

THE CHALLENGES OF BUILDING THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

The 2013 French White Paper on Defence and National Security states that “support for establishment of a collective security architecture in Africa is a priority of France’s cooperation and development policy”. The non-African stakeholders’ support mechanisms for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) are a strategically important topic of study, given the extent to which they tend to modify power relationships between the various actors – African and non-African, institutions and states. This paper does not aim to analyse the international support practices for the APSA, but rather the reasons that push African states to accept a dependency relationship on exogenous actors in terms of crisis management. This analysis is essential to understand the current structure of the collective defence system that is emerging in Africa. The aim of this paper is to analyse this relationship by referring to the concept of extraversion, defined by Jean-François Bayart as “the fabrication and capture of a true dependence income” or the “mobilisation of resources derived from their (possibly unequal) relationship with the external environment”¹.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
I. What is an Extraversion Strategy?	2
II. Extraversion Strategy Levers: Conflict Management Ownership Discourses	3
III. International Recognition and Representativeness in the International Institutions at the Heart of Extraversion Strategies	4
IV. The Multiplication of Security Structures: a Multiplication of Military Rent?	5
Conclusion	5
For Further Reading	6

INTRODUCTION

There is a vast amount of literature on the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) created by the African Union (UA) in 2003. The APSA is the continental mechanism that structures the African collective defence system in order to promote peace, security and stability on the continent. Centred on the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC), the system relies on the African Standby Force (ASF), made up mainly of standby regional brigades, and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), created in 2013². Whereas the primary aim of the APSA is ownership of conflict management, Africanisation is closer to the reality³. There are indeed many challenges to full appropriation by African actors.

The non-African stakeholders' support mechanisms for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) are a strategically important topic of study, given the extent to which they tend to modify power relationships between the various actors – African and non-African, institutions and states. In the mechanisms to support the building of the APSA, these exogenous state actors see ways to reconcile the constraints they face – such as the obvious budgetary constraints and the fall in acceptability of their interventions – while simultaneously fulfilling their primary imperative, which is to maintain or strengthen their influence within the international conflict management system⁴. The 2013 French White Paper on Defence and National Security states that: "Support for establishment of a collective security architecture in Africa is a priority of France's cooperation and development policy"⁵.

The academic literature dealing with peacekeeping challenges in Africa addresses international support practices for the APSA through the prism of the classic dichotomy which separates the African troop-contributing countries (TCCs) to African or UN peacekeeping operations, and exogenous actors – suppliers of financial, structural and operational aid that enables this Africanisation. Bruno Charbonneau criticises this distinction, which he defines as "subject-object"⁶. This approach mainly focuses on the analyses of the interests of these exogenous actors in supporting the APSA and the resources provided by these actors⁷. While this field of study is essential in order to understand the current structure of the collective defence system that began to emerge in Africa at the end of the bipolar world, it is necessary to reflect on the reasons that push African states to accept this dependency relationship on exogenous actors in terms of crisis management⁸.

Consequently, the objective of this paper is to analyse this relationship through the concept of extraversion. **Jean-François Bayart defines the extraversion of African states as "the fabrication and capture of a true dependence income" or the "mobilisation of resources that are derived from the (possibly unequal) relationship with the external environment"**⁹ (I). We will demonstrate that behind the discourse on African ownership there is an intensification of dependency. Conflict management by African actors is becoming a new lever for extraversion strategies (II). In particular, we will analyse participation in peacekeeping operations (PKOs) as a new manifestation of these extraversion strategies (III). Lastly, we shall see that the new dependence incomes thereby created explain the competition between programmes and the multiplication of security structures (IV).

I. WHAT IS AN EXTRAVERSION STRATEGY?

The relationship with the outside world is a key aspect of the notion of extraversion. Jean-François Bayart's article, *"L'Afrique dans le monde : une histoire d'extraversion"*, opened up this new field of research which raises relevant questions on the complex nature of the relationships between African actors and the external environment¹⁰. According to Bayart, "it is not a question of denying that dependency exists, but to think about dependency without being a proponent of dependency theory". This new scientific approach to the relationships between African actors and non-African actors challenges "the antagonistic relationship of radical alterity" whereby certain researchers attempt to reduce the African continent to its relationship with its partners¹¹. **The major challenge in this approach is to study dependency from African actors' point of view.** Opposing the notion that dependency is imposed by non-African actors, Bayart evokes "dependency as a course of action"¹². According to Bayart, "subjugation is very much a form of action" that the leading elites attempt to transform into economic rent by creating extraversion strategies¹³.

During the 1990s, Bayart notes an “exacerbation and a radicalisation of the extraversion strategies as the failure of structural adjustment programmes implemented since 1980 became increasingly apparent” and lists the different types of extraversion strategies: democratic extraversion (“the democracy discourse is just another source of income, comparable to what was previously the denunciation of communism (or imperialism) during the Cold War”)¹⁴, political and military extraversion, financial extraversion “in the form of direct aid from friendly states and multilateral institutions”, economic extraversion “as soon as the cost of war is repaid by exports” and cultural extraversion.

Denis M. Tull states that the choice of extraversion strategies greatly depends on the international community’s agenda priorities. According to Tull, in order to ensure that aid continues, governments are often inclined to feature the fashionable principles in their speeches – currently, for example: economic transparency, gender equality, protection of the environment and natural resources and human rights¹⁵. During the 2000s, the extraversion strategies mentioned above were renewed as part of the construction of the APSA.

II. EXTRAVERSION STRATEGY LEVERS: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT OWNERSHIP DISCOURSES

The creation of the APSA and support mechanisms to implement it contributed to the emergence of new extraversion strategies based on the principle of African ownership of conflict management.

In the last two decades, a change has been observed in the role of every actor involved in conflict management in Africa. In 1992, the famous report by the United Nations Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, called *An Agenda for Peace*¹⁶ recognised the role of regional organizations in peacekeeping, thereby inviting the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to draw up a new collective defence system for the African continent, which materialised with the creation of the AU and the APSA. The continental African organisation became established on the international stage and a fully-fledged actor in conflict management. Although according to the Charter of the UN, “no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council”¹⁷, this responsibility-sharing policy and the legitimacy to intervene enabled advanced inter-organisational cooperation¹⁸ to develop between the AU and the UN¹⁹ with a view to furthering African ownership of crisis management. Mélanie Cathelin defines the evolution of the roles of different actors within the international crisis management system as a “new international division of labour”²⁰. **The African actors are invited to take on their responsibilities by providing troops for UN missions deployed to the continent, but also, and most importantly, by creating a credible collective defence system able to respond rapidly** and thereby lighten the considerable “load” borne by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). Non-African actors, meanwhile, are encouraged to play a support role towards these new mechanisms.

The funding issue is the main impediment to African ownership of conflict management²¹. As an example, only 40% of the AU’s operating budget is financed by contributions from member states. In such a context, the volume of non-African funding to support the AU reduces by as much its autonomy in conflict management. Upon observation of this fact, former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo submitted a report²² in 2012 to the AU, concluding with suggestions for alternative sources of funding for the African organisation, such as imposing a visitor’s tax, text message commissions or a tax on plane tickets for international flights. The recommendations of the Obasanjo Report were never followed up, however, due to the lack of political will from the member states. **Romain Esmenjaud and David Ambrosetti remarked that “the African actors show no interest in financial ownership and depend on resources from others”²³**. Bruno Charbonneau also explains that “not everyone is interested in developing efficient crisis management tools, because the issues of funding and military deployment are intimately linked to the patterns of extraversion”²⁴. As such, the support funding from exogenous actors for the APSA might place African states in a situation of prolonged dependency.

Participation in peacekeeping operations is a new form of economic extraversion strategy. It provides access to different international support mechanisms such as funding from the international organisations mandating the PKO, the donation of military equipment, access to military training and the logistical support necessary to project the contingents engaged. In short, their contribution to a PKO is a way to seize on the benefits offered by the various interna-

tional support mechanisms for APSA, while boosting their “international credentials”.

III. INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND REPRESENTATIVENESS IN THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AT THE HEART OF EXTRAVERSION STRATEGIES

The extraversion strategies developed by the African ruling elite also contribute to the competition for the representation of the African continent within international institutions, particularly as the United Nations Security Council undergoes reform. Behind this race for international recognition, there can be multiple motives. Scott Firsing revealed several of them. They help explain the reasons for African states’ contributions to PKOs: international pressure, a desire for status and influence at international and regional levels; a desire for prestige and influence within the United Nations system; national security; political gain; economic profits and the modernisation or growth of the armed forces²⁵.

African actors use different strategies. Some, such as Burkina Faso, prefer to adopt a sub-regional approach; others, such as South Africa, foster a continental approach; others still try and make themselves indispensable to the United Nations directly by contributing significant troops to a UN or AU PKO. Uganda and Burundi each contribute over 5,000 troops to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). Similarly, as of January 2016, Ethiopia is the second-highest UN contributor, with 8,496 troops committed, as well as the 4,395 troops deployed to AMISOM. Concerning Ethiopia, PKOs are a way to cultivate an image of “security provider” and to be recognised as such by the international powers and the United Nations system²⁶. The Ethiopian government declares to have great experience in peacekeeping and a regional and global commitment to security which it foresees growing “at the request of the international community” in years to come²⁷. Nigeria, with unrivalled economic power in a well-integrated sub-region thanks to robust Regional Economic Communities (RECs), chose to take the lead in West Africa in terms of conflict management, namely through its key role in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). South Africa is attempting to play a leading role on the continent in relation to international authorities, with its tireless commitment to the African Union. However, these ambitions could soon be undermined by “the state of critical decline” of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), as revealed by the *South African Defense Review*, published in March 2014 by the government. The low military budget does nothing to prevent its obsolescence.

The growing participation in UN or AU PKOs enables these countries to reduce the pressure of democratisation from Western states and international institutions. It is also a way to legitimise their political power and become indispensable in the eyes of non-African actors. This high level of military commitment through participation in peacekeeping operations enables leaders to increase their control on the political and economic life in their country without fear of protest from their international partners. **The security rhetoric, at a time of combating terrorism, has replaced the democracy rhetoric of the 1990s and became an additional economic rent.** Exporting an image of “troop provider” and of security is a major concern for the elites in power. Whitfield, Fraser, Fisher and Beswick have shown how the Ugandan, Ethiopian and even Rwandan elites have “played the ‘star contributor’ and ‘obedient reformist’ cards in their dialogues and relations with the troop-contributor community”²⁸. Maxime Ricard showed how the Ivorian elite took advantage, in line with their own agenda, of the presence of international actors in Côte d’Ivoire as part of the post-conflict reconstruction by using different types of extraversion strategies²⁹.

Furthermore, by providing troops, be they under the aegis of the UN, the AU, a REC or a task-specific coalition, the African states reach the command and decision-making bodies of these organisations and in this way, increase their influence from within. Rwanda is recognised for its knowledge of the workings of the UN system, due to its participation in several PKOs. 6,077 Rwandan personnel were deployed as at 31 December 2015. The extraversion strategy, which consists in ensuring that Rwanda is seen as indispensable to certain theatres of operations, enabled Rwanda to obtain, on 11 June 2013 and against all expectations, the nomination of General Jean-Bosco Kazura to the head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). He was selected over Chad’s candidate even though Rwanda had not sent any contingents to Mali. The Rwandan example reveals the

new strategies established by African states on the discourse of ownership of conflict management.

IV. THE MULTIPLICATION OF SECURITY STRUCTURES: A MULTIPLICATION OF MILITARY RENT?

The African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), an African project supported by South Africa and Algeria following the French intervention in Mali, was created in May 2013. However, this project was not unanimously supported by African states, because some consider it to be a system that encourages the monopoly of hegemonic states in Africa. The voluntary participation is inevitably favourable to the states that possess the greatest military assets, at the expense of others. Although the project aims to provide the AU with an additional rapid response tool to the African Standby Force, which remains one of the APSA's cornerstones, certain states fear that it will delay the operationalisation of the regional brigades that it is composed of.

Faced with the complexity of responses from the AU, there is also evidence of a regionalisation trend in conflict management through the use of ad hoc regional organisations. The proposition³⁰ made by South Africa to the PSC in January 2015 to deploy the ACIRC for the first time in Nigeria against Boko Haram and the reactions that followed are symptomatic of the complex power relationships between the various African actors and the current debate over the level at which contemporary conflict would be most effectively managed. The proposition was rejected in favour of strengthening the 8,700-strong force representing the countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), an *ad hoc* organisation. According to Jakkie Cilliers, “it was inevitable that the suggested use of the ACIRC would not amount to anything”, as Nigeria is “not ready to authorise a foreign country to restore domestic security”. While this situation appears specific to Nigeria, the fact remains that the ACIRC has thus far never been used. The decision of the heads of state of Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad to create the G5 Sahel in 2014 drives home the extent of the challenges that the UA are facing. Split between three RECs recognised by the AU, and therefore three regional brigades that make up the ASF, they believed that a new structure would be more efficient in dealing with the terrorism emerging in the Sahel-Saharan strip. The Nouakchott Process, headed by the AU, aims to take over such initiatives and adapt its crisis management system to the cross-border threats affecting its member states, with terrorism (Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, ISIS, Boko Haram, etc.) being the most symptomatic.

Beyond this “competitiveness” among African states to best represent the continent in international organisations, there is fierce competition – even rivalry in some respects – between the various African actors for the control of crisis management on the continent between the AU, the RECs and the “pivot states”. **African ownership may be expressed at different levels and is not solely constructed at the AU level. The collective defence model on the African continent wavers between the concentration of PKO leadership at the AU Peace and Security Council, the return of imperialistic behaviours through the ACIRC³¹ and the regionalisation of conflict management with RECs or ad hoc organisations, with every African state actor attempting to promote the system that offers the most control in managing conflicts that it is affected by.**

CONCLUSION

According to Jean-François Bayart, “the dominant actors of sub-Saharan societies”, i.e. the ruling elite, resorted to extraversion strategies to “compensate for their difficulties in empowering themselves and intensifying the exploitation of their dependants”, confirming that the main objective of these strategies is to reinforce the authority that the political powers exercise over their subordinates and the power balance with outside countries in order to prevent intervention. For the large majority of African troop contributing countries, and as we have previously shown, their participation in African or UN PKO's is a way to establish their political power and become indispensable in the eyes of non-

African actors. **The consequential strengthening of the security apparatuses and the training programmes provided by non-African actors supporting the APSA, indirectly strengthen the ruling elites that control them.** In this context, Chad is an interesting example. With a high level of involvement in Mali, and more generally in the Sahel-Saharan strip, in Darfur, CAR and the fight against Boko Haram within the Lake Chad Basin Commission, Chad is seen by African actors and the international community as an essential actor for resolving the conflicts in these areas. High military involvement, through participation in LCBC, AU and UN PKOs, helped Chad's president [Idriss Deby Itno](#) to tighten his grip on the country's political and economic life without fear of protest from international partners³².

In general, the extraversion policies practiced by African actors merit further study, in particular with the build-up of the APSA. Comparative research should also be carried out in order to study the extraversion strategies developed by the elites in Sahel-Saharan area countries, with a backdrop of war on terrorism and international interventions. Such research would help provide an understanding of how, first of all, these actors manage to transform their international image, and secondly, to observe the impacts of these extraversion strategies on how national politics play out. **Lastly, studies on the meaning of "ownership" or "appropriation" and its acceptance by African and non-African actors could be conducted beyond the evaluation of this ownership.** The militarisation of certain regions of the continent encourages reflection on both Africa's integration within the international system and the reinforcement of dependency through the increase in extraversion strategies enabled by the construction of a security architecture on the continent.

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