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African peacekeeping in Africa: Warlord politics, defense economics, and state legitimacy

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Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War, sub-Saharan African states have substantially increased their participation in international peacekeeping operations in Africa. Their contributions have become highly valued and even facilitated by major powers. This article examines why certain African states might contribute more than others to peacekeeping. In particular, prominent arguments are considered about the primacy of regime security concerns and the dynamics of warlord politics in the foreign policymaking of African states, the economic incentives of peacekeeping, and the importance of African states' concerns over their state legitimacy and territorial integrity. First, this study investigates the possibility that peacekeeping might be utilized as a diversionary strategy to divert the attention of both an African state's military and major powers from a regime's misrule. Second, this study examines the extent to which financial and material assistance from donor states encourages poorer states to engage in peacekeeping. Third, the study investigates whether states with less legitimate and more arbitrary borders might have greater incentive to contribute to peacekeeping operations to promote the territorial status quo in Africa. Empirical evidence from a quantitative analysis across 47 states of sub-Saharan Africa from 1989 to 2001 suggests that states that are poorer, with lower state legitimacy and lower political repression, participate more often in regional peacekeeping.

Keywords

Africa, foreign policy, international security, peacekeeping

Introduction

More than a few scholars have noted idiosyncrasies in the international relations of Africa. The relative rarity of international war, for instance, is rather striking.[1] One international interaction in Africa that is not rare and has increased markedly since the Cold War is international peacekeeping by African troops. This article examines the extent to which two of the most prominent arguments about African foreign policymaking might explain why some African states contribute more than others to international peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Major powers have wavered over the past decade between serious engagement in supporting international security, economic development, and democratization in Africa or remaining a safe distance from what may appear a hopeless quagmire. Since the end of the Cold War, African leaders themselves have perhaps made the most determined strides in coming together to remedy regional ills. The most visible manner of cooperation has been in the form of international peacekeeping.

Many Western governments have come to depend on African peacekeepers to manage and resolve conflicts in the region. The African Union (AU) Mission in the Sudan, deployed to slow conflict in Darfur, and the AU force deployed to Somalia in 2007, following the collapse of the Union of Islamic Courts regime, stand out as instances where African states were more willing and ready to deploy troops to trouble-spots than major powers. The willingness of African states to contribute troops to Darfur was particularly critical, as the Sudanese government initially refused entry to Western peacekeepers. Interestingly, African peacekeepers less often come from the most developed states such as South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana, but more often from poorer countries including Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda. Some African states, from small Ghana to hegemonic Nigeria, will dependably send

[1] While numerous colonial wars have been fought in Africa, and devastating intrastate wars have been common, there have been relatively few full-fledged interstate wars in sub-Saharan Africa. A commonly used criterion for identifying full-fledged interstate wars is the Correlate of War project's 1,000-battle-death threshold. By this criterion, there have only been four interstate wars in sub-Saharan Africa since 1950. Lemke (2002: 161–170) determined that Africa is 3 to 5 times less war-prone than the rest of the world.

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troops anywhere on the continent, whereas other states rarely or never participate in peacekeeping.

With widespread poverty, weak states, and HIV/AIDS epidemics afflicting African soldiers, civilians, and governments, it seems surprising *prima facie* that African states contribute as much to regional peacekeeping as they do. After all, Khanna, Sandler & Shimizu (1998) and Shimizu & Sandler (2002, 2003) describe peacekeeping as a largely public good where large rich states contribute disproportionately to peacekeeping and smaller poorer states – which characterizes most African states – free-ride while enjoying public benefits from peacekeeping operations in their neighborhood. Neack's (1995) presentation of the logic of peacekeeping participation seems to predict even less African participation, as she argues that states benefiting the most from the status quo of the international system and their position in the international hierarchy should be most willing to participate in peacekeeping. Clearly, no African state ranks in the global hierarchy, and major powers from other regions may wield the greatest influence in Africa.[2] Perhaps African peacekeeping in Africa is better explained by Bobrow & Boyer's (1997) presentation of peacekeeping as a 'club good', where significant private benefits accrue to states close to the peacekeeping operation and major powers whose economic activities abroad benefit from global stability. Still, this does not entirely explain why African states sometimes send peacekeepers to operations on the continent far from home, and why states in the neighborhood of operations might decline to participate.[3] This begs the question: what motivates particular African states to contribute more to international peacekeeping? In answering this question, I examine the ability of two increasingly prominent explanations for African international relations to account for peacekeeping deployments. First is the playing of 'warlord politics' by leaders and how African foreign policy and military policy has often been used more as a tool to promote regime security than as a response to national security threats. The second is the concern shared by many leaders for promoting state legitimacy and maintaining the integrity of African countries and their borders. While rarely directly applied to analyzing the politics of peacekeeping, these two dynamics lend potentially important insights and expand upon Africa-specific ways in which peacekeeping, as Khanna, Sandler & Shimizu (1998) and Shimizu & Sandler (2002, 2003) suggest, can yield 'joint products'. That is, ways in which peacekeeping operations can not only yield benefits publicly enjoyed by the global community, but can simultaneously yield additional benefits that are either impurely public to some states or privately enjoyed by particular states (Shimizu & Sandler, 2003: 129). It is these more country-specific benefits that may influence differences among states in peacekeeping contributions.

In this article, I seek to test the explanatory power of these arguments and better understand patterns of African peacekeeping participation. First, I examine in greater empirical detail the rise of African peacekeeping. Second, I examine the extent to which arguments about the primacy of domestic political concerns and regime survival in foreign policymaking might explain peacekeeping participation and how peacekeeping might be used as a sort of diversionary strategy. Third, I examine the extent to which concerns about promoting state legitimacy and territorial integrity might explain a state's interest in peacekeeping participation to preserve the territorial status quo. Fourth, I test these arguments and several other explanatory variables in a systematic analysis of African peacekeeping deployments in the period 1989–2001. Lastly, I conclude by summarizing the findings of which variables best explain African peacekeeping contributions, identify the hypothetical state most likely to contribute to peacekeeping, and note some important policy implications for countries such as France, the United Kingdom, and the United States that expend significant resources each year to train and develop the peacekeeping capabilities of African militaries.

A proliferation of peacekeeping and peacekeepers

Diehl (1993: 4) defines peacekeeping as 'any international effort involving an operational component to promote the termination of armed conflict or the resolution of longstanding disputes'. Peacekeeping is distinguished from military intervention by the fact that peacekeeping forces usually arrive in a country only after a ceasefire has been agreed to between the warring parties, and with the permission of the host country. By the nature of their role, peacekeeping troops rarely bring armaments beyond personal rifles and transportation vehicles to the site of deployment. Traditionally, the roles of peacekeepers are to search for violations of ceasefire agreements, mediate conflicts, and serve as a buffer between warring parties. In the 1990s, peacekeeping evolved to include more active forms of peace enforcement (often referred to as 'peacemaking') where troops were sent to defeat insurgent forces. An example of this was the ill-fated 1993 'Blackhawk Down' incident, when US special forces attempted to capture Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid in concert with a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission. Peace enforcement might also characterize the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) missions into Liberia and Sierra Leone, where troops directly fought rebel forces. As Bures (2007) highlights, the variety of peacekeeping mission types and force capabilities has increased over time. While the techniques of peacekeeping may differ across missions, the goals remain fairly consistent.

[2] One might propose that for the purposes of maintaining the regional status quo, 'regional hegemons' might show especially strong support for peacekeeping. This is a proposition I will explore in passing, but ultimately find little support for.

[3] In 2007, the geographically disparate states of Benin, Burundi, Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda pledged troops to the AU Mission to Somalia. None of these states are within 300 miles of Somalia. Ethiopian troops were also in Somalia, albeit independently (Lederer, 2007).

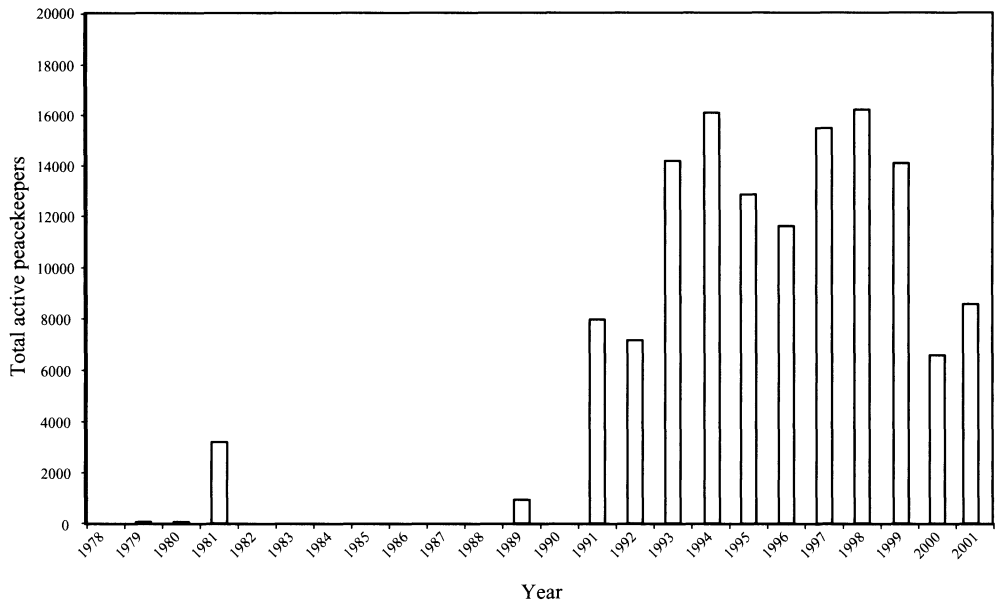

Figure 1. African troops peacekeeping in Africa

Peacekeeping activity worldwide has increased significantly since the end of the Cold War, and the proliferation of peacekeeping operations in Africa stands out in particular. Until 1989, missions in Africa accounted for only 8% of UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs). In the following decade, this proportion surged to 41% (Bobrow & Boyer, 1997: 731). At the same time, the participation of African states in PKOs in Africa has increased dramatically.

The striking shift in the peacekeeping behavior of African states after the Cold War can be observed in Figure 1, which shows the annual number of active peacekeepers deployed by African states in Africa in 1978–2001. Less than a handful of PKOs were conducted in Africa from 1978 to 1990 that included participation by African states. In the next decade, no less than 7,000 African peacekeepers were deployed in Africa each year from 1991 to 2001. While some states, such as Ghana and Nigeria, are reliable contributors to PKOs and have made peacekeeping a central plank in their foreign policies, other states rarely or never contribute.

Warlord politics, regime survival, and peacekeeping

Clark (2001: 67) argues that 'foreign policy making in central Africa can most usefully be explained as a direct out growth of domestic political needs' and identifies the most important 'domestic political need' as regime security. Most African leaders face the challenge of governing what are more or less weak states. Herbst (2000) identifies a key obstacle to governing and consolidating power in African countries as the often-difficult political geography. Many countries have the combination of relatively low population density and unbalanced dispersions of population centers. Herbst argues that this combination makes it difficult for leaders to project power from the capital city to the far reaches of the country. Autocratic leaders may be especially threatened by this challenge, as their regime is more likely threatened by rebellion than democratic leaders. As Dahl (1973: 13) asserts, for autocrats 'all opposition is potentially dangerous, no distinction can be made between acceptable and unacceptable opposition, between loyal and disloyal opposition'. Autocrats must eliminate opposition to their rule within their regime and outside their regime and prevent the rise of political rivals in their countries. Toward this task, African leaders have often utilized what Reno (1998) calls 'warlord politics', to the detriment of state-building.

For African autocrats, garnering and retaining the support of two groups can be essential to regime security. One group is the military. On one hand, military force can be essential to deterring and defending against opponents of the regime. On the other hand, military leaders who are displeased with their nation's leadership may be tempted to intervene in politics through a coup d'état. For both of these reasons, retaining the support of the military is essential to an autocrat's regime security. A second group includes major powers and donor states around the world. Foreign aid, arms transfers, military training, and trade relationships with these states may be essential to sustaining an African autocrat's ability to hold power (Reno, 1997). Deploying troops to PKOs may actually be a sort of diversionary strategy to garner and retain the support of both of these groups by distracting them from the misrule of the leader.

Such diversionary behavior differs somewhat from that explained by conventional diversionary theories (of war), which generally posit that leaders facing domestic political

difficulties may try to divert public attention from problems at home by engaging in a militarized confrontation with a foreign enemy, thus taking advantage of in-group/out-group dynamics to rally popular support in the face of an external threat (Wilkenfeld, 1968; Stohl, 1980; Levy, 1989). Diversionary peacekeeping behavior falls into the broader framework of Rosenau's (1969) 'linkage politics' – political behavior in the international system linked to political behavior in a domestic political system – and falls more specifically into the category of behavior that Kisangani & Pickering (2007) term 'benevolent diversionary force'. In their presentation, a 'benevolent diversionary' military action is one that need not involve confrontation with a foreign enemy, but can be a 'humanitarian' or 'friendly' mission of sufficiently high visibility to effectively shift the political agenda to one less troublesome to a leader.

In the African context, a diversionary strategy of peacekeeping can be successful on two levels. First, sending troops abroad to PKOs can divert the attention of military leaders from problems at home and remove troops from the vicinity of the capital city. Both of these outcomes might increase the chances of regime survival. This is similar to the common policy of frequently rotating troops among stations to prevent the establishment of local loyalty networks that could lay the groundwork for a successful military coup, and also similar to the tactic of sending troops into battle for the sake of focusing their attention on operational rather than political activities. While commanding a UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon during a time of political turbulence at home, Ghanaian General Emmanuel Erskine (1981: 155) wrote that he sought to extend the deployment time of his troops as he feared 'that to send the troops home might act as a catalyst for exacerbating the already difficult and uncertain situation in Ghana'.

Pickering & Kisangani (2005) argue that autocrats who are struggling to consolidate their power and harboring doubts over the loyalty of the military might adopt the diversionary tactic of sending troops into battle to attack a rival country or a weak neighbor. Ugandan opposition leader Kizza Besigye (2006) claims that President Yoweri Museveni – the increasingly autocratic leader of Uganda – has purposely sustained a resolvable civil war with the Lord's Resistance Army, in the north of the country along the Sudanese border, for this reason. By not seriously trying to resolve the conflict, Museveni has been able to keep most of his troops in the field, while keeping the most loyal division as his 'presidential guard' in the capital. In addition, he has been able to justify greater military expenditures. Yet, he has directed a disproportionate amount of funds to the presidential guard, presumably to secure their loyalty.

This sort of strategy is a component of Reno's (1998) 'warlord politics': waging war as a means to strengthen political authority and legitimacy while rejecting the pursuit of a state that serves a collective good in favor of one that best promotes their personal power and wealth. In early 2007, Museveni sent about 1,500 troops to Somalia – a country Uganda does not even border – under the auspices of an AU peacekeeping mission. By deploying troops to PKOs abroad instead of to wars, leaders may be able to accomplish many of the goals of this strategy with lower costs. There is some risk involved, as leaders may face the undesirable consequence of having peacekeeping units return from the field more experienced and competent, with greater unit cohesion and loyalty to their commanders, thus better organized for intervention into politics. However, this consequence may be weighed against an additional diversionary benefit of peacekeeping deployments.

While peacekeeping participation could be a diversionary strategy at the domestic level, it can also be effective on the international level. Various forms of warlordism, corruption, repression, and self-aggrandizement may be condemnable in the eyes of the international community and lead to the ostracism of such tyrants by world leaders. However, many African dictators have discovered strategies to encourage major powers to overlook their criminal behavior, essentially by proving their usefulness to the interests of those powers. During the Cold War, the United States offered support and aid to almost any leader who opposed the activities of the Soviet Union in Africa. Most famously, the United States supported the warlord regimes of both Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire and Samuel Doe in Liberia. Clark (2001: 74) contends that 'Mobutu sought security assistance from the United States, China, and France, duping each into believing that its interests corresponded with his own regime security'.

After the Cold War, African leaders found it more difficult to demonstrate their utility to the major powers. Mazrui & Ostergard (2002: 26) observe that 'the disappearance of the Soviet "threat" in Africa after the Cold War also marked the beginnings of the United States' diplomatic departure' and Reno (1997: 166) observes that African autocrats have subsequently had to 'rework' their relationships with foreign powers to maintain support. Towards this end, perhaps African leaders – and specifically autocrats – have turned to peacekeeping opportunities as a way to win the favor of major powers in the post-Cold War era. Major power democracies appreciate the contributions of developing states when it allows them to limit use of their own troops and avoid dealing with domestic political opposition to deploying peacekeepers. The primary contribution of small or developing states is usually little more than 'boots on the ground', often with inadequate training and equipment. Larger and wealthier countries often have an option of whether to focus their contribution around personnel or around logistical support. Diehl (2002) notes that major powers sometimes substitute a contribution of advanced technology for sending troops. The US government has struggled to justify PKO participation to its domestic audience, especially in the wake of the 1993 Somalia affair, and has mostly limited its role to logistical support in recent African PKOs (and clearly, commitments to stability operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have limited the United States further still).

Sani Abacha ruled Nigeria through warlord politics from 1993–1998 and offers an example of how the diversionary dynamic of peacekeeping participation has been used effectively. Abacha was notable for both his ruthless domestic policies and liberal contributions to PKOs across Africa. While his human rights practices were condemnable, the United States acted cautiously toward the prospect of disrupting Abacha's regime. Reno (1998: 103) notes that 'the US State Department's Office of Human Rights may protest the Abacha regime's violent repression of civic organizations. But at the same time, the US ambassador to Nigeria must balance US government concerns that Nigerian troops will continue to ... enforce recent peace agreements in Liberia'.

These peacekeeping deployments continued despite significant domestic opposition in Nigeria to peacekeeping involvement as noted by Bangura (2002: 152): 'Vocal groups ... who were viscerally opposed to Abacha, questioned the failure to provide information about the financial and human cost of [peacekeeping operations].' This has not deterred the recent leaders of Nigeria from peacekeeping participation, nor the United States from aiding Nigeria's military capability and peacekeeping efforts.

The autocratic regime in Guinea was similarly inspired to deploy troops to Liberia. As Jourde (2007: 493) explains, by contributing 600 troops to the ECOMOG mission, the regime sought to present Guinea 'as a "good regional citizen" and a stable regime against the image of a region marked by instability, rogue regimes, and violent warlords ... Guinean officials hoped to draw on Western regimes' concern with stability and to lower their normative expectations about democratization in Guinea.'

Regarding major powers' relations with African dictatorships, Mkandawire (1999: 122) asserts that 'there remains the lingering belief in the authoritarian advantage in policy formulation as ways and means are sought to circumvent the democratic process or render it ineffective in policy making'. Major powers might find it advantageous to cooperate with dictators who can implement favorable policies expediently.

While Ethiopia is not necessarily a warlord state, the US government recently showed a willingness to overlook its purchases of North Korean arms in early 2007, despite this being a violation of sanctions placed on one of the USA's principal rival states. Reportedly, the United States allowed the arms delivery to go through because of the important intervention and peacekeeping role Ethiopian troops were playing in Somalia after the fall of the Union of Islamic Courts regime (Gordon & Mazzetti, 2007). While the USA's potential displeasure with Ethiopia was due more to its government's foreign policy than domestic policy, it does illustrate the extent to which the utility of peacekeeping by African states can offset major power concerns over other high priority issues. When African leaders do not demonstrate this sort of utility to promoting regional stability, their rule is less likely to be supported and possibly more likely to be threatened by major powers. It is noteworthy that Charles Taylor was the democratically elected president of Liberia. Yet, by the end of his regime, Taylor had come to practice warlord politics without demonstrating a usefulness to Western powers. His disruption of regional stability – particularly in neighboring Sierra Leone – contributed to US President George W. Bush's public demand for him to leave Liberia in July 2003.

Considering these opportunities for African leaders to use peacekeeping as a diversionary strategy at both the domestic and international levels, it might be suspected that more repressive regimes may be most likely to contribute to peacekeeping. It is certainly not obvious that the most democratic and free states in Africa contribute the most to peacekeeping. Botswana is the most longstanding democracy in Africa with a prosperous economy, and yet it has rarely participated in peacekeeping. Democratic South Africa has also not participated much relative to its substantial power and size among African states. In worldwide analyses, Andersson (2000) and Lebovic (2004) find that democracies contribute more to peacekeeping than non-democracies. And yet, because peacekeeping participation can play a valuable diversionary role in the African context, it may be the case that Africa is the exception to this pattern. The most repressive African states, then, may contribute the most to African PKOs, all else equal. From this, I posit:

H1: The more politically repressive an African regime, the more it will contribute to peacekeeping in Africa.

While theory and anecdote lend support to Hypothesis 1, there is another – more simple – explanation for why a leader might rely upon peacekeeping as an opportunity to promote regime survival. A major incentive for developing countries to participate in UN peacekeeping is that they receive a monthly stipend per soldier – often about $1,000 per month. Developing countries typically receive stipends for non-UN missions as well, donated by wealthier countries. This money rarely goes directly to the soldier, but to the government to use at its discretion. For the poorest countries, this money can be highly attractive for leaders – both autocratic and democratic – who are struggling to pay troop salaries, fund government functions, and perhaps even distribute adequate patronage. In addition, when large contingents of African peacekeepers are preparing to deploy, major powers often step in to provide sufficient equipment and training, which can be quite attractive to African militaries. A better-funded military and government can help a leader maintain regime stability and promote their own political prospects, whether through satisfying the salary demands of troops, the policy demands of the public, or the patronage demands of important political clients. Considering that the financial and material support available through peacekeeping should be more valuable to leaders of poorer than wealthier countries, I posit the following relationship:

H2: Poorer African states will contribute more to peacekeeping in Africa than wealthier states (in terms of GDP per capita).

State legitimacy and peacekeeping

A concern of many, if not most, African leaders since independence – that seems to cut across both democracies and autocracies in influencing foreign policymaking – is that of building state legitimacy and maintaining the integrity of national borders and populations. Peacekeeping in Africa has played a major role toward this effort. Most borders were drawn between African states in a way that best suited colonial powers' exploitation of the continent, often without much regard for pre-colonial nations or concentrations of different ethnic groups. Mazrui & Ostergard (2002: 19) contend that not only have borders in Africa rarely been a source of interstate conflict, but at the time of independence African leaders 'embraced' the colonial borders, drawn by European powers: 'Since then, African leaders have defended the question of borders and territorial integrity and discouraged challenges to them.' Herbst (2000: 25) characterizes the system of borders as 'the critical foundation upon which leaders have built their states.' This embrace of colonial borders has caused, what Englebert (2000) calls, a crisis of 'horizontal legitimacy'. That is, a crisis over 'the level of agreement on what constitutes the polity – the politically defined community that underlies the state'. (p. 4). According to Englebert, the degree to which a state's modern borders reflect pre-colonial nations and ethnic groups is the degree to which it is horizontally legitimate.[4]

Englebert, Tarango & Carter (2002) distinguish illegitimate state borders between those that 'dismember' and those that 'suffocate' the nation-state. Dismemberment refers to splitting up single ethnic groups into multiple states, while suffocation refers to grouping distinct ethnic groups into a single state. Englebert, Tarango & Carter find that African states with greater degrees of both dismemberment and suffocation have experienced the rise of more secessionist movements attempting to dissolve the state.

In a study of economic development and governance in Africa, Englebert (2000) finds evidence that horizontal legitimacy alone has more power to explain the quality of domestic policymaking than social heterogeneity, political culture, or colonial background. Horizontal legitimacy might also explain foreign policymaking as well. Englebert, Tarango & Carter, for instance, find that states with low legitimacy are more likely to enter international disputes when their borders dismember ethnic groups across different states. It seems reasonable that decisions on peacekeeping might also be influenced by concerns over horizontal legitimacy.

Leaders of states with low horizontal legitimacy may have greater need to maintain current borders and regional stability. First, states with low horizontal legitimacy bordering failed states might fear that an ethnic group partitioned across the border will unite together and threaten state unity. Reno (1998) argues that it was an effort to defeat then-insurgent Charles Taylor that caused ECOMOG to invade Liberia in 1990, as his autonomous control of a border province (known as 'Taylorland') threatened neighboring weak states. Sani Abacha (1997: 9), as military ruler of Nigeria, similarly explained that the emergence of ECOMOG in the 1990s was spurred by the exit of Western powers and the 'realization that economic progress and development ... could not be realized in the absence of political stability.... And because of the high degree of integration and interdependence of the economies and peoples of the member states of ECOWAS, events in one state invariably resonate in others, particularly in those states sharing common borders with those in turmoil.' Adebajo (2004: 293) further highlights specific threats ECOWAS states faced from instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone: 'Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone were flooded with about 750,000 Liberian refugees. Fighting from Liberia and Sierra Leone spilled over into Guinea, while Liberian factions made border incursions in Cote d'Ivoire. [Charles Taylor's rebel army] had Sierra Leonean dissidents within its ranks, who launched a decade-long civil war from Liberia in 1991.' Similarly, in recent central African conflicts, Baregu (2006: 75) observes that 'one of the most distinctive characteristics of the [Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)] conflict is its ethnic configuration that bears no correspondence with the centralized state systems in the region' and Khadiagala (2006: 2) notes that 'ethnic conflagration in Rwanda reverberated across the entire Great Lakes region by reopening ethnic tensions in the DRC, [and] diminishing ethnic compromises in Burundi'.

Second, African states with low horizontal legitimacy may fear a breaking of the longstanding status quo of state boundaries. If other states are allowed to break up into smaller states recognized as sovereign, a precedent might be established across the continent that encourages minorities in countries to form secessionist groups and seek independence.[5] The case of Somalia reflects African leaders' attitudes toward territorial integrity. From 1991 to at least 2006, Somalia has had no effective central government and has been regarded as a collapsed state. In the interim, the regions of Somaliland and Puntland have each consolidated authority, declared their sovereignty, and have operated as functioning states. However, these two entities had not – as of 2008 – been recognized as sovereign states by other countries. Instead, other African states have supported efforts to re-establish a central

[4] Englebert also examines 'vertical legitimacy': the extent to which modern state governing structures resemble pre-colonial governing structures. This can be thought of as the legitimacy of the political regime itself and its system for choosing national leaders. Since my argument concerns maintenance of state territorial integrity, the question of whether the governing regime has legitimate authority to rule is not of direct interest. The question of where the regime has a right to rule speaks to a state's level of horizontal legitimacy.

[5] Interestingly, Kornprobst (2002) finds evidence that the management of border disputes and norms of territorial integrity may differ by region within Africa. However, I believe that my claims should hold true for most of sub-Saharan Africa.

government for all of Somalia. In 2000, the Organization of African Unity recognized a Somali government-in-exile led by President Abdiqasim Salat Hasan as the official representative for all of Somalia, despite having no real authority in the country.

In sum, I argue that the degree to which a state is at risk of internal conflict or secessionist movements due to low state legitimacy can explain the interest of state leaders to engage in regional peacekeeping. While at any one time, two states of equally low horizontal legitimacy can have quite different levels of stability, the manner in which their borders have been drawn is a constant challenge to governing the country across time. This leads me to expect:

H3: The lower a state's horizontal legitimacy, the more it will contribute to peacekeeping in Africa.

Other explanations for peacekeeping participation

While political repression, wealth, and state legitimacy are the variables of greatest theoretical interest in this article, there are of course other possible predictors of peacekeeping contributions. A few of the most likely predictors will be analyzed as control variables.

First, states with larger militaries can both contribute to more PKOs and deploy a larger number of peacekeepers at one time. While tiny states such as the Gambia desire to participate in peacekeeping, it may not be worthwhile for major powers to transport only a handful of troops to the site of deployment. Not only do larger militaries have more troops to spare, but they usually have more aircraft, sea vessels, and ground vehicles for troop transport. Clearly we can expect:

H4: The larger a state's military, the more it will contribute to peacekeeping in Africa.

Some leaders facing immediate and serious security threats may not have the option to contribute to peacekeeping. A state engaged in conflict is likely to devote its military resources to ending the conflict as soon as possible, and peacekeeping will be a relatively low security priority. One can certainly point to cases of major peacekeeping contributors that are engaged in or anticipating conflict, such as Nigeria, which sustains large deployments to Liberia and Sudan despite combating militants in the Niger Delta. Another example is Ethiopia, which sustained large deployments to Liberia and Somalia despite heightened tensions with Eritrea. However, on the whole I think it is reasonable to expect that:

H5: A state engaged in an internal or external conflict will contribute less to peacekeeping in Africa than a state at peace.

Great Britain and France are two of the biggest contributors to peacekeeping over time. They also engage closely with their former colonies in Africa, often offering security assistance in the form of training and equipment. I expect that African states are likely to follow the example of their former colonial power. Their participation will be encouraged by Great Britain and France on the basis of their similarities of language and military doctrine. PKOs initiated by former colonial powers include the Inter-African Force to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB), Operation Turquoise, and the Commonwealth Monitoring Force. And so, I expect that:

H6: States that are former colonies of Great Britain and France will contribute more to peacekeeping than other states.

Research design

Empirical domain

To test these hypotheses beyond anecdote, I use multivariate regression to analyze the peacekeeping behavior of 47 states of sub-Saharan Africa by country-year from 1989 to 2000.[6] While African states are known to contribute to PKOs in other parts of the world, I am specifically interested in contributions to peacekeeping within sub-Saharan Africa. I analyze participation in both UN and non-UN led PKOs.[7]

Measuring the dependent variable

I operationalize PKO participation in two different ways: as a nominal commitment and as a resource commitment. First, I count the number of PKOs in which a state is participating in a particular year (*PKOs/year*). These data were collected from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Berman & Sams (2000), and Aboagye (1999). A state is considered a participant for the duration of a UN mission.

Second, I count the number of peacekeepers deployed per year to any PKO (*PKO troops*). The size of deployments were obtained from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Berman and Sams, and Aboagye. Only military personnel – military observers and troops – are included as peacekeepers; civilian police participants are not counted.

[6] These states are Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasha), Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

[7] UN PKOs include MONUA, MINURSO, UNAMSIL, UNMEE, MONUC, UNOMSIL, UNOSOM I, UNOSOM II, ONUMOZ, UNTAG, UNAMIR, UNOMUR, MINURCA, UNASOG, UNOMIL, UNAVEM I, UNAVEM II, and UNAVEM III. Non-UN PKOs include OAU-Chad, ECOMOG I (Liberia), ECOMOG II (Sierra Leone), Inter-African Force to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB – Central African Republic), Operation Turquoise (Rwanda), and the Commonwealth Monitoring Force (Zimbabwe).

While the same set of hypotheses on which states are most likely to contribute to peacekeeping is expected to hold true for each measure of the dependent variable, some differences in results are possible. *PKOs/year* is more of an indicator of the nominal political commitment to participate in PKOs, whereas *PKO troops* captures more of the actual resource commitment of each state. For a state, merely participating in a PKO, regardless of the size of commitment, may win it recognition in the eyes of the global public. That is, the number of PKOs in which a state is involved may be more salient than the size of the troop contribution. However, leaders of other states involved in the PKO will likely be very aware of the exact nature of the resource commitments each state is making. In order to impress those states with the strength of their commitment, a state must send a significant number of troops abroad. Also, if a state has a serious interest in seeing a conflict resolved, they will likely make a more serious commitment. I control for differences in the size of states' armed forces, as obviously states with more troops can potentially send more peacekeepers.

Method

The two models to be tested are:

$$PKOs/year = \beta_0 + \beta_1(political\ repression) + \beta_2(horizontal\ legitimacy) + \beta_3(GDP\ per\ capita) + \beta_4(military\ size) + \beta_5(internal\ conflict) + \beta_6(international\ conflict) + \beta_7(British\ colony) + \beta_8(French\ colony) + \varepsilon$$

$$PKO\ Troops = \beta_0 + \beta_1(political\ repression) + \beta_2(horizontal\ legitimacy) + \beta_3(GDP\ per\ capita) + \beta_4(military\ size) + \beta_5(internal\ conflict) + \beta_6(interstate\ war) + \beta_7(British\ colony) + \beta_8(French\ colony) + \varepsilon$$

I estimate these models using Ordinary Least Squares with panel-corrected standard errors (OLS-PCSE). These are sometimes referred to as Prais-Winston standard errors. Beck & Katz (1995) suggest the use of panel-corrected standard errors to correct for contemporaneous correlations of errors across countries. This is useful here as all else equal, each African state has the same peacekeeping opportunities each year as any other state. However, the different opportunities to engage in peacekeeping vary by year across all countries, resulting in the possibility of spatial correlation of errors.[8]

Measurement of independent variables

Political repression The Freedom House annual ratings of civil liberties and political rights are used to compare the repressiveness of regimes.[9] Each state is rated on a scale from 1 to 7 for each measure, with 1 having the most political rights and civil liberties, and 7 having the least. I simply sum the two scores to create an index of repression 2 to 14. Thus, the higher the score, the more repressive the regime.

Freedom House has occasionally been accused of an overly subjective or Western-centric concept of political freedom. This should not be an issue in this study. If anything, my argument calls for measuring a Western perception of the level of political repression in African countries. Western governments are reluctant to aid African states that are identified as repressive by highly public indicators such as those reported by Freedom House.

GDP per capita I use Gleditsch's (2002) 'Expanded Trade and GDP Data', in constant 1996 US dollars.

Horizontal state legitimacy I use Englebert's (2000) scale of horizontal legitimacy from 0.00 to 1.00, from least to most horizontally legitimate. This is calculated by subtracting from 1.00 the fraction of a state's population belonging to an ethnic group partitioned by colonially determined boundaries.

Horizontal State Legitimacy
= 1 – (% of population in partitioned ethnic groups / 100)

Since African borders have remained fairly stable since independence, this variable does not change over time. It is based on the historical determination of modern boundaries and, thus, need not change with demographic shifts – it is a measure of historical contiguity. While it is not coded by Englebert, I assign Eritrea a score of 1.00, since its border was determined in a war of independence from Ethiopia rather than by colonial powers. I estimate a score for South Africa of 0.80 based on Englebert's coding rules.

Military size I use the annual estimates of the size of each state's armed forces, in thousands, from the National Material Capabilities dataset of the Correlates of War (2002) project.

International war battle deaths/pop. This is defined as the number of interstate battle-deaths per year as a percentage of the state's population, to capture the cost of international conflict (Fordham & Walker, 2005).

Civil war battle deaths/pop. This is defined as the number of civil war battle-deaths per year as a percentage of the state's population, to capture the cost of internal conflict (Fordham & Walker, 2005).

Colonial heritage I include dummy variables to identify states of British and French colonial heritage.

Results

The results of the OLS-PCSE regression of *PKO troops* – the number of peacekeepers deployed in a given year – are presented in Table I. There are 558 country-year observations across the 47 states. In this sample, states contribute anywhere between 0 and 14,009 troops in a year to PKOs. I first run Model I – which does not include dummy variables for *British*

[8] I do not control for autocorrelation, as there is no one particular reason why peacekeeping participation observed one year should influence participation the succeeding year. Panel-corrected standard errors also correct for a particular kind of heteroskedasticity that Stimson (1985) says results from stacking cross-sectional data into a time series.

[9] See Casper & Tufis (2003) for a discussion and analysis of how Freedom House ratings differ from other indices of regime type.

Table I. OLS-PCSE model of peacekeepers deployed per year

	Model I	*Model II*
Political repression	−0.91	−4.22
	(18.06)	(17.17)
Horizontal state legitimacy	−289.26***	−554.99***
	(61.78)	(83.19)
GDP per capita	−0.02*	−0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Military size	3.95***	3.78***
	(1.26)	(1.23)
Intl. war battle deaths/pop.	−514597.60	−1198719.00**
	(415784.20)	(477396.80)
Civil war battle deaths/pop.	−43.23	−0.95
	(37.46)	(20.62)
French colony		20.21
		(19.73)
British colony		690.78***
		(88.51)
Constant	347.39*	348.82*
	(208.95)	(200.85)
Wald Chi^2	82.12***	335.89***
R^2	0.03	0.09
N	558	558
Number of countries	47	47
Average years per country	11.87	11.87

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1 (two-tailed test).

Table II. OLS-PCSE model of PKOs per year

	Model I	*Model II*
Political repression	−0.05***	−0.05***
	(0.02)	(0.01)
Horizontal state legitimacy	−0.72***	−0.88***
	(0.11)	(0.15)
GDP per capita	−7.11E-05***	−1.00E-04***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Military size	2.61E-04	5.00E-04
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Intl. war battle deaths/pop.	126.97	−605.18
	(1822.12)	(1533.65)
Civil war battle deaths/pop.	−0.09	−0.03
	(0.06)	(0.03)
French colony		0.23***
		(0.09)
British colony		0.81***
		(0.09)
Constant	1.76***	1.56***
	(0.23)	(0.22)
Wald Chi^2	108.85***	154.82***
R^2	0.06	0.14
N	558	558
Number of countries	47	47
Average years per country	11.87	11.87

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1 (two-tailed test).

and *French* colonial heritage, and then Model II which includes these two variables.

In both Models I and II, the Wald Chi-squared statistic is highly significant, suggesting that the variables in each model are jointly significant. Turning first to Model I, Hypothesis 1 posited that more politically repressive regimes would contribute more to PKOs. I do not find evidence in support of this. The variable of interest, *Political repression*, can be observed as having a negative coefficient of –0.91 with no statistical significance. Thus, there is no evidence that level of repression has an effect on the number of troops a state deploys to PKOs.

Hypothesis 2 posited that poorer countries would contribute more to peacekeeping. The analysis supports this proposition. The variable of interest, *GDP per capita*, has a negative coefficient of –0.02 with statistical significance at the $p < .10$ level. Thus, countries with lower GDP per capita deploy more peacekeepers.

Hypothesis 3 posited that the lower a state's horizontal legitimacy, the more it will contribute to peacekeeping. The results of the analysis support this proposition as well. The variable *Horizontal state legitimacy* has a negative coefficient of –289.26 with high statistical significance. This suggests that the higher the legitimacy of a state, the fewer troops it deploys to PKOs.

As expected, *Military size* has a positive and significant coefficient of 3.95, suggesting that states with larger armed forces tend to deploy more peacekeepers. This supports Hypothesis 4. However, neither *International war battle deaths/pop.* nor *Civil war battle deaths/pop.* is statistically significant, lending no support to Hypothesis 5 – that states engaged in conflict are less likely to contribute to peacekeeping.

In Model II, when controlling for *French* and *British* colonial heritage, substantively similar results can be found for the three main hypotheses: *Political repression* is not statistically significant, *GDP per capita* is negative and statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level (a higher significance than in Model I), and *Horizontal state legitimacy* is once again negative and highly significant. Thus, the evidence continues to support Hypotheses 2 and 3, but not Hypothesis 1. Different from Model I is the finding that *International war battle deaths/pop.* is statistically significant with a negative coefficient of –1198719.00, lending partial support to Hypothesis 5 – that states in conflict will contribute less to peacekeeping – but the variable *Civil war battle deaths/pop.* remains non-significant. The variable for *French colony* is non-significant, while the variable *British colony* is highly significant with a positive coefficient of 690.78, suggesting that former British colonies contribute more to peacekeeping than others.

Table II presents the estimates for the model of *PKOs per year* – the number of different PKOs a state is participating in for a particular year. The Wald Chi-square statistics of 108.85 and 154.82 for Models I and II, respectively, have high statistical significance, suggesting that the variables in each model are jointly significant. Turning to the first variable of interest in Model I, *Political repression* is negative and highly significant with a coefficient of –0.05. Not only do I once again find no evidence to support Hypothesis 1 – that more repressive regimes contribute more to peacekeeping – but the

Table III. Summary of observed relationships

Variable	*Effect on number of PKOs per year*	*Effect on number of peacekeepers deployed per year*
More political repression	Fewer PKOs*	
Greater horizontal state legitimacy	Fewer PKOs	Fewer peacekeepers
Higher GDP per capita	Fewer PKOs	Fewer peacekeepers
Larger military size		More peacekeepers
More intl. war battle deaths/pop.		Fewer peacekeepers
More civil war battle deaths/pop.		
French colony	More PKOs	
British colony	More PKOs	More peacekeepers

* Inverse of expected relationship.

inverse appears to be true: more repressive regimes engage in fewer PKOs.

The second variable of interest, *GDP per capita*, is negative and highly significant with a coefficient of –7.11E–05. This lends additional evidence to Hypothesis 2, that poorer states contribute more to peacekeeping.

For Hypothesis 3 – that less horizontally legitimate states contribute more to peacekeeping – I also find additional support. *Horizontal legitimacy* is negative and statistically significant with a coefficient of –0.72. This suggests that less legitimate states are involved in more PKOs.

I find one variation in the estimates for the control variables from the first analysis. *Military size* does not appear to have a significant effect on *PKOs/year*. That is, how large a state's armed forces are does not seem to affect how likely it is to join a PKO, contrary to the expectation of Hypothesis 4 (though as found in the previous analysis, the contribution of a smaller state is likely to be smaller in size). This suggests that regional hegemons are not especially likely to be engaged in regional peacekeeping, though they may contribute more troops once they join a mission. This time, I do not find support for Hypothesis 5 – that states in conflict are less likely to contribute to peacekeeping – as I find no significant effect for either *International war battle deaths/pop.* or *Civil war battle deaths/pop.*

Turning to Model II, I find substantively the same results for the three main variables of interest when I control for colonial heritage: *Political repression, GDP per capita*, and *Horizontal state legitimacy* are all negative and highly significant. The control variables of *Military size, International battle deaths/pop*, and *Civil war battle deaths/pop.* are once again non-significant. This time, however, *French colony* and *British colony* are each positive and significant with coefficients of 0.23 and 0.81, respectively. This suggests that former French and British colonies join more peacekeeping missions than other African states, and former British colonies tend to join the most, supporting Hypothesis 7.

As summarized in Table III, less wealth and lower state legitimacy are found to predict both larger peacekeeping contributions and more frequent peacekeeping engagement. Political repression does not seem to have an effect on the size of contributions, but – contrary to expectations – decreases the frequency of peacekeeping engagement.

Conclusion

The surge of African participation in regional peacekeeping after the Cold War has been striking and would seem to signal a change in the international security dynamics of the continent. This article's purpose was two-fold. First, it sought to account for this change and examine which characteristics make particular African states more or less likely to contribute to peacekeeping in Africa. Second, it examined in particular how two prominent explanations for African foreign policy-making – the pressures of regime survival and a concern with building state legitimacy and maintaining the territorial integrity of African states – might help explain the decision by African states to deploy troops to PKOs in Africa.

I first proposed that leaders may engage in international peacekeeping as a strategy for bolstering regime survival. I hypothesized that African leaders – autocrats, in particular – will use peacekeeping participation as a diversionary tactic on two levels: to keep their military engaged in field operations and away from interference in domestic politics and to garner favor with major foreign powers. Despite prominent exceptions, I do not find, however, that the most repressive African regimes are most likely to contribute to peacekeeping. While no significant relationship is found between degree of political repression and the size of peacekeeping contributions, I actually find that less repressive regimes are likely to participate in more different PKOs than more repressive regimes. To the extent that repression can be a proxy for level of democracy, the findings of this study somewhat corroborate the global-level findings of Andersson (2000) and Lebovic (2004) that democracies contribute more to international peacekeeping than non-democracies. However, this only extends to predicting the *frequency* of contributions, not the *size* of contribution.

In further analyzing the importance of regime security concerns, I also examined how the incentive of material and financial benefits from peacekeeping participation might be attractive to leaders, both democratic and autocratic,

searching for resources to strengthen the prospects of regime stability. I hypothesized that because the poorest countries would likely see the most benefit from foreign donations of soldier stipends and military equipment, they would contribute more to peacekeeping. As expected, poorer states – those with lower GDP per capita – are more likely to contribute to PKOs, both in terms of number of PKOs and size of troop contributions.

Third, based on the insights of the African statebuilding literature, I hypothesized that leaders of states with lower state legitimacy would be more likely to contribute to regional peacekeeping in order to maintain regional stability and territorial integrity of the African state system. I find consistent support for this hypothesis. States with lower horizontal legitimacy – those whose borders suffocate multiple ethnic groups into single states or dismember ethnic groups across different states – seem to both participate in more PKOs and make larger troop contributions to PKOs.

Other variables are also found to have noteworthy effects on the variation of peacekeeping participation among African states. As one might expect, states with larger militaries contribute more troops to peacekeeping. However, interestingly, the size of a state's military does not seem to predict the number of different PKOs in which a state will participate. While the sizes of contributions vary, there does not appear to be a significant difference in the likelihood of large and small states joining any given peacekeeping mission. Further, involvement in military conflict does not seem to be a consistent predictor of peacekeeping contributions. In fact, states with ongoing insurgencies, including Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda, have been reliable peacekeeping contributors. Also, states of British colonial heritage seem especially likely to be major contributors to peacekeeping. The group of former British colonies is clearly led by Nigeria and Ghana. Both of these states are not only the most active in African PKOs, but regularly participate in UN missions outside of Africa as well. One reason that former British colonies may contribute more is because English has become the official language of UN PKOs and English-speaking peacekeepers may be better prepared to interoperate with foreign forces.

In the broader literature on why states contribute to peacekeeping, the findings of this study lend Africa-specific evidence to support the insights of Bobrow & Boyer and Khanna, Sandler & Shimizu that state-specific incentives can affect a leader's decision to contribute to peacekeeping. But while there is seemingly substantial anecdotal evidence that many African dictators use peacekeeping as a diversionary tactic, I do not find evidence here that this is a key driving force behind the rise of African peacekeeping.

Since the end of the Cold War, African interstate security cooperation has increased substantially, and the regional security role of intergovernmental organizations such as the AU, ECOWAS, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has notably expanded. The findings of this study of peacekeeping cooperation not only suggest that the commonality of state-building challenges across Africa remains an important impetus to international cooperation, but also that democratization may be an important complement to strengthening international regimes in Africa. Over the past decade, Western powers have sought to implement various training and education programs to improve the peacekeeping capabilities of select African states. The analyses presented here suggest that the state that will contribute the most to regional peacekeeping is a poor, less repressive, former British colony with low state legitimacy and a large military. Perhaps by focusing on the countries most likely to contribute to peacekeeping, resources can be invested where they will be most effective.

Replication data

Data available at http://www.prio.no/jpr/datasets.

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Appendix

Descriptive statistics

Variable	*Mean*	*Std. dev.*	*Min.*	*Max.*
PKO troops	213.740	1176.657	0	14009
PKOs/year	0.688	1.171	0	7
Political repression	9.425	3.148	3	14
State legitimacy	0.596	0.311	0.0001	1
Size of military	25.277	43.694	0.3	438
GDP per capita	2144.105	2454.535	281.26	13931.69
Interstate war deaths	4.28E−06	4.74E-05	0	0.0006252
Civil war deaths	0.044	0.428	0	9.441088
French colony	0.364	0.482	0	1
British colony	0.366	0.482	0	1