

CONSTRUCTIVE DISENGAGEMENT

Western Efforts to Develop African Peacekeeping

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Glossary of Terms

ACRF African Crisis Response Force

ACRI African Crisis Response Initiative

ACSS African Centre for Security Studies

AMU Arab Maghreb Union

ANAD *Accord de non-aggression et d'assistance en matière de défense* (Treaty of Non-Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence)

BALTBAT Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion

BMATT British Military Advisory and Training Team

BMLO British Military Liaison Officer

CAR Central African Republic

DRC Democratic Republic of Congo

EAC Commission for East African Co-operation

ECCAS Economic Community of Central African States

ECOMOG ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

E-IMET Expanded International Military Education and Training

EIPC Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities

FTX field training exercise

IGAD Inter-Governmental Authority on Development

IMET International Military Education and Training

ISDSC Inter-State Defence and Security Committee

JCET Joint/Combined Exchange Training

MEDFLAG Medical Conflagration

MINURCA United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic

MISAB *Mission interafricaine de surveillance des accords de Bangui* (Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements)

NACC North Atlantic Co-ordination Council

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NMOG Neutral Military Observer Group

OAU Organisation of African Unity

OMIB Observer Mission in Burundi

SADC Southern African Development Community

SHIRBRIG Stand-by High Readiness Brigade

ST Sustainment Training

STTT Short-Term Training Team

UNAVEM United Nations Angola Verification Mission

Introduction

In response to recent humanitarian tragedies in Africa, countries such as France, the United Kingdom and the United States have started to offer peacekeeping-related training, instruction and equipment to African states. In May 1997, they announced the 'P-3 Initiative', a common capacity-building programme designed to strengthen and co-ordinate their respective policies and provide a forum for other interested countries to participate. Despite the apparently non-controversial nature of these undertakings, the three countries have nevertheless felt compelled to defend their actions.

In an effort to portray the P-3 Initiative in a favourable light, Western officials have endeavoured to display a unified front and downplay African scepticism. When Nigeria's Foreign Minister denounced Western capacity-building initiatives at the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers meeting in March 1998, Western countries quickly discounted his criticism as sour grapes. US law precludes Nigeria from receiving American assistance, and France and the UK have also withheld support. Libyan and Sudanese support for Nigeria's stand has been interpreted as proof of Nigeria's isolation. The US, in particular, dismissed reports that Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe had also joined Nigeria in voicing their disquiet.

Nevertheless, African fears of further marginalisation and Western disengagement are widely held. While a number of African countries have participated in Western-sponsored bilateral and subregional training programmes, no African regional or subregional organisation has formally approved of Western capacity-building initiatives. In light of this undercurrent of wariness and hostility, United Nations officials hosting the 5 December 1997 Meeting on Enhancing African Capacity for Peacekeeping feared that the conference would be a diplomatic fiasco and were greatly relieved that it even took place.

African countries view these initiatives as a manifestation of the West's desire to avoid being drawn directly into conflicts, either financially or militarily. The Security Council's growing reluctance to commit UN Blue Helmets — in sizeable numbers if at all — has altered the international peace and security landscape substantially. This trend has affected Africa more severely than other regions because of the huge demand for peacekeeping on the continent and the difficulty African actors have in responding effectively on their own. While the mere interposition of peacekeepers (be they UN or others) is not necessarily beneficial, the failure to deploy can also have grave consequences.

At the same time, African states are aware of their own limitations. As a general rule, individual African countries possess inadequate military infrastructures to mount sustained operations beyond their borders. Scant economic resources also restrict their abilities. While a number of African states have considerable UN peacekeeping experience, they have benefited from Western and UN largesse in carrying out their responsibilities. In fact, logistical and financial constraints often preclude African states from participating in peace operations that receive Security Council authorisation as multinational forces, but do not receive UN equipment or financing.

African states are thus attempting to become more self-sufficient in responding militarily to various crises by developing collective responses. To this end, a number of political and economic alliances on the African continent have been expanded to include military dimensions. The OAU and various African subregional organisations are attempting to create new mechanisms and develop new capabilities. African states are also increasingly willing to form *ad hoc* coalitions to respond to conflicts.

While it is important that African actors have recognised the need to take primary responsibility for responding to crises, even their collective abilities to undertake credible and effective peacekeeping operations remain limited. Their political will far surpasses their peacekeeping capabilities. For the recently established UN peacekeeping operation in the Central African Republic (CAR), for example, France transported all of the African contingents to the mission area.

This monograph assesses current efforts to develop African peacekeeping and peace enforcement capabilities. As a starting point, it identifies the shortcomings of African regional, subregional and *ad hoc* attempts to manage and resolve conflicts on their continent. It then describes various Western capacity-building initiatives, highlighting larger individual programmes such as those of Denmark, France, the UK and the US. In order to chart an appropriate future course, the monograph examines the true motives underlying Western initiatives, identifies the positive aspects of these programmes and suggests how they can be made more effective.

Limitations of African Peacekeeping Efforts

Many nascent African undertakings in the realm of peace and security are not expected to contribute significantly in the short term. The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) established an informal structure known as the Council for Common Defence in 1990, but this organ has yet to be tested. Several of the initiatives undertaken by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), including the conclusion of a non-aggression pact, are not likely to be very effective. Although the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been active in the Sudanese and Somali conflicts, its role has been confined to mediation. The Treaty of Non-Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence (known by its French acronym, ANAD) has recently begun to investigate the modalities for a subregional peacekeeping force in West Africa, but its efforts may serve to complicate rather than complement other subregional peacekeeping developments. The Commission for East African Co-operation (EAC) is presently considering a draft treaty to establish the East African Community, which provides a possible basis for joint military operations, but any peacekeeping role for the organisation would be a long-term development.¹

Even the initiatives of several of the (relatively) better funded and more institutionalised organisations such as the OAU, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are deeply flawed. Although these bodies are attempting to strengthen their peacekeeping mechanisms, their recent flurry of diplomatic and military activity is less significant than it might appear. Severe institutional, financial and operational constraints continue to hamper their effectiveness.

Several *ad hoc* coalitions also demonstrate the present limitations of African peacekeeping and peace enforcement arrangements. The African force dispatched to the Central African Republic in February 1997 required the direct assistance of France to deploy and to remain operational. Similarly, the proposed peacekeeping operation in the Republic of Congo (Congo) in mid-1997, which the Security Council ultimately failed to authorise, could not have deployed without outside assistance. Although an African force did deploy unaided to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August 1998, the implications of its intervention are troubling.

Organisation of African Unity

The much heralded OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution has not made a significant impact since it was created in 1993.² Its proponents hoped to strengthen the role of the OAU Secretary General and establish a more formal conflict resolution procedure.³ Historically, the OAU Secretary General has refrained from meddling in the internal affairs of OAU member states. As Sam Amoo has observed, when former Secretary General Edem Kodjo showed initiative in mediating the Western Sahara conflict, *"he found himself performing a solitary tightrope walk ... [with] no net to break his fall."*⁴ The OAU Secretary General is now in a slightly less precarious position. On paper, the Mechanism does provide the Secretary General with greater flexibility to undertake initiatives relating to internal affairs of OAU member states. In practice, however, the prohibition against intervention in the internal affairs of OAU member states, which is enshrined in the OAU Charter, continues to limit the Mechanism's utility.

Other OAU initiatives intended to strengthen the organisation's ability to promote peace and security have yet to prove their effectiveness. Neither the Early Warning System nor the Crisis Management Room — both part of the recently established Conflict Management Centre — is fully operational. The OAU created the Early Warning System to address the organisation's previous failure to secure reliable and timely information on conflict situations and to respond effectively on the basis of such information. In addition, it constructed the Crisis Management Room — a 24-hour situation room where civilians and military officers will monitor crises in Africa.⁵ Even if these structures should begin to function smoothly, however, they are not likely to improve the OAU's operational performance. Early decision-making is a much more pressing problem for the organisation to overcome than early warning.

A tenuous financial base hampers the OAU's ability to make progress in promoting peace and security. Only five per cent of the organisation's annual budget is allocated to peace initiatives.⁶ The failure of the majority of OAU member states to pay their dues on time and in full exacerbates the problem. The OAU Peace Fund, established to supplement the meagre level of assessed contributions allocated to the Mechanism, has proven largely illusory. The contributions of OAU member states have been *"rather modest."*⁷ Although the UN and a number of Western states have made significant donations to the OAU's conflict management machinery, these contributions have not always prompted meaningful results. Organisational and personnel problems have prevented the OAU from making full use of available funds.⁸ A UN official familiar with the issue opined that the OAU's Conflict Management Division needed personnel willing to *"roll up their sleeves and work"* rather than more money.⁹

The OAU's capacity to undertake credible and effective peacekeeping missions remains limited to a few small observer missions. Other than its short-lived and overly ambitious operation in Chad in 1981, the OAU has only dispatched military observers in three conflicts — all in the past six years. The first, the Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG) in Rwanda, was authorised in July 1992, prior to the Mechanism's creation. In August 1993, the Mechanism approved NMOG II. The Observer Mission in Burundi (OMIB) was established in April 1994. In December 1997, the OAU dispatched an observer group to the Comoros. Although such missions have played important symbolic roles and have provided useful confidence-building measures, they cannot be expected to assume multifaceted peacekeeping operations.

The Organisation's current plan to establish a stand-by African peacekeeping force is unrealistic. In October 1997, the OAU Chiefs of Defence Staff recommended that the OAU could earmark a brigade-sized contribution to stand-by arrangements from each of the five African subregions. They also suggested that the OAU should identify 100 military and civilian observers from each of the subregions as a starting point.¹⁰ In March 1998, the OAU Council of Ministers agreed that an eventual African peacekeeping force should consist of subregional brigades under the OAU's command and control, within the framework of the OAU Central Organ.¹¹ Given that the OAU has had to go hat in hand to donors for items such as boots,

socks and flashlights for its mission participants, it is difficult to see how it plans to field OAU missions comprising subregional brigades. Moreover, in the light of African countries' lukewarm commitment to the existing UN Stand-by Arrangements System,¹² the idea appears overly ambitious. Even the OAU's request to have its members identify a stand-by pool of 500 military and civilian observers as a short-term measure is far-fetched.

Southern African Development Community

Reflecting subregional consensus on the need for stronger security co-ordination, SADC established the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security in June 1996, but the body is not yet operational.¹³ The controversy centres around whether the Organ is to be treated as a SADC sector under the umbrella of the SADC Chairperson or as an essentially autonomous structure. At an extraordinary SADC Summit in March 1998, the matter was referred for resolution to the presidents of Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia. The presidential commission completed its preliminary draft proposals in August 1998 and is preparing a report for the other SADC heads of state.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the issue will likely remain a source of tension for some time.

Even if the Organ should become operational, it is doubtful whether it will make a difference as far as regional peace and security are concerned. Economic concerns have always been the organisation's chief focus. Other than the shared goal of liberating neighbouring countries from white rule, political and security issues have been particularly contentious. Recent events surrounding the rebellion in the DRC have shown that SADC members are deeply divided in terms of their willingness to intervene militarily in regional conflicts — organ or no organ.

Indeed, the present divisions among SADC member states threaten to undo the progress that SADC and its member states have made, both in developing a stand-by peacekeeping capacity and in conducting subregional training exercises. Despite the non-functioning of the Organ, a stand-by brigade is being put together for the subregion under the supervision of SADC's informal security secretariat, the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC). Each SADC member state is to earmark contingents as well as headquarters staff.¹⁵ Even if a stand-by brigade is established, SADC members will be hard-pressed to agree on its deployment. Also, South Africa had planned to host a subregional training exercise, Blue Crane, in November 1998. The exercise was postponed, however, due to tensions and instability in the subregion.¹⁶

Yet, the significant military potential of SADC members and the political standing of South Africa on the continent make SADC potentially very significant in the domain of peace and security. South Africa and Angola, in particular, possess considerable force-projection assets that they could bring to the fore.¹⁷ Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe have performed ably in UN peacekeeping operations. Accordingly, several Western states have initiated programmes to develop and promote Southern African peacekeeping structures at both the national and regional levels.

Importantly, SADC's peacekeeping capabilities have yet to be tested. Although the united diplomatic and military response of Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe to the Lesotho crisis in August and September 1994 is often cited as an important example, its significance is actually quite limited. No peacekeeping mission was deployed, as a show of force by the South African military along the Lesotho border proved sufficient.¹⁸ Moreover, the undertaking was *ad hoc* and was not organised under SADC auspices.¹⁹ The August 1998 military intervention by Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe in the DRC did receive retroactive endorsement from SADC, but the approval is best understood as a face-saving measure for presidents Robert Mugabe and Nelson Mandela. South Africa's September 1998 military intervention in Lesotho, in which Botswana also participated, is a 'SADC force' in name only. It received such a designation after a series of frantic phone calls between heads of state. The Organ on Politics, Defence and Security was never activated.

Economic Community of West African States

Although ECOWAS has fielded peacekeeping forces in Liberia and Sierra Leone and is contemplating intervening in Guinea Bissau, the organisation lacks an institutionalised crisis prevention and management mechanism. As a result, its military involvement has been *ad hoc* and not in accordance with a specific operating procedure. In the Liberian conflict, for example, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government established a Community Standing Mediation Committee, which in turn created the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) at its inaugural session. In Sierra Leone, in contrast, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government did not formally approve of the ECOMOG force until some three months after its intervention. In Guinea Bissau, the ministerial-level ECOWAS Defence Council voted to extend ECOMOG's mandate to Guinea Bissau,²⁰ but the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government have not yet addressed the issue.

This lack of a formal decision-making mechanism and the apparent willingness of ECOWAS to retroactively 'authorise' the use of force have raised questions about who controls ECOMOG. ECOMOG is only nominally accountable to ECOWAS, which exercises little oversight and provides minimal political and administrative guidance. The fear among ECOWAS member states that Nigeria has appropriated ECOMOG to further its own foreign policy agenda is widespread and justified. However, the fact that ECOWAS ministers designated the recent Senegalese-led military operation in Guinea Bissau as an ECOMOG force suggests that any country willing and able — not only Nigeria — can manipulate ECOMOG.

The stated intention of ECOWAS to establish a permanent peacekeeping force does not address these concerns. In December 1997, ECOWAS Heads of State and Government agreed in principle to set up a formal mechanism to prevent conflict and supervise peacekeeping in the subregion.²¹ In March 1998, a ministerial-level meeting was convened to decide upon the structure of this mechanism. Debate centred around whether ECOMOG should be transformed into a permanent force or whether another peace force should be constituted.²² The ministers ultimately decided that ECOMOG would serve as the basis for the future peacekeeping body.²³ Whether the force is called ECOMOG or by some other name, the critical issue is who will determine when and how it will be deployed.

The current manner in which ECOMOG is funded does little to discourage interested parties from abusing their power. None of the organisation's annual budget is earmarked for peace operations. ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone have been funded entirely through voluntary contributions. This lack of a sound and broader financial base limits ECOMOG's effectiveness and encourages any country willing to cover the costs to act with near impunity. Western countries provided considerable financial assistance to ECOMOG in Liberia, but Nigeria bore the greatest financial burden, as it has in Sierra Leone. (Although Nigeria complains bitterly about the costs it has incurred to undertake ECOMOG missions, it will likely remain in its interests to do so. In Sierra Leone, for example, referring to the force as the 'Nigerian-led ECOMOG' was invaluable to a country in need of some positive public relations.)

Moreover, ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia was plagued by numerous operational difficulties and actually prolonged the conflict. Financial constraints prevented the ECOWAS Secretariat from providing logistical support to ECOMOG troops. ECOWAS initially had agreed that each troop-contributing state would provide logistical support for its own contingent for the first thirty days of the operation, after which the ECOWAS Secretariat would take over. ECOWAS was unable to fulfil its commitment, however, and troop-contributing states had to continue to resupply their own troops.²⁴ The force also lacked an effective and unified command during its first several years. Indeed, ECOWAS member states not only supported, but also created different factions in the civil war. Initial Western support was halting, and proposed 'solutions', such as the introduction of East African peacekeepers into the force, led to new problems. A new force commander, an influx of Western military assistance²⁵ and a growing war-weariness later all combined to enhance ECOMOG's effectiveness. The force did ultimately oversee the July 1997 presidential elections, but this achievement does not counterbalance ECOMOG's previous track record.

Ad hoc arrangements

Central African Republic

The 800-strong African multinational force deployed in the CAR highlights several of the shortcomings of recent African responses. The Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (known by its French acronym, MISAB)²⁶ required the direct assistance of France to deploy and become operational. The force also required French logistical and tactical support on the ground.²⁷ Although each participating state provided its troops with their regular pay and supplied them with weapons, France paid their total food and daily subsistence allowances at rates then applicable to Central African military personnel. France also supplied, maintained and provided fuel for tactical and support vehicles, paid rents for buildings used by MISAB command and military personnel and donated office equipment.²⁸ In April 1998, in view of France's impending withdrawal from the country, the Security Council established the UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA)²⁹ to replace the French-supported force.

Transforming the mission into a UN peacekeeping operation has not remedied these shortcomings; in fact, it has created new ones. The Security Council's decision to place the operation on a shoe-string budget contributed to numerous and largely preventable delays. The lack of adequate air support and logistics personnel has severely restricted the UN force's ability to provide necessary security and support.³⁰ Due in part to the insufficient number of troops, the elections that are to bring the peacekeeping operation to a close have been postponed until November 1998.

Republic of Congo

The contemplated peacekeeping operation in Congo similarly illustrates the limitations of African actors. Although the Security Council ultimately decided not to authorise the mission, the proposed Senegalese-led force would not have been able to deploy without outside assistance. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan observed: *"No country emerged that was able and willing to assure the command, control and communications capacity, the rapid deployment capability or the ability to generate the necessary financing that would be required to assume the leadership of a multinational force."*³¹

The financial impediments to the constitution of the proposed force are also telling. According to the Secretary-General, *"[m]ost potential troop contributors specified that the force should be a United Nations peacekeeping operation rather than a multinational force."*³² This is instructive because it highlights a reality that is often unstated: financial — not political — concerns are often paramount when African countries speak of seeking UN authorisation. UN peacekeeping operations are supported through non-negotiable assessments³³ and are pegged at a rate that covers most African countries' expenses.³⁴ UN multinational forces, however, are financed through voluntary contributions, with participants expected to cover their own costs.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Although Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe proved willing and able to deploy a military force to the DRC in support of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the long-term significance of their intervention is likely to be more worrisome than encouraging.³⁵ Rather than safeguarding the territorial integrity of the DRC, it may actually help to dissolve the country. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the intervening countries are primarily motivated by parochial and business interests. From a military perspective, the troops constitute an effective force which thwarted the initial rebel advance on Kinshasa. Yet, it should be underscored that their gains have thus far been limited to the western DRC. Moreover, logistical as well as command and control capacities have been found wanting.³⁶ One 'achievement' that is not in doubt, however, is the harm that the intervention has caused to SADC as a potential instrument for promoting regional peace and security.

Western Responses

Aware of the limitations of African responses (and their own unwillingness to intervene militarily), several Western countries, led by the so-called P-3, have begun to develop African peacekeeping capabilities. Eager to prove their commitment and compassion, Western countries have tended to label any effort even remotely aimed at enhancing African peacekeeping capabilities as 'capacity-building'. Individual programmes vary considerably in terms of their level of financial and political commitment, as well as their primary emphasis. Yet, most focus on providing some combination of training, instruction and equipment to African troops.

The American, British, Danish and French programmes are the most substantial and well-developed capacity-building initiatives. The US African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) provides peacekeeping training and related non-lethal equipment to countries on a bilateral basis. France conducts subregional peacekeeping training exercises, provides classroom instruction and pre-positions heavy equipment in designated locations in Africa through its *Renforcement des capacités africaines de maintien de la paix* (RECAMP) programme. The UK African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme focuses primarily on training and education. Denmark's programme focuses exclusively on the provision of peacekeeping instruction.

Several smaller scale Western programmes also merit mention. Canada and Ireland, for example, have assisted the Zambia Staff College in developing its peacekeeping training curriculum. Canada has also provided instructors for training courses held at the Egyptian Institute of Foreign Affairs and sponsors twenty to thirty African participants per year to attend peacekeeping courses offered both by its military and at the Lester B Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre.³⁷ Together with Denmark, the other Nordic countries have held various training initiatives such as the Nordic Senior Management Seminar. On its own, Norway is financing a five-year Training for Peace in Southern Africa Project, through which it co-operates with two South African non-governmental organisations to disseminate peacekeeping doctrine and provide relevant training.³⁸ Most recently, Sweden and Norway funded the first United Nations Police Officers Course for the SADC region scheduled for 4-14 November 1998.³⁹

Training

United States

ACRI provides classical peacekeeping training to national contingents at the battalion level. The training is based on procedures from both national and intergovernmental peacekeeping doctrines.⁴⁰ Basic soldiering skills as well as specific peacekeeping functions, such as establishing checkpoints, providing perimeter security and processing displaced persons are taught. The importance of respecting human rights and developing and maintaining good relations with civil society are also emphasised. The ACRI Special Co-ordinator speaks of the desirability of training ten to fourteen battalions and 10 000 to 12 000 troops.⁴¹ Initial recipients were each to provide a single battalion for training, with the exception of Ethiopia, which was to provide two battalions and a brigade headquarters. Training for smaller specialised units is being considered, as is the provision of training on a subregional basis.⁴²

ACRI training is conducted in the recipient countries, at roughly six-month intervals over a three-year period. It is divided into two 'phases'. Phase 1 lasts seventy days and culminates in a field training exercise (FTX) that involves humanitarian agencies and the local population. Phase 2 encompasses up to six shorter Sustainment Training (ST) modules for elements of the selected battalion. Each ACRI-trained battalion will receive four to six STs in one or more of the following areas:

- logistics and maintenance;

- battalion headquarters staff operations;
- operational interaction with international and non-governmental organisations;
- brigade headquarters staff operations; and
- human rights and train-the-trainer development.⁴³

The first STs are to last thirty days. The timing and duration of the last ST, a regional training exercise, are undetermined given the number of variables involved.⁴⁴

To date, seven African countries have concluded agreements with the US. Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Senegal and Uganda were selected initially, and Benin signed a memorandum of understanding with the US in July 1998. (The US has announced that Côte d'Ivoire will also receive ACRI training.⁴⁵) Tunisia was originally chosen to receive ACRI training as well, but it expected more than the US was willing or able to provide, and no agreement was ultimately concluded.⁴⁶ Senegal and Uganda were the first to receive Phase 1 training (beginning in July 1997), followed by Malawi (September 1997), Mali (February 1998) and Ghana (April 1998). Ethiopia was scheduled to receive Phase 1 training in the second half of 1998, but this was put on hold due to the outbreak of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 1998. The decision to provide ACRI training to Ethiopia is being re-evaluated.⁴⁷ Phase 2 training has already commenced in Malawi, Mali, Senegal and Uganda.

In addition to ACRI, the US conducts other military assistance programmes that enhance recipients' peacekeeping capabilities through training. Unlike ACRI, however, they are not regional in application and peacekeeping is not their primary objective. The Joint/Combined Exchange Training (JCET), designed to enable US troops to train abroad alongside foreign militaries and develop important long-term contacts, provides some relevant training to African countries.⁴⁸ The US provides medical training as well as humanitarian and civic assistance to several African countries each year through the Medical Conflagration (MEDFLAG) programme.⁴⁹ In March 1998, for example, the US provided MEDFLAG training to medical personnel in Guinea.⁵⁰ The US has also sponsored several regional training exercises in Africa through the FLINTLOCK programme. The focus of the May - June 1997 FLINTLOCK regional exercise in Mali was peacekeeping.⁵¹

France

RECOMP aims to develop Stand-by Force Modules that can be called upon to participate in UN- and OAU-authorised operations.⁵² Unlike ACRI, RECOMP prioritises training at the subregional level. Through RECOMP, France provides significant support to multinational peacekeeping exercises hosted by different African countries. Some of the participating troops are organised into multinational battalions, giving them an opportunity to work closely together.

The first RECOMP training programme, Guidimakha, took place in February 1998 in Senegal. The exercise built upon a more modest multinational undertaking held in Togo the previous March.⁵³ Some 3 600 troops from eleven African and Western countries⁵⁴ took part in the ten-day exercise. Mali, Mauritania and Senegal were represented at battalion strength. Five other African countries provided platoons: Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. France supplied roughly 900 troops. The UK and the US also provided small contingents.

Subregional training exercises under RECOMP are designed to prepare troops for a number of contingencies and thus cover a broad range of topics. For example, Guidimakha was divided into four separate phases, in order to simulate an actual operation and facilitate training. First, specialised personnel from participating countries gathered intelligence in the theatre of operations. Next, during the preliminary contingency operations phase, participating troops were tasked with securing key strategic points. During the third phase, operations centred around taking control of a particular area and securing a humanitarian zone, and included aerial bombardment simulations. The final phase was devoted to providing humanitarian assistance,

such as regrouping and protecting refugees and displaced persons.⁵⁵

France intends to support such subregional training exercises roughly every two years, in different locations around the continent. This does not preclude smaller French contributions to other African peacekeeping exercises. Each subregional exercise will be preceded by a civil-military planning seminar and a command post exercise. In view of the high cost of such undertakings, however, France intends to limit the size of future exercises to roughly 1 000 participants.⁵⁶

United Kingdom

Unlike US and French capacity-building initiatives, the UK African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme focuses primarily on training officers. In light of the relatively small size of its programme, the UK has determined that its comparative advantage lies in 'training the trainer'. The rationale underlying this 'top-down' approach is that the officers receiving training will then impart the lessons they learned to their soldiers.

A central goal of the British programme is helping to develop national military staff colleges into centres of excellence for regional peacekeeping training. Two African-based British Military Advisory and Training Teams (BMATTs) — BMATT West Africa (in Ghana) and BMATT Southern Africa (in Zimbabwe) — provide training to officers from the host countries as well as other African states.⁵⁷ Whereas BMATT West Africa conducts programmes in Ghana only, BMATT Southern Africa trains throughout the subregion. After several years of discussions, the UK and the Ugandan governments recently concluded a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a BMATT in Uganda to cover the East Africa subregion.⁵⁸

Although the BMATTs are the most formalised component of the British programme, the UK also has smaller scale training initiatives. British Military Liaison Officers (BMLOs) are stationed in Angola, Ethiopia and Mauritius.⁵⁹ The BMLO in Addis Ababa, for example, works closely with the Ethiopian military and the OAU.⁶⁰ Among their various activities, Short-Term Training Teams (STTTs) provide training in specialised areas for periods of up to six weeks to African battalions preparing to deploy to peacekeeping operations. For example, STTTs provided mine awareness training to the Zimbabweans before they participated in the third UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), and to a Ghanaian contingent in January 1996 before it deployed to Liberia as part of ECOMOG. Britain has also conducted map exercises for a wide range of African countries at the British Staff College in Camberley and in Addis Ababa.⁶¹

The UK has aided subregional training initiatives as well. In April 1997, it supported and helped organise a three-week peacekeeping exercise hosted by Zimbabwe, spending over US \$500 000. More than 1 500 troops from ten SADC countries participated in Blue Hungwe.⁶² The UK also offered to help South Africa to plan Blue Crane, the regional peacekeeping exercise mentioned above, but South Africa has sought to limit external assistance to financial support.

Teaching

United States

During his March 1998 trip to Africa, President Clinton announced that the US will help to establish a centre for security studies in Africa.⁶³ According to Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice, the African Centre for Security Studies (ACSS) will *"provide a forum for senior military and civilian officials to explore together complex defence policy issues and provide training to strengthen civil-military relations in burgeoning democracies."*⁶⁴ The US has emphasised that the ACSS will not duplicate existing US government programmes geared towards African countries.⁶⁵ Neither the centre's location nor its opening date has yet been announced.

The US also provides peacekeeping and related instruction to African officers through several of its other assistance programmes. The International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme provides professional military education and training to foreign military personnel and civil servants both in the United States and abroad. IMET programmes include segments on human rights and civil-military relations.⁶⁶ The Expanded International Military Education and Training (E-IMET) programme, which has the same core focus as IMET, provides instruction to a wider group of beneficiaries. Besides instructing military officers and civil servants, E-IMET programmes are open to members of civil society, such as the media and non-governmental organisations.⁶⁷ The Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities (EIPC) programme focuses on developing peacekeeping doctrine, rather than providing tactical training.⁶⁸ The US Navy Justice School, which is open to African participants, conducts courses on military law, respect for human rights and the role of the military in democracies.⁶⁹

France

Under RECOMP, France plans to provide additional peacekeeping instruction. Together with Côte d'Ivoire, France is establishing a regional peacekeeping training centre near Yamoussoukro, which is scheduled to open in early 1999. Initially, training will be offered to West Africans only, but the centre will eventually be open to officers from beyond the subregion as well. Although French will be the language of instruction, anglophone participants are welcome to attend. At the outset, all of the instructors will be French. Each course will comprise some forty officers, half of whom will be from Côte d'Ivoire.⁷⁰ The centre's construction alone will cost France more than US \$3 million.⁷¹ Although France has encouraged donations from other Western countries, it will provide the necessary funds if no additional contributions are forthcoming.⁷²

France also provides financial assistance and instructors to five African national military staff colleges, which have been designated to provide training to other nationals as well.⁷³ Each of these schools is devoted to a particular aspect of military training. Although these centres focus on basic military *savoir faire*, their courses include peacekeeping modules. The military staff college in Koulikoro, Mali, for example, focuses on humanitarian law issues, relevant international treaties and conventions and recent African conflicts during its nine-month course.⁷⁴

In addition, participation in courses conducted at French military staff colleges is open to a certain number of African officers. Recently, France invited African participants to attend a three-week course at its *Institut de Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale*, which focused on peacekeeping.⁷⁵

United Kingdom

The provision of peacekeeping-related instruction is a central component of BMATT. Each of the BMATT programmes is tailored to the specific needs of the host country and the subregion. They cover such topics as international humanitarian law and civil-military relations. In Ghana, a small team of military officers works closely with the directing staff of the Ghanaian Armed Forces Command and Staff College to run the annual four-week peacekeeping module in the senior staff course, which is open to participants from throughout the subregion and beyond.⁷⁶ In Zimbabwe, the BMATT team works closely with the directing staff of the Zimbabwe Staff College to run an annual, two-week peacekeeping module open to participants from throughout the subregion. Moreover, all of the tactical and staff training courses given by BMATT in Zimbabwe include peacekeeping modules.⁷⁷

The UK also conducts a number of courses outside BMATT host countries. For example, BMATT Southern Africa has recently run a company commanders course in Swaziland, a disaster management course in Mauritius and a method of instruction course in Mozambique. Each of these programmes was open to military personnel from the host country only.⁷⁸ In

October 1998, BMATT Southern Africa held a four-week command and staff course in Malawi for officers from SADC countries.⁷⁹ The above courses included a peacekeeping element.⁸⁰ African officers also receive instruction at various military academies in the United Kingdom.

The UK has supported and initiated several other projects designed to strengthen African peacekeeping. British contributions to the UN Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa have financed peacekeeping courses in Ghana, Kenya and Zambia.⁸¹ Together with Nigeria, the UK co-chaired an informal working group that produced a paper entitled *Conflict Prevention and Peace-keeping in Africa*, which was submitted to the Secretaries-General of the UN and the OAU in April 1995. In an effort to promote anglophone/francophone military co-operation in theatre, it funded an English/French peacekeeping dictionary produced jointly by the Ghanaian and Senegalese armed forces.

Denmark

Denmark's programme to develop African peacekeeping capabilities focuses on the SADC subregion in general and Zimbabwe in particular, where it is developing a Regional Peacekeeping Centre. In accordance with a memorandum of understanding signed with Zimbabwe in January 1997, Denmark has begun to construct and equip peacekeeping training facilities at the Zimbabwe Staff College. The same agreement calls for Denmark to organise ten peacekeeping courses there over a three-year period. Moreover, Denmark will provide the means for participants from the subregion to attend Nordic peacekeeping courses. The initial budget for the three-year programme is some US \$900 000 per year.⁸²

Denmark has also given SADC officials an opportunity to learn first-hand about the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BALTBAT)⁸³ and the Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG),⁸⁴ with the intention of helping SADC member states develop similar capabilities. The Danish government organised a visit for SADC Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence to Denmark and to Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 1998 and underwrote the costs of the trip.⁸⁵ Denmark organised a second trip in May 1998 for senior SADC military officers to observe the joint Danish-Polish brigade serving in the NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which includes a Lithuanian company serving with the Danish battalion.⁸⁶

Other Danish educational initiatives designed to enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of African states also focus on the SADC subregion. Denmark is supporting the creation of a 'clearing house' at the Zimbabwe Staff College that will monitor peacekeeping training activities, identify new regional training requirements and keep a record of trained peacekeeping practitioners and instructors in the subregion and beyond. The budget for the establishment of this clearing house is some US \$180 000.⁸⁷ In addition, Denmark has funded a defence management course at a South African university for mid-level officers and civilians from SADC countries and has supported an effort to develop indigenous conflict resolution strategies.⁸⁸

Equipping

United States

ACRI furnishes each participating African state with approximately US \$1,2 million worth of related equipment, for the battalion as well as the individual soldier. The equipment provided is intended for use both in training and in the event of actual deployment. Provision is made for standard communications equipment (US radios and British repeaters), night vision binoculars (Russian) and mine detectors (Austrian). Emphasising interoperability, the US supplies recipients with equipment that meets UN specifications whenever possible. Except for small arms ammunition used for marksmanship training, the ACRI package does not include any lethal equipment. Each trainee is outfitted with a complete uniform, boots, personal gear and even eyeglasses if needed.⁸⁹

The US has also provided equipment for specific peacekeeping operations in Africa, on a case-by-case basis. In 1996, for example, it provided a US \$30 million equipment package (and related training) to ECOMOG troops in Liberia.⁹⁰ The equipment consisted of trucks, generators and medical supplies.

France

The provision of peacekeeping-related equipment is another important element of RECAMP. France used Guidimakha as an occasion to pre-position equipment in Dakar, for use in the exercise as well as in future peacekeeping operations. Beyond the cost of the equipment itself — valued at some US \$3 million — France spent roughly US \$2 million to deliver and install it. This matériel will remain under French control, and France will also assume responsibility for maintaining it. After Guidimakha, France left behind some 140 vehicles, 650 individual and collective weapons and a field hospital.⁹¹ Much of this equipment has subsequently been used to support the UN peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic. France plans to pre-position additional equipment over the next two years in other African countries, in conjunction with future subregional training exercises.⁹²

Like the US, France has supplied equipment for use in specific peacekeeping operations in Africa. In late 1997, for example, France provided roughly US \$300 000 of equipment and logistical assistance to the OAU observer mission deployed in the Comoros. The French Ministry of Defence "*loaned*" a number of vehicles from its Reunion fleet to the mission while the Ministry of Co-operation "*gave*" a number of others.⁹³

United Kingdom

The provision of equipment is not a central component of the British capacity-building programme, but the UK also donates peacekeeping-related matériel on an *ad hoc* basis. In view of the expense involved in providing equipment, the UK decided that offering training and instruction would be a better use of its limited resources. Nevertheless, on several occasions, the UK has allocated money to buy equipment for use in peacekeeping operations. In 1996, for example, Britain contributed more than US \$500 000 to purchase and dispatch vehicle spare parts for contingents serving in ECOMOG. Subsequently, it has contributed more than US \$3 million to the UN Trust Fund for Sierra Leone, with most of the money earmarked for logistical support to ECOMOG.⁹⁴

'Capacity-Building': A Way Forward

The harsh reality underlying these multifaceted initiatives is that Western countries, by and large, are unwilling to become directly involved in African conflicts. By providing African countries with peacekeeping-related training, instruction and equipment, Western states hope to obviate their need to intervene militarily in Africa. In order to truly make Africans more self-sufficient (and thus to enable the West to disengage with a clearer conscience), the provision of peacekeeping-related equipment is crucial, yet this is the least developed element of Western initiatives. Supplying the type and amount of military equipment that might enable African peacekeepers to respond effectively to crises on their continent is neither financially nor politically feasible; providing low-level peacekeeping training and instruction is. Western initiatives respond principally to domestic political concerns — not African limitations.

Yet, the implications and origins of Western policies should not detract from their merits. Indeed, current programmes have many positive aspects. On some level, Western countries have displayed a renewed (if revised) interest in African peacekeeping, and the resources they are channelling into Africa are significant. The various initiatives also impart valuable practical and theoretical skills to participants. Moreover, Western countries have proven willing to alter their programmes in response to perceived shortcomings and criticisms. Importantly, Western and African states have begun to co-operate between and among themselves on peace and security issues.

Room for improvement exists, however, and there is much that Western and African countries can do — both unilaterally and collectively — to build upon this co-operation. Western states must minimise competition among themselves if they want to give substance to their claims of collaboration. There are still too many examples of words and deeds diverging. Western countries should also continue to revise certain aspects of their respective programmes. The most influential and powerful African countries, for their part, must not continue to 'hold out' for something more from the West. Working with donor countries to devise sensible programmes would be a better use of their time. The OAU and subregional organisations merit Western political and financial support in spite of their limitations, as they provide potentially important political legitimacy as well as checks and balances.

Acknowledging political realities

Above all, ACRI is a response to perceived American needs. It reflects the desire of the US not to be drawn into armed conflicts and humanitarian tragedies in Africa. Indeed, the impetus behind the programme was to devise a quick-fix response in mid-1996 to the anticipated bloodbath in Burundi and to avoid having to commit American troops. The sense of urgency can be seen from the spate of visits by senior US officials to Burundi. US National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, Special Assistant to the President Susan Rice and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose all travelled to Bujumbura⁹⁵ to gauge the situation and appeal for cooler heads to prevail. The haste with which the initial proposal for an African Crisis Response Force (ACRF) was formulated is further evidence. ACRF sought to create a standing African peacekeeping force. As one Department of Defence official familiar with the proposal stated emphatically, ACRF was *"total bullshit, and we [policymakers] knew it from Day 1."* The official cautioned, however, that it is important to bear in mind the tremendous pressure the Administration put on the Joint Chiefs of Staff to *"come up with something."*⁹⁶ Congress's decision to appropriate US \$20 million to support preventive action in Burundi is perhaps the clearest indication of the fear in Washington of a possible Rwanda-type genocide in Burundi⁹⁷ to which the US might be compelled to send American troops.

Many US government officials readily concede that ACRI is flawed but stress that it represents the best policy option that can realistically be expected to garner Congressional support.⁹⁸ Isolationist and anti-UN sentiment in Congress does represent a very real constraint. Funding is granted on a yearly basis after much wrangling, and at a very modest level.⁹⁹ By repeatedly making the UN a scapegoat,¹⁰⁰ the Administration has poisoned public opinion and thereby emboldened Congress.

RECAMP, like ACRI, is first and foremost a response to domestic interests and limitations. Throughout most of the 1990s, France muddled through crises on the African continent, often pursuing seemingly inconsistent foreign policy objectives. Because of the questionable allegiances it forged, the French government suffered a series of humiliations and its traditional, pro-active Africa policy came under increasing criticism. France propped up a number of dictatorial or undemocratic African regimes to keep the pro-French élite in power. The French public began to question France's financial commitment in Africa and policy-makers became increasingly preoccupied with NATO enlargement and European integration. This series of developments led France to re-evaluate and reformulate its Africa policy.

RECAMP is billed as a strengthened commitment to African peacekeeping, but it can best be understood as a cost-cutting measure intended to reduce France's traditional exposure and expenses on the continent. At the instigation of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, France is scaling down its military presence substantially throughout Africa.¹⁰¹ Although the government is re-channelling some thirty per cent of its military spending destined for Africa into peacekeeping-related activities, the overall aid figure in real terms is significantly reduced. The integration of the Co-operation Ministry into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is further indication that Africa's privileged status in the formulation of French foreign policy is waning. As France's schizophrenic

support for the proposed Senegalese-led operation in Congo¹⁰² and its eagerness to extract itself from MISAB in the CAR both attest, its commitment to strengthen peacekeeping on the continent is dubious.

Although the smaller British and Danish programmes are not such blatant examples of self-interested politics, domestic considerations also motivate and constrain them. Financial limitations have as much to do with the British emphasis on 'training the trainer' as coherent policy does. The desire of Denmark's Minister for Defence to carve out a high-profile role for himself helps to explain the surprisingly large scope of the Danish programme. More broadly, Denmark was eager to differentiate itself from its Nordic partners and has taken obvious pride in being mentioned along with the P-3.

Recognising accomplishments

The fact that domestic interests motivate Western capacity-building programmes does not automatically negate their value. As a result of ACRI, for example, the issue of African peace and security is higher on the US agenda than it otherwise would be. Also, France's decision to pre-position equipment and dispense with it for actual peacekeeping operations has proven beneficial. More generally, Western initiatives provide tangible benefits, including training and confidence-building.

The peacekeeping training and instruction being offered have particular relevance for the development of civil-military relations. The more routine military and policing duties such as instilling proper discipline and decorum in conducting checkpoints and running observation posts are important but perhaps less of a priority.¹⁰³ Criticisms that the classical peacekeeping training being offered is of questionable utility — given that many African conflicts require robust intervention forces — are too dismissive. Imparting a respect for human rights and an understanding of the ways in which international humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organisations work is of crucial importance in any conflict.

Moreover, as a result of these initiatives, Western and African state and non-state actors have actively begun to collaborate. It is too early to conclude that the West and Africa have entered into a 'partnership' (as the US, in particular, likes to describe its relationship with current and potential ACRI recipients). However, Western and African states have become more receptive to working together to address peace and security issues. The P-3 have also begun to share information among themselves on their respective activities. On all fronts, mutual suspicion is slowly giving way to co-operation and mutual respect.¹⁰⁴

There are numerous examples of this new-found spirit of co-operation. The fact that interested countries — both African and Western — have twice gathered at UN headquarters to discuss the subject of enhancing African peacekeeping capabilities is encouraging. Similarly, Guidimakha clearly manifested the willingness of Western and African countries to work together. In addition, Guidimakha revealed African states eager to display a unified front. The spectre of Senegalese and Mauritanian troops training side-by-side was a poignant symbol in view of recent tensions between the two countries.¹⁰⁵ It is also noteworthy that the UK and the US provided military contingents to take part in the French-organised Guidimakha; such a contribution could not have been contemplated even two years ago. Similarly, the fact that the UK has conducted a peacekeeping course in Ghana open to officers from ACRI-trained battalions¹⁰⁶ and that Belgian military officers have worked as ACRI trainers¹⁰⁷ are also important developments.

Identifying next steps

As the negotiations behind the establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation in the Central African Republic illustrate, however, a good deal of distrust and competing interests still exist among the Western actors. The Clinton Administration's reluctant and much-delayed support for the UN peacekeeping operation in the CAR made the transition to the UN force unnecessarily

difficult and acrimonious. It should have been possible to extract additional concessions from France (concerning what assets it would leave behind) and from the CAR President Ange-Félix Patassé (concerning the domestic opposition and the International Monetary Fund) without resorting to stonewalling. France also exacerbated tensions by withdrawing many of its troops prematurely.¹⁰⁸

Tensions between Denmark and the UK are also apparent, although their ramifications are less pronounced. Whereas the two countries could work together to strengthen peacekeeping capabilities in the SADC subregion, each spends more time belittling the other's actions than trying to co-ordinate activities and build upon its counterpart's successes. Denmark takes obvious pleasure in chiding the P-3 by stressing how its programme is designed to work with and cater to Africans, while the P-3 tend to dictate policy with a 'take it or leave it' attitude. The UK views Denmark as an interloper that has usurped part of its turf.

Western countries must stop paying lip service to collaboration while actually competing for the affections of African countries. It should be possible for a country to pursue its own capacity-building agenda without undercutting the efforts of other countries. Denmark and the UK, for example, must stop ignoring one another and pretending that the other's activities in Zimbabwe are of no consequence. The sooner the two Western donors and the host country devise a common strategy, the better. These three countries should then meet with Canada, Ireland and Zambia to discuss how the military staff colleges of Zambia and Zimbabwe, which both aspire to regional roles, can complement one another rather than compete against one another.

In addition to better co-ordination of their activities, Western states ought to revise specific aspects of their individual training programmes. For example, the field training exercise that concludes Phase 1 of ACRI should be expanded, with greater emphasis placed on developing civil-military relations. While progress has certainly been made since the initial exercises, in which the participation of UN agencies and non-governmental organisations was largely serendipitous, more can be done. ACRI should also provide training to subregional groupings to encourage co-operation among neighbouring states. RECAMP ought to focus more on imparting peacekeeping skills during its regional exercise and less on showcasing military capabilities.¹⁰⁹ It is understandable that Guidimakha, as the inaugural RECAMP initiative, was a media circus, but future exercises should be smaller and more straightforward.

If Western states used more rigorous criteria when selecting training recipients, their programmes would be more effective — particularly in the short term. Although training and instruction are potentially valuable regardless of the participant's current abilities, Western programmes should initially target able and dedicated peacekeepers. This is not presently the case with ACRI. Originally, ACRI recipients were to possess a certain level of military capabilities and peacekeeping experience, as well as a strong tradition of civilian rule. Of the nine countries identified as possible participants, only four were among the initial countries selected.¹¹⁰ (American heavy-handedness in presenting its programme and in recruiting participants undermined its efforts.¹¹¹) Ultimately, the countries selected had more to do with expedience than with careful planning.

For Western states to use more rigorous selection criteria, targeted African countries need to be persuaded that these initiatives merit their support. Until now, the most powerful and influential African states have been particularly wary of giving their blessings to Western programmes. Both Egypt and South Africa, for example, have steadfastly refused to accept ACRI training. A way must also be found to engage Nigeria now that General Sani Abacha has departed from the scene. Nigeria should be allowed to benefit from the provision of peacekeeping training and equipment. Perhaps more than any other country, Nigeria has the potential to play a positive role in subregional and continental peacekeeping. There are sufficient incentives for Abacha's successor, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, to make good on his stated intention to return Nigeria to civilian control. The need for Nigeria's peacekeeping services is too great to make training and equipment conditional upon a complete transition to democracy.

Stronger bilateral commitments should not come at the expense of efforts to strengthen and engage the OAU. Despite its shortcomings, the OAU cannot be replaced and it provides potential political legitimacy to UN and subregional initiatives. It therefore merits continuing Western support. It is appropriate to work with the OAU to develop mechanisms to make it more effective even though its contribution to conflict management and resolution will remain quite limited for the foreseeable future. The money that the West has bestowed upon its conflict management machinery must be put to productive and efficient use. Throwing more money at the problem, however, is no solution. The OAU must still change the way it conducts business.

Just as the West has generously funded various OAU initiatives, greater attention and money should be paid to subregional organisations, particularly ECOWAS and SADC. Given the Security Council's deference to ECOMOG in regional peacekeeping, ECOMOG must be placed firmly under civilian political control. Despite the persistent schisms within SADC, which have become even more pronounced in recent months, the organisation still has a potentially important role to play in the subregion and on the continent. Western largesse might be put to good use to find a way to mitigate antagonisms. For example, while South Africa and Zimbabwe should not be seen as being rewarded for their military adventures in Lesotho and the DRC, respectively, offering training and equipment for a joint South African-Zimbabwean dedicated peacekeeping battalion might make both political and military sense and would be a timely initiative.

Finally, although linking the provision of training and equipment to participation in actual peacekeeping missions is politically incorrect, it may be militarily desirable. Under the current scheme, Western countries could be building a capacity that will never be tapped effectively. African participants are under no obligation to participate in any eventual peacekeeping force. According to the memorandum of understanding that ACRI recipients must sign, for example, they agree only to refrain from using the donated equipment for unintended purposes. The enthusiasm of ACRI recipients for the programme may have more to do with helping themselves to US training and equipment now, than with helping their fellow Africans later. Raising the issue of linking capacity-building and capacity-utilisation should not be taboo.

Conclusion

Despite the protestations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States, their programmes to develop African peacekeeping capabilities are indeed motivated by a recognition that African security is not a priority concern and a desire to avoid direct involvement in African conflicts. Western programmes are simply not the 'engagement' policies that their architects would have the world believe. Moreover, the Western-driven Security Council will continue to disengage from Africa, notwithstanding its responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security.

Because Western capacity-building initiatives respond primarily to domestic political concerns, their emphasis is misplaced. Although many African countries already possess substantial peacekeeping experience and have performed ably, Western programmes focus on providing training and instruction. The provision of peacekeeping equipment, which would seem a more appropriate response, is the least developed element of Western initiatives. African needs have taken a backseat to those of the donors.

Justifiably, African countries are developing regional responses to better prevent, manage and resolve conflicts, but these efforts have achieved only limited success due to numerous financial, operational and institutional constraints. The structures that the OAU has created are not working as intended. For the foreseeable future, the OAU can only be expected to field small military observer missions. The recent military interventions of SADC member states in the DRC and Lesotho have reinforced both the existing weaknesses and the potential strengths of that organisation. Its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has proven a source of conflict rather than a tool for resolving or managing it. ECOWAS has made the most progress in fielding an

effective force, but ECOMOG's track record is spotty and there is a legitimate concern about who controls it, if anyone.

Recent *ad hoc* initiatives further underscore African limitations in undertaking peacekeeping operations. Without the support of France, the African peacekeeping force in the CAR could not have deployed or remained operational. For the proposed African-led UN operation in Congo, no state willing to participate in the force was capable of leading it. There were also important unanswered questions about the mission's financing. While an African force did manage to deploy in the DRC, its range of operations has been severely limited. Moreover, the potential implications of the intervention are worrisome — both in terms of the future of the DRC and regional stability.

Because African states are often not in a position to respond effectively without outside assistance, Western efforts must not be casually dismissed. While Western motives may be morally distasteful and politically short-sighted, their determination not to become directly engaged in African conflicts is likely to persist. African states would therefore do better to try and improve what is being offered.

The fact that Western policies signify a disengagement of sorts and are first and foremost a response to domestic concerns does not make them inherently flawed. Indeed, current capacity-building initiatives have many positive aspects. Moreover, much can and should be done to make them more effective. It is important that Africans and the West work together to improve the services and equipment being provided. Current Western capacity-building programmes provide the basis for such co-operation.

Endnotes

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1. In June 1998, the three EAC member states – Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – together with the US undertook their first joint peacekeeping exercise, Natural Fire, in Kenya.
2. The Mechanism was established in part to allay fears of Africa's marginalisation in the post-Cold War era. See M Mwagiru, *The Organisation of African Unity and the Management of Internal Conflicts in Africa*, **International Studies**, 3(1), January - March 1996, p. 7.
3. Although the **OAU Charter** provides for a Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, the Commission was never activated.
4. S Amoo, *Role of the OAU: Past, Present and Future*, in D Smock (ed.), **Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa**, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1993, p. 248.
5. W Nhara, Telephone interview, Co-ordinator for Conflict Prevention and Research, OAU Conflict Management Division, 20 August 1998. See also W Nhara, *The OAU and the Potential Role of Regional and Sub-Regional Organisations*, in J Cilliers & G Mills (eds.), **Peacekeeping in Africa**, Vol. 2, Institute for Defence Policy, Halfway House, 1996, pp. 105-07.

6. In contrast, roughly eight per cent of the OAU's budget is spent on translation and interpretation services. F Soudan, *La face cachée de l'OUA*, **Jeune Afrique**, 1851, 26 June - 2 July 1996, p. 92.
7. **Statement of Salim Ahmed Salim**, 68th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, June 1998, <www.oau.oua.org/oau_info/burkdoc/council_of_ministers.htm>
8. H Cohen, *African Capabilities for Conflict Management: The Role of the United States*, in D Smock & C Crocker (eds.), **African Conflict Resolution: The U.S. Role in Peacemaking**, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1995, p. 84.
9. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations official, Interview, New York, 16 March 1998.
10. See **Draft Report of the Second Meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of the Central Organ of the OAU**, 24-25 October 1997, OAU/CHST/Co/Draft/Rpt (II).
11. See *OAU Wants Sub-regional Brigades for African Force*, **Panafrican News Agency**, 9 March 1998, <www.africanews.org/pana/search.html>
12. As of 1 October 1998, twenty African countries had officially expressed their willingness to participate in the Stand-by Arrangements System. Of those, only Ghana and Nigeria have actually signed memoranda of understanding with the UN. See **Monthly Status Report, UN Standby Arrangements**, 2 October 1998, <www.un.org/Depts/dpko/rapid/str.htm>
13. As Mark Malan has written, "*the Organ has the potential to become a source of conflict rather than an instrument for its prevention, management and resolution.*" M Malan, **SADC and Subregional Security: Unde Venis et Quo Vadis?**, *ISS Monograph Series*, 19, Institute for Security Studies, Halfway House, February 1998, p. 16.
14. See *Team Chosen to Draft SADC Reorganisation Plan*, **Panafrican News Agency**, 10 August 1998, <www.africanews.org/pana/search.html>
15. Maj-Gen D S Hamman, Interview, Secretary, Inter-State Defence and Security Committee, Halfway House, 21 January 1998.
16. As of 15 October 1998, efforts to salvage the civilian police component of the exercise were continuing.
17. South Africa, however, is likely to remain preoccupied with reorganising and downsizing its military and will not be eager to make external commitments. R M Williams & N Sendall, Interview, Defence Policy Department, South African Department of Defence, Halfway House, 23 January 1998. Its September 1998 military intervention in Lesotho was intended to be limited to a show of force.
18. For an account of this incident, see B Seery, *Africa's Reluctant New Policeman Twirls His Truncheon*, in M Shaw & J Cilliers (eds.), **South Africa and Peacekeeping in Africa, Vol. 1**, Institute for Defence Policy, Halfway House, 1995, pp. 87-97.
19. See L H Evans, *Preventive Diplomacy in Lesotho and Mozambique*, in Cilliers & Mills, op. cit., p. 188.
20. See *ECOWAS Puts Out Plan to End Bissau Mutiny*, **Panafrican News Agency**, 5 July 1998, <www.africanews.org/pana/search.html>
21. A Kuma, *ECOWAS Extraordinary Summit Ends in Lomé*, **Panafrican News Agency**, 18

December 1997, <www.africanews.org/pana/search.html>

22. *News in Brief — Thursday, 12 March 1998*, Panafrican News Agency, 12 March 1998, <www.africanews.org/pana/search.html>
23. *West African ministers agree on peacekeeping force*, **BBC News**, 13 March 1998, <news.bbc.co.uk>
23. F Olonisakin, *African 'Home-made' Peacekeeping Initiatives*, **Armed Forces & Society**, 23(3), Spring 1997, pp. 363-64.
24. In February 1997, for example, the US transported 1 200 ECOMOG troops and their equipment to Liberia. M J Ogou, *US Military to Transport African Peacekeepers*, **United States Information Agency**, 14 February 1997, <www.usia.gov/products/pdq/wfarchive.htm>
25. MISAB comprised troops from Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Mali, and later, Senegal and Togo.
26. France estimated the cost of its support at US \$2 million per month. Col B Dary, Interview, Director, Operational Centre, Africa Division, État Major des Armées, Paris, 29 May 1998.
27. See *Letter Dated 20 August 1997 From the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council (Enclosure)*, S/1997/652, 21 August 1997, containing the International Monitoring Committee's First Report to the Security Council Pursuant to Resolution 1125 (1997).
28. See S/RES/1159 (1998), 27 March 1998. The authorised strength of MINURCA is 1 350.
29. See, for example, **Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic**, S/1998/540, 19 June 1998, and **Second Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic**, S/1998/783, 21 August 1998.
30. **Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in the Republic of Congo**, S/1997/814, 21 October 1997, para. 27.
31. Ibid.
32. The rates are based largely on contributions to the UN's regular budget, with the permanent members of the Security Council paying a premium.
33. Governments that provide formed military units to UN peacekeeping operations receive approximately US \$1 000 per month per person, regardless of their actual outlays.
34. Subsequently, Chad sent troops. Sudan is widely reported to have sent a contingent as well, but officially denies having done so.
35. Attacks on Kisangani and cities in the eastern DRC have been limited to aerial bombardments. Kabila's willingness to discuss a cease-fire was due in part to the alliance's inability to support a military campaign to retake the East.
36. M Duval, Letter, Permanent Representative, Canadian Mission to the UN in New York, to B Miyet, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, 2 March 1998, courtesy of the Canadian Mission to the UN in New York.
37. See H Hernes, *Nordic Perspectives on African Capacity-Building*, in M Malan (ed.), **Resolute Partners: Building Peacekeeping Capacity in Southern Africa**, ISS

38. All four Nordic countries, as well as Botswana and Zambia, will provide instructors, and the Institute for Security Studies will co-ordinate the programme. Significantly, this is the first Western initiative to focus on civilian police rather than on the military.
39. ACRI training borrows from US, UK, Nordic, UN and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peacekeeping doctrines.
40. M McCallie, Interview, ACRI Special Co-ordinator, Washington, DC, 11 March 1998.
41. P Egger, Telephone interview, Political Officer, Office of the ACRI Special Co-ordinator, 25 August 1998.
42. P Egger, Written correspondence, Political Officer, Office of the ACRI Special Co-ordinator, 27 August 1998.
43. Maj R Naughton, Interview, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement Policy, the Pentagon, 11 March 1998.
44. S Fisher, Statement, Political-Military Advisor, ACRI Interagency Working Group, SADC Peacekeeping Training Seminar, Harare, 29 July 1998.
45. For example, Tunisia had held out for armoured vehicles to be included in the training package, which was not in the offing. C Ikins, Interview, Management Consultant, Cohen and Woods International, Arlington, Virginia, 11 March 1998.
46. Lt Col M Bailey, Telephone interview, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement Policy, 20 August 1998.
47. JCET also allows the US to provide training to countries that otherwise would not receive Congressional approval, provided the purpose of the exercise is primarily to train US troops. See L Duke, *Africans Use Training in Unexpected Ways*, The Washington Post, 14 July 1998, p. A1.
48. See **HQ USEUCOM MEDFLAG Exercises in Africa**, unclassified document, 27 August 1996, courtesy of the US Department of Defence.
49. See **DoD Deploys Forces to Guinea for Medical Training and Civic Assistance Exercise**, News Release (Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defence), 13 March 1998, <www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar1998/b03161998_bt109-98.html>
50. See **FLINTLOCK Background Paper in Support of DCINC Africa Visit**, unclassified document, 12 March 1998, courtesy of the US Department of Defence.
51. See *Statement of France, Meeting on Enhancing African Capacity for Peacekeeping*, New York, 5 December 1997.
52. Some 4 000 troops from Benin, Burkina Faso, France and Togo participated in the week-long Nangbeto exercise.
53. Belgium provided a C-130 aircraft but no troops and is not included in this number.
54. **Guidimakha 98**, EMA-EMIA, Sirpa/Bureau édition, Paris, May 1998, courtesy of French

55. French military and diplomatic officials, Interviews, Paris, 28-29 May 1998.
56. There is another BMATT in Pretoria, which provides advice solely to South Africa on restructuring its armed forces and does not provide peacekeeping training. G Coglein, Written correspondence, Acting Head, Peacekeeping Section, United Nations Department of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 21 October 1998.
57. G Coglein, Telephone interview, Acting Head, Peacekeeping Section, United Nations Department of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 23 July 1998.
58. Coglein, Written correspondence, op. cit.
59. The officer is currently examining staffing at the OAU Conflict Management Division and planning a command post exercise (as a follow-up to the US-run exercise of April 1998) for the Conflict Management Centre, scheduled for March 1999. Ibid.
60. An April 1997 exercise, for example, was attended by diplomats and military officers from seventeen African countries.
61. SADC members Mauritius and Zambia did not participate. Slightly more than half of the 1 584 troops were from Zimbabwe. Angola sent only two civilian police, and Botswana sent only two civilian police and two observers. Brig A Naughten, Interview, Commander of BMATT Southern Africa, Harare, 26 January 1998, and Written correspondence, 9 February 1998. The DRC and Seychelles, SADC's most recent members, did not join the subregional organisation until after Blue Hungwe.
62. **Transcript of Remarks by President Clinton to Senegalese Troops in ACRI Training**, Thiès, Senegal, 1 April 1998, <www.usia.gov/products/pdq/wfarchive.html> The centre will be modelled after the George C Marshall Centre in Germany.
63. **Transcript of Remarks by Susan Rice**, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, City Club of Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio, 17 April 1998, <www.usia.gov/products/pdq/wfarchive.html>
64. **Fact Sheet on African Centre for Security Studies**, White House Press Office Release in Dakar, 1 April 1998, <www.usia.gov/products/pdq/wfarchive.html>
65. US Department of Defence official, Telephone interview, 27 August 1998.
66. Ibid.
67. US Department of Defence official, Interview, the Pentagon, 9 March 1998.
68. See *US Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa*, **Defence Issues**, 10(78), August 1995, <www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1995/di1078.html>
69. Col J Digonnet, Interview, Deputy Chief, Military Co-operation Mission, French Ministry of Co-operation, Paris, 29 May 1998.
70. E Lenain, Interview, UN and International Organisations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 28 May 1998. In addition to financing the construction of the centre, France will provide a monthly allowance to trainees.
71. Col P Sartre, Interview, Strategic Affairs Division, État Major des Armées, Paris, 28 May

1998.

72. These schools are located in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo.
73. Information taken from briefing given by the École d'État Major Ouest-Africaine de Koulikoro during Guidimakha, Bakel, Senegal, 28 February 1998.
74. Digonnet, op. cit.
75. Sir J Weston, Letter, Permanent Representative, British Mission to the UN in New York, to B Miyet, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, 20 February 1998, courtesy of the United Nations Department of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The UK has also funded the construction of additional classrooms and dining facilities and has provided computers. It is now funding the construction of new accommodations that will house 28 students.
76. Ibid.
77. Coglin, Written correspondence, op. cit.
78. Weston, op. cit.
79. Coglin, Written correspondence, op. cit.
80. Ibid.
81. **Memorandum of Understanding between Denmark and Zimbabwe**, 31 January 1997, courtesy of the Royal Danish Embassy, Harare.
82. The three Baltic countries — Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — have agreed to contribute troops for a joint battalion earmarked for international peacekeeping duties. Denmark, together with Norway and Sweden, has taken the lead in providing peacekeeping training to these countries.
83. SHIRBRIG is designed to provide the United Nations with a capability to respond quickly and effectively to international crises. In December 1996, Austria, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Sweden pledged to co-operate in establishing and maintaining this high readiness brigade, but the arrangement is not yet operational.
84. Eleven of fourteen SADC members sent representatives, although not all at the ministerial level. P L Hansen, Interview, Head of Department for Southern Africa, Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Copenhagen, 17 February 1998.
85. Ibid.
86. K Mosgaard, *Training Co-ordination: The NACC Clearing House Concept*, in Malan, op. cit., February 1998, p. 88. The programme is modelled after the successful handbook and database compiled by the North Atlantic Co-ordination Council (NACC).
87. J Cilliers, *The United States, Southern Africa, the ACRI and the ACSS*, background paper prepared for a meeting with Amb M McCallie, April 1998, courtesy of author. Although these initiatives are somewhat tangential to peacekeeping, they provide the basis for important confidence-building measures that contribute to peacekeeping.
88. Col D McCracken, **On the Record Briefing**, Amb M McCallie and Col D McCracken, US Department of State, Washington, DC, 29 July 1997,

<www.usia.gov/products/pdq/wfarchive.html>

89. See Capt M Doubleday, **Department of Defence News Briefing**, 9 May 1996, <www.defenselink.mil/news/May1996/t050996_tbrfg050.html>
90. French military officials, Interviews, Dakar and Bakel, Senegal, 23-28 February 1998.
91. French military and diplomatic officials, Interviews, Paris, 28-29 May 1998.
92. Digonnet, op. cit.
93. Coglein, Written correspondence, op. cit.
94. Amb G Moose, Interview, Permanent Representative of the United States, US Mission to the UN in Geneva, Geneva, 4 March 1998.
95. US Department of Defence official, Interview, the Pentagon, 9 March 1998.
96. Moose, op. cit.
97. US government officials, Interviews, Geneva, Pretoria and Washington, DC, Winter and Spring 1998.
98. ACRI received US \$15 million its first year and US \$20 million its second year. As one government official observed, *"this is supposed to be a major African policy initiative, but it's living from hand to mouth."* See J Rupert, *US Troops Teach Peacekeeping to Africans; Despite Little Funding, Program to Form Continental Force Draws Interest Abroad*, **The Washington Post**, 26 September 1997, p. A16.
99. President Clinton was all too willing to let others ridicule former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in an effort to prevent the Republicans from making the UN an election issue. Clinton first chose to demonise the UN after the ill-fated attempt to capture Somali warlord Gen Mohamed Farah Aideed, which had been an American-initiated policy in the first place.
100. The French Minister of Defence, Alain Richard, confirmed that France would reduce its forces from 8 100 to fewer than 6 000, and would close its bases in the CAR. See H Sada, *L'allègement du dispositif français en Afrique*, **Défense nationale**, December 1997, p. 189. See also, for example, *France: A New Foreign Policy*, **The Economist**, 6 September 1997, p. 32.
101. While France was expressing its tentative support before the Security Council for a UN authorised intervention, President Jacques Chirac allegedly cut a deal with the opposition on behalf of French business interests. See B Ankomah, *'Chuck your bloody constitution in the dustbin'*, **New African**, May 1998, pp. 12-13.
102. According to the US, the UN Military Advisor advocates that Western capacity-building initiatives follow a 'crawl, walk, run' format. (McCallie, op. cit.) While this explanation for the US focus is convenient (as it takes the 'blame' for the provision of such low-level training away from Congress and the Clinton Administration), it is not entirely convincing.
103. As Richard Cornwell warns, however, this ostensible co-operation has potentially negative repercussions for Africa. He postulates that Africa may be increasingly marginalised as a result of diminished competition between not only the US and the Soviet Union, but also among the US, the UK and France. R Cornwell, Interview, Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies, Halfway House, 23 January 1998.

104. Indeed, the dispute centred around territory in the very area where the exercise was held.
105. Weston, op. cit. Officers from five ACRI-trained countries — Ghana, Senegal, Malawi, Mali and Uganda — took part.
106. Ten Belgian officers took part in Phase 1 training in Ghana.
107. In the end, however, France did provide assets that greatly facilitated the transition from MISAB to MINURCA.
108. Guidimakha resembled a military exercise more than a peacekeeping training exercise.
109. The nine were Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Mali was subsequently added as a tenth country in deference to French sensitivities. US Department of Defence official, Interview, the Pentagon, 9 March 1998.
110. As President Mandela explained to reporters just before his meeting with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, *"Africa would like to feel that they are handling things themselves ... not acting in response to suggestions that come from outside the continent."* See H French, *Africa Hears Indifference in a US Offer to Help*, **The Washington Post**, 20 October 1996, p. D4.