

DARFUR

and Peacekeeping Operations in Africa

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THE CRISIS IN DARFUR, which the United States has labeled genocide and the United Nations has called “the world’s gravest human rights abuse,” has revealed glaring weaknesses in the African Union’s (AU’s) ability to conduct its own peacekeeping operations.¹ The situation also reflects a larger, more serious problem: since the end of World War II, Africa has been the site of the world’s worst violence. An estimated 8 million Africans have died in war since 1945, and 9.5 million other Africans remain displaced from their homes, accounting for one of every three refugees on the planet.² Vicious acts of genocide in Rwanda and Darfur have killed one million.³ Now, new peacekeeping demands in Sudan, Chad, Somalia, and the Central African Republic will require 30,000 to 35,000 more troops over the next 6 to 12 months.⁴ The current situation is poised to overwhelm an already exhausted international peacekeeping system that has seen demand for forces increase 600 percent since 1998.⁵ The subsequent gap in peacekeeping abilities could spawn an era of ultra-violence on the continent affecting American interests across the globe.

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History of African Peacekeeping

Wars of independence and civil conflict filled the power vacuum left by the post-World War II withdrawal of colonial powers from Africa. Since then, 17 of 46 (or almost 40 percent) of all UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) have occurred in Africa.⁶ The continent currently hosts nearly half (8 of 18) of all active UN peacekeeping missions; 81 percent of the 54,000 UN peacekeepers are serving in Africa.⁷ Of the UN missions created in the last 10 years, 60 percent have been in Africa, including four of the five largest operations—with over 50,000 PKO troops in Congo, southern Sudan, Liberia, and Cote d’Ivoire.⁸

Peacekeeping operations are expensive. The cost of fielding a typical UN peacekeeping force is about \$45,000 per soldier per year. *Peacemaking* operations, the forceful separation of warring factions, are even more expensive, requiring about 10 times more personnel and equipment than a peacekeeping effort.⁹ The United States, Japan, and European countries mainly bear the cost of financing all these UN operations—more than \$5 billion per year. The United States pays 26 percent of the annual UN peacekeeping bill. Experts expect recently proposed UN operations in Somalia, Chad, Darfur, and the Central African Republic to add \$3.3 billion to the UN’s annual peacekeeping costs.¹⁰

PHOTO: A woman refugee walks past a United Nations peacekeeping police patrol in the Abou Shouk refugee camp in North Darfur, Sudan, 27 January 2008. The patrol was one of the first to re-enter Darfur’s refugee camps since the United Nations took over peacekeeping to try to end five years of violence. (AP, Alfred de Montesquiou)

While the United States has made significant financial contributions to the UN, the U.S. does not send military forces for use in UN operations. As of July 2007, only 307 U.S. personnel deployed for the UN; most were police forces and only 10 percent were working in Africa. The current administration does not consider it politically or militarily acceptable for U.S. personnel to operate under another nation's military leaders.¹¹

Nevertheless, the United States clearly sees the need for security on the continent of Africa. United States involvement on the continent has increased due to post-9/11 fears of terror-sponsoring nations. In 2002, the U.S. established its first permanent military base in Africa (in Djibouti) to intercept terrorists fleeing the Middle East into the Horn of Africa. The U.S. European Command (EUCOM) headquarters runs Operation Enduring Freedom, one part of which is a trans-Sahara counterterrorist program in nine Saharan nations and the third largest U.S. military operation after Iraq and Afghanistan.

African terrorists have participated in terror attacks against U.S. and Western targets. In August 1998, Al-Qaeda exploded two massive car bombs outside the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, killing 224 people (including 12 Americans) and injuring 5,000. In 2003, four suicide bombers attacked Jewish, Spanish, and Belgian sites in Casablanca, Morocco, killing 33 people. African jihadists carried out the 11 March 2004 train bombings in Madrid, Spain, killing 191 people, and wounding 1,400 others. "We're trying to prevent Africa from becoming the next Afghanistan or Iraq," General James Jones, former head of EUCOM, explained.¹²

U.S. foreign assistance to Africa has tripled in the past six years to \$4 billion a year.¹³ In December 2006, the U.S. assigned its first ambassador to the African Union. In February 2007, the White House announced the stand-up of the African Command (AFRICOM), a U.S. military regional headquarters dedicated solely to security issues in Africa. A four-star general will run AFRICOM, which will be operational by October 2008. Now located in



U.S. European Command deputy commander Army General William E. "Kip" Ward, accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Liberia Donald E. Booth (left), conduct a pass and review of Liberian soldiers upon the general's arrival at the Monrovia airport, Monrovia, Liberia, 18 April 2006. Ward was in Liberia to sign an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement with the Liberian Minister of National Defense.

DOD, Jaime L. Wood, U.S. European Command Public Affairs

Stuttgart, Germany, the joint services staff, heavy with interagency representatives, hopes to move onto the continent in the next few years.

U.S. humanitarian efforts in Africa have had mixed results. The Somalia relief effort in 1993, Operation Continue Hope, was to bring humanitarian relief to hundreds of thousands of Somalis caught between fighting local warlords. However, when American TV viewers saw the bodies of U.S. service members dragged through the streets following the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993, approval ratings for President Bill Clinton's handling of the situation fell to 30 percent. The operation cost the lives of 43 Americans and was the worst foreign policy setback since the Vietnam War. The President withdrew U.S. peacekeepers a week later.¹⁴ In a decision former President Clinton considers one of his greatest policy regrets, the resulting fear of commitment in Africa caused him to delay peacekeeping assistance to Rwanda until after Hutus killed 800,000 Tutsis and others in genocide there the following year. Clinton later said, "We did not act quickly enough after the killing began. We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide. We cannot change the past. But we can and must do everything in our power to help [Africa] build a future without fear, and full of hope."¹⁵

The nations of Africa have recognized the need for their own response force. In January 2004,

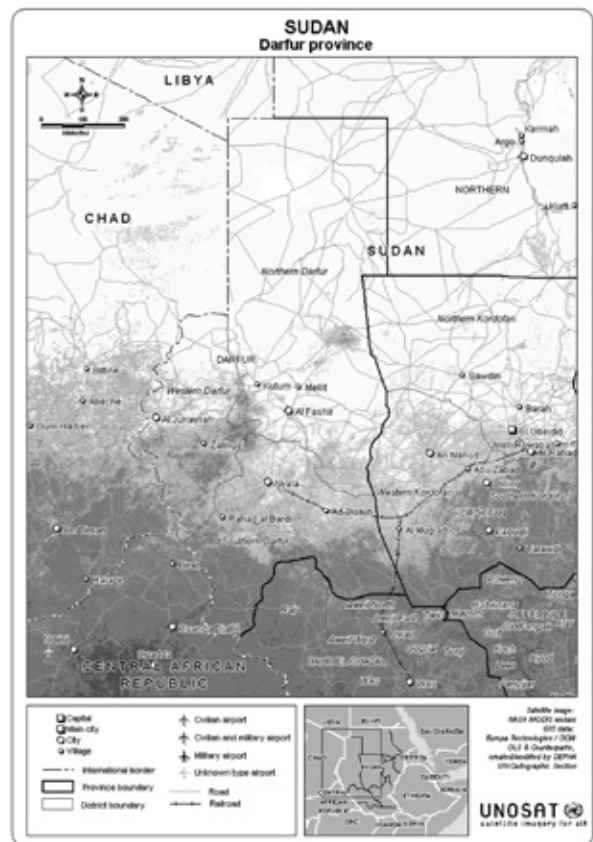
representatives from each of the 53 African nations met at AU headquarters and agreed to develop an African peacekeeping force to ensure rapid humanitarian assistance during disasters. The new force, known as the African Standby Force (ASF), has five regionally based brigades of 3,000 to 4,000 troops and a sixth force based at the AU headquarters for a total of 15,000 to 20,000 peacekeepers.¹⁶ The AU forces have had limited success, and the recent deployment of 7,000 AU troops to Darfur has revealed significant problems in the program.

The Crisis in Darfur

The major crisis in Africa today is the genocide occurring in the Darfur region of Sudan. Over 200,000 people have died in the violence and another 2.5 million left homeless, 90 percent of them women and children.¹⁷ A rift between the Arab Sudanese government and the Christian/animist people of Darfur dates back to 1983, the start of the 20-year civil war that eventually took the lives of 2.2 million Sudanese. The current conflict began in February 2003 when rebel groups attacked military posts in the region, accusing the central government of ignoring the region and discriminating against its inhabitants. The government struck back by employing local Arab militias, known as the *janjaweed* (men on horseback) to attack the rebel forces and loot villages. With government support and weaponry, the *janjaweed* used brutal terror tactics—burning villages, raping women, and massacring civilians. By late 2006, the *janjaweed* had destroyed over 2,000 villages in Darfur.¹⁸

In September 2004, the United States finally labeled the atrocities “genocide,” the first time U.S. officials had done that since the Holocaust of World War II.¹⁹ That same month, the European Union (EU) declared that the Sudanese government’s actions were “tantamount to genocide” and threatened to impose sanctions.²⁰ This classification was important because, under UN guidelines, countries have a duty to interfere to stop genocide.

The *janjaweed* have been brazen in their attacks against foreigners, too. Since AU personnel deployed in 2004, 32 peacekeepers have been killed, over half of them in 2007. Additionally, 69 aid workers have been abducted, 37 relief convoys have been attacked, and 61 humanitarian vehicles hijacked.²¹



United Nations

The conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has taken the lives of over 200,000 people since violence broke out in 2003. African Union troops, forced to patrol an area the size of Texas with only basic equipment, have been unable to stop what the United States has labeled genocide.

The conflict has spilled over into neighboring Chad and the Central Africa Republic where thousands of refugees fled to avoid the bloodshed. In the Central African Republic, 200,000 people have been forced out of their homes near the Sudanese border. An additional 236,000 refugees have crossed into Chad to avoid the bloodshed in Darfur. Chad declared a state of emergency and accused Sudan of supporting the rebels that attacked the Chadian capital in 2006. John Prendergast of the International Crisis Group sounded the alarm in the international community, saying, “The international community is actually missing the potential enormity of the crisis as it metastasizes to Chad and the Central African Republic.”²² Calls to action like Prendergrast’s have driven European peacekeepers into motion. In late November 2007, EU officials met in an emergency planning session and voted to send 4,000 European troops to Chad and the Central African Republic to help refugees there.²³

Fears of foreign interference in African politics have made many African leaders reluctant to accept outside assistance. South African President Thabo Mbeki visited President George W. Bush in June 2005 and insisted that Africans could handle the problem in Darfur, saying, “It’s critically important that the African continent should deal with these conflict situations on the continent. And that includes Darfur . . . We have not asked for anybody outside the African continent to deploy troops in Darfur. It’s an African responsibility and we can do it.”²⁴ Others did not feel as confident. Senegal’s Foreign Minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio said, “We are totally dissatisfied with the fact that the African Union . . . has asked the international community to allow it to be an African solution to an African problem and unfortunately the logistics from our own governments did not follow. The UN Security Council, the European Union, the African Union, the United States—we should all come together in a new way of dealing with the suffering of the people of Darfur—we have to do something.”²⁵

African Union peacekeepers began arriving in the region in 2004. The AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) consists of about 7,500 soldiers and police from Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and South Africa. Their mandate, to “provide a safe and secure environment for the return of internally displaced persons and refugees,” has them spread across 34 refugee camps, some containing as many as 120,000 people. However, the forces lack the communications,

vehicles, airlift, logistics, and intelligence capabilities to stop the militia attacks.

The AU deployment to Darfur, the first significant test of AU forces, has been a failure. Relegated to protecting heavily populated refugee camps in an area the size of Texas, the AU forces lack the arms and equipment of the government-supported militia forces. Their vehicles and radios are rarely operable and they lack sufficient manpower, weapons, and logistical support. Their rules of engagement do not allow them to challenge rebel roadblocks, and their most successful role to date is to protect groups of women from the janjaweed as the women collect firewood needed to fuel their open-pit fires. Many AU soldiers are not paid and do not receive regular food and water shipments. Corruption also presents a problem; in October 2006, two AU vehicles were intercepted while being illegally loaded on a plane for Nigeria. “As the security situation steadily worsens, AMIS’s credibility in Darfur as a military and civilian protection force is at an all-time low,” said a March 2006 International Crisis Group report. Villagers in the area seemed to agree, “I have given [the AU] so many reports but [they] did nothing. Many rape cases were reported and [they] conduct many patrols. But [they] have done nothing,” said one village chief to an AU patrol leader.²⁶

In June 2006, the UN and AU agreed that a UN force should take over peacekeeping in Darfur. However, the Sudanese government, led by President Omar al-Bashir, refused to cooperate with the



U.S. European Command

Nigerian troops working for the African Union head for Darfur aboard a U.S. Air Force cargo plane.

UN, claiming that a foreign force on its territory would violate its sovereignty. Al-Bashir has the attributes of many African autocrats that preceded him. A former general in the Sudanese Army, he seized power in a bloody coup in 1989, overthrowing President Sadiq Al-Mahdi's democratically elected government. Once in power, Al-Bashir aligned himself with Islamic fundamentalists and implemented sharia law. In the mid 1980s, he gave refuge to Osama bin-Laden until international criticism forced him to withdraw the amnesty. In 1995, the United Nations levelled sanctions on Sudan for its role in an attempted assassination of Egypt's President, Hosni Mubarak. Since then, Sudan has dodged additional international condemnation by wooing influential international sponsors like China with its oil revenues, which now provide \$1 million per day.

In the Darfur crisis, Al-Bashir plays to local fears, declaring, "The UN forces have a hidden agenda in Sudan because they are not coming for peace in Darfur. They want to recolonize Sudan."²⁷ His government has pledged to disarm the janjaweed during seven separate rounds of peace talks over the past three years but repeatedly failed to do so.²⁸ There is also fear in Khartoum that many Sudanese government officials may face war crimes charges by the International Criminal Court, which opened an investigation into the atrocities in June 2005.

On 31 August 2006, the UN passed Security Council Resolution 1663, which calls for a 20,000-man force to deploy to Darfur by October 2006 to assist the AU. The force was supposed to have consisted of 17,300 military personnel and 3,300 civilian police officers under UN command with the African Union running day-to-day operations. The UN already has a 10,000-man force in southern Sudan (called the UN Mission in Sudan) to maintain the peace there after the two-decade long civil war. This new resolution in Sudan (called the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur or UNAMID) would have made it the largest UN PKO in the world, eclipsing the 17,500 men in the Congo.

However, disagreements among AU, UN, and Sudanese representatives blocked the deployment of the forces. In June 2007, after nearly four years of bloodshed, the Sudanese representatives finally agreed that an international peacekeeping force

could deploy to the region. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon welcomed the decision, saying it would send a "clear and powerful signal [of Sudan's commitment] to improve the lives of the people of the region and close this tragic chapter in Sudan history." A light support package of police advisers and staff has already been deployed to Darfur in the first phase of the UNAMID mission. However, the second phase of deployment will take months to execute because the UN has no standing army and must rely upon the goodwill of its 192 members to send troops.²⁹ The third and final phase will be a combined AU and UN operation in Darfur using armed vehicles and aircraft to protect civilians.

The euphoria about the breakthrough agreement didn't last long. On 29 September 2007, hundreds of rebels in 30 heavily armed trucks overran an AU base in eastern Darfur, killing 10 soldiers, kidnapping 50 others, and seizing tons of supplies including heavy weapons. Some AU soldiers ran out of ammunition during the attack, which was the deadliest on AU troops since they arrived there three years earlier. One relief worker in the region said of the rebel attack, "It's indicative of complete insecurity. These groups are attacking anybody and everybody with total impunity."³⁰

Local authorities blamed the attack on renegade factions of the two rebel groups trying to gain legitimacy prior to peace talks in Libya. Others said the rebels wanted to punish AU troops who they thought were collaborating with the government. Still others think the attack was only an effort to seize weapons.

To make matters worse, cease-fire negotiations in Libya between rebel leaders, Sudanese government officials, and UN and AU representatives broke down when several leaders failed to appear. United Nations officials had described the cease-fire effort as a "make or break moment for Darfur."³¹

As the turnover date for the UNAMID force arrived on 31 December 2007, the mission seemed more in jeopardy than ever. The Sudanese government continued to drag its feet on critical elements of the UN deployment, rejecting Norwegian, Swedish, Nepalese, and Thai members of the force, refusing to turn over land necessary for bases, denying overflight authorities for UN aircraft, and impounding communication equipment. In its most blatant act of aggression, the Sudanese Army fired

on a UN convoy of 20 vehicles carrying rations for UN soldiers, critically wounding one driver, and destroying a fuel tanker.³²

As a result of the threat posed to peacekeepers, the African Union forces were banned from operating in certain areas of Western Darfur.

“This is the moment of truth for Darfur,” said Jan Egeland, the UN undersecretary general for humanitarian affairs, in Khartoum. “We are playing with a powder keg. It could definitely get worse.” Egeland said Darfur’s crisis has recently worsened and now four million people depend on international aid to survive.³³

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—Jan Egeland

Problems with African Peacekeepers

Washington recognizes the desperate need for peacekeepers in Africa. In March 2007, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sent an urgent diplomatic cable to all U.S. ambassadors saying that the United Nations would soon approve peacekeeping efforts in Darfur, Chad, the Central African Republic, and Somalia. The peacekeeping operations would require 30,000 to 35,000 additional troops at a cost of \$3.3 billion. In her opinion, the “UN is already hard-pressed to meet existing demand and will face significant challenges staffing these new missions.” Secretary Rice later said efforts to recruit additional PKO forces for duty in Africa received a “lukewarm response,” a dangerous situation that could result in unchecked violence and conflict across Africa.³⁴

Other crises have frequently derailed efforts to bolster peacekeeping forces in Darfur. On 5 June 2006, the UN Security Council approved Secretary General Kofi Annan’s request for an additional UN force in Cote d’Ivoire. However, the approval for 1,500 new police and soldiers was less than half of the 3,400 that the Secretary General had requested, reflecting a lack of availability of trained forces. The next month, the EU sent a 2,000-man force to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to safeguard the presidential elections, the first democratic

elections in 40 years. The EU force complemented an existing 17,000-man UN force, at the time the biggest in the world, that kept peace between rival factions since a bloody civil war from 1998 to 2002 left over two million dead—the worst violence in any country since the end of World War II.³⁵ The Congo operation has been an expensive venture for the United Nations, costing the UN and its donor nations \$450 million.³⁶

In December 2006, Ethiopia’s invasion of Somalia resulted in a U.S. call for an international monitoring force of 8,000 in Somalia to separate warring factions there. In early May 2007, AU Chairperson John Kufuor of Ghana expressed frustration in his efforts to recruit PKO forces for Somalia, saying, “The AU wants to send 8,000 peacekeepers [to Somalia] as soon as possible but we are having trouble finding the troops.” Only Uganda had provided troops, but in a disincentive for other African nations, AU headquarters had yet to pay their forces.³⁷ The situation only got worse. In May 2007, Somali gunmen attacked and killed four Ugandan peacekeepers. Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton summarized the philosophy of involvement in African hotspots like Somalia or Sudan: “Sudan is a case where there’s a lot of international rhetoric and no stomach for real action.”³⁸

The prevalence of AIDS on the continent is another serious problem that plagues African peacekeeping forces. Sub-Saharan Africa has just 10 percent of the world’s population but contains 60 percent of all the people living with HIV—over 25 million persons. Southern African nations are the most affected. Life expectancy has dropped below the age of 40 in nine countries. Four countries have declared HIV/AIDS the biggest threat to their national security.³⁹ HIV infections are prominent in the armed forces of these countries. The military and police are especially susceptible to HIV infection because of long deployments away from family,

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—John Bolton

access to cash, the tendency to use prostitutes, drug and alcohol use while off-duty, and the plenitude of soldiers from poor and uneducated backgrounds.⁴⁰ In 2003, Malawi Defense Force chief General Chimbayo said that troop strength in the country was down 40 percent due to AIDS deaths. China expelled over a third of the Zimbabwean officers sent for training in 2004 because of their HIV infections. The head of the police force in Mozambique said the country was no longer able to recruit and train police officers fast enough to replace those dying of AIDS. In July 2004, a survey of South African National Defense Force personnel revealed that 87 percent were infected with HIV. Some African countries have refused peacekeepers from southern Africa on the grounds that they would cause higher rates of infection in their civilian populations.⁴¹

U.S. Efforts to Train African Peacekeepers

Before the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized nations in June 2004, President Bush announced a \$660 million program to train and equip 75,000 peacekeepers around the world over the next 5 years. He said, “The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) was necessary because we believe in human dignity. The world must have more effective means to stabilize regions in turmoil and halt religious violence and ethnic cleansing. We must create a permanent capacity to respond to future crises.”⁴²

The 2007 GPOI budget lists peacekeeping efforts in Africa as its biggest priority. Well over half (\$47.5 million) of the \$81 million annual GPOI budget goes toward peacekeeping programs in Africa. The funding for African PKO efforts is more than all the other areas of the world combined.⁴³

The African branch of the GPOI is the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA). The objectives of the ACOTA

program are to develop and improve African military capacities to deploy and conduct peace support and humanitarian relief operations in Africa and other areas of the world. Thirty thousand African peacekeepers will train in basic military skills such as military policing, infantry tactics, human rights awareness, and engineering. By improving their military skills, the African peacekeeping forces hope to be able to respond quickly to crises to provide humanitarian or peace support operations. Once trained, forces combine into multinational units to conduct operations under the auspices of the AU, the UN, or regional security organizations. The Department of State oversees the program, and the geographic combatant commanders—U.S. European Command across mainland Africa and U.S. Central Command in the Horn of Africa—execute it. The AFRICOM will assume responsibility for the program once it becomes mission-capable in October 2008.

Another important goal of the ACOTA program is to improve interoperability and facilitate regional operations among African partners. When feasible, one of five regional security brigades that make up part of the African Standby Force (ASF) is supposed



U.S. Air Force, SSGT Bradley Church

Rwandan soldiers line up to board a U.S. Air Force C-17 at the Kigali International Airport, Rwanda, for transportation to the Darfur region of Sudan, 17 July 2006. Their deployment is part of a multinational effort to improve security in Darfur.

to address these problems. The ASF headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has representatives from each of the regional security brigades: in the North, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States; in the West, the Economic Community of West African States; in Central Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States; in the East, the Inter-Government Authority on Development; and in the South, the Southern African Development Community. Of these forces, the Economic Community of West African States is the most advanced.⁴⁴

Since its inception in 2004, ACOTA has trained 6,800 personnel (27 battalions), 200 cadre, and 100 command and control experts at the brigade level. These soldiers have deployed to monitor conflicts in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Sudan (Darfur), and Lebanon. The ACOTA goal is to train and equip sufficient numbers of African peacekeepers, including the 25 infantry battalions required to staff five Regional Economic Community (REC) stand-by brigades.

To date, 19 African nations have received ACOTA training.⁴⁵ The training involves tactical field training for soldiers and command and staff training for officers. The typical six-week battalion-training program includes a command post exercise, field training, and human rights topics such as AIDS awareness and prevention, gender rights, and rules of engagement. Overwhelmed with a resilient insurgency in Iraq and a re-emerging Taliban threat in Afghanistan, the U.S. military has few forces to dedicate to peacekeeping training across 53 countries in Africa. For that reason, the Department of State has hired private contracted companies to conduct most of the training since September 2001.

However, there is a risk in providing military training to nations with poor human rights records. Heavy-handed tactics and atrocities against civilians could delegitimize the national army and further destabilize the region. Six of ten African nations that the Pentagon provided training for in 2006 (Algeria, Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Tunisia) have poor human rights records.⁴⁶

Solutions for Africa

African countries are being asked to solve their continent's security problems as many Western

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nations, entrenched in a global conflict against Islamic extremism, are increasingly reluctant to move farther afield to provide PKO in areas seemingly devoid of strategic objectives for their own countries. Nevertheless, the problem remains that African nations are unprepared for peacekeeping duties. Almost all African militaries lack the capability in training and equipment to perform this security role. Those who do have the capability do not have the resources to sustain the deployment very long. In addition, African leaders' collective lack of political will threatens to jeopardize future efforts to equip these PKO battalions. Even with external assistance, prospects for success are limited. There is little reason for optimism.

The U.S. must collaborate with its allies to promote security in Africa. The French have conducted Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacity (RECAMP) exercises since 1998 to train African peacekeepers. The bi-annual event focuses peacekeeping training on the REC. Standby brigades and 12 to 15 other European nations send mentors and advisors to the RECAMP exercise. Like ACOTA, RECAMP can provide multi-national training to the standby brigades that are supposed to respond to crises within their geographic regions.

A critical element of the African Standby Force is a rapid deployment capability (RDC). Currently, no means exist to send AU forces expeditiously into a conflict zone. In July 2007, AU representatives met at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to identify RDC requirements and parameters. Participants concluded that an AU RDC should deploy within 14 days, provide urgent assistance to existing peacekeeping forces, and be able to conduct self-sustained autonomous operations for 30 days. The conference forwarded the proposal to all AU nations' heads of defense for ratification.

The idea of a deployable peacekeeping force has been around for a while. President Clinton had proposed a similar type of UN RDC force in 1993.

During a speech before the UN General Assembly, President Clinton called for the “creation of a genuine UN peacekeeping headquarters with a planning staff, access to timely intelligence, a logistics unit that can be deployed on a moment’s notice, and a modern operations center with global communications.”⁴⁷ In his book, *An Agenda for Peace*, then UN Secretary Boutros Boutros Ghali recommended a “rapid reaction force” of battalion-sized units stationed in their own countries with common training, procedures, and equipment, and operating costs of \$1 billion per year after start up, extremely modest compared to the \$6 to 8 billion per month operating costs for Iraq.⁴⁸

NATO has developed a rapid response force and tested its capabilities in exercises in Africa and Europe. For its part, NATO has expanded from a traditional role of defending territory in Europe to managing threats around the world before they can reach the European shoreline. The NATO Response Force, a 25,000-strong body which became operational in October 2006, is designed to respond to crises in five days, fight its way into hostile areas, and operate autonomously for one month before needing to resupply. While NATO has already formed its RDC, the UN and the AU seem unable to implement this and other strategies because of lack of troops.⁴⁹

Conclusion

At the UN Summit in October 2005, United Nations representatives pledged to “protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity” by passing Resolution 1674, the “Responsibility to Protect.”⁵⁰ Likewise, the U.S. must do more to prevent a terror-sponsoring nation from appearing on the African horizon. The attacks of 9/11 showed the world the destruction that can emanate from a single failed state like Afghanistan. Although the U.S. Department of Defense designates peacekeeping as a “core military mission,” the quagmire in Iraq has absorbed military assets that Africa needs: the annual Global Peace Operations Initiative budget for Africa would last just five hours in Iraq.

The difficulty of training foreign peacekeepers is evident in the current conflict in Iraq. A recent report from the U.S. Congress House Armed Services Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee stated that, despite \$19 billion spent on organizing,

... the annual Global Peace Operations Initiative budget for Africa would last just five hours in Iraq.

training, and equipping Iraqi military and police personnel, the effort has yielded only “mixed results.”⁵¹ According to the Iraq Study Group report, U.S. military forces, “stretched nearly to the breaking point by repeated deployments to Iraq,” will find it difficult to send adequate troops to African nations that have an immediate need for training and advisement.

The situation in Africa presents a difficult dilemma for foreign policy experts. As Rear Admiral Richard W. Hunt, former Commander of Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa put it, “Africa is the new frontier that we need to engage now, or we are going to end up doing it later in a very negative way.”⁵² Yet the military peacekeeper solution is only one element of a more complex problem. Regarding Darfur, Former Secretary of State Colin Powell has said, “In my mind, there would never be enough troops to impose order on this place. The only way to resolve this problem is for there to be a political settlement between the rebels and the government.”⁵³

Bogged down in unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States has little political or diplomatic capital to spend to stop the Sudanese genocide in Darfur. Yet, genocides committed in locations such as Rwanda and Darfur demand an international response. The potential for terrorist training in failed states such as Somalia or Sudan is a threat that could have repercussions in Europe or the United States. American intentions in the region are suspect; suspicion runs deep among African nations with large Muslim populations. Furthermore, many Americans do not see a need to help Africa and see no strategic imperative worth defending to justify sending American troops there. Former U.S. Senator John Danforth, appointed by the Bush Administration as special envoy for Sudan, echoed this sentiment, saying, “This isn’t a country that has much strategic interest for the United States.”⁵⁴

President Bush himself expressed his aversion to peacekeeping operations in a speech at The Citadel. "The problem," Bush said, "comes with open-ended deployments and unclear military missions. In these cases, we will ask, 'What is our goal, can it be met, and when do we leave?' We will not be hasty. But we will not be permanent peacekeepers, dividing warring parties. This is not our strength or our calling."⁵⁵

Regardless of the assistance the United States

and other industrialized nations provide for peacekeeping in Africa, the 21st century promises to be a challenging one for Africans. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs Theresa Whelan described the mission for the U.S. military in Africa: "We want to prevent problems from becoming crises and crises from becoming catastrophes."⁵⁶ For now, the hopes are slim that Africa's own peacekeepers can prevent continuing genocide in Africa. **MR**

NOTES

1. "Darfur: UN Rights Council holds special session," U.N. News Service, 12 December 2006.
2. The post-independence period in Africa gave rise to numerous conflicts. Estimates of the number of casualties range from eight million to as high as fourteen million. Among the most costly were wars in the Congo (1998-present) with 3,800,000 killed, Sudan (1983-present) with 1,900,000 killed, Ethiopia (1962-92) with 1,400,000 killed, and Nigeria (1966-70) with 1,000,000 killed. The African Union estimated in mid-2005 that there were some 10 million refugees in Africa.
3. The crisis in Rwanda in 1994 resulted in 800,000 deaths in the space of 100 days, mostly Tutsi and Hutu moderates killed at the hands of radical Hutus. Aid organizations in Darfur put the death toll of the more recent crisis at 200,000 though some estimates have it as high as 400,000.
4. SECSTATE WASH DC, message dtg 051635ZMAR07.
5. Center on International Cooperation, "Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2007," New York University, 27 February 2007.
6. United Nations homepage, UN Peacekeeping Operations, <www.un.org/Depts/dpho>, (16 December 2005).
7. Stephan Faris, "Containment Strategy," *Atlantic Monthly*, December 2006, 34.
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