Challenges To Africa's Peace And Security: A Peacebuilding Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Much of Africa has experienced armed conflict in recent decades, the majority of which have resulted in deaths, injuries and insecurity, and fear of violence in many people. Though the violence and war experienced are intimately related to the well-known challenges of poverty, bad governance, and weak states in the region, more previously unforeseen factors have also contributed to the instabilities. Some more common causes of conflicts in Africa include political systems, regionalization and globalization, transition to democracy, climate change, and new energy sources. This study discusses the critical challenges that African countries must tackle before lasting peace, acceptable to the global community, can be realized. It should be highlighted at this point that challenges threatening peace in Africa are complex, multifaceted, and interlinked. Some challenges are unique to particular countries while some similar challenges do affect different countries in different ways. Major threats to peace in Africa discussed include terrorism and violent extremism, ethnic arithmetic, bad politics, comprised of bad governance, internalization of conflicts, post-electoral violence, and failure to effectively transition to true democracy. Other challenges discussed are human rights abuses, natural disasters (including climate change) and natural resources, regionalization imposed by former colonial powers, and inadequacy of peacekeeping operations. Some solutions to the challenges of peacebuilding discussed are the involvement of all stakeholders including marginalized populations and fostering political will in African political leaders. Peacebuilding should be a global, inclusive and sincere effort by all countries.

Keywords: Peace, security, peacebuilding, violence, terrorism

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Peacebuilding is a distinct concept of international engagement that was developed in the early 1990s specifically for conflict prevention and peacekeeping by the United Nations (UN)(Hutton, 2014). In 1992 there was a call for the UN to become a central instrument in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and rebuild war-torn institutions and infrastructures of nations and build bonds of peaceful mutual benefit among nations formerly at war. Much of Africa has experienced armed conflict in recent decades majority of which have resulted in deaths, injuries and insecurity, and fear of violence in many people (Buxton, Greene, &Salonius-Pasternak, 2006).

Though the violence and war experienced are intimately related to the well-known challenges of poverty, bad governance, and weak states in the region (Buxton et al. 2006) more previously unforeseen factors have also contributed to the instabilities. A lot has changed in the global arena with systemic changes at the global level being met with changes at national and local levels in Africa. Some changes that have occurred include the birth of South Sudan as a new state and changes in the governments of Tunisia, Zimbabwe, and Egypt (Hutton, 2014). Some more common causes of conflicts in Africa include political systems, regionalization and globalization, transition to democracy, climate change, and new energy sources. This has also been exacerbated by the presence of weak and fledging states with inherited problems, extreme poverty, fragile economies, and a complex web of inherent contradictions within the African state (Karbo& Virk, 2018). This has happened in West Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone), the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia), Eastern Africa (Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda), the Great Lakes region (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda), North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia) and in Southern Africa (Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe) (Karbo& Virk, 2018). Unfortunately, conflict, armed violence, and insecurity devastate economies, societies, and families and create a vicious cycle of distorted political economies that enrich only a few, to the detriment of the majority (Buxton et al., 2006). Though efforts have been made to build and keep peace in Africa, a plethora of challenges exists that Africa has to tackle for meaningful peace to prevail. The purpose of this essay is to critically discuss the various

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challenges to peacebuilding and sustenance in Africa and the possible solutions to the challenges. Several challenges have been noted related to peace and security in Africa. These challenges are discussed in detail below.

Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Terrorism and violent extremism are arguably Africa's greatest security threats. Local groups with international terror links are embedded in East, West, and Southern Africa. Their activities foment local conflicts and enable organized crime rackets—destabilizing already fragile political landscapes. Sub-Saharan Africa has become a new global hotspot for jihadist activity. Armed groups have increasingly developed strong Salafi ideologies and forged ties with movements predominantly active in the Middle East, namely Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known by its Arabic acronym, Da'esh (European Union, 2021). The rise of terrorist activity in the region of the Sahel, Lake Chad, the Great Lakes, and the Horn of Africa, and more recently in northern Mozambique, cannot be attributed solely to the influence of jihadist ideology from the Middle East. Several factors have contributed to the deterioration of security, among them poverty, corruption, various local grievances, separatist movements, pre-existing inter-communal violence between herders and farmers over land rights (exacerbated by the consequences of climate change), weak state presence, and lack of prospects for young people. In Mali, transnational jihadist groups emerged from the conflict triggered by the separatist Tuareg movement. In Mozambique, grievances, and poverty in one of the country's poorest provinces in the Muslim-majority north, Cabo Delgado, provided fertile ground for jihadist ideology, nurtured further by foreign preachers and returning students who had studied in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. The insurrection is also a protest against socio-economic asymmetries and inequalities (European Union, 2021).

Lack of political will by leaders

Political leaders in Africa have not demonstrated much political will to build and maintain lasting peace. The political elite is usually greedy for political power and tends to put its benefits before the lives and security of the general population. Where political leaders should promote national peace and security, African leaders have been found to perpetuate ethnic arithmetic, a tactic initially introduced by colonizers to divide and rule, but upheld by African leaders themselves beyond independence (Meredith, 2013). Whilst African societies of the pre-colonial era were held together by their lineage groups, villages, clans, empires, and chiefdoms, these were transformed into new ethnic formations made up of new and distinct tribes and frontiers such as the Abaluyia or Kalenjin of Western Kenya who were formed from two congeries of adjacent peoples and chiefs as appointed by the colonizers became the symbol of ethnicity (Meredith, 2013). "In the first elections in the post-war era in Africa, nationalist politicians started out proclaiming nationalist objectives, selecting party candidates regardless of ethnic origin. But as the number of election candidates, politicians and voters alike came to rely on ethnic solidarity which ultimately became the ticket to power" (Meredith, 2013, p. 156) This ethnic entrepreneurship required parties to ensure that their ethnic person was the centre of power to ensure a slice of the spoils which would be returned to their people (Meredith, 2013). This tactic has remained a hindrance to peace between the Hutus and Tutsis of Rwanda, the Yoruba, and Ibos of Nigeria, and the Shona, and Ndebeles of Zimbabwe with reconciliation remaining an illusion (Meredith, 2013). Additionally, the actors on the political front usually have contradictory priorities, perspectives, stakes, and understandings of the conflict (OCHA, 2015). This greed, characterized by irresponsible diversion of state funds and/or aid, leads to a lack of sufficient resources to do the work of peacebuilding, and the proper capacity and visioning to effectively deploy available resources. Several countries including Chad, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Zaire, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Sudan experienced warfare or economic chaos while receiving at least $3 billion in aid during that same period. Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Sudan all received over $10 billion in foreign aid but instead of the alleged gains to be realized in those countries, more political unrest and poverty were ensured (Connecticus, 2019). Generally, leaders have a belief that the holding of elections and the legitimization of power elite is the end goal of peacebuilding interventions. There is no or little regard for longer-term processes of reconciliation and the resolution of the underlying issues causing conflict. There is a relative downscaling, in post-conflict phases, of long-term institution-building initiatives aiming to strengthen fragile states beyond the first "successful" cycle of post-conflict era elections (OCHA, 2015). Unfortunately, the post-conflict era is characterized by bad governance.

Bad governance

With good governance increasingly becoming a major instrument for successful growth performance and development purposes in the world, the absence of good governance in Africa has remained a concern since the 1960s when some African countries got their independence (Meredith, 2013). In Africa, poor governance has led to poor economic growth and it has manifested through corruption, political instability, and ineffective

rule of laws and institutions. Bad governance in Africa also frustrates efforts toward effective peacebuilding. This creates inequitable social and economic systems leading to exploitation and economic inequalities. Regime evolution in post-colonial Africa portrays cases of mismanagement, official pillaging, dictatorships, irresponsibility, vacillation, and confrontation (Chazzan, 1999). Bad governance in African countries is characterized by nepotism, exclusion, corruption, injustice, and unequal distribution of national resources. (Acheoah, 2018) suggests that leaders in Africa have been a failure because they serve to protect or support the personal interests of the elite or leadership which in turn creates weak institutions that become a barrier to sustainable growth, development, and peacebuilding in Africa. Examples of countries that have displayed poor leadership are Egypt, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC Congo, Central Africa Republic, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Libya, and Uganda (Acheoah, 2018). Bad governance leads to poverty, destroys social cohesion, and causes violent conflicts. The conflict-generating political systems represent poor governance (Acheoah, 2018). Additionally, there has been a failure to embrace democracy in African countries another attribute of bad leadership. A progressive leadership that embraces progress and unity of purpose are what Africa needs (Meredith, 2013). This type of leadership will be willing to eradicate corruption, bad governance, dictatorial rule, and staying in power forever as well as fairly manage resources. Resources should be well-managed such that they benefit ordinary citizens and allow civil societies to grow and flourish. With poor governance, resources are poorly distributed, and the wealth of the continent is not shared among its people. The poverty and suffering brought about by these inequalities are some of the major root causes of conflict in Africa.

Failure to transition to true democracy
Transitioning to democracy has always been a challenge for most African countries. There seems to lack a favourable environment for a healthy transition to democracy in most African countries. For true democracy to prevail there is a need for the presence of socio-economic, religious, rural, urban, ethnic cultural, and support to the government (Collier, 2008). These aspects promote and hasten development in a nation and are lacking in most African countries leading to a poor design of democracy. Moreover, political parties' functions have been negatively influenced by identities of ethnicity, religion, and region. These anomalies have inevitably led to conflicts contributed to conflicts. Political order has not been able to respond to societal challenges, thus intensifying the conflicts (Meredith, 2013). After transitioning from colonial powers, Africans followed undemocratic regimes to democracy. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda and conflicts in Burundi, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt, South Sudan, and DRC Congo were due to the failure in managing the transition. Political conflicts increased in Uganda and Kenya because they insisted on the one-party system. Most African countries have experienced violent conflicts in the recent past. In these countries, the willingness of combatants to shift allegiances between conflict parties and rebel movements has not been possible (Debos, 2008). Examples of countries that struggled to transition from colonial rule to democracy are Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, the Congo, and Uganda in the 1950s and 1960s. These countries suffered massive internal conflicts that resulted in otherwise avoidable bloodshed due to violent gang attacks, rape, and razing down of houses in villages. Internal and external displacement of people from their homes has also occurred as a result of this.

Electoral violence
Even long after colonial rule, most African countries experience bloody electoral violence. There has been a lot of instance of some political leaders rejecting election results in countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, and Nigeria. Serving heads, in some countries, have also failed to accept defeat (Dowden, 2008). There seems to be a link between electoral violence and colonial legacy in most affected countries. Destructive consequences of colonialism were due to the approach to administration by various colonial powers. The British had a policy of indirect rule while the French had the assimilation policy which culminated in politics of divide and rule. Even during the colonial era, there was the physical killing of liberation struggle leaders who could have become founding fathers of their independent nations (Dowden, 2008). These actions affected Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC Congo, which became political orphans in the wave of decolonization. This also happened in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In most cases after elections defeated or intimidated candidates incite their followers to participate in violent activities. Some eruptions of violence have been due to delays in the announcement of results and, in some cases, mere speculation. Countries such as in Kenya, DRC Congo, Zimbabwe, and Ivory Coast have all experienced post-election violence (Blair, 2002). Countries such as Nigeria and Uganda have experienced violence in form of intimidation, harassment, and riots. The electoral violence reflects poor governance and has been a threat to lasting peace in most African countries.

Internationalization of conflicts
Internationalized armed conflicts are wars between two internal factions both of which are supported by different states (Kraus, 2017). The supporting states are usually 2 enemy foreign states that militarily intervene in an internal armed conflict in support of opposing sides. An internalized conflict can also be a war

involving a foreign intervention in support of an insurgent group fighting against an established government (Kraus, 2017). Internationalized armed conflict, therefore, can be simplified as internal hostilities that are rendered international (Stewart, 2003). Internationalization conflicts in Africa are due to several factors that include economic profits by foreign actors, cultural rivalries, identity-based proximities, and geopolitical competition by foreign powers (Shyaka, 2008). These conflicts usually occur in countries well-endowed with a particular natural resource because foreign countries look for markets in Africa and also a source for goods and services that they distribute both locally and internationally (Mackatiani, Imbovah, &Imbova, 2014). Nigeria with its oil and the DRC with its minerals have suffered internalized conflicts. Seventy percent of conflicts that occurred in the world between 1945 and 1990 occurred in Africa (Shyaka, 2008). Internationalization also occurs as former colonial powers seize the opportunity to penetrate and control former colonies. Unfortunately for Africa, internalization can easily occur through investment. The colonial and investment aspects are aimed at promoting ideologies from these foreign countries. France alone launched more than 70 military operations in Sub-Saharan African states in the 30 years following independence, 12 of which were launched in the Great Lakes Region (DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda) and six in Rwanda alone between 1990 and 1994. African conflicts tend to be more common in former Francophone countries such as DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda. The internationalization of conflicts frustrates international efforts in building peace in Africa. Building peace in Rwanda, DRC, and the Central African Republic was a mammoth task for the international community because of foreign interference in conflicts.

Human rights abuses
There are two dimensions of abuse of human rights threatening peace in African nations. Firstly, there are human rights abuses from within the countries by leaders and abuse from the peacekeeping troops deployed in post-conflict zones.

Human rights abuse by leaders in conflict zones
African countries still experience intractable armed conflicts, new forms of violence by non-state actors, widespread killings, torture, abductions, sexual violence, and mass displacements, including crimes under international law, in several sub-Saharan African countries. Countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR), DRC, Sudan, and South Sudan have faced indiscriminate and targeted attacks on civilians. Armed groups in Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and elsewhere keep committing abuses, including killings and abductions, leading to mass displacements (Amnesty International, 2019). Unfortunately, state security forces in such countries often respond with even more grave human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture. There is widespread repression of dissent – including crackdowns on peaceful protests, and attacks on media, human rights defenders, and political opponents. In over 20 countries, people were denied their right to peaceful protest, including through unlawful bans, use of excessive force, harassment, and arbitrary arrests. All these actions do fuel conflicts both internal and international. Countries such as Eswatini, Nigeria, and Uganda have experienced forced evictions without compensation(Amnesty International, 2019).

Human rights abuse by peacekeeping troops
Even the same peacekeeping troops meant to restore peace in most African countries have also been implicated in cases of human rights abuses against local people. There have been shocking revelations of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers being implicated in cases of sexual assaults involving women and children (Aning& Edu-Afful, 2013; Notar, 2006; Thakur, Aoi, & De Coning, 2007). Allegations concerning humanitarian workers and peacekeepers in West Africa in 2002 and allegations concerning sexual misconduct of peacekeepers in the DRC (MONUC), 2004 brought about an increased focus on the human rights abuses being perpetrated by peacekeepers and this was met with outrage by the international community (Notar, 2006). Cases of use of excessive force by peacekeepers have also been reported. In Somalia, in 1992, foreign forces in UNITAF and UNOSOM II were accused of mistreatment and murder of Somalis, detention without trial, armed attacks on civilians, and displacement and compulsory resettlement of the population (United Nations, 1995). Human rights abuses were also recorded in Liberia and DRC. Moreover, the troop-contributing countries are responsible for taking disciplinary action if peacekeepers violate codes of conduct. This creates a weakness in the disciplinary chain that gives a distorted image of impunity for peacekeepers. However, UN personnel are all subject to rules and regulations, including the UN Charter, Staff Rules and Regulations, and Ten Rules (Code of Conduct for Blue Helmets)(Thakur et al., 2007). The perceived immunity of peacekeepers strengthens the negative perception of the peacekeepers in the host nation, eroding the efficacy of the mission, and even resulting in more conflict from disgruntled locals (Thakur et al. 2007).

Socio-economic development deficit

Southern Africa has some of the world's most unequal societies, with enormous social cleavages that were forged by settler colonialism and racial segregation, but that have persisted in the post-colonial period. Given this, it is unsurprising that socio-economic grievances should not only impinge on human security but also represent a formidable challenge to peace and stability in the region over the longer term. Investments in human capital and the creation of economic opportunities have been impeded by sluggish growth rates, and over the past decade, unemployment has risen steadily across much of the region. Some 34.2 percent of the population of Southern Africa is below the age of 25, and that proportion is growing rapidly. In the absence of improved economic and educational opportunities, the region is likely to experience more social unrest in the foreseeable future. In South Africa sustained social protests that have been fuelled by extreme inequality have often turned violent and xenophobic in the last ten years. In Angola, rampant inequality and the flagrant accumulation of wealth by the ruling elite have triggered youth protests against the government, which has responded with violence and repression. Similarly, in Zimbabwe economic despair and frustration with a complacent and corrupt government have sparked a wave of social media-driven protests. In Mozambique, economic grievances and a feeling of marginalization have led to social unrest in the capital and have allowed political entrepreneurs to mobilize fighters for the RENAMO rebellion. The politically well-connected Mozambican elite have also been awarded licenses enabling them to exploit the country's mineral wealth and leaving the population at large feeling short-changed. All this can lead to further conflict (The Nordic Africa Institute, 2018).

Climate change and natural disasters

Africa has been marked by an increased scale and scope of natural disasters and armed conflicts. Since 1990, natural disasters have affected about 217 million people every year (Guha-Sapir, Vos, Below, &Ponserre, 2012) and about 300 million people now live amidst violent insecurity around the world. Cyclone Idai which occurred in March 2019 had devastating effects on Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and South Africa. Thousands of people died, went missing, were left permanently disabled, or were displaced. This has sparked internal conflicts in some instances as people compete over inadequate resources such as pastures, food, and shelter. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the closing of borders and skies by almost all nations. Some leaders have misappropriated aid meant for the fight against COVID-19 thereby triggering violent demonstrations by citizens (Cassim, 2020). This threatens peace as even citizen demonstrations can turn bloody.

Climate change and the discovery of new energy sources pose a security threat to Africa (Brown, Hammill, &McLeman, 2007). Climate change and natural resources are interlinked with economic, social, and political concerns and they threaten peace as well as national economies, governance, and development. This leads to conflicts in these areas. Conflicts have erupted in the arid and semi-arid lands of Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, and Uganda due to competition from pastoralists and farmers over scarce pastures and water resources. Drying up of lakes and rivers, as has happened in Kenya and areas around Lake Chad has just worsened the problem. Over the past ten years, eastern Africa and the Sahel have had extremely high temperatures coupled with sustained droughts. As a direct result, according to the United Nations, 80% of the Sahel's farmland is degraded. This has escalated conflicts in agriculture in Mali and Chad near Sahel region which experiences shorter rainy seasons. Similarly, East African states such as Kenya and Somalia have seen rates of warming two and a half times greater than global averages with rainfall decreasing steadily since 1980 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2019). Variations in temperature and rainfall are the main environmental causes of conflict. Some regions have experienced heavy rainfall that has led to floods and landslides resulting in the destruction of cultivated land and inhabited areas (Brown et al. 2007). This impacts directly on the economies and livelihoods of affected populations and will lead to conflicts.

The causal relationship between natural resource endowment and the outbreak of violent conflict is complex with the ensuing conflicts interlinked with political, social, economic, and ecological background factors to generate aggressive behaviour (Maphosa, 2012). Natural resources on the continent have played a significant role in many violent conflicts (Maphosa, 2012). Besides, most natural resources in African countries are seen as a symbol of heritage and tradition and are very significant to the history of nations. An example is gold, in Zimbabwe. It was the currency of trade dating back even to the Munhumutapa Empire, was the major reason for the colonization by the British, and remains a particularly important natural resource to date. Many foreign countries have come to Africa in search of land and natural resources in Africa. The Scramble for Africa is one rather sad example of such greed by developed countries. Natural resources, mainly oil and gas, diamonds, columbium tantalite (coltan), drugs, gold, platinum, uranium, and other gemstones play a key role in triggering and sustaining conflicts (Maphosa, 2012). Timber, coffee, water, land, grazing pasture, livestock, and rubber have also been subjects of conflict in Africa. This has resulted in the 'resource curse in Africa, whereby easily available natural resources and commodities have essentially hurt the prospects of several African national and regional economies by fostering political corruption and feeding violence and rebellion(Frankel, 2010). Countries such as Namibia, Kenya, Mozambique Angola, the DRC, Nigeria, and Ghana have

experienced conflicts triggered by competition over their natural resources (Alao, 2007). Katanga region of DRC Congo, which is rich in gold deposits, has experienced violence (Atibu et al., 2013). Boko Haram in Nigeria has caused instability due to oil deposits in northern Nigeria (Ayegba, 2015).

Regionalization

Intricately linked to the internalization of conflict is regionalization. Regional conflict formations are interconnected wars among adjacent countries that are mutually reinforcing and typically protracted. Characterized by complex political, economic, social, and military trans-border linkages, they are distinct from interstate and intrastate wars (Cater, 2003). Borders of African countries were determined by former colonial powers with little regard for ethnicities and traditional territories of the indigenous people. The new borders integrated different ethnical groups within the same colonial territories thereby creating post-colonial tribal conflicts that transcend borders. Rwandan descents were distributed in different colonial territories in DRC with the M23 rebel group in the DRC receiving support from Rwanda. Conflicts among ethnic groups within the same country have also been experienced in countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Kenya. The Gukurahundi, which occurred in Zimbabwe post-independence, is one good example of regionalization. The conflicts are even more complex because besides being ethnic, they are also related to self-determination. For Africa to be a conflict-free state, its divides should be appreciated by Africans. Colonial boundaries should only be for administrative purposes not for competition and war. If at all, the borders should be utilized for land linking of countries to promote trade that can potentially help develop the continent.

Inadequacy of peacekeeping operations

However, though Africa faces challenges to peacebuilding, some of the challenges are beyond the African countries to deal with. These are problems of the peacekeeping operations such as the imposition of conditions by the UN on the warring parties rather than engagement. Peacekeeping, especially when it is imposed on the host nation, inevitably brings into question western powers forwarding their agendas and imposition of foreign ways. This has also got to be viewed along with concerns of the developing world being increasingly marginalized. Developing countries tend to view peacekeeping with suspicion and as a means of western interventionism. Peacekeeping presupposes that liberalization introduced in a country will bring around peace and stability yet the same can cause widening inequalities and economic dislocation and very often ends up benefitting those already in power. The outcome, therefore, is a conflict in the priorities and the commitment shown by the powerful countries according to their interests resulting in some operations being given more attention than others.

Generally, conflicts in Africa also have relatively fewer media coverage than those on other continents. People have talked about the 'CNN effect' whereby conflicts in other regions such as the Middle East get massive media coverage thereby prompting responsible organizations such as the UN to send peacekeeping troops. On the other hand, conflicts in Africa are not extensively covered. Part of the reason could be the repression of media that has resulted in victimization, assault, and even murder of journalists covering conflicts in Africa. This seems tied to a lack of knowledge of the ethics of journalism in African countries. As a result, conflicts may be "hidden" from other nations. However, this has been mitigated these days by the advent of social media. Great atrocities have been made public through social media platforms as ordinary citizens capture them in real-time.

Peace enforcement missions have also been faced with inadequate resources such as vehicles, armoured personnel carriers, and helicopters which are all essential to enforce the given mandate in strife-ridden areas. Peacekeeping operations usually overlook the root causes of conflicts. The failure to take into account the importance of religious aspects during the Somalia conflict was a major contributor to the failure of UNOSOM II(United Nations, 1995). The ethnic rivalry between the various warring groups which was reported by news organizations was also neglected. Peacekeeping faces the tremendous challenge of the sheer magnitude of the task involved. Post-conflict societies lack institutions of governance and face human security problems and development challenges. The conflicts often remain in limbo till the intervention is over and thereafter flare up again (Veit, 2010). Despite all the challenges threatening peace in Africa, attempts have been made to build everlasting peace on the continent. The African Union devised an approach to peacebuilding that was an outcome of African experience with peace missions and lessons from the global environment, especially the United Nations (UN) (Zondi, 2017).

Discussions about peace efforts in Africa have focused on actions, successes, and failures since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and have embraced them as the institutionalization of pan-African ideals of prosperity for all, peace, development, self-reliance, freedoms, and liberation (Murithi, 2008). The AU approach, therefore, is fundamentally unique in that it is informed by familiar and particular historical experiences (Murithi, 2008). A major part of this peacebuilding agenda is contained in the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework (NEPAD 2005) and within the New Economic Partnership for

Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative itself. On the failure of the Lagos **Plan of Action (LPA)** for the Economic Development of Africa 1980–2000, a brainchild of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) 1980–2000, to fully take off, together with a group of other African leaders, Mbeki, Nigeria's Obasanjo, Algeria's Bouteflika, Egypt's Mubarak, and Senegal's Wade institutionalized the African Renaissance into NEPAD. The leaders agreed to set up an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) that would monitor their performance and punish defaulters. In exchange, they asked industrialized states for an improved package of trade, investment, aid, and debt relief measures. The founding principles of NEPAD are solid and could still achieve the original desired results and solve Africa's ongoing peacebuilding and peacekeeping woes (Murithi, 2008). Efforts at peacebuilding should be made with the incomplete transition of Africa from colonial to post-colonial in mind. This has resulted in the persistence of neo-colonial conditions, which must be born in mind creating some 'neo-colonized postcolonial' conditions in Africa making peace and development elusive for ordinary Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). It is also important to take advantage of organizations such as the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) established in 2004, to help build, promote, and sustain peace in Africa.

II.   CONCLUSION

Challenges to peacebuilding discussed were poor political organization, human rights abuses, natural disasters and natural resources, regionalization, and ineffective peacekeeping operations. It should be highlighted, however, that all these challenges to peacebuilding in Africa do not occur in isolation. They are usually complex and interlinked and a systematic approach with careful and comprehensive consultation of all stakeholders should be adopted in trying to overcome them. The new challenges in the current African security terrain threaten established frameworks, existing capacity, and approaches of both the United Nations (UN) and African organizations. It is very important to have a paradigm shift in the approach to peacebuilding in Africa is required to unlock the potential of these actors to overcome the challenges of building and sustaining peace in Africa (Wilton Park, 2015). It is very important to involve all stakeholders from the local to the international, the state to the non-state; from those traditionally involved in peace and security issues to those only now coming into the conversation (Park, 2015). Innovative society-wide approaches as well as the development of new frameworks for all citizens to live together as equal citizens, respecting each other's rights and existence are critical for sustainable peacebuilding. It will also be beneficial to promote the participation and influence of marginalized groups, such as women and youth, in efforts to promote peace and curb violent extremism. The priority themes for the 20th anniversary of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security are increasing the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and exploring the role of young people in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding (Wilton Park, 2015).

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