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Transnational Terrorism and the African Union: From Ideal Aspirations to Harsh Realities in Somalia and Mali

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Transnational Terrorism and the African Union: From Ideal Aspirations to Harsh Realities in

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Abstract

This paper will question why the African Union has been unsuccessful in confronting the rising issue of transnational terrorism. It looks at the history of both the Organization of African Unity and the African Union and examines the measures the two organizations have taken in preventing and combating terrorism. The particular history of African States and their relation to the term "terrorism" is discussed in this section. In this light, I analyze the African Union's peacekeeping missions in both Somalia and Mali to determine why they have failed to stop the spread of transnational terrorism. In conclusion, I will discuss the reasons why I the African Union has struggled in dealing with transnational terrorism.

Introduction:

Since its founding, the African Union (AU) – whose members have long called for "African Solutions to African Problems" – has sought to "achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa" (AU Constitutive Act, Art. 3). Nevertheless, the AU has struggled on many fronts, including confronting the rising threat of transnational terrorism. The challenge is complicated, involving nation-states, international organizations and transnational forces, and, in Africa, the deep historical legacy of colonialism. This paper explores this problem by focusing on two case studies that illustrate the limitations of the AU's ability to deal effectively with terrorism and to intervene in a successful fashion. The first of these interventions by the AU was in Somalia from 2007 to today, and the second in Mali since 2012. Despite significant AU military intervention, both areas continue to struggle with transnational terrorism today.

This essay seeks to explore the reasons why the AU is failing to fight terrorism, looking back to the founding of its precursor, the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in the period of Pan-Africanist optimism after independence. The problematic nature of the African state, inherited from the colonial period, and the constraints nationalism placed upon the OAU as an international organization with regard to even defining "terrorism" will also be discussed. One result of the OAU's inability to define and condemn terrorism was its apparent tolerance of dictators, which blemished its image with respect to the international community and other international organizations. In response, as the threat of transnational terrorism grew, the OAU began passing important counter-terrorism laws in the early 1990s. As the OAU transitioned into the AU, the latter took further steps to address the issue, including new international agreements and the founding of a research center specifically dedicated to defining and studying the issue of

terrorism in Africa. Nevertheless, the dysfunction of the AU's member states continued to undermine attempts to coordinate African efforts to address terrorism. It is within this context that the AU intervened in both Somalia and Mali.

The two case studies show how "failed states" can drive transnational terrorism and highlight the weaknesses of those intervening -- African states and an international organizations like the AU itself. Both Somalia and Mali demonstrate how, despite the AU's efforts, serious shortcomings in financial, logistical, and material support prevented its missions from being successful. More broadly, the inability and even unwillingness of some AU states to become involved in the AU's military interventions demonstrates how the idealistic spirit of Pan-Africanism retreats in face of the realities of regional interests and power politics. As a result, the AU ends up heavily dependent on the UN and Western powers for assistance. Due to this dependency, in some cases African problems will continue to be dealt with by foreign powers, often, paradoxically, including former colonial powers themselves.

This essay begins by examining the founding of the OAU and its position regarding terrorism and reviews the legislative measures taken by both the OAU and the AU in countering terrorism, as well as their shortcomings. The two case studies of my paper will be analyzed with this as background. Firstly, an analysis of the AU's intervention in Somalia will investigate why the mission, despite some early success, came to be considered as a failure. The second case study will look at how the AU reacted to the 2012 crisis in Mali and how its goals failed to meet reality. Finally, the conclusion will explain why the AU is inherently ineffective against not only fighting terrorism, but also acting as a coherent, cooperative international organization.

<u>Historical and Institutional Context:</u>

To better understand the AU today, it is important to look at its history. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), the forerunner of the AU, was established in May 1963 (Svensson 2008, p. 9). One of the main reasons why the OAU formed was to help newly independent African states cooperate amongst themselves and collectively defend their sovereignty from external influences, most notably from former colonial powers. Its charter declared one of its main goals to be that "conditions for peace and security must be established and maintained" in the continent (OAU Charter 1963, p. 1). After independence, fledgling African states were especially concerned with the internal dynamics of their newly formed states. The external aspects of cooperating in the international community were, in turn, mostly relegated to the OAU. With the advent of the OAU, Pan-Africanism formally took form and provided a protected place where the development of African norms in respect to the international community could take place. "The prevalence of conflicts and political instability with spillover effects in the newly independent states underscored the primacy of security if the new community were to survive" (Ewi 2015, p. 4). With this in mind, one of the central pillars of the OAU, collective security, assured the sovereignty of African states through the notion of Pan-African unity.

The preamble to the OAU Charter outlined its intention to collectively establish and sustain the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its member states. This stance, however, was largely a hollow statement as Article III (2) legally tied the OAU to its principle of "[n]on-interference in the internal affairs of [Member] States" (OAU Charter 1963, Art. III (2)). The organization was inherently weak in promoting peace and security in Africa because it was restricted to reacting to a situation only when a consensus had been reached amongst its members (Svensson 2008, p. 9). Even though the Charter was an important milestone in African

history, severe threats to the organization remained unaddressed. More specifically, the OAU failed to address the issue of terrorism; an issue that was never directly identified as a threat to Africa despite it having been a controversial aspect of past anti-colonial conflicts. The history of decolonization in Africa helps explain the OAU's aversion from using such a term. Colonial forces accused local rebels of being terrorists and condemned the OAU of being a "political center or an umbrella organization of terrorist groups" (Ewi 2015, p. 4). Due to its battle against colonialism, Africa's first encounter with the term "terrorism" was viewed as a tool the colonial powers used to delegitimize grievances made by locals attempting to free themselves from colonial exploitation. Additionally, local rebels often themselves deemed the actions of their colonizers as "terrorism," demonstrating how the subjective use of the term would affect how African states address terrorism (Ewi 2015, p. 4).

It is important to note the distinctions between domestic, international, and transnational terrorism. Since there is no universal definition of terrorism, numerous governments and legal entities use varying definitions (Schmid 2011). In the post-9/11 environment that we live in, the definition of the term has received increased interest from scholars. According to "The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research," author Alex Schmid cites research done Mike Hough and Paul Wilkinson in their definitions of terrorism. Hough identifies three levels of terrorism: domestic, international, and transnational. The author states that although transnational and international terrorism may appear the same, he asserts that they are qualitatively different.[1] Hough differentiates international terrorism from transnational terrorism by referring to "al-Qaeda…because it does not necessarily link objectives to a particular geographic entity"

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[1] Hough divides international terrorism into four types: "first, 'pure' international terrorism, including its use as part of a domestic insurgency; second, that carried out by independent non-state groups or individuals; third, state-sponsored terrorism enacted by those other than the state; and finally, terroristic violence by state agents on the state's behalf" (Schmid 2001, p. 184).

(Schmid 2011, p. 184). It is for this reason that the term "transnational" is preferred when referring to the type of terrorism that is discussed in this paper. Similarly, Wilkinson adopts an approach that defines transnational terrorism as "between individuals or groups from nation-states" and domestic terrorism, which is "carried out by those within a country" (Schmid 2011, p. 184). While the threat of domestic terrorist organizations only concerns a single country, transnational terrorist organizations are composed of foreign fighters, receive support from external sources, and operate within multiple countries simultaneously. The fact that transnational terrorism transcends international borders makes it that the international community must be increasingly vigilant in its cooperation and coordination in confronting terrorism.[2]

For the following three decades, the OAU's main political focus was promoting the fight against apartheid in South Africa and ending colonization on the continent. During that period, the OAU adopted the position of non-action in regards to terrorism. But for two exceptions,[3] the term "terrorism" never appeared in official OAU publications (Ewi 2015, p. 4). The OAU's aversion to condemning and even defining terrorism[4] coupled with its misguided support of autocrats such as Muammar Gaddafi and Idi Amin detrimentally affected how the rest of the world, particularly the UN and Western powers, viewed the OAU. Once apartheid ended in 1994, however, "so did the purpose of the OAU" (Svensson 2008, p. 9). Starting in the 1990s, a new era of violent conflict erupted throughout Africa. The failure by the international community in preventing these catastrophes, most notably in the case of the Rwandan genocide, created a new sense of Pan-Africanism and reinvigorated the desire in Africa to find "African solutions to

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[2] Please note that from this point forward the term "terrorism" is synonymous to "transnational terrorism."
[3] The term "terrorism" was "applied only on rare occasions to Israeli-Palestinian issues and South Africa's apartheid state" (Allison 2015, p. 2).
[4] "Even seemingly obvious terrorist incidents, such as the Lockerbie bombing and the Entebbe hostage crisis, failed to merit its usage" (Ewi and du Plessis 2014, p. 735)

African problems" (Svensson 2008, p. 9). The genocide in Rwanda, along with other atrocities,[5] is emblematic of the OAU's lack of response to crises erupting on the African continent due to its strict adherence to respecting the principles of non-interference and states' right to sovereignty. In sum, the OAU's categorical dedication to the protection of state sovereignty caused suffering in Africa and tarnished the organization's reputation. Acknowledging that the OAU was defunct and with the resurgent Pan-Africanism that was sweeping across the continent, the African Union (AU) was first conceived in Sirte, Libya in 1999. The next year, the Constitutive Act of the AU was signed. "After a transitional period of a little more than [two] years, the OAU was completely replaced by the AU…. on 9 July 2002" (Bogland et al. 2008, p. 14). By the time of its final dissolution, the OAU had lost almost all credibility, in both Africa and the rest of the world. To emphasize the scorn its detractors heaped on it, the organization was often dubbed as a "club of dictators" and a "moribund organization" (Ewi 2015, p. 41).

The main point that distinguished the AU from the OAU was the incorporation of Article 4 (h) in the AU Charter which states the "right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (AU Constitutive Act 2000, Art. 4 (h)). Continuing along these lines, Article 4 (p) also promised the "condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of governments" (AU Constitutive Act 2000, Art. 4 (p)). These two statements voiced the AU's commitment to becoming fully engaged in the prevention of conflicts, a clear divergence from the OAU's policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of its member states.

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[5] Such as the 1972 and 1992 genocides in Burundi, massacres as a result of the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone during the 1990s, the 1996-1997 internecine conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the breakout of the Somali Civil war in 1991.

It is important to note the initial steps taken by the OAU in addressing the threat of international terrorism. By the early 1990s, religious radicalism had risen to the fore as a major threat to peace and security in Africa. The outbreak of the Algerian Civil War in late 1991 sent warning signals to other African countries that had the religious, political, social, and economic preconditions for the spread of religious fundamentalism (Ewi 2015, p. 42).[6] In response to the conflict in Algeria, the OAU adopted a resolution to increase the cooperation and coordination amongst African states and condemned states that were sponsoring terrorism.[7] This resolution, called the "Resolution on the Strengthening of Cooperation and Coordination among African States" was passed July 1, 1992. Two years later, another important step was taken by the OAU in its search to solidify the organization's stance on the growing concern of transnational terrorism. In July 1994, the OAU adopted the "Declaration on the Code of Conduct for Inter-African Relations." The Code of Conduct rejected "extremism and terrorism" and emphasized its determination to increase "cooperation in order to erase this blot [terrorism] on the security, stability, and development of our [African] countries" (AU Doc. AHG/Del.2 (XXX) 1994, Art. 10). For the first time the OAU was juridically in full compliance with existing international laws

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[6]The AU list the following conditions that facilitate the emergence of terrorist groups in Africa: "i) poverty, illiteracy and high rate of unemployment among the youth and the general population, which render them vulnerable to the manipulative messages of terrorist groups and their promises of quick gain; (ii) poor working conditions, insufficient training and discipline of law enforcement personnel that make them easy prey for corruption; (iii) the search for safe havens and refuge by criminal networks in a zone characterized by vast territorial expanses, low and insufficient security coverage and administrative presence; (iv) the quest for new sources of funding, especially through smuggling, drug trafficking and illegal migration; (v) the need to conquer new areas for recruitment and redeployment with the objective of expanding the confrontation field beyond their traditional zone of operations; and (vi) Government institutional weaknesses and the existence of long stretches of porous, largely ill-monitored and poorly-controlled borders, which, combined with vast, ill administered spaces of territory, facilitate illegal cross-border movement of people and goods and provide fertile ground for exploitation by terrorists and transnational organized criminals" (AU Doc. PSC/AHG/2(CDLV) 2014, Art. 8)

[7] "NOT TO ALLOW any movement using religion, ethnic or other social or cultural differences to indulge in hostile activities against Member States as well as to refrain from lending any support to any group that could disrupt the stability and the territorial integrity of member States by violent means, and to strengthen cooperation and coordination among the African countries in order to circumstances the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism" (AU Doc. AHG/Res. 213 (XXVIII), Art. 2).

against terrorism. The Code of Conduct even introduced the principle of *aut dedere aut judicare*, in which African states were obligated to either "bring to justice or extradite terrorist elements" (AU Doc. AHG/Decl.3 (XXX) 1994, Art. 16).

These new measures would soon be put to the test. The 1995 attempted assassination of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and the 1998 simultaneous bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam demonstrated how the measures taken by the OAU in combatting terrorism still had some ways to go. Sudan was suspected of facilitating the assassination attempt carried out by al-Qaeda affiliate al-Gama'a but the OAU was unable to sanction Sudan decisively nor get it to admit its role in the attack. Moreover, the 1998 bombings announced a new era of modern terrorism in Africa. The sophistication and sheer will of the terrorists to carry out mass casualty attacks, accompanied by the complicated transnational nature of international cooperation and mutual legal assistance in capturing and convicting the terrorists, proved that the OAU's previous efforts were not enough. The OAU realized that "a tougher and permanent legal instrument that would promote international cooperation on all aspects of counter-terrorism and hold states accountable for their role in the commission of terrorist acts in Africa" was desperately needed. (Ewi 2015, p. 45).

In 1999, the OAU adopted the "Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism." The Convention required that Member States "implement the actions, including enactment of legislation and the establishment as criminal offences of certain [terrorist] acts….and that States have ratified and acceded to and make such acts punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account the grave nature of those offences" (OAU Convention 1999, Art. 2 (c)). The Convention also took the first official steps to define a terrorist act under Article 1.3:

"(a) any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated or intended to:(i) intimidate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles; or (ii) disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to the public or to create a public emergency; or (iii) create general insurrection in a State;(b) any promotion, sponsoring, contribution to, command, aid, incitement, encouragement, attempt, threat, conspiracy, organizing, or procurement of any person, with the intent to commit any act referred to in paragraph (a) (i) to (iii)" (OAU Convention 1999, Art. 1.3).

The significance of the Convention regarding Africa's commitment to counter-terrorism is unquestionable. It "codified counter-terrorism norms and consolidated common standards for the fight against terrorism in Africa" (Ewi 2015, p. 45). The Convention sought to institutionalize the foundations of the criminal justice framework used against terrorism in Africa. Three years later, in December 2002, the Convention would finally enter into force after 40 Member States ratified the document (AU Institutional Doc. 2015).

To underscore the commitments, duties, and obligations of AU members under the new counter-terrorism doctrines, the 2002 "Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism" later reinforced the Convention. The Plan of Action undertook constructive counter-terrorism measures that categorically addressed the security challenges in Africa. More specifically, efforts to improve conditions in areas such as the "exchange of information among Member States on the activities and movements of terrorist groups in Africa; mutual legal assistance; exchange of research and expertise; and the mobilization of technical assistance and cooperation, both within Africa and internationally, to upgrade the scientific, technical and operational capacity of Member States" (AU Doc. Mtg/HLIG/Conv.Terror/Plan.(I) 2002, Art. 3). The Plan of Action was "equally intended to provide a roadmap for the prevention and

combating of terrorism. It was significant in that it blended international and continental standards…" (Ewi 2015, p. 49).

To ensure that the Plan of Action was properly carried out and implemented, the last article of the Plan of Action established a permanent body that would focus its attention solely on fighting terrorism in Africa. The program, the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), was established in 2004 in Algiers to "serve to centralize information, studies and analyses on terrorism and terrorist groups..." (AU Doc. Mtg/HLIG/Conv.Terror/Plan.(I) 2002, Art. 20). The ACSRT also was given the responsibility to "develop training programs by organizing, with assistance of international partners, training schedules, meetings, and symposia" (Mtg/HLIG/Conv.Terror/Plan.(I) 2002, Art. 20). By the time it was implemented, however, the AU had replaced the OAU. The development of counter-terrorism capacity building programs marked for the first time that the AU was explicitly addressing the issue of terrorism with its own research body. It was also the first time that the AU provided a forum where Member States and Regional Mechanisms could openly interact and exchange information in efforts to ensure the coherent coordinating and cooperation of counter-terrorism efforts.

By the end of 2002, the AU formally replaced the OAU. The former's legacy in building up its capacity in addressing terrorism was continued by the newly formed AU. With the founding of the AU, the 2004 "Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism" reinforced the 1999 Convention. Although the publishing of the Plan of Action was an important step taken by the OAU in addressing the issue of terrorism, it failed to fix the Convention's lack of an implementation mechanism. The absence of such mechanisms made it difficult to plan counterterrorism programs, particularly at the level of states' parties. The

Protocol, however, provided a vital element for the efficient implementation of counterterrorist initiatives at the state level, particularly by specifying the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) as the responsible organ that maintains day-to-day operations. It also allowed for Regional Economic Communities (RECs)[8] to participate and contribute to counter-terrorism measures. "In this regard, the Protocol helps to enhance coordination and harmonization of counter-terrorism activities in Africa" (Ewi 2015, p. 49).

Furthermore, the Protocol addressed the increasingly threatening nature of terrorism on the African continent and recognized the correlations between terrorism and other forms of illegality such as "weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking, corruption, transnational organized crimes, money laundering, and the illicit proliferation of small arms" (AU Protocol 2004, p. 1). Additionally, Article 3(d) of the Protocol addresses the recently established Peace and Security Council of the AU. The Protocol also states that the PSC's purpose, *inter alia*, is to "coordinate and harmonize continental efforts in the prevention and combating of international terrorism in all its aspects" (AU Protocol 2004, Art. 2.2).

In July 2010, the AU accentuated its renewed efforts to address terrorism at the Assembly of the Union on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. To help streamline the bureaucratic process, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union formally appointed a Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation to the AU.[9] The Special Representative is, contemporaneously, also the Director of the ACRST. Since the creation of the position, the Special Representative has tackled an extensive number of vital assignments that actuate both the domestic and the international support in its fight against terrorism. He is also responsible in

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[8] These include Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Southern African Development Community (SADC).
[9] The current Special Representative is retired Ghanaian Military personnel Larry Gbevlo-Lartey Esq. (Kodjo 2015).

gauging the security situation in its many Member States and determining the security issues that concerned African states need to address (AU Institutional Doc. 2015).

Shortly after the appointment of the Special Representative, the AU deemed it necessary to provide Member States with a model which national authorities could base their legal battles against terrorism. Most African states have not passed the required specific counter-terrorism legislation because of its technical nature. This lack of a detailed legal structure was one of the major problems that impeded African states to preventing and combating terrorism in a convincing manner. In July 2011, the AU Commission developed a Comprehensive Anti-Terrorism Model Law "to provide ready-made assistance to AU member states…" and "… towards facilitating their efforts aimed at elaborating the necessary domestic legislation" (Ewi 2015, p. 51). The Model Law helped harmonize and standardize counter-terrorism legislation in Africa, reducing differences in legislation that often paralyzed states' efforts (Ewi 2015, p. 51).

Considering the substantial policy framework mentioned above, at first glance one would assume that Africa would have made progress in its battle against terrorism. However, terrorists do not recognize laws, resolutions, and international treaties. In fact, terrorists make it their goal to break these laws and treaties as often as possible. Terrorism continues to threaten Africa and organizations such as al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) and al-Shabaab are wreaking havoc in both of the countries in which they operate and surrounding regions. But precisely why is the AU's counter-terrorism strategy failing? Policies are only effective if they are appropriately implemented by the Member States. Unfortunately, though, this is not the case with the AU's counter-terrorism policies.

The Protocol, originally drafted in 2004, took more than a decade of deliberation before it met the minimum of 15 signatures so that it could officially enter into force (Allison 2015).

Unfortunately, to date the number of Member States that have ratified the Protocol remains the same. "Among those who have not ratified are key actors in the fight against terrorism, including Kenya, Nigeria and Somalia" (Allison 2016, p. 3). Additionally, only a third of the Member States have incorporated the specific counter-terrorism laws that were recommended by the AU's Anti-Terrorism Model Law (Allison 2016, p. 3). It can be suspected that the reason why AU Member States have been so reluctant in adopting the Protocol and the Model Law is that since they are not directly affected, some African countries do not have the same level of urgency to legislate on the matter. Sometimes, they avoid the issue altogether because legislating on toughening the laws on terrorism might be an invitation for retaliation from terrorist groups (Ndiaye 2017).[10] Additionally, "counter-terrorism in Africa competes with other priorities for limited resources and has always been treated a lesser priority" (Ewi 2015, p. 58). The unwillingness of Member States to adopt the AU's counter-terrorism recommendations is extremely detrimental to the AU's success in this area. Without the cooperation of Member States, the attempts made by the AU to deal with terrorism are mostly for naught. Concurrently, Member States are not entirely to blame for the AU's deficiencies. The founding of the ACSRT in Algiers was an important step in institutionalizing the AU's commitment to counter-terrorism. The ACSRT, however, "remains chronically underfunded and understaffed, a problem that has been endemic throughout the African Union and the United Nations Peacekeeping and Peace Support missions" (Allison 2016, p. 3).

Several factors impede the eradication of terrorism from the African continent. As mentioned above, serious political and institutional constraints to African governments along with chronic lack of resources continue to hinder endeavors aimed at preventing and combating

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[10] These last two lines of information were provided to me through an interview with Dr. Masse Ndiaye 25 April 2017.

terrorism. The increasingly globalized environment in which states operate today also makes the transnational nature of modern-day terrorism incredibly complicated for the international community to handle. Global terrorist organizations are rapidly expanding their allegiances and receiving support from across the world. Groups such as al-Qaeda and the so-called Islamic State, with their numerous affiliates, make terrorism a problem that transcends international borders and, consequently, beyond the jurisdiction of individual states. The capabilities of African states are continuously hampered by endemic factors such as "chronic conflicts, political instability, abject poverty, widespread corruption, abundance of natural resources and black markets, failed states and weak institutions with little rule of law" (Ewi 2015, p. 57). As a result, these factors make Africa and its weak states ideal havens for al-Qaeda and the spread of transnational terrorism. In sum, "the fight against terrorism in Africa is weak and lack [sic] genuine commitment, cohesiveness and coordination" from the AU's Member States (Ewi 2015, p. 58).

Case Study: Somalia

What follows is an examination of how the AU has dealt with the situation in Somalia from 2007 onward, including a brief background of the origins of the conflict in the East African country and how the terrorist organization al-Shabaab came into existence. This section will seek to explain the AU's limitations and failures in effectively dealing with terrorism by analyzing its intervention in Somalia. More specifically, it will focus on how a weak state like Somalia is a perfect driver of terrorism and how terrorist groups, such as al-Shabaab with its ties to al-Qaeda, are increasingly becoming major transnational forces. The long-standing animosity between Ethiopians and Somalis will also be covered in this section to help explain the origin of the

conflict. Further on, a commentary will be provided on how regional self-interests rather than holistic Pan-Africanism hindered the Mission's appearance as a neutral arbitrator and how the lack of sustained international support undermined the Mission. Finally, the conclusion will go over the reason why, despite its best intentions, the African-led Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) has failed to provide adequate "African solutions to African problems."

Ever since the outbreak of the civil war in 1991, Somalia has been marred by violence. The situation in Somalia became so bleak that it drew the attention of the international community. Following the initial failure of the United Nation's monitoring mission UNOSOM, a U.S.-led intervention called UNOSOM II entered into effect in 1993. The U.S., however, was soon drawn into an extremely bloody conflict which resulted in the notorious Battle of Mogadishu where UNOSOM II faced such ferocious fighting that the U.S. withdrew its forces from the mission less than a year later (Bowden 1999). Recognizing that it was unable to support such a mission without U.S. involvement, the UN Security Council, noting the lack of progress in the peace process, adopted Resolution 954 to extend the mandate for a final time (Mayall 1996). The UN would fully withdraw its forces by March 1995. For the remainder of that decade, Somalia was ignored by international actors and viewed as the prime example of a "failed state."

Attitudes towards Somalia would soon change as the 9/11 attacks drew widespread attention to the threat of transnational terrorism. After many years of general disorder and lack of central authority in the country, in 2004 the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed. The newly elected president of the TFG, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, was mistrusted by Somalis and considered by his compatriots as "an Ethiopian puppet" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 7). Their accusations stemmed from Yusuf's visit to Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, soon after

his election. The reason for his visit to obtain a peacekeeping force that would help him establish his rule over the highly anarchic country (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 7).

To understand the significance of these accusations, it is important to know the historical context of the animosity between Somalis and Ethiopians. Somalis are known as devout Sunni Muslims while Ethiopians are traditionally Orthodox Christians. Wars have been fought throughout history between the two opposing ethnic groups with the most recent major war occurring in 1977-1978 (Schmidt 2013). This war, known as the Ogaden War, was fought over Somalia's claim of Ethiopia's Ogaden region, which is mostly populated by ethnic Somalis. This territory even became part of Somalia after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1936. "Following the expulsion of Italy after from Ethiopia....Britain administered Ogaden...which it hoped to unite with British and Italian Somaliland under British governance" (Schmidt 2013, p. 150). Under pressure from America, Britain eventually relinquished the territory back Ethiopia a decade later, "despite strong Somali protests" (Schmidt 2013, p. 150). Ever since, Somali irredentism coupled with strong religious differences have made the people of Ethiopia and Somalia extremely distrustful of each other.

The threat of Ethiopia becoming involved in their internal affairs outraged many Somalis. This coupled with the public's general distrust of the TFG prompted the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts (SCIC) to form in 2006. Once the SCIC defeated secular warlords and gained control of Mogadishu, it was rapidly able to extend its authority over the southern half of the country (Shinn 2013). Wary of the SCIC's growing presence, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) "sent its troops to the town of Baidoa to protect the TFG authorities" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 9). Ethiopia's intervention confirmed many Somalis' belief that the TFG was

not to be trusted and prompted the SCIC to declare *jihad* against all Ethiopian soldiers in Somalia (Begashaw 2016, p. 2).

In December 2006, "the Islamic Courts' militia made the mistake of attacking the Ethiopian forces in Baidoa, suffering a major defeat" (Shinn 2013). With the SCIC's power diminished and popular support turned against them, Ethiopian forces easily captured Mogadishu and helped install the TFG in the capital (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 9). Ethiopia's occupation of Mogadishu "was deeply resented by Somalis; their presence gave Somali Islamist elements and especially the new organization known as al-Shabaab a rallying cry for removing the Ethiopians" (Shinn 2013). Rising out of the void left by the SCIC, al-Shabaab formed in 2006 and soon began receiving international support from al-Qaeda.[11] As al-Shabaab slowly began to lead a new popular movement against Ethiopia and the TFG, a new era of internal conflict ensued in Somalia.

To address the growing problem of instability in Somalia, the AU decided to deploy what would later become its largest ever peace operation to date (Williams 2017). Despite lacking necessary funding and capabilities to implement and sustain such a mission, AU Commission Chairperson at the time, Alpha Oumar Konaré, explained their reasoning for the creation of AMISOM:

> I am fully aware of the challenges facing our Organization. Indeed, unlike the United Nations, the AU does not have a system of assessed contributions to fund its peace support operations; we rely to a very large extent on the support of our partners. This means that the funding of our operations remains precarious. I am also aware of the limitations of the Commission with respect to its management capacity to oversee large-scale peace support operations… Finally, the challenges of an operation in Somalia, a country that has been without central Government for the past 16 years and where security remains precarious, cannot be underestimated … Yet, the African Union cannot abdicate its responsibilities vis-à-vis Somalia and fail its people. The African Union is the only Organization the Somali people could readily turn to as they strive to recover from decades of violence and untold suffering. We have a duty and an obligation of solidarity towards Somalia

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[11] Such as "instructing local radicals in the use of remote-controlled improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombings. Tactics that had previously been unknown in Somalia" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 23)

(AU doc. PSC/PR/2(LXIX), paras. 36-37).

Due to glaring shortcomings in capacities to plan and sustain such a large operation, the European Union (EU) and the United States "helped establish the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) within the AU to plan and manage the organization's peace operations" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 43). Although this was a major boost to the operation, it did not reach its operating capacity of 19 planners until September 2007, nine months after its original deployment. This international support would be a precursor to the future United Nations Support Office to Somalia (UNSOA), which is discussed in further detail below. AMISOM was finally deployed to Mogadishu January 2007 with a mandate that stated that it was:

> to provide…. protection to the Transitional Federal Institutions and enable them to carry out their functions; to provide…. technical and other support to disarmament and stabilization efforts; to monitor…. the security situation; to facilitate humanitarian operations; and to protect its personnel…. including the right of self-defense (AU doc. PSC/PR/Comm(LXIX)).

From the very beginning of AMISOM, the mission was breaking one of the major rules of peacekeeping; consent by all parties, including civilians. AMISOM was perceived by Somalis as an Ethiopian tool of influence due to the fact that it was operating alongside ENDF despite the two having distinct roles (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 46). While the ENDF conducted its own operations in Somalia separate from AMISOM, the Mission itself was entirely supported by a few thousand Ugandan troops during its initial stages. Uganda's impetus in aiding the AU and its peace operation should not, however, be seen as a benevolent gesture done in the spirit of Pan-African unity. Museveni, the authoritarian ruler of Uganda since 1986, saw AMISOM as an opportunity to promote its authority in hopes of garnering more influence and leadership over the region. The deployment of the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) to Mogadishu also "provided an opportunity to repair its reputation after its interventions in the Democratic

Republic of the Congo (1998-2003) had been widely criticized" and also "provided an important opportunity for the UPDF to attract significant training, military financing, and equipment options, especially from the United States" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 40). Uganda is a country that is highly dependent on foreign aid.[12] By promoting the perception of Uganda as a valuable ally against terrorism, Museveni was able to convince Western donors that his country remained worthy of international assistance in spite of its undemocratic practices. "[D]uring interviews, several senior donor officials acknowledged that Uganda's presence in Somalia made it more difficult [for donors] to criticize the Museveni regime for domestic transgressions" (Fisher 2012, p. 420).

After supporting the bulk of AMISOM's operations for most of the year, Ugandan troops were joined by soldiers from Burundi at the end of 2007 to comprise a force total of a little under 2,500 troops (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 48). Burundi's motives to intervene, however, were similar to Uganda's. According to senior Burundi officials, its participation in AMISOM "would allow the country to express its gratitude for the external assistance it had received to end its civil war and enhance Burundi's status on the international stage, in part through increasing the professionalism of its military" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 40). Despite their willingness to deploy, Burundian officials conceded that they could not do so without considerable logistical, training, and financial assistance from external actors. In return for their participation, the "United States [trains] the country's army; the African Union (with European support) pays soldiers' salaries while they are in theater" (Dickerson 2011). In sum, both Uganda and Burundi participated in AMISOM not because of the spirit of Pan-African unity but rather because of

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[12] According to Havard Bergo's 2015 article in *Global Risk Insights* and figures gathered by *Global Humanitarian Assistance*, Uganda has been amongst the world's top aid recipients for several decades. Between 2003 and 2012, the country received more than $16 billion in official development assistance, ranking them as the 13th largest recipient worldwide.

regional interests and power politics. Without the presence of such incentives, it is doubtful any of the two African countries would have participated in AMISOM at all.

By the beginning of 2008, Ugandan and Burundian forces were largely supported by private U.S.-based corporations DynCorp International and Bancroft Global Development (Shinn 2015). The idea that the United States was once again becoming involved in Somalia displeased many AU officials. The possibility of AMISOM being "seen as a proxy for U.S. interests in the 'War on Terrorism' made most PSC members reluctant to contribute troops" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 46). The suspicion of the U.S.'s involvement combined with the fact that AMISOM was deployed to an active war zone where a ceasefire had not been signed, a general precondition for peacekeeping missions,[13] deterred many potential troop-contributing countries (TCCs), such as Nigeria and Ghana, from providing military support (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 48). The lack of a dependable source of funding also dissuaded many TCCs from becoming involved. Unsurprisingly, as time went on, Uganda and Burundi struggled to maintain order in Mogadishu, let alone achieve control over the rest of the country (Shinn 2015).

Eventually, the ENDF, whose presence was becoming increasingly toxic,[14] agreed to withdraw from Mogadishu by January 2009. Despite the rejoicing from local residents, AMISOM was not so happy for as soon as the ENDF left al-Shabaab almost immediately occupied their previous positions (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 14). The ensuing months were characterized by an increase of asymmetric attacks conducted by al-Shabaab and largely successful attempts in instigating AMISOM to indiscriminately retaliate, often causing massive

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[13] The 2008 "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines" report states that "[s]ince United Nations peacekeeping operations are normally deployed to support the implementation of a cease-fire or a more comprehensive peace agreement, Security Council mandates are influenced by the nature and content of the agreement reached by the parties to the conflict."

[14] A 2008 report by Amnesty International claimed that Ethiopian soldiers were deliberately killing civilians, attacking mosques, and participating in gang-rapes of Somali women (AFR 52/006/2008).

civilian casualties. In detriment to its image, AMISOM took a long time to acknowledge that it was causing civilian deaths and even went so far as to deny the allegations all together.[15] "AMISOM's existing approach had neither defeated al-Shabaab nor destroyed its heavy weapons yet had caused resentment among local civilians, reduced cooperation, and probably pushed some locals to join al-Shabaab or at least provide the insurgents with information about AMISOM" (Williams 2013, p. 10). The rise of public outrage against the Mission helped turn the momentum in al-Shabaab's favor.

To compound AMISOM's difficulties even further, it consistently lacked the capabilities and weaponry[16] to deal with the rising insurgency within the capital. In spite of the overt need for such counter-terrorist capabilities, the AU held firm that it could not provide funding for an intelligence operation as part of a peace support mission (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 54). The conditions in which AMISOM was introduced made the situation extremely difficult. The fact that it was operating in a hot conflict where neither communication strategies nor adequate infrastructure were in place forced the Mission to perform damage control rather than being proactive. The fact that AMISOM lacked a sound, locally operated logistical support system made it heavily reliant on the bilateral donors, notably the U.S. and the United Kingdom (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 56). This, in turn, caused significant information delays and impeded the Mission's ability to implement its mandate even further. The situation on the ground, however, began to improve substantially in August 2009 when the UN Support Office for AMISOM

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[15] "AMISOM has never shelled indiscriminately at civilians … [p]eacekeepers have always avoided civilian shellings and observe international humanitarian laws" -Gaffel Nkolokosa, AMISOM spokesperson during a 2010 interview with The Washington Post (Raghavan 2010).

[16] Including aerial surveillance, mortar locating capabilities (to guide its own counter mortar fires), and timely intelligence (Bruton and Williams, p. 54).

(UNSOA) was established in nearby Mombasa, Kenya to provide logistical support to the Mission.

The year 2010 would prove to be pivotal in Somalia. Al-Shabaab's bomb attacks in Kampala were made in attempt to weaken Uganda's resolve. The bombing would have the opposite effect as they only intensified Uganda and Burundi's commitment to AMISOM. The AU would subsequently request an increase in AMISOM's troop capacity from 8,000 to 20,000 (Security Council Report No. 3 2010, p. 1). Another factor that turned the tide in AMISOM's favor was the failed offensive by al-Shabaab, known as the Ramadan Offensive. In an attempt to cut off almost half of AMISOM's forces, the terrorist organization suffered significant losses and allowed AMISOM to launch a successful counter-offensive and regain control of Mogadishu. African leaders, however, were dismayed by the lack of robust response to the Somali crisis by Western powers. In light of the Kampala bombings, the AU requested reinforcement of troop levels, weaponry, and funding. Nevertheless, reactions by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the U.S. were subdued and offers to increase funding for AMISOM were nonexistent. To compound their frustrations, the UN rejected the AU's proposal of increasing the force size from 8,000 to 20,000. After months of intense debate in December 2010 the AU was finally able to have the UN authorize a troop increase of only 4,000 troops compared to the 12,000 the AU had previously requested (UN Doc. S/RES/1964 2010, Art. 2).

Initially, the troop increase proved to have little effect on the Mission. As it turned out, many recurrent problems continued to restrain AMISOM's efforts. Some of the leading complications that arose while carrying out such an extensive offensive operation were its lack of coordination with TFG security forces, inability in gaining the trust of locals, and the lack of the AU's bureaucratic capacity in overseeing an operation of AMISOM's size and complexity. A

2011 report[17] by AMISOM's self-assessment team concluded "the effective and efficient management of AMISOM performance, operations, administration and information systems was hampered by understaffing and lack of structures" (Bruton and Williams, p. 60).

In spite of all of these difficulties, the 2011-2012 period saw AMISOM make significant gains against al-Shabaab. That year was blighted by a drought that produced a massive famine and caused an exodus of refugees flowing over the border into neighboring Kenya and Ethiopia. The increase in refugees fleeing Somalia coupled with the disintegration of al-Shabaab's authority over the area due to the famine prompted Ethiopia and Kenya to take advantage of the situation and unilaterally intervene in the conflict. Both armies would eventually be integrated in AMISOM and increase the authorized strength to 17,731 (AU press release 2012). Djibouti and Sierra Leone also pledged a battalion of troops while Nigeria deployed a police unit to Mogadishu (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 64). The security situation was beginning to improve and the process of establishing a permanent government became feasible. In August of 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) formally replaced the TFG. The military branch of the FGS, the Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF), eventually began conducting military operation alongside AMISOM.

With the founding of the FGS, the AU established a review team to determine what the new role of AMISOM would be in Somalia. This was in large part because of the widely held belief that "the status quo [was] not an option" (UN doc. S/2013/134, para. 45). Three proposals were drawn up for consideration: 1) the handover and re-hatting of AMISOM troops to form a

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[17] The same report stated that funds for reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment to the troop-contributing countries were absent; inadequate provision of appropriate operational equipment for AMISOM troops; lack of facilities for repair and maintenance of the equipment in theatre; no VSAT [an Internet over satellite provider] connectivity between AMISOM's Nairobi headquarters, the mission's force headquarters in Mogadishu, and the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa; and inadequate coordination between AMISOM military and other forces (Bruton and Williams, p. 60-61)

UN peacekeeping operation; 2) enhancing AMISOM and its capabilities equal to the support provided to a UN mission; or 3) establishing a new joint AU-UN mission where:

> AMISOM could be joined up with a UN peacebuilding office in a structural arrangement that a) ensures joint AU-UN political direction and leadership; b) ensures AMISOM has the necessary resources from the United Nations to pursue its mandate, and; (c) ensures that AMISOM retains its multidimensional character, and a mandate that allows it to use the levels of force necessary to support the Federal Government of Somalia to recover and secure those areas still under the control of Al-Shabaab (UN doc. S/2013/134, para. 49).

The Review Team concluded that: "as the status quo is not an option, and option 1 is not feasible at this stage, the remaining options are option 2 and option 3. As option 2 does not provide for sustainable and predictable funding for AMISOM, the Review Team therefore recommends option 3" (UN doc. S/2013/134, para. 50).

Developing a joint AU-UN mission, however, required a substantial amount of time. In light of this, the AU endorsed the enhancement of AMISOM while the joint mission was developed. The UN, however, was not eager to form a joint mission, and in early 2013, the UN Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council should create a new UN Assistance Mission to replace the old UNSOA. His recommendations, however, were not realized until late 2015 with the formation of the UN Support Office to Somalia (UNSOS). Despite this, a joint AU-UN mission would never come into effect. Rather, the UNSC passed Resolution 2124 on November 2013 to authorize an increase in its force strength "from 17,731 to a maximum of 22,126 uniformed personnel..." (UN doc. S/RES/2124, para. 3). This is the total amount of troops and police officers that are stationed in Somalia today.

Even though the situation was beginning to improve, trouble struck the core of AMISOM during the summer of 2013. A major controversy arose when the Kenyan forces in the southern port city of Kismayo were accused by the FGS of violating AMISOM's mandate (Doyle 2013). Specifically, the FGS accused the Kenyans of supporting the leader of a local militia that

opposed the FGS in order to manipulate the political order in southern Somalia in their favor (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 69). Kenyan authorities, however, denied these accusations all together (Guled 2013). This episode brought in to question the limits of AMISOM's "central command and control structures and its ability to function as a coherent force rather than several disconnected, national parts" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 71). The problem of AMISOM being viewed by locals as a tool in which neighboring states could promote their own interests within Somalia prevents the Mission from achieving its objectives, stifles its efforts in promoting a positive public diplomacy campaign, and damages the AU's image as a credible force in its deployment of peace operations. AMISOM is unable to achieve its objectives because of regional actors infringing on Somalia's sovereignty. Regional powers vying for personal interests is a direct violation of the AU's objective in "[p]romot[ing] and defend[ing] African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples" (AU Constitutive Act 2002, Art III (d)).

Recently, the situation in Somalia severely contrasts to the prospects of success made by previous assessments.[18] As the mission marks its tenth anniversary, AMISOM remains the main source of protection for the FGS and is still required to patrol the roads that link Mogadishu to the surrounding countryside. As Somali Defense Minister Abdulkadir Sheikh Ali Dini laments, "[h]alfway through this anniversary period, we should have readied the army to secure the country but we did not achieve this as planned, both as a government and people" (Maruf 2017). This is especially troubling considering the fact that some of AMISOM's major TCCs have both threatened and declared their intent to withdraw their troops from Somalia within the coming

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[18] Freear and de Coning in their 2013 article "Lessons from the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) for Peace Operations in Mali" consider Somalia as a successful model off which the intervention in Mali should base itself.

years (Williams 2017). Various African heads of state[19] cite their grievances over unpaid troop allowances by the AU, the desire for the UN to cover their operation cost, frustration with the lack in development with the SNAF, and the lack of international support (Williams 2017). The risk of abandonment by its TCCs puts AMISOM's future increasingly in doubt. To make the situation worse, the European Union has recently cut 20 percent its African Peace Facility budget, a program that funded the entirety of the allowances paid to AMISOM's troops (Maruf 2017). This meant that AMISOM peacekeepers were payed considerably less than their UN counterparts; thus decreasing both the desirability to participate in the Mission and the morale of the troops.

AMISOM was most effective whenever sufficient international support was provided to the Mission. Unfortunately, with the threat of a major decline in international support looming large, the fate of the Mission is now at risk. The fact that AMISOM was supported by only two TCCs until 2012 demonstrates how countries are unwilling take the lead and dedicate materials to a Mission that is not immediately relevant to them. Despite many early convictions of success, AMISOM's progress post-2011 was greatly aided by al-Shabaab's mismanagement of the famine provoked by the drought. Conflicts amongst AU leadership regarding which specific agendas would be pursued also disrupted the coherence between the AU and its external partners. Another factor that harmed AMISOM's ability to counter al-Shabaab was its inability to appear impartial in the conflict, a prerequisite that is standard for all UN peacekeeping missions.[20] Because of this lack of impartiality in its operations, its relation with local

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[19] Presidents from Burundi, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda have all expressed their extreme discontent with AMISOM's lack of progress. See Williams 2017 article "Paying for AMISOM: Are Politics and Bureaucracy Undermining the AU's Largest Peace Operation?" for additional information.
[20] The other two are consent by all parties and usage of force only in defense (UN Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines 2008). AMISOM has subsequently failed to uphold all three standards.

populations was impacted detrimentally. AMISOM's involvement in providing humanitarian access to locals also jeopardized the impartiality of NGOs who were also providing aid.

Somalia posed a troubling conundrum for counterinsurgency planners. To conduct counterinsurgency campaigns effectively, the local partner must be effective in its capabilities and legitimate in the eyes of its citizens. "One of AMISOM's major challenges was that the TFG was neither" (Bruton and Williams 2014, p. 86). The inherent weakness of the Somali state greatly hindered the AU's ability to operate in the country. The fact that AMISOM troops are paid less than UN peacekeepers also set a poor example. In suggesting that AU peacekeepers are less valuable than ones who operate under the aegis of the UN was one of the root causes for much of the discontent and low troop morale amongst TCCs and its troops. Once again, the sheer extent in which the AU has had to stretch itself in order to take on such an immensely complex mission highlights the gap between the AU's ideal aspirations for a united Pan-African front that finds "African solutions to African problems" and the harsh realities of its marginal capabilities. The fact that al-Shabaab is a transnational terrorist organization that recruits foreigners into its ranks only complicates the matter even greater for both the government of Somalia and the AU. Its inability in controlling its future independent from the influences of external groups and actors will indefinitely condemn the AU to merely being an aspirational, but ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to lead a mission that addresses African problems all the while providing its own African solutions.

Case Study: Mali

Ever since its independence from French rule in 1960, Mali has been characterized by instability and repressive regimes where most functions of the central government have been

almost entirely replaced and carried out by non-governmental organizations (Mann 2015). This means that the authority of Mali has historically been weak and that it has always held tenuous control over its people and territory. The political and military crisis of 2012 is a good example of the African Union's on-going problem of projecting its intent to react firmly to crises such as genocide, war crimes, and/or crimes against humanity but eventually failing to provide an effective and immediate response to the situation. It is ultimately unable to sustain its response without the support from international partners, often, ironically, from former colonial powers themselves.

Like Somalia, the territory of Mali is immense in respect to the central government's ability to govern over it. As a result, desert nomads known as Tuaregs residing in the north have lived with relative autonomy. Conflicts between the Tuaregs and the sub-Saharan Africans residing to the south have continuously divided the country. Many of the grievances the Tuaregs have are rooted in what they perceive as a serious lack of the government investment in their area (Mann 2015). The Tuareg political leaders of northern Mali, locally known as Azawad, have a history of reclaiming independence and rejecting the authority coming from the capital city, Bamako. In late 2011, a new coalition called the *Mouvement National de Libération d'Azawad* (MNLA) formed to lead a reinvigorated insurgency against the Malian state. The MNLA, however, would soon be overrun by radical Islamists with ties to al-Qaeda in Maghreb (AQIM) and eventually turn a local rebellion into an international battle against terrorism.

Aided by an influx in arms and fighters flowing across the ungoverned Sahara due to recent collapse of Gaddafi's regime in nearby Libya, the most recent Tuareg rebellion took place in early 2012. On January 16, the MNLA launched its first attack against a military barracks and a national guard base in Ménaka located in the Gao region in the far eastern region of the country

(Stewart 2012). Due to the poor state of the roads and limited air capacity, the Malian Defense and Security Forces (MDSF) was slow to react and suffered many losses early on. Finally, after two months of waging an unsuccessful campaign and having lost up to a third of its territory to the rebels, the MDSF, having enough, stormed the presidential palace and overthrew President Amadou Toumani Touré in a military *coup d'état* on March 22nd (Mariko and Geel 2012, p. 4).

As one would expect, the *coup* threw the country into deeper despair and allowed rebels to make significant gains. By April, the MNLA declared independence from Mali, although it was never able to garner any international recognition (Fessy 2012). The MNLA's success, however, was short-lived as other radical organizations sought to install their own authority to fill the recently formed power-vacuum left by the retreat of the Malian state. Ansar Dine along with the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA), both radical Islamist militant groups, began clashing with the mainly secular MNLA over authority of northern Mali. In a short matter of time, radical Islamists who were enforcing a severe interpretation of *sharia* law occupied most of the land previously held by the MNLA (Mariko and Geel 2012, p. 7). While Tuareg fighters in the past have clashed with the Malian government, this was the first time that transnational terrorism had become such an issue in the country. By the end of summer, radical Islamists with ties to AQIM were in *de facto* control of northern Mali while the disorderly and poorly equipped MDSF were failing to stop their advancement towards the capital. By the second half of 2012, state, regional, and even international powers were growing increasingly concerned with the possibility of Bamako falling into the hands of the al-Qaeda-allied terrorists and thus throwing the entire region into total chaos. With the potential of a new failed state looming large, it was then that plans for a military intervention were drawn up.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in coordination with the African Union (AU) began to draft an operation designed to stabilize Mali and assist the MDSF to recapture the north. Early drafts of the operation had the troop count fluctuate between 3,000 to 11,000 (Gowan 2013, p. 17). ECOWAS twice presented its proposal to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to authorize a military intervention and both times the Council refused citing a lack of detailed operational plans. The reason why ECOWAS and all other regional organizations require the UN's approval in order to carry out military operation is due to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which indicates that it is the ultimate authority in approving of such missions (UN Charter 1945). Although it allows regional organizations to organize such interventions without the UN's approval, they would have to proceed without the UN's assistance. This means that although regional organizations such as the AU and ECOWAS are technically able to carry out peacekeeping missions on their own, the fact that many international organizations in Africa are weak and lack adequate structural and financial support condemns their missions before they are even able to deploy.

In October 2012, after the second proposal from ECOWAS had failed, the UNSC, in light of Mali's newly appointed interim president's request for an intervention, called on the UN to assist ECOWAS and the AU in the final drafting of a military intervention plan (Gowan 2013, p. 17). Although the aid provided by the UN accelerated the process, it took away from the sense that the AU and ECOWAS were competent organizations that were capable of defending its Member States and protecting their sovereignty. A month later, the AU endorsed a joint strategic operational framework for an African-led international support mission for Mali, which was previously "endorsed by the chiefs of defense staff of ECOWAS on November 6th…." (UN doc. S/2012/894, para. 85). Under this new proposal, the PSC called upon the UNSC, in compliance

with Chapter VII of the UN Charter, to authorize AU members to establish an African-led international support mission for Mali. This mission was planned for "an initial period of one year, comprising 3,300 personnel, to take all measures necessary, as appropriate, to assist the Malian authorities to recover the occupied regions in the north of Mali in order to restore the country's unity and territorial integrity and reduce the threats posed by terrorist and affiliated groups…." (UN doc. S/2012/894, para. 85).

Based on this measure, the UNSC authorized the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) under Resolution 2085 on December 20, 2012. The UN, however, was less than keen on the idea of AFISMA. While AFISMA was mandated to "train, equip, and provide logistical support to the MDSF, it could hardly do the same to sustain itself in the field without substantial external assistance" (Oluwadare 2014, p. 114). Given the limits of its logistical and financial capabilities, the Mission was received by the UN with some skepticism. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General at the time, who regarded AFISMA as an instrument of "last resort" and considered that an ill-conceived intervention by AFISMA could only worsen the situation (Oluwadare 2014, p. 115), best exemplified this reticence. Secretary-General Ban cautioned that "…. if a military intervention in the north [of Mali] is not well conceived and executed, it could worsen an already fragile humanitarian situation and also result in severe human rights abuses" (UN doc. S/2012/894, para. 84). He also emphasized that all troops accused of violating human rights would be held accountable for their actions (UN doc. S/2012/894, para. 25). This concern stems from the backlash the AU received when its peacekeeping force in Somalia, AMISOM, was found to be directly involved in civilian casualties. Despite this, due to the rapid decay of security in northern Mali and the urgency for an immediate intervention, the UN had little choice but to authorize the Mission.

The UN, leery because of lessons learned from AMISOM, did not want to have its name associated with any civilians killed by a mission it had authorized. Due to the offensive nature of AFISMA where the risk of civilian casualties was high, the UNSC declined to authorize a UN support package as it had previously done with AMISOM (Boutellis and Williams 2013, p. 3). This half-hearted approval increased friction in an already testy relation among African TCCs, the AU, and the UN (Boutellis and Williams 2013, p. 13). The UN, however, did eventually offer support through a political office installed in Bamako, the United Nations Office in Mali (UNOM), to provide "support to the planning, deployment and operations of AFISMA" (UN doc. 2085, para. 23). The European Union also offered to set up a mission where it sent military advisors that conducted training exercises for the MDSF. Deploying a regional force on such a scale required many months of specific training, diligent planning, and meticulous restructuring of the MDSF (Arieff 2013, p. 2). Because of this long preparation time, the Mission would not be operationally ready until September 2014 at the earliest. All the while, the situation on the ground was becoming increasingly volatile with AQIM-affiliated fighters infiltrating central and southern Mali. Ironically, months of careful planning for nascent regional cooperation were abandoned as France, at the government's request, intervened in Mali on 11 January 2013 in what would be called Operation Serval.

France's intervention in Mali, operating separately from AFISMA, dramatically altered the dynamics of the situation. Approximately 4,000 French troops landed in Mali and soon launched a rapid series of operations (Boutellis and Williams 2013, p. 3). Yet, like in Somalia, many of the rebel fighters avoided direct confrontation and often resorted to asymmetric attacks before retreating into the vastness of Mali's ungoverned territories. Another parallel with Somalia is that militants in Mali would begin targeting peacekeepers, whom they dubbed

"Crusader occupation forces" for their association to Western powers, such as France (Sieff 2017). This provided recruiters from AQIM and its allies with a useful propaganda tool to increase their support from abroad and even lead to them committing several terrorist attacks throughout the region.[21]

The intervention by a former colonial power forced the AU to accelerate its deployment. Within the next two weeks, the first contingent of a few hundred Nigerian and Burkinabe soldiers arrived. Chad also deployed troops but theirs were initially integrated within the existing French command structure rather than AFISMA's. "Once these initial forces were deployed, it soon became clear that they would struggle to sustain themselves logistically" (Gowan 2013, p. 18). Without a support package provided by the UN, as it had done in Somalia's case, AFISMA was highly dependent on voluntary contributions to an AU trust fund and support from bilateral donors (Boutellis and Williams 2013, p. 13). A majority of the African troops sent to support AFISMA came from ECOWAS member countries who pledged to contribute 3,300 troops (Maru 2013, p. 2). A sizeable number of 2,250 troops, however, came from Chad alone, whose experience in desert warfare made them indispensable (Valdmanis and Lewis 2013). By the end of the month, the French-led operation had freed a majority of the north and eliminated almost all traces of resistance.

The French intervention, however, was only a short-term response to a long-term problem. In light of this, African leaders acknowledged the fact that they needed additional support if they were to ensure their own peace and security. On January 25, realizing that its original mandate of 3,300 troops was too small to properly carry out their task, the PSC "requested the Commissions of AU and ECOWAS, in collaboration with the UN, the EU and

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[21] AQIM and its allies have perpetuated deadly attacks throughout Mali and even neighboring Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Niger.

other partners, to revise the Joint Strategic Concept of Operations in order to increase AFISMA troop strength…" (UN doc. S/2013/189, para. 45). The new force total was authorized to be increased to approximately 9,500 troops. This number, however, would never be attained with the troop total only reaching 6,288 (Oluwadare 2014, p. 116).

The UNSC concluded in March 2013 that AFISMA was unsustainable in its present state and discussion of the creation of a UN peacekeeping operation in Mali began. Some of the main reasons why the UNSC came to these conclusions was that AFISMA was almost entirely dependent on voluntary contributions assessed to an AU trust fund and support given by bilateral donors. This collaborative model, similar to the one used for the AU's previous peace operations in Sudan and Burundi, was used on a much larger scale and ultimately was stretched beyond its capabilities (Boutellis and Williams 2013, p. 13). Acknowledging the need to provide Mali with a better peacekeeping mission, the UNSC met in April 2013 and passed Resolution 2100 authorizing the creation of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). During this time, France's Operation Serval was slowly winding down its engagement in the country as their immediate objective of stopping AQIM and its allies from advancing on Bamako and driving them out of most major cities had been achieved. With this in mind, the official date for the transfer of authority from AFISMA to MINUSMA was scheduled for July 1.

Since, MINUSMA and its authorized force of over 11,000 troops has struggled in providing security to the Malian people. *The Washington Post* recently dubbed it the world's most dangerous UN mission, having seen the deaths of 118 peacekeepers over the last four years (Sieff 2017). Although a peace deal has been signed in 2015 between an alliance of Tuareg-led rebels called Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA) and the Malian government, the

Islamist militants continue carrying out deadly attacks such as ambushes and suicide bombings against the Malian government today (Sieff 2017). The fact that France had to intervene in order to prevent Mali from plunging further into anarchy was extremely detrimental to the AU's reputation and counterproductive to its aim of Pan-African unity. Although some African heads of state praised France's intervention, others, such as Guinean President Alpha Condé, were less than enthusiastic that the French forces intervening in their place. President Condé remarked how "it is a shame for us having to applaud France. We are grateful to François Hollande, but we have been a bit humiliated that Africa was not able to solve the problem on its own" (Kappès-Grangé 2013). Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner of the AU Peace and Security Council, echoed in agreement, "Africans could have done better. It could have reacted quicker to ensure that the French intervention was not indispensable. It is a pity that fifty years after the independences our security is still so dependent on a foreign partner" (Kappès-Grangé 2013).

France's intervention demonstrates how the AU and ECOWAS are not ready as international organizations to take on the responsibility of implementing their own missions that aim at solving African problems solely through African solutions. "African leaders' weakness in responding effectively to the crisis contravenes the spirit and objectives of Pan-Africanism…" (Maru 2013, p. 3). Another problem with France's intervention is that it provided support to AQIM's claim that the West is at odds with Islam and its proponents and thus ensured the recruitment of more Islamist fighters and funders from other parts of African and even from outside the continent itself. Although AFISMA's original objective in intervening was with good intent, as the Mission began to be implemented, it soon became clear that it would not achieve its goals through the available means. The crisis in Mali, as in most conflicts in Africa, is primarily a political one. The weak structure of the state coupled with an inadequate international body

failing to mitigate a growing crisis only exacerbates the situation on the ground. This leads to a full collapse of the state and the creation of a void perfect for the proliferation of transnational terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and its affiliates. If the AU is ever to address its problems with terrorism, it is imperative for the organization to look at these issues separately and seriously commit to providing sustainable and predictable funding to not only its counter-terrorist programs and operations, but also to the development of its Member States political infrastructures. Until then, the AU's aspirations to providing African solutions to African problems will always come up short and rely on the sparse and unpredictable support from external actors.

Conclusion:

African states have to deal with terrorism in a way that differs from the rest of the world. Independent African states were formed out of the borders and framework inherited from their colonial past, imposing structural problems and challenging their national legitimacy. After independence, most of Africa's governments struggled to retain even tenuous control over their borders due to a lack of funding, material, and personnel, and central governments struggled to enforce their authority over their territories. European powers continued to intervene in the affairs of their former African empires. In this context, the OAU was formed in 1963 to insure African sovereignty, emphasizing Pan-African unity and collective security. In practice, however, many African governments, crippled by endemic internal problems and undemocratic institutions, remained weak. For both the OAU and its successor, the African Union, however, these independent African countries have been more concerned with their own survival and have

been more likely to pursue their individual interests than to come together in the spirit of Pan-African unity and cooperation.

The limitations of the AU's efforts can be seen in the comparison of Somalia and Mali. In the case of Somalia, we can see how regional interests and power politics undermine the cohesion of the AU and condemn its mission to failure. Individual states like Uganda, Burundi, and Ethiopia have sought their own national legitimacy and goals by participating in AMISOM and receiving support from the international community. Paradoxically, these other African states benefit from Somalia's internal divisions. Despite some early success in countering its power, the group al-Shabaab has regained a foothold in the country and has increasingly put into doubt the future of AMISOM. By contrast, the case of African Union intervention in Mali further demonstrates that the AU is unable to carry out interventions through its own capabilities, and even a partnership and coordination with regional organizations like ECOWAS can be of limited value. In Mali, the AU's ideology came into direct conflict with its ability to carry out its objectives. The AU's ambitions clashed with its heavy dependence on foreign assistance, notably from former colonial powers, in the end delegitimizing the international organization as the face of African sovereignty and assured security. The fact that Chad's soldiers were fighting under France's control further demonstrates the AU's limitations in assuring the sovereignty of its Member States.

Transnational terrorism thus poses a crucial test for international organizations like the AU. With the expanded means of communication brought about by globalization, local terrorist organizations are becoming increasingly able to coordinate with international sources that provide weapons, money, and training. Transnational terrorism is able to profit from the weakness and failures of Africa's states, and highlights the weakness of regional African

organizations (like ECOWAS) and the African Union itself. Solutions will not be easy, but the case studies examined in the paper suggest that significant progress needs to be made by African States in the development of administrative and security capacities if the AU is to demonstrate itself as the leading force of African sovereignty. If regional interests and power politics continue to dominate its Member States' agendas, then African states will continue to fall prey to the scourge of transnational terrorism while remaining highly dependent on the international community.

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