

**THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU)
AND
INTRA-REGIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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1984

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PREFACE

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"They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah, The Book of the Prophet). The day is far far off, the road extremely difficult but hope that magnificent human virtue exhorts us not to lose faith. The challenge indeed is formidable if we look at the present-day world - nations behaving in a seemingly irrational manner and going to war even for mere bald patches of land. The idyllic situation envisaged by Isaiah may not be possible in the near future, but there is no harm in hoping and trying.

My dissertation, in its modest way, is a contribution towards building a better future. Conflict between nations is a scourge, at the present stage it would be too much to believe that it can be totally abolished or outlawed, what we can hope realistically is to 'manage' them - to try to prevent them if possible and to decrease their intensity when they actually take place. One potent weapon is to do it through regional organizations - our focus here being on the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the biggest of them all. By the method of case study, the aim is to analyse some conflicts where OAU was involved and to see where it was effective and where it went wrong. The conclusions drawn

would help in making OAU more effective in its conflict management. One limitation, primarily aimed at restricting the scope of the paper, is to study only intra-regional conflicts, because there are other conflicts (notably the conflict with the minority regime in South Africa) which can be termed 'international'.

My assumption in this paper is that conflicts in inter-state relations are inevitable, like tides. I also assume that states would continue to behave in the same manner in the foreseeable future. Starting with these assumptions much significance is attached to constant communication between parties, even belligerents. The study of the theory of conflicts also shows that in a conflict, after a point of time the party/parties in that conflict wish to negotiate for a halt in the conflict. Considering all these, my dissertation starts with a two-fold purpose, (i) to study conflicts, classify them, explore their origins and analyse the involvement of OAU and (ii) to draw conclusions on that basis, so that within its limitations the organization can tackle conflicts better.

In the first chapter the terms 'conflict' and 'conflict management' are discussed briefly after which the conflicts in Africa are classified, as a backgrounder to the study various aspects effecting conflict management are discussed. It is followed by a brief description on the birth of the OAU which touches upon the Pan African movement, the different

groupings in Africa at that time (Brazzaville, Casablanca and Monrovia) and their approaches to conflict management. The second chapter, after a brief mention of the Addis Ababa Conference, examines in detail provisions regarding conflict management, the organs relating to it and their proposed role. A tentative framework, as envisaged by the framers, is attempted. The third chapter takes up five case studies, namely the Algeria-Morocco conflict 1963, the Nigerian Civil War 1967, the Angolan Civil War 1975-76, the Western Sahara Conflict and the Civil War in Chad. After touching upon the genesis of the conflict, OAU's role in it, is examined fully. The fourth chapter is a discussion on the present state of conflict management organs. The principles of conflict management which have developed over the years as well as the trends in voting are also discussed. This is followed by the conclusion. Two appendices are provided - one a theoretical model of a conflict and the second, a list of intraregional conflicts in Africa with a brief summary.

Collecting materials for this dissertation was not an easy task. Though books on Africa are plenty the same cannot be said about the OAU. Deliberations in the OAU Assembly and Council meetings are not made public, therefore, what transpires there has to be gleaned from various newspaper reports. In this respect, the African leaders should be more forthright which will go a long way in clearing up

some misgivings about the organizations. It is not enough to profess unity among themselves, it should be known to others outside also.

Despite heavy commitments, my supervisor Professor Anirudha Gupta has spared time for me, for which I am thankful to him. To the staff members of ICWA library, JNU library and the ICCR library I owe a debt of gratitude. I am also grateful to Mrs. Meera and Mr. M.N. Talwar who 'deciphered' my writings and made the paper presentable.

For my friends, who helped me all along with their criticisms and suggestions and moral support, any amount of gratitude would be too little.

I share the bouquets but the brickbats are mine alone.

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Chapter - I

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT - THEORETICAL ASPECTS:

"A conflict emerges wherever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space, or the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain incompatible goals, or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purposes."¹ This definition can become a good starting point to explain the extent in which conflict and conflict management is to be studied. Intraregional conflicts have sovereign nation states (or aspiring nation states, as in a civil war) as parties. With no absolute and effective agreement to refrain from the use of force in their relations with each other, conflict in the field of interstate relations mostly means armed conflict. Thus conflict management means "limiting the conflict and reduce its intensity to such an extent that major armed hostilities can reasonably be ruled out."²

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1. Robert C. North, "Conflict Political Aspects" in David L. Sills (ed.) International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (London, 1968), vol.13, p.226. For a diagrammatic representation of a conflict, see Appendix I.
 2. Han-Peter Neubold, "Principles and Implementation of Crisis Management Lessons from the Past" in Daniel Fei (ed.) International Crisis and Crisis Management - An East-West Symposium (Aldershot, 1976). In the case of regional organizations like the OAU, OAS or Arab League the roles are usually limited to 'wearing away' or 'breaking down differences'. A resolution of substantive aspects of the conflict are attempted after this phase is completed successfully.

The idea of conflict management is inherent in the theory of conflict itself. 'Almost any aspect of conflict, however, destructive requires interaction between antagonists, considerable communication, and the establishment and maintenance of many reciprocal ties and subtle understanding. Conflict, thus, though it may sound paradoxical, functions as a binding element between parties who previously have had not contact at all.'³ Though this integrative function of conflict may be having a limited application in the field of inter-state conflict, the fact remains that a conflict tends to make the stands of countries clear, makes each other capable of understanding each other's capabilities, strength, weakness and even problems.⁴

Many conflict arise from what nations think may happen - from their anxieties, prejudices, fears and uncertainties - rather than from any phenomenon that is actually threatening. This is where institutions of conflict management can serve as conduits for the exchange of ideas leading to a better understanding of each other's positions, the forum of conflict management establishments can be utilised and misunderstandings cleared up.

3. Lewis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict, (III. 1956), p.121.

4. For a discussion on the positive functions of war, see Quincy Wright, A Study of War (Chicago, 1942), vol.1, pp.250-53.

Conflict management remains a possibility because pure conflict is a myth. As Schelling remarks in his excellent study of conflict - The Strategy of Conflict, in international affairs, there is mutual dependence as well as opposition. War of extermination is very rare, virtually non-existent.

The most powerful impetus for conflict management comes from the attitudes of the parties themselves. This can be explained in terms of the payoffs involved and the national interest of the parties in a conflict. At the risk of sounding too simplistic, the following argument can be advanced. Nations engage each other in conflict when rightly or wrongly they assume that their national interests are at stake or if they think that the penalties attached are less than the reward which may accrue by going to war or to use the language of game-theorists, the pay-off is taken to be positive. At some point during the conflict the penalties associated with continuing the conflict may appear too great to one or both parties in relation to the rewards. The pay-offs become negative or negligible for the parties concerned. This is the time when the nations pause after a first encounter (often a bitter battle) and take stock of the situation. This is the time for third parties to start their conflict management manoeuvres.⁵

5. However, there always are exceptions. If external actors intervene directly or even indirectly (arms support or political support) the conflict may spiral.

CONFLICTS IN AFRICA - A CLASSIFICATION:

When African countries were on the verge of getting independence, the belief in some quarters was that it would lead to the outbreak of numerous conflicts.⁶ Another view was that instability in new states is a probable threat to international peace, that is, the domestic weakness of one state will encourage foreign intervention or alternatively prompt its rulers to displace domestic dissatisfaction on to foreign scapegoats.⁷ If this has been the case, only an analysis of the conflicts themselves would prove, but before that a classification of these conflicts need be made. On a general level, conflict can be classified as caused by (a) racial or colonial issues; (b) boundary, or (c) personality clashes; (d) external intervention in domestic disorders.

(a) The racial conflicts stemmed from the continued existence of a white minority regime in South Africa. Though Rhodesia has got independence and become Zimbabwe, Namibia still is held by South Africa illegally. This constitutes

6. For example, see Saadia Touval, "Africa's Frontiers: Reactions to a Colonial Legacy", International Affairs (London), vol.42, no.4, October 1966, and Ravi Kapil, "On the Conflict Potential of Inherited Boundaries in Africa", World Politics, (Princeton), vol.18, no.3, July 1966.

7. For elaboration of this theme, see Arnold Rivkin, The African Presence in World Affairs (N.Y., 1963), pp.10-11 and S. Touval, "The Organization of African Unity and African Borders", International Organization (Madison), vol.21, no.1, Winter 1967, pp.102-127.

a source of conflict in Africa. Before 1963, individual countries helped the guerilla fighters in the above mentioned dependent territories. But after the establishment of OAU, most of this help has been channelised through the Liberation Committee. Occasional forays by the militarily superior South African armed forces into the territories of sovereign countries like Angola and Swaziland constitutes a threat not only to Africa but also to international peace.

(b) Boundary disputes can be divided into four categories over territory, position, function and resource development.⁸ Territorial conflicts arise from the fact that 'some portions of land belonging for the moment to one state is actively sought after by another neighbouring state.'⁹ In Africa they resulted from the arbitrary way in which political boundaries were super-imposed by alien powers on the cultural and physical land - scape of the continent. Following Zartman territorial conflicts may further be distinguished as to the nature of arguments advanced to justify alteration of the status quo.¹⁰ In one

8. As adopted by J.R.V. Prescott, The Geography of Frontiers and Boundaries (Chicago, 1965), Chapter 5, and Robert O. Matthews, "Interstate Conflict in Africa", International Organization, vol. XXIV, winter 1970, pp.335-360.

9. Ibid., p.109.

10. See I. William Zartman, "The Foreign and Military Politics of African Boundary Problems", in C.G. Widstrand (ed.) African Boundary Problems, (Uppsala, 1969), pp.80-86.

instance, lack of coincidence between political boundaries at the time of independence and the earlier and more self-conscious communities of solidarity, leading to a number of irrendentist claims on neighbouring countries. Almost all the border conflicts in 1963 can be included in this category. However, in two instances, between Ghana and Ivory Coast and Ghana and Togo, the purely territorial issue was fused with and in part transformed by elements of personal and ideological nature.¹¹ Only the case of Somali irrendentism is an undiluted ethnic dispute and any attempt to resolve it legally runs up against the underlying political problems raised by Somali's advocacy of a 'Greater Somalia'.¹² In some other instances, territorial conflicts have arisen from alleged historic claims referring to both colonial and pre-colonial times. There was a dispute between Mali and Mauritania because of a transfer of eastern Hodh region by the French administration in 1944 from Mali to Mauritania.¹³ Violence erupted on the Gabon

11. See C. Welch, The Dream of Unity (N.Y., 1966), Chapters 2 and 3; I.W. Zartman, International Relations in New Africa (New Jersey, 1966), pp.112-13. On Togo, Ghana dispute, see Dannis Austin, "The Uncertain Frontiers - Ghana and Togo", The Journal of Modern African Studies (London), vol.1, no.2, June 1963.

12. Though the superpowers are now involved, the origin of the dispute is purely ethnic and not ideological because (i) Ethiopia new revolutionary regime also inherited and supports Selassie's stand; (ii) Somalia's volte face in supporting USA.

13. See I.W. Zartman, "A disputed frontier is settled", Africa Report (New York), vol.18, no.8, August 1963, pp.13-14.

Congo border in September 1962 because of Congo's claims on the Gabonese province of Upper Ogone because it was attached to the colony of Central Congo from 1920-1946. Morocco at one time claimed all of Mauritania, 150,000 square miles of north-eastern Mali, a large area of Algeria and all adjacent part of 'Spain in Africa' as a part of the 'Greater Morocco' empire which was dismembered in 1912 by the French and Spanish. To realize its claims, based on pre-colonial history, Morocco has fought wars with Algeria, at one time refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Republic of Mauritania and is currently engaged in fighting a war with the Polisario front in former Spanish Sahara.¹⁴

Positional disputes unlike territorial ones, occur as a result of an incomplete boundary definition and can be described as a controversy over interpreting the delimitation and description of the boundary.¹⁵ The fact that different regions of different countries belonged to one administrative unit of a colonial administration combined with inaccessibility to the border areas left many borders undefined at the time of the independence.

14. For details refer to Chapter III.

15. For a list of Inter African boundary disputes and the length and status of international boundaries in Africa, see Appendix I and II in C.G. Widstrand (ed.), n.10.

The presence of members of one tribe in a wide area did not help matters. Though the demarcation of a boundary is usually a technical problem factors like discovery of mineral resources cutting across undemarcated borders, differences over the interpretation of a treaty may degenerate into border conflict. The Algerian-Tunisian border dispute is an excellent example.¹⁶ Similarly, political differences have tended to exacerbate purely technical questions of demarcation. Thus the contested ownership of the island of Lets in the Niger river contributed to the deterioration of relations between Dahomey and Niger in 1963-1964. Malawi and Tanzania had made claims and counterclaims on each others territory in 1968-1970. Previously considered demarcated, parts of the Ethiopia-Sudanese boundary (referred to as the "Major Gwynn Line") have since 1966 been the subject of some dispute.¹⁷ The undermined borders between Upper Volta, on one hand, and Ghana and Mali on the other hand, contributed to a bitterness in relations between these countries.

Functional conflicts are related to the application or non-application of state functions at the border. The

16. Zartman, n.11, pp.113-14.

17. See David Hamilton, "Ethiopia-Sudan: Border Issue", Africa Research Bulletin (Exeter), Vol.5, no.2, February 1965, pp.975-976.

colonial rulers had, for their own convenience, allowed laissez-faire policy towards their boundaries, but the new sovereign nations passed immigration laws, imposed export and customs duties, posted borderguards to check free flow between two sides of the border. Previously unhampered in their movements, traders and various mobile social groups like nomadic tribes and migrant labour found travel a problem. One of the main causes of the border conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia is a result of transborder movement of nomadic people. Tensions arose between the Ivory Coast and Dehomay, Gabon and Congo (Brazaville), and Niger and Dahomay, Nigeria and Ghana when the former states expelled or repatriated the latter's nationals. But this factor has not gone to the extent of starting an armed conflict between the countries concerned. It has made sour relationships a little more worse, or given a setback to existing relationship. However, if on one hand restrictions have contributed towards the generation of tension, unrestricted entry has also led to functional conflict of a different sort. This refers to the refugee problem and the occasional charges of subversion raised against each other. A large number of refugees from central African Republic, Congo (Kinshasa), and Uganda stayed near the Sudan border. Unattached to any country, they were influenced by the guerrilla group Anya-Nya and several incidents were reported at the border.¹⁸ Similar

18. See Matthews, n.8, p.343.

occurrences developed along Rwanda's border with Burundi, Congo (Kinshasa) and Uganda and along Sudan's frontier with Ethiopia and Chad. According to a report of the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR) by 30 June 1982, there were more than two and a half million registered refugees in Africa in need of immediate assistance. Zaire, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan and Somalia were the worst sufferers.¹⁹ Apart from the enormous drain on the economy, the refugee problem poses a few political problems too and is a generous contributor toward increasing the tension in Africa. Refugees, who are either victims of political or tribal prosecution or are engaged in activities aimed at the overthrow of existing governments, give rise to the most delicate problems.

'OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa' signed in Addis Ababa on 6 September 1969,²⁰ tries to alleviate the misery and suffering of the refugees and at the same time eliminate refugee issue (subversion) as a source of friction between its members.

19. Africa South of the Sahara, 1983-84, Europa Publications, 1983, p.150. For details see, Poul Hartling "An African Tragedy" in Africa Report, Jan-Feb, 1981, pp.39-41, and Crawford Young, Ideology and Development in Africa (Yale, 1982), pp.317-19. Table on page 318.

20. Which came into force on 20 June 1974 when Algeria, as the fourteenth OAU member, deposited its instrument of ratification. Art IV of the Convention excludes any person from being recognized as a refugee who is involved in 'subversive activities on the part of neighbouring states or any other state'.

Exploitation of Resources is the final sub-category of boundary disputes. It refers to the exploitation of a resource held in common by two or more countries. In Africa, there are lakes that border on several states (Lake Nyasa, Lake Tanganayika, Lake Chad, Lake Victoria) and of rivers that either constitute (the Zambezi river) or cut across (the Nile, Senegal, and Niger rivers) international boundaries. Problems could presumably arise over transport needs,²¹ fishing rights, and the question of water supply. Despite the fairly high potential for such conflicts, only one has actually occurred: the dispute between Egypt and Sudan over the distribution of waters of the Nile.²² Over the years when development takes place and the countries are in a better position to exploit these resources, problems may arise. The Cavally river, the west bank of which marks Liberia's border with Ivory Coast was opened by agreement in 1961 to Liberian ships and goods. Other states have formed inter-state organizations such as

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21. Lake Nyasa borders Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique. Lake Tanganayika borders Tanzania, Zaire, Burundi. Lake Chad borders Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Lake Victoria borders Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. As for the rivers, River Nile passes through nine countries namely, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt. River Niger passes through Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria. The Zambezi constitutes the border between Zaire and Angola, River Senegal passes through Senegal, Mali and Guinea.
 22. The dispute, however, was resolved by an agreement in 1959. Matthews, n.8, p.344.

the Organization of Senegal River States, the Niger River Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Commission to coordinate their policies and avoid conflict.

(c) Vernon McKay in his book African Diplomacy: Studies in the Determinants of Foreign Policy talks of certain conflicts which have arisen neither because of ideological nor territorial reasons but rather out of personal rivalries for influence within the various inter-state groupings in Africa.²³ In analysing the determinants of foreign policy, the impact of the personality factor is very hard to gauge. However, in countries where the iron law of oligarchy is still in operation and where a ruling elite can clearly be identified, the personality factor, the importance of idiosyncratic factors can not be minimized.²⁴ Active campaigning for personal influence within various regional and continental movements for African unity had a direct impact on the relations between Senegal and Ivory Coast (1958-1960), Senegal and Mali (1960-1963), Liberia and Ghana (1959-1961), and Tunisia and the United Arab Republic. Efforts to form some kind of political Pan Africanist organization was blocked by a competition for leadership.

23. Vernon McKay (ed.), African Diplomacy: Studies in the Determinants of Foreign Policy (N.Y., 1966), pp.6-7.

24. See Olajide Aluko (ed.), The Foreign Policies of African States (London, 1977), especially the introduction by the editor.

one leader's role viewed with suspicion and mistrust. Disagreements, may it be due to ideological reasons or territorial claims, is often attributed to the actions of the man essentially responsible - the President. In Africa, where in most cases it is very difficult to distinguish the interests of the state from the interest of the ruler, personal charges and counter charges (sometimes to the extent of slander) tend to make rapprochement difficult to achieve.²⁵ Notable examples are the no love lost relations between Nkrumah and Boigny, Nyerere and Banda, Sekou Toure and Boigny. Bitterness between them has tended to exacerbate disputes mainly ideological and territorial in origin.

(d) A distinction can be made between two types of domestic conflicts; first, challenges towards territorial integrity and second, threats to 'the security of existing regimes'.²⁶ The first one refers to the secessionist movements by groups who perceive it to be impossible to continue in the country where the European powers have put them. They demand complete independence and do not hesitate to raise guerilla warfare to realize it. Threats to existing regimes result from challenges to the legitimacy of political

25. For elaboration of this theme and a general discussion on leadership in Africa, see S. Cartwright, Political Leadership in Africa (New York, 1983).

26. See Ali Mazrui, "Violent Contiguity and the Politics of Retribalization in Africa", Journal of International Affairs (Columbia), Vol.23, no.1, 1969, pp.102-3.

authority in power. Due to the presence of closed political systems in most African countries the opposition fails to get a share of the cake and gets totally excluded from the political scene. Added to that is a feeling that they 'could have done better if in power' prompts many African leaders to challenge the regime in power either inside the country or in exile. The external intervention in both these kinds of domestic conflicts has been both African and non-African whenever and wherever it has taken place. The reason for such help may be ethnicity, ideology, religion even humanitarian. The civil war in Nigeria is an example where Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Gabon's decision to recognize the Biafran regime led to severance of all ties between these countries and Nigeria. Libya's help to the Muslim rebels in Sudan has deteriorated relations between the two countries. In the past (1963-1966), the relations between Rwanda and Burundi had deteriorated drastically due to incursion of armed Rwandan refugees (from Burundi) into Rwanda. These Tutsi refugees are now settled away from the border and the tension has lessened considerably. In the case of Tanzania and Malawi, the former's offer of political asylum to President Banda's (of Malawi) Chief political enemies had embittered relations.²⁷ But the situation, though tense, has stabilised to some extent. President Nkrumah's overzealousness in

27. along with Malawi's pursuit of close friendship with South Africa.

actively supporting opposition groups from other independent countries,²⁸ (and his advocacy of extending his revolution to neighbouring countries) led to a period of suspicion, mistrust and tension. One or two short armed conflicts ensued. But with the overthrow of Nkrumah the relations dramatically improved.

Apart from the African actors, extra systemic actors in the form of big powers may involve themselves in African conflicts. These involvements take many forms both overt and covert. Supply of arms to parties in a conflict, help to rebels aiming to oust an existing regime, help via third parties are a few instances. Direct armed intervention is also not unheard of. The 'Stanleyville drop' of 1964, the presence of Cuban troops in Angola and Ethiopia are examples. Apart from the two super powers, other powers involved in intraregional conflicts in Africa at one time or the other are Belgium, Britain, Cuba, France and South Africa.²⁹

THE AFRICAN SITUATION:

Conflict management is not an isolated phenomenon occurring in a vacuum. The classification of intra-regional conflicts in Africa prompts one to ask questions about the

28. They included Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, U. Volta.

29. China, Czechoslovakia, Israel and West Germany can be included in the list as arms suppliers.

circumstances under which such conflicts originate and take place. Innumerable factors can be taken into account. But due to obvious reasons, a detailed study of these factors is outside the scope of this paper. But as a backdrop to the actual conflict management by the Organization of African Unity(OAU), a brief general study of the African situation can be undertaken. The factors discussed are divided into two categories - domestic and international. But as the proponents of 'linkage politics',³⁰ will point out, these two systems - domestic and international - frequently overlap each other. In the category of domestic factors, a general study about the state of economies and the resulting dependence (as primary producing and exporting countries with dominant trading partners), internal political pressure (public opinion(s), pressure groups), the nature and ideology of the governing elites would be included. Under the category of international (or external)³¹ factors, geographical location, the continuing cold war environment and very

30. For elaboration, see James N. Rosenau, "Introduction: Political Science in a Shrinking World", in Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems, ed., James N. Rosenau (New York, 1969), pp.1-17 and "Theorizing Across Systems: Linkage Politics Revisited", in Conflict Behaviour and Linkage Politics, ed., Jonathan Wilkenfeld (New York, 1973), pp.25-56.

31. As Olajide Akulo calls it. The author uses his framework for identifying the factors in the African situation, n.24, pp.1-18.

briefly the existence of colonialism and white-supremacist regime would be discussed.

The Economy:

The study of most African economies presents a sad as well as alarming picture. "Although during the past two decades there has been some structural changes in African economies, the fact is that today the African economy is still basically underdeveloped; low income per head, a very high proportion of population in agriculture, low levels of productivity, a circumscribed and fractured industrial base, a high dependence on a vulnerably narrow spectrum of primary export commodities, a transport network geared largely to the export sector, a sharp bifurcation between the traditional and modern sectors, a high degree of illiteracy, low levels of life expectancy, and predominance of expatriate business enterprise in banking, commerce, finance, industry and management. Although they are merely some of the pointers to Africa's underdevelopment, they suggest the magnitude of challenges confronting African economies."³²

32. Statement by Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa on 'Perspectives of Development and Economic Growth in Africa upto the Year 2000' at the OAU/ECA Colloquium, Monrovia, Liberia, 12-16, Feb. 1979, pp.4-5.

Although industrialization has been taking place in all African countries with varying degrees of success since independence, the nature of their economies remain colonial in character - export of produce and import of manufactured products.³³ In size and population, most African countries are too small to support any kind of large scale industrialization. The African countries, consequently, accounted for 0.6 per cent of the world industrial output in 1975. Many African countries are not in mineral and natural resources but are desperately short of capital and technical expertise to develop them. Coupled with this factor, negligible inter-African trade and dependence on a very few (often one or two) trading partners makes the African countries very vulnerable to fluctuations in the world economy.

African countries, many of which are at the periphery of the periphery are tied - by colonial legacies; by their undeveloped infrastructure, in many cases also by the idiosyncratic tendencies of their leaders.³⁴ If we study the theory of dependancia - the theory that explains economic

33. See Table I.

34. Many leaders like Boigny and Senghor who were educated in Paris and had admiration for the French, decided to stay in the France zone and have defence pacts with France.

Table I

SELECTED LEAST DEVELOPED AFRICAN COUNTRIES:
PRINCIPAL EXPORTS

	Most Recent Year	Principal Export	Share of Total Export Earnings (%)
Benin	1972	Cotton	28.0
		Cocoa	19.0
		Vegetable oil	16.0
		Oilseeds	12.0
Botswana	1975	Meat	32.9
		Diamonds	29.3
		Copper nickel	20.4
Burundi	1974	Coffee	84.0
Cape Verde	1974	Fish	47.1
CAE	1975	Shaped wood	29.0
		Coffee	23.0
		Diamonds	19.0
		Cotton	17.0
Chad	1975	Cotton	64.9
		Meat	16.5
Comoros	1976	Cloves	36.4
		Perfume essences	29.4
		Vanilla	20.8
Ethiopia	1975	Coffee	32.6
		Oilseeds	17.9
		Pulses	13.9
Gambia	1975-76	Oilseeds and vegetable oil	94.0
Guinea	1976	Bauxite	67.0
		Alumina	28.0
Malawi	1976	Tobacco	44.0
		Tea	18.0
		Sugar	12.0
Mali	1975	Cotton	31.0
		Livestock	21.0
		Oilseeds	13.0
		Misc. manufactures	10.0
Niger	1976	Uranium	73.0
Rwanda	1976	Coffee	68.0
		Nonferrous metals (Cassiterite & wolfram)	15.0
		Livestock	62.0
Somalia	1974	Bananas	19.0
		Cotton	50.0
Sudan	1976	Oilseeds	29.0
		Coffee	18.0
Tanzania	1975	Cloves	12.0
		Sisal	11.0
		Cotton	11.0

contd...

Uganda	1976	Coffee	88.0
Upper Volta	1976	Livestock	25.0
		Oilseeds	23.0
		Cotton	23.0

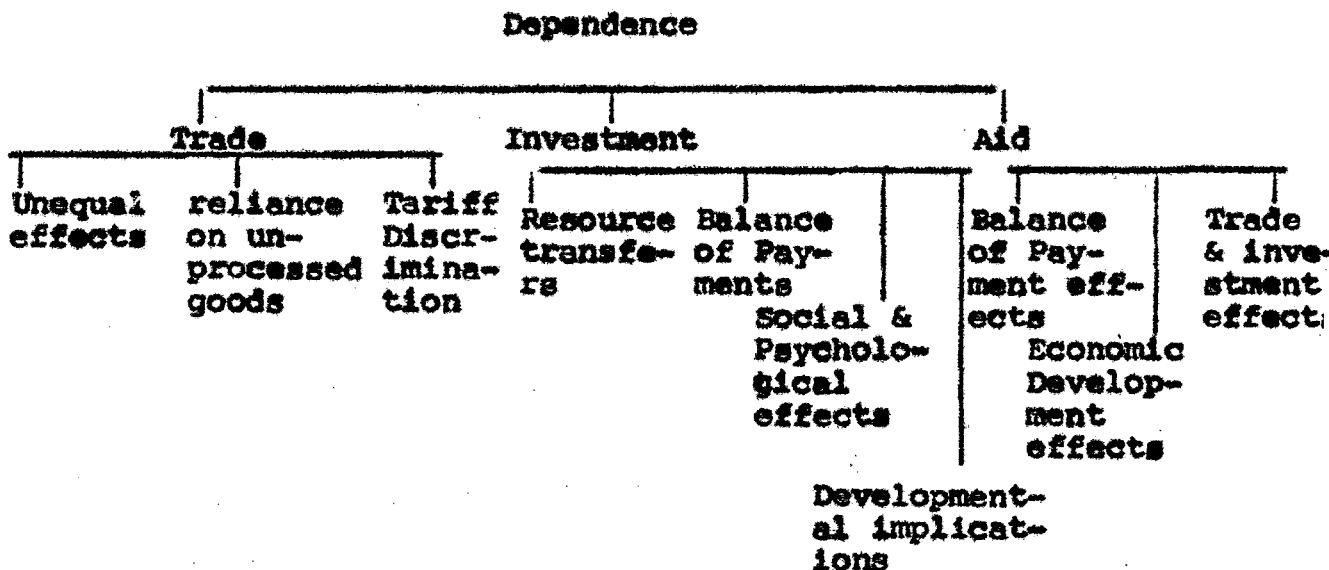
Exports that account for at least 10% of total earnings.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record 1978-79
PC 125.



dependence of one country on another - we can find that most African countries are in an unenviable position or in other words, they are the classic examples of 'dependent' countries.³⁵ It is no accident that of the thirty one Least Developed Countries (LDCs) twenty one are in Africa.³⁶ Of them fourteen countries have an added disadvantage, they are land-locked.³⁷

35. The dependence model can be represented thus:



For elaboration see Nee IR, Richardson, Foreign Policy and Economic Development (London, 1978), pp.14-62.

36. Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, The indicator by which LDCs are defined are (a) low per capita GDP \$100 or less - in 1975, it was increased to \$125. (b) Share of manufacturing in total GDP 10 per cent or less and (c) literacy rate (percentage of persons aged fifteen and over can read and write) 20 per cent or less. For details on LDC, see Shahid Qadir, "UK Conference on LDCs", Third World Quarterly (London) Vol.4, no.1, Jan. 1982, pp.132-33.

37. They are Botswana, Burundi, CAR, Chad, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Upper Volta, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Ibid., p.145.

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An analysis of the economic relationship between the African countries and their partners show a vastly unequal relationship. In trade, aid and investment it is largely a lopsided situation. Relatively the closest economic relationship persists between France and its erstwhile colonies. Most of these ex-colonies have preferred to stay in the Franc zone,³⁸ whose over all aim as Arthur Gavshon puts it is to 'preserve old arrangements under which Africa's primary products and raw materials could be extracted for profitable downstream development in metropolitan France while manufactured goods could in turn be marketed in France.³⁹ The Balance of Payment factor favours France.⁴⁰ A major part

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38. The Current Members, according to Africa South of Sahara 1983-84 (London, 1983), pp.167-168, number thirteen excluding France. They are Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta. Their currencies are linked with French Franc at a fixed rate of exchange. Furthermore, they agree to hold their reserve mainly in the form of French Francs and effect their exchange in Paris market. For a discussion on French role, see Rajen Harshe, "French Neocolonialism and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa" in Priya Matalik Desai (ed.), Development Issues in Africa (Bombay 1982), pp.263-286.
39. Arthur Gavshon, Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West (London, 1981), p.172.
40. In 1977 the volume of imports to France from Francophone Africa and Indian Ocean countries was valued at 19,077,914 Francs whereas the export from France was 31,105,705 Francs, a deficit of more than 12 million Francs. Source: Marchés tropicaux, 4 August 1978. Quoted in Africa Contemporary Record, p. C 141.

of French aid is for Africa, especially the French speaking Africa.⁴¹

As far as Britain is concerned, the Franc zone has its counterpart in the Sterling area.⁴² But the similarity is only superficial. Because unlike France, Britain has not attempted to retain decisive influence over the monetary and fiscal policies of erstwhile Anglophone countries. If British financial influence could be exerted it was through the commercial banks in the hands of a small number of large British institutions operating an extensive system of branches. With the nationalization of banks in many African countries or stringent restrictions on foreign banks, this influence has waned over the years. But, ^{Britain} intrade/remains a major trading partner with almost all Anglophone countries.⁴³ As

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41. The aid has varied in volume from country to country. The criteria has been the record of relations with France. For elaboration, see Rajen Harsh, n.38, p.275-277, a detailed treatment of the overall French policy see Africa Report, May-June 1983, pp.8-21 and Kaye Waterman, "President Mitterand and Africa", African Affairs (London, 1981), vol.82, no.328, pp.329-343.
42. Walder A. Nielsen describes it as "a kind of unstructured international financial club whose members believe it offers certain privileges but feel free to leave when their interests dictate". The Great Powers and Africa (London, 1969), p.37. As of now, the Sterling area has become almost meaningless.
43. UK Exports to the OAU countries except Nigeria - in the first half of 1978, totalled £770.1 bn - an overall rise of 43.1% w.e.f. 1977. Almost all of this was accounted for by six countries: Kenya (an increase of 101.7% w.e.f. 1977), Tanzania (80.9%), Algeria (59.7%), Sudan (59.3%), Ghana (51.6%), Libya (32.3%), Nigerian imports were £615.3 bn. in first half of 1978 an increase of 18.7% w.r.t. 1977. ACR 1978-79 PA 122.

far as aid is concerned it has declined over the years, particularly after the coming to power of the Tory government in May 1979 but is considerable even now.⁴⁴ Kenya remains Britain's largest recipient of aid.

American economic interest in Africa increased with the energy crisis of early 1970s with Nigeria, Algeria and Libya being oil suppliers to United States. Consequently, private investment and trade has also increased. In the eighteen years up to 1973, private US investment in Africa (excluding South Africa) has soared more than five times, and from 1973-1980 it has doubled.⁴⁵ The annual trade deficit with Africa as a whole of the beginning of 1980 was around \$40 thousand million.⁴⁶ Apart from this, countries in Africa get tied aid and technical assistance.⁴⁷ Countries like Somalia, Kenya are examples. Liberia uses the US dollar as its national currency. Notwithstanding the fact that a major portion of the aid is earmarked for Egypt, the total aid to the impoverished countries of Africa remain large enough to sway their policies, as it happened at the time of the Extraordinary Summit meeting on the Angolan crisis.⁴⁸

44. In 1979-1980 the total aid to Africa was £794 m. It was expected to be £680 m. in 1983-84. ACR 1980-81, p.A166. A major portion of the aid is tied. For details see ACR 1978-79, p.122.

45. From \$3.4 thousand million in 1973 to \$6.5 thousand million in 1980. Gavshon, n.39, p.164.

46. Gavshon, n.59, p.164. This was due to the oil export.

47. There are instances when US assistance has been stopped due to a negative vote in the United Nations. For example, for casting a vote against US stand on the Afghanistan issue, aid to Angola and Mozambique were suspended.

48. Discussed in detail in Chapter III.

As far as other countries are concerned, trade, aid and investment has increased over the years.⁴⁹ Soviet and Chinese aid to African countries has been on a selective basis, so has been their trade and investment. Chinese help in the Uhuru railway in Tanzania has become a show piece of Chinese-African friendship. Cuba, which until recently had only military presence in Africa is making a serious effort to supplement it by economic relationship.⁵⁰ Other notable economic powers in Africa being West Germany, Japan and Belgium.⁵¹

Summing up, one can say that inspite of attempts at collective bargaining (Yaounde and Lome agreements), increasing inter-African trade, the African countries are in a vulnerable position economically. They have remained susceptible to pressures from countries who are in a position to exert it. The predominant position of some countries in the international financial institutions (World Bank, IMF) has added to the helplessness of African countries.⁵²

49. From 1970-76 Chinese aid to Africa was \$1,815 m. and for the corresponding period Soviet aid was \$1,019 m. Source: ACR 1978-79, p.C148.

50. Cuban engineers were engaged in expanding a water supply system at Qui Fangenda to supply water to Luanda, the capital of Angola. Cuba also is involved in health aid programmes in a number of African countries.

51. According to 1978 estimates 6.5% of total wood imports of West Germany is from OAU countries. ACR 1978-79 P.C145. For Japan's trading partners and volume of trade see p.C.147. Belgium's exports to Africa in 1977 was 47 m. Belgian France and imports 45 m. Belgian France.

52. However, there are instances when African countries have acted independently at the risk of losing financially. King Hassan of Morocco asking United States to close down ...contd.

Internal Political Pressure:

Does public opinion play a part in determining the policies of a government more specifically the foreign policy? Dennis Austin thinks not.⁵³ However, Innis Claude Jr. comments, though in a general vein, that "Public opinion is a matter of great interest and importance to Parliamentarians, Prime Ministers, and Presidents, to monarchs, and dictators, to cabinets, to party Presidia, and Military Juntas - that is to political leaders of every description; he adds. 'Foreign policy of a state is typically formulated and conducted within the limits set by the actual, or presumed, or potential demand of the public.'⁵⁴

In Africa where the nation state often preceded the birth of the nation, the governments' need to use foreign policy (in which its policy towards OAU can be included) to

52. contd...

all bases and President Nyerere rejecting West Germany's objections to the opening of East Germany's consulate General in Dar-es-Salaam are two examples. But they remain as exceptions rather than the general rule.

53. Dennis Austin, "Ex Africa Semper Eadem?" in Roger Morgan ed., The Study of International Affairs (London, 1972), p.167. In his article 'Public Opinion on International Affairs in Less Developed Countries', Jorge I. Dominguez agrees with this observation. See in R.L. Merritt and B.M. Russett (eds.) From National Development to Global Community - Essays in Honor of Karl W. Deutsch (London, 1981), pp.184-202.

54. Innis Claude Jr., Impact of Public Opinion upon Foreign Policy and Diplomacy (London, 1965), p.2.

cement the precarious unity of their countries was important.⁵⁵ Few African leaders, for long, consciously followed policies abroad that served hopelessly to divide their people at home. John Howell in his analysis of Kenyan foreign policy has shown that the radical posture of the Kenyan government (in the various organs of the OAU and other forums) in the American-Belgian-British rescue operation (known as the Stanleyville drop, 1964) and its moderate stand in East Africa, was due to the desire to unify all diverse tribes in the country as well as to meet the demands of both militant and conservative opinions within it.⁵⁶ Demands in many Francophone countries - notably Mauritania, Madagascar, Cameroon, Niger - for the revision of the cooperation agreements with France have been principally due to pressure exerted in this direction by militant elements in those countries. There have been several other instances.⁵⁷

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55. For elaboration, see the article by Prof. Robert Good, "State Building as a Determinant of Foreign Policy in the New States" in Lawrence Martin (ed.) Neutralism and Non-alignment (New York, 1962), pp.3-12.
56. John Howell, "Kenyan Foreign Policy", The Journal of Modern African Studies (London), vol.6, n.1, May 1968, pp.30-33.
57. Like the sudden decision of King Hassan of Morocco to despatch troops to Syria in 1973 to help defend the Golan Heights. This had been the demand of various opposition parties and university students for years.

Nature and Ideology of Government Elites:

The institutional framework of foreign policy making is largely absent in most African countries. That means, in effect that African Heads of States and Governments and their advisors exert enormous influence on their country's foreign policy. Though internal political pressure factor was discussed earlier, it is as yet largely unformulated and very very amorphous. So the ideological and in many cases, the personal belief of leaders colour the foreign policy of African countries. Generally it can be said that 'where the rulers are militant and socialist in outlook, and where they are of humble birth without wealth such as Dr. Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, M. Keita, Colonel Gaddafi, one can expect a radical foreign policy stance, but where the leaders are conservative, with aristocratic background, such as King Hassan of Morocco, or wealthy as President Felix H. Boigny of Ivory Coast, one can expect a moderate, cautious foreign policy.'⁵⁸ However, despite the crucial role played by the elites in a developing country in decision-making, one should not lose sight of the constraints under which they work. Even in the absence of concrete institutional structures,

58. Aluko, n.24, p.12.

it is evident that they work under several limitations.⁵⁹ Even an all powerful leader having full decisions making powers can not ignore the overwhelming factors of national interest. Even a rabid anti-colonialist, anti-neocolonialist like Nkrumah decided to stay in the British Commonwealth. The successful working relationship between the conservative Ethiopian Emperor and Soviet Union and China, and the important links of militant Socialist Keita with the EEC are examples of the predominance of national interest.

Geographical Location:

Geographically, Africa is isolated from the two super powers, it is not directly under the shadow of a super power. In that respect, African countries have been fortunate, for most of them are to a considerable extent free to pursue any type of policy with either of the two super power blocks. This, must not however, be exaggerated. For their freedom to pursue any policy with either of the super powers led military power blocs is limited by their obvious economic and military weakness, and their dependance for aid and investment on these military power blocs.

59. J. Cartwright, n.25, in his book on Political Leadership in Africa lists the constraints as (a) limits imposed by actors beyond the leader's own state i.e. (i) power and interests of other states and (ii) transnational organizations; (b) limits within his own state i.e. (i) resource limitation; (ii) dominant values within the society; (iii) interests of social and functional groups; (iv) political institutions (basic rules of conduct etc.); (c) the leader's own personal limitations (ability, time available) pp.23-32.

Geographically, there are African countries with big areas. But the size is seldom matched by corresponding military and economic strength. In Africa, with the exception of some countries like Egypt, Algeria and Nigeria, the power distribution⁶⁰ among all the states is more or less even, because of this one state being totally absorbed by the other is remote. Though force has been used in many instances, protracted wars are not numerous in Africa. In recent years, many African countries have significantly increased their armed forces, but no country including Nigeria or Egypt has come to be regarded as a local 'policeman'.

The fact that some African countries are land locked⁶¹ has implication for conflicts in Africa. Since the bulk of the trade is with extra-African countries, an easy and reliable access to the coast is of permanent importance. Consequent upon this, most, if not all, the African countries have tried to maintain cordial relationships with countries through whose territories the bulk of their exports and imports must pass. For instance, one of the main reasons

60. National Power, according to Morgenthau, consists of (a) Geography, (b) Natural Resources, (c) Industrial capacity, (d) Military Preparedness, (e) Population, (f) National Character, (g) National Morale, (h) Quality of Diplomacy and (i) Quality of Government, H.J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (3rd ed. Calcutta, 1973), pp.101-148.

61. For a list, see n.37.

why Mali quickly reacted a 'rapprochement' with Senegal in early sixties after the bitterness that followed the break up of the Mali Federation was the former's need for the use of Senegal's railways, roads, and ports for the bulk of her trade with the rest of the world. One of the main factors in good neighbourly relations between Niger and Nigeria is the former's dependence on the facilities of the latter. In passing it may be mentioned that the critical dependence of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland on South Africa is largely dependent on their land-locked status.

Cold War Environment:

Living in the post-war era, as we are, it is too much to believe that the cold war is ever far away. Africa, being a primary raw material producer to the world and being near to many of the trading routes of the 'free world', was inevitably sucked into the vortex of the cold war. The question was not 'if' but 'when' and the answer was not long in coming. It was almost immediate-in Congo.⁶² The offshoot

62. For a general account of the Congo crisis, see Kwame Nkrumah, Challenge of the Congo: A Case Study of Foreign Pressures in an Independent State (New York, 1967) and R.C. Good, "The Congo Crisis: A Study of Post-Colonial Politics", in L.W. Martin (ed.) Neutrality and Non-alignment - The New States in African Affairs (N.Y., 1962). For OAU's role, see Catharine Hoskyns, Case Studies in African Diplomacy: The Organization of African Unity and the Congo Crisis 1964-65 (Dar-es-Salaam, 1969).

was a division among African countries largely on ideological lines, which persisted, even after the establishment of OAU in 1963. Angola, the Horn and to a lesser extent, Western Sahara saw massive involvement on the part of both the super powers. In the case of Chad, United States, though leaving the matter largely to France, did everything possible (including arms and economic aid) to thwart Libya's presence there. As it has been pointed out, in the post colonial era, US has allowed some leeway to the western powers because it feels that its interests are best served. The 'communist expansionism' have to be kept within bounds and more countries should not be allowed to go 'red'. However, global commitments elsewhere and the relatively less strategic value of Africa prompted USA not to have a high profile presence in Africa. In this situation the Western powers (like France and Britain) with their proven adherence to the principles of 'free world' and more importantly, with their vast experience and presence in the African countries, became the best bets for US. Strategically their policies converged though economically their interests came into conflict in some cases.⁶³ The Soviet Union has

63. For a general discussion on the world and Africa, see Anirudha Gupta, "Africa's Global Relations in the 1980s" in Priya Matalik Desai (ed.) n.38 and for a general discussion on Africa and the super powers see Waldemar A. Nielsen, n.42, Sylvanus E. Olympio, "African Problems and the Cold War", in Foreign Affairs (New York), October 1961, Vernon McKay, African Diplomacy: Studies in the Determinants of Foreign Policy (N.Y., 1966), especially C.T. Thorne, Jr., "External Political Pressures",

also done the same thing with Cuba, a relative new comer (to Africa) in some instances. (Angola, Ethiopia). However, in the case of both the super powers, they have been never very far from the centre stage.

As far as conflicts in Africa and the super powers are concerned, it has been a story of growing involvement. It has been the experience that any armed conflict of a protracted nature (may it be a conflict between nations or a civil war) is a standing invitation for the super powers to intervene. They have the capability and resources to do that and often a readymade excuse is available, though in most cases the belligerents themselves approach them. In the terminology of the super powers there is nothing like an unilateral intervention - if one super power shows active interest, at least for that sole reason, the other super power gets involved. However, Africa has more than that, it has raw materials and ideologies. In these circumstances, conflict-management assumes an importance of the greatest proportions. As long as conflicts are managed and kept within bounds, they are open to the cold war environment in a very limited way. ~~The extent to which OAU has been~~

63. contd.,.

Davidson Nicol, "The United States and Africa" in African Affairs, vol.82, no.327, April 1983, and Oye Ogunbadejo, "Soviet Politics in Africa", in African Affairs, vol.79, no.316, July 1980.

Existence of Colonialism and White
Supremacist Regimes:

In international relations it has been said that war anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere. This is exactly happening in South Africa. The minority regime there is following a policy of apartheid and ruling over an overwhelming majority of the people by force, added to that is illegally occupying Namibia. The armed struggle by South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) against the minority regime is a war of liberation where African countries help both materially and diplomatically.

The presence of the minority regime in South Africa and its continued occupation of Namibia affects the African countries in three ways: (a) South Africa as a security threat; (b) South Africa as a threat to unity; (c) South Africa as a preoccupation.

There is no doubt that South Africa is a security threat to the whole of Africa. It has an armed force which is perhaps the best in the continent⁶⁴ with almost certain

64. For the strength of the armed force and the comparable strengths of other African countries, see Robert C. Sellers (ed.), Armed Forces of the World: A Reference Handbook (N.Y., 1977), L.H. Gann and Peter Dulgnan (ed.), Why South Africa will Survive (London, 1981), p.203 and for defence expenditure, see p.207 and Shanti Sadiqali, "OAU and Conflict Situation in Southern Africa", IDSJ Journal (New Delhi), April-June 1977, p.376.

nuclear capability. Its 'retaliatory' raids against guerillas of African National Congress (ANC) and SWAPO has made a mockery of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of many African countries. The worst sufferers have been the front line states like Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia. South Africa's well equipped forces have crossed and recrossed the borders with impunity.

As far as threat to unity is concerned it has taken many forms: (1) South Africa has consistently tried to entice African countries to its side. The dialogue proposed by South Africa in 1970-71 was an example. The idea of dialogue was sold to many black Francophone countries.⁶⁵ It was accompanied by an offer to any willing African country to sign a non-aggression pact. It was a deliberate ploy to divide the ranks of the African countries in their common struggle against South Africa. That South Africa was not serious about the idea is borne out by the fact that it did not lose any time in dropping the idea. However, in 1974, there was another abortive attempt at a negotiated settlement.⁶⁶ The South African attempts of engineering a split among the

65. West Africa (London), 6 August 1971. However, on the face of determined opposition to the idea in the OAU, it could not materialise.

66. See Zdenek Cervenka, The Unfinished Quest for Unity: Africa and the OAU (London, 1977), pp.152-53.

African countries assumes importance because of the critical dependence of the countries immediately next to South Africa - the front line states.⁶⁷ Malawi remains a Pro-South African country within OAU and many other countries maintain overt and covert contacts with it - even inspite of the sanctions.⁶⁸

South African issue acts as a preoccupation - as far as international conflict management by OAU is concerned. During 1963-76, more than 50 OAU resolutions were passed on the South African issue.⁶⁹ Often the resolutions show a rephrasing of old resolutions. Not minimising the importance of the South African situation, one can say that consequently the time devoted to intraregional conflict management has decreased. However, the recent trend shows that with the independence of Zimbabwe and in the face of a stalemate reached in South Africa, comparatively less time is devoted to the South African question. It is hoped that more time would be devoted to developmental issues and conflict management.

67. See Gann and Duignan, n.64, pp.180-81, 194-95, and 236-38.

68. The example of Mauritius can be given which maintained trade relations with South Africa, ACR 1976-77, p.A70.

69. ACR 1976-77, n.68, p.A69.

BIRTH OF THE OAU:

The introductory ~~works~~ would remain incomplete without tracing the origins of the OAU. The divisions between the three groups Casablanca, Brazzaville and Monrovia, their subsequent compromise and its impact on conflict management provisions makes fascinating reading. On the practical side it can provide an insight into the present day internal rivalry in the OAU.

The organization of 51 countries⁷⁰ with ^{about ten} per cent of the globe's total population has a tortuous history. Though the birth of the OAU is always linked to that of the history and progress of Pan Africanism⁷¹ there is some controversy as to the role of Pan Africanist thoughts in the founding of OAU. Some consider that the creation of OAU was a triumph of nationalism and state sovereignty rather than of

70. Including the controversial Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.

71. For an account of Pan Africanism, the following can be studied. Colin Legum, Pan Africanism: A Short Political Guide (London, 1965), Adekunle Ajala, Pan Africanism: Evolution, Progress and Prospects (London, 1974), American Society for African Cultures (ed.) Pan Africanism Reconsidered (Calif. 1962), Jon Woronoff, Organizing African Unity (New Jersey, 1970), George Padmore, Pan Africanism or Communism (N.Y., 1971), Immanuel Geiss, "Pan Africanism" in Journal of Contemporary History (London) January 1969, D. Austin, "Pan Africanism", Ophima (South Africa), June, 1965.

Pan Africanism.⁷² Still others think that taking into account the dynamic nature of Pan Africanism, (it has no fixed definition or meaning as such) OAU is in reality, a "fruit of the Pan African dream".⁷³ However, it must be kept in mind that unlike the early sixties when the term Pan Africanism and Pan African unity was heard quite often, over the years they are very rarely, if ever, heard.

The concept of nations and independent countries came to be thought of only after countries in Asia, notably India and Pakistan got independence. Before that Pan African Congresses made very modest demands. In many African countries the time tables for independence were set for sometime in the nineteen seventies and eighties. But later, they were preponed drastically. But as independence was drawing near, the concepts of unity advocated so vehemently and rhetorically from the Pan African platforms, were going through a change. The leaders of yesterday were destined to be the Presidents and Prime Ministers of their countries. Already notions of their national interest were forming in their minds. The colonial legacy of ethnic tribal divisions and undemarcated borders, weak, dependent economies,

72. For a discussion on nationalism and Pan Africanism, see Collin Legum's article in East Africa Journal, April 1965. Davis A. John's and Apter and Coleman's articles in Pan Africanism Reconsidered, n.71.

73. For example, see Logan, n.71, p.5. and Norman J. Padelford, "The Organization of African Unity", International Organization, vol.XVIII, 1964, p.521.

absence of democratic institutions and above all balkanization were harsh realities. Unity, no longer, was the all pervasive word it used to be, faced with reality the countries began to give their own interpretation of it. Compounding the problem was the personal and ideological rivalries between the leaders, the cold war environment and armed flare-ups in the continent.

The idea of conflict between states-to-be in Africa was not entirely novel to the leaders of Pan Africanism. Almost all the leaders were educated in Britain, France or the United States. In the inter war years they could not but have been aware of the intense interstate rivalry and conflict. It must have been painfully clear to them that border is very often the cause of violent conflict between nations. But concerned, first, with the attempt to ameliorate the conditions of black people everywhere, then with demand for self-autonomy and lastly with independence for colonies, the ideas of inter-state conflicts, got a back seat in the scheme of things of Pan African leaders.

In 1958, Pan African political movement came home. Summing up the Pan Africanist programme at that time Colin Legum⁷⁴ lists as the second point the concept of 'United States of Africa' - the idea of a wholly unified continent

74. Colin Legum, n.71, pp.38-39.

through a series of inter-linking federations within which there would be a limitation on national sovereignty. The first conference of Independent African States, Accra 1958, was attended by all eight independent African states. Included in the resolutions was an agreement to observe each others political and territorial integrity, and to settle their differences, if any, by conciliation and mediation within the African community.⁷⁵ Significantly, there was no mention of the United States of Africa, nor of regional federations, though the conference was held in Nkrumah's capital. Two likely explanations can be offered: (i) the already independent countries were bidding for time in anticipation of the independence of other African countries; (ii) Nkrumah wanted to start from the micro level and then go to the macro level. In other words he wanted to have an open ended union with a likeminded country and keep open the door for other African countries to join. The Conakry Declaration of May 1, 1960, announcing Ghana-Guinea union was such a union.⁷⁶ However, the second conference of Independent African states in Addis Ababa from June 15-24, 1960 was also silent on the union of African States. In the discussions,

75. Other resolutions dealt with colonialism, South Africa, total emancipation of the continent and the struggle in Algeria. In all 11 resolutions were adopted. For text, see Colin Legum, n.71, pp.157-66.

76. The first clause of the 'Declaration of the Ghana-Guinea Union' made it clear. For text, see n.71, pp.178-79.

however, Nkrumah's plan had a definite setback when Liberian President Tubman's idea (as expressed in the Sanniquelli Declaration,⁷⁷ July 19, 1959) was endorsed by the leader of Nigerian delegation, Mr. Yusuf Maitima Sule.⁷⁸ The only country to wholeheartedly support Ghana's stand was Guinea. Two attitudes to Pan Africanism and African unity were emerging - one, the gradualist or federalist approach of Nigeria and the other, the unitarian ideas of Ghana - the advocates of the former approach, the so called 'moderates' were clearly in a majority. This, however, was not the only divisive factor in the conference. Charges of subversion, territorial ambitions and engineered coups were traded freely.⁷⁹ Thus it came as no surprise when nothing specific was decided in the conference, the President of the conference was requested to "address a communication to the Heads of States to initiate consultations... with a view to promoting African unity", and African unity was to be included in the next conference's agenda. The tension earlier mentioned

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77. The Sanniquelli declaration declared that each state was to maintain its sovereignty, and the countries were not to interfere in the internal affairs of other members. It was very clearly a far cry from a political union.
78. Mr. Sule went on to make an ill concealed attack on Nkrumah by saying that nobody should make the mistake of thinking himself to be a Messiah, who had got a mission to lead Africa.
79. The Cameroon Republic bitterly attacked Guinea for harbouring the rebel headquarters of Mr. Mounie's party at Conakry. Tunisia and Egypt were not on good terms because of the accusation by the former of latter's complicity in Bourguiba's assassination. Togo and Ghana had quarrelled over Ewe unification, Somalia and Ethiopia had a border dispute.

and the patchwork declaration were an indication of the shape of things to come.

However, roughly till October 1960, the African countries continued to share a common platform through the CIAs, through the African Group at the UN, and to a lesser extent through the All African People's Conference (AAPC).⁸⁰ Still by 1963, on the eve of the establishment of the OAU, we see three distinct groups of countries with separate charters. How did this come to happen? Though it is difficult to examine all the factors in detail, they can be touched upon briefly.

Legum identifies five main events: the independence of Nigeria, the independence of thirteen French territories, the quarrel between Morocco and Tunisia because of the latter's support for Mauritania's separate independence, the breakdown in the Central Government of the Congo; and the role of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Africa (ICFTU). The independence of Nigeria only strengthened the two opposing approaches to African unity. As examined earlier, Ghana and Nigeria had clashed earlier and it was

80. AAPC was a not governmental conference of political parties. It had three meetings: Accra 1958; Tunis 1960 and Cairo 1961. The evolution of a Commonwealth of African states was the declared objective along with other objectives. The attendances were fairly wide. For details see, Legum, n.71, pp.42-45, Ajala n.71, pp.17-19 and pp.24-25 and Woronoff, n.71, pp.40-43.

not the end of it. Before their independence, many of the leaders of the French-speaking territories had come to be looked upon by the African states in control of the Pan African organization, as 'stooges'. Their relatively cordial manner of gaining independence from France (except Algeria), their continuing economic, social and military relationships with France seemed to strengthen the belief. There was a feeling that they had pussyfooted in crucial matters like the independence of Algeria and French atomic tests in the Sahara. Several former French colonies (Togo and Cameroon for example) signed treaties for the supply of French troops to defend their governments. Thus the independence of thirteen African countries tended to deteriorate the situation.

At this time came the Congo crisis which made apparent the cracks in African unity and formally ushered the cold war into Africa.⁸¹ However, until the fissure opened in the central government between Lumumba and Kasavubu, the African states in the United Nations were really working as a group. Individually,⁸² and collectively the African countries were making their presence felt. They unitedly fought when Belgian troops returned to Congo ostensibly to

81. For further reading on the Congo crisis, see n.62.

82. Ghana's role as mediator and moderator, Nigeria's incursion through Mr. Jaja Wachaku's chairmanship of the UN conciliation Commission are specifically mentioned by Legum, n.71, p.49.

protect its nationals. But matters became complicated due to: (i) the secession of Katanga under Moise Tshombe; (ii) Prime Minister Lumumba's displeasure and anger over the way Dag Hammarskjold was handling the problem and the extent to which UN forces should be used against the Katangese secession, his (Lumumba's) call for outside support (including Soviet) to put down the secession and the holding of a conference at Leopoldville⁸³ to gather support; (iii) the rift and parting of ways between Kasavubu and Lumumba. Mobutu, the head of Congolese National Army, joined hands with Kasavubu and started fighting with forces loyal to Lumumba. So by the end of 1960, there was no legitimate government in Congo (because President Kasavubu had dismissed Prime Minister Lumumba and he in turn dismissed Kasavubu) but there were three regimes - one in Leopoldville (Kasavubu and Mobutu), one in Stanleyville (Lumumbists)⁸⁴ and one in Katanga (Tshombe).⁸⁵

83. Countries present were Algeria, Congo (Leopoldville) Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Liberia, Morocco, Sudan, Togo, Tanzanayika, Tunisia and the UAR. However, the delegates advised him to work in cooperation with United Nations. See Woronoff, n.71, pp.59-60.

84. Lumumba was already arrested by Mobutu while trying to get out of Leopoldville. The present name of Stanleyville is Kisangani.

85. Albert Kalondji had proclaimed himself the 'King' of the 'Mining State of Kasai'.

A rift had already occurred in the Afro-Asian group at the United Nations over the representation of the Congo (Leopoldville) seat in the General Assembly session. Though President Kasavubu managed to have his representative seated it was only after a voting where Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco and the UAR joined by India and the communist countries voted against the countries supporting him. The stage was then set for the Brazzaville Conference (where invitations were sent to particular countries unlike other meetings of African independent African countries), which was in turn answered by the Casablanca and Monrovia Conferences.

The immediate cause of the Brazzaville Conference being called was the possibility of the former French territories mediating between France and Algeria. Moroccan claims to Mauritania was another cause. On the initiative of Abbe Fulbert Youlou of Congo (Brazzaville) the Conference opened on 15th of December 1960 among the Heads of States of Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mauritania, Upper Volta, Niger, Dahomey, Chad, Gabon, the Central Arab Republic (CAR), Cameroon and Madagascar. Not all the members had agreed to join the French community⁸⁶ and Togo did not attend the conference. The Conference ended on 19th December 1960 with a joint declaration.⁸⁷

86. Notably Mali and Guinea.

87. For French and English texts of the Brazzaville Declaration, see Appendix 13 of Legum, n.71.

The response was not long in coming. The African states who had supported Lumumba were a minority in the UN and they wanted to do something about it. Therefore, Congo and specifically UN role in Congo was the rallying point and Morocco provided a venue for these like-minded countries to meet. However, it had its own reason. It was reacting to the Brazzaville Group's sponsorship of Mauritania. The conference held in January 1961 at Casablanca was attended by Morocco, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, the United Arab Republic (UAR), Libya and the Algerian Provisional Government.⁸⁸ The African charter of Casablanca was adopted at the end of the conference.⁸⁹

The two conferences were different in a number of ways. The Brazzaville powers were with notable exceptions former French colonies having close social, legal, political, military and economic ties.⁹⁰ The leaders too had good personal relations among each other. However, as Woronoff points out the solidarity between the Casablanca states was much more recent and although they had somewhat similar concepts of domestic structures, economic development and African socialism, these states did not form a contiguous block and had no previous trade or financial ties. Thus

88. Interestingly, Ceylone (now Sri Lanka) was also represented though at the ambassadorial level.

89. For text, see Ajala, n.71, Appendix 2.

90. The stress on economic relations in the Brazzaville declaration was unmistakable. A permanent inter-state Economic Secretariat was established.

the Casablanca group devoted themselves largely to laying down a common platform on the key political issues of the day.⁹¹ Their stands on current issues differed drastically. The Brazzaville Conference 'saluted the effort undertaken by the UN to serve Congo (Leopoldville) from chaos and anarchy'. Their special thanks went to Dag Hammarskjold, the Secretary General of the UN. However, in the Casablanca Conference Hammarskjold came in for a lot of criticism (though no resolution was adopted condemning him) and the countries decided to withdraw their troops and other personnel from UN operational command in the Congo.⁹² On Mauritania, the Brazzaville powers welcomed it to their fold as a sovereign nation and criticised the Soviet veto in the Security Council against admitting Mauritania to the UN. The Casablanca Conference, on the other hand, regarded Mauritania as a 'puppet state' and a part of French neocolonial strategy, legally Mauritania was held to be a part of Morocco. On the question of Algeria, the tone of the Brazzaville Conference was one of the gentle chidings and fervent appeals.⁹³

91. Woronoff, n.71, p.97.

92. Which all did except Ghana.

93. ... 'They have resolved to ask France firmly to conclude the war in Algeria in 1961. (emphasis added) Moreover, the first part of Brazzaville declaration contained a homage to de Gaulle for beginning French decolonisation and ended with the words, 'Thus France will show that by liberating the fifteen states which grew out of the colonial regime and in permitting the Algerians freely to choose their destiny'. She stays faithful to her own principles and to her traditions. Legum, n.71, Appendix 13.

However, in Casablanca charter the resolution was a virtual condemnation of France, pointing out that the war in Algeria was a hostility against the whole of Africa and a threat to peace and security in Africa and the world.⁹⁴ The accusing finger was clearly pointed towards France.⁹⁵

The other main issue on which these two conferences differed was on the question of political union of the continent. But as we can see, the difference was not as extreme as one would have thought.⁹⁶ The Casablanca charter goes only so far as to 'affirm our will to intensify our efforts for the creation of an effective form of cooperation among the African states in the economic, social and cultural domains.' Though it provides for the establishment of four Joint Committees - political, economic, cultural and

94. Legum, n.71, Appendix 15.

95. In the Casablanca Conference a resolution on Nuclear tests 'vigorously opposed' the carrying out of nuclear tests on the African continent by France.

96. Both the conferences were in favour of decolonisation of all African territories, the need for economic co-operation. There were intra conference differences on the Congo question. Ghana opposed the stands taken by other Casablanca powers. Nkrumah did not favour direct military aid to Gizenga's Stanleyville regime on 'logistics' grounds. As Catherine Hoskyns points out Casablanca group had notable successes in the UN on the Congo question but in its internal relations, due to wide cultural, linguistic and administrative differences, the cooperation was only symbolic. See Catherine Hoskyns, "Pan Africanism and Integration", in Arthur Hazlewood (ed.) African Integration and Disintegration (London, 1967), pp.366-67.

a military command--they were only for consultative purpose with no power of any kind. The term 'effective form of cooperation' was nowhere fully explained. The committees, except for the Joint African High Command, were the kind one sees in almost any association of states.⁹⁷ One agrees with Woronoff that 'the Casablanca machinery, although more intricate than any organization before it was a far cry from the political union demanded by President Nkrumah.'⁹⁸ On its part, the Brazzaville conference talked of 'concerted regional action' and 'enlargement of inter African solidarity'. The Brazzaville powers were only making their stand on African unity clear but it is the Casablanca Conference which fell short of endorsing Nkrumah's 'political union' concept. The writing on the wall was becoming clear - United States of Africa was attracting less and less support.

The Monrovia Conference was aimed to be a grand get-together of sorts (for the Casablanca, Brazzaville and the yet uncommitted countries).⁹⁹ However, that was not to be, Guinea and Mali withdrew as co-sponsors at the last minute, under pressure from Ghana.¹⁰⁰ But this was the

97. If we go by examples then the High Command promised to be a non-starter. The failure of UN Joint Staff Committee was an indication.

98. Woronoff, n,71, pp,98-99.

99. Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra, Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, Togo and Tunisia.

100. The other sponsors being Liberia, Nigeria (from the 'uncommitted' group), Cameroon and Ivory Coast (from the Brazzaville group).

largest attended conference of its kind where for the first time the whole of the French speaking states joined with a majority of English speaking states. Significantly, Libya, a signatory to the Casablanca charter,¹⁰¹ attended. The conference which opened on May 8, 1961 saw only the seats of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Sudan and UAR empty.¹⁰² Though the Monrovia Conference was not attended by all the independent African countries, it saw the old custom of invitations being sent to all. Mutual recriminations in the national presses (mostly in Ghana and Nigeria)¹⁰³ had generated a lot of heat and pointed references¹⁰⁴ by different Heads of State only added to it.

In the conference, the major resolution 'on the Means of Promoting Better Understanding and Co-operation toward Achieving Unity in Africa and Malagasy' emphasised

101. It had not signed the Protocol in May 1961.

102. Sudan stayed away as she had done from Casablanca. Her official objection was to Mauritania's presence, so was Morocco's. Ghana, Guinea and Mali did not attend on the grounds that preparations had been inadequate. UAR did not attend mostly because Algerian Provisional Government was not invited.

103. For details, see Legum, n.71, pp.54-55.

104. President Tubman's (Liberia) reference to the idea of Primus inter pares, being destructive to African unity and peace, Milton A.S. Margai, PM of Sierra Leone's opposition to subversion against lawfully constituted governments are only two out of numerous examples. For the full text of the Resolutions and declaration, see Legum, n.71, Appendix 17.

the equality, sovereignty, inalienable right to existence and development of personality of African states. Non-acceptance of any leadership, support for non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and condemnation of outside subversive action by neighbouring states was thought in many quarters to be a snub to Ghana.¹⁰⁵ In a significant paragraph it was made clear that 'the unity that is aimed to be achieved at the moment is not the political integration of sovereign African states, but unity of aspirations and of action considered from the point of view of African social solidarity and political identity'. A technical commission of experts was established to work out detailed plans for economic, educational, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation. It seemed that Nkrumah's dream of the political kingdom of Africa was to remain only as a dream.

Perhaps the first explicit reference to any conflict management provision was contained in the 'resolution on settlement of conflicts which may arise between African states'. The conference recommended (i) that the settlement of disputes should be by peaceful means; (ii) that a commission should be created which should be attached to the Organization of Co-operation of the African and Malagasy

105. Because Ghana was accused by many to be engaged in toppling governments and of wanting to become the leader in Africa. It was the prevalent feeling in many countries.

states and (iii) that Ethiopia and Somalia attempt to solve their existing frontier and other disputes. Viewed in this perspective, Monrovia Conference and the blueprint for conflict management contained there, were the precursor of the OAU Charter.

With the advantage of hind-sight, we can say that it was in the Lagos Conference, January 25-30, 1962¹⁰⁶ that the real roots of OAU conflict management provisions found. It took the decision to ratify, albeit in principle only,¹⁰⁷ a charter for the Inter African and Malagasy State Organization (IAMSOS) based on a draft submitted by the Liberian delegation.¹⁰⁸ The preamble 'resolved to avoid rivalry or conflict among all independent African and Malagasy states by consciously creating and maintaining institutions capable of furthering a common destiny'. In Art.3 it talked of sovereign-equality of states, non interference in the internal affairs of Member States and 'peaceful and harmonious settlement of all disputes arising among the African and Malagasy states'. The pacific settlement of

106. Twenty countries attended. Only Ghana, UAR, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mali and Guinea did not attend. The attendance Algerian Provisional Government, the presence of Mauritania were the reasons.

107. According to Legum, the main reason for accepting the charter in principle only was to avoid facing those not represented with a fait accompli. For, although Lagos had failed in its main objective in the same way as Monrovia, none believed that the search for unity should be abandoned. n.71, p.139.

disputes was to be primarily done by a Permanent Conciliation Commission but the apex organ - the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers were also to have a part in the conflict management process.

108. For the text of the Charter, see Louis B. Sohn (ed.), Basic Documents of African Regional Organizations, Vol. I, (N.Y., 1971), pp. 55-61.

Chapter - II

ADDIS ABABA, THE CHARTER AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

What were the generally held views on conflict management in Africa on the eve of the Addis Ababa Conference? The answer to this question is very difficult to provide because the different and often diverse views on African unity, that the countries held. But all were agreed that conflicts and tension do exist among African countries and they would crop up in the future. Even Nkrumah, the staunch believer in African unity was realistic enough to admit this - 'There are bound to be differences between the independent states of Africa, we have frontier troubles, and a host of other inter-territorial problems'. However, he hastened to add that 'they can only be resolved within the context of African unity'.¹ As the resolutions and declaration of the Casablanca Conference showed, conflict management was to be done by an African Joint High Command (AJHC) under the political committee. AJHC was to consist of chiefs of staff of member countries or their representatives. The AJHC was entrusted with the task of (i) ensuring common defence of Africa and (ii) safeguarding the independence of African states.² On the other hand, the Brazzaville

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1. Kwame Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite (London, 1963), p.148.
 2. For the text of Casablanca Charter, see Adekunle Ajala, Pan Africanism: Evolution, Progress and Prospects (London, 1974), Appendix-2.

Conference made no specific reference to conflict management, its attitude towards the Algerian and Congolese problems showed a marked bias for negotiated settlement. The subsequent Lagos character provided for commissions of conciliation but nothing comparable to AJHC. Significantly none of the conferences including that of Casablanca fully endorsed Kwamé Nkrumah's views on a political union. The very need for AJHC to 'safeguard independence of African countries'³ proves this.

THE CONFERENCE:

A preparatory foreign ministers' conference was held at Addis Ababa from 15 May 1963. The main task before them was to draw up an acceptable charter. A sub committee was formed for this purpose.⁴ But in the absence of mandates from their heads of state in the face of numerous draft proposals⁵ before them, the sub committee agreed to default till the Heads of States met a few days hence.

The tone of the summit meeting which opened on May 22, was set by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia who stressed on meaningful action. The conference, he said, "cannot close without adopting a single African charter", adding that "we can not leave here without having created a single

3. Emphasis added.

4. Comprising of Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania and Tunisia.

5. The Ethiopian draft proposal, the Casablanca and Lagos charters were there along with Dr. Nkrumah's proposals for a union of African States.

African organization'. Significantly, the second point he made was to have 'permanent arrangements to assist the peaceful settlement of disagreement between African states'.⁶ In his speech, President Ahidjo of Cameroon, supported the emperor's proposal for the establishment of a conciliation commission. President Tsiranana of the Malagasy Republic favoured a permanent conciliation commission and said that appeals to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) should be made only when all the means of conciliation in Africa had been exhausted. Other speakers like Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, Hamani Diori of the Niger Republic and Leopold Senghor of Senegal gave the conciliation commission an important place in their blue print of the Charter. President Nkrumah of Ghana in his speech wanted the delegates to 'agree here and now to the establishment of a union of African states'. An all-African Committee of Foreign Ministers to be created immediately was to establish a permanent body of officials who were to work out the machinery for the Union Government of Africa. However, he did not dwell upon the proposed African High Command for long, perhaps to allay

6. See Addis Ababa Summit, 1963, Publications and Foreign Language Press, Dept., Ministry of Information (Addis Ababa, 1963) and Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States, vol.1, sec.2. (Provisional OAU Secretariat Addis Ababa, 1963). Henceforth all quotes on Addis Ababa Conference are from these sources.

the fear expressed earlier by some countries.⁷ Predictably, he faced opposition from the Monrovia countries and other uncommitted countries in this regard. But the most surprising aspect of Addis Ababa Summit was that he only got support for his call from the premier of Uganda, Milton Obote, who advocated the creation of a strong Pan-African executive and an African Parliament, to which African states would be prepared to surrender part of their sovereignty. Abbe Fulbert of the Congo (Brazzaville) also put forward a plan that would be gradual but nevertheless would tend towards the same solution. Except for these two⁸ other Casablanca powers let Ghana down. President Nasser, in his speech, was clearly in favour of retaining the sovereignty of his nation so was Bourguiba of Tunisia. Prime Minister Balewa of Nigeria was not exaggerating when he said, "there have been only a very few members who spoke on the desirability of having a political union. Almost all the speeches indicate that mere practical approach is much preferred by the majority of the delegations." The Ghanaian proposal of a high command

7. According to some observers, Nkrumah had considerably watered down his original plan for African unity. Woronoff, for example, quotes this portion of Nkrumah's speech to prove his point. 'Unite we must, without necessarily sacrificing our sovereignties, big or small, we can here and now forge a political union...' Jon Woronoff, Organizing African Unity (New Jersey, 1970), p.132.

8. Described as the only real 'Nkrumahists' by Woronoff, n.7, p.132.

for collective security got little support. Prime Minister Balewa equated it with 'organizing ourselves into a bloc' and 'joining the arms race'. And went onto add that the need of the hour was not to join the arms race but how to stop it. That Ghana's stand on dispute settlement was getting very little support was evident from Nkrumah's suggestion that border dispute would have no locus standi once the artificial barriers imposed by the colonial powers were swept away by the political union of Africa which was coolly ignored by other leaders speaking on the subject. But this does not mean that border problems was far away from their minds. The King of Morocco had stayed away from the conference because his country would not recognize the independent existence of Mauritania and perhaps the only discordant note in the conference was sounded by the President of Somalia, Aden Abdullah Osman, who spoke of the self determination for the Somali nation and pleaded the cause of the Somali living in French, Somali land, Ethiopia and Kenya's Northern Frontier District and charged that 'Ethiopia had taken possession of a large portion of Somali territory without the consent and against the wishes of the inhabitants.'⁹ The rebuttal came from the Ethiopian Prime Minister who

9. Earlier Somalia had tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to include the question of colonial frontiers and in particular their claims on territories inhabited by Somalis, in the agenda for the Summit.

spoke in favour of retaining the colonial frontiers for the interest of all concerned.¹⁰ Somalia was going against the tacit understanding arrived at the Foreign Ministers' Conference to stress on the issues that unite African countries rather on those which divide them.¹¹

It was increasingly becoming clear that President Nkrumah, isolated by allies and opponents alike, had failed to convince the conference of the urgent need for a political union of Africa. Conflict management was to be done more or less as it was being done elsewhere in the world. Africa and Addis Ababa were not to usher in a different era in interstate relations. But Ghana and other radicals got some compensations. First, from the unanimous support for decisive action against colonialism and apartheid, and second, the

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10. Though this was the sharpest exchange about boundary disputes, therefore, most widely reported, there was other references too. Kenya, not yet independent, was represented by a delegation of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) which distributed a memorandum attacking the Somali Government's support for the secession of the Somali inhabited Northern Frontier District (NFD). The Moroccan-Mauritanian dispute was also mentioned by the Mauritanian President who declared his country's willingness to establish friendly relations with Morocco provided Morocco recognized Mauritania's independence and sovereignty or, in other words, abandoned its claim.
 11. President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, the Conference President for the day, expressed regret that a subject which should have been discussed in private should have been raised as a part of the proceedings.

establishment of a liberation committee.¹²

Ghana, prudently, decided not to swim against the current and in the special committee of Foreign Ministers, Ghana agreed to accept the amended Ethiopian draft¹³ apparently satisfied with vague promises that the question of a union government would be taken up by the organization of a later stage. The way then was cleared for the formal acceptance and signing by the assembled African leaders. They duly did so in the early hours of 26 May 1963 in a solemn ceremony.

Summing up one can say that the Addis Ababa Conference was a triumph for the moderates and the policy of compromise. As in everything else so also in conflict management, no radical departure from the accepted norms and practices of relations between states was attempted. The existence and future occurrence of conflicts were recognized and was given high, if not the highest, priority in the speeches and deliberations. As far as border disputes were concerned, the overwhelming view was in favour of a policy of status quo. Though the importance of United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security was

12. Though Ghana contributed greatly to the adoption of a radical posture on the question of colonialism and liberation of colonial territories, the obvious contribution of Ben Bella, the President of Algeria cannot be over-emphasised. In a speech which marked the 'finest hour' for the conference, he exhorted other leaders 'to agree to die a little so that peoples under colonial domination may be free'. Speech after speech supporting his call were delivered among others by Miltonobote of Uganda and President Nyerere of Tanzania. In a way conflict management was overshadowed by colonialism.

13. For the amendments, see the later part of this chapter

accepted, the tendency was to have African solution for African disputes and conflicts, thereby minimising the chance of outside interference.

THE FRAMEWORK IN THE CHARTER:

Roughly half the time spent on considering the charter as a whole, was spent just for the preamble and there is gainsaying its importance.¹⁴ It was more or less like Preambles of other similar organizations¹⁵ but for the mention of neocolonialism and resolve for its eradication.¹⁶ As such there was only indirect reference to conflict management. In the fourth paragraph the aspiration of African people for brotherhood and solidarity was mentioned and in the sixth a more explicit reference was made when the Heads of States and Governments expressed their determination to 'safeguard and consolidate the hardwon independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity' of their states.

13. contd...

in the discussion on the institutions for conflict management.

14. T.O. Elias, 'The Charter of the OAU', The American Journal of International Law (Washington D.C. 1965), p.24.

15. The language of the Preamble reveals the influence of other documents: the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Colonial Peoples (Fifth Pan African Congress, 1945) and the 1958 Accra Conference of Independent African States.

16. For the text of the Charter of the OAU, see Z. Cervenka, The Unfinished Quest for Unity (London, 1977), Appendix-2.

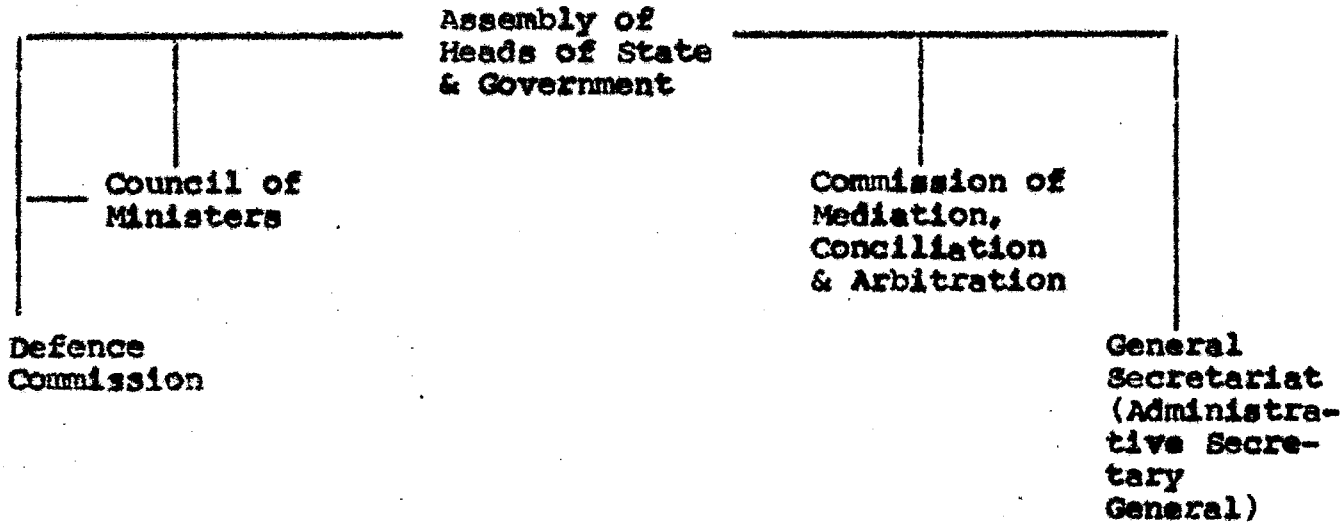
The organization's principles as contained in Article III of the Charter made it clear that the organization was to be the main instrument of conflict management in Africa. It is a measure of the importance of conflicts and their management in Africa that the first five principles dealt with them. Though the most direct reference was in the fourth principle, peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration - affirmation of the principles of sovereign equality of states (first principle), of non-interference in the internal affairs of states, (second principle), of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence (third principle), of unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring states or any other states, also dealt with it. The fate of President Sylvanus Olympio of Togo, killed during the coup d'etat in January 1963, was on the delegates' minds when the fifth principle was drafted. It showed the concern and regard for the safety of the person of the Head of State or Government who in most cases was the centre of authority unlike most other democracies around the world.¹⁷

17. The importance attached to this principle by the African leaders was shown by the adoption of a special declaration on the problem of subversion of the 1965 Summit in Accra.

The principles read along with the purposes (Art.II) make it clear that the framers wanted to make it clear beyond doubt that cooperation (in any field) was between sovereign equal states. The sovereignty of the states is mentioned twice once in part C of clause 1 in Art.II and again in clause 1 in Art.III. Significantly among the purposes listed, cooperation in the defence and security field is at the bottom. It provided the hint that the framers were not going to provide a collective security system (like in the UN Charter) for the African continent. The purposes and principles were remarkable for the scrupulous and deliberate avoidance of reference to the internal situation in the African countries, except for the customary non-interference in the internal affairs. This was due, in a major part, to the agreement of the preparatory Foreign Ministers' Conference to stress on the issues that unite them rather than the issues which divide them. But OAU's relatively poorer record of conflict management (as compared to interstate conflicts) in the internal wars of member states can be, to some extent, traced to this omission.¹⁸

18. The only lines that could have been invoked by the peoples against their leaders, which briefly slipped into the Sub Committee (of the preparatory conference) draft were stricken off by the Foreign Ministers - "Believing that the aim of the government is the well-being of the governed." It was strange that a continent, where a majority of the leaders claim to be leading the masses, there was hardly any mention of the African common man as such.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK IN THE CHARTER



In the above diagram we have a tentative framework of conflict management in the OAU Charter. Tentative because of the uncertain position of some institutions in the framework. But whatever uncertainty was there, was not with respect to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government,¹⁹ which was expressly mentioned as the supreme decision making body having wide ranging powers. The Council of Ministers,²⁰ the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration,²¹ and the General Secretariat were subordinate institutions because the first is responsible to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Commission members are elected by the Assembly and so

19. Henceforth referred to as the Assembly.

20. Henceforth referred to as the Council.

21. Henceforth referred to as the COMCA.

also the head of the Secretariat, the Secretary General.²² However, the General Secretariat is listed slightly below the Council and the COMCA because it was intended to have a marginal role to play in conflict management. The Defence Commission, as the very name implies, was to be a part of conflict management process. Established by the Assembly, it was subordinate to the Council of Ministers because the regulations for its function was to be approved by the Council of Ministers. However, the tentativeness of the framework stems from the relationship between Council of Ministers and the COMCA. The Council of Ministers was to 'take cognisance of any matter referred to it by the Assembly' and implement the decision of the Assembly and also 'the responsibility of preparing conferences of the Assembly'.²³ This made it a part of the conflict management scheme. The provision for extraordinary session also confirmed this. But on the other hand, the COMCA was expressly created for settling disputes between member states, a major conflict management function. The importance of the COMCA was highlighted by the fact that its details were spelt out in a separate protocol. (Art.XIX) which was approved by the Assembly. As discussed earlier, there was wide agreement in the Addis Ababa Conference that the COMCA was to be a vital part of the proposed Charter. Taking all this into consideration, the COMCA has been placed

22. And can be removed from office.

23. Which included the task of preparing an agenda for the annual meeting of the Assembly.

right below the Assembly and slightly above the Council in the diagram depicting the framework of conflict management in the Charter.

INSTITUTIONS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government :

Unlike many other charters of the similar kind,²⁴ OAU Charter begins with the words, 'We, the Heads of African States and Governments...'. Article I establishes the Charter with the words, 'The High Contracting Parties...'. This was but an accurate reflection of the role of Heads of State on the African continent. In countries which had got independence recently (and other 'older' ones as well), these leaders wielded power like despots - benevolent or otherwise.²⁵ May be the objective conditions²⁶ of the countries made it imperative. It is no wonder, therefore, that Art. VIII made

24. For example the UN Charter, which begins with the words, 'We the Peoples of the United Nations...'

25. For an interesting discussion on leadership in the Third World, see Jean Lacouture, The Demigods: Charismatic Leadership in the Third World (Knoff, N.Y., 1970), especially the chapters on Nasser, Bourguiba and Nkrumah.

26. Most of them faced the birth pangs - clash of interest between different groups, tribes and regions, often armed, the implementation of diverse paths of development, outside interference and a host of other problems. Discussed at some length in Chapter I.

the Assembly, the 'Supreme Organ' of the Organization. In this respect, the OAU Charter went beyond the Ethiopian draft charter. Woronoff writes, 'Certain important changes were also made in the institutional machinery proposed in the original Ethiopian document. In every case, this enhanced the position of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers, subordinate but working closely with it. The roles and autonomy of the lesser bodies were increasingly restricted and the lines of command made stricter.'²⁷

In the Charter, the power of the Assembly flows from its composition ('the Heads of State and Government or their duly accredited representatives'). It was hoped that the heads of state would use this opportunity to meet each other and if possible, repair damaged relationship. That is why at least one meeting per year was specified after a lengthy debate.²⁸ To make the Assembly more of an effective body, there is provision for an extraordinary meeting of the Assembly which may be held at the request of a member state

27. Woronoff, n.7, p.150.

28. Bourguiba of Tunisia very perceptively pointed out, "We know very well that the unity of heads of state is regulated not only by the Charter but also by the quality of their personal relations. We know that personal contacts play a role which permits the development of understanding among men called to the realization of the same task." Quoted by Michael Wofers Politics in the Organization of African Unity (London, 1976), p.26.

subject to the approval of a two-third majority of all member states. (Art.IX) Undoubtedly, this was done keeping in mind crises (including conflicts) which cannot wait till the next annual meeting of the Assembly or which cannot be dealt effectively by the Council. Another source of the power of the Assembly is the blanket provision in Art.VIII which says that the Assembly has the right to 'discuss matters of common concern to Africa'. Thus, it may act on matters of far reaching consequences in political, military, and economic spheres. Its other functions strengthen this view: (a) to review the structure, functions and acts of all the organs and any specialized agencies which may be created in accordance with Charter (Art.VIII); (b) to appoint the Administrative Secretary-General and his assistants (Art.XVI); (c) to establish the specialized and ad hoc commissions (Art.XX); (d) to decide questions which may arise concerning the interpretation of the Charter (Art.XXVII); (e) to decide on the admission of new members; (f) to approve amendments to the Charter; (g) to approve the regulations concerning the functions of the Secretariat (Art.XVIII) and approve the protocol of the COMCA (Art.XIX).

The purpose of the Assembly is to provide a forum for discussion. For that a vast agenda is necessary and the eleventh Rule of Procedure states that the provisional agenda

of an ordinary session.²⁹ of the assembly shall comprise of (i) items which the assembly decides to put on its agenda; (ii) items proposed by the Council of Ministers; (iii) items proposed by a member state; (iv) any other business. In this regard, it should be kept in mind that the Assembly may not only disregard any recommendation of the Council but also decide on the insertion of a new item not considered by the Council.³⁰ As befitting a decision making body for speedy and effective action Art.X of the Charter provides that any conclusion must be registered in the form of resolutions unless the question at issue concerns appointments, elections, or procedural matters. Again to remove the prohibitive rules for adopting a resolution, the criteria of four fifths of the Assembly as contained in the Ethiopian draft was reduced to two-thirds and the rigidity was further softened by the Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure for the Assembly which said, "Questions of Procedure shall require a simple majority of all members of the organization whether or not a question is one of procedure shall be determined by a

29. In the case of an extraordinary session, however, the agenda is limited to the items which prompted it. Rule Thirteen of the 'Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government' for text see, Louis B. Sohn (ed.), Basic Documents of African Regional Organization (N.Y., 1971), p.77.

30. The most striking example of this was the discussion on the Nigerian crisis during the Kinshasa Summit Conference of 1967.

similar manner'.³¹ In regard to quorum for the annual meeting, it was also reduced from four-fifth to two-third.

A rather striking feature of the Assembly is the absence of any provision to effectively implement its resolutions. Though the Council of Ministers is supposed to be 'entrusted with the implementation of the decision of the Assembly' (Art.XIII), there is no follow up provision in this regard. Or, in other words, there is no provision in the Charter to take action (either by the Assembly or the Council) against those countries who do not abide by the resolutions (even if they had voted for it). Interestingly, OAU Charter has no provision for the expulsion of a member.³² Therefore, this also cannot be used as a form of persuasion. By all accounts, it suggests a deliberate intention to leave the matter (of the binding nature of OAU Assembly resolutions) ambiguous. This is understandable considering the overwhelming concern of the African countries for their sovereignty. Again, any attempt to coerce the members to abide by the resolution against their wish would have failed because of the low degree of mutual interdependence. 'Sanctions' and 'boycotts' are contentions issues and the attempt at Addis

31. Interestingly, admission of a new member, though an important matter, requires a simple majority (Art.XXVIII).

32. The question was raised by a delegate in the Addis Ababa Summit but 'murmurings from the floor suggested that members did not feel it a necessary provision to make'. Wolfers, n.28, p.33.

Ababa was to ignore them or postpone their discussion to some future date.

So, what does it mean? Does it mean that the OAU Assembly is an ineffective body passing resolutions after resolutions fully knowing that they are not of a binding nature? The reality, however, is not quite so dismal. The OAU resolutions were once described by Emperor Haile Selassie as representing 'respect for the basic ideas which bind us together'. Most of the resolutions are reiteration of well known principle on which there is consensus and as such need no prodding on the part of the OAU to the member states to respect them. On controversial issues the resolutions passed with the two-thirds majority also carries great weight because (i) they represent the collective consensus of the opinions of the Heads of State; (ii) no other international organization of the OAU's size operates at such a high level. Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that the resolutions carry dubious legal weight, the moral weight behind them is clear and imposing.

The Council of Ministers:

The Council is mentioned next only to the Assembly in the Charter. Its role was envisaged to be secondary³³ and

33. The secondary role is made clear in the Charter [Art.XII(1)] and Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure which respectively read 'The Council of Ministers is responsible to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government', and 'The Council of Ministers is answerable to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government'.

complementary to that of the Assembly. It was a sort of a 'cabinet' to the Assembly as it was 'entrusted with the implementation of the decision of the Assembly'. However, as mentioned earlier, no machinery was provided for this task.

The Council was an important part of the conflict management process as evident from the following factors: (i) it can meet in emergency session if two-third of the members want it. Moreover, in ordinary circumstances it meets twice a year; (ii) it has been given the task of 'inter-African co-operation' which includes the defence and security field also. Moreover, it was assigned the task of approving the regulations for the specialized commissions (including the Defence Commission); (iii) the agenda of the Council consists of the report of the Administrative Secretary-General and items decided by the Assembly or the Council as well as those proposed by the Specialized Commissions and by any member state, a clear indication that conflicts or conflict situations were to be discussed.

The relationship between the Council and the COMCA is not clear. In the Protocol of the COMCA, however, the importance of the Council is recognized. If a party to the dispute refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Commission, the matter was to be referred to the Council.³⁴ The Council

34. By the Bureau of the Commission, Art. XIII(2) of the Protocol. For the text of the Protocol, see Sohn, n.29, pp.69-76.

was also given the power to refer a dispute to the COMCA [Art.XIV(1)]. It is clear that the Council was intended to be the political executive wing of the organization having wide powers (including conflict management) and the COMCA, the legal organ for conflict management.

The General Secretariat:

With the spectre of Congo and the assassination of Lumumba hanging over the Addis Ababa Conference, the post of the head of the General Secretariat, the Secretary-General, came in for a lot of debate, often negative as far as the powers of the Secretary General are concerned.³⁵ The consensus was for a head of the General Secretariat having severely restrained power as evident from the title - the Administrative Secretary General. In this respect, Addis Ababa Charter is a major departure from the Ethiopian draft which envisaged a position of the Secretary General akin to that of the UN Secretary General. The Secretary General was deprived of his only outlet for direct influence when the sub-committee (of the Foreign Ministers) decided not to

35. On the issue of the powers of the Secretary-General, even Senghor and Nkrumah agreed. According to Senghor, "Secretariat is an administrative body not a political one, a body implementing decisions, not making them". Nkrumah suggested that it should be secretary not Secretary 'General'. He added, "We don't want to create super something. Yes, administrative Secretary, Simple. He will think he is Hammarskjold". Wolfers, n.28, p.48.

specifically authorize him 'to participate in all deliberations of the Institutions of the Organization'. Then he was made 'administrative' and was even surrounded by several assistants, also elected by the Assembly. Unlike the UN Secretary General, who according to Art.99 of the United Nations Charter can initiate action if a threat to peace existed, the OAU Administrative Secretary General can only make mentions in his report. Unlike the UN Secretariat which is equal in status to the other organs, OAU's Secretariat is subordinate to the Assembly and the Council. Again, the OAU Administrative Secretary General is one of the - not the - spokesmen for this organization, the chief spokesman being the chairman of the Assembly whereas the UN Secretary General is the main spokesman for the Organization.³⁶

However, ironic as it may sound, the very fact that the Heads of States attempted, to curb the powers of the Secretary General, proves that he was to play a key role in the organization, including that of conflict management. Strangely, the Charter does not mention anything about the power and function of the Administrative Secretary General

36. For a general discussion on the OAU's Administrative Secretary General, see David Meyers, 'The OAU's Administrative Secretary General', International Organization, vol.30, no.3, Summer 1976, pp.509-520, and Woronoff, n.7, pp.183-192, A. Ajala, Pan Africanism (London, 1974), pp.76-81, Z. Cervenka, n.16, pp.27-35.

except that 'the functions and conditions of services of the Secretary General... shall be governed by the provisions of the Charter and the regulations approved by the Assembly' (Art.XXVIII). The rules governing the functioning of the Secretariat was approved under the title of Functions and Regulations of the General Secretariat at the first meeting of the Council at Dakar in August 1963. The rules provide that the Secretariat would provide services (providing administrative and technical staff, making and keeping record of proceedings) to all meetings of the Council, the Assembly, Specialized Commissions, various ad hoc bodies, etc. Taking part in the deliberations of various organs, which is an important matter, was mentioned in vague terms according to Rule 9 which states, 'The participations of the Administrative Secretary General in the deliberations of the Assembly of the Council of Ministers, of the Specialized Commissions and other organs of the organization shall be governed by the provisions of the Charter and by the respective rules of procedure of these bodies'. The buck, thus, was passed. On their part, the rules of Procedure of the said organs do not contain any mention of the Secretary's participation. Thus nothing in the Charter, in the Rules of Procedure of various organs, prevent the Secretary General from attending the meeting.³⁷

37. In practice, the Secretary along with his Assistants is attending the meetings, both public and closed ones, except for once during the 14th Session of the Council at Addis Ababa in February 1970. For details, see Cervenka, n.16, p.29.

Summing up, one can say that the Charter intended an administrative as opposed to political role for the Secretary General. He submits his report to the Council of Ministers, not to the Assembly. He is appointed by the Assembly and has little control over the staff who are under the control of the Assembly. He cannot initiate discussions. But the Charter did not prevent him from attending meetings of OAU organs, nor did the Charter forbid the Assembly, Council and other bodies from assigning various tasks to him,³⁸ thereby delegating some authority.³⁹

The Defence Commission:

There was no consensus as to what constitute the functions of the Defence Commission. The views varied greatly: the commission could become a body for collective defence in case one of the independent states were attacked; it could become the nucleus of an African army under a united high command; it could perform peace-keeping operations in the independent countries;⁴⁰ or finally, it could be a force

38. Rule 10 of the Functions and Regulations of the General Secretariat of the OAU states, 'The Administrative Secretary General shall submit the reports requested by the Assembly, the Council of Ministers and the Commissions'. For the text, see Sohn (ed.), n.29, pp.92-97.

39. For a critical evaluation of the Administrative Secretary General's role in the conflict management, see Chapter-IV.

40. Only with the consent of the country concerned.

for decolonization either to protect the border states from retaliation by the colonial and settler powers or even to aid the liberation movements. It was unanimously accepted that the Commission would not concern itself with internal law and order of any member state. It was also recognized that the Defence Commission was to play a valuable role in the conflict management process as contained in the Charter. It was hoped that in the subsequent meetings of the Defence Commissions details about its functions would emerge.

The Charter provisions only provided that the Commission would be appointed by the Assembly and the functions carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the regulations approved by the Council' (Art.XXII).⁴¹

The Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration:

Described as the raison d'être of the organization,⁴² the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration grew out of a virtual unanimity at Addis Ababa among African countries to have this kind of a machinery for conflict management and dispute settlement. The importance of the Commission is apparent from the fact that the signatories

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41. The activities of the Defence Commission are examined critically in Chapter IV.
 42. By Haile Sellasie of Ethiopia in his address to the opening session of the Commission in Addis Ababa in 1967.

to the OAU Charter while taking a 'pledge to settle all disputes among themselves by peaceful means' decided to 'establish a Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration' by a separate protocol to be approved by the Assembly.⁴³ Some even went to the extent of believing that the future of African unity could well depend upon the working of this Commission, for there were few African states that did not have frontier problems.⁴⁴

The establishment of the COMCA was a logical corollary to other provisions in the Charter.⁴⁵ The special character of the COMCA was marked by the fact that it was set up through a separate constituent instrument unlike the specialized commissions created under Art.20. The protocol provided for a President, two Vice-Presidents and eighteen other Commissioners. They all were to possess recognized professional qualifications. They were to hold office for five years and were eligible for re-election. The President and both Vice-Presidents, elected by the Assembly, were to be appointed

43. Article XIX. The Protocol was endorsed at the 1964 Summit Conference in Cairo.

44. Guardian (London) 24 May 1963 as quoted by Boutros Ghali, 'The Addis Ababa Charter', International Conciliation (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) no.546, January 1964, p.45.

45. In particular part 4 of Art.III which talks about 'peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation/ mediation, conciliation or arbitration'.

on a full time basis, while other eighteen commissioners were to be part time. Together, they constituted the Bureau of the Commission and were responsible for consultation with the parties to any dispute over the appropriate mode of settlement. As T.O. Elias, the Chairman of the Committee of experts formed to formulate the protocol, pointed out later, 'It is for the parties themselves to select the mode of settlement they prefer'.⁴⁶ The COMCA was to appoint a registrar and such other officers as might be deemed necessary. Its office, too was located in Addis Ababa.

In electing the members of the COMCA, the overriding concern of the African states was to ensure that it was impartial. That was why no more than two candidates could be from one state and in the COMCA there could be no more than a single member from each state. Once chosen, the members could not be removed from office except by a two-third majority of the total membership of the Assembly 'on the grounds of inability to perform the functions of their office or of proved misconduct'.⁴⁷ Like other officials of the OAU, the COMCA members were not to seek or receive instructions and were covered by the convention on Privileges and Immunities when engaged in business of the COMCA.

46. T.O. Elias, 'The Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration', British Yearbook of International Law (London) 1965, p.340.

47. Art. IV of the Protocol.

The jurisdiction of the Commission was limited to dispute between states only.⁴⁸ The idea, according to Elias, was to make possible member and non-member states both to use the resources of the COMCA. There were four ways of bringing the dispute before the COMCA: (a) jointly by the parties concerned; (b) by a party to the dispute; (c) the Council of Ministers; (d) the Assembly of Heads of state and government (Art.XIII). There was no compulsory jurisdiction as such. This is borne out by the provision that 'where a dispute has been referred to the Commission... and one or more parties have refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Commission, the Bureau shall refer the matter to the Council of Ministers for consideration [Art.XIII(2)]. At that juncture, the dispute becomes a political one not strictly legal and as such needing a political solution. Once the dispute has been referred to the COMCA, the member

48. Woronoff comments, "Its jurisdiction could well have been broader, but again the Heads of State would not accept any infringement on their own prerogatives. The Commission could not be seized with a conflict between a state and the Organization. It did not interpret the Charter of the OAU, this being the role of the Heads of State themselves. Nor did it serve as an advisory body for the OAU or give its opinion on legal matters. In particular, despite all talk of human rights and justice, there was no question of an individual's (or corporate body's) being able to seize, the Commission or bring a suit against a state'. n.7, p.154.

states were enjoined to refrain from any act or omission that is likely to aggravate a situation' (Art.XV).

The COMCA provides for three types of proceedings: (a) Mediation; (b) Conciliation and (c) Arbitration. Mediation, the most simple and the most prevalent one in international relations was listed first. Under this, the President, after the dispute had been brought, was to appoint one or more members to mediate. The role of the mediator was confined to reconciling the views and claims of the parties and make written proposals to the parties as expeditiously as possible. If the parties agreed and accepted a particular means of reconciliation, it was to be the basis of arrangement between the parties (Art.XXI). Conciliation was a little more complex but the consent of the parties was essential because of the five members of the Board of Conciliators (to be established by the President of the COMCA) one each were to be from the disputing parties.⁴⁹ At the close of proceedings of the Board, it was to submit a report to the President and the parties stating if they had succeeded or not (Art.XXVI). In Arbitration too, the consent of the parties was essential. Because each party was to designate one arbitrator from among the Members of the COMCA having legal qualifications to constitute a

49. Art.XXIV makes it doubly clear: "It shall be the duty of the Board of Conciliators... to bring about an agreement between the parties on mutually acceptable terms" (emphasis added).

three member tribunal, the President being agreed by the said two arbitrators or by the Bureau (if the two arbitrators fail to agree, within one month of their appointment) from among the members of the COMCA (Art.XKVII). Submitting to arbitration, inter alia, did not mean abiding by its decisions. This is evident from Art.XKVIII which says that "Resource to arbitration shall be registered as submission in good faith⁵⁰ to the award of the Arbitral tribunal.⁵¹

Conclusion:

The discussions at the Addis Ababa Conference revealed the concern, the Heads of State had, for the the potential future conflicts. Though the overriding concern was for border disputes, no formal resolution was adopted. The conflict management process, which was envisaged, had mainly a four tier structure. At the apex was the Assembly, the supreme organ, overseeing everything. Below it composed of trusted lieutenants of the leaders was the Council of Ministers charged with implementing the decision of the Assembly. Both of these organs were predominantly 'political' once as far as conflict management was concerned, as opposed to the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration

50. Emphasis added.

51. Though there was the provision for a compromise specifying the legally binding nature of the decision of the tribunal (Art.XXIX).

which was the 'legal' part of the conflict management process. As indicated by the discussions on the formation of Defence Commission its role was to provide, if the need arose, the nucleus for a peace keeping force for troubled areas.

What was the conflict management scenario at the Addis Ababa Conference? Or, in other words, what was to be the approach to conflict management? This is a difficult question to answer mainly because of the tacit agreement in the preparatory foreign Ministers' Conference and in the Addis Ababa Conference itself to stress on those aspects which unite the African countries rather than those which divide them. Conflicts belonged to the latter category and as such were referred to in vague terms. However, from the Charter, from the speeches and from the discussion, we can piece together a likely approach to conflict management. The Assembly was to be supreme in conflict management as in everything else.⁵² But, though there was no hard and fast rule, all disputes were not to come straight to the Assembly. If predominantly political in nature, they were to go to the Council of Ministers and if legal, to the COMCA.⁵³ However,

52. Interestingly, the original Ethiopian draft had envisaged a Court of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, but doubtless, on instructions from their Heads, the Ministers changed it to a mere Commission.

53. Knowing fully well that disputes are very rarely purely legal or political, one can venture for a distinction on the basis of the nature of the dispute and the willingness of states to go in for legal settlement. Say, for instance, two states have some dispute over an undemarcated border and they genuinely want a proper demarcation. In this case, the COMCA can be of a greater help than the Council.

when the dispute became an armed conflict, the COMCA was to have no further role. All actions generally connected with (armed) conflict management (issues of appeals for ceasefire, for the creation of demilitarized zones, appeals to the belligerents to stop fighting and come to the negotiation table, etc.) were to be done by the Council and the Assembly. The provisions for emergency sessions were provided for contingencies of this kind.⁵⁴

54. And other pressing problems mainly economic, as later practice suggests.

Chapter - III

THE CASE STUDY OF CONFLICTS

After more than two decades of the existence of the Organization, the conflict management provisions also changed shape, though not beyond recognition. There have been improvisations, the creation of ad hoc bodies; institutions created for the express purpose of conflict management have been gathering dust on the sidelines with one being completely discarded. But the best way to taste the pudding is to eat it, hence to arrive at any conclusions about conflict management, case studies of actual conflicts which came before the OAU, must be studied.

Following Meyer's¹ and Nye's² scheme, a conflict can be studied utilizing three variables - conflict variables, organization variables and outcome variables. Conflict variables include the following: intensity (a measure of conflict behaviour in terms of number of deaths and destruction);

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1. B. David Meyers, "International Conflict Management by the OAU", International Organisation, Summer 1974, pp.350-355.
 2. J.S. Nye, "Peace in Parts: Integration and Conflict in regional Organization" (Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1971), pp.135-36.

whether the conflict was primarily internal or international depending on the issues involved; the role of other African states and of sub-regional organizations; the actual role, if any, of extra-regional states; and the potential role of extra-regional states with particular attention to the possibility of intervention by one or both super-powers. Organization variables are those concerned with how the OAU became involved in the dispute (what party or parties brought it and the level of involvement - COMCA, Council or the Assembly) and what activities did it sponsor or undertake in efforts to end fighting where they 'forum' or 'operation' activities³ and how far it was successful in isolating the conflict and assist settlement. The outcome variables describe the general status of the conflict at the present state and a summing up of OAU's efforts at pacification, isolation (from other intractable conflicts) and settlement.

3. Nye, *ibid.*, p.135. The Organization can serve as a forum or place to meet and debate or it can have an executive role in carrying out operation. Attempted conciliation by bodies and commissions created by the organs of the OAU come under 'operations'. According to Nye, a third but non-independent role for the Organization can be that of a 'figleaf', where a predominant power uses the organization to help legitimize its unilateral actions after the act. The United States intervention in the Dominican Republic is an example.

A word about the choice of conflicts. The intention is to take into account a wide variety of conflicts (border wars, internal wars with international ramification, conflict between rival liberation movements, etc.). The importance of the conflicts, some of which threatened to split the Organization and some which even now hang over the Organization, is another factor. In all these conflicts, different principles of the OAU (according to its Charter and subsequent resolutions)⁴ were at stake and it would be interesting to see how OAU dealt with them.

1. Algeria-Morocco (1963):

In this case, the problem of an undefined border was compounded by what Algeria viewed as a threat to its government. These two are different but related factors. The undefined border was a result of (a) French oversight⁵ and (b) the peculiar concept of a border held by Morocco.⁶

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4. Principles are discussed in detail in Chapter IV.
5. Though the French authorities had concluded a number of boundary agreements with Morocco, they were more often than not based on tribes rather than territory. This, as Patricia Wild comments, created frontier zones rather than definite boundary. The 1912 Franco-Moroccan Treaty did not clarify this boundary situation. Thus different French maps showed different positions. For details, see Patricia Berko Wild, "The Organization of African Unity and the Algerian-Moroccan Border Conflict: A Study of New Machinery for Peace-keeping and for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes among African States", International Organization, vol. XX, 1966, p.18.
6. The conflicts of the territory were related to Dar-al-Islam (House of Islam) and inhabitants were Umma (believers). The territory extended over the territory where the prayer was read in the name of the King. For details, see Anthony S. Rayner, "Morocco's International boundaries: a factual ...contd.

Added to these were some causes relatively immediate in origin which included (i) the discovery of oil and mineral resources in Sahara; (ii) political considerations which assumed greater importance for the King of Morocco after Allal-al-Fassi of Isteqlal party raised the 'Greater Morocco' issue. In the domestic politics of Morocco, the latter assumed important proportion, especially for the King.⁷ The difference in political system between the two countries was also a factor.⁸

6. contd...

background", Journal of Modern African Studies (London) Vol.1, no.3, 1963, p.315.

7. The solidarity forged during the independence was coming apart, already there had been disturbances in the countryside. The 'Greater Morocco' issue provided an emotional rallying point.
8. Algeria was professing socialism while Morocco was a monarchy. In late 1963, all the lands in foreign hands in Algeria was nationalized, while in Morocco foreigners still owned large tracts of land. Comparisons were frequently made. The Left Wing opposition in Morocco had Algeria's sympathy. The difference between the two governments was evident from the way Algerian government under Ben Bella rejected the secret agreement concluded between King Hassan and Ferhat Abbas in 1961. It went further and refused to recognise that any boundary problem existed between the countries. For details of the secret agreement, see Le Monde (Paris), 23 October 1963 as quoted by Jon Woronoff, Organizing African Unity (New Jersey, 1970), p.336.

But what worsened the situation was desertation on 29 September 1963 of some 8,000 Berber Veterans of the Algerian army who joined the Berber stronghold in Kabylia mountains swearing to overthrow Ben Bella. There were accusations of Moroccan complicity. Thus while as late as mid September, the border skirmishes were dismissed as created by "uncontrollable elements,"⁹ by the beginning of October war seemed imminent.

Course of the Conflict and Attempts of Negotiations:

On October 1, Morocco had occupied the frontier posts of Hassi-Beida and Tinjoub, which it claimed were on its side of the boundary. On October 8, a larger Algerian force with tanks and artillery retook it. The fighting took place between Bechar and Tindouf, about ninety five kilometers south-west of Colomb-Bechar. Full scale war had broken out and it intensified further with casualties on both sides. Algeria occupied Hassi Beida and Hassi Mounir along with Tinjoub which was earlier occupied. A few days later, both Hassi Beida and Tinjoub, which were border posts, were recaptured by the Moroccan army. As usually happens in wars, both countries proclaimed that they were only fighting for self-defence. Morocco moved in additional troops and Algeria declared a general mobilization. The combat went on in the Saharas for a fortnight.

9. by Algeria. quoted by P. Wild, n.5, p.21.

A close look at third party involvement in the process of conflict management shows that most of them were doomed to fail, because of the marked bias of the mediators. President Bourguiba of Tunisia had sent telegrams to the disputants urging them to end hostilities and he tried for the meeting of North African foreign ministers in Tunis to deal with this question. But the relations between Algeria and Tunisia were not exactly friendly - in December 1962, President Bourguiba had accused the Algerian regime of harbouring the Tunisian perpetrators of a plot against his life. Similarly, President Nasser's invitation to the Governments of Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya went unanswered because of his open support for Algeria.¹⁰ The Arab League was thought to be sympathetic to Algeria.¹¹ So, the mediation effort from this quarter had no better result. Guinea's President Sekou Toure also urged Morocco and Algeria to end hostilities but his moral support was for Algeria.¹²

10. In the speech where he extended invitation to these countries, he condemned the 'aggression committed against Algeria'. Egypt was also providing military assistance to Algeria.

11. Patricia Wild, n.5, p.21.

12. West Africa (London), 2 November 1963.

Bilateral negotiation had failed earlier.¹³ The war-fronts had stabilized and Morocco had a slight territorial advantage. It still held Hassi-Baida and Tinjoub but could not take Tindouf. The troops on both the sides were firmly entrenched and though there were sporadic outbursts it was clear that new territory could only be taken at the cost of heavy losses. It was becoming obvious that no more could be gained by fighting.

The Role of the OAU:

The OAU was seized of the matter as soon as the major fighting had started on October 14. Algeria had promptly informed the OAU Secretariat. On 19 October, Algeria formally called for an emergency meeting of the Council of Ministers. However, Morocco had some initial reservation about the efficacy and even the integrity of the OAU. Rightly or wrongly, it was under the impression that OAU has a tilt towards Algeria. The following are the likely reasons:

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13. President Ben Bella sent Mohammed Yazid, the former Minister of Information, and Major Slimane with a personal message to King Hassan. On the very day King Hassan in a speech had declared Morocco's readiness to hold discussion to peacefully settle the dispute. However, a deadlock was reached when Morocco insisted on negotiations on its territorial claims and Algeria insisted on the withdrawal of Moroccan forces from the positions they occupied as well as on the recognition of the borders existing at the time of Algerian independence.

(i) King Hassan of Morocco had not attended the Addis Ababa Conference (though Moroccan officials had attended it) and signed the Charter later with reservations). (ii) The diplomatic position of Algeria was strong in Africa. The Algerians benefitted from a certain sympathy evoked by their suffering during the war of independence. The Casablanca group of states were strongly backing Algeria. (iii) The Moroccan government knew that the principle of Uti Possidetis was overwhelmingly supported in the Addis Ababa Conference, however, with the prominent place of irrendentism in Morocco's policy, it naturally was reluctant to take the matter to the OAU. Therefore, it was the endeavour of Morocco to take the matter to the United Nations, until dissuaded by Paris and Washington. On the initiative of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, after a good deal of shuttle diplomacy, agreement was reached at Bomako in Mali. Apart from the belligerents Ethiopia and Mali were parties. The terms of Bomako agreement were:

- (i) to effect a ceasefire from midnight on 1 November 1963;
- (ii) to establish a commission of Algerian, Moroccan, Ethiopian and Malian officers to determine a demilitarized zone;
- (iii) to invite Ethiopian and Malian observers to supervise the ceasefire and watch over security and military neutrality in the demilitarized zone.

- (iv) to request an extraordinary meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in order to set up a commission that would determine responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities, study the frontier questions and make proposals for a settlement of the dispute.
- (v) to request Algeria and Morocco to cease all public and press attacks on each other as from November 1 and to observe strictly the principles of non-interference in each other's affairs and of settlement of all disputes between African states by means of negotiations.

Although there was a new burst of hostilities around Figuig only hours after the ceasefire was to start, the ceasefire generally held and the fighting stopped.

The outcome of the Summit was hailed as a great success and the triumph of the 'Addis Ababa spirit' but a close look reveals that Morocco's recognition of the OAU's jurisdiction came after a lot of pressure was brought to bear upon it. The pressures came from USA and France, two of Morocco's allies, of whom the latter even went to the extent of stopping arms supplies to Morocco. Another factor was the rebuff by the United Nations. It is a fact that time and again Morocco approached the Security Council of the UN for the consideration of the crisis. The Security Council and the Secretary General advised Morocco to apply the 'try OAU principle'. This was also advised by two permanent members of the Security Council - USA and France. As Andeñicael pointed out, they (USA and France) were "presumably concerned that if the dispute were brought to a United Nations organ, the major powers might

overtly take sides and hinder the process of reconciliation.¹⁴ The persuasions by other African countries also had a marginal effect on Morocco's decision to involve OAU in the conflict management process.

Though the Bamako agreement talked of convening the OAU Council's extraordinary meeting, at first it was not clear if Haile Selassie's efforts were on his personal capacity or on behalf of OAU, as the Provisional Secretariat of the OAU was entrusted to the Government of Ethiopia. But the successful diplomacy of the Emperor and the invocation of OAU Charter principles in the Bamako communique made it clear that the conflict management was being undertaken under an OAU framework.

In mid-November, when a ceasefire had been effected with the help of the Ethiopian and Malian members of the mixed military Commission (which came into existence according to the Bamako agreement), the OAU Council of Ministers met in an extraordinary session to consider the dispute, the basic agenda item being article four of the Bamako communique which asked the Council to set up a commission. Moroccan

14. Le Monde (Paris), 23 October and 5 November 1963 as quoted by Bahanykun Andemicael, Peaceful Settlement Among African States; Roles of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), New York), 1972, p.6.

claims were based on historical territorial rights and Algerian insistence on the need to observe the OAU Charter principle concerning territorial integrity and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means within a strictly African framework.¹⁵

The Council of Ministers, partly with a desire to allay Moroccan fears of partisan behaviour, declared that 'members should scrupulously respect all¹⁶ the principles enshrined in the Charter'. In addition, the Council created an ad hoc commission of seven states¹⁷ to mediate in the dispute. The Bamako Commission, though not an OAU body, was encouraged to continue its work and to establish contact with the OAU ad hoc commissions. Its work was thus brought within the over all diplomatic effort of the OAU.¹⁸

The ad hoc commission created in the absence of the COMCA, had an extremely delicate task and it was generally believed that it would be a wonder if it managed to cut the 'Gordian Knot'. First, it was not an arbitration body as proposed in Bamako but a body offering good offices. Secondly,

15. A rebuke no doubt to Morocco for its attempts to take the matter to UN.

16. Emphasis added.

17. Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Tanganyika. The composition shows careful weighing and the choice of moderate or neutral states.

18. For a detailed account of the Council's extraordinary meeting, see Wolfers, Politics in the Organisation of African Unity (London, 1976), pp.124-28.

the ascertaining of the responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities, as the Bamako agreement had asked it to do, was an extremely difficult and delicate almost impossible task in the face of contradictory claims by the two states and in the absence of neutral observers in the sparsely populated area where the hostilities took place. However, the commission succeeded in classifying issues and narrowing down some areas of disagreement. As observers agree, the very presence of the commission contributed to decrease in the tension between the two countries.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the Bamako Commission succeeded after some difficulty on February 20, 1964 in facilitating an agreement between the two Foreign Ministers to withdraw their troops to the positions they occupied before the outbreak of hostilities, thus creating a demilitarized zone along the border.

The ad hoc commission had meeting in Bamako in January 1964, following by one in April and then convened again in Casablanca and in Algiers of the same year, without going into the substantive aspect of the dispute nor deciding

19. This was evident when following Ben Bella's overthrow in May 1964, tensions ran high after alleged Algerian troop movement near the border and Algerian nationalisation of iron ore mines in the area claimed by Morocco. The Moroccan government sent envoys to the Emperor of Ethiopia and the President of Mali and demanded an urgent meeting of the commission. Algeria had no objection to such a meeting. Though the Commission did not solve the underlying problem, a crisis was avoided.

as to who started the hostilities. But meanwhile bilateral relations were improving and there was exchange of ambassadors. Finally, in May 1970 a final settlement was reached.²⁰

A Critical Assessment:

This final agreement marked a significant achievement for conflict management under OAU auspices. Though it was achieved by bilateral negotiations, the bodies created by the OAU and under OAU framework contributed much towards creating a conducive atmosphere for negotiation. But while not minimizing OAU's role, the following factors must be kept in mind: (i) this conflict was remarkable and exceptional in the way super and big powers did not want to get involvement. A border war remained localized with comparatively low casualties. Even when requested to intervene, USA remained aloof and France, except for supplying some arms, did not intervene. Among the African countries, except for Egypt (who provided arms for Algeria and even supplied troops), other countries largely remained neutral or passive supporters. OAU's conflict management endeavours got a boost when the United Nations recognized its primacy in intra-regional

20. In which the long standing border dispute was resolved and the two countries decided to cooperate in exploiting the iron ore deposit in the area. Rabat and Algiers agreed to set up a border line as marked on a map drawn up under French rule and kept at the Paris National Geographical Institute.

conflict management. (ii) The OAU reacted to the outbreak of hostilities promptly.²¹ The Emperor of Ethiopia to which country the Provisional Secretariat was entrusted acted promptly to bring the parties together, though initially it was not known if he was acting on behalf of the OAU or in his personal capacity. The conflict management, thus started with the individual initiatives and it was subsequently given the stamp of approval. (iii) Indications were already there that the tier structure of conflict management as envisaged by the Charter may not be followed strictly. With the signing of the protocol of the COMCA in 1964, the dispute could well have been transferred to it. Further, instead of the Ethiopian and Malian joint military commission supervising the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, it could well have been OAU troops (troops from member states) under the command of the Defence Commission. (iv) The conflict management attempts under the OAU framework consisted more of forum activities than of operational ones.²² The only operation activity was appointment of the ad hoc commission but the coming together of foreign ministers of the disputing countries, the subsequent meeting of the Heads of states signify considerable forum activity.

21. The hostilities became full scale war on between 8th and 14th September. On October 17, Haile Selassie started his efforts and the OAU Council of Ministers met in an extraordinary session on 16 November.

22. For a discussion on 'Forum' and 'operation' activities, see

2. Nigerian Crisis (1967-1970):

Genesis:

To a student of Nigerian history the tragic civil war of 1967 comes as no surprise. Though the immediate causes are generally traced back to the two coup d'etats of 1966, the roots can be traced to the beginning of colonial rule by the British. There were ethnic, religious and cultural differences between people of different regions but with myopic administrative policies, the British chose to ignore them. In the west, mostly the Yorubas lived in towns, medieval kingdoms had flourished there and they were being Islamized from the North which in turn were emirates tracing their past to history. The Ibos mostly living in the East were loosely organized and individualistic.²³ They lived mostly in villages. In the middle belt lived mostly primitive communities. The religion differed from animism and pagan religions to Islam. Economically also there was imbalance. The Yoruba West was rich compared to the east and the centre. And this created ill feelings. As against this formidable array of diversities, the British only showed vacillation and neglect. After many trial and errors in 1914, Nigeria was declared as a single unit,

23. Even when Ibos lived in Yoruba majority area, they lived apart in Sabon Gari or the strangers' district.

completely disregarding the various diversities.²⁴ As has been aptly remarked at that time various Nigerian communities shared little in common, other than government by Britain.²⁵

The features of tribal, communal, ethnic, religious and social conflicts appeared as factors in politics too.²⁶ The dangerous trend continued even after the plans for independence of Nigeria was declared. Thus on the eve of independence there were three main parties - the Northern People's Congress (NPC) dominated mostly by the traditional elite of Hausa Fulani; there was also the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), virtually an Ibo party, and thirdly, there was the Action Group which had roots in the Nigerian Youth Movement and a western and Yoruba dominated party.

When independence was granted in October 1960, it came after many trials and turbulations. Two constitutions had preceded it and the conservative Hausa Fulani of the North had to be persuaded to remain in the Federation. The Federation was loose in nature, as was expected

24. In this matter the colonial office accepted the philosophy of Lugard, who advocated large provinces in preference to that of his critics Bell, Temple and Morel who advocated smaller units.

25. John Hatch, Nigeria: A History (London, 1970), p.197.

26. The movement for Nigerian independence which started in London was divided in three lines. The Yoruba students had their own organization Egbe Omo Oduduwa or the society of the descendants Oduduwa. The Ibos had Pan Ibo Federal Union.

of regions as diverse as the North, East and West. Nnamdi Azikiwe's attempts at a national party had ended in failure and Nigeria was set on a course of ethnic conflict. At this juncture came the census of 1962, rejected and revised in 1963 which gave a clear, large majority to the North. (29.8 million as opposed to 12.4 of the East and of total of 55 million). In the 1964 elections, Nigerian National Alliance [primarily consisting of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) Akintola's (the Premier of the West) Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP)] won 198 seats as opposed to 50 of the Grand Alliance, which wavering between boycott and participation was only half in the races. The election was, according to observers, rigged. President Azikiwe of the Federation ^{who} was earlier in favour of a postponement of the polls was hesitant about appointing a Prime Minister but in a final attempt to stem the disintegration, Sir Abubakar formed a broadbased national government. Matters, however, were coming to a head. Amidst rising violence Akintola's NNDP won a huge majority in a farcial election in the West.

The Crisis and the Conflict:

Then on 15 January 1966, the fuse was ignited. A group of junior officers most of whom were Ibos, unleashed a coup which resulted in the assassination of the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, two regional premiers, Ahmadu Bello of the North and Chief Samuel Akintol

of the West, as well as many senior northern officers. A few days later, anarchy was forestalled by the establishment of a provisional military government under the highest ranking Ibo officer, Major General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi. General Ironsi's substitution of a unitary state for the federal state was strongly opposed by northern Nigerians who regarded the measure as a scheme for domination by the Ibos. In addition, the fact that he and most of his advisers were Ibos and he had not punished the officers responsible for the killing during the coup created such antagonism in the north that rioting broke out in northern cities. On 29 July 1966, a group of northern soldiers carried out a counter-coup killing General Ironsi and many high ranking Ibo officers. After a few days of crisis, Lieutenant Colonel (later General) Yakubu Gowon, a northern officer, was called upon to form and take command of a National Military Government. However, before the new Government could establish its authority, the communal riots resulted in the death of a large number of Ibos in the north and the flight of over a million others to the Ibo dominated East.

The new Government reinstated the earlier federal system and declared that a constituent assembly would be convened and a referendum held to determine a widely accepted system. However, the Ibos of the East were simmering. They were coming to a conclusion that they could not remain safe in a federation with the North and the West. An Ibo land was becoming a distinct possibility for them. They

demanding for the right of secession to be included in any future constitutional plan which the northerners were not prepared to accede to. Subsequently, Colonel Ojukwu, the military Governor of Eastern region, halted payment of revenues (consisting mostly of oil revenues) to the Federal Government. In retaliation, the Federal Government imposed economic sanctions. On 27 May 1967, the Federal Government promulgated a decree decentralizing the system of government and creating twelve states out of the former regions; for the Eastern region this meant a division into one Ibo and two minority states.²⁷ On 30 May 1967, after being mandated by a committee of representative of the Eastern Region, Colonel Ojukwu declared the region an independent sovereign state to be named 'Biafra'. The Federal Government of Nigeria, which regarded the declaration as an act of rebellion, responded by mobilizing its troops and warning all countries not to interfere in the internal affairs of Nigeria. On 6 July 1967, fighting started between the troops of the Federal Government and 'Biafra' and continued until the latter was completely defeated in January 1970.

27. In addition, Gowon assumed full powers, declared a state of emergency, banned all political statements and meetings.

OAU's Role:

It was not until September 1967 that OAU took any initiative in the matter, when the OAU Assembly met for its fourth session at Kinshasa, the civil war was discussed. However, it had not submitted as an item for the conference agenda by the Council of Ministers. The hesitancy and uncertainty with which the OAU Assembly was taking up the matter for discussion (the discussion took place after the Nigerian Federal Government allowed it on the condition that no attempt would be made to interfere with its internal affairs) was due to the Nigerian Federal Government's assertion that any intervention even in the form of a discussion at the OAU (or the United Nations) level would be in violation of the domestic jurisdiction clauses in Article III(2) of the OAU Charter (and Article 2(7) of the UN Charter).

In this situation the Kinshasa resolution on the Nigerian civil war was expected to be pro-Nigerian. But the resolution itself went beyond the expectations of die-hard supporters of the Federal Government. First of all, the resolution recognized that the situation was an internal affair of Nigeria, the solution of which was primarily a responsibility of Nigerian themselves. A consultative Mission of Six Heads of State (Cameroon, Congo, Zaire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Niger) was to be sent to the Head of the Federal Government of Nigeria 'to assure him

of the Assembly's desire for the territorial integrity, unity and peace of Nigeria'. (This mission was later called a consultative committee on Nigeria). Significantly, there was no discussion at Kinshasa of Biafra claims to self-determination and no mention of Biafra in the resolution. The committee visited Lagos in November and issued a joint communique.

The next step in the conflict management process was the Kampala peace talks of May 1968. However, the peace talks were held, not under the auspices of the OAU but the Commonwealth Secretariat. The talks broke down because (i) the irreconcilable positions held by the two sides while the Federal Government's principle condition was renunciation of secession by Biafra before a ceasefire, the Biafrans wanted an immediate ceasefire with no such condition attached. (ii) Federal advances into Biafran territory and the escalation of the conflict.

The Consultative Committee met again at Niamey (Niger) in July 1968 where both General Gowon (Federal Nigeria) and Colonel Ojukwu (Biafra) attended. However, in the face of the raging war and the rigid positions held by two sides, the talks did not concern itself so much with the settlement of the dispute as with the supply of relief to innocent victims of the war. Preliminary talks held under the Chairmanship of President Hamani Diori of the Niger Republic decided on an agenda for the peace negotiations

in Addis Ababa to be held on August 5, 1968.²⁸ In the Addis Ababa negotiations, the two parties were unwaveringly rigid about their stands. But a tentative agreement in principle about relief operations and the proposal for land and air mercy corridors for these supplies, broke apart when on 25 August, without waiting for the outcome of Addis Ababa talks, General Gowon announced the launching of the final offensive. On 4 September, Aba, one of the remaining towns in Biafran hands fell to Federal forces. So when finally the five weeks of negotiation were adjourned on 9 September, it came as no surprise.

The Council of Ministers, at its preparatory session shortly before the Algiers Summit dealt with a motion tabled by Tunisia which requested that both Nigeria and Biafra be invited to the conference but it was opposed by Nigeria and several other African countries, subsequently the motion was withdrawn. In the Algiers meeting of the OAU Assembly (September 1968), a pro-Nigerian resolution calling for 'secessionist leaders to co-operate with the Federal authorities in order to restore peace and unity in Nigeria', was passed. The Algiers conference was a clear cut victory for the Federal Government despite the recent recognition of Biafra by four countries - Tanzania, Zambia,

Gabon and Ivory Coast.²⁹ Meanwhile, the meeting of the OAU Consultative Mission at Monrovia in April 1969, which subsequently proved to be its last, ended in failure when its plan was not accepted by the Biafran side. The last OAU initiative on a settlement of the Nigerian conflict was made at the 6th Assembly Conference in Addis Ababa on 6 September 1969. It simply reiterated the OAU's previously held stand. The conflict was settled on 12 January 1970 when Colonel Philip Effiong on behalf of Biafra formally surrendered to General Gowon.

A Critical Assessment:

A war raging on for almost three years cannot help getting internationalized and that is what exactly happened. Arms supply, including aircraft and heavy artillery, was made by the governments of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Egypt to the Federal Government and from French, Portuguese and South African

29. The final resolution on Nigeria was passed with an overwhelming 33-4 majority. The Secretary General of the UN, General U. Thant, speaking at the Conference, pointed out that the 1967 OAU Summit resolution pledging faith in the Nigerian Federal Government and recognising Nigeria's territorial integrity formed the only basis for solving the problem. The successes of the Federal Army against the Biafran army made it clear that it was just a matter of time before Biafra surrendered. This also acted as a point in favour of the Federal Government.

sources to Biafra.³⁰ The Churches, the International Red Cross, Caritas and some other European organizations began supporting Biafra. The role of major powers (Britain, France, etc.) also acted negatively for OAU conflict management efforts. A typical example of external influence occurred in 1968 during the Niamey and Addis Ababa talks when both sides received new supplies of arms. Britain stepped up the arms supply and Nigerians seemed to overrun Biafrans but the French came to its aid with diplomatic and military help. Diplomatically the civil war did not get internationalized because (i) it did not become a cold war issue, Soviet Union supported the Federal Government;³¹ (ii) the insistence of Nigeria to treat it as an internal matter; (iii) the presence of OAU which insulated the conflict from the international environment. The involvement of OAU, irrespective of its success, discouraged other forums from trying their hand at peaceful settlement.³²

In this conflict, the Administrative Secretary General Dialo Telli and Emperor Haile Selassie, a key figure

30. In late 1968 a team of observers representing the Secretariat General of the UN and the OAU and Governments of Canada, Poland, Sweden, and the UK went to the battle front to investigate Biafran charges of Genocide. This was another internationalization of the conflict.

31. Principally, because of its Leninist line, national self-determination involved recognition of one legitimate government.

32. The only exception being Commonwealth Secretariat under whose auspices the Kampala Peace talks of May 1968 was arranged.

in the peace negotiations admitted that OAU's role had been largely ineffective. The cluster of factors responsible for this can be divided into three main categories: (a) the Charter provisions and the OAU mandate; (b) the attitude of the disputants; and (c) role of extra African actors.

(a) The legal principles which came into play were Art. III, 2 'non-interference in the international affairs of states, Art. III 3, Part 1, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state. Art. 3, 3 Part 2 respect for inalienable right to independent existence. Principle of non-interference in internal affairs was invoked by General Gowon, the Military ruler of Federal Nigeria, in a letter to the OAU and other African heads of states. This diplomatic initiative went a long way in countering Biafra's claims and invoking the principle of self-determination. Apart from the legal principles, the nature of the OAU itself, as evident from the Charter and from actual practice, precluded the possibility of any bold step in managing the conflict.³³ OAU was envisaged and functions as an inter-governmental organization with no claims to supranationality. It attempts to settle disputes peacefully by means of - diplomatic persuasion namely negotiation, good offices and conciliation. However, diplomatic persuasion has one inherent weakness in that it depends upon the disputants for

33. It is a fact that for a conflict of this magnitude, no extraordinary meeting (either of the Assembly or Council) was called.

the outcome of the efforts. Where one of the disputants was a member of the OAU and the other disputant had declared secession against it, the organization finds itself in a fix.

The OAU mandate which was spelt out in the Kinshasa Summit and subsequent Council and Assembly and consultative committee resolutions, was trying to reconcile two goals which were often mutually exclusive - non-recognition of secession and the management of the conflict.³⁴ The mandate managed to make the first goal clear but thereby destroyed any chance it had for the second. OAU as a forum for discussion was ruled out by the Biafrans. This was particularly evident after the Lagos visit of the Consultative Committee and the communique issued at the conclusion of the visit. In December 1969, when Emperor Haile Selassie attempted to convene the two sides in Addis Ababa, the effort failed because the Biafrans refused to participate in talks guided by the OAU mandate, and on the other side, Nigerians objected to participate in any talks not so guided. Before that, on 1 November 1969, in an address to the Biafran Consultative Assembly, Colonel Ojukwu reiterating preparedness to meet Federal Representatives in any

34. A secondary, but nevertheless important, goal was to provide humanitarian relief to sufferers in the conflict.

place and at any time, excluded the OAU as a possible forum 'because of OAU's lack of foresight objectivity, courage and conviction'.³⁵ This was in stark contrast to the pre-Kanshasa Summit optimism in the Biafran capital, Enugu. The question arises whether Mandate could have been different and could the Consultative Committee have undertaken a different course of action. Taking into account the overwhelming support for the unity of Nigeria and the opinion against secession, the Mandate of such a kind was inevitable. However, in any type of conflict, the body ensured the conflict management must keep its options as wide as possible. In this particular case, members of the Committee who were on good terms with Biafrans could have been encouraged to retain informal contact with the Biafrans. One possibility was Cameroon, whose President Ahidjo was known for his sympathy for the Biafrans.³⁶ Or, in other words, the Biafran card should not have been forsaken so early in the conflict.

35. Quoted by Z. Carvenka, Unfinished Quest for Unity, Africa and the OAU (London, 1977), p.106. The Mandate was also criticized by Sierra Leone which played a very active and influential role in helping organizing the talks. Some members of the Consultative Committee felt that the Committee could have performed better had it been given an explicit mandate for conciliation instead of consultation. Former President Diiori of Niger, for example, would have liked to see the Committee changed from a consultative to conciliatory committee. See West Africa (London), May 8, 1968.

36. And believed to have cooperated with Biafra in breaking the Federal blockade in the field of telecommunications.

By committing itself totally to the support of the Federal Government, the Organization could not really exert pressure on Federal Government at later stages. There is much truth in the argument that the mandate really was not for peaceful settlement, although the Organization advocated such a settlement. In this case, as one observer has pointed out, the most appropriate thing OAU could have done within terms of the mandate would have been to 'make available to the Federal Government all the military power that it (OAU) could muster for a quick victory over Biafra. This would have intensified the fighting and the suffering but over a short period of time'.³⁷

Two more factors acted detrimental to the conflict management efforts by the OAU. The first was the time factor and second, the role of the Administrative Secretary General, Diallo Telli. It has been proved that in most cases the task of management of a conflict by an international organization becomes more difficult after the disputants' positions become more rigid and well publicised.³⁸ The

37. Gemuh E. Akuchu, "Peaceful Settlement of Disputes: Unsolved Problems for the OAU (A case study of the Nigerian-Biafran conflict)", Africa Today (Colorado), October-December 1977, p.46.

38. See R.O. Matthews, "The Suez Dispute: A Case of Peaceful Settlement", International Organization, vol.XXI, no.2, Winter 1967, Elmore Jackson, Meeting of Minds (N.Y., McGraw Hill, 1952), pp.137-45.

Consultative Commission (Committee) was set up by the Kinshasa resolution on 27 September 1967, but its visit to Lagos occurred only on 23 November 1967. Andemicael comments, "Had the Committee been able to visit Lagos on 27 September as originally scheduled, that is, at a time when no victory was in sight for either side, perhaps it might have been able to develop its role in such a way as to exercise good offices from the start. But when it visited Lagos two months later at a time when the Biafran forces were in retreat, the Committee was not left with much leeway".³⁹

As far as the Secretary General is concerned, his role in this conflict management gave rise to much controversy. A close look reveals that he acted 'more loyal than the king' - he refused to involve the Biafrans in the negotiations even when General Gowon had no objection and OAU had authorized him. Akuchu remarks, "it is seen in diplomatic manoeuvres that diplomats particularly of regional organizations usually explore all avenues ending the conflict and often depend on a broad and liberal interpretation of the mandates given to them... Although the conduct of the Secretary General towards Biafra initially could be rationalized in terms of lack of expressed authorization to deal with a non-sovereign

39. B. Andemicael, n.14, p.32. The same thing has been pointed out by David B. Meyers, n.1, p.364 and Akuchū, n.37, p.45. Though recognising the importance of this argument its hypothetical nature must also be taken into account.

party to the conflict, the same attitude was maintained even after the Secretary General had the authorization from the OAU. Even General Gowon thought that he (Telli) can be a go-between but Mr. Telli refused to contact the Biafrans on the ground that he has not the sufficient authority or the weight or even the prerogative to undertake the task'.⁴⁰ Akuchu adds that it was an opportunity for the Secretary General to undertake responsibility beyond the normal call of duty thereby expanding the role of the Secretary General. Again, when General Gowon invited an international team of observers, including OAU representatives, to see for themselves that no genocide was taking place as per Biafran allegation - Telli said that there was no need to send observers because the OAU stood solidly behind the Federal Government.⁴¹ The award of Nigeria's top insignia, Command of the Federal Republic (CFR) to Mr. Telli, after the end of the conflict, seemed to confirm his role during the conflict.

(b) Both Nigerian and Biafran attitudes towards the OAU initiatives were basically negative. Both sides were bent on military solution as revealed by hawks from both sides whenever attempts were made to convene the two sides or when peace talks were actually in progress, the Federal

40. Akuchu, n.37, pp.47-48.

41. However, he relented and sent observers.

Government intensified the fighting on the battleground thus destroying the atmosphere for negotiations.⁴² Much of the talk was wasted in counter charges and refutations about atrocities committed on the battle field.

(c) The role of extra African actors like the Churches, the Commonwealth, the International Red Cross has already been discussed. However, the extra African actors who played a crucial role were the arms supplier to both the sides. Ideology took a back seat when Britain and Soviet Union supplied arms with the back-stage support of the US. On the Biafran side, the French were playing a leading role and to a lesser extent South Africa and Portugal.

3. Angolan Civil War (1975-76):

The Angolan conflict is remarkable from the OAU's point of view, for the first ever extraordinary conference of the Assembly of Heads state and Government. But more importantly, it is remarkable for the massive outside intervention, the role of African states and the deep cleavage it created among African countries, even among likeminded African countries.⁴³ It saw the super power involvement directly and through their proxies, it saw

42. One of the main factors for the failure of Niamey and Addis Ababa peace talks was stepped up arms supply at the time of the talks.

massive Cuban presence and an open attack by the detested South African regime on an African country. However, the blame for the internationalization of the conflict cannot go solely to the outside powers involved, nor can the Portuguese take the entire blame. It lies, to a large extent, on the leaders of Angolan independence movements as the subsequent analysis would show.

Genesis:

On the face of it, the Angolan civil war was a fight between three rival liberation movements - Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA), Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA) and Uniao Nacional Para a independencia Total de Angola (UNITA)⁴⁴ and their leaders Augustin Neto, Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi respectively. Their backers - both African and extra-African powers - only exacerbated the situation by both diplomatic and military help.⁴⁵

44. For details of the birth of these movements and their rivalry, see Richard Gibson, African Liberation Movements (London, 1972), pp.190-242.

45. Holden Roberto of the FNLA was supported by Zaire, Zambia, US, China and North Korea, when independence came, he formed a government with UNITA and soon afterwards UNITA asked for and got South African help in the form of direct intervention. They had also employed mercenaries. MPLA got arms from Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc. Cuba helped with combat troops, war planes and tanks. The former Katangese soldiers also fought for MPLA. For a discussion, see Colin Legum "Foreign Intervention in Angola", ACR 1975-76, pp.A43-A35,

The underlying factors, however, go deeper. The division of the liberation movements on largely ethno-regional lines owes⁴⁶ its origin to the exploitative character of the Portuguese rule. Like other colonisers, the Portuguese played one ethnic group against the other with tragic consequence,⁴⁷

contd...

45. Mohamed A. El-Khawas, 'South Africa and the Angolan Conflict', Africa Today, April-June 1977, pp.35-46., G.J. Bender "Angola, the Cubans and American anxieties", Foreign Policy (Washington D.C.), Summer 1978, pp.3-30, Charles K. Ebinger, "External Intervention in Internal War: The Politics and Diplomacy of Angolan Civil War", Orbis (Philadelphia), vol.20, no.3, Fall 1976, pp.669-699, and Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World (Colorado, 1980), Chapter 5-9.
46. Communal tripolarity had marred Angolan nationalism from its origins. Holden Roberto's FNLA had its support mainly from the Bakongo of the North, Jonas Savimbi's UNITA from among the Ovimbundu of the South and Augustinino Neto's MPLA from among the Mbundu of the north-central Angola as well as the major urban centres. However, to describe these three as purely tribal parties would be a mistake because the provisional government of FNLA and UNITA was a supra-tribal government, MPLA had the backing of the urban intelligentsia, the mestizos and progressive Portuguese. The Ovimbundu were themselves split with minority support going to Chimpanda, another leader. For a discussion, see R. Gibson, n.44, pp.190-242.
47. The policy of assimilation, an offshoot of Lusitropicalism, was a subtle manifestation of divide and rule. It created two kinds of people - the natives and the assimilados (those who have been assimilated). The oppressive character of Portuguese colonialism was evident from the abominable practice of forced labour and later the way dissent was silenced with the help of war planes and bombs. For an account of Portuguese colonialism, see Basil Davidson, In the Eye of the Storm (London, 1972), p.109, G.J. Bender, Angola Under the Portuguese (London, 1978), Norman P. Bennett, Africa and Europe (London, 1975). For a shorter account see Basil Davidson, "Independence of Portuguese Africa: Background and Emergence to 1974", Africa, South of Sahara, 1983-84 (London, 1983), p.30.

Against this background, the chain of events which led to the total break down of law and order in Angola and the protracted civil war started with a coup in Portugal. On 25 April 1974, under the leadership of former officers organised in the Movimento das Forças Armadas, the Portuguese armed forces overthrew the dictatorship. Significantly, the twin slogans of the new military regime was 'democratization at home' and 'decolonization in Africa'.⁴⁸ However, the new President General Antonio de Spínola for some months continued to reject African claims to independence. In mid-July, a delegation of the Armed Forces Movement took over the government so as to ensure that the aims of the coup could be realized. The way thus was cleared for the independence of the Portuguese colonies, the date set for Angolan independence was 11 November 1975. Thereafter, things began to move swiftly.

It was a situation where the colonial country wanted to grant independence to the colony by formally handing over power. But the crucial question - to whom - remained unanswered. The discussion between the Angolan movements, quite obviously was a crucial topic in the 1974 negotiations with the Portuguese government. The OAU liberation committee

48. Portuguese Chief of Staff General Francisco de Costa Gomes in a press interview on 11 May 1974, referring to the continuing war in Africa, said, "The Armed Forces have reached the limits of neuro psychological exhaustion".

established by the Charter of 1963, took an initiative in the matter and assisted by the Heads of State of countries where the movements were based (Zaire, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo) succeeded in making the movements agree on negotiating jointly with the Portuguese Government at Penina on 5th January 1975. UNITA, so far denied OAU recognition, was hastily recognised for that purpose.⁴⁹ The agreement known as the Penina Concordat, signed on 15 January set Angola's independence day as 11 November 1975, and provided that a transitional government consisting appointees both of Portuguese Government and MPLA, FNLA and UNITA would administer the country in the interim period.

49. There are no fixed rules governing the recognition of liberation movements; the main criteria are the degree of support they enjoy in their territories and how effective is their struggle. Holden Roberto's FNLA was recognised by African Liberation Committee (ALC) in 1963 but the support was withdrawn in 1964 on the grounds that its armed struggle had waned. It was recognised again in 1972, but au par with MPLA. In passing, it can be mentioned that on the policy of recognition of liberation movements, as pointed out by President Samora Machel of Mozambique in 1976, "The correct line of action for the OAU is to recognise only one organization and exclude the rest or, in justified cases, to strive to reconcile them before recognition", quoted by Z. Cervanka, p.35, p.47.

However, the welding together of three movements having great differences in ideology,⁵⁰ being supported by different African and non-African governments and having their backing in different parts of the country proved impossible. Within a few days of the formation of the coalition government in Luanda on January 31, disputes broke out between the armed supporters of the movements. Throughout 1975, armed warfare continued and much of the time, resources and energy of the OAU and other African Heads of State was spent in arranging ceasefires which broke down almost as soon as they were reached. In course of the year, more than ten peace and ceasefire agreements were signed without any avail, including the agreements concluded under the OAU auspices in Kinshasa, Mombasa and Alver. The last conciliatory effort on the part of the OAU Liberation Committee prior to the Kampala Summit in July

50. The ideological factor should not, however, be over-emphasised. MPLA, despite its professed Marxist leanings, got help from such diverse sources as OAU, the Soviet bloc, Cuba, Yugoslavia, China, Sweden and also from left wing parties in Portugal. But by the time independence was coming nearer MPLA was getting help only from Cuba (with combat troops) and Soviet Union. Interestingly, in an address to the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization held in Luanda in February 1976 Neto stressed on the non-aligned status of Angola and said that Angola would join no military bloc. Holden Roberto, the leader of FNLA also professed left leanings. He was a friend of Patrice Lumumba. FNLA got help from China until discredited in African eyes because of its South African links. UNITA also had maintained Chinese connection. Therefore, as we can see it was pragmatism not so much as radicalism which ruled the roost.

1975 was the Nakuru meeting in June 1975. Though comprehensive, this agreement had no better fate than its predecessors and on the eve of the Kampala Summit, the armed hostilities escalated.

The peace efforts were simultaneously been threatened by bitter battles fought with arms literally being poured into Angola. American and Chinese arms came in with "Zaire as the conduit,"⁵¹ however, with the harbour in its grip (which MPLA occupied in July), Soviet and Cuban arms came in large quantity for the MPLA. By mid-September MPLA was scoring important victories helped by a well trained force of former Katangese gendarmerie. In June UNITA, hitherto, only an observer joined the battle and struck up an uneasy deal with the FNLA. In mid-1975, another significant event took place. South Africa started armed incursions from Namibia into Angola with the knowledge of Zaire and on the invitation of FNLA/UNITA. By October, the South African intervention had assumed the proportions of a full scale attack. Right through November the combined attack by FNLA/UNITA forces with South African army, and mercenaries continued. But timely assistance by Soviet Union who began

51. There was a break in this supply from late 1974 to September 1975 because of the expulsion of the US Ambassador following an abortive coup. But arms supplied continued, albeit, at a lower rate through other channels.

massive airlift of arms and the Cubans who sent tanks, warplanes and combat troops saved the situation for MPLA. Though on Independence Day, 11 November, the position of MPLA was shaky, it improved further with the passage of time. By March 1976 MPLA was firmly in control through a military victory and diplomatic victory followed soon after in the shape of recognitions by African countries and later by the OAU. The Cuban troops continued to be in Angola.

OAU and the Conflict:

Except for the ALC, OAU was not involved in a big way in conflict management in Angola till the Kampala Summit.⁵² However, there had been earlier calls and resolutions for unity among the liberation movements. The Resolutions on Angola were adopted at the Kampala Summit. The first adopted by the Council, expressed regret at the violation of the previous agreements between the three

52. Both MPLA and FNLA had attended the 1963 Addis Ababa Conference and signed in a memorandum submitted to it. In 1964 ALC recognised FNLA the strongest liberation movement. But by the end of the year it began reversing its stand and decided to divest FNLA/GRAE of exclusive recognition. This was, however, not accepted by the Council in Nairobi in March 1965. The Council repeated earlier resolution urging the reconciliation of GRAE/FNLA and MPLA. In 1968 ALC decided to totally withdraw the aid to FNLA. But the Assembly did not approve this.

movements and urged them to end their hostilities. It also issued a warning that the situation in Angola was likely to divide Africa.⁵³ The Assembly in its resolution went beyond 'regret' and 'deplored' the bloody confrontation... and 'demanded' that the rival movements lay down their arms'. Portugal was requested to resume responsibilities for the maintenance of law and order in Angola till independence on 11 November 1975. A Fact Finding Commission of Enquiry and Conciliation was to be established to depart for Angola immediately, and the OAU Defence Commission was requested to consider the possibility of creating and dispatching an OAU peace force to Angola. However, the OAU's efforts were doomed to fail because responding to OAU's invitation only Dr. Jonas Savimbi of the UNITA attended the Kampala Summit. The more powerful FNLA and MPLA rejected the invitation as 'impermissible interference in Angola's internal affairs'. Interestingly, though there was wide outside interference, the resolutions were pointedly silent on them. The Fact Finding Commission of Inquiry and Conciliation on Angola was chaired by the OAU Chairman Idi Amin of Uganda, himself with Somalia, Algeria, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Morocco, Niger and Upper Volta as members. The Commission made a ten day tour of Angola, submitted a report which was discussed at a special session of the OAU

53. Resolution CM/424(XXV) 'On the Situation in Angola', Africa Contemporary Record, 1975-76, p.A68.

Bureau (where the current Chairman deal with problems between the ordinary session of the Assembly). The bureau repeated the call for a Government of nationality unity and the integration of the armed forces of all the movements. The last attempt by the OAU before the extraordinary session of the Assembly was nothing short of a farce. On 5 November, Amin called for the meeting of the Defence Commission to 'assess the need for despatching an OAU peace-keeping force to Angola and the need to despatch an African Political Military Mission to help the Government of National Unity⁵⁴ to set up a national army and an administrative structure'. It was farcical because (i) there was no Government of National Unity in Angola at that time and (ii) the situation had drastically changed because of the full scale attack by South African defence forces.

Angolan Independence Day, 11 November, saw the proclamation of two governments - the People's Republic of Angola formed by the MPLA in Luanda and the Social Democratic Republic of Angola, formed by FNLA and UNITA in Huambo. The OAU's position on independence day was governed by the Kampala Summit resolution insisting on a government of national unity that would include all three liberation movements. However, 30 countries from throughout the world

54. Emphasis added.

(including Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau) recognised the MPLA Government, when the Extraordinary Session of the Assembly convened in Addis Ababa on 10 January 1976, twenty one countries had already recognised the MPLA Government.

In the Extraordinary Summit - first in the history of the OAU - the cracks were clearly visible. Mozambique's President Samora Machel was unequivocal in his support for MPLA Government. However, he was offset, to some extent, by the current Chairman of the OAU Amin himself who talked of Government of National Unity. It was seen at the conference that the overt intervention by South Africa on behalf of UNITA and FNLA made the supporter of these two movements a little hesitant about coming out openly in their favour. Those who opposed MPLA Government favoured a government of national unity. However, in the Summit, despite the support by Nigeria⁵⁵ and a broad consensus against South African intervention, the countries were

55. Considered crucial by many observers. For example, see Basil Davidson, 'Angola-Recent History' in Africa South of Sahara, n.47, p.193. 'Nigeria, the US, the USSR and Angola', West Africa, 1 December 1975.

divided, twenty-two each in favour of two opposing resolutions.⁵⁶ Another point of contention was on the question of condemning external intervention. The members were evenly divided between those wishing to condemn all forms of external intervention and those to endorse the positive role of Soviet Union and Cuba, whose intervention, according to them, was justified by the need to defend Angola from South Africa. In the face of such deep division it was no wonder that the Extraordinary Session ended with a terse one sentence communique 'After seriously considering the Angolan problem from 10-13 January, the Assembly of

<u>56. Favouring Recognition of the MPLA</u>	<u>Favouring Govern- ment of National Unity</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
Algeria	Botswana	Ethiopia
Benin (Dahomey)	Cameroon	Eganda
Burundi	CAR	
Cape Verde	Egypt	
Chad	Gabon	
Comoros	Gambia	
Congo Republic	Ivory Coast	
Equatorial Guinea	Kenya	
Ghana	Lesotho	
Guinea	Liberia	
Guinea Bissau	Malawi	
Libya	Mauritania	
Mali	Morocco	
Madagascar	Rwanda	
Mauritius	Senegal	
Mozambique	Sierra Leone	
Niger	Swaziland	
Nigeria	Togo	
Sao Tome	Tunisia	
Somalia	Upper Volta	
Sudan	Zaire	
Tanzania		

Source: The Economist (London), January 17, 1976.
For the text of the resolutions, see ACR 1975-76,
pp. A72-73.

Heads of State and Government, decided to adjourn and requested the OAU to follow closely the Angolan problem'.

Meanwhile, MPLA had further secured its position and in February 1976, a month after the Extraordinary Assembly session, the OAU Council, by a simple majority, decided to accept Angola as the 47th member of the Organization. Once again diplomatic stalemate was resolved quite easily by military victory.

A Critical Assessment:

An analysis of the OAU's involvement in the Angolan Civil War shows that the following OAU organs were involved at different stages of the conflict management: the ALC, the Defence Commission, the Secretary General, the Council and the Assembly.⁵⁷ In the beginning, the ALC, though continually shifting its stand, used to help the liberation movements - both materially and morally. During that period, there was a goodwill mission from OAU - trying to reconcile the warring factions, but failing that, it decided to recommend exclusive recognition of the FNLA. But with the strengthening of the MPLA, from the mid-sixties the ALC usually favoured the MPLA. In 1968, it was recognised and was

57. The role of other African statesmen was also significant - though largely irrelevant for the final outcome of the conflict, considering that MPLA won a military victory. To give one example, the Nakuru agreement was reached largely through the efforts of President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, though under the OAU auspices.

supplied with arms procured by the ALC. But once the Civil War intensified and massive external arms and armaments came - the ALC had very little role to play. The Defence Commission's involvement - though technically correct - was meaningless. Because, by the time the Defence Commission was asked to form a peace-keeping force to maintain law and order in Angola and help the Government of Unity - the situation was well out of hand with the physical presence of South African, Cuban troops and massive influx of arms from outside sources. The Secretary General, apart from reiterating the OAU's stand of government of unity - generally maintained a low profile.- OAU Council's role of the conflict management process was minimal. Owing to the magnitude and nature of the problem it could not take any initiative.

With the advantage of hindsight one can say that OAU Assembly's effectiveness was curbed by the following factors in order of their importance: (a) the attitude of the warring faction towards the OAU (which invariably was influenced by their African and non-African backers); (b) the sharp division among the OAU members (the external influence and the internationalization of the conflict is also involved here) and (c) the role of the OAU Chairman, President Idi Amin of Uganda. (a) The attitude of the three liberation movements to the OAU was largely negative as evident from the almost cavalier manner in which the

invitations to attend OAU Summits were treated. From the beginning, owing to their insurmountable differences, they were bent on military solutions. OAU was used by all three of them as long as it fitted into their scheme of things. It was clear to them once they consolidate their position - with the help of arms from any quarter they could muster - recognition by OAU would follow. This was confirmed by subsequent events. Unlike some other conflicts in Africa, there was no inducement by the backers of the liberation movements to make use of the OAU conflict management machinery, though formal declarations to mark adherence to OAU principles were made frequently. (b) The sharp division among OAU members was a reflection of the interpretations of the national interest of African countries, the growing internationalization of the conflict with consequent pressure (both covert and overt)⁵⁸ on African countries to toe a particular line. (c) The conflict management efforts were largely in the hands of Idi Amin from July 1975, because of his being the

58. Two out of numerous examples can be given. On November 3, Amin received a message from the Soviet Union asking him to go along with the Soviet position by recognizing MPLA government. Consequently, Amin asked the Soviet Ambassador to leave and the diplomatic relations were cut off, though only for a week. The United States on the eve of the Extraordinary Assembly Conference at Addis Ababa, sent Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, William Schaufele on an African tour to stop the recognition of the MPLA government. At the Extraordinary Summit, President Murtala Mohammed of Nigeria criticised the USA and its President for the circular letter he had sent to African Heads of State.

host to the 13th Summit. Considering that the period from mid 1975 to the early 1976 was the most crucial, Amin's role was detrimental to the OAU efforts. As one commentator wrote, "Amin's idiosyncratic role as the Chairman was an important contributory factor to the failure of OAU policy".⁵⁹ There was belief in many quarters (with justification) that Amin's policy was an extension of Mobutu of Zaire's policy. Amin's pronouncements and actions were sometimes quite unbecoming of the 'current spokesman of Africa'.⁶⁰

4. The Western Sahara Conflict (1976-):

As one of the two major conflicts which threaten the very existence of the Organization,⁶¹ today the war of attrition in Western Sahara raises some basic questions about the commitment and sincerity of the African states to African unity. When we take into account the fact that

59. Legum, ACR 75-76, n.45, p.A22. But A.J. Klinghoffer provides another point of view. He comes to the conclusion that 'Amin handled the OAU Chairmanship rather properly on most occasions', n.45, pp.68-71.

60. Amin's action in receiving the Cabindan 'President' Luis Franque, despite protests by all the three movements, did nothing to enhance his already low credibility for the Angolans. As late as in November 1975, he addressed a letter to President Ngouabi of Congo saying him that he might wish to send Uganda troops to resist South Africa and that he would wish them to pass through Congo. As Congo was pro-MPLA (it was a conduit for Soviet and Cuban arms) Ngouabi's reaction was hostile, he demanded the resignation of Amin from OAU Chairmanship.

61. The other being the conflict in Chad.

nineteen countries are prepared to leave the Organization on this issue only,⁶² the study of this seemingly intractable problem becomes imperative.

Genesis:

The conflict is a result of the incompatible claims by Morocco and the Polisario⁶³ front. The causes can broadly be divided into four (a) the desire by nomadic Saharawi's to settle down,⁶⁴ (b) the 'absentee' nature of Spanish colonialism,⁶⁵ (c) the uncertain boundaries⁶⁶ and last but not the least (d) the territorial claims of Morocco.⁶⁷

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62. As has been threatened from time to time by Morocco and its allies. The nineteen have generally struck together and walked out when ever SADR representative has taken the seat in the Council or any other OAU forum.
 63. Frente Popular Para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y Rio de Oro established in 1973. Though the war is between Morocco and Polisario, at the beginning Mauritania was also claiming a part of the Spanish Western Sahara and was a party in the conflict till August 1979.
 64. Due mainly to the discovery of estimated 10 billion tons of high grade phosphate a majority of Saharains decided to settle down. For example, the number of Saharais in these main towns (El-Ayoun, Smara and Villa Cisneros trebled between 1967 and 1974.
 65. Owing mostly to the hostile climate and uninhabited area, Spain remained entrenched in the West. Though in 1967, a territorial Dilemma was formed, it had purely consultative role and was not representative in character.
 66. Though Spanish Sahara was governed on a separate administrative unit as late as in 1958, there was no demarcation of boundary with Morocco. This was a direct outcome of the nature of Spanish colonialism.
 67. In 1956, Morocco got independence. Immediately there was talk by Istiqlal leader Allal-al-Fassi of 'Greater Morocco' comprising of portions of Algeria, Mali, the whole of Mauritania, and western Sahara. As Tony Hodges
...contd.

Added to these is the factor of the rise of Saharawi nationalism⁶⁸ which had taken the form of armed struggle.

The immediate origins of the Western Sahara conflict can be traced back to 1974 when the Spanish government decided to lay the ground-work for Spain's withdrawal from the territory. The Djemaa (consultative body) was to be converted into a legislative assembly to prepare the people for self-government and the final referendum to be held under UN auspices during the first half of 1975. However, Spain had not taken into account Morocco who was determined, due mainly to domestic reasons,⁶⁹ to lay claim to the territory. Morocco rejected the UN held referendum plan and in December 1974 successfully persuaded the UN to urge

67. contd.,.

succintly puts it, 'King Mohammed V could not afford to allow the main nationalist party to outstrip the monarchy in nationalistic fervour during the delicate post-independence period when the monarchy was still consolidating its power', n.64, p.88.

68. According to V. Thompson and R. Adloff, Saharawi nationalism has nothing to do with nationalist movements of other neighbouring countries. According to them, Saharawi nationalism derives directly from the discovery of Western Sahara's mineral resources. n.64, p.17. While there is an element of truth in it, the Saharawis transparent commitment to independence, and their dedication to their cause cannot be underemphasised. As of present a strong Saharawi nationalism definitely exists.

69. In 1974, by launching a patriotic crusade to recover the 'Moroccan Sahara' he aroused enormous enthusiasm among the people and also out maneuvred the opposition. Thereby he re-established his regime which had been rocked by crises - among them two abortive coup attempts - in the early 1970s.

Spain to postpone the referendum while the Saharan dispute was examined by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague. Meanwhile, the other contender Mauritania was pacified by striking a secret deal (with Morocco), by which Western Sahara would be partitioned. To put pressure on Spain, its fishing boats were harassed and dormant claims to two Spanish enclaves on the Mediterranean Coast was revived. Spain wilted under these pressures and postponed the referendum - (the idea was abandoned subsequently). For a while Spain toyed with the idea of handing over power to Polisario.⁷⁰ However, an ambiguous ICJ advisory opinion⁷¹ changed all that and it triggered off

70. On 9 September 1975, the Spanish Foreign Minister, Pedro Cortina Mauri secretly met El-Ouali, the Polisario leader, to discuss the transfer of power. Before that Polisario had stopped guerilla attacks and the two sides had exchanged prisoners.

71. ICJ gave its advisory opinion on two questions:
(1) Was Western Sahara at the time of colonization by Spain a territory belonging to no one (terra nullius)?
(2) What were the legal ties between this territory and Morocco and Mauritania? In ICJ's opinion, the territory had not been terra nullius. It was inhabited by peoples which, if nomadic, were socially and politically organized in tribes and under chiefs competent to represent them. As for the second question, the answer was that there was no tie of sovereignty of Mauritania or Morocco over Western Sahara. But one sentence mentioned, "...they (the information before the court) are in accord in providing indications of a legal tie of allegiance between the Sultan (of Morocco) and some, though only some, of the tribes of the territory, and in providing indications of some display of Sultan's authority or influence with respect to those tribes". Though the court said that it found no legal ties which may affect the principle of self-determination for the people of the territory, the sentence recognising some kind of ties with Morocco was used to its advantage by Morocco.

the 'Green March'.⁷² The March, justifiably called a political masterstroke had military dimensions as well. There were fears of military confrontation between Spain and Morocco (whose 'Green Marchers' were being defended by regular troops) which Spain was attempting to avoid at any cost.⁷³ In these circumstances, contrary to the UN resolutions, Madrid Accord was signed on 14 November 1975. In effect it handed over Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania. Both countries were allowed to send thousands of troops into the territory who took the place of the evacuating Spanish troops. The Djemaa, a rubber stamp body of Morocco, endorsed the accord. United Nations, on its part, adopted two rival resolutions on Western Sahara, one pro-Algerian (which supported self determination by Saharans) and the other relatively pro-Moroccan (it did not mention Polisario but mentioned self-determination.)⁷⁴ However, United Nations provided a set back to Morocco's attempt to legitimize the occupation of Western of Sahara when on the basis of the report of the UN observer Olof Rydbeck, the Secretary General rejected

72. The alacrity with which the plan for the Green March was announced, suggests that it was a well thought out action decided much in advance.

73. In the domestic sphere, Spain was at a critical juncture. General Franco was dying and there was uncertainty as to what kind of regime would take over. The shadow of the military was looming large.

74. For the text of the resolutions, see the Yearbook of the United Nations (28) 1975 (NY, 1977), pp.189-92.

rejected Moroccan and Mauritanian requests to send UN observers to the 26 February meeting of the Djenna. Finally, in a move reminiscent of the colonial era, Western Sahara was formally partitioned by Morocco and Mauritania on 14 April 1976. Morocco got two-thirds of the territory (including the phosphate rich area) and Mauritania one-third. Meanwhile, the Saharawi people proclaimed their own government the Saharan (or Saharawi) Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on 27 February 1976.

From the beginning, Polisario singled out Mauritania as the 'weak link' in the chain and concentrated its attack on Mauritania. On two occasions, Polisario kataeb (units) were able to reach the outskirts of the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott and shelling the Presidential palace. The country, clearly, was in no position to sustain the war. The production in iron mining industry virtually came to halt. Despite French and Moroccan military help, the condition of Mauritania was becoming desperate.⁷⁵ In July 1978, armed forces seized power toppling the government of Ould Daddah and after some hesitation, the new government decided to 'withdraw from the unjust war in Western Sahara' as a result of an agreement with Polisario. In a secret addendum Mauritania undertook

75. To the cost of war were added devastating drought, and a drastic deterioration in the terms of trade due to spiralling oil prices and the slump in world demand for iron. By April 1978, the total public external debt had climbed to \$71 million or equivalent to a whopping 170% of the country's GNP.

to hand over the territory held by it to Polisario.⁷⁶ Thus from July 1978, it has been a direct fight between Algerian supported Polisario and the Moroccan troops. Though by dint of their knowledge and adaptability to local conditions, their bravery and discipline, the Polisario guerrillas have won many spectacular victories, the war drags on and has reached a stalemate. With superior arms (unmistakable air superiority and easier access to sophisticated arms) and the help of the 'wall',⁷⁷ the Moroccans have entrenched themselves and any chance of total Polisario victory remains remote.

OAU and the conflict:

Till 1976, OAU's involvement in the conflict was peripheral. But with the coming into existence of SADR and its application for membership, a controversy has arisen. At the OAU Council meeting at Addis Ababa in February 1976, the member states were split on this issue. Algeria called for recognition, Morocco and Mauritania both threatened to withdraw from the OAU if Polisario was given the status of OAU liberation movement.⁷⁸ The Council resolved the

76. Though it could not be implemented because Moroccan troops seized control of the territory.

77. Extending for 250 miles from the strategic pass through Zivi mountains to the south of Boujdour on the Atlantic Coast.

78. Seventeen voted in favour, nine opposed and twenty-one abstained.

matter by leaving it to each OAU member state to recognise Polisario or not, as it chose. The Western Sahara issue was opened again in the 13th Assembly Meeting in Mauritius, Benin, in a draft resolution, in the preceding Council Meeting strongly urged OAU to confirm 'the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and national independence' among other things. After an acrimonious debate, the resolution was adopted in the Council but the Assembly chose to exclude it from the resolutions endorsed by it, undoubtedly under pressure from Morocco and its allies. The Assembly adopted a resolution in which it decided to 'hold an extraordinary session at Summit level with the participation of the people of Western Sahara with a view to finding a lasting and just solution to the problem of Western Sahara'. No date was mentioned and at the time of writing there is very little hope of such a Summit being convened.⁸⁰ In the Libreville Summit, this issue was shelved though hope was expressed that the Extraordinary meeting of the Assembly would resolve the conflict.

The growing importance and seriousness of the conflict was recognized when a different approach was adopted at the fifteenth summit of the OAU, held in Khartoum, Sudan, in July 1978. The Summit, by resolution⁸¹ commissioned the

80. The twin risks of huge financial expenditure and failure act as deterrents.

81. For a text of the resolution, see ACR 1978-79, pp.C35-36.

Sudanese President Jaafar Numeiri, the Chairman of the OAU in 1978-79, to form an ad hoc committee of 'wise men' to seek a solution to the Sahara conflict compatible with the right of self-determination.⁸² The report of the Wise men's Committee, prepared after the sub committee (comprising of Nigeria and Mali) visited Mauritania, Algeria and Morocco, called for an immediate and general ceasefire in the Sahara and recommended the exercise of the right of self-determination by the Saharawi population through a free and general referendum enabling them to choose one of the two following options: (i) total independence, (ii) maintenance of the status quo. This report was endorsed by the July 1979 OAU summit in Monrovia. Amid considerable consternation, several delegations led by those from Morocco and Senegal walked out of the OAU summit. Morocco refused to recognise the findings of the Wise men's Committee.

The next stage was the OAU Freetown Summit in July 1980. By that time, twenty six out of fifty members of the OAU had recognised SADR and naturally the question of admitting

82. The Wise men's Committee was composed of the Heads of State of Mali, Guinea, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Tanzania and was chaired by Sudan. The composition of the Committee was contested by both sides. Morocco objecting to Mali and Tanzania (especially after Tanzanian recognition for SADR in November 1978) and Algeria (Polisario's ally) to the Sudanese President for his pro-Moroccan sympathies. Ivory Coast did not participate. Thus the essential work of the Committee was carried on by Mali and Nigeria.

SADR to the OAU came up. A heated debate on this question ensued featuring exchanges between the delegations from Morocco and Mozambique. Morocco argued that the SADR was neither independent nor sovereign, two attributes of a state required by the OAU Charter (Art.27). Rabat insisted that this question of the Charter's interpretation required a two-thirds majority vote according to Rule 28 of the 'Rules of Procedure of the Assembly'. However, Mozambique invoked Art.28 of the Charter according to which a simple majority is needed for the admission of a new member. The example of Guinea Bissau was given which became a member in September 1973 a full year before Portugal's withdrawal from the country. Faced with a Moroccan threat to quit OAU with its allies, a Nigerian compromise resolution was accepted which referred the admission issue and the whole western Saharan issue to the OAU's Wisemen's Committee set up by the Khartoum Summit in 1978. The resolution noted Morocco's willingness to talk to 'all interested parties' in the Sahara dispute and it called for the wisemen's Committee to meet in Freetown within three months. The meeting which was held in Freetown (known as Freetown II) was not attended by King Hassan.⁸³ Though fourteen 'interested

83. Morocco questioned the 'neutrality' of the Committee and cited Sierra Leone's recognition of SADR only a week before the Freetown Summit as an example. Further, King Hassan had put forward the plea that he would attend 'if procedural issues gave way to substantive discussions'. Apparently they did not.

parties' presented their cases, the refusal by the Moroccans to attend joint sessions with Polisario meant that no progress could be made. The Committee before dissolving itself gave a six point peace plan in which the main two recommendations were (a) ceasefire within three months to be enforced by UN peace-keeping forces, and (b) a referendum to be organized by the OAU with UN assistance. The peace plan was referred to the OAU for consideration at its 1981 Summit meeting.

Nairobi Summit in late June 1981 saw an apparent thaw in Moroccan stand. In a carefully worded address to the OAU Heads of State and Government, Hassan offered to hold what he termed as a 'controlled referendum' in the Sahara that would take into account Morocco's historical rights to the territory. For the first time Morocco accepted the idea of any kind of referendum, previously they were rejecting it, and also for the first time Morocco accepted the term 'self-determination'. The Nairobi Summit appointed an Implementation Committee⁸⁴ to 'take, with the participation of the United Nations, all necessary measures to guarantee the exercise of a general and regular referendum of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara'. Despite holding two sessions, both Nairobi, on 24-26 August

84. Composed of the Presidents of Kenya, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Tanzania.

1981, and 8-9 February 1982, this Committee was unable to make any real progress towards organising a referendum or even arranging a preliminary cease-fire primarily because of Morocco's flat refusal to recognise Polisario as its adversary. The third meeting in Nairobi (known as Nairobi III) decided to appoint a Commissioner, with the consent of the parties, to head the interim administration. The Moroccan administration was asked to cooperate with this administration. However, Nairobi III also failed to name the warring parties, though President Moi, the Chairman of the OAU and of the Implementation Committee, said, "We know who the parties are".⁸⁵

In February 1982 another development took place which had far reaching consequences for the nineteen year old organisation. At the annual meeting of the OAU Council in Addis Ababa, OAU Secretary General Edem Kodjo of Togo seated the SADR delegation for the first time. Kodjo termed his action as 'administrative decision' based on formal notification by a majority of OAU members of their recognition of the SADR. Predictably, Morocco walked out. But, the seriousness of OAU's predicament became manifest in the summer of 1982 when the two-thirds quorum (34 states) for convening a summit was lacking, primarily because of

85. President Moi's statement on 9 February 1982, cited in Financial Times (London), 11 February, 1982.

the SADR issue.⁸⁶ It was not until 8-12 June 1983, after a change in venue to Addis Ababa and the staying away of SADR ('voluntarily and temporarily') that OAU could hold its Summit. The Summit passed a consensus resolution⁸⁷ naming, for the first time, Morocco and Polisario as the parties in the conflict and urging them to 'undertake direct negotiation' for 'a peaceful and fair referendum of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara under the auspices of the UN and the OAU'. Morocco and Polisario were urged to meet the Implementation Committee 'as soon as possible' so that the referendum could be held in six months before the end of 1983. However, despite a secret exploratory Morocco-Polisario meeting in the spring of 1983, the referendum, as envisaged by the OAU is unlikely. The war, in the meantime, continues.

A Critical Assessment:

The conflict in Western Sahara is a protracted one where the non-African big powers and the two super powers

86. Along with other countries' hostility to the African policy of Colonel Gaddafi of Libya particularly in Chad. This factor was stressed when the necessary quorum could not be mustered even after SADR decided 'voluntarily and temporarily' not to take its seat.

87. For a full text of the resolution, see Africa Research Bulletin: Political, Social and Cultural Series (Winter), pp.6856-6861.

are only indirectly involved.⁸⁸ Among the African countries, only Algeria and Libya are actively involved.⁸⁹ Though the involvements of non-African and African powers have contributed marginally to the course of the conflict, the deciding factor has been the national interest of Morocco and the 'national' interest of SADR.

Among the two, it has been Morocco which has thwarted OAU's conflict management efforts. In fact, Morocco's attitude has been to create a confusion between different forums of conflict management (OAU, UN, Non-Aligned Movement, NAM) and gain by it. Its attempt has been to restrict the consideration of the conflict to as small a forum as it can manage. In this respect, Morocco has used OAU as a red-herring to avoid embarrassments at

88. Among the two super powers, USSR has been circumspect in its relations with Polisario. It has yet not recognised SADR though it supports Polisario and their demand for self-determination. Even though Polisario fights mainly with Soviet arms no evidence of direct arms transfer is available. Algeria and Libya both of which use Soviet arms and support Polisario are most probably the suppliers. Economic interests of USSR in Morocco are considerable. USA and France supply arms to Morocco and among the two the more overt pressure is that of USA which values Morocco's position as a long time ally and its strategic position. For a discussion, see Tony Hodges, n.64, pp.111-14; John Danis, n.64, pp.114-127 and V. Thompson and R. Adloff, n.64, pp.296-301.

89. For elaboration, see J. Danis, *ibid.*, pp.34-38 and 108-114.

larger forums like the United Nation or NAM. A specific example can be given, in 1976-77 Morocco successfully exploited the OAU's plan for an extraordinary summit as a pretext to dissuade the UN General Assembly and the Non-Aligned Movement (at its Cbleabo Summit in August 1976) from taking positions on Western Sahara.⁹⁰ In the OAU itself, Morocco secure with the knowledge that it has got some diehard supporters, has tried, sometimes successfully, to gain diplomatic advantages. In the early phase of the conflict these advantages included obstruction of OAU's recognition to the Polisario as a liberation movement, in the later phase the attempt was to deny SADR from being seated in the Council or the Assembly and to prevent the resolutions adopted by the Council and Assembly from containing the name of Polisario as the legitimate representative of the Saharawi people or from having any reference to referendum. The method used for such diplomatic arm twisting ranged from questioning the neutrality of the constituents of ad hoc committees created for conflict management and walkouts in protests to threats to leave the organisation. Another weapon which was used by King Hassan to stave off an impending adoption of a near unanimous resolution against Morocco,

90. However, these two organizations subsequently have passed resolutions supporting Polisario, and the right of Saharawi people to self-determination as expressed through a general and impartial referendum.

was a promise of 'controlled referendum' at the Nairobi Summit. However, observers doubted the King's sincerity in the face of (i) his earlier pronouncements (on 24 June 1981, just two days before his speech at the Nairobi Summit King Hassan said on Moroccan television that Morocco would not renounce a single grain of this 'Moroccan' Sahara. There are other instances.) (ii) the domestic pressure in Morocco.⁹¹ As for the Polisario, though a little less recalcitrant than Morocco, it has also frequently rejected OAU resolutions.

Therefore, in spite of considerable 'forum' activity, 'operation' activities are virtually non-existence. This can be attributed to the attritive nature of the war and on the floors of OAU, the presence of a highly determined minority to defend Morocco. With no quick victories in sight on the military front and faced with a split, the conflict management by the OAU is likely to take a slow and tortuous course.

91. Examined in detail by Tony Hodges, "The Western Sahara: The Sixth Year of War" in Africa Contemporary Record 1980-81 (London, 1981), pp. A88-90.

5. The Civil War in Chad (1966-):

The ongoing war in Chad raises the ugly but familiar aspects of fratricidal war, external intervention both in the shape of African and non-African powers. The war which is older than the OAU itself, has divided the organisation to the verge of a split.

Genesis:

Samuel Decalo was absolutely right when he commented, "What Chad faces today, as at independence are the twin tasks of building a nation and a state."⁹² Chad is a classic case where independence was premature - in the sense that nationalism was absent there. Difference between the North and South regions have proved to be insurmountable. The North is predominantly Islamic and conservative whereas the South predominantly Christian and relatively progressive.⁹³

92. Samuel Decalo puts absence of representative structures, the disability of any one state apparatus to extend its influence to the peripheral regions among the reasons. "Regionalism, Political Decay and Civil Strife in Chad", in the Journal of African Studies, October 1980, p.23. For an account of the historical roots of the Chad conflict, see Rene Lamarchand, Current History (London), December 1981, pp.414-417.

93. In both the regions, animism remains the primary basis of spiritual life.

Though the North and South are different ethnically, they themselves are not homogeneous. They are a mosaic of tribes and languages.⁹⁴ Added to the diversity of ethnicity and tribal groupings, the nature of French colonialism also hampered the rise of nationalism. It has been seen, particularly in Africa, that colonialism by putting a wide area with diverse cultures, ethnic groups and tribes under one administration helps to bring about a sense of having something in common which over a period of time develops into nationalism. But in Chad where a posting in the colonial service was regarded as a demotion or for novices, the French administration was almost absent. The indirect rule meant that people were as divided as before. Following reforms in 1944-46, there was some political activity and parties were formed.⁹⁵ But they could not rise above their narrow loyalties and there was nothing like a national party.

94. Over 100 languages are spoken in Chad and there are at least twenty five tribal groupings. For a comprehensive account of the history of Chad, see R. Palmer, The Bornu, Sahara and Sudan (London, 1936).

95. In Chad, like many other developing countries, party affiliations change rapidly. There have been a multitude of parties from the mid nineteen forties. The two most important groupings were Parti Progressiste Tchadien (PPT) which won the election in 1957 and Front de Liberation National (Frolinat) an alliance formed in 1966.

In spite of all these, Chad was granted independence in 1960. Instead of following a policy of moderation to unify the country, the new President Tombalbaye chose to gag free opinion and dissolve all parties except his own Parti Progressiste Tchadien (PPT). Excesses in the North by Chadian troops worsened the situation. The extremely unpopular domestic policies of Tombalbaye, for example, 'authenticity' and the mass loan scheme hastened his down fall. General Felix Malloum took over as President of the Supreme Military Council (SMC). Front de Liberation National (Frolinat) formed in 1965 did not recognize this regime. Forces of a Frolinat leader Hissen Habre attacked the capital N'Djamena. Goukouni Oueddei, another Frolinat leader helped him. But the French troops intervened and as a result of consultations a government was formed with Habre as Prime Minister and Malloum as President. Habre's own forces Forces armees du Nord (FAN) were to be integrated into the Chadian national army Forces armees tchadiennes (FAT). However, it did not come about. Because of differences between Habre and Malloum, a civil war started again, this time the principle actors being Habre with FAN and Goukouni with Forces armees Populaires (FAP).

Attempts of Reconciliation and the Role of the OAU:

Meanwhile, attempts at national unity and formation of a government with representatives from all regions in the country failed despite two attempts at Kano in Nigeria (Kano I in March 1979 and Kano II in April 1979). Following the failure, FAN, FAP and FAT constituted another Gouvernement d'union nationale de transition (GUNT) which despite support from France was doomed to fail. The South refused to recognise it and the situation deteriorated as a result of Libyan backed offensive by forces of Kamougue and Ahmat Aeyt. Outside Africa also, GUNT failed to assert itself. The Lagos Conference sought to lessen the tension and was attended by a wide variety of forces in Chad. Held under the OAU auspices, it gave birth to the second GUNT, a result of the Lagos agreement. However, very soon the forces of Habre and Goukouni started to fight among themselves and various attempts at ceasefire failed. Two events, proved decisive for Goukouni. One was the evacuation of French troops by the middle of May 1980 and the help he got from Libya on the basis of a friendship treaty. By the end of 1980, Goukouni was firmly in control of the capital. The situation was again placed in the balance when a merger of Chad and Libya was announced in Tripoli on 6 January 1981. France reacted strongly as did other African countries who viewed this as the first step towards Gaddafi's dream of Jamshiriya - an Arab kingdom. Faced with the increasing

prospect of being deprived of the post of OAU Assembly's chairmanship, opposition from Goukouni and pledges of financial assistance from France and the USA for an Inter African Force (IAF) under the auspices of the OAU, Gadaffi decided to withdraw the Libyan troops from Chad.⁹⁶ Taking advantage of this withdrawal and the uncertainty about the mandate of the IAF, Habre's FAN took control of the capital in June 1982. As the matter stands today, despite French help Habre has not succeeded in extending his control over the whole of Chad, in the North Goukouni, with help from Libya, controls large portions of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti (BET). The South, inspite of a change of government, is far from peaceful and Habre's control there is not at all secure. Meanwhile, the war goes on with varying intensity and with active involvement of Libya on the side of Goukouni and France and the USA on the side of Habre.

OAU and the Conflict:

OAU came to the scene late,⁹⁷ though other bilateral negotiations, with the blessings of OAU if not on behalf of

96. Excluding the Aozou strip which Libya annexed in 1973. For Libya's role in Chad, see "Comments: France, Libya and Chad", World Today (London), October 1983, pp. 361-364, "Chad Strategic Tug of War", South (London) October 1983.

97. OAU's late entry was due to the nature of the conflict. Though the civil war started way back in 1966, the OAU Assembly could not address itself to the conflict because of the simple reason that it was not brought before it and with one President or the other providing some semblance of a government, in Chad. OAU could not by itself discuss an 'internal' affair.

OAU, were taking place. OAU first discussed the conflict in 1977 when Chad complained against aggression and military occupation by Libya of northern part of its territory. The Assembly, meeting in Libreville (Gabon), decided to set up a six nation commission⁹⁸ to report on the dispute. The next OAU summit, held in Khartoum in 1978, appointed a new ad hoc committee (Sudan, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria) to mediate in the conflict,⁹⁹ their efforts produced the first ceasefire between the Chad Government and the Frolinat, which was signed on 27 March 1978 at conference in Sheba and Benghazi. Though another interested party Libya, was actively associated with Sudan and Niger in securing this agreement, the ceasefire never took effect.

By the 1979 ordinary session of the Assembly in Monrovia, the situation in Chad had deteriorated further to the extent that without concrete claims to territorial occupation, none of the contending delegations was seated.

98. Comprising of Algeria, Senegal, Cameroon, Nigeria, Mozambique and Gabon.

99. The language of the resolution was vague and said that the neighbouring countries should be consulted to resolve the dispute. Though no new ad hoc committee was to be created as such, the interpretation by Sudan, the Chairman, was that the above mentioned countries constitute a new ad hoc committee superseding the existing one.

Thus Chad went unrepresented. The assembly gave broad support to the two Kano agreements. It concentrated on ending the fighting, encouraging the formation of an effective national government of unity, and eliminating both French and Libyan intervention. With Nigeria taking initiative in trying to implement OAU decisions, the Lagos agreement was signed on 21 August 1979.¹⁰⁰ It provided for (i) the formation of a transitional government of national unity (GUNT), (ii) freedom for political prisoners and elections to be organized within eighteen months, (iii) immediate withdrawal of French troops after the formation of the government, (iv) ceasefire (to a radius of 100 km.) and a halt to foreign interference along with the demilitarization of the capital, (v) dissolution of existing armed forces and the establishment of an integrated army. A three-nation African Peacekeeping Force (Guinea, Congo and Benin) was to be deployed. There was no mention of Libyan occupation of Aozou. But this first attempt at raising a peacekeeping force was a failure. Guinea and Benin announced that they could not meet the costs involved. Only Congo provided its quota. Of the OAU's promised contribution of \$6 million only, \$60,000 was raised.

100. In fact there were two Lagos conferences. The first, held in May was a failure because of the absence of all factions. For an elaboration of the Lagos conference see Colin Legum (ed.) ACR 1979-80, pp. B409-411.

By the time of the next Summit conference of the OAU, the Lagos accord had become a mere scrap of paper, though OAU persisted with its efforts at raising an Inter African force. The Assembly which adopted the council's resolution on Chad reaffirmed its support for the Lagos accord and for GUNT. No country was specifically named to contribute troops for the proposed force, though it requested 'African states in a position to provide forces at their own expense' to do so.¹⁰¹ It also decided that if OAV failed to raise the necessary funds for its peace-keeping efforts after a period of two months. UN Security Council was to be approached. OAU's sub-committee on Chad under the joint chairmanship of Sierra Leone and Togo succeeded, after two 'mini Summits' in having a ceasefire agreement signed, Habresigned after initially not cooperating with the sub-committee.¹⁰²

The Libyan intervention on behalf of Goukouni Oueddei and subsequent declaration of merger, hardened African attitudes and this was evident in the OAU. The Nairobi Summit in June 1981 did not mention Libya by name but called for the 'progressive replacement' of all foreign

101. For the text of the resolution, see CN/794 (XXXV), ACR 1980-81, p. 14.

102. However, he vowed to continue the struggle against the Libyans and declaring the GUNT as illegal.

troops, by a 'Pan African peacekeeping force'.¹⁰² President Goukouni (of GUNT), however, maintained that Libyan troops were there under the bilateral defense treaty of June 1980. But soon under pressure from OAU, individual African countries and France, Goukouni had to ask the Libyans to withdraw. Due to various reasons,¹⁰⁴ Libya complied and the evacuation took place in November 1981.

The OAU force began arriving from mid-November and by the end of the year, three thousand troops had arrived from three countries.¹⁰⁵ By mid-January 1982, the OAU force was encountering increasing logistic and financial difficulties. With an unclear mandate the force was only a bystander in the sudden spurt in the conflict when FAN under Hissen Habre sought to capture the capital. Oueddei naturally was worried and began talking of taking the help of 'friendly countries'. Under these circumstances, the OAU sub-committee on Chad meeting in Nairobi in February 1982 drafted a schedule for the resolution of the conflict and asked Goukouni to abide by it. It contained dates for ceasefire, conciliation talks, drafting of a constitution and an election under OAU auspices.

103. For the full text of the resolution, see Keesings, Contemporary Archives (London), vol. XXVII, p.31055.

104. For an elaboration, see 'Chad under the wing of OAU: A test for Pan African Force,' Review of International Affairs (Prague), December 20, 1981.

105. Though the original stipulation was for 10,000 troops from more than six countries.

However, the schedule could not be met in the face of non-compliance by both the parties and their preference for a military solution. Fighting intensified and N'Djamena fell to FAN in June. The countries contributing troops to the Force began recalling their troops, and by June 11, the Chairman of the OAU, President Moi of Kenya ordered the total withdrawal of OAU troops by June 30. Thus ended a unique experiment in conflict management in the OAU history.

A Critical Assessment:

The OAU's peacekeeping role in Chad is a landmark in OAU's history. But, though the idea in its totality was commendable, the way it was executed raises some questions which are relevant for future conflict management operations. The absence of the Defense Commission was sorely felt. The Defense Commission, which many felt would be entrusted with the military part of the conflict, was not revived. The operation was controlled by the sub-committee on Chad mandated by the Assembly. The sub-committee appointed Major General Geoffrey Ejiga as the Commander and it was Chairman of the sub-committee, President Moi who ordered the withdrawal of the OAU forces. The hastily put together mandate for the force was also a main drawback. It was not clear on the point how the force was to react if FAN attacked territory being 'policed' by the OAU force. Koukoumi's view

was that as the President of GUNT headed the legitimate government and as such OAU force was to help the national army defend the position held by it but in practice, the OAU forces remained neutral. A clear mandate spelling out the limitations of OAU's Force's sphere of activity would have cleared the uncertainty. Another difficulty was the financial burden. Without having the ability to sustain such a costly operation, OAU had to give indirect approval to the USA and France contributing towards the peacekeeping operations.¹⁰⁶ This curtailed OAU's freedom of action which was evident the way different contingents were withdrawn unilaterally without the OAU sub-committee on Chad making any declaration to that effect. Once Habre who was getting the support of France and USA, got the upper hand in the fighting and the fall of N'Djenena was imminent, the goals of France and USA were achieved and their commitment to provide the funds wavered. On the issue of withdrawal of troops, outside powers had a greater say than the OAU. Any future operation of this kind (if and when they occur) must raise enough funds or ensure regular flow of funds from sources preferably impartial, before committing the troops to any action.

106. The Senegal contingent in the OAU force was paid for by France, the USA committed \$12 m. for logistic help to Nigeria and Zaire. See, n.103, p.31678.

Concluding, it can be said that OAU's conflict management efforts in the Chad conflict were more or less similar to its experiences in civil wars which is marked by failure to condemn outside intervention by name (in most cases) appointment of sub-committees, attempts at persuasive diplomacy. (However, the sole and significant exception was the sending of peacekeeping forces). Considering all the limitations (structural, financial, etc.) one tends to agree with Julian Crandall Hollick 'that the OAU was full of good intentions but short of men and money'.¹⁰⁷

107. 'Civil War in Chad, 1978-82', World Today, July-August, 1982. p.302.

Chapter - IV

INSTITUTIONS, PRINCIPLES AND REFORMS

THE INSTITUTIONS

Commission of Mediation, Conciliation & Arbitration and the Defence Commission:

As we have already discussed, there was a defacto division at Addis Ababa between 'legal' and 'political' disputes and the legal disputes were to be handled by the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration. The practice has been somewhat different. As the matter stands today, the COMCA has quietly been replaced by an ad hoc Commission.¹ It was one of the first victims of the austerity programme started by the OAU² but that is

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1. In a significant resolution CAAG/ Dec.109 XIV, the Assembly meeting in Libreville in July 1977 decided to ask the Administrative Secretary General to study "as a matter of urgency" the procedures in the Protocol of the COMCA and 'submit recommendations for their modification to enable the Commission to react more promptly to crises'. The third part of the resolution decided to set up an ad hoc Commission 'as a temporary measure' consisting of CAR, Gabon, Gambia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Togo, Tunisia, Zaire and Zambia. For the full text of the resolution, see ACR 1977-78, p.C6.
 2. For an account of the financial crisis of the Organization, see J. Woroneff, Organizing African Unity (London, 1970), pp.634-36.

not the only cause, events leading to the replacement of the COMCA suggest a lack of political will and fear of curbs on the sovereignty of member states.³

The Defense Commission, another 'specialized commission' regarded as one of the few concessions to the radicals

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3. The account of the decline and replacement of the COMCA shows the reluctance of the states to curtail their flexibility of options and actions in any disputes. After five years of hard work, the COMCA formally came into existence on the basis of the Protocol signed on 21 July 1964. The first elections to the COMCA (of the key appointments of the President and two Vice-Presidents) were made at the second Assembly in Accra in October 1965. But without its own funds, the Commission took three more years to fill up the total of twenty one posts. It had to depend on the Council of Ministers for the grant of funds. Immediately afterwards, there was a rethinking. By the time of the Council meeting held in Addis Ababa in February and March 1970, Diallo Telli, the Secretary General was reporting that on the basis of observations and discussions at the Sixth Assembly in Addis Ababa in September 1969 it was 'more than likely' that the Commission would lose its permanent status from September 1970 and become an ad hoc Commission. By the time the budgetary session came round in 1971, the Commission had in fact been converted to an ad hoc organization. Diallo Telli was asked by the Council to 'find ways and means of disposing of all the assets' of the Commission. However, Nao Ekangaki, the Secretary General succeeding Telli reported in May 1973 to the tenth anniversary Assembly that the General Secretariat had received communications from a certain number of states requesting that the COMCA be purely and simply abolished, but naturally, this would require an amendment to the OAU Charter'. But with no amendment in the offing, the COMCA is in the deep freeze now with very few chances of coming out of it.

at Addis Ababa did not share any better fate. Though it survived intact the streamlining in the late 1960s, it has been dormant all these years. The Commission which managed to hold its first meeting after two years of formal existence (in February 1965) went into a frenzy of activity following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the white minority regime in Rhodesia on 11 November 1965. However, the lukewarm response⁴ to a system of continental defence again put the Commission in deep freeze, again to come out after the Portuguese attack on Guinea in 1970. From time to time, various Secretary Generals have tried to revive the Defence Commission, but without success.⁵ Finally, at the Libreville Summit in July 1977, the inert Defence Commission was superseded by a new ten-member ad hoc Defence Committee composed of Togo, Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Cameroon, Uganda, Lesotho, Liberia, Tanzania and Egypt. But it was not clear if the ad hoc Defence Committee

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4. ²² Malawi, the Pariah of Africa, was downright hostile to the idea and ridiculed it. This African country is openly friendly to South Africa.
 5. In 1970, in his report to the Council, the Secretary General Diallo Telli put forward the idea as did William Eteki in 1977.
 6. Most probably, to avoid the hassles and the procedural wrangles of amending the Charter, nothing specific was mentioned about replacing the Defence Commission. So, from a legal point of view, the Defence Commission still exists.

was to deal with defence matters arising from time to time or only with the contingency arising out of Rhodesia's threat to front line states. The absence of a Defense Commission was sorely felt in 1981 when OAU decided to undertake peacekeeping operations in Chad.⁷ Though various countries have raised the issue of the Defense Commission, nothing more has been done to reactivate it.

The Secretariat:

The General Secretariat with the Administrative Secretary General as its head has had a mixed record. On the plus side, the Secretary General, though not asked by the Charter, sits in all the meetings of the Council and Assembly⁸ and has the option to attend the meeting of other bodies. The Assembly and the Council generally entrust him with tasks which go much beyond the formal duties under the Charter. For example, in the 1977 Assembly Conference in Libreville, he was charged 'to take as an interim measure and as a regular procedure, every necessary step to carry out investigation into all cases of conflict which could, in his opinion, endanger peace and security in Africa and submit without delay report on his findings to the current

7. Hugh Manning quoting an International Peace Academy (IPA) Conference report points out, "...in Chad OAU took an intolerable time to act, the decision in principle had to be taken at the heads of Government level and sent back through the Chiefs of Staff and Ministers of Defense to their staffs and then recommendations came back to Heads of Governments of OAU'. Hugh Manning, 'Life belt for Africa: The DAU in the 1933' The World Today (London) April 1981, p.312.

8. The Charter provisions in this regard are discussed in Ch.II

Chairman...⁹ This resolution gives the Secretary General powers, very much akin to that of the UN Secretary General under Article 99 of the UN Charter.

However, if the Assembly was responsible for an increase in the Secretary General's powers, it was also quick to censure him, as happened in the case of Telli in 1966 Assembly Conference and with Ekangaki in 1974 on the Lonrho affair¹⁰ (which eventually led to his resignation). Recently, in 1982, the Secretary General Edem Kodjo faced criticisms and even demands for his resignation for admitting SADR as the fifty first member of the Organization. Idiosyncratic characteristics also have affected the role of the Secretary General in conflict management. Some of them, notably Diallo Telli, favoured a broad interpretation of the Charter provisions regarding the role of the Secretary General but some like Ekangaki favoured a more conservative interpretation. One factor adversely affecting the overall efficiency of the Secretariat, including its conflict management potential, is the infighting in the Secretariat. This matter was so serious that it found a place in the

9. ACR 1977-78, p.C6, emphasis added.

10. A detailed account is given in LONRHO - Portrait of a Multinational by Cronje, Ling and Cronje (London, 1976), especially Chapter 10, 'The Commanding Heights'.

Secretary General's report in 1974. As the matter stands today, in the absence of Charter provisions and in the presence of a predominant Chairman of the Assembly, the role of the Secretary General in conflict management is limited. But it is not meaningless as evident from the seriousness with which the election of a new Secretary General is undertaken.¹¹

The Council of Ministers:

The Council of Ministers, the 'executive' branch of the organization, is empowered by the Charter to hold 'extraordinary' sessions apart from the two regular sessions provided. It has been the experience that the extraordinary sessions usually are convened to deal with conflict between member states.¹² In the first fourteen years of the organization's existence, there were ten extraordinary sessions, making the Council one of the most active organs of the

11. In the 19th Summit at Addis Ababa, a new Administrative Secretary General could not be elected inspite of twenty rounds of voting. None of the candidates got the required 2/3rd majority.

12. With one exception. The 11th extraordinary session of the Council was held in Kinshasa in December 1976 to consider economic problems, namely, the economic operation between African states and their economic relations with the industrialized countries.

Organization. Its usual practice of dealing with a conflict was to hear the parties involved, draft resolutions reflecting the consensus of the members and in most cases appoint a committee to carry out whatever practical action was indicated. It prepared resolutions on the same topic for submission to the Assembly it need be, and always gave directives to the General Secretariat and other institutions, when action on their part was deemed necessary. However, due to obvious reasons, it falls short of 'implementing the decision of the Assembly'.

An analysis of the working of the Council would show that it was very active in the early years of its existence, during the first year, the Council met three times in ordinary session and twice in extraordinary session. Algeria-Morocco conflict, the conflict between Somalia and its neighbours and the mutinies in Tanganyika were some of the problems discussed.¹³ However, in 1965 the Council's dynamism received a set back, in the form of rebuff from the Assembly.¹⁴

13. The cause for the obvious radical posture (as compared to Assembly) of the Foreign Ministers, who constitute the Council, according to Woronoff was their comparative youth and because they were not directly involved in any action. n.2, p.165.

14. Concerning breaking off diplomatic relations with Britain if it would not crush rebellion in Southern Rhodesia within ten days. This strong resolution was a direct off-shoot of the UDI by the minority regime in November 1965.

The Council came under fire again in 1967 because of its adoption of a particularly harsh resolution against Israel following the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East. The Assembly, which did not wish to commit the Organisation to such an extent in the conflict, was embarrassed and at the 1967 Algiers Assembly decided that all Council resolutions had to be officially approved by the Assembly, though no amendment to the Charter was undertaken. After 1967, the Council has been more circumspect and cautious, sometimes to an extent of provoking observers to accuse it of 'passing the buck' to the Assembly. Particularly, in the case of conflict situation where the division among the member states is deep, the Ministers, often without mandate from their heads of government, decide to defer and refer the matter to the Assembly. The personalized decision making process in most African countries and the concentration of power in the hands of only one person, generally the Head of State and Government, is the most likely reason.¹⁵ Thus the Nigerian Civil War was not even considered by the Council nor it included in the agenda of the next summit in Kinshasa.

15. For elaboration, see Chapter I.

In the final analysis recognising the contributions of the Council in conflict management, the following limitations have to be pointed out: (i) the general constraints which apply to all organs;¹⁶ (ii) the Council's subordinate position as mentioned by the Charter and made clearer by the 1967 resolution of the Assembly. As recent trends suggest the Council has acted, in case of conflicts, as a conduit. It has deliberated on them without really aiming to take decisions. Its aim has been to put the issues involved, clearly before the Assembly, in some cases suggesting proposed course of action. Non-controversial resolutions like calling for a ceasefire and calling on the disputants not to do anything which might hamper mediations have been passed. Ad hoc committees have been appointed, wherever there have been a consensus.¹⁷ Undoubtedly, it has influenced the Assembly without being instrumental to it for decision-making.

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government:

The one organ which has enhanced its powers at the expense of the other organs has been the Assembly. We have already discussed how in 1967, an overenthusiastic council

16. The binding nature of Council resolution is very doubtful, even though adopted by consensus.

17. In many cases, the tension has decreased by the very presence of such a sub-committee.

was put in its place, we have seen how the Protocol for the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration was replaced by another ad-hoc committee of Heads of State. Further, it is not the Administrative Secretary General who is the main spokesman for the Organization but the current Chairman of the Assembly.¹⁸ All this has led outside observers to attach much, often too much, significance to a regular event like the annual summit of the OAU (the Conference of Assembly) one writer comments, "Perhaps there is no better barometer with which to assess the health of the OAU than attendance records for the Summit meeting..."¹⁹ Identifying the organization with one organ, however powerful the organ may be, has its shortcomings too. Thus a split in the said organ, manifested by the inability to convene, may be interpreted as the death of the organization as a whole, notwithstanding other successful organs and the amount of good work being done by them. This is exactly what has happened to the OAU. In 1982, despite two attempts

18. As Cervanka and Legum pointed out, many of the Foreign Ministers and Heads of State and Government thought that Diallo Telli had begun to behave like an African Dag Hammarskjold. So they preferred to entrust important OAU diplomatic negotiations to one of their own number, hence the accumulation of duties by the office of the current Chairman, in 'OAU in 1978' ACR 1978-79, p.A30.

19. 'The Organization of African Unity', Claud E. Welch, Jr., in Helen Kitchen (ed.), Africa: From Mystery to Mass (Massachusetts, 1976), p.200.

it was unable to meet for the Summit and the very existence of the organization was in doubt; in 1983 it was able to meet after a two-day delay. There was a collective sigh of relief all around.

But this centralisation of power does not come as a surprise. It is a reflection of the internal situation in almost all African countries. An authoritarian (in some cases totalitarian) leader is not supposed to behave like a liberal democrat once he comes to attend OAU meetings, delegation of authority is rare in Africa, and OAU is no exception. In conflict management which often involves questions affecting national interest of different countries or the survival of the leader, the delegation of authority is even less. There is another reason for the powers of the Assembly which we have already discussed, namely, the Charter provisions making it the supreme organ of the organization.

In the face of the present conflicts threatening the very existence of the Organization, there has been much soul searching about the effectiveness of the Assembly. The Assembly, even expressing the 'collective will' of the continent, has been defied openly. In spite of support by a majority of the members, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) cannot take its place in the organization, nor does the Somali Government renounce its irredentist policy (though almost all members are against that policy).

The resolutions of the Assembly are not legally binding and there is no provision for sanctions against on expulsion of a member defying the resolution. Malawi maintaining diplomatic and other links with South Africa is an example. The moral weight of the resolutions and fear of diplomatic loss of face are the only factors standing between an absolute reign of state sovereignty and a token respect for the Organisation. And this particular state of affairs is likely to continue.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:

Over the years some important principles of conflict management have emerged. Though it would be a mistake to say that they 'govern' conflict management, it is manifestly clear that they quite obviously occupy a key position. They are (1) Try OAU first; (2) To respect boundaries inherited at the time of independence and (3) To support the legitimate government against the secessionists in case of a civil war; (4) Condemnation of foreign intervention. Though these four principles do not exhaust all the principles followed by the OAU in conflict management, they are the most important ones.

Try OAU First:

This principle is not explicitly specified in the Charter, but the presence of the provisions for an elaborate conflict management machinery makes this self-evident. This principle was followed when OAU dealt with the first conflict coming before it. The Algerian Moroccan conflict was a test case for the newly formed organization; the leaders knew that the attention of the world was riveted on them and failure to find a solution would seriously undermine the prestige of the organization. Experience shows that this theme was constantly harped upon by the mediators, notably Emperor of Ethiopia and the President of Mali. Morocco, however, was extremely reluctant to come before the OAU.²⁰ It sent intimations to the Secretary General of the UN and explored possibilities for convening the Security Council. But a combined effort by the UN, the African countries and Morocco's allies, France and USA, finally persuaded Morocco to try the OAU with the influence of the latter two proving to be decisive. Thus OAU was saved from a sure embarrassment. Subsequently, the matter was settled bilaterally after OAU had eased the tension by a ceasefire. Significant to note is that the UN, without

20. The causes are discussed in Chapter III under the sub-title 'Algeria-Morocco'.

totally renouncing its right of dealing with the conflict, recognized the primacy of OAU in conflict management in the continent.

'Try OAU principle' was made more explicit by a resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers meeting in an extraordinary session at Dar-es-Salaam in February 1964.²¹ This was a response to Somalia's attempt to siege the security council of the UN of its dispute with Ethiopia. Somalia's attempts stem primarily from its conviction that due to its own views on irrendentism and colonial boundaries, OAU would fail to understand its case. But due largely to an appeal by the Secretary General of the United Nations and support thereto by the Soviet Union (Somalia's friend), Somalia was persuaded to put the matter before the OAU. Even after the OAU was siezed of the matter, Somalia continued to send messages on developments to the President of the Security Council. It was keeping all its options open.

In the Rwanda Burundi conflict of December 1963, it was the UN Secretary General who sent his personal

21. OAU Council of Ministers resolution ECN/Res.3(11), 15 February 1964 quoted by B. Andemicael, Peaceful Settlement among African States: Roles of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (UNITAR, NY, 1972), p.9. Another resolution in the similar vein was passed at the time of Algeria-Morocco conflict too.

representative to attempt mediation, though the Burundi government had requested both the UN and OAU Secretaries General. This was done only after it was clear that OAU was in no position to play a significant role because of its preoccupation with the Algeria-Morocco conflict and its lack of resources.²² United Nations' commitment to OAU's first principle was demonstrated when in the third phase of the Rwanda Burundi conflict²³ (1966) the OAU played a significant role while the UN remained in the background. In the Congo Civil War (1964-68) this principle was reaffirmed. UN stepped in when OAU itself favoured that the matter should go to it. But subsequently, after the discussion on this conflict the Security Council adopted a resolution recognising, in unequivocal terms, the primacy of the OAU in managing conflicts in Africa.²⁴ The Nigerian Civil War (1967-70) saw both the OAU and the UN helpless to intervene in what Nigeria regarded as its internal affair.

22. The Secretary General explained that it was 'clearly the duty of the UN, and therefore (his) duty to be as helpful as possible in situations of this kind'. UN Press Release SG/SN/5, 7 February 1964, *ibid.*, p.18.

23. For a comprehensive account of the Rwanda-Burundi relations, see R. Lemarchand, Rwanda and Burundi (N.Y., Praeger, 1970).

24. See Andemicael, n.21, p.25, for the resolution.

However, the Secretary General of the UN had decided to encourage the OAU to assist in the quest for a peaceful settlement²⁵ after exploring possibilities for exercising his good office.²⁶ 'Try OAU First' principle was followed with high degrees of success in subsequent conflicts like those between Tanzania and Uganda in 1973 and 1978-79; Angolan Civil War; Western Saharan conflict and the conflict in Chad.

An analysis of the 'Try OAU First' principle shows that often it is mentioned in relation to the UN, the reason being the overlapping nature of the membership of the two organizations. However, early in the life of the OAU, the UN made its stand clear, in fact it was at the Security Council that the principle crystallized.²⁷ As discussed earlier, the attitude of big and super powers has also contributed towards strengthening this principle. But to think that it has become a cardinal rule which is never violated, would be a travesty of truth. The nature of the intra-regional conflicts in Africa and the attitude taken by parties to the OAU efforts at conflict management are

25. Speaking before the fifth session of the OAU Assembly, he stated that 'the OAU should be the most appropriate instrument for the promotion of peace in Nigeria'.

26. UN Press Release SG/SM/1531, 16 September 1971, p.11. Quoted by Andemichael, n.21, p.35.

27. Ibid., p.46. For a critical analysis of the principle vis-a-vis UN, see pp.45-50 of the same book.

the two primary reasons. In Africa, as in other parts of the world, sometimes conflicts are influenced by outside powers. As such any attempt to manage the conflict must take into account these actors who are not members of the OAU, in which case, UN with its near universal membership becomes the appropriate forum to discuss the conflict and if possible, persuade the members involved to show restraint. OAU has been pragmatic enough to realize this and this explains why conflicts have been concurrently taken up by the UN and the OAU. In the delicate task of conflict management, the OAU or the UN have not stood in each other's way. The attitude of the parties as determined by their reading of their national interest is another factor. There is nothing in the OAU Charter to prevent a member from taking a matter to other forums. 'Try OAU First' is a voluntary principle, and it remains so. The Western Sahara conflict demonstrates this. Morocco wants to play down the conflict (in Western Sahara) that is why it prefers OAU as the forum, but Algeria and the Polisario want to highlight it, hence their attempts to bring it before as many international forums as possible

Respect for Inherited Boundaries:

This principle has proved to be vital for conflict management in Africa. OAU gave it concrete sanction in 1964 in the Cairo Summit of African Heads of State and Government.

The resolution, though accepting the artificiality of the boundaries inherited at the time of independence, has accepted them as final.²⁸ The overriding concern of the states that revision of the boundaries would open a Pandora's box of troubles, was the deciding factor.²⁹ Over the years, this principle, with some notable exceptions, has been adhered to and due largely to it the apprehension of Africa watchers on the eve of independence that boundary conflicts might transform into a cauldron³⁰ has not come to happen. As the

28. For the text of the resolution, see Ian Brownlie (ed.) Basic Documents on African Affairs (London, 1971), pp.360-61.

29. About the states' attitude to inherited boundaries, Nye comments, "...there have been a paradoxical stability in interstate relations in Africa that might be attributed to a 'glass house' theory - 'people who live in poorly integrated states do not throw tribes". J.S. Nye, Peace in Parts: Integration and Conflict in Regional Organisation, (Boston, 1971), p.165. Another interesting argument has been provided by Sadio Toural. According to him the 'tribal balance' on which the political structure of a state often depends would be upset by any change of the frontiers which divide tribes between neighbouring states. The annexation of a population would increase the size of a tribe inside a country, which might then quickly lead to a internal conflict. Thus internal political considerations were an important factor in the Nigerian Government's opposition to proposals for the annexation of the Yoruba populated area of Benin (Dahomey). The cautious policies of Gabon and Cameroon regarding the future of Spanish controlled Rio Muni arose because its absorption could have involved the incorporation of additional Fang in their respective territories, S. Toural, The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa, (Massachusetts, 1972), p.81.

30. Discussed in chapter I.

matter stands today there are only two predominantly boundary related conflicts before the OAU - the Western Sahara conflict and the Somali claims to a 'Greater Somalia'. In fact way back in 1964 when the resolution was adopted these same two countries had expressed their reservations.

As late as in January 1976, Togolese information Minister, Kwaovi Benyi Johnson in an editorial in Togo Press challenged what he described as 'the sacrosanct principle of the immutability of African frontiers.' He called the OAU principle 'a wide idea at the time of OAU's inception but one which at present does not stand upto an objective historical analysis.'³¹ This was a reference to Togo's own dispute with Ghana over the Western Togolese area (a former German colony) which was handed over to Ghana in 1946 after a UN referendum. However OAU's reiteration to this principle in the case of each and every boundary conflicts shows that there is no serious rethinking about the efficacy of this principle. Such opinions (as the Togo's Ministers) are isolated and have very little impact on the principle.

Opposition to Secessionist Movement:

A secessionist movement is a demand for a new sovereign country. Thus by direct implication it is a demand for the redrawing of the boundary of an

31. Quoted by Z. Cervenka, Unfinished Quest for Unity, (London, 1977), p.71.

existing country, so if we analyse the 1964 resolution on boundaries, OAU can be said to be against secessionist movements. In a very real sense, this has been the case (though not solely on the basis of OAU's adherence to the sanctity of inherited boundaries.)³² This principle has been manifest in the reluctance with which OAU decides to take any action in relation to an internal war. Legum comments, "The OAU is, as one might expect, weakest and at its most disappointing when it comes to dealing with serious internal problems of its member states. Thus there has never been any question of the OAU expressing, even mild criticism of the 'double genocide' that has scarred the life of Burundi, or of seeking to ameliorate the conditions in the Sudan caused by the long rebellion of the Southern Sudanese before, happily they were able to find an amicable settlement of their differences. President Obote's abortive attempt to raise the allegation of mass murder against President Amin was another example. The OAU's greatest failure, perhaps was its inability to make a positive contribution during the nightmare years of civil war in Nigeria."³³ However, he hastens to add, "These failures are undoubtedly serious, but the reality is that no organization like the OAU can hope to survive once it attempts

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32. The principle stems directly from principle-2.Art.III (non-interference in internal affairs), Principle-3.Art.III (respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity), Principle-5 (against subversion). Strengthened by Para I, Para 6 of the Preamble and Art.II,1(c).
33. Colin Legum, 'Organization of African Unity--Success or Failure', International Affairs (London), vol.51, no.2, April 1975, p.212.

to intervene - however good the reasons - in the internal conflicts of one of its members. This essential constraint is inherent in any international organization, this may be a pity, but no such organization should be condemned for failing in an area, which it cannot, realistically touch'.³⁴ Thus Legum poses the question and provides the answer, the only thing we can add is, knowing fully well the limitations of an organization of OAU's kind, can we term these non-involvement (or limited involvements) as 'failures'?

This principle has evolved slowly over the years. In 1969 Vincent Bakpetu Thompson talked about the 'failure' of the Addis Ababa Conference in 'establishing the point at which an issue might cease to be a domestic issue and become one for Pan-Africanist intervention'.³⁵ But by mid nineteen eighties, primarily secessionistic incidents like the sporadic fight in Sudan by the South against the North, the fight in Eritrea in Ethiopia have not come before the OAU and even now have little chance of doing so if no fundamental change in the situation takes place.³⁶ As long as states are reluctant to yield any of their sovereign powers, any idea of

34. Ibid., p.213.

35. Vincent Bakpetu Thompson, Africa and Unity - The Evolution at Pan-Africanism (London, 1969), p.186.

36. Polisario's claims would, most likely, have met the same fate but for their notable military successes, Algeria's full hearted support and the subsequent recognition by states and organizations.

intervention by the OAU in such cases remains in the realm of fiction. This, in turn, depends on the attitude of African countries towards secessionist movements. In spite of having tribal, ethnic, cultural or linguistic affinities with the secessionist movements, many countries are hesitant about coming out openly in their favour because they know that such a policy is a double edged sword - with their own positions shaky and with no absolute claims to transcendental nationalism in their own countries.

This principle has not been an unmixed blessing. It has proved vital for its very existence of OAU and helped conflict management. But it also has made OAU a mere spectator in some of the worst manmade tragedies in the continent. It happened in Nigeria where millions of Ibos lost their life, due mainly to starvation and disease and also in Burundi where over one lakh Tutsi were killed in 1972-73. In the latter case, the only comment that the Administrative Secretary General Mr. Mzo Ekangaki made was that events in Burundi were its internal matter.³⁷ In the Nigerian case, the extent of carnage prompted Diallo Telli to call on the OAU Council of

37. Quoted by U.O. Umozurike, "The Domestic Jurisdiction Clause in the OAU Charter", African Affairs (London), Vol.78, no.311, April 1979, p.199.

Ministers meeting in Algiers in 1968 to redefine the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs in order to 'prevent members from avoiding important issue'.³⁹

Condemnation of Foreign Intervention:

One of the primary purposes of conflict management is to isolate the soluble local intra-regional conflicts from more complex global ones. Intervention by extra regional powers in the form of arms supply, diplomatic pressure and direct participation in the conflicts is obviously not conducive to conflict management. However, as we have discussed earlier, Africa is part of the globe and it cannot help being a part of the cold war between the two power blocs. Added to that, Africa has got many attractions for other powers - big and small. All these have led to, what has been termed, 'the second scramble for Africa'. In this situation, to expect that the above mentioned principle can be applied in full is wistful thinking.

But the extent of foreign intervention and their ramifications makes one wonder if there is at all such a principle for conflict management. At present, USA has

39. West Africa (London), September 14, 1968. His call went unheeded.

base rights in Kenya and Somalia bringing with it the inevitable military and economic aid package, the Soviet Union has a large scale presence in Ethiopia. Cubans soldiers are present in Angola as well as in Ethiopia, Libyan involvement in Chad, though not a 'foreign' (Libya is an African country) intervention, is no different. Among others France has a considerable military presence in Africa, right from Chad to Zaire. Zaire, on its part has been too happy to provide paratroops to 'check the expansion of communism in Africa'. Belgians and British after their controversial participation in 1964 'Stanleyville drop' are small fries in military terms - as far as Africa is concerned (though Belgian paratroopers helped Mobutu's government in 1978). Last but not the least, South Africa's opportunistic role and its penchant for intervention, makes Africa a hot bed of international intrigue. But this is only the proverbial tip of the iceberg. The military relationships (arms transfer, training of troops, etc.), the economic relationships (aid, trade and investment) and the consequent diplomatic pressure, are more than enough to undo the actions of the OAU in any given conflict situation. Julius Nyerere's comment that the US and France were stronger than the OAU itself is not much off the target when viewed in this context.

However, inspite of these arguments, a strong case can still be made for reasonable independence of

action on the part of the OAU in a conflict situation.³⁹ It stems primarily from the public pronouncement of almost all African countries of their adherence to non-alignment and their membership of non-aligned movement (NAM). In this respect, the condemnation of the Shah of Iran in Libreville Summit in July 1977 is an indication. The resolution adopted there entitled 'On Interference in the Internal Affairs of African States' makes it clear that condemnation of foreign intervention (in any form it occurs from any source) is a cardinal principle of the OAU. It recommended that (i) African countries should not get involved in outside conflicts, especially ideological ones, 'emanating from without', (ii) they refrain from having recourse to foreign intervention in the settlement of conflicts between African states.⁴⁰ (iii) called on all extra-African powers, particularly big ones, to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of African States.⁴¹ The implementation of the operative part of the resolution is a difficult

39. Admitting that this independence of action varies from conflict to conflict. For example, in the Congo and Angolan crises foreign intervention was high but in other conflicts it was comparatively low.

40. The first part of this paragraph said, 'without prejudice to their right to conclude defence agreements of their choice intended especially to forestall outside aggression'.

41. AHG/Res.85(XIV). For the text, see ACR 1977-78, p.C4.

task, but not a hopeless one. If one is looking for a total ban on foreign intervention, one would be naturally disappointed but if one pre-supposes and accepts some foreign intervention as inevitable and as a reflection of the reality, then the above resolution, the principle behind it and OAU's frequent reiteration to it makes sense.⁴² OAU's stand on foreign intervention. The strong reaction to French intervention in Zaire and the French plan for a permanent Inter African Security Force reaffirmed the principle.⁴³

Apart from these principles mention can be made of the principle on refugees. The principle, as contained

42. Much of the controversy on the principle and its violation arises out of the interpretation of the word 'intervention'. If state 'A' invites a country (extra African in most cases) to put down a rebellion on the basis of a previous agreement (or without one), it does not appear an 'intervention' to 'A'. But to other countries of the neighbourhood and of the continent, the presence of such a foreign force seems repugnant. When this factor is added to ideological, personal and other differences, intervention becomes a much used and abused word. With uncertainty about circumstances under which outside powers can intervene in Africa, OAU is caught on the horns of a dilemma.

43. Resolutions on 'An Inter African Military Force of Intervention', condemnation of the mercenary invasion against Benin and on military intervention in Africa and measures to be taken against Neo-colonialist Maneuvres and Interventions in Africa made this clear as did the discussion on them. For the texts of the resolutions, see ACR 1978-79, pp.C16-C20.

in a resolution adopted at the Accra Summit in 1965, was made more elaborate by the signing in 1969, of the OAU Convention governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problem in Africa.⁴⁴ The relevance of this Convention for conflict management by the OAU becomes apparent when we examine the last part of the 1965 Assembly's resolution on refugees, it said, '(The Assembly) requests all Member-States never to allow the refugee question to become a source of dispute among them' and the para-3 of the Preamble of the 1969 convention which made clear the awareness of the OAU, 'that the refugee problems are a source of friction among many Member States...' Ghana's role in the mid-sixties caused much concern and the conflict generating nature of refugee problems are a burning issue even today. The principle as devised through various resolutions and the convention, prohibits refugees from carrying out subversive activities against any Member state of the OAU, the humanitarian rather than the political aspect of asylum is stressed. Though subversion is not exactly a forgotten term in today's Africa, this principle, at least has contributed towards discouraging open subversion.

44. For the text of the Convention, see Ian Brownlie, n.28, pp.18-24. The Convention came into force only on 20th June 1974 when Algeria, as the fourteenth OAU member deposited its instrument of ratification.

TRENDS IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:

At the beginning of this Chapter, we mentioned the peculiarity of each conflict and the way OAU responds to it. Thus ascertaining the trends in conflict management is certainly a hazardous task but one can safely identify two recurring trends: (a) the increasing dependence of the OAU on ad hoc bodies and (b) the voting pattern in the OAU, particularly in relation to conflict management.

(a) That the OAU has come to depend on ad hoc bodies for conflict management is obvious. The definite causes are hard to find but the success of the informal type of mediation and conciliation early in the life of the Organization (when the COMCA was not in existence); the waning of the 'Spirit of Addis Ababa' and the financial constraints may be the likely reasons.

Practice has shown that though the defence commission and the COMCA have been replaced by ad hoc bodies, these ad hoc bodies do not deal with all the conflicts. Rather, different ad hoc bodies have been created for different conflicts. The task of composition of the ad hoc bodies have been a tight-rope act. At different times, different countries have openly complained about the impartiality of some of the members, in those bodies. This has led to a practice of having a 'balance' with in such bodies with an equal number of countries supporting

both the sides and having one or more 'neutral' state. Usually, such bodies contain members from countries who enjoy the confidence of the parties in the conflict. In all cases, the role of the Chairman of the particular body was crucial, whatever positive results were attained were due in large part to his special efforts.

The ad hoc bodies have varied in their levels of national representation (ranging from senior civil servants to Heads of State) and the scope of responsibilities. The most successful have been those composed of the Heads of State. The size varies usually from three to ten. But there are instances when an individual Head of State has been designated by the OAU in the role of an intermediary. The effectiveness of this method was demonstrated in the third phase of the Rwanda-Burundi situation and the Guinea-Ivory Coast case. Sometimes individual statesmen take initiatives in the spirit of the OAU Charter and exercise their good offices on several occasions, OAU usually blesses these efforts. This was evident in Algeria-Morocco, Ethiopia-Somalia, Kenya-Somali conflicts.⁴⁵

45. As well as in some cases that were not brought before the OAU, such as the disputes between Chad and Sudan and that between Uganda and Tanzania in 1971.

(b) To date analyses of the voting pattern in the (particularly in the Council and Assembly) are virtually non-existent. In 1979, Legum and Cervenka attempted a general evaluation of the voting pattern in the OAU on the basis of the adhered ideology (both professed and practised) of the country concerned. In this study, no elaborate study of voting pattern was undertaken and the issues involved was also limited. But inspite of these limitations that study can be used as a basis.⁴⁶

OAU's fifty members can be arranged in four broad categories with a few sub-categories. The terms used to categorise them is highly tentative because those terms have been used differently at different times by different people. It would not be out of place here to mention that in some circles, particularly in the west, labels like 'left', 'right', 'radical', 'moderate', 'pro-west', 'pro-communist' have been used freely to describe the orientation of a country. This practice is an over-simplification and in most cases denotes a rather low level of understanding about the countries concerned.

Category 1: The Marxist Radicals (11 members)

- (A) Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Cape-verde, Sao Tome and Principe and Zimbabwe.
- (B) Madagascar, Benin, Congo.

46. Zderek Cervenka and Colin Legum, n.18, pp.A28-29.

- (C) Equatorial Guinea. The country is not in any sense Marxist but depends almost exclusively for its support on the communist world.

Category 2: The Radicals or Militant Nationalists (13 Members)

Algeria, Cameroon, Guinea, Ghana, Libya, Mali, Mauritius, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Category 3: Nationalists with Non-aligned Aspirations (7 Members)

Votes are liable to change on particular issues.

Burundi, Central African Empire, Djibouti, Lesotho, Liberia, Niger, Upper Volta.

Category 4: 'Moderates' and Conservatives (19 Members)

Affirm belief in non-alignment, but tend to adopt anti-Soviet/Cuban positions (though not necessarily anti-Chinese).

- (A) Ivory Coast, Gabon, Malawi, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Senegal, Chad, Togo, Comoros, Zaire, Somalia.

Aggressively anti-Soviet to the point of welcoming open western military and other support.

- (B) Liberia, Kenya, Mauritania, Gambia, Tunisia, Botswana, Swaziland, Less doctrinaire in their anti-Soviet stand and more circumspect in the relations with the West and China.

On most questions, other than critical foreign issues, those in category 1 and 2 usually vote in the same lobby, with a combined strength of 24. The seven members of category 3 divide their votes between categories 2 and 4, depending on issues. The 31 votes in categories 1, 2 and 3 represent a fairly permanent majority on many issues that come before the OAU. This majority is further strengthened by the tendency of the seven members in Category 4(B) to vote with categories 2 and 3 (though Kenya's stand is becoming more and more sympathetic to that of (A) in category 4). On most issues, the members in category 4(A) form a permanent minority in the OAU. Similarly, the 11 members in category 1 also form a minority, except on issues where their interests correspond with those of category 2. The dominant group in the OAU is in fact category 1. Except on the very rare occasions, when these countries happen to be internally divided as over the recognition of MPLA regime in January 1976, their support is usually decisive in determining whether an OAU consensus is possible.

Conflicts being a primary reason for discord, the OAU's attempts have always been to arrive at a consensus. Therefore, the resolutions reflect the least common denominators and are usually not put to vote. For example, the resolutions on foreign intervention avoid, as far as possible, naming any country as the powers intervening in Africa. As far as the routine actions like calling for end to hostilities, for ceasefire, etc., unanimity is possible.

Reforms of the OAU:

Except, possibly in the Utopias, perfection is very seldom, if ever found. And in this strife torn world, it is a very illusory term. The OAU is no exception. Concern for the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization is usually accompanied by suggestion for reform. Each annual summit of the organization often contains more than one call for reforms to make the organization stronger. The suggested reforms for the conflict management machinery can be summarised as (i) having a 'peace council' or a standing committee of the Assembly which can promptly respond to any flare up of a conflict in the continent; (ii) having a continental defence force to defend states coming under attack from extra-systemic powers and capable of undertaking peacekeeping work if and when the need arises; (iii) strengthening the Secretariat, and in particular, giving more powers to the Secretary General to make him an important and more active partner in the conflict management process.

In the Summit in 1980 in Freetown (Sierra Leone) the host state outlined its ideas for a political Security Council. As contained in President Siaka Stevens' speech and in a memorandum submitted to the OAU Secretariat in May 1980, this Council was primarily meant to 'meet at a moment's notice, given the exigency of the situation, cutting through bureaucratic obstacles and come up with effective counter

measures'.⁴⁷ The Council was to have 15 members elected on a geographical basis by the Council with due regard to equitable geographic distribution: three each from North, South and East Africa, and two for Southern Africa. All decisions were to require two-thirds majority. Though nothing concrete was adopted, the discussion itself was explosive because of the strong feeling among some bigger African states that it was only right that they may be given permanent membership and veto power. This view was strongly opposed by the smaller countries. Nothing more has been done about it, though the Foreign Ministers were to submit their views to the Secretary General before the end of 1980.

Freetown Summit was not the only one in recent times to talk about reforms. In the Khartoum Summit of July 1978, President Numeiry called for an 'instrument that can contain armed conflicts in a manner worthy of our ambitions for positive, effective and independent actions'. President Nyerere of Tanzania⁴⁸ and General Gbasanjo of Nigeria also spoke about reforms. However, no draft proposal for reforms or amendment of the OAU Charter was forthcoming. Rhetorics

47. ACR 1980-81, pp.A70-71.

48. In a statement in December (9) 8, President Nyerere called for the Charter to be reviewed with a view to committing the organization to defend freedom and individual liberties in Africa, ACR 78-79, p.A38.

notwithstanding the attitude of states to reform was apparent when the Council could not take any decision about the report of the Committee of fourteen on OAU Structural Reform - though the reform of recommended were relatively minor compared to the proposals of President Numeiry. For all practical purposes, the report was shelved.

Similarly, the proposals for a continental defence force is getting the typical 'blow hot blow cold' treatment by the Council and the Assembly. In crisis situations, like the invasion of Guinea or in response to France's plan for an interventionist force it is actively debated upon then to be put in the cold storage again. Though it has been recognised that the absence of a collective security system weakens the over all power, in particular the conflict management capability, of the organization, when the concrete proposals are put forward, African countries demur. Thus the impression created is that OAU leaders preferred to cling to existing methods of peaceful mediation of disputes without having any real intention of creating an inter-African Military or Security Force. The rejection of specific proposals put forward by the Secretary General for the creation of security force strengthens this belief.

A call for strengthening the Secretariat was given in the 1974 Mogadishu Summit by President Siad Barre of Somalia who wanted the Secretary General to be dynamic and active.⁴⁹ There have been many committees examining this aspect. But the most important one is the Turkson Committee (under the Chairmanship of Ghanaian diplomat Yaw Turkson) which had submitted 'Report on the Structural Reform of the OAU General Secretariat'. Though submitted wayback in 1976, it has not yet been acted upon. Its terms of reference included strengthening the role of the Chief Executive of the OAU, the Secretary General, vis-a-vis the Member States and his own staff.⁵⁰

49. Along with a call for amending the Charter.

50. The report has not been made public. But brief mentions are made in Gervenka, n.31, p.xii, and ACR 1977-78, p.A64.

CONCLUSION

'The mountain has given birth to a mouse'. This is how a commentator described the adoption of the OAU Charter in 1963. This conclusion - unquestionably erroneous - was in a way an indication of shape of things to come. During more than two decades of its existence, OAU has had more than its share of sarcasm and cynicism.* Conflict management which inevitably involves contentious issues has come in for special treatment. All incidences of conflict starting from small border skirmishes to full scale wars are squarely blamed on the 'impotency' of the organization.

Today Africa has two continuing wars and numerous quiescent ones. An analysis of the past record would show that many of the conflicts were settled bilaterally. OAU had marginal or no impact in two biggest tragedies of Africa - the civil war in Nigeria and the 'genocide' in Burundi as

* The press has been the most vociferous. One out of numerous examples can be given - International Herald Tribune on 21 July 1977 wrote, "Cynics in Africa used to say that the only word in the title of the organization that the Pan African body has lived up to was 'of'". But academic writings have generally been more analytical and reasonable.

in various other conflicts. The involvement of outside powers including the two super powers in African conflicts remains deep. The French plans for a rapid deployment force mostly to intervene in African countries, is at an advanced stage. Faced with issues and divisions OAU failed to convene twice in Tripoli. The ideological division apparent in the early sixties has lost its sharpness now but divisions based on other factors - attitude towards the socialist bloc countries, towards the presence of troops of foreign countries in Africa, etc. have added to the continuing internal crisis in the organization. All these adversely affect conflict management by the OAU. On a broader front the appalling state of African economies, their exclusive external dependence in trade, aid and investment, the absence of durable political institutions,* are some of the factors which make the OAU member states vulnerable to pressure and coercion from parties with vested interest. There are numerous examples when countries have been 'persuaded' to toe a particular line. It happened at the time of extraordinary summit on the Angolan issue. It has led two of Africa's oldest statesmen to complain bitterly that in the OAU, USA or France have enormous clout .

* The recent uncertainty about OAU's proposed summit in Guinea demonstrates to what extent absence of internal political institutions can influence a country's external commitments. The death of a President/Prime Minister in a democracy would not have meant to create any such confusion, because of the practice of the election of a new leader and a smooth transfer of power. But in Guinea, the rulers with questionable legitimacy do not wish to play host to such an extravaganza.

Added to this is the state of OAU's internal mechanism for conflict management. The Defence Commission is still born, the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration exists only on paper, the Administrative Secretary General remains as more of a chief clerk than a chief executive and the Council of Ministers is only too happy to pass the buck. Thus the brunt of conflict management falls on the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The Assembly, on its part, is bitterly divided. Walk-outs in the summits and public denouncements against each other are common feature. Backlog of previous conflicts and other economic and political issues makes speedy and efficient treatment of conflicts difficult. As discussed earlier, in most conflicts the Assembly took a long time of parties. To top it all, recently there have been threats of resigning from the organization because some countries could not have their way in the annual summit.

Yet OAU is, relatively speaking, a success. Not spectacularly successful, but successful as a modest organization with modest ambitions and means.

The causes are manifold but the study of an isolated conflict divorcing it from the factors which we discussed earlier and which we can call as African realities, will not give an objective assessment. Each conflict has its peculiarity and it imposes many constraints on anyone attempting to mediate.

Getting round them involves many factors sometimes too big for the mediator. Those factors were touched upon in previous discussions, suffice to say that the mediator in our case - the OAU, becomes quite helpless in such a situation. Thus while drawing a balance sheet of OAU's assets and liabilities in conflict management, care should be taken not to blame the organization for its supposed failures which were not in its hands. For any conflict OAU's objectives must be compiled at first, and the end results assessed on that basis itself. Thus if in a conflict OAU aims only at a ceasefire then there is no point blaming it for not bringing about a resolution of the conflict.

The factors which limit the effectivity of OAU in conflict management - big and super power involvement in the 'second scramble for Africa', economic vulnerability, internal instability, idiosyncratic factors, ideological divisions and the sovereignty aspect - also strengthen the case for the OAU. In other words, the steps taken by the OAU in a conflict seem bigger when we consider the constraints under which they were being taken.

Still these factors do not absolve OAU of all responsibility. There is vast room for improvement. The study of conflicts shows that OAU usually takes a long time to act, during which period the belligerents strengthen their positions and, consequently their attitudes harden. There is need for a small body to meet as and when crises come up.

Various proposals were mooted without any concrete decision being taken. There is need for improving the financial position of the organization which is critical now. The countries have to pay their arrears. Structurally, OAU needs a revamping. The position of the Secretary General which is very much akin to that of a chief clerk rather than a chief executive must be strengthened. The Defence Commission should be revived and kept ready for contingencies like Chad.

But in the ultimate analysis the whole thing boils down to two vital factors: (a) the peculiarities of the African state-system and its interaction with the wider global state system in the light of the cold war and nuclear power politics and (b) the commitments of African states to unity. Of these, the first factor is almost permanent in nature and ^{will} continue to affect conflict management by the OAU; but as for the second, it is the African countries themselves who can make that decision. They should remember that in spite of everything as sovereign nation states they have a wide range of unhampered alternatives. Their judicious use could mean the difference between war and peace, between a stable and unstable Africa.



BOULDING'S PRESENTATION OF CONFLICT

1. Behaviour Units:

They are the parties in a conflict. They are called the behaviour units because they are 'capable of assuming a number of different positions while retaining a common identity of boundary'.¹ In the diagram (next page) they are A_1 and A_2 . A behaviour unit may be a person, a family, a tribe a class of ideas, a theory, a social organization, a trade union, a nation or even a group of nations.

2. The Behaviour Space:

This is 'the position of behaviour unit at a moment of time defined by a set of values (sub-set, to be technical) of a set of variables that defines the behaviour unit'.²

3. Competition:

Competition in its broadest sense exists when any potential positions of two behaviour units are mutually in compatible.³ This is a broader concept than conflict, in the sense that all cases of conflict involve competition,

1. Kenneth E. Boulding, Conflict and Defense - A General Theory (New York, 1962), p.2.

2. Ibid., p.3.

3. Ibid., p.4.

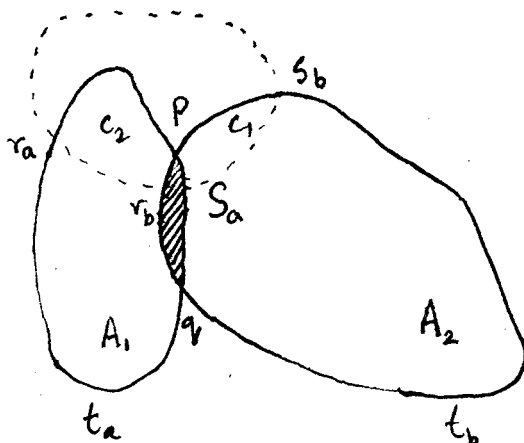
in the above sense, not all cases of competition involve conflict.

4. Conflict:

Conflict may be defined as 'a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of other'.⁴ Boulding, however, admits that the words, 'aware' and 'wishes' are 'laden with philosophical dynamite' and 'obscure'. Hence the need for the diagram.

5. The Boundary of Possibility:

It defines certain 'limitations on the position one can occupy by various physical, psychological, legal and financial restrictions'.⁵



Source: Boulding, pp.10-11.

4. Ibid., p.5.

5. Ibid., p.6.

A behaviour space with two behaviour units A_1 and A_2 are considered. Each point on the field represents a state of the universe that is relevant to either one or both behaviour units. Possibility boundaries, as before, are drawn round the present positions of the parties at A_1 and A_2 , and we suppose that the possibility sets intersect in the shaded area PS_aqr_b . Each point within the shaded area, then, represents a state that is open to both the parties, suppose now there is, within the dotted line, a set of mutually exclusive states that has the property that, if one party is within this area, the other party is excluded from it, that is, if A_2 is anywhere within the dotted line, A_1 's boundary of possibility drops to the area $r_a S_a t_a$, and if A_1 is anywhere within the dotted area, A_2 's boundary of possibility shrinks to $r_b S_b t_b$, then the area $r_b S_a P$ is the field of potential conflict. All states within this area are open to each only if the other is not within the area. However, it is a field of actual conflict only if both parties wish to remain within it, that is, if their highest value state (in the field of international relations national interest)⁶ lies within it (or they think it lies within it).⁷ If A_1 's best point is C_1 (within his original possibility boundary) and A_2 's best point is C_2 , neither can

6. Parenthesis added.

7. Parenthesis added.

reach his best point if the other reaches his. If A_1 reaches C_1 , then A_2 's possibility area is reduced to $PS_b t_r_b S_a$. He will have to be content with something like the point r_b , which is a somewhat less advantageous than C_2 . Similar considerations obtain for A_1 if A_2 reaches C_2 . The area $r_b S_a q$ is one of contact but not of conflict.

This model makes two assumptions. (1) That the behaviour unit moves toward the best possible position. (2) Being derived from the economists' theory of rational behaviour, it presupposes more or less rational behaviour on the part of the behaviour units. However, it can be argued that 'rationality' is not always reflected in the nations' dealings with one another - particularly in a conflict situation.

In spite of these limitations, Boulding's model can be utilized to study the theory of conflict and conflict management. For example, Boulding asserts that the behaviour units (the parties) are open to the environment around them. This means that they are not closed to influences like world organizations (UN), regional organization (in our case the OAU), world public opinion or even to the opinion of friendly states. Now if they are influenced by them and act accordingly, the conflict can be deescalated or stopped altogether. (For example, in the diagram A_2 will not go for the most advantageous

position C_2 and its possibility boundary will remain at $r_b S_b t_b$. If A_1 also remains at $r_a S_a t_a$ then for the field of potential conflict $r_b S_a P$, some kind of negotiation can be held).

SUMMARY OF INTRA-REGIONAL CONFLICTS 1963-1983

Conflicting States	Main Issue	Primary OAU Activity	Outcome (as of December 1983)
Algeria-Morocco	territory	Legitimize ceasefire, aid communications, provide neutral site for leaders.	bilateral settlement
Ethiopia-Kenya-Somalia	territory	1964-order ceasefire (not effective), 1967 - provide neutral site, 1973 - establish good offices committee	On going
Ghana-Upper Volta	territory	1964 - Conciliation, 1965 - Forum. Pressure on Ghana	Settled (Ghanian withdrawal)
Equatorial Guinea-Gabon	territory	assist negotiations, create commission, to define border	bilateral settlement
Ghana-neighbours	Subversion	1965 - Attempted mediation	Settled (conflict) Settled by Ghanian coup
Rwanda-Burundi	Subversion	Refugee Commission attempts conflict prevention 1966 - legitimize Mobutu mediation, 1973 - establishment of mediation committee	quiescent
Guinea-Senegal	Subversion	1971 - establish mediation commission	Settled. Ambassadors exchanged in 1978.
Tanzania-Uganda	Subversion	1973 - provided neutral site for leaders, assist Somali mediation efforts.	Settled (reconciliation)
Ghana-Guinea (I)	Seizure of diplomats	none	Settled (release with UN help)
Ghana-Guinea (II)	Seizure of diplomats	Inquiry by the Council and pressure on Ghana by the Assembly.	Settled (release arranged with by three heads of states)

Conflicting States	Main Issue	Primary OAU activity	Outcome (as of December 1983)
Guinea-Ivory Coast	Siezure of diplomats Subversion	Legitimize President Tubman's initiative for release of diplomats	Settled
Tanganyika (internal)	Replace British peacekeeping troops	Legitimize Nyerere's action and troop loans	Settled (bilateral loans of troops successfully repla- ced the British).
Congo (1964-65)	Civil War	Attempt conciliation, attempt to limit external involvements	Settled (Military victory)
Nigeria (internal)	Secession	Support for Federal Govern- ment, attempt conciliation.	Settled (military victory)
Sudan (internal)	Secession	none	settled (some assistance from Ethiopia.
Burundi (internal)	ethnic strife	minimal, legitimize govern- ment actions	Ongoing
Angola (external involvement)	Rivalry between different liberat- ion movements	Call for ceasefire, appoint- ment of <u>ad hoc</u> Committee, Extra- ordinary meeting of Assembly	Settled (military victory)
Morocco-Polisario	Self determination by Saharawi People in Western Sahara (helped by Algeria)	<u>Ad hoc</u> committee, call for ref- erendum in disputed area, rejected by Morocco.	Ongoing
Benin-Guinea- Morocco-Gabon	Subversion, mercenary invasion	Seven nation fact finding commission of Inquiry	Settled
Zaire (internal)	Secession in Shaba	Minimal general condemnation of outside interference	Settled (with help of Morocco and France)
Chad (external involvement)	Civil War (with Libyan and French involvement)	<u>ad hoc</u> and sub committees, call for ceasefire	Ongoing

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