



AFRICA in The Pursuit of Peace

The Africa institute for Strategic and Security Studies (AISSS). Sept: 11,2022

This is a call for scholarly contributions from researchers with interest in Africa and who have work experience in one or more African countries. Our call is for primary research and new ideas that can help confront the contemporary security challenges of the continent and propose pragmatic solutions. We have witnessed far too many times the growing interconnection of internal conflicts in a given state with neighboring countries and their region as well as the whole international community. **“Intrastate conflicts can easily spill-over the borders, especially if they are connected with huge social dislocations. Factors such as the external competition for a country's natural resources, have been feeding instability in Africa. Porous borders, fuel black markets, and facilitate the emergence of transnational crime and the proliferation of illicit weapons. Global terrorist networks are increasingly finding footholds in various pockets of Africa. And conflicts between state and non-state actors, continue to cause that displacement and destruction”** ¹

Africa's economic policies are dependent on foreign aid. It does not have the industrial base for technologies and almost all its needs are dependent on foreign trade or aid. Much of Africa does have the financial capacity to achieve its developmental goals and therefore enters into a debt trap that it cannot get out from without paying a heavy price.

“The debt trap is a situation where you are forced to over consume loans to repay your existing debts. Over time, you get stuck in a situation where the debt spirals out of control, exceeding your repayment capacity, making you fall into a debt trap.”²

“To be clear, development aid is not the solution to Africa's problem, neither is it the entirety of the problem. It is the persistent nature of aid – and Africa's apparent inability to be weaned off it – which is undoubtedly rendering the continent's current development model unsustainable.” ³

Africa is the cradle of humankind and civilization. The continent has 40 percent the world's gold and up to 90 percent of its chromium and platinum. It has the largest reserve of cobalt, platinum and uranium diamonds in the world. It holds 65 percent of

the world's arable land and 10 percent of the planet's internal renewable fresh water source in the world. And yet its inhabitants are the poorest on earth and, in many places, populations entirely dependent on foreign handouts. Africa does not have a robust industrial base and relies on the industrialized world for much of its essential needs, basic technologies. It is a continent with the largest number of conflicts, the largest number of internally displaced people and the largest number of migrants fleeing to Europe. Unsurprisingly, 94 percent of the UN peacekeeping missions, the largest and most expensive, are all in Africa.

The activities of AISSS will revolve around such contemporary challenges which are directly related to the security challenges the continent faces. AISSS commitment focuses on multi-disciplinary research, training, seminars and international conferences and global partnerships with institutions and governments that share our goals. We request all with interest and expertise on the topics identified in the Mission Statement to contribute and complement the work of the AU and the UN. As well as many African Studies centers across the globe.

The Emergence of a New International Order and Africa

The post-decolonization and Cold War era in Africa has seen the emergence of new types of conflicts on the continent that demand a rethinking of the "Concept of Security." While there are now fewer wars in contemporary Africa, many other types of conflicts have emerged. The world is now witnessing the emergence of multi-polar political and economic order with the rise of China as second largest economy and Russia as the second military might, and the alliance and determination of the two powers to work together and "move towards a multi-polar, just, democratic order." The foreign minister of Russia Mr. Sergei Lavrov made comments that Russia and China were standing together and that "the world is living through a very serious stage in the history of international relations. We, together with you, (China) and with our sympathizers will move towards a multipolar, just, democratic world order.... Our striving for peace has no limits, our upholding of security has no limits, our opposition towards hegemony has no limits." ⁴

This fierce competition for supremacy, influence and dominance of strategic areas, will have direct impact on global security as seen most recently in the Ukraine war.

China's foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters that Moscow and Beijing will continue efforts to "advance global multipolarity and the democratization of international relations" ⁵ The war in Ukraine has certainly pushed Russia to Asia, notably to India and China as demonstrated by the positions they took on the international sanctions on Russia. Reports coming out of the Middle East countries indicate that they too: "have no interest in abandoning relations with China, the leading trading partner for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, or breaking with Russia, which established itself as a force to be reckoned with when it saved Syrian President Bashar al-Assad through its military intervention in his war. Beyond that, our Mideast partners have lost confidence in America's commitment to global leadership.... They are also experiencing whiplash from a Trump administration that frustrated the nuclear deal with Iran to a Biden administration, they feel is pursuing it without sufficiently factoring in Tehran's regional aggression." ⁶

In early March the United Nation's General Assembly **voted** on a resolution demanding Russia to immediately stop its military operations in Ukraine. Out of 193 member states, 141 **voted** in support of the resolution, five voted against, 35 abstained and 12 didn't vote at all. Of the 54 African member states, Eritrea voted against the resolution, 16 African countries including South Africa abstained, while nine other countries did not vote at all. In all about half (26) of the 54 member states in Africa chose the path of neutrality in some form. So why did African countries not vote overwhelmingly to support the resolution? AFRICOM Army general Stephen Townsend testified, "It was troubling to me that half of the continent" did not vote to condemn the Kremlin for its invasion of Ukraine in a March 2 U.N. vote. Many African nations abstained from the vote, which Townsend described as "biding their time." 7

Henry Kissinger wrote in his book "World Order": "No truly 'global world order' has ever existed....What passes for order in our time was devised in Western Europe nearly four centuries ago, at a peace conference in the German region of Westphalia, conducted without the involvement or even the awareness of most other continents or civilizations."

As Kissinger rightfully stated the rest of the world outside Europe and America including Africa needs to be involved in the establishment of a new global economic, security and political order and it seems that this decade provides that opportunity for Africa to have its rightful place in having a say in establishing and sustaining global order. Africans see themselves better positioned to make choices in the emerging multi polar political and economic order. This period of shifting alliances and erratic behavior of the losers in the emergence of a multi polar world order has a direct effect on human security in Africa. How does this transitional period affect Africa? How Africa should navigate in these troubled waters without further turmoil in the continent will be a subject that needs to be discussed during this most critical time since the struggle for decolonization for Africa and since the 2nd World War for Europe and America.

Please go through our website below which includes our Mission Statement, Concept of Security, Strategic Tools, Daily African News, and introduces members of the advisory board. The website will include all the research papers and op-eds published after review by the editor.

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Contact us: hello@afrcaiss.org; Tel: 264810409553
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****The website and our activities were interrupted for two years. We have now reconstructed the website to reflect the prevailing situation in Africa and added new distinguished members for the Advisory Board.***

****Please read my most recent book entitled "What a Life!" <https://www.ebay.com/itm/125138051693> which deals with some of the African challenges I have observed in the 28 years of my experience working in the continent.***

<https://www.africanews.com/2022/08/09/capacity-building-needed-for-sustaining-peace-in-africa/> 1

<https://www.moneytap.com/blog/debt-trap/> 2

<https://newafricanmagazine.com/26727/> 3

<https://www.newsweek.com/russia-promotes-new-world-order-china-1693445> 4

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202208/t20220810_10740034.html 5

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/the-ukraine-war-is-making-saudi-arabia-and-the-uae-rethink-how-they-deal-with-us-pressure-over-china/> 6

<https://news.usni.org/2022/03/15/africom-china-russia-expanding-influence-in-africa> 7