

‘African solutions to African problems’: An assessment of the African Union (AU)’s policy implementation for peace and security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 2004

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
AFDL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo
ANC	African National Congress
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APF	African Peace Facility
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAR	Central African Republic
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CFS	Congo Free State
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIAT	Committee in Support of the Transition
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the People
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONAKAT	Confederation of Tribal Associations of Katanga
DDR	Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EASF	Eastern African Standby Force
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
EUFOR RD Congo	EU Military Operation in the DRC
EUPOL RD Congo	EU Police Mission in the DRC
EUPOL Kinshasa	EU Police Mission in Kinshasa
EUSEC RD Congo	EU Mission to Provide and Assistance for SSR in the DRC
EPF	European Peace Facility
FAR	Armed Forces of Rwanda
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade
ICD	Inter Congolese Dialogue
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M23	Movement of March 23
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of Congo
MNC	Congolese National Movement
MONUC	UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MONUSCO	UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
NARC	North African Regional Capability
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development

OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PF	Peace Fund
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PoW	Panel of the Wise
PSCF	Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region
PSO	Peace Support Operation
RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCI-LRA	Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA
RECs/RMs	Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms
ROM	Regional Oversight Mechanism
RTF	Regional Task Force
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SROs	Sub-Regional Organisations
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNSC	UN Security Council
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

Despite the historical significance of states in Africa gaining political independence since the 1950s, the continent has struggled with the challenges of sustaining security and peace. African leaders, who set out with the ideals of the iconic Nkrumah's 'Pan-Africanism' of the 1950s, as committed to in the launching of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, sought permanent solutions to problems rooted in this decolonial ideal when they founded the subsequent African Union (AU) in 2002. The stated aim of the AU was to create peace, security, and stability in Africa. Accordingly, the slogan 'African solutions to African problems' is closely linked to Pan-Africanism as a decolonial philosophy and driving force that became a policy objective. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), implemented in 2002 at the founding of the AU, was established as a mechanism to obtain this objective.

The AU has undertaken to take a leading role and responsibility in addressing violent conflicts in Africa as the root issue lies in the historical context that African problems are neither caused nor continued by sovereign African agencies; the point is historically, politically, and economically more complex. Hence, the stated ideal of the aphorism 'African solutions to African problems' can only be meaningfully attained if the mechanisms to achieve peace and security are situated within sovereign African agencies and cultural political philosophies – the complexities of the global and post-colonial political and economic context notwithstanding. This mini-thesis critically engages the stated Africa-centred decolonial aspiration and approach for sovereignty and asks, therefore, to what extent the AU has succeeded in applying its sovereign agency in achieving 'African solutions' designed for peace in the case study of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 2004.

STRUCTURE OF THIS MINI-THESIS

This minor dissertation comprises six chapters.

Chapter One covers the general introduction, which focuses on the study's background in understanding 'African solutions to African problems'.

Chapter Two analyses the related literature review to understand the study and its context.

Chapter Three presents an outline of the problem statements and rationale, research questions, aims and objectives, theoretical framework, and the research methodology.

Chapter Four introduces the case study of the DRC within its historical context from pre-colonial times to the creation of a western imposed nation-state and related imperialist interferences.

Chapter Five provides an assessment of the AU's peace and security instruments application of 'African solutions' in the crisis of the DRC since 2004 by studying the AU policy documents as primary evidence.

Chapter Six summarises the key findings and considerations for a way forward.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Brief Historical and Philosophical Background to ‘African solutions’

The struggle for African sovereignty has been a perennial challenge in the face of European imperialism and colonialism. This resistance is rooted in a rejection of western representation of Africa philosophically, politically, and economically. Responding to the ambition of the imperial powers, there Africa was defined as the ‘dark continent’, following a lack of perceived ‘modernity’ associated with dystopian savagery (Brantlinger, 1985). As Achille Mbembe (2001:3) stated, “Africa is portrayed as a vast dark cave [...] in short, a bottomless abyss where everything is noise, yawning gaps and primordial chaos”, an area in which Europeans could intervene. The continent must therefore be ‘pacified’ and the ‘chaos’ resolved. The European mission thus consisted of civilising and moralising the Africans to bring peace to the ‘dark continent’. Following the claimed European ‘discovery’ of the continent during the mercantilist era, economic exploitation was one of the desires from the outset. Anthony Anghie (2005:97) argues that the idea of civilising the ‘barbarian’ was part of a project to engage with the dark African continent through commerce and the colonial imaginary. The proverbial “White Man’s Burden” rationalised the colonial project. Such ontological assumptions of Africa presupposed that all non-Westerners were essentially non-historical until their encounter with Europe (see Trouillot, 2015). It meant that only Europe has history and is, therefore, historiographically presented in the global public imagination as the first place of modernity and enlightenment in the world. This categorisation is further expanded by Franz Fanon (1986:83) “the black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man”. The ‘discovery’ of Africa and other continents led to ‘enlightenment’, conversion to Christianity, the European civilising mission, natural resource exploitation in Africa, and the concomitant ‘justified’ brutal racialised colonial oppression.

The notion of the ‘scramble for Africa’ (see Chamberlain, 1974; Pakenham, 1991) at the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, as Anthony Baah (2003:1) argues, was based on the pursuit of “pure imperialist greed and insatiable quest for wealth”. The European consensus at Berlin “literally fragmented and reconstituted Africa into British, French, Portuguese, German, Belgian, and Spanish Africa” (wa Thiong’o, 2009:5) and divided pre-colonial societies without considering the social cohesion that held Africans together for long (Mazrui, 2010). The continent was transformed blindly to satisfy the selfish economic interests of the imperialists (see Rodney,

2011). From early on, but particularly at the height of imperialist and colonial conquest during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Africans rebelled against colonial oppression and sought to take charge of their futures by leading resistance wars. With political independence from the 1950s onwards, this anticipation of attaining sovereignty gained a new momentum towards its long-hoped-for realisation.

1.2. Pan-Africanism and the Aspiration of ‘African solutions’

Pan-Africanism is “the idea that all Africans have a spiritual affinity with each other and that, having suffered together in the past, they must march together into a new and brighter future” (Emerson, 1962:280). At its core is the idea that harmony can forge an independent, empowered economic, social, and political African destiny (Mazrui, 2001). That is to say, Pan-Africanism is “a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans, and African descendants abroad as a unit” (Esedebe, 1994:5). The goal of Pan-Africanism has been to restore the damage caused by foreign invasions to the continent, beginning with enslavement and humiliation to the native population (see Crutcher, 1963; Mathews, 2008; Onyebuchi Eze, 2013a; 2013b). In this way, Pan-Africanism¹ “seeks to respond to Africa’s contemporary crises of post-coloniality illustrated most starkly by underdevelopment” (Murithi, 2015:220).

The Pan-Africanist movement in the 20th century aimed to foster unity among black communities worldwide by striving for independence from European powers. During the 1900s, five Pan-African Congresses took place in the USA (New York) and Europe (Paris, London, Brussels, Lisbon, and Manchester), advancing the liberation of Africans. The “first stage of institutionalisation of Pan-Africanism” originated at conferences held in 1919, 1921, 1923, 1927, and 1945 (Murithi, 2008a:3) and W.E.B. Dubois, Marcus M. Garvey, and George Padmore had pivotal roles in disrupting the racialised black African inferiority stereotypes (Shepperson, 1962). In the ‘modern’ Western-dominated world, the Pan-African Congresses provided a space for the black Africans in the diaspora and within to declare their presence. In the early stage of Pan-Africanism emerged among Africans as a way of life that fought against white supremacy; following the Pan-African Congress in 1945, Manchester, the discourse shifted towards the African continent from Europe (Nkrumah, 1963:132-140; Kasanda, 2016; Harshé, 2019). Pan-Africanism was strengthened on the continent by African nationalists,

¹ Literature on Pan-Africanism is rich. See for instance Legum, 1962; Geiss, 1967; Thompson, 1969; Ajala, 1974; Ackah, 1999; Esedebe, 1994.

including Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), Patrice Lumumba (1925-1961), Julius Nyerere (1922-1999), and Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001), in its message of the unification and total liberation of the continent. The struggle for Africa's sovereignty and the Organisation of African Unity establishment provide examples of how Pan-Africanism has inspired Africans to act concretely over the years.

1.3. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and its Early Aspiration of 'African solutions'

The OAU was born in "historic necessity and a welter of conflict in political ideas and interest", as Colin Legum (1975:208) describes. The Pan-African Movement on the continent emerged with two broad, opposing schools of thought in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Firstly, the Casablanca Group promoted political union, and Kwame Nkrumah was its chief proponent (Sesay, 2008:10). Following Ghana's 'independence' in 1957, Pan-Africanist leader Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, emphasised solving Africa's problems strongly connected with colonial structures (Nkrumah, 1965) and limiting foreign intrusion into Africa. The Pan-African perspective of Nkrumah, evident in his book *Africa Must Unite* (1963), a passionate advocate for economic and political unity, centred on African states' integration divided into arbitrary borders by the 1885 Berlin Conference. Nkrumah's view was liberating and uniting Africa through achieving the "aspiration of Africans and people of African descent everywhere" (Nkrumah, 1970:88). Secondly, the Brazzaville Group or Monrovia Group agreed on the gradualist approach to integration, beginning with regional economic cooperation. However, there was a clear ideological divide between Pan-Africanists, but their core concerns were the same: ending colonialism and revering its devastating effects on the continent and establishing a vehicle for accomplishing this goal (Sesay, 2008:10). Thus, the founding of the OAU "as the second stage in the institutionalisation of Pan-Africanism" (Murithi, 2008a:3) on 25 May 1963 demonstrated African abhorrence of external dominance and African leaders' ability to cooperate at that time.

Timothy Murithi (2008a:3) writes, "the creation of the OAU was supposed to herald greater Pan-African solidarity, political liberation, economic development and security". The urgency for Africans to collaborate to solve their post-independence issues has shaped the anti-colonial rhetoric on 'African solutions to African problems'. The concept's origins, which found its seeds in Pan-Africanism in Marcus Garvey's phrase 'Africa to Africans' (Kasanda, 2016),

continued as a desired realisation across the continent from the 1960s into the 1990s. This motto led to widespread euphoria among Africans, setting out its agendas and how to execute them without outside interference (Ani, 2016). Well-known leaders like Nyerere insisted on Africa finding its own identity and brought the ideologies of “African Socialism” to the forefront for African states to find their way after independence (see Nyerere, 1968). African political thought leaders have always sought to find their place in global politics, expressed through foregrounding the history of Africa and resistance against colonialism. In that vein, the African philosophical and political notions such as *Négritude*² (see Senghor, 1964; Césaire, 2000), *African personality*, and *Consciencism*³ (see Nkrumah, 1964) guided the Pan-Africanist thoughts that emerged as a multidimensional concept.

Since its creation, the OAU has promoted the principle of ‘Try Africa First’ as a priority engagement for resolving Africa’s security issues. The starting point of self-governance started with Ali Mazrui’s book *Towards a Pax Africana* (1967), which calls for an inter-African intervention in Africa’s challenges instead of meddling by external forces. Many scholars have emphasised this lead role and security ownership approach many times later (see for instance Franke & Esmenjaud, 2008; Apuuli, 2012; Dersso, 2012; Nathan, 2013; Solomon, 2015; Muchie et al., 2017). In this context, OAU stressed its self-confidence in achieving its goals through Pan-Africanist ideals in response to Africa’s security challenges.

1.4. The African Union (AU) and its Successive Aspiration of ‘African solutions’

The OAU championed a Pan-African agenda that protected African states’ territorial integrity and sovereignty and eliminated colonialism in all its forms (Sesay, 2008:11). However, the OAU’s method of security issues was ineffective due to the adoption of the non-intervention principle with the sovereign rights of its members (Organisation of African Unity [OAU], 1963:art. 2). This meant the OAU could not influence member states’ politics and intervene in their internal crises to prevent human rights violations. Additionally, the OAU lacked the capacity or mechanisms to promptly handle an internally occurring humanitarian crisis (Fogwell, 2013:6). An example is when the Rwandan genocide tragically occurred in 1994, the

² In the period of French colonisation in black Africa, *Négritude* grew out of the dominant position of white people. Indeed, it was an effective way of asserting black identity and rejecting racism that emerged from colonial knowledge-building mechanisms (Harshé, 2019:43-46).

³ The philosophy aims to restore the egalitarianism of human society and mobilise the necessary resources to do so. Thus, Nkrumah considered social equality, morality, and freedom from colonisation and imperialism fundamental issues (Kasanda, 2016:188-189).

OAU could not effectively engage in peace complications (Murithi, 2008a:3-4). Meanwhile, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), amongst others, was experiencing tremendous conflict in the early nineties, leading to millions of Africans' deaths. Violent conflicts within its member states exposed the OAU's impotence (Murithi, 2007a:3; Walraven, 2010; Ottoh, 2017:311).

Due to the ongoing conflict, the OAU subsequently met in Sirte, Libya, in 1999 to revise its Charter and stressed the urgency of reinforcing unity among African nations, including the reinvigoration of the Pan-Africanism spirit. The OAU declaration was adopted that called for the foundation of the AU to take the position of the OAU with the acknowledgement that "... (the) continental Organisation needs to be revitalised in order to be able to play a more active role and continue to be relevant to the needs of our peoples and responsive to the demands of the prevailing circumstances" (OAU, 1999:art. 6). In response to this, the OAU was relaunched as the AU is "inspired by the noble ideas ... of Pan Africanists ... to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African states" with the consciousness of "the need to promote peace, security and stability as a prerequisite for the implementation of our development and integration agenda" (African Union [AU], 2000). The AU was therefore considered "the third phase of institutionalisation of Pan-Africanism" (Murithi, 2007a:3; 2008a:4), which has dramatically reinforced the political and institutional capacity of its precursor.

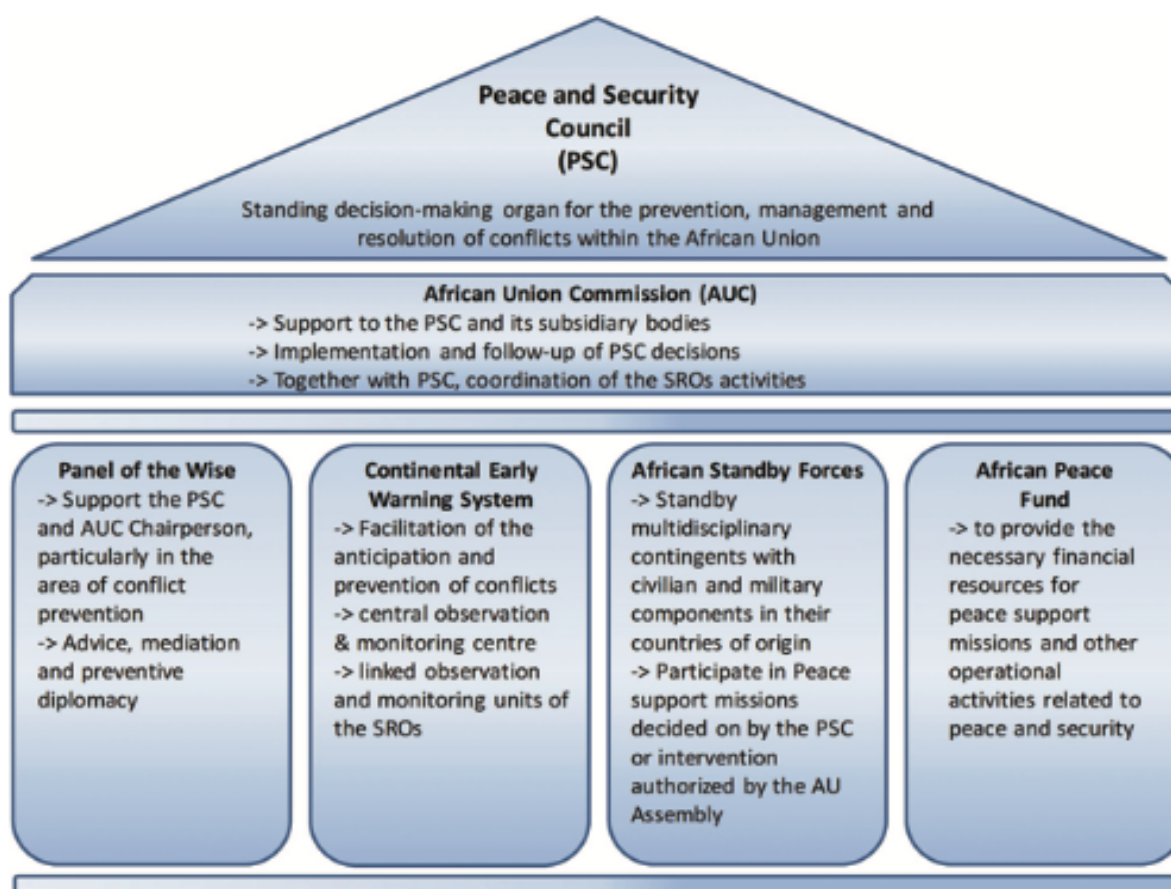
African leaders established a new integration project in 2002, namely the AU, which represented the next stage in maturing the ideal of Pan-Africanism (Bah et al., 2014:27; Harshé, 2019:61); new legal and institutional frameworks characterised it by enhancing the continent's security. According to the Constitutive Act, the AU has the right "to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (AU, 2000:arts. 4(h)-4(j)). Reflecting on the AU's proactive role, it has "the primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa" (AU, 2002:art. 16.1). Accordingly, African peace actors have committed to institutionalising 'African solutions to African problems' towards peace and security by establishing the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in 2002.

Since the OAU was renamed the AU, 'African solutions to African problems' has been a motto for political leaders in the continent (Lipman, 2010; Solomon, 2015; AU, 2013c:5), which "evokes a sense of self-reliance, responsibility, pride, ownership and indigeneity, at once a

rallying cry and a neat amalgam of politics, agency and geography” (Nathan, 2013:49). It is a philosophical discourse that underpins how Africans need to take the initiative in engaging with the policies and practices that belong to their continent. This requires a commitment that it is Africans’ primary responsibility and leadership to deal with security concerns (Franke & Esmenjaud, 2008; Williams, 2011; Apuuli, 2012; Dersso, 2012; Nathan, 2013; Ottoh, 2017). Thus, by formulation of the APSA, the leaders of the continent reaffirmed their resolution “to enhance... capacity to address the scourge of conflicts on the Continent and to ensure that Africa, through the African Union, plays a central role in bringing about peace, security and stability on the Continent” (AU, 2002:3).

The APSA is formed, based on the provisions of the Constitutive Act, to “promote peace, security, and stability on the continent” (AU, 2000:art. 3(f)) as “an operational structure for the effective implementation of the decisions taken in the areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace support operations and intervention, as well as peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction” (AU, 2002:3). The “nerve centre” of the APSA is the Peace and Security Council (PSC) (Onditi et al., 2021:155). Some subsidiary bodies support the PSC: the Panel of the Wise (PoW), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the African Standby Force (ASF), and the Peace Fund (PF). Partnerships with the AU and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms (RMs) and the relationship with the United Nations (UN) and different external actors are fundamental parts of the APSA (see AU, 2002; Bah et al., 2014).

FIGURE 1- STRUCTURE OF APSA⁴



1.4.1. Peace and Security Council (PSC)

The PSC, an integral part of the APSA, was formally launched in 2002⁵ by adopting the *Protocol Relating to Establishment Peace and Security Council of the African Union* (hereupon the Protocol) “as a standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts” figure in “a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crises in Africa” (AU, 2002:art. 2.1). It is responsible for resolving Africa’s conflicts, managing the APSA’s security plan, and peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. Among the tasks of the PSC is “promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa; early warning and preventive diplomacy; peace-making, including the use of good offices, mediation, conciliation and enquiry; peace support operations and intervention, under Article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act; peacebuilding and post-

⁴ Klaussen, P. 2022. African peace and security architecture (APSA). In *Routledge Handbook of the Horn of Africa*. J.-N. Bach Ed. London: Routledge. 116–127.

⁵ The AU ratified the Protocol on 26 December 2003, which was enforced in January 2004 and launched in May 2004.

conflict reconstruction; humanitarian action and disaster management; any other function as may be decided by the Assembly” (AU, 2000:art. 6).

The PSC has joint responsibilities with the AU Commission (AUC) in responding to African crises. While the Chairperson of the AUC is not technically an official partner of the APSA, the PSC uses powers in most cases with the AUC. The PSC collaborates with RECs/RMs (AU, 2002:art. 7(j)). Besides, the PSC “shall cooperate and work closely with the United Nations Security Council” for “the fulfilment of its mandate in the promotion and maintenance of peace, security, and stability in Africa” (AU, 2002:art. 17). That is similar the statement made by the Protocol, the PSC shall “promote and develop a strong partnership for peace and security between the Union and the United Nations and its agencies, as well as with other relevant international organisations” (AU, 2002:art. 7(k)). Moreover, the PSC is in strong contact with “a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, an African Standby Force and a Special Fund” (AU, 2002:art. 2.2).

1.4.2. Panel of the Wise (PoW)

The PoW was established “to support the efforts of the PSC and those of the Chairperson of the AUC, particularly in the area of conflict prevention” (AU, 2002:art. 11). The PoW was officially inaugurated as a politically independent advisory mechanism to bolster the PSC’s conflict prevention and mediation culture in December 2007 (Porto & Ngandu, 2015:34). The PoW, which works through mediation to reduce conflicts, bears traces of African traditions and cultures, as it resembles the indigenous roles of elders (see Murithi & Mwaura, 2010; Porto & Ngandu, 2015). To summarise, “the insights drawn from indigenous African culture provided a philosophical inspiration for the creation of the PoW. Specifically, the wise counsel of leaders within the typical traditional African community was vital in intervening, resolving and sustaining peace” (Murithi & Mwaura, 2010:212). In terms of its historical origins, the PoW “is a contemporary rendition of the traditional institution of the council of elders” (Murithi & Mwaura, 2010:214). Therefore, the PoW provides a genuine and authentic ‘African solutions’ representation for bringing peace to Africa.

1.4.3. Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)

Another critical component of APSA is the CEWS “to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts” through “an observation and monitoring centre to be known as the situation room” and “responsible for data collection and analysis on the basis of an appropriate early warning indicators module” (AU, 2002:art. 12). Specifically, the CEWS alerts policymakers to

situations that may escalate to armed conflict. The CEWS⁶ collects, analyses, and reports data related to conflict outbreaks to the Chairperson of the AUC and then presents the results to the PSC. The CEWS was established to strengthen the effectiveness of APSA and other agencies while working to prevent security problems on the continent before conflict escalates. The subsidiary body continues to grow with appropriate information technology infrastructure to implement efficiency to support conflict prevention (Bah et al., 2014:46-49).

1.4.4. African Standby Force (ASF)

The ASF was established to perform the function of the military operational arm ready to be operated in crisis areas on the continent (AU, 2002:art. 13.1). Under the Protocol, its primary role is “observation and monitoring missions; preventive deployment in order to prevent an ongoing violent conflict from spreading to neighbouring areas or States; peacebuilding; and humanitarian assistance” (AU, 2002:art. 13.3). The personnel of the ASF are formed through commitments made by the AU member states and Africa’s five sub-regions⁷ (Dersso, 2010:7; Bah et al., 2014:53). On paper, it is the only standby force globally, illustrating the continent’s commitment to responding effectively and timely to its challenges. As Batware (2011) claimed, ASF is a necessary step toward resolving African conflicts, even though it is not a single solution. As de Albuquerque (2016:17) perceptively argues, “the rapid deployment capability of the ASF is key to the notion of finding an African solution to African problems” as it allows mobilise “the AU military capability to deploy at short notice to prevent war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity, rather than having to be at the mercy of the international community deciding to take action”.

1.4.5. Peace Fund (PF)

The PF was created as another vital backbone of APSA “to provide the necessary financial resources for peace and security” (AU, 2002:art. 21). The Peace Fund has been funded through “financial appropriations from the regular budget of AU, including arrears of contributions, voluntary contributions from Member States and from other sources within Africa, including the private sector, civil society and individuals, as well as through appropriate fund raising activities” (Bah et al., 2014:67). The PF represents a critical device on the way to responsibility and leading for the implemental role of peace efforts; “the Peace Fund is arguably one of the

⁶ For more on the system see African Union, 2008.

⁷ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Eastern African Stand-by Force (EASF), and the North African Regional Capability (NARC).

AU's most important initiatives" (Institute for Security Studies [ISS], 2022) toward 'African solutions'.

1.4.6. Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs)

There are eight regional economic communities (RECs)⁸ recognised by the AU, as well as two regional mechanisms (RMs) (AU, n.d.). RECs/RMs "are part of the overall security architecture of the Union" (AU, 2002:art. 16) to facilitate peace and security governance (Bah et al., 2014:69-70). Per the Constitutive Act (2000:art. 3(1)) and the Protocol, the "effective partnership" between AU and RECs/RMs is advancing on the strength of "close harmonisation, coordination" (AU, 2002:art.16). Effective operationalisation and implementation of the overall architecture depends on collaboration between the APSA and RECs/RMs (Onditi et al., 2021:132). The AU and RECs/RMs have predominantly initiated AU-led peace operations on the continent (Onditi et al., 2021:147). For instance, the SADC has been a very effective mediator in the DRC and Lesotho (see Kapinga, 2015; Phungula, 2020). Franke and Esmenjaud (2008) and Solomon (2015) argue that sub-regional organisations (SROs) take important responsibilities and are essential players in focusing on Africa's peace and security problems.

1.5. Conclusion

The strong sense of Pan-Africanism fuelled the fight against the legacy of colonialism on the continent, as typified by the expression 'African solutions to African problems'. The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw Pan-Africanism's first stage institutionalised through Pan-African congresses. Following this, the OAU was established in 1963. The calls of Pan-Africanism for the solutions to the continent's security problems resulted in the renewal of the OAU to the AU. It was these efforts that led to the establishment of APSA in 2002 as a vehicle for the revival of Pan-Africanism. To conclude, APSA and its institutions formulated the commitment of the African leadership to solve security dilemmas across Africa. This commitment goes beyond resolving conflict to empower the African people to take responsibility for their own destiny and deliver comprehensive peace to the continent. This research project focuses on the effectiveness of this commitment and its implementation.

⁸ Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. ‘African solutions to African problems’ - Standpoints and Debates

By the beginning of the 21st century, ideas surrounding the *African Renaissance* – first coined by Cheikh Anta Diop (1996) in his writings between 1946 and 1960 - had gained a strong political following. Colonialism abused Africa, but Diop believed Africans possessed the power of the renaissance, and their black colour made them unique for reawakening. For him, finding a path that propels the *African Renaissance* required a spirit of self-determination inspired by Africa’s rich and diverse history and cultures (Marumo & Chakale, 2018:174). Building on Diop’s thinking, African intellectual Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (1986) sought to rethink indigenous African values in his iconic book *Decolonising the Mind* in postcolonial times. Decolonial African thought leaders would argue that the security dilemma that the continent faces today requires eliminating the colonial and imperialist forces that put it in a deadlock. In this sense, there has been the use of ‘African solutions to African problems’ to leverage Africa’s rich history to reconstructing Africa’s international political landscape on its terms and in its favour.

During the late 1990s, the aphorism rooted in a new evolved ‘Pan Africanism’ reappeared in the political concept of the *African Renaissance* led by African National Congress (ANC) politicians in post-apartheid South Africa, considering the ongoing political turmoil experienced in the early post-independence era. In the spirit of Nkrumah’s view, the *African Renaissance* was framed around the idea that postcolonial countries, shaped by the structures left over from colonial powers, were liberated by African values and systems, defined as the “rebirth and renewal of our continent” (Mbeki, 1998; 1999). The *African Renaissance*, which combined sustainability with security and democracy (Adebajo, 2017), was accompanied by the introduction of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) in 2001 and the relaunch of the OAU in 2002 for ‘African solutions to African problems’ (Akokpari, 2008). The main goal of NEPAD is to provide a common mechanism, which includes good governance supported by the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and regional cooperation, achieving poverty eradication, promoting sustainable growth, and preventing globalisation from marginalising Africa (AU, 2019c). As Deputy President and later President of South Africa, and esteemed ANC leader, Thabo Mbeki, popularised the *African Renaissance* idea, reflecting this spirit from the late 1990s to the late 2000s.

It is worth noting that eminent political economist George Ayittey (1994) used the “African solutions to African problems”, in which he criticised the international intervention on the continent. Ayittey (1994) advocated Africa’s ownership of its problems and solutions and admonished the excessive intervention of external powers that the US-led UN forces as “occupying powers” (as he called it) in the early 1990s Somali crisis. He noted the complex nature of conflicts within the continent. He argued that “outside attempts to resolve Africa’s problems have regularly proven ineffective and even counterproductive” (Ayittey, 1994:1). In the same light, Dersso (2012:21) has argued more recently that “the political ideal of African solutions to African problems is essentially an issue of self-determination. It seeks to bestow Africa, as a matter of principle, the lead role or ownership in the endeavour to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts on the continent”. Africans could overcome their security issues by defining and solving problems in a decolonised way.

The famous maxim “implies a resurgence of African renaissance... indicating a commitment by Africa’s leaders to retake control of the continent and being instrumental in influencing the socio-political and the economic affairs of the continent” (Ferim, 2013:143). In many ways, the maxim reflects a desire for Africa to steer the continent’s course by African hands. The first Chairperson of the AUC argued for it in 2007 that “... the primary responsibility for ensuring peace in Africa belongs to Africans themselves” (Dersso, 2012:24). The former AUC Chairperson Jeng Ping emphasised that “the solutions to African problems are found on the continent and nowhere else” (Vorrath, 2012:1). In 2013, the *Solemn declaration on the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU*, the AU announced it would “take ownership of African issues and provide African solutions to African problems” (AU, 2013c:5). These solutions are often “based on either ownership, being African-led or of being ‘working’ solutions rooted in African identity manifested in its culture, values and realities of societies” (Komey, Osman & Melakedingel, 2013:2). Several arguments have been presented supporting “the AU to boldly articulate its doctrine and strategy and not succumb to external pressures to meet others’ priorities” (Berhe & de Waal, 2015:1).

According to Solomon A. Dersso (2012:11), “despite the fact that the political ideal of African solutions to African problems underlying the APSA is routinely used in the literature and policy circles, questions remain on what it entails and how it informs and shapes African policymaking on peace and security issues affecting the continent”. Komey, Osman and Melakedingel (2013:1) argue that “its practical application has been at best elusive”. Several writers, for instance, MØller (2009), Apuuli (2012), Dersso (2012), and Nathan (2013), are not

clear on what this ownership should contain and how it will be created; they focus solely on practice rather than solutions or values. What is clear, however, is that the argument in the debate that for Africa to meet its common challenges in this decolonisation ideal, there is a need for a new narrative in Africa based on unity, dignity, self-reliance, and independence that is anchored in Pan-African values (see AU, 2013c; AU, 2015; Muchie et al., 2017).

2.2. Understanding Implemental and Conceptual Aspects of the AU's 'African solutions'

2.2.1. A Brief Review of the AU's Institutional Mechanism

African leaders have pledged through *Agenda 2063: the Africa we want* (2015) not to pass the burden of conflict on to future generations. In alignment with the AU, Lobakeng (2017:2) defines, "African solutions to African problems appears to be an indication of Africa's determination to solve her own challenges and leave the image of a permanently troubled land behind". This involves the establishment of the AU, as Nathan (2013), Dersso (2012), and Solomon (2015) argue that the APSA is demonstrating that African leaders are attempting to realise 'African solutions to African problems' by anticipating, avoiding, managing, and ending the conflict in Africa. As previously explained (see Chapter 1), African actors have achieved great success on the organisational front. Africans established more than just the AU: the APSA and its organisational structure governed all security policies (Lobakeng, 2017; Ani, 2019).

2.2.2. African Indigenous Approaches to Peace

Some cite the breakdown of indigenous order as one of the reasons for the continent's challenges. For instance, Chinua Achebe argued in *Things Fall Apart* (1986) that the imperialist pursuits of Western powers deflected the traditional lifestyle, and everything crumbled due to the foreign standards and systems that have become the norm. Given this, it is essential to consider the relevance and contribution of solutions from African localities to global peace discourses.

While the demand for the institutionalisation of traditional African peace approaches is rising (Ani, 2019:145-147), Rwandan President Kagame and Egyptian President Fatah al-Sisi (respectively Chairpersons of the AUC between 2018-2020) both believed that these indigenous resources should be empowered and utilised to find 'African solutions' (Tawil, 2019; Genger, 2020:293). In the same vein, many scholars stated that to solve the continent's

problems effectively; it should exhibit an attitude representing African values (see Salem, 1993; Walker, 2004; Boege, 2011; Run, 2013). For Muchie et al. (2017:xii-xiii), “Africa urgently needs to be excavated, recorded, studied and resurrected in order to educate generations of Africans about the continent’s history of finding solutions to its problems”, and “African values, traditions and knowledge should be the foundation on which a united Africa should be anchored. African philosophies such as *Ubuntu*, *ujamaa*, *harambee* and *Maát* should be valorised” (Muchie et al., 2017:xiii).

One such worldview is *Ubuntu*, used for centuries as a systemic tool for reconciliation and mediation to resolve conflicts, heal relationships, and fix the inherent causes of conflict. The principles of *Ubuntu*, the South African philosophy (“I am because we are”), are used to transform the African security paradox that persists due to colonial discourse (see Mangaliso & Damane, 2001; Murithi, 2006; Akinola & Uzodike, 2018). South African philosopher Mogobe Ramose (1999, quoted by Maris, 2020) believes that *Ubuntu* is African philosophy’s root, rejecting liberal rights as a form of Western imperialism. Accordingly, *Ubuntu* is based on African culture and philosophy; it is viewed as the ideal pillar for African security (Malunga, 2006; Ncube, 2010; Appiah-Thompson, 2020). Muyingi (2013) and Rugeje (2016) assert that *Ubuntu* is a panacea for lasting peace because the protracted conflict in the DRC’s eastern region failed to establish peace despite great international and regional efforts.

These solutions need to be mainstreamed for better flexibility and effectiveness in conflict resolution (Malan, 1997; Brock–Utne, 2001; Murithi, 2006). Malan (2012:15) notes that traditional conflict resolution methods are still maintained among many societies despite being belittled the reason of “dominant peace advocacy had generally conceptualised peace and peacebuilding in the context of Eurocentric thinking”, as pointed out by Jeng (2012:6). For instance, Malan (1997) places the role of mediation, arguing that elders can be instrumental in ensuring a more inclusive peace on issues that threaten peace by researching the use of wisdom and values. Likewise, African women’s cultural roles associated with conflict resolution have been studied by Isike and Uzodike (2011), and Ineba Bob-Manuel (2000, quoted by Brock-Utne, 2001:13) highlighted the role of Kenya’s Luo women in different steps of peace efforts. Besides considering the various methods of African fundamental principles for resolving disputes and adopting a feminist approach to understanding hybrid peacebuilding, Martin de Almagro (2018) uncovers women activists in the DRC as resourceful agents of change. She argues that engaging in a relational approach to micropolitics and its manifestations is crucial to understanding how identity difference is generated in peacebuilding interventions.

2.3. Challenges and Limitations of the AU's 'African solutions'

2.3.1. Challenges in the AU's Implemental Role

According to MØller (2009:16), an essential gap remains between aspiration and implementation. The PSC has been a significant player but has been performing below average due to the difficulties operating and the incompatibility between the PSC and its subsidiary bodies (Williams, 2011). For instance, the PoW's "inadequate resources, membership, visibility, accessibility and cooperation" are cited as continuing challenges (Jegade, 2012). Despite its engagement in Kenyan post-election violence during 2007 and 2008 and its active participation in the Arab Spring in 2011, according to ISS (2014) report, the PoW has had a minor role in mediation and peace-making. As a result, the PoW handled the task of the crisis after it had already transpired instead of anticipating it by examining impending difficulties beforehand (ISS, 2014). Despite its good position for giving early warning of conflict, the CEWS has a shortage of appropriately qualified and experienced analysts to interpret received data and lacks geographic representation in the Situation Room (Bah et al., 2014:48). As stated by Darkwa (2017:471), despite being ready for operation since 2016, the ASF has still not been deployed in the way it was initially intended. The ASF has limited operational capabilities and relies significantly on foreign assistance to deploy and sustain AU forces (Caparini, 2016; Apuuli, 2017). The AU's inability to raise sufficient capital for its PF is one of its most pressing challenges in achieving its goals. Due to a high level of donor dependency, the AU (2017b) has increasingly focused on externally funded activities, "weakened ownership and led to strategic drift".

For many researchers, the structures formed by the AU attend to the security of Africa, and the values draw an impressive portrait in theory, but in practice, resource capability is shown as one of the biggest obstacles to the implementation of peace goals (see Williams, 2011; Vorrath, 2012; Vines, 2013; Dires Gardachew, 2020). The AU lacks the resources, like soldiers, police, equipment, strategic airlift capacity, training facilities, and staff required to continue small-scale peacekeeping operations. For instance, the Darfur crisis (2003 onwards) also put the AU's limited resources and inadequate equipment to the test in managing conflicts (Murithi, 2009a:100). "Burden of external funding" is one of the most considerable constraints to APSA's development and autonomy (Onditi et al., 2021:153), and this creates a fiscal dependence on international partners (de Albuquerque, 2016:29; de Coning, 2007). More than

90% of the AU's peace and security actions are financed by international actors (Paterson, 2013:29; Desmidt, 2016:7), mainly from the UN and the EU (Onditi et al., 2021:153). For instance, as the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) knows, peacekeeping efforts rely on the support of foreign aid, such as the UN's contribution of approximately 800 million dollars between 2009 and 2011, which was injected into the AMISOM trust fund (Fafore, 2020:50). On the European side, since 2003, the EU's African Peace Facility (APF)⁹ has contributed more than \$300 million in financial support to the AU (Franke & Esmenjaud, 2008:147, Franke & Gänzle, 2012:93) as part of its three interconnected priorities: strengthening engagement on security issues, operationalising the APSA, and assisting with Peace Support Operations (PSOs) (see European Commission, 2013).

Most peace operations on the continent involve temporary missions later taken over by a powerful UN mission (Okumu & Jaye, 2010:15). The example of the use of the UN's resources can be observed in the 2007 joint AU/UN Hybrid mission in Darfur (UNAMID) (see Murithi, 2009b). Nevertheless, Murithi (2007b; 2008b) claimed that a paternalistic relationship between the UN and the AU resulted in a failed peace dominated by external ideas. Similarly, according to Franke and Esmenjaud (2008:149), the AU Counter-Terrorism Centre is an example of western actors abusing Africa's dependence on foreign aid for their own ends. Due to this, a great divide emerged between the thinking of Africans and non-Africans concerning the concept of "African security". Franke and Esmenjaud (2008) cited Mazrui (1967:216) in this and argued that the dream of "*Pax Africana* that is protected and maintained by Africa herself" is a long way from realisation.

2.3.2. Limits in the Conceptual Paradigm of 'African solutions'

Liberal Peace Paradigm

The dominant paradigm describing post-conflict interventions since the Cold War is called 'liberal peace', informed mainly by the Westphalian state model¹⁰, which is the foundation of liberal peacebuilding (see Paris, 2004; Richmond, 2006; Richmond & Franks, 2009; Chandler, 2010; 2011; Autesserre, 2011; Campbell, Chandler & Sabaratnam, 2011). Heathershaw

⁹ The African Peace Facility (APF) was expanded and replaced by the European Peace Facility (EPF) in March 2021. For more information see <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-peace-facility/> [2022, August 30].

¹⁰ The creation of the 'modern' nation-state is attributed to Euro-American modernism. A treaty was signed in Westphalia at the end of the Thirty Years War, which laid the foundation for this system. The institutionalisation and "norming" of a contemporary international order emerged from the Westphalian Peace Treaty in 1648 (see Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a).

(2008:597) argued that this approach has no foundation based on the reality on the ground; instead, it is built on the arguments and theories put forward by international organisations based on their interests and experiences. The notion of ‘weak’ and ‘failed’ states in postcolonial Africa was seen as a significant factor in conflicts, threatening peace. The formula, therefore, was to ‘fix’ these nations, “defined as failed not by what they are, but *what they are not* [my own emphasis] according to a Western model of a legal-rational Weberian state” (Hellmuller, 2013:221). Ramose (2002:1) notes that it is significant that “for centuries, discourses on Africa have been dominated by non-Africans”. One fundamental flaw in these approaches is that liberal peace proponents commonly originate from North America and Europe and ignore that the ‘Africanist worldview’ is that Africans have developed and tested indigenous conflict management methods (Aubyn, 2020:16). Efforts driven by liberal peace methods have led to cosmetic solutions on the continent like in Burundi, the DRC, Mozambique, Somalia, and Sudan (Ayittey, 1994; Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2005; Murithi, 2008b; Curtis, 2012; Zambakari, 2017).

2.4. Decolonial Lens: Reflections on Peace and Security in Africa

The concept of peace and a ‘civilising’ mentality have always had a relationship, as in Roland Paris’s (2002) work. For colonies of the European empire, peacebuilding is a modified and gentle style of the “*mission civilisatrice*” to ‘civilise’ the colonised peoples of Africa. What is described as “*mission civilisatrice*” could be considered a colonial legacy that is called ‘coloniality’¹¹ which is inextricably linked with a “colonial matrix of power” (see Mignolo, 2011). Coloniality, as expressed through the prisms of Eurocentrism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; 2016:38), includes a set of modern structures shaped by Western prejudice, as noted by Samir Amin (2010), similar to the way it is pointed out by decolonial scholars, namely Grosfoguel (2011), Mignolo (2007; 2011), and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013c; 2013d). The concepts of globalisation and modernisation emerged as forms of neo-colonialism. Archie Mafeje (1977) notes that neo-colonialism is based on different shapes and control methods to continue the old

¹¹ There is an imperative distinction to be made between colonialism and coloniality. Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007:243), “coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged due to colonialism but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism”. In the same way, Ndlovu (2013:5) calls coloniality “invisible colonialisms” that remain after ‘independence’.

relations. The coloniality of the modern age has been described as a twin of Eurocentrism (Amin, 2010). Some forms of coloniality have emerged as a liberal peace paradigm in peace and security.

The struggle by African intellectuals throughout history to ‘unthink’ the Enlightenment epistemologies as well as “reproduce itself outside of these relations” (Quijano, 2007:169) is evident in some influential works about Africa (see Zeleza, 2006). While several African scholars find it challenging to think about peace outside of a liberal framework, likewise, it is about overcoming adversity i.e., the “colonial mindset and the neurosis of victimhood inflicted on Africans by a combination of exploitative and demeaning processes of the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism and apartheid” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Chambati, 2013:28). African scholars are nonetheless beginning the purpose of decolonial epistemology to use in the function of liberating language and political guidelines into the continent in the future despite these constraints (see Mamdani, 1996; Ahluwalia, 2001; Osaghae, 2006; Zeleza, 2006; Mhango, 2018; Nhemachena, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). These authors believe that a decolonial-liberationist approach to using Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s terminology - is a recipe to relaunch Africans to a radical struggle so they can achieve a postcolonial and postimperial future (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012; 2013a). Osaghae (2006) suggests that in a decolonial-liberationist account of the African, the narrative needs to transcend liberal evaluations of the African states and recognise how emancipatory and liberating aspects continued to smudge under colonial matrices. Top-down approaches to peace have been criticised as paternalistic (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2005; Murithi, 2006; 2007b), causing the problem to mutate rather than solve it (Curtis, 2012; Zambakari, 2017).

Although several researchers have proposed alternative models based on ‘hybrid peace’ to represent internal and external actors’ complex relationships (Mac Ginty, 2010; Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012; Forsyth et al., 2017), here, the emphasis was put on this by Zondi (2017:106), and Grosfoguel (2009) that there is a necessity for a ‘decolonial peace’, a peace that “deals with the colonial continuities like the inherited western state, with its underlying paradigm of war and violence, its coloniser model of the world and its colonial political economy” are addressed.

2.5. Conclusion

This literature review has given a brief overview of the argument presented concerning the limitations and challenges involved in ‘African solutions to African problems’ experienced by African states within the generally adopted liberal peace paradigm. Scholars have advocated that most African problems are the products of colonisation (see Alogo, Niebebu & Sampson, 2018). The literature on conflicts in Africa generally acknowledges that these problems are complex due to numerous structural, economic, political, cultural, and historical factors. As a result, for this reason, it is argued by those who could be considered anti-colonial or decolonial theorists that African states (as elsewhere in the colonised global south) should focus on eliminating the colonial structures underlying the issues to solve African problems as a priority. But is this perhaps easier said than done?

CHAPTER 3

RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1. Statement of the Research Problem

African leaders constantly endeavour to explore the potential to determine their capabilities to ensure the implementation of their solutions on the continent without external interference (Ayittey, 1994; MØller, 2009; Nathan, 2013; Ottoh, 2017). Conversely, the AU's APSA remains insufficient in the implemental scheme due to the continued presence and interference of the western colonial system on the continent. Increasingly, foreign interventions in Africa are being criticised for serving ulterior motives, providing illusory solutions, and worsening security conditions, thereby undermining local interests and values (Brock-Utne, 2001; Boege, 2011; Run, 2013).

3.2. Aims and Objectives

This thesis aims to appraise the AU's implementation of 'African solutions' for contributing to peace and security on the continent in the case study of the DRC since 2004.

Objectives:

The main goals are:

- a) To explore the meaning of 'African solutions to African problems' in the context of peace and security.
- b) To assess the AU's implementation of 'African solutions' in the DRC from 2004.

3.3. Research Questions

The central question being asked is:

To what extent has the AU succeeded in achieving implementation of the 'African solutions' in the DRC since 2004?

The sub-questions being asked are:

- a) In what ways has coloniality interfered with the discourses on ‘African solutions’ in the DRC?
- b) How has the vision of ‘African solutions to African problems’ impacted the implementation of peace and security in the DRC?
- c) What and how may potential resolutions and trajectories be mapped out for building peace and security within the DRC?

3.4. Theoretical Framework

Africa evolved around the active operations of colonial powers, defined as a set of invisible imperial designs (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). This coloniality emerged as applications of individualistic/liberal methods in conflict situations on the continent. Hence, liberal peacebuilders rejected African identity, indigenous practices, and cultural customs. The decolonial theory seeks to liberate the narrative of the modern world from the lens of coloniality by calling for epistemologies developed by subaltern and indigenous people from the global South (see Grosfoguel, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2000; 2007; 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2016; Quijano, 2000a; 2000b; 2007; Zondi, 2017; 2018). Hence, this study adopts this decolonial theoretical perspective on peace and security in African realities and epistemologies.

3.5. Research Methodology

3.5.1. Research Approach

A qualitative method with a desktop study of the implementation of the ability of the AU to produce ‘African solutions’ towards the attainment of a prosperous and peaceful Africa is applied. This method allowed the researcher to collect information on methods, opinions, views, and perspectives on the AU’s application of security policy in the DRC since 2004.

Data collection of this study mainly uses the official documents of the AU to evaluate the organisation’s peace and security policies in the DRC since 2004. The primary sources include official documents (*communiqué, press statement, report*) produced by the AU. Other primary

sources are joint official peace agreements and publications by the AU on the DRC. The secondary sources comprise books, chapters, and journal articles regarding the DRC. Accordingly, relevant newspaper articles, online media reports, and electronic (Internet) resources were included in the research.

3.5.2. Research Design: The Case Study of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Over the last decade, the DRC appears to have made little progress in establishing peace and political stability. The ability of the DRC to repeat violence in the face of international intervention makes it a focal point for peace discussions. Mashimango (2015) has shown that the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), as an arm of the international organisation, has failed to sustain peace and security in the city of Goma. Several theses have examined the capacity of SADC/South Africa in the Congolese conflict, which is characterised by several challenges (see Molemane, 2015; Kapinga, 2015; Mangwanda, 2016).

Nevertheless, in conformity with the Protocol, “the Union has the primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa” (AU, 2002:art. 16). Thus, this study concentrates on African solutions’ implementation via sovereign African agencies. In this sense, while the DRC poses significant challenges for the AU, which has the full responsibility for materialising the solutions for the security subjects on the continent, the complex structure of the DRC, which includes legacies of colonial rule and its remnants (coloniality), also allows for the examination of the conceptual role of solutions. As a result, it serves as the foundation for the case study on the AU’s implementation of the ‘African solutions’ in the DRC.

3.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The general characterisation of the cause of the bloodshed in the DRC has been the persistent image of a ‘resource war’. It has been primarily economic factors that have motivated external actors to participate in and perpetuate the conflict (see Clark, 2002). Therefore, it is suggested that there is more than a political crisis in that underlying socio-historical-economic determinants compound it. The conflict has been studied extensively concerning the political economy, state formation, and the processes of forming a national identity¹² within the context (see Cuvelier, Vlassenroot & Olin, 2014; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004; Vlassenroot,

¹² As discussed with reference to ‘African problems’ in the DRC (see section 4.2).

2006). This explains my focus on studying the AU and its mechanisms and examining how these known complicities impact sovereign African agencies. The case study is from 2004 with a focus on the DRC and is limited to a review of the AU's intervention through a desktop study method of the relevant primary sources.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

4.1. Brief Historical Overview of the DRC Conflict

The DRC shares borders with Congo (Brazzaville), Central African Republic (CAR) to the west, Sudan to the north, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda to the east, and Angola and Zambia to the south and is the largest in the Great Lakes Region. Approximately 108 million people are recorded to live in the country at present (CIA, n.d.), which is strategically located in the “heart of Africa” (Didier, 2017:52).

4.1.1. Pre-colonial Era

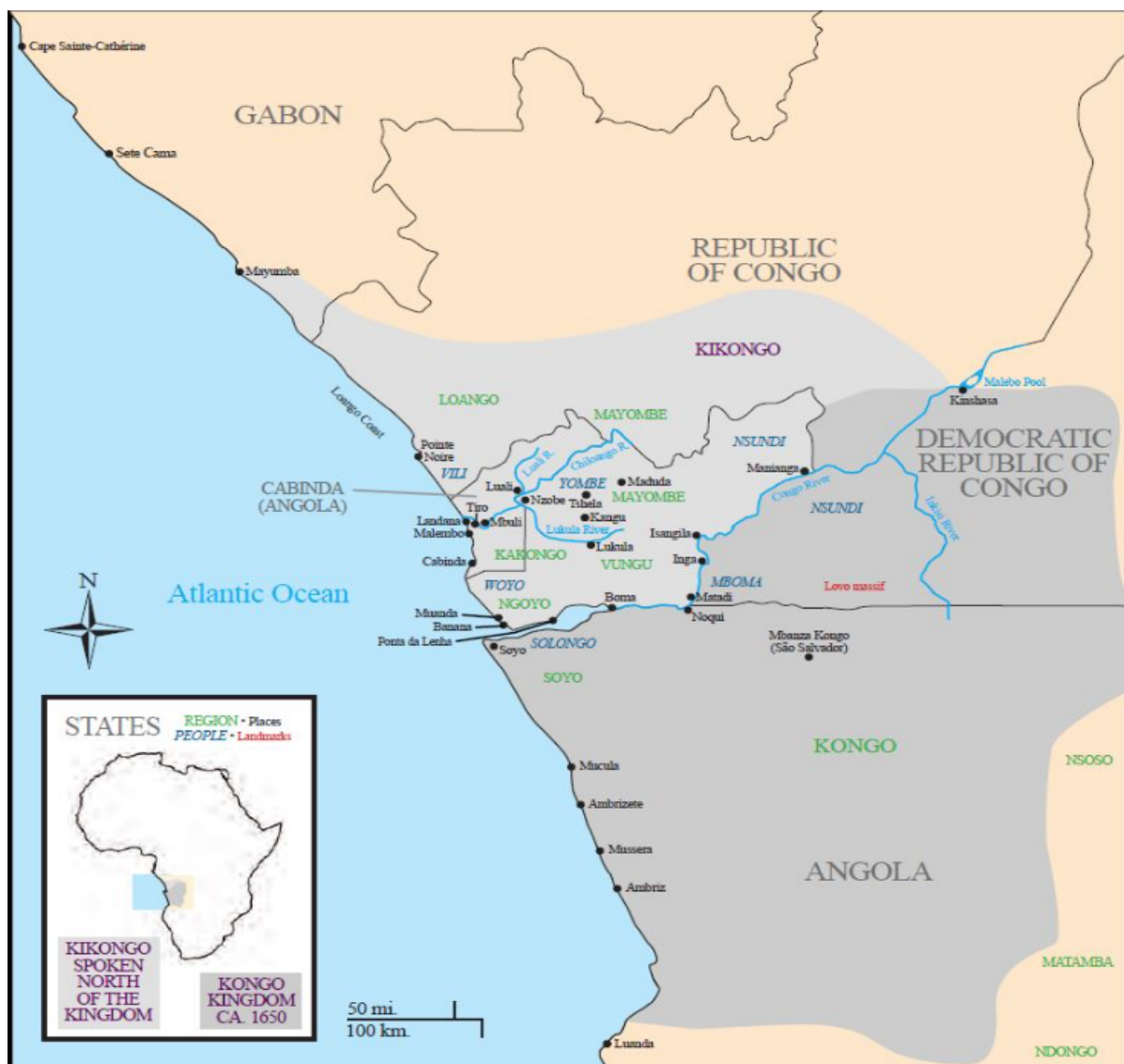
The name ‘Congo’ emanated from the pre-colonial ‘Kongo’¹³ Kingdom, where a river of the same name flows (Hove, 2017:16). According to Davidson (1980:133-163), pre-colonial ‘Kongo’ was characterised by considerable complexity, parallel to the modern Congo (DRC), which now represents one of “a mosaic of ethnic cultures” Africa’s most multilingual nations with many distinct indigenous languages or ethnic groups (Kisangani & Bobb, 2010:iv).

It is common to call pre-colonial African economies “subsistence economies”. However, the societies [in the region] used trading routes for the products that could not be produced locally and to exchange surplus (Rodney, 2011:109). The false idea that the continent only operates at the subsistence level, lacking sophistication and creativity, was born from strengthened European imperialism’s grip on Africa (Diop, 1987:130). Indeed, long before the Portuguese came ashore in the Congo, there were more than ten thousand states and kingdoms in Africa, and African civilisations differed significantly in size and structure (see Falola & Fleming, 2009). For example, in the state system of Luba, Lunda, Kuba, and Kongo, which had a centralised political structure, the Congo basin was the habitat of large-scale communities (see Vansina, 1966). As a great kingdom in Central Africa, Kongo (1390-1914) was a prominent and influential African kingdom with economies comparable to most other cultures in the 15th and 16th centuries (Hochschild, 1999:21-23). The well-organised Kingdom of Kongo was highly centralised, with a population of around 60.000 (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012:58). The Kongo Kingdom had a bureaucracy, taxation system, extensive public goods provision, an

¹³ In the thesis, ‘Kongo’, the name of the ancient kingdom in west-central Africa south of the Kongo River, is used to represent the country in the indigenous context, while ‘Congo’ is used to refer to the period after systematic colonisation and re-construction of the ‘Kongo’.

unwritten constitution, a comprehensive legal system with a jury trial and appeals system, skilled police force, and the military (Davidson, 1980:133-163; Vansina, 1990:155-158). In this manner, there is a stark contrast to the popular rhetoric that “Africa has no past” (Davidson, 1980:149), Africans being ‘barbarians’ and ‘savages’ who have not yet enjoyed the blessings of the European ‘civilising’ mission. Indeed, this sophisticated civilisation was during the 16th century up to the horrendous period called the transatlantic slave trade. The crippling impact of the slave trade on the economic, military, and political systems caused the Kongo to disband by the mid-seventeenth century (Davidson, 1980; Falola & Fleming, 2009).

FIGURE 2 - MAP OF THE KONGO KINGDOM CA. 1650 AND PRESENT BORDER ¹⁴



¹⁴ Africa Museum. n.d. *The Kongo kingdom*. Available: https://www.africamuseum.be/en/discover/history_articles/kongo-kingdom [2022, August 23].

4.1.2. Contact with Europe and the Start of the ‘African problems’

After the Portuguese sailor Diogo Cão first encountered the Congo/Kingdom of the Kongo in 1482 (Davidson, 1980:133; Hochschild, 1999:19), Europeans were keen to return to the continent with colonial interests. They did so in 1491 when a missionary expedition was dispatched by King João II of Portugal, which focused on two purposes: first, to bring Christianity to the ‘savages’ on the ‘dark continent’, and secondly, to discover profitable trade routes for Portugal (Levi, 2009:369-370). After the time of the Portuguese arrived in the fifteenth century, the Congolese were forced into a series of violent, insecure, and poverty-stricken circumstances (see Hochschild, 1999; Ewans, 2002). Portuguese colonisers transformed the Kongo into a centre of slavery for their profit (Hochschild, 1999:26-27). There is consensus among historians that “the hunting down of men – justified in the name of economic necessity, sanctified, practised one way or another by all the ‘foreigners’ and their native agents, was one factor in the destruction of the old Kongo. It perverted social relations... [I]t wounded the population of the Kongo in its very substance” (Gondola, 2002:32). The Congo became the centre of “the transatlantic slave trade marked the first scramble for Africa” (Omeje, 2012:12) by the Portuguese, with millions of Africans captured and sent across the ‘new world’ in the 1500s (Hochschild, 1999:25-27).

Over time, relations between Portugal and the Kongo deteriorated under the tremendous growth of the slave trade (Hochschild, 1999:28-35; Kisangani & Bobb, 2010:ivi). Ultimately, the Kingdom was captured by the Europeans in the late 1800s (Hochschild, 1999:35) after the Portuguese invasion and killing of the King in 1665 (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015:24). Throughout the three centuries of the slave trade, Africa suffered a severe economic impact (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015:24). Sophisticated pre-colonial states, particularly the Kongo, were torn apart systematically in a way that served best the Western colonisers’ political and economic interests (see Rodney, 2011). An institutional framework for the division of Africa among Europeans or “the systematic exploration of West Africa” was finally established in Berlin in 1885; whatever remained of the indigenous governing structures was further systematically destroyed by this ‘scramble for Africa’ (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2016:1807). Thus, the conference symbolised the end of a previous phase in utilising the continent’s human and material resources and starting a new chapter (Depelchin, 1992:35).

4.1.3. Systematic Colonisation of the Region and its Impact in the ‘Postcolonial’ Era

In 1871, Henry Morton Stanley was sent to the Congo’s hinterland by King Leopold II of Belgium to ‘explore’ its natural resource potential, to “justify the process of inventing and conquering a continent and naming its primitiveness or disorder, as well as the subsequent means of its exploitation and methods for its regeneration” (Mudimbe, 1988:20). Stanley returned from Africa to bring “the civilisation of Europe into the barbarism of Africa” (Stanley, 2011:333), which linked with Leopold II’s desire to establish a colony. The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 followed years after this expedition, balkanised Africa into colonisable sectors, coupled with the Belgian King’s desire to exploit the continent’s resources. Armah (2015:109) described the Berlin Conference as “a process much like the butchering of a huge elephant for sharing among jubilant hunter kin”. The conference recognised Leopold II’s control over the Congo.

When it was officially accepted internationally as King Leopold II’s (1885-1908) personal empire, colonial violence increased through the design of the so-called ‘Congo Free State’ (Meredith, 2006:95). While slave prices began to rise in the 19th century, European colonialists turned to trade products such as ivory and most notably rubber produced by local labour. These products replaced the declining slave trade (Exenberger & Hartmann, 2007:5). The Westerners started to understand the volume of this vast resource wealth following King Leopold II’s capture of the area in 1884-5. At the end of the same century, the Belgian imperialists started extracting large quantities of the Congo’s wild rubber. As stated by Hochschild (1999:322), “for Leopold, the rubber boom was a godsend. . . the world did not lose its desire for ivory, but by the late 1890s wild rubber had far surpassed it as the main source of revenue from the Congo”. As Leopold became immensely rich, he sparked a cycle of violence involving Congolese slave labour to meet demanded Belgian rubber quotas (Lowe & Montero, 2017). The violence in Leopold’s brutal system of forced labour was so high that anyone who refused to comply or resisted was amputated (Meredith, 2006:95). It is estimated that ten million Congolese died during the Leopold period (Hochschild, 1999:463). The ruthless period of exploitation continued with the then-known ‘Belgian Congo’ in 1908, marking the territory’s formal transition into a Belgian colony. Congolese people suffered racial discrimination, oppression, and human rights abuses for another fifty-two years (1908-1960). Hochschild (1999) and Nzogola-Ntalaja (2002) echoed that King Leopold’s rule, later passed on to the Belgian government, was marked by extensive carnage and blatant plunder of the Congo’s wealth.

Belgium eventually granted the Congo its ‘independence’ in 1960. Following independence, the country was plagued by instability, including the Katanga crisis¹⁵ and Patrice Lumumba’s assassination. Indeed, Witte (2001:173) stated that “the Congo crisis is due to just one man, Patrice Lumumba”. Despite being elected President and Prime Minister in 1960, Joseph Kasavubu and African revolutionary anti-Imperialist activist Patrice Lumumba served short terms, especially Lumumba. He (an avid supporter of Nkrumah) heavily protested colonialism, and its Western strategies were considered Communist. This perception was interpreted as a severe threat to the so-called ‘free world’ by Euro-western standards (Duodu, 2011). Western financial and corporate interests were endangered by Lumumba’s efforts to assist the Congolese people through the nation’s natural resources. Specifically, Lumumba pointed out that the country’s resources should be harnessed for the development and advancement of the Congo state rather than for the benefit of Westerners or its multinational corporations. He desired economic and political independence for the DRC, and while many Congolese regarded him as a saviour, others [the West] thought he would threaten their political and financial interests (Braeckman, 2004). The USA’s Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) considered Lumumba a detested person. More specifically, on 18 August 1960, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the President of the USA, was briefed on the Congo situation by the National Security Council and asked if “we can get rid of this guy [Lumumba]” (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002:107).

Unsurprisingly, Lumumba was assassinated a few months later, on 17 January 1961, with the known involvement of Belgium and the USA/CIA (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011). Lumumba had been secretly buried after he was killed, but his remains were later excavated to cover up the crime, cut with a hacksaw, and his body dissolved in a barrel of acid (see Gerard & Kuklick, 2015). The body was never found. The corpse was dissected in acid, and Belgian police officer Gerard Soete took the tooth. The Belgian policeman, who is now deceased, also decided to bring back some relics from Africa like ‘hunting trophies’. The federal prosecutor’s office only found one tooth that could be linked to Lumumba. On 20 June 2022, King Philippe of Belgium handed the tooth over to Lumumba’s family. In Kinshasa, on 30 June 2022, Lumumba’s family buried the only known relic of him - a tooth (“DRC: Belgium to...”, 2022; “DRC buries independence...”, 2022). The Congolese nation has been deeply affected by his murder, called by Ludo De Witte “the most important assassination of the 20th century”, which has been

¹⁵ The Katanga crisis was supported by the other major party, the Confederation of Tribal Associations of Katanga (CONAKAT), headed by Moise Tshombe, as opposed to Lumumba's Congolese National Movement (MNC). With the support of the West, the copper-rich Katanga province declared independence on July 11, 1960, under the leadership of Tshombe.

regarded as a terrible calamity to DRC's prosperous prospects (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011). His untimely and brutal death dealt a severe blow to the ambitions of Lumumba, including economic and political autonomy among all Africans, beyond the hopes of the Congolese and those fighting for democratic change (see Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011).

After Lumumba's death, Joseph-Désiré Mobutu became the new ruler, backed by the USA and Europe. Mineral resources were a significant motivator for American and European interests, compared to those possessed by Lumumba, which Mobutu could help them access. The instability and turmoil supported by the international actors during the five years after independence resulted in Mobutu coming to power due to a coup in 1965 arranged by the Belgian state and the CIA. There was a difference between the agendas of these two institutions. Belgian officials wished to remain "the godfather in Zaire's¹⁶ affairs as long as possible" as it was concerned about maintaining its dominance in forming policies since the Congolese economic institutions were tied to Belgian and foreign capital (Wong, 2012:75).

In contrast, the USA desired to see the DRC operate in free trade within the global capitalist system (Wong, 2012:75). In the end, the USA and Western policies towards the DRC were based on all these premises, which were interdependent. Firstly, it followed "the logic of both Cold War politics and institutional racism in the United States" to "prevent chaos, and therefore communist subversion". Secondly, because of unconditional western loyalty, and lastly, "to promote western interests in Central and Southern Africa" (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002:160-161). When the formula was applied, it created Mobutu's regime (1965–1997), which permitted extensive corruption, kleptocracy, and violence (Askin & Collins, 1993). As an echo of colonial rule, the DRC suffered economic collapse (Young & Turner, 1985:306-309), which fuelled fighting over land and identity at the heart of the conflict (Vlassenroot, 2002:507-508; Reyntjens, 2009:10-15).

In the post-Cold War policies, the same force that supported Mobutu Sese Seko¹⁷ in the DRC displaced him as its period of usefulness with the West had expired; that this would happen was evident from the considerable USA aid of roughly 400 million dollars between 1985 and 1990, which declined to 600 thousand dollars in 1992 after the Cold War (Schraeder,

¹⁶ In 1885, the name of the country now known as the DRC was the '*Congo Free State*'. Belgian colonisation of the CFS began in 1908 and was called the '*Belgian Congo*'. It became the '*Republic of Congo*' in 1960. In 1971, the country was renamed '*Zaire*'. Since 1997, the country has been known as the '*Democratic Republic of the Congo*' (DRC) (Kisangani & Bobb, 2010:xv).

¹⁷ Between 1966 and 1971, many names were changed to African names under the ideology of "Authenticity" or "Zairianisation". Accordingly, he changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko and the country's name to '*Zaire*' (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002:273-274).

1994:113). The 1994 Rwandan genocide led to the brutal 'First Congo War'. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized control of Rwanda following the massacre of mostly Tutsis, and several million Hutus fled to the neighbouring DRC, where they stayed in refugee camps. To overthrow Mobutu, Rwanda intervened in the DRC conflict under this pretext (Locke, 2010:168). In late 1996, the Tutsi community in South Kivu, backed by Rwanda, started a revolt to root out the genocide perpetrators known as the former members of the Armed Forces of Rwanda (ex-FAR) and Rwandan Hutu former militias (Interahamwe) or the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). When Hutu-Tutsi violence intensified in 1997, eliminating Mobutu and replacing him with Laurent Désiré Kabila became an integral part of the ambitions of the colonial powers. As this war became politicised with the international community's participation, with the support of Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL), commanded by Kabila, overthrew Mobutu from power in May 1997 (Mathys, 2017:467-468).

Gondola (2002) claimed that Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda were motivated by covert economic reasons beyond fighting Hutu militias. The RPF was created by the Ugandan military with help from the United Kingdom (UK), which trained the RPF at its military base in Uganda. Kagame commanded the RPF after training in the USA (Baregu, 2002:36). As part of the inter-imperialist rivalry, multinational companies were involved financially and logistically in this war (see Naidoo, 2003). As an example, Canadian Tenke Mining received a \$50 million contract in 1997, while American Mineral Fields agreed to a \$1 billion deal with AFDL (Ngolet, 2000:70-71).

After just one year, the DRC entered its 'Second War' in August 1998 when Kabila decided to separate from the Ugandans and Rwandans who had helped him topple Mobutu. In 1998, Kabila ordered the Rwandan and Ugandan militaries to leave the DRC to prevent both regional countries from annexing the mineral-rich province. The powers who installed Kabila responded by accusing him of not complying with their wishes. As part of its attempts to overthrow the ruling regime of President Kabila, Rwanda and Uganda backed various rebel groups. During this period, Kabila enlisted the assistance of Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia to ensure his power (Gross, 2007:97-100). Rebel forces launched a new Tutsi-led movement, namely the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD)¹⁸, triggering the 'Second Congo War' (1998-2003)

¹⁸ The RCD was later renamed RCD-ML, an Uganda-backed group, and RCD-Goma, supported by Rwanda. MLC (Movement for the Liberation of Congo) is another anti-Kabila group supported by Uganda.

(Verweijen, 2016:20). Some even labelled it the “first African world war” (Reyntjens, 2001:311).

The ripple effect of the war was considerable instability in the region. This led to multiple policy unclarity and disputes among Congolese who fought over the resources (Gross, 2007). In 1999, the Second Congo War officially ended on paper, marking a significant turning point in the DRC and the region’s history. Six African nations- Angola, the DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and the insurgent groups RCD-Goma and MLC- signed the *Lusaka Agreement* (Carayannis, 2009:7). There was an agreement between the parties to stop all guerrilla operations within the Congo (Fisher, 1999) and has been welcomed as the “African solution to an African problem”¹⁹ (Apuuli, 2004:69). Following the signing of the ceasefire, the UN Security Council (UNSC) authorised the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) by Resolution 1279 of 30 November 1999 (Carayannis, 2017:93). Despite these efforts, the parties to the conflict repeatedly violated the agreement. Even though the *Lusaka Agreement* was celebrated, this ongoing conflict between armed groups to control areas and minerals became known as the “Third Congo War” (Carayannis, 2003:247).

On 16 January 2001, Laurent Kabila was killed. His son Joseph Kabila succeeded him as president (Warren, 2011:7). On 17 December 2002, the signing of the *Global and All-Inclusive Agreement* prepared the way for a new constitution to be adopted following the gradual restoration of peace (Rogier, 2004:35). In April 2003, the *Final Act* for the settlement of any other neglected issues, in particular the disarmament of the armed groups and the integration of the forces into a national army, namely the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) (Verweijen, 2016:22), was signed after nearly three years of negotiations²⁰, namely the Inter Congolese Dialogue (ICD)²¹. This formally ended war that had claimed 3.8 million lives (Turner, 2007:2). Most political-military factions disbanded their military wings (Verweijen, 2016:22). After all, President Kabila presided over a transitional government between 2003 and 2006 (Warren, 2011:7) when the civil war officially ceased with a series of peace agreements facilitated by many national and international actors.

¹⁹ SADC played a leading role among various regional organisations. In the first war, Nelson Mandela (1996-1997) emerged as the principal mediator. The most diplomatic efforts were made by African figures (Blaise Campaore- as Chairman of the OAU, Frederick Chiluba- authorised by the SADC) (Rogier, 2004:26).

²⁰ For more about negotiations see International Crisis Group, 2002.

²¹ The Lusaka Agreement (1999:art.3.19) envisaged a six-week national conference designated as the Inter Congolese Dialogue (see Rogier, 2004).

4.2. Background to ‘African problems’ in the DRC

4.2.1. Nation-states and Ethnic Fragmentation in the Region

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a:333) argues that the African continent’s current security issues can generally be explained by focusing on the “European game”. Throughout Africa, nation-building efforts inspired by imposed Westphalian models have been widely documented (see Bayart, 1993; Bayart, Ellis & Hibou, 1999; Mbembe, 2001; Ferguson, 2006). For example, a detailed historical analysis was provided by Dunn (2003) regarding how Western codes and understandings in the Congo emerged and remained. Many researchers suggest that modern African countries suffer from the ‘Curse of Berlin’, referring to the division of Africa into nation-states and their sharing out amongst European imperialist powers at the Berlin Conference 1884-85 (see Adebajo, 2010; Mazrui, 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a; 2015). This resulted in the division of strong pre-colonial societies without considering the social cohesion that held Africans together for a long.

As African historian Ali Mazrui (2010:xii) further puts it, the Berlin Conference “unleashed unprecedented changes in African societies: political, economic, cultural, and psychological”. This conference resulted in people of different ethnic origins in Africa being trapped and controlled by European imperialist powers in new artificially created national borders of colonial states. Described as “iron cages” or “bondages of boundaries” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a:339, Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Mhlanga, 2013), even long after independence, this geographical and political division led to a profound disintegration in Africa that continued to obstruct the efforts for peace into contemporary times. While this creation is described by Basil Davidson (1992:10) as the “black man’s burden” and “the curse of the nation-state”, ignoring the nature of the constructed ‘nations’ is a vital issue that directly affects Africa’s security.

Fanon (1963:39-40) thus argues that today, the world is compartmentalised between the majority of native people and a minority of invading foreigners that appear to be “two different species”. Its most important outcome was the colonial state, which was referred to by Albert Memmi (1991) as the “coloniser” and “colonised” and Mahmood Mamdani (1996) as “citizen” and “subject”. The cultures were what mattered in the pre-colonial Congo region, and the notion of the nation-state was an unfamiliar state structure imported from Europe. Today, the legacy of colonialism is the arbitrary division of pre-colonial African states into so-called ‘modern’ states by colonial rulers. As a result, Africa has been controlled by a legacy of

colonialism based on arbitrary colonial borders, western state formation, and multi-ethnicism (see Nhema & Zeleza, 2008).

It is widely believed that the Belgian administration was a factor in segregating the Congolese people. Congolese scholar Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002:217) stated that “the colonial trinity sought to impose its hegemony through paternalism, white supremacy and administratively enforced ethnic division among Africans”. This resulted in an internal conflict between ethnic groups (Vlassenroot, 2002). The violence that continues today, mainly in the eastern part of the DRC, is based on constructed identities built-in a line with the interests of the colonial master. Firstly, citizenship rights issues were ingrained through local political structures. There were two types of people in the colonial state: races were governed through civil law for all non-natives (settlers), and ethnicities were governed through customary law for all natives (Mamdani, 2001b:654-657).

Mamdani (1998)²² affirms that “in the Great Lakes region, the proto-type settler was the Tutsi, and the proto-type native the Hutu”. The colonial system systematically divided African societies within the framework of its imperial ambitions, formulating the *Hamitic hypothesis*²³, positing that the Tutsis were classified as an ethnic group instead of a racial group, meaning they were always assumed to have originated from somewhere in Africa. It was not entirely clear where they were (Mamdani, 1998). Indeed, as Mamdani (1998) summarises, it is also important to remember that Hutus and Tutsis were both “colonised subjects”. There was a “victim consciousness” in both. To illustrate the conflict trap, it is evident in the contemporary Kivu province in eastern DRC, where there are antagonistic relations as ethnic groups view each other as enemies that deserve to be neutralised, injured, or eliminated, sometimes violently. In addition, these artificial dualisms (colonial casting of ‘indigenous’ and ‘non-indigenous’ in the region) have created problems with land ownership and conflicts. In the eastern DR Congo, the ethnic groups of South Kivu and North Kivu have constructed an ideology that connects land rights to customary power. This concept and its application led to the denial of native citizenship to Tutsis, as well as the denial of their ethnic rights as a group.

²² Online source: <https://citizenshiprightsafrika.org/wp-content/uploads/1998/05/mamdani-1998-inaugural-lecture.pdf> [2022, May 23].

²³ It is crucial to understand how divisions are constructed by colonisers and shaped by anthropological narratives. During the colonial period, this was done to distinguish Hutu from Tutsi. Colonisers used a legendary historical study to categorise the people of this region according to their origins based on the called *Hamitic hypothesis* (Mamdani, 2001a:79).

Due to the politics of exclusion, armed groups have become more motivated to mobilise (see Mamdani, 1996; Reyntjens, 2009).

There is no possible way to explain the wars and violence in the DRC region without mentioning colonialism and its cultural destruction. Colonialism annihilated the identities and values of the Congolese and the people inhabiting the surrounding region. The destruction of identities has led to cultures marked by violence and conflict (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002). Those nations such as Rwanda and Burundi that were victims of ethnic hatred and segregation are now killers of unending violence and war - a paradox in itself (see Mamdani, 1996; 2001a).

4.2.2. Political and Economic Resource Control of the DRC

The DRC is natural resources-rich enough to make the country one of the wealthiest countries (Laudati, 2013; Maystadt et al., 2014), but ironically, the nation is among the UN's least developed country category²⁴, with 175 out of 189 in the 2020 Human Development Index (UN, 2020:2). Several researchers, including Auty (1993) and Lalji (2007), have demonstrated the paradoxical relationship between abundant natural resources and a weak economy. It has been quoted as the 'Resource Curse' (Auty, 1993; Lujala, Gleditsch & Gilmore, 2005; Humphreys, Sachs & Stiglitz, 2007; Enough Project, 2009). Due to the rich natural resources in the region, the Congolese people have been adversely afflicted by conflict for hundreds of years. In Turner's words (2007:26), the country is a "geological scandal" because of some conflict minerals, including copper, cobalt, uranium, diamonds, and coltan. They are being illegally exploited by some of those "conflict minerals" while funding the fighting (Turner, 2013:13). As Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002:28) puts it: "the real scandal, however, is that in 110 years of mineral extraction, the wealth of the country has not been used to the benefit of the great majority of its people".

Problems caused by resource control by the West are rooted in the country's colonial era. During the 15th century, the Portuguese began interfering in the Congo as a slave-trading European power. The Belgians followed them in the 19th century with a brutal invasion and occupation. Another essential feature of the colonial period that must be considered is the function of the USA in the region as the first country to recognise the imposed colonial government of King Leopold II and force Belgium to take over the 'Belgian Congo' from the King after reports of brutal economic exploitations. The USA's involvement in the region arose

²⁴ Available: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category-democratic-republic-of-the-congo.html> [2022, April 14].

from its interest in the land's natural resources. In this regard, it is important to remind one that the uranium used for manufacturing the first atomic bombs by the USA was taken from the soil of DRC (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011). Despite the DRC's abundance of natural resources, rulers, foreign allies, and business partners have primarily used them to their advantage since King Leopold's reign (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002:28).

Many scholars cite the DRC's natural mineral resources as the cause of the violence, which were used either to finance warring parties or as an instrument of war (Turner, 2007; Gambino, 2011). Especially, Kivu, Katanga, and Kasai are the eastern provinces where the DRC's vast mineral deposits lie broadly (Autesserre, 2010:62-63). Regarding the ongoing wars, Kakozi (2007:84-5, quoted by Didier, 2017:115) observed that all wars had been fought in the country's east part. Mineral-rich eastern Congo is also home to many armed groups. These rebel groups come from surrounding countries (Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi) and worsen the struggle and competition for mineral resources (Autesserre, 2010). According to Autesserre (2012:204), "illegal exploitation of Congolese mineral resources is a significant cause of conflict", and the accompanying little-discussed sexual violence towards women (though not a focus of this study) remains a horrible and widespread form of abuse. In the hypothetical case of the DRC, without its large reserves of so many minerals, the war would have been less dramatic and their consequences less severe (Reyntjens, 2014).

The DRC's natural resources have been plundered for decades; Dunn (2002:69) concludes that "the fighting [was] for the institutionalization of violence for profit". The war in the country is similarly also described by Nzongola-Ntalaja (2004:15) as "the war for Congo's natural resources".

4.3. A Brief Overview of the Current Discourse on Causes of 'African problems' in the DRC

It is impossible to homogenise the DRC situation with one set of causal factors. The region has therefore attracted extensive research interest (see for instance Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002; Turner, 2007; Carayannis, 2009; Eriksen, 2009; Lemarchand, 2009; Prunier, 2009; Autesserre, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2014; Swart, 2010; 2011; Hellmuller, 2012; Stearns, 2022).

George Ngwane (1996:4, quoted by Ani, 2016:101) argued that "even though the West are the first to appear in any trouble spot or war zone in Africa posing as humanitarian relief agents

and Peace Keeping forces, they are sometimes the catalysts of most tragic reactions in Africa”. Many historians believe one of the roots of strife in the DRC can be found in Belgian colonial rule, supporting and changing the mythology of ethnic difference (Karbo & Mutisi, 2012). This can be explained in the analysis of Autesserre (2010:1) that external actors have created a world that is marked by “its own rituals, its own customs, its own beliefs, its own roles, its own stars, its own villains, its own rules, its own taboos, its own meeting places, in brief, its own culture”. The DRC has been a victim of this predicament, particularly with the imposed western approach to peace.

Addressing post-conflict country needs, liberal approaches are frequently criticised for their top-down and state-centred nature. Autesserre (2010; 2011) draws attention to the fact that top-down peacebuilding models do not pay enough attention to local dynamics. Olonisakin and Muteru (2014) draw attention to the value of traditional African systems for peace on the continent while at the same time pointing out that, by contrast, western-influenced African peacebuilding processes do not prioritise local context and local actors. For example, the ICD process between 2000-2003 was dominated by national elites. Civil society and grassroots have also mainly been neglected, favouring more powerful Congolese actors (Hellmuller, 2012:243; 2013:224). The implications of the ICD are addressed by Rogier (2004:39), who states: “the ICD was reduced to a bargaining forum between warlords and predatory leaders”, highlighting elites’ control during the negotiations. The ICD contained a central paradox in liberal peace: although the methods were claimed to focus on local problems and root causes, this was not implemented.

Bussy and Gallo (2016) argue that liberal peace programmes that determine a top-down method that builds strong state authority are the primary cause of the ongoing conflict. Likewise, Eriksen (2009) outlined that the 1999 *Lusaka Agreement* is ineffective due to “one size fits all” models because there has been a trend for UN policies to be unresponsive to vital domestic actors, and therefore “the entire project of external state-building is contradictory and doomed to fail” (Eriksen, 2009:653). Most importantly, perhaps, the debate has been dominated by the dictate that elections are the main solution to the country’s problems. It has been stated by Stearns et al. (2017) that the DRC’s problems can only be resolved through elections and institutional reforms. Contrary to popular belief, foreign interference in the Congo has not succeeded in achieving peace, as Nzongola-Ntalaja (2006) asserts. In fact, outside interference has undermined the unity and consolidation of the DRC’s democratic path.

In this context, the Lusaka and other ceasefire agreements are mainly aimed at liberal state-building in a country described as one “with a history of abuses”, manifested by “a constant pattern of violence by people in power” (Autesserre, 2010:74-75). This view reflected the widespread belief that the DRC was a failed state’ that needed to be ‘corrected’. It could be claimed that the goal in this process includes the theoretical concept of ‘bringing peace to Africa’, to “rely on a colonial logic of development that reduces war-torn societies to states that have fallen from the ladder of human progress and need a cure of ‘liberal state-building to get back on track” (Lidén, 2011:57). The liberal peacebuilding paradigm heavily influences the MONUC and MONUSCO agendas. The same concept applies to the DRC’s more general image as a ‘savage’ nation and ‘failed’ state: these notions shape a likely behaviour pattern in peacebuilding initiatives (see Autesserre, 2014). There is also extensive documentation of racist discourse in UN missions in the DRC. According to de Heredia (2012:81), the language used by UN officials refer to the “Congolese as ‘corrupt’, ‘lazy’, ‘opportunistic’, ‘selfish’ or ‘backward’”. Furthermore, she reflected that MONUC’s indispensability had been justified by ‘bad-mouthing techniques’ (de Heredia, 2012:81). To put it another way: “start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story” (Adichie, 2009).

Given this historical context of the DRC as a case study, this research now proceeds to critically review the question of the effectiveness of the AU’s implementation of ‘African solutions’ for bringing peace to the DRC since 2004.

CHAPTER 5

THE AU'S IMPLEMENTATION OF 'AFRICAN SOLUTIONS': THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) SINCE 2004

5.1. An Assessment of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and its Institutions

On 30 June 2003, the transition process was officially launched upon establishing the transitional government. During the following months, the major warring parties began planning for general elections to rebuild a government authority. The AU supported the country's reconstruction with the tasks of establishing new legal and institutional frameworks and building state authority. It has been a long and challenging road. On 13 April 2004, the Peace and Security Council (PSC, 2004a) issued a communiqué after its 5th meeting on the situation in the DRC. The PSC (2004a:4, art. 1) expressed its "grave concern" about "the many delays in the implementation of the programmes...within the framework of the transition process". The PSC (2004a:5, art. 2) specifically called for Transitional Institutions. Particularly relevant, AUC submitted a report to the PSC, informing the PSC of various political, security, and electoral processes. The report highlighted the challenges faced by establishing the Transition institutions (PSC, 2004b).

The state-building project has been expanded in response to international peacebuilders' rhetoric while increasing MONUC troop numbers. There was a need to oversee the ceasefire more closely and 'assist' the Congolese authorities. From 2003 to 2006, MONUC was partly responsible for functions as part of the Committee in Support of the Transition (CIAT) (Reyntjens, 2009:263). The AU applied the same logic. The AU followed up on implementing the transition process and monitored the country's toward 'democratic governance'. The focus was on the presidential election and a short-term perspective on peace promotion in which local and African dynamics have been overlooked as a participant of the CIAT formed by the global powers for assisting in the electoral process. Headed by William L. Swing, an American and UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in the DRC, the CIAT also consisted of a committee of permanent members are Belgium, Canada, and the EU involved in the peace process (Haskin, 2005:148). In this sense, it is significant to note that the international community criticises the positions within the CIAT for continuing to act as the "guardians", despite being regarded only as an "accompanying" organ (de Goede & Van Der Borgh, 2008:124). To address the crisis, the AU Special Representative attended all CIAT and

Technical Committee meetings (PSC, 2004b:art. 29). Overall, through the Liaison Office, the AU also maintained “regular contacts both with the Congolese players in the peace process and the country’s external partners in the process” (PSC, 2004b:art. 31).

During this period, ceasefire agreements were partially respected despite a close relationship with Western partners; conflicts continued intensely. Likewise, between 1997 and 2013, 23 peace agreements were signed, but no signs of peace have been evident in the DRC (Nderitu, 2013:1). The PSC (2004c:art. 8), which held its 9th meeting on 25 May 2004, expressed “deep concern with regard to the delays in the implementation process”. There seemed to be no mechanism to break the deadlock after the peace agreements. The AU-led DRC peace promotion lacked comprehensive transformation. The early meetings of the PSC repeated that emphasis on Transitional Institutions and implementation of the peace agreements. It focused on the state-centred approach envisaged by the Euro-centric modernity (see Mbembe’s earlier point in 2001 on imposing a sense of incompleteness and “primordial chaos”) by establishing European-like institutions that exclude African states from the ownership of their own peace processes.

By doing so, the PSC continued its appeal to UN peace efforts in the DRC within historical paternalism defined by Murithi (2007b:2) as “a top-down unidirectional relationship”. On 4 June 2004, at its 11th meeting, the PSC, after renewing its support for increasing the size of MONUC, issued a statement reiterating its “full support for the peace and reconciliation process and transition institutions in the DRC” (PSC, 2004d:arts. 6-7). The PSC called on all stakeholders to “facilitate... the efforts of the international community to promote peace and stability in the region” (PSC, 2004d:art. 9). As explained above, the central concept of the ‘international community’ is derived from the ‘failed’ label of the state. It is defined by Auteserre (2010:75) as “a country with a continuous pattern of violence and abuse against the population by people in power”. Repetitions such as facilitating the “efforts of the international community” point to the coherence of colonial discourse and authority.

Given the continuity of colonial discourse that triggered the DRC’s security dilemma, on 4 July 2004, the PSC published a communiqué in which it reaffirmed its concerns regarding the delays in the transitional process (PSC, 2004e:2, art. 1). Subsequently, the Chairperson of the AUC stated that they deployed a mission to the DRC and Rwanda. The delegation held tasks to reduce the tension between the two countries by conducting a series of talks with several actors (PSC, 2004f:5, art. 24). The Chairperson’s report observed that the recent events in Southern

Kivu indicated the fragile nature of the DRC's ongoing transitional process (PSC, 2004f:7, art. 30) In a communiqué dated 7 December 2004, the PSC once again expressed its concern over the remaining activities of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe while requesting the "UN to vigorously pursue its efforts to strengthen the MONUC to enable it effectively support the disarmament and demobilisation of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe" (PSC, 2004g:art. 4). Thus, it can be said that the PSC has started reaching more inclusive and lasting solutions to the problem with the field mission. However, it has maintained its complementary role to the UN's unfruitful efforts.

The PSC (2005a:6, art. 7) called for "the UN...as well as the international community, to continue to support the peace and transition processes". The PSC (2005a:5, art. 4) requested "the UNSC to increase substantially the strength of the MONUC and enhance its mandate". The AU followed the situation regularly through the Liaison Office in the DRC and had "*a more active role* [my own emphasis] in supporting the transition process, particularly the electoral process", by consulting with all stakeholders (PSC, 2005a:6, art. 9). However, from the PSC's policy documents, there were slight indications that the AU has played an "active role", while following a multilateral path, including a partnership with international actors.

The Chairperson's report of the AUC of 10-11 January 2005 noted that the tension between DRC and Rwanda was becoming "a recurring problem in the last few years". The ongoing crisis was a critical indicator of potential and future conflicts (PSC, 2005b:art. 24). Indeed, the report was one of the few to highlight the significance of negative conflict attitudes and tensions as sources of future conflict (see PSC, 2005b). Although the ongoing conflict had highlighted the stalemate, the AU struggled to find durable solutions while supporting its Western partners due to the colonial legacy. For instance, the Belgian colonial rule "used ethnicity as an organizational variable in creating administrative units...reinforced the sense of ethnic identity on the part of these communities" (Turner, 2007:81). As Mamdani (2001a:33) argues, it follows that anti-indigeneity narratives established by colonial state authorities "...set in motion a process with the potential of endlessly spawning identities animated by the distinctions indigenous and nonindigenous, and polarising them. This set the context in which political violence unfolded in Africa, colonial as well as postcolonial". As mentioned in Chapter 4, as well as disputes over mineral resources and territory, citizenship emerged as an instrumental factor in the Eastern Congo (Mamdani, 2001a; Turner, 2007). Accordingly, the crisis in North Kivu continued to be a significant concern. The AU determined to discourage and neutralise the armed groups in Eastern DRC (PSC, 2005c). This was followed by the Military

Reconnaissance Mission to the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda between November and December 2005 (PSC, 2006a).

The three-year transition resulted in the elections held in 2006. On 2 June 2006, the PSC communiqué issued took note of the Report of the Chairperson of the AUC on the situation in the DRC tabled on the same day. The PSC (2006b:art. 2) underscored “the importance which the African Union attaches to the smooth conduct of the presidential and legislative elections due on 30 July 2006”. The PSC mandated the UN to oversee all activities preparatory to implementing the electoral process. As part of this effort, MONUC provided the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) with technical and logistic assistance and support for all its activities. It formed an elections unit to plan electoral activities and communicate with various stakeholders. Meanwhile, in general, the EU supported the peace and transition process, particularly the electoral process, with a required budget of EU funding of 80% (PSC, 2006c:art. 4).

Moreover, EU Military Operation in the DRC, known as EUFOR RD Congo, was formed in 2006 to assist the MONUC. In June 2006, the EU special force incurred expenses of € 60 million for the election (roughly \$75.6 million) (Reid, 2013:38). As part of its engagement, it should also be reminded that the EU deployed its first EU-led mission outside Europe to the DRC. In 2003, the code-named ARTEMIS was a mission for the “stabilisation of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in the town of Bunia, eastern DRC” (Froitzheim, Söderbaum & Taylor, 2011:52). With five EU interventions²⁵, including ARTEMIS and EUFOR, since 2003, the DRC has emerged as the country that has received the most EU ‘assistance’ (Arnould & Vlassenroot, 2016). Some scholars demonstrated that the interventions of the EU arose from its concerns over potential economic losses in the DRC (Kent, 2015). In the ‘postcolonial’ period, many scholars argued that the DRC is seen as a space in which EU foreign policy instruments can be “tested”; it is also called “the biggest laboratory for EU crisis management” (Grevi, 2007:114).

Operation ARTEMIS and EUFOR were conducted because so-called ‘humanitarian missions’ were necessary, but this definition alone was insufficient. For example, in 2004, there were widespread violations during fighting between militias and the government in Bukavu. During this time, the EU did not send troops to support MONUC. In 2005 and 2006, no intervention

²⁵ 2003 ARTEMIS, 2006 EUFOR RD Congo, 2005 EUSEC RD Congo (the mission to give Security Sector Reform or SSR support), 2005-2007 EUPOL Kinshasa, civil police mission, and this was replaced by EUPOL RD Congo in 2007, which expanded its scope to include other areas of the DRC.

was made in Rutshuru or Sake; EUFOR did not stay in Kinshasa beyond December 2006 (Gegout, 2009:410). In all these cases, the EU could have intervened if ‘humanitarian concerns’ had dominated the process. However, it chose not to do so: these missions were primarily created to further the EU’s role as a security player instead of promoting peace. The EU is heavily involved in the DRC conflict, so it is obvious that the EU’s primary concern is maintaining its engagement while demonstrating its commitment through a test of its intervention capabilities.

Theoretically, special cooperation with international partners is often viewed as a beneficial component for the AU in achieving the ‘African solutions’, but they are also known to mask some negative aspects. As shown in Chapter 2, there have been complicated relations between the AU and its foreign supporters due to the AU’s severe financial dependency. Hence, “whoever pays the piper calls the tune” (Genger, 2020:301); the international donors have dictated how APSA operates. The obsession with state-building and democratic elections, in general, led to “a creeping Westernisation of African security efforts” (Franke & Esmenjaud, 2008:148; Franke & Gänzle, 2012:95). In this way, the AU’s agenda was guaranteed to result in reciprocal relationships that would ensure the desired results hoped for by the external players, the extinction of alternative politics that held the potential for decolonial praxis. The AU has performed to represent the persistence of global colonial matrices (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a) that pushes the ‘Africanist worldview’ to the margins while continuing to implement ‘solutions’ based on dominant discourse and politics. Therefore, AU could not offer a permanent cure for DRC and had to focus solely on reducing the observed symptoms of violence.

Accordingly, in the press statement on the preparation for the upcoming elections on 30 July 2006, the PSC (2006d) observed the progress made by the IEC. The AU has continued to monitor the situation and urged all concerned to avoid doing any activity that might adversely affect the electoral or the transition process (PSC, 2006e; 2006f). The AU has attempted to resolve disputes in (post)colonial Africa; however, there was no doubt that the colonial fragmentation of the pre-colonial continues to negatively impact the colonially created nation’s security and peace prospects, as discussed in Chapter 4. The AU declared the holding of elections and setting up of new institutions as “a *new chapter* [my own emphasis] in the history of the DRC” (PSC, 2007a:art. 23). However, the Chairperson of the AUC, in his report on the situation in the DRC on 25 October 2007, stated that “the continuous presence of foreign armed groups in Eastern DRC, including the FDLR, poses a real threat to peace in the country”. In

this sense, the Chairperson stated that “the African Union and its Member States have a crucial role to play in this respect” (PSC, 2007a:arts. 23-24). The AU seemed willing to play a valuable role in peace processes, but these efforts were compromised by the liberal peace consensus perceptions of the building of ‘democratic’ states through elections.

After the 2006 elections, there has been limited progress in disarming and reintegrating the rebel groups or the FDLR²⁶ forces. On this issue, at the meeting on 25 October 2007, the PSC (2007b:art. 6) expressed its “deep concern over the continued presence of exFAR/Interahamwé, the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) and other armed groups in the East of the DRC”. At its 97th meeting, the PSC (2007b:art. 6) strongly condemned “their destabilising activities in the region, as well as the terrible acts they commit against the civilian population”.

The peace process was considered a failure even after constructing a new government. Even though two agreements were signed in the 2007 *Nairobi Agreement* and the 2008 *Goma Acte d’engagement*, which served as the basis for the Amani process, there were two binding contracts in part of the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR), the number of armed groups²⁷, in particular, the FDLR, the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) and Mai-Mai militias²⁸ and their sizes continued to grow exponentially following these agreements (Carayannis, 2009:5). The Eastern region (South and North Kivu) and their neighbouring countries were most affected (see Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2009). In a press statement at its 106th meeting, the PSC expressed “its deep concern over at the persisting violence in the North and South Kivus” (PSC, 2008a). The PSC issued a communiqué on 29 June 2008, urging “the Congolese parties to comply with the *Goma Actes d’engagement*, to strictly implement them with a view to accelerating the re-establishment of State authority in the Kivus” (PSC, 2008b:art. 10). On 30 October 2008, the PSC (2008c) expressed significant concerns about the North Kivu region’s worsening humanitarian and security crisis. Therefore, the PSC issued a communiqué recalling “the crucial importance of the implementation of the *Actes d’engagement* for the restoration of lasting peace, security and stability in the Kivus” (PSC, 2008d:art. 5). The PSC (2008d:art. 8)

²⁶ For more about FDLR, see DRC Affinity Group, 2014.

²⁷ There have been violent conflicts and intermittent rebellions in the eastern DRC. Many of these have been organised by the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), a group of Rwandan Hutus. The other major group, CNDP, ethnic Congolese Tutsis, emerged as the leading armed group in Eastern DRC in 2008; General Laurent Nkunda led the group. For an overview of armed groups, see Stearns & Vogel, 2015; Verweijen, 2016.

²⁸ This umbrella term refers to armed groups that use “discourses of self-defence and native belonging” (Verweijen, 2016:21).

also stated “its full support to the MONUC” and underlined the “need to reinforce MONUC through additional troops and equipment to enable it fully discharge its mandate”. Indeed, as early as its establishment, MONUC was responsible for protecting civilians, supporting the territory’s security, and reconstituting state authority. Eriksen (2009:663) argues that the state-building project of external actors failed due to designs “operating with a fixed, non-negotiable conception of what the state eventually should look like” while disregarding the complex and evolving interests and relations amongst domestic powers. In this context, peacebuilding has continued by the UN forces to establish state authority through ‘modern’, ‘righteous’, and ‘appropriate’ means in the country.

There continues to be a tendency for peace efforts to prioritise restoring state authority sponsored by international organisations, which conceals the significant role traditional African systems may play in promoting peace (see Olonisakin & Muteru, 2014). This is reflected in the AU-led solution process; its policy implementation has continued to work towards enforcing peace agreements (PSC, 2008e:art. 14) and constantly played a complementary and supportive role for the leading liberal peace practitioner by encouraging the UNSC “to seize the occasion of the renewal of the mandate of MONUC” (PSC, 2008e:art. 16). In this sense, the main event in the period concerned the renewal of the MONUC mandate. The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the AU, at its 15th Ordinary Session, stated that “the AU was actively involved in the consultations initiated in this regard” (AU, 2010:17, art. 78). Accordingly, MONUC’s mandate was extended by the UNSC in 2010. The name of the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) was changed, reflecting its expanded role.

In generating complementary models for the solution, the PSC recommended eradicating sexual violence²⁹ and ending illegal exploitation (PSC, 2010a) in the report on the Multidisciplinary Mission (February 2010). The mission’s recommendations also included consolidating peace in Eastern DRC, reforming the judicial and security sectors; restructuring the administrative system, combatting corruption, mainstreaming gender issues in Vision Congo 2030; reviewing UN engagement, and the provision of adequate electoral arrangements for 2011; and protecting the DRC’s mineral resources from illegal exploitation (PSC, 2010b). It was an essential point of view that the AU drew attention to sexual violence, which is a complex component of the economic explanations of the ongoing crisis of DRC. Furthermore,

²⁹ For a comprehensive overview of sexual violence in DRC, see Mertens, 2017.

in a communiqué released at its 8th meeting held on 21 May 2010, the PoW (2010) emphasised implementing the recommendations in the mission's report. On the flip side, while these proposals describe the AU's point of view for the 'solutions', many can be criticised for the failure to provide detailed plans for how to do this and its arguably slow performance in promoting and encouraging the fundamental values of 'African solutions'.

The AU's policy implementation may be slow, but external actors' strategies remain the basis for the new layers of conflict added by poorly designed approaches to combat armed groups. As Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2009:484) put it, "the strategy of power-sharing and institution building in the DRC has slowly but steadily become constitutive of a dialectic of structural violence and privatized governance that forms an essential impediment to genuine change". This illustrates the enduring effects of fragmentation; in April 2012, violence resurfaced, displacing an estimated 100,000 people, repositioning hostile forces, attacking civilians and peacekeepers from MONUSCO, and seriously damaging bilateral ties between Rwanda and DRC. There started to be articles published in the Congolese press under the title "DRC at War Again" (Sidorova & Lyubenova, 2021:1321). The main actors in the ongoing insecurity situation are the ex-CNDP deserters from the FARDC and their supporters operating under the Movement of 23 March (M23)³⁰. The M23 rebel group has intensified the regional humanitarian crisis, again throwing the eastern DRC into chaos (see Stearns, 2012). Deteriorating security conditions have allowed armed groups and conflict opportunists to exploit vast natural resources in the East through illegal exploitation and smuggling, which the AU, in its limited role, has not been able to contain.

It was apparent from continued violence that the DRC had not yet reached economic and political independence, despite becoming 'independent' in 1960. Africa has been experiencing chronic instability and insecurity due to "artificial wars", or wars "with hands of other people" (Sidorova & Lyubenova, 2021:1319). These war designers are not just the product of Congolese actors or neighbours. There are invisible strings linking the puppeteers to Europe and the USA. It is well known that violence is associated with exploiting natural resources plundered by international agencies since the slave trade, Mobutu's regime, and the civil war. As the United Nations (UN, 2001) reported, the global players' funds gained through the looting and exploiting natural resources are essentially to blame for the violence. Similarly, the

³⁰ In 2012, ex-CNDP soldiers and officers formed the M23 rebellion, which was a consequence of the 2009 integration of the CNDP into the FARDC (Stearns, 2012; Verweijen, 2016:64).

UN's (2003) report on illegal exploitation referenced the war economy while simultaneously showing that Western superpowers did not leave the DRC after 'independence'.

In this sense, a shared understanding of the DRC's turbulent history of violence has shown that external forces are to blame for most of its troubles (see for example Reno, 1998; International Peace Information Service [IPIS], 2002; Jackson, 2002; Haskin, 2005). The UN (2001:art. 215) has clearly shown how illegal mining and other natural resource smuggling are driven by the private sectors, especially during the first years of the conflict. Another fundamental IPIS (2002) report examined the strong links between European commercial businesses operating in South Kivu and the Rwanda-backed RCD-Goma insurgents, revealing that European corporations are the main culprits in the natural resource exploitation the persistence of violence (see IPIS, 2002). Even if many of these businesses have vanished, armed groups continue to manage their well-established networks of exploitation and trade (Kibasomba & Lombe, 2011:77). This was in line with the fact that several scholars portrayed those global corporations as the "engine of the conflict" (see Noury, 2010). As Turner (2007:24) stated, "Pillage of Congo's resources is not just a manner of speaking. It is a reality".

Although the suffering of the people of the DRC is enormous and ongoing, these companies and their nations remain prosperous. As Chomsky (1998:28) reminds us that societies continue to live below the poverty line while at the same time, rulers accumulate enormous wealth, ensuring the "welfare of the world capitalist system" and the possibility that exploited societies might not even consider "alternatives different from those of the powerful". Zondi (2017) and Grosfoguel (2011) emphasise colonial continuities in an inherited 'postcolonial' state, its 'postcolonial' economic system, and its cycle of war and violence. In this perspective, while the AU implements policies clearly described as 'African solutions', it should not only assume a leading role in implementation but also pursue policies to eliminate postcolonial continuity for 'decolonial peace'. In this sense, the AU could play an essential role in the remedy; however, its actions are limited. The argument that the AU takes a back seat in the DRC has focused chiefly on the lack of resources to address the complex situation effectively, but this contradicts the theoretical goals and mandate of the AU, which call for explicitly endorsed 'African solutions'.

Moving the debate further, based on a study by Kibasomba and Lombe (2011) in Kivu, local perceptions of conflict resolution are quite different from those of the AU regarding its solutions. According to the findings, South and North Kivu residents believed the international

community is just as guilty of blocking peace in the DRC as multinational companies (Kibasomba & Lombe, 2011:131). However, while PSC had to move along the peace line drawn by external partners, at its 324th and 327th meetings held in 2012, the PSC (2012c; 2012d) recalled support for the efforts to fully restore State authority and reiterated that all stakeholders should support MONUSCO at its 343rd meeting held on 26 November 2012 (PSC, 2012f:art. 7). In its 346th meeting, the PSC (2012g:art. 10) reiterated “deep concern at the serious humanitarian situation...and calls for the provision of a humanitarian support”. These requests were met with financial aid from international partners. An example is the 10th and 11th European Development Fund (EDF)³¹, which provided respectively €584 million (Froitzheim & Söderbaum, 2013:9) and €620 million in aid from 2008 to 2020 (European Commission, n.d.), including peace-related programs financed by the African Peace Facility (APF) since 2003. Providing security funds for 18 years under APF was expanded and replaced as the European Peace Fund (EPF) in March 2021 and increased to support the AU with 600 million dollars in April 2022 (Council of the EU, 2022). While this decision by the EU is touted as a firm reminder of “a strong signal of EU’s long-standing commitments to African partners, particularly the African Union” (Council of the EU, 2022), controversially, it appears to give the EU renewed legitimacy to play a substantial role in future African peace sphere.

On 24 February 2013, African countries signed an UN-drafted peace deal to stabilise the DRC (*Framework of Hope*) in Addis Ababa. The Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region (PSCF) was signed by eleven sub-Saharan African countries, namely Angola, Burundi, CAR, DRC, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, while the four main guarantors, the AU, the UN, ICGLR, and the SADC. As stated in the second paragraph of the PSCF, the motivation of the PSCF (2013:para. 2) refers to “the recurring cycles of conflict and persistent violence” experienced in the DRC. North Kivu’s recent crisis, signalled by the outbreak of war whose “recurring cycles of violence” has proven that “the current path is untenable” and needs to be “created a window of opportunity to address the root causes of conflict” (PSCF, 2013:para. 4). Despite this recognition, there was still a liberal lens that defined that new path.

There is no doubt that coloniality profoundly affects the global structure of world politics. There is a tendency among international peace actors to portray the conflict in a simplistic dual system in which armed groups are the main problem, and the solution is to support the state

³¹ The European Development Fund (EDF) is the primary tool for granted aid to the continent in accordance with the 2000 Cotonou Agreement.

and build its authority. In the new roadmap, African indigenous perspectives were not reflected but only renewed state-building by liberal peace partners. The PSCF outlines specific responsibilities for each party to a peaceful region. Therefore, the DRC authorities renewed their commitment to “continue, and deepen security sector reform, particularly with respect to the Army and Police; to consolidate State authority; to make progress with regard to decentralisation; to further economic development; to further structural reform of Government institutions, including financial reform; to further the agenda of reconciliation, tolerance and democratisation” (PSCF, 2013:para. 5.1).

This agreement, like its predecessors, was a top-down effort conceptualised by outsiders that failed to address fundamental underlying problems. It is therefore intended to address the perceived problem of ‘weaknesses’ or ‘fragility’ by ensuring a successful ‘state-building’ project that meets the above requirements. Indeed, the findings presented above combine to support the central claim that by deploying structuralist conceptualisations of the ‘state’ and justifying a peacebuilding intervention that was to be and has remained a ‘state-building’ project, Euro-American actors played critical roles in defining the assumptions underpinning the operating of the PSCF. It serves the function of so-called strategic securitisation by justifying interventions in the Global South as part of global coloniality. As a result, peacebuilding interventions largely determine the character of the new global political order. In this context, the PSCF was described as “an international tutelage on DRC” by Nzongola Ntalaja’s (2013, quoted by Mbugua, 2014:8) in a presentation at the SARC Conference on Conflict Minerals in DRC.

Moreover, while requesting the ‘international community’ to support the DRC and the region in various ways (PSCF, 2013:para. 5.3), there is no mention of any operational capacity of the AU in the PSCF. Trying to understand the reasons for this is a complex endeavour. The AU has deeply rooted colonial ties that have resulted in its over-reliance on external partners to implement its solutions. After centuries of colonialism, the complex dynamics of the crisis constitute the “African Security Regime Complex”.³² It is claimed that the AU is at the heart of this overlapping competency.

An example is to boost ‘African solutions to African problems’ through the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) program launched in 2007, emphasising “African ownership”. It is strongly

³² For complex structure in Africa that is characterised by several regional and international actors, see Brosig, 2010; 2013.

recommended that “EU support provided will apply the principle of African and local ownership and should follow African agendas” and “combines strong African ownership of programme design and implementation with provisions for strategic and political EU-level involvement” (Council of the EU, 2007:arts. 32-33). However, there is no real sign of European disengagement from Africa. Instead, we have seen an earlier point, the progressive concept of the desire for the EU to become a significant player in African politics.

Similarly, despite African actors’ increased capacity for peace and security, the UN has remained vital in providing security solutions. Since 1960, when the UN intervened in the DRC conflict to end Katanga and Kasai crisis, the global powers have been engaged in the conflict. This intervention is described by Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002:258) as “the first major UN peacekeeping force of the postcolonial era”. The UN’s peacekeeping activities skyrocketed in the 2000s, especially in Africa, where most of the deployment of the organisation’s ‘blue helmets’ to its largest missions, such as the DRC (Williams & Boutellis, 2014:265). In this respect, the MONUC (1999-2010) was actively involved at the beginning of the conflict. Despite nearly 18000 UN personnel, which formed part of the MONUSCO (2010-), the violence escalated as the armed group seized control over more areas. There have recently been protests against MONUSCO in the eastern DRC for its failure to maintain peace and security for decades, and in anti-UN demonstrations, at least 15 people have been killed (“At least 15...”, 2022).

While the reality is saying “Western solutions to African problems” (Nathan, 2013:2), the PSC issued a press statement on 10 May 2013, welcoming the commitment of all the signatories in their renewed actions to bring peace to the region (PSC, 2013a). According to the PSCF, a “regional oversight mechanism” was established to facilitate the universal adoption of the ‘inclusive’ and ‘systemic’ principles on which it is based and to ensure its achievement (PSCF, 2013:para. 7). It is expected that the regional oversight mechanism not only develops a detailed plan for the PSCF’s performance but also works closely with international partners, namely Belgium, the EU, France, the UK, and the USA (PSCF, 2013:paras. 7-8). On 27 May 2013, the PSCF’s Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM, 2013) first met in Addis Ababa. The communiqué issued after this meeting highlighted that “the continued implementation of the PSCF should be conducted in a spirit of unity, cooperation and shared responsibility for all regional and international actors” (ROM, 2013).

On the other hand, adopting a “cooperation and shared responsibility for all international actors” has resulted in the absence of a fundamental change in the DRC, especially in a world where North-South relations are still dominated by imperialism in the current global political and economic climate, which was obvious press statement of the PSC at its 391st meeting on 19 August 2013. The PSC (2013d:1) expressed its concern about the continuing “presence of negative forces in the eastern DRC is a major source of violence, instability, insecurity... and an alarming increase in internal displacement”. This corresponds to what the PSC welcomed in the operationalisation of the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade staffed by South Africa, Malawi, and Tanzania (PSC, 2013e:art. 8). In addition to its paradox in applying the solutions, and the AU and subregional bodies failed to find a durable solution that addresses the roots of violence. This is especially evident with the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) authorisation in 2013.

The FIB, operated under MONUSCO’s command and control, was staffed by SADC in March 2013. The FIB was formed in response to the signing of the PSCF and the adoption of UNSC resolution 2098. the FIB was required to assist the government in reasserting its control over the entire territory of the DRC by conducting offensive operations against armed groups. At first glance, the M23 rebel movement surrendered and announced on 5 November 2013 that it would disarm and “pursue by purely political means the search for solutions” by force of the FIB (Enough Project, 2013). Likewise, the FDLR has surrendered partially, though they remained active (Besheer, 2013). However, operations against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) failed, and massacres of civilians continued. For instance, there have been a series of mass killings that the ADF has given rise to violence in Beni since 2013. In the aftermath of the primary wave of violence in October 2014, at least 800 people were killed. These killings-primarily machete attacks-have brought unprecedented levels of brutality to the area (Congo Research Group, 2017). Even though the FIB defeated the M23, UN military operations have generated greater insecurity.

In the Eurocentric prism, the DRC is a failed and deviant state, justifying its primary objective of restoring state authority. From this perspective, Grosfoguel (2011) sees militarism as an enabler of the hierarchy of coloniality when Europeans and North Americans are capable of disciplining deviant states, and the military approach fosters violence. As an example, *Amani Leo*, *Kimia II*, and *Umoja Wetu* are three military operations conducted between 2009 and 2012 that resulted in grave human rights violations rather than neutralising groups, making local communities the apparent targets of armed reprisal attacks by armed groups and leading to

mass displacement (de Heredia, 2019:632). In addition, conflict dynamics were not adequately addressed in terms of political and economical with a broader perspective in these operations (Verweijen, 2016:63).

Along with the escalating tension, the PSC was closely monitoring the implementation of the PSCF. In its 452nd meeting on 22 August 2014, the PSC reviewed the performance of the PSCF. In a communiqué that followed the meeting, the PSC (2014:art. 4) stressed that “despite the progress already made, many challenges are still to be overcome”. The PSC issued a communiqué on 23 February 2015, discussing the progress made while stressing “the crucial importance of the scrupulous and timely implementation of the PSC Framework” (PSC, 2015a:art.4). On 13 June 2015, the Guarantors of the PSCF held the second meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa. They (Guarantors of PSCF, 2015:art. 3) worried about “the slow progress in the implementation of the commitments of the PSC Framework” (Guarantors of PSCF, 2015:art. 7). On the fifth anniversary of the PSCF, stakeholders and experts met in Addis Ababa, and issued a joint press release in which it noted: “however, that progress is modest in light of the high expectations and hope raised by the signature of the PSC framework. Five years on, important challenges remain”. They also underlined “the *critical role of the AU* [my own emphasis] in promoting peace on the continent” (“Five years on...”, 2018). Following the AU policy documents as primary evidence, we can say that the “critical role” that should be understood is to follow non-African peace actors. It is, therefore, necessary to ask the question: is a solution led by Africans and having a “critical role” sufficient for it to be defined as an ‘African solution’? If this is the case, this argument can be viewed as having only hasty measures that superficially impact continental security, given the AU’s application of solutions.

The AU followed a multilateral path, often seen merely echoing the UN and other partners’ statements and positions in the conflict. Very similar to the understanding of the AU-UN collaboration (AU, 2002:art. 17), the members of the PSC (2018a:2) urged “the support of the forces of the UN” in a press statement issued at the 758th meeting on 14 March 2018. At its 903rd meeting in January 2020, the PSC (2020) called for international support. In that vein, on 22 January 2021, the PSC communiqué at its 974th meeting paid tribute to MONUSCO and welcomed “extending the mandate of MONUSCO” (PSC, 2021a:art. 6). Moreover, the PSC (2021a:art. 12) reiterated “the vitality of cooperation and coordination between the AU and UN”. Against this, it is worth noting that even MONUC was implicated in illicit exploitation. Noury (2010:34) points out that “MONUC was heavily criticised, including by the UN itself, in the light of allegations, some substantiated, concerning its complicity with rebel troops and

other kinds of illegality and malpractice”. Moreover, alarmingly, it was also widely reported in August 2011 that a UN officer had been detained for mineral trafficking near the Rwandan border in Goma (Kavanagh, 2011).

In this way, the peace efforts have created a complex picture of coloniality that resists Congolese and AU agencies in the global episteme dominated by Euro-American logics of organisation, internalised by many African actors. Africa’s political and socio-economic fabric continues to be compromised by interference through the structural imposition of colonial epistemes for peace and security long after ‘independence’. Benedict Kumbi (2018, quoted by Sidorova & Lyubenova, 2021:1321) explains that “globalised capitalism in the DRC creates permanent chaos”. Western countries sponsor numerous massacres of the Congolese people as international markets consider several natural resources to be ‘strategic’ (Congo Research Group, 2019). For instance, in 1998 alone, the US delivered \$12.5 million in weapons to African countries involved in the civil war (Hartung & Moix, 2000:4). Thus, the continent was a victim of international players, as evidenced in the 1990s in the Great Lakes region conflict.

The current conflict reflects this legacy (Kibasomba & Lombe, 2011:68). As mentioned in Chapter 4, the American and European governments supported eliminating leader Lumumba to obtain rich resources cheaply instead of leaving them for the Congolese. Today, while the economic and strategic interests of the West continue to dominate, more common models, namely democratic governance and human rights discourses, have come to the fore to ensure this. Related to this, Autesserre (2010; 2012) argues that peacebuilding efforts in the DRC follow a standard paradigm that will be resolved by the increased state authority in the ‘lawless’ Congo. This has resulted in a situation where “well-meaning international efforts have also had unintended ramifications that have prevented the intervention from achieving its stated goals, and that have even, at times, contributed to the deterioration of the situation in the eastern Congo” (Autesserre, 2012:204-205).

In recent decades, Africa has faced increasing political crises and civil strife, which can be attributed to these imposed Western peace and reconciliation epistemes and frameworks. The AU had noted this recently, as evident when the PSC issued a communiqué on 21 June 2021; it expressed it “strongly condemns the heinous crimes, including illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources” (PSC, 2021b:art. 7). Despite the wide variety of explanations offered for the cause and consequences of the conflict caused by the liberal culture of peace practitioners,

the PSC (2021b:art. 9) also “appealed to the international community to continue to support to eradicate the armed groups”.

Thanks to decolonial thought, the gap between the AU’s ‘solutions’ and reality regarding peace and security was demonstrated in April 2022 when fresh fighting broke out in the DRC’s troubled East between army troops and M23 rebels (Schwikowski, 2022). In a communiqué issued on 5 April 2022, the Guarantors of PSCF (2022) strongly condemned “the resurgence of attacks by the ex-M23 rebels against positions of the FARDC and deplore the impact on the civilian population of the violence linked to the activities of armed groups in the eastern DRC” (Guarantors of PSCF, 2022). On 19 April 2022, in a communiqué issued at its 1078th meeting, the PSC (2022a:art. 6) repeat condemned “the atrocities committed by the ex-M23, as well as the ADF and other armed and terrorist groups which result in the loss of lives and sufferance to the civilian population”. Most notably, the PSC (2022a:art. 15) stressed “the need to evaluate and assess the implementation of the Framework Agreement to enhance its effectiveness to address the challenges facing the DRC and the region” while requesting “the Guarantors to the Framework to initiate the process, in consultation with the relevant key stakeholders”. In this respect, recently, in a press release issued after the AU’s three-day (20-22 June 2022) field mission, the PSC (2022b) reaffirmed “its commitment to promoting peace and security on the Continent and the need to realise a conflict-free Africa as envisioned in Agenda 2063”.

This assessment of the APSA and its mechanisms is crucial to my research, as it demonstrates that tantamount to ‘African solutions’, and by extension ‘DRC solutions’, is a supporter of liberal practices. In addition, this ignores the fact that the outbreak of the current crisis was primarily a result of ongoing epistemic imperialist control and structural coloniality in the region.

5.2. An Assessment of the AU-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA)

Since independence, armed rebels who have gained political, economic, and military power over the years have become important figures in the DRC’s political landscape. Much of the instability in the DRC has been driven by non-state actors, predominantly the FDLR, CNDP, and the M23 formed by ex-CNDP soldiers (see Verweijen, 2016). The long DRC peace process carried the signing of numerous peace accords, ensuring the establishment of a strong UN ‘peacekeeping’ force (MONUSCO), democratic elections, and finally, the signing of the PSCF

in 2013 continues without any visual solutions. It is estimated that over 120 armed forces roam in the Eastern DRC (DR CONGO: Militia violence, 2022), and about 1.5 million people have been displaced in 2021 alone (Global Humanitarian Overview, 2022).

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other visible and 'invisible' actors exacerbate the situation for the DRC. In 1987, the Acholi people founded the LRA in response to their marginalisation and abuse by Ugandan President Museveni's government. September 2005 marked the arrival of LRA forces in the DRC from southern Sudan. Since that date, the movement has been based in Garamba Park. The group, which could not carry out civilian attacks before, started to change this after November and December of 2008 (Titeca & Costeur, 2015:99). To respond to these attacks, the countries DRC, Uganda, and South Sudan, which wanted to prevent these brutal attacks of the LRA, authorised a trilateral agreement and stated a mission code-named "Lightning Thunder" on 14 December 2008. However, they could not avoid the effects of the LRA (Brubacher, Damman & Day, 2017:286-287).

Schomerus (2012) pointed out that the LRA is among the world's most deadly rebel groups. From December 2008 to January 2009, the LRA killed at least 815 Congolese civilians and 50 Sudanese. It continued until the last – but vastly underreported - a massacre in February 2010, when hundreds were killed and abducted (Titeca & Costeur, 2015:99). Therefore, the PSC monitored the LRA, which emerged as a regional security threat over recent years. The PSC issued a communiqué on the Eastern part of the DRC on 22 December 2008. The PSC (2008e:2, art.13) concluded that waging a joint operation in Garamba Park with Uganda and the Sudanese government should serve further actions against hostile forces in the region. In August 2009, the AUC Chairperson also included the LRA in a report given to the Special Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Tripoli, Libya. The Chairperson of the AUC referred to the LRA as the "threat to peace and security in the Great Lakes region" and informed the Assembly of the efforts being undertaken across the continent to reduce its crimes in northern Uganda and neighbouring countries (AU, 2009:art. 55).

The PSC (2009:art. 6) issued a communiqué at its 201st meeting on 25 August 2009 that addressed how the LRA's brutal activities "threats...to the security and humanitarian situation in Southern Sudan". Besides, the PSC requested the global partners to step up the pressure on the LRA (PSC, 2009:art. 6). While applying the steps of this process, and the AU hosted the second meeting of Ministers of Defence and Security of countries affected by the LRA crimes from 6 to 8 June 2011. It was agreed by the ministers to establish a Regional Task Force (RTF).

According to the consensus, an AU peacekeeping mission should be installed with voluntary contributions from the affected countries to end the LRA's atrocities. Furthermore, the AU agreed to mobilise financial resources, logistics, and other resources to benefit RTF components (see AU, 2011). The PSC (2011a) released a press release following its 295th meeting on 27 September 2011, expressing "its full support to the conclusions of the regional ministerial meeting held in Addis Ababa on 8 June 2011" by countries that had been affected by LRA cruelties.

Finally, on 22 November 2011, the PSC (2011b:art. 10) classified the LRA as a terrorist group and allowed an initiative with 5000 strong troops from the affected countries (PSC, 2011b:art.7(ii)). The AU's new response model to a regional security crisis is the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA). According to Dersso (2014:63), it was "a unique experiment" identification of a viable cross-border security response. Overall, the initiative aimed to "strengthen the operational capabilities of the countries affected by the atrocities of the LRA; create an environment conducive to the stabilisation of the affected areas, free of LRA atrocities; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected areas" (PSC, 2011b:art. 5). In an atmosphere of operationalisation of the task force, the AU took ownership of solutions to manage regional peace, stability, and security.

The PSC discussed improvements regarding eliminating the LRA in the 321st meeting on 22 May 2012. During its meeting, the PSC (2012a) addressed the RTF's logistics and financial aspects and demanded the UNSC "to consider modalities of enhanced support through the UN peacekeeping missions present in the area of operation of the RCI-LRA, including by adjusting as may be necessary their mandates" (PSC, 2012a:art. 7). The PSC has advocated for a more significant role for the UN in combating the LRA, the UN adopted a regional strategy, which led to closer UN-AU cooperation. As part of its close working relationship with the UN, the RTF utilised existing UN mission resources in the region. Based on complete trust in the UN and international peace partners, this multilateral attitude of the AU demonstrates that various forms of terrorism threaten state power and the global economic model, and more ruling elites are turning to military responses to anything that looks like a threat. Even so, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Chambati (2013:144) point out, "the continuation of violence is one indicator of the continuation of coloniality after the end of colonialism". Therefore, militarising peacebuilding will spur more violence than reducing it. I agree that the tension between militaristic power diffusion in Africa and seeking solutions to coexist will affect the future of

peace, war, and coloniality. However, the AU continued to applaud the operation for its apparent success.

The RCI-LRA resulted in a new sense of hope among those victimised by the ravages of war. The Chairperson of AUC explained that with its originality and flexibility, the RCI-LRA provided a way for the states in the region to pool their resources to address the problems of LRA (PSC, 2012b:art. 16). In doing so, the Chairperson of AUC encouraged the PSC to solicit support from international partners and member states for the RTF (PSC, 2012b:art. 16). For mobilising the RTF, over the past decade, there has been a total expenditure of \$560 million by the USA in the category of 'humanitarian assistance', mainly to LRA-affected people in the CAR, the DRC, Uganda, and Sudan (ISS, 2012:14).

During the LRA issue, the USA invested substantial resources and made considerable efforts. Related to this, LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, passed in May 2010, the USA pledged direct support to Ugandan counter-LRA operations and dispatched over 100 special operations military advisers in October 2011. In 2013, the Department of Defence cost \$135 million to operate the LRA (Titeca & Costeur, 2015:102). Titeca and Costeur (2005:93) explain that US efforts that overemphasise the LRA issue results in framing the conflict in a way that is "weakly connected with the realities". This remained an interesting point in the continued strategic partnership with the USA, the region's primary beneficiary of the war. Behind these peace efforts, perhaps most importantly, there are similarities in the ongoing interests of the continent, as Baregu (2002:33) points out the little-known role of the USA in Africa, stating that it is a supplier of weapons, ammunition, and military training for over \$227 million from the early 1990s to the end.

The conflicts on the axis of ambitions legitimised by benevolent aids continued to be monitored by the PSC. On 13 November 2012, in its 341st meeting, the PSC (2012e) discussed that terrorism was becoming a growing threat and that different mechanisms should be developed to combat it. The PSC continued to consider the LRA issue by hearing the report of the AUC Chairperson that provided updates on the activities of the RCI-LRA (PSC, 2013b; 2013c). After all, there were notable accomplishments by the RTF in operational terms. For instance, the RTF initiated an offensive in August 2013 code-named "Operation Monsoon". The AU reported that one of the LRA's key camps had been dismantled (AU, 2013a). According to a press release on 10 December 2013, since Operation Monsoon's launch, the RTF has rescued several civilians abducted by the LRA, destroyed several of their bases in the CAR and DRC,

damaged their logistical network, and reduced their ability to fight (AU, 2013b). The overall success of the AU-led RTF was welcomed at PSC meetings. Subsequently, in May 2015, the PSC expressed appreciation for the close partnership between the AU and the UN. It also appreciated the EU's financial contribution and the US for its support (PSC, 2015b:arts. 4-5; PSC, 2015c:2). Besides the PSC (2016a:art. 10) communiqué on 30 May 2016 renewed the authority of the RCI-LRA for a further one year; it also noted: "satisfaction the progress made by the RCI-LRA towards the elimination of the LRA" (PSC, 2016a:art. 2; PSC; 2017c:art. 4).

However, the Chairperson of the AUC submitted his report on the Status of the Implementation of the RCI-LRA on 12 May 2017, which stated that "the LRA has maintained an active presence in [the] CAR, DRC and parts of South Sudan where it continues to raid, ambush, loot, torture, abduct and detain civilians, as well as traffic ivory poached from the Garamba National Park in the DRC, and minerals looted from [the] CAR to sustain itself and its leader, Joseph Kony" (PSC, 2017d:art. 4). Even though the LRA is today only a shadow of what it once was, Kony and a small group of people remain fugitives and remain an unknown threat (Prah, 2019). Considering this, it is also appropriate to ask: when does terrorism become a significant threat to security? Indeed, there must be an awareness of the origins of the history of terrorism in the region. The legacies of and the recent experiences of colonial violence are vivid among the Congolese. The western-inspired racialised and inferiority discourses on the conflict continue to be perpetuated about present-day Congo. Throughout history and political epochs, violence on the continent and the DRC has been naturalised as a 'native phenomenon', while historical colonial violence has been forgotten. Consequently, the AU has reached the point where it cannot promote lasting peace by following the 'solutions' prescribed by the West.

5.3. An Assessment of the AU's Role in the Electoral Crisis in the DRC

In early 2010, the country's tensions on election-related issues were simmering. A highly contentious new electoral system was in place, and a biased electoral management body was in place to conduct a contested voter registration process (see Mangu, 2013). Besides the Eastern Congo, security conditions in the rest of the country were also challenging due to concerns in security, geography, and infrastructure, as well as a lack of professional capacity security forces (ISS, 2011:3-4).

Considering the support from the AU during this period, between 6 and 8 October 2011, the Panel of Wise (PoW) was part of an information/fact-finding mission with high-level

representatives of the COMESA, ECCAS, ICGLR, and SADC. Several attempts have been initiated by the PoW's mission that met with President Kabila and other leading groups (Porto & Ngandu, 2015). The mission's primary objective was to invest in prevention and early warning policy while enhancing, strengthening, and facilitating a peaceful, accessible, and harmonious electoral process. Essentially, the PoW promotes indigenous African approaches and epistemologies and avoids western trusteeship. It is based on an age-old tradition at the centre of most African societies to resolve conflicts and problems through elders (Porto & Ngandu, 2015). The strategies used to engage with the DRC military and security challenges were not reflective of the African cultural values, but instead, they represented the western capitalist systems of dealing with issues.

Moreover, the election's outcome clearly showed that the DRC electoral process was rapidly heading towards a violent standoff by the time the PoW engaged with several Congolese political actors (Gerenge, 2015; van Wyk, 2016). In the run-up to the elections, violent demonstrations have alarmed observers. There was violence during the election between 26 and 28 November, which reported the death of 18 civilians and the injury of 100 civilians ("DR Congo: Rein...", 2011). Incumbent President Kabila defeated the primary opposition candidate Etienne Tshisekedi. Following the conclusion of the elections, the AU issued a joint declaration on 30 November 2011, welcoming "the successful holding of the elections" (African Union et al., 2011:art. 3). However, in Kinshasa, gunfire erupted after Tshisekedi rejected Kabila's victory and declared himself the new leader ("Post-election violence...", 2011).

Subsequently, on 6-7 December 2011, the PoW (2011:1) issued a communiqué that discussed "the situation in the DRC, especially the presidential and legislative elections of 28 November 2011, in the light of the two visits it undertook to the DRC in October and November 2011". At its 11th meeting, the PoW (2011:1) recalled "the joint communiqué on the conduct of the elections, issued by the observation teams of the AU, COMESA, ECCAS, SADC and the ICGLR"; the PoW also stressed that "the obligation that befalls all those who may dispute the results of the election to do so exclusively through the mechanisms and processes provided for that end". On 30 April 2012, the PoW (2012:2) underlined "lessons from the pre-electoral missions undertaken to the DRC". The late response from the AU response in 2011 served as a lesson for quick action in the 2016 electoral crisis. However, upon reflection, the lesson here was not the delay in implementing 'quick action'; indeed, as the main lesson should be drawn from the perspective of 'African solutions', the failure of the PoW to fulfil its mandate as an

innovation mildly promoting African epistemologies, averting western trusteeship, and pursuing an indigenous African approach.

In the DRC, elections are held every five years, and a president's term is limited to two successive terms each. The DRC's extended political crisis between 2015 and 2018 began when the government ignored these times. Due to a desire to find a way around the presidential term limit, the election was delayed until 2018. More than two dozen people died in protests due to the President's legal election process, whose term of office ended in 2016, and Kabila's intimidation policies against opposition parties ("Dozens killed in...", 2016; "A timeline of...", 2017). In this growing instability, the international actors called on the AU to intervene and apply its tools for mediation and preventive diplomacy (ISS, 2016a). Thus, in a press release dated 6 April 2016, the AUC Chairperson announced the appointment of Mr. Edem Kodjo, Former Prime Minister of Togo and Former Secretary-General of the OAU, as the Facilitator for the national dialogue in DRC. As stated in the press, the facilitator "aims at assisting in convening an all-inclusive dialogue in order to address issues related to the upcoming elections in that country" (AU, 2016).

On 1 September 2016, facilitator Edem Kodjo launched the *Dialogue of the African Union City* with the backing of the AU. The dialogue was envisaged to use a multi-prong approach that included the government, the opposition, and civil society stakeholders in the DRC (Carter Center, 2019:16). Following Kabila's refusal to relinquish power on 18 October 2016, and the AU brokered an agreement after the National Dialogue facilitation led by Edem Kodjo. This then led to a smooth transition against the backdrop of the election. After its 642nd meeting on 6 December 2016, the PSC issued a communiqué regarding the situation in the DRC. This communiqué welcomed "the signing, on 18 October 2016, of the Political Agreement for the Organization of Peaceful, Free, Fair and Credible Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo" facilitated by HE Mr. Edem Kodjo (PSC, 2016b:art. 2). A press release of the 645th meeting on 22 December 2016 conveyed the same message as welcoming the agreement (PSC, 2016c).

As part of the communiqué released by the PSC after its 665th meeting on 13 March 2017, the PSC commended the "exemplary work undertaken by Elder Edem Kodjo in facilitating, among other cases, the mediation process in the DRC" (PSC, 2017a:art. 3). However, most observers have not used the word "exemplary" to describe that mission as one that was mostly perceived as a failure (ISS, 2016b). This delay in elections has triggered off the persistence of the political

crisis. Most major political parties boycotted the AU-mediated political agreement reached in October 2016 (Roth & Sawyer, 2017). In the atmosphere of Kodjo's mediation, it was argued that an already forgotten agreement was not sufficiently inclusive or representative of all stakeholders (Monjap Pefoura Ntieche, 2017:8). Almost all political parties participated in the second round of talks moderated by the Catholic Church, which is seen as a neutral and credible mediator. On 31 December 2016, an agreement called the *Saint Sylvester Agreement* was reached to form a transitional government and for elections to be held in 2017 (Carter Center, 2019:16).

The AU, however, has not been able to overcome liberal perceptions of the peacebuilding mission, despite its attempts to resolve security issues, as this research continues to argue. During a 'failed' state reconstruction through elections, local critical perspectives and capabilities were lost. On 27 March 2017, the 671st meeting of the PSC essentially traced lingering Western concern by expressing its "concern about the slow progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Political Agreement of 31 December 2016" (PSC, 2017b:art. 5). The 712th meeting of the PSC called upon "all the political and social stakeholders in the DRC, to support this institutional process to ensure a successful political transition and establishment of conditions conducive for the organisation of free, fair and credible elections" (PSC, 2017e:art. 7) while requesting "the Chairperson of the AUC to take the necessary measures to dispatch a pre-electoral and security situation assessment mission to the DRC" (PSC, 2017e:art. 12). After the PSC adopted the communiqué, the Chairperson of the AUC, made a working visit from 28 September to 1 October 2017 to Kinshasa, accompanied by the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs. Besides this, the President of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of the DRC met with him on 31 October 2017. They stressed, "the importance of *the rapid publication* [my own emphasis] of a credible and as consensual as possible electoral calendar" (AU, 2017a). The word 'rapid' choice revealed the preference for expediency regarding the peace process, which implied that the 'democratic' elections had been an exclusive tool for peace. These AU interventions have remained to resonate with the liberal and western ways of conflict resolution, as has been the case in the DRC.

The INEC announced the election calendar on 5 November 2017 and set a date for the elections as 23 December 2018. The PSC (2017f:art. 5) welcomed "the publication by the INEC of the electoral calendar" and reaffirmed the lead role of the AU in close cooperation with regional and international actors (PSC, 2017f:art. 10). Although the election calendar was released,

opposition political actors and civil society activists have continued to call for nationwide demonstrations before 31 December to force President Kabila to leave the country. Kinshasa witnessed violence and arrests during these demonstrations, which peaked in December 2017 (Moore & Wembi, 2018; Burke, 2018). It is essential to acknowledge that violence continued even after the attempted imposition of democracy. Likewise, as Hellmuller's results point out (2013:224), the people of the Congo perceived the elections as "legitimising the government's authoritarian rule rather than legitimising the government itself".

It has been highlighted by the release of the electoral calendar that INEC still faces challenges in conducting the entire electoral process. On 22 November 2017, the Guarantors of the PSCF, namely the AU, UN, ICGLR, and SADC, met in Addis Ababa. As part of this meeting, information was collected about the DRC's electoral preparations, and support was coordinated regionally and internationally. While they welcomed "the publication of the electoral calendar for the holding of presidential, legislative and provincial elections on 23 December 2018", the guarantors also called for "all stakeholders to create the necessary conditions to ensure the holding of timely, peaceful and credible elections" (Guarantors of PSCF, 2017). In general, peacebuilding continued to take shape under the dominance of a liberal paradigm that tends to be associated with democratic elections, as seen on the AU agenda.

In its press statement issued on 14 March 2018, the PSC (2018a:1) called for "the international community to provide the necessary technical, logistical and financial support for the smooth organisation and holding of the elections in the DRC". During the 2018 elections, the primary purpose of European support was to strengthen the democratic role of civil society. Notably, the EU has committed approximately €17.5 million to election support actions ("Democratic Republic of...", 2019:8). The international community has given financial and diplomatic support to state-building measures - especially those related to elections (Hellmuller, 2013:221-222), as the country's dominant peacebuilding culture places a high priority on state-building.

A collaborative international community led by the Congolese population finally celebrated in mid-August when Kabila announced its successor candidate (Wolters, 2019:13). On 19 November 2018, the PSC (2018b) congratulated the Congolese authorities for taking all the measures to handle the challenges associated with the electoral process. In an announcement on 9 January 2019, INEC President confirmed that Felix Tshisekedi had won the election. In contrast to the official election results, Martin Fayulu announced he had won the election with 61% of the votes and would contest the official results in the Constitutional Court. According

to the *Financial Times* and other media outlets, the election commission database data indicated that Fayulu won by nearly 60 per cent (Wilson, Blood & Pilling, 2019).

After it was announced that Tshisekedi had won the election, on 17 January 2019, a high-level consultative meeting of Heads of State and Government, which is “part of the African-led efforts, in the spirit of continental solidarity, to assist the DRC political stakeholders and people to successfully conclude the electoral process and preserve peace and stability in their country” met in Addis Ababa (AU, 2019a). Following consultations with Rwanda’s President and Chairperson of the AUC, SADC and ICGLR leaders posited that “there were serious doubts on the conformity of the provisional results” and they also called for “the suspension of the proclamation of the final results of the elections” and agreed on “urgently dispatching to the DRC a high-level delegation” The meeting urged “all concerned actors in the DRC to interact positively with the high-level African delegation in the interest of their country and its people” (AU, 2019a). Three days after, the AU (2019b) issued a communiqué on 20 January 2019, which noted that “the visit of the high-level delegation to Kinshasa on 21 January 2019 has been postponed”, and the AU’s official bold stance failed to enact any of the recommendations. On 19–20 January 2019, Felix Tshisekedi was the official presidential election winner after the Constitutional Court declared that Fayulu’s challenge was unfounded. The AU, while reiterating “the continued availability of the AU to accompany the DRC in this critical phase of its history, as well as its solidarity with the Congolese people” (AU, 2019b) – despite the electoral results, was somehow not capacitated to intervene appropriately.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary of Findings

This mini-thesis critically assessed the theme of ‘African solutions to African problems’ and its deployment in promoting peace and security by the AU since 2004 in the DRC as a case study. It has emerged from this study that there are several points of both coherence and dissonance between the AU’s vision and aspirations of peace and security and its implemental and conceptual role in actualising this sovereign aspiration of ‘African solutions to African problems’. As a result, it is crucial that its desire and implementation are consistently aligned to improve the AU’s security visions and increase its contribution to long-term solutions to historically complex conflicts. Despite its challenges due to these complexities, the thesis has demonstrated the AU’s commitment and vision to engender a sustainable peace and security strategy through its commendable tenacity in maintaining stability. However, the devotion to ‘African solutions’ remains an evolving concept that adjusts and adapts to the ebb and flow dynamics of coloniality and post-colonialism within the context of global capitalism and its structural mechanisms still operative on the continent. As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 4, European imperialism exercised its hegemony over Africa at the 1885 Berlin Conference with long-lasting consequences for the region into contemporary times because of the African continent being divided into colonially-constructed ‘nation-states’, like the Balkanisation of Europe (an epistemic anomaly). The concept of the sovereign nation-state is alien to the pre-colonial kingdoms of the region. This ongoing colonial legacy (coloniality) remains in Africa today with imposed ‘liberal peace’ colonial epistemic frameworks.

This coloniality is illustrated in the AU’s political interventions in the DRC as a case study which shows its role as limited to a designated complementary one. The AU does not lead these actions due to a lack of resources cited as part of its reasons for taking a back seat in the DRC. However, such a position contradicts the AU’s vision of ‘African solutions to African problems’ derived from its ideological goals. While there is a will and a commitment by the AU to resolve the crises using its peace and security mechanisms, there are also inherent limitations to accomplishing the interventions. The significant setbacks are the limited financial and related resources and the colonial legacies of dependency that lurk behind the well-intended and positive initiatives. Hence, the ‘African solutions’ project remains embroiled in conflicting global and local interests.

Despite the AU's performance in exercising primary agency in resolving the crisis, it often has to collaborate with other stakeholders. The challenge which arises out of the collaborative processes is the failure of the AU to leverage the power dynamics to its advantage. The other collaborating institutions position themselves at a vantage point due to their ownership of financial and other resources. In more recent AU interventions in the DRC, the support for multilateralism illustrated this approach as an overarching contemporary strategy. The APSA and its organs, such as the PSC, are oriented toward cooperating with the UN and other external partners, mainly the EU and USA. An analysis of the discourses of cooperation, collaboration, and partnership between the AU, EU, and the UN needs to be re-interrogated. This is important because the nature of those relationships always tends to be skewed toward the advantages of those with more resources rather than those with less. It essentially boils down to power, control and influence. Coloniality needs to be fully addressed rather than presume its disappearance by rhetoric alone.

With the formation of the APSA, its approach to peace and security has converged with established patterns in its support for the conceptual aspect of 'African solutions', reflecting its own norms, beliefs, and value system. However, the AU's approach to peacebuilding in the DRC has been complimentary and supportive of liberal concepts of peace, as illustrated in the communiqués, press statements, and reports of the PSC after 2004. These methods and objectives of dealing with conflicts were unrealistic and led to cosmetic solutions. Analysing the DRC illustrates how the AU has not escaped Western dominance and influence (coloniality) over its interventions to counter the escalation of many conflicts in the country. The dilemma faced by Africa is emphasised by Mazrui (1979:2), "rebellion against the West and imitation of the West".

Due to liberal practices, indigenous methods and ideas for conflict resolution are neglected in the DRC. Marginalising indigenous African values left a large gap between the conceptual role of 'African solutions' and liberal peace solutions. This gap does not seem to be filled by the PoW, which does not integrate "the insights drawn from indigenous African culture" (Murithi & Mwaura, 2010:212). One of the key critical questions that are troubling and lingering is whether initiatives like the PoW will bring any significant positive change in DRC. For instance, in the case of DRC, the debate was dominated by the calls for expedient elections to be imposed as the primary solution to the country's troubles in the last few years. While elections might be part of the tenable strategies toward bringing peace and stability, they need to be augmented by other autochthonous solutions. In this regard, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012)

remains sceptical about the sincerity of Western projects in conflict-resolution pedagogies. The basic fact is that the West will not implement that which would undermine their imperial interests. They will instead offer moderate rather than radical solutions (state-building, ‘peacekeeping’ forces, ‘rapid’ elections, etc.) that will perpetuate the crisis to their own advantage. They are doubtful about sharing that which brings permanent solutions for Africa.

6.2. A Possible Way Forward for the AU to Sustain Peace and Security in the DRC

Decolonial epistemic interventions informed by indigenous peace and security epistemologies need to be the fulcrum against the “unfinished story of liberation from colonialism, neo-colonialism, neo-liberal imperialism and hegemonic globalisation” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Chambati, 2013:256). One crucial response to be considered to attain the decolonial interventions desired in the DRC is to tap into and utilise the available Indigenous Knowledge Systems on peace and security. For instance, there are a plethora of oral and written resources that can serve as typological scripts and reservoirs of knowledge that fit different crisis scenarios. In this context, the concepts of ‘peace’, as used by non-African actors in the DRC, are informed by colonial stereotypes of Africa, reflecting a Eurocentric sense of nation-state development. To illustrate this problem, Englebert and Tull (2008:111) highlight that the failed postcolonial African states have never been close to the Western polity, which can also be the point of departure for further analysis of the conflict. Indeed, it could be suggested that a more experienced AU in realising sovereignty within a strangling and compromising global capitalist and imperialist economy may very well be able to rebuild their own continent on their own terms, systematically overturning the complex legacy of colonialism and imperialism.

To understand how coloniality bolsters current political power, we need to understand its conjoined historical legacies - for example, through the provision of arms and foreign control of natural resources. This ultimately leads to consideration of to what extent peacebuilding itself is complicit in and embodies the coloniality of power. There is evidence that some decolonial authors, as discussed in several sections of this thesis, view the African postcolonial world as a hostage to the hegemonic and asymmetries in power relations that emerged during the colonial encounters (Grosfoguel, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012). According to them, the current conflict has been caused by colonialism, and the only way to resolve it would be through “delinking” (Amin, 1990; 2009) – i.e., by having peace discourses from a decolonial perspective.

The AU's challenges resulted from its donor syndrome attitude and a lack of developing a robust framework of self-reliance in its postcolonial phases. The West has exercised double standards in that, on the one hand, they promised a positive development vision. However, on the other, they exploited African resources through the organised use of violence. For example, today, the USA is one of the biggest contradictory donors since it played a part in the murder of Lumumba and the militarisation that created and sustained a war-torn state. It has been shown that the USA has contradictory involvement in the DRC by providing military equipment to both warring groups while justifying promoting democracy and development (see Hartung & Moix, 2000; Amuwo, 2009). Due to the PSC's unwillingness to confront the USA regarding its arms trade, the AU was unintentionally complicit in maintaining the spiral of violence that enveloped the country. The AU remains invested in treating symptoms of conflicts and violence with the complexity of the donor-recipient relationship rather than addressing the fundamental causes. The AU needs to extricate itself from the colonial and imperial domination it has been subjected to by the West. The failure to create a sovereign strategic and organisational framework will make the AU a perpetual victim of exploitative colonial masters and those who dominate the financial world stages. Therefore, there is a need to refocus on the broader picture if the AU is to ensure a sustainable existence in the future.

To attain sovereignty, the AU should begin by strengthening its institutional structures and thereby severing its colonial ties in multilateral approaches to peace in Africa. It must ensure the separation and implementation of Pan-Africanist ideals in its anti-imperialist struggles. Although the situation is complex and challenging, as illustrated in the thesis, it could be helpful to consider the suggestion by Nzongola-Ntalaja (2012)³³, who rejects the idea of the financial resources of the EU and UN as the exclusive drivers of peace and security in Africa by asserting emphatically that “the salvation of Congo lies in the hands of her own sons and daughters”.

³³ Online news article. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/nov/28/congolese-people-democratic-republic-congo> [2022, February 11].

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