

The Role of International Organizations in Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Analysis of the United Nations and the African Union

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Abstract:- The study conducted a comparative analysis of the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) in their roles as conflict resolution entities. By examining their objectives, mechanisms, and challenges, the research aimed to identify similarities and differences in their approaches. The study employed a comprehensive review of scholarly literature and official documents to gain insights into decision-making processes, peacekeeping operations, diplomatic negotiations, and humanitarian interventions. The findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on conflict resolution, enhancing our understanding of the roles played by international organizations and providing recommendations for improving their effectiveness.

Keywords:- Comparative Analysis; Comprehensive Review; Conflict Resolution; International Organizations; International Relations.

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of both regional and international organizations in conflict resolution has become a subject of increasing scholarly interest. Among the most prominent of these organizations are the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). Both institutions have been pivotal in resolving conflicts and fostering peace and security.

The UN, established in 1945 as the successor to the League of Nations, is a global intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting international cooperation, peace, security, and human rights. It possesses a wide array of conflict resolution mechanisms, including peacekeeping missions, mediation, and arbitration. The UN has a well-established reputation as the primary international organization involved in conflict resolution efforts, and it has overseen numerous peacekeeping agreements in various regions of the world (UN Department of Political Affairs 2006; Mamoon Bashir 2024).

On the other hand, the AU, established in 2002 as the successor to the Organization of African Unity, is a continental intergovernmental organization focused on promoting African unity, peace, and development. The AU has been actively involved in conflict resolution in Africa,

establishing a variety of mechanisms to address conflicts. These mechanisms include the African Peace and Security Architecture, which involves the African Standby Force for conflict prevention, and various peacekeeping operations, such as the AMISOM-African Union Mission in Somalia (Oguonu and Ezeibe 2014a).

Both the UN and AU have played significant roles in managing, preventing, and resolving conflicts (African Union 2020; Ngwube 2013). The UN has been instrumental in resolving conflicts in regions such as the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans, utilizing mechanisms like peacekeeping, mediation, and negotiation. Similarly, the AU has been actively involved in conflict resolution efforts in Africa, including those in Darfur, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, employing peacekeeping, mediation, and the African Peer Review Mechanism (African Union 2020; Ngwube 2013).

One notable example of AU-mediated conflict resolution is its involvement in the Darfur conflict. In 2004, the AU deployed a peacekeeping mission to Sudan to address the conflict between the government and rebel groups. According to Oguonu and Ezeibe (2014b), the AU played a crucial role in securing a ceasefire and facilitating peace talks. Another example is the AU's intervention in the Burundi crisis in 2015. The AU successfully mediated between the government and opposition groups, brokering a peace agreement (Wilén and Williams 2018). Additionally, the AU has been involved in deploying peacekeeping troops to Somalia since 2007 to stabilize the country and combat extremist groups like al-Shabaab (African Union 2020; Ngwube 2013).

The UN has also been involved in significant conflict resolution efforts. For instance, the UN facilitated the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), ending a decades-long armed conflict in 2016. The UN monitored the rebel group's disarmament and demobilization and supported the peace deal's implementation of the (United Nations 2023; UN Security Council 2017; 2024). Another example is the UN's ongoing efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, involving various resolutions and peacekeeping missions aimed at promoting a two-state

solution and facilitating negotiations between the two sides (UNSCO 2021).

Despite the contributions of the UN and AU, scholarly perspectives on the role of international organizations in conflict resolution vary. Some argue that these organizations play a critical role in promoting peace and stability by providing platforms for dialogue and cooperation. However, others express skepticism about their effectiveness, citing issues such as lack of funding, enforcement mechanisms, and political biases.

One perspective emphasizes the importance of international organizations in providing mediation and negotiation services. These organizations can leverage their impartiality and legitimacy to bring conflicting parties together and facilitate peace talks. This view highlights the significance of international cooperation and coordination in conflict prevention and resolution (Africa Union Commission, 2015).

Conversely, some scholars argue that international organizations may not be effective in resolving conflicts due to various reasons. Criticize the often weak mandates of the UN and AU, which can hinder their ability to respond effectively to crises (Cingranelli and Pasquarello 1985). Additionally, coordination difficulties among member states and the influence of powerful countries' interests can undermine the effectiveness of these organizations (Barbosa and Kuster 2019).

Despite their efforts, the UN and AU have faced numerous challenges in their conflict resolution endeavors. The complexity of conflicts involving multiple stakeholders, a lack of resources and funding, political interests, and external interference all pose significant obstacles. Moreover, lack of trust and cooperation from warring parties and poor implementation of agreements can hinder peace-building efforts (Barbosa and Kuster 2019).

Given the pervasive nature of international conflict and the importance of peaceful resolution, a comparative analysis of the UN and AU is essential to understand their strengths and weaknesses in conflict resolution. This study aims to conduct such an analysis, examining their efforts to resolve conflicts and promote peace. Thus, the study attempted to identify the major differences and similarities in the roles and approaches taken by the UN and the AU in conflict resolution. By doing so, the study can help to identify major challenges, share experiences, and provide recommendations for improving their effectiveness.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the efforts of international organizations like the UN and AU, armed conflicts continue to persist worldwide, leading to loss of life, displacement, and destruction. While these organizations are mandated to promote peace and security, their effectiveness in resolving conflicts is a subject of debate. Bureaucratic processes, limited resources, and conflicting interests among member

states often hinder conflict resolution (Desmidt and Hauck 2017). This raises questions about their ability to provide timely and effective responses, as well as the comparative effectiveness of their approaches.

In Africa, conflicts persist and even escalate due to factors such as inadequate funding, lack of political will, and failure to address root causes. The UN and AU may have different approaches and agendas, leading to confusion and ineffective interventions. Greater collaboration and investment in conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms are necessary to address the challenges facing African countries (Forti and Singh 2022).

There is a lack of comparative studies specifically focusing on the role of international organizations, such as the UN and AU, in conflict resolution. While general research on conflict resolution exists, comparisons of different approaches used by these organizations may be limited. Additionally, the study should examine specific challenges and limitations faced by these organizations in their efforts to resolve conflicts.

Hence, the general purpose of this study is to investigate these issues through a comparative analysis of the UN and AU, focusing on their roles in various conflicts. By examining their strategies, effectiveness, and contributing factors, the study aims to contribute to the ongoing debate about the role of international organizations in promoting peace and security. Ultimately, the findings will inform policy recommendations for improving their capacity to respond effectively to conflicts.

➤ *Specifically, the Study Aims to Achieve the Following Objectives:*

- To identify the major differences in the approaches taken by the UN and the AU in conflict resolution.
- To identify and describe the major challenges that influenced the success or failure of conflict resolution efforts by the UN and the AU.
- To articulate important lessons that can be drawn from the experiences of the UN and the AU in conflict resolution efforts for further undertakings.

III. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Role of International Organizations in Conflict Resolution*

The role of international organizations in conflict resolution has been a subject of extensive debate and analysis. Some scholars argue that international organizations have a limited impact due to constraints imposed by member states and limited resources (Zürn and Stephen 2010). However, others posit that these organizations can play a crucial role in preventing and resolving conflicts by leveraging their legitimacy, expertise, and technical capacity (Ogunu and Ezeibe 2014b).

International organizations play a key role in mediation. Mediation involves a third party intervening to facilitate a mutually acceptable agreement between conflicting parties. The UN, AU, and EU have all mediated conflicts worldwide, de-escalating tensions, bridging divisions, and building trust. Another role is to provide peacekeeping missions (ONAFESO 2020). Peacekeeping involves deploying international troops to maintain peace and security in conflict zones. Peacekeeping missions can provide security and stability, creating space for negotiations and diplomacy. International organizations also play a vital role in providing humanitarian aid in conflict zones.

Furthermore, international organizations can support conflict prevention by identifying and addressing root causes before violence erupts. They can provide resources and expertise's to help countries build institutions, strengthen governance, and promote development (Oguonu and Ezeibe 2014b).

In general, the literature highlights the significant role international organizations can play in preventing and resolving conflicts. While challenges and limitations exist, these organizations can leverage their resources, expertise, and legitimacy to support peace and security globally.

B. Historical Development of the United Nations and African Union

The UN and AU are two of the most recognized international organizations. The UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to promote international cooperation, peace, security, human rights, and humanitarian aid. The AU, formerly the OAU, was established to address colonialism, apartheid, and underdevelopment in Africa.

The UN's role in Africa began with decolonization, mediating conflicts like the Congo crisis, the Angola civil war, and South African apartheid. However, critics argue that the UN has not addressed root causes of conflicts sufficiently (Oguonu and Ezeibe 2014b).

The AU played a pivotal role in Southern Africa's liberation struggle and anti-colonialism movements. However, it was criticized for its weakness in addressing regional conflicts like the Rwandan genocide and the Somalia civil war. The transformation to the AU was seen as a move towards a more effective and integrated continental organization (Fafore 2020).

In recent years, the UN and AU have collaborated on peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and humanitarian aid. While the relationship has not been without challenges, both organizations have played significant roles in addressing Africa's challenges.

C. Comparative Analysis of the UN and AU in Conflict Resolution

Both the UN and AU have played significant roles in managing and resolving conflicts worldwide. The UN has a broader mandate and more resources, while the AU has a

greater understanding of the local context in Africa (Bamidele 2016).

The UN has created specialized missions to address conflicts, such as UNAMI, UNMISS, and MONUSCO (Firstday, Etiki John. 2019). The AU's APSA, including the PSC, ASF, and CEWS, is a framework for preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts in Africa (Enuka and Nwagbo 2016).

Both organizations have played critical roles in conflict resolution in Africa. The UN has been involved in peacekeeping missions, while the AU has focused on internal conflicts. The AU has taken the lead in resolving regional crises, whereas the UN has supported its efforts. The key difference is the level of involvement. The UN has a broader global mandate and more resources, allowing for a more proactive approach. The AU, which focused primarily on conflicts within Africa, may have limitations in terms of resources and ability to resolve conflicts outside the continent.

Therefore, the UN and AU have made significant efforts towards resolving conflicts in Africa. While they have different mandates, they work together to achieve shared objectives. The UN has stronger tools and resources globally, while the AU has a deeper understanding of regional conflicts. Collaboration and complementary efforts are essential for effective conflict resolution in Africa and beyond.

D. Strengths and Weaknesses of the UN and AU in Conflict Resolution

• Strengths of the UN in Conflict Resolution

The UN has considerable experience dealing with conflicts and has been involved in various peacekeeping operations and conflict resolution initiatives around the world. It has helped end conflicts and foster reconciliation in countries such as Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, Namibia, and Tajikistan (Kayrak 2019).

The UN has a vast network of member countries and can mobilize international support and resources to resolve conflicts.(Dagmar and Jan 2015) Its legitimacy as an international organization is seen as a neutral mediator in conflicts (Negretto and Thompson 2017). The UN's commitment to neutrality and peaceful resolution of conflicts is outlined in its Charter (United Nations 2015).

Moreover, the UN has been involved in effective peacekeeping. It has a dedicated peacekeeping force that has been effective in conflict zones such as Cambodia and Sierra Leone (United Nations 2015). The UN encourages member states to cooperate and work toward common goals, which can lead to more successful conflict resolution. Its ability to mobilize resources and provide humanitarian aid and development programs contributes to global peace-building efforts (Bamidele 2016).

- *Weaknesses of the UN in Conflict Resolution*

One of the most cited weaknesses of the UN in conflict resolution is its slow decision-making. Bureaucratic procedures can slow decision-making and limit the effectiveness of its actions. Examples include the Rwanda genocide in 1994 and the Syrian conflict (von Einsiedel and Malone 2018).

The political influence of powerful member states can also limit the effectiveness of the UN in resolving conflicts. The Syrian conflict is an example where major powers backed opposing sides, hindering progress. (Macdonald 2002) The veto power of permanent members of the UN Security Council has also been used to block progress in resolving conflicts (Gifkins 2021).

The UN's lack of enforcement is another significant limitation. The UN has limited enforcement mechanisms and relies on member states to provide troops and other resources. An example is Rwanda, where UNAMIR lacked the necessary resources and mandate to prevent genocide (Gombar 2016). Similarly, in Bosnia, UN peacekeepers were unable to stop the violent conflict and ethnic cleansing (Zekri 2016).

- *Strengths of the AU in Conflict Resolution*

One of AU's strengths is its superior regional knowledge. The AU has a better understanding of the local context and can develop more effective strategies to resolve conflicts (Enuka and Nwagbo 2016). This contextualized understanding enables the AU to craft more effective strategies that are reflective of the needs and aspirations of the people on the ground.

The AU has successfully intervened in several conflicts within the region, such as Darfur and the Central African Republic. These interventions were successful because the AU was able to leverage its understanding of the local context and establish relationships with key stakeholders involved in the conflict (Adewusi and Kocadal 2022).

The AU's sense of ownership is another source of strength. As an African-owned and African-controlled institution, the AU's solutions are more likely to be accepted by the parties to the conflict. This ownership ensures that the solutions proposed by the AU reflect the interests and perspectives of African countries. The AU has demonstrated its ability to provide effective conflict resolution solutions that are accepted by parties to the conflict (Oguonu and Ezeibe 2014b).

- *Weaknesses of the AU in Conflict Resolution*

The AU has limited resources to address the many conflicts on the continent. The AU has struggled to fund its own peacekeeping operations and has faced challenges in funding its Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Division (CPWD). The AU's authority is limited by the sovereignty of member states and can be challenged by some governments in its efforts to resolve conflicts. The conflict in South Sudan is an example of how the AU has struggled

to resolve it due to the lack of cooperation from the South Sudanese government (African Union 2020; Ngwube 2013).

Lack of unity among member states has negatively impacted the African Union's effectiveness in conflict resolution. The civil war in South Sudan is an example where the AU has struggled to resolve the conflict due to divisions among its member states, some supporting the government and others supporting the rebels. Similarly, in Libya, the AU's inability to find a solution can be attributed to the lack of unity among member states, with some supporting one side of the conflict and others supporting the other (Ekwealor and Uzodike 2016).

The African Union has also been criticized for human rights abuses committed by its peacekeeping forces in some conflict zones, such as the Central African Republic and Somalia. Human rights abuses refer to violations of the basic rights and freedoms that all people are entitled to. In the African Union's case, its peacekeeping forces have been accused of committing human rights abuses in conflict zones such as the Central African Republic and Somalia. For example, in the Central African Republic, AU peacekeeping forces were accused of physically and sexually abusing civilians during disarmament campaigns in 2017 (Abass 2014). In Somalia, AU forces have been accused of carrying out extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, torture, and rape of civilians, which have resulted in increased tensions and hostility towards the peacekeeping mission in Somalia. These actions by the African Union have been criticized by human rights organizations and have led to calls for accountability and reform within the organization (Mégret and Alston 2020).

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study employed a comparative study that compares and describes the existing phenomenon of the role of international organizations in conflict resolution with a focus on the UN and AU with a special emphasis on approaches, experience, effectiveness, and outcomes. Comparative analysis in research is a method of analysing and evaluating similarities and differences between two or more objects, phenomena, or concepts. It is used to identify patterns, relationships, and trends within and across groups, and is often employed in fields such as sociology, anthropology, education, and political science (Azarian 2011). Comparison, as a method strategy, plays an important role in the most diverse branches of the humanities and the social sciences alike (Azarian 2011). In terms of research approach, the study has focused on collecting secondary data and analysing it in a qualitative way, hence, it is a qualitative approach.

B. Data Collection

This study has mainly relied on secondary data—document analysis. According to document analysis, the process of examining a text document to understand its meaning and extract relevant information. (Hsieh and

Shannon 2005) It involves analysing the structure, content, and context of the document to identify patterns, themes, and relationships. Document analysis can be used to study various types of documents, including historical records, legal documents, scientific papers, and business reports. It is commonly used in social science research to study policies, laws, and regulations. Techniques used in document analysis include content analysis, discourse analysis, and critical discourse evaluation. Therefore, a blend of secondary data only was used in this study.

C. Data Analysis

Since comparative studies involve the analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences, and patterns across two or more cases that share a common focus or goal, the specific features of each case should be described in depth. To be able to do this in depth, it is incorporated into qualitative data. By document analysis, it refers to the analysis of all the available secondary documents (empirical works, journal articles, and any other official documents) that were found to be an important source of information about the AU and the UN.

To cross-validate the documents obtained, effort has been made to access the documents in different sources and cross check the consistency of the data. Therefore, it was tried to assess the reliability and validity of a document analysis with careful inquiry, and evaluation of the obtained documents.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Overview of Conflict Resolution in the UN and AU

The UN and AU have played vital roles in conflict resolution within their respective territories. While they share similarities in their conflict resolution mechanisms, there are also fundamental differences.

➤ Major Differences

One significant difference lies in their approaches to conflict resolution. The UN employs a comprehensive approach, focusing on diplomatic means, peacekeeping missions, and addressing root causes (P. D. Williams and Boutellis 2014). In contrast, the AU primarily focuses on peacekeeping operations (Murithi 2008).

Another difference is their level of involvement in conflicts. The UN has a global mandate and is involved in conflicts all over the world. It has a unique role in monitoring, managing, and preventing conflicts, including imposing sanctions and initiating peacekeeping operations (Hamilton 2014). The AU, primarily focused on African countries, has devised mechanisms to resolve African conflicts, such as the African Standby Force and the Peace and Security Council (COMMAND, n.d.).

Furthermore, the UN has a broader membership, dominated by Western nations, while the AU consists solely of African countries, giving it a more focused role in resolving conflicts in the continent (R. Williams 2015).

➤ Similarities

Both the UN and AU are committed to promoting peace and resolving conflicts through peaceful means. The UN has the primary objective of preventing conflicts and promoting peaceful resolution of disputes among nations. The African Union, similarly, has the mission to promote peace and security in Africa (Bogland, Egnell, and Lagerström 2008).

Both organizations have played significant roles in the history of conflict resolution. The UN has deployed peacekeeping missions in various regions, including Africa, to address conflicts. These missions have helped reduce tensions between warring parties and restore law and order. The UN has also developed various mechanisms to resolve disputes through dialogue, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration (Goltsman et al. 2009). Similarly, the African Union has played an important role in promoting peace on the continent. Its Peace and Security Council was established to address issues related to conflict, peacekeeping, and regional stability. It has intervened in several conflict situations, such as in South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Somalia, to promote peace and stability (Thuranira 2019).

Both organizations work together to promote peace and resolve conflicts. The UN and the African Union have signed numerous agreements to strengthen their collaboration on peace and security issues. This includes the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which calls for improved coordination and cooperation between the two organizations in peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts (P. D. Williams and Dersso 2015).

In conclusion, both the UN and the AU have a long history of working to promote peace and resolve conflicts. They employ various mechanisms and tools to address conflicts and their root causes, working collaboratively to strengthen their capacity to respond to crises.

B. Comparison of Conflict Resolution Approaches in the UN and AU

While both the UN and AU strive for conflict resolution, their approaches differ according to mandate, use of force, funding, approach to dialogue, and mediation.

- **Mandate:** The UN's mandate for peacekeeping and conflict resolution is global, while the AU's is regional. The UN addresses conflicts on a global level, while the AU focuses on conflicts within African countries (Boulden and Charron 2010).
- **Use of Force:** The UN tends to rely more on the use of force to resolve conflicts than the AU, which prefers a more diplomatic approach. The UN may authorize military action to enforce a ceasefire, whereas the AU has limited its use of force in conflict resolution (De Coning 2017).
- **Funding:** The UN has a larger budget and more resources to invest in conflict resolution efforts

compared to the AU, which struggles with funding and resource constraints (Jentzsch 2014).

- **Approach to Dialogue:** The AU places a greater emphasis on dialogue in resolving conflicts, whereas the UN often seeks to impose its solutions on conflicting parties (Phiri 2018).
- **Mediation:** The AU tends to take a more proactive role in mediating conflicts, while the UN may be more reactive in its approach (Malweyi 2009).
- **Regional Dynamics:** The AU has a stronger understanding of the regional dynamics and is more familiar with the cultural context of conflicts in Africa. As a result, it is often better positioned to provide mediation and conflict resolution services (Rein 2015).
- **Decision-making:** In the UN, the Security Council is mandated to act in conflicts, with five permanent members holding veto power. The AU also has a Peace and Security Council to make decisions, but its authority is less formalized, and its decision-making process is slower (Ningiza 2022).

While both the UN and AU strive for conflict resolution, their approaches differ according to mandate, use of force, funding, approach to dialogue, and mediation. While the UN has more resources and a wider mandate for conflict resolution, the AU has a stronger understanding of African dynamics and is more likely to be accepted as a mediator in African conflicts. Consequently, the two organizations can work together to combine their strengths and resolve conflicts effectively.

C. Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the United Nations and African Union in Conflict Resolution

In evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN and AU, it is important to examine their approaches, mechanisms, and outcomes.

➤ *Effectiveness*

The effectiveness of the UN and AU in conflict resolution can be evaluated based on their ability to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts in Africa. Despite considerable efforts and resources, the UN and AU have faced several challenges in effectively resolving conflicts in Africa. One major challenge is the lack of political will and commitment by conflict parties, often leading to non-compliance with peace agreements and a resumption of hostilities. Another issue is the under-resourcing of peacekeeping missions, which hinders their ability to effectively fulfill their mandate (Sheehan 2011).

In terms of successes, the UN and AU have played crucial roles in resolving conflicts in Sudan, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, their effectiveness has been questioned as conflicts continue to persist in Libya, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic (Bouelanguye 2019).

➤ *Efficiency*

The efficiency of the UN and AU in conflict resolution can be evaluated based on their ability to deploy peacekeeping missions in a timely and effective manner. Timely deployment is important in preventing the escalation of conflicts and loss of lives. The UN and AU have progressed in improving their efficiency in deploying peacekeeping missions in Africa (De Coning 2019). However, bureaucratic processes and logistical challenges continue to hamper their efficiency (Boutellis and Williams 2013).

Another factor affecting efficiency is the coordination and cooperation between UN peacekeeping missions and AU peace support operations. There have been instances where the UN and AU have failed to coordinate and cooperate in resolving conflicts in Africa (Plank 2022).

In conclusion, while the UN and AU have made significant efforts to resolve conflicts in Africa, their effectiveness and efficiency have been hampered by several challenges, including lack of political will, under-resourcing of peacekeeping missions, bureaucratic processes, logistical challenges, and coordination and cooperation issues. While successes have been achieved in some conflict resolution efforts, persistent conflicts in the region remain. Therefore, there is a need for both organizations to address these challenges and improve their approaches to conflict resolution.

D. Challenges in Conflict Resolution for the UN and AU

The challenges and opportunities in conflict resolution for the UN and AU are multifaceted, as conflicts in Africa have been rampant due to various reasons, such as ethnic identity, political instability, economic disparities, and resource competition. While the UN and AU have played crucial roles in managing conflicts, they have faced several challenges.

➤ *Limited Resources*

The UN and AU often face a shortage of resources, including funding, personnel, and equipment, which can impede their effectiveness in resolving conflicts. For instance, in 2019, the UN faced a severe funding shortage, leading to a two hundred and thirty million US dollar deficit in its regular budget. The AU also experiences funding challenges. In 2020, the AU Commission Chairperson highlighted the financial constraints faced by the organization, which impacted its peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts (Ekanayake 2021).

Both the UN and AU struggle with a shortage of personnel for peacekeeping and conflict resolution missions. The demand for peacekeepers often exceeds the available supply, making it challenging to effectively address conflicts. In 2021, the UN experienced a shortage of military and police personnel, leading to delays in deploying peacekeeping forces. This impacted the UN's ability to quickly respond to conflicts and maintain peace in various regions (Bokeriya 2022).

Furthermore, the lack of necessary equipment impedes the effectiveness of both the UN and AU in addressing conflicts. Peacekeeping missions require specialized tools and resources, including vehicles, communication systems, and protective gear. Many peacekeeping operations have faced challenges due to equipment shortages. For example, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has often struggled with inadequate logistical support, including insufficient military hardware and vehicles (Karlsrud 2023).

➤ *Sovereignty Concerns*

Sovereignty is a significant concern for African governments, and they are often hesitant to allow external intervention in domestic affairs. The AU's principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states makes it difficult to resolve conflicts. This principle asserts the respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of member states.

One example that highlights the African governments' reluctance to allow external intervention is the case of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). AMISOM was established in 2007 by the AU to support the Somali government in its efforts to stabilize the country and combat militant groups. Although AMISOM has had some successes, its effectiveness has been hindered by challenges rooted in the principle of non-interference. Firstly, the AU's principle of non-interference limits the scope of intervention that can be undertaken in conflicts within member states. This creates difficulties when trying to address internal conflicts or political crises that may require external intervention to bring about resolutions. Member states are often cautious about accepting external assistance and perceive it as a potential threat to their sovereignty (Nierman 2021).

Furthermore, the principle of non-interference can prolong conflicts since AU-led interventions require the consent and cooperation of the affected member state. If a government is unwilling to acknowledge or address the conflict, external resolutions become challenging to achieve. This was the case in countries like Sudan, where the government resisted international intervention during the Darfur crisis (Karlsrud 2015).

Therefore, the evidence suggests that sovereignty is indeed a significant concern for African governments, and the AU's principle of non-interference poses challenges when it comes to resolving conflicts. While the principle aims to uphold the sovereignty of member states, it can hinder external intervention and make it difficult to address internal affairs or conflicts effectively.

➤ *Divergent Interests and Priorities*

The UN and AU member states have conflicting political, economic, and security interests and priorities, which sometimes hinder collective action towards resolving conflicts. For instance, in terms of political interest, member states have differing political ideologies and alliances that can impede collective decision-making. During the Cold War, the UN and AU were divided along

the lines of the two superpowers, with member states aligning themselves with either the United States or the Soviet Union. This ideological divide influenced their positions on various conflicts, leading to difficulties in reaching consensus (Lundestad 2013).

In addition, economic interest divergence also created divisions within the UN and AU. Member states prioritize their own economic growth, trade, and investment opportunities that can clash with the goal of resolving conflicts. For example, states with significant economic ties to one of the conflicting parties may be hesitant to support actions that could jeopardize their economic interests, leading to inaction or watered-down resolutions (Gehring and Dörfler 2019).

Overall, the evidence presented highlights how divergent interests and priorities within the UN and AU member states can hinder collective action towards resolving conflicts. Political ideologies, economic considerations, security concerns, and power dynamics all contribute to these challenges, making it difficult to achieve consensus and effective conflict resolution.

➤ *Inadequate Cooperation*

Many African countries lack cooperation with the UN and AU in resolving disputes, which limits the impact of conflict resolution efforts. Countries have sometimes shown resistance or delays in implementing UN resolutions aimed at resolving conflicts. For example, in the case of the conflict in South Sudan, despite several UN Security Council resolutions, the parties involved have not fully implemented the agreed-upon peace agreements (Bior 2022).

The other issue is the limited involvement of the AU in peacekeeping operations. The AU has been actively involved in peacekeeping efforts across the continent. However, not all African countries contribute troops or resources to these operations. Some countries have been reluctant or hesitant to participate in peacekeeping efforts, which undermine collective efforts to resolve conflicts (Gelot 2014). Moreover, African countries often have complex regional dynamics, including political rivalries, economic competition, and territorial disputes. These factors can hinder cooperation within the AU and undermine joint conflict resolution efforts. Conflicting interests among member states can prevent them from presenting a unified front in resolving disputes (Gelot 2014).

While these issues demonstrate some of the challenges faced in African countries' cooperation with the UN and AU, there are also instances where successful collaborations have occurred. Nonetheless, addressing the limitations in cooperation among African countries and these organizations remains crucial for more effective conflict resolution on the continent.

➤ *Summary of Major Findings*

The two organizations have developed different approaches to conflict resolution, even if they have also adopted similarities in some aspects.

• *The Two Organizations have Adopted Different Approaches to Conflict Resolution*

- ✓ The UN adopts a more global approach, focusing on multilateral diplomacy, peacekeeping operations, and enforcing international law.
- ✓ The AU takes a regional approach, prioritizing African solutions to African conflicts through mediation, peacekeeping, and regional integration.

• *The Two Organizations have Different Mandates and Legal Authority.*

- ✓ The UN has a broad mandate and legal authority, backed by Chapter VII of the UN Charter, allowing for military interventions and sanctions to resolve conflicts.
- ✓ The AU's mandate is primarily based on its Constitutive Act, which limits military interventions to cases of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

• *External Influences and Power Dynamics*

- ✓ The UN often faces challenges in conflict resolution due to political divisions among its member states and the influence of veto-wielding Security Council members.
- ✓ The AU's effectiveness is sometimes hindered by external interference, geopolitical interests, and power struggles among member states.

• *Resource Constraints and Capacity*

- ✓ The UN has more resources, funding, and expertise in conflict resolution due to its global membership and extensive institutional framework.
- ✓ The AU faces resource constraints, including funding limitations, logistical challenges, and a lack of specialized personnel, which can affect its conflict resolution efforts.

• *Local Ownership and Involvement*

- ✓ The AU emphasizes the principle of African ownership, encouraging local actors' involvement in conflict resolution processes.
- ✓ The UN seeks to ensure legitimacy and inclusivity but sometimes faces difficulties in engaging local populations effectively.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *Conclusion*

This analysis reveals that the UN and AU employ distinct approaches to conflict resolution. The UN emphasizes global consensus and multilateral decision-making, while the AU prefers regional ownership and a

more proactive stance. Moreover, the challenges faced by both organizations have significantly impacted the success or failure of their conflict resolution efforts. The UN has faced issues such as the Security Council's veto power, political divisions among member states, and limited resources. Conversely, the AU has struggled with financial constraints, a lack of military capabilities, and inadequate regional integration.

Despite these challenges, important lessons have emerged from the experiences of both the UN and the AU in conflict resolution. First and foremost, cooperation and collaboration among international and regional organizations are crucial for effective conflict resolution. The UN and AU should strengthen their partnerships and utilize each other's strengths to address conflicts more efficiently.

Moreover, conflict resolution efforts should prioritize preventive measures rather than solely focusing on reactive strategies. Early identification of potential conflicts, mediation, and preventive diplomacy can significantly contribute to successful conflict resolution. Additionally, conflict resolution initiatives should promote inclusive processes that involve all relevant stakeholders, including local communities and civil society organizations. Involving diverse perspectives and ensuring the participation of marginalized groups' can help facilitate more sustainable and long-lasting peace agreements.

Furthermore, according to the UN Department of Political Affairs (2006), 'the UN Security Council, which has a key responsibility in the prevention of violent conflict, has historically focused on the management of immediate crises and large-scale conflicts' (UN Department of Political Affairs 2006). In this case, the AU can focus more on the conflict prevention early warning system and response mechanism, particularly at a low scale level before its escalation into a larger scale due to its intimacy with the local conditions, knowledge, and contexts, which is crucial and cost-effective to avoid the overall occurrences of conflicts. This way, through increased cooperation, strategic convergence, coherent solutions, and enhanced combined strength, one can fill the other's gap, and both parties will be able to harvest complementary benefits in successfully addressing shared challenges and achieving common goals.

In conclusion, while both the UN and AU have made significant contributions to conflict resolution, there are distinct differences in their approaches. Understanding these differences, addressing challenges, and applying important lessons learned can improve the effectiveness of international and regional organizations in resolving conflicts around the world. By continually improving their strategies and fostering cooperation, the UN and AU can contribute to a more peaceful and stable global community.

B. Recommendations

➤ Based on the Major Findings of the Study, the Following Possible Suggestions are Made:

- Greater emphasis on preventive measures: A more significant focus on preventive measures can be critical in reducing the frequency of conflicts, addressing the root causes, and creating long-lasting peace. To ensure long-term conflict resolution, it is essential to address the underlying social, economic, and political factors that contribute to conflicts. Investments in development, education, and effective governance can help prevent future conflicts.
- Greater promotion of sustainable development: The promotion of sustainable development can address the root causes of conflicts while building more resilient and inclusive societies that are less prone to violent conflict.
- Strengthen diplomatic approaches: Both the UN and AU should prioritize diplomatic negotiations and mediation efforts in resolving conflicts. This approach can help prevent the escalation of violence and achieve lasting peace.
- Improve coordination and cooperation: To effectively address conflicts, the UN and AU should enhance their cooperation and coordination mechanisms. Joint peacekeeping operations and information sharing can lead to better outcomes. Through increased cooperation, strategic convergence, coherent solutions, and enhanced combined strength, one can fill the other's gap, and both parties will be able to harvest complementary benefits in successfully addressing shared challenges and achieving common goals.
- Strengthen early warning systems: Developing and utilizing robust early warning systems can help both organizations detect potential conflicts and intervene proactively. Timely prevention and early response play a vital role in conflict resolution.
- Accountability and justice: Upholding accountability and promoting justice are crucial for successful conflict resolution. Establishing mechanisms for transitional justice and holding perpetrators accountable can contribute to healing societies and preventing future conflicts.
- Learn from past experiences: The UN and AU should regularly evaluate and learn from their previous conflict resolution efforts. Sharing best practices, conducting thorough assessments, and adapting strategies based on lessons learned can improve future outcomes.
- Adapt to evolving challenges: Both organizations need to remain flexible and adaptive as conflicts and their dynamics continue to evolve. Embracing innovation, leveraging technology, and staying updated with emerging conflict trends are essential to effectively responding to new challenges.
- Cultural sensitivity: Conflict resolution initiatives should consider cultural differences and sensitivities. This helps to facilitate dialogue and communication between different groups, as well as avoiding misunderstandings and unintended consequences.

- Monitoring and evaluation: Conflict resolution initiatives should be monitored and evaluated to track progress and ensure that they meet their objectives. This helps to identify areas where improvements can be made and helps to ensure that the initiative is achieving its intended goals.

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