



## CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HISTORY

Journal homepage: <https://cajssh.centralasianstudies.org>



### Historical Inquiry into Problems Faced by African Union in Resolving Conflict among Member Nations

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#### **Abstract:**

Since the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002, there was apparent optimism that myriad of African's security problems would be over. This optimism appears to have been elusive as there are mixed feeling concerning the success of the body in this regard. The study examined the extent to which the African Union with its peace and Security Council has been able to achieve its set objectives. The study employed historical and qualitative research methods and relied on secondary data. The data gathered were analyzed thematically, using the Somali, Darfur, Libyan and Mali crises. From the analysis, it was discovered that the body has not actually performed creditably well due to a number of challenges. Particularly lack of political will and unity among member states, including acute inadequacy of resources for managing the continent's peace support activities. These problems were observed in the era of OAU and are still prevailing in African Union. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommend among others that member states should first and foremost develop the political will to enhance commitment, unite and develop a well-coordinated strategy with minimal cost in managing conflict in the region.

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

##### **Article history:**

Received 09-Apr-23

Received in revised form 15-Apr-23

Accepted 07- May-23

**Available online 9-June-2023**

**Key word:** African Union,  
Conflict Resolution, Political  
will, Shared Values.

Again, the complexities of the continent require close collaboration with foreign bodies especially the United Nations, and other sub-regional bodies to help cope with the protracted conflict in the region is another way to address conflict issues in the region.

## Introduction

Many African countries are either in conflicts or have just emerged from violent conflicts. In the continent of Africa, it is quite easy to notice different manifestation of conflicts. In this regards, some countries experienced conflict of secession, conflict of ethnic sub-nationalism, conflict of self-determination, while others experiment conflict of military intervention and political legitimacy or conflict of national liberation.

Thomas (2012:1) summarized the trend of conflict in Africa in these words:

About one third of all armed intra-state conflicts between a government and rebel organization in the world during the period 1989 – 2007 occurred in Africa. Similarly, a total of 190 days of organized intra-state armed violence couple with violence against civilians have occurred in 34 out of 53 states during the Post Cold War period (1989 – 2001).

It is important to note that efforts at one time or the other were made to resolve these conflicts. Contrary to the expectation that the end of the Cold War would usher in a period of peace, the anticipated peace dividend has so far eluded the world.

The intractability of African conflicts and the failure on several conflict resolution efforts has remained a source of concern.

Africa is a traumatized continent, every part or region experience different types and scale of conflict ranging from rebellions and insurgencies to outright conventional wars. The African continent continue to experience human suffering on scale unparalleled in human history despite all efforts made at international, regional and sub-regional levels. This stems primarily from African's complex and often prolonged conflicts which occurs at both inter-state and intra-state level. The continent of Africa continues to record a proliferation of peace support operations. In 2018, the United Nations spent approximately \$5.7 billion on peace support operations in Africa which was two-third of the total spent for the period (Jakkle, 2011:78).

Countries in the region, have also responded through sub-regional, continental-wide initiative on conflict resolution and peace building. One of these initiatives is that of the African Union.

In attempts to resolve and perhaps reverse the unfortunate conflict-driven African Society, the African union established a subsidiary organ called the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (PSCAU) with the responsibility to promote peace, security and stability on the continent (2008).

Despite the existence of central organ of OAU, it has been argued that the OAU, for its best never possessed the political mandates, resolves, or resources to manage conflict.

During its 37 ordinary session from 9b 11 July 2001, the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the OAU decided to incorporate the central organ as one of the organs of the African Union. This was in line with Article (5(1) of the constitutive act that specifically request that OAU then, review its structures, procedures and working methods of the central organ including the possibility of changing its name. it was on the basis of this request that the peace and security council was established as

decision making organ for AU for the prevention; management and resolution of conflict (Thomas, 2011). The African Peace and Security Council of the African Union is composed of fifteen (15) members elected in the basis of equal rights. In order to ensure continuity, ten (10) members are elected for a term of two years and the rest for a term of three years (article, 591) of the SC protocol). The Peace and Security Council operates at the level of ambassadors, ministers, and heads of state government (Ben Kioko, 2003). Members of the council are selected by the AU Assembly based on the principles of equitable regional representation and rotation:

Region	Number of Representation
Central African	3 (Burmuth, Chad and Egntarial Ginea)
East Africa	3 (Atibouti, Rwanda, Kenya)
North Africa	2 (Libya, Mauritanua)
Southern Africa	3 (Nnmibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe)
West Africa	4 (Benin, Cole D'ivore, Male and Nigeria)

Most importantly, there is no provision for permanent members of the Peace and Security Council as is the case with the United Nations Security Council. Criteria for selection of members of the council include:

- i. Level of contribution to the promotion and maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa
- ii. Respect for human rights
- iii. Commitment to uphold the principles of the AU capacity and responsibilities
- iv. Participation in conflict resolution initiations
- v. Contribution to peace find/special fund created for specific purpose
- vi. Respect for constitutional governance, rule of law and human rights
- vii. Willingness and ability to take up responsibility for regional and continental conflict resolution initiative.

The structure, and core functions, including voting are modeled after the United Nations Security Council. As a general rule, all the decisions of the council must be made by consensus. Where this fails, the council further provides the adoption of procedural matters by simple majority and two-third majority, depending on the matters.

The Constitutive Act of African Union set out the responsibilities of the organ in article 3, paragraph a-1, to include:

- i. To promote peace, security and stability on the continent
- ii. To promote democratic principles, institutions popular participation and good governance
- iii. To promote and protect human and people's rights
- iv. To establish the necessary conditions that would enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations

- v. To promote sustainable development of the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economic
- vi. Work with international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases in the promotion of good health on the continent

To achieve the above and other mandates of the body, the constitutive act further requires the following actions as stipulated in Article 4, that:

- i. Full participation of the African people in the activities of the union
- ii. The right of the union to intervene in a member state pursuant to a decision of the assembly in respect of grave circumstances such as war armies, genocide and crime against humanity.
- iii. The right of member states to request intervention from the union in order to restive people and security.
- iv. Condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional change of government

This continental security architecture is premised on the assumption that;

- i. Effective African union capacity for conflict management and peace building bound make great contributions to the achievement of the much desired peace, security stability and economic development in the continent.
- ii. That a stable and economically viable Africa will deliver the good life to its citizens and would also be much more active member of the international community and reliable partner in the search for lasting global peace and prosperity on the whole.

*The African peace and security architecture is the policy and institutional framework established to ensure that it has the required capacity to address the scourge of conflict on the continent and to ensure that Africans, through the Union plays a central role in bringing about peace, security and stability on the continent.*

The above implies that African Union Peace and Security Council act as a standing decision making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and early warning engagement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict situations in Africa. It is basically a collective Security mechanism, a system seen as moving beyond a practice in which each state must build up its own forces to safeguard its security. Within this purview, peace is maintained through a balance of power toward a one for all and all for one system of unified response to aggression. However, the result have been a mixture of success and failure. Despite some success stories, resolving conflicts among member states of the African Union is still faced with problems and shortcomings, hence this study. Based on the above background, this paper seeks to analyze the extent to which the body has achieve the most important objective of conflict prevention, management and resolution in selected member states. Objectively, therefore, this study examines the extent to which the envisaged objective of PSCAN has actually contributed to peace and security, and stability on the continent. This is pertinent in order to identify challenges preventing the realization of the set objectives, so that appropriate recommendations could be made.

The study use both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources depended on treaties, declarations and resolutions of the African Union in particular and other international organizations such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies in general. These primary sources have a

legally binding effect on member states. The secondary sources relied on textbooks, article reports and other relevant papers and documentations, including the reports compiled by the various organs of the African Union with bearing on peace and security in Africa.

Secondary sources used in the study includes those that capture the responsibility of the council, and how the body has over the years, collaborated with related regional mechanisms towards resolution of conflict in the continent. It is interesting to state that most of the primary and secondary sources employed in the study are easily available on the internet. The African Union posts most of its important documents and latest developments on its website (Au's Website).

The study is descriptive, prescriptive and analytical. An understanding of the subject under discussion obviously requires a qualitative method of data analysis. This is because, a necessary legal provisions, are all qualitatively driven to critically brings to bear the extent of achievement of the set objectives.

Tuma (2005) in his work titled Africa, its conflicts and tradition, noted that peace and Security Council of African Union functions as the fulcrum for all peace and security activities of the African Union. As earlier noted, the body's mandate is to undertake peacemaking, peace building, prevent resurgence of violence and combat international terrorism. Given the lapses and deficiency in the achievement of the set mandate, the work reiterate the need for collaboration with other relevant state holders especially the United Nations security council, the Pan African parliament and the African Commission the avail socially organizations and related sub-regional mechanisms. This work is relevant to the paper in that, both works centre around the inevitable ways, means and tools to trying effective resolutions of conflict on the continent.

It is noteworthy that concept of conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution are separate but independent component of a comprehensive framework engine peace, security and stability in Africa as provided in the constitutive Act.

Most important aspect of achieving peace and security is conflict prevention. This, according to Levitt (1999) means averting conflicts altogether or at least diffusing it in the initial stages with trust building, coalition building and negotiated settlements. From operative perspective, conflict prevention can be achieved through preventive diplomacy or preventive deployment. However, conflict prevention cannot be sustained without viable early warning and risk assessment system (Jakkie 2008). Thus, article 12 of PSCAU protocol establishes the Continental Early Warning System (EWS) with observation, and monitoring centre located at the conflict management directorate of the African Union called "the situation room" and is in charge of collecting and analyzing data on the basis of appropriate early warning indicators module. This is key to peace and security in Africa. This is because, PSC protocol provides that the chairperson of AU commission shall use the information gathered through the EWS, to advise the peace and Security Council in potential conflicts and threats to peace and security and to recommend the best course of action (AU, protocol).

The conflict management is also important in the maintenance of peace and security. Conflict management is directed towards restoring like to normality in the event of conflict. Using this methods to ensuring peace and security requires effective diagnosis of the conflict. Menkhaus (2004) observed that the misreading of Africa's conflict is responsible for the many failed diplomatic initiatives and peace operation littering the continent since 1992.

Conflict management must go beyond the mere resolution of a particular conflict and include the elimination of the conditions that create or promote an environment of conflict. This is why it has been suggested that conflict management should be viewed holistically as an integrated system of activities, which should begin with the prevention of conflict or peace production and consolidation. It should also include conflict control and abatement. This will help to prevent escalation.

## Overview of Selected Cases

### Somalia

Since the overthrow of President Mohamed said Barre in January, 1991, Somalia has been without an effective central government. The country experience power struggle and violence following clan-based militia quest for power. The state became divided with factional leaders and their militia vied for control of the country's valuable resources. Many lost their lives in the conflict that erupted, while hundreds of thousands were displaced as they fled the conflict. The African Union was unable to resolve this conflict as envisaged in the constitutive act of the Peace and Security Council. Beside the support it gave earlier to peace initiatives, the union contribution revolved around the deployment of the Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) with little focus on political aspects of restoring peace to Somalia (Ogaba, 2010: 167). AMISOM was not able to make the desired impact on the crisis.

### The AU and Darfu Crisis

The African Union involvement in Darfur conflict began in April, 2004 with cease fire agreement brokered between the government of Sudan and the Rebel movements. The action of AU, resulted in the setting up of the Africa Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) with 150 troops and later increase to 7000 troops in 2007. (Sani, 2010: 178). The African Union Mission in Sudan, was to observe and monitor the Humanitarian (Ceasefire Agreement) signed by the Sudanese parties to the conflict and to report alleged violations through ceasefire commission. The African Union Mission personnel were not allowed to intervene between the parties. N this crisis, the African Union again scored a hunted success in improving the security situation in Darfur. It also failed to facilitate effective delivery at humanitarian resources and reconciliation between different tribes.

### African Union and the Libya crisis

The Libyan crisis, revolution or uprising as often referred, was an integral part of the series of protest that swept through the Arab World or Middle East. It started with Mohammed Buazzizi's self. Immolation in 2010 in Tunnis (Adenisi, 2011): 49. The success of the uprising in Tunisia and Egypt provided fresh impetus to Libya crisis. The protest started in Tripoli and took from roots in Benghazi.

*The root of the problem was the simple fact that Libya's huge oil wealth was not used to establish an equitable society and a democratic government.*

On 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2011, protesters demanded for an end to muammair Godadfi's 41 year old reign. The Libyan government initial effort to repress the revolt was unsuccessful as the protesters overwhelmed government's forces. This failure made Gaddafe to employ all means available to his government.

*The Libyan government was reported to have employed simpers, artillery, helicopter, gunships, war planes, anti-air craft weapon and warships against demonstrators. Sympathizers, intellectual and other prominent citizens on the opposition more subjected to torture and execution. Paramedics helping injured protesters were denied access to hospital and ambulance transport (Tobins, 2011: 8).*

In a speech broadcast on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, Gaddafi affirmed that “he would rather die a martyr than step down, and subsequently called on his supporters to attack and cleanse Libya house by house until the protesters surrendered”.

This situation undoubtedly attracted the attention on the international humanity including the African Union. The Peace and Security Council by the African Union discussed the Libyan crisis at its 261 setting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2011 and decided to dispatch a mission of the council to Libya to assess the situation on ground (Adeniji, 2011: 54). The body again met on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011 as the crisis continued and elected to establish a roadmap as mechanism for resolution of the conflict. The roadmap include;

- i. Call for an urgent African action for the cessation of all hostilities
- ii. Cooperation with competent Libyan authorities to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance to needy populations.
- iii. Protection of foreign nationals including African migrants living in Libya.
- iv. Adoption and implementation of political reforms necessary for the elimination of the causes of the crisis.

In addition to this, the peace and security council established high level adhoc committee with five Head of States and government and the chairperson of the commission as members. The adhoc committee mandate include;

- i. To engage with all parties and continue to assess the evolution of the situation on ground; facilitate an inclusive dialogue among the Libyan parties on appropriation reforms and engaged other AU's purturs to facilitate coordination efforts and seek the support for the early resolution of the crisis.

Given all these mandates, and efforts, the African Union scored in the Libyan crisi was not also encouraging.

### **\ AU and Mali Conflict**

The same experience was noticeable in Mali. Resolving the Malian conflict was a big task for the regional body (AU). For clarity, an armed rebellion launched on 17th January 2012 expelled army from the North, while a coup deposed President Amadou Toumani Tourre on 22nd March. This occurred at a time when Malians were preparing for legislative and presidential elections, expected to be held on 29th April, 2012. (Akintarinwa, 2013)

Reaffirming its unwavering commitment to the national unity and territorial integrity of Mali, as well as its total rejection of terrorism and armed rebellion as a means of furthering political claims, endorsed the harmonized concept of operations (CONOP) for the planned deployment of the African-Led International Support Mission In Mali (AFRIMA).

Like other operations, the body was not able to address the conflict independently. AU, then appealed for external support. In early January 2013, the then African Union chairman, President Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin, called on NATO to lead in Afghanistan styles intervention in Mali. This called aptly revealed that the African Union has been facing underperformance in regard to resolving conflict among member states.

*African countries in most cases are not positioned for social provisioning and neither are they able to provide minimal levels of service delivery or domestic security. The aftermath is dissatisfaction leading to internal crisis and conflict and eventually an out war that may end the fragmenting of state.*

Consequently, the complex features of African conflicts in the face of abject poverty, with no clear mandate of all to address poverty related causes of conflict makes the anticipated peace more illusive

## Discussions

The formation of the African Union was based upon the search for Pan-African solutions to African problems. Thus, African Union Peace and Security Council was structured in a way as to ensure Peace and Security and stability, which was a fundamental shift away from the constraint that impeded the performance of the OAU. The question that protrude from the above case studies that necessarily requires answer is “why is it that African Union finds it difficult to resolve conflicts in member states. The failure of the African Union to resolve conflicts in member states can be located in several strategic factors.

First, the political will and commitment required for effect resolution of conflict in member states by the African Union is virtually lacking. Over the years, practical experience in the field has revealed that the conduct of peace operations in Africa has not been backed up by a genuine commitment by the AU member states. In this sense, not all of Africa’s Heads of state and Government are taking the AU system seriously. This un commitment attitude has been reflected in the way the African Union has been conducting peace operations overtime.

Will refers to the Faculty of Human Consciousness as it concerns the power to choose and determining and persistently pursue a course of action to a successful outcome (Nwolise) 2013). Political Will thus refers to strategic and structural decisions and its execution to achieve the will of the State. In this wise, there exist input process and output, thus, policy is backed by input to pursue that policy to its logical conclusion. Therefore, input process and output defines political will.

- i. Foresight of a good leader
- ii. Recognition of the relevance of a project or value
- iii. Strategic plan for pursuing and successfully achieving the identified values or objectives.
- iv. Engagement of experts.
- v. Provision of adequate funding for the project
- vi. Establishment of necessary structures
- vii. Strict and continuous monitoring, supervision and evaluation of the process in the pursuit of the project.

Political will has considerably been an issue in the implementation of AU’s conflict resolution programs. For example, it was the greater lack of political will to act swiftly that was responsible for the tragic genocide in Rwanda in 1994 (Akinterinwa, 2013:383)

Following lack of political will, is the blatant disregard of the AU’s decision by some member states in conflict situation. This clearly undermine both the peace-keeping operation and the body’s credibility. For instance, there are cases of ceasefire violations. In Chad, the deployment of peacekeepers were delayed due to intense fighting between the GUNT forces of President Goukhousini Weddeye and the



Armed Forces of the North of his erstwhile prime minister, Hissene Habre ( ). In Darfur, Murithi (2009) observed that the AU mission floundered primarily because the Sudanese government was obstructionist and prevented its effective functioning:

All peace and Security Council continued to seek Sudan's consent for the transition of the force into an expanded UN mission, highlighted the gap between the interventionist provisions of the Ali's constitutive Act and the practical political complexities of implementation.

Out of the many thousands of troops that the African Union often authorized, only a few thousands are sent, because many members state do not have an interest at stake in the conflict or the region where the conflict exists. This was a clear case of Mauritania, which borders Mali to the West, and has one of the most effective armies in the region, with experience in desert warfare, but remains aloof from the Malian conflict (<http://www.iol.co.za/news/Africa/mauritania>)

This situation arguably point to the fact that, members disregard the body's decisions and make it powerless in the face of prevailing conflict. This is obvious, as the continental body did not have credible deterrent sanctions to compel spoiler member states and leaders to respect its decisions and leaders and goals especially during peace keeping operations.

There is persistent failure by members to raise enough financial and human resources to conduct peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. For instance, in 2003, Darfur, Sudan crisis, the continental body could not raise US 26 million required to deploy a 6000 strongly observed mission to Sudan. The body depended on external donors to take off. The union had to dilute its troops and evolved into a UN/AU Hybrid mission in Darfur in order to continue to survive. Members always found reasons; as they failed in cases to raise troops for the Union mission. The Burundi Mission was estimated to cost \$121m to support the 2,300 strong contingent deployed to the country. In the end, the continental body could only raise \$10m leaving the troop contributing states to cater for their men. For instance, South Africa funds its participation, while Mozambique and Ethiopia requested Britain and US respectively, to help them out of the embarrassing situation in the end (Amadu, 2013:416)

Problem of lack of fund made the body to overwhelmingly depend on external funding which often affect deployment of troops. Deployment of troops is dependent on the availability of fund, not by the urgency of the situation on the ground in the target country.

In a situation where all dependent on foreign donors for fund, the willingness and speed with which external donors respond to the request for financial assistance, however, determine the extent to which the target objectives of resolving conflict would be achieved.

As Amadu (2013) rightly observed, under such a situation, it is almost impossible for the AU to sustain peace operation. More importantly, what happen if the western donors have vested

Interest in the conflict-inclined country. While not totally discouraging accessing external donors involvements, it is obvious, that over dependent on foreign source of finding peace keeping operation, the AU could possibly be vulnerable to external conditioning as such does not enhance the acquisition and development of indigenous capacity.. As observed by Bolade (2013), a situation whereby only five countries – Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and South Africa, each with a scale of assessment of 13.27 percent (US & 16.27) million contributes about 66.35 percent), while the remaining 48 countries contributes just 34 percent of the AU budget does not go down well with the body.

The AU did not have its own resources to fund peace keeping. It is expected to raise finances through contributions from obligations by member states, left the body susceptible to the manipulation of extra-African powers, who had diverse interest. Funds to establish and run peace support missions have been difficult to access. As it is today, the body cannot boast of its own capacities to deploy and take over logistical responsibility in any operations (Minrithi, 2012). Logistics such as finances, supplies, transportation, communication, technical supports and housing needs, as well as administrative, communications engineering and aviation services are challenges facing AU Peace operations on the continent. An important point to be added is that, sometimes financial contribution is also predicated on national interest. In this regard, plans and actions that do not fall within the donor's perspectives will always be overlooked and sensitive operations that jeopardise strategic interests and objectives of the donor countries and organizations will remain challenges

The total lack of commitment by members, president of Gambia Yahya Jammeh to cried out:

*If the African Union cannot stop the killings taking place in some of its member states, then it cannot be in a position to bring about a continental government capable of lifting Africa out of abject poverty and underdevelopment (David, 2011).*

Africa is a beautiful continent, full of potential and attractive resources, t the way they approach conflict in the region is such that prospect of African solutions to African problems seems unattainable.

The second strategic factor that limit African Union success in resolving conflict in member states is total lack of Unity among member states. This was a clear case in the Libyan crisis. Penil (2011) pointed out rightly, that the AU's approach to the Libyan did not enjoy unity from its members. This is obvious because, the AU's peace and Security Council expressed solidarity with Libyan and rejected any foreign military intervention in whatever forms, even as South Africa, Gabon and Nigeria non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council voted for UN resolution 1973. It needs little telling that the position of African Union and that of the three African members of the UNSC is a clear manifestation of lack of unity and consensus, and a lack of agreement among African leaders on conflict resolution in member states.

It is perhaps for this reasons that; Earnest Bai Korama said;

*The groupings within the Union are visible and they may be responsible for a sluggishness of the Union. The position of source of it is that we have to transform the whole concept of the African Union, make it into an institution that will have completeness in terms of mandate and decision making, it is not only the promptness of taking a decision but also having the authority of implementing decisions that are taken (Streams, 2011).*

In a similar way, President Alassane Quatara said;

*I must confess, I am very disappointed with the African Union's lack of efficiency, the lagging decisions, due to the fact that the different sub-regions are not well connected into the decision making process. And I don't think (AU) commission really has any power on responsibility.*

For effective and efficient functions, the Peace and Security Council of African union protocol create three fundamental rules;

- i. Member-states agree that in carrying out its duties, the Peace and Security Council act on their behalf.

- ii. Member states agree to accept to implement the decisions of Peace and Security Council of the African Union.
- iii. Ceding their power to the Peace and Security Council and accept also the implementing of its decisions.

This position, is predicated on the impotent of the defunct OU in its effort to monitor the internal behavior of member states and prevent human rights atrocities, which, was largely due to the emphasis of its character on nonintervention.

The lack of unity among members shows itself in the ambiguity of the AU's position on the Libyan crisis. China put out in bold relief of this fact when she (China) indirectly blamed the AU for its refusal to apply a veto on the matter at the Security Council. The Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed her anger in the following words:

*Benjing had serious reservations with portions of the resolution but opted out to defer to the concerns and stances of Arab comities and the African Union as well as special.*

The implied assumption in the above thought is that AU appear to have lost credibility due to lack of unity and direction by member of the African Union; what the Chinese position suggest is that she did not wish to become the proverbial outsider crying louder than the bereaved. If the government and people of African problems, needless to do otherwise

The problems of Unity also created familiar problem of lack of confidence among members of the African Union. This reflects the descending name on the composition of adhoc committee on the Libyan crisis. Niyi (2011) observed that virtually every member of the committee; the AU delegation is a beneficiary of one or the other of Gaddafi's largesse. A particular case in point was Mali whose president, a member of the committee was alleged that Gaddafi had literally rebuilt the capital city of Bamako for him. Justifying his position, Niyi, specifically argued that "the central building named after Gaddafi in Bamako out of gratitude, indicates that, the committee lack the needed confidence to resolve the crisis. Besides, other members of the committee came into power through coup, and would therefore impede the democratic government requested by the Libyan protesters.

The lack of confidence reflect the reaction of citizens of some African states to the position of their government on conflict resolution approaches in AU member states. For examples, the ANC youth leagues argued that the resolution 1973, authorizing all necessary measures... to protect civilians in Libya, voted in favour by the South African government did not go without condemnation. To the ANC youth League, the position of the South African government portrayed her as "an imperialist weakest link to the African continent" (Emmanuel, 2011).

Nigeria's position also suffered such condemnation. In its editorial of 30<sup>th</sup> august, 2011, Nigerian questioned the rationale for the government's action, wondering whether it was in Nigeria's interest to under the African Union and compromise the integrity of African States (the Guardian, 2011). The lack of confidence in leaders of various African countries is obvious as;

*Most national governments in Africa are dubious and corrupt. They evoke hatred and contempt in their citizens and foreigners alike. It is not simply that they are extremely and nauseatingly corrupt most African leader also lack elementary self-esteem in the new world order (Edwin, 2011).*

Nwolese earlier observed the lack of political will when he said:

*But the challenge is the cultivation of the political will to transform the AU Objectives and Principles with concrete policies, programmes, and actions that will wipe out this stigma on Africa as a conflict ridden continent, bring about lasting peace, catalyze scientific and technological development, giving governance, involve Africans in the management of their own affairs, mobilize the people to practice and provide Africans with the good life.*

There is a huge gap between an objective and actual policy commitment by member states due to lack of political will. There exist in this case apparently irresistible conflict between the AU's shared values and member state's national interest.

While corruption and lack of self-esteem would be said to account for the inaction of the African Union conflict Resolution in member States, one is nonetheless inclined to agree with the lack of unity and commitment as factors for the AU's failure in effective promotion of peace, security and stability envisaged in the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and its protocols. This position is ventured by the fact that the lack of unity among member states show their inability to speak with one voice, and deter total commitment to conflict resolution on the continent.

Nigeria and South Africa have always been considered as the two countries that should propel the renaissance of modern Africa given that both countries possess enormous economic and human resources (Kia and Theodore, 2022).

*No State in Africa except Nigeria and South Africa is in position to play a major role outside its immediate region. African security issues... should be left largely to African nations with South Africa and Nigeria playing the principal role (Adebayo, 2006).*

The reality of this recognition is yet to play out on decisions that border on African's peace and progress, as both countries are always not inclined to accept each other's position when it comes to African's overwhelming security problems.

For instance, in 2005, both countries were embroiled in an acrimonious struggle for the occupation of one of the two African seats on an expanded UN security council. Though this proposal failed, but the bitter contest divided the both countries to the extent that some Nigerian officials privately questioned the true nature of South Africa as a black African State (Adekeye, 2011:25).

Both countries had issues on the Cote d'Ivoire crisis, where Nigerians were not happy with Thabo Mbeki's victory claim over peace keeping success in Cote d'Ivoire with complete disregard to the efforts made by the government of Nigeria.

This notwithstanding, south African government in 2006 opposed the suggestion that Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo should continue for a mind consecutive term as the chair of the African Union.

What is important here is that seemingly lack of unity among the two outstanding African states: Nigeria and South Africa appears to have undermine the African Union capacity to resolve conflicts on the continent given that both countries are affected by the clash of interest in and beyond the region. For example;

*Nigeria's recognition of National Transition Council (NTC) irritated the South African authorities such that the secretary general of the African National Congress (ANC), Gwede montashe, publicly*

*accused Nigeria of jumping the gun in recognizing the rebels as Representatives of Libya (Kasaije, 2011:9).*

In response, Nigerian government led by President Goodluck Jonathan:

*Accepted Nigeria's recognition of the TNC, adding that, Nigeria's external Relations trajectory would not be related to her by the government, party or opinion of mother country.*

It is interesting that close to five to six decades of its existence as a regional body, the issue of shared values in the African Union is still amenable to contentious, when it ought to have been settled at its formation. Ali (1980) attributed the problem of shared values of the Union to the nature of African society and its colonial experience. Thus:

*Africa's complexity, its heterogeneity, and its history, a history that is defined by humiliation in the cross of slavery, the persisting territorial marginalization by colonials, the cultural under valuation by imperialism and the resultant psychological demeaning that has run into hundreds of years.*

The understanding from the above is that the continent is highly physically and ideologically fractured to the extent that, there is Anglophone Africa for the British, Francophone Africa for the French, Lusophone Africa for the Portuguese and even some continue to completely Arabize till date (Ali, 1977). According to Agwu (2009), these fractured has made African states mere colonial entities granted to respond to new-colonial interest rather than African initiatives.

The continent today is increasingly experiencing lack of unity and agreement on major issues affecting the region. This condition create lack of potential for effective resolution of conflict in member states.

African Union peacekeeping operation had challenge associated with linguistic diversity. Linguistic diversity, among the peace keepers, un-standardized equipment, different military doctrines and vulnerable communication channels made it difficult to maintain confidentiality of sensitive message among the peace keepers.

Amadu (2013) put the problem of this linguistic diversity in regional to peace keeping operation in these words:

Poor channels of communication made it difficult, if not impossible to effectively gather routine intelligence about the enemy and sharing it among the peace keepers giving the opponent that are already familiar with the terrain significant advantage over the peace keepers. This makes preventive deployment very difficult while effective patrolling and monitoring suffer.

Another challenge is the problem of skill and expertise in desert operation. Most soldiers in Africa, on peace keeping mission lack skills and expertise in desert war and can hardly survive in the desert for long. Rebels, particularly Islamic Jihadist and extremists born and nurtured in the desert easily over power AU peace keepers with little knowledge of desert operation. It is only the Chadian and Malian troops that displayed high level of knowledge of desert operations. These countries alone cannot effectively carry out successful peacekeeping operation. Thus, it is a big problem.

Another fact in the low performance in the resolution of African conflicts has to do with the neglect of the link between resources scarcity and conflict in the region. Conflict resolution and perhaps peace building are better conceived as "development issues". Bridging security and development offer an integrated approach to conflict resolution. It is instructive to bear in mind that poverty has not only

reduced the ability of people to lead productive lives, it has also increased identity conflicts along communal, ethnic, religious and regional lines. As the economic and living conditions of the majority of the citizens in African countries deteriorate, many have become more attached to primordial ties and less committed to support government and peaceful resolution of conflict in the region.

### Concluding Remarks

The African Union appear to have lost its credibility in resolving conflicts in member states due to factors identified in the analysis. Crisis in countries discussed exposed the limitations of African Union Peace and Security Council in taking proactive decisions and action capable of promoting peace, security and stability in conflict inclined member states. These limitations exposed the vulnerability of the African Union total dependent on foreign donors (AU NATO).

For the AU to get all the resources it needs for the multifarious peace-support role, it is expected to develop and practice unity, love and equality, first, there is need for Nigeria and South Africa in particular and other member states in general to develop a well-coordinated strategy based on unity, solidarity and cooperation. These would enable the body to access immense resources to meet its peace support activities.

Again, the African Union must organize its conflict management activities on the basis of minimal cost. Since it is relatively more expensive to manage conflict at the escalated level of conflict control and abatement, including conflict resolution, all should seek to gain special expertise in conflict prevention, peace promotion/consolidation in order to reduce the frequency of resorting to peace keeping and at the level of conflict resolution.

Another aspect of the problem facing the body in the area of conflict resolution is the apparently irresolvable conflict between shared values and national interest. This created lack of political will, therefore as a matter of necessity, issue of share values should be addressed as the continent belong to all of us

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