

## **U.S. Africa Command: Military Operations or Good Governance**

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**Abstract:** *The United States is the sole super power that maintains great influences across the globe. Her influences encompass various aspects such as economic, political, cultural, and military. In pursuance of its national interests through foreign policy, indirect methods are commonly adopted; meanwhile the military has remained a direct tool channeled to achieve numerous foreign policy agendas. Account of this can be noted in reference to dozens of US bases across the globe. Africa was not left behind; the continent remains one of the US centers of interest. As a result, United States established tactic historical military operations in Africa known as US-Africa Command (US AFRICOM) in 2007, with the aim of providing security and viable atmosphere to African region. The paper investigates the effect of US AFRICOM and its association with the question of US interest in Africa, those factors that triggered United States to pursue a direct military agenda on African soil regardless of opposition from several African nations. It further evaluated the progress and the benefit of the operations to the hosts, and how it has relatively affected the issue of good governance. The research concludes with certain recommendations for a better US African relation.*

**Keywords:** *US Africa, Military Operations, National Interest, Democracy, Good Governance.*

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### **I. Introduction**

The period of multi polar and the events that paved way for US to become the sole super power signifies the importance of US relations with the rest of the world. Her military involvements and several bases around the world uplifts Washington strategic position. US shared long historical relations with Africa; the pre-colonial periods, the tragic history of colonization through Trans Atlantic Slave Trade roots, creation of the League of Nations, the subsequent formation of the United Nations, US opposition to colonial rules and propagation for colonies' independence, and the historical population of African ancestors and African Diasporas in the American continents signified the US closed relations with Africa. It is also worth to note that US had played great role in aiding Africa in many areas such as education, technology and other aspects. The United States military involvements with Africa can be traced back to over two centuries. It begins with the Barbary Wars of 1801-05 and 1815, to the World War I and II, the North Africa Campaign to the present day. [1] Africa is a strategic location between US and Asia it was an alternative route for sea and air to Middle East and Far East. US established air and Naval facilities in Africa to secure flow of Persian Gulf and fuel oil from sub Saharan Africa with other natural minerals to West as far as 1945. [2] The US presence enjoyed an indirect or temporary military involvements in Africa, one of the notable engagements after Second World War was a marine battalion that was ordered to evacuate U.S. nationals and other persons in Egypt during the Suez crisis of 1956, [3] followed by several other operations elsewhere in Africa. [4] The first phase of US presence in Africa can be said to have ended in 1970s, due to public concern in the U.S., the notion of nationalist movement and changing of government of the host countries in those African states.

However, the hot situation in Persian Gulf in 1978 (Iran revolution) made US revisit its early military strategy engagement in Africa. As a result, Berbera, Mombasa, and Ras-Banas host US Naval and air facilities with Africa. Between years 2000-2006, US decided to assign African operations into three Commands that divided responsibility for her military operations. The three commands are; US European Command (EUCOM), U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). However, the horrific event of September 11 that subsequently led to invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 respectively was connected to US foreign policy change towards Africa. Therefore, US considered a direct military cooperation that led to the establishment of US Africa Command known as US AFRICOM in 2007, and construed to a unified command and a stand-alone command with effect from Oct 1, 2008. US AFRICOM became the ninth unified and sixth regional US military commands, and four functional commands that were established after the Second World War. The existing commands before US AFRICOM are; U.S. European Command, U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Strategic Command, and U.S. Special Operations Command. U.S. Transportation Command. [5] US considered US AFRICOM a better option regardless of her earlier operation mechanisms that purported a great concern. The decision

aimed at achieving a direct joint military operation in the heart of Africa. From 1956 to 2009 US had engaged in a direct military activities accounted for 45 times in Africa. [2]

## **II. The Scope Of The Operations**

The focus of US AFRICOM's missions was aimed on diplomatic, economic and humanitarian aid. It also wishes to prevent conflict, rather than military intervention, according to Theresa Whelan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for African Affairs. [6] Although, all US combatant commands have the same responsibilities in general that is; to plan, direct and execute U.S. military operations in their assigned area of responsibility, US AFRICOM is different in regard to the situation on the continent. As such, U.S. officials believed that it would be better served by the military, and in many cases, playing a secondary role to other efforts. Steven Morrison [7] agreed that the new command holds potential well beyond military oversight. Therefore, its mission could be broadly defined to include, focusing on the efforts of intelligence, diplomatic, health and aid experts. [8] The US-Africa Command (US AFRICOM) operations covered all part of the African continent except for Egypt. [9] It also includes all island countries commonly associated with Africa such as Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles.[10]

Understanding of U.S. Africa Command's formal mission statement that was approved in May 2008, together with the White House and department of State statements make the scope of the operation cleared: "United States Africa Command, in concert with other U.S. government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy." [11]

The White House stated that: "[AFRICOM] will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa. Africa Command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa." [12] While the U.S. Department of State stated that: "The U.S. military's new command centre for Africa, Africa Command (AFRICOM), will play a supportive role as Africans continue to build democratic institutions and establish good governance across the continent. AFRICOM'S foremost mission is to help Africans achieve their own security, and to support African leadership efforts." [13] The U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa aims at: "Strengthen democratic institutions [in Africa] and boost broad-based economic growth, including through trade and investment." [14]

At its initial stage, it was argued that Africa Command is the result of what Washington believed an internal re-organization of the U.S. military command structure. Intends to create one administrative headquarter that will responsible to the Secretary of Defence for U.S. military relations with 53 African countries at the time. Unlike traditional Unified Commands, Africa Command will focus on war prevention rather than war-fighting. It will work with African nations and African organization to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy. It was also formulated to understand the relationships between security, development, diplomacy and prosperity in Africa. As a result, US AFRICOM reflects a much more integrated staff structure, one that includes significant management and staff representation by the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other U.S. government agencies involved in African operations. The command also intends to seek for incorporate partner nations and humanitarian organizations, from Africa and elsewhere to work alongside the U.S. staff on common approaches to shared interests.

## **III. Us Africom's Operations**

Having said that, the U.S. military areas of cooperation and responsibility were transferred from three separate U.S. unified combatant commands: most of Africa was transferred from the United States European Command, the Horn of Africa and Sudan transferred from the United States Central Command. While responsibility for U.S. military operations in the islands of Madagascar, the Comoros, the Seychelles and Mauritius was transferred from the United States Pacific Command. However, the operational methods were shared between bases in Germany and Italy as following;

U.S. ARMY AFRICA – Italy

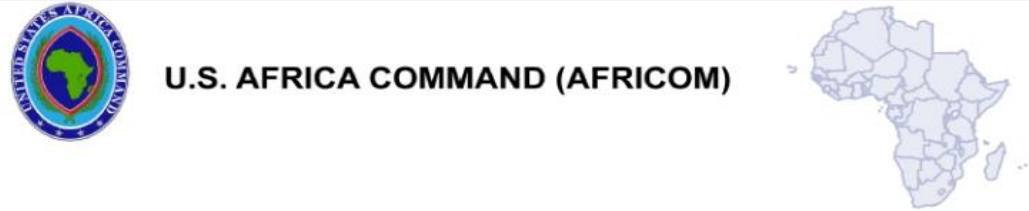
U.S. AIR FORCES AFRICA – Germany

U.S. MARINE FORCES AFRICA – Germany

U.S. NAVAL FORCES AFRICA – Italy

U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AFRICA – Germany. [16]

The bellow table shows the number of services men both civilian and military in the operations for the fiscal year 2012.



**Fiscal Year 2012 Authorized Military and Civilian Positions by Directorate, Subordinate Unified Command, and Other Activities**

U.S. Africa Command Headquarters Directorates	Military	Civilian	Total
J00 Command Staff	65	74	139
J1/J8 Resources	36	82	118
J3 Operations	105	94	199
J4 Logistics	43	37	80
J5 Strategy, Plans, and Programs	83	85	168
J6 Command, Control, Communications, and Computer Systems	22	52	74
J7 Joint Training and Exercises	12	9	21
J9 Outreach	12	19	31
<b>Headquarters Directorates Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>830</b>
<b>Subordinate Unified Commands and Other Activities</b>			
Special Operations Command Africa	133	47	180
J2 Intelligence and Knowledge Development - Stuttgart	81	119	200
J2 Intelligence and Knowledge Development - Molesworth	120	133	253
Security Cooperation Organizations	93	81	174
<b>Subordinate Unified Command and Other Activities Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>807</b>
<b>U.S. Africa Command Grand Total</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>1,637</b>

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.  
 Note: Authorized military and civilian positions represent positions identified by DOD as approved, funded manpower requirements at the geographic command. Numbers in this table do not include numbers of foreign nationals employed by AFRICOM.

Financially, the U.S. Africa Command transition team was budgeted for approximately \$50 million in Fiscal Year 2007, \$75.5 million for Fiscal Year 2008, and \$310 million for Fiscal Year, 2009, while it received \$274 million in Fiscal Year 2010. The Obama administration requested \$298 million for the command for Fiscal Year 2011, and \$276 million in Fiscal Year 2012. These show increase in financial estimation on yearly basis that begin to be reduced from year 2012. On training level, the US-Africa Command with other U.S. government agencies and international partners aim at conducting sustain security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy. [17]

US had established about a dozen of air bases across Africa since 2007, although most of the bases are small operations in several African military bases or civilian airports. The operations have intensified in recent years, due to growing shadow war against al-Qaeda affiliates and other militant groups. The lightly equipped commando units train foreign security forces and perform aid missions, and also engaged in tracking and killing terrorism suspects. United States had justified the use of surveillance operations in Africa as necessity to track terrorist groups that have taken root in failed states on the continent and threaten to destabilize neighbouring countries. [18]

In recent years, the U.S. spy planes fly hundreds of miles north to Mali, Mauritania and the Sahara, searching for fighters from al-Qaeda, a regional network kidnaping several Westerners for ransom. It used Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso to establish a small air base on the military side of the international airport with surveillance flights active in the aftermath of a March coup in Mali 2012, the situation that triggered al-Qaeda sympathizers to declare an independent Islamist state in the northern half of the country. [18] Increasing worried of the spread of Boko Haram, an Islamist group in Nigeria blamed for a rash of bombings that have killed hundred of innocent civilians allowed U.S forces to show willingness to extend her operation in Nigeria. Washington extends its assistance to a regional intervention in Somalia, targeting al-Shabab, another al-Qaeda affiliate. Central Africa also hosted about 100 American Special Operations troops deployed for helping and coordinate the hunt for Joseph Kony, a leader of a brutal guerrilla group in Ugandan known as the Lord's Resistance Army. The American surveillance missions are shrouded in secrecy, even though the U.S. military has launched air strikes and raids in Somalia and other places, they limit their involvement in sharing intelligence with allied African forces, a door of opportunity for Washington to attack terrorist camps on their own without consent from African counterpart.

A senior U.S. military official, confessed that U.S. have used remotely piloted aircraft in East African region, while he did not rule out using the same in other part of Africa; “We don’t have remotely piloted aircraft in many places other than East Africa, but we could,” “If there was a need to do so and those assets were available, I’m certain we could get the access and the over flight [permission] that is necessary to do that”. [18]

#### **IV. United States’ Secret Agenda**

In 2006, US Congress authorized a feasibility study on the creation of a new command for Africa to consolidate current operations and activities on the continent under one commander. [3] By January 2007, the United States Navy’s Naval Postgraduate School reported that U.S. policy towards Africa determined by international terrorism, the increasing importance of African oil to American energy needs, and the dramatic expansion and improvement of Sino-African relations since the turn of the century. [19] It was followed by a U.S. military officer who wrote the first public article appealing for establishment of an African Command. As a result, US AFRICOM was established, and since then United States formed several bases across east, central and West African regions. Among US bases in Africa are; Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Seychelles, Uganda, South Sudan, and Burkina Faso, while limited number of military forces were recently deployed to aid others such as Nigerian Army in term of training and expert advice in the fight against Islamic militants known as Boko Haram, with several bilateral military cooperation engaged with dozens of other African nations.

The establishment of US AFRICOM highlights the ways in which Special Operations forces are blurring the lines that govern the secret world of intelligence, moving aggressively into spheres once reserved for the CIA. Its foreign policy seeks security cooperation with Africa to serve significant benefit to US national interest and not for African security. To ascertain, the January 2002 report from the African Oil Policy Initiative Group (AOPIG) played a role in getting discussions about Africa commands in the U.S. national security community, the outcome of their specific recommendation was to create a sub-command for the Gulf of Guinea.[21] The AOPIG report emphasized that the U.S. National Intelligence Council has estimated that the United States will buy 25 percent of its oil from Africa by 2015, which aiming at surpassing the entire Persian Gulf. Specifically, areas of increasing interest to the United States in Africa includes the Sahara/Sahel region over which Joint Task Force Aztec Silence is conducting anti-terrorist operations known as Operation Enduring Freedom. The Horn of Africa Combined Joint Task Force where US is conducting another operations. [22]

The Continent holds some of the biggest reserves of oil, gas and minerals in the world. Sub Saharan Africa crude oil production surpassed 4 million barrels a day in 2000, and in 2011 it has reached 5.44 million in which more than two third of it comes from the gulf of Guinea (coastline between Nigeria and Angola) [21] U.S. is getting over 16 percent of its oil imports from sub-Saharan Africa, equivalent to that from Saudi Arabia. It is strongly believed that creation of US AFRICOM enables Washington to have direct focus on the Gulf of Guinea, whose oil resources are expected to gain more importance. To pursue the mission, United States Congress approved US\$500 million for the Trans-Saharan Counter-terrorism Initiative (TSCTI) over six years to support countries involved in counterterrorism against alleged threats of Al-Qaeda operating in African countries. The center focus of terrorism are primarily from, Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Nigeria, and Morocco. This program builds upon the former Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), which concluded in December 2004 and focused on weapon and drug trafficking, as well as counterterrorism. [23] Being the largest trade partner with Africa, U.S. would like to retain the status quo especially when it was cleared that China had suppressed her as Africa’s top trade partner in 2009. The development growing faster and in 2012, bilateral trade hit nearly \$200 billion. At the same time, China is the world’s second largest consumer of oil after the United States and she acquired about a third of its oil from Africa. As a result, it was alleged that the prime purpose for establishing US AFRICOM was to counter the speeding growing of Chinese economic and political influence in Africa. Washington was concerned of the event that took place in October 2006 when the Chinese President hosted an historic Beijing summit known as China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the summit brought closed to fifty African heads of state and ministers to Beijing. Subsequently, Hu Jintao made a tour of twelve-day to eight Africa nations in 2008 makes it a third visit to the continent since he took office in 2003. Followed by announcement of \$3 billion for three years program in preferential loans and expanded aid for Africa. These funds came on top of the earlier \$3 billion in loans and \$2 billion in export credits that Hu had promised. [24] By the year 2011, China’s trade with Africa has reached \$166 billion, while African exports to China rose to \$93 billion from \$5.6 billion over the past decade. In July 2012 China offered African countries \$20 billion in loans over the next three years, triple of the amount pledged in the previous three-year period.[25]

Even though, several Americans had openly argued that US AFRICOM was created to counter the growing presence of China in Africa. Dr. J. Peter Pham, a leading Washington insider and an advisor of the US State and Defense Departments, openly expressed that the operations widen the target beyond China, he believed that among the aims of the new US AFRICOM, is the objective of, “protecting access to hydrocarbons and other strategic resources which Africa has in abundance .a task which includes ensuring against the vulnerability of those natural riches and ensuring that no other interested third parties, such as China, India,

Japan, or Russia, obtain monopolies or preferential treatment” [24] It was further argued that for US to counter the growing of Chinese influence across Africa, it has enlisted the economically weak and politically desperate French with promises of supporting a French revival of its former African colonial empire in one form or another. The strategy become clear in the wake of the French-US use of Al Qaeda terrorists to bring down Ghaddafi in Libya and wreak havoc across the Sahara from Mali, is to foster ethnic wars and sectarian hatred between Berbers, Arabs, and others in North Africa. [24] Moreover, it appears they have even co-opted an earlier French blueprint for direct control. In a ground breaking analysis, Canadian geopolitical analyst and sociologist, Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya writes,

“The map used by Washington for combating terrorism under the Pan-Sahel Initiative says a lot. The range or area of activity for the terrorists, within the borders of Algeria, Libya, Niger, Chad, Mali, and Mauritania according to Washington’s designation, is very similar to the boundaries or borders of the colonial territorial entity which France attempted to sustain in Africa in 1957. Paris had planned to prop up this African entity in the western central Sahara as a French department (province) directly tied to France, along with coastal Algeria”. [26] He added that Washington intentionally had the energy-rich and resource-rich area in mind when it drew the areas of Africa that need to be ‘cleansed’ of alleged terrorist cells and gangs. At least now US AFRICOM had plan for its new African strategy. The French Institute of Foreign Relations Institut français des relations internationales, IFRI) openly exposed this tie between the terrorists and energy-rich areas in a March 2011 report. [26]The French make no secret of their alarm over growing Chinese influence in former French Africa. French Finance Minister Pierre Moscovici stated in Abidjan, Ivory Coast that French companies must go on the offensive and fight the growing influence of rival China for a stake in Africa’s increasingly competitive markets. “It’s evident that China is more and more present in Africa...(French) companies that have the means must go on the offensive. They must be more present on the ground. They have to fight”. [26]

## **V. US Africom And Uncertainty**

The US government contended that the creation of U.S. Africa Command should not be construed to mean that U.S. military is taking leading role in African security matters nor will it establishes large U.S. troop bases. Instead, it was claimed that Africa Command is a headquarters staff whose mission entails coordinating the kind of support that will enable African governments and existing regional organizations, such as the African Standby Force, to have greater capacity to provide security and respond in times of need. [27] When the decision for establishing US AFRICOM was made in 2007, the initial plan was to have a central headquarters located on the African continent. Such headquarter would be complemented by several regional offices that would serve as hubs throughout US AFRICOM's area of responsibility. Ironically, seven years after its inception, U.S authority had even forgotten the initial plan, rather the dragging shifting of headquarter location remains between current place in Germany or to be shifted to United State. A set back to its earlier promises which according to DOD officials, having a command presence in Africa would provide a better understanding of the regional environment and African needs; help build relationships with African partners, regional economic communities, and associated standby forces; and add a regional dimension to US security assistance.

Having travelled and conducted extensive studies throughout Africa to identify appropriate locations and meet with key officials in prospective nations, DOD concluded that it was not feasible to locate US AFRICOM's headquarters in Africa, for several reasons. First, State officials who were involved in DOD's early planning teams for US AFRICOM voiced concerns over the command's headquarters location and the means by which the US AFRICOM commander and the Department of State would exercise their respective authorities. Specifically, DOD and States officials said that States was not comfortable with DOD's concept of regional offices because those offices would not be operating under the Ambassador's Chief of Mission authority. Second, African nations expressed concerns of the United States for exerting greater influence on the continent, as well as the potential increase in US military troops in the region. Third, since many of the African countries that were been considered for headquarters and regional office locations did not have existing infrastructure or the resources to support them, DOD officials concluded that locating US AFRICOM headquarters in Africa would require extensive investments and military construction in order to provide appropriate levels of force protection and quality of life for assigned personnel. Officials were also concerned about the assigned personnel that if the headquarters were located in Africa, it would not be able to have dependents accompany them because of limited resources and quality-of-life issues in the region. [27] After US AFRICOM was established, a review of potential permanent headquarters locations in Europe and the United States was conducted, but DOD decided to defer any final decision until the Command had reached its full operational capability, slated at that time for 2012. As a result, the 2007 plan and the reviews in 2008 and 2011 were ultimately followed by the 2013 CAPE study. GAO's review emphasized that the CAPE study did not conform with key principles GAO had derived from a variety of cost estimating, economic analysis, and budgeting guidance documents, therefore, it was not well-documented, and it did not fully explain why the operational benefits of keeping the headquarters in Stuttgart outweigh the benefit of potentially saving millions of dollars per year and bringing

thousands of jobs to the United States. It also abrogated the initial plan to established and managed US AFRICOM in Africa.

It was reported by commander, General David Rodriguez that in 2012, the U.S. military carried out a total of 546 “activities” on the continent. In other words, it averages about one and a half missions a day which represents a 217% increase in operations, programs, and exercises since the command was established in 2008. In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee Rodriguez noted that the 10 exercises, 55 operations, and 481 security cooperation activities made US AFRICOM “an extremely active geographic command.” But exactly what the command is “active” in doing is often far from clear. [28]

US AFRICOM is instituted to aid Africa, improving its security, stabilizing its economy that should leads to harmonious atmosphere, at the same time U.S refused to fight terrorists in North-Eastern Nigeria. This lead David Asonye Ihenacho to say that; “President Obama is using all sophisticated military aircrafts to bomb ISIS to submission but could not spare even a helicopter to help defeat Boko Haram in North-eastern Nigeria...” [29] A day earlier, the Nobel Laureate Professor Wole Soyinka angrily blasted the position of U.S for reluctantly refusing to sell weapon to Nigeria to fight Boko Haram. He said: "Please, United States of America, could you please, overlook the arithmetical deficiency of governance and stop giving an excuse to this government for failing to protect us. We are trying to create, I hope a situation, where we do have conflict affected households. We do not need emergency relief supplies. We want to stop the displacement of humanity etc." [30]

He further noted: "So, please, just say that will not supply arms to Nigeria and leave it at that. But don't say that instead you will send other things. That is not the issue at this critical moment for Nigeria. We are fighting a legitimate, a just war," [30]

As a result, physical financial budget for US AFRICOM had been cut short gradually by gradually from year 2012 to date. This action raises number of question; whether US AFRICOM was established to benefit Africa or U.S. in other words, whether it was meant for win-win situation, or otherwise. It is therefore undoubted that U.S. has secret agenda behind the US AFRICOM operations. .

## **VI. National Interest Or Good Governance**

US AFRICOM defines its mission as following: Africa Command has administrative responsibility for US military support to US government policy in Africa, to include military-to-military relationships with 53 African nations. [31] It also promised working closely with US Embassies and State Department across Africa, an unusual admission which also includes USAID: US Africa Command provides personnel and logistical support to State Department-funded activities. Command personnel work closely with US embassies in Africa to coordinate training programs to improve African nations’ security capacity. [31]

As a result, US AFRICOM had negotiated with authorities in various African states such as; in Dakar and Uganda to set up bases in their respective countries and Botswana is also alleged of being in the process of becoming home to another base. [32] It was cleared that through various incentives, US interests can be secured even if African states refuse and oppose US AFRICOM. Hence US can attract some countries with financial assistance or compensation. For instance; Djibouti was paid an annual least of US\$30 million for allowing U.S. operations a permanent base on its soil. [5]

The U.S. promised to provide advisers and reconnaissance drones to aid in efforts to rescue more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram in April 2014. One of the primary lessons of Afghanistan and Iraq is that wars against Islamic extremism can’t be won by military means alone, and U.S. officials say their strategy reflects that. Still, economic aid fell from 2009 to 2012 as military financing rose, according to the most recent State Department data available.

In 2009, U.S. economic and other non-military aid for all of Africa was \$10.4 billion, compared with \$8.26 billion in military assistance through the Foreign Military Financing program. In 2012, economic aid dropped to \$8.1 billion while military financing rose to \$16.8 billion. [33] General Kip Ward speaking to the International Peace Operations Association in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 27, 2008 when he defined the command’s mission of US AFRICOM as; in concert with other US government agencies and international partners, [to conduct] sustained security engagements through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of US foreign policy. [31]

Although, nothing much was known about US AFRICOM’s activities in Libya until it declared that the command had ‘stopped the advance of the Libyan army on defenceless civilians in Benghazi, and it had enforced no-fly zone over Libya and established a sea embargo against the Gadhafi regime. It shows that US AFRICOM was at the forefront of implementing the UN-mandated no-fly zone. [32] This could have been construed in line with the UN resolution 1973 that did mandate the creation of a no-fly zone. However, instead of protecting civilians, it was actively involved in the destruction of armoured vehicles, providing close air support to rebel forces, impeding African Union negotiations for a political settlement to the conflict and

ultimately assisting in causing the deaths of thousands of people when a political solution could have been manoeuvred earlier. [32] Most importantly, the role of AU who requested to find a political solution was totally ignored by U.S. and its allies.

It could be recalled that during Cold war era, more than \$1.5 billion worth of weaponry was transferred to Africa from 1950-1989 by United States. Countries such as Liberia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Zaire got the largest portion of the weapon. In other words, these countries are under authoritarian, oppressive, and unpopular regimes. Zaire received the highest U.S. weapon, while US further provided aid to Zaire amounted to \$860 million between 1960 and 1988. Much of these weapons were transferred to rebels across the border fighting a civil war in Angola, a war that lasted for close to three decades. [34] About 4,000 U.S. soldiers and other military personnel camped in Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti. The United States regards it as a major staging area for attacks against terrorists in Yemen and Somalia. Until recently, the facility was used to launch U.S. drone strikes against suspected al-Qaida fighters. [35] At the same time Djibouti is a one party dominant state under the People's Rally for Progress (RPP), it controlling both legislature and the executive since its formation in 1979. Opposition parties are allowed with very limited freedom, while the main opposition party, the Union for National Salvation boycotted the 2005 and 2008 elections, citing government control of the media and repression of the opposition candidates. The current president was sworn in in 1999, and he is serving the third six-year term, after a one-man election on 8 April 2005 for second term won by 100% of the votes in a 78.9% turnout. [36] Protest was organized by the Djiboutian against the president for attempt to stand again for the third term. He amended the constitution to run for a third term that he won with 80.63% of the vote in a 75% turnout on 22 February 2013. Even though, the international observers considered the election as free and fair. [37] Such situation makes one surprise whether international communities at times working for the interest of certain nations or establishing unconditional facts.

Several writers accused Washington for maintaining good relations with the Ethiopian government such as; providing Ethiopia with equipment and training to fight the Somali Al-Shabab militia, regardless of Ethiopia's bad reputation on human rights' record and its attempts to suppress protests and dissent. [38] While United States was silent on the anti-democratic actions of the Equatorial Guinea dictatorship, her ignorance for criticizing Angolan and Nigerian fraudulences in the various past elections was criticized. This was a result of the role of these regimes in securing US oil interests. Especially, Nigeria is the fifth largest supplier of oil to the USA market. It is also important to note that establishment of US AFRICOM had benefited some African states dictators to propose and consider military solutions to domestic problems. The case of Mali is good for this illustration. [39] The Tuareg rebellion which had been brewing for decades got opportunity when a coup by southern soldiers in March 2012 occurred, less than a month before Mali's election. The intensification of the rebellion was one of the consequences of the US AFRICOM coordinated NATO intervention in Libya and the overthrow of the Gadhafi regime. Those Tuareg who have been part of Gadhafi security fled and met them in situation where they can make use of the weapon brought from Libya, as a result Mali was divided into two regions. [40]

## **VII. Africa Mechanism For Conflict Resolution**

Camp Lemonnier a former French Foreign Legion post that becomes the only permanent footprint for US on African continent since 2001 was arranged four year after the establishment of U.S. AFICOM. [28] US AFRICOM is never a response to African requests for security, nor for development but a unilateral decision made by US without any consultation or compromised agreements with African Union or any of its sub-regional organizations. Despite that the rise of Islamic militancy in parts of the Sahel and Horn of Africa poses growing threats to regional stability, the appeal of these militants stems from their ability to tap into and persuade marginalized communities, particularly youth, that their grievances can be rectified by the establishment of a more pure Islamist culture. With exception to Somalia, Mali and Nigeria recently, Islamic militants in Africa do not possess great military power and may not seek to govern at the state level. Rather, they tend to be home grown phenomena, while their focus was on local concerns, and they only gained support of small minorities within Muslim communities. However, ill-considered interventions, especially those involving Western forces, frequently reinforce the militants' narrative, thereby strengthening their credibility and recruitment. [41]

Africa had set up a mechanism for conflict resolution since the regional organization come to existence. The Organization known as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Now Africa Union (AU) [42] was formed in 1963, it comprised of all independent African States, (except Morocco) the then OAU sets the desire to protect the territorial integrity of African states as its core goal. On conflict resolution, its Charter specifically called for amicable resolution to disputes, preventive measure, Commission on Mediation, Arbitration and Conciliation was established as a tool to resolve disputes between member states. Members were also exhorted not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states, and a decision was made to respect the inherited colonial boundaries. The organization's charter was based on two pillars "sovereignty" and "Pan-



Africanism". While guarding its newly acquired sovereignty from Cold War "hawks," it also wanted to free dependent countries from colonial rule. [43]

It could be said that the organization at the same time was weak with number of unattended problems. For instance, the attention of the organization was more on the "state," without much interest in the "population". The overemphasis on the "state" caused the organization to show more interest in addressing conflicts between, rather than conflicts within states. This state-centric focus of the OAU can be traced from the opening statement of its charter, while the UN charter opens with a people-focused declaration: "we the peoples of the world..." the OAU charter begins with "We the Heads of States of African countries..." [44] Looking at overall justification, it is suit to assert that in the early years of its creation, OAU was able to conduct its own successful brand of conflict resolution e.g. the Ethiopia-Somalia conflicts, the Kenya-Somalia conflict, and the Algeria-Morocco conflict are examples of how the OAU was able to prevent potential wars for peace. The trace of Pan-Africanist envisaged in 1960s brought with it an understanding that any conflict in Africa, regardless of its geographical location was an African problem. [45] It was within this positive outlook that African leaders were able to successfully resolve their problems in peaceful manner in those days. It could be further strengthen that the fresh memory of colonialism was a contribution factor behind those successes at the time. Notwithstanding, the same phenomenon had been repeatedly sought in the 21 century that Africa is solution to African problems.

The OAU aiming at promoting peace, security, and stability on the continent, principles of peaceful resolution on conflicts among member states through appropriate means as may be decided upon by the OAU assembly. AU assigned a specific body known as the Peace and Security Council (PSC) with the implementation of these objectives and principles. [46] Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act, recognizes the right of the Union to intervene in member state in circumstances of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Any decision to intervene in a member state under article 4 of the Constitutive Act will be made by the Assembly on the recommendation of the PSC. The power of PSC among other things includes; to authorize peace support missions, to impose sanctions in case of unconstitutional change of government, and to "take initiatives and action it deems appropriate" in response to potential or actual conflicts. The PSC is a decision-making body in its own right, and its decisions are binding on member states.

The PSC has been active in resolving several crises since its inception in 2004; Darfur, Comoros, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire and other countries. It has adopted resolutions creating the AU peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Darfur, and imposing sanctions against persons undermining peace and security. The leaders of the rebellion in Comoros were sanctioned with travel bans and asset freezes. The Council is working on establishment of a standby force to serve as a permanent African peacekeeping force. [47] Recently, AU members are suggesting the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), such force aiming to include the African Standby Force (ASF), to be deployed during emergency needs e.g. genocide or other serious human-rights violations. The AU is planning on putting the concept into active by 2015. [48] Apart from AU, there are various sub-regional organizations, each sub-regional organization was set up with a comprehensive objectives. Mechanism for conflict resolutions was present in cooperation with other objectives. Currently, there are eight sub regional organizations recognized by the AU, each established under a separate regional treaty. They are [49]:

- The Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)
- The Common Market For Eastern And Southern Africa (COMESA)
- The Community Of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)
- The East African Community (EAC)
- The Economic Community Of Central African States (ECCAS)
- The Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS)
- The Intergovernmental Authority On Development (IGAD)
- The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)

At the July 2007 Accra summit, the Assembly finally decided to adopt a Protocol on Relations between the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities. This protocol is intended to facilitate the harmonisation of policies and ensure compliance with the Abuja Treaty and Lagos Plan of Action time frames. [50] For instance, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was mainly established for economic cooperation, but due to its comprehensive objectives, mechanism for conflict resolution was formed and it has recorded number of success in resolving various crises arose in West Africa; Liberia, Serra Leone, and Guinea Bissau among others under the umbrella of Economic Community of West African Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). In situation where Africa had established various security mechanisms, a direct presence of U.S. seems uncalled for, and assistance in term of providing facilities and equipment will be justified as honest assistance to Africa. It is also suit to note that neither American nor the European can resolve conflict in Africa but Africans themselves.



### **VIII. Opposition To The Us Africom Operations**

It was speculated that in few years' time, one quarter of the oil and raw materials consumed by the United States will come from Africa. On the basis of that consideration, a U.S.-Israeli think tank, the Institute for Advanced Strategic & Political Studies (IASPS), recommended the creation of a U.S. military command for Africa. As a result, US AFRICOM was inaugurated at the end of the Bush Administration and placed under the command of Afro-American General William E. Ward, former coordinator for security between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The announcement of its creation gave rise to a wave of resistance in Africa. No African state was willing to host it and US AFRICOM ultimately set up base in Germany and Italy. [51]

"...is naive to imagine that better consultation, planning, and marketing would have substantially improved AFRICOM's reception on the continent. No communication and consultation could have altered the essence and improved the image of a superpower whose foreign policy is characterized by unilateralism, militarism, and disregard for international law. The formation of a US military command for Africa is a component of this foreign policy and is thus inescapably associated with its features" [52]

US AFRICOM's build up crystallize around the U.S. base in Djibouti, where Israeli troops are already stationed, while control of the Gulf of Guinea may constitute another strategic focus. For diplomatic reasons, US AFRICOM will probably start out as a network of small bases, rather than a display of big installations. Upon announcement the creation of US AFRICOM, almost all African leaders sceptical about the establishment of such a military organization on African soil, except President Ellen Sirleaf -Johnson of Liberia. She was the only known African leaders that publicly supported and promised to host US AFRICOM in her country when other African states criticized the plan to sit US AFRICOM on African soil. There are several reasons attached to African opposition to US AFRICOM; the US unilateral action without proper consultation with the AU during US AFRICOM's conceptualization made many states wary about the command's real intentions. Some viewed it as an attempt to eclipse the AU and to become the most important decision-making body on African security.[52] The 2011 US AFRICOM's direct involvement in Libyan crisis undermined the role of AU as the regional security authority. Even though the AU call for negotiations and a political solution which was rejected and ignored by the US AFRICOM-coordinated NATO forces which overstepped its UN mandate and orchestrated regime change. [32]

The twenty-five-member Community of Sahel-Saharan States (Cen-Sad) asserted that it totally refuses the installation of any military command or any foreign armed presence on any part of Africa soil, whatever the reasons and justifications, while the fourteen-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) argued that it is better if the United States were involved with Africa from a distance rather than be present on the continent. [53] The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also firmly opposed US AFRICOM's creation, while the leaders of Zambia, Nigeria and South Africa were strident in their criticism of the command.[53] Although, Liberia was the lone voice supporting US AFRICOM, with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf arguing that the command was intended to secure US interests, these often coincided with the interests of African states. [53] The stands of Liberia should not be met in surprise, much need to do with its historical connections with U.S. Interestingly, one of the major reasons for some African leaders' opposition to the US AFRICOM bases on the continent was due to concern on the balance of power within sub regional institutions, and between states.[53] They feared that US AFRICOM's presence would undermine the regional institutional influence while regional hegemony scared that it's stationing in neighbouring states would alter the balance of power. As a result, South Africa and Nigeria used their influential positions in SADC and ECOWAS respectively to lobby against the establishment of the Command's headquartered in their regions. [52]

U.S. believed that the deadly mall attack in Kenya that killed almost 70 people, and two recent special operations raids; one in Libya and the other in Somalia underscore the challenges facing Africa. Rodriguez argued that in East Africa, much of the threat emanates in Somalia around the al-Shabaab militant group. In North Africa, particularly in Mali and Libya, US AFRICOM is grappling with the threat of al-Qaida and several other terrorist organizations. Maj. Gen. Patrick Donahue, commanding general of U.S. Army for Africa believed that recent trends also show some techniques migrating from Afghanistan into northern Africa, such as the use of improvised explosive devices in Mali and Nigeria, he said: The enemy is learning from experiences in Afghanistan and transferring that learning into Africa... We're seeing things we're very familiar with in other places." [54]

### **IX. Conclusion**

The U.S. military is indeed pivoting to Africa, for instance at present, it has secured averages of a mission per day on the continent, conducting operations with most of African military forces, in majority of African countries, while building up camps, compounds, and contingency security locations. The U.S. has taken an active role in wars from Libya to the Central African Republic, sent special forces into countries from Somalia to South Sudan, conducting airstrikes and abduction missions. It even operating on the ground in countries that it promised not to enter in the first place. [28] Even though, some officials in the State Department

had expressed concern about the militarization of U.S. foreign policy on the continent, they argued that most terrorist cells in Africa are pursuing local aims, not global ones, has been claimed by the US government, and such local threat did not present a direct risk to the United States. [18]

Africa needs nothing than good governance, peace and peaceful negotiation where there is presence of violence. What Africans will appreciate are transparency, accountability, war against corrupt leaders, and striving for economic developments. In contrast, military operations should not be viewed as utmost solution to African issues. Washington should understand that continuous operation in its current form will not deter violence, especially extremists but rather make it worse. Washington should take measures to show a more conciliatory façade, accepting China's exploitation of Sudan's oil fields, thereby halting that country's destabilization, and accept liberation of global markets rather than monopoly target. Simultaneously, Paris with a contingent of not less than 9'000 men on African soil should reduce its military presence, share it with other countries of the European Union, and engage it in the peace-keeping operations of the African Union only if necessary.

Use of foreign military might in areas such as Somalia and Mali constitutes a major dilemma. While the involvement of regional actors, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), may be at least better choice and seen by rebels as African mechanism. Peace engagement would be better choice, although, the governments in Somalia and Mali have been unable to provide an effective military response which can be considered as a choice for external involvement, but military action without long-term political and economic engagement will obviously not secure lasting peace and stability, such military choices should be left within the ambit of AU decision. U.S. and other international forces can better provide aids in term of democratic and good governance rather than military operations. Suggestion has viewed that U.S. and other foreign forces involvements in Africa will create more dictatorships on the continent, the dictators will cease terrorist's opportunity to result to military solution for political issues. A systematic way of continue injustice that will abuse human right, and at the end the grievances will continue. Washington should pack its weapon out of African soil, and resort to assisting AU or its sub region organization when needed on security, and to limit such assistance to provide necessary equipment, trainings, and financial supports.

Former president of Nigeria Obasanjo in his claim that the reason behind Islamic militant 'Boko Haram' is not simply lied with religion: "Boko Haram is not simply a menace based on religion or one directed to frustrate anybody's political ambition but essentially a socio-economic problem that is tainted with religion". [55]

Obasanjo continues: "It took even the president more than three years to appreciate and understand that it is a terrible mix of poor education or lack of education, misinterpretation of what is almost and the Quran teach and stand for, poverty, unemployment, injustice, drug, gun trafficking, human trafficking, fallout from Libya, revenge, frustration, struggle against inequality, imitation of international terrorism leading to training and part of the absorption by international terrorists groups and general poor governance including corruption". [56]

Therefore, crises in Liberia, Serr Leone, Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe, and Kenya were few among those that AU and its sub regional organizations had settled; some with force while those of Kenya and Zimbabwe were resolved through peaceful negotiation. These successes were achieved not simply because African leaders and their troops are better off, but due to the fact that those states acknowledged their African counterpart involved as colleagues and their own brothers rather than outsiders or foreigners.

Finally, it should be noted that Africa issues can best be handled by Africans, and not Americans. On top of that, United States should carefully understand the grievances behind revolt on African region, and admit the fact that it's quite difference scenario to that of Arab uprisings and others. If US involvements continue on African soil, Africa is likely to continue seeing violence, and US will one day withdraws and leave us while jeopardized our promising continent from progress and stability to a failed continent.

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