



World Scientific News

WSN 78 (2017) 328-334

EISSN 2392-2192

The role of African international organizations as a classic example of ensuring safety in the region

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ABSTRACT

Reliable presentation of the subject of Africa region in international relations is not possible without addressing the key issues associated with its past and history right after the World War II. Initiated then decolonization brought a fundamental change in the geopolitical map of African continent. The United Kingdom, France, Portugal, Belgium, Italy and Spain have lost their dependent territories, in the place which were formed 50 sovereign States. The new formed States began the process of shaping own national identity and places in international relations. It is assumed that all the States on African continent and number of islands in the oceans covering Africa (Republic of Cape Verde, São Tomé, Madagascar, Comoros, and Seychelles) are a part of the Africa region.

Keywords: Africa, regional organizations, international relations, state security, regional integration

1. INTRODUCTION

African countries after gaining independence were weak, without any major attributes of power. Almost all were ranked among underdeveloped countries. Africa region up till today is one of the poorer regions of the world. Strong postcolonial connections projected on independence of the new States. Over time, ethnic-cultural differences and forced process of changes collided and led to deepening of crises within the government. Weaknesses of little experienced power, as well as relatively poor education of the population inhabiting Africa also had an influence on this conditioning. All these factors destabilized the modernization

process, and this along with development of the authoritarian systems led to alienation of States of the African region [1].

2. CHALLENGES AND THREATS TO SECURITY IN AFRICA

The end of the cold war gave hope to positive evolution of the African security. The disintegration of bipolar world tempered impulses of world powers in the game for influence in Africa. In addition, in the late 1980s of the 20th an initiative arose to shape governance in the region on the basis of conciliation principles. The leaders of the United States and USSR (Ronald Regan, Mikhail Gorbachev) have agreed to take actions to resolve local conflicts in the third world. The idea was right, but in the face of hard reality turned out to be a fiasco. Suppressing major outbreaks have failed, and even led to sharpen local contradictions and antagonisms, which more or less gave up control of the great powers. Local conflicts flared anew, and the international community could not or did not want to take risky actions to restore peace [2].

A legacy of colonialism, which stopped natural development processes of African societies, turns out to be other problem. Repeating standards of European countries did not harmonize with mentality and forms of the social life of autochthons, it forced the return to pre-colonial principles of the functioning of society. This also applies to political institutions, where e.g. in Uganda survived traditional kingdoms, whereas in Ghana and Nigeria the structures of tribal States. The loyalty to own political institutions is necessary for the system efficiency, and therefore return to classic systems of the power in Africa turned out to be right [3].

Multiethnic is very often indicated as the security threat in Africa region. Provided ethnic differences are something natural and commonly acceptable in Africa region, they pose a challenge. Just to look at the continent's political map and at first glance we can see that Africa was divided with straight lines creating the States, dividing natural ethnic groups on its territory. However, on the other hand, with such a huge diversity of ethnic issues, leaving open borders would cause an escalation and transfer of conflicts. In 1964 within the Organization of African Unity implemented the principle of respecting postcolonial border (*uti possidetis iuris*), which settled border disputes. Examples of two countries clearly showed what not accepting this principle is threatening with. Somalia and Morocco do not accept adopted divisions, which led to Somalia-Ethiopian war (1977-1978), and Moroccan-Algerian war (1963). An example is South Sudan, established in July 9, 2011, as a result of the agreement of the Sudanese government with the Sudan People's Liberation Army, which ended the civil war in Sudan – the longest civil war in Africa. Ethnic tensions can lead to disputes concerning the exercise of power in the State. Many ethnic groups in a small area can lead to rivalry for the administration (e.g. Nigeria or Democratic Republic of Congo has over 200 tribal groups). The authority gains tribal nature then and becomes an element of building the power of only one group, rather than the entire State, which does not allow democratic mechanisms to function. Such political systems are only stable to the moment of overthrowing them by other tribes. All these examples show how important for the elite of power of the State is resolving ethnic issues and their stabilization [4].

A natural destructive element is fight for wealth on the given territory. Poor Africa has large deposits of natural resources that can contribute to economic growth; however the fight

for dominance on these goods moves the national existence on the second plan, shaping only the existence of individuals. An example of this conflict is Angolan crisis, where huge deposits of diamonds and oil were illegally extracted during the civil war from 1975, which gradually degraded the economy. In other Africa regions (Rwanda, Zimbabwe) continues the fight for cultivable land, which is missing [1, p. 44].

African countries are poor, because of corruption, nepotism, and incompetence of the ruling elites, lack of appropriate staff of officials, and all that overlaps the weakness of infrastructure of the State, with which the authorities cannot cope. Such a state of affairs can lead to collapse of the State. Somalia is an example, where from 1991 the civil war last, and the government controls only about 10% of the State. Political-military fighting groupings are not able to reach a compromise. Similarly in Sierra Leone and Liberia, where currently is carried out reconstruction of the government structures as a part of peaceful operations [5].

Recent years also does not save the continent of Africa. The civil war in Mali, caused by the revolution of the Tuareg people aspiring to create their own autonomy, has led to French intervention on this territory. In addition to ethnic conflicts, there are also religious conflicts. The Central African Republic is currently in the fight between Muslim rebels and the Christian militias. The peace is also guarded by French armies, supported by several dozens of Polish Contingent [6].

3. REGIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS – ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, AFRICAN UNION

Organization of African Unity is one of most important and most numerous regional international organizations bringing together almost all African States, except Morocco. It was founded on May 25, 1963 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), which remained its headquarters. Already at the Founding Conference in 1963, a resolution was adopted that Organization of African Unity will combat all forms of colonialism in the continent, because it was considered as a threat to peace in the region. A help to colonial nations in their fight for liberation was announced. In 1966, the Organization of African Unity appointed in Dar es Salam so-called Committee of National Liberation, which was supposed to provide assistance, including financial, for national-liberation movements. The Organization of African Unity from the beginning strongly condemned Republic of South Africa for apartheid policy [8]. The Organization of African Unity also aspired for establishing the Africa as a free trade area, but these plans turned out to be unrealistic.

Objectives of the Organization:

- strengthening of unity and solidarity of African countries;
- deepening the comprehensive political and economic cooperation between them;
- ensuring conditions for rapid development of these countries;
- eradicating the colonialism and racism;
- preventing disputes between African countries and within them (Organization of

African Unity stood on the position of inviolability of colonial borders). Successes of the Organization of African Unity:

- 1963 – appointment of Arbitration Committee on calming Algerian-Moroccan conflict;
 - 1965 – leading to the end of fighting between Somalia and Ethiopia;
 - 1980 – activities on creating the African Security Council, sending to Chad of the Organization of African Unity forces, which replaced Libyan forces there.
- In July 8, 2002 the organization ceased to exist and in its place was established the

African Union. An anniversary of establishing the Organization of African Unity is being celebrated as the Day of Africa [7].

The formation of African Union is associated with objectives of the part of African leaders to deepen the integration in order to carry out the ideas of pan-Africanism. During the summit of the Organization of African Unity in Algiers on 12-14 July 1999, Muammar al-Gaddafi declared that in his opinion the Organization of African Unity has exhausted its usefulness and in its place should be established an organization that can ensure the acceleration of the integration. He recalled also the idea of building the United States of Africa, but by most of the leaders it was recognized as too far-reaching. However, a need of establishing the cooperation on new principles was accepted. In July 11, 2000 in Lomé a meeting was held of the Assembly of Heads of the State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, during which the statutes of new organization was signed. On May 26, 2001 the Constitutive Act of the African Union entered into force. July 9, 2002 was the first day of functioning of the new organization [10].

In order to assure security on the continent, the Peace and Security Council was appointed within the UA. The Council is a working constantly body, which ensures rapid response in crisis situations on the continent. The basic competence of the Council include counteracting disputes and conflicts, and the politics which may seek to commitment of crimes against humanity, as well as carrying out tasks in building and strengthening the peace in Africa. Out of many functions, which were assigned to the Council, the greater attention should be given to the fact that it has the right to send peacekeeping and observation missions, as well as to determinate moments of armed conflict [9].

Objectives of the Organization:

- promotion of democratic solutions on the continent;
- promotion of economic and social development of Member States;
- fight against poverty and corruption;
- popularization and protection of human rights;
- actions in favor of political and economic integration of the continent (among others single Afro currency);
- common parliament;
- central bank;
- common court;
- actions in favor of ending conflicts on the African continent, and in the future counteracting them;

The African Union is intended to promote principles and democratic institutions (unlike the Organization of African Unity, about which it is said that was a club of dictators). To a greater extent protect human rights on the African continent and to implement mechanisms of

exerting mutual influence to end the armed conflict, and in the future to prevent them, to create and maintain general-continental market (according to the global trend in order to form large economic blocks). It is also supposed to limit the trade exchange with former colonial powers for the exchange within the continent (way out of addiction) and to attract foreign capital [10].

3. AFRICAN SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR ROLE IN SHAPING THE SECURITY

The 1990s of the 20th century have brought activations of subregional institutions to ensure security in the Africa region. These include among others:

1. ECOWAS – *Economic Community of West African States* (1975). The primary objective of ECOWAS is to create the economic and monetary union, covering all West African States, by gradual integration on different levels of the economic activity, as well as in the political, social and cultural sphere. The main decision-making body of the community is the Authority of Heads of the State and Government, which is responsible for implementation of the statutory objectives of the Organization, laying out the directions of its development and control of adopted provisions. ECOWAS stressed the existence of strong connections between peace and security, and opportunities for socio-economic development. Actively takes part in ensuring security in the region. Measures have been taken to create subregional peacekeeping force within the African forces (African Standby Forces) [11].
2. SADC – *Southern African Development Community*, established in 1980. The objective of the organization is to unify economic policy, truce solving conflicts, combat all forms of harassment, as well as national and international persecutions, to strengthen economic, social and political bonds. The result was among others development of road transport infrastructure and railway between Member States [7, p. 45].
3. AMU – *The Arab Maghreb Union* – The Organization brings together the Member States of the Maghreb region (determination applied by Arabs to the region of North-Western Africa). The Union was established during the second summit of Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia leaders, which was organized in Marrakech. The Treaty appointing the Union was signed on February 17, 1989. Programming documents assumed gradual deepening economic cooperation and creating the common market, promotion of cultural cooperation, progressive approximation of the political and security sphere. Mechanisms of agreeing on the cooperation were based on a few institutions. Presidential Council in the organization became the highest decision-making body [12].
4. CEN-SAD – *Community of Sahel-Saharan States*, established in 1998 from the initiative of the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi. Its objectives include: removing barriers in the movement of persons, goods, services and capital between Member States, promotion of the trade, establishing the economic union through harmonization of economy in the field of agriculture, industry, electricity, and investment. In addition, in 2008 the Intervention Forces of Sahel and Sahara were established. They

constitute a defensive pact, which supposed to intervene in case of the outbreak of conflict between two members or external attack on one of them [9, p. 45].

5. IGAD – *Intergovernmental Authority on Development*, established in 1996 as the successor of the International Organization of Drought and Development, created in 1986. Despite the great defeat of drought in the 1970s and 1980s of the 20th century (and it was a caused of founding the IGAD), a shortage of the drinking water is one of the most important problems, with which members must face. One of the greatest achievements of the organization is contribution to peace in Sudan in 2005 [7, p. 56].
6. EAC – *East African Community*, established by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in 1967, fallen in 1977, re-established under a signed Treaty on November 30, 1999 in Arusha (Tanzania). The East African Community in its aims and tasks is focused above all to the achievement of economic objectives. Integration process, formulated in adopted parts of the strategy for consecutive periods of five years, has led to adoption of agreements establishing the Customs Union. The EAC institution acting for development of subregional strategy to strengthen the peace and security is the Centre for Studies of the Peace, conducting such initiatives as: early warning system against threats, methods of conflict resolution, raw material conflicts, preventing proliferation of light weapon and armaments [3, p. 75].
7. COMESA – *Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa* – the largest in Africa grouping of economic integration, established under the terms of the Treaty signed on November 5, 1993 in Kampala (Uganda). As a part of COMESA, in the cooperation with other subregional organizations (above all, EAC and IGAD) to resolve the major threats to security in Eastern and Southern Africa, initiated the implementation of research program on the role of economic factor as an element conditioning formation of antagonisms and contradictions of conflict nature [13].

3. CONCLUSIONS

The end of the cold war has brought Africa visible limitation in the involvement of outside powers, which was associated with false hopes for ceasing the escalation in conflicts. However, actions of the UN and other organizations lead to destabilization of the political systems and spread of conflicts.

The last decades have brought a gradual process of mitigate conflicts associated with huge costs and disorganized State. There has been a phenomenon of fallen States, as a new element restricting the security. Multitude of subregional organizations was perceived as a possibility of effective prevention of conflicts, for simultaneous economic growth and facilitation in functioning of the poorer countries.

As a part of the reconstruction process of regional institutions, African leaders have taken the effort to create an effective system of conflict resolution and assuring security. The OJJ\UA actions had a positive effect on shaping the awareness and responsibility for the region among its inhabitants.

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(Received 14 June 2017; accepted 14 July 2017)