

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 02-10-2012		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Challenges, Benefits, and Recommendations for Continued Nigerian Peacekeeping.				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) William M. Wando, Lieutenant Colonel, USMC Paper Advisor (if Any): Dr. George Oliver, NWC and CAPT Larry Stein, USN				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the Naval War College faculty in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.					
14. ABSTRACT Africa is a continent that holds a high place in U.S. national security interests, yet it is still beset with local and regional conflicts. After Western attempts to aid Somalia in the early 1990s ended in tragedy, changes in U.S. policy that made it increasingly difficult to get involved directly in peacekeeping efforts in chaotic areas such as Africa. What has evolved since then is an Africanized solution where local and regional entities respond initially, and are reinforced by international assistance when required. Western African powerhouse Nigeria has assumed a leadership role in regional peacekeeping efforts since the early 1990s. Today, it is the largest African contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, both in and around Africa. However, Nigeria appears to be at a crossroad regarding continuing to support peacekeeping efforts abroad. This paper examines the challenges, outlines benefits, and makes recommendations as to where U.S. assistance will best keep Nigeria engaged in peacekeeping operations. As Nigeria is a key regional partner with the U.S., it is vital for both our national interests to enable continued Nigerian support to peacekeeping operations.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Nigeria, Military, Police Force, Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations, USAFRICOM					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: UNCLASSIFIED			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 22	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

**“CHALLENGES, BENEFITS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUED
NIGERIAN PEACEKEEPING”**

by

William M. Wando

Lieutenant Colonel, United States Marine Corps

**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the
requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily
endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

Signature: _____

2 NOVEMBER 2012

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Abstract

Challenges, Benefits, and Recommendations for Continued Nigerian Peacekeeping.

Africa is a continent that holds a high place in U.S. national security interests, yet it is still beset with local and regional conflicts. After Western attempts to aid Somalia in the early 1990s ended in tragedy, changes in U.S. policy made it increasingly difficult to get involved directly in peacekeeping efforts in chaotic areas such as Africa. What has evolved since then is an Africanized solution where local and regional entities respond initially, and are reinforced by international assistance when required. Western African powerhouse Nigeria has assumed a leadership role in regional peacekeeping efforts since the early 1990s. Today, it is the largest African contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, both in and around Africa. However, Nigeria appears to be at a crossroad regarding continuing to support peacekeeping efforts abroad. This paper examines the challenges, outlines benefits, and makes recommendations as to where U.S. assistance will best keep Nigeria engaged in peacekeeping operations. As Nigeria is a key regional partner with the U.S., it is vital for both our national interests to enable continued Nigerian support to peacekeeping operations.

Introduction

Peace is an extension of war by political means.

- Robert Heinlein

Africa is the second-largest and second-most populous continent in the world today. Since the end of the Cold War, it has seen almost half of the world's local and regional conflicts erupt within and between its borders.¹ After the catastrophe of Somalia in the early 1990s, Western powers significantly reduced their direct peacekeeping involvement in Africa. This created a void into which the African states had to step up and assume leadership and support for these peacekeeping operations.

Western Africa has been one of the most volatile areas on the continent. Central to creating stability in this turbulent area was the emergence of Nigeria as a leader in Africa in regional (and lately global) peacekeeping efforts. While peacekeeping operations are a challenging task for Nigeria, especially for its military, the gains are worth the risks and Nigeria should continue to be supported in these endeavors.

Background

During the Cold War, the strategic interests of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. caused both countries to become indirectly and directly involved throughout the African continent. While sometimes having the negative effect of causing or exacerbating local and regional conflicts on the continent, this influence ultimately served to restrain most outbreaks of violence across Africa. Long-term interests of both superpowers prevented escalations on the resource-rich continent, as unchecked conflict was thought to create conditions for the other power to intervene and

Epigraph – Robert A. Heinlein, “Lazarus Long”, *Time Enough For Love* (1973), http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Robert_A._Heinlein.

1. Severine M. Rugumamu, “Conflict Management in Africa: Diagnosis of Current Practices and Future Prospects”, United Nations Public Administration Network, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/cafrad/unpan009062.pdf>, 5.

therefore challenge respective spheres of influence.² In effect, the superpowers enforced a fragile stability on the continent through “stationing troops, extending security commitments, rejecting or limiting the shipment of advanced offensive weaponry, applying political pressure, and using economic rewards and threats of punishment to elicit certain behaviour.”³ In the most extreme cases, the two powers went so far as to sanction or install authoritarian regimes in various African states that supported their global benefactors.⁴ Once the Cold War ended, the superpower support and tenuous stability vanished, and long-simmering rivalries were once again allowed to flare-up unchecked.

In the early 1990s, one of these conflicts erupted in Somalia. A new dynamic was at play now with the recent emergence of globally active media capabilities (such as CNN), which portrayed the suffering and inhumanity of the conflict to an increasingly aware Western world. Escalating calls went forth for countries to become involved and intervene. World powers subsequently turned to the United Nations to take up the mantle of chief peacemaker and peacekeeper.⁵ Even with support from Western nations, such as the U.S. and Great Britain, this effort was doomed from the start by competing national interests and mission creep on the part of the U.S. and the UN.⁶ The resulting disaster significantly diminished Western desire to become involved in African conflicts, with large UN contributors such as the U.S. becoming much more selective in what activities they would get involved with on the continent.⁷ What has evolved since is a much more “Africanized” approach to solving problems on the continent. For example, a study by the

2. Eric G. Berman and Katie E. Sams. *Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities*, (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2000), 13, 15.

3. Rugumamu, “Conflict Management in Africa,” 5.

4. Ibid.

5. Rugumamu, “Conflict Management in Africa,” 7.

6. Frank G. Hoffman, “One Decade Later – Debacle in Somalia”, *Proceedings Magazine Vol. 130/1/1,211*, January 2004, http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,NI_Somalia_0104,00.html.

7. Rugumamu, “Conflict Management in Africa,” 7.

United States Institute of Peace (USIP) described a framework by which “local and national organizations are expected to respond initially, followed by responses at subregional and regional level, and ultimately at the level of the broader international community.”⁸

This local and regionalized approach to peacekeeping has become particularly relevant in Western Africa in the last couple of decades. Since the early 1990s, that region was consistently one of the most conflict-prone areas in the world.⁹ Through Nigeria’s leadership, the Economic Community Of Western African States (ECOWAS) established long-standing relationships with the UN.¹⁰ Through this partnership, Nigeria has emerged as a contemporary powerhouse in peacekeeping operations.

Modern peacekeeping operations present complex problems. The UN classifies peacekeeping as “a technique designed to preserve the peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing cease-fires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars, to incorporate a complex model of many elements – military, police and civilian – working together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace.”¹¹ Continued support for Nigeria in its role as the regional peacekeeping leader in Western Africa is necessary, as it has shouldered an every increasing amount of the peacekeeping burden since the early 1990s. Currently, Nigeria is the fourth largest contributor to UN peacekeeping operations worldwide, and the largest African contributor (see chart on the following page).

8. Rugumamu, “Conflict Management in Africa,” 8.

9. Adekeye Adebajo, *UN peacekeeping in Africa: from the Suez crisis to the Sudan conflicts*, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2011), 139.

10. Ibid., 139-140.

11. United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (New York, NY: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2008), 18.

Figure 1

Year	Police	Military Observers/ Military Experts on Mission	Troops	Total	Position in UN Top 10
2006	365	80	1,963	2,408	9
2007	630	90	1,974	2,694	7
2008	917	88	4,903	5,908	4
2009	806	86	4,915	5,807	4
2010	877	76	4,888	5,841	4
2011	726	75	4,948	5,749	4

Nigerian Peacekeeper Contributions, compiled from United Nations Peace Operations Year In Review

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/publications.shtml>

According to UN statistics, the need for peacekeepers is slightly declining. However, there is still an important requirement for UN sponsored field missions. Consequently, peacekeeping operations will remain a high-demand service over the next several years.¹²

Challenges of Peacekeeping

In the context of this demand, there are numerous challenges for Nigeria's military regarding their continuing support and leadership in peacekeeping operations. One of the most insidious yet unspoken issues is the high infection rate amongst returning Nigerian peacekeepers regarding sexually transmitted diseases, especially the HIV/AIDS virus. A study done in 2005 by the U.S. Naval Health Research Center determined that the Nigerian military had an estimated infection rate of about 15%, as compared to about 5% in the general Nigerian civilian population.¹³ Additionally, the chances of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS dramatically increased with the number of years deployed, from about 7% with one year to about 15% with three years of duty on peacekeeping missions. Part of this may be attributable to the increased likelihood of being directly exposed through wounds to HIV/AIDS contaminated blood.¹⁴ However, there are

12. United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping," last modified 19 September 2012, accessed October 15, 2012, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/present.shtml>.

13. Dr. Ernest Ekong, "AIDS in Nigeria: A Nation on the Threshold", AIDS Prevention Initiative Nigeria, accessed October 18, 2012, http://www.apin.harvard.edu/AIDS_in_Nigeria.html, Chapter 24, 560.

14. Ibid., 561-562.

several other reasons for the increased occurrences of sexually transmitted diseases. These

factors that are common to militaries worldwide. Danger/risk taking is part of the culture and tends to engender a feeling of invincibility. Younger military members tend to be single and sexually active. Service members are highly mobile and separated from their communities for extended periods, and are easily influenced by peer pressure. Lastly, they generally have access to disposable income in areas where there are increased opportunities for casual or commercial sex.¹⁵

The inherent dangers of an HIV/AIDS infected military population could potentially be very dangerous and destabilizing. In most instances, Nigeria keeps the HIV/AIDS infected military members on active duty. This results in a drop in combat readiness of the total force. Other issues, mostly speculative at this point, involve the emotional state of infected military members who increase their levels of high-risk activity knowing that their lives have become dramatically shortened. This may also include a willingness to engage in potentially illegal activity in an attempt to obtain money to pay for treatment normally unaffordable to the average soldier.¹⁶ Finally, HIV/AIDS has been identified as the leading cause of death in both the military and police forces in several African nations, including Nigeria.¹⁷

In response to this crisis, the last few years have brought heightened awareness, treatment and prevention strategies into effect in an attempt to drastically reduce these figures. Better long-term management in the form of readily available antiretroviral (ARV) therapy is being provided to infected Nigerian military members.¹⁸ In 2011, the UN passed UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1983 which “*Encourages* the incorporation, as appropriate, of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, including voluntary and confidential counseling and testing

15. Ekong, “AIDS in Nigeria,” 560.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 559.

18. ProCAARE, “Nigeria’s Military Hails Success of ARVs,” cross-posted from Nigeria-AIDS [May 13, 2004], accessed October 16, 2012, <http://www.procaare.org/archive/procaare/200405/msg00012.php>.

programmes in the implementation of mandated tasks of peacekeeping operations.”¹⁹

A second challenge to continued peacekeeping support is that Nigeria faces problems regarding adequate military funding. This has an impact in supporting ongoing and future peacekeeping operations. Nigeria is not alone in this category, as fiscal pressures regarding military funding are widespread throughout Africa. The fragile economies of the continent's nation-states are poorly situated to man, train and equip their military and police forces in support of the numerous peacekeeping missions. Consequently, these conditions contribute to the fielding of forces that are haphazardly screened and poorly trained for important out-of-area deployments in support of UN missions. Additionally, much of the equipment fielded in support of peacekeeping operations by many of the African nations, including regional leader Nigeria, is in substandard condition due to age and lack of maintenance.²⁰ Nigeria, in particular, spent only 1% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on its military in 2010, as compared with 4.8% by the U.S. during the same period.²¹ However, in 2011 Nigeria increased its defense budget by 32%, elevating it to the seventh largest spender on its military on the African continent and securing its place as the largest military contributor in ECOWAS.²² Regardless of this fact, the majority of African militaries remain underfunded and poorly positioned to correct past deficiencies in manning, training and equipping individual personnel and units for peacekeeping operations.

Another challenge facing Nigeria in recent years is perceived corruption regarding payment of deployed Nigerian military members in support of peacekeeping operations. In

19. United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 1983 (2011),” UNAIDS Webpage, accessed October 25, 2012, http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/document/2011/unsc/20110607_unsc-resolution1983.pdf.

20. James N. Mazimba, “Challenges of the African Military in Peacekeeping Missions in Africa,” Research Paper, Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2012, 4-6.

21. Simon Rogers, “Military spending: how much does the military cost each country, listed,” *The Guardian Online*, April 16, 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/apr/17/military-spending-countries-list#data>.

22. *Business Day Online*, “Nigeria's defence budget increases 32%, ranks 57th globally,” July 5, 2011, <http://businessdayonline.com/NG/index.php/news/76-hot-topic/24131-nigerias-defence-budget-increases-32-ranks-57th-globally>.

order to incentivize African countries supporting peacekeeping operations, the UN reimburses governments supporting these missions based upon a stipend per member and piece of equipment actually deployed.²³ However, the perception within the military is that Nigerian officials seem to be skimming these payments, reducing the reimbursement to the military establishment and shortchanging the personnel participating in peacekeeping operations.²⁴

The response to the perceived government corruption is beginning to grow. In 2008, Nigerian soldiers returning from peacekeeping operations in Liberia converged on the Nigerian town of Akure, located 300km east-northeast of Lagos, and effectively shut it down in protest over the perceived pay skimming. Instead of the almost \$7,400 per soldier total for the six month deployment in UN allowances they expected (based upon the UN advertised stipend of \$1,228 per soldier per month), they received only \$3,000 from the Nigerian government.²⁵

In June 2012, Nigerian soldiers on a peacekeeping operation in Darfur, Sudan lodged a protest and forwarded a petition while on deployment, arguing to be paid their allowances and to be sent home right away. This was because their original six-month mission was extended by an additional month due to lack of return transportation. To paraphrase their petition, the junior and mid-grade Nigerian soldiers were very proud of their past positive performance in restoring peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone. However, they felt that they had lost the UN's respect during the mission due to the unreliable state of their equipment as well as corruption in the Nigerian leadership in charge of the operation in Darfur.²⁶ These issues need to be addressed through a

23. United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping: Financing Peacekeeping," last modified 19 September 2012, accessed October 15, 2012, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/financing.shtml>.

24. Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, "Failing State, Fading Peacekeepers," *THISDAY LIVE*, March 16, 2012, <http://www.Thisdaylive.com/articles/failing-state-fading-peacekeepers/111562/>, 1-2.

25. HUUHADMIN, "Nigerian Army: In the Shadow of Corruption," *Modern Ghana News*, accessed September 17, 2012, <http://www.modernghana.com/news/259133/1/nigerian-army-in-the-shadow-of-corruption.html>.

26. Misbahu Bashir and Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar, "Nigeria: Darfur Operations – Nigerian Soldiers Threaten Mutiny – Ask to be Airlifted Home," *Daily Trust*, 26 June, 2012, <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201206260968.html>.

more transparent Nigerian military accounting system, as well as through better expectation management within the military and the Nigerian public regarding additional payments for peacekeeping deployments.

There is also growing evidence of increasing internal dissatisfaction within Nigeria's military over the lack of monetary and security-related benefits after supporting so many external peacekeeping missions. During a 2011 Nigerian peacekeeping conference, senior military officials stated Nigeria has yet to realize "economic, material or political gains" in spite of being the fourth largest contributor to global peacekeeping operations.²⁷ Specific issues cited included: the UN not utilizing Nigeria as a safe-haven for peacekeepers on leave from Liberia (Ghana profited instead), Nigerian equipment not being utilized under a lease program by the UN, other nations profiting from using their helicopters in support of UN transportation requirements (i.e., Russia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and South Africa), and under-payment or late reimbursement from the UN causing issues with non-delivery of food, clothing, equipment and medicine.²⁸ The senior military leaders also expressed concern over Nigerian peacekeepers contracting HIV/AIDS, frustration over the slow or non-existent implementation of change in ailing countries despite the substantial infusion of Nigerian capital and peacekeeping efforts, and the need to better address the deteriorating internal security situation in Nigeria, which seems to be falling apart.²⁹

Benefits of Supporting Peacekeeping Operations

While the 2011 peacekeeping conference highlighted many challenges, it also enumerated several of the benefits. Colonel Adewale Adeniyi Taiwo noted that as a result of its sustained

27. Eno-Abasi Sunday, "Rethinking Nigeria's role in peacekeeping missions," *The Guardian Nigeria*, June 2, 2011, <http://odili.net/news/source/2011/jun/2/6.html>.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

support, Nigeria had realized gains in several areas.³⁰ With regard to military benefits, Nigeria received improved training and support from such venues as the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, as well as through bilateral and multilateral training events. ACOTA, administered through the U.S. Department of State, and the other military activities are designed to increase military peacekeeping capabilities. Additionally, the positive performance of Nigeria's peacekeepers has garnered increased foreign aid for the military, such as \$66 million from the U.S. in 2000. Another noted economic benefit mentioned was the UN Troop Contributing Country (TCC) financial reimbursement program. Through this program, the UN compensated the Nigerian Government for "raising, training and sustaining" her deployed peacekeeping forces.³¹ Conference participants also discussed perceived political gains. Colonel Taiwo, quoting Professor Ibrahim Gambari (a prominent Nigerian scholar and diplomat, currently assigned as the joint AU/UN Special Representative for Darfur), noted that "Nigeria remains one of the UN[s] important and long standing contributors" to peacekeeping missions. This regional leadership has elevated Nigeria's international influence as witnessed by its increasing inclusion as a non-permanent member in the U.N. Security Council.³²

Nigeria's role in UN peacekeeping has also developed very professional military commanders. Since its involvement in UN peacekeeping operations beginning in 1960, Nigeria has had 25 of its general officers selected for duties as Peace Support Operations (PSO) Force Commanders.³³ Recently, the Joint African Union (AU)/UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was commanded by Nigerian General Martin Luther Agwai, who turned over the position successfully in 2009. Additionally, Nigerian peacekeepers and their leadership received high accolades after

30. Sunday, "Rethinking Nigeria's role."

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

supporting global missions such as the UN Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia in 1992. Currently, Nigerians are involved in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), including key leadership positions.³⁴

While supporting global peacekeeping operations, the Nigerian military continues to play an important role in internal security and carries out functions traditionally reserved for the police. As a result of these efforts, the populace has a greater trust in its military. In a 20 April 2012 editorial to the *Nigerian Sunday Tribune*, a reader indirectly praised the Nigerian Army, commenting on the Nigerian Police's demand for new uniforms. He mentioned, "The Nigerian Army has never changed its uniform, yet it is not found wanting when it comes to efficient discharge of its duties. Besides, it is known for discipline, commitment and dedication to duties."³⁵ Accolades for the military vis-à-vis their peacekeeping role have even garnered praise from the Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan. In public comments at a promotion ceremony in December 2010 for new Nigerian Navy and Air Force Flag Officers, President Jonathan stated that the world at large was looking to Nigeria to help settle the political situation in Cote d'Ivoire. He went on to say; "We have to thank the [Nigerian] military for keeping the country together [Cote d'Ivoire]. You have shown leadership in the whole of Africa."³⁶ President Jonathan received calls from leaders worldwide praising Nigeria for helping to resolve the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. He also said; "That tells you how others rate Nigeria and we have no reason to derail. I have to commend the military for doing that. We have a standing role in the society because of the role the military is playing."³⁷

34. Sunday, "Rethinking Nigeria's role."

35. John Tosin Ajiboye, "Nigeria Police need attitudinal change, not new uniform," *Nigerian Tribune*, 20 April 2012, <http://www.sunday.tribune.com.ng/index.php/letters/>.

36. NBF News, "Jonathan warns IBB, Atiku Over Inciting Statements," *The Nigerian Voice*, December 17, 2010, <http://www.thenigerianvoice.com/nvprint/41229/1/jonathan-warns-ibb-atiku-over-inciting-statements.html>

37. Ibid.

Favorable comments like these are increasingly common from across Western Africa. In her speech to the UN on 23 September 2008, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf acknowledged Nigeria's enormous contributions to end the conflict in her native Liberia, specifically noting the exemplary military leadership throughout the sustained effort.³⁸ In 2009, Liberian Vice-President Joseph Boakai stated that "Nigeria was behind the formation of ECOWAS Peace Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)", and through its leadership of the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL), Nigeria was instrumental in ending the eighteen year Liberian civil war.³⁹

Other political benefits that Nigeria gained for its consistent leadership role in peacekeeping efforts include assignment to prominent positions within the UN leadership system. For example, Professor Ibrahim Gambari (mentioned earlier) was the Special Representative for the Secretary General (SRSG) in Angola and Darfur, and Ambassador Olu Adeniji, later the Nigerian Foreign Minister, was the SRSG for the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone missions.⁴⁰ As a result of its proven leadership, Nigeria plays a prominent international role in representing Western African affairs. This role was further highlighted in a paper delivered at the workshop on Nigeria and the Reform of the United Nations in 2005. In it, Muhammad Juma Kuna, Head of the Department of Sociology, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria, asserted that Nigeria's sustained peacekeeping efforts regionally make it uniquely qualified to represent Africans continent-wide and globally.⁴¹ Finally, Nigeria served as a non-permanent member on the UN Security Council four times since 1966.⁴² These types of positions translate into

38. Remmy Chuks Nweke, "The Role of Nigeria In Restoring Peace In West Africa," Doctrinal Dissertation, University of Malta (2010), accessed October 18, 2012, [http://www.diplomacy.edu/sites/default/files/30112010145910%20Nweke%20\(Library\).pdf](http://www.diplomacy.edu/sites/default/files/30112010145910%20Nweke%20(Library).pdf).

39. Nweke, "The Role of Nigeria In Restoring Peace In West Africa."

40. Adebajo, *UN peacekeeping in Africa*, 139-146.

41. Muhammad Juma Kuna, "The Role of Nigeria in Peace Building, Conflict Resolution, and Peacekeeping since 1960," The Centre for Democratic Development, Research and Training (CEDDERT), accessed October 18, 2012, <http://www.ceddert.com/publications/ceddert006.pdf>.

42. United Nations, "UN Security Council Membership Archives," accessed October 29, 2012, http://www.un.org/en/sc/inc/searchres_sc_members_english.asp?sc_members=114.

international prestige for Nigeria.

Analysis

There are increasing calls for Nigeria to curtail its out-of-country peacekeeping operations, especially in light of the numerous challenges and internal instability at home. While this is a potential solution to address the difficulties and growing unrest, it is shortsighted. Nigeria's continued involvement in peacekeeping operations builds regional goodwill, experience and leadership. This in turn establishes legitimacy for the Nigerian military and the government, which will enable the government to overcome internal unrest in the long term.

Many of the challenges facing the Nigerian military (AIDS infection, limited budget, perceptions of corruption) are easily defined and therefore capable of being solved. Inversely, the intangible benefits are difficult to assess but demonstrate their value locally through the positive public image the Nigerian Army enjoys at home. On a larger scale, these positive qualities have garnered Nigeria prominence in the region as a trusted partner that is committed to long-term peace and stability. Internationally, Nigeria is positively recognized as a stabilizing force through its contributions to global peacekeeping missions. These translate to political credibility for Nigeria's government, and are worth sustaining.

Recommendations to Improve Peacekeeping

Nigeria is a key U.S. regional partner in Western Africa and demonstrates the desire, drive and proven track record to organize and lead peacekeeping operations. After examining the challenges and benefits of Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operations, Nigeria appears to be at a crossroad regarding continued support. Since its inception in November 2008, U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) has sought ways to help Africans solve African problems. As stated by General Carter Ham, USAFRICOM's Commander, "we will strive to build upon existing

relationships and develop new partnerships in Africa in order to strengthen the defense capabilities of partner nations to better enable them to provide for their own security while increasingly contributing to regional security and stability.”⁴³ In light of Nigeria’s situation, USAFRICOM must increase its commitment to assist Nigeria in building its capabilities for continued success in supporting peacekeeping efforts. Along those lines, some suggestions are offered.

First, a West African regional focus group should be held at least biannually to discuss ongoing and emerging peacekeeping operations. The AU could possibly facilitate this initiative, with support from USAFRICOM and in concert with the UN and regional ECOWAS partners. This review should examine ongoing as well as projected regional, and potentially global, peacekeeping missions, and determine what capabilities will be required. After requirements are identified, Nigeria (with help from U.S. Africa Command and other vested partners) should conduct a comprehensive review of its peacekeeping capabilities. This should be done in order to determine the best way ahead to organize, train and equip Nigeria’s military (as well as the National police force) to meet projected requirements. This review is needed as Nigeria has had past problems determining and filling UN specified peacekeeping operation troop support requirements. Not only does this contribute to haphazard training, but more importantly it leads to Nigeria under-manning troop commitments. This has the effect of less than optimal reimbursement for Nigeria under the UN Troop Contributing Country (TCC) program.

An additional area to examine regarding manning of peacekeeping operations is an increased utilization of the Nigerian national police force. Nigeria’s police force currently faces public perception problems; therefore increased training and experience gained in support of

43. GEN Carter Ham, “2012 U.S. Africa Command Posture Statement,” accessed October 19, 2012, <http://www.africom.mil/fetchBinary.asp?pdfID=20120301102747>, 1.

peacekeeping operations could serve to improve professional standards and conduct.

Another key aspect to this analysis would be to determine how Nigeria could best benefit from future peacekeeping endeavors, through use of existing capabilities or introduction of new ones. One potential area is through Nigeria's Air Force adopting increased use of helicopters in support of military lift. The UN, through its *New Horizon Initiative: Progress Report No. 2* (December 2011), outlined the critical shortage of military helicopters required for peacekeeping missions.⁴⁴ By acquiring, training and employing this critical resource in support of UN peacekeeping operations, Nigeria would be able to increase its ability to profit from future peacekeeping operations.

Next, U.S. Africa Command should increase its Force Protection training with partner African nations, particularly with those preparing to conduct peacekeeping operations. A central part of this training would be the education, prevention and treatment strategies for HIV/AIDS. This is important because the Nigerian population also bears the scars of this debilitating infection prevalent in the Nigerian military and police forces. Either through an increased tax burden or by potential infection via personal interaction via sexual activity, blood transfusions, and so forth, infected peacekeepers returning to Nigeria have a profound affect on society. More needs to be done to increase awareness, monitoring and treatment of the disease, especially in the vital Nigerian peacekeeping community. Increased partnerships with organizations such as the World Health Organization and USAID are critical to successfully addressing this issue.

A further area that U.S. Africa Command could assist Nigeria, as well as other African nations contributing to peacekeeping operations, is through increased recognition of peacekeepers in the conduct of their duties. In June 2010, retired Nigerian General Martin Luther Agwai received

44. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *The New Horizon Initiative: Progress Report No. 2, December 2011*, accessed October 29, 2012, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon_update02.pdf.

the “Visionary Award for Achievement in Peace and Security” for his leadership role in peacekeeping operations from the Africa Center for Strategic Studies.⁴⁵ These types of awards give the individuals recognized a sense of accomplishment, and serve to enhance the regional and international prestige of their country. This public recognition also helps validate the reasons for getting involved in what is many times a thankless and dangerous job.

Conclusions

The debacle of the Somalia intervention in the early 1990s led U.S. President Bill Clinton to sign Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25), The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations in May 1994. Along with a revised National Security Strategy (NSS) of Engagement and Enlargement, published in February 1995, there was a much more stringent determination as to what conditions would warrant U.S. involvement in peacekeeping efforts. With a renewed focus on first being able to clearly articulate specific goals and end states before committing U.S. forces in support of peace operations, involvement in chaotic and uncertain areas such as Africa became increasingly difficult.⁴⁶ The perception from Africans was that Africa was no longer a key U.S. priority. This situation placed continental peacekeeping operations during the 1990s increasingly in the hands of African nation states to lead and support, severely challenging their abilities and resources.⁴⁷ In this vacuum, Nigeria demonstrated solid resolve and commitment by assuming a key leadership role in peacekeeping operations, while also building regional and international credibility.

As recent history has shown, small-scale conflicts are increasingly prevalent in Africa. These

45. African Center for Strategic Studies, “Africa Center Presents ‘Visionary Award’ to Retired Nigerian General Martin Luther Agwai,” accessed October 18, 2012, <http://africacenter.org/2010/06/africa-center-presents-‘visionary-award’-to-retired-nigerian-general-martin-luther-agwai/>.

46. Matthew L. Sorenson, “The Impact of Presidential Decision Directive 25 on Intervention Policy for Complex Emergencies,” Thesis Paper, Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1996, 1-4.

47. Adebajo, *UN peacekeeping in Africa*, xvii.

have the potential to escalate out of control if not kept in check. The U.S. cannot address all of these issues unilaterally, and will have to have to rely on key local and regional partnerships.

As USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, Earl Gast, testified before the House Foreign Assistance Committee in July 2012, “Nigeria is among the United States’ most strategic African partners. Home to the seventh largest population in the world, Nigeria is the world’s largest contributor to peacekeeping missions in Africa”.⁴⁸ He further emphasizes how Nigeria has gained credibility through its leadership role in peacekeeping, stating “Nigeria plays a significant role in African regional affairs through the African Union, [and] the Economic Community of West African States”.⁴⁹

While peacekeeping operations are becoming a greater challenge for Nigeria, the potential gains are worth the risks. Nigeria should continue to support these peacekeeping endeavors, and receive assistance in this role. If Nigeria falters, regional security in Western Africa could become increasingly unstable, potentially requiring direct intervention by the U.S. Therefore, keeping Nigeria’s military strong should be a priority goal for USAFRICOM.

In order to enable continued Nigerian success in supporting future peacekeeping efforts, extensive reviews must occur in order to determine potential requirements and priority of effort. These comprehensive assessments should help Nigerians respond efficiently and effectively to regional conflicts. Through this coordination and cooperation, USAFRICOM can effectively and efficiently build partner capabilities in Nigeria so that they assume a greater leadership role to meet shared security concerns in West Africa, as well as support African goals.

48. Earl Gast, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, “U.S. Policy Toward Nigeria: West Africa's Troubled Titan,” Testimony before the House Foreign Assistance Committee Subcommittee on African Affairs July 10, 2012, <http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/112/HHRG-112-FA16-WState-GastE-20120710.pdf>.

49. Ibid.

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