

NIGERIA ROLE IN PEACE - KEEPING IN DARFUR-SUDAN

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Abstract

This paper will appraise the role Nigeria has played in peace-keeping in Africa (Darfur in Sudan) from inception in 1956 to date. It will look at the Niger Foreign Policy as relates to other African states, and Nigeria efforts in draw the attention of the international community to the conflict in Sudan. Ma Africans have focused singularly on the effects of the European Conquest Colonization of Africa and its history. African states should be allowed by U.N to handle their internal conflicts by themselves. African state shou contribute their own quota to the military strength needed to make the for stronger in reducing crisis between African states. African states should allow playing a leading role in finding a long lasting solution to the crisis the continent.

Keywords: *Nigeria, Peacekeeping Operations, Darfur Conflict, Sudan, Nigerian Foreign Policy, African Security, United Nations Peace Missions, Conflict Resolution in Africa.*

INTRODUCTION

If the idea and search for peace is as old as humanity, then the story of conflict, its harbinger, is equally ancient (Galtung, 1969; Richmond, 2022). Since creation, human societies have been confronted with conflicts and contradictions that have necessitated the emergence of mediating institutions and various strategies for the maintenance of peace (Boulding, 1962; Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, 2023). Such efforts have over the years found expression through anti-war movements, diplomacy, collective security arrangements, and the development of peace studies as an academic discipline (Galtung, 1969; Richmond, 2022).

In the early nineteenth century, for instance, the states of Europe under the leadership of Prince Klemens von Metternich converged at the Congress of Vienna in an attempt to establish a balance of power among the major European powers for the purpose of maintaining peace and stability in Europe (Kissinger, 1994; Schroeder, 1994). These efforts, including subsequent arrangements that culminated in the Concert of Europe system, sought to preserve international order through diplomatic consultation and collective action among the great powers (Claude, 1964; Osiander, 2020). However, these mechanisms did not succeed in permanently preventing major wars, as the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 demonstrated the limitations of the balance-of-power system (MacMillan, 2013; Tooze, 2014).

Since the end of the First World War, statesmen and international organizations have remained actively engaged in negotiating peace settlements and establishing international systems for the maintenance of peace and security (Claude, 1964; Weiss and Daws, 2018). The establishment of the League of Nations after World War I and the United Nations after World War II represented major efforts to institutionalize collective security, conflict prevention, and international cooperation in the pursuit of global peace (Mazower, 2012; United Nations, 2024). Consequently, the maintenance of international peace and security has remained one of the central objectives of contemporary international relations and global governance (Weiss and Daws, 2018; United Nations, 2024).

THE ORIGIN OF DARFUR CRISIS

The crisis in Darfur can be traced to historical, political, economic, and environmental factors that evolved over several decades (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007; Tubiana, 2023). Darfur was historically an important center of trans-Saharan trade and was also linked to slave-raiding networks that connected the region with neighboring territories, including Bahr el-Ghazal and the

Nile Valley (O'Fahey, 2008; Daly, 2010). Competition among different ethnic and tribal groups over access to slaves, trade routes, and economic resources contributed to recurrent tensions and conflicts within the region (Prunier, 2007; de Waal, 2015).

The various communities in Darfur developed different economic systems that often brought them into competition with one another (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Tubiana, 2023). The Fur and Masalit communities were predominantly sedentary agriculturalists, while many Arab groups and sections of the Zaghawa practiced nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism (Harir, 1994; Prunier, 2007). These differing livelihood systems frequently generated disputes over land ownership, grazing rights, and access to water resources, particularly during periods of drought and environmental stress (de Waal, 1989; UNEP, 2007; Verhoeven, 2023). Consequently, conflicts between farming and pastoral communities became a recurring feature of social relations in Darfur (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Tubiana, 2023).

Following Sudan's independence in 1956, political power became increasingly concentrated in the hands of successive governments dominated by Arab-Islamic elites based in Khartoum (Deng, 1995; Johnson, 2016). Sudan experienced prolonged periods of military rule beginning with General Ibrahim Abboud's coup in 1958 and continuing under subsequent military governments (Collins, 2008; Johnson, 2016). These governments were often criticized for political marginalization, unequal resource distribution, and inadequate representation of peripheral regions such as Darfur (Deng, 1995; de Waal, 2015).

A civil war between the predominantly Muslim government in Khartoum and largely non-Muslim populations in Southern Sudan erupted in 1955 and continued intermittently until the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 (Collins, 2008; Johnson, 2016). Conflict resumed in 1983 with the outbreak of the Second Sudanese Civil War and continued until the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 (Johnson, 2016; Young, 2012). During this period, many communities in Darfur complained of political neglect, economic marginalization, and inequitable sharing of national resources by the central government (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007). These grievances contributed to the emergence of armed movements such as the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), which accused the Sudanese government of discriminating against non-Arab populations in favor of Arab groups (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007).

THE CRISIS IN DARFUR

On 26 February 2003, approximately 300 rebels belonging to the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF), under the leadership of Abd al-Wahid Muhammad Ahmad al-Nur, launched attacks against government installations in the Jebel Marra region of Western Darfur (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007). Equipped with automatic weapons, mortars, and "technical" vehicles mounted with machine guns, the rebels attacked several police and military positions before retreating to their strongholds in Jebel Marra (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Tanner and Tubiana, 2007).

Shortly thereafter, the Darfur Liberation Front changed its name to the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and intensified its military operations against Sudanese government forces (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007). Fighting escalated throughout 2003, with both government and rebel forces claiming victories in various engagements across Darfur (Human Rights Watch, 2004; Flint and de Waal, 2005). Although ceasefire initiatives were proposed through mediation efforts involving Chad and other regional actors, most agreements quickly collapsed, leading to renewed hostilities (African Union, 2004; Prunier, 2007).

The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) also emerged as a major armed group and conducted several attacks against government troops and allied militia forces known as the Janjaweed (Flint and de Waal, 2005; de Waal, 2015). By late 2003 and early 2004, the conflict had intensified significantly, with government-supported Janjaweed militias carrying out widespread attacks against villages suspected of supporting rebel groups (Human Rights Watch, 2004; United Nations, 2005).

Reports indicated that Janjaweed militias frequently crossed into neighboring Chad while pursuing displaced populations and rebel sympathizers (Human Rights Watch, 2004; International Crisis Group, 2005). Religious institutions, homes, farms, and community infrastructure were often targeted during these attacks, contributing to large-scale displacement and destruction (United Nations, 2005; de Waal, 2015).

There was also widespread destruction of villages by Sudanese government forces and Janjaweed militias, with some settlements selectively targeted while neighboring communities remained untouched (Human Rights Watch, 2004; International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur, 2005). Many observers argued that these attacks reflected deliberate patterns of ethnic targeting directed primarily at non-Arab communities in the region (Prunier, 2007; de Waal, 2015).

Both government forces and rebel groups were accused of committing serious human rights violations, including unlawful killings, torture, rape, forced displacement, and destruction of civilian property (Human Rights Watch, 2004; United Nations, 2005). However, the better-armed Janjaweed militias, operating with varying degrees of government support, quickly gained military superiority over many affected communities (Flint and de Waal, 2005; Prunier, 2007).

By the spring of 2004, several thousand civilians—predominantly from non-Arab communities—had been killed, while more than one million people had been displaced from their homes, creating one of the world's worst humanitarian crises at the time (United Nations, 2005; UNHCR, 2024). The crisis acquired an international dimension when large numbers of refugees fled into neighboring Chad, where clashes occasionally occurred between Janjaweed fighters and Chadian security forces (Human Rights Watch, 2004; UNHCR, 2024).

Numerous violent incidents were reported along the Sudan-Chad border, resulting in significant casualties among both combatants and civilians (International Crisis Group, 2005; United Nations, 2005). Human rights organizations documented cases of mass killings, village burnings, looting, sexual violence, and other atrocities committed against civilian populations (Human Rights Watch, 2004; Amnesty International, 2004).

The magnitude of the crisis led to international concern and warnings of possible genocide (United Nations, 2005; Prunier, 2007). Then United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan publicly warned that the situation in Darfur posed a serious risk of genocide and required urgent international action (United Nations, 2005; Power, 2008). Several observers and humanitarian agencies compared aspects of the violence to ethnic cleansing campaigns witnessed in other conflicts, particularly because of the systematic targeting of civilian populations (Human Rights Watch, 2004; de Waal, 2015).

The remoteness of many affected areas limited humanitarian access and left hundreds of thousands of civilians vulnerable to hunger, disease, and insecurity (United Nations, 2005; UNHCR, 2024). The International Crisis Group reported that large numbers of people were at risk of death from starvation, disease, and continued violence if urgent interventions were not implemented (International Crisis Group, 2005; World Food Programme, 2024). Consequently, the humanitarian situation in Darfur became characterized by widespread fear, displacement, insecurity, and severe human suffering (Flint and de Waal, 2005; UNHCR, 2024)

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF NIGERIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING

Nigeria since independence has actively been involved in the management of international peace, either under the sponsorship of the United Nations or through the assumption of specific responsibilities for the management of regional security concerns (Akinyemi, 1989; Vogt, 2016; Williams, 2011). In its over six decades of independence, Nigeria's decision-makers have continuously designed, shaped, and maintained a foreign policy that has had a significant impact on the international system, particularly in facilitating peace-making and conflict resolution in Africa (Adebajo, 2002; Gambari, 2008; Tieku, 2019).

This conception informed the self-perception of Nigeria's leadership and citizenry, based on the belief that a state's ability to influence the international environment depends largely on the

strength of its policy framework and diplomatic posture (Akinyemi, 1989; Osuntokun, 2007; Ade-Ibijola, 2022). Nigeria's role in peacekeeping must therefore be understood within this broader foreign policy context (Adebajo, 2002; Akinterinwa, 2010).

The foreign policy statement of Nigeria's Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, confirms Nigeria's commitment to international peace and cooperation. On the occasion of Nigeria's admission into the United Nations in October 1960, Balewa stated:

"It may be better to state briefly the principles we have accepted as the basis for our policy in international relations. First, it is the desire of Nigeria to remain on friendly terms with all nations and to participate actively in the work of the United Nations Organization" (Balewa, 1960, cited in Aluko, 1981).

He further declared:

"We shall not forget our old friends and we are proud to have been accepted as a member of the Commonwealth, but nevertheless we do not intend to align ourselves as a matter of routine with any of the power blocs. We are committed to upholding the principles upon which the United Nations Organization is founded" (Balewa, 1960, cited in Aluko, 1981).

Balewa also emphasized that:

"Nigeria hopes to work with other African states for the progress of Africa and to assist in bringing all African territories to a state of responsible independence" (Balewa, 1960, cited in Aluko, 1981; Gambari, 2008).

These statements demonstrate Nigeria's commitment to international cooperation and the promotion of global peace and security under the auspices of the United Nations (Aluko, 1981; Gambari, 2008; United Nations, 2023). They also reveal the country's early commitment to Pan-Africanism and collective security on the African continent (Adebajo, 2002; Tiekou, 2019).

As later emphasized by Nigerian leaders:

"We want Africa to live in peace; we do not want her to continue in pieces. Pan-Africanism is no longer merely a theory; it is a pact" (Akinyemi, 1989).

Although this statement focused primarily on African peace, it equally reflected Nigeria's broader commitment to peace at both regional and global levels (Akinterinwa, 2010; Williams, 2011).

These early pronouncements represented Nigeria's determination to adhere to the purposes and principles of both the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU) (Aluko, 1981; Murithi, 2005). They also clearly outlined Nigeria's foreign policy priorities, including the maintenance of friendly relations with other nations and support for international peace and security (Akinyemi, 1989; Gambari, 2008).

Africa has consistently remained the centrepiece of Nigeria's foreign policy, with a strong emphasis on promoting peace, prosperity, stability, political goodwill, and mutual understanding among African countries (Adebajo, 2002; Akinterinwa, 2010; Ade-Ibijola, 2022). Consequently, Nigeria's commitment to maintaining international peace and security has remained a central objective of its foreign policy since independence (Osuntokun, 2007; Tiekou, 2019).

This commitment has been demonstrated through Nigeria's active participation in various international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity/African Union, ECOWAS, and other multilateral institutions (Adebajo, 2002; Murithi, 2005; Williams, 2011). The country's foreign policy orientation also received support from legislative institutions that sought mechanisms to strengthen Nigeria's international peace initiatives and diplomatic engagement (Gambari, 2008).

Successive Nigerian governments have consistently upheld this principle and pursued it as a guiding foreign policy objective through the OAU/AU, the United Nations, ECOWAS, and other regional and international organizations (Akinyemi, 1989; Adebajo, 2002; Tiekou, 2019; AU Peace and Security Council, 2023).

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION OF NIGERIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS

For any philosophy to stand the test of time, it must have a guide and a base which will not only ensure legitimization. For a sovereign and independent nation, like any organization, the guiding philosophy for decision making is the constitutional provision. Generally speaking, constitutions do not usually define and elaborate on specific public policies of any state as the supreme fundamental law (Ake, 1981; Nwolise, 2012; Okolie and Ojukwu, 2021).

- a) Promotion and protection of the National interest.
- b) Promotion of the total liberation of Africa and support of African Unity.
- c) Promotion of international co-operation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of racial discrimination in all its manifestations.
- d) Respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication.
- e) Promotion of a just world economic order (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; Akinyemi, 1979; Adebajo, 2021).

It should be noted that the constitution did not come into force, yet these principles have guided the foreign policy conduct of Nigerian regimes since independence. The truth remains that the framers of the Nigerian constitution over the years have believed in the Clausewitzian theory of perceiving war as "diplomacy by other means" (Clausewitz, 1832/1976; Gambari, 1989; Ogunnubi and Akinola, 2020).

They see a linkage and interdependence between defence and foreign policy. The constitution by this provision has prescribed complementary roles for both the President of the country and the National Assembly or Senate, as the case may be, in deciding deployment of the armed forces in case of an attack on the country or the promotion of foreign policy objectives (like peacekeeping operations) outside the country's territorial waters (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; Saliu, 2006; Adetula, 2022).

These provisions gained support from Section 20 of the Draft Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1995. It is clear that the waging of war is the responsibility of the President who, as a general rule, however requires the prior approval of the Senate to deploy the armed forces outside Nigeria on combat duty. However, if the President is satisfied that national security is threatened, he can, after consultation with the National Defence Council, deploy the armed forces on a limited combat duty outside Nigeria and within seven days obtain the consent of the Senate (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1995; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; Nwanolue and Iwuoha, 2018).

From a critical analysis or assessment of Nigeria's actions, given efforts to promote the constitutional provision of the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, which is also contained in the UN and OAU/AU Charters, the legal concept of territorial integrity and political independence of states with recognition of sovereign equality remains fundamental (United Nations Charter, 1945; OAU Charter, 1963; AU Constitutive Act, 2000; Williams, 2020).

It is however clear that in addition to the fact that Nigeria operates under the wider umbrella of international organizations, these serve as indicative signals about the broad directions of major state policies. Indeed, they provide an important starting point for understanding legislative and functional roles, institutional contexts, domestic structures and challenges that bear on the conduct and management of public affairs (Easton, 1965; Gambari, 1989; Ogunnubi, 2023).

The examination and analysis of Nigeria's constitutional allocation of responsibilities for the conduct of foreign policy is relevant. This is necessary so as to validate the conduct of foreign affairs and the pursuit of defence policy, which are obviously interrelated aspects of the transactional preoccupations of independent sovereign states (Akinboye, 2013; Saliu, 2006; Okeke, 2021).

In other words, the decision to continue participation in any public policy is *sui generis*. This applies particularly to Third World countries which have linkages between the domestic and external structures of their foreign policy (Ake, 1981; Gambari, 1989; Arowosegbe, 2022).

Unfortunately, the Independence and Republican Constitutions of Nigeria were somewhat silent on allocation of responsibilities to any particular arm of government. This could be explained by the fact that as an emerging independent nation, Nigeria's legal and political status had not yet been fully developed and decisions were still influenced by imperial powers (Coleman, 1958; Dudley, 1982; Mustapha, 2021).

However, there is some respite in the provisions of the 1979 Constitution which placed responsibility for the conduct and management of Nigeria's external relations as an exclusive role of the Federal Government. For instance, Section 19 of the Constitution provides that it is the responsibility of the state to promote African unity and support the political, economic and social emancipation of Africa and combat racial discrimination (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979; Akinyemi, 1979; Ogunnubi and Akinola, 2020).

The 1989 Constitution, although it never came into force, assigned to the Federal Government the sole authority in the conduct and management of Nigeria's external relations. The Constitution reinforced the position under the 1979 Constitution and adopted a broader conception of foreign policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989; Gambari, 1989; Adebajo, 2021).

For example, these fundamental objectives and directive principles relating to the conduct of external relations provide the basis for deployment of peacekeepers under admissible principles of international law. These include collective security, intervention to enforce international treaties, and protection of citizens abroad. Given this legitimate position, it must be pointed out that Nigeria has national interests across a wide range of issues (United Nations Charter, 1945; Nwolise, 2012; Williams, 2020).

According to Akinyemi, "Nigeria's national interest can be identified as predicated on the nation's military, economic, political and social security. Anything that will enhance the capacity of Nigeria to defend her national security must be seen as being in the national interest" (Akinyemi, 1979; Saliu, 2006; Adebajo, 2021).

As the most populous African country, Nigeria has the capacity to use her armed forces in peace-making exercises given her diplomatic influence and natural resources. Nigeria thus has both a legal and strategic basis for participating in global conflicts under the directives of international organizations (Adebajo, 2002; Nwolise, 2012; Ogunnubi, 2023).

With this position, Nigeria has successfully participated in peacekeeping operations involving the UN, AU and ECOWAS. Participation in international multilateral security efforts represents one of the most important aspects of the Nigerian military profession. The Nigerian defence establishment has historically considered its involvement in peacekeeping as a tremendous asset in terms of operational experience, logistics capability and enhancement of Nigeria's international image (Berman and Sams, 2000; Vogt, 2016; Adetula, 2022).

The prospects for Nigerian military involvement in international peacekeeping remain high due to changes in the international security environment and the increasing expectations placed upon regional powers. It is therefore unsurprising that Nigeria has consistently been viewed as a stabilizing force in Africa and a catalyst for peace and security on the continent (Adebajo, 2002; Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013; Williams, 2020).

OVERVIEW OF NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE-KEEPING

One of the self-evident facts of Nigeria's international relations is that since independence in 1960, she has engaged in virtually every major peacekeeping mission. Beyond her involvement in United Nations operations, Nigeria has also played leading roles in the initiation, organization, and leadership of peacekeeping missions at both regional and international levels (Vogt, 2016; Adebajo, 2002; Adetula, 2022).

Nigeria's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations dates back to the Congo Operation (ONUC) of 1960–1964, which represented the country's first major international military engagement after independence. Nigeria also participated in the United Nations Interim Force in

Lebanon (UNIFIL), contributing significant troop contingents as part of multinational peacekeeping efforts (Akinboye, 2013; Vogt, 2016; United Nations Peacekeeping, 2023).

Nigeria further participated in the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) from August 1988 to November 1989. Nigerian military officers served in observer capacities and contributed significantly to monitoring compliance with the ceasefire agreement between Iran and Iraq (Berman and Sams, 2000; Nwolise, 2012; Williams, 2020).

Nigeria also contributed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Angola through the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM). Nigerian officers occupied strategic command positions within the mission, reflecting international confidence in Nigeria's military professionalism and peacekeeping experience (Adebajo, 2002; Vogt, 2016; Adetula, 2022).

In 1991, Nigerian military personnel served in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), further demonstrating Nigeria's commitment to international peace and security (United Nations, 2023; Williams, 2020; Ogunnubi, 2023).

Nigeria also participated in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia in 1992, contributing military personnel and observers despite subsequent adjustments to the scale of participation (Berman and Sams, 2000; Vogt, 2016).

In 1981, Nigeria responded to the request of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to contribute troops toward peacekeeping efforts in Chad. The OAU force was established to stabilize the country amidst political instability and civil conflict (Adebajo, 2002; Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013; Williams, 2020).

The OAU peacekeeping mission in Chad operated from December 1981 to June 1982. Nigeria played a leading role in the mission by providing troops, command leadership, and substantial financial support when the OAU lacked sufficient resources to fund the operation adequately (Berman and Sams, 2000; Vogt, 2016; Adetula, 2022).

In 1991, Nigeria contributed military observers to the Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG) in Rwanda. Nigerian officers served alongside personnel from other African countries and provided command leadership to the mission at various stages (Adebajo, 2002; Nwolise, 2012; Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013).

A significant turning point in Nigeria's peacekeeping history occurred in 1990 with the formation and deployment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to Liberia. Nigeria played a dominant role in initiating, financing, and sustaining the operation (Adebajo, 2002; Berman and Sams, 2000; Adetula, 2022).

At the commencement of ECOMOG operations in Liberia in August 1990, Nigeria contributed approximately 1,375 troops out of an initial force strength of about 3,000 personnel. Between 1990 and 1996, Nigeria deployed numerous battalions and military formations in support of peace operations in Liberia (Adebajo, 2002; Vogt, 2016; Williams, 2020).

Nigeria subsequently demonstrated its commitment to regional peacekeeping through participation in ECOMOG missions along the Guinea-Liberia border and later in Côte d'Ivoire, where Nigerian troops contributed to regional stability efforts (Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013; Adetula, 2022).

Beyond troop contributions, Nigeria bore a substantial proportion of the financial and logistical burden of ECOMOG operations. While ECOWAS member states initially agreed to support their contingents independently, many states relied heavily on Nigerian resources for transportation, logistics, and operational support (Berman and Sams, 2000; Adebajo, 2002; Williams, 2020).

As observed by Berman and Sams, Nigeria supplied most of the heavy weapons, military aircraft, naval vessels, and petroleum products used during the operation. Consequently, Nigeria committed enormous human and material resources to peacekeeping in Liberia (Berman and Sams, 2000; Vogt, 2016).

By the conclusion of the Liberian operation, Nigeria had reportedly spent billions of dollars supporting not only its own contingent but also sustaining much of the overall peacekeeping effort (Adebajo, 2002; Adetula, 2022).

The scope of ECOMOG operations later expanded to Sierra Leone, where Nigeria again assumed a leadership role. Despite reservations among some ECOWAS members, Nigeria provided the bulk of troops and resources required to restore constitutional governance in Sierra Leone (Adebajo, 2002; Berman and Sams, 2000; Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013).

Although the military junta was eventually removed, Nigeria continued to bear a disproportionately large share of the military and financial responsibilities associated with ECOMOG operations in Sierra Leone (Berman and Sams, 2000; Vogt, 2016).

Nigeria's peacekeeping commitments also extended to Sudan, particularly the Darfur crisis, where the country contributed troops under the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to support monitoring efforts and civilian protection initiatives (Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013; Williams, 2020; AU Commission, 2021).

The Nigerian government deployed troops alongside personnel from other African countries, including Rwanda, as part of collective African efforts to restore peace and stability in Darfur (African Union, 2005; Adetula, 2022).

In discussing Nigeria's motivations for peacekeeping, Nwolise argues that Nigeria's contributions to international peace and security are rooted in its commitment to peaceful settlement of disputes, African solidarity, and collective security (Nwolise, 2012; Saliu, 2006; Ogunnubi, 2023).

According to this perspective, peace and security are essential prerequisites for political, economic, scientific, technological, and socio-cultural development. Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping is therefore linked to its belief in African brotherhood and collective responsibility (Nwolise, 2012; Adebajo, 2021).

Nigeria's readiness to participate in peacekeeping operations also stems from its large population, substantial military capabilities, and diplomatic influence within Africa and the international system (Akinyemi, 1979; Ogunnubi and Akinola, 2020; Adetula, 2022).

With a relatively large and professionally trained military force, Nigeria has often been perceived as a regional stabilizer and a leading security actor in West Africa and the African continent generally (Adebajo, 2002; Williams, 2020; Ogunnubi, 2023).

Another major factor behind Nigeria's peacekeeping involvement is the protection of national interests. These include safeguarding sovereignty and territorial integrity, promoting national development, preserving regional stability, and supporting African institutions such as the African Union and ECOWAS (Akinyemi, 1979; Gambari, 1989; Adebajo, 2021).

Humanitarian and moral considerations have also influenced Nigeria's peacekeeping behaviour. The suffering of civilians, particularly women and children affected by armed conflicts, has frequently motivated Nigerian participation in peace support operations (Williams, 2020; United Nations, 2023; Adetula, 2022).

Nigeria's contribution to international peace and security equally possesses a legal foundation. The country's obligations derive from international agreements, including the United Nations Charter, which encourages member states to contribute personnel and resources for collective security operations (United Nations Charter, 1945; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; Williams, 2020).

The use of theories by social scientists and political scientists as analytical frameworks has facilitated the study of peacekeeping and international relations. In this regard, the System Theory provides a useful framework for understanding interactions among states and institutions (Easton, 1965; Kaplan, 1957; Okolie and Ojukwu, 2021).

David Easton and other systems theorists argue that political systems consist of interconnected components whose interactions determine system stability and adaptation to change (Easton, 1965; Kaplan, 1957; Heywood, 2021).

System Theory assists in determining a political system's capacity to maintain equilibrium in the face of internal and external pressures. Consequently, Nigeria's peacekeeping activities can be interpreted as mechanisms that contribute to maintaining stability within the broader international system (Easton, 1965; Williams, 2020; Ogunnubi, 2023).

The theory is also useful for understanding crises and tendencies toward political instability, while identifying factors that contribute to system maintenance and survival (Kaplan, 1957; Easton, 1965; Heywood, 2021).

Applied to the Darfur crisis, System Theory demonstrates how instability within a particular region can generate consequences for neighbouring states, regional organizations, and the wider international community (Prunier, 2007; Flint and de Waal, 2008; Williams, 2020).

Nigeria's involvement in Darfur reflects its long-standing leadership role in Africa and its belief that threats to peace anywhere on the continent may ultimately affect African stability as a whole (Adebajo, 2021; Ogunnubi and Akinola, 2020).

The African Union, supported by Nigeria, South Africa, and other member states, has played an important mediatory role in seeking peaceful solutions to the Darfur conflict (African Union, 2005; Williams, 2020; AU Commission, 2021).

Similarly, the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and other international actors have contributed diplomatic, financial, humanitarian, and logistical support aimed at restoring peace and protecting civilians in Darfur (United Nations, 2023; Flint and de Waal, 2008; Williams, 2020).

System Theory therefore helps explain how the Darfur conflict became a major international concern and why states, international organizations, and humanitarian agencies have mobilized resources to assist civilians and support peacekeeping operations in the region (Easton, 1965; Prunier, 2007; Williams, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Another human tragedy is playing in Western Sudan, it is the tragedy of Darfur. The conflict in Sudan has been described as genocide. However, let me point out that what we see in Darfur is another example of how African's are made victims of an expansionist, and brutal external marauders who have historically taken advantage of the inherent racism and some might say Indolence of the Negroid people. Many Africans have focused singularly on the effects of the European conquest and colonization of Africa and history of imperialism.

The Nigerian troops consist of eight officers and 147 soldiers drawn tom the army's infantry with support and units from the corps of the Nigeria's army's Headquarters (HQ) Garrison and other formations within the nation's capital, Abuja. The Nigeria contingents were led by Commander. Lt. Col. Abiodun Oluwadare with Major Muhammed Aliyu as the second in command. The Nigeria's troops were given the mandate to obey the rules and regulation guiding the mandate.

RECOMMENDATION

A better understanding of the conflict should well be taken so that the night measures are being put in place in no distant time.

The African union commission on cease fire has ordered an enquiry into the allegation made by rebel groups, this allegation should be looked into and make sure their findings are right.

The A.U should continue to play the mediatory role of making sure there san agreement by the rebel groups and government forces. Sanctions should not be allowed to be used in Sudanese crisis as it affects every progress made so far by the A.U.

Every African country should take the issue that concern African to be the problem of all Africans by contributing positively met the lukewarm attitude many of the African states are showing now.

Africans should be the ones to find a solution to this problem in Sudan and UN should not be allowed to use their own way, rather they should work in harmony to find a lasting solution to the problem. The African union should be very receptive to resolving this situation.

Every other African states should contribute their own quota to the military they needed to make the force strong and having a strong AU force whose primary assignment should be on-peace keeping in Africa.

Training in the area of uniform equipments such as weapon system use of communication gadgets, joint exercises periodically to appraise degree of coordination of the various units, importantly the force comma should be based on the consensus of members. When this is done problem associated with the coalition of forces will be reduced.

African states should endeavour to ensure unnecessary rivalry, se aside ideological difference for a common target. African leaders should st enough commitment in the area of financial contribution to fund and man peace keeping operation in Africa.

Multinational companies operating in Africa should be made contribute towards peace funds within the region, they should be m partners in the search for peace in the continent to enable businesses s for the better.

African leaders should be fair to all, no matter the tribe they belong that is pretenders should be discarded from their attitude.

Finally, African states should shun Western attitude in the managem of its conflicts irrespective of the incentives attached.

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