

**TC**  
**ISTANBUL COMMERCE UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND AFRICAN STUDIES**

**A Master's Thesis Entitled:**

**Role of Regional Organizations and Institutional Think-Tanks in Peace and Conflict  
Resolution: Case Studies of IGAD and ACCORD in South Sudan**

**Submitted to the Graduate Institute as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Master of Arts Degree in International Relations and African Studies**

**By**

**Billy Agwanda Nyadera**

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**Supervisor: Dr. Başak Özoral**

**August 2020**

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T.C. İSTANBUL TİCARET  
ÜNİVERSİTESİ

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**MASTER'S THESIS APPROVAL FORM**

The thesis entitled “**Role of Regional Organizations and Institutional Think-Tanks in Peace and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies of IGAD and ACCORD in South Sudan**” of Billy Agwanda, the graduate student at the International Relations and African Studies postgraduate program has been accepted as the Master's Thesis by majority of votes/ unanimity of votes by the jury formed by the decision of the Board of Directors of the Graduate School dated **23.06.2020** and numbered **2020-510/02**.

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- ii. I have presented all visual, auditory and written information and results in accordance with scientific ethics.
- iii. I refer to the relevant works in accordance with scientific norms in case the works of others are used.
- iv. I cited all the works I cited as a source.
- v. I have not made any tampering with the data used.
- vi. I have not submitted any part of this thesis at this university or another university as another thesis.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis investigates the role of regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks in conflict resolution and peacebuilding through the analysis of South Sudan conflict. This is important because the United Nations which has been traditionally seen as the international peacekeeping body, is increasingly granting more autonomy to regional bodies to oversee conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes. This thesis argues that these institutions are particularly suitable in the context of conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa because they have better capacity to examine and understand regional and internal dynamics of conflicts. Secondly, regional organizations are less likely to be considered neo-colonial in nature and thus, are easily accepted as impartial mediators. The thesis also argues that Think-Tanks are critical to peacebuilding by providing essential research and training to mediators and civil societies engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

# CONTENT

<b>Academic and Ethical Rules Declaration of Conformity .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Regional Organizations and the UN Charter .....	4
1.2 Background of Regional Organizations and Think-Tanks in Africa .....	6
1.2.1 Regional Organizations .....	6
1.2.2 Institutional Think-Tanks.....	10
1.3 Structure of the Study .....	12
1.4 Research Questions .....	13
1.5 Significance of the study .....	13
1.6 Problem Statement .....	14
1.7 Research Methodology .....	15
1.8 Theoretical Framework: Neoliberal Institutionalism .....	16
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Capability of Regional Bodies in Conflict Management .....	18
2.2 Constraints Facing Regional Bodies in Conflict Management .....	20
2.3 Conflict Management Resolution Mechanisms .....	21
2.4 Institutional Think-Tanks and Conflict Resolution.....	24
<b>3 CONFLICT IN AFRICA.....</b>	<b>26</b>
3.1 Conflict Trends in Africa .....	27
3.2 Overview of Underlying Causes of Conflict in Africa .....	31
3.2.1 Natural Resources .....	31
3.2.2 Are Territorial Borders to Blame?.....	32
3.2.3 Religion and Ethnicity .....	33
3.2.4 Inequality .....	34
3.2.5 Collapse of state/ government.....	34
3.2.6 Economic Decline .....	34
<b>4 CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTH SUDAN BY IGAD AND ACCORD .....</b>	<b>36</b>

4.1	Actors in South Sudan Conflict .....	36
4.1.1	Sudan's People Liberation Movement/Army.....	36
4.1.2	Sudan's People Liberation Movement in Opposition .....	37
4.2	Overview of Conflict in South Sudan (2013-2018) .....	37
4.3	Conflict Narratives .....	40
4.3.1	Struggle for Political Power .....	41
4.3.2	Access to Arms .....	41
4.3.3	Natural Resources .....	42
4.3.4	Ethnicity .....	44
4.3.5	Role of Sudan.....	45
4.4	Conflict Resolution Efforts by IGAD in South Sudan.....	45
4.5	ACCORD Partnership in Peacebuilding Initiatives in South Sudan.....	48
4.6	Weaknesses of IGAD Peace Processes .....	53
4.7	Time For Alternative Peace Approaches?.....	56
<b>5</b>	<b>ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>60</b>
5.1	Strengths of Regional Organizations in Conflict Resolution .....	62
5.2	Challenges Facing Regional Organizations in Conflict Resolution.....	63
5.3	Conclusion .....	65
5.4	REFERENCES .....	66



## **List of Figures**

**Figure 1:** African States Membership to Regional Organizations

**Figure 2:** Conflict Trends in Africa

**Figure 3:** Total Conflict Fatalities vs Population Growth from 1989-2017

**Figure 4:** Seven countries with highest total fatalities from 2001 to 2017 vs. rest of Africa

**Figure 5:** Displacement in South Sudan (2012-2018)

**Figure 6:** South Sudan Regional Boundaries

**Figure 7:** South Sudan Peace Negotiations and Violence

## **List of Tables**

**Table 1:** Regional Organizations in Africa

**Table 2:** Leading African Think-Tanks 2019

**Table 3:** ACCORD peacebuilding programmes in South Sudan

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

One of the dominant features of human societal transformation processes, is the presence of conflict that ushers in different eras in human history. From the historical wars waged between empires to modern Westphalian states, conflict remains a key determinant of how our societies are organized and function. As human societies continue to evolve, it has become an agenda of national governments, regional and international organizations or institutions to prevent conflict and institute peace that facilitates social, political and economic development.

The historical footprints of two famous conflicts (World War 1 and 2), demonstrate that unabated conflict in contemporary world will not only lead to extensive loss of lives or property but rather, has the potential to end human civilization and existence. This existential threat posed by modern forms of conflict is largely due to ground-breaking inventions and innovations in modern warfare technology and war tactics.

The vivid experiences of World War 1 and subsequent failure of the League of Nations to deter World War 2, influenced the global community of nations to shift strategy in the prevention and resolution of conflicts by establishing the United Nations (UN) in 1948 (Meisler, 2011). As the largest international organization, UN was equipped and mandated with the responsibility to secure global peace and security (Conte, 2017).

But, even more precisely, this thesis recognizes that the idea of the role of institutions in conflict resolution dates to the influence of the Concert of Europe in 1814 (Lascurettes, 2017: 2-3). The Concert of Europe was a platform that great European powers at the time (United Kingdom, Austria, Russia, France (from 1815), Prussia, Germany (from 1871) and Italy (from 1871) would mediate amongst themselves solutions to European conflict and reiterate the importance of using force only as a last resort (Fenton, 2017). Former president of the United States; Franklin Roosevelt, used the Concert as the framework in designing the consortium of great

powers that transformed into the modern-day United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Lascurettes, 2017).

Whereas the United Nations has considerably done a commendable work in maintaining international peace, the nature of conflicts has significantly transformed and as such, conflict remains a constant threat to societal order. Since the end of Cold War, conflicts have increasingly metamorphosed from inter-state to intra-state conflicts that oftenly lead to serious national and regional security threats (Crawford, 2016; Mantoya, 2016; Kacowicz and Press-Barnathan, 2016). This category of threats has further been compounded by other forms of insecurities such as transnational crimes and global terrorism since 9/11. Outlawed and criminal groups or organizations tend to exploit existing insecurities to establish their organizations that operate regionally.

However, the existing volatility of the international system and the limitations of UN as an international guarantor of peace and security, has influenced states to establish other regional and sub-regional organizations. This is because of the need for additional support in solving issues that are conflictual between or within states. The contemporary international system has posed very serious challenges to the effectiveness of the UN in maintaining international order (Luck, 2006; Fink, 1995). For instance, the increasing practice of labelling conflicts as acts of terrorism and subsequent adoption of counter-terrorism measures has led to the neglect of the underlying factors that drive conflicts (Nyadera, 2019). This has extensively reduced the space needed for conflict resolution as witnessed in the experiences of Libya, Cameroon, Syria and Yemen. In all the cases, respective governments exploited state monopoly over force, to crush political opposition in the name of counterterrorism leading to protracted internal conflicts.

Secondly, geopolitical rivalries have become facets of protracted conflicts between regional and global powers who pursue different interests and oftenly support different proxies in a conflict. Thirdly, the tendency of states to panic over displacement of people fleeing conflict has led to closer of national borders to refugees (Rheindorf and Wodak, 2018; Freedman, 2016; Martin, 2016) thereby complicating further the mandate of the UN. Fourth, UN is under increased pressure for humanitarian assistance while the resources at its disposal remains very limited to effectively respond to conflicts (Weiss, 2018). Finally, the contemporary experiences or legacies of military intervention and regime changes in the name of trans-national counterterrorism, civilian protection or ouster of rogue regimes has established deep distrust of interventionism thereby negatively impacting peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes. As such, existing under the sub-structures of international organizations such as the UN, regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks have emerged as key actors and alternative viable frameworks for collective security to manage crisis in both long-terms and short-terms (Elfversson, 2015; Arriola, 2013; Wulf, 2009).

During the last four decades, internal conflicts have been prevalent in the African continent. These conflicts have had immense social, political and economic impacts that in many occasions, have portrayed the continent in negative image at the international system. There is indeed no shortage of academic literature covering majority of these conflicts in addition to media coverage through video documentaries and pictures that have captured different phases of conflicts in the continent (Daudu *et al.*, 2019; Bienen, 2019; Cappelli *et al.*, 2018). The prevalence and trends of conflicts in the continent have often led to questions such as, is there a role that regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks can play in the maintenance of regional peace and security and if so, are they effective?

This question as will be discussed in the later sections, has been subjected to significant debate (Nolte, 2018; Nathan, 2016; McDonald, 2015). One view is that these types of organizations have a limited role in maintaining peace and security and even when they do, it is usually in pursuit of their own socio-political or economic interests (Laakso, 2005). The other view is that regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks do not only have a role to play but also, they have emerged as viable frameworks for the maintenance of peace and security (Elfversson, 2015).

### **1.1 Regional Organizations and the UN Charter**

In order to examine the role of regional organizations in conflict and resolution of peace, it is imperative to highlight some terminologies such as region, conflict resolution, regional organizations and UN Chapter VIII.

Different definitions have been forwarded on what qualifies as a region. Kelsen (1951) opines regions to be constitutive of geographical proximity and continuity. However, other scholars such as Shayegan (2001) do not consider regional proximity as a prerequisite and argues that it is only important to limit the organizational measures under regional organization to a specified region in the agreement. In other words, Shayegan (2001) argues that regional organizations are countries with shared interests. While Chapter VIII of the UN does not offer any definition as to what a regional organization is, the organization nonetheless adopts the view that any international organisation that is not universal and impossible for all UN member states to join is a regional organization.

Consequently, the UN recognizes both regional organizations whose member states share the same geographical proximity such as AU, and, other organizations whose members do not belong to an integrated regional space such as the Arab League as regional organizations (Shayegan, 2001).

The increasing use of mediation as a tool of conflict resolution to manage conflicts in both short-terms and long-terms has seen regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks play a more critical role in conflicts. The recognition of the advantages of having common approaches and cooperation; value of sharing experiences; and, the need to avoid harmful competition in the management of conflicts influenced the United Nations to initiate structured processes of consultation (Peck, 1998). Article 54 of the UN Charter states:

“Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.” (UN Charter).

Even though Chapter V of the UN Charter primarily mandates the maintenance of international peace and security with the Security Council, Chapter VIII provides the mandate of maintaining regional peace and security to regional organizations. In Article 33(1) of Chapter VI, the UN requires that all actors or parties involved in a given dispute that endangers international peace and security to first seek a solution through negotiation, mediation, judicial settlement, enquiry, conciliation, resort to regional organizations or other available peaceful avenues of their own choosing.

Article 52 (1) also stipulates that no provision in the UN Charter is to preclude the establishment or existence of regional organizations in addressing issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security as appropriate for regional action. Additionally, the Article encourages member states of regional organizations to take all measures that lead to the attainment of pacific resolutions of disputes before referring them to the UN Security Council.

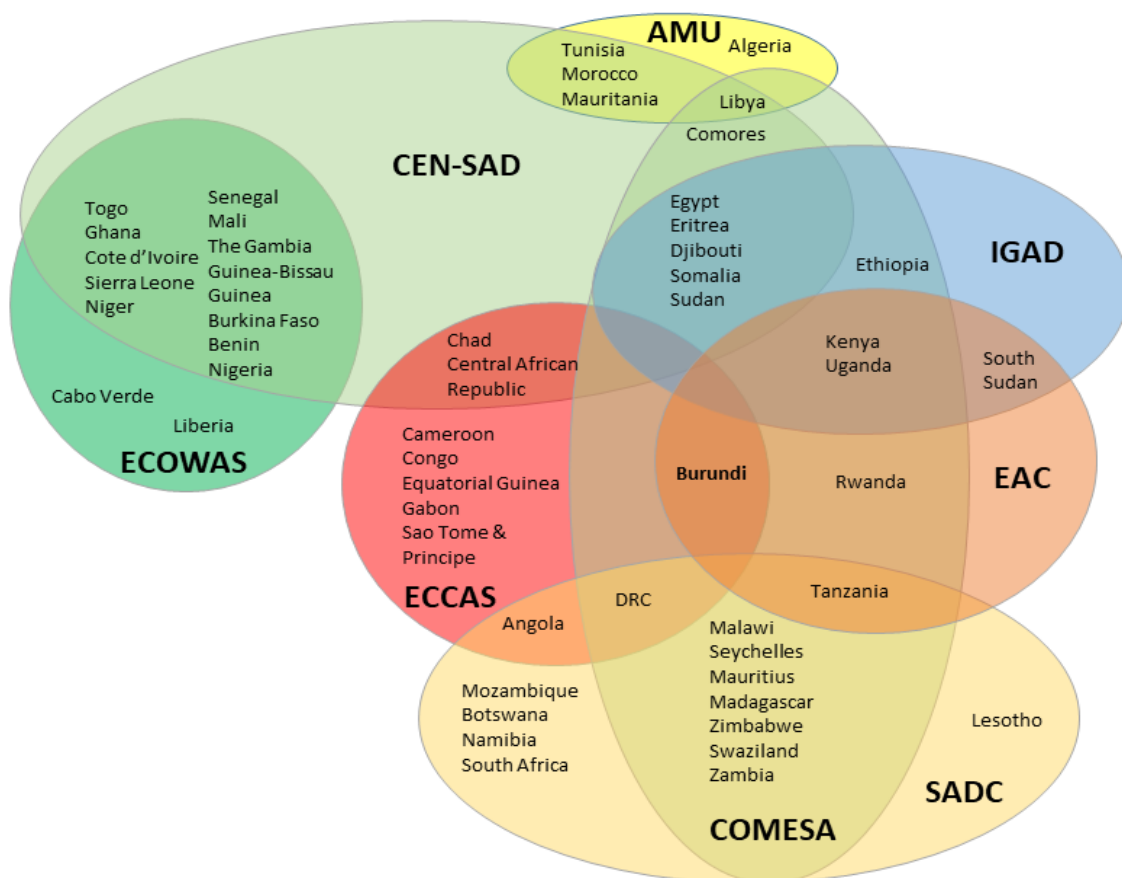
Regarding the enforcement actions of regional organizations, Article 51 in Chapter VII is cognizant of the right of individual or collective self-defence. As such, Article 53 (1) of Chapter VIII documents that the Security Council shall utilize regional organizations where appropriate for enforcement action under its authority. However, regional organizations will not undertake enforcement actions without the authorisation of the Security Council which must be kept fully informed of the initiatives undertaken or in consideration for execution by regional organizations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

## **1.2 Background of Regional Organizations and Think-Tanks in Africa**

### **1.2.1 Regional Organizations**

Today, Africa perhaps hosts the highest number of regional organizations than any other continent and this is not merely by coincidence but rather, represents a deeply founded vision in the form of Pan-Africanism (Dinka and Kennes, 2007: 5). This Pan-African ideology has been a unifying factor behind African states' embrace of regionalism. Indeed, virtually all African states belong to one or more regional integration body. Among the existing regional blocs, this study highlights five major organizations that cover the regions recognised by the African Union as the major regions in the continent. These bodies include; ECOWAS (West Africa), ECCAS (Central Africa), IGAD (Eastern Africa), AMU (North Africa) and SADC (Southern Africa).

**Figure 1:** African States Membership to Regional Organizations



**Source:** Capon (2019)

Notably, regional organizations in the continent were established during two discernible waves. The first wave lasted between the 1970s to early 1980s while the second wave covered majorly the 1990s. These waves either corresponded with changes in the international system or were a consequence of the initiatives adopted by respective member states. During the first wave, the period marked the rebirth of post-independence efforts for African integration. This wave can also be examined as a response by African countries to the success of the European Community (now European Union) following its expansion after Ireland, United Kingdom and Denmark joined the organization. The second wave from the 1990s was more of a reform phase that focused on expanding the roles of the already existing regional organizations rather than



establishing new ones. It also coincided with the consolidation of the EU single market system and the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

According to Adebajo (2004), ECOWAS was established as a platform for economic cooperation for West African countries. However, several scholars (Aboagye, 2004; Adebajo, 2002; Berman, 2000) have highlighted the transformation of the bloc to include mandate over conflict resolution and management. One underlying rationale for expanding the scope of ECOWAS to encompass conflict resolution is that, by uniting the member state (neighbours), it therefore becomes easier to adopt multilateral solutions to security and deter organized crime and proliferation of small arms.

**Table 1: Regional Organizations in Africa**

No	Name of Regional Organization	Establishment
1	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	1975
2	Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)	1983
3	Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)	1986
4	Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)	1988
5	Southern African Development Community (SADC)	1992
6	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)	1994
7	Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)	1998
8	East African Community (EAC)	2000

**Source.** Author Compilation

According to Berman and Sams (2000: 203), ECCAS was established in 1983 incorporating member states from Central Africa as a customs union. However, in 2000, a Mutual Assistance

Pact was adopted by ECCAS obligating member states to support each other in case of an aggression or to prepare for such through joint military operations (Mubiala, 2003: 12). Another protocol; Peace and Security Council for Central Africa (COPAX), emphasising on upholding the sovereignty of member states as well as common approaches to issues such as refugees, arms trafficking and transnational crime was adopted (ECCAS, 2000).

IGADD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development) which was founded in 1986 was renamed IGAD in 1996 (Nanni, 2016). Like ECOWAS in West Africa, its founding objectives were principally to advance economic development, but, this has since evolved to include promotion of peace and stability by creating mechanisms through which interstate and intra-state conflicts can be abated in the region. Møller (2009: 11) takes note that the agreement establishing IGAD also had provisions on mediating conflicts and facilitate the repatriation and reintegration of refugees.

In 1989, Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya founded AMU to promote peace and security, justice and equity (Brunel, 2008). However, several scholars (Union, 2019; Zunes, 1995) have highlighted AMU as probably the weakest regional bloc in Africa partly due to the constant rivalry between Algeria and Morocco over the Western Sahara (Sahrawi) dispute.

SADC was established from the former Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) as an economic body that aimed to counter the South African apartheid regime by reducing the region's economic dependence on South Africa. Also, the end of Cold War transformed Southern Africa from a region previously shackled in a conflict structure into a more subtle 'security community' (Ngoma, 2003). As such, Omari and Macaringue (2007) argues that these conditions were ideal for the establishment of a new and strong regional organization capable of standing-up to the South African apartheid regime (Nathan, 2016).

After the collapse of the apartheid regime in 1994, South Africa gained membership to the regional body followed by Mauritius in 1995, Seychelles and DRC in 1998 and Madagascar in 2005.

### **1.2.2 Institutional Think-Tanks**

The emergence of institutional Think-Tanks in Africa was extensively influenced by the political context in which the continent found itself during both the colonial era and post-independence Africa. The political trends during these periods were shaped by the question of how power was concentrated across states and, the influence of external actors. Among the colonial powers with massive colonial empire in Africa were France and UK who adopted different colonial policies (direct rule, indirect rule and assimilation) to govern their colonies. These colonial policies offered no or minimal space for the African elites in the formulation of policies. As such, in order to govern their colonies, expand production and improve the lives of their settler populations, both the French and British established research institutions. Rathgeber (1988: 401) documents that:

“These [colonial] institutes took a highly focused approach, usually concentrating on agriculture and health, particularly on the needs of settler populations and on the improvement of export-oriented cash crops. For example, the British opened the botanical research station in Lagos in 1893 and by the 1930s they had established an extensive network of research stations and experimental farms throughout the country. Emphasis was on the improvement of export crops such as palm oil and palm kernels, cotton, groundnuts, rubber, cocoa, etc. After the Second World War, perhaps in recognition of the declining days of the empire, there was an increased tendency to establish regional research institutes [...] Colonial research efforts were geared towards immediate needs and especially the provision of research support to the plantation economies. Cash crop agriculture was systematically

organised and colonial governments had little interest in improving the food crops grown by indigenous populations.”

After the end of colonial era, post-independence African governments restructured these research institutes by providing funding to promote domestic development for the African people. However, the dark era of authoritarianism that cut-across the continent during the 1970s and 1980s weakened the existing research institutes that were manipulated to legitimise governments in order to continue receiving government funding for their operational needs. Also, the structural adjustment programmes initiated by World Bank in the 1980s led to the closure of several research institutions. According to Scarritt (1971: 44):

“Many governments [...] neglected and declined to actively solicit the views and research inputs of national think tanks,<sup>12</sup> particularly as related to the primary areas of policy setting or policy prescriptions. While several social scientists continued to produce research that was relevant to policy-making purposes, such efforts have often been wilfully ignored. Where research has produced divergent views, it has usually been considered as subversive.

Evidence has also indicated that even when solicited by governments, the rate of adoption of recommendations made by social scientists was dismal.”

But, the failure of the structural adjustment programmes initiated by Brettonwood institutions in the early 1990s, influenced donors to change tact and focus on political reforms and good governance in the region by improving the existing democratic institutions, transparency and accountability of bureaucracies (Mkandawire, 2000). Research as a primary function of the government were transferred to non-state actors leading to the proliferation of foreign-funded independent Think-Tanks.

**Table 2:** Leading African Think-Tanks 2019

Africa Ranking	Name of Think-Tank	Global Ranking
1	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)	38
2	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)	56
3	African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)	67
4	South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA)	83
5	Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR)	85
6	African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS)	101
7	Institute for Security Studies (ISS)	114
8	Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC)	139
9	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)	159

Source: <https://www.africaportal.org/features/african-think-tanks-make-their-mark/>

### 1.3 Structure of the Study

This study adopts a funnel-shaped analytical structure from broad to a specific context and is organised into five chapters. *Chapter one* discusses the introduction of the study; background of regional institutions and Think-Tanks in Africa, the research design; significance of the research; and, the research methodology.

*Chapter two* examines the key definitions of conflict and other related concepts in peace and conflict resolution. The chapter also provides an in-depth literature review of similar studies

and attempts to analyse some of the most prevalent social, political, economic and cultural causes or triggers of conflict in Africa.

*Chapter three* examines conflict in South Sudan by examining the actors, causes of conflict and conflict duration. Additionally, the section examines the conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes by Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Africa Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD).

*Chapter four* provides a critical analysis of regional organizations and Think-Tanks in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The chapter explores the mechanisms they apply in conflict resolution by emphasizing on their unique structures, merits and the demerits in resolution of conflicts.

*Chapter five* discusses the findings of the study, recommendations and conclusion.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- a) What are the roles of regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks in conflict resolution?
- b) What is the role of IGAD and ACCORD in conflict resolution in South Sudan?
- c) What are the challenges facing regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks in conflict resolutions?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study seeks to contribute to literature on peace and conflict resolution in Africa using contemporary data that reflects the new realities and dynamics in the continent. It examines how regional organizations and conflict resolution Think-Tanks have transformed or emerged as viable frameworks that facilitate the quick resolution of conflicts and further support post-

conflict peacebuilding programmes that support the development of human security in the continent.

Whereas there is significant research on the role of regional organizations in peace and conflict resolution, specific research on the role of IGAD and ACCORD remains limited, as such, this study also aims to address the existing literature gap on the topic. The study provides a coherent and comprehensive understanding of the role and the operational structure of these two institutions in the management of conflicts and post-conflict peacebuilding. Importantly, the study attempts to provide recommendations that can be utilized by both IGAD and ACCORD in mediations of conflict in a manner that addresses both contemporary and future challenges. The outcome of this research provides a valuable reference to experts on conflict resolution, policy makers, researchers and students interested in peace and conflict resolution in Africa and beyond.

## **1.6 Problem Statement**

Since the end of colonial era in Africa, the continent has experienced several low, medium and high intensity conflicts at both inter-state and intra-state level. Colonial legacies left behind disintegrated social, economic, cultural and political conditions that have perpetuated insecurity through weak human welfare and development. These challenges have been manifested in the post-independence weak institutional capacities of many African states that continue to struggle with high rates of poverty and low economic development.

South Sudan had been previously embroiled in one of the longest civil wars in the continent that was fought between the South Sudanese and North Sudanese (Arabs) until 2005 when South Sudan attained independence after a secession referendum vote. Nonetheless, the joy of independence did not last before South Sudan plunged into another deadly ethnic civil war that claimed thousands of lives and displaced millions internally and to neighbouring countries.

While the claim to sovereignty prevented many African states or the African Union from intervening through military power, the resolution of the conflict was subjected to diplomacy and mediation through IGAD as the regional organization mandated by member states to intervene in emergency political affairs and conflicts. Cognizant of the duration of the South Sudan conflict that spanned for over eight years characterized by intense fighting, this study examines the role played IGAD in the peace process.

Despite the numerous attempts during the resolution of the conflict, several peace deals that had been brokered by IGAD were violated by either parties involved in the conflict leading to further loss of human lives and humanitarian crisis. Consequently, the study will seek to explore the challenges that IGAD faces in conflict resolution. While the current revitalised peace agreement signed in 2018 has brought the conflict to a halt, there are still grievances expressed by the opposition led by Vice-president Riek Machar regarding the implementation of the peace deal. This thesis will therefore explore the role of regional organization as part of third-party actors in ensuring that peace deals are not only signed but also implemented comprehensively to avert any future outbreaks of conflict due to failure of implementing peace agreements.

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

This thesis adopts a qualitative case study design to analyse the role of regional organizations and Think-Tanks in conflict resolution. The advantage of qualitative analysis in research is its ability to allow a researcher to conduct in-depth and comprehensive analysis of a given subject and use it as a representation of a larger area of study.

Preference for qualitative method used by the researcher in this study is because it facilitates the collection of data on the views, opinions and perspectives of experts on conflict resolution. This study will make extensive use of secondary data that will be collected from several sources



that include but not limited to government reports, academic publications, media website information, workshop reports, online articles, IGAD, ACCORD, African Union and United Nations reports, textbooks and news update. These sources will help to give context analysis, literature review and critique of previous studies.

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework: Neoliberal Institutionalism**

As a theory of International Relations, this thesis adopts neoliberal institutionalism to explore the role of regional organizations and institutional Think-Tanks in conflict resolution. The theory focuses on the nexus between international cooperation and international institutions and its views go beyond the confines of realist notions that focus largely on interstate relations. Nonetheless, whereas neoliberal institutionalists are considered as the strongest opponents of realists, they do however agree on certain fundamental assumptions. These assumptions include states are the core actors in interstate relations; states are unitary and rational actors; and, that states also act based on their perceptions of self-interests (Baldwin, 1993).

Neoliberal institutionalism emphasize the idea that international institutions (both regional and international organizations), have significant role to play as they underly the nature of transnational relations (Stein, 2008). Proponents of this theory such as Chayes and Chayes (1993), view cooperation as rational and beneficial for states to facilitate resolution of issues. While focusing on the question of whether institutions matter, Mitchell (1994) argues that states by a great extent comply with the treaties or agreements which they make sometimes even without the need for enforcement mechanisms.

Keohane (1984) and Axelrod (1984) who coined the theory, argue that institutions such as the United Nations transformed the role of states in resolution of conflicts. Despite the inability of international institutions to transform anarchy as argued by realists, they nonetheless have the capacity to influence the behaviour of states through providing incentives for cooperation such as trade or sanctions (Navari, 2003). These arguments are particularly of great relevance when it comes to conflict resolution because it highlights the relations between states amidst an international environment that is characterised by anarchy. Put differently, neoliberal institutionalists argue that because of the nature of interaction within

international institutions, states often prefer to remain within such organizations. The need to cooperate also arises for the pursuit of common goals such as security and states tend to develop a preference for pursuing this goal because of the reduced cost benefits in comparison to pursuing security as unilateral actors.

The threat posed by conflict in South Sudan to regional security in terms of displacement of people to neighbouring countries, reduced economic interactions with South Sudan, and the general instability of the region is a common security threat. IGAD as a regional institution therefore provides a common platform through which regional states can collaborate to address conflict in South Sudan. The incentives and benefits between regional countries and South Sudan therefore fits well with the propositions of neoliberal institutionalists as have been discussed in this section.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Capability of Regional Bodies in Conflict Management**

The role of regional organization has quickly gained prominence in the last two decades partly due to the rapid changes taking place in the international arena. Nonetheless, this expanding role of regional organizations has sparked debate among scholars who have conducted studies regarding the efficacy of regional organizations in conflict resolution. Studies conducted by the proponents of regional organizations highlight the cultural, social and historical affinity of these institutions that enhance understanding of the conflicts and facilitate rapid response (Franke, 2006; Langinvainio and Reyes, 2006).

Secondly, Carment and Schnabel (2003) opine that conflicting parties are oftenly willing and more comfortable to address the contentious issues at the regional level as opposed to engaging with international organizations such as the United Nations or the International Court of Justice. Additionally, using the claim of state sovereignty, countries may resist external interventions out of the concern that external actors may exploit the opportunity to gain more influence and meddle in the internal affairs of the country (Bergenas, 2007).

A study by Enuka and Nwagbo (2016) regarding the limitations and capabilities of regional organizations as conflict managers argues that an increase in failed or disrupted states has led to regional instabilities going by the extent of civilian casualties and impact on economies. Consequently, this transformation in conflicts has put more pressure on global organizations leading to the incorporation of regional organizations as part of conflict resolution mechanisms. Enuka and Nwagbo (2016) emphasize that the shift of conflict from interstate to intra state has necessitated conflict management from the regional level that provides a deeper attention compared to global organizations such as the UN that has been overstretched with the international mandate to guarantee global peace and security. However, regional organizations

are also faced with operational hurdles that are not limited to internal rivalries between member states; lack of adequate resources; and the question of state sovereignty.

Additionally, the study noted that an analysis of the capacity of regional organizations such as ECOWAS and other regional organizations in the Great Lakes Region should be understood relative to other international organizations. In other terms, international organizations such as the UN have higher capacities in terms of experience, technical capacity, goodwill and skills. However, despite these glaring challenges, regional organizations have recorded significant successes because of their proximity and understanding of regional socio-political and economic dynamics.

In analysing historical land injustice and the mobilization of electoral violence in Kenya and Ivory Coast, Mitchell (2015) opines that regional organizations lack adequate capacity for conflict intervention as when compared to the UN or AU. Frere (2016) in support of this view still, ensuring regional peace and security does not comprehensively cover capacity as it is important that regional organizations be bound by common economic ties. Economic integration increases the capacity of regional organizations in terms of technical competencies, functional skills and adequate motivation for conflict management and resolution through lasting solutions.

Another study by Adebaio (2002) on the capacity of ECOWAS as a regional organization in conflict resolution in countries such as Gabon, Togo, Ivory Coast and Cameroon concludes that whereas conflicts may unite countries sharing the same experience, the cumulative capacity of regional organizations is hindered by lack of adequate technical capabilities such as lack of adequate experts on conflict training negotiators thereby leading to prolonged conflicts because of poor conflict resolutions.

## **2.2 Constraints Facing Regional Bodies in Conflict Management**

Regional organizations face a myriad of challenges when dealing with issues of peace and security. Bryon (1984) points out that one of the consistent themes in examining the challenge of regional organizations in conflict resolution is the inability to act boldly and decisively against global and regional powers. This is because more often than not, these regional organizations do not have the requisite political clout or the absent of adequate resources to conduct operations absent the support of these global or regional powers. According to Enuke and Nwagbo (2016), a regional hegemon can have the capacity to sustainably resist any pressure to support any action and still, if an action is authorized, it may still be in a position to jeopardise it directly or indirectly. For instance, the Organization of American States (OAS) has been unable to conduct any effective operation without the support of the United States. In East Africa, IGAD would face a daunting task mounting any operation in East Africa without the assistance of Kenya or Ethiopia while any regional arrangement in Asia may face a challenge in attempting to restrain the Japanese or Chinese behaviour.

According to Nathan (2010), the challenges experienced in conflict resolution processes by regional organizations can also stem from economic weaknesses. A majority of African countries still have underperforming economies, and this directly translates to poor funding of regional organizations. Lack of adequate funding therefore means that regional organizations are incapacitated to conduct effective and efficient operations including training of staff, deployment, negotiations or mediation that are critical in conflict resolution processes. This argument supports the argument by Enuke and Nwagbo (2016) that stronger economies have higher allocation of resources to peace and conflict resolution initiatives as compared to weaker economies. Adebaio (2016) therefore recommends that in order to avert this challenge to regional organizations in the developing parts of the world, the regional economic hegemons should shoulder more economic responsibility relative to financing of regional peace and

conflict resolution initiatives as demonstrated by Nigeria in the West African regional block; ECOWAS.

A study by (Diehl, 2008) also identifies weak regional states and ethnic conflicts as incapacitating regional organizations. The traditional understanding of the concept of sovereignty has always illuminated conflicts not in the regional context but rather more as an internal issue. Diehl (2008) therefore cites the hard-shell view of sovereignty as the reason behind the objection to any military intervention in conflict stroked areas such as Darfur in Sudan. Ethnic conflicts and weak states are key factors considered during intervention by other states independent from regional organizations. According to Zartman (2007), the intervention into Congo by neighbouring countries supporting different factions in the conflict rendered it difficult for regional organization to reach a consensus on intervening in the conflict.

Hansel (2002) identifies territorial disputes between states as a major hinderance to the operations of regional organizations in conflict resolution. Disputes involving territorial claims based on ethnicity, religion or historical claim make it difficult to find a compromise over those founded on defence concern or resources. This is very true for Africa that still suffers from the consequences of the 1884-85 Berlin Conference that partitioned the continent without any considerations for the historical affiliations of Africans in different regions.

### **2.3 Conflict Management Resolution Mechanisms**

According to Essuman-Johnson (2009: 410-11), conflict resolution is the elimination of the underlying causes of a given conflict with the consensus of the antagonists involved in the conflict. Therefore, conflict resolution process may take long, but the proximate aspects can be halted through an agreement between antagonists. Essuman-Johnson (2009) notes that resolution mechanisms may range from ad hoc or permanent committees or structures for conflict resolution depending on the power relations within a given region. According to Kieh

(2002) regional organizations may adopt three mechanisms in conflict resolution revolving around peace-making; peacekeeping; and, or, peace enforcement. Conflict resolution based on peace-making may adopt approaches or techniques such as negotiations, mediation, adjudication, arbitration or resolution inquiry. Peacekeeping involves a collective and legitimate intervention purposely to deter the resurgence or outbreak of violent conflicts between antagonistic parties.

Regional organizations which fall under the third parties in conflict resolution may either adopt mediation or peacekeeping forces. Nathan (2010) argues that mediation as a regional approach to conflict resolution is more effective because of regional organizations are the best likely to comprehend the local dynamics of conflicts and therefore are capable of making more informed mediation. Moreover, Aggad-Clerx and Desmidt (2017) argue that a mediation process led by regional organizations are important because they have a stronger incentive to resolve a given conflict as they are the direct beneficiaries of regional peace and stability.

A study by Dersso (2013) on conflict management highlights that mediation is a leading method of conflict resolution because it allows parties involved in a conflict to retain some elements of control during the process. As such, the use of mediation as a method of conflict resolution by either regional or International organizations facilitates better the cessation of hostilities and violence thereby minimising or reducing conflict casualties. Mediation gives opportunity to regional organizations to proceed swiftly and respond to conflicts as compared to international organizations because regional bodies are able to mobilize rapidly (William, 2013).

Enuka and Nwagbo (2016) reiterate that peace keeping is an important method of conflict management used by both regional and international organizations to respond to violent conflicts. These peacekeeping missions involved the deployment of armed forces contributed by member states of regional organizations to either prevent further escalation of violence or

stop it altogether (Ngunia, 2014). However, Wallensteen (2013) argues that peace keeping missions may not be always effective and, in some instances, have only acted to prolong conflicts. For instance, the Economic Community of West African States that was established in 1990 by the Anglophone ECOWAS member states intervened in the Liberian civil war for a decade between 1986-1996. As such, Brookings (2015) articulates that the deployment of peacekeeping forces by regional or international organizations can be effective in short term objectives such as stopping ongoing violence but lack the capabilities to facilitate long lasting peace, and reconciliation among the antagonists.

On negation as a tool of conflict resolution, Wallestein (2013) argues that it is imperative that certain variables are understood in advance before regional organizations or institutions engage in conflict negotiation. One of these underlying variables is the ideological differences that may be driving the different stances adopted by the antagonistic parties in conflict. Additionally, Gray (1989) identifies regional bodies while engaging in conflict negotiations must undertake comprehensive decision, structural and process analysis. This therefore enables the regional bodies to understand the structural role of power between conflicting parties, and, what constitutes a win-win position for each party involved in the conflict. Regarding the process analysis in negation, Frere (2016) argues that it is important for negotiators to comprehend the context of the regional negotiation and the impact this has on the choices and decision-making processes of the actors in conflict. The process analysis accounts for the impact of personality influences, situational pressures, other interaction factor and how these impact on the negotiation behaviour and outcome. For instance, Klaus and Mitchell (2015) cite the Kenyan 2007-2008 postal violence and how the personality of former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's personality prevailed over the Kenyan government and the opposition to agree on a formula for power sharing under a coalition government.



## **2.4 Institutional Think-Tanks and Conflict Resolution**

Think-Tanks have become an essential part of the policy research organizations by playing crucial roles in the processes of policy formulation. The differential qualities from other organizations such as autonomy in research discourse and analysis; organizational independence; high degree of expertise; strong policy orientation and the ability to influence public opinion renders these institutions ideal mechanisms in conflict resolution. McGann (2007) emphasizes that these institutions are permanent and provide an important network for experts who share common values and belief in an area of concern. Moreover, the institutions are primarily driven by public interest and therefore act as an independent voice that participates in critical discussions and form opinion that are reliable, accessible and easily understandable by policymakers and the public.

The very nature of institutional Think-Tanks makes them a crucial component of institutional frameworks that supports and mitigates sustainable peace. Given the nature of conflicts today, Think-Tanks can be peace brokers or conflict promoters. They can provide early conflict warning indicators; continue with post-conflict peace-building initiatives; bridge the gap between political institutions or actors in conflict; engage in capacity building; and, due their pool of experts, identify the best or ripe moment to intervene or seek reconciliation in conflicts.

The emergence and growth of majority of Think-Tanks in Africa can be attached to the need of developing a better understanding of what are the prerequisite factors to influence successful growth and development (McGann, 2017). This also marked the shift from the traditional ‘one-size fits-all’ mentality. African states have begun to appreciate and realise that each country is unique and therefore the need to have a Think-Tank fit to address the needs of the country within its specific context. This recognition prevented ideal conditions for Think-Tanks to emerge at the national level to explore extensively customised policy options that can meet the needs of the country within the contest of its own environment. As such, African Think-Tanks

emerged to act as links between the governments, businesses and civil societies. Gradually, some have developed into regional and continental Think-Tanks.

According to Pautz (2012), there is an important interdependence of ideas and material conditions that influence the behaviour of Think-Tanks as critical components of state-society relations that surpass elites and ideas. Intellectuals who are the main actors in Think-Tanks play active roles in guiding the relations between civil societies and the political society (Pautz, 2011). In conflict resolution, the discourses and influence that is generated by intellectuals due to their positions in the society, class and connections with both state actors and the civil society is very important. Owing to their intellectual capacities and cooperation with different actors in the society enables them to influence policy ideas, identify areas of conflict and promote the agenda of both the state and other actors (Parmar, 2004), who in the context of conflict resolution, can be opposition groups and civil societies.

### **3 CONFLICT IN AFRICA**

War and conflict have always been part and parcel of Africa's social, political and cultural composition. Historical records on the continent's pre-colonial past underline that often, conflict was a product of the constant struggles initiated by African societal structures to maximize population. This involved migratory movements from one region to another that was met by resistance from other similar indigenous African communities leading to violent encounters. Moreover, these confrontations were also sustained by the desire to control the physical environment such as pasture, arable land and water resources. Ultimately, increased contact with external influences led to adoption of new technologies and warfare strategies that has ended up fuelling violence and ushering a new phase in the military history of Africa.

Today, recent conflicts in the continent have manifested extreme violence and brutality that never seem to end. Most combatants in African conflicts do not have clear goals, entrenched ideology and unlike in the tradition sense of warfare, are even less concerned about laying siege and taking over cities. On the contrary, they have a higher preference of fighting from the bushes, valleys and forests where it is easier to commit crimes. There is little or no concern on winning converts, instead criminal groups, rebels or terrorist organizations are contented in forceful recruitment of fighters, arming the new combatants with guns or other crude weapons and making them commit the murders on behalf of the conflict leaders. From the Boko Haram conflict, war in Somalia, to the deep wars fought deep in the forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo, this has been the general trend.

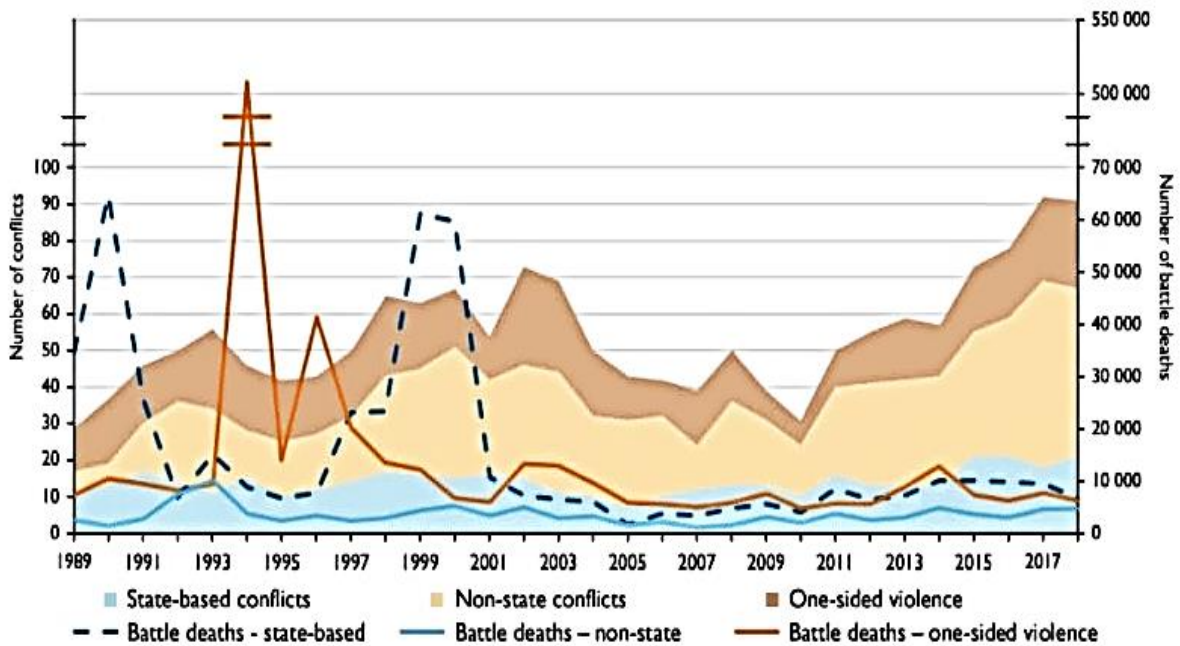
There has been a decline in the classical liberation movements experienced in the continent during the colonial era and in the post-independence African struggle for political reforms. The proliferation of conflict has become more violent and messier and does not represent classical conflict but rather something that is more of a pandemic opportunism of heavily armed banditry. Conflict has metamorphosised from the common soldier vs soldier confrontation to a

more serious soldiers vs civilian conflict. Even still, many of those involved in battlefield are not just fighters or rebels with a mission, rather, fighters on either side have become predators involved in war crimes such as rape, torture and kidnappings of women, young girls and boys. In today's conflicts in Africa, spreading terror is not just an end but rather, a means of conflict. There is a big contrast between African leaders who used conflict as a means of political struggle for independence and the faces behind conflicts in the continent today. African leaders in the yesteryears were fighting to end colonialism, apartheid or tyranny and the faces behind the conflict movements were charismatic, intelligent and charming in ways that permitted them to wield persuasive rhetoric amongst their followers. For instance, the contributions of rebel leaders such as John Garang eventually culminated in South Sudan autonomy; organised rebel groups in Congo waged war against Africa's most corrupt person and dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in 1996; and, even Robert Mugabe was once a guerrilla leader who led the armed struggle for Zimbabwean independence.

### **3.1 Conflict Trends in Africa**

Africa continues to experience conflicts and violence across different regions. During the last six decades, the continent has experienced severe civil wars claiming millions of human lives, displacing more and destroying properties worth billions of dollars. Africa has experienced the Biafran war in the 1960s; the Rwandan Genocide; the Ethiopia-Eritrea War; the Somali Civil War; South Sudan Civil War; the Anglophone Cameroon Conflict; and, other several political uprisings such as the Arab Springs in Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and political violence in Libya. The trends in conflict in Africa can be categorised into two broad groups; state-based conflicts and non-state conflicts.

**Figure 2: Conflict Trends in Africa**



*Source: UCDP/PRIO database*

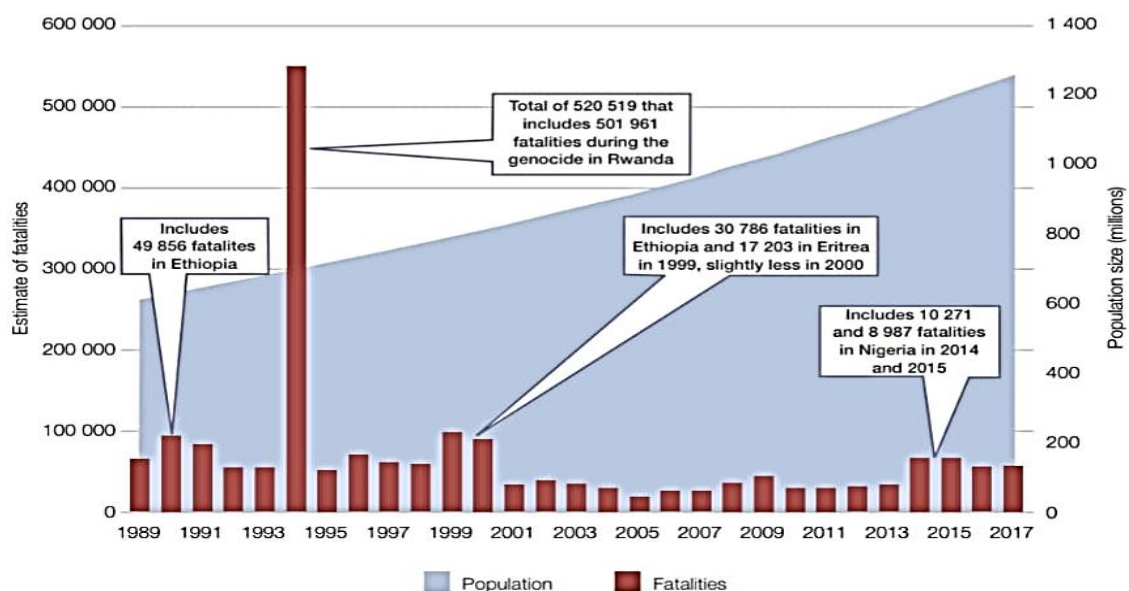
The state-based conflicts are those that involve states or governments as one of the actors in the conflict and are the most commonly given more attention by the international community given that they tend to be deadly. In 2017, 18 conflicts were categorised as state-based conflicts in Africa. Whereas this marked a decrease from previously reported 21 conflicts in 2016, it remains higher than reported conflicts a decade ago. Moreover, aside from the increase in conflicts, there has also been a sharp increase in the number of countries in which conflicts are ongoing. While there were 12 conflicts taking place in 10 countries in 2007, this figure rose further to 18 conflicts in 13 countries by 2017.

Non-state conflict are those conflicts fought between different groups that are not related to the state. Since 2014, non-state conflicts have increased from 24 to peak 50 non-state conflicts by 2017 making Africa the continent with the highest number of non-state conflicts. Nonetheless, in several countries where non-state conflicts existed, state-based conflicts were also experienced. This suggests that indeed conflict breeds conflict in the sense that countries

experiencing conflict or those with a recent history of conflict are at a higher risk to experience more conflict.

Overtime, conflict has transformed into a complex phenomenon as the numbers of actors have considerably increased. The number of extremist organizations or rebel groups have increased and oftenly disintegrate into additional armed groups. Secondly, sections of the extremist groups have established transnational links through organised crimes and terrorism.

**Figure 3:** Total Conflict Fatalities vs Population Growth from 1989-2017



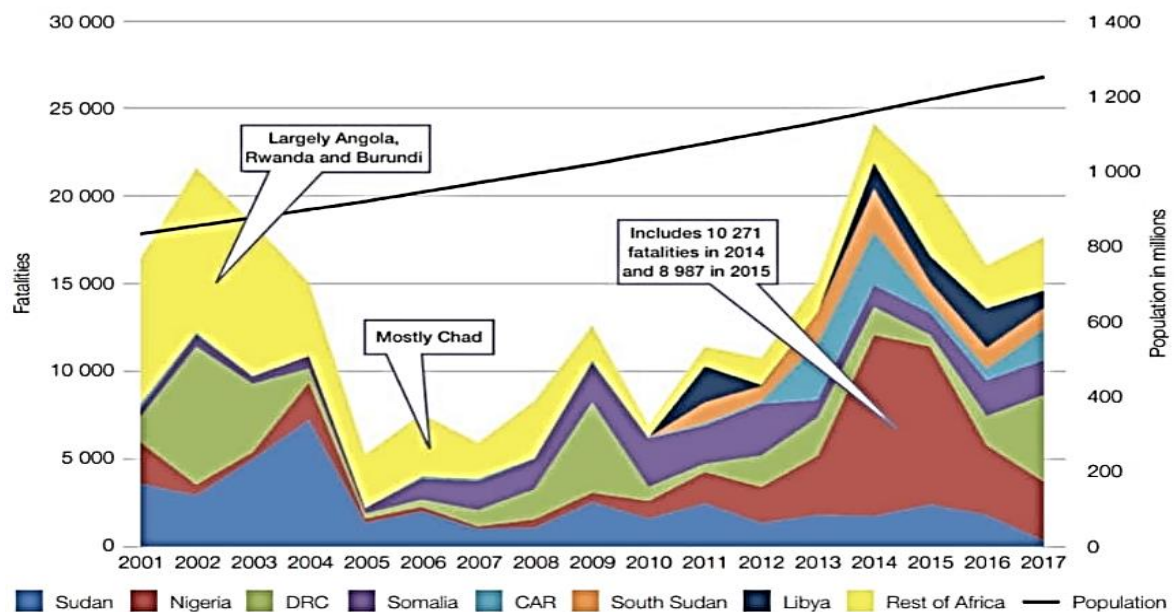
**Source:** UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED)

In Africa, there has been a growing trend of domestic terror groups pledging alliance with those in Middle East such as the Islamic State and al-Qaeda (Alda and Sala, 2014).

Despite the continent getting international attention regarding conflict, it is important to highlight that most of these conflict and fatalities are concentrated within a few countries. The countries that have recorded the highest number of conflicts and fatalities include Libya, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, DRC Congo, Central African Republic and Nigeria (Cilliers, 2018). For instance, in the western region of Africa, the hotspot of violence remains the Sahel Belt where

Boko Haram insurgency remains a threat to both the national and regional governments in the region. In Burkina Faso and Niger, Boko Haram and other non-state armed groups continues to inflict violence leading to heavy casualties among the government security forces and civilians.

**Figure 4:** Seven countries with highest total fatalities from 2001 to 2017 vs. rest of Africa



**Source:** Cilliers, 2018

The sharp increase in conflict fatalities in 2002 was the result of the conflict in DR Congo where the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo were reported to have massacred thousands of civilian and combatant pygmies. Also, in 2009, a combined force of DR Congo, Rwanda and the UN Stabilization Mission in DRC that sought to expel rebels in eastern and northern Congo led to increase in fatalities. Between 2013 and 2015, Boko Haram terror activities in Nigeria and the counter-terrorism operations launched by the government of Nigeria sparked an increase in fatalities.

## **3.2 Overview of Underlying Causes of Conflict in Africa**

The end of cold war marked a shift in the nature of conflicts. Whereas superpower rivalries at the global level declined significantly, new crises emerged in Africa. These crises were the consequences of increased ethnic conflicts, poverty and decline in economic development, corruption and poor governance of natural resources and flawed democratic transitions. The fragility of African states and weak economies compounded the consequences of conflict in the continent.

### **3.2.1 Natural Resources**

Natural resources remain a central feature in literature pertaining to conflict in Africa. According to Le Billion (2000), natural resource conflicts are either due to wars of resource scarcity or wars of abundance. Conflicts that regard natural resources occur because of the confrontation and competition over the management of natural resources such as water and grazing lands. Conflicts of natural resource abundance involve control of resources which dictate state power such as oil and mineral resources.

Alao (2007) identifies that natural resources and conflict can be linked in three ways in Africa. Firstly, natural resources can be a direct cause of conflict; be used to fuel or sustain conflicts; and, be a considered factor during conflict resolution initiatives. As a cause of conflict, competition over control of land or water sources have been associated with many communal conflicts and on a larger scale, serious conflicts have been waged on issues regarding the territorial boundaries. Armed groups in Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Libya and DRC at one point or another have use natural resources to wage intense conflicts against the various governments. Likewise, governments in certain instances have also exploited natural resources to consolidate their power and authority against opposition groups or rebels (Le Bilion, 2013). Conflicts in countries such as Angola and Sierra Leone drew attention from the global



community especially regarding the role of diamond in prolonging the civil wars (Berdal, 2003).

During conflict resolutions, natural resources are oftenly included as part of peace agreements especially in conflicts that have competition over natural resources as an underlying cause. The rationale behind this is that inclusion of natural resource division and, or distribution can pacify fighting factions or reduce the mismanagement of these resources altogether. For example, the Lome Peace Agreement established in Sierra Leone vested the management of the country's diamond resources under the control of rebel group Revolutionary United Front. From land in Zimbabwe, oil in Nigeria, diamonds and gold in DRC to water in the Horn of Africa, the control and management of these precious natural resources have led to devastating internal conflicts that oftenly end in external intervention by other countries and international or regional organizations.

### **3.2.2 Are Territorial Boarders to Blame?**

During the pre-colonial era, Africa did not have any legally boundaries as many groups or societies were loosely organized and territories largely unmarked. It was until the Berlin Conference of 1885 that legally bounding boundaries were imposed on the continent. These colonial boundaries enclosed societies with no traditions of shared authority or similar systems of internal or external disputes and conflict resolution. Moreover, the colonial system did not provide any opportunity for these groups to be integrated, learn and become congenial. For instance, the British in West Africa amassed under their sphere of influence massive territory comprised of three major groups; Yoruba, Hausa and Ibo with other smaller ethnic groups. The Yoruba were distinctively different from the Muslim Hausa and who were also distinct from the Ibo. This artificial structure became a key factor in the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70.

But, if colonialism pushed societies who would otherwise have preferred living apart from each other into the same political entities, then it also separated groups that would otherwise choose to live together. In the case of Somalia which has always strived to be an all-Somali inclusive state has seen Somalis scattered in Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia. Their continued desire for reunification has often ended-up in deadly conflict.

Nonetheless, it will be partially false to only emphasize that African conflicts are just about boundaries. Ironically, most African governments have laid claim to these artificially established colonial borders and have emphatically resisted any challenge to them. In fact, there have been comparatively fewer conflicts on borders which trends towards internal conflicts and not external conflicts; inter-state border conflict. To this moment, the only existing exception to this has been the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute (Tronvoll, 1999).

### **3.2.3 Religion and Ethnicity**

Most of the conflicts in the continent involving Arab Africa are religious whereas those in Black Africa are largely ethnic or tribal. The Arab Africa is largely composed of countries such as Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia. In Algeria, conflict has been mounted between radical Islamists and the secular military arm of government. Religion has also remained at the epicentre of conflict in Egypt.

On the contrary, several conflicts in Black Africa are associated with ethnicity. The worst of them all; the 1994 Rwandan genocide that led to the death of more than 800,000 people was a conflict of ethnic cleansing between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Ethnicity has also been highlighted as the root cause of the Burundi genocide. In Somalia, ethnicity has taken the form of inter-clan conflict fighting to political power and economic control of state resources. In Sudan civil war was fuelled by ethnic rivalries between the Arab North and the Black Africans in the South. In South Sudan, ethnic differences between the Nuer and the Dinka sparked a

severe civil war. As such civil wars and other conflicts experienced in the continent have both ethnic and, or religious interpretations.

### **3.2.4 Inequality**

Inequality between diverse ethnic or social groupings is perhaps the foremost cause of conflict in Africa today. Inequality in the form of either social, political and, or economic status between various groups in the society significantly increases the prospects of violence. Countries such as Rwanda, Liberia and Sierra Leone where power was wholly vested on one group that exploited and monopolised political power, civil conflicts experienced remain among the most severe in the continent's recent history. Notably, in many African societies where inequality in access to power is perpetuated, there also tends to be unequal access to basic human rights. The consequences of illiteracy therefore sustain the cycle of inequality that often grows wider and tend to lead into direct conflict.

### **3.2.5 Collapse of state/ government**

The collapse of state institutions has caused to protracted internal and regional conflicts. Collapse of the state or government is rarely sudden. It is a consequence of degenerative processes usually characterised by predatory governments that are entrenched in deep corruption, personality politics, exclusion and coercion to obtain power and control natural resources. These factors render governments unable to provide basic services and security to the people leading to loss of its legitimacy. The breakdown of institutions and use of ethnic violence establishes ideal conditions in which violence becomes self-sustaining as was witnessed in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

### **3.2.6 Economic Decline**

Continuous decline in the state of economy is a major component and cause of conflict in Africa. While decline in economic conditions of African states may be attributed to several

reasons, extensive changes in global trade or natural catastrophes have often led to far-reaching economic shocks. For example, the 1974 famine in Ethiopia was the underlying cause behind the overthrow of the government under Haile Selassie and the subsequent violence that ensued (Kaplani 2019). Natural catastrophes such as famine can lead to mass displacement of people and increase pressure on scarce resources. Economic decline or shocks can also have similar effects. In 1992, the sudden changes in trade for Nigeria reduced income by about 50 percent, led to hyperinflation, overthrow of government and an intense civil war (Chuku *et al.*, 2004).



## **4 CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTH SUDAN BY IGAD AND ACCORD**

### **4.1 Actors in South Sudan Conflict**

#### **4.1.1 Sudan's People Liberation Movement/Army**

SPLM/A is the oldest political movement that spearheaded the struggle of independence for South Sudan during the two-decade Sudan Civil War. After the independence of South Sudan, SPLM/A rebranded to become SPLM-In Government as it assumed the responsibilities of South Sudan's first and current ruling party (as of 2020). Upon assuming leadership of the movement during the liberation struggle, President Salva Kiir merged both SPLM which was the political wing of the liberation struggle and SPLA which represented the military faction of the movement<sup>1</sup>. As will be discussed later, President Kiir has been accused of using SPLM-IG to advance the interests of the Dinka ethnic group through allocation of land, oil resources and employment opportunities in government.

The SPLM-IG is aligned with other actors both within South Sudan and across the border. Domestically, SPLM-IG is aligned with a militia group known as *Mathiang Aynoor* that protects the government against other groups and is headed by one of the SPLA commanders known as Paul Malong. However, Malong has recently hinted at crossing over to a new political party known as the South Sudan United Front (SSUF) after criticizing President Kiir for the poor governance in the country (Gurtong, 2018). Additionally, SPLM-IG maintains ties with a rebel group in Darfur and Kordofan in Sudan and maintains friendly ties with the governments of Kenya and Uganda.

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<sup>1</sup> The SPLM and SPLA were initially founded as interconnected but distinct units: the former as the political wing and the latter as the military unit. This delineation ended when John Garang, leader of the SPLA in the second civil war ousted chairman of the SPLM, Joseph Oduho and rendered himself leader of SPLM and SPLA combined (SPLM/A). Following the death of John Garang, current president Salva Kiir took chairmanship and continued governance with the amalgamation of both units.

#### **4.1.2 Sudan's People Liberation Movement in Opposition**

SPLM-IO was established in 2014 after breaking away from SPLM-IG in the early months of 2013. It remains the largest opposition political movement challenging the government of South Sudan (as of 2020). Riek Machar who was serving as the vice-president of Salva Kiir accused the former, of orchestrating a massacre in Juba involving members of the Nuer ethnic group; criticized Kiir for restructuring internal boundaries; and therefore, demanded the resignation of Kiir from the government.

SPLM-IO draws support largely from the Nuer ethnic group and other militia groups such as the Nuer White Army<sup>2</sup> and the Arrow Boys who largely base their allegiance to SPLM-IO to enable them effectively counter the Dinka who occupied their farmlands during the conflict. On the regional front, SPLM-IO had ties with Sudan and Ethiopia.

#### **4.2 Overview of Conflict in South Sudan (2013-2018)**

The year 2011 marked the culmination of nearly two decades that had largely been characterized by intense relations and conflict between south Sudanese (non-Arabs) and north Sudanese (Arabs). The civil war involving these two regions ended when South Sudan attained independence and subsequently became the newest state in the world. The conflict between the Arab north and the non-Arab south was so intense that the international and regional community were drawn in to come and mediate a peace deal following huge losses of human life. The efforts of the peace process culminated in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on the 9th January 2005. This agreement was the result of several protocols signed by various leaders representing the north and south in Kenya during negotiations that lasted for over two years between 2002 and 2004 (Jok, 2015: 1-5).

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<sup>2</sup> The Nuer White Army, although currently allied to the SPLM-IO faction, gears most of its activities towards protecting cattle camps, particularly from the Murle tribe, which is a rival group contesting for cattle and land in Jonglei and Upper Nile states.

Nonetheless, the social, political and economic atmosphere in South Sudan at the dawn of its independence can be better captured as being in a state of kleptocracy- a deeply corrupt, militarized and neo-hereditary structure of governance. The country's comparatively plenty sources of revenue were already hived up by the military dominated political system to the extent that very little resources were left for public utility. Five weeks before the anticipated Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2005 to mark the end of civil war between Sudan and the Sudan's People Liberation Army (SPLM), Salva Kiir summoned a meeting of SPLM commanders and voiced his criticism for the movement stating that:

“I would also like to say something about rampant corruption in the Movement. Now some members of the Movement have formed private companies, bought houses and have huge bank accounts in foreign countries. I wonder what kind of system we are going to establish in South Sudan considering ourselves indulged in this respect.”

Cognizance is given to the fact that South Sudan was indeed negatively impacted by the secession conflict, which either prevented or destroyed the existing basic infrastructure, human capital, and civilian institutions. However, the breaking point of the new state emerged with increasing faultiness characterized by high levels of government corruption at the expense of public delivery of government services that in a gigantic fashion hampered the post-civil war conflict recovery, peacebuilding and development.

However, it is the intense political tensions in December 2013 between leading South Sudanese political leaders that triggered the outbreak of violence. Whereas conflict broke out as a result of power struggles both within the executive and military arms of government, it quickly transformed to overpower the tensed inter-ethnic relations that were exploited by the different political leaders to score or settle political grievances. This spurred an outbreak of conflict incidences such as ethnic cleansing in the capitol Juba and gradually across other regions in

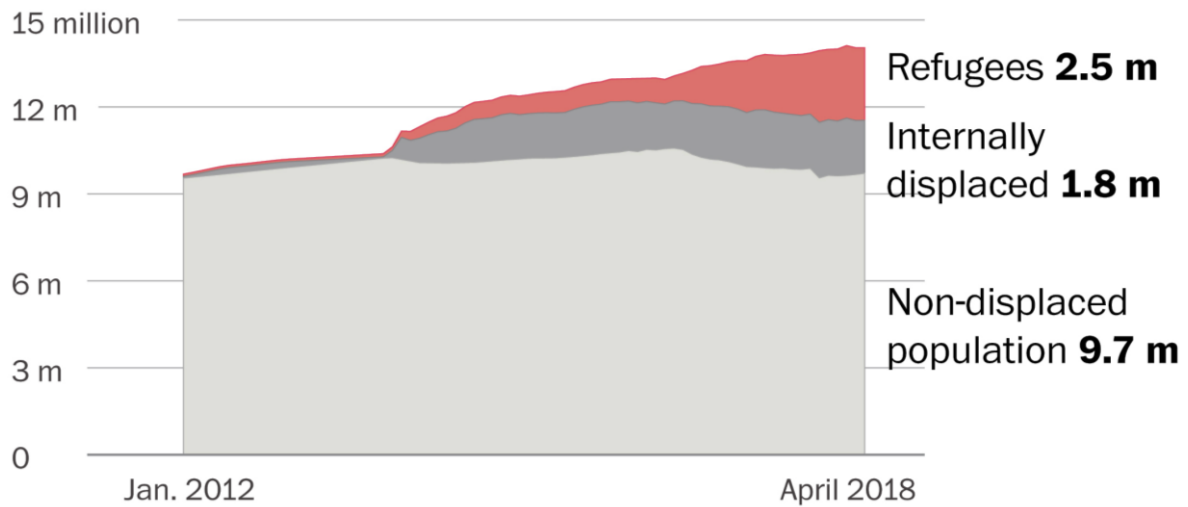
the country. the immediate environs. The immediate cause for the outbreak of this conflict was an accusation against Riek Machar regarding plans to overthrow Salva Kiir from the presidency. These allegations have vehemently been rebuffed by Machar.

During the early days of the conflict, hundreds of civilians lost their lives following attacks targeted on Machar's ethnic group, the Nuer, in Juba. In similar revenge attacks, the Nuer also plotted attacks on Kiir's ethnic group, the Dinka. These sporadic turns of events fueled violence to other parts of the country. Machar having gained the support of a section of senior Nuer military commanders, were collectively declared active rebels against the government. The conflict continued undiminished for more than 20 months as regional neighbors struggled to make progress in negotiations under the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). With constant but unbinding commitments by both sides of the warring groups, the conflict spread to become one of the most serious conflicts witnessed in the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The conflict has had dire consequences since its outbreak in 2013. Approximately over 400,000 deaths have been reported in the country between 2013-2018. According to a report released by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, more than half of these deaths have been due to violence in the country (Checci *et al.*, 2018). The conflict has also led to the displacement of more than 4.5 million South Sudanese. Out of these, 2 million are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and more than 2.5 million are refugees in neighboring countries such as Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Central African Republic, DR Congo and Ethiopia.



**Figure 5:** Displacement in South Sudan (2012-2018)



**Source:** London School of Hygiene and Tropical Studies

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2019) report also highlights dire humanitarian crisis epitomised by sharp food shortages, economic meltdown, outbreak of communicable diseases such as flu. In 2019, 5.2 million people were exposed to starvation out of which 220, 700 were children below 5 years.

#### **4.3 Conflict Narratives**

Prior to the outbreak of civil war in 2011, South Sudan had been experiencing socio-political upheavals such as highly contested politics and small pockets of armed rebellion. It is however the deep political differences in government that ultimately led to the outbreak of nationwide armed conflict that transformed into a civil war. The scope of the conflict reflects multifaceted but intertwined factors that emanate from the highest level of South Sudan's political structure to create or open up already existing deep tensions between communities and groups. The constant reshuffling of the political structure and system, internal borders and division of power have been a source of confusion and bitter disagreements, elite manipulation and conflict throughout South Sudan. It is conflict at the local level that spiraled into the wider conflicts

leading to significant impacts on all social, economic and political levels. This section provides an overview of the conflict narratives through the macro and micro lenses.

#### **4.3.1 Struggle for Political Power**

Leadership struggles between South Sudan's political elite can be cited as the immediate cause of the conflict. A sporadic political dispute overlying pre-existing sharp political differences and ethnic tensions in December 2013 sparked armed violence leading to sporadic attacks on ethnic communities. Accusations by Salva Kiir against his deputy Riek Machar on plans to overthrow the government sparked conflict first among the military before spreading to other regions outside Juba. This conflict led to displacement of thousands of civilian compounding further the already existing development challenges facing the country. The provisional constitution vested more powers in the presidency without adequate guarantee of checks and balances to prevent abuse of executive powers. Even more significant was the political struggle existing between different groups in South Sudan seeking to curve political positions. After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Sudan and South Sudan, minimal reconciliatory efforts were initiated in the country. Many of the dissatisfied groups with the CPA took up arms demanding for more changes and positions in government.

#### **4.3.2 Access to Arms**

Proliferation of small arms in South Sudan can largely be contextualized from macro political and civil war context since the founding of Sudan (before secession of the southern regions) in 1956. There was a deliberate distribution of small arms to non-state actors such as local militia groups, civilians and tribal groupings as one of the tactics used by warring factions during the Sudan civil wars<sup>3</sup>. This did not stop even with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace

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<sup>3</sup> The Second Sudanese Civil War was a conflict from 1983 to 2005 between the central Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. It was largely a continuation of the First Sudanese Civil War of 1955 to 1972. Although it originated in southern Sudan, the civil war spread to the Nuba mountains and the Blue Nile. It

Agreement (CPA) between the government of Sudan and southern region liberation movements such as the SPLMA. Conventional importation of small arms, cross-boarder trafficking and arming of military commanders with either flexible loyalties or strong bases of support in proxy continued for approximately 6 years post-CPA (Lewis, 2009). The failure for a comprehensive disarmament process after South Sudan attained independence in 2011 played a fundamental role in the continuation of and escalation of the conflict. This is because access to arms by civilians and militia groups enabled these non-state actors to challenge the state's monopoly over the use of force (O'Brien 2009:11). The fear of the state's authority was eroded

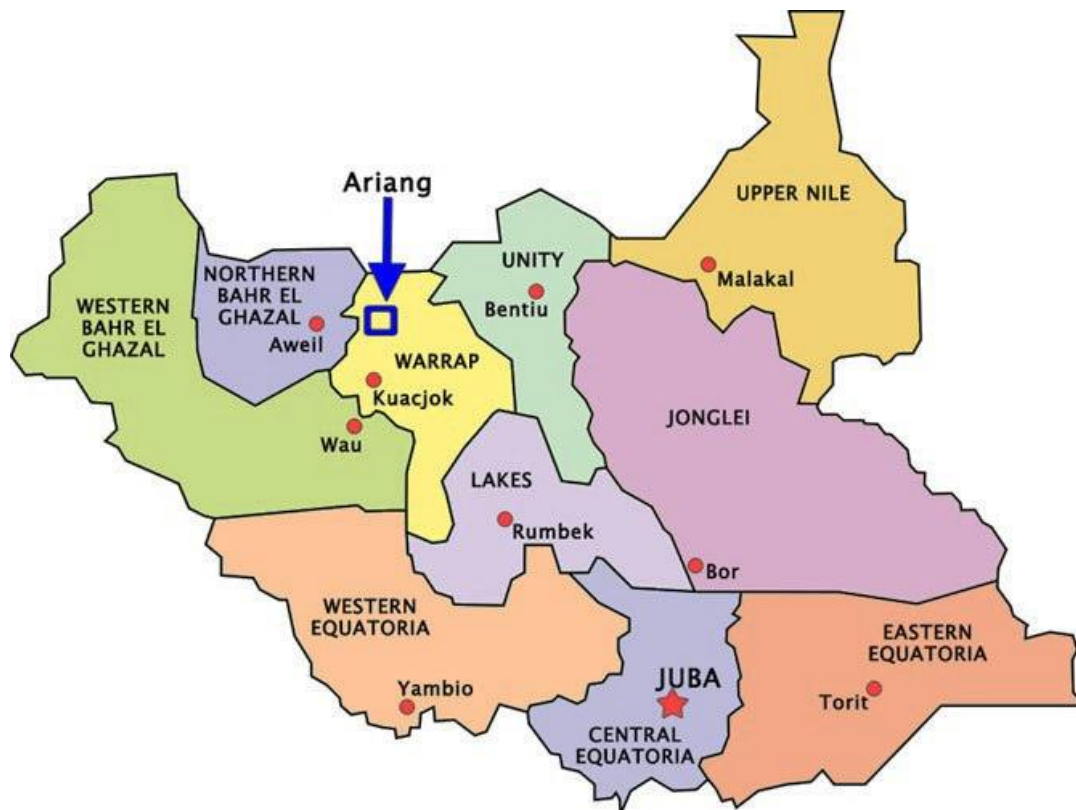
### **4.3.3 Natural Resources**

Besides the political power struggles, underlies an even older conflict between farmers and pastoralists. During peaked dry seasons, these two groups clash when pastoralists who need pasture for their herds of livestock move to regions inhabited by farmers growing crops. However, during the outbreak of the conflict, farmers in the Equatorial regions incurred heavy losses when herders seeking refuge from war in other parts of the country moved into the region. Notably, herders always move with thousands of animals and are heavily armed. A study by (Agwanda and Uğur, 2020) highlight that often, the herders fail to respect seasonal limitations on grazing; rules on movement through transit corridors; and other forms of arrangements meant to ease tension between the pastoralists and farmers.

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lasted for 22 years and is one of the longest civil wars on record. The war resulted in the independence of South Sudan six years after the war ended.

**Figure 5:** South Sudan Regional Boundaries



Farmers in the Equatorial regions associate the impunities by herdsmen to their close relationship with political and military leaders in Juba. Local traditional elders in Western Equatoria county for instance argue that the conflict with pastoralists are part of a larger conspiracy plan by the government to evict them from their farmlands. But even more importantly, crop farmers have often opted to defend themselves as continued criticism towards the government has only resulted in farmers from these regions being labelled as supporters of the opposition groups in South Sudan therefore attracting government response leading to more conflict.

The struggle to control oil has also been a source of conflict in South Sudan (Nyadera, 2018). Several scholars (De Soysa, 2002; Ballentine and Nitschke, 2005; Fearon and Laitin, 2003) have exploited different sets of data to demonstrate the existence of a causal relationship between natural resources such as oil and conflicts. Oil is the largest source of revenue for

South Sudan and competition for the control of these regions manifested in oil producing states such as Upper Nile, Unity and Jonglei. These states experienced protracted and high intensity conflicts since fighting begun in 2013. An investigative report by US-based think-tank, Sentry, concluded in its report that oil revenues were appropriated in the financing and sustenance of the civil war (Bariyo 2014).

#### **4.3.4 Ethnicity**

South Sudan is comprised of more than sixty ethnic communities. However, two communities: the Dinka and Nuer dominate the inter-ethnic antagonisms in South Sudan. This ethnic antagonism pre-dates the independence of South Sudan as their divergent views dominated the Sudan's People Liberation Army (SPLM) during the struggle for independence from Sudan. For instance, the Dinka favoured a united state of Sudan albeit with radical political and economic reforms that would liberate all the people of Sudan from Khartoum's bad governance (Yak, 2016). On the contrary, the Nuer advocated for nothing less than full independence for the southern regions of Sudan. In post-independent South Sudan, these divisions were exploited by the political elites to encounter political challenges. Ethnic antagonism and divisions along political views are a dominant feature of transitional states where populations are more vulnerable to changes in political power dynamics (Carment and James, 2000). It is therefore not a new phenomenon that politicians when faced with serious political, social or economic problems, they can successfully nurture ethnic animosities to keep power. Additionally, ethnic tensions encouraged the proliferation of weapons at the hands of civilians who either felt that they are not accorded equal opportunities to services offered by the state such as rule of law and a guarantee of security. A study by Jok (2013: 7) highlights that:

“For some communities, their ongoing experiences with ethnic and inter-communal violence is so intense and localized that the end of the North-South war and the independence of South

Sudan may have little meaning for them in terms of their day-to-day security. Many communities say that independence has only ended a certain kind of war but has left sources of insecurity most relevant to them unmitigated - the “mini-wars” that continued to occur between rival ethnic groups and communities.”

#### **4.3.5 Role of Sudan**

Sudan has been accused of engaging in activities meant to undermine stability in the southern regions even prior to independence and post-independence by providing arms to groups in South Sudan (Nyadera, 2018). Between 1983-2005, Sudan provided support to the South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF) led at the time by Riek Machar and other military commanders to provide support to Sudanese military garrisons in protecting oil fields in the Northern parts of South Sudan (Young, 2006). A report by the Canadian Department of Justice (2014) highlights that Khartoum’s support to SSDF in terms of military equipment and training later facilitated the orchestration of the 1991 Bor Massacre.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4.4 Conflict Resolution Efforts by IGAD in South Sudan**

The first efforts to mediate in the conflict peace was in 2014 led by IGAD with support from United States, Norway and United Kingdom (Taulbee, 2014). The talks were initiated with a target of having a comprehensive peace deal by 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015, but the target was not achieved. In retaliation, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions on six high ranking individuals in the government of South Sudan. These sanctions however excluded Salva Kiir and Riek Machar. Nonetheless, there was more pressure from the international community demanding for an immediate end to the conflict and the UN security Council also threatened to impose sanctions on Salva Kiir and Riek Machar should they fail to sign a peace deal by

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<sup>4</sup> The Bor massacre was a massacre of an estimated 2,000 civilians in Bor on November 15, 1991 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sudanese Civil War. The massacre was carried out mostly by Nuer fighters led by Riek Machar and the militant group known as the Nuer White Army. Amnesty International said at least 2,000 Dinka were killed, though the real number may have been higher.

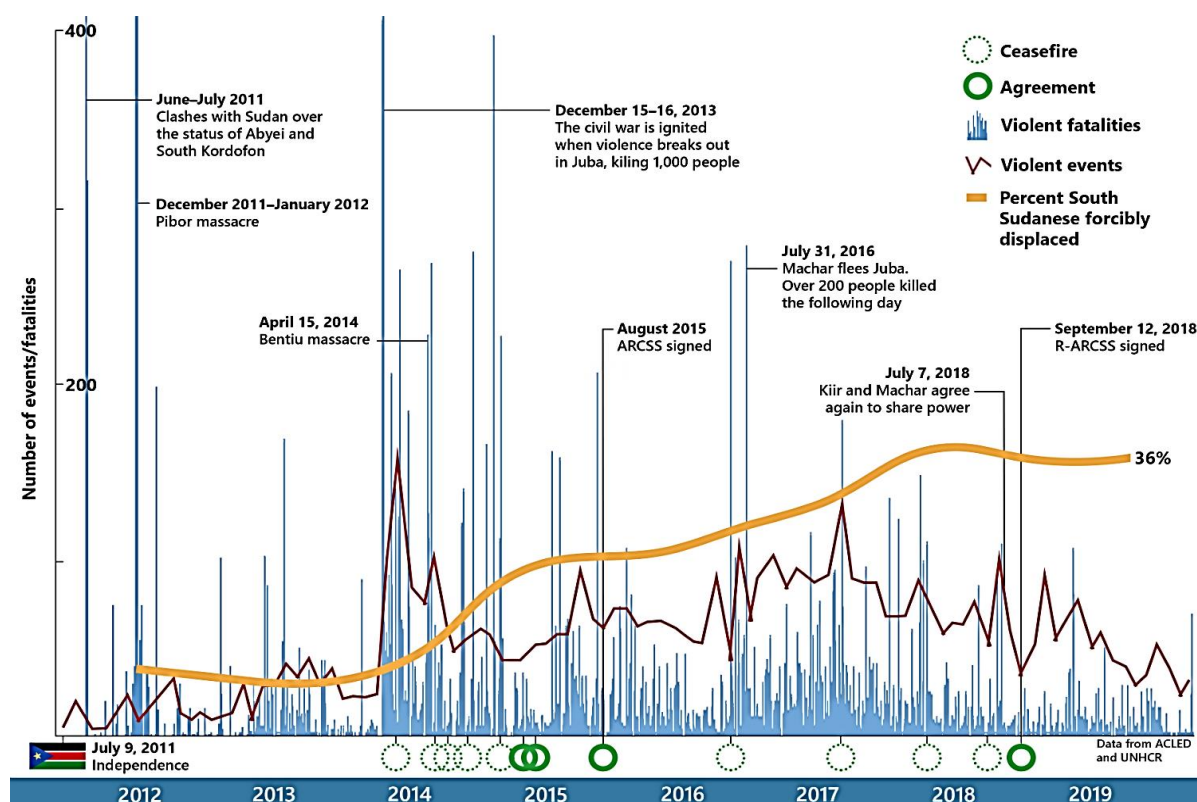
August 17, 2015 (Foreign Policy, February 2015). This consequently led to the signing of the Agreement on Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) in August 2015.

This first treaty mediated by IGAD lasted for two months after which Machar accused Salva Kiir of making unilateral decisions in running the government. This came on the backdrop of establishment of 18 more additional states by president Salva Kiir. Additionally, the implementation of the peace accord was slow and the deadline of establishing a Transitional Government of National Unity elapsed in January 2016. However, despite being in exile, Riek Machar was appointed as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and demilitarization of Juba was ongoing as per the agreement in the early weeks of February. But there was renewed fighting in other parts of the country following weeks of accusation that troops belonging to the South Sudanese government had attacked UN-protected civilian camp thus putting the peace deal at great risk. (South Sudan News Agency, 26 February 2016).

Machar was able to return from exile to Juba to take up his position as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President in April 2016 (Baker, 2016: 20-27) before another wave of fighting broke out between government loyalist forces and forces loyal to Riek Machar. This forced Machar to flee once again thereby marking the collapse of the Transitional Government of National Unity in 2016. Scholars (De Vries et al, 2017: 333-340) attribute the collapse of the 2015 Agreement on Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) to the lack of political goodwill by both the government and the opposition groups.

The collapse of the 2015 peace agreement that was brokered by IGAD saw the conflict continue to early months of 2018 as mobilization to bring back the leaders to negotiate a peace deal continued. These efforts by IGAD and supporting international community led to the resumption of talks in May 2018 in Addis Ababa.

**Figure 6: South Sudan Peace Negotiations and Violence**



**Source:** Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 2019

Notably, these renewed talks faced several challenges key among them, the hardline positions adopted by the two leading factions who rejected IGAD proposals on how to share government positions, the system of governance and most importantly the organization and command of security.

Another agreement was adopted and signed in Khartoum after renewed pressure from regional and international community between Salva Kiir and Riek Machar (The Star, June 2018). This new agreement called for immediate cease-fire of clashes throughout the country and the formula for sharing government positions. Unfortunately, just hours after signing this new ceasefire agreement, the deal was violated with government and opposition accusing each other of the violations. The disquiet on the government side particularly regarding the new structure of government that was to consist of three vice-presidents and the rejection of postponement



of elections by three more years by the opposition threatened this new peace agreement. The go-ahead for the government to resume oil exploration was also challenged by the opposition groups.

Other provisions of this agreement included a 120-day pre-transition period and a 36-month transition followed by a general election, withdrawal of troops from urban areas, villages, schools, camps, and churches. Uniquely, other rebel groups were also involved in the negotiations and were allocated a share of the executive and parliamentary seats as well as a slot among the proposed positions of the vice presidency during an agreement signed in Kampala, Uganda on the 8th of July 2018.

The latest peace deal dubbed the ‘Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS),’ was inked on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Addis Ababa. This marked the 12<sup>th</sup> time that Salva Kiir and Riek Machar have signed a peace agreement since the onset of the conflict. The uniqueness of this new peace deal is seen in the entrance of Sudan and Uganda who were previously perceived as being actors in the South Sudan conflict. The consequence of this development is that the latter are now being viewed as part of the solutions to the conflict.

#### **4.5 ACCORD Partnership in Peacebuilding Initiatives in South Sudan**

Since its establishment in 1992 in South Africa, ACCORD has grown and expanded its influence throughout the continent.<sup>5</sup> The institution has been on the forefront of peace and conflict resolution initiatives through partnerships and collaborations with regional organizations, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. ACCORD's primary aim is to influence political developments by bringing conflict resolution, dialogue

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<sup>5</sup> European Commission. The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) is a South Africa-based civil society organisation working throughout Africa to bring creative African solutions to the challenges posed by conflict on the continent. [https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/accord-african-centre-constructive-resolution-disputes\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/accord-african-centre-constructive-resolution-disputes_en)

and institutional development to the forefront as an alternative to armed violence and protracted conflict (ibid). In addition, ACCORD offers a range of training courses in conflict management theory and practice, and in mediation and negotiation. In conflict regions such as Burundi, the institution not only limited its peacebuilding contacts with other civil societies and NGOs, but also worked closely with the transition government and armed groups in the country. This is also same for the institution's peace processes in DR Congo (Lotze *et al.*, 2008).

ACCORD's special focus on conflict management and resolution in different sectors such as government institutions, businesses, police institutions, civil societies and the military has enabled the institution to develop its internal capacity and become a valuable partner to leading regional organizations in Africa for over two decades.<sup>6</sup> It is noteworthy that the institution has often become a platform through which leading organizations such as AU, UN, and RECs in Africa have recruited some of their staff. Their emphasis on training and vast network with external specialists on specific issues has enabled ACCORD to develop adequate capacity to cover core issues in peace and conflict resolution such as policy formulation and writing of peace agreements. Its partnership with organizations such as IGAD and AU has facilitated the development of policies that have been transformed into initiatives and actions at regional and local level to facilitate peace processes through conflict prevention, mediation and management.<sup>7</sup>

Of all the Think-Tanks in the continent, ACCORD has the widest experience and has been a key component of AU's mediation and conflict management division since 1993 out which it

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<sup>6</sup> See SIIA, ACCORD's Knowledge Production Department does produce a range of publications. For example, the 2014 Annual Report refers to eleven publications focused primarily on security sector reform and peacebuilding in West Africa; creating enabling peacebuilding environments through ensuring coherence; radicalisation as a threat to peace in Nigeria and the peacekeeping role and contributions of the AU to peace and security on the continent. <https://www.sida.se/contentassets/9eec4e9fdb8c4769a1f702f6fb0c8e5b/15900.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See Reliefweb, ACCORD/TFP supports the launch of the IGAD Woman and Peace Forum board <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/accordtfp-supports-launch-igad-woman-and-peace-forum-board>

has been able to participate in all the major intrastate conflicts. Additionally, ACCORD has entered memorandums of understanding with organizations such as COMESA, IGAD and SADC while also maintaining a close working relation with the UN particularly on issues pertaining to peacekeeping reviews in the continent. Its relatively ‘silent’ approach and good reputation amalgamate to produce internal capacity of the institution to develop and sustain working relationships even with less liberal or difficult regimes and groups.

In South Sudan, ACCORD has conducted various programmes aimed at empowering both negotiators in the South Sudan, government officials and other grassroots civil society organizations in South Sudan. Key among these programmes include:

**Table 3: ACCORD peacebuilding programmes in South Sudan**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>2011</b>	Sudan Conflict Transformation Initiative	One-week conflict management training course for key personnel from South Sudan’s Ministry of Peace. This initiative aimed to contribute to the achievement of peace in South Sudan through enhancing participants’ knowledge and skills in conflict management and resource mobilisation.
<b>2012</b>	MoU between the Republic of South Sudan's Peace Commission and ACCORD	Assist the government's peace building institution and the international organization to work together in promoting peace and harmony between communities in the country's volatile areas.
<b>2013</b>	Mediation and Negotiation Support Training (MANST)	Training for South Sudanese government officials and stakeholders who are directly or indirectly

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involved in the negotiation processes with Republic of Sudan. The issues were related to:

- Citizenship – issues related to nationality, particularly for South Sudanese living in the Sudan
- Security – covering cross-border security arrangements, border demarcations and the status of the disputed region of Abyei
- International agreements – matters pertaining to international agreements signed by the Sudan before secession, such as the Nile Water Agreement
- Economic and financial settlements – in particular, how the two states will share Sudan's burden of debt.

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<b>2013</b>	South Sudan Initiative (SSI)	Joint training on conflict analysis and mediation for the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Parliamentary Committee on Peace and Reconciliation.
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To contributes to SSI's main objective of building and enhancing the capacity of government institutions in South Sudan in conflict management, negotiation and mediation.

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<b>2014</b>	Enhancing the process of peacebuilding in South Sudan	Training on conflict and conflict analysis, introduction to conflict management, the negotiation process in South Africa, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation process and how the process was initiated, developed and implemented, the role of non-state actors in peacebuilding processes, the processes of social cohesion and the necessity for coherence and coordination among actors. How could the experience of South Africa peacebuilding process be applied in South Sudan?
<b>2015</b>	Improving the effectiveness of peacebuilding in South Sudan:  Promoting conflict-sensitive approaches to peacebuilding and development programming.	The training increased knowledge in analysing conflict contexts in South Sudan, and how these can be impacted by the programmes of IOM and its partners. It equipped the participants with skills in conflict-sensitive programming to maximise the positive impact and minimise the negative impact of programme interventions.
<b>2016</b>	Training of Grassroots Peacebuilding, Humanitarian, and Development Actors on Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding.	Case studies and practical exercises, the training further built the overall competence of the targeted CSOs to consolidate their capacity in applying Conflict Sensitivity in their interventions to enhance effective peacebuilding in South Sudan.  To train personnel from International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its partner organisations

		<p>working in South Sudan on 'Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding</p> <p>Training aimed to disseminate Conflict Sensitivity skills to the grassroots in Eastern Equatorial State and increase the pool of peacebuilding, development and humanitarian practitioners cognisant of applying Conflict Sensitivity in their development, humanitarian and peacebuilding interventions.</p>
<b>2016</b>	<p>African Peacebuilding Coordination Programme (APCP)</p>	<p>Conducting trainings on Conflict Sensitivity for national Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in South Sudan. The training enhanced the capacity of CSOs working in peacebuilding processes to apply Conflict Sensitivity in the design and implementation of peacebuilding programmes that contribute to sustainable peace.</p>

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**Source:** UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2018

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#### **4.6 Weaknesses of IGAD Peace Processes**

The first intervention of IGAD in the South Sudan conflict occurred two days after fighting broke out in Juba when a fact-finding mission to Juba was dispatched on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013. Henceforth, the displacement of over 4.5 million people and the death of over 400,000 others after a duration of five years, reflects the weaknesses of the organization as a guarantor of regional peace and security. This chapter identifies 4 key internal and external factors that

contributed to the inability of the organization to provide strong leadership in the resolution of the conflict.

Firstly, the *structure of IGAD as an organization* undermines independent and objective decision-making processes. This is because the supreme policy making and regulatory power rests with the heads of states and government in the region. The centralisation of decision-making within the heads of governments overrides IGAD's secretariat organ and consequently, instead of pursuing policies that might benefit South Sudan or the region at large, several decisions regarding the conflict have been made from the primary consideration of the national interests of the member states. The secretariat organ of the organization has often been relegated to the peripheries of the mediation processes partly due to the fact that IGAD secretariat is based in Djibouti while the South Sudan mediation office is stationed in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), therefore, other than making arrangements for summits to examine and discuss the situation in South Sudan, it plays a very minimal role in the day-to-day conflict resolution and management process. Additionally, despite the organization establishing a mediation support unit roster of experts in conflict resolution and management in 2011 under the IGAD Peace and Security Strategy 2010-2014, they were not involved in the South Sudan mediation process which became highly politicized (Phillip-Apuuli, 2015).

Secondly, IGAD lack the ability to conduct an independent *deployment of peace and deterrence force*. A study by Healey (2014) highlights that IGAD first suggested the deployment of 5,500 troops in January 2014 to support the implementation of the Agreement on Secession of Hostilities that was yet to be signed. However, member states such as Uganda had already taken unilateral decision to deploy the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) to fight alongside the government against opposition groups in Juba and its immediate surrounding cities such as Bor. As a key member of the IGAD policy and regulatory organ, such actions are a clear manifestation that Uganda had already taken a position regarding the

conflict thereby, failing to meet one of the fundamental pillars of mediation: the principal of neutrality. Additionally, due to other commitments of troops by member states such as Kenya which had a significant number of troops deployed in Somalia and Sudan (Dafur), there were fears that the initial 5,500 troops needed for immediate deployment to oversee the implementation of the secession of hostilities agreement couldn't be raised wholly from IGAD member states. This perhaps explains why member states that are not within the IGAD cooperation framework such as Rwanda and Burundi were also invited to contribute troops (Beswick & Jowell, 2014). Also closely related to deployment of troops is the issue of financing. Critical peace and security operations within IGAD are significantly if not completely dependent on donor funding.

Thirdly, the IGAD peace processes have been greatly undermined by the *noncommitment of the conflict belligerents*. Between 2013 and 2018, approximately ten minor and major peace agreements have been signed between the government and opposition groups. But, the absence of political will by both parties has led to violations of these agreements in one way or another. The conflict belligerents have all been obstacles to IGAD peace mediation processes, with deadlocks taking several weeks to be resolved. For instance, just before the first mediation talks begun in 2013, SPLM/A-IO demanded that Ugandan troops be withdrawn from the conflict and that all political detainees be released unconditionally. The government on the other hand, argued that these political detainees were behind an attempted coup and as such, had to face charges of treason against the state. Despite this impasse being resolved through the intervention of Kenya, the government of South Sudan once again provided another condition that detainees could not be part of the negotiations in Addis Ababa (Akol, 2014).

The IGAD peace process were also weakened by the *lack of strong sanctions* both against the government and individual leaders in South Sudan. Whereas global leaders such as US, Norway, UK and the UN called for sanctions on arms embargo, IGAD member states were



reluctant to do so. Strong economic ties between South Sudan government and regional neighbours hindered any actions pertaining to the imposition of strong economic sanctions on both South Sudan and high-ranking political leaders involved in the conflict. Kenya for instance, has been reluctant on imposing economic sanction on South Sudan because of long-term economic interest between the two states regarding investments in road, rail and oil export pipeline constructions. Additionally, South Sudanese political elites have substantial investments in properties particularly in Kenya and Uganda (Dessalegn, 2017).

The IGAD peace processes were also weakened by the *lack of a united purpose and coordination*. The mediation processes were overseen from multiple fronts leading to an increase in the timeline for conflict resolution. Within IGAD, there were mediation efforts by the Secretariat; another mediation team overseen by special envoys from Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan; and the extra-ordinary summits convened by IGAD heads of states and governments. During the 2015 mediations, the process was further enlarged to incorporate a new framework referred to as IGAD-Plus. This new alliance constituted the AU Commission, UN, EU, Troika (US, UK and Norway), China and the AU-high level committee (Algeria, Chad, South Africa, Rwanda and Nigeria). Moreover, in an attempt to reunite three groups that had emerged within SPLM, ruling parties of South Africa and Tanzania initiated the Arusha intra-party dialogue process (Copeland, 2015).

#### **4.7 Time For Alternative Peace Approaches?**

The experience of conflict in South Sudan and the challenges experienced in the conflict resolution processes raises the concern as to whether there are perhaps other appropriate modalities to address complex conflict landscapes. But even more importantly, are whether other existing models to peacebuilding and conflict resolution may be best suited in the context of Africa. Scholars such as Lundy and McGovern (2008) have proposed alternatives such as the adoption of bottom-up approaches in conflict resolution. The rationale for this argument is

that the liberal approach in the form of power-sharing that is popular with many political processes in conflict resolution, is alien to a majority of local communities particularly in Africa. As such, liberal approaches make it difficult for any sustainable and long-lasting peace to be established. Bottom-up approaches on the other hand, facilitate the development of structures that can support transitional justice and perhaps address some of the historical issues from the grassroot level.

Intra-state conflicts and peacebuilding have increasingly become a complex affair. As evidenced in the case of South Sudan, the longer it takes to achieve peaceful resolution of a conflict, the greater the risks and damage there is on communities. It therefore becomes imperative that preventing the reoccurrence of conflicts in the long-run, ought to be the ultimate agenda of conflict resolution processes. The role of international or regional organizations such as IGAD should therefore be that of aiding member states so that they can be able to sustain their own peace processes through strengthening the resilience of domestic or grassroot social institutions by supporting investments in social cohesion.

This self-sustaining peace process can be best achieved through an adaptive peacebuilding approach. According to De Coning (2018), this approach is guided by the complex nature of conflicts, potential resilience of local social institutions, and local ownership of peace and conflict resolution processes. This approach rejects the view that conflicts can only be meaningfully examined, and solutions developed by external experts. Instead, the approach has an emphasis on the empirically complex social systems which are unpredictable because these systems are highly dynamic, have self-organizing and non-linear behavioral features. As such, it is impossible to predetermine or design social systems. Attempts to therefore impose means by which societies prevent or manage their own conflicts can therefore potentially interfere with the self-sustaining ability of the society to generate its own capacities for peace and therefore generate unintended negative effects.

Consequently, if the long-term aim of a regional organization such as IGAD is to facilitate self-sustaining peace where there are no political groups within the society that resorts to violence in order to achieve their needs, and communities believe that difference in politics can be addressed peacefully, then it is necessary that the adaptive and social resilience of the society are strengthened to prevent and manage conflicts. However, this also points to a delicate balance. First, organizations or institutions need to develop the capacity of local or national institutions. Secondly, it may also imply that these organizations may need to step back and allow local and national institutions to attempt self-organization, experiment, and learn from their weaknesses and failures.

Endogenous hybridity also offers a new pathway in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. This approach that is founded on cultural and anthropological studies, attempts to address the weaknesses of the liberal approach to peacebuilding and conflict resolution by interacting with both agency and local contexts on one side, and engaging with the power and agency of national and international structures. Endogenous hybridity can be used in two significant ways. First, as an analytical framework that reflects the heterogeneity and diversity of societies where hybrid political orders exist and transform often with claims to authority, legitimacy and power as well as mirroring a complex mix of local, Western, formal and informal traditions. Secondly, it can be used as an objective that includes the models and strategies that symbolize and craft efforts in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. This approach therefore enhances the understanding of the relevance and dynamics of local, national, regional and international processes of interactions and negotiations (McCandless, 2010).

Hybridity approach denotes the movement away from the traditional focus on international-local, and liberal-local (Western) interphase, to hybrid systems that while reflecting diversity, emerge from within the local contexts (Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012). This approach is particularly relevant in fragile and conflict-engulfed states where there are several claims to

power and authority often intertwine. It encourages movement away from the rational-legal conception of the state towards pathways that nurture national ownership of a state and peace. In states such as South Sudan where the government itself is part of the conflict, there is very low levels of vertical trust. According to a study by Kuol (2018), an opinion poll conducted in South Sudan prior to the outbreak civil war in 2013, highlights that the trust on traditional authority (chiefs) was high at 87% than state officers such as county commissioners (58%). Hybridity therefore provides a framework through which there can be inclusion of other actors and systems or institutions in the society such that, conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes, acquire legitimacy through the inclusive contribution of a variety of actors in crafting and shaping a national vision.

## 5 ANALYSIS

As the world is increasingly becoming globalised, involvement in ongoing cross-border conflicts has become a fundamental pillar of state's foreign policy agenda. The resolution and management of conflicts has become more significant going by the nature of conflicts and actors involved. Whereas states continue to improve their domestic capacities to address conflicts, other multinational platforms such as the UN and regional organizations have taken centre stage in addressing conflicts that are of multinational nature or those which threaten the security of other states through development of conflict resolution mechanisms (Bobrow and Boyer, 1997). Concurrently, other non-state actors such as institutional Think-Tanks and other non-governmental organizations have emerged to as key actors in conflict resolution processes by offering alternative expertise and contributions.

Nonetheless, behind the recognition that these third-party institutions have a role to play in conflict resolution, there is an ongoing debate amongst scholars of International Relations. This debate has pushed IR scholars into further research regarding the understanding of the trends and drivers of international humanitarianism and search for empirical reflections that are ideal for policy formulation. Indeed, while it remains undebatable that conflicts should be resolved, human rights violations stopped, and that the most inhumane conditions reduced, two questions remain critical. Firstly, there is the issue of the effectiveness of intervention and secondly, the legitimacy of these organizations and non-state actors. More openly, which actors can or should intervene? Are such interventions ideal for conflict resolution by providing sustainable settlements and bringing violence to a stop?

The nature and causes of conflicts and how they are perceived and defined is of great significance when deciding on how to address them. Certain conflicts can be better positioned to be addressed through external intervention while others can be addressed internally. Since the end of Cold War, interstate conflicts have become prone especially in regions that

underwent the complex process of European decolonization. In Africa, such conflicts were protracted in countries such as Rwanda, DR Congo and Somalia. In these countries as well as other parts of the world such as the Balkans and Middle East, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms proved inadequate especially during the 1990s.

Besides the decision to intervene, the specific role to be played by third party actors in conflict resolution is of essential consideration. Based on circumstances, potential implications of the conflicts, and the nature of conflict, third parties may opt to support either the government or opposition groups during conflict resolution processes (Reagan, 2002). Specific conflict resolutions may be of interest to the intervening parties either politically or economically and may constitute a fundamental reason for the third party to intervene (Reagan, 1996). As such, the role played by these actors can affect the intensity and duration of conflicts.

The conflict resolution tools that are adopted by third parties are also significant in conflict resolution processes. Previously, direct military intervention acquired great prominence as a tool of conflict resolution through various peacekeeping missions. However, there is a gradual trend that demonstrates a shift away from the traditional military intervention to more sophisticated but integrated methods of promoting peace during conflicts and state-building afterwards (Collinson *et al.*, 2010; Attina, 2012). Whereas military intervention is one of the most visible forms of conflict resolutions, many contemporary conflicts have witnessed the use of both official and unofficial conflict resolution methods. Officially, states can use diplomacy by sending special peace envoys to mediate for a peaceful resolution amongst the conflicting parties (Jeong, 2019).

Conflict resolution often tends to be a complex process that include various items and steps that work in an interdependent manner (Diehl and Regan, 2015). In their study on conflict resolution processes, Diehl and Regan (2015) opine that conflict resolution can be addressed

through a multiplicity of approaches. Other scholars (Beardsley, 2011; Gross and Juncos, 2011; Badran, 2013) also add that during conflict resolution, different phases may need different approaches; there is need for adaptation and interactions with ongoing hostilities; and that possible existence of temporary and spatial interrelationships should be taken into consideration. Resolution of conflicts may make use of tools such as military intervention, mediation, arbitration, negotiation and peacekeeping missions.

### **5.1 Strengths of Regional Organizations in Conflict Resolution**

The essence of regional organizations can be better comprehended when viewed vis a vis international organization such the UN. While it cannot yet be claimed that regional bodies have outperformed the UN in conflict resolution or management, there indeed exists differences on how they address or approach conflicts resolution processes. Additionally, in as much as regional organizations just like the UN may register success or failure in conflict resolution for nearly similar reasons, the former has the benefit of having some unique advantages as discussed below:

***Better understanding of regional and local dynamics:*** It is imperative to appreciate that more often, states that share territorial boundaries are more likely to share ethnic, historical, cultural and geographical ties. Understanding these dynamics is important during conflict resolution processes. In areas where regional organizations deploy troops, then the understanding of the terrain and climate becomes a plus in peace operations. Chad for instance has been known for its deployment of Chadian soldiers to serve under the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in the Sahel desert. In 2018, Chad had the highest contingent of 1450 soldiers after Burkina Faso in Mali and another 2500 soldiers fighting in the larger Sahel against Boko Haram. Shared commonalities have emboldened regional organizations to demand a leading role in resolving regional problems especially those pertaining to conflict. For instance, it has become a common adage that “*Africa needs African solutions for African problems.*” This has

further been reaffirmed by the establishment of the African Peace and Security Council that was widely welcomed by African leaders across the continent as a way of solving the security problems facing the continent (Nathan, 2010: 5-7).

**Greater consensus:** Unlike international organizations that are more heterogeneous because of its membership that is drawn from all corners of the world, regional organizations tend to be more homogenous in nature (Bennett, 1991). Members of a regional organization are likely to rank just about the same in terms of development; share historical and cultural ties and perhaps even profess almost similar political outlook since they face common regional challenges. These shared commonalities provide grounds for the establishment of greater consensus amongst member states for strong unilateral actions through the regional body as a single entity. Importantly, regional organizations unlike institutions such as the UN are not constrained by hegemonic members who are wielding veto power.

**Deployment of troops:** The proximity of regional organizations to conflict areas enhances rapid deployment of troops in cases of emergencies in conflict areas. This is especially true considering the long bureaucratic processes that may be involved should forces deployed under the banner of the UN be considered (Kelly-Kate, 2008: 4). For instance, the impact of a coup d'état in Central African Republic in 2013 was controlled following the rapid deployment of regional forces under a joint AU-ECCAS mission. This mission was later reaffirmed by the UN following its Security Council resolution 2121 before the UN took charge of the whole mission that had been coded MINUSCA in September 2014.

## **5.2 Challenges Facing Regional Organizations in Conflict Resolution**

Whereas regional organizations and think tanks have demonstrated valuable merits as actors in peace and conflict resolutions, there are several challenges that also constrain their operational capacities and in extension, their effectiveness in peace and conflict resolution. One frequent



theme is this regard is the lack of collective or collaborative actions against powerful member states (Byron, 1984). Hegemony of some member states in these organizations can often undermine the likelihood for such organizations to authorize intervention missions that directly involve the various regional hegemonic powers. The lack of necessary political clout or resources can undermine interventions that are opposed by some member states and in cases whereby operations are authorised, powerful member states can still manage to sabotage such operations. As such, regional organizations can be relegated to playing conflict intervention roles in states that are relatively less powerful in the region.

Ethnic conflicts in weak states also challenge the effectiveness of regional organizations. Africa has been plagued by several ethnic conflicts that have spilled over to include other external factors. The conventional idea on sovereignty has historically quarantined internal conflicts within the purview of states in the sense that states have been considered to have the sole mandate of addressing conflicts within their territorial authority. This understanding of sovereignty that is also guaranteed by international law has excluded regional organizations from making timely interventions in conflicts as has been witnessed in the Darfur conflict in Sudan. Moreover, because of the shared ethnic lineages particularly across borders in African countries, some states have often taken unilateral decisions to intervene in conflicts outside authority and support of regional organizations. In the Congolese civil war, neighbouring states such as Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi all sent troops to support various factions in the conflict (Zartman, 2007). Such unilateral actions undermine the development of a consensus needed for regional organizations to intervene in conflict resolution.

The effectiveness of regional organizations may also be undermined by the lack of adequate resources in terms of finances, troops and logistical capabilities to undertake necessary actions. Regional organizations are dependent on member states for these resources in order to be operational. The concept of conflict resolution is wide and requires large amounts of resources

to engage in peacekeeping activities, organize high-level summits and mediation conferences, and also provide humanitarian assistance to those affected with conflict. For countries that are less developed, regional organizations may be largely dependent on foreign funding in order to operationalise its activities. This may consequently expose these organizations to undue external influences that may not be ideal with peacebuilding initiatives.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Whereas the UN maintains the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, regional organizations are increasingly playing a major role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The current nature of conflicts are very complex and therefore present daunting tasks to regional organizations as peacekeepers and conflict mediators striving to pacify warzones where conflict belligerents are targeting civilian populations; humanitarian aid workers are attacked or prevented from providing critical humanitarian aid; fighting and violence is guided without any ideology; and, the measurement between criminal and political violence is becoming unclear.

Institutional Think-Tanks on the other hand remain the key drivers beyond research and training of other civil society organizations to assist in peacebuilding. Conflict resolution in the absence of peacebuilding initiatives may prove futile in establishing peace. Think-Tanks therefore provide a platform through which new approaches and models are developed to respond to the changes in nature of conflicts and actors through rigorous empirical and qualitative research. They also develop educational mechanisms that can be adopted by civil society organizations at the grassroot levels to sensitize war-stricken communities about peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives. Think-Tanks are even more important as partners of regional organizations in conflict resolution because it can enable them to address the challenge of who to address in their reports and other research outputs. In Africa, Think-Tanks rarely get audience from domestic governments despite the critical role which they play

in the society. The fragile nature of majority of African states have made governments approach Think-Tanks with a lot of distrust because of the fear of facing criticisms.

In conclusion, within the context of South Sudan conflict, IGAD has played a critical role in attempting to resolve the conflict. Nonetheless, the approach of IGAD to resolving conflict in South Sudan has largely been based on the framework of power-sharing. This framework has contributed to the long duration of the conflict as various groups outside the government and SPLA/M-IO have held discussions hostage at several stages using the threat of violence. Nonetheless, the experiences of the IGAD-led conflict resolution processes cannot independently resolve the underlying drivers of conflict. In the absence of practical frameworks that can nurture the values of peace to the core of inter-societal relations at the lowest levels, then, the establishment of formal structures of power sharing will only postpone conflict. The power-sharing model adopted by IGAD will only achieve to satisfy the interests of individuals and groups represented in the mediation processes as well that of the regional and international community in achieving a ceasefire in the conflict. This conglomeration of domestic self-interested political state and non-state actors and interstate actors at both regional and international level have undermined the potential capacity of IGAD to institutionalize measures or programmes that may be fundamental in creating equitable, inclusive and self-sustaining peace.

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