THE AFRICAN UNION AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: A STUDY OF THE DARFUR CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the role of the African Union in resolving the Darfur crisis in Sudan. The study made use of only secondary sources of data, exploring various literature on the issue from scholars. The functionalism theory of international relations was adopted and argued that African Union intervened in the Darfur crisis because the nature of the crisis demanded international collaboration and support which the Sudanese Government did not have the capacity to manage the crisis. It was revealed that the Darfur crisis which lasted between 2004 and 2011 ensued as the result of political subjugation, economic exploitation and underdevelopment of the Darfur region of Sudan. The People Southern Sudanese considered these trends as injustice and as such, they violently revolted against the Sudanese Government with the agitation for independence. The wanton destructive nature of the crisis necessitated the intervention of the international community. The study revealed that African Union was the first body to intervene in the crisis through mediation and sending of troops in July 2004 before the United Nations took over the mission on 31st December 2007. The paper showed that even after United Nations took over the peacekeeping operation, African Union still made significant contributions in terms of troops, finance, and humanitarian services. The study concluded that despite the weaknesses of the African Union in managing the conflict, the success story of the United Nations in the Darfur region cannot be analyzed without taking into cognizes the effort of African Union put into the crisis. Therefore, the paper recommends that African Union should be proactive and timely in intervening in conflict on the continent so as to avoid escalation

Keyword: African. Conflict, Crisis, Darfur, Management

(ii) (i)

Introduction

There is a large body of literature on the genesis and historical foundation of conflicts in post-colonial Africa. Many scholars such as Nnonli (1999), Mwagiru (2001) and Tsuwa and Ochoga(2016) have argued that most of the conflicts have their roots in colonialism. While not denying the fact that many pre-colonial societies in Africa were often engaged in inter-tribal wars, the people also had a mutually beneficial relationship long before the colonial authorities came to forcefully subjugate the people for almost a century through a colonial rule which had economic exploitative features

The anti-colonial struggle in Africa was characterized by a combination of peaceful and violent means as happened in Ghana and Nigeria in the "settler colonies of Southern Africa and in Algeria. Armed struggle became the only veritable weapon in the fight for freedom. As colonialism became unfashionable in the light of the emerging norms of international relations of the 1960s, such as the principle of self- determination, many colonial powers were forced to beat a hasty retreat without preparing the

new States in Africa for self- governance. As a result, the seeds of conflicts in the postcolonial era were sown (Femi, 2015).

This was the case with the Belgian Congo, now the Democratic Republic of Congo (DPC), whose immediate post-independence elites were faced with the challenges of building and growing a new nation without the modern skills and training necessary for this import and task (Garba,19995). In some countries like Zimbabwe, the land question was left unresolved. In South Africa, the obnoxious system of apartheid and white minority rule constituted the greatest source of conflict and threat to the entire continent. It was one of the greatest plights on the conscience of all civilized nations until the system was finally dismantled in 1994 through the blood and sweat of the African people and the hesitant and equivocal support of the international community (Tsuwa and Ochoga,2016).

For instance in Liberia and Sierra Leone, many scholars observed and recognized that the civil wars (Best, 2001:2) fought in these two neighbouring countries from the early 1990s to

2004, arose from their roots as "settler colonies" in which the American-Liberian and Sierra Leonean repatriate ethnic groups, over and above the native people of the united states and Britain as distinct counter resentment against this imposition, coupled with bad governance, were largely responsible for the violent wars of consultations and attributions that were brought on the innocent citizens of the countries for over a decade.

More fundamentally, it can be argued that virtually all African countries as they exist today, were created by colonial rule. Reflecting on the patterns of European domination influence and control of the continent, we believe that this is why in today's Africa, there remain cleavages along the linguistic lines between Anglophones, the francophone and with obvious implications for post-colonial nation building, peaceful interstate relations and regional unity. Thus, the colonial boundaries of many African countries were arbitrarily drawn at the Berlin conference of 1884, without regard to ethnic and other affinities. In consequence, people with different ethnic origins, cultures, and languages strewn across the continent were forcefully conditioned to line as one indivisible entity without seeking their consent for the administrative convenience of colonial interest.

No doubt, this has laid the basis for the border dispute and outright wars that many African countries had fought among themselves. From independence to date, for instance we had boundary disputes between Nigeria and Cameroon or between Algeria-Morocco and other internal conflicts predicated on religion, ethnicity, primitive accumulation of authority resources, marginalization and other forms of primordial sentiment.

Be that as it may, any analysis of the genesis of conflicts in Africa without considering the various inter-tribal conflict among tribes of African societies before the advent of colonialism would be considered as incomprehensive analysis. While the demarcation of the continent by the colonial powers further intensifies the conflict to different dimensions as African interest was not considered. Thus, in contemporary Africa conflicts that have or are being resolved are not without loss of lives, properties and devotion of scare resources to manage such conflict to the detriment of development at large. It was against this background that African Union (AU) saw the need to involve in conflict management in the continent, as it is believed that no meaningful development can take place in a conflicting environment.

Conflict resolution and peacebuilding are issues that have become very topical in debates and discussions on Africa. This is not only because Africa has been engulfed by many conflicts. Mwagiru (2001:5) underscored the importance of the Africa

Union (AU) in conflict resolution when he says one distinguishing features of Africa's political landscape is its many dispensational and protracted social and political conflicts. This remains the problem for AU to adequately and effectively scope and manage these conflicts. Where conflicts exist they are weak, and thus, social and political relationships on the continent have been disrupted. This has had negative consequences including the interruption of development and the diversion of scarce resources to the management of these conflicts.

Therefore, it was as a result of these that the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was founded in 2004 to resolve the Darfur conflict. According to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1564, AMIS was to closely and continuously liaise, coordinate and manage the conflicts at all levels. It works with the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) (UNMIS, 2005). AMIS was the only external military force in Sudan's Darfur region until United Nations and African Mission in Sudan (UNAMID) was established (AMIS, 2009:9). The situation in Darfur continued to escalate until AMIS was finally replaced by UNAMID on December 31, 2007 (Tsuwa and

Ochoga, 2016).

Apart from the military approach to the Darfur conflict resolution, the AU equally adopted other peaceful mechanisms of conflict management. Specifically, on September 15, 2005 a series of African leaders mediated between the representatives of the Sudanese government and the two major rebel groups (Ochoga, 2020). Also, notable African leaders at different times have had talks with the leading forces with the view to stopping the conflict. Despite the military and non-military approaches applied by African Union, the conflict had taken a pragmatic destructive dimension as the use of firearms by the conflicting parties intensified in recent times. The speed and scale of its occurrence and unprecedented dimensions are what in most cases attracted the interest of the international community. The constant confrontations by the disputants pose threat to civilians

and their properties as the conflict endangers the peace and stability of Sudan in the Darfur region in particular.

Thus, the Darfur conflict is a civil war centered in the Darfur region of Sudan. It began in February, 2003 when the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLMA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) groups in Darfur took up arms, accusing the Sudanese government of oppressing non-Arab Sudanese in

favour of Sudanese Arabs. One side of the conflict is composed mainly of the official Sudanese Military group recruited mostly from the Arab Abbala tribes of the Northern Zaghawa region in Sudan. The other combatants are made up of rebel groups, notably the SLM and the JEM, recruited primarily from the non-Arab Muslim, Zaghawa, and Masalit ethnic groups. Although the Sudanese government publicly denies that it supports the Janjaweed it has been providing financial assistance and weapons to the militia and has been organizing joint attacks targeting civilians against the Southern Sudanese who are seeking independence (Ochoga, 2020).

The conflict in Sudan's Western Darfur region flared up in 2003 when two rebel groups rose up against the government, accusing it of neglect. Khartoum moved swiftly to crash the revolt by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberian Army (SLA) (Ba, 2005). The government is widely accused of arming militias drawn from Arab tribes who have used scorched earth tactics against the rebel communities. The militias known as Janjaweed, had blamed killings, widespread rape and abductions. Refugees describe them as

ferocious gun-wielding men riding camels or horses who burn villages and steal whatever they can carry (Salvin, 2007). Khartoum has repeatedly denied any links to the Janjaweed, dismissing them as outlaws. But in March 2009, the International Criminal Court issued a warrant of arrest for Sudan's presidents Omar Hassan Al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur, describing the Janjaweed as allies of the Sudanese armed forces.

In 2009, the United Nation's outgoing military commander said that the conflict was effectively over and isolated attacks and banditry were the region's main problems. Both the U.S-based anti-genocide project and the Ugandan army say the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has moved

fighters into Darfur (Gana, 2010:34).The exact number of people killed in the conflict in Dafur was hard to ascertain. But, the United Nations says many as one million people may have died since 2003 (Deby, 2011).

According to Gibril (2011), the violence has displaced up to 2.7 million people from their homes. As many were living in squalid camps in Darfur and neighbouring Chad. The International Crisis Group (ICG, 2012) says the displacement of many people from their homes appears to be part of a government policy of ethnic cleansing, and its bid to cripple support for the rebel movements. It was reported that the

displaced were mostly African farmers from the fur, Zaghance and Massaleit tribes (ICG, 2012). The Janjaweed are from the Arabic-speaking pastoralist communities, which hard camels in Northern Darfur and cattle in Southern Darfur. Both the farmers and the pastoralists are Muslim and dark-skinned and have inter-married for centuries. The Zaghawa are also camel herders and have strong ties to Chad while Darfur's population of 7 million is scattered over a harsh desert area and the size of France (Kingibe, 2010:21).

More fundamentally, the Darfur was a region historically separated and had experienced long neglect by Khartoum in the areas of basic infrastructural development. Scholars such as Kingibe (2010), Gibirl (2011) and Ba (2011) in their separate opinion argued that the motives for the rebellion were predicated on the aged long political exclusion, lack of roads, schools, and potable water and health services in the Darfur region. The Darfur people saw this as pragmatic justice and as such the frustration of the people led to a revolt against Khartoum.

Traditionally, conflicts were settled with little or no

violence by respected local councils. These were abolished by

the Khartoum Government after it came to power in a coup in 1989, leaving no mechanisms for resolving disputes peacefully. The disbanding of the councils coincided with droughts and the encroachment of the expanding Sahara-Desert, which forced Arab herders from the North into competition over land with farmers based in villages (Udombana, 2009:14). To make matters worse, ethnic differences between the two groups-who used to co-exist peacefully in the past was exaggerated by local leaders in the battle over resources. The existence of oil in Darfur, revealed in 2005 when Sudan's Advanced Petroleum Company (APLO) partly owned by Swiss Company Children began drilling, has led some analysts to wonder how far oil could be guiding Khartoum's actions in the region (Piipannen, 2007). We thought that the oil reserves could act as an incentive to end the fighting. Drilling is risky during the conflict, and if the oil can be extracted, there will be more wealth to go around.

In October 2007, the JEM rebel groups attacked Sudan's oil field in the Kordofan region, neighbouring in Darfur, killing 20 government soldiers and taking two foreign hostages. The rebels

vowed to launch more assaults on oil installations across Sudan

which is why many commentators say the conflict in Darfur has been exploited in the struggle for power within Sudan's Islamic movement. Be that as it may, from the various sources as this study has discovered that the war waged by Muslim Arabs against Christian and Animist black Africans, which had claimed many lives and properties is not very true that the conflict was rooted in religion, but, the major reason was using primordial sentiments as a basis of allocation of authoritative resources among Sudanese, whereby Southern Sudan felt politically subjugated, marginalized and economically exploited permeated by ethnic and religious differences. It is against this background that this study attempt to examine the actual causes and dimensions of the Darfur conflict in Sudan. Specifically, the focus is on the efforts of the African Union (AU) to put an end to the conflict between

2004 and 2011

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study adopts Functionalism as the theoretical framework. Functionalism -Functionalists believe that international organizations are formed for very different reasons. This viewpoint is best articulated by the scholar David Mitrany in his groundwork titled 'A Working Peace System'. Mitrany argued that: the problem of our time is not how to keep the nations peacefully apart but how to bring them actively together (Mitrany, 1946). Thus, he proposed that 'units bind together those interests which are common, where they are common, and the extent to which they are common" (Mitrany, 1946). This implies that Mitrany advocated for the establishment of a platform for States with common interests to serve as the basis for them to work towards such interests.

Also, Mitrany in his view of the informal sector, believes that there are many issues states may not be able to cover effectively but, most importantly, there are problems behind the competence of individual nation-states, they may lack the technical capacity or the requisite resources to deal with them, in such circumstances, collaborative actions become necessary under the auspice of international organization (Mitrany, 1946). To him, whereas this goes on sometime in the informal sector it might subsequently be incorporated into the political sector and the integrated community transcending the nation-state might therefore be born.

We can say that Mitrany's work is the pioneering work that inspired functionalism scholars like Gabriel Almond, Michael Hans and other scholars to expand the school of thought.

Generally, functionalists believe that States are not suitable unit to resolve problems between or within the States,

this weakness according to the functionalists was what called for the formation of formal institutions which Almond (1959) argued that functionalism promote building and expanding the habits of cooperation nurtured by groups of technical experts , outside of formal State channel. The habit of cooperation as advocated by Almond is the formation of international organization to perform certain functions. At this time, Almond made it clear as he said that based on the recognition of the gaps that exist between States, therefore it is imperative that incremental strategy be adopted to bridge the gaps between States. According to Almond, the bridging of the gaps involves the formation of functional international organizations which would performs the functions of input and output since the international system represent the social system (Almond, 1959). It is necessary to identify the structures and the functions perform by the structures, therefore, a leading functionalist, Michael Hans modified Gabriel Almond's Structural Functionalism at the national level to suit international system. Hans classified the

functions to include articulation, interest aggregation, socialization, recruitment, transaction, rulemaking, rule

application and rule supervision (Hans, 1962). This Functionalist (Hans) believe that a description of an international system therefore involves how each of these eight functions are performed within an organized formal arrangement so as to enhance peace, stability and development which single State would not have achieve on its own. Hans maintained that these habits of spill over cooperation in military and political affairs can be achieved when States transfer their allegiances to likeminded individuals (organizations) around the globe without losing their identity for common interest. Along the way, functionalists believe that the economic disparities will have been eliminated and war will therefore be less likely (Kaka, 1967:3).

The compelling reason for the adoption of the Functionalism Theory for this study is borne out of the fact that the formation of the United Nations and subsequently other international organizations were influenced by the views of the functionalists. Thus the route of the European Union was a

functionalist one, its architect, Jean Monnet, believed that the weakened forces of nationalism could in the long run be further undermined by the logic of economic integration (Mingst, 1990). Like other international organizations, the formation of the African Union was born out of the desire to collaboratively deal with issues and problems in the African continent. As observed by Mitrany, the proposed 'earlier units (i.e. international organizations) bind together those interests which are common to confront issues with common interest'. These common interests that form the major argument of the theory may include eliminating war, reduce economic disparity, etc which are typical of AU functions in the African continent.

Also, the linkage or relevance of the theory to this study can be also expressed below in this manner. first and interestingly, just as the functionalists believe that States are not suitable units to resolve certain intra and inter-state problems, therefore, the AU intervened in the Southern Sudan conflict based on the fact that the Sudanese Government nearly lack the necessary and requisite resources to resolve the Darfur crisis and as such there was a need for external assistance which the AU saw the need to come in. Secondly, like any other international organization, the common interest of the AU to eliminate war (conflict) in the continent via collaborative efforts was what prompted the continental organization to intervene in the crisis through its structures to perform political and military functions as proposed by the functionalists.

Thirdly, Nigeria and other countries that immensely participated in resolving the crisis went to the Darfur region under an umbrella body (organization) to which they have transferred their allegiances and have obligations to achieve a common goal, but the participating countries did not go to Darfur region as a single nation that has the capacity to assist. Fourthly, without the existence of the AU all the countries that participated in managing the conflict would not have the legal jurisdiction and justification as well as the platform to swiftly mobilize support and resources to be involved in conflict management. Fifth and last, taking Hans's structural-functional thesis into consideration, AU as an organization has structures that perform certain specialized functions that ensure its continued existence towards the attainment of the set goals and vision. It was with the help of structures saddled with the responsibility of conflict resolution that the AU was able to make an impact in the Darfur conflict management even before and after the UN took over the conflict.

Despite its popularity among analysts of international relations, the theory has been criticized on the ground that it did not consider the implications of an international organization on nation-state sovereignty and territorial integrity. Specifically, Wilkinson (1978) maintained that the functionalists advocated for political and military cooperation among States under formal

institution without considering such implications on the affected nation's sovereignty in a case of interfering in the internal affairs of member states.

Despite the criticism, the theory to a large extent attempts to justify the formation of international organization as well as the involvement of AU in conflicts in the continent and Darfur's conflict in particular. Thus, in essence the functionalists are interested in a specific organization that pursues the common needs of the member States as a priority. In other words, the theory is relevant to this work because the functionalists are of the view that war is caused by economic deprivation and economic deprivation and cannot be solved in a system of independent States, but through the creation of functional units (international organizations) to solve specific

problems, where States will develop habits of political, economic and military cooperation which in a long run, economic disparities will lessen and war will be eliminated in the international system like the case of Darfur region.

Therefore, the extent in which AU' structures performed their functions in resolving the Darfur conflict between 2004 and

2011 remains the major reason why this work will employ the Functionalism Theory to investigate and explain.

Contribution of African Union to Peace Building in Sudan

The previous chapters focused on theoretical analysis of the assessment of the African Union in the Darfur crisis of Sudan. Thus, this chapter specifically, attempts to assess the actual contribution to the African Union in the Darfur crisis resolution. Relevant empirical data were used to ascertain the extent of contributions against such possible outcomes and naked realities in the Darfur region.

(i) Military Contributions of African Union

There is no gain in saying that armed forces contributed toward the management and resolution of the Darfur crisis. Thus, this section examines the actual number of troops employed by

the African Union to Darfur in Sudan within the period under study. Table 1.1 presents the number of troops employed by the African Union for the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) before the UN took over the operation. From table1.1 the analysis shows that African Union's first troops were sent to Darfur in July 2004 with 150 troops. The number of troops increased to 300 between January and June 2005. African Union drastically increased the troop's capacity to 7000 between July 2005 and June 2006. While the total of 7,300 troops was maintained from July 2006 until the UN took over the operation in 31st December 2007 from AMIS. Table 1.2 presents the distribution of troops deployed to Darfur under the United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). The table shows that UNAMID started operation in Darfur region in January 2008. In the table, between January 2008 and December 2009 UNAMID maintained a total troop capacity of 26,000 while African Union contributed 17,300 out of the total troops. The table shows that between January and June 2010 UNAMD slightly increased the troop's capacity to 28,000 while African Union still maintained 17, 3000. Between July 2010 and December 2011 UNAMID increased the troop's strength to 29,000 while African Union equally increased its contribution to 17,500.

Table 1.1: Distribution of AU Troops to Darfur before UN took over

2006 July-December	7,300
2007 January-June	7,300
2007 July-December	7,300

Source: AU, (2011).

Table 1.2: Distribution of Troops deployed to Darfur under UNAMID

Year	No. of troops
July-December	150
January-June	300
July-December	7000
January-June	7000

(20)

Year	No. of AU	Troops UN	Total
2008 January-June	17,300	8,700	26,000
2008 July-December	17,300	8,700	26,000
2009 January-June	17,300	8,700	26,000
2009 July-December	17,300	8,700	26,000
2010 January-June	17,300	10,500	28,000
2010 July-December	17,500	11,500	29,000
2011 January-June	17,500	11,500	29,000
2011 July-December	17,500	11,500	29,000

AIMIS (2008) reported that within the period in which the African Union was solely in changed of the mission, the organisation deployed a total of 200 hundred medical personnel

Source: UNAMID (2011)

(ii) Humanitarian Contribution of African Union

Against the background of the excruciating humanitarian situation in Darfur region, this section examines the attempt by AU on humanitarian ground to assist the displaced and affected Southern Sudanese.

and drugs as well as equipment worth about 450 million US

dollars to cater for the health needs of the Southern Sudanese before the African Union handed over the mission to UN.

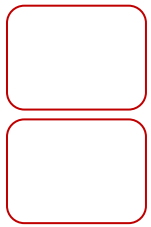
Also, AU (2011) recently reported that since the UN took over the mission. AU had ensured the steady contribution of 100 hundred health workers and drugs and food worth 150 million dollars as annual contribution to UNAMID as well as estimated relief materials donated by individuals and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Africa for the Darfur region.

(iii) The Role of African Union toward Sudan Referendum

On November 9th 2004 the government of Sudan and the two leading rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA), signed two short-term peace agreements aimed at progress in ending the conflicts. The first step taken by African Union toward the referendum was the treaty establishing a no-fly zone over rebel-controlled areas of Darfur a measure designed to end the Sudanese military's bombing of rebel villages in the region in order to pave the away for negotiation. The second accord granted international humanitarian aid agencies unrestricted access to the Darfur region. The accords were the product of African Union sponsored peace talks in Abuja that began on October 25, 2004 (Henri, 2015).

To support the comprehensive peace agreement signed by the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's liberation movement on 25 October 2004, to perform certain functions relating to humanitarian assistance, protection, promotion of human rights, and to support AMIS, AU wrote to the UN security council to weigh into the security situation in Darfur region and as such UN security council established the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) under resolution 1590 on March 24, 2005, because the security council deemed the situation in Darfur to be a threat to peace and international security (AU, 2015).

In a follow-up attempt African Union sponsored other talks between the forces and representatives of the UN during the meeting at Abuja Nigeria the military-led JEM Mohamed Saleh argued that the entire Southern Sudanese have decided to be disintegrated from Sudan. To him, this is the only solution

(21)  (22)

to the crisis. In response the then Head of Army ruled that the wishes and preferences of the Southern Sudanese who are directly affected are the interest of the African Union and the entire peace lovely international system (Salim, 2016), meanwhile both signed the decision for a referendum to be conducted to determine the interest of the people with the agreement to implement the ceasefire treaty (AU, 2016). This marked the end of the Second Civil War in Sudan.

After UNAMID took over the peacekeeping Mission on 31st December 2007, one of the progress report agendas submitted by AMIS to UNAMID was to enforce the ceasefire treaty and to fix a referendum date for Southern Sudan (Salim, 2018). Salim avers that the slated date of the referendum for January 2011 was a by-product of concerted efforts of the African Union before the UN took over the peacebuilding process in the Darfur region.

Also, Konare (2011) argues that apart from the series of efforts made toward the referendum, African Union contributed 40% of the total materials, labour and other logistic costs of the referendum. To him, African Union was the brain behind the

success of the referendum. Also, African Union carefully used the collaboration to set up peace committees to mediate before violence erupt whilst building relationships with large international oil companies and the government. As part of the African Union peace-building effort toward independence, in May 2011 the collaborative was asked by the government to be the voice of civil society in negotiations to empire transparency with oil companies. We maintained that their influence and impact are ever increasing and the work of the collaborative is a very real force-depending and reducing the fragile peace which the international system has struggled to build in Sudan over the years. In the wake of this jubilation in the Darfur region, African Union strategically looked behind the excitement in the region and fashioned out means to enhance peace building through its instrumentality in preparation for the proposed Independence Day slated for 9th July 2011.

(iv) The Role of the African Union towards the South Sudan Independence

The release of the referendum timetable and guidelines generated high optimism that the long warring and politically subjugated Southern Darfur would soon get freedom from

economic exploitation and injustice perpetuated by the

Sudanese government. In the wake of this jubilation in the Darfur region, African Union strategically looked behind the excitement in the region and fashioned out means to enhance peace building through its instrumentality in preparation for the proposed Independence Day slated for 9th July 2011. The referendum in January 2011, when Southerners voted on whether they wanted to secede from the North, the referendum result which came out in favour of the successive desire of the Southerners, thus, marked the end of the 21st-year civil war that left about 2 million people dead. But the peace was fragile, especially over the contentions Abiye oil- rich area which became another source of conflict among the warring forces (Bah, 2011).

While UNAMID created a buffer zone over the contentious Abiye area in order to reduce the conflict, African Union strategically used organizations such as the African Center for Democracy and Rights Studies, African Center for Development, African Center for Justice and Peace, and African Women's Development and Communication Net, under the auspice of collaborative for peace in Sudan for peace and capacity building in Sudan (Salim, 2019). Salim maintains that African Union through this effort has brought peace-building organizations from across North and South Sudan together to collectively help tribes and communities move away from violence and how to live in peace and harmony in preparation for the proposed independence of Southern Sudan. Undombane (2021) argued that the role of the African Union after the referendum was not only physical contact via the use of armed forces, but the organization worked right at the heart of local communities, with tribal elders, community leaders, women and young to find ways to respond to conflict without violence.

Also, the African Union carefully used the collaboration to set up peace committees to mediate before violence erupt whilst building relationships with large international oil companies and the government. As part of the African Union peace building effort toward independence, in May 2011 the collaborative was asked by the government to the voice of civil society in negotiations to empire transparency with oil companies. We maintained that their influence and impact are ever increasing and the work of the collaborative is a very real force-depending and reducing the fragile peace which the international system has struggled to build in Sudan over the years.

Discussion of Findings

This segment attempts to evaluate the various contributions discussed above in order to ascertain the actual

impact of the African Union on the Darfur crisis resolution. To start with, table 1.1 presented the analysis of African Union troops deployed to Darfur before the UN took over the Mission. From the table, African Union sent its first troops of 150 on July 2004 with a budget of 220 million dollars. As the conflict got intense, the troops' strength was increased to 7,300 with a budget of 450 million dollars until AMIS finally overhanded the mission to UNAMID on 31st December 2007 following the UN Security Council's Resolution 1769). In this study, our findings indicate that the African Union was instrumental in the resolution of the Darfur crisis in the following ways:-

AU was the first and major intervener that sent troops, despite being outnumbered by government and rebel forces. The organization ensured that the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's liberation army signed the April 2005 ceasefire agreement which led to the end of the Second Sudanese Civil War.

Form table 1.2 we discovered that within the period UN took over the mission, African Union maintained an the average of 65 percent contribution of troops to UNAMID, while the

remaining 35 percent troops were allocated to non-African UN Member States. Therefore, since African troops constituted the majority of the Armed forces in the peacekeeping mission in Darfur, then the praise and glory of the mission should be attributed to African Union.

As presented in section 1.2.2 of this work, African Union sent about 120, 220, and 450 million dollars respectively annually within the period the conflict was single-handedly managed by African Union. While during the period managed by the UN, the mission had an annual budget of 2250 million dollars, out of it, African Union was allotted 900 million dollars contribution. By implication, we discovered that African Union contributed 40 percent of the funds needed to persecute the conflict in Sudan. Therefore, based on this data we wish to submit that the African Union was the major financer of the Sudan peace-building process.

As part of the role of the African Union toward the referendum, we discovered that the various mediation meetings

sponsored by African Union for the conflicting forces formed the plat-form for subsequent agenda even after UN took over the mediation. Therefore, the referendum was a by-product of African Union efforts.

We equally discovered that after the referendum, African Union collaborated with some African institutions and

devoted concerted efforts on how to respond to conflict situations without a violent approach, peace capacity building and leadership attitude development in preparation for the independence slated for 9th July 2011. From all indications, the evidence presented in the foregoing discussion is nothing but a reflection of the fact that the African Union through its structures has to large extent contributed greatly in all ramifications toward the resolution of the Darfur crisis that led to independence. This reminds us that all the countries that participated under the auspices of AU and UN would not have participated if International Organizations (AU) were not created, this submission further affirmed the relevance of the Functionalism Theory to this study.

On a general note, it has been observed that conflict is a multifaceted phenomenon as it involves both violent (physical) and nonviolent (structural) conflict but it all depends on the viewpoint of the researcher. In this research, we are mainly concerned about the violent aspects of conflict like the case of the Darfur crisis in Sudan. One may ask why Africa is prone to violent conflict as every sub-region in the continent has one or more countries confronting conflict and security challenges. The first possible answer to this question is that the Europeans who partitioned the continent never consider ethnic, racial and religious differences before demarcating and grouping Africans to form States. This negligence by the Europeans which was permeated by parochial interest could be identified as the 'primary source 'of most contemporary African conflicts like that of the Darfur region. The differences in tribe and religion have become the tool to acquire political power as well as an instrument of political mobilization by selfish politicians who take advantage of epic phenomena to cause national disharmony along religious and ethnic lines. Also, apart from the forceful partitioning of African States as earlier stated, since most African countries are practicing democracy, ethnic and religious identities have become the basis to acquire political power and allocation of authoritative values. In other words, bad governance is the key factor that fuels conflict in Africa. For example, the South Sudanese people alleged that uneven allocation of authoritative values and politics of exclusion and elimination prompted their aggression to revolt against the Sudanese Government. As long as good governance remains a myth in the African States, ethno-religious conflicts and liberation movements might not cease on the continent. From this observation, in Africa, conflict is conceptualize as the violent manifestation of incompatibilities of groups over the struggle for authoritative values which the inherent

forces are destructive to lives and properties, whereby concerned bodies, governments or organizations show interest to reduce the incompatibilities or put an end to it .

When conflict ensues among parties and a third party intervenes in conflict resolution. The various methodologies were discussed in chapter two of this work. As much as the western methodologies were applied in African conflicts in the past, does not mean that these methodologies can be applicable in all situations. This is because conflicts come with peculiar natures and dimensions. This will take us to bear our mind that AU should conceptualize African- oriented approaches to tackle conflicts in the continent, most likely at the initial stage before such conflict degenerate into the uncontrolling stage. AU is fond of the traditional method of sending African elder state men to mediate among conflicting parties and mobilize troops when mediation fails and the conflict intensifies. But, one may ask, what is the current operational stake of the AU's Early Warning System in predicting possible outbreaks of conflicts in the continent? Does it mean that the Organization has not been using this platform to predict possible manifestation of conflict

in the continent? Is it that AU usually treats the System's report with less priority and levity? One thing we must know is that more credence will be given to AU for preventing conflict than for managing it. Because by preventing conflicts lives and properties that would be claimed by the conflicting forces will be preserved. While resources that are used for managing the conflicts could be a channel for development.

In other words, the 'missing link' is that AU is yet to realize that it is cheaper and safer to devote attention to conflict prevention than conflict resolution.

CONCLUSION

Although religion and ethnicity appear to be the causes of the Darfur crisis, the actual cause was predicated on the uneven allocation of authoritative resources between North and South Sudan which was considered as political subjugation and economic exploitation against the Southern Sudanese. These sheer injustices led to the civil war which claimed about 1.5 million lives of Sudanese and an unestimated worth of properties were destroyed. The inability of the Sudanese Government to manage and cope with the conflict gave African Union the impetus to intervene. This premise made us show the relevance

or linkage of the Functionalism Theory to this work because the

exponents of Functionalism Integration Theory argued that International Organization were established as a result of the gap created by the inability of States to single-handedly and effectively manage conflicts and other forms of development challenges in their territory.

Thus, through its structures, the African Union was the first International Organization that intervened in the crisis before 31st December 2007 when the mission was handed over to the UN. This made us believe the phrase 'Structures performing Functions' as presented by (Michael Hans) a leading proponent of Functionalism is not a myth but reality. Because it was through the structures that AU was able to perform certain functions in the Darfur conflict resolution. African Union worked assiduously with the UN in all ramifications before and after the referendum with the interest that Sudan is in Africa, and whatever happens to Sudanese would directly or indirectly affect the African continent. Therefore, it was against this background that motivated AU to play a major and leading role in the Darfur crisis resolution and peacebuilding process.

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