

The creation of the oau



The AU was born out of the (OAU). The OAU was created as a measure of African resolve for pan-decolonization and promotion of African solidarity in 1963. When the OAU charter was signed, it incorporated 47 countries of varying black and Arab origins as a measure to promote this solidarity (Binaisa 1977; Biswaro, 2005). At a meeting of nation-states in Tripoli, Libya, H. E. Alpha Omar Konare, President of the Republic of Mali at the time and Chairmen of The Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) suggested the use of the AU as a replacement for the OAU because the mission of OAU - African liberation from the hold of colonialism had been realized. According to Alpha Omar Konare, the OAU had lost its political mandate and could not uphold the economic mandate stated by the Abuja Treaty. It therefore follows that the AU should function as a replacement for the OAU and should also serve as a consolidation medium for the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) leading to a (con) federation of states (Biswaro, 2005). This led to the genesis of Sirte II, a draft Treaty to be submitted and signed in Lome on July 2000, marking the beginning of the African Union (Biswaro, 2005).

Considering the motivation for peace was the catalyst for the formation of regionalization, it follows that many regions have found themselves in peacekeeping operations (Dinan, 2003). Therefore, once the OAU met their goal of the widespread decolonization, their focus shifted toward a new mission: peace.

It is acknowledged that despite the virtue of peacemaking and peacekeeping, achieving and maintaining peace in Africa still remains a problem. The UN peacekeeping operations are mainly dependent on the

contributions of some of its few member states (namely the United States and a select other few wealthy nations) (Wall & Druckman, 2003) Even though the UN does not design its peacekeeping agenda based upon the price of a mission (Binaisa, 1977). Insufficient funds can impede upon mission effectiveness (Berman & Sams, 2000). The probability of success within a peacekeeping mission relies largely upon the organization, deployment, or direction of the force (Joffe & George, 1990).

The demand for peacekeeping in Africa has increased. This has been emphasized by the increase in UN annual budget of peacekeeping initiatives. In 1980, the annual budget for peace efforts was \$180 million, in 1994 that cost increased to \$3.5 billion and stood at about \$7 billion in 2008 (Deen, 2008).

This documented proliferation of conflict combined with a member-supported Peace Fund result in an over-stretched AU peacekeeping machine. The UN reports that the AU Peace Fund is \$48 million in arrears in funding its peacemaking and peacekeeping operations (Berman & Sams, 2000). This shortcoming in AU member funding provides an alarming illustration of the organization's inability to finance necessary and effective peacemaking and peacekeeping campaigns. Given the price tag of peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts, it follows that more effective and efficient uses of peacekeeping funds are needed (Binaisa, 1977).

Mediation which is the intercession of the third party to facilitate the talks between the conflicting groups has been found to be one of those price-efficient forms of peacekeeping. It often involves a face-to-face conversation

to work out differences and offers clarification on issues of contention, both with the intent to pacify conflict (Allott & Duffield, 1994).

According to RAND corporation, the UN's recent employment of mediation tactics upon the African continent has resulted in a 40 percent decline in the number of conflicts since 1992 (Deen, 2008). In Kenya for example, the former Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Anan, utilized this form of peacekeeping to end postelection riots at the price of a mere \$208 thousand (Deen, 2008).

The good track record of mediation in Africa recently, such as the stopping of a five-year conflict in Dafur (Sudan Tribune) as well as its inexpensive price tag makes mediation noteworthy within the study of peacekeeping in Africa (Binaisa, 1977). However, financial and logistical means are not the only impediments to peace. Political and cultural issues arise as well. Political constraints can include policies of inaction. This is exemplified by China's inaction towards leveraging its economic power with Sudan to encourage a cessation in hostilities (Joffe & George. 1990).

Other political constraints include policies of home countries which prevent peacemaking and peacekeeping goals from being set, such as the decline by Morocco to withdraw its troops from the Western Sahara as well as its rejection of the presence of UN and AU troops in the area to facilitate a self determination referendum (Binaisa, 1977).

Political impediments can also intertwine with ethnic constraints. The drawing of arbitrary borders during colonization, for example, have separated indigenous peoples, coupling rival clans together and potentially

sowing seeds of conflict. Furthermore, American and Russian funding of rival factions during the Cold War have fanned hot flames of conflict, further deepening conflict (Binaisa, 1977).

Border conflicts have seen Africa experience conflicts that have later resulted in war. This has led to many killings and displacement of people from their areas of residences. Border conflicts has seen countries such as Morocco and Algeria, Ghana and Togo, Burkina Faso and Mali, Somalia and Ethiopia, Libya and Chad, and Nigeria and Cameroon result to war. There is need to prevent the pread of such wars thus ensuring peace among the African people (Barbour, 1961). Whether this is a liability to these African states is an issue of debate with arguing that this artificialness of boundaries is found everywhere and Africa being an exceptional will be weak (Bello, 1995; Herbst, 1990, 2000; Mariam, 1964; Ngwa, 1993). Even though some don't see the nature of African boundaries being erratic, they concur in different capacities, that it has had a few negative consequences as the source of possibilities to the African population or that they were an asset for consolidating a state (Joffe & George. 1990).

Even those who supported the idea that the African continent has suffered from separation into parts, consider that however, it is much more expensive to reform these countries, despite all the benefits of it (Barbour, 1961). Some authors still consider that some countries would stand against if there were a threat of territorial changes. (Bello, 1995).

The recent conditions of political environment in Sub-Sahara were characterized by the failure of stated, international and internal conflicts and

weak authority structures. It increased the urgency of reconsideration of boundaries on the African continent. , This debate has, however, suffered from a lot of shortcomings that has hindered the progress on this question. Firstly, it has been accorded a systematic treatment, where much of its literature being opinion-based on opinions thus exposing it to some degree of biasness.

Secondly, in spite of few exceptions, it was considered that African continent exists as a single part from three divisions into territories and only the conditions of each state differ. The failure to count on these differences makes conclusions about the results of arbitrariness to be vague. As a result, international conflict emphasis also limits this debate. Given that interstate conflicts was not there in Africa till late 1990s renders redundant the argument that artificial borders are the cause of these conflicts (Allott & Duffield, 1994). Whatever the claims validity, it misses an important dimension of the nature and even consequences of boundaries.

If the boarders had to define who the others are, they could also define the self membership in neighborhood. According to C. Geertz (1973), postcolonial states apart from being liable for “dismembering” peoples across borders, it also “suffocate” those heterogeneous groups from the inside. However, domestic and international results of territorial arbitrariness are to be studied together.

A study of the level of arbitrariness of African boundaries with specific focus on the suffocation and dismemberment, looking into the possible consequences both domestically and internationally contrasted the

literature. It found out that arbitrary boundaries really magnify the possibility of conflicts both domestic and international. One of the problems experienced in the study, however, was the measurement difficulties.

It is very controversial whether the colonial boundaries play a role in the conflicts experienced in Africa. The factor of conflict among African countries is controversial. A common perception is that countries sharing arbitrary boundaries are likely to engage in disputes (United Nations, 1993). This is partly because such boundaries partition populations which were previously unified, leading to irredentist demands, creating chances for instability abroad, or otherwise increasing the political tensions with neighbors (Asiwaju, 1993).

Those claiming international irredentist consequences must be assuming that governments represent the interests of their partitioned citizens and will deploy efforts for their reunification, presumably within their own borders. Some circumstances, such as the level of the partitioned group, the prevalence of ethnic nationalism in the claimant country (Asiwaj, 1993: Touval, 1969), or the extent to which enforcement of the border by either government (Kapil, 1966), may magnify the chance of irredentist claims. The claim by Somalia over Ethiopian and Kenyan region inhabited by an ethnic Somali group has caused repeated conflicts with both countries, including long-term hostilities in Ethiopia's especially in the Ogaden region (Boyd, 1979; Kum, 1993) though by no means the only one. Global disputes with irredentist essentials have also involved Libya, Algeria, Western Sahara, Morocco, Chad, Togo, Ghana, and Ivory Coast.

Conflicts may also draw from the poorly defined nature of many borders. Africa as a continent is characterized by poor delimitation and demarcation. This could be because the partitioned-states were under the same colonial power or because of the imprecise colonial treaties. The former leads to classical territorial disputes and in the latter case attempts at demarcation often cause tensions. The discrepancies between the two, that is, delimitation and demarcation may also promote conflict (Joffe & George, 1990). The dispute between Benin and Niger (over the island of Lete), between Ethiopia and Somalia, and between Nigeria and Cameroon (Mariam, 1964; Ngwa, 1993), can all be attributed to the multiple and contradicting treaties.

Other delimitation conflicts in Africa involved Burkina and Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. Sudan and Kenya which also disagreed over the "Ilemi Triangle" portion found in their joint boundary (Brownlie, 1979). As for the ambiguous demarcation between Senegal and Gambia, it was only partly resolved when Senegal returned 26 villages from the Kantora region to Gambia in the 1960s in one of only two African precedents of postcolonial boundary redrawing (Renner, 1985).

The popular belief that the boundary area contains of natural resources has magnified disputes (Joffe & George, 1990). This was seen as the case with the armed clashes between Burkina and Mali in 1974-1985 over the Agacher strip, rumored to hold oil reserves. The Moroccan claim over the Western Sahara was also influenced presence of phosphate deposits in the region. In general, it can be seen that unequal resources - including water, oil and

other minerals, fisheries, and access to the sea - are what seem to be promote conflict (Asiwaju, 1993; Prescott, 1972).

Artificial borders have also been seen to offer pretexts of picking quarrels thus opportunity for disputes (Allott & Duffield, 1994). A very good example is the 'christmaswar' between Burkina and Mali in 1985. Though it was on territorial claims, it appeared secondary to the animosity between revolutionary regime and the conservative government. The dispute between Ghana and Togo in 1965 and 1966 was also partly driven by Nkrumah's domestic economic problems.

Several authors, in contrast, contend that boundary arbitrariness does not necessarily lead to belligerent or litigious outcomes (Boyd, 1979). They argue that partitioning can only be resisted by those groups with strong political identities or nomadic lifestyles and that irredentism is just but a diversion from political and economic problems. Barbour, (1961) points, for example, to the peaceful partition of the politically decentralized Alur between Zaire and Uganda.

Even the demands of unified groups, such as the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania, whose chiefs petitioned the British Colonial Office for reunification before independence, have been tamed by the process of the nation-building. How the split groups relate to structures of power in each country also matters. More important, there is a consensus that weak African governments are unlikely to challenge each other on irredentist issues for the fear of triggering a chain reaction of territorial realignments from which none of them can expect to escape unscathed (Asiwaju, A. I. 1984,

December). Given the large numbers of partitioned African groups, the rarity of actual occurrences of reunification attempts is seen as evidence for this view (Boyd, 1979; Touval, 1985).

For similar reasons, the lack of demarcation or delimitation is not supposed to be perceived as the cause of conflict. In fact, the permeability of many of Africa's weakest states' borders may render their arbitrariness largely irrelevant in practice (Asiwaju, 1985). From this point of view, it can be deduced that territorial attractiveness in Africa does not result in conflict. This is because of the absence of empirical effectiveness of the African state (Barbour, 1961).

Little relationship therefore, should exist between poor demarcation or delimitation and conflict. From this discussion, the following hypotheses derived: Hypothesis 1. The extent of dispute's likelihood is dependent on the degree of dismemberment and the political centralization of the partitioned groups; Hypothesis 2. The dispute likelihood increases with the decreasing delimitation or demarcation of boundaries; Hypothesis 3. The greater is the use of straight lines, the greater is the likelihood of disputes.

The findings above support claims that boundaries matter in Africa and that some African countries have paid a substantial price for failing to challenge those they inherited from colonialism. Although the measure of international conflicts can be attributed to boundary disputes -arguably a minority of Africa's conflicts, the relationship between boundary arbitrariness and civil wars, political instability and secession attempts suggests the broad

relevance of suffocation and dismemberment to instances of the political violence rampant in Africa.

The claims for boundary changes in Africa may be legitimate, one of which could result in political benefits. Since not all African boundaries are equally arbitrary and that not all arbitrary ones are equally conflict-prone, reshuffling attempts should only target those conflict-prone boundaries. That is, it should be discriminatory and based on the established demands of the local people.

Whereas opponents of change claim that delimitation is inherently difficult due to nomadism, migration, and overlapping areas containing different groups (Barbour, 1961; Griffiths, 1986) and note that partitioning countries exposes them to conflicts (Sambanis, 2000). Others stress that the fact itself of changing boundaries could trigger a bigger violence than the one existing. As the Economist puts it, “ Stupid they may be, but trying to redraw them could plunge the continent into chaos (Barbour, K. M. 1961).

As real as this danger is, the current spread of violence across the continent has weakened this line of reasoning, and possibly because of, prevailing boundary rigidities. At the very least, the findings suggest the need for assessment of the social and economic costs of redrawing boundaries in light of the costs of maintaining peace in the already existing ones. It is suggested that the dilution of existing boundaries into larger regional or federal units for instance the East Africa Community (EAC) which brings together Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda, bringing similar groups together

and weakening individual ethnic claims, is a more realistic solution to the boundary problem in Africa (Asiwaju, A. I. 1984).