

Review

Contending hegemony and the new security systems in Africa

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This paper evaluates the new scramble for Africa in the post-cold war era which has largely contributed to the geostrategic reshaping of the continent. Although much like its predecessor, this newfound scramble is based on resource scarcity that favors dominant powers and discards the hopes and interests of African peoples. The paper deviates, as it should, from the pessimistic outlook that western scholars have adopted in their prediction of African future. Rather, this analysis builds on the perspective founded by prominent Pan African figures like Henry Sylvester Williams, Edward W. Blyden, W.E.B. Du Bois and Kwame Nkrumah where the main focus lies in forming a comprehensive view of Africa founded on principles of unity and renaissance, in a way that supports the aspiration of the African peoples. The aim of this study is to emphasize the importance of solving African problems through African perspectives, reiterating the need for relying on the African Union (AU) as framework to formulate a system of collective security. The African Peace and Security Architecture came into existence by establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) in 2004.

Key words: Hegemony, scramble for Africa, security, soft power, The African Union, AFRICOM.

INTRODUCTION

There has been vital transformation in the global geo-strategic scene after the end of the cold war, leading to a renewed international focus on governance and security affairs. The main drivers for the shift in focus are perhaps due to the international community's growing security concerns paired with unprecedented complications that have shaped recent global affairs. Such focus is embodied with the ongoing controversy regarding the importance of reforming the United Nations and redefining the international system.

Under such global transformation scenario, there is a big question about the role and status of Africa in the light

of rising global powers, such as China, India, and Brazil. The remarks made by the South African President Jacob Zuma have indicated that Africa can make effective contributions to global security affairs in the context of a changing global power structure (WEF, 2013). Such contributions would not only lead to renewed interest in Africa, but also to the existence of social, environmental, and security issues in global level with significant implications on the international sphere. The rise of violence and religious extremism in North and West Africa, accompanied by the border security dilemmas involving illicit arms trade and organized crime in west

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Africa and the Sahel region, as well as the ongoing piracy of the African horn, have not only constituted a priority issue on the global agenda, but have also dictated the African strategic planning.

The international hegemonic policies, which have long scrambled for African resources, have shown that it is quite unlikely for an African nation to rise as a strategy-imposing superpower in the current transformative post-cold war era. That mixed with the well-rooted stereotypes regarding the continent has placed it in a position of inherent poverty, backwardness, and conflict, for which Africans are themselves to blame. The western view of Africa is still characterized by the Hagel perspective, which dictates "Africa proper has no historical interest of its own, for we find its inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery in a land which has not furnished them with any integral ingredient of culture. From the earliest historical times, Africa has remained cut off from all contacts with the rest of the world; it is the land of gold, forever pressing in upon itself, and the land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night (Bayart, 2000, p.217). "

Africa was evidently geopolitically reshaped during the Berlin conference in 1884-1885, which according to Rodney et al. (1981) has incurred Africans the burden of western development.

The Hegemonic Approach of International Relations is very useful in analyzing the dynamics of the global post-cold war scramble for Africa, and its implications on security and conflict within the region. The term 'Hegemony' here acquires two meanings: the first relates to the global power paradigm, while the second pertains to the dominance of certain ideas or assumptions, such as Neo-liberalism and Globalization (Waltz , 2009, p.31; Brooks and Wohlforth, 2008). Both the definitions will form the scope and basis of investigation in this paper. Within this hegemonic discourse, dominant powers use their sources of soft and hard power to influence and limit the decision making capabilities of less abled countries. This does not happen under a legal framework; rather it is enforced through practical considerations. The global power paradigm, in this light, has been challenged by a no-longer-withstanding Hegemonic stability theory. This is embodied in the post-cold war African experience, where the scuffle between dominant players and less abled countries has turned many political conflicts into violent endeavors.

This paper henceforth outlines a basic assumption that the new scramble for Africa in the post-cold war era has largely contributed to the geostrategic reshaping of the continent¹. This analysis builds on the perspective founded by prominent Pan African figures like Henry Sylvester Williams, Edward W. Blyden, W.E.B. Du Bois and Kwame Nkrumah and Kwame Nkrumah, where the main focus lies in forming a comprehensive view of Africa founded on principles of unity and renaissance, in a way that supports the aspiration of the African peoples (Peller, 2012, pp.149-152.).

A review of the literature pertaining to issues of hegemony and security systems in post-cold war Africa finds it synonymous with the tale of the Blind Men and the Elephant (Rume,1975), which demonstrates how partial views will lead to partial truths and encourages comprehensive outlooks as a method of truth-seeking. The neoliberal discourse has justified the new scramble for Africa as a feature of contemporary globalization. In this regard, The Economist magazine published an article titled "Rising Africa: A hopeful continent"ⁱⁱⁱ (2013). This discourse patently emphasizes the importance of integrating Africa in the new paradigm of Globalization (Kieh, 2008). Another discourse dubs the situation in Africa as a new colonial scramble for resources, characterizing the new global powers as neocolonial nations in disguise (Obi, 2009; Carmody, 2011). A third discourse, mainly adopted by African scholars, emphasizes on the importance of solving African issues through African perspectives, reiterating the need for relying on the AU as framework to formulate a system of collective security (Adesida and Oteh, 2001). However , this discourse admits that there are still some important shortcomings such as the political will of the member states and the acute financial resources gap that continues to confront the AU (Besada, 2010,p.47).

A holistic view of the post-cold war Africa, in the light of the global war on terror, must take into account the interests of rising hegemon amidst a transforming world order that is yet to retain its shape. This order might prove to be multipolar in terms of number of Hegemons, in which case this would create an opportunity for African nations to reorganize its priorities and form strong alliances with the rising new powers. The discussion in this paper is therefore divided into three parts. The first part discusses the policies and strategies of Hegemons and their impacts on the geostrategic engineering of Africa. Egypt is referred to as one of the multiple examples of the reengineering process, where it was isolated from its African context according to the American perspective of a 'New Middle East'. The greater African Horn, the Sahel region and the Gulf of Guinea also appear to be subjects to this engineering process. The second part explains modes and models of hegemony and conflict in Africa from military, economic and technological perspectives. The third part discusses the prominent security policies and the existence of an African alternative to the unfolding hegemonic scene. Such discussion will run from the standpoint of the new security doctrine offered by the AU under the slogan of "African Solutions to African Problems". The PSC has become the single most powerful institution within the security architecture of the AU.

New hegemon and the strategic reengineering of Africa

The African continent has been, for many centuries since

the slave trade, subjected to multiple processes of resource-draining by power hungry nations. Ali Mazrui, states that "Imperialism and gunboat diplomacy made colonized Africa part of world-wide empires. But colonized people are inevitably marginalized people. The extractive imperative made African minerals fuel the world economy. African minerals enriched other economies rather than Africa's own (Mazrui, 1999,p.7). The new scramble for Africa should be seen as part of a continuous process of mineral extraction in Africa that has been in motion since early colonialism. The rapid increase in raw minerals and oil prices has driven traditional powers like the United States and Europe, and rising powers like China, to thrive for the control of the African oil well. The goal here becomes not only profit-seeking, but also a bid to seize strategic resources. The United States, in this sense, faces a threat to its current strategic position in the region, and hence relies on the same anti-terrorism narrative as adopted in the Middle East to justify military intervention. The aspirations of the United States go beyond securing reliable and plentiful sources of oil, but also in combating the growing Chinese influence and religious extremism (Banks et al., 2013). Perhaps this "New Front" in the battle against jihadi Islam, alongside issues of Security and Energy formulate a mixture that characterizes the old and the new scrambles alike and justify the militarized American approach that accompanies the global anti-terrorism campaign.

A clear manifestation of this militarized approach is the United States Africa Command, (U.S. AFRICOM), which is an organization that includes administrative headquarters for the US Secretary of Defense and which encompasses all African countries, with the exception of Egypt. The organization was formed on 1st October 2008, and is based in Stuttgart, Germany, after it has been continuously rejected by African Nations. Egypt, however, was listed under a different Military command that handles the affairs of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, which is based in Tampa, Florida.

The AFRICOM, which is tasked with military and civilian projects, has superficially aimed to empower Africans by endorsing their collective security. However, many analysts suggest that the AFRICOM in its current form reflects the militarized strategy that the US adopts in dealing with complex workings of security issues across the continent. This strategy also assumes that fighting terrorism and guarding the US's supply line of coal, metals and other resources, amidst the growing presence of China has found its way as a top priority in the US.

This is evidently reflected in the growing levels of military funding, training and expenditure directed at some African countries (Volman, 2007; Keenan, 2008; Francis, 2010).

Issues dealing with Egypt and the African Horn were assigned to the United States Central Command until 2008, when the US placed Egypt in its scheme for a New

Middle East and deprived it of its African context. However, the Horn of Africa, centered around Ethiopia, retained its position as a key interest for AFRICOM.

Nonetheless, it is evident that the geostrategic reformatting of Africa has shed light on region that were otherwise neglected, among which is the Greater Sahel Region. The region has been dubbed in earlier Western literature as strategically useless. Attention for the region started in early 2003, when a militant group following the Salafist Jihadi movement under the leadership of Amari Saifi, managed to detain western hostages awaiting ransom. The American security and Intelligence efforts at the time, have paved the way for the "Pan Sahel Initiative" which is aimed at assisting local forces in detecting and combating illicit trade movements and Jihadi Islamist militant activity.

An article published in the Air force Magazine in 2004, named "Swamp of Terror in the Sahara" illustrates how the vast deserts of the Sahara, which mount up to unmonitored and unpaved paths, form a stronghold for terrorists. The article also points out to the illicit drug trade, weak security establishment, lack of central authority and widespread corruption as harboring factors of radical and extremist groups and ideologies. This has led General James Jones, former commander of the US-European Command, to state, "We need to drain this swamp." The US has hence solidified its military presence in the region through the framework of the Pan Sahel Initiative.

Modes of hegemony and conflicts in Africa

Five modes of hegemony can be identified in the context of the global and regional scramble for Africa. The first mode is military hegemony, which points to the militarized nature of the scramble. This is embodied in the French and American interventions in the conflict zones of the Sahel, West Africa and the regional interventions by Ethiopia, Uganda, Burundi and Kenya in Somalia. The second mode is the ideological hegemony, which refers to the preaching of neoliberal ideologies with its political and economic dimensions. These ideologies have constituted new principles in international relations such as humanitarian intervention, responsibility to protect, and many others.

The presence of China and other regional actors such as Israel, Turkey, and Iran, poses a third mode of soft hegemony, which relies on soft power such as labor. The fourth mode pertains to the control of water resources and the rise of new regional powers in the Nile basin region at the expense of Egypt and Sudan. This raises the question of water conflict and the militarization of water security in the African setting. The fifth mode relates to the roles that some rising actors assume in their regional contexts such as in the cases of Nigeria and South Africa.

The different modes of hegemony are discussed below.

Military hegemony

The US and its Western allies, particularly France, have resorted to the military approach in Africa as a means of securing natural resources such as oil and uranium, contesting national security threats, limiting Chinese influence, and finally combating religious extremist groups. This model of military intervention is not only limited proliferation of military power through direct intervention such as in Libya and Somalia, but also extends to building military bases, commencing training programs, sending advisors and personnel, and facilitating logistical support. Reports have shown that the AFRICOM has carried out its military activities in more than 49 African countries (Schmidt, 2013, pp. 213-225).

In some cases, the American military is engaged in secret warfare by either offering training centers for African Allies or the usage of pilotless aircrafts that target Al-Shabab militant group in Somalia or members of Al Qaeda in North Africa (Keenan, 2009). In other cases, the US alternatively offers assistance in building essential facilities and offering key services. The most prominent US military bases in Africa are Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti and the Niger-based camp specializing in hosting drones, which was announced in February 2013. Other US bases are located in Entebbe, Ouagadougou and other areas in Kenya and Ethiopia.

Moreover, the US reserves several African locations as fueling stations for its ships. These locations are Duala in Cameroon, Mindelo in Cape Verde, Abidjan in Ivory Coast, Port-Gentil in Gabon, Sekondi in Ghana, Mombasa in Kenya, Port Louis in Mauritius, Gulf of Levins in Namibia, Lagos in Nigeria, Port Victoria in the Seychelles, Durban in South Africa and Dare Salam in Tanzania (Turse, 2013).

The clear military intervention in Libya, Mali, and Côte d'Ivoire forms a model for the current Western raid on Africa. This raid is different from the older colonial scramble in two ways. The first difference relies on the fact that scramble for resources can include consensual wealth-sharing within one state. This means that the regional borders that once confined the colonial scramble to one colonialist state per nation no longer stands. For example, in the case of military intervention in Mali, the French immediately found American and European support. The need to organize conferences to coordinate colonial affairs, like those historically held in London or Berlin, is overshadowed by the overarching framework of the UN, which is facilitated by the Western powers for decision endorsement after the humanitarian dimension has been provoked.

The second difference, which is noteworthy, is that the new scramble is carried out with African assistance as evident in the cases of Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali

(Charbonneau, 2008). The historical links between the former colonialist powers and their ex-colonies have resulted in African nations being engaged in proxy wars. This new archetype is supported by the African need for Western aid as well as the fear of a growth spurt in terrorist activities.

Ideological hegemony

The Western narrative has changed after the cold war, where multiple Western statements signaled the end of a struggle with the Eastern Bloc and the return of the new Western burden of spreading principles of humanitarian intervention and responsibility to protect. This led to the characterization of the current Western narrative (De Waal, 2000; Deans, 2005).

It is noteworthy that the anti-homosexuality laws adopted in Africa are attributed by the Western commentators to the primitive African lifestyle. In spite of this claim, a recent survey for the Pew Global Attitudes puts disapproval of homosexuality at greater than 90 percent for many African countries (Pew, 2013). According to this Western narrative, it becomes essential for the development of African nations to follow the industrially-skilled Western expertise. In Malawi's case, anti-homosexuality laws have been frozen after the Western threats of pulling back foreign investments from the country. The *Economist*, which is considered one of the most supporters of same sex marriage stated that some countries such as Uganda are penalized by the West for their assault on homosexuals. However, the magazine was very cautious that this policy could send Africa to the hands of Chinese (The *Economist*, 2014).

Thus, it is evident that the actions of the UN are influenced greatly by the lobbying of Western nations, especially the US. Such influence has made humanitarian intervention an end in itself, rather than an alternative to the peaceful settlement of conflicts. This has led to two phenomena. The first phenomenon is the escalation of demands by conflicting parties as their perception of the conflict has been distorted by the external intrusion. This is illustrated by the protracted conflicts in the Horn of Africa. The second phenomenon is the selective nature of the international peacekeeping missions mandated to intervene in conflict zones, which allows for the catering of the interests of human rights organizations and lobbying nations. This is illustrated clearly in the case of Darfur (Hassan, 2010, pp 20-32).

The measures of international justice seem to be affected by the magnitude of Western hegemony. A thorough overview and analysis of the International Criminal Court (ICC) since its initiation reveals its selective nature. It becomes a valid speculation that international justice is relevant only to Africans. This has left some commentators to label Africa as a 'lab rat' for the new world order. The court is looking into four cases

that relate to the Great African Horn, namely, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur and Central Africa. Other cases submitted to the court from 139 countries have often been rejected on the grounds that they are outside the court's jurisdiction. The most popular of these cases is regarding human rights violations and war crimes during the US invasion of Iraq (Ashour, 2010).

Soft hegemony

Although water is a soft liquid, it can move a heavy rock to a considerable distance. As a general rule, anything soft and flexible can out power anything hard and stringent. Soft power is of great importance, and Nye defines it as, "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment" (Nye, 2004, p.11). Nye identifies that soft power is linked with three main sources: the cultural ability to attract, practical political principles and the social and ethical dimensions of foreign policy. He argues that soft power related to culture and popular opinion constitutes a considerable arsenal to the collective power of countries. Similar to hard military power, it becomes important to formulate the concept of soft power and determine its objectives. The Chinese, Israeli, Iranian and Turkish post-cold war policies are examples of this soft hegemony.

The Chinese tools of soft power in Africa include (Hassan, 2007):

1. The Confucius Institutes, a non-profit educational and cultural institution aiming to provide Chinese language lessons to those who seek it outside of China. According to its website, the Institute has around 39 branches in Africa.
2. The African Development Fund: This fund was founded on June 26th, 2007 with a head start of 5 billion USD. Its first phase of operation included a billion USD fund directed at developmental projects. The Chinese experience in economic development is regarded by Schiere (2011) as a role model and a strong point of reference for other countries.
3. Educational scholarships: Chinese universities provide approximately 4000 educational scholarships to African students (King, 2013). In addition, thousands of other African students are enrolled in Chinese institutions at the expense of other institutions.
4. Health diplomacy: China has enjoyed a long history of providing medical aid to Africa; Chinese medical teams have toured the continent for treating patients and training medics. Moreover, the Chinese Health Ministry has participated in programs that help combat communicable diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDs.

Due to the importance of Afro-Chinese relations, the former Chinese Prime Minister, Xiang Zhenen, proposed a partnership plan based on cooperation and common

interest during the Chinese-African Ministerial Conference in 2000. African commentators considered such Afro-Chinese relations as important due to the values of interdependence among the rising nations that they promote, as a means of fixing the current power paradigm.

The Chinese relationship with Africa has seen a sharp evolution, with China becoming Africa's most prominent trade partner in 2009. The net trade between the African countries and China reached a milestone of 198.49 billion dollars in 2012. Meanwhile, Chinese exports to Africa have reached 85.3 billion dollars while its imports from Africa have reached \$113.171 billion (China-Africa, 2013).

However, the real motives behind this strategic approach towards Africa should also be considered. From the Chinese perspective, three factors can be identified:

1. The Chinese quest in reinforcing its position as a rising global power, for which strategic cooperation with countries of the South is essential. Africa undoubtedly holds a key position in this quest.
2. The growing Chinese demand on natural resources and the need to secure such resources. Africa's open markets and its investment potential when it comes to natural resources place it among the top subjects for Chinese investments. Additionally, such investment potential grants the opportunity for multiple job openings for the Chinese. For example, in Angola, thousands of Chinese personnel work in infrastructural railway construction projects.
3. The successful Chinese attempts to curb the growing Taiwanese calls for independence. This can be illustrated by the fact that after Chad had revoked its acknowledgment of Taiwan, there were only five African countries that still diplomatically recognized Taipei's regime.

The African perspective on reinforcing the relationship with China can be conversely analyzed by the following factors:

1. Political considerations: According to Africa, China has no colonial history. Moreover, since it belongs to the global South, China has gained African support. China also forms a break from the unipolar global structure. More importantly, China's permanent seat in the UN Security Council constitutes a source of protection for many smaller African countries with no significant political cost.
2. Economic considerations: The growing Chinese economy is a crucial source of development and investment in Southern countries. Although the net flow of Chinese investment is limited in relation to the global rates, it remains of significant help to some smaller nations in Africa. The Chinese economic model, in this sense, constitutes a viable alternative to the growingly

unpopular neoliberal model, supported by Washington. Moreover, Chinese trade relations are often unaccompanied by political terms or conditions, as with the case of Western trade relations. This can be seen in the cases of Sudan and Zimbabwe. The only condition for economic cooperation put forward by China is the integrity of the 'One China' principle that dictates the non-recognition of Taiwan.

Despite such factors, China's bid in Africa is riddled with many challenges that have been the subject of multiple African and international literature pieces.

Water hegemony

Similar to the concept of Water Wars which means fighting over Earth's most precious fluid, water hegemony is an ambiguous concept. It can, however, be defined as the success of one of the riparian nations in the seizure and control of water resources through one of the following mechanisms: direct use of force, bribery and gift-giving, providing legitimacy to the hegemon through channeled beliefs of mutual benefit, and ideological hegemony that enforces existing beliefs and customs (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006, 435-460).

In the past, Egypt has retained its position as the water hegemon in the Nile Valley region for decades, asserting its upper hand over neighboring riparian countries. African countries, including Ethiopia, have not dared to challenge Egypt's status, especially when it concerned Egypt's national security (Waterbury, 2002, p.167).

However, in the last decade, a new power balance has emerged in the Nile Valley region that has been shaped by counter-hegemony and the diminishing consensual framework by the hegemons and their subjects. Counter-hegemony can be characterized by two phases; the first is a reactive phase where the current system of hegemony is challenged while the second is a proactive phase where a new system of hegemony is constituted. It is the latter stage, however, which defines the process of counter-hegemony. There is a partial consensus among the researchers that Egypt played a hegemonic role in controlling the Nile waters as it relied on colonial legislation and on the 1959 agreement with Sudan. In addition, Egypt received continued global support for its status as a dominant water power (Hassan, 2011, pp. 131-152).

The new regional transformations have come to disfavor the advantageous position of Egypt and Sudan, especially after the Arab Spring in 2011 and the separation of South Sudan. Such transformations led to the growing dominance of East African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. It is quite evident that Chinese funding has significantly helped the Nile Basin countries to challenge Egypt's dominance, which in turn used to rely on pressuring global donors into funding any water projects after its

approval only (Hassan, 2010). Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan agreed in March 2015 on 'Declaration of Principles' on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This followed a decision in previous month by Egypt to return to the Nile Basin Initiative, a group it had boycotted for five years. However, Egypt is still looking at the GERD as a security threat that could reduce its annual water share as the 63 billion cubic meter reservoir behind the dam is filled.

Regional hegemony

The modes and models of hegemony are not limited to rising global actors or Western powers. It is also appropriate to consider the influence of some African nations, which can be dubbed as regional hegemons, on their regional scopeⁱⁱⁱ. The experience of post-apartheid South Africa forms a clear model of such regional hegemony. It is considered one of the most developed African states as it contributes to around 82% of the net GDP of the South African Development Community (SADC). This has led commentators to label South Africa among countries of the more developed North, despite belonging geographically to the South.

Hence, multiple researchers have labeled South Africa as a hegemon state. Emmanuel Wallenstein defined a hegemon state as one that is "able to impose a set of rules that shape interactions between states in a way that creates a new political system". A hegemon state can hence gain a political advantage in the projects and investments it owns and supports (Wallenstein, 2002). Adam Habib (2009), a respected professor of political science, believes that South Africa can at least be labeled as a hegemon with its regional context. With the characteristics of hegemony, the following can be concurred about South Africa:

1. Played a key role in building a continental perspective to the African renaissance project as well as in The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) that was initiated in 2001.
2. Has claimed a proactive role in adopting initiatives concerned with institutional development, especially those regarding the AU in 2002.
3. The political leadership has adopted a policy of decisive confrontation in areas of conflicts that threaten national security, as was the case with Lesotho.
4. South Africa holds a leading role in the private and public business sectors in terms of economic development and investment across the nation.

Other researchers, however, have rejected the notion that South Africa is a hegemon state. Landsberg (2004) believes that South Africa is mislabeled as an African superpower. It can be, nonetheless, considered as a potential hegemon or more specifically, a pivotal state in the regional and international sense. The pivotal state

refers to a country that holds relatively more power than its neighbors.

This power permits the exercise of influence over other countries and the course of events in the region. This concept of the pivotal state may contradict with the concept of the dominant state, which considers itself a strong state capable of enforcing the law in the region. The pivotal state works for the benefit and in collaboration with other neighboring states through partnerships. South Africa can be considered as a regionally influential state for its enormous economic potentials and the foundation of the democratic system in the aftermath of the fall of the apartheid regime in 1994. Since the mid-nineties, the political leadership is working on reaching a balance between the internal demands and the regional and international commitments. It has also led the efforts supporting the issues of the South against the dominance of Western powers in the new world order. Undoubtedly, South Africa is facing major internal and external constraints, affecting its abilities to exercise its leading role.

One of the main challenges for South Africa's regional role affecting its global position in the medium and long term is the African acceptance of this role on one hand and the hesitant and indecisive position of the South African policy makers on the practice and requirements of such a role. These strong doubts in South Africa's dominant role can be attributed to historical factors. Political, economic and military pressures exerted by the Government of Pretoria on its neighbors at the time of apartheid are still not forgotten. Therefore, African countries, especially those competing for South Africa's regional role such as Nigeria, Angola and Zimbabwe, are very sensitive to any attempt by the Pretoria government to exercise any leading role on the political and economic levels.

South Africa is conscious of these dilemmas and has thus adopted non-strict or violent actions in many cases where it was required to carry out its responsibilities as a leader. Many studies show that this reluctance or hesitation in the imposition of South Africa's leading role on opposing countries is due to economic reasons. Political leadership in Pretoria does not have a national consistent strategy to fight poverty and eradicate social marginalization in poor rural and urban communities. Undoubtedly, failure in eradicating poverty may lead to the intensification of alienation and the risk of social instability for the poorer classes of the society.

On the other hand, the Government of Pretoria suffers from the weakness of its strategic planning agency, which has led to conflicts between the internal and external goals and agendas. South Africa's actions towards the Arab Spring indicate the absence of a clear or common vision or set priorities in its foreign policies.

The Pretoria's political leadership has presented itself in the post-apartheid era as a representative of the African continent and the countries of the South. It

is striking that Pretoria gained more international acceptance for playing this role than in the African interiors. This can be demonstrated in the following examples:

(1) South Africa continues to strive hard to serve in the major international institutions. In the framework of the UN reform efforts and in collaboration with the AU, South Africa is leading a campaign for Africa's permanent seat in the UN Security Council, intending to reserve a seat for itself if the campaign is successful.

(2) South Africa played a significant role in supporting the issues of the South during the discussions with the World Trade Organization and Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in 2009.

(3) It joined the BRICS group, which includes Brazil, Russia, India, and China, in 2011^{iv}. The South African government formed the IBSA in 2003, a trilateral international group including both India and Brazil.

In spite of the constraints and dilemmas related to the internal situation in South Africa, the process of peaceful transition and democratization and reconciliation with past racial injustices has pushed South Africa to become the largest economic power in Africa. According to the statistics in 2010, the South African economy was ranked 27th on the list of the world's largest economies with a total GDP of 364 billion dollars. It was ranked above countries such as Denmark, Finland, and Singapore. South Africa comes at the bottom of the list of rising international powers, particularly in terms of economic achievements. However, its importance as a rising power in the international system is measured in terms of relative strength compared to the achievements of other African countries and not in terms of numbers and statistics.

Security policies and the alternative model

Through the analysis of foreign and regional dominance patterns in Africa, we can refer to four major approaches to deal with conflict and security in the post-Cold War issues.

The first approach is the direct Western military intervention. The US and France, followed by the Western countries, moved to the militarization of the international scramble for dominance in Africa in an effort to secure their access to African natural resources, simultaneously challenging the growing Chinese influence in Africa^v. The West has used the war on terrorism, the support to democratization, the protection of the civilian population or the so-called humanitarian intervention to cover up its real objectives. The intervention in Cote d'Ivoire, Libya, and Mali give a clear example of this approach.

This security approach may lead to an increase in radical and jihadist tendencies among the Saharan Africa's population, resulting in the creation of a suitable

environment to turn Northern Mali region into Afghanistan of Africa. The impact of Western interventions on the security and stability of neighboring countries such as Algeria and Tunisia and the escalation of more internal conflicts are inevitable, turning the whole region into an extremely conflicting complex.

France follows a similar discourse by carrying out its foreign policies in Africa. Bruno Charbonneau believes that France is seeking to re-formulate domination strategies in order to reproduce hegemony in new forms and mechanisms; the dialectic of the French discourse on security and hegemony represents a key element to practice French domination (Charbonneau, *op. cit.*, pp 8-9). The French military intervention in Africa since its independence reveals that the French discourse and policies cannot ignore the fact that these African countries are the product of the French colonial mentality. The political, economic and cultural ties with 'French Africa' gave France precedence and leadership in the management of any potential conflicts in Francophone Africa.

The study of the French military presence in Africa clearly demonstrates that France was never a neutral or honest party seeking a peaceful, fair settlement of African conflicts. The French foreign policy continues to be biased in trying to maintain or reproduce societal conditions that meet the French interests, thus protecting its policies of hegemony and exploitation.

The second approach is represented in the intervention through an African proxy. This approach is called "The Western Money" and "African Boots". In this case, the Western countries seek to avoid participation in a large-scale war by sharing the burden of security and enabling African forces to deal with their local conflicts. The regional intervention operations in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes are clear examples of this western security approach. However, the critical study of this approach shows its disastrous consequences on the African integration process. This involvement by proxy discourse has led to the internal destruction of Sudan and Somalia with the emergence of secession movements and the paradigm of self-determination.

The eastern Congo, rich with natural resources, is another example of the western mode of competition. According to the American foreign policy in Africa, the case of Rwanda is similar to the case of Israel in the Middle East to the extent that an array of literature names Rwanda as the "Israel of Africa". Rwandan leadership has built close relations with Israel based on their shared experience of genocide. Currently, we face a new colonial division of Africa, but this time with the participation of African regional powers.

The international and regional security policies in the Horn of Africa have determined a geostrategic perception of the future of Somalia. Three major regions will be established in the new Somalia. The first region is the Southern Somalia, where Kenya, through its military

presence, is seeking control of the strategic city and port of Kismayo in order to establish the Jubaland region closer to the border by integrating the Lower and Middle Juba and Gedo regions. By this, Kenya aspires to establish a buffer zone inside the Somali territory against the threats of the young Mujahideen. The second region is the Central Somalia, which includes the strategic Hiran region. Ethiopia seeks to extend its control over this region and establish a pro-Ethiopia regional authority in order to achieve its dream of controlling Somalia and using its ports for accessing the outside world. The third region is the Banadir region and its capital Mogadishu and surrounding areas, which are all under the control of the AU forces (AMISOM).

The complications of the internal situation in Somalia and the intertwined regional and international interests, related to the strategic location of the Horn of Africa, have prevented any real settlement of the Somali dilemma. The election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has not put an end to the state of division and fragmentation in Somalia; it is rather an expression of the international and regional will to put an end to the Somali chaos. The recent UN report on Somalia recalled that in November 2012, the Kenyan forces and their ally Sheikh Ahmed Madobe started a one-sided exportation of charcoal from the port of Kismayo. This was in violation of the charcoal export ban imposed by the Security Council and under the instructions of the Somali President. Under the same light, the youth movement still maintains its position in the commercial networks of charcoal and still achieves substantial financial gains (UN Report, 2013).

The third approach is associated with the use of soft power by the new emerging powers in the international system. China's policies for funding water projects in the Nile Basin challenged the status quo that preserved Egypt's water dominance. Therefore, China has contributed to the growing interest in Ethiopia and the Nile upstream countries in exploiting water resources of the river without the need for prior approval of Egypt. This new perspective has provoked conflict over water in the Nile Basin. Some researchers have also warned of the coming water wars in the region. Undoubtedly, the interference of countries, such as Israel and Iran, in the African sphere has created new sources of tension and conflict. The most prominent of these sources are the Sunni-Shiite conflict and the Afro-Arab conflict.

Although China's military ties with some countries are experiencing civil wars and intense armed conflicts, China offers an alternative security model that challenges Western approaches. China is trying to overcome Western criticism of its policies supporting "disobedient" African countries such as Sudan and Zimbabwe by harmonizing these policies with those of the African Union and regional organizations. China's foreign policy accentuates the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs (Taylor, 2007, pp. 139-146.). China has supported the AU

security architecture. "By sending its largest troops in African war-torn countries named Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sudan while other great powers are reluctant to dispatch, Beijing has actively and substantively responded to conflict threat through mediation or conflict-resolution efforts (Ayenagbo et al., 2012,p.22).

Regional security approach: Some regional organizations and major regional actors play important roles in the formulation of region-specific security policies and in determining the dynamics of the security approach in the region. Nigeria plays a leading role in dealing with security issues within the framework of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS). This can be attributed to the Nigerian status and power in the region. However, the extent of Nigeria's dominance in the region is doubtful. Despite these doubts, Nigeria remains a large and influential force in the formulation of any security policy in West Africa.

The regional role of South Africa seems central compared to the Nigerian role because the military establishment in South Africa is better in terms of preparation and training and has the necessary resources to deploy peacekeeping forces outside the borders. However, there remains the fear of having a dominant regional power behind the ineffectiveness of peace and security structures in southern Africa. On the other hand, the traditional rivalry between Ethiopia and Kenya and the intense hostility between Eritrea and Ethiopia are a stumbling block to the development of security policies in East Africa. The Algerian-Moroccan disputes over the Western Sahara and the challenge of the Egyptian role have greatly hindered the formation of a North African military force.

Alternative security model

Due to the failure of the security policy of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), African leaders decided to adopt a new security system that works through the African Union. The AU has been entrusted new tasks and functions. The most prominent of these tasks and functions are (Powell, 2005, pp.9-10): to strengthen security and stability in Africa, predict and prevent conflicts, support the implementation of peace-building to assist in the reconstruction of post-conflicts phase, coordinate continental efforts to prevent and combat international terrorism, develop a common and applicable defense policy, consolidate and encourage democratic practices, good governance and to consolidate the rule of law through the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the sanctity of human life and respect for international law.

This shift towards the new African security system has witnessed two important issues. The first issue is the

adoption of the right to interfere in the internal affairs of member states. Article IV of the Constitutive Act of the African Union states the right of the Union to intervene in the internal affairs of any member state in the case of grave circumstances such as war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. The second issue is the creation of the African Union Peace and Security Council as a new institutional mechanism to deal with security challenges in Africa. The creation of this council was not stated in the Constitutive Act of the Union. It replaced the OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management, and resolution and entered into force in December 2003 (Besada, 2010).

The new security culture adopted by the African Union stressed on the Africanization of the general and international standards and obligations. As Risse and Sikkink (1999) noted, the localization of international standards and its implementation on local and regional realities takes place through a series of socialization processes that include three basic mechanisms highly effective adjustment, increase awareness and provoke dialogue and persuasion, institutionalizing to a common degree.

In July 2000, the General Assembly of the OAU formalized a new trend in African and international interactions by refusing to acknowledge unconstitutional changes in African governments, which facilitated a new dimension in the prominent security culture in Africa. The importance of this development is attributed to the importance of military coups as one of the most prominent causes of instability in Africa during the post-independence era (Soaré, 2009). The African Peace and Security Council have committed itself to condemn any unconstitutional changes. In the wake of the overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi by the Egyptian army in July 3, 2013, the African Union suspended Egypt's membership and stressed on respecting the constitution and following all necessary measures to hold democratic elections^{vi}.

On the other hand, the African principle of responsibility has been established to protect the population. It is consistent with the international principle of "Responsibility to protect." The Constitutive Act of the AU has acknowledged the right to intervene in the affairs of a member state on the decision of the General Assembly and under serious cases such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. In 2003, the Heads of States and Governments of the African Union approved an amendment to Article IV of the Constitutive Act that expanded the use of the right to intervene in situations that "pose a serious threat to legitimate order or to restore peace and stability in a Member State of the Union on a recommendation from the Peace and Security Council."

The African Union has maintained its status on the continental and global levels in spite of experiencing a few setbacks. The African Union Mission in Somalia has

proved its ability to lead peace-making processes. Its biggest challenge is not the decision of intervention or deployment of forces in urgent cases, but the ability of the African countries to effectively deploy forces. The issue of funding and training is a huge challenge for the new security organ of the African Union, and it therefore should reduce dependence on external partners if it is to rely on African solutions for peace and security challenges in the continent. In case the external support policy continues, the African Union risks the loss of legitimacy and becoming an organization dependent on international actors to accomplish its missions.

Conclusion

The post 9/11 Era (September 2001 – present) has led to the mobilization of foreign military forces in many African territories as a result of the international campaign on terrorism led by the US as well as the lack of security apparent in the areas of Sahel, Horn of Africa and Western Sahara. A closer look shows that these manifestations of Western militarism are not only directed against terrorism and insecurity, but are also related to an economic war between international forces competing for power and wealth in Africa.

Accordingly, the Western military scramble in the region is closely linked to the situation of instability and civil war in the African regions and the need to control its strategic reserves of oil, cobalt, gold and diamonds. In other words, the US and its allies adopted a scorched earth policy by working towards the continuation of the turmoil, thus ultimately draining the Chinese investments from the region. This may reproduce foreign domination policies on Africa in new forms and mechanisms.

The Libyan revolution and the Western intervention to overthrow the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi demonstrate this hidden war between the West and China on Africa's resources. After the fall of Gaddafi, China now faces a new issue of national governments strengthening their economic ties with the West. In the same context, the European countries have offered 12 million dollars to carry out joint military operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, which indicates the nature of the imminent economic war to control the resources of East Africa and the Nile Basin.

The US has established, since President Bush's administration (1989–1993), what might be called "the new Spice Road" in Africa, referring to the route followed by the Western nations and the US to deliver fuel and military equipment by land and sea. These equipments are delivered to the growing network of warehouse suppliers and small camps and airports that serve the American and Western military presence in the African continent. Thus, the US decision in 2007 to create a new military command in Africa has led to a change in the nature of international competition for natural resources, especially African oil, where it acquired a militaristic

nature under the pretext of fighting terrorism and Islamic extremism.

Undoubtedly, some of the conclusions raised by this analysis are related to the nature of the debate about the present and future of peace and security in Africa. This means to consider the principle of African solutions to African problems, thus easing the tense of domination strategies and policies in Africa.

First, in spite of positive developments in the peaceful management of major armed conflicts operations, especially during the past decade, the conflict scenarios in areas such as Darfur, the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia still pose serious security challenges in the continent. Moreover, a large number of countries are still facing challenges of military coups and political instability that are closely associated in some cases with the election processes. The question here is related to the evolution of armed conflicts and political tensions and the role of various African and international actors.

Second, the past decade has witnessed an increased role of the African Union and regional organizations in the management of armed conflicts or political disputes. However, the African security system has faced significant challenges on the political and logistical levels, such as in the Darfur crisis. This raises important questions about the major shortcomings and goals achieved in that regard and the aspects that should be taken into account in order to enhance the new security mechanisms in Africa.

Third, conflict, peace and security in Africa have witnessed significant changes during the past decade, presenting improvement in African collective security approach. Thus, this has reduced the importance of the pessimistic trend that dominated the literature on Africa in the '80s and '90s of the last century. However, the continued international scramble to loot the African wealth and the tendency to militarize international intervention in African conflicts pose new threats and challenges affecting the formulation of complex future scenarios in Africa.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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ⁱ The analysis here is based on Southall and Melber's work published in 2009. They provided us with an important theoretical and historical overview to current interventions and resource extractions in Africa. See: Southall, Roger, and Henning Melber. (2009) *A New Scramble for Africa?: Imperialism, Investment and Development*. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

ⁱⁱ Africa has regained its strategic value which motivated the Western Powers to take it seriously because of the China's growing business links with Africa. In 2004, *The Economist* magazine used the term 'A New Scramble' in an article about china's presence in Africa.

ⁱⁱⁱ There is a big difference between traditional and new policies of colonial domination and quest of some Rising African countries to have influence in its regional environment in order to formulate an African security perspective and apply the principle of African solutions to African problems

^{iv} The idea of grouping Brazil, Russia, India and China together first appeared in 2001 by Goldman Sachs, as part of the forecast of global economy trends in the middle of the next century. During the meeting in New York in September 2011 the 4 states agreed to invite South Africa to join them

^v China's engagement with Africa has raised many concerns regarding human rights, its policy on arms sales and its oil diplomacy. China creates also opportunities. It provides African states an alternative to the dictates of the international financial institutions. What is needed is to consider how to react to China's challenge while avoiding 'uncritical acceptance on the one hand or mere rejectionism on the other'. see: Manji, Firoze. (2006) *African Perspectives on China in Africa*, Pambazuka, Issue 282 at : <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/38873>

^{vi} During the period between 2003 and 2013, Africa witnessed 13 military coups, and the African Union suspended the membership of nine countries: Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Egypt. This demonstrates the insistence of the African Union to oppose unconstitutional changes of regimes