African Solutions for African Problems?
The Philosophy, Politics and Economics of African peacekeeping in Darfur and Liberia

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The dream of Africa's 53 sovereign states to form a United States of Africa was first conceived by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana more than fifty years ago. Since then, Africa has struggled to overcome a history of conflicts, which have ravaged individual countries and reflect the continued exploitation of Africa by the international arena. In response, many African leaders have proclaimed the need for "African solutions to African problems," calling on African states to take personal responsibility for preserving peace and stability. In principle, the long-held dream of a united Africa involves a transformation of the continent from a series of post-colonial fragments divided by arbitrary borders into a unified state that could play a powerful role in global affairs.

Although parts of Africa continue to suffer from conflicts, African organizations have come to play an increasingly important role in mediating internal disputes. One such institution is the African Union, which attempts to achieve continental stability and solidarity. At the same time, eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have emerged across the continent with the aim of creating common markets for their respective regions. These communities are recognized by both the AU and the UN and exist under separate regional treaties.

The development of continental and regional organizations provides two alternatives to addressing African conflicts. Among the RECs, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) first attempted conflict resolution in the 1990s in reaction to the First Liberian Civil War. More recently, the African Union's involvement in the Darfur region of Western Sudan represents the institution's first peacekeeping attempt to bring political and economic stability to the continent. An analysis of these two case studies

reveals the obstacles faced by each institution and provides important implications for their potential success in addressing future conflicts.

<u>The First Test of Continental Peacekeeping: The African Union and the Darfur Conflict</u>

Today, the African Union most directly reflects the pan-African ideals first expressed by Nkrumah and embodied in the Organization of African Unity (OAU). On July 9, 2002, African leaders established the AU with the aim "to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States."[1] At its inception, the objectives of the AU's leading institutions aspired to accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent, to promote and defend African common position in the international arena, to achieve peace and security within Africa, and to promote democratic institutions, good governance and rule of law. According to the Constitutive Act of the AU, the African leaders recognized the need to "build a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society" in order to "take up the multifaceted challenges that confront our continent and peoples in light of the social, economic and political changes taking place in world."[2] Today, the AU boasts a series of administrative councils, including a Pan-African Parliament and a Peace and Security Council, as well as a continental economic program outlined in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)[3]. Although still in its infancy, the African Union reflects significant achievements in the evolution of continental institutions.

The African Union's involvement in Darfur represents the institution's first peacekeeping effort. Since 2003, violent conflicts between Government forces and rebels

1   African Union. The Constitutive Act. 2003. African Union. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.africa union.org/About_AU/Constitutive_Act.htm>
2   African Union. African Union Mission in Sudan. Communiqué of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Peace and Security Council. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2004. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://64.233.169.132/search?q=cache:v00YeZAAuNAJ:www.africa-union.org/News_Events/Communiqu%C3%A9s/Communiqu%C3%A9%2520_Eng%252020%2520oct%25202004.pdf+Darfur+AU+ceasefire+mandate&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=us&client=safari>.
3   www.african-union.org. 2003. African Union. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/index/index.htm>.

from the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) have ravaged the Darfur region of Western Sudan. Although the Sudanese government publicly denies its support of the Janjaweed forces[4], evidence of government financial and military assistance to the militia continues to emerge[5]. While the reported numbers vary, it is evident that tens and possibly hundreds of thousands of Darfur civilians[6] have been killed and many more driven from their homes as a result of the violence. With evidence of these massive atrocities, the UN has described Darfur as one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. The United States has gone even further, declaring the situation to be genocide.[7]

The African Union's particular interests in Darfur relate to the regional dimension of the conflict. Although the Darfur insurgency is often framed as an internal Sudanese crisis, the conflict involves regional political, social and military relationships. The connections between Darfur and the crises occurring in Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Libya are essentially a manifestation of Zaghawa politics.[8] Referred to as either Zaghawa or nomadic Bideyat, the Zaghawa ethnic group includes many powerful leaders in the Darfur insurgency, as well as in the Chadian government under Idriss Déby. Throughout the Chadian Civil War, Zaghawa groups dispersed across the Sudanese border to reorganize their strategies. In addition, Libya began to support Zaghawa-led opposition groups, as Chad became a battleground for major confrontations between Libya and the West. In 2003, when the Darfur threat first emerged, the Sudanese government viewed the insurgency as primarily a Zaghawa upheaval and blamed Déby for instigating a reaction from Arab and

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4   Janjaweed militiamen refer to members of predominantly nomadic tribes, who have long come into conflict over Darfur's water and land resources with settled farmers. For more information on the historical and religious roots of the Janjaweed and the rebel groups associated with the Darfur conflict, see: <http://slate.msn.com/id/2104210>.

5   "Darfur's Real Problem." Washington Post 3 June 2005: A22. Washingtonpost.com. 2008. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/02/AR2005060201666.html>.

6   "No Power to Protect: The African Union Mission in Sudan." Refugees International. 9 Nov. 2005. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/policy/in-depth-report/>.

7   Refugees International. <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/policy/in-depth-report/>.

8   Roland Marchal, 2007 "The Unseen Regional Implications of the Crisis in Darfur", in: Darfur and the Search for Peace, Alex de Waal (ed.), Justice Africa 175.

other Chadian tribes who had relocated in Darfur.[9] Thus, the Darfur conflict incorporates the interests of many competing regional leaders. For this reason, the African Union addresses the Darfur conflict as a threat to the continent's security and stability.

The African Union first responded to the conflict in Darfur by facilitating peace talks in 2004. On April 8th of that year, the Government of Sudan and the two rebel movements signed the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement, thereby agreeing to cease hostilities and allow humanitarian assistance into Darfur.[10] Following this ceasefire, the newly formed AU Peace and Security Council organized the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to oversee the peace agreement. By the end of the summer of 2004, AMIS consisted of 465 personnel from 10 African countries, who were accompanied by a small Protection Force. [11]

A closer analysis of the official mandate reveals both the expectations for and the limitations faced by AMIS forces in Darfur.   Primarily, the main tasks of the mission included observing, monitoring, and reporting violations of the April Ceasefire Agreement to a Ceasefire Monitoring Commission, which included representatives of the Parties and international staff.[12] The AMIS Protection Force was not permitted to intervene in conflict between the parties, and was only able to fire in self-defense if directly threatened. Regarding civilian protection, the mandate states that AMIS may "protect civilians whom it encounters under imminent threat and in the immediate vicinity, within resources and capability." At the same time, the mandate emphasizes "the protection for the civilian population is the responsibility for the Government of Sudan."[13]   In practice, AMIS forces did not hold the authority or the resources to actively intervene to protect citizens. Without the mandate to physically intervene, the African Union forces essentially remained a symbol of military

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9   Marchal, 178.
10   "Humanitarian Cease Fire Agreement on the Conflict in Darfur." Peace Agreements Digital Collection: Sudan. 6 May 2004. United States Institute of Peace. 7 Dec. 2008
11   "African Union Mission in the Sudan." AMIS. 2006. African Union. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.amis-sudan.org/>
12   AMIS < http://www.amis-sudan.org>.
13   African Union Mission in Sudan. Mandate <http://64.233.169.132/
search?q=cache:v00YeZAAuNAJ:www.africa-union.org/News_Events/Communiqu%C3%A9s/
Communiqu%C3%A9%2520_ Eng%252020%2520oct%25202004.pdf+Darfur+AU+ceasefire+mandate&hl=en&ct
=clnk&cd=2&gl=us&client=safari>.

presence and insufficiently impacted the violence of the conflict.

The weak authority of the AMIS forces is evident in the entire rhetoric of the mandate. Throughout the mandate, the African Union "requests" for the warring parties to abide by the Ceasefire Agreement, and "further urges" them to cooperate with AMIS personnel. In addition, the mandate repeatedly calls on the Sudanese Government "to take all steps required to bring the attacks against civilians to an end and to bring to justice all perpetrators of human rights violations."[14] Moreover, the rhetoric of the mandate reveals that the African Union held little leverage over the warring parties. Thus, although AMIS represents the first peacekeeping effort of the AU, it entered the conflict without the necessary authority to enforce and ensure peace.

In addition to its initially minimal size, a weak mandate, and inadequate logistical resources, the AMIS mission was further inhibited by continuous violations of the Ceasefire Agreement on both sides of the conflict. Although the government of Sudan has always publicly denied any connection to the Janjaweed militia, evidence continues to emerge that reveals otherwise. Among its numerous accounts, the AU's Ceasefire Commission reported an attack on Umm Zoor market by Janjaweed militias in collaboration with Government soldiers on July 16, 2005, resulting in the death of at least three innocent civilians.[15] In a telegraph to an Australian newspaper, Mohammed Hamdan, who had been identified by Human Rights Watch as a Janjaweed commander, admitted to receiving weapons and vehicles from the Sudanese government and openly accused President Omar al-Bashir himself of issuing orders. These provisions directly breached the UN Resolution 1556, which was issued along with the Ceasefire Agreement in July 2004, and required Sudan's regime to disarm Janjaweed militias and bring its leaders to justice.[16]

Beyond violating peace agreements with rebel forces, the Sudanese government

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14   African Union Mission in Sudan Mandate
15   African Union. Ceasefire Commission. CFC Ceasefire Violation Report Number 96/05 Alleged GOS Attack on Umm Zoor Market on 16 Jul 05. El Fashar, Sudan, 2005. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.africa-union.org/DAR-FUR/Reports%20of%20the %20cfc/96-05.pdf>.
16   Nima El-Bagir, and Uri Al-qura. "Sudan Government armed us, says Militia Leader." The Age [Southern Sudan] 13 Mar. 2008. theage.com.au. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.theage.com.au/news/world/sudan-government-armed-us-says-militia-leader/2008/03/12/1205126007282.html>.

further prevented the AU from establishing peace within Darfur by manipulating politics within the AU itself. As a powerful country in Eastern Africa, Sudan holds an important position within the African Union administrative system. In particular, Sudan has actively attempted to secure the Chairman position for President al-Bashir. Traditionally, the annual election of this position is granted to the president of that year's AU summit host country. In 2006, however, during the AU Summit at the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, President Denis Sassou-Nguessor of the Republic of Congo was declared chair of the organization. As a compromise, the AU Committee promised Sudan the chairman position in 2007, regardless of accusations against Bashir and the situation in Darfur.[17]   Still, member states remained concerned that electing the Sudanese President would damage the credibility of the AU both within Africa and abroad. In support of this perspective, Human Rights Watch argued Sudan should not be given the AU presidency unless the government disarmed the Janjaweed militias, facilitated the return of displaced Darfurians, and brought those involved in war crimes to justice.[18]   As it turns out, Sudan's quest for the leadership position has since been rejected, preventing President al-Bashir from further manipulating AU policies and AMIS forces in Darfur.

Although it has failed to secure the top position of the AU leadership, the Sudan government employs its position within the AU to protect President al-Bashir and other top Sudanese officials from international criticism. In particular, the African Union has publicly expressed concern over war-crimes charges against members of the Sudanese government. As the International Criminal Court was preparing what turned out to be an indictment of President Bashir as a war criminal, attacks against peacekeeping forces by Janjaweed and government forces increased, threatening the level of security for AU troops.[19]   In addition to invoking this pressure on AU forces, Sudanese officials appealed to sentimental relationships within the AU by arguing that an indictment of the head of

17   "AFRICA: Sudan welcomes Sassou-Nguesso's election as AU head." IRIN news. Dec. 2008. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs . 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=57901>.
18   IRIN news. <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=57901>
19   AU Warning over Sudan 'charges.'" BBC News: Africa. 12 July 2008. BBC. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7503803.stm>.

state represents a violation of Sudanese sovereignty.[20]   With this rhetoric, Sudan appealed to the African Union's foundation as a continental organization based on African solidarity. Thus, the AU cannot feasibly support the ICC's indictments of Sudan's president without the threat of politically alienating African leaders.

Although the Government of Sudan has failed to respect AMIS forces, it still refers to its cooperation with the AU in justifying its opposition to UN intervention. As the situation in Darfur gained international attention, the Sudanese government declared the pan-African ideal of finding "African solutions to African problems" and refused to allow non-African troops to enter the country.[21]   As a compromise, the United Nations agreed to shift responsibility for resolving the Darfur conflict to the newly established African Union. While this solution at first appeared promising, the AU forces struggled to maintain security and peace. In May 2006, along with signing the Darfur Peace Agreement, the Sudan Government agreed to a joint UN-AU force to mediate the conflict. Despite this declaration, the Khartoum government continued to promote the ability of the AU to solve the crisis, calling for the extension of the AMIS mandate throughout the next two years. Once again, the government of Sudan effectively postponed the intervention of UNAMID forces by emphasizing pan-African ideals and manipulating politics within the AU.[22]

After intensive diplomacy efforts by the international community to pressure the Government of Sudan and its allies in the UN Security Council, the UN finally established a joint UN-AU peacekeeping operation on July 31, 2007. The introduction of the combined UNAMID tactic poses interesting possibilities for solving the conflict in Darfur. On the one hand, the UNAMID forces receive better logistical support from the international community and can draw from numerous sources to employ more troops. At full strength, the UN claims that UNAMID will have almost 20,000 troops, from both

20   "AU Warning over Sudan charges" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7503803. stm>
21   "New Efforts to End Sudan Crisis." BBC News: Africa. 23 August 2004. BBC. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://news. bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3589396.stm>.
22   United Nations. UN Security Council. Security Council Authorizes Deployment of United Nations-African Union 'Hybrid' Peace Operation in Bid to Resolve Darfur Conflict. New York, New York: UN Department of Public Information, 2007. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2007/sc9089.doc.htm>.

African and non-African countries, and will operate on a budget of $1.7 billion for the fiscal year 2008-2009.[23]   Moreover, the new forces have been granted a stronger mandate. In addition to continuing to monitor violations of the Darfur Peace Agreement, Chapter VII of the Security Council's charter authorizes UNAMID to take all necessary action within its capabilities to: (i) prevent armed attacks and disruption of implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement, and (ii) protect civilians under threat of violence without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government of Sudan. On the political dimension, the charter established a joint African Union-United Nations mediation team to continue efforts for peace by promoting the respect for human rights and the rule of law.[24]

Despite the promising expectations of its mandate, UNAMID has only achieved modest gains for improving the situation in Darfur.   Although the visible presence of UNAMID has improved the breadth and quality of civilian protection on some levels, rebel groups and the Sudanese army have continued to attack civilians and humanitarian forces. Moreover, the full deployment of UNAMID troops has been repeatedly hampered by a lack of cooperation from the Government of Sudan.   Initially, the Sudanese government postponed signing the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) governing the AU-UN mission for six months after the UN authorized the force. Worse still, the government's approval of SOFA has yet to bring about actual enforcement.   Rather, the Government of Sudan has obstructed the full deployment of UNAMID forces with a multitude of bureaucratic and logistical hurdles.[25]   Thus, despite the expansive mandate and more logistical support, the joint AU-UN peacekeeping mission continues to face many of the same political obstacles as the original AU forces.

The African Union's involvement in the Darfur crisis exemplifies the first attempt

23   "Darfur - UNAMID - Background." UNAMID: African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. 2008. UN Peace and Security Section of the Department of Public Information. 10 Dec. 2008 <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamid/ background.html>.
24   "August 2007 Darfur/Sudan." Security Council Report. Aug. 2007. UN Security Council. 10 Dec. 2008 <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.3041197/k.1777/August_2007 BRDarfurSudan.htm>.
25   Fowler, Jerry, and John Prendergast. Keeping Our Word: Fulfilling the Mandate to Protect Civilians in Darfur. Washington, DC, 2008. Save Darfur. 2008. 10 Dec. 2008 <http://darfur.3cdn.net/35b2008acd4c9385ae_3qm 6bhv3u.pdf>.

by a continental institution to mediate a regional conflict. Although the AU represents a colossal effort to assume responsibility for the continent's stability, its willingness to undertake peacekeeping missions appears to far surpass its capacities. As an alternative, Regional Economic Communities provide another approach to addressing regional conflicts. In particular, ECOWAS' intervention in the Liberian Civil War represents the first attempt by a regional organization to secure peace.

Regional Mechanism for Conflict Resolution: A Look at ECOWAS' Intervention in Liberian Civil War

In May 1975, 15 West African countries formed The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as part of the Treaty of Lagos. At its inception, ECOWAS aimed to promote economic trade, national collaboration, and monetary synchronization for the growth and development of West Africa.[26] In addition to the goals of achieving an economic and monetary union, this treaty also states ECOWAS' mission to establish a West African parliament, an economic and social council, and an ECOWAS court of justice to address the West African political sphere. Ultimately, ECOWAS aspires to completely integrate national economies of member states, which in turn should help raise the living standards of its people and secure stability in the region by promoting relations among member states.[27]

Early in its development, ECOWAS leaders recognized that peace and security were necessary preconditions for sustainable economic cooperation. Initially, the Member States signed a Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression (PNA) in April 1978, which stated they would refrain from using force against one another and turn instead to a Committee of the Authority of State and Government to solve disputes. Although this represented a major

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26   ECOWAS in Brief. 14 Apr. 2007. Discover ECOWAS. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.comm. ecowas.int/sec/index.php?id=about_a&lang=en>
27   African Union. Profile: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/recs/ECOWASProfile.pdf>

effort towards ensuring peace at the political level, this treaty failed to address the various insurgent movements that continued to spill across borders and cause unrest in the region.[28] Subsequently, West African leaders signed a Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense (PMAD) in May 1981 as a collective defense treaty. Under this agreement, armed threat against any Member State, whether activated from outside or engineered from internal conflict, constitutes a threat to the peace and security of all Member States.[29] In response, this protocol calls for a non-standing military force, composed of soldiers from member nations, to provide mutual military aid and assistance.[30] The ECOWAS mechanism thus declares each member states' commitment to uphold human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, while providing the necessary protocol to intervene in regional conflicts.

West African leaders first realized that ECOWAS should adopt conflict resolution mechanisms in reaction to the First Liberian Civil War. The war, which lasted from 1989 to 1996, destroyed the lives of 200,000 Liberians and further displaced millions as refugees in neighboring countries.[31] Although tension in Liberia stemmed from a variety of complex issues, the conflict officially began when Charles Taylor led a small group of trained rebels in an attempt to overthrow President Samuel Doe. Doe, a member of the Krahn ethnic group, had seized power through a bloody military coup in 1980. His rule marked the end of the 133-year period of political domination by the Americo-Liberian True Whig Party, which had originated when freed American slaves came to settle in Liberia. Under Doe, members of the Krahn ethnic group dominated top government positions, causing conflict with Americo-Liberians and other Liberian ethnic groups.[32] As President, Doe consolidated his power by suppressing political participation and vehicles for expression of

28   Habiboulah Bakhoum. ECOWAS as Regional Peace Broker. 9 Apr. 2009. < http://74.125.93. 104/search?q=cache:MRFBeBkDTaAJ:www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/sorting_out_the_mess_ecowas_regional_peace_broker_h_bakhoum.pdf+PMAD+address+various+insurgent+movements&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=safari>
29   http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/recs/ECOWASProfile.pdf, Adougaye Appendix A pg 372
30   BBC News: Africa. 17 June 2004. "Profile: Ecomog." 8 Apr. 2009 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/ africa/country_profiles/2364029.stm>
31   Global Security. 27 Apr. 2005. Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996. 8 Apr. 2009 <http:// www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1989.htm>
32   Public Broadcasting Society. 2009. Online NewsHour: Liberia's Uneasy Peace; Post-1980 Timeline. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/liberia/post1980_timeline.html>

dissent.[33]   Throughout his regime, the US State Department accused Doe of fraudulent elections, as well as repeated human rights abuses and corruption.[34]

On December 24, 1989, Charles Taylor, who came from both native and Americo-Liberian descent, launched an offensive from the Ivory Coast with his guerilla army known as the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), under Doe's command, responded with a brutal counterinsurgency campaign, ravaging villages and killing innocent civilians.[35] As opposition against Doe escalated, Prince Yeduo Johnson broke off from the NPFL to form his own rebel faction known as the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL).[36] As the conflict remained unresolved, the emergence of other smaller rebel groups reflected the collapse of all peaceful democratic measures to resolve the conflict of interests and political demands.[37]

The internationalization of the crisis occurred as violence increased between Doe's army and Taylor's guerilla rebel force. As the scale of destruction expanded, law and order within the country diminished, leading to indiscriminate killings of civilians, refugees, and even foreigners. In addition, Charles Taylor sought external support for his plans to overthrow Doe's government. While the Ivory Coast was the initial base to build his army, Taylor also turned to Libya and Burkina Faso for major funding and material support. At the same time, the mass relocation of refugees from Liberia to neighboring countries contributed largely to the internationalization of the crisis.[38] Thus, from the outbreak of the war, the Liberian conflict involved movement across borders and reflected international politics.

With the Liberian state structure collapsing and the crisis infecting neighboring states, ECOWAS recognized the need for a sub-regional solution to achieve regional stability. In

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33   M.A. Vogt (ed). The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peace Keeping. Lagos, Nigeria: Gabumo Publishing. 1992. Pg. 31.
34   PBS. Online NewsHour: Liberia's Uneasy Peace; Post-1980 Timeline.
35   Human Rights Watch Report. June 1993. Volume 5, Issue No. 6. Waging War to Keep the Peace: Te ECOMOG Intervention and Human Rights. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/ 1993/liberia/#2>
36   Vogt. Pg. 47.
37   Colonel Festus B. Aboagye. ECOMOG: A Sub-Regional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management and Peacekeeping in Liberia. Accra, Ghana: Sedco Enterprise. 1999. Pg. 43.
38   Vogt, Pg. 56-57

execution, ECOWAS aimed to improve the situation from three approaches. Primarily, ECOWAS declared a military provision to implement an immediate ceasefire between the warring factions. The ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was to be comprised of military contingents from member states, totaling 4,000 troops. In addition, ECOWAS sought to provide social provisions for the resettlement of all refugees. Third, a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) was established to schedule peace talks between Doe's administration and the rebel groups and to help facilitate the formation of a broad-based government.[39] From the beginning, the ECOWAS regional approach to conflict resolution aimed to stabilize both the situation on the ground as well as to mediate peace between the warring political leaders.

By the end of August 1990, ECOMOG had acquired an intervention force of roughly 2,600 troops from Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia. Notably, this number only accounts for about 65% of the SMC's estimated number; still, as Taylor continued to refuse to partake in peace efforts, ECOWAS declared it necessary to deploy its force.[40] Under the command of the Ghanaian general Arnold Quainoo, ECOMOG ground, naval and air forces concentrated in Sierra Leone in preparation for the intervention.

The SMC's decision to intervene in the Liberian conflict represented an historic attempt by a regional organization to address conflict resolution. In contrast to the traditional UN peacekeeping model, ECOMOG entered the crisis without a ceasefire agreement in place. In fact, at the time, the UN and the US, which had formerly colonized Liberia, did not sanction ECOWAS' decision to intervene and declared the crisis an internal Liberian problem.[41] Thus, ECOMOG's role surpassed that of a peace-keeping force. Instead, the ECOMOG military had to fight its way into Liberia in order to enforce a peace that was not supported by a comprehensive ceasefire.

The development of ECOMOG as a vehicle for peace enforcement is evident in the evolution of its mandate. The ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee officially

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39   Aboagye. Pg. 58.
40   Aboagye. Pg. 143.
41   Aboagye. Pg. 61.

established ECOMOG in Banjul, The Gambia, on August 7, 1990. At its inception, ECOMOG's mandate included aid for refugees to escape safely to neighboring countries, evacuation of foreign nationals, and efforts to restore law and order. Specifically, the mandate stated that the force would (1) maintain and monitor the ceasefire, (2) protect life and property, (3) maintain essential services, (4) provide security to the Interim Administration, (5) observe elections, and (6) conduct normal police duties.[42] Although the rhetoric of ECOMOG's initial mandate conceived the operation as a peacekeeping effort, the troops immediately encountered opposition from Taylor's NPFL, who refused to recognize the ceasefire and resisted ECOMOG's invasion.[43] Thus, the neutral tone of this mandate quickly proved irrelevant to the situation on the ground.

ECOMOG's initial politico-military effort was further undermined following the arrest and massacre of President Doe by the INPFL in September 1990. In addition to fueling Taylor and other rebel movements, the massacre infuriated Doe's party and challenged ECOMOG's assertion as a neutral force.[44] As hostility escalated, the SMC issued a revised ECOMOG mandate in the Yamoussoukro Accords on October 1, 1990, which expanded ECOMOG objectives to include peace enforcement activities. In addition to continuing humanitarian assistance and monitoring of the fighting on the ground, ECOMOG's new objectives included the encampment and removal of weapons from warring factions.[45] Under this mandate, ECOMOG troops were deployed to rebel camps to ensure the disarmament and collection of weapons. In August 1996, the Abuja Accords further endorsed ECOMOG troops to disarm the warring parties. These accords sanctioned ECOMOG troops to monitor the borders and entry points by land, sea, and air to control the transportation of arms and ammunition.[46] At the same time, ECOWAS

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42   E.T. Dowyaro. Institute for Security Studies – South Africa. Monograph No 44: Boundaries of Peace Support Operations. Feb 2000. ECOMOG Operations in West Africa: Principles and Praxis. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/no44/ECOMOGPraxis.html>
43   Adekeye Adebajo. Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002. Pp. 52
44   Aboagye. Pg. 85.
45   Dowyaro. ECOMOG Operations in West Africa: Principles and Praxis
46   Aboagye. Pg. 124

organized meetings and peace conferences with Taylor and the other rebel leaders in efforts to promote ceasefire and ensure disarmament.

With the commencement of disarmament, ECOMOG gained the necessary authority to prevent further violence and restore stability in Liberia. In addition, the announcement to enforce disarmament earned ECOMOG respect from Liberians and the international community. By February 1997, a total of 28,829 fighters of an estimated 33,000 had been disarmed[47], returning a sense of hope and relief to the situation and encouraging thousands of Liberian refugees to return home. Moreover, key international players, including the US, EU, and international NGOs, showed their support for ECOMOG by increasing funding and helping to facilitate the peace process.[48]

Following the successful disarmament campaign, ECOMOG focused on preparing for the upcoming presidential elections. Under the supervision of UN officials, ECOMOG operations included monitoring voter registration, establishing adequate voting sites, and securing ballot boxes to ensure accurate counting.[49] On August 19, 1997, Charles Taylor was elected into office as President of the new Government of Liberia. Although Taylor's ability to revitalize the country after years of violent civil war remained to be seen[50], his election marked a major accomplishment in ECOWAS' mission to establish peace in the region. The military force of ECOMOG, in combination with the social and political provisions as facilitated by the ECOWAS institution, had essentially reinstated an operative state structure in Liberia.

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47   John Laband (ed.). Daily Lives of Civilians in Wartime Africa; From Slavery Days to Rwandan Geno-
cide. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. 2007. Pg. 209.
48   Dowyaro. ECOMOG Operations in West Africa: Principles and Praxis
49   Aboagye. Pg. 133-135
50   Although Taylor won the 1997 elections by a staggering majority of 75.3% of the vote, he continued to
battle insurgent opposition during his presidency. Unfortunately, Taylor used his position of power to profit from
illegal trade with rebels in neighboring Sierra Leone. In exchange for diamonds stolen from Sierra Leone's mines,
Taylor supplied the country's rebels with weapons, which were then used to kill civilians in the rebel's opposition
movement. Taylor has since been accused of war crimes by the United Nations. For more information, see: <http://
news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/07/0725_ 030725_liberiataylor_2.html>.

<u>Analysis</u>

In principle, the widespread phrase "African solutions for African problems" calls on African leaders to direct their political will in order to resolve their own conflicts, rather than continuing to rely on external intervention and aid. Stemming from the radical ideas of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, this vision has most recently been rekindled by Colonel Muammar Qaddafi. At the African Union Summit held at the beginning of 2009, Colonel Qaddafi, who has ruled Libya for four decades, became the new African Union chairman. In supporting the transformation of Africa into a single unified state, Qaddafi proposes immediate unity and the establishment of a single currency, army and passport across the entire continent.[51]

Although Qaddafi intends to promote his agenda of creating a United States of Africa, dissenting voices question the feasibility of African unity and debate if such a movement would benefit the continent given the political realities of the time. While an integration of economies and a political union of African states could come to play a powerful role in global affairs, African leaders recognize the difficulties in securing the stable and peaceful environments necessary for progress. Given the realistic limitations of African governments, the slogan "African solutions to African problems" could be detrimental if it leads to self-inflicted isolation from valuable donor countries that might otherwise offer assistance to Africa in its development.[52] Clearly, genuine external supporters of Africa may become weary if faced with unnecessary criticism and skepticism from those they intend to assist. At the same time, the slogan protects African governments from international criticism on human rights violations and political corruption. To the citizens of Africa, as well as many African leaders, cooperation and assistance from the international community remains essential for African improvement.

Despite these reservations, the principle of adopting responsibility for stability and

51   Lydia Polgreen. The New York Times. 2 Feb. 2009. Dakar. "Qaddafi, as New African Union Head, Will Seek Single State." NYTimes.com. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/03/world/ africa/03africa.html?_r=1>
52   Chris Fomunyoh. AllAfrica.com. Opinion. 9 Feb. 2005. "Africa: African Solutions to African Problems: A Slogan Whose Time Has Passed." 8 Apr. 2009 <http://allafrica.com/stories/200502090005. html>

peace on the continent remains an African ideal. Following such disasters as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, during which the international community stood by and watched as hundreds of thousands of Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred by Hutu extremists, it has become clear that African countries cannot always rely solely on external forces to resolve conflict. Even when the UN and powerful countries like the US have decided to intervene in African crisis situations, individual countries are often unwilling to commit troops.[53] In order to achieve true, lasting stability, Africa must strengthen its capacity to respond to internal crisis and develop mechanisms to prevent differences of opinion from escalating into armed conflict.

The development of the African Union and sub regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West Africa reflect both the desire for and necessity of establishing African cohesion and solidarity. In searching for homegrown solutions for Africa's developmental and political problems, the AU and ECOWAS represent two initiatives that offer supra-regional mechanisms to conflict resolution. While each institution provides separate benefits and suffers from its own shortcomings, an analysis of their attempts to mediate internal conflicts offers insight into how African institutions can enhance their peacekeeping capacities. Although each case remains unique to the history and environment of the region, a comparison of the successes and failures by each peacekeeping operation reveals important implications for addressing future conflicts. Overall, from philosophical, political, and economic perspectives, the regional approach as seen in ECOWAS' intervention in Liberia proves more effective at securing peace.

The initial objectives as stated at the times of establishment of the African Union and ECOWAS reflect the philosophical ideals upon which each institution is based. The birth of African Union in July 2002 marked a monumental event in the institutional evolution of the continent.[54] At its foundation, the AU grew from the Organization of African Unity, which formed in response to the Independence movement in the 1950s. As the wave of

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53   Fomunyoh. "Africa: African Solutions to African Problems: A Slogan Whose Time Has Passed."
54   African Union. 2003. "African Union in a Nutshell." 8 Apr. 2009 <http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm>

colonization ended, the OAU continued the liberation struggle by providing an effective forum for Member States to defend the interests of Africa collectively. More recently, with the onset of the globalization era, the priorities of African leaders have shifted towards accelerating economic and political unity across the continent. The African Union, in essence, represents another step in efforts to establish a United States of Africa. Within this ideal, AU leaders aim to promote political and socio-economic integration between governments and all segments of civil society.[55]

In contrast to the AU, ECOWAS developed primarily from solid economic relationships. In the early 1970s, leaders of West African states recognized that intra-regional integration would improve economic development within the region as well as allow for greater integration into the global economy. At its core, ECOWAS was formed in response to the increase in irregular migration within the region.[56] With a history of trade and shared culture, intra and inter-country movement occurred often throughout West Africa in response to economic and political factors. As the West African countries struggled to develop after Independence, the effects of depressed economies, macro-economic adjustment programs, and population pressure led to diverse patterns of urbanization and immigration.[57]

At the Lagos Conference in May 1975, West African leaders addressed the issues of irregular migration as posing the single greatest obstacle to creating a West African trade bloc. Subsequently, one of the main objectives of the ECOWAS treaty aimed to abolish "the obstacles to the free movement of persons, services, and capital."[58] Article 12 declared that within the course of fifteen years, a Customs Union among the Member States would eliminate all customs duties on trade between Member States, as well as establishing a common tariff on all goods imported into the region.[59] In addition, the treaty declared

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55   African Union. "African Union in a Nutshell."
56   Richard Alkali. AllAfrica.com. 7 Feb 2008. Abuja. "West Africa: ECOWAS – Its Formations and Achievements." 8 Apr. 2009 <http://allafrica.com/stories/200802070412.html>
57   Alkali. "West Africa: ECOWAS – Its Formations and Achievements."
58   Vogt. Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Article 2(d). Appendix, pg. 6.
59   Vogt. ECOWAS Treaty. Article 12. Appendix, pg. 14.

freedom of movement within the Community, referring to citizens of the Member States as "Community citizens."[60]   In these protocols, the goals of ECOWAS to establish monetary and economic union stemmed from the practical experiences of West African citizens.

Notably, neither the African Union nor ECOWAS included the responsibility of peacekeeping in declaring its initial objectives. For the African Union, Darfur represented an opportunity for the continental institution to cement its authority as a peacekeeping force. In conjunction with the pan-African ideals of establishing "African solutions for African problems," the AU responded to Darfur in hopes of fulfilling its ideals of continental peace and security.   In contrast, ECOWAS decided to intervene in the Liberian crisis because West African leaders viewed regional stability as a necessary precondition for their economic programs.

The initial motivations to get involved in each conflict relate to the connections between the different ideals of continental and regional organizations and the specific obstacles faced by each. Primarily, as a continental institution, the African Union remains too removed from any specific ground conflict. Without direct ties to the immediate situation, the Member States of the AU lack the necessary incentives to provide funding and resources for a peacekeeping operation. At the same time, the AU suffers from the limitations of neutrality. In essence, the AU can never effectively intervene and mediate conflict because it simultaneously claims to represent all African states. In the case of Darfur, as the Sudanese government maintained a functioning state structure, the Khartoum regime continued to represent itself within the AU, which essentially prevented the AU from taking an aggressive stance against Sudanese officials.

The AU's broad ideological goal to unite all African states undermines its capacities as a peacekeeping force. In the situation in Darfur, the AU struggled to mediate peace and remained dependent on the Ceasefire Agreement. Although the Sudanese Government and major rebel groups agreed to cease hostilities, the Ceasefire Treaties remained superficial agreements. As the warring factions continuously violated the terms and conditions of the

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60   Vogt. ECOWAS Treaty. Article 27. Appendix, pg. 24.

treaties, the Sudanese government refused to engage in negotiations for peace. At the same time, the AMIS mandate restricted the forces from interfering in the ongoing conflict. Thus, without legitimate peace efforts, the status of AMIS as a peace-keeping force proved ineffective.

As evident in the Darfur case, undertaking peacekeeping responsibilities actually further complicates the ideological goals of the AU. With the intervention in Darfur, the AU set a precedent for further conflicts, promising to address civil conflicts and ongoing civil wars. While the belief of relying on African solutions for African conflicts is ideal, the involvement of the African Union in the Darfur conflict challenges the practicality of this noble goal.

From a political perspective, the AU lacks the necessary political support of its Member States to conduct peacekeeping operations. Most importantly, the bureaucracy of the institution prevents efficient action in response to conflicts and crises. On the one hand, the organization of the Assembly, the supreme organ of the AU, allows for annual election of the Chairman and only meets itself once a year.[61] With such high turnover of leadership, it remains difficult to agree on basic decisions regarding in which conflicts to intervene. Moreover, as seen in the Darfur example, powerful states can manipulate the AU administration to their benefit. Since the outbreak of violence in Darfur, the Sudanese government has publicly promoted pan-African idealism and supported the presence of AU troops in order to prevent the involvement of international powers. While Sudan claims to support the African Union as the continent's chief political institution, it uses its position within the institution to manipulate policy decision and protect the country's top officials from international criticism. Thus, Sudan's ability to manipulate the AU for its own benefit uncovers crucial weaknesses in the institution's political structure.

Even if the AU could establish a bureaucratic structure that better prevented corrupt African leaders from manipulating the system, the AU would still struggle to generate the necessary economic resources to engage in peacekeeping operations. In Darfur, the AMIS

61   African Union. Profile: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

mission suffered from poor logistical planning and lacked trained personnel, funds, and experience in intervening to protect civilians. Although the official AMIS mandate called for an initial force of 5000 troops, the AU entered Darfur with only 500 personnel in August of 2004. By July 2005, AMIS forces were increased by about 3,300 troops, with a budget of $220 million.[62] Although the AU forces eventually grew to roughly 7,000 troops, they remained largely ineffective, lacking the equipment and funding to protect civilians and themselves.

The African Union continuously struggles to generate funds both for its continental programs and activities, as well as for the basic operations of its various organs. Although Member States are expected to pay dues in accordance with their country's GNP, they only finance the AU's operational budget. Moreover, as many Member States suffer from their own national poverty issues, many partners fail to meet their commitments on time.[63] Without consistent funding from Member States, the African Union relies completely on external donations. As a continental institution based on broad ideals, very few incentives exist for Member State leaders to provide resources that otherwise would contribute to their own country.

In contrast to the African Union, ECOWAS represents an alternative regional institution based on economic incentives and coordinated political goals. Compared to the AU's decision to enter Darfur, ECOWAS leaders were motivated to intervene in Liberia because they believed it would benefit them directly. Notably, West African leaders were initially hesitant to interfere and feared intervention would disrespect state sovereignty.[64] At the same time, West African leaders recognized that peace and stability would be necessary for future economic growth. With the intervention into Liberia, ECOWAS set a precedent

62   African Union Mission in the Sudan." AMIS. 2006. African Union. 7 Dec. 2008 <http://www.amis-sudan.org/>
63   Dr., Maxwell M. Mkwezalamba, Commission for Economic Affairs. African Union. 29 May 2006. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. "Statement on the Occasion of the Opening of the Meeting of Governmental Experts on Alternative Sources of Financing the African Union. 8 Apr. 2009 <http://74.125.93.104/search?q=cache:dtHx8x7s1TEJ:www.africa-union.org/root/UA/Conferences/Mai/EA/29mai/WELCOME%2520 STATEMENT%2520%2520Alternative%2520source%2520of%2520funding.pdf+African+Union+member+states+budget&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=safari>
64   Bakhoum. ECOWAS as Regional Peace Broker.

that prioritized regional stability over individual state sovereignty. In this way, the ideals of ECOWAS shifted to address the political and economic realities of the West African region.

The most important effect of ECOWAS' philosophy regarding regional stability became evident with the crisis of Liberia's Civil War. As the Liberian state structure collapsed, ECOWAS recognized its responsibility to act as the necessary vehicle for building peace. Notably, in contrast to the situation in Darfur, there was no effective Government in Liberia whose "sovereignty" was endangered by ECOWAS intervention. Still, to maintain some sense of neutrality, ECOMOG originally entered Liberia as a peacekeeper with the intent to monitor a cease-fire. However, hostility from the NPFL instantly required ECOMOG soldiers to use force to fight their way in, and ECOMOG troops were compelled to fight first for their own survival.[65] Subsequently, ECOMOG's mandate was quickly revised to include more aggressive policies of peace enforcement. Unlike the AMIL forces in Darfur, ECOMOG recognized peace-keeping efforts would not be effective in such an unstable environment.

In addition to taking action against the warring factions, ECOMOG forces actively worked to end the conflict by removing arms and ammunition from rebel camps. At the same time, ECOWAS organized meetings with Taylor and other rebel leaders to negotiate peace. To the extent that the Liberian crisis threatened the security of the state, as well as the surrounding region, these proposals were crucial. The external security force worked to restore confidence in the proposed peace plan and made it possible to implement the peace process as outlined in the agreements.[66] With the combined efforts on the ground and at the political level, ECOWAS provided the necessary security and assistance for the peaceful election of Taylor in July 1997, thus reinstating Liberia's operative state structure. Essentially, ECOWAS recognized the instability of the Liberian conflict and the need to act as a vehicle of peace enforcement. In the end, ECOWAS fulfilled its role as the leading regional body by adopting responsibility for ensuring regional peace and stability. Unlike

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65   Dowyaro. ECOMOG Operations in West Africa: Principles and Praxis.
66   Aboagye. Pg. 58

the AU efforts in Sudan, which failed to address the instability and corruption of the Khartoum government, ECOWAS improved the political situation in Liberia by helping to restore a stable state structure.

The successes and failures of the AU and ECOWAS reveal the connection between each institution's ideals and the political and economic realities of Africa. While the symbolic value of the African Union should not be discounted, the AU lacks the capacity to offer the most feasible or effective mechanisms for conflict resolution in Africa. As a continental institution, the broad ideals of the AU do not accurately reflect the relationships among its Member States. ECOWAS, on the other hand, developed as West African leaders grew to appreciate the economic benefits derived from regional unity and cooperation. Having established their interests in regional stability, Member States feel motivated to support ECOWAS programs and activities. In this way, the institution's ideological objectives for regional unity reflect and promote the existing economic and socio-political relationships in West Africa.

As a mechanism for conflict resolution, ECOWAS' political structure promotes regional cooperation on matters of peace and security. As noted above, in establishing ECOWAS, the West African leaders signed a Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression (PNA) in April 1978, which called for disputes to be settled by a Committee of the Authority. However, as insurgent movements continued to threaten regimes internally, a Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense (PMAD) was signed in May 1981 that created a non-standing military force to be used to render mutual military aid and assistance to a member state.[67]

Later, as ECOWAS engaged in its first regional conflict in Liberia, the ECOMOG command structure developed in conjunction with these ideals of mutual regional assistance. At its inception, the ECOMOG states had varying military capabilities, with the small Ghanaian army regarded as the most professional and the Nigerian forces offering the most resources and troops. In coordinating the contributing Member States, ECOMOG initially

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67   Bakoum. ECOWAS as Regional Peace Broker.

diversified its command structure so that Nigeria became the major supplier of men and materials, Ghana provided the force commander, and all of the five original ECOMOG countries held some command positions.[68]   However, after the initial peacekeeping effort into Liberia failed, Nigeria stepped up as the dominant leader of ECOMOG.   Under a strong Nigerian leadership, decision-making became much more efficient, enabling ECOMOG to develop into the peace enforcing force that proved necessary to address the conflict in Liberia.[69]

Today, the current administrative structure of ECOWAS continues to provide a model for regional politics. At the top, the Authority acts as the supreme body of the Community and is composed of heads of state and government of Member States. Similar to the AU's Assembly, the Authority meets at least once a year under the leadership of the Chairman, who is elected annually. Although the Authority determines the final decisions for ECOWAS, the Council of Ministers approves the community budget and nominates Secretariat officials, who run the day-to-day administration.[70]

Since the experience in Liberia, ECOWAS' Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Security has developed to address regional problems. At the Abuja Summit in August 1999, ECOWAS aimed to institutionalize structures and processes that would promote negotiations and collective responses to regional security issues.[71]   A Mediation and Security Council, with a rotating membership of nine member states, was established to oversee ECOMOG operations. All Council decisions require a two-thirds majority and must include a strong political component when intervening in regional conflicts.[72] The Council also strongly promotes conflict prevention by holding

68   Herbert M. Howe. Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 2001. Pg. 137-138.
69   Howe. Pg. 139
70   Ntuma, L. L. (n.d.). Chapter 15: Institutional Similarities and Differences: ECOWAS, ECCAS, and PTA. In Regional Integration and Cooperation in West Africa; A Multidimensional Perspective.
71   L. L. Ntuma (n.d.). Chapter 15: Institutional Similarities and Differences: ECOWAS, ECCAS, and PTA. In Regional Integration and Cooperation in West Africa; A Multidimensional Perspective. R. Lavergne (Ed.). 2007. 2 Apr. 2009. <http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:MRFBeBkDTaAJ:www.bmlv. gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/ sorting_out_the_mess_ecowas_regional_peace_broker_h_bakhoum.pdf+ECOWAS+PNA&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=4& gl=us&client=safari>
72   Howe. Pg. 170.

informal meetings to encourage peaceful negotiations and establishing four observation zones to signal potential of conflicts throughout the region.[73]

ECOWAS also offers a more realistic model for peace operations from an economic perspective. For both the AU and ECOWAS, general funding remains a major obstacle for each institution's development. However, since ECOWAS remains more solidly based in economic ties, its Member States share strong incentives to generate funds for ECOWAS operations. With the basic principle of regional progress, ECOWAS fundamentally requires the collective effort of all individual member states. In his analysis of ECOMOG, Lieutenant Colonel Aboagye uses the average GDP and military strength to determine the level of contribution by each member state that would satisfy ECOMOG operations. Using data for Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone, Aboagye reveals that had member states contributed between 8-10% of their armed forces, ECOMOG would have fulfilled the troop requirements for the Liberian intervention.[74] Although Aboagye's analysis remains a hypothetical calculation, his findings prove that a self-sustaining military force is a feasible possibility in West Africa. By promoting the principles of regional stability through a rotational political structure and collective economic reforms, the establishment of ECOWAS and the success of ECOMOG demonstrate the benefits of regional institutions as practical mechanisms for addressing conflict.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to compare and analyze two approaches to maintaining peace in Africa. On the one hand, the African Union offers a continental model that attempts to promote African Unity in order to elevate Africa within the global hierarchy. In contrast, ECOWAS represents a regional body that focuses primarily on economic and monetary union. Overtime, both institutions have come to recognize the importance of regional stability as a precondition for implementing larger programs. By analyzing the first

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73   African Union. Profile: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).
74   Aboagye. Pg. 145

attempt by each institution to intervene in regional conflicts, this paper offers insights into potential models for peacekeeping in Africa.

In searching for an "African solution to Africa's problems," ECOWAS provides a more effective model for securing peace and stability. Primarily, ECOWAS developed as a result of political, economic, and social relationships that have developed overtime. Inter- and intra-migration, combined with a collective West African history and culture, led to trade patterns that helped to cultivate mutual interests. As ECOWAS attempted to expand regional trade networks, the Liberian crisis quickly revealed to Member States the importance of peace as a necessary precondition for economic progress. From the beginning, ECOWAS Member States shared personal incentives to ensure regional stability. As a result, the philosophy, politics, and economics that ECOWAS developed remained consistent with its original goal of promoting regional coordination for progress.

An analysis of ECOMOG's experience in Liberia brings to light the dilemmas of peacekeeping. Initially, ECOWAS formed in coordination with the Cold War principles of the UN and OAU that promoted national sovereignty and emphasized non-interference among Member States. Based on these principles, peace operations operated on a cease-fire agreement between warring parties and a neutral peacekeeping force.[75] However, as the realities of conflicts have continuously challenged political stability and economic progress, greater initiatives have proven necessary for establishing peace.

As a beneficial contribution to international peacekeeping, the ECOMOG model offers important implications for peace operations in Africa. In the case of the Liberian crisis, the development of ECOWAS from a peacekeeping force to a vehicle for peace enforcement represented a pragmatic response to the realities of the conflict. Most importantly, the ECOMOG experience reveals the importance of understanding the underlying issues of a conflict and the dynamics necessary to achieve stability. For any peace operation, in order to maintain peace, peace must already have been established. Thus, in addressing regional conflicts in Africa, sustainable peace requires both initial peace enforcement and ongoing

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75   Dowyaro. ECOMOG Operations in West Africa: Principles and Praxis.

peacekeeping activities.