

## Troop Deployment and Effective Peace Operations in Africa: African Union Mission in Darfur (AMIS) (2004-2006)

Dodeye Uduak Williams<sup>1</sup>

*Lecturer in the Department of Political Science,  
University of Calabar, Nigeria  
Email: williamsdodeye@yahoo.com*

Doi: 10.5901/mjss.2012.v3n3p313

---

**Abstract** *The African Union (AU) was set up in 2002 with one of its core objectives being to ensure Peace and Security in the continent. In response to this, the AU has been involved at various levels in peacekeeping activities involving deployment of troops. Given that the success or failure of any peace operation is tied to the various components of the peace process, this paper examines the AMIS intervention in Darfur in terms of its limitations as a useful model for troop deployment in future African peace operations. It finds that the security situation in Darfur was a huge challenge to AMIS and its deployment to Darfur was flawed on several counts including a weak mandate and unclear terms of reference for the mission.*

**Key Words:** *African Union, Darfur, Peacekeeping, Deployment, Peace operations*

---

### 1. Introduction

African peacekeeping experiments and conflicts are notable for the impact they have had on the concept and practice of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping. More broadly, Africa has provided the fertile ground to experiment with some of the most challenging developments in peacekeeping, and in the process the continent has considerably influenced the evolution and development of UN peacekeeping. However, Africa needs to create its own capacity without relying on outside powers all the time especially with the growing consensus in peacekeeping literature that traditional UN approach to peacekeeping in Africa is no longer sustainable. But the UN has changed its traditional approach to peacekeeping in Africa and made a transition to different strands of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation peacekeeping. The UN efforts are now on multidimensional peacekeeping, hybrid peacekeeping, co-deployment and post-conflict peace building. Beginning from the 1990's these examples could be differently found in post-war Mozambique, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Sudan etc. This calls for an in depth assessment of the peacekeeping efforts of the African Union (AU) with a view to understanding and addressing the major challenges in its operations. The introduction of the joint mission of the UN and the AU (UNAMID) in Darfur clearly showed the perceived inadequacy of the AU, as a continental security regime yet again, to field a mission which can produce the desired results and fulfill its given mandate, without external "support" from the UN.

### 2. Darfur: The 2003 Conflict

The root causes of the present conflict in Darfur have been described by many scholars as being very complex. The prevailing belief among these scholars is that several factors, among them, tribal feuds resulting from desertification, availability of modern weapons, deep layers relating to identity, governance and the emergence of armed rebel movements which enjoy popular support amongst certain tribes have played and are still playing a major role in shaping the current crisis. The war in Darfur has been described as a typical north-east African civil war, made up of multiple overlapping conflicts mixed with large-scale offensives by the government army and its proxies and rebels (De Waal, 2007).

A comprehensive examination of the origins of the conflict lies outside the scope of this paper however it is sufficient to give a brief overview of the events leading to the conflict in 2003. During 2001-2003, local disputes were exacerbated

---

<sup>1</sup> Dodeye Uduak Williams holds a PhD in International Relations. She is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, Nigeria. She was a Commonwealth Scholar at the Centre for African Studies, University of Edinburgh in 2008. Her research interests include Peace and Conflict Studies in Africa, Religion and Politics. She has published a number of articles in refereed and scholarly Journals.

by the breakdown of local governance and combined with the ambitions of frustrated provincial elite to fuel an insurgency, which escalated more quickly and bloodily than either side anticipated (De Waal, 2007b).

In May, 2000, a manuscript called the 'Black Book' surfaced and outlined Darfur's grievances towards the central government. It used sensitive records from state archives to show the imbalance of power and wealth in Sudan and the dominance of three tribes from Sudan's Nile valley in the north of Khartoum. The publication of the book caused a stir in Sudan after copies were mysteriously found in mosques and other public places.

In February 2003, the JEM – associated with Bedouin people of north Darfur such as the Zaghawa – and the SLM – associated with the Fur and Masaalit people – attacked military installations triggering an armed response from the Central government. The rebel groups blamed the government in Khartoum for the situation in Darfur and have continued to attack the government and government installations. The government, which was caught by surprise, had very few troops in the region (as most of them had been deployed to the south), and many of the lower and middle-ranking officers in the Sudanese army were actually from Darfur. Its response under pressure was to mount a campaign of aerial bombardment allegedly supported by ground attacks by an Arab militia called the Janjaweed (which means men on horseback), comprised of fighters from the Baggara people in West Darfur (De Waal, 2007).

### 3. AMIS Deployment in Darfur

In response to the crisis, on the 8 April, 2004, under the auspices of the President Idriss Deby of Chad and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and in the presence of International observers and facilitators, the Sudanese parties signed a Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (HCFA) on the Darfur conflict and a protocol on the establishment of Humanitarian Assistance in Darfur. Further to this, an AU-led mission including all parties was sent to Darfur from 7 – 16 May, 2004 and recommendations were made to dispatch monitors, [military observers, MILOBS] and military units, to serve as their protection, from African Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs). As a result of this, on the 28 May, 2004, the Sudanese parties signed an Agreement on the modalities for the Establishment of the Ceasefire Commission and the deployment of military observers in the Darfur region. In accordance with this agreement, the parties accepted the deployment of 60 African military observers and 300 MILOB protectors as well as observers from the Sudanese parties. It was also agreed that the European Union and the United States of America would participate in the mission by sending advisors (AU PSC Reports, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 accessed 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2008).

Sector commanders were appointed and assigned initially to the six (6) newly created sectors – El-Fasher, Nyala, El-Geneina, Kabkabiya, Tine and Abeche (Chad) on 22 July and ordered to deploy by 25 July, 2004. Apart from those in Abeche and Nyala, the sectors were in deplorable and deprived areas, some sectors having a higher risk factor against the background of incessant violence and absence of AU protection in Darfur (Appiah-Mensah, 2005). The effectiveness of the initial AMIS deployment was constrained by its small size and by its logistical challenges. The small number of MILOBS, regardless of their efficiency and dedication, were unable to provide meaningful monitoring coverage for an area roughly the size of France and particularly in a situation where the parties were not complying with the provisions of the HCFA that they had signed. The parties requested that AMIS be strengthened.

Realizing the inadequacy of the initial deployment, at the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) held on the 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2004, a request was made for the chairperson of the AU commission to submit, for consideration, a comprehensive plan on how best to enhance the effectiveness of the AU mission in Darfur, this was to include the possibility of transforming it into a full-fledged peacekeeping mission, with the mandate and strength to implement the HCFA by the disarmament and neutralization of the Janjaweed militia, the protection of the civilian population and the facilitation of the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The AU commission proposed the transformation of the nature, scope and composition of the mission and called for the enhancement of the mandate together with the strength of the military observers and the protection force. This proposal was approved by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) on the 20 October, 2004. The number of AMIS was increased to '3,320 Personnel including 2,341 military personnel, among them 450 observers, up to 815 civilian police personnel and appropriate civilian personnel' (AU PSC reports, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2004, accessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

#### 3.1 The Mandate

The missions mandate was given as follows:

- ❖ To monitor and observe compliance with the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement of 8 April, 2004 and all such agreements in the future
- ❖ To assist in the process of confidence building

- ❖ To contribute to a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief and beyond that, the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees to their homes, in order to increase the level of compliance of all parties with the HCFA and to contribute to the improvement of the Security situation throughout Darfur
- ❖ In all sectors under its jurisdiction, AMIS performs for the benefit of the local population the following tasks by the deployment of military observers, protection forces as well as civilian and military police from all over Africa:
  - Monitor and verify the provision of security for returning IDPs
  - Monitor and verify the cessation of hostile acts by all parties
  - Monitor and verify hostile militia activities against the population
  - Monitor and verify efforts of the government of Sudan (GoS) to disarm government controlled militias
  - Investigate and report about allegations of violations of the HCFA
  - Protect civilians whom it encounters under imminent threat and in the immediate vicinity with resources and capability, it being understood that the protection of the civilian population is the responsibility of the government of Sudan (GoS)
  - Protect both static and mobile humanitarian operations under imminent threat, and the immediate vicinity, within capabilities
  - Provide visible military presence by patrolling and by the establishment of temporary outposts in order to deter uncontrolled armed groups from committing hostile acts against the population (AU, Peace and Security Council Reports, 20 October 2005 accessed 9th October, 2008).

### 3.2. Coordination and Administration

In response to the challenges of coordination and administration, AU's PSC deemed it necessary to establish the Darfur Integrated Taskforce (DITF), which would provide support for the mission in an organized manner. In January 2005, the Darfur Integrated Task Force (DITF) was integrated within the Peace and Security Directorate (PSD) of the African Union to assist with the planning, force generation, procurement of logistics and administrative support, and also to liaise with partners to mobilize resources in support of DITF and AMIS on the ground in Darfur.

The tasks of the DITF included the following:

- ❖ Advise the Chairperson and the Commissioner for Peace and Security on strategy for effective implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement and any future political settlement.
- ❖ Advise and support the work of the AMIS headed by the Chairperson's Special Representative and the DMT headed by the Special Envoy.
- ❖ Plan for the establishment and expansion of the AMIS.
- ❖ Serve as focal point in the HQ and provide the necessary support for AMIS activities in Darfur, Sudan.
- ❖ Serve as the focal point for the partners who would like to support the AU efforts with respect to Darfur.
- ❖ Plan and establish a media strategy in collaboration with AMIS and DMT (AMIS website accessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

The DITF was the ad hoc strategic Military/Police headquarters of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). It was expected that the taskforce would become the nucleus of the Peace Support Operations Divisions of the AU. At this strategic level two important cooperative groups, the Liaison Group (LG) and the Partners Technical Support Group (PTSG), met regularly to discuss and assist AMIS operations. The idea of establishing these two forums on AU Mission in Darfur, according to the DITF, was to appropriately identify the needs of the mission and to coordinate support for the mission. The partners were also to provide experts in specific areas to work closely with AU's staff.

The Liaison Group (LG) was chaired by the Head of the DITF, with Senior Military, Police, and Political Affairs Officers. The LG meeting was usually attended by representatives of European Union, United States of America, European Union Experts and UN experts. During the meeting, the AU indicates its requirements and partners ask questions related to the support provided.

The Partners Technical Support Group (PTSG) met regularly and was chaired by a senior member of the European Union delegation in Addis Ababa. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Embassies of Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United States of America, the United Nations and NATO.

### 3.3. Deployment

According to the PSC report of 20 April, 2005 the strength and status of deployment at the time was given as follows:

- i. Military Observers (MILOBS) – 454: Algeria 13, Congo 15, Senegal 23, Nigeria 48, Mozambique 5, Egypt 34, Ghana 24, South Africa 39, Namibia 23, Gabon 20, Kenya 30, Gambia 20, Mauritania 10, Mali 15, Rwanda 10, Zambia 15, Malawi 15, Burkina Faso 4, Cameroon 13, EU 10, USA 3, Chad 18, GoS 16, SLA 15, JEM 16
  - SLA 15
  - JEM 16
- ii. Civilian Police (CIVPOL) - 245
- iii. International staff/CFC Members - 26
- iv. Protection Force - 1647
  - Nigeria 587
  - Rwanda 392
  - Gambia 196
  - Senegal 196
  - Kenya (MP) 35
  - South Africa 241
- v. Darfur Integrated Task Force (DITF) 12 (PSC Report, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

To undertake its tasks in fulfilling of the mandate, AMIS adopted a flexible Concept of Operations (CONOPS) in Darfur (Appiah-Mensah, 2005). The concept of operations of AMIS 2 envisaged the military component establishing 8 sectors and 8 military observer group (MOG) sites. The 8 sectors were El-Fasher, Nyala, Geneina, Kabkabiya, Tine, Kutum, Zalingei and Al-Daun (PSC Report, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

**Table 1:** Breakdown of Personnel Strength at the sectors

S/N	Location	MILOBS (Military Observers)	CIVPOL (Civil Police)	IS/CFC (International Staff/CeaseFire Commission)	PF (Police Force)	Remarks
a	b	c	d	E	f	g
1	HQ AMIS FHQ AMIS	70	7	26	65	232
a	b	c	d	E	f	g
2	Sector 1	45	19		207	71
3	Sector 2	45	29		207	83
4	Sector 3	47	29		143	17
5	Sector 4	45	16		196	59
6	Sector 5	47	20		196	65
7	Sector 6	49	19		21	08
8	Sector 7	48	18		196	1
9	Sector 8	45	24		196	11
10	Abeche	11	--			
Total		454	245	26	1647	372

Source: PSC Reports, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2005

AMIS strength was expected to be increased to 6,171 military personnel, with an appropriate civilian component, including up to 1,560 civilian police personnel by the end of September, 2005 to meet up with the challenges of peacekeeping in Darfur. However, as of 20 October, 2005, the status of the deployment was as follows:

- Nigeria 3 battalions of 680 = 2,040
- Rwanda 3 battalions (1 of 680 and 2 of 338) = 1,756

- Senegal 1 battalion = 538
- The Gambia 1 company = 196
- Chad 1 section in Abeche = 40
- Kenya 1 military police section = 60 (35 deployed)
- South Africa 285 military personnel representing one company of 241, one light engineer section of 38 and EOD section of 6 military (PSC Reports 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 Assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

The total was only 4,915 and was not up to the planned deployment of 6,171. To complete the deployment plan as provided for in the Concept of Operations (CONOPS), the Republic of South Africa was requested to raise its contribution to include a battalion of 538 military personnel, a reserved company of 120, and a light Engineer company of 100 and an EOD Team of 10. The response was very slow. In addition to the protection force, a further 686 MILOBS generated from African countries, from the Sudanese parties and from some partners were deployed into Darfur.

In spite of this deployment, the security situation in Darfur continued to deteriorate. As of 1st September 2006, AMIS strength stood at 7,200 personnel, comprising 4,980 protection force elements, 783 military observers and staff officers, 1,425 civilian police personnel and 12 CFC members, drawn from 28 Member States. This was 541 personnel short of the authorized strength of 7,731 (6,171 military and 1,560 civilian police). The shortfall is made up of 406 military personnel and 135 civilian police elements. Efforts were still being made to bring AMIS deployment to the authorized level up till the plan for the introduction of the UN and AMIS joint force by September 30, 2006.

#### 3.4. Funding

The initial budget of the AU observer mission in Darfur, according to the PSC report of 20 October, 2004, amounted to about 26 million dollars. Some AU partners pledged to pay part of the budget in monetary terms and other pledged to support the mission in kind. The EU pledged 12 million Euros, while Germany pledged 250,000 Euros, the UK provided 3.6 million dollars and the USA at the time was in the process of operationalizing the Headquarters and the sites for the various sectors (PSC Reports, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2004 assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008). In this report, the Chairman of the AU Commission expressed his concern about the lethargy with which AU member countries treated their contributions and stated as follows, 'It is my sincere hope that AU member states will also contribute to the funding of the AU observer mission.'

In its 10 March 2006 decision, the AU Council reiterated its appeal to AU partners to provide all necessary financial and logistical assistance to sustain AMIS until 30 September 2006, as well as support to the Abuja Talks. In this respect, Council welcomed the envisaged convening of a pledging conference in Brussels, with the support of the UN and the EU. Against this backdrop and in addition to the main budget amounting to US\$ 170 million, to sustain the Mission within the current mandated strength, which had already been prepared and circulated to donors the Commission, also prepared a supplementary budget. This supplementary budget was to cover requirements arising from the implementation of the DPA during the transition period.

In the meantime, the UK and the Canadian Governments gave firm undertakings to provide aviation assets, ground fuel and aviation fuel up to the end of the transition period, i.e. from 1st April to 30 September 2006. The EU, on its part, pledged 50 million Euro, following the decision to replenish, in the short term, the Africa Peace Facility from the 9th EDF (PSC Reports, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2004. (Assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008). The council once again hoped that more funds would be mobilized during the pledging conference, especially as the Mission had been facing acute shortage of funds since April 2006. Through the Liaison Group and the Partners Technical Support Group, AMIS received the necessary funding, technical support in terms of experts and training of MILOBS, staff officers, and Civilian Police.' The European Unions' (EU) contribution to AMIS included vehicles, communication equipment, pay and allowances, experts (CIVPOL) and maps. The contribution of the United Nations included UN Assistance Support Cell in Addis Ababa, Staff training and Mapex. NATO's contribution included Strategic air lift, staff training at strategic/operational levels, Mapex under UN auspices, Information Analysis Training, Capacity Building for PSOD Staff (including training and supply of Office Equipment) after AMIS transition to UN, Basic Operational Equipment (NVE, Training Aids, Flak jackets) and Training Simulators for Staff Training. The United States contribution to the mission included construction and maintenance of camp facilities and observers. Canada's contribution was 105 APCs including Training & Maintenance support package, Ammunition, Ground Fuel, 25 Helicopters, Experts and Maps. Norway contributed Communication Equipment CIVPOL Accommodation at IDP Camps (26 in place, 39 to start) and Netherlands contributed communication equipment (AU PSC report, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2004, assessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008).

Not much is said in the PSC reports, about the financial contributions of AU member countries. The PSC reports reveal large contributions, in cash and in kind, by countries outside Africa. Contributions from AU's international partners totaled £278,974,147.39. The budget of AU was USD \$26 million dollars and the total contribution from its international partners for AMIS 1 was £30,555,476.48 as shown in Table 2. Table 3 shows the total contribution for AMIS 2 and Table 4 merges the two tables.

**Table 2: Pledges and Contributions: Status of Donors Contribution for Darfur**

AMIS 1

Donors	Pledges in cash £	Pledges in Kind £	Total £
Canada(1)	-	-	-
EU	14,931,000.00	-	14,931,000.00
Germany	1,165,120.00	-	1,165,120.00
Norway	-	-	-
Netherlands	-	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00
Sweden	134,066.23	-	134,066.23
Denmark	736,666.25	-	736,664.25
UK (3)	3,676,000.00	-	3,676,000.00
USA (4)	-	7,340,000.00	7,340,000.00
France	-	-	-
Italy	240,000.00	-	240,000.00
South Korea	200,000.00	-	200,000.00
Ireland	-	-	-
Greece	132,626.00	-	132,626.00
Japan	-	-	-
Belgium	-	-	-
Contribution	21,215,476.48	9,340,000.00	30,555,476.48

Source: PSC Reports 2004-2006

**Table 3 AMIS 2 (Amounts in £)**

Donors	Pledges in cash	Pledges in Kind	Total
Canada (1)	1,515,151.52	15,037,593.98	16,552,745.50
EU	100,604,794.44	-	100,604,794.44
Germany	1,311,750.00	-	1,311,750.00
Norway	1,558,250.62	-	1,558,250.62
Netherlands	5,020,848.02	-	5,020,848.02
Sweden	443,360.67	-	443,360.67
Denmark	-	-	-
UK (3)	-	22,080,000.00	22,080,000.00
USA (4)	-	95,086,485.05	95,086,485.05
France	1,763,907.73	-	1,763,907.73
Italy	588,352.83	-	588,352.83
South Korea	-	-	-
Ireland	659,750.00	-	659,750.00
Greece	-	-	-
Japan	2,070,000.00	-	2,070,000.00
Belgium	678,426.05	-	678,426.05
Contribution	116,214,591.88	132,204,079.03	248,418,670.91

Source: PSC Reports 2004-2006

**Table 4** Total Contributions for AMIS 1 & 2

Donors	Total £
Canada (1)	16,552,745.50
EU	115,5535,794.44
Germany	2,476,870.00
Norway	1,558,250.62
Netherlands	7,020,848.02
Sweden	577,426.90
Denmark	736,664.25
UK (3)	25,7756,000.00
USA (4)	102,426,485.05
France	1,763,907.73
Italy	828,352.83
South Korea	200,000.00
Ireland	659,750.00
Greece	132,626.00
Japan	2,070,000.00
Belgium	678,426.05
Contribution	278,974,147.39

Source: PSC Reports 2004-2006

### 3.5. Security Strategy

The AU mediation's security arrangements commission included an implementation task force which had drawn up estimates for the numbers of troops and civilian police required. In line with the Cease Fire, troops were needed to verify the positions of the parties' military forces, to monitor the disengagement and withdrawal of the parties, and to monitor the limited arms control. Troops and civilian police were needed for the demilitarization of the displaced camps and the training of a 'community police force' drawn from among the displaced communities.

Troops were also required to monitor the demilitarization of humanitarian supply routes, to monitor the government's staged plan for restricting, containing, and disarming the Janjaweed, and to monitor airfield in order to ensure that the government was complying with its obligation to halt offensive military flights.

However, the security situation in Darfur was a huge challenge to AMIS. The GoS had all the States military apparatus at its disposal to deal with what it called 'an internal rebellion.' It used Antonov aircrafts and helicopter gunships to attack what it perceived as 'rebel strongholds' which contained large civilian populations. This contributed largely to the massive internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugee crisis in Darfur. The GoS also used the Janjaweed as a proxy force, even though the Janjaweed acted alone at times. On the other hand the Rebel groups, JEM and SLM targeted GoS forces. They attacked police stations, administrative convoys and members of the government within its vicinity.

## 4. Conclusion

A critical look at the observations presented above reveal the following:

First, the parties to the Darfur conflict agreed to the presence of the AU regime. The Sudanese authorities expressed the view that although they considered the Darfur conflict to be an internal one, they had no problem with the involvement of the AU. The parties having signed the HCFA, and being aware of the volatile situation, accepted the need to have the presence of the AU to ensure compliance with the ceasefire agreement. However, the consent did not last as Bellamy, William and Griffin (2004) observe, consent can only be maintained if the peacekeepers come across to the parties as being impartial and neutral. The parties, especially the rebel groups, had no faith in the negotiations. The AU was unable to match its position during the talks with its position in the field. The groups felt that the AU was not capable of protecting them and their people as evidenced in the continued assault by the GoS on the people of Darfur even in the presence of the AMIS officials.

Second, AMIS mandate was based on the assumption that the parties would adhere to the HCFA. The parties had no regard for the ceasefire agreement they had signed and the situation was still very volatile. As an observer mission,

AMIS, only observed series of violations to the HCFA and when the mission was transformed into a full-fledged peacekeeping mission there was still 'no peace to keep.' The parties believed that they could win in the battle field and so the HCFA and even the peace talks had little or nothing at stake for them. The GoS especially used all the force at its disposal to make sure the rebel groups and all civilians associated with them suffered severe assault. This in turn provoked the rebel groups to fight back and all this was happening as the talks were going on and in spite of the Ceasefire agreements. Nathan (2008) observed that most of the parties in Abuja appeared to view the battlefield as the strategic arena of conflict and the negotiations as simply a tactical arena. The peace talks were only a forum to show that they were talking and negotiating, for them it was not a principal means of defending and advancing their interests. As Zartman (2000) notes, participating in negotiations does not in itself indicate the existence of a ripe moment, it may be merely a tactical interlude on a sop to external pressure, without any serious intent on the part of the parties to seek a joint solution. Nathan (2007) made the following observation about the parties – 'Minawi's faction of SLM seemed to believe their interests were best served through a 'war of manoeuvre' against the militarily weak Abdel Wahid faction of the SLM. While the negotiations were going on, his forces seized strategic locations from Abdel Wahid. The government seemed to believe that its interests would be served through 'a war of attrition' it was not overly troubled by the weak international pressure; it did not have a strong sense of responsibility to protect civilians. It was also not under any great military threat from the rebels. It was not incurring onerous military costs since it relied on the Janjaweed as a proxy force, and the rebels were busy fighting each other. JEM had a national political agenda that would not be met by a peace agreement for Darfur, and although the organisation lacked a sizeable fighting force, its military activities in western (and eastern) Sudan, helped to maintain its profile and status as a liberation movement.

Third, the troops were confused about their rules of engagement. As a result of the weak mandate and the unclear terms of reference for the peacekeeping mission, it was difficult for the peacekeepers to react in a situation where they were being attacked along with the civilians they were expected to protect which were being attacked right under their watch. For a peacekeeping regime, minimum use of force is one of the major characteristics. For this reason it was impossible for the troops to fight back except in self defence and this meant they were unable to fulfil their mandate. AMIS failed to monitor and observe compliance with the ceasefire. Fighting continued throughout the period of negotiations and the security situation became worse when the DPA was concluded. AMIS itself needed protection and although the troops did all they could, they were not able to provide the protection needed by the local population.

Fourth, a lack of political will hinders the deployment and ultimately the success of any peacekeeping mission. The reluctance on the part of the AU members to give the mission the means to successfully fulfil its task in Darfur shows the lack of political will to see an end to the Darfur crisis. Members were also very slow in contributing troops or funds to the mission and ultimately most of the support came from external partners. The provisions of the Constitutive Act of the AU reflect great intentions and principles that are workable. However, the genuineness of these aims and guiding principles are not in tandem with actual practices especially in a situation where the political will to actually enforce relevant decisions is lacking. The membership of the AU is represented by Heads of States who appear to have no moral justification to intervene militarily in the internal affairs of other states when their own states are facing similar situations of conflict even though the intensity may differ from state to state. Most of the countries within the AU have themselves used the apparatus of the state to oppress minority groups. A ready example is the Niger- Delta region of Nigeria. It is interesting to note that while the Darfur Peace Talks were being hosted in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, Niger-delta militants were exchanging fire with the Joint Task Force in the some of the creeks in the Niger-delta.

Fifth, just as scholars like Wesley (1997) have acknowledged that the extent to which mandates are achievable and appropriate to the situation on the ground depends largely on the diagnosis of the conflict on which the objectives are based. The fact that the AU mandate was weak, inadequate and ineffective in the face of the volatile situation shows that the AU did not appreciate the gravity of the situation in Darfur. The first mission was made up of 300 Military Observers. In a region as large as Darfur, this was an unfortunate situation as reveals a lack of understanding of the situation prior to the deployment. Wesley (1997) rightly points out that a wonderful mandate predicated upon wrong assumptions about the root causes of a conflict has failed even before it takes off.

Sixth, according to the Brahimi Report (2000), the leadership, personnel and command structures of a mission are crucial because they are the basis for the implementation of the mandate and each policy tool of which the peacekeeping operation is comprised. The character and ability of those who lead a peacekeeping mission contribute largely to its success or failure. AMIS did not have a good command and control system which was necessary for receiving and distributing information. As Neil and Cassis (2005) rightly argue, where this structure is absent the troops will not have the privilege of early warning or advanced information on potential attacks or ambushes and the result of this is the inability to distribute available information to those who may need it for defence of themselves or others. This was the situation the AMIS troops found themselves in. Decisions were taken on the basis of the reports sent in from the mission field. The



failure of the negotiations put the peacekeepers in jeopardy as they were simply trapped between the parties. It was not able to provide a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief; the terrain was not conducive for moving troops and supplies to affected areas. AMIS was not able to monitor and verify the cessation of hostile acts by all parties. The Ceasefire Monitoring troops were deployed to an area that was well known to the killing forces of the Janjaweed whom the AU knew very well were responsible for much of the violence in Darfur. These forces were very organized and well positioned. They knew the terrain more than the AU forces that were, in the first instance, numerically weak. The Janjaweed were trained forces with a motivation to kill. The rebels and the government forces were also large, well-equipped and well-supported killing forces that were deployed in large and dispersed areas well known to them. Considering the size of Darfur, these forces were not concentrated in one place but were well spread hence the killings were also widespread. Another challenge for AMIS was the fact that the terrain was conducive for ambushes and since AMIS did not know the terrain very well it could not intercept these ambushes effectively. The mission lacked strategic intelligence to support the operation and this led to a wide gap at both the strategic and operational levels of the AU. The humanitarian efforts were also hindered in the sense that the terrain made it difficult for supplies to get to the displaced civilians without being intercepted by either rebel forces or the government sponsored militia.

Finally, the AU's mediation team's strategy of developing a compromise text and presenting it to the parties as the basis of a final expedited negotiation was the product of very frustrating circumstances and the urgency to find a settlement in the light of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur. Nathan (2007) rightly observed that the AU and its international partners, desperate for a quick accord, pursued a counterproductive strategy of 'deadline diplomacy' that inhibited progress. The AU mediators and their partners were not patient. An enduring peace agreement cannot be forced on the parties. It has to be owned by them. The contents must be determined by them. In a conflict of this nature, he argues correctly that a quick fix is not possible because the issues at stake have multiple historical, structural, political, social and economic causes that are complex, deep rooted and intractable. This position is also consistent with that of Fetherston (1993) who argues that conflict is caused by the frustration of human needs and is at least partly a subjective phenomenon and so these social and cultural conditions that cause violent conflict must be changed by peacekeeping operations. Ross (1993) also posits that constructive conflict management occurs only when a large conflict can be progressively de-escalated through the successive settlement of a series of component disputes.

### References

- Appiah-Mensah, Seth (2005) 'AU's critical assignment in Darfur: Challenges and Constraints', *African Security Review*, 14 (2), 7-21
- AU, PSC Reports, 2004-2006, [www.africa-union.org/root/au/au/department/psc/dif.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/au/department/psc/dif.htm), accessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008
- AU, PSC Reports, 2004-2006, [www.amis-sudan.org](http://www.amis-sudan.org), accessed 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2008
- AU, PSC Reports, 2004-2006, [www.amis-sudan.org](http://www.amis-sudan.org), accessed 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008
- Bellamy, A. J, Williams, P. and S. Griffin (2004) *Understanding Peacekeeping*, Cambridge: Polity Press, Cambridge
- Brahimi, L. (2000) *Report of the panel on United Nations peace operations* New York: UN General Assembly, A/55/305 S/2000/809
- De Waal, Alex (2007) *War in Darfur and the search for Peace*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Cambridge
- De Waal, Alex (2007b) Darfur's deadline: The final days of the Abuja peace process, in Alex de Waal (ed.), *War in Darfur and the search for peace*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 267-283
- Fetherston, A. B (1993) 'Putting the Peace Back in to Peacekeeping: Theory Must Inform Practice' *International Peacekeeping* Volume 1 No. 1 pp 3-29
- Laurie Nathan, Laurie (2007) The making and unmaking of the Darfur peace agreement, in Alex de Waal (Ed.), *War in Darfur and the search for peace*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 245-266
- Marc, Howard Ross (1993) *The management of conflict: Interpretation and interest in comparative perspective* New Haven: Yale University Press
- Neil, W and Cassis, V (2005) *Protecting two million internally displaced: The success and shortcomings of the AU in Darfur*, Bern: University of Bern Press
- Wesley, M (1997) *Casualties of the new world order: The causes of failure of UN missions to civil wars*, Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Zartman, William I. (2000) 'Ripeness: The hurting stalemate and beyond' in P. C. Stern and D. Druckman (ed.), *International conflict resolution after the cold war* Washington DC: National Academy Press, 225-250

