comity of nations need not pose any challenges contrary to either the OAU and the AU’s positions on state recognition. Somaliland’s case presents particularly interesting perspectives in terms of the interpretation of the norm of uti possidetis.

This is the framework within which the AU seeks to deepen its partnership with the UN, particularly in the areas of peace and security issues. The AU recognises that its peace and security actions on the continent will be effective if it cooperates with the UN. To that end, the African Union, at its Summit meeting held on 22-30 January 2007 entreated the UN to examine, within the context of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the possibility of funding, through assessed contributions, peacekeeping operations undertaken by the African Union or under its authority and with the consent of the UN.
An emerging partnership?

Can one say that there is an emerging relationship between the AU and the UN? There is no doubt that in the last decade there has been a growing recognition by the UNSC of the need to cooperate more closely with regional organisations, particularly the AU, under Chapter VIII of the Charter. For example, in 1989 there were no references in Security Council resolutions to regional organisations, and in 1990 there was only one such reference. From 1991, however, references to regional organisations’ engagement in conflict became common. The period between 1989 and 1992 saw resolutions expressly recalling Chapter VIII of the UN Charter; conveying appreciation of regional efforts aimed at the settlement of a conflict; supporting cooperation between the UN and regional organisations; or endorsing regional efforts. While most of the references concerned attempts at peaceful settlement of disputes, this period also saw the first authorisation by the Security Council of the use of force by a regional organisation. It is clear that since 1989, and especially since 2004, the Council’s practice with respect to approving actions undertaken by regional organisations has increased.

Early initiatives along these lines were welcomed by the General Assembly. As a follow-up to GA Res 48/42 in 1994 there was a Declaration of the General Assembly that regional organisations in peace and security should be encouraged and, where appropriate, supported by the Security Council. In spite of what can be seen as a significant effort to collaborate with other organisations, such cooperation does not come easily to the UN, which is structured and funded to focus on its own operations rather than those led by other groups even when such missions are authorised or supported by the Security Council.

In seeking to improve the cooperation and coordination between the UN and regional organisations, especially the African Union, there are several issues that should be resolved concerning how to interpret Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Part of this deals with the discussion of the role of regional organisations broadly, but the AU specifically, in international peace and security. But more importantly, it is also about the type, nature and division of responsibilities. There is no doubt that any endeavour to resolve and understand the nature of the relationship between the United Nations and regional organisations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter will need to address some of the definitional and conceptual issues inherent in any such a relationship and partnership. This is critical because it is becoming obvious that while both the UN and regional organisations talk about partnership(s), there is a fundamental misconception, misunderstanding and misperception of what such partnerships entail, and what should be the guiding principles of this relationship.

Over the past years, there has been a deepening of the relationships and interfaces between the UN and regional organisations generally in the areas of securing international peace and security. And nowhere is this more practically demonstrated than in the UN’s collaboration with the African...
Union. Responding to and collaborating with the AU on different forms of crises has demonstrated beyond doubt that when collaboration between the UN and regional organisations is implemented correctly, it goes a long way towards bringing about success, as exemplified in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Burundi. Understanding and appreciating how such partnerships should be designed is primary to determining the outlines of this relationship.

**Division of responsibilities**

There is no doubt that the best way to prevent conflicts is when the United Nations partners with regional organisations in which the parameters of such partnerships are well defined and well coordinated. Establishing support arrangements for such cooperation and coordination will not be achieved easily. A division of labour will not be without political implications. However, the AU’s active engagement with peace and security issues on the African continent is fraught with challenges and difficulties both among its member states and in terms of its relations with the UN. There are several provisions in both the Constitutive Act and the Protocol establishing the AU PSC that on the surface appear to be contradictory. A cursory glance at the two documents shows a level of uncertainty as to whether the PSC has taken upon itself the primary responsibility for peace and security in Africa. Furthermore, nothing in either the Constitutive Act or the Protocol establishing the PSC openly requires the AU to seek prior consent from the UNSC. But there are potential difficulties and conflicts here between the two organisations. The PSC has arrogated to itself the ‘primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa’. However, further on in the Protocol, it pledges to ‘cooperate and work closely’ with the UNSC. For clarity, the PSC Protocol states:

> Where necessary, recourse will be made to the United Nations to provide the necessary financial, logistical, and military support for the African Union’s activities in the promotion and maintenance of peace and stability in Africa, in keeping with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

While the UN Charter stipulates that it can authorise a regional organisation to undertake enforcement action under its authority, it also asserts that, ‘no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements…without the authorization of the Security Council’. It is clear from the cumulative proactive interventionist language in both the Constitutive Act and the PSC Protocol that, whilst the UN’s primacy in maintaining international peace and security is recognised, the AU has also reserved for itself an interventionist role that only reverts to the UN where necessary.

But herein lie the possible conceptual, legal, political and operational pitfalls: if the AU has these provisions, to what extent must

---

23 Ibid, Article 17.
24 Ibid, Article 17 (2).
25 UN Charter, Article 53 (1).
26 A combination of the Constitutive Act (Articles 4 (h) and (j)) and the PSC Protocol, Articles 4 (j) and (k), Article 6 (d), 7 (c) – (g), Article 16 (10) and 17 (1) and (2) amply demonstrate this cumulative desire to initiate intervention schemes.
the UN support the AU when the PSC takes unilateral decisions like authorising its member states to contribute troops to form the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)? While such decisions create difficulties for both organisations, there is no doubt that Africa, for example, has come a long way in defining and refining its peace and security architecture since the end of the Cold War. However, Africa’s experiences in the peace and security field, especially its relationship with the UNSC, have contributed to undermining the notion that the Security Council is the only organisation that does peacekeeping. It is fair to conclude that this assumption is outmoded.

Although these difficulties exist, there are several reasons why the role of regional organisations in peacekeeping should be encouraged and supported. These include their proximity to the crisis, their familiarity with the actors and issues involved in a particular crisis and, more importantly, the perception and recognition that a regional organisation has an interest in resolving a crisis that has erupted in its background. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter underlines the roles that regional organisations can play as partners of the UN in maintaining international peace and security. This is the reason why when the African Union undertakes peace and security interventions: it perceives its actions as a contribution to the UN and the general international community and therefore expects to be supported. However, the Security Council’s responses to decisions made by regional organisations are, at best, ad hoc. There is certainly the need to discuss what exactly the term ‘partnership’ means. Understanding such partnership also raises several issues about the nature of such relationships. For example, how far can the UN go to support decisions taken by regional organisations outside the remit of the Security Council. What does delegation of authority mean?

There is an apparent schism in understanding between the UN and regional organisations when the functions of the UN are ‘delegated’ to regional organisations. There is a need to bridge this apparent gap and define the conditions under which there can be more scope for partnerships in the UN, and how the UN can assume a larger role in operations managed by regional organisations, either through co-deployment, co-financing or hybrid forces. Such an approach requires the UN to decide whether it can afford to have ad-hoc approaches and delegate what it considers as non-core missions to regional organisations.

With the increase in the interfaces and synergies between the UN and regional organisations, particularly the African Union, there appears to be recognition that regionalism as a component of multilateralism is desirable, feasible and necessary. There is now the possibility of a global/regional mechanism for maintaining international peace and security. This is based on the recognition of the need for greater involvement by regional agencies in conflict prevention and management in all regions, in cooperation with the United Nations. It is this that underpins the vision of a ‘mutually-reinforcing regional-global mechanism’ for peace and security.27

This mechanism can be effective if there is a combination of flexibility and impartiality pragmatism and consistency. Such an approach will reduce the endemic uncertainties and occasional tensions between the UN – responsible for international peace

27 A/61/204 – S/2006/590
and security — and regional agencies, which are meant to play a supporting role.

However, much as there is a recognition of the potential for and sometimes the reality of greater involvement by regional agencies in conflict prevention and management in all regions, in cooperation with the UN, the real challenge is to replace the improvised, politically-selective, resource-skewed approach to regionalism with a more planned, consistent — yet flexible and resource-balanced — style of regional and global governance on the part of the UNSC.

The trend in recent years has been a moving away from the exclusive reliance on UN-mandated peace enforcement operations in favour of ‘hybrid’ operations in which the UN and other international organisations cooperate in various ways over the same mission.

**Coordination and consultation mechanisms**

Improved partnerships between the UN and regional organisations by extension assume that there will be coordination and consultation mechanisms between the UN Security Council and Peace and Security organs of other regional organisations. In the case of the African Union in particular, the Peace and Security Council (PSC), was established as part of a new structure that provides a clear paradigm on security to construct a continental security architecture. The objectives of the AU PSC include the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, the anticipation and prevention of conflicts and the promotion of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. Furthermore, it is established as a standing decision-making organ intended to function as a collective security and early warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient responses to conflict and crisis situations in Africa.

Following the establishment of the AU PSC in March 2004, the Security Council adopted two Presidential Statements, which recognised the importance of strengthening cooperation with the African Union in order to help build its capacity to deal with security challenges. This cooperation has been epitomised in Security Council resolution 1625, expressing support for the establishment of a 10-year capacity building programme for the African Union.

As a result, several practical measures have been undertaken. For example, on 12 November 2006, the Department for Political Affairs received a request from the Commission of the African Union to train staff members of the Secretariat of the Peace and Security Council, on the work of the Security Council. To help improve the performance of the PSC Secretariat, the Security Council Affairs Bureau organised two training programmes focusing on the working methods of the Security Council and the activities of the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) in its various aspects. Further to these developments, on 16 November 2006, my predecessor and the Chairperson of the African Union signed a Declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation.

More recently, the UNSC also issued a presidential statement which encouraged increased exchange of information and sharing of experiences, best practices and lessons learned between the Security Council and the AU.

---

29 A/61/630
30 S/PRST/2007/7
What role for non-state parties: defining a new relationship?

In this section I focus on another important aspect of the emerging security architecture as mentioned in the CADSP and the PSC Protocol, namely the role of specialist NGOs and civil society organisations. I identify three possible entry points through which organisations with the requisite expertise in security-related issues can contribute to the Commission’s work; I also address the problem of NGOs’ limited capacity in this area. CSOs and NGOs are referred to interchangeably in the CADSP and the PSC Protocol, as they are, too, in the analysis below. Both can be seen as epistemic communities in the sense that these groups have a ‘common understanding of particular problems in their field of research as well as an awareness of, and a preference for, a set of technical solutions to these problems’ (Hansenclever et al. 1996: 209; see also Haas 1992: 3, 16–20).

There are several references to CSOs and NGOs in both AU documents. For example, the PSC Protocol states, under the section referring to relations with civil society organisations:

The Peace and Security Council shall encourage non-governmental organizations, community-based and other civil society organizations, particularly women’s organizations, to participate actively in the efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. When required, such organizations may be invited to address the Peace and Security Council.31

However, nowhere in either document is there a discussion of how this relationship can or should be operationalised. Identifying areas for NGO and CSO participation is therefore critical.

Evaluating CSO capacity and identifying areas of potential collaboration

Clearly it is important to assess the capacities that CSOs can bring to the table, paying particular attention to issues of subsidiarity, comparative advantage and complementarity. There are several identified areas where CSOs can be of support to the AU in terms of conflict prevention, management and other actions. These are on two levels: conceptual and analytical work; and practical peacebuilding activities.32 These are areas where the AU needs particular support and help from CSOs.33

Among some of the identified weaknesses of the AU is the lack of:

- in-depth analyses of conflicts to provide a sound basis for taking decisions on interventions
- adequate capacity to manage the conflicts on the continent
- independent analytical briefing of the AU on the situations in conflict zones
- mechanisms for disseminating information about the decisions and operations of the AU.

---

31 Article 20. See also Article 24 of the CADSP.
32 See ‘Civil Society–African Union consultative process: towards a new partnership’, prepared by CSS-DCA/CIDO of the AU Commission, (n.d.), pp. 3-4. The concept note identifies several areas for potential CSO contribution and argues that ‘analyses of conflict issuing from such indigenous sources have tended to have a different thrust from those of foreign scholars and think-tanks’.
33 Ibid, p. 3. Other areas where CSOs can be of help are (a) mobilising resources, (b) as a conduit for early warning; see Murithi (2005: 121-125).
Earlier I characterised CSOs and NGOs as epistemic communities – that is, communities with a shared understanding of particular issues pertaining to their area of expertise. What, then, are the situations in which such expert groupings can contribute to the operationalisation of the AU’s peace and security architecture? Among the several possibilities that exist, I will mention three:

(1) when a high degree of uncertainty exists among policy-makers, arising out of insufficient understanding of complex issues and their causal linkages (see Hansenclever et al. 1996)

(2) when there is no coherent policy framework, as a result of lack of consensual knowledge among experts

(3) when members of such communities gain political power or have relatively unfettered access to those with political power.

Contextualising the role of CSOs is also important. While there is enthusiasm on the part of the AU for a collaborative process, the number of non-state actors involved remains small. It was only in the late 1990s that a few civil society organisations started to take an active role in security sector issues. Before then, two key factors militated against their involvement: the nature of the regimes in power, with their overriding penchant for putting an embargo on issues they did not want to be under public scrutiny; and the dearth of civilian expertise on matters of security. The latter issue helps explain why, after more than a decade of democratic dispensation, only a few civil society groups are actively engaged in the field. Several security areas are still highly specialised; as a result, there is both limited expertise and interest, a situation sustained by the traditional secrecy in which security-related issues have been cloaked.

There is therefore a need to broaden the limited circle of experts and expertise, expand the space for debate on security sector reform (SSR) and democratise popular participation and interrogation of the concepts, norms and practices of security analysis in Africa. Equally, there is a need to avoid complacency in assuming that CSOs are, by their mere existence, structurally superior to state structures and inherently better equipped to contribute positively to the security debates. Civil society may not always be ‘civil’ and ‘may be similarly unrepresentative and unaccountable to society’ (Damian 2002: 7).

To this end, more work needs to be done on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with the African Union on Chapter VIII arrangements to contribute to addressing common security challenges and deepen and broaden dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

---

34 There is also increasing concern about the need to disaggregate the sum of CSOs proffering expertise in particular issue areas. Murithi (2004: 113) warns about this proliferation and ‘...the assumption that all civil society groups are benevolent in nature and purpose. This of course would be a misconception. Civil society [groups]...can be just as authoritarian, in their internal governance, and as corrupt as the governments they criticize. Some civil society organizations are opportunistic enterprises convened for the purposes of taking advantage of donors...’
Literature

AU and UN Special Envoys for Darfur Peace Process Address Journalists.

UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferre
The UN and the AU: a co-dependent relationship on matters of peace and security

Linnea Bergholm*

This article looks at the advantages and limitations of a regional organisation, the African Union (AU), in its response to the large-scale civil war challenge of Darfur. I show how the quality of the evolving relationship between the UN and the AU had political implications for the type of response to Darfur that was chosen. One thorny question that may well continue to hamper the UN-AU relationship revolves around what it is that makes a conflict international and/or local. This is important because it is the UN Security Council that determines whether a conflict is of international significance or not. If they agree that it is, an internationally backed intervention would be expected to follow, in line with UN peacekeeping principles.1 By contrast, the civil war in Darfur was framed as a local problem and, consequently, was met with less consent, impartiality and the non-use of force. The Brahimi Report added that all mission mandates need to be backed up with the appropriate political backing and resources from the UN membership. This is difficult to enforce, as long as Article 43 of the UN Charter gives member states the right to selectively support missions with military and other assistance. See UN (2000).

* I wish to thank Ludwig Gelot for helpful and constructive comments on an earlier version of this article

Linnea Bergholm is a PhD candidate at the University of Aberystwyth, Department of International Politics. This article is based on one of the chapters in her thesis, which provides a critical assessment of the AU’s involvement in Darfur and its civilian protection mandate in particular. She has carried out field research in Darfur, Sudan, in November-December 2006 as well as in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and New York, USA, in September-October 2007. She will be completing her studies during the first half of 2009.
urgency and less resolve. The AU lead in this conflict symbolises a suspicion that African political problems, involving no great political, economic or security interests for the P5 states,² may be framed as ‘chaotic’ or ‘risky’.³ I argue that the international reaction to Darfur implied a co-dependent relationship between the UN and the AU. The implications of such co-dependence are in need of further discussion.

**The UN, Sudanese sovereignty and the AU**

Denied by no one except the Government of Sudan (GoS), the crimes committed in Darfur amounted to human rights violations on a scale that required the invoking of the global ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P).⁴ On 5 December 2003, Jan Egeland, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, said that Darfur was amongst the world’s worst humanitarian crises.⁵ On 22 July 2004, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1556, which, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, determined that Sudan constituted a threat to international peace and security and to stability in the region. Yet, subsequent non-compliance from the Khartoum government to UN demands met with no more than empty threats. This was the case because the UN is politically constrained when enforcing certain decisions, most significantly Chapter VII missions into countries where the sitting regime does not consent to such intrusion.⁶ The Sudanese government had made it clear that it would not accept Western troops on its territory. The US preferred to steer clear of military options in the wake of the deeply unpopular intervention in another Islamic state: Iraq. Furthermore, the considerable diplomatic and financial investments by the US, Norway, the UK and the East-African Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the mediation of the North-South conflict in Sudan hindered mediation of the Darfur conflict (Bellamy and Williams 2005: 38).⁷ There was an unwillingness to acknowledge that the same politicians who were meant to implement peace, might be executing new war crimes elsewhere (Prunier 2005: ix). The Security Council avoided the mili-

---

² The Permanent Five members of the Security Council: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
³ Rwanda is the most high-profile UN scandal along these lines; see UN (1999). Of course, the lack of political will amongst Western nations to deploy robustly in Africa is not absolute. There have been exceptions in cases that acquired ‘international’ importance, such as MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo in its later years and Operation Pallicer in Sierra Leone.
⁴ Darfur was widely described as a first test case for R2P. The R2P framework, embraced by the UN member states in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document, prescribes a ‘responsibility to protect’ in grave circumstances: genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Importantly, the R2P should not be equated with any carte blanche for military adventurism. The framework includes a broad range of policy choices, from prevention to reaction.
⁵ UN (2003), Press Release, December 12, AFR/789 IHA/840.
⁶ For two different takes on this point, see Wheeler (2000) and Findlay (2002).
⁷ The UN’s political efforts in Sudan initially focused on the North-South conflict, as seen in the existence of the UN Advance Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS) since 2004 and the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) from 2005. The main task for UNMIS was to oversee the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), concluded between the GoS and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) on 9 January 2005.
tary option for other geopolitical reasons as well. Sudan exports oil to, and imports arms from, China and Russia. It trades terrorist intelligence with the US. In their capacity as UN Security Council P5 members, these states chose to stress the need to uphold Sudan’s unity and to focus most attention on a large-scale humanitarian effort. In sum, no non-African state was willing to commit their troops to Darfur. In a remark telling of how the UN is only as strong as its members allow it to be, then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan admitted: ‘We can’t go and say “Send in the cavalry” and then not be able to go through with it.’ Additionally, from the UN Secretariat’s point of view, a mission in an area with ‘no peace to keep’ was seen as infeasible.

In a briefing with the AU Peace and Security Council in July 2004, Sudan foreign minister, Dr Mustafa Osman, asked the AU to take the lead over the Darfur issue. He implied that this would help protect Sudan from negative foreign interference. The GoS resorted to a manoeuvre commonly used by a regime preoccupied with its own survival. It insisted that what was occurring in Darfur was a tribal conflict, an internal matter in which no international organisation could legitimately intervene. By repeating and exaggerating the ethnic component of the war, or its ‘African’ character, outside advocates played into the hands of the GoS. There was hardly any acknowledgement of the civil war in Darfur that had been well under way since 2002. This war was indicative of questions of power and development, and posed a threat to the inner circle of the regime (Prunier 2005: 106). The pressure to do something mounted as reports of the violence proliferated and the word ‘genocide’ began to be used. More and more sources showed that the ‘Janjaweed’, proxy militias of Arab identity, were operating with the full support of the regular Sudanese army (see for example, Human Rights Watch 2004).

Turning to the AU can be seen as an illustration of the ongoing ‘decentralisation’ of international peace and security management. The UN has since the early 1990s started cooperating more with regional actors and ‘coalitions of the willing’ (see, for example, Bellamy and Williams 2005: 157–195; Fawcett 2003). There has been an increase in ‘sub-contracting’ and burden-sharing in UN operations, often argued to be useful in this time of global ‘peacekeeping overstretch’ and capacity as well as legitimacy deficits. Sometimes the argument is also that a regional actor is best placed to intervene.

---

8 BBC News, 2008. ‘China is ‘fuelling war’ in Darfur’, 13 July. These charges were immediately refuted as ‘ungrounded’ by Liu Guijin, the Chinese government’s special representative on the Darfur issue.
9 After the al-Qaida attack on the US, on 11 September 2001, US-Sudan relations improved because Sudan had, in 1996, offered to hand over Osama Bin Laden. The Bush regime has since collaborated with the Sudanese regime on issues of international terrorism.
11 Confidential interview with senior EU military official, Addis Ababa, September 2007. It would have been problematic, but not impossible, for the UN to access Darfur with the considerable logistics and resources required, without the consent of the GoS. On the importance of ‘a peace to keep’, see UN (2008a: 49).
13 For one example, see ‘War in Western Sudan Over Shadows Peace in the South’, New York Times, 17 January 2004.
14 Prunier has estimated that the war has killed around 300,000 people.
15 First used in May 2004, by the US Managing Committee of the Washington Holocaust Memorial.
For instance, Sudanese diplomat Francis Deng, the UN secretary-general’s special representative on internally displaced persons (IDPs), advocated an AU lead on these grounds. For him, UN or Western military intervention would be likely to ‘complicate and aggravate the situation’ and meet with armed resistance (Deng 2004: paras 36 and 37). Thus, the idea of an African solution seemed the most attractive.

The AU itself began to claim ownership over their efforts in Darfur. The organisation was already involved, since late 2003, in the Chad-led mediation process between the GoS and the (then) two main rebel groups: the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The signing of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (HCFA) in N’Djamena, on 8 April 2004, marked a success in the sense that the agreement detailed the provisions for the deployment of the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS). The GoS, the SLM/A and the JEM had thereby consented to an AU military presence in Darfur (AU 2004). The key drive behind the AU’s involvement in Darfur is to be found in the politics of the evolving African security architecture and the normative shift from non-interference to ‘non-indifference’. The significance of this context has been aptly captured in the article by Kwesi Aning (see also Williams 2007; Kioko 2003). Capturing this mood, Thabo Mbeki, the president of South Africa, stated in a June 2005 meeting with George Bush on Darfur: ‘It’s critically important that the African continent [deals] with these conflict situations on the continent… We have not asked for anybody outside of the African continent to deploy troops in Darfur. It’s an African responsibility, and we can do it’ (cited in Rice 2005).

In addition to the AU’s wish to act there were also more spurious cultural and historical reasons. Darfur is wholly Muslim, comprising both Arab and African identities that have changed historically depending on factors such as ancestry, language or way of life (de Waal and Flynt 2005: 5). Darfur, and the ongoing politicisation of ethnic identities, risked upsetting the Arab and African identities contained within the member states of the AU.16

An ‘African solution’ to the conflict in Darfur was the ideal compromise: it was the only one that all parties, including the GoS, could agree to. The UN membership could be seen as taking action after having passed Resolution 1556. Yet, this choice had a number of political consequences. Both the UN and the AU knew, but were willing to leave to the side, that the AU did not have the authority or capability to rapidly stop the violence in Darfur.

**Political consequences**

*Co-dependency*

Proactive leadership at the pan-African level in 2003-2004 provided momentum for the AU to engage both politically and militarily in Darfur, through the mediation of ceasefires, negotiation, and its peacekeeping operation, AMIS. The AU Commission chairperson, Alpha Oumar Konaré, held several consultations with the GoS, expressing concern over the humanitarian situation in Darfur (Human Rights Watch 2006: 12).

16 For example, contemporary Nigeria, which, like Sudan, is a large African state with both Arab and African peoples.
However, the Union’s structures and institutions were in their emergent phases. The AU lacked the finances, human resources, logistical procurement capability and military capability necessary to sustain a peace process or a military presence in a crisis as complex as that of Darfur. The AU membership knew that international support was required and that the expectations of the AU were high. The AU’s special representative in Darfur, Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe, said on 8 June 2005: ‘We stand or fall in Darfur’ (Cohen and O’Neill 2006: 53). The dependency of the AU’s actions on outside assistance and expertise was also due to the reluctance of AU member states to contribute. Close to 75 per cent of the entire AU budget is paid by only five countries, namely South Africa, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and Algeria.

The formal start of the co-dependent relationship between the UN and the AU over Darfur was when the UN endorsed the AU’s actions in operative paragraph 2 of Resolution 1556, passed by the Security Council on 30 July 2004. The UN had thereby clarified that the AU was the lead organisation. It acknowledged the legitimacy of the AU’s efforts and signalled international agreement and support. However, the UN was not prepared to formalise this delegation of authority. The resolution avoided the stronger term ‘authorised’ which may be seen as a way for the UN to detach itself from the AU by virtue of language. For instance, the AU was under the impression that the UN would take their mission over much sooner than it eventually did. A significant challenge to the UN-AU relationship was the prevailing interpretation of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. According to this interpretation the UN Assessed Contributions Budget, which finances UN-authorised and UN-led peacekeeping, could not be used for actions undertaken by regional organisations. On an ad-hoc basis, therefore, the UN provided the AU with assistance in the form of human resources, skills and certain logistics. The UN sent military advisors, police advisors, and civilians. It established a planning cell in Addis Ababa to help the AU with strategic planning for AMIS. Between 18 August and 27 August 2005 the UN together with the EU, NATO and the US undertook a ‘map exercise’ (MAPEX) at AMIS force headquarters in El Fasher. In 2005 the UN also arranged training for AMIS personnel, covering human rights, policing, rule of law and gender-based violence, and deployed 49 human rights officers to Darfur (UN 2005b: 1-12).

In consequence, the AU relied on various sources of assistance from individual states as well as other regional organisations. The EU contributed 300 million Euros to AMIS from its ‘African Peace Facility’ and provided military and police support for AMIS (Piiparinen 2007: 385-6). On 8 June 8 2005, NATO decided to launch an operation to airlift AU troops into Sudan: its first op-

---

17 Countries with significant financial resources, such as Angola and Botswana for instance, contributed little to the AU budget, and to AMIS. The Arab League was also criticised for their meagre support, in addition to their relative silence over the events in Darfur.

18 I have not found any written records of such a promise, yet it was a verbal agreement according to several AU officials interviewed in Addis Ababa, September 2007.
eration on African soil. The US focused on humanitarian aid, providing almost half of the total international amount of funding for Darfur’s emergency needs in the period 2004 to 2006 (US Government Accountability Office 2006: 21). The US State Department covered the cost of the private contractor Lockheed Martin’s Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE) to construct and maintain camps for AMIS. The UK was a significant cash donor. In June 2005 Canada donated 105 armed personnel carriers (APCs) and civilian helicopters which helped increase the mobility of AMIS.

The irony of the outside support behind the AU was that it was neither wholesale nor long-term. As such, the AU ‘had been scheduled for a “Mission Impossible” type of situation. It was supposed to substitute [sic] itself to the coalition of the unwilling ... to operate on a shoestring and to keep the pretence of serious international involvement for its tight-fisted sponsors’ (Prunier 2005: 145-6).

AMIS and the challenge of civilian protection

The co-dependent and ad hoc relationship between the UN and the AU inhibited efficient security provision for Darfur’s civilian population. Both organisations faced challenges in striking the right balance between protection for Darfur’s civilians and respect for Sudan’s territorial integrity. The AU membership, on their part, favoured cooperative relations with the GoS. Sudan was a member of the AU Peace and Security Council around the time of the outbreak of violence in Darfur and drew sympathy from states such as Libya, Algeria and Egypt (Kagwanja and Mutahi 2007: 6). South Africa and Nigeria were more prone to condemn certain aspects of the Darfur crisis.

The existing political settlement, the HCFA, did not provide for an assertive civilian protection role. For instance, its provisions for the disarmament of the Janjaweed failed to define who constituted the Janjaweed and who could realistically do the disarming (vaguely stressing the responsibility of the GoS to neutralise the ‘armed militias’). This agreement lamentably set the course not only for the AU’s subsequent efforts but also for the demands of the UN Security Council (de Waal 2007a: 1041). UN Security Council Resolution 1556 gave the Sudanese regime 30 days to comply with requirements on facilitating humanitarian access, the disarmament of militias, civilian protection, and the investigation and punishment of human rights violations. Nevertheless, it did

---

20 The GoS did not allow the APCs to enter Sudan until October 2005, when 35 were allowed in. Not until December 2005 were all the APCs finally in Darfur; see Human Rights Watch (2006: 34).
21 The Darfur crisis was one of the first challenges for the AU Peace and Security Council. Its Protocol was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, and entered into force in December 2003.
22 Both Nigeria and South Africa were important mediators and troop contributors in the overall AU response to Darfur. They were both instrumental actors behind the creation of the AU. For more details see Tieku (2004).
23 By April-May 2004, the UN fact-finding missions to Darfur had well established the proportions of the human rights violations and war crimes in Darfur (see UN 2004). ‘Report of the Acting High Commissioner on the Human Rights Situation in Darfur’, E/CN.4/2005/3, 7 May. Visits to Darfur made clear that far greater responsibility for human rights violations rested with the GoS and the proxy militia than with the rebel forces. See also UN (2004c).
not define ‘disarmament’ or ‘Janjaweed’; nor did it specify any consequences resulting from non-compliance. The Sudanese regime did not meet the demands of the resolution. On the one hand, it was unrealistic to expect the GoS to rein in the Janjaweed in such a short time (Prunier 2005: 118). On the other hand, the GoS also failed to comply with the changed requirement of 90 days in total, proposed by the UN secretary-general’s special representative for Sudan, Jan Pronk. The UN Security Council went on to pass resolutions on oil sanctions, travel bans and an arms embargo, neither of which was efficiently monitored or implemented. 24 Seemingly a little more effective was the Security Council’s decision, in Resolution 1593 of 31 March 2005, to refer the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) (De Waal and Flint 2005: 129).

In June 2004 80 AU military observers and a small protection force of 300 Nigerian and Rwandan troops arrived in Darfur. 25 They faced a general situation of continued ceasefire violations by all parties to the conflict, as well as ongoing abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law such as the government’s aerial bombardment of villages. Despite their concern with the security situation in Darfur, the AU – and the UN 26 – refrained from calling the conflict genocide. On 4 July 2004 the AU Peace and Security Council stated that, even though the crisis in Darfur was grave, the situation could not be defined as genocide. 27 Nonetheless, the attacks on the mission itself and on civilians led to calls for AMIS to be upgraded from an observer mission to one with a more proactive protection role. 28

On 20 October 2004 the AU authorised the transformation of AMIS into a peacekeeping mission of 3,320 personnel, which included force protectors and unarmed civilian police. The expanded AMIS mandate was fourfold: to monitor the ceasefire; to assist in the process of confidence-building; to contribute to a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief; and to contribute to the improvement of the security situation, ‘it being understood that the responsibility for the protection of the civilian population lay primarily with the GoS’. Also listed was the task of protecting AMIS personnel, equipment and facilities as well as civilians under imminent threat, in the immediate vicinity of AMIS personnel, and within the capabilities of AMIS. 29 This

24 See, for example, UN Security Council Resolutions 1564 and 1591. Alex de Waal and Julie Flint provide a good discussion of the inefficiency of these demands (see De Waal and Flint 2005: 127).
25 The AU Peace and Security Council meeting on 25 May 2004 called for the deployment of military observers to Darfur (see AU 2004e). The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the AU (commonly known as the AU Summit) authorised the deployment of AMIS in June 2004 to monitor the N’Djamena ceasefire agreement.
26 Neither the Security Council nor the Secretariat has applied that word in connection with Darfur. The UN Commission of Inquiry found that the GoS and the Janjaweed were responsible for ‘...crimes against humanity and war crimes ... [that] may be no less serious and heinous than genocide’ (UN 2005e: 3-4).
27 AU (2004d:1). The Assembly, in its first thorough treatment of the Darfur issue, followed this line (AU, 2004c: para. 2). It is possible that this was a political decision to facilitate the entry of AU forces into Sudanese territory.
28 Such as the concerns raised by Sector Commander Seth Appiah Mensah (‘Frustration of Darfur “Observer”’, BBC News, 14 November 2004).
29 AU (2004a: paras 65 and 67). The civilian protection element was reemphasised one year later (see AU, 2005a).
was the first time that an Africa-led mission had explicit legal permission to protect civilians. Significantly, the UN affirmed the AU’s legal authority through its endorsement of the enhanced mandate.30 The UN Security Council, meeting in Nairobi on 19 November 2004, expressed its strong support for the increased AMIS, as well as for its enhanced mandate. It urged member states to provide the required support.31

To find ways of strengthening AMIS further, the UN and the AU launched a joint assessment mission to Darfur in March 2005. After this, AMIS was authorised a total strength of 6,171 troops plus 1,560 personnel in the civilian police component. The deployment of these numbers was delayed due to problems with the AU command and control chain, as well as lack of funding. Challenges with donor-funded aviation fuel and camp construction were two delaying factors (Human Rights Watch 2006: 30–31, 51).

By December 2005, AMIS force levels finally reached almost 7,000, including a stronger civilian police component totalling approximately 1,320.32 This increase in numbers made a positive difference to the security situation on the ground. AMIS provided water and firewood patrols for scared IDPs, escorted humanitarian convoys, and helped victims of attacks get to hospitals.33

Nevertheless, AMIS’s weak political and military clout meant that the security and protection they could provide in Darfur was dependent upon the cooperation of the warring parties. Such cooperation was sorely lacking. One example of this was when, on 7 April 2005, government-supported militia attacked the village of Khor Abeche despite assurances from the GoS given to the AU days earlier.34 AMIS troops also largely lacked the training and experience to face the political and operational implications that were likely to follow from decisions to engage with elements of the Sudanese army involved in attacks on civilians.35 In a tragic illustration, on 29 September 2007, an AMIS Military Group Site in Haskanita, South Darfur, was attacked by a heavily armed group, leaving ten peacekeepers dead (Polgreen 2007).

The AU’s dependency on external resources prevented any long-term planning on the part of AMIS and impacted on what civilian protection the force was able to provide. The

---

30 See UN (2004a: para. 54). Also, UN Security Council Resolution 1590 of 24 March 2005 reaffirmed AMIS’s mandate and described events in Darfur above all as a crisis of insecurity and lack of protection. It established UNMIS and afforded it with a similarly worded civilian protection mandate under Chapter VII. In 2006 the UN ‘acknowledged’ the steps taken by the AU in regard to civilian protection in armed conflict (Security Council Resolution 1674, S/RES/1674).
32 The troops were from Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Senegal, Gambia and Kenya, the police from Ghana, and there were military observers from Egypt and Libya, among others.
33 The AU confronted the GoS with evidence of government involvement in attacks. The government had previously denied all use of airpower in its offensive military operations. Now it ‘agreed’, on 8 February 2005, to withdraw all Antonov bombers from Darfur. The GoS did not honour the agreement. (Human Rights Watch 2006: 19.)
34 UN News Centre, ‘UN-African Union condemn “savage attack” on village by armed militia’. A joint statement was made on 8 April 2005 by the AU’s Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe and the UN’s Jan Pronk on the destruction of Khor Abeche on 7 April 2004.
35 Confidential interviews with the Darfur Implementation Task Force (DITF) and the UN DPKO Darfur Planning Team, Addis Ababa, September 2007, and New York, October 2007.
mobility of AMIS was highly reliant on the vehicles, helicopters, and fixed-wing aircraft provided by donors. However, AMIS lacked attack helicopters, military pilots, adequate intelligence, proper communications technology, and professional medical services. Donors never followed through on the recommendation of the March 2005 UN-AU assessment to provide AMIS with attack helicopters (Human Rights Watch 2006: 8; UN 2005c; AU 2005d). This was a tangible obstacle. AMIS sector commanders had to request helicopter back-up from El Fasher to try to deter any suspected attacks within their sector. Often none could be sent, since AMIS only had civilian aviation capability with civilian pilots. Civilian pilots, as opposed to military pilots, cannot be ordered to fly long distances in dangerous circumstances.36

During 2006 the AU Peace and Security Council stressed the need to strengthen AMIS and called for an increase in the number of personnel to around 12,300.37 There was no willingness amongst the international partners to fund such an increase. Instead, there were increasing pressures for the UN to take over AMIS.38

‘No peace to keep’

The pressures for the UN to take over only grew stronger when the AU-led mediation process culminated in a Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), signed on 5 May 2006 by the GoS and the Minni Minawi faction of the SLM. However, the hopes for peace were immediately shattered as both the JEM and the SLM Abdel Wahid al Nur faction rejected the agreement.39 Post-DPA, growing segments of Darfur’s society started perceiving AMIS as siding with the GoS (Fadul and Tanner 2007: 284-313). The previously relatively cohesive rebellion fractured into more than 15 groups, without clear political positions and with little popular support (International Crisis Group 2007). The GoS initiated new offensives to crush the rebellion (de Waal 2006). In this situation of ongoing conflict, the UN found itself in a difficult position. The new mediation initiative that was launched by the UN and the AU in Sirte, Libya, in 2007, had yet to produce anything approaching a durable settlement that would overcome the weaknesses of the DPA. Additionally, the UN remained unwilling to contemplate a UN peacekeeping operation without the consent of the GoS. The Sudanese position, supported by the AU, was that it would accept a UN force only if a political agreement was reached and if the force was primarily comprised of African troops.40

In a fascinating move, UN Security Council Resolution 1706 of 31 August 2006, invited the Sudanese government to consent to a robust UN peacekeeping operation. When the GoS refused, a compromise proposal, the ‘hybrid’ UN-AU force, was suggested by the US and China on 16 November 2006. Su-
dan consented to this during consultations with the UN and the AU in Addis Ababa, on 12 June 2007 (de Waal 2007a: 1042). Consequently, on 31 July 2007, the Security Council authorised the establishment of the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) through Resolution 1769.

UNAMID became operational on 1 January 2008. Its authorised deployment was of 26,000 troops, and the budget estimate for the first year was a staggering 2.2 billion USD. The use of the UN Assessed Contributions Budget thus enabled the authorisation of numbers and resources that were denied the AU-led force. What remains to be seen is whether the political backing behind UNAMID will enable the deployment of these figures and towards what purposes they will be used.

After six months on the ground, UNAMID was still struggling with inadequate force levels, equipment and resources and could only provide a basic level of protection in Darfur. In July 2008 the force comprised only approximately 9,400 troops of which approximately 1,600 were civilian police (Darfur Consortium 2008: 3). Most of these were ex-AMIS forces. UNAMID lacked attack and transport helicopters, and means for ground transportation (NGO Report 2008: 6). As of 28 July 2008, many areas did not benefit from life-saving patrols. In a serious criticism against UNAMID the Darfur Consortium argued that the mission could be doing more, even within the limits of their existing troops and resources. For example, they could be doing more foot patrolling (Darfur Consortium 2008: 6).

Sudanese sovereignty remains the primary impediment for civilian protection. UNAMID was afforded a civilian protection mandate, under Chapter VII. Despite this initially bold mandate adoption, the political and military leadership of UNAMID has retracted on the interpretations of the mandate. Force Commander General Martin Luther Agwai and Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada regard UNAMID as a peacekeeping force present in Darfur to keep a peace that doesn’t exist. Even if UNAMID were at full deployment, they argue that the peacekeepers are ‘not there to stand between rival armies and militias engaged in full-scale combat’. This suggests that UNAMID peacekeepers will not be supported to act proactively to save lives where they can. Nor can they seize and dispose of illegal arms. UNAMID may only ‘monitor whether any arms or related material are present in Darfur in violation of the Agreements and the measures imposed by paragraphs 7 and 8 of resolution 1556 (2004)’.

41 See S/RES/1769. This ‘Addis Ababa Agreement’ detailed that the hybrid force would have a predominantly African character and that the troops should, as far as possible, be sourced from African countries.

42 At the 62nd General Assembly Fifth Committee Meeting (GA/AB/3828, November 19) a 1.48 billion USD budget was passed for the first year of UNAMID. This amount has not been without criticism. See Konaré in ‘Caught Between Peacekeeping And Development,’ Inter Press Service, 11 March 2008.

43 Sudanese officials have warned that UN peacekeepers may be heading for another Iraq- or Afghanistan-style disaster, as long as talks between the Khartoum government and rebel groups remain stalled (see ‘Sudan Warns West of ‘Iraq-style Disaster’ in Darfur’, The Guardian, 12 March 2008).


45 Article 9 of the UN Resolution 1769. The final text of the resolution dropped a threat of sanctions inserted by Britain and France, due to China’s opposition.
Despite these ambiguities, UNAMID may have deepened the understanding of the co-dependent relationship between the UN and the AU. Ad hoc lines of communication and diplomacy vis-à-vis the Sudanese government have set an important precedent. For instance, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno, and AU Peace and Security Commissioner Saïd Djinnit conducted joint assessment missions in Darfur. The political process underway in Darfur saw the birth of a joint envoy system between the UN special envoy to Darfur, Jan Eliasson, and the AU special envoy to Darfur, Salim Ahmed Salim. The first-ever joint meeting between members of the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council took place on 11 June 2007 in Addis Ababa. They committed themselves to the development of a stronger and more structured relationship, in a joint resolution by the UN secretary-general and the AU Commission chairperson (UN 2007). However, the balance of the working relationship, concerning the control and command structure of UNAMID and its strategic and military planning, remains tilted towards the UN rather than the AU.

**Conclusion**

I have argued that the UN and the AU were co-dependent ‘partners’ in their response to the violence in Darfur. The UN membership detached itself from the events in Darfur through the use of the slogan ‘African solutions to African problems’. The deployment of AMIS provided a convenient excuse for Western powers to avoid committing their own soldiers (Cohen and O’Neill 2006: 52). Nonetheless, the AU’s partners also needed the AU: their support allowed them to portray themselves as ‘doing something’ about Darfur. The AU’s actions in Darfur were therefore global contributions and not a ‘substitute’ for the UN’s fulfilment of its responsibility for international peace and security. This means that the actions of the AU, and its reliance on constructive engagement and cooperative relations with the GoS, cannot be understood and evaluated with reference to the AU alone.

Full UN engagement in Darfur may not have been possible or desirable. Naming Darfur an ‘international conflict’ in Resolution 1556 was not enough to forge a consensus view or exit plan amongst the P5. The decision to turn to the AU in these circumstances should have been followed by a higher degree of formalised empowerment and support (political, human, financial). AMIS, for all its imperfections, was the only significant foreign military presence in Darfur. Overall, it prevented even larger-scale killings in Darfur. Yet, it could have done more had it not been so severely under-reourced.

Darfur, in sum, serves as a warning that the international division of labour of peacekeeping can have negative political implications. There is a risk that the UN will come to rely on burden-sharing opportunities afforded by (sub)regional organisations such as the AU, sometimes facing greater constraints than the UN itself. It is therefore...

---

46 See also S/2007/421, annex II.

47 In a positive move, the AU Summits of 2006, 2007 and 2008 prevented the president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, from assuming the chair of the AU.
a matter of hope that the issue of how to interpret Chapter VIII has become a high-level priority for the UN. For example, on 7 April 2008 a secretary-general report on the UN-AU relationship on issues of international peace and security acknowledged that the AU resource base needs to be supported and improved in a sustained way. He recommended that a panel of distinguished persons from both organisations be set up to propose such modalities, in particular as related to start-up funding, equipment and logistics of AU peacekeeping missions with UN mandates (UN 2008b: para. 76).

**Literature**


AU doc. PSC/MIN/2(XLVI), 10 March 2006.


Bellamy, Alex and Williams, Paul (2005), ‘The Responsibility to Protect and the Crisis in Darfur’, *Security Dialogue*, vol. 36, no. 1.


UN (2004c), ‘High-Level Mission to Darfur, the Sudan, 27 April-2 May’, Khartoum, May.


Positive, ambiguous or negative?
Peacekeeping in the local security fabric

Andreas Mehler

This contribution aims to shed more light on the balance sheet of outside efforts to bring security to African countries, in particular by peacekeeping troops. After a discussion of general aspects, three case studies – two short ones on Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire, and a more extended one on the Central African Republic – are presented. It is argued that a realistic assessment must include local perspectives on peacekeepers and their relations to other (state and non-state) actors in the security arena. Peacekeepers do harm, just as they do good; and they would profit from a more systematic evaluation of the local perception of their action (or passivity).


Andreas Mehler is director of the Institute of African Affairs at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg. His research interests include causes of conflict, statehood and security, French Africa policy, and politics in Francophone Africa south of the Sahara. He is an advisor to President Köhler’s ‘Partnership with Africa’ initiative and co-editor of the Africa Yearbook (with Henning Melber and Klaas van Walraven), published by Brill, Leiden.

Peacekeeping Monument, Ottawa, Canada
Photo by Alistair Williamson
fourth of all sub-Saharan African countries are concerned. Mandates are variable; they are adapted to some degree to the local situation and probably to a higher degree to the changing dominant paradigms, with the ‘responsibility to protect’ being the order of the day. Although a majority of peacekeeping troops deployed in Africa’s crises are from Asia or Africa, their mission is conceived somewhere else, most of the time in the UN’s headquarters in New York, in Brussels or in Paris. This has impacts on the way security is conceptualised. The remote threat to domestic security plays a certain role: a youth rebellion in Africa may be seen as the breeding ground of terrorism (particularly in mostly Islamic societies) and war could be an additional push factor for illegal immigrants coming to Europe. It is of course legitimate to care about threats from outside, but this thinking might be utterly simplistic and may conceal what is at stake locally.

One major problem is the transposition of the outsiders’ own institutional set-up to the crisis area. The conceptualisation of an outside intervention in supposedly failed or weak states is usually guided by … a clear state bias! The state is considered by the overwhelming majority of Western decision-makers as the only possible saviour when it comes to security concerns. If it is in shambles, it has to be re-built as quickly as possible. The real needs of a population may not come to mind at all. However, in many African states the public security services have become primarily ‘insecurity providers’ (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Baker 2007: 31). When UN and other peace missions come to Africa they look for cooperation with state agencies. Most of the time a short appraisal is enough for these to be considered in urgent need of reform. So ‘security sector reform’ is high on the agenda, and usually the security sector can be seen as limited to the state organs: the police, army, secret service, maybe also the customs services, prison guards and adjacent judicial services. This delimitation might be highly problematic as some of the most efficient self-help mechanisms are kept out of the picture and receive only scant attention. In recent years ‘non-state armed groups’ have been identified as important players in post-conflict situations at least in development cooperation (Grävingholt et al. 2007), but usually they are seen as ‘spoilers’ of peace processes. ‘Non-state armed groups’ can be of a very different nature and some may be important positive forces. Unwittingly, the outsiders may destroy more than they can build up.

A second neglected aspect is the more imminent role of international peacekeepers in the local security fabric (Pouligny 2006). Not all of their actions provide more security to everyone or would be regarded as impartial. As well as the peacekeepers other outside security providers may be at work: security advisers to the president of a given state; private military and security companies of foreign origin; troops from neighbouring states or from the former colonial power, which might still be linked to its ancient possession by defence agreements. This latter scenario is not unusual in the case of former French colonies in Africa.

This contribution questions the value of security provision from outside. It focuses mainly on peacekeeping troops and touches only superficially on the other actors enu-
merated above. The reason is that the paradox of missions assigned and outcome becomes clearer in the case of peacekeepers. It is argued that the relation between peacekeeping and security provision is much more complex than A leading to B. The outcome of peacekeeping missions can be quite ambiguous. Why is this so? The answer is obvious: contexts are not taken into account and diverging interests may not allow for an outcome that satisfies all.

The academic and practice-oriented discussion suffers from the following aspects:

- an insufficiently complex description of the social relationship between actors of violence, including the peacekeepers
- the overemphasis on dichotomies such as ‘state’/‘non-state’ or ‘good’/‘bad’
- ignorance of local perceptions.

I have argued elsewhere that local actors are likely to be regarded as not entirely impartial and that they can have an ambiguous record in security provision: a threat to one segment of society and a force for protection to another. This can be true and has a certain degree of probability for international peacekeepers, too. Take, for example, Côte d’Ivoire in November 2004 or January 2006, when peacekeepers shot demonstrators. In both cases Western media and human rights organisations said that the demonstrators or the government manipulating them bore the brunt of the responsibility (Amnesty International 2006). The peacekeepers would have acted in legitimate self-defence. This can be an important part of the explanation of why peacekeepers shot live bullets. But the fact remains that (a) the deaths were on the side of the demonstrators and (b) the legitimacy of the peacekeepers was doubted by at least an important part of the population – before, and certainly after the event – not least because (c) they had not managed to do the job they were mostly expected to do: providing security. In the case of the Ivorian demonstrators this meant particularly the disarmament of rebels. Frequently, dishonest motivations on the part of the demonstrators are then presumed, but not properly examined. An analysis of the legitimacy of peacekeepers in the eyes of the population is most of the time not – at least not verifiably – undertaken, because by definition they have to represent the good cause. It is however crystal clear that the role of peacekeepers has to be examined more objectively, particularly when they remain in their local operational area for several months.

The ambiguous balance sheet of peacekeepers in the local arena has become evident in reports of rape and child abuse by peacekeepers that have been published, mostly on the UN mission in the DRC since early 2004. But in Côte d’Ivoire as well, a Moroccan contingent of UNOCI had to be assigned to the barracks when similar complaints were voiced. The UN reacts sensitively to these kinds of accusation, which are

---


3 United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire.

4 Jeune Afrique (Paris), 29 July–4 August 2007, 68ff; Süddeutsche Zeitung (München), 29 July 2007 (‘Vom Schutzengel missbraucht’).
documented inter alia by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.\textsuperscript{5} The entire balance sheets of peace missions are not automatically turning negative as a result of such events. But they should be an integral part of a sober analysis of how much security and insecurity is produced by peacekeepers interacting locally. And as we will see, they have to interact. Peacekeepers cannot remain untouched by the surrounding society. And any interaction makes them part of the local constellation of actors. In fact, this is no new topic in the debate, at least in West Africa where several, mostly Nigeria-led, ECOMOG missions to Liberia and Sierra Leone (1990–1997) showed numerous problematic aspects of local interaction, including trafficking with precious resources by peacekeepers.\textsuperscript{6}

Three case studies in outside intervention

A more detailed account of the security function and imperfections of outside forces, in particular peacekeepers, can be provided through focusing on recent case studies. The cases of Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire (since 2002/3) are briefly presented while the rich history of outside intervention in Central African Republic (since 1996) receives more attention.

\textbf{Liberia}

In Liberia, a comparatively small country, the United Nations Mission for Liberia (UNMIL) with its 15,000 troops (one of the biggest UN missions to Africa to date) had rather good preconditions for providing security. In fact, it must be seen as the dominant security provider and as engaging in a security sector reform programme. UNMIL trains the personnel of the Liberia National Police (LNP). In the first three years since the peace agreement of 2003 the LNP was not able to provide security on its own, not even in the capital. Recent information shows that this had not completely changed even by the end of 2007.\textsuperscript{7} This gap was partly filled (and only in some areas of Monrovia) by neighbourhood watches (Community Watch Teams) which take over the responsibility of protecting communities. And wealthier citizens hire the services of private security companies to protect their property.

The picture gets more complex with the UN mission contracting private security companies who themselves employ (badly remunerated) ex-combatants. On the one hand this gives an income opportunity to potential spoilers of the peace process; on the other hand the UN itself may demonstrate a lack of confidence in the Liberian

---


\textsuperscript{6} van Walraven (1999: 53) draws this conclusion: ‘Unfortunately, throughout their stay in Liberia the performance of ECOMOG’s contingents was limited in effectiveness and, in the long run, was even self-defeating and counter-productive.’

\textsuperscript{7} The BBC reported on 31 December 2007 that the government handed out mobile phones for security reasons. The text of the report is telling: ‘Each of 400 communities around the capital, Monrovia, will be given 10 phones, pre-programmed with a free police hotline to report crimes. There will be a prize for the community which reports the most crimes … [Police] Officers only go into dangerous areas with the backing of UN peacekeepers’ (www.bbc.co.uk, accessed 31 December 2007)
police (or state services in general) by hiring private security services. It also means that working relations between UNMIL and other actors providing the security architecture are consistently maintained.

Although UNMIL, compared to other UN missions, has an overwhelmingly positive balance sheet, there have been controversial acts such as the media-reported but officially denied use of arms against ex-combatants illegally holding the Firestone rubber plantation in Guthrie. At least once a shoot-out between peacekeepers was reported. And furthermore at the end of 2006 a number of events were recorded, when one Nigerian peacekeeper and five Russians contracted by UNMIL were accused of sexual harassment or rape. It should be noted, on the other hand, that between October 2003 and May 2005 alone 47 UNMIL peacekeepers lost their life in service in Liberia. Again, compared to other places, the Liberian record of UN peacekeepers is fairly good.

Côte d’Ivoire

International peacekeepers in Côte d’Ivoire (2002-2007) received a particularly negative local assessment. This has to be seen in light of the strong French component of the peacekeeping troops, although professionally they were certainly no less suitable than others for the job. Until April 2004 the French ‘Opération Licorne’ (about 4,000 troops), operating under a UN mandate, formed the backbone of the international mission while ECOWAS troops (about 1,400) took over some positions in early 2003. Only in 2004, when a sizeable UN mission (United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire – UNOCI) was established (about 6,000-, later even 8,000-strong), was the international presence substantial. The French mission stayed on and was only partially integrated into the overall mission. France was seen by government and rebel parties as a party in the conflict – for different reasons. France had stopped the rebel advance in September 2003, but it had not helped the government to push back the rebels although they were obviously supported by the regime in neighbouring Burkina Faso (which would have allowed Paris to see the attacks as aggression from outside and therefore react in the name of the existing defence agreement). It was probably not by chance that most of the serious incidents between 2002 and 2007 involved Opération Licorne. Amongst them: the appropriation of a sum of money by a group of French soldiers deployed to protect a public bank; the murder of a suspected highwayman and assassin in French military custody, which led to the suspension of a French general; the lack of intervention when security forces violently ended a demonstration by the opposition; and the shooting of demonstrators after anti-French riots in Abidjan.

8 Daily Observer (Monrovia), 7 September 2006.
10 The News (Monrovia), 30 May 2005.

11 In January 2006 UNOCI peacekeepers shot dead five demonstrators and wounded at least 20 in Guiglo (Western Côte d’Ivoire) after they were harassed by violent demonstrators, see Amnesty International (2006). The UN troops had to leave this and three other cities; all UN buildings were ransacked.
These events will be described in some detail:

- The robbery of the local branch of the West African Central Bank, BCEAO, in the course of a conflict between competing rebel groups in their stronghold of Bouaké (October 2003) left more than 30 million euros unaccounted for. A detachment of Licorne peacekeepers called to the scene found a bundle of bank notes containing about 58,000 euros and took it. Only when attempting to exchange the money for diamonds were the six perpetrators caught; they were brought to trial a year later in France.¹²

- The suspected robber, murderer and rapist Firmin Mahé was shot and seriously wounded on 13 May 2005 close to Bangolo by French peacekeepers. On the way to hospital he was suffocated with a plastic bag by his custodians. A shadow was cast over the entire mission when it was established that their superiors had given orders that could be interpreted as a wish to have the criminal brought in dead rather than alive. General Henri Poncet, well known for his tough stance, was finally suspended from office, since he had covered up for his men and may also have given the nod to Mahé’s assassination.¹³

- A banned demonstration by the opposition took place on 25 March 2004 in Abidjan and served as a pretext for an escalation of repression by supporters of the president. According to a report by an expert mission at least 120 people were killed (and 274 wounded).¹⁴ The French peacekeepers, based in Abidjan, did not intervene. The spokesperson of the Licorne mission declared that the troops were not on the spot, information was insufficient, their mandate would not have been sufficient and the authorisation of the Ivorian security forces to intervene was lacking.

- Finally, one of the most debated events of the Ivorian crisis, involving an escalation of violence, came in the aftermath of an attack on a French military camp by the Ivorian air force in November 2004, which left nine dead.¹⁵ France’s then president, Jacques Chirac, ordered the destruction of the Ivorian fighter jets. Angry protests and anti-French riots started in the metropolis of Abidjan. According to official figures 64 people died as a result of French bullets (and 1,300 were wounded).¹⁶ Paris essentially held the Ivorian army responsible, for not managing to contain the demonstrators. While the French media predominantly reported on the horrors endured by fleeing French nationals the media close to the government in Abidjan showed terrifying photographs of dead Ivorians.¹⁷

These four events show how easily peacekeepers can get into a situation where they become part of the local constellation of violent actors. It is maybe even more strik-

¹⁶  According to President Gbagbo reported by Agence France Presse, 24 November 2004. The health ministry later gave the following figures: 57 dead, 2,226 wounded.
¹⁷  Amateur videos of the most macabre scenes were sold in the streets of Abidjan almost immediately afterwards.
ing that they can do harm to the local popula-

This could also be done quite indi-

The inhabitants of a village in the ‘confidence

18 For some conceptualisation of interventions in local,

19 UN Security Council, ‘Eighth report of the Secre-

20 A reading of numerous reports by the UN Secretary

21 Even so, a positive interim balance sheet of the

18 For some conceptualisation of interventions in local,

trans-border and global frameworks see Callaghy et

al. (2001). On spatial dimensions see Engel and Me-


19 UN Security Council, ‘Eighth report of the Secre-

tary-General on the United Nations Operation in

20 A reading of numerous reports by the UN Secretary

21 Even so, a positive interim balance sheet of the

proverbial efficiency of French troops can-

22 It might be recalled that CAR citizens had seen de-

ployments of French troops before. When France

launched Operation Barracuda to topple Bokassa in

1979 and re-install President Dacko this came with

an important deployment of troops. The mission

counted 1,400 men and created what was called, by

the later prime minister, Ngoupande, the ‘Barracuda

syndrome’ – that is, a heavy outside military compo-

nent in the upholding of any regime in the country,

internalised as a given by all Central Africans.

Central African Republic

This can be seen again in our third case. In

the Central African Republic French troops

became part of the conflict while they (reluc-

tantly) supported President Patassé during the

second and third of three mutinies in 1996.22

During the second mutiny, in May, 43 people

were killed in combat. Violence returned once

again in mid-November. The confrontation

clearly had become more dangerous after Pa-

tassé had created his own party militias. France

was now dragged deeper into the confronta-

tion, despite the already big distance between

the governments in Paris and Bangui. In the

final stage, French troops were themselves

ultimately considered a party in the conflict

when they engaged overtly in acts of retaila-

tion after two French soldiers were killed by

mutineers. No exact figures are available, but

several dozen innocent civilians probably died

during these incidents. French Prime Minister

Jospin made a remarkable and decent declara-

tion to the press later on when he deplored

unnecessary and violent encounters between commu-

nities, above all in 2003 and 2004, took place –

despite the presence of the peacekeepers.

It should be noted as being of particular sig-

nificance that in the ‘zone of confidence’,

controlled neither by government nor rebels

and patrolled by the peacekeepers, a high

number of violent acts were recorded.20

This should not at all make us overlook the

fact that without French troops there would

have been no ceasefire in 2002.21 And the

Central African Republic

This can be seen again in our third case. In

the Central African Republic French troops

became part of the conflict while they (reluc-

tantly) supported President Patassé during the

second and third of three mutinies in 1996.22

During the second mutiny, in May, 43 people

were killed in combat. Violence returned once

again in mid-November. The confrontation

clearly had become more dangerous after Pa-

tassé had created his own party militias. France

was now dragged deeper into the confronta-

tion, despite the already big distance between

the governments in Paris and Bangui. In the

final stage, French troops were themselves

ultimately considered a party in the conflict

when they engaged overtly in acts of retaila-

tion after two French soldiers were killed by

mutineers. No exact figures are available, but

several dozen innocent civilians probably died

during these incidents. French Prime Minister

Jospin made a remarkable and decent declara-

tion to the press later on when he deplored

unnecessary and violent encounters between commu-

nities, above all in 2003 and 2004, took place –

despite the presence of the peacekeepers.

It should be noted as being of particular sig-

nificance that in the ‘zone of confidence’,

controlled neither by government nor rebels

and patrolled by the peacekeepers, a high

number of violent acts were recorded.20

This should not at all make us overlook the

fact that without French troops there would

have been no ceasefire in 2002.21 And the

Central African Republic

This can be seen again in our third case. In

the Central African Republic French troops

became part of the conflict while they (reluc-

tantly) supported President Patassé during the

second and third of three mutinies in 1996.22

During the second mutiny, in May, 43 people

were killed in combat. Violence returned once

again in mid-November. The confrontation

clearly had become more dangerous after Pa-

tassé had created his own party militias. France

was now dragged deeper into the confronta-

tion, despite the already big distance between

the governments in Paris and Bangui. In the

final stage, French troops were themselves

ultimately considered a party in the conflict

when they engaged overtly in acts of retaila-

tion after two French soldiers were killed by

mutineers. No exact figures are available, but

several dozen innocent civilians probably died

during these incidents. French Prime Minister

Jospin made a remarkable and decent declara-

tion to the press later on when he deplored

unnecessary and violent encounters between commu-

nities, above all in 2003 and 2004, took place –

despite the presence of the peacekeepers.

It should be noted as being of particular sig-

nificance that in the ‘zone of confidence’,

controlled neither by government nor rebels

and patrolled by the peacekeepers, a high

number of violent acts were recorded.20

This should not at all make us overlook the

fact that without French troops there would

have been no ceasefire in 2002.21 And the

Central African Republic

This can be seen again in our third case. In

the Central African Republic French troops

became part of the conflict while they (reluc-

tantly) supported President Patassé during the

second and third of three mutinies in 1996.22

During the second mutiny, in May, 43 people

were killed in combat. Violence returned once

again in mid-November. The confrontation

clearly had become more dangerous after Pa-

tassé had created his own party militias. France

was now dragged deeper into the confronta-

tion, despite the already big distance between

the governments in Paris and Bangui. In the

final stage, French troops were themselves

ultimately considered a party in the conflict

when they engaged overtly in acts of retaila-

tion after two French soldiers were killed by

mutineers. No exact figures are available, but

several dozen innocent civilians probably died

during these incidents. French Prime Minister

Jospin made a remarkable and decent declara-

tion to the press later on when he deplored

unnecessary and violent encounters between commu-

nities, above all in 2003 and 2004, took place –

despite the presence of the peacekeepers.

It should be noted as being of particular sig-

nificance that in the ‘zone of confidence’,

controlled neither by government nor rebels

and patrolled by the peacekeepers, a high

number of violent acts were recorded.20

This should not at all make us overlook the

fact that without French troops there would

have been no ceasefire in 2002.21 And the
the African deaths: ‘The problem is to know what missions the government is giving to our soldiers. The defence accord with the CAR which is invoked is not a police accord. The French army should not be transformed into a force of internal security nor into a presidential guard for President Patassé’.23 These words were not chosen by chance. In December 1996 a former interior minister under Kollingba, and his son were killed by Patassé’s Presidential Guard. French military ‘coopérants’ were at that time training the same Presidential Guard. The series of events showed how difficult it was and is to stay out of the local security arena when physically present with soldiers. The consequence was the (temporary) closure of French military bases in the CAR. These had become, over decades, part of the life of the capital, Bangui, and Bouar in the west of the country: economically, politically and socially. As in other countries, Côte d’Ivoire being a good example, the mere presence of French troops had a dissuasive function. The behaviour of the troops was not always exempt from local criticism: it was seen to be patronising and disrespectful of national sovereignty. But major logistical operations such as the organisation of country-wide elections would not have been possible without French military help.24

The French presence was originally not part of a peacekeeping mission. But Paris acted on the diplomatic scene to get one on the ground. The Bangui Peace Accord of 25 January 1997 provided for the deployment of an inter-African military mission as a buffer between mutineers and loyalists (Mission Interafricaine de Surveillance des Accords de Bangui – MISAB). MISAB had financial and logistical support from France, but acted under an African command. All in all, MISAB played a constructive role by, inter alia, rather effectively collecting arms (Faltas 2001). One major incident showed, however, that the peacekeepers had muscles. In May and June 1997 new confrontations with the mutineers took place. After the death of a Senegalese peacekeeper MISAB started carrying out blind acts of retaliation, including the bombing of several neighbourhoods of Bangui (ICG 2007: 11). The capital was for a short while back in a situation of highly escalated conflict, with bombing and heavy mortar fire. The fighting between MISAB and the rebels resulted in the heaviest loss of life of the entire mutiny phase. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, 500 people died in the conflict and 60,000–70,000 were driven from their homes. In this context, media and human rights groups reported that MISAB soldiers disregarded citizens’ human rights. The MISAB commander denied these allegations, suggesting that criminal elements had masqueraded as MISAB members – not a very credible excuse.25 In this way, the first peacekeeping mission to the CAR quickly found itself in a situation similar to that experienced by the French troops.

23 Le Monde, 7 January 1997; the entire declaration is cited in ICG 2007, footnote 50.
24 The author had the opportunity to assist in the preparation for those elections and once accompanied a military flight to distribute voting material in the east of the country. All was well organised and efficient. Before sitting down for a picnic on the tarmac of an airstrip the military police patrolled with German shepherd dogs and scared away the kids of the nearby town, an unpleasant instance of master-and-servant behaviour. Before the take-off the remaining baguettes were thrown onto the tarmac and the kids stormed the location, to the amusement of the soldiers. This kind of ‘post-colonial situation’ is probably far from rare with French military missions in Africa.

MISAB was replaced in April 1998 by a UN mission (Mission des Nations Unies en RCA – MINURCA). No major incident was recorded during the MINURCA era (which continued until February 2000), while, for example, the establishment of a neutral radio station (Radio MINURCA, later transformed into Radio Ndeke Luka) was widely appreciated. What the 1,350 peacekeepers could not prevent was a tentative ‘ethnic cleansing’ which took place in parts of the capital, Bangui; some neighbourhoods became completely ethnically homogeneous in the last years of the old millennium. No major scandals were recorded, though. The main problem with MINURCA was its early termination after elections in 1999 were deemed sufficiently acceptable (and won by the incumbent Patassé). This was to underestimate the underlying sources of conflict. The UN hoped to retain the momentum by entertaining a small UN peacebuilding office (BONUCA) on the ground, which engaged inter alia in police training and human rights seminars.26 Only two years later violence was back. A failed, but bloody coup attempt in May 2001 proved that an early end to a peacekeeping mission, no doubt linked to financial considerations, could be another, not-so-innocent signal to local armed groups.

This time outside forces (about 100) came from Libya to support the regime.27 About 300 combatants of the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), a rebel group in neighbouring DRC, came to the rescue of Patassé. What the undisciplined MLC rebels caused in terms of human suffering is not yet fully documented.28 Six months later, in late October 2001, a new rebellion was started by the sacked chief of staff, Bozizé. Libyan troops and aircraft were back again. They were quickly replaced by a small peacekeeping mission, under the flag of Cen-Sad (or COMESSA), the Libyan-sponsored Community of Sahelo-Saharan states, with contingents coming from Djibouti (50), Sudan (50) and Libya (200). The Libyan troop presence was obviously not popular in Bangui, while an embassy official simply stated on the mission: ‘We want to improve the security in the country … If we leave, there would be a coup tonight.’29 At the end of 2002 the Cen–Sad troops were – under diplomatic pressure – replaced by yet another peacekeeping mission under the authority of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, CEMAC. The so-called ‘Forces Multinationales de la CEMAC’ (FOMUC) was just 380-men strong and had contingents coming from Chad, Congo and Gabon. It was barely in a position to control the capital Bangui. On Bozizé’s second, successful attempt to conquer Bangui (and to oust Patassé) he met with little resistance by FOMUC; only at the airport a shoot-out with the Congolese contingent caused the death of some peacekeepers. According to the International Crisis Group the CEMAC countries preferred Bozizé to the difficult character of Patassé and had given orders to their peacekeepers not to move; a com-

26 BONUCA is linked to the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), not the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).
27 On Libya’s involvement in CAR see, for example, Melly (2002: 10ff).
28 Only in 2007, after a long delay, did the International Criminal Court, officially launch investigations into crimes against humanity, particularly sexual violence and rape, committed by Patassé, the MLC and others.
munication problem seems to have resulted in this message not being delivered to the Congolese contingent (ICG 2007: 16, footnote 81). In this context, 300 French soldiers were sent to Bangui to protect French nationals. This was the beginning of ‘Opération Boali’.

This was not the end of the FOMUC mission, which was prolonged time and again. One hundred and fifty out of 500 Chadian soldiers who were called by Bozizé to the still insecure capital of Bangui shortly after his victory were integrated in the mission. This was heavily resented by parts of the local population as Chadian nationals controlled part of the small commercial sector and were frequently involved in violent confrontations. FOMUC risked being associated with (unsympathetic) Chadian interests.30 However, FOMUC is also credited with disarming and conducting to the Chadian frontier, in 2003, about 200 so-called ‘libérateurs’ (that is, armed supporters of Bozizé at the time of the coup) who had begun to be a serious security threat in Bangui (Berman 2006: 27).

In 2004 the spread of zones of insecurity in the countryside were attributed not only to the so-called ‘Zaraguina’ highway rob- bers (or ‘road-blockers’), but also to former ‘libérateurs’ who became a major source of concern. Those frequently undisciplined troops, most of Chadian origin, also began racketeering with Bangui residents. In July some success in combating banditry at the northern border was reported after the government deployed about 200 French-trained soldiers. In fact, one year after Bozizé’s coup, France had again reinforced her presence. Vice-admiral Giraud, in charge of military and defence cooperation in the French Foreign Office, visited the army barracks and was received by Bozizé. He handed over 46 vehicles plus equipment worth US$ 3.2 million. Military trainers and support for the CEMAC troops would remain – meaning that about 200-300 French troops would stay in the country. As when the author interviewed French officers in 1993,31 an International Crisis Group (ICG) report in 2007 recorded a remarkable absence of vision as to why they were there (ICG 2007: 21): ‘c’est de la présence pour la présence’ (‘it is being present to be present’).

The year 2005 saw a growing number of attacks in the northern part of the country. Small groups of armed men had launched a series of raids. In August, skirmishes occurred between government forces (supported by the Chadian army and remotely by French troops) and rebels believed to be

---

30 Human Rights Watch (2007: 73-74) lists human rights abuses by Chadian actors in the CAR and notes that Chad’s role in the CAR is complex: ‘Chadian elements can be found on all sides of the various conflicts: Bozizé’s personal security detail is Chadian, and so are many of his GP troops that helped bring him to power (the ex-libérateurs). Many Chadian ex-libérateurs are found in the ranks of the UFDR fighting in the northeast; Chadian bandits are involved in the zaraguinas criminal groups attacking civilians in the north; Chadian troops form part of the FOMUC regional peacekeeping mission; Chadian anti-Déby rebel groups have based themselves in CAR; and Chadian army troops have carried out independent raids against CAR rebel groups on CAR territory, and have also engaged in abusive looting raids inside CAR, some involving the rape of civilians.’

31 At that time, French pilots, asked why they were there, argued that the two air bases offered an ideal opportunity to quickly deploy troops to Rwanda. They were not able to detail the interests in doing exactly this. Source: interviews conducted by the author in Bangui in 1993.
members of the FDPC (‘Forces pour la Démocratie du Peuple Centrafricain’) of Abdoulaye Miskine. The FDPC was considered to be close to former President Patassé, which added a political dimension to the fighting. During the rainy season, Miskine could attack villages and army posts. The victims were mainly civilians, who suffered at the hands of both sides and were accused of complicity with the enemy. A second group, ‘l’Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la Démocratie’ (APRD) claimed to be behind further attacks on Marcounda (September) and Kabo (December). The APRD, ridiculed by a government speaker as a small and ethnically based group (‘groupuscule complètement folklorique’), declared its intention to overthrow Bozizé. CEMAC decided to deploy peacekeepers to the north of the country and about 100 were sent to the northeastern mining town of Bria in October.

In January 2006, Paris deployed two helicopters to help the Central African army in transporting troops.33 Worse was to come. On 30–31 October 2006, rebels of the best-organised group, the ‘Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement’ (UFDR) attacked Birao, killing 10 soldiers and taking the town. Subsequently, other towns (Sam Ouandja, Ouanda Djallé in Vakaga prefecture, Ouadda in Haute-Kotto and provincial capital Ndale in neighbouring Bamingui-Bangoran) fell to the rebels. Cooperation with France intensified after the rebel conquest of these northern towns. In a dramatic radio message, the government appealed to the international community and ‘friendly nations, in particular those linked by specific treaties, particularly France, to work for the restoration of the territorial integrity’.

The response was immediate. France used six Mirage fighter jets to combat rebels in accordance with the military pact linking both countries. About 300 French soldiers took part in the operation. Nine years after the closure of her two military bases in the CAR, France was visibly back.

The UFDR launched a second attack on Birao on 3–4 March 2007 and quickly gained control of the airport. A small French military detachment left in Birao in November 2006 appeared to be threatened. This was the obvious reason why Paris acted quickly, launching a high-risk operation involving a paratrooper commando securing the airstrip prior to the landing of a Transall with 130 additional elite troops stationed in Gabon. French media complained about the news blackout on the major Birao operation, where Mirage fighter jets and helicopters were used. UN coordinator Toby Lanzer visited Birao two weeks after the raid, imposing – in his words – ‘a pax Gallica,’ and reported that only 600 of the 14,000 inhabitants who had fled the city had returned to their homes.35 He compared Birao with the Chechen capital Grozny: 70 per cent of the houses were destroyed by the armed forces.

32 According to Agence France Press (AFP), 15 December 2005.
33 On 26 June 2006 at least two members of the Chadian contingent of the FOMUC were killed during a rebel attack (AFP, 3 July 2006; Agence Centrafrique de Presse (ACAP), 5 July 2006).
34 Agence Centrafricaine de Presse (ACAP), 31 October 2006, ‘La communauté internationale appelée à défendre l’intégrité territoriale de la RCA’.
35 Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), 23 March 2007, ‘République centrafricaine : Une ville désertée par ses habitants fuyant l’insécurité’.
and French bombs (ICG 2007: 28). A report by Human Rights Watch accused the French soldiers of being bystanders when the state security organs committed severe human rights violations (HRW 2007). Christophe Gazam Betty, a former CAR ambassador to Paris, now self-declared coordinator of a number of rebel groups, went a step further in a media interview on 20 April, accusing France of committing crimes against humanity by indiscriminately bombing villages in the north of the CAR and saying they should be dealt with by the International Criminal Court. Paris constantly invoked the defence agreement linking both countries when justifying its engagement. Without massive French help it would not have been possible to hold Birao in March 2007. France’s ‘Opération Boali’ established itself more firmly, with a full colonel as a commander (replacing a lieutenant-colonel) at the head of a 200-men-strong detachment.

The story of peacekeeping in the CAR does not end here. After a report by a technical assessment mission in Bangui and Birao, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission to the border triangle between Chad, the CAR and Sudan on 23 February 2007. This met with hesitation on the Chadian side, while Bangui was in favour. During the summer, France pushed for the organisation of an EU-led operation with a UN mandate; an EU Council meeting on 23 July came up with a vague supportive statement.36 In June, a second UN assessment mission toured both countries and on 10 August the secretary-general came up with a revised concept, including the deployment of an EU military mission.37 On 23 September, the UN Security Council decided on the establishment for one year of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), with an express mandate to protect civilians with the support of the EU operation.38 France finally secured a ‘Joint Action’ of the Council of the European Union on 15 October 2007,39 wherein it nominated an Irish commander, but it had difficulty mobilising its European partners in terms of commitments to troop deployment. NGOs such as the International Rescue Committee and the Red Cross openly questioned whether a troop dominated by France could be regarded as neutral in its former colonies,40 and it was only with great difficulty that ap-

---

36 Council of the European Union, ‘Council Conclusions on Sudan/Darfur, 2817th External Relations Council meeting, Brussels, 23 and 24 July 2007’: ‘The EU … reiterates its support for the deployment of a multidimensional UN presence in Eastern Chad and North-Eastern Central African Republic … The Council asks its competent bodies to continue planning in view of a possible decision on a bridging operation, in the framework of the European Security and Defense Policy, in support of the multidimensional UN presence in Eastern Chad and North-Eastern Central African Republic with a view to improving security in those areas.’


40 IRIN, 26 December 2007.
proximately 3,500 troops were raised in the European Union by mid-January 2008 for the mission, including 2,100 from France itself (the rest from Poland and Ireland). This caused a considerable delay of the mission that should have started in November.

History seems to repeat itself, with troops of a former colonial power dominating a multilateral peacekeeping mission, and all the attendant risks of encountering problematic stereotypes and expectations on the ground. It can only be hoped that the police-oriented mission of MINURCAT makes a difference. However, the close association of FOMUC with the government’s reconquest of rebel-held territory in 2006/2007 and the disputed neutrality of BONUCA41 raise doubts whether any peacekeeping and peacebuilding effort funded from outside can become anything other than an extension of the power of the president.

The underexposed local appraisal of peacekeepers

Intervention troops and peacekeepers are rated locally. Local sources report people’s disappointment with international peacekeepers when expectations are unmet. This is no different in the case of recent UN missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, which have been criticised by local media. In Liberia, there is a good number of voices complaining about insufficient efforts to curb criminality: ‘...bandits have become lords of the night, attacking residents and murdering and/or robbing them of their meager possessions, sometimes under the noses of officers of UNMIL or elements of the security forces of the government of Liberia’ – and this despite a very large mission with a robust mandate. ‘And the best UNMIL ... has been able to do is to play the ambulance unit, clearing bodies from the streets, taking them to the mortuary and promising investigation into the crime.’42

The line of defence of those criticised should not surprise: the mandate is insufficient – or at least the number of troops deployed is insufficient to do more than is currently being done.43 Most remarkable is the frequently voiced opinion that military personnel are not suited to policing tasks. In a post-conflict phase these policing challenges are more

---

41 See Refugees International, ‘Central African Republic: Take steps now to head off intractable crisis’ (www.refintl.org/article/detail/9962; accessed 25 March 2008). This alleges that ‘BONUCA and its leader, General Cissé, have grown too close to the government, preventing it from acting as a neutral mediator and facilitator’.

42 The Analyst (Monrovia), 5 September 2006. See also Aboagye and Bah (2004: 16) who criticise ‘...the inaction of troops arising from the narrow interpretation of UNMIL’s mandate regarding the use of force for the protection of civilians’. In Sierra Leone UNAMSIL was similarly criticised in an early phase of its deployment, see Standard Times (Freetown), 26 January 2001 (‘Editorial: UNAMSIL and the Image Factor’): ‘And as if to increase the pain and trauma of the local populace UNAMSIL men are seen engaged in frivolous and jolly activities as if they are here for a picnic of course.’ UNAMSIL had a particularly difficult start in Sierra Leone, when more than 200 UN peacekeepers were captured by rebels. British paratroopers provided for a second and better start. Interestingly, they receive a much more positive appraisal than their French counterparts in close-by Côte d’Ivoire.

frequently than not the most salient issues. The attempt to explain the weaknesses of a mission as the result of a hostile environment and, in particular, manipulation by politicians is more problematic. The rhetoric and tactical skill of African politicians is not in doubt, but it could be a bit too easy if the accusations were not even to be examined and if the role of the intervention force in the local security architecture were not to be viewed with some objectivity.

In the case of the Côte d’Ivoire the charges were not voiced by just one conflict party. The president’s party, Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) constantly aired its accusations that the UN-sponsored disarmament process was a failure. But rebel sympathisers were no less vocal in accusing the peacekeepers of remaining inactive when faced with acts of repression by the government. Rumours of an imminent (and robust) disarmament of rebels led to a big demonstration in their stronghold of Bouaké; the protest march reached the local headquarters of the Licorne mission and the UN headquarters. The explanation of the protesters was straightforward: you want to take away our most important means of protection. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had to acknowledge in March 2005 – more than two years after the peace accord of Linas-Marcoussis – that the disarmament of ex-combatants (rebels and militias close to the president) had not yet even begun. This failure must have had repercussions for the perception of the efficiency of the mission, as for the perception of the current security situation on all sides.

44 The eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, UN Doc. S/2006/222 (11 April 2006), notes ‘As part of the lessons learned form the January disturbances, personnel of formed police units are being deployed alongside the United Nations troops returning to the west, to ensure a crowd control capacity’. The police component of UNOCI was steadily increased and stood at 1000 troops in December 2006. Pouligny (2006: 252) notes on police work in UN missions ‘Much is played out in day-to-day life, in a work of proximity and small gestures, seemingly insignificant, which will none the less make it possible or not to build relations of confidence.’

45 International NGOs are quick to support this, see Amnesty International (2006). Only rudimentary evidence is given to support the judgment. Human Rights Watch (2006) is more critical in its report, ‘“Because they have the guns ... I’m left with nothing.”: The Price of Continuing Impunity in Côte d’Ivoire’. The proportionality of the reaction is questioned here (p. 10).

46 Failures of UN operations are rather briefly analysed (in comparison to the fully documented successes) in Doyle and Sambanis (2007). The factors of failure identified in Cyprus and Rwanda are given as the wrong design of the mission and management errors. The authors do not consider analysing local perceptions of the missions.

47 This was the reason given by National Assembly chairman Mamadou Koulibaly for demanding the disbanding of the Licorne mission, see Le Jour (Abidjan), 14 March 2005. President Gbagbo made an equally sharp declaration in an interview with Jeune Afrique, 3-9 July 2005, when he found the Licorne mission ‘psychologically disturbing’. He stated: ‘Licorne est assimilée par une majorité d’Ivoiriens à une force injuste, loin d’être neutre.’

48 Le Nouveau Réveil (Abidjan), 7 October 2004: ‘...la société civile entend protéger contre la communauté internationale et les responsables de l’opération qui auraient manifesté leur volonté de désarmer de force les FAFN [Forces Armées des Forces Nouvelles, A.M.]. Selon un membre de la société civile que nous avons approché, leur action serait la résultante des rumeurs qui proviendraient de l’ambassade de France. Pour les manifestants qui se sont recrutés par centaines dans tous les quartiers de Bouaké, la France aurait choisi de rouler pour Laurent Gbagbo.’

The official reactions to the ‘affaire Mahé’ (cited above) were rather modest. FPI chairman Pascal Affi N’guessan delivered the clearly political message that the suspension of General Poncet must be seen in light of his overall output (not of the link to the assassination). However, the local media were less restrained. One paper writes that the announcement of Mahé’s death by French soldiers to their superiors was delivered ‘in the way that bushmeat is delivered for dinner’. The UN secretary-general reported in early 2007 that civil society groups had accused UNOCI troops of behaving in an unacceptable way; for example, no assistance seems to have been given to civilians threatened by sexual violence. According to the next report of the secretary-general, the complainants retracted their allegations during the course of an investigation; however, new allegations of misconduct by UNOCI military personnel were also received.

However, local people can also have the opposite experience and as a consequence come to a much more positive assessment of peacekeepers. When French troops took stronger action in response to multiplying acts of violence in the confidence zone they were explicitly thanked by the local population: ‘We feel secure now and can circulate freely’ was one of the opinions expressed by a mini-van driver to Le Jour: ‘This is what we asked them to do.’ This shows that the local population makes judgements, be they positive or negative. It is obvious that these judgements influence the chances of peacekeeping missions being successful.

Peacekeepers in Central African Republic could not have such a prominent role in the mindset of the local population as they were always smaller in numbers. However, some major problems occurred in the MISAB mission and the Libyan – and by extension the Cen-Sad peacekeepers – were publicly rejected by the entire opposition. When in June 1997 rebels attacked MISAB troops based in some areas of Bangui, their response was clearly disproportionate, leading to up to 500 deaths. In this context, media and human rights groups reported that MISAB soldiers disregarded citizens’ human rights. In particular, members of the Chadian contingent of MISAB were pointed at, as having committed human rights abuses including the killing of civilians and the looting of residences in Bangui’s suburbs of Fatima and Petevo. A Catholic priest reported the killing of old people, children and women by soldiers wearing MISAB uniforms. The rather problematic image of Chadians in Bangui contributed to a negative local view of the mission.

There are a few hints as to reservations vis-à-vis MISAB and MINURCA on the part of Central Africans. In a lengthy article to l’Echo de Centrafrique, republished by the pro-Patassé internet source Centrafrique-Presse, an author complained about unspecified costs of the mission: ‘Qui va payer pour la MISAB ...’

50 Abidjan Lumières (Abidjan), 25.10.2007.
51 Le Matin d’Abidjan (Abidjan), 25.11.2007.
53 ‘Fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire’, S/2007/593 (1.10.2007); para. 57
la MINURCA … puis aujourd’hui le BONUCA…? Ce sont nos enfants. N’aurait-il pas mieux valu que cet argent soit dépensé autrement?"56 In another lengthy contribution in the Patassé-critical internet journal Sangonet allusions to the arrogant conduct of the UN missions and its effect on the official security forces were made: ‘... une armée qui n’a pas encore digéré [sic] la trahison des politiques et la soumission à l’arrogance des militaires aussi bien de la Misab que de la Minurca’.57 But open accusations of partiality and failures in protection were not voiced. This is probably due to the limited scope of both missions.

The Libyan troops and Cen-Sad peacekeepers received more local criticism. On 14 November 2001 the opposition political parties issued a statement in which they requested, inter alia, the withdrawal of Libyan troops from the Central African Republic.58 In a later declaration, on 1 January 2002, the opposition saw the hand of Libya behind the decision of the attorney-general, Bindoumi, to stop judicial prosecution of Bozizé and others after it had obtained a supposedly hard-fought-for Cen-Sad mandate for a peacekeeping mission. The parties had four main demands – in this order: the return of refugees in conditions of guaranteed security, a general amnesty, the retreat of the Libyan troops, and a national dialogue.59 On 6 February 2002 the same parties wrote to the members of the UN Security Council and the UN secretary-general, expressing their firm opposition to the deployment of Cen-Sad troops as peacekeepers and asking the Security Council to turn down any demand for the funding of this force. In March they noted that the Security Council had not expressed its view on the matter and complained that, nevertheless, a Sudanese contingent had been deployed to complement the Libyan troops ‘déjà présentes de manière illégale sur le territoire national’ (already illegally present on the national territory). The Sudanese deployment was in fact suspected to be motivated by the undeclared design to use the CAR territory as a base from which to fight the rebels in the south of Sudan. Interestingly, the political parties went one step further in declaring their complete rejection of the principle of any peacekeeping force in the CAR, even under the aegis of the UN, in a context where there was neither civil war nor aggression from the outside. In this context, this force would have no mission other than to consolidate the power of the president instead of alleviating the suffering of the Central African people. Instead of a peacekeeping mission they asked for a prolongation of the BONUCA mandate and extended the capacities of this small peace-building unit to help disarm the president’s militias, reform the armed forces, fight insecurity and poverty, facilitate the return of refugees and further national reconciliation.60 Paul Bellet, a leading opposition political figure is quoted as saying ‘We resent the influence

56  Centrafrique-Presse, 4 February 2002.
59  Sangonet, 5 January 2002. The declaration was signed by the political parties ADP, ASD, FC, FND, FODEM, FPP, MDI-PS, MESAN-BOGANDA, MNR, PUN and UNDD.
60  Sangonet, 16 March 2002 (www.bbc.co.uk, accessed 18 March 2002), signed by ADP, ASD, FC, FND, FODEM, FPP, MDI-PS, MESAN-BOGANDA, MNR, PUN and UNDD.
Gaddafi is having on our president and on our country … Our people were buried alive in their homes during the Libyan bombing’.

Apart from the statements of politicians BBC reporters collected further evidence of a widespread popular rejection of Libyan troops in February 2002. The newspaper *Le Citoyen* wrote: ‘Central Africans are asking themselves: what have the Libyans *done for us*? … Libya has a dream of an Islamic republic in Africa but we do not share that dream’. Local journalists are said to have complained that Libyan officials tried to bribe them with trips to Tripoli, promising them meetings with Colonel Gaddafi. They claimed they had been asked to write laudatory articles about the Libyan troops in an attempt to change public opinion. A journalist on *Le Confident* reportedly wrote ‘Most people see the Libyan troops as only here to protect the president … The harassment of civilians by soldiers continues – there are still bandits in the country – so what do the Libyans offer the average citizen?’61 The president’s camp, while acknowledging widespread criticism of the Libyans62 justified the presence of the Cen-Sad peacekeepers by the fact that Patassé’s decision to call them in conformed with both the CAR Constitution and the Cen-Sad treaty which the CAR ratified in 1999 – the defence of the republican institutions being the main aim; nothing was said about the security of the population.63

However, local expectations, experiences and perceptions are among the most important factors of success or failure in international missions. It is most surprising that they are so rarely taken into account by policy-makers in the North and the South.

**A tentative conclusion**

A tentative balance-sheet of outside intervention troops in the three case studies can be given in a synoptic way. The table on the following page summarises size, mandate and a brief characterisation of security provision as perceived by the local population.

---

62 Some critics termed them ‘occupation troops’, or compared their action with an ‘invasion’, or even accused them of turning the CAR into a ‘protectorate’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mission/ intervention troop (years)</th>
<th>Personnel (max.)</th>
<th>Mandate</th>
<th>Balance sheet / security provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>UNMIL (2003-)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>Support for implementation of ceasefire agreement, protection of UN staff, facilities and civilians, support for humanitarian and human rights assistance, support for security sector reform, support for implementation of peace process.</td>
<td>Positive, but maybe not sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISAB (1997-1998)</td>
<td>500-1,100</td>
<td>Return to peace and security by controlling the application of the Bangui accord. Disarmament of ex-mutineers, militias and all other persons illegally armed.</td>
<td>Positive/ambiguous, disproportionate use of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MINURCA (1998-2000)</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>Assistance in maintaining and enhancing security and stability, including freedom of movement, in Bangui and the immediate vicinity of the city; to assist the national security forces in maintaining law and order and in protecting key installations in Bangui; to supervise, control storage, and monitor the final disposition of all weapons retrieved in the course of the disarmament exercise.</td>
<td>Positive, short-lived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Libyan troops (2001-2002)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>- not defined (presidential security)</td>
<td>Ambiguous, not seen as impartial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MLC (2001, 2002-2003)</td>
<td>1,500-2,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Negative, resulting in large numbers of civilian casualties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CEN-SAD (2002)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Make the capital secure and ensure the security of the President of the Republic.</td>
<td>Ambiguous/short-lived, Libyan contingent seen as not impartial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOMUC (2002/3-)</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>Contribution to the security of CAR. Contribution to the structural reform of the army. Accompany the stabilisation process by supporting the normalisation of institutions and economic relaunch.</td>
<td>Ambiguous, Chadian contingent seen as not impartial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opération Boali (2003-)</td>
<td>220-300</td>
<td>Support of FOMUC, protection of a French military camp, patrols in the city of Bangui, provincial tours in 100 to 200 km perimeter outside Bangui, training of army.</td>
<td>Ambiguous, not seen as impartial, disproportionate use of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opération Licorne (2002- )</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>Contribute to the general security of the area of activity of the international forces. Intervene at the request of UNOCI in support of its elements whose security may be threatened. In consultation with UNOCI, intervene against belligerent actions, if the security conditions so require, outside UNOCI’s areas of deployment. Help to protect civilians, in the deployment areas of their units. Contribute to monitoring the arms embargo established by resolution.</td>
<td>Ambiguous, not seen as impartial, disproportionate use of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>ECOMICI (2003-2004)</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>Facilitate the application of the Marcoussis agreements; monitor the cessation of hostilities; facilitate the return of normal public administrative services and the free movement of goods and services; contribute to the implementation of the peace agreement; and guarantee the safety of the insurgents, observers and humanitarian staff.</td>
<td>Ambiguous, not efficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the framework of this main task the assistance to the army in making other zones secure was foreseen, as was a progressive transfer of responsibility and material from FOMUC to unspecified Central African defence and security forces. Assistance by the French army was explicitly mentioned. Source: ibid.

In the framework of this main task ‘reassuring the populations by regular patrols’ in the regions of Bria, Bozoum and Kaga Bandoro was mentioned just as a vague contribution to the return to sovereignty and to the control of the economy in these regions by the Central African state (source: ibid). Other mandates are listed in www.opérationspaix.net/FOMUC (accessed 4 March 2008). This text is much more ambiguous when it comes to the concrete tasks, as it claims that the security of President Patassé, the surveillance of the border between CAR and Chad as well as the arrest and disarmament of warlords would fall within its domain. The fight against pillaging and other acts of violence in and around the capital are a further mandate mentioned. The mandate of FOMUC was indeed extended in August 2005 to cover the north and the east of the country as well (besides Bangui).
Column three shows that some missions, particularly in the CAR, were so small that a substantial protective effect could not be expected. Column four shows that sometimes mandates did not particularly include security provision for the population. This was probably so only in the past and should now be constantly part of the mandate with the new dominant paradigm of ‘responsibility to protect’.

The balance in column five is based mostly on the interpretation of local and international news coverage by the author. It is obviously difficult to establish without proper investigation techniques and is therefore debatable (with one exception). It would be most helpful to have some concrete data, but they are frequently lacking. Those data can be generated. In a recent research project about security perceptions in Liberia (and Sierra Leone)\textsuperscript{74} we used a quantitative opinion poll and qualitative research techniques such as focus group discussions to get more tangible results.

The opinion poll revealed a very positive assessment of the UNMIL mission’s protective capacity by inhabitants of Monrovia and two other cities (Buchanan and Tubmanburg) two and a half years after the end of the war in a survey conducted in November 2005 (Mehler and Smith-Höhn 2007: 49–65; Basedau et al. 2007): 77.8 per cent of the respondents replied ‘UNMIL’ to the open question of who they thought was the most important actor for their personal security. Ranked second (at 18.4 per cent) was the Liberia National Police; other actors were rarely mentioned. In the ensuing part of the questionnaire individual security providers had to be rated according to predetermined options (ranging from ‘very important for my personal security’ to ‘a big threat for my personal security’). Again, the responses are in line with this positive assessment of the UN mission, with 96.5 per cent of the respondents opting for ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ (UNMIL again being followed – at a distance – by the Liberia National Police). However, community watch teams – a non-state actor – were also very positively rated.

Peacekeepers and other peace-building missions have to explicitly decide with whom they want to cooperate in the security field. As we have seen, in both Liberia and the Central African Republic they have opted for state agencies with little regard for other groups, be they (former) rebel groups, self-help organisations or traditional authorities. Implicitly, though, the UNMIL mission interacted intensely with other actors. This seems not to be the case for any of the outside intervention troops in the CAR: MISAB, MINURCA, FOMUC, the French ‘Opération Boali’ or even the UN peace-building unit BONUCA. And at the same time, CAR presidents Patassé and Bozizé have privatised the state to a large extent, including parts of the security sector. It was therefore far from obvious that the state should be the sole partner of outsiders in security affairs. In contrast, as Côte d’Ivoire was effectively split into North and South the three Ivorian rebel groups united under the label of ‘Forces Nouvelles’ were more or less natural partners for outside intervention.

\textsuperscript{74}‘Legitimate oligopolies of violence in post-conflict societies’, funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research. The opinion polls were financed by the Institute of African Affairs/German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg.
forces. However, little care was given to the efficiency and legitimacy of other non-state providers of security at the local level. What ordinary people thought of them was never analysed.

This contribution has argued that for peacekeepers it is essential to know:

- how their own actions are rated locally
- which actors are truly efficient and legitimate (with which groups within the society) in providing security, as these are the natural cooperation partners.

Another important assessment concerns the extent of the challenge for those security actors remaining on the ground when peacekeepers leave. As UNMIL proved to be by far the most important provider of security in Liberia, it is obvious that it would be difficult to replace it. Our focus group interviews (or one of their results – a graphical mapping of actor constellations) saw UNMIL as having contacts and links of cooperation with most other actors; it was in a key position, which state actors would have difficulties in filling. It should be borne in mind, nevertheless, that UNMIL was not in a position to patrol anything except the main streets, strategic sites and public buildings and that crime was a daily experience in Monrovia. One conclusion from this seems obvious: with the current limitations of state security forces it would be very unwise to dismantle self-help mechanisms on a local level; instead it would be better to promote them.

What all this means is that there is simply a real necessity to think beyond state structures to (a) get the picture of the security output of peacekeepers right and (b) find appropriate local cooperation partners in the field of security in African post-conflict societies. This should be self-evident if the statement of Doyle and Sambanis (2000: 779) on peacekeeping strategies holds true: ‘Strategies should address the local roots of hostility, the local capacities for change, and the (net) specific degree of international commitment available to assist sustainable peace’. It is going a step further to suggest that the forced introduction and maintenance of a monopoly on the use of force might have less chance of succeeding in bringing about security than the ‘optimisation of oligopolies of violence’ (Mehler 2006). A second motive may support this view: whoever wants to avoid costly long-term protectorates as a by-product of ever more complex UN missions should not ignore non-state actors and might have to think about cooperation, if only for this material reason. The question remains: with whom? Two main criteria for such cooperation stand out: efficiency and local legitimacy. This legitimacy may again partly be the outcome of efficient security provision or be based on charisma, ideology, symbols and myths, or conformity of important norms and convictions between protectors and the protected.75 It is obvious that most Western governments will find it impossible to cooperate with actors who openly violate human rights or even call for genocide. But even actors who do not qualify as partners should not be left out of any analysis about the security situation. Different wings of the ‘Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamance’ (MFDC) (Evans 2004, Foucher 2007) in Senegal or the ‘jeunes patriotes’ in

75 Meagher’s analysis of the Bakassi Boys (2007: 98–99, 112–113) invites the drawing of similar conclusions on relevant criteria.
Côte d’Ivoire may be portrayed as ‘impossible partners’. But a sober assessment of how they are viewed locally is needed. Potential strategies to integrate difficult non-state actors in a holistic security-sector strategy may include a strategy of ‘certification’ and an obligation to respect core human rights in exchange for recognition and sustained, trustful cooperation. But trustful cooperation also presupposes that peacekeepers can be trusted and are appreciated locally. Again, this is far from self-evident when the reality-check proposed in this contribution is taken into account.

**Literature**


Grävinginholt, Jörn, Hofmann, Claudia and Klingebiel, Stephan (2007), *Development cooperation and non-state armed groups*, Bonn: German Development Institute


Pouligny, Béatrice (2006), Peace Operations Seen from Below. UN Missions and Local People, Bloomfield CT: Kumarian Press.


Documents


Human Rights Watch (2006), ‘Because they have the guns ... I’m left with nothing’. The Price of Continuing Impunity in Côte d’Ivoire’, (Human Rights Watch report, 18 (4)).


United Nations peacekeeping operations go back to Dag Hammarskjöld’s initiatives as the second Secretary-General. More recently, they have taken on hitherto unprecedented dimensions. By far the largest proportional engagement is currently to be found on the African continent. Of late, the African Union has initiated its own security architecture to complement the UN’s efforts and assume collective responsibility for African security affairs.

The contributions explore the experiences and scope of UN peacekeeping initiatives in Africa and the emerging collaboration with the continental body.