

## Conclusion



## **GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**

The various African and Western undertakings to develop African peacekeeping capacities raise important questions about the efficacy of current approaches. There remains a significant disparity between Africa's inabilities and needs, on the one hand, and the West's abilities and predispositions on the other. Although some progress has been made, the international community is still not prepared to respond meaningfully to crises in Africa. African countries largely possess the troops and the will to intervene, but not the means. Western countries, for their part, are still pursuing policies that primarily reflect their own needs and are reluctant to devote the requisite resources with the speed the situation demands, if at all. Five years after the failure to stop the genocide in Rwanda, insufficient progress has been made to respond appropriately, let alone to prevent, a similar catastrophe.

### **Peacekeeping in Africa: the Growing Demand and Dwindling United Nations Supply**

The prospects for African peace and security are disheartening. African States still suffer from the enduring legacy of colonialism. The end of the cold war has created a power vacuum conducive to the rise and spread of internal violence. African leaders have also contributed to the problems facing their nations. It is proving increasingly difficult for the State to respond to economic, social, and security challenges. Some States have "failed" and others are in steep decline. The proliferation of weapons, especially small arms, as well as the migration and displacement of large numbers of people have all contributed to the spread of armed conflict. In several instances, conflicts that started on a national level have spilled over into neighbouring countries or have assumed regional dimensions.

Ironically, at a time when the demand for peacekeepers is growing, the supply of United Nations Blue Helmets has shrunk drastically. In the early 1990s, United Nations peacekeeping expanded exponentially in both size and scope. In addition to serving as a buffer between warring factions, the new operations assumed such diverse responsibilities as disarming combatants, repatriating refugees, instilling a respect for human rights, holding elections, and even nation-building. Some of these tasks proved exceedingly difficult and controversial. The missions also became much more

costly on both human and financial scales. For mostly political reasons, the accomplishments of United Nations peacekeeping operations were minimized and their shortcomings emphasized. In Africa and elsewhere, the United Nations Security Council has substantially scaled back the numbers of operations and Blue Helmets and has increasingly turned to others to take the lead in responding to crises in their midst.

### **African Efforts to Promote Peace and Security: Numerous but Limited**

African regional and subregional organizations have made noticeable strides over the past decade in assuming primary responsibility for promoting peace and security. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) has created new institutions and provided for greater financial resources to address armed conflict on the continent. The Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, established in 1993, institutionalized an informal structure and gave a smaller body of member States a mandate to make decisions that previously could only be taken by consensus among all 53 members. The decision to deploy the OAU Observer Mission in the Comoros (OMIC), taken at the ambassadorial level of the Central Organ, represents an important achievement. The newly-created OAU Peace Fund has succeeded in securing crucial funding for various peace and security initiatives. The OAU Secretariat's Conflict Management Division is slowly acquiring the skills and equipment necessary to support OAU peacekeeping initiatives.

Members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have played a pivotal peacekeeping role in the subregion through the Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Since its creation in 1990, ECOMOG has intervened militarily in three subregional conflicts—first in Liberia, then Sierra Leone, and most recently in Guinea-Bissau. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, ECOMOG responded when no other body was willing and proved committed to remaining engaged. Although ECOMOG did not achieve its objectives in Guinea-Bissau, it is nevertheless illustrative of the institutional progress that ECOWAS has made. Importantly, the agenda in that mission was not dictated by a single member State. The composition of the force and its adherence to a mandate are significant advances that bode well for ECOMOG's future. Similarly, ECOWAS member States' decision to establish the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management,

and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security confirms their intention to abandon their ad hoc peacekeeping approach.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) member States have also exhibited a growing interest in responding to conflicts in their subregion. In 1996, they established a formal framework for addressing peace and security issues known as the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security. Since then they have continued their efforts to resolve the impasse over the Organ's structure and functioning. Even without a working mechanism for addressing peace and security issues, SADC members have undertaken important peacekeeping training and other capacity-building initiatives. In addition, SADC member States have fielded multinational operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Lesotho.

Several other African subregional groupings have moved towards establishing peace and security frameworks. The Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) created an informal body called the Council of Common Defence in 1990. East African Co-operation (EAC) members undertook a successful joint peacekeeping exercise in 1998 and are presently considering a draft treaty to set up the East African Community, which provides a possible basis for joint military operations. In 1999, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established a mechanism to promote, maintain, and consolidate peace and security in their subregion known as the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX). The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has played a mediation role in Somalia and the Sudan since the early 1990s, and the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF) has generated financial and international political support for these efforts since its creation in 1997. The Treaty of Non-Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence (ANAD) has decided to form a subregional peacekeeping force.

To date, however, these African regional and subregional responses have achieved only limited success. The OAU remains saddled by its legacy of non-intervention. The Mechanism has succeeded, therefore, in ensuring that the OAU deploys peacekeepers in very few instances, and then only on a very modest scale. The financial and operational shortcomings that plagued the OAU peacekeeping initiative in Chad twenty years ago have not been overcome. Conflict prevention—rather than its management or resolution—will continue to represent the area in which consensus has the greatest chance of being attained. Election monitoring missions will continue

to be the most prevalent OAU field undertaking. Thus, even if the Conflict Management Division's Early Warning System were to become operational, it would not likely have a profound effect on the OAU's operational performance. Timely and appropriate decision-making is—and will remain—a much more pressing problem for the Organization to address than early warning.

Of the African subregional organizations, ECOWAS has made the most progress in fielding a credible peacekeeping force, but each of its interventions has had troubling aspects and implications. ECOMOG exacerbated the civil war in Liberia, and its involvement there contributed to the civil war in Sierra Leone. The force's limitations in Sierra Leone have also prolonged that conflict. ECOMOG's inability to deploy a sizeable force in a timely manner in Guinea-Bissau set the stage for the subsequent coup. In addition, a lack of adequate financial and human resources casts doubt upon the organization's ability to fund and oversee a framework as ambitious as the proposed Mechanism. Beyond these concerns, potential troop contributors might find it less attractive to participate in an ECOMOG force that was subject to strict controls.

Although SADC members have cooperated in peacekeeping training and other capacity-building endeavours, the organization itself has been effectively sidelined in the domain of peace and security due to the non-functioning of the Organ and broader subregional tensions. Until the conflict over the Organ is conclusively resolved, subregional peacekeeping initiatives will be largely divorced from SADC. Moreover, the recent interventions of SADC members in DRC and Lesotho have exacerbated existing subregional tensions and created new ones. The military capabilities of SADC members and the political standing of South Africa on the continent make SADC potentially very significant in the domain of peace and security, but current divisions are forestalling this eventuality.

No other African subregional organization is prepared to undertake large-scale multifaceted peacekeeping operations. UMA's Council of Common Defence has never convened, and its members have tacitly agreed not to intervene diplomatically, let alone militarily, on divisive "domestic" issues in member States. Although EAC members could conceivably field a peacekeeping operation in the near future, any such initiative would be quite limited in both scope and duration. ECCAS cannot be expected to respond

in any meaningful way to crises within and among its members. IGAD's efforts will remain limited to mediation and negotiation. ANAD's plans for a standby peacekeeping force are not likely to materialize in view of financial limitations and other subregional peacekeeping developments.

Recognizing that working through a regional or subregional organization is not always feasible or practical, African States have continued to intervene militarily on the continent outside of formal organizations. Like regional and subregional efforts, such interventions highlight the growing political willingness of African countries to undertake peacekeeping operations. The historical examples of the two Moroccan-led forces in Zaire, the Nigerian operation in Chad, and the military involvement of Southern African countries in Mozambique, as well as the more recent examples of the Inter-African Force to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the proposed mission in Congo (Brazzaville) show that much has and can be achieved outside of African regional and subregional organizations. As MISAB attests, an ad hoc coalition of States can make a positive contribution to regional peace and security by deploying peacekeepers.

Yet these examples of ad hoc initiatives also underscore African limitations in undertaking peacekeeping operations. In order to participate in ad hoc peacekeeping operations, African countries have typically required substantial Western assistance. When the necessary financial and logistical support is provided, African peacekeepers are largely successful. If that assistance is not given, as in the case of Congo (Brazzaville), or is withdrawn, as in the case of MISAB, African countries have not managed to assume such responsibilities themselves.

### **African Peacekeeping Experience and Military Capabilities Explain Predicament**

African experience in various United Nations peacekeeping operations and Western-led multinational forces, while vast, underscores the problems they have encountered when undertaking missions on their own. African countries contributing formed units to these missions have tended to provide infantry battalions with modest assets. More often than not, they have deployed with and remained operational as a result of outside assistance. Very few African countries have provided specialized units to such

undertakings. Although African countries do not take part in United Nations peacekeeping operations for the monetary benefits—evident from their willingness to deploy troops in numerous non-UN operations—the absence of financial support severely undermines their ability to function effectively.

It follows then that many of the difficulties that African organizations and ad hoc coalitions have encountered when fielding their own forces are related to the military capabilities of participating States. Few African countries are capable of deploying a battalion for a peacekeeping operation or multinational force without significant assistance. In addition, most do not possess specialized units with sufficient equipment or expertise to provide such necessary services as engineering, communications, medical, or movement control. African countries whose militaries do possess some of these skills are hard-pressed to make them available for extended periods of time. With few exceptions, African countries cannot project force great distances. The ability to sustain a sizeable force presents a more significant obstacle. Whereas it is possible to utilize civilian assets to assist in the initial transport of troops and some *matériel*, it is much more difficult to redress shortcomings in command and control, logistics, and resupply. It has even proven difficult for African countries to deploy with the desired level of self-sufficiency.

#### **Western Programmes to Develop African Capacities: A Partial Answer**

The P-3 Initiative, which has since been broadened to include any interested States and brought within the United Nations framework, has fulfilled some of its objectives. A number of Western countries have begun to develop programmes to enhance African peacekeeping capabilities and to provide logistical assistance to African peacekeeping contingents. A crucial dialogue has begun between potential donor and recipient countries and organizations. Both African and non-African countries are more aware of what is needed and what is being offered. The greater degree to which this information is being made available has led to increased transparency and cooperation.

However, the desired and necessary “partnership” between Western and African countries has yet to be established. Many African States remain sceptical of Western capacity-building initiatives. The fact that the United Nations Working Group for Enhancing Peacekeeping Training Capacity in

Africa had not become operational one year after it was proposed shows Africa's apprehension. The initial planning meeting in January 1999 reached no agreement on a mandate or terms of reference for the proposed Working Group. Subsequent meetings scheduled for May and June 1999 were postponed. The inability to designate a focal point within the United Nations has complicated matters but does not explain the failure of the Group to convene. Rather, African countries have stalled because they do not want their participation to be misinterpreted as unqualified approval for Western policies.

African countries' concerns are understandable. The reality underlying many capacity-building initiatives is that Western countries, by and large, are unwilling to become involved militarily in African conflicts. By providing African countries with peacekeeping-related training, instruction, and equipment, Western States hope to obviate their need to intervene directly in Africa.

In order to truly make Africans more self-sufficient, the provision of peacekeeping-related equipment and logistical assistance in the field is crucial, yet these are the least developed aspects of current Western initiatives. Supplying the type and amount of military equipment as well as the level of logistical support that might enable African peacekeepers to respond effectively to crises on their continent is neither financially nor politically feasible at this time; providing low-level training and instruction is. France's *Renforcement des capacités africaines de maintien de la paix* (RECAMP) concept is exceptional among the most sizeable Western capacity-building initiatives in that it includes the pre-positioning of significant peacekeeping-related *matériel* in various locations on the African continent. The equipment that was placed outside Dakar in conjunction with *Guidimakha* has since been used in two peacekeeping missions. By contrast, the US furnishes only a small amount of non-lethal equipment to African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) participants and the UK provides no equipment through its Peacekeeping Training Support Programme. Many other Western capacity-building programmes also focus primarily on providing training to African troops rather than equipment.

When *matériel* and logistical support are forthcoming, they usually arrive only after the African force has suffered a significant setback. For example, most of the US's support for ECOMOG's efforts in Liberia materialized six

years into the conflict. The 1999 matching grant of US\$ 16 million that the UK made available to support Sierra Leone and ECOMOG operations was offered after ECOMOG had suffered numerous casualties and had threatened to withdraw.

Although the needs of African countries are well known, bilateral Western capacity-building initiatives respond principally to domestic political concerns, not African limitations. ACRI originated as the African Crisis Response Force (ACRF) to permit the US to work towards resolving African conflicts without having to commit its own troops. The largest US Defence Department programs that provide training and education for African recipients are designed primarily for the benefit of US armed forces. RECAMP owes its origins in large part to France's intention to withdraw many of its troops stationed in Africa and achieve a cost savings while trying to retain its influence. Financial limitations have as much to do with the Peacekeeping Training Support Programme's emphasis on "training the trainer" as does coherent policy. The desire of Denmark's Minister for Defence to carve out a high-profile role for himself helps to explain the surprisingly large scope of the Danish programme. Canadian support for the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF) and the Zambakro Peacekeeping Training School in Côte d'Ivoire is in part based on the Québec issue. Domestic considerations also motivate and constrain other countries actively involved in developing African peacekeeping capabilities.

Similarly, the African capacity-building and military assistance programmes of the multilateral organizations generally reflect the interests and concerns of their members. Reluctant to become actively involved in African conflicts, organizations such as the European Union (EU), the Western European Union (WEU), the Commonwealth, and OIF have focused their attentions on conflict prevention. They have made little concrete progress in the way of developing African peacekeeping capabilities. Both the EU and the WEU spoke of fielding a peacekeeping operation of their own or providing logistical support to an African force for Eastern Zaire in late 1996, but those plans were unrealistic given some of their members' concerns. The Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) contemplated deploying a force in Guinea-Bissau, but that proposal was not viable in view of the financial and military limitations of its members.

The implications and origins of Western policies should not detract from their merits. Indeed, current programmes have many positive aspects. Western countries have displayed a renewed (if revised) interest in Africa, and the resources they are channelling into Africa should not be dismissed. The various initiatives also impart valuable practical and theoretical skills to participants. Moreover, Western countries have proven willing to alter their programmes in response to perceived shortcomings and criticisms. Importantly, Western and African States have begun to cooperate between and among themselves on peace and security issues.

### **Short- and Medium-Term Approaches Needed**

Room for improvement exists, however, and there is much that Western and African countries can do—both unilaterally and collectively—to build upon this cooperation. While Western programmes' current emphasis on capacity-building is not without value, they represent a long-term approach at best. Col. François Dureau, the Chief of Staff of the Military Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General, supports capacity-building programmes' goals in general but warns that too much should not be expected of them in the short term. He stresses that the time-frame for African countries and regional organizations to capably assume responsibility for peacekeeping operations on their continent is not "2, 3 or 5 years, but rather 20, 30 or 50 years."<sup>1</sup>

Recommendations for what can be done in the short and medium terms follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Col. François Dureau, Chief of Staff, Military Adviser's Office, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 22 June 1999, New York.

## SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

### Concerning Actions to be Taken by African States and Organizations

- ***African States must place a greater emphasis on staffing their organizations with sufficient personnel to assume new responsibilities.***

Subregional organizations are creating mechanisms with inadequate regard for the ability to run them. In the ECOWAS Secretariat, for example, the “Department” of Legal Affairs, which has also been responsible for supporting ECOWAS peace and security initiatives, consists only of a Director and a Deputy Director. Similarly, staff of the OAU’s Conflict Management Division has not grown commensurately with the new demands it has been asked to meet. Fifteen people, including both professional and support staff, are insufficient to run the Conflict Management Centre’s 24-hour Situation Room, let alone the entire Division. African organizations must recruit and train adequate qualified personnel to handle the greater demands being placed on their secretariats.

- ***African States need to concentrate on making incremental progress and resist the temptation to jump from one ambitious plan to another without effect.***

African regional and subregional organizations should be more pragmatic about what they can and cannot accomplish in the short and medium terms. Overly-ambitious plans divert scarce resources from more realistic projects. For example, ECCAS has created overlapping and ill-defined peace and security structures with insufficient regard for how they will operate and how its Secretariat will service them. Rather than creating new mechanisms, ECCAS members should now concentrate on making existing ones operational. In the short term, efforts to secure funding for joint peacekeeping training exercises or to establish an Early Warning Mechanism should be abandoned; member States should focus instead on developing COPAX and strengthening the ECCAS Secretariat. ECOWAS has also initiated several projects that appear far-fetched in view of present and foreseeable limitations. Its sub-Regional Security and Peace Observation System, which is to comprise four Observation Monitoring Zone field offices, seems well beyond the organization’s current capabilities, as does a standing

peacekeeping force. ECOWAS members would be better served to put such plans on hold and first concentrate on developing other aspects of the Mechanism, particularly the proposed Mediation and Security Council and numerous reforms to strengthen the Secretariat.

➤ ***African multilateral military interventions need to be placed firmly under civilian control.***

In the past, the OAU and African subregional organizations failed to adequately supervise the military activities of member States that were ostensibly acting in their name. Designating a civilian official to oversee the mission is a possible means of addressing this deficiency. Although the OAU and ECOWAS have both assigned Special Representatives for some of their operations, they have not always been effective. Financial and other organizational constraints make it difficult to provide these officials with appropriate staff. As President Amadou Toumani Touré proved in MISAB, however, a strong-willed, active, and respected individual with an appropriate mandate can achieve much with minimal support. Ensuring that consistent communication channels are established between the Secretariat and the field—a recurring problem for the OAU and ECOWAS—could also minimize misunderstandings and promote civilian control.

➤ ***African countries should embrace the United Nations Working Group for Enhancing Peacekeeping Training Capacity in Africa rather than find reasons to forestall it.***

Some African countries have expressed concern that the continent will be further marginalized if donor countries begin to cooperate. They reason that competition for influence makes donor countries more generous. This dynamic, which characterized many donor-recipient relationships during the cold war, is much less pronounced today. Several United Nations Member States would be willing to provide additional assistance to African countries on either a regional or a bilateral basis to develop their peacekeeping capabilities if they could target specific needs. The United Nations Working Group for Enhancing Peacekeeping Training Capacity in Africa would provide a useful forum for this dialogue to take place.

- ***The OAU Conflict Management Division should serve as a clearing house for continental peacekeeping-related data that cannot be easily retrieved elsewhere.***

Wherever possible, the Conflict Management Division should take advantage of services provided by others. For example, African military staff colleges and other institutions that provide peacekeeping training to nationals from other countries should ensure that their information is entered in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations' database. The Division could provide a useful service by entering the names of personnel who successfully complete these courses into a database of potential staff for future OAU, subregional, or ad hoc operations.

- ***The OAU should forego its stated intention to develop a standby peacekeeping force in favour of creating a standby observer group.***

Given that the Central Organ is not likely to authorize a large, multidimensional peacekeeping force and that the Conflict Management Division is not appropriately staffed to support such an operation, tasking OAU members to earmark troops to form five regional brigade-sized contingents is overly ambitious. Obtaining commitments from OAU members to identify a small number of military officers who could participate in an OAU observer mission is a more realistic undertaking. Ideally, these pre-selected officers would already possess peacekeeping experience. At a minimum, all should have studied peacekeeping doctrine.

- ***ECOWAS should create a standardized pay scale for officers, observers, formed units, and civilian police, as well as a means by which to collect and distribute funds directly to member States contributing personnel to peacekeeping operations.***

The current reliance on countries contributing troops to ECOMOG operations to self-finance their participation is problematic. It has skewed the force's composition towards wealthier countries, those that have secured bilateral aid, or those that can undertake a loss-making venture. It also encourages creative financing schemes to partially offset the force's costs, which often adversely affect troop discipline and performance. The OAU has developed a differentiated pay scale for military observers, and MISAB employed a remuneration package that also covered formed units. These agreed-upon levels of reimbursement, which are considerably lower than

United Nations rates, could serve as useful benchmarks. Donor countries, many of which are legally prohibited from funding foreign armies or are simply disinclined to do so, might be able or willing to provide such support through a subregional organization. ECOWAS could earmark a percentage of monies received from donor countries to carry out the necessary administrative functions.

- ***The SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security should function similarly to the OAU Central Organ and should be based at, and serviced by, the SADC Secretariat.***

Resolving the long-standing impasse over the structure and functioning of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security should be SADC members' top priority. The Organ must be made accountable to SADC and not subject to the whims of a single country. The SADC body could more closely resemble the OAU Central Organ. The SADC Summit could elect a smaller group—perhaps seven States—to serve on the organ for one-year renewable terms. Membership on the Organ should be extended automatically to the serving SADC Chair as well. It would meet at least annually at the Heads of State level, biannually at the ministerial level, and monthly at the ambassadorial level. The “Presidency” of the Organ could rotate monthly. Any decision to intervene militarily or to implement coercive means such as the imposition of sanctions would require a two-thirds majority. The Organ's decisions on such matters should then be brought before the full membership at the SADC Summit level, but no country should be able to exercise a veto. The Summit should provide the necessary mandate and, ideally, the means for the operation. The Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) should provide relevant information and expertise to the Organ and eventually be integrated into its structure.

- ***In the domain of peacekeeping training, SADC member States should continue to explore the possibility of instituting a division of labour scheme in accordance with the “Nordic Model.”***

Even without a functioning security mechanism, SADC member States have undertaken important peacekeeping training initiatives, many under the umbrella of the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee. Zimbabwe initially took the lead in this regard. Since 1995, the Zimbabwe Staff College's Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (RPTC) has opened

selected courses to participants from the subregion. Other SADC members have also begun to offer peacekeeping-related training to other countries in the subregion, through their military staff colleges as well as other institutions. Given that several SADC countries have highly professional militaries and impressive United Nations peacekeeping experience, the “Nordic model” of peacekeeping training, where each country develops a particular area of peacekeeping training expertise and offers courses in that domain, is an attractive option. Because the ISDSC has requested the RPTC to coordinate and harmonize peacekeeping education and training in the SADC subregion, Zimbabwe is well placed to initiate this process.

- ***ANAD member States should focus their energies on making ECOWAS more democratic and effective rather than creating autonomous mechanisms.***

The long-standing anglophone-francophone divide in West Africa is increasingly anachronistic. ECOMOG, which initially served as a tool for Nigerian foreign policy aims, has shown itself capable of being transformed into a truly regional mechanism for responding to threats to peace and security. In light of Anglo-French intentions to develop a cooperative policy towards the continent, the time has arrived for anglophone-francophone distrust among ECOMOG member States to be reduced and bridged. Given the scarcity of resources, ECOWAS, rather than ANAD, should be strengthened and reinforced as a matter of priority.

#### **Concerning Actions to be Taken by Non-African Countries and Organizations**

- ***In the absence of a meaningful dialogue between donor and recipient countries, those providing assistance to develop African peacekeeping capacities should meet among themselves as an interim measure.***

If donor countries are better informed about their respective programmes, they are likely to use their limited funds more intelligently rather than reduce their aid. Western countries have successfully teamed up on several occasions to provide peacekeeping training. Both African and Western countries have benefited from this cooperation. The United

Kingdom is sponsoring African participants at the French-supported peacekeeping training centre in Zambakro and is also providing BMATT instructors for its courses. The United States has agreed to cover the costs for several Africans to attend the British-assisted international peace support operation (PSO) course to be held at the Ghanaian Armed Forces Command and Staff College (GAFSC) in the second half of 1999. Portugal will assist with translations for lusophone participants at seminars sponsored by the US African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), as well as with some conference documentation. Because African fears of being further marginalized should not be dismissed, however, Western countries need to be transparent in their collaboration.

- ***Non-African capacity-building programmes need to more generously support the hiring and training of additional qualified personnel within African regional and subregional organizations.***

Although some non-African countries and organizations have financed additional posts within African organizations and helped train their staff, such assistance is rare and is conducted on a relatively small scale. The UK has recently agreed to fund three political desk officers at the OAU Conflict Management Centre's Situation Centre for a three-year period. The European Union has underwritten the employment of short-term staff to assist the OAU Conflict Management Division. The United States has supported an exercise designed to test preparedness of the OAU Crisis Management Centre. Such initiatives should be expanded in order to enhance the operational capabilities of African regional and subregional organizations.

- ***Donor countries should provide funding for conflict resolution efforts first and "early warning systems" second.***

At present, the greatest challenge in promoting African peace and security is to find a meaningful response to existing conflicts and working to contain them. Broadly speaking, preventive diplomacy is a worthwhile and intelligent policy option. Several programmes billed as "preventive," however, have been oversold—particularly "early warning systems." Yet many donor countries and organizations devote significant scarce resources to these initiatives—often at the expense of more pressing and deserving conflict resolution efforts. Providing funding for peacekeeping missions to

manage and resolve ongoing conflicts should take priority over providing funding for elaborate and expensive initiatives to collect and analyse data.

- ***Western States and organizations should more freely share their data and analyses on African conflict areas with the United Nations or African regional organizations.***

Many Western States and organizations have devoted substantial resources to monitoring and analysing threats to peace and security on the African continent. Individual Western countries have shared their findings with African States and organizations—albeit rarely. This type of assistance can be extremely helpful to regional peacekeeping initiatives in Africa as evidenced in Sierra Leone, where the UK has shared intelligence with ECOMOG commanders on the ground and provided the force with detailed maps of the area. It is understandable that much of this information cannot be shared given its sensitivity and the need to protect sources. However, there is much useful information gathered that is not of a sensitive nature that nevertheless is not divulged. This describes, for example, much of the reporting and imagery on African conflicts and crises that the Western European Union Satellite Centre has produced. The WEU should consider making some of this information available to either African States and organizations or to the United Nations.

- ***ACRI should engage subregional organizations directly and not limit its support to individual States on a bilateral basis.***

Working directly with subregional organizations has numerous benefits. It strengthens the role of the organizations' secretariats, which is important given the additional responsibilities the United Nations Security Council is asking those bodies to play in the promotion of peace and security. A subregional approach could also enable countries with small military forces to receive training that might not otherwise be possible. Smaller national units could train alongside contingents from other countries. These joint units could also serve as the basis for confidence-building measures among countries that have a history of distrust.

- ***The Brigade Staff battalion to be trained under ACRI should comprise a coalition of countries from within a region rather than a single country as initially foreseen.***

The initial decision to train a Brigade Staff battalion from Ethiopia as part of ACRI was put on hold because of the Ethiopian-Eritrean war. Subsequently, both Ghana and Senegal concluded the necessary agreements to make them eligible recipients. No decision has yet been made, however, on which country is to receive such training and when the training would commence. Rather than limit its selection to a single country, the US should work towards creating a coalition of States to provide the 60 or so senior officers as well as the 300-plus strong forward support company. Countries with specialized skills, such as Namibia (deminers), but which would not be likely candidates for ACRI battalion training, could contribute cells as part of the forward support company. Ideally, the US would fund two Brigade Staff battalions: one drawing on participation from ECOWAS members, the other concentrating on the SADC subregion.

- ***France's programme of pre-positioning matériel in Africa to support regional peacekeeping operations should be expanded.***

From its stocks in Senegal, France has provided vehicles and medical equipment to African peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic and in Guinea-Bissau. RECAMP's long-term plans include establishing four more depots for such pre-positioned *matériel*—in Gabon, Djibouti, and tentatively Côte d'Ivoire and Réunion. Ideally, the depots should be spread out around the continent to better ensure the equipment's rapid availability. It may not prove practical to pre-position equipment on Réunion, for example, given its location. If France were to develop this aspect of RECAMP in closer collaboration with African regional or subregional organizations, that might encourage other donor nations to contribute *matériel* to supplement France's own supplies. The standard equipment package could also be enlarged to include greater numbers of vehicles and spare parts. Additional non-lethal supplies such as communication equipment, generators, tentage, and rations could be provided as well.

- ***The UK's decision to use development funds for non-military training and assistance to foreign security forces and relevant civilian bodies is a worthwhile initiative that merits replication by other countries.***

The Security Sector Reform Programme of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is a bold experiment with potentially significant results for African countries. Reforming the security sector is a new domain for development agencies, which have often restricted their support to non-military undertakings. Through the DFID initiative, substantial development aid will be used to train foreign security forces with the goal of rendering them accountable to civilian democratic authorities. Although it is still too early to know whether the Security Sector Reform Programme will make a notable impact, the effort provides adequate financial means for serious programmes to be undertaken.

#### **Concerning Actions to be Taken by the United Nations**

- ***The Security Council must provide greater oversight and guidance to regional arrangements that intervene militarily in the promotion of peace.***

While it may not always be practical or possible for the Security Council to give prior authorization for a regional organization or ad hoc initiative to deploy troops, the Council should require all such undertakings to provide it with timely and relevant information on their activities and the situation on the ground. Reporting requirements should be reasonable and clearly stated. Regional forces must be better sensitized to the needs and activities of international humanitarian relief organizations that work alongside them.

- ***The Security Council should review its practice of authorizing small military observer missions to serve alongside regional peacekeeping forces.***

The deployment of United Nations military observers to complement non-UN peacekeeping forces is more likely to create new tensions than to serve as either a useful check and balance or a confidence-building measure. The regional force feels that it is being unfairly scrutinized. If the United Nations observer mission is critical in its reporting, tensions will increase.

Because the small observer mission is sometimes dependent on the larger regional mission for security, there is a tendency to withhold criticism to maintain good relations. When security is not or cannot be provided, United Nations observer missions withdraw—at great financial and political cost. Another problem of this approach is that such small, largely ineffective observer forces provide the Council with a pretext that it is meaningfully engaged in trying to resolve a conflict when it is not.

➤ ***The Security Council should authorize specialized United Nations contingents to serve within regional peacekeeping forces.***

Ask an African regional organization or a coalition of ad hoc States what kinds of United Nations assistance would best support their peacekeeping initiatives, and they are not likely to answer “military observers.” Yet that is exactly what the Council offers. Military observers respond to the Council’s concerns, not those of the regional force. What African countries lack are specialized units with sophisticated or expensive *matériel*, such as aircraft, communication or engineering equipment. A well-equipped and trained signals unit would be an especially welcome addition to African operations, given that such initiatives often lack reliable communication links between headquarters and contingent or sector commands. Similarly, a well-equipped logistics unit would also be helpful in light of the operational shortcomings African operations face. The command structure of the force would potentially be a delicate issue, which should be addressed prior to the force’s deployment. Under such a scenario, the Council would be making a much better investment as formed units cost the United Nations much less than similar numbers of military observers. In addition, the Council would create a more symbiotic relationship between the United Nations and the regional or ad hoc force.

➤ ***The United Nations Training Unit within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be expanded to serve as a focal point to promote dialogue and transparency in the development of African peacekeeping capacities—but only if donor countries show a greater willingness to exploit it.***

The Training Unit’s emasculation (due to the departure of gratis military personnel) has hindered its ability to serve a meaningful function as a clearing house in the dissemination of peacekeeping training information. The Unit

has created a potentially useful Database of Peacekeeping Training and Initiatives in Africa but has been unable to maintain it. In addition, much of the information provided for inclusion in the Database has been of questionable utility. Courses not open to other nationals, for example, should not be listed. It is the responsibility of the country furnishing the data to include relevant information only.

### **PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA: CAPABILITIES AND CULPABILITIES**

In summary, the recent enthusiasm for deferring to African States and organizations to promote peace and security on their continent is misguided. While former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali accurately asserted that the United Nations “cannot address every potential and actual conflict [emphasis added],” it is important to stress that the Security Council *no longer tries* to address many potential and actual conflicts. The Council’s reliance on burden-sharing is particularly troubling as concerns Africa, where the demand for peacekeepers is arguably the greatest and the indigenous supply faces the most obstacles. Secretary-General Kofi Annan was correct to point out that the United Nations “lacks the capacity, resources and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa.” Yet the same might be said—only more so—of its new African “partners.” African organizations and ad hoc undertakings face many of the same challenges as United Nations peacekeeping operations plus numerous additional obstacles. African and Western efforts to develop African peacekeeping capabilities provide a basis upon which to build, but the United Nations Security Council must also reassert itself in peacekeeping on the continent.