

## State fragility and its regional implications for peace and stability

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### The Case of the Greater Horn of Africa

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*Abstract: The East African region is characterized by heterogeneous units and by being conflict ridden. Historically the region has been plagued by both the overlay of the Cold war actors resulting in rivalry and intrastate wars, e.g. the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia in the 1970's. The end of the Cold war left a security void, and the fragility, and in some instances collapse, of the state structures resulted in new state formations and new conflicts, both intra- and inter-state in nature. However, conflicts and security challenges in East Africa are due to amongst other things porous borders, fragile states and bad governance regional in nature, and cannot be solved by the individual states alone. Regional institutions have been in a weak position dealing with these challenges, and attempts have been to strengthen the capacity of these regional institutions. This paper investigates the attempts setting up regional security institutions in the Greater Horn of Africa and asks if fragile states are capable of creating strong security institutions and effectively handling regional peace and security challenges?*

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## Introduction

...peace is the goal for which all nations should strive, and where this breaks down, internationally agreed and non-violent mechanisms, including effective arms control regimes, must be employed. (Mandela, 1994)

This article starts with an apparent puzzle: Is it possible for weak and fragility prone states to form and create effective over-national security institutions? The logical answer would be no, since two weak units combined do not create something strong. Nevertheless, that is what the states in East Africa<sup>1</sup> are attempting. This part of Africa, plagued by the wars in Somalia and Sudan, the latent and proxy conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the post-conflict societies along the great lakes, the politically unstable states of Kenya and Ethiopia, and porous borders, has decided at the request of the African Union (AU) to establish a military standby force for the use of the AU, the so-called East African Standby Force (EASF). But will this ever be able to transform into an effective security institution, with the ability of handling the challenges facing the region? The regional enmities between the states seem to be widespread, deep-rooted and of a nearly chronic nature.

The article will start by mapping out the security dynamics and architecture in East Africa, including its membership circles and priorities. The article then scrutinizes the ambitions within the EASF and, finally, assesses to what extent this institution will be able to meet this task.

## The Security Complexes in East Africa

*"The theory, to state it baldly, claims that the presence of a single, strongly dominant actor in international politics leads to collectively desirable outcomes for all states in the international system. Conversely, the absence of a hegemon is associated with disorder in the world system and undesirable outcomes for individual states". (Snidal, 1985, p. 579)*

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<sup>1</sup> East Africa is here understood as the members of the East African Standby Force on the Horn and in East Africa, i.e. Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Comoros and Seychelles. Tanzania, Madagascar and Mauritius are members of the region, but do not take part in the security cooperation in the region.

One of the arguments that is often heard in the description of the security dynamics in East Africa is that due to the apparent fact that the region lacks a hegemonic power, the security situation is volatile and characterized by conflict and disorder. Furthermore, the ambition, especially of Ethiopia, of being the regional hegemonic power, a much contested ambition, means that regional cooperation is difficult and has never managed to move beyond simple cooperation. The important point here is that most of the other states in the region do not accept Ethiopia's claim for regional dominance and hegemony, which has led to many examples of political infighting and even conflict. Ethiopia, which due to mere geographical size, the size of its armed forces, and the size of its population could be seen as a hegemonic power, lacks power not only in terms of relative and actual power, but also in terms of legitimacy, ideas and norms, which are not accepted by the other members in the region.<sup>2</sup> Hedley Bull once argued that a great power has special rights and responsibilities in a system, and that these need to be accepted by the other members of the system. (Bull, 2002, p. 196) Joseph Nye on a similar note once wrote that:

*If the leading country possesses soft power and behaves in a manner that benefits others, effective countercoalitions may be slow to arise. If, on the other hand, the leading country defines its interests narrowly and uses its weight arrogantly, it increases the incentives for others to coordinate to escape its hegemony. (Nye, 2003, p. 15)*

There is limited, if any, trust between several of the regional states, which have been at war with each other, and are still involved in unresolved conflicts. The result is that East Africa is one of the most impoverished and conflict ridden regions of the world. (Sharamo & Mesfin, 2011) Attempts to establish effective regional institutions have so far been unsuccessful. No state has been able to lead the process of finding a way to include all the states in the region in an effective regional security structure, or political and economic institution for that matter. The largest regional institution, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), is a case in point, and the attempts to set up the regional African Standby Force (ASF) is another example of the lack of trust and leadership which can be found in the region.

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<sup>2</sup> The same could to a certain extent be said about Kenya.

It is questionable if the AU's East African region can be understood analytically as a single large security complex. However, the historical enmities and amities exist both locally and in the larger system. The next section will try to unravel these structures and dynamics.

### **Regional Security Dynamics in East Africa**

Security is a relational phenomenon, and we cannot understand the security of an individual state without understanding the international pattern of security interdependence in which it is embedded. (Buzan, 1991, p. 187) One example of this is the relationship between Kenya and Somalia, the two states being tied together by geography into what Buzan calls a security complex. (Buzan, 1991, p. 187ff) Kenya cannot afford not to become involved in the crisis in Somalia because it has a direct bearing on Kenya itself in terms of refugee flows, crime, etc. The regional dynamics have a significant influence on how states conduct their policies at the international level. In the post-Cold War era, the concept of security has been subject to a redefinition that has broadened understanding of the term. Areas such as environmental issues, public health and migration have received much more attention and are often included in analyses. In the East African context, such an approach includes for instance the water disputes amongst Nile River countries concerning access to the water, and the disagreement between Somalia and its neighbors concerning the demarcation of their common border. Natural resources, and especially access to them, must be included in the process of drawing the security map of a sub-region like East Africa. The continued high levels of conflict and violence in East Africa after the end of the Cold War and the withdrawal of the international penetration and overlay have revealed an important finding, that the Cold war in itself did not cause the regional conflicts and insecurity in Africa. The penetration and overlay from international actors might have led to the confrontations between Ethiopia and Somalia, but the end of the Cold War and the removal of that direct involvement have caused the conflicts to take on new forms. The end of the Cold War has exposed existing enmities and amities<sup>3</sup>, which have been instrumental in fuelling further conflict. It is therefore equally important to examine the political elites in the post-colonial states of southern Africa, or to probe at the structural level of the states and their nature, to find some reasonable explanations for what, up until now, seems to be a chronic level of insecurity in the region. The end of the Cold War, and the subsequent reconfiguration of the region, has opened up the East African regional

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<sup>3</sup> For further details on these concepts see (Buzan, 1991)

security complex, where the Cold War issues cut across and hid other enmities and amities. With the Cold War gone, individual states re-evaluated their continental and regional relationships and returned to, if such a thing exists, “traditional security relations”. One could go still further and claim that at independence the colonial states were merely replaced by another type of domestic colonial structure which, due to the externally imposed borders, kept large ethnic groups trapped within state borders. The new domestic masters managed the new states through processes of inclusion and exclusion, leaving marginalized groups outside the main political structures. Another important element related to the security dynamics and challenges facing the region are related to cross border activities, often of an illegal nature if seen from the side of the formal government, transnational networks and terrorism. The consequences of weak states is, amongst other things, that non-state actors in several states have de-facto control in parts of the territories and that the states do not have a monopoly on the use of violence. Furthermore, most states find it difficult to control their borders, which makes it relatively easy for trans-border activities to take place, e.g. smuggling, cattle rustling.

### The Recent History of the Greater Horn of Africa



. Since the end of the Cold War it has witnessed large scale interstate war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, with large battles between conventional armies and high numbers of casualties. Nearly all states in the region have experienced some form of domestic insurgency and intrastate violence, and most states in the region show signs of fragility, political suppression and authoritarian political systems. According to Freedom House, in 2011 only a few East

African States were considered “partly free” (Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda), whilst the rest were considered “not free”.<sup>4</sup> (Freedom House, 2012) Large geographical areas are outside the central and formal state’s control, and the ideal of the state monopoly on the use of violence is difficult to find in this region. Significant individual differences between the states can be detected; Somalia and Tanzania being at opposite poles on a continuum of formal state fragility.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the region lacks a regional institution that encompasses all states in the region. While the three main organisations, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) have membership from the region, none of them include all states and the region has so far been unable to agree to join forces in one regional arrangement. This is amongst several reasons why the EASF today is based on a Regional Mechanism (RM), which is not built upon and into an existing regional structure. IGAD is the organisation with the highest number of members from the region, but is split between north-south divisions of interest. Ethiopia is dominating this organisation, which has made it difficult for the organisation to accommodate all the different actors in the region, with states like Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania not seeking membership. However, IGAD has played a significant role in setting up the so-called Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), which is a donor supported attempt to cooperate on issues such as small arms proliferation, pastoral caused conflicts, cattle rustling and smuggling. It seems that IGAD has been relatively successful in finding a role in this specific area, and the cooperation on these cross-border issues has an important confidence building element which should not be underestimated.

### **Interregional Challenges**

As mentioned above the East African region is one of the most conflict ridden and poverty stricken in the world. (UNDP, 2012) This has to be combined with a high fertility rate, low life expectancy and lack of government capacity and service delivery. (UNDP, 2012) The political elites in power, most of them stemming from former liberation movements, refused to implement effective political reforms which could create space for a real political opposition. The consequences of these factors have been that the East African region faces a significant

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<sup>4</sup> The Freedom House verdict is highly problematic for a variety of reasons, but is a good indicator of the level of problems and challenges to be found in East Africa.

<sup>5</sup> In many places informal structures and actors have taken over where the state is absent.

challenge in trying to accommodate and handle the current conflicts, and, most especially, in trying to pre-empt future conflicts and insurrections. The so-called Arab Spring of 2011 comes into mind and sends a significant warning to (semi-) authoritarian leaders in for instance Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda, that they need to remedy the challenges facing them. However, a number of the issues facing the region are of a regional, as opposed to a national, nature. The challenges from issues such as climate change, drought, and the related humanitarian disaster affecting 13 million people in 2011, needs effective government and international responses and capacity. The region seems currently unable to produce both national and combined regional responses to these challenges. The role of international donors becomes crucial, both in terms of actual bankrolling initiatives, but also as policy drivers. One of these multilateral issues is the continental and sub-regional security architecture, which was initiated in 2002 as an attempt to create an African military capability enabling the continent to respond to conflict.

### **The African Security Architecture – a short overview**

Collaboration within the area of security was from the outset one of the cornerstones of regional integration in Africa, at both the regional and continental levels. It was seen as a way of creating the necessary peace and stability to provide room and space for economic growth and development. It was also important for the dominant states on the continent in the sense that the institutionalisation of relations is always a means of stabilising and disseminating a particular order. Such institutions depict the power relations prevailing at the time of their establishment, which however, can change over time. (Cox, 1986, p. 136) Through the Cairo decision of 1993, the members of the OAU had expressed the ambition that the OAU, and therefore also from 2002 the AU, should be able to deal effectively with the mounting challenge of conflict and destabilisation that afflicted and still afflicts the continent.

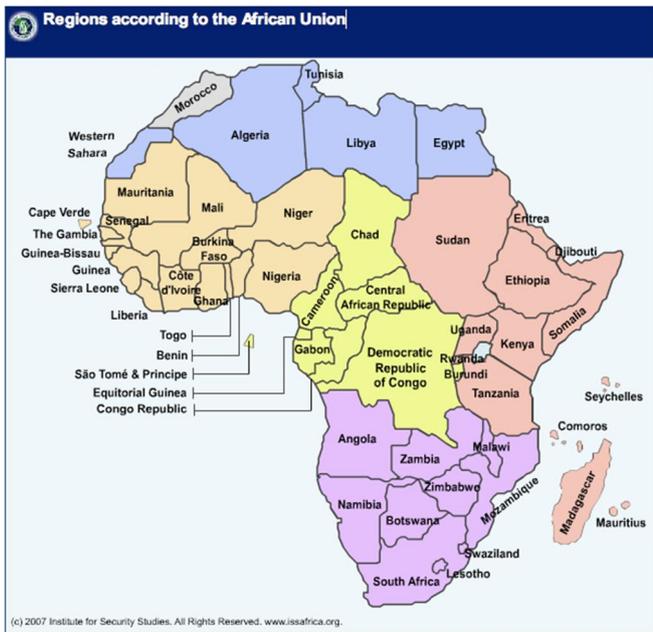
The establishment of the AU in 2002 also signaled a paradigmatic change in the way that the continental body in Africa was to act upon and view security related issues in the future. Two types of principles were to underpin the new organization, state centric and human security, which were not necessarily compatible. The AU Constitutive Act called for a common vision of “a united and strong Africa”, while it at the same time acknowledged the obstacles this “development and integration agenda” faced as a result of conflict and underdevelopment.

The AU's main objective was to "achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the people of Africa" (African Heads of State, 2000). This was to be done by introducing new principles in the field of peace and security and by ensuring the respect for human rights. In Article 4 of the Constitutive Act (African Heads of State, 2000) 18 principles were mentioned, and of those, eight constituted the central principles of the peace and security regime that was to be formed on the continent. Sovereign Equality of States was still one of the barring principles on a continent where autocratic and life-time leaders still feared domestic opposition and external intervention. The second principle was that of non-intervention and peaceful coexistence which was also part of the OAU legacy, and should also be understood and seen in the context of colonial history, where the African states had fought bitterly for independence from their colonial masters. However, the problem with the principle of non-interference is that it has been widely used by African regimes to suppress opposition when first being in power and having the legitimate, de jure, sovereign right to rule. (Jackson, 1993) The third principle was the inviolability of the borders of the member states which was an inherited principle from the OAU charter, and an attempt to avoid conflicts on border issues. The AU Constitution also introduced a number of principles that were heavily influenced by the widened concept of security to include softer and non-military issues as part of the (in-)security discourse. The constitution therefore stressed the principles of peaceful resolution of conflicts and non-use of force as one of the barring principles in the future AU. Conflicts should no longer be resolved by the use of arms, as had continually blighted the continent since independence. As part of the new human security discourse that was introduced with the AU constitution, the norms of respect for human rights, sanctity of human life and democratic principles, and good governance were also included. This was significant in the sense that it introduced principles that the member states signed up to requiring them to reform domestically and to comply with these principles. A peer review mechanism was also introduced whereby the states' compliance to these principles would be audited. In addition to establishing the rejection of impunity and unconstitutional changes of governments as fundamental principles on the continent, the AU was given the right to intervene in a member state in the case of grave circumstances. All the above principles signal that the AU, and thereby the member states on the continent, has taken a step away from the African past of the Westphalian logic of non-interference. However, as mentioned above, there is a tension between these new principles and the Westphalian principles in the sense that

they are included in the same document, and because the African states have been divided on how to interpret and prioritize these principles. The authoritarian regimes tend to focus on the (regime's) right to non-interference and self-determination, while the reform states, led by South Africa amongst others, stress the principles of peaceful resolution of disputes, good governance etc. This tension has been visible in the setting up of the security architecture and the responses that the organization has made to challenges to peace and security. On a positive note the organization has, compared to its predecessor the OAU, been very active in attempting to settle conflicts and to deploy peacekeepers to secure post conflict situations. However, in its responses so far the organization has lacked capacity in military deployments, whilst its political responses, or lack thereof, to the continued crises situations in for instance Zimbabwe, Kenya and to the war in Libya, have been at best contradictory.

### **The AU Security Architecture**

In 2002 it was decided that the AU security architecture would be based on five geographical regions. This decision was founded on the decision taken by the AU's predecessor, the OAU, at a summit meeting in 1976. (OAU, 1976) The legal basis for the security architecture can be found in the Constitutive Acts article 4d, which derives its legal mandate from Article 4(d) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, calling for the establishment of "a common defence and security policy for the African Continent" (African Heads of State, 2000)



### The Five AU Regions: Source: The ISS

The challenge in 2002 was that these regions did not correspond to the existing regional institutions on the continent. It was decided that in West Africa ECOWAS should be given the responsibility of setting up the regional structure, whereas in the South it was SADC and in Central Africa it was ECCAS. In North Africa it was decided that since there was no regional institution, the standby brigade should stand alone and not be layered into an existing regional entity. In East Africa there were three existing institutions to choose from: COMESA, which included a number of members from outside the region; the East African Community (EAC), which at the time included Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania; and finally IGAD, which included most of the EASF member states. IGAD was initially given the responsibility for the East African leg of the security architecture. The basic idea was of course that it was preferable that security cooperation and institutions be layered into existing regional institutional structures, as that would ensure a higher level of trust and ability to cooperate. In the case of IGAD it turned out that the institutional capacity of the organization was weak, which meant that it came to act as more of a hindrance in setting up the security structure. Furthermore, a number of the states in the region, Rwanda, Burundi, Comoros and Tanzania, were not members of IGAD and did not want to become members. Ethiopian dominance in IGAD also meant that a number of the other states did not see the organization as the vehicle that should, or even could, carry the burden of setting up the regional security architecture.

The decision to move the responsibility for security away from IGAD stresses the regional division that can be found between the Ethiopian dominated North and the Southern region comprising Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda. In 2007 it was therefore decided to transfer the responsibility of setting up the East African Standby Force (EASF) to a regional mechanism, like the one in North Africa, outside the existing regional economic institutions.

### **The African Standby Force: Principles and guidelines**

The July 2002 establishment of the ASF was the culmination of a long process in which African states had expressed the ambition of creating a military capacity and thus of providing themselves with a tool to deal with and manage conflicts on the continent. Article 13 of the protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) as one of the AU's institutions stated that:

In order to enable the Peace and Security Council to perform its responsibilities with respect to the deployment of peace support missions and intervention pursuant to article 4(h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act, an African Stand-by Force shall be established. Such a Force shall be composed of Stand-by multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components in their countries of origin and be ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice (AU 2002 article 13-1).

It was therefore stipulated that the ASF should include standby multi-disciplinary components with civilian, police, and military components located in home countries.

Each of the AU's five economic regions, not identical with the existing sub-regional organisations in Africa, became responsible for setting up an extended brigade-size formation of up to 6000 military and civilian personnel, including a brigade HQ, four infantry formations, reconnaissance capabilities, medical units, engineering capabilities and a helicopter unit.<sup>6</sup> The

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<sup>6</sup> The individual brigades are to consist of: a brigade (mission level), headquarter and support unit of up to 65 personnel and 16 vehicles; a headquarter company and support unit of up to 120 personnel; four light infantry battalions, each composed of up to 750 personnel and 70 vehicles; an engineer unit of up to 505 personnel; a light signals unit of up to 135 personnel; reconnaissance company (wheeled) of up to 150 personnel; a helicopter unit of up to 80 personnel, ten vehicles and four helicopters; a military police unit of up to 48 personnel and 17 vehicles; a light multi-role logistical unit of up to 190 personnel and 40 vehicles; a level-II medical unit of up to 35 personnel and ten vehicles; a military observer group of up to 120 officers; a civilian support group consisting of logistical, administrative and budget components. The policy framework sets the following additional military, police and civilian stand-by list targets to be

first phase of the formation ran until June 2005 and focused on the establishment of planning elements (PLANELM) for the AU and on creating capacity for handling situations falling under scenarios 1, 2, 3 and 4 listed below. In Phase 2 from 2005–2010, the AU and its regions were scheduled to build capacities enabling them to handle situations like the ones outlined in scenarios 5–6 listed below. The AU has decided that the civilian roster of experts is not a Phase 1 priority as UN humanitarian, development and human rights elements, which do not require a mandate from the UN Security Council, could deploy in tandem with an ASF mission. The following six missions and scenarios inform the ASF structure:

- *Scenario 1.* AU/regional military advice to a political mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate resolution;
- *Scenario 2.* AU/regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN Mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate resolution;
- *Scenario 3.* Stand-alone AU/regional observer mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate resolution;
- *Scenario 4.* AU/regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (and peace building). Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate resolution;
- *Scenario 5.* AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions, including those involving low-level spoilers. ASF completed deployment required within 90 days of an AU mandate resolution, with the military component being able to deploy within 30 days; and
- *Scenario 6.* AU intervention, for example in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly. Here it is envisaged that the AU would have the capability to deploy a robust military force within 14 days.

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maintained centrally by the AU: 3006500 military observers (MilObs); 240 civilian police (CivPol); and an unspecified roster of civilian experts to fill the human rights, humanitarian, governance, demobilisation, disarmament, repatriation and reconstruction structure (Cilliers and Malan, Progress with the African Standby Force, ISS Occasional Paper 98, Pretoria, May 2005).

Furthermore, the first roadmap plan for the ASF stipulates that in the case of genocide, the ASF contingents must be able to deploy within two weeks' notice, and not the 30 days required for the military component of traditional Peace Support Operations (PSO) missions. This means that brigade HQ capacity and logistic support must be in place at all times, i.e. the ASF structure needs its own permanent logistical capacity in order to be able to deploy within this timeframe. It is, moreover, acknowledged that, because no major military alliance exists on the continent, individual members, in effect the regional powers, are the only states possessing this capacity (AU 2005b Annex A Section II 1a). In addition to this, the AU members have decided to establish regionally based battalion-sized rapid reaction capabilities within each of the five regions under direct AU control (AU 2009). International donors like the UK, Denmark, France and the US are all involved in supporting and training these units.

### **The East African Standby Force<sup>7</sup>**

The vision of the EASF is *“To contribute to regional and continental peace through a regional conflict prevention, management and resolution capability able to respond effectively to crisis within Eastern Africa and across the African continent” (Ngowenubusa, 2011)*

Following the AU decision to establish the African Security Architecture, including the five regional standby brigades, the East African Ministers of Defence met in March 2004 to start the process of setting up the EASF.

In East Africa the responsibility for setting up a regional brigade was initially given to the IGAD, but in March 2007 the heads of state and government in the East African region decided to establish and operationalise an Independent Coordination Secretariat, EASBRICOM/EASFCOM<sup>8</sup>, and thus to operate outside the framework of IGAD. Since its establishment EASF has moved forward rapidly, and it maintained for a long time that it would be fully operational by 2010. In 2011 the target date for a fully operational multidimensional brigade was changed to 2015, while from 2010 it has had an initial

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<sup>7</sup> Currently the EASF is composed of 10 active member States that include Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. (EASFCOM)

<sup>8</sup> The Jan 2011 the new designation of the regional secretariat now known as EASFCOM (Eastern Africa Standby Force coordination Mechanism) was decided.

operational deployment capability. (Ngowenubusa, 2011) Despite its institutional weaknesses, EASF, as opposed to SADC, is being heavily supported by international donors helping with financial support and training. An area where EASF has only shown limited progress is in setting up centres of excellence, i.e. training facilities at the strategic, tactical and operational levels. One of the problems that remains to be solved is the identification of which institutions are supposed to represent the region, which is a delicate issue politically due to the regional infighting. Another example that illustrates the regional divisions was the decision to divide the ASF structures between Ethiopia and Kenya, i.e. that the EASFCOM and the military planning element is located in Nairobi, Kenya, while the brigade HQ and the logistical base is located in Addis Ababa. This also shows that the states in the region are still struggling for control and influence. One example of this is the disagreements over the status of the EASFCOM. In Kenya this institution is seen as the head of the EASF, institutionally located above the three other HQ, as the head of the ASF, while the four institutions are seen as parallel structures in Ethiopia, which does not see EASFCOM as being the head of the structure. The EASF has shown impressive progress in many areas of setting up the standby brigade structures. However, the volatile and conflict-ridden nature of the East African region and its weak states makes setting up an effective force difficult. The EASF has conducted its first field exercise which to a large extent was successful. However, the exercise once more stressed the regional divisions, which meant that Ethiopia only participated with a very symbolic contribution, while Eritrea continues not to participate, and Somalia and the Sudan (now the two separate countries) are plagued by internal conflict. This has a negative effect on the whole region. In an attempt to speed up the process, it was decided to put more emphasis on setting up the nationally-owned RDC.

### **Setting up the RDC**

The RDC concept envisages a rapidly deployable strong capability within each region. The capability needs to be flexible in its composition and capable of reacting to urgent situations with the right tools. The RDC by its very nature is a short term capability. It should not remain deployed for more than three months before being augmented and relieved. The AU Assembly is the authority for deploying the RDC. The Roadmap III plan of action should tackle the following issues:

- a. The AU will organize a roster to ensure that at any one time there will be two different regions providing this standby capability, through a cycle of training and standby and, where necessary, deployment and recovery.
- b. Each of the regions has developed RDCs to a greater or lesser extent. What is now required is refinement of the concept, harmonization where there are issues that need to be harmonized, and detailed operational planning between the AU and REC/RMs on deployment and logistic planning.
- c. It is recommended that the RDC concept should be tested, evaluated and made operational by 2012. (ASF, 2011, p. 9)

One of the problems facing the ASF system, including the RDCs, is that there is a different perception of the distribution of power and roles between the regional and continental level. The AU would like to be responsible for the doctrinal development and training. However, it lacks the capacity to do so and this has furthermore been met with resistance from the regions. This underlines the tension that can be found not only within the region, but also between the continental level and regions. Are the ASF/RDC structures something that the regions set up for the use of the AU, or are they something that is controlled by the regions?

As a consequence of the problems faced by EASF members in setting up a standby brigade, much emphasis has been put on the establishment of four nationally-owned regional RDCs. The UK is supporting the process in Kenya and Uganda, while the process of setting up an Ethiopian RDC is yet to start. Finally, in 2009 the region did ask Rwanda to be responsible for the fourth RDC, which seems to be on track to start materialising by the middle of 2012. One of the challenges in setting up the RDCs is that they to a large extent depend on donor support and national political will. In the Rwandan case the Nordic countries donor group, which is heavily involved in the EASF, was asked to support and help train the Rwandan RDC. However, this has proven to be difficult for various political reasons. Sweden and Norway, the two countries that have been most involved in Rwanda, have refused to support the RDC, primarily for political reasons. If they are to support the setting up and training of lethal military capabilities, a positive process in the partner country, as seen from the donor-perspective, must be underway, thereby limiting the risk of the capability being used for

instance against domestic political opponents. The problem in the case of Rwanda is that the “Rwandan miracle” has come under scrutiny for increased authoritarian tendencies. The question remains to what extent Denmark is then supporting and training a battalion size structure that might be used for purposes that contradict the values and norms that Western donors, like Denmark, would like to permeate into the regional structures.

### **A Security Community in East Africa?**

The question that remains to be addressed is to what extent the regional system was transformed and used to reduce the perception of fear and threat between the different states in East Africa. Should the EASF be seen as a collective defence structure, protecting the state-centric interests of the individual states, or is this the first step towards a common security structure? Robert Jervis once called this a security regime, where states seek to cooperate and to manage their disputes and avoid war by seeking to resolve security dilemmas through both their own actions and their assumptions regarding the behaviour of others. (Jervis, 1982, p. 364ff) The formation of security regimes often occurs after periods of war where former allies attempt to establish some kind of framework for peace; that is, a regime of security. This often also includes the losing party to the conflict. A hegemonic regime will only be created when one actor possesses a surplus of resources and power compared to the others, as it will then be able to “coerce” or “attract” the other actors to join the regime. This regime will be demolished when power becomes equally distributed between the different actors within the regime or participation becomes unattractive to the smaller members. (Hasenclever, Mayer, & Rittberger, 1997, p. 90) (Nye, 2003, p. 10ff) As was discussed earlier, Ethiopia does not have the strength and acceptance to enable them to play that role, and the regional members have opted for other regional and sub-regional arrangements such as the EAC and SADC.

One of the most important elements of security cooperation and institutions is not just to set up a joint military capability, like the EASF, it is also to act as a confidence building measure between the member states. The nature and depth of this cooperation is of course an important element in this, as it is open to question whether the cooperation is based on military alliance or the ambition to build a security community, i.e. what Ferdinand Tönnies once distinguished between as “Gemeinschaft” and “Gesellschaft”. However, this requires the existence of certain levels of common values and norms. In the case of East Africa it is difficult

to see how the chosen model of placing the regional brigade within a regional mechanism outside the existing regional economic institution can create the necessary trust and common values.

There are many ways to define international regimes. The definition depends on which theoretical approach is being applied. The cognitive approach sees regimes as agreements between the units of a system based on mutual understanding and agreement. The actors in this system scrutinise and read the actions of the other members of the regime and act accordingly. In opposition to this approach, the liberal behaviourist model defines a regime as a set of rules and regulations agreed upon by international political bodies. Here, therefore, the possibility of “punishing” states for violating the norms and rules of the regime actually exists. In this dissertation the term “regime” is used as Robert Keohane defined it:

”regimes are institutions with explicit rules, agreed upon by governments, that pertain to particular sets of issues in international relations”. (Keohane, 1989, p. 4)

As can be gathered from this definition, regimes often possess specific functions, for instance, a set of trade agreements or treaties of cooperation and security cooperation. A regime will be established when it is profitable for a group of actors to enter into such a structure; it will be demolished when it no longer has a constructive role for its members. The basic assumption in this article is that the actors on the international scene do not necessarily try to damage each other unless they are competing for power. In the description of the process of creating a regime, the terms “first order” and “second order” are used to describe the dynamics of the process of establishing a regime. The phrase “first order” describes the first part of the process, where an agreement to establish a regime is reached between the different parties. The first part of the process is relatively cheap for the actors. The second part of the process of regime-establishment (the “second order”) represents negotiation on the distribution of costs between the actors. This could, for instance, be an agreement to lower trade tariffs or to limit economic support given to domestic industries. The question in these cases will always be: Who is to cover most of the costs of the regime? The actors will always be reluctant to be in total agreement with their partners in the regime because they fear that they will have to pay too great a percentage of its costs. The risk of being cheated will always exist. (Gilpin, 1987, p. 74) For a benign hegemonic power it is therefore necessary to cover the collective

administrative costs and allow “free-riding” so as to have the smaller actors join the regime (Gilpin, 1983, p. 169). In East Africa no state seems yet to possess the necessary capacity or will to act in such a way.

A hegemonic power will occupy a position on a continuum between “dominance” and “primacy”. (Bull, 2002, p. 209) Dominance means that the hegemonic power habitually disregards general international rules and regulations in its relations with its immediate region, resorting instead to the use of force. “Dominance” in this dissertation is simply another term for the coercive strategy. “Primacy” is what a dominant state obtains in its relations with minor states without the use or the threat of force, by acting in a benign manner. (Bull, 2002, p. 208) This means that, in managing the hegemonic position, different strategies can be chosen. As noted earlier, two basic forms of hegemony exist: benign and coercive. (Gilpin, 1987, p. 89ff) The benign form represents a hegemonic power that does not have the capacity to coerce or chooses not to coerce other states to conform with its wishes, and chooses a cooperative diplomatic strategy instead. It will often abstain from unilateral decisions and seek a multilateral approach. Another characteristic of the benign hegemonic type is that it will attempt to organise the regime around the “superior hegemonic idea or ideal”. If successful, this function and position are easier to sustain for the hegemonic power than a regime organised by coercive means. (Cox, 1986, p. 137) This is due to the fact that, generally speaking, the smaller states will seek to prop up a weakening benign hegemon because it serves their interests, but will attempt to destroy a coercive hegemonic power whenever they have the chance. (Snidal, 1985, p. 582)

The benign regional hegemonic power will, furthermore, often use regime-formation as a way of consolidating itself and strengthening its own position at the global level. This can be used to strengthen its bargaining position in the international and regional systems. As already noted, the benign hegemonic power will often cover most of the costs of the regime in order to attract the weaker states, thus allowing them to “free-ride” (Gilpin, 1987, p. 75) The weaker states will often benefit economically from the regime. (Snidal, 1985, p. 588) However, a regime will often only prevail as long as one actor is strong enough to maintain regime rules or as long as the regime is relevant to its members. If the balance of power among the actors changes, the nature of the regime will change as well, or even disintegrate. The result will often be the creation of a new regime in its place, better reflecting the new distribution of

power and interests, and organised around a new set of hegemonic ideas. In East Africa it seems that the reluctance especially of Ethiopia to involve itself actively in the EASF has led to the other members moving ahead without the reluctant states to set up parallel security structures in the framework of the East African Community (EAC).

## Conclusion (TBC)

Collective security and defence treaties will, at the margins, remove the perception of threat. However, the nature of this kind of treaty is often determined by the power structure within a particular region, which means that when the distribution of power between the actors changes, the nature of the alliance will change as well. Acting against this is the level of the integration and the sheer size of the alliance. In East Africa the states have so far been unable to create effective regional security institutions. The EASF is not this kind of institution since it, despite having all regional states as members, largely has been unable to get all states to engage actively in the project. Some members continue to be plagued by war, whilst others for political reasons have opted only to participate in a limited capacity. The EASF is therefore as an institution moving ahead, at a slow pace, with the states that would like to participate. As might be expected, looking at the actual member states, the region seems political most focused and committed to the state-centric principles of the AU. The EASF is therefore also mostly directed towards in-regional conflicts, while it has expressed an unwillingness of deploying outside the region. There are a number of arguments for and against this strategy, but in relation to nature of the security cooperation in East Africa it indicates that the states are focused on the regime security, where the EASF can be an effective tool in stopping insurgencies.

The regional institutions have only to a very limited extent been able to introduce new norms, compared to what has been seen in for instance Southern and West Africa. The EASF is not political or economic regional institution, but a military coordination mechanism, without common values. As long as this is the case the EASF it will be difficult setting up an effective military capacity. Can these states for instance agree on the where to deploy and under which conditions? The RDC structure will in the coming years be an important capability, since it is nationally owned and therefore does not to the same extent require regional cooperation and involvement to be deployed compared to the entire brigade structure. However, it is positive

that the region has been able to set up a regional structure where they meet and exchange views on security related issues, which has an important confidence building element. The interplay between the EASF and the existing regional institutions, the EAC and IGAD, will be interesting to follow, since parallel regional integration processes seem to be at play, but not including all members of the EASF. Whether this will work to compliment or undermine the EASF remains to be seen.

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