Structure of Eastern African Standby Force in Maintaining Peace and Security in Kenya and Somalia

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ABSTRACT

Structural issues marred intrastate conflicts in the early nineties thus challenging regional security. This prompted the need for a collective regional response. Further, this explains the formation of a number of regional security mechanisms such as EASF with a mandate to maintain peace and security in the Eastern Africa region. Despite over a decade of its existence, the EASF efforts to tackle the seemingly intractable peace and security dilemmas in the region and especially in Kenya and Somalia have remained elusive and insignificant, making it more of a bystander. This study sought to address this gap. Specifically, the study examined the structure of Eastern African Standby Force. The study was underpinned by regional Security Complex theory.

Keywords: Eastern African Standby Force, EASF, peace, security, Kenya, Somalia

I. INTRODUCTION

Minterzberg (1972), in his book, "The structures of an organization" explains structure as the system that is used hierarchy to define the within the organization that establishes how it operates to execute its goals. It involves the jobs, the processes, the people and groups making efforts to achieve its goals. Jack et al (2009), when analyzing the structure of NATO, reiterates that the organization is structured with international political and military organs, to be able to undertake its role of guaranteeing the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. The overall organ is the North Atlantic Council. This is the highest decision making entity and is comprised of the Representative Ambassadors of the Allied countries. Other organs are the Military Committee, which is comprised of the Defence Chiefs of Staff of the Allied countries, to which the Allied Command Transformation Operation and Allied Command report. The third organ is the International Staff and the International Military Staff, which prepares plans and directs operations. As an organization, NATO has very few permanent own forces and so when the Atlantic Alliance decides to launch an operation; the Member States provide military forces voluntarily (Jack et al, 2009).

At the continental level, Darkwa (2017) observes that a similar hierarchical structure exists in ECOWAS. To be able to articulate its mandate of promoting peace and economic integration of the constituting countries, ECOWAS is organized with three arms of governance. They include the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. At the helm of the structure is the Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government, who is appointed by other Heads of State and Government to oversee coordinate of and the affairs the organization for a period of one year. Others are the Council of Ministers, the Community Tribunal, the Community Court of Justice, the Executive Secretariat, the

ECOWAS Parliament, and the Specialized Commissions to include one on Peace and security (Agyapong, 2005).

At the sub regional level in the East African region, Ligawa (2015), opines that EAC, being sub-regional the a intergovernmental organization of the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, is structured with seven main Organs. They comprise the Summit, the Council of Ministers, the Cocoordinating Committee, the Sectoral Committees, the East African Court of Justice. the East African Legislative Assembly and the Secretariat. Each of these organs undertakes specified functions to enable the organization achieve its mandate of widening and deepening co-operation among the partner states and other regional economic communities in, among others, political, economic and social fields for their mutual benefit (Ligawa, 2015).

To be able to achieve its mandate of maintaining peace and security in the EAR, this study found out that EASF is also organized with a structure that establishes how it operates to execute its goals. The structure constitutes the Planning Element (PLANELM), the Early Warning Systems (EWS), the Mediation and Negotiation capability, the political and geo-political systems as well as the Mission Support capabilities and the Logistics Base (Kimathi, 2010).

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was underpinned by Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT). This theory was advanced by Buzanet al (2003), in their works "Regions and Power". It is a theory of international relations, which posits that international security should be examined from a regional perspective, and that relations between states exhibit regular and geographically clustered patterns. The theory explains the structure of international security and spills it over to the regional segmentation of the concept of security. In particular, this theory

explicates how security is clustered in geographically slated regions. It avouches that security concerns do not travel well over distance and threats are therefore, mostly linked and witnessed in the geopolitical regions, hence affirming security interdependence. The Regional Security Complex Theory underpinned this study in the sense that, it helped unravel the intricacies surrounding the structure of EASF effectiveness in maintaining peace and security in the region and specifically in Kenya and Somalia. It also endeavoured to explain whether structural aspects affect EASF's mandate.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive research design. Orodho (2003) defines descriptive design as a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaire to a sample population to get their attitude, opinion and habits on any variety of educational or social issues. This design was used to describe the demographic elements under study. It gave a detailed account of demographic characteristics of the respondents to the study. The descriptive approach aided in describing the status of the variables in objective one while showing how the variables relate in the natural (Creswell, 2009). Descriptive setting research design was employed to describe the structure of EASF. It described the structure as the system that is used to define the hierarchy within the organization that establishes how it operates to execute its goals, for instance, EASF planning element, early warning system, and negotiation and mediation capability of EASF as well as how the political and geopolitical structures are made up. A total of 300 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. 255 were returned, while 45 were not returned. This implied that there was 85% response rate. This impressive rate was achieved due the rigorous engagement of the to respondents by the research assistants. The 15% who did not manage to complete the

study was either due to busy schedules or failure to submit the questionnaires in time. The study findings are considered valid since, according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting. A response rate of 60-69% is considered to be good, while that of above 70% is excellent. So the response rate for this study was excellent (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

IV. STUDY FINDINGS

The study sought to examine the structure of EASF in its mandate of maintaining peace and security in Kenya and Somalia. The findings are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

EASF Planning Element N=255 LEVEL OF RESPONSE Strongly Agree 9% Agree 45% Not Sure 13% Disagree 27% Strongly Disgree 6% 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% PERCENTAGES

***** EASF Planning Element

Figure 1.1: EASF Planning Element. Source: Field Data, 2019.

The study sought to underscore the structure of EASF. It sought respondents' understanding whether they strongly agreed, agreed, not sure, disagreed or strongly disagreed to factors determining the structure of EASF. As illustrated in figure 1.1, out of 255 respondents, 9% of them strongly agreed that EASF planning element was a defining structure for EASF. Besides, 45% agreed that EASF planning element was a critical element of EASF structure. Additionally, 13% of the respondents were not sure. A further, 27% of the respondents disagreed to the inquiry as to whether EASF constituted planning element EASF structure. Minutely, 6% of the respondents strongly disagreed to the inquiry. Cumulatively, 54% of the respondents agreed that the PLANELM is a critical entity in the structure and effectiveness of the EASF.

In light of the foregoing discussion, one of the key informants had this to say:

Planning element of EASF is part EASF structure of based in Nairobi. This is the engine of EASF since virtually all plans of the EASF are developed, designed and implemented from the planning element directives issued from the Nairobi office. However, for effective operations of EASF to take place, there are has often been need for coordination between the LOGBASE in Ethiopia and PLANELM offices in Kenya The coordination process is broadly making up the EASF structure that consists of the thirteen member states. However more tailored approach towards better planning is necessary in future (Interview with informant EASF kev at PLANELM, Nairobi Kenya 20/11/2019.

The foregoing is illustrative of planning elements witnessed across the globe, the continent and within transnational formations. However, it is important to note that, the planning elements without proper coordination mechanisms become moribund. Such was the case with the restructuring of EASBRIG in 2004 into EASF. The PLANELM was composed of a regional military and civilian staff on secondment from all EASBRIG member states, and was equipped at its location at Karen, outside Nairobi, close to the existing International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC), with funding from Britain. The function of the PLANELM was to serve as multinational the full-time planning headquarters for EASBRIG and it is

empowered to enter into agreements with national and other training institutions for necessary capacity building. However, the restructuring of EASBRIG was necessitated by its ineffectiveness, hence the need to come up with a more effective structure (Cilliers& Malan, 2005). This finding is supported by Robinson (2014), who reiterates that during the 2013 verification of the ASF pledged capabilities, EASF, ECCAS, ECOWAS and SADC, were found to have operational PLANELMS. NARC capabilities were still not operational but were working towards achieving operational readiness (AU Verification Report, 2013).

However, Kibuko (2014), on the other hand, observes that the military components are the most dominant within the PLANELMs with a relatively fair capacity to plan, launch and sufficiently manage missions. This is attributed to the originalBrigade concept of the ASF whilst gradually being shed, but is still evident. The military components at the regions are comprised of staff officers across land, maritime, air and service support elements who report to a Head of Component and/or Chief of Staff. There is therefore need to enhance and develop the police and civilian components. There also remains a need for integration/integrated capacities. This will ensure that each component is afforded the opportunity to develop and manage its affairs in its unique manner whilst contributing to the overall strategic objectives that have been set within the PLANELM. This is due to the fact that Police and civilian components continue to report through the military and it was observed that they are not adequately represented in decision-making structures and processes such as the Chiefs of Defence meetings wherein decisions that inform and drive the activities of the PLANELMs are taken. Where technical expert groups are utilised (such as in the EASF region), it was informed that they are for the most part comprised of military representatives. The communication flow and correspondence are also coordinated and managed by the

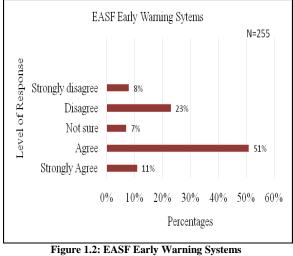
Military Chiefs of Staff and this leads to communication being more directed to the Ministers and Chiefs of Defence and not to Chiefs of Police and Ministers responsible for police matters as well as Ministers of Foreign Affairs on civilian matters (Kibuko, 2014).

Omanyo (2015) agrees that staffing and funding constraints still remain a challenge for the regions, especially with respect to the police and civilian components within the PLANELM. When it comes to funding, there is still quite a dependency on partner funding to support posts within the PLANELMs. This again is especially particular to the police and civilian components. As partner funding continues to wane, the sustainability of staffing positions becomes a major challenge. Thus regions also need to ensure that they include funding for posts in their regular budget structures for the PLANEMs. All the regional PLANELM structures provide for three police experts in the police component. And it was observed that the only region where these positions are all filled, is the EASF with only one officer in SADC and two each in ECCAS and ECOWAS (Darkwa, 2017).

EASF Early Warning Systems

Regarding early warning systems as composing EASF structure, 130 respondents (51%) of the total 255 respondents agreed that Early Warning Systems (EWS) had been initiated by EASF. 59 (23%) of the respondents disagreed to this inquiry and 28 (11%) strongly agreed that early warning systems had been put in place by EASF. Besides, 20(8%) strongly disagreed that EWSs were part of EASF structure and 18 (7%) of the total respondents were not sure.

Cumulatively 62% of the respondents agreed that Early Warning System was a vital component that had been operationalized within the EASF structure. These results are illustrated in figure 1.2.



Source: Field Data, 2019.

In view of the foregoing deliberations, one informant had this to say during the interview:

Early warning systems are essential for EASF role. In maintaining peace and security, it is important to understand the dynamics that comes with early warning. It is not just about issuance of alerts, slapping countries with travelling advisories as witnessed by the redtape countries like USA and UK. Early warning entails activating preparedness levels in readiness to respond to crises (Interview with Kenya Immigration government official on 23/11/2019, Mombasa, Kenya).

Chikwanha (2010), reiterates that EASF, working with the Africa Union Commission CEWS has developed many capacities and skills. This has enabled the organization and the region to engage in and security operations peace when mandated. Key among them is the Early Warning and Conflict Analysis system, which provides regular updates and analysis of conflict in the region. This finding is supported by previous studies; for example by the Bah et al (2014), on the enhancement of Early Warning Capacity in Africa. It revealed that a lot of progress has been made to enhance this capacity in the continent. While the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) was put in place by Article 12 of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC), its operationalization is guided by the provisions of the "Framework for the Operationalization of CEWS". The two instruments stress the importance of collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on matters of early warning and conflict prevention as a prerequisite for the successful operation and full operationalization of CEWS (Chikwanha, 2010).

The PSC Protocol specifically States that the African Union Commission shall collaborate with International Organizations, Research Centres, Academic institutions and NGOs, to facilitate the functioning of the CEW. Against this background, the ASF and CSOs have provided an important contribution in the operationalization of CEWS. This is done through participation in various meetings and workshops convened by the AU Commission since 2003. During this period, three consultative meetings have been held with REC/RMs and CSOs, in the continent. They have basically focused on creating awareness and understanding amongst them on the mandate, structures, operations and status of operationalization of CEWS (Bouka, 2016).

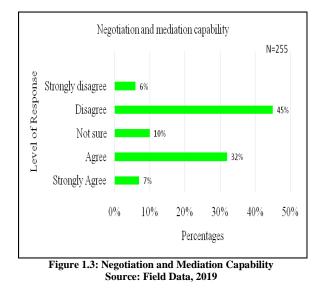
This has enabled the development of an effective working methodology between the CEWS, RECs/RMs and CSOs. This has facilitated emergence of an effective, practical and sustainable relationship; and elaborate the modalities for engagement and their effective participation in conflict prevention and early warning with the CEWS and RECs/RMs.

As a follow-up to the consultative meetings, CEWS identified five CSOs and Research Centres from the 5 AU regions to coordinate data collection activities and thematic research initiatives. Further, the Africa Reporter tool, which is an important online platform, has been used to enhance exchange of information between the AU,

the RECs/RMs and CSOs. Through this the RECs/RMs and CSOs, are able to exchange information with CEWS, in countries/regions, where they have a presence or through existing networks (Cuman, 2012).

✤ Negotiation and Mediation capability

As far as negotiation and mediation capability is concerned, out of the 255 respondents, 115 (45%) of the respondents disagreed to the inquiry whether negotiation and mediation capability constitutes EASF structure. 81 (32%) of the respondents agreed that EASF had capability in terms of mediataion and negotiation. 26(10%) of the respondents were not sure, while 15(6%) strongly disagreed and 18 (7%) strongly agreed. Cumulatively, only 39% agreed that EASF has a functional mediation and negotiation capability. This is illustrated in figure 1.3.



In view of the foregoing discussion, one informant adduced that:

Negotiation and mediation are important aspects of regional organization like EASF. While, EASF has in the past been involved in negotiation and mediation efforts in attempts to maintain peace and security, it may need to be further developed to be a more effective conflict prevention tool in the Eastern Africa region, especially in Kenya and Somalia. (Interview with Key informant Nairobi, 24/11/2019)

The AU continues to support REC/RMs to develop their negotiation and mediation capabilities through the APSA framework and given legitimacy to the RECs/RMs mediation activities. This is contained in the UN-AU Ten Year Capacity-Building Program. ACCORD (2009).in a study on negotiation and mediation capabilities in Africa emphasized that what is required now is the development of a sustainable work program for the support to RECs/RMs capabilities.

It recommended that the process of strengthening the mediation relationship between the UN, AU and the REC/RMs should be broadened. The UN should further offer support for building the mediation capacity of the sub-regional organizations. This will go along way in ensuring that the relationship between the AU, the UN and the RECs/RMs regarding mediation is strengthened through desk-todesk contact; sharing information and early warning. It will also develop a system for jointly identifying emerging conflict issues and designing timely response measures (ACCORD Report, 2009).

Political and geo-political structure

The study sought to ascertain whether political and geo-political structures formed part of EASF structure. As illustrated from figure 1.4, out of the 255 respondents, 145 (57%) of the respondents strongly agreed that political structure exists in EASF and is affected by member state politics. Additionally, 58 (23%) of the respondents agreed with the foregoing Besides, 26 (10%) of inquiry. the respondents disagreed to the inquiry, 13 (5%) concomitantly were not sure while a further 13 (5%) strongly disagreed that the political/geopolitical structures exhibited effectiveness of EASF.

Cumulatively, 80% of the respondents agreed that a political and geopolitical structure existed within the EASF and was key to its maintenance of peace and security in the EAR.

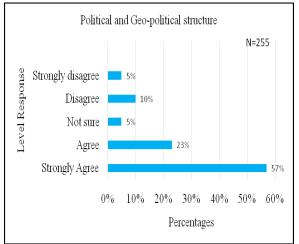


Figure 1.4: Political and Geo-political Structure Source: Field Data, 2019.

In view of the foregoing discussions, one of the FGD participants observed that:

Political and geopolitical structures are key in the operations of the EASF. Regional organizations are by nature political entities of member states. In most cases politics guides issues that circumnavigate around national Politics interests. have been structured, well rooted into the political fabric of EASF member states (FGD participant on 20/11/2019, PLANELM Nairobi).

This finding is supported by study conducted in the ECOWAS by the World Mediation Organization (WMO) in 2017. It found out that endless politics and geopolitical interests always pervade all regional regional and sub security organizations. When **ECOWAS** was established in 1975, its mandate was restricted only to economic issues. This tradition changed in 1990, when ECOWAS decided to intervene in the civil war in neighboring Liberia.

The economic organization redesignated itself as a security organization with the objective of making and enforcing peace. Making peace involved negotiation, mediation and arbitration. Enforcing peace involved the deployment of a 3,000-strong military force to supervise the ceasefire in August 1990 (Mortimeer, 1996).

Due to political/geo political interests, in 1999, Mauritania withdrew its membership. When ECOWAS decided to create a Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), in 1990, serious political divisions between the Anglophone nations led by Nigeria and the Francophone nations represented by Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire became apparent. This division, which eventually included most Anglophone countries on one side and most of the Francophone countries on the other side, not only hindered the implementation and the effectiveness of the operation, but strained the cohesion of also the organization. This explains that incessant politics will always take centre stage from member states. This, to a greater extent has shaped the politics of peace and security in regions such as Eastern Africa and even in major blocs like the NATO (Howe, 1997).

According to Desmidt and Huuck (2017), this explains why EASF lacks a political home; with some key structures in Kenya and others in Ethiopia. He observes that the political climate in the Eastern Africa region is unpredictable, especially among member states due to prevailing political and geo-political interests. Desmidt and Huuck (2017), further observes that the dearth of any member states failing political legitimacy to house regional organizations is worrying but inevitable in today's geopolitical environment.

✤ Mission Support Capability

Regional security mechanisms are only strong and efficient when they possess adequate mission support capabilities. These are the capabilities that enable them to respond expeditiously to various conflict situations and scenarios without much support challenges. Mission support is an integrated capacity of military, civilian and

contracted resources. The mission support component is responsible for the overall management and coordination of all logistic support functions for the EASF (Apuuli, 2016).

In order to know whether there are adequate mission support capabilities within in EASF structure, the study found out that, out of the 255 respondents, 156 (61%), of the respondents agreed that EASF had adequate mission support structure, while 43 (17%) of the respondents disagreed. Besides, 33 (13%) of the participants were not sure and 23 (9%) strongly agreed. None of them strongly disagreed.

Cumulatively, 70% of the respondents agreed that there exists a mission support capability within EASF structure. This is illustrated in figure 1.5.

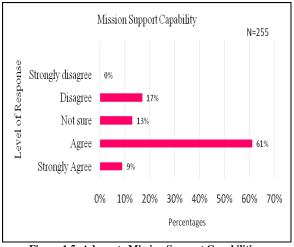


Figure 1.5: Adequate Mission Support Capabilities Source: Field Data, 2019.

The findings are underpinned by Kibuko (2014), who singled out mission support component as the most misunderstood yet critical components for the effective functioning of peace support operations. Based on her experience in UNAMID, she explains that effective deliverv of mission support during operations becomes a clear indicator of a successful mission and hence a force multiplier. She observes that, if the procurement and supply units are not working well this means that even the military and police activities are hampered. In her opinion, regional security mechanism

can learn from the UN pre-deployment training for the mission support functions such as Information Technology (IT), which has not been well explored by EASF. She detests any attempt by EASF to operate with limited resources, and duplication or overlap of efforts and resources must be minimized, if not avoided, as best as possible (Kibuko, 2014).

This finding is further supported by an ASF Pledged Capabilities verification, which was conducted in the EASF by AU team led by Gambari in 2017. It found out that EASF, ECOWAS, and SADC were at different stages of establishing their mission support capabilities. The EASF and **ECOWAS** were assessed to possess adequate logistics capabilities, which could perform procurement and administrative functions beyond the storage of prepositioned equipment. NARC and ECCAS were still yet to establish such capabilities in their regions (AU Report, 2017).

Logistics Base (LOGBASE)

The heart of all humanitarian and peace support operations lies in the ability to conduct operational logistics to sustain the assigned forces. The EASF sub-region's environment presents austere difficult logistic challenges. The research findings show that 115 (45%) of the respondents felt that the Force has an important logistical Unit as shown in figure 4.5. Out of the total 255 respondents, 69 (27%) of them averred that EASF has no operational logistical unit. Furthermore, 23 (9%) of the respondents strongly agreed that EASF has a functional LOGBASE and 15 (6%) strongly disagreed. In an interesting fashion, 33 (13%) of the respondents were not sure whether EASF has a LOGBASE or not.

Cumulatively, 54% of the respondents agreed that EASF has a functional Logistics Base, within its structure. This is illustrated in figure 1.6.

The foregoing was underpinned by Oluoch (2015), who argued that the identification of broad sustainability, logistical support, and funding requirements

are key components for the deployment of any peace operations including military intervention under any mission scenario. Emphasising that the problem of logistics is not only that of outdated communication and operational equipment, he contended that it is also the ability of the force to maintain modern logistical infrastructure operational supply systems. and The standardization of logistical equipment among the contingents of the EASF in as much as possible is a very important element of successful operation. However, due to different development capacities of member state defence forces, equipment standardization will not be possible across the whole spectrum of EASF military equipment. One kind of solution to bridge the gap that may exist between the different EASF member states` defence forces is the early identification and standardization of interoperability where between areas contingents is crucial to the success of the EASF (Oluoch, 2015).

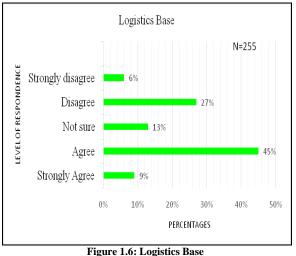


Figure 1.6: Logistics Base Source: Field Data, 2019.

This prevenient assertion was supported by Bayeh (2014), whose opinion is in tandem with Oluoch's credence of EASF. However, he contends that African armies as well as security mechanisms put in place, have 'notoriously' weak logistics facility. In order to promote peace and security, Bayeh (2014), calls for offensive equipment such as artillery and other force multipliers like helicopters instead of small arms that were being used. He argued that such equipment were crucial in dismantling groups that stymie peace and security efforts. The researcher, therefore, believes that, LOGBASE in a regional security mechanism acts the centralized as warehouse for storage of logistics that are key to operations of EASF troops in maintenance of peace and security in Eastern Africa region. The LOGBASE controls virtually all the aspects of logistics in Eastern Africa (Bayeh, 2014).

The above assertion is further supported by the findings of the AU team tasked to verify ASF Pledged capabilities that was led by Gambari, which assessed that EASF has an operational Logistics Base that was established in 2007 in Ethiopia to provide and coordinate logistical support to EASF operations. Its mandate includes amongst other aspects, managing the logistics infrastructure; providing training for logistics personnel; maintaining start-up kits for the Force HQ for rapid deployment; undertaking contingency planning and coordinating all logistics activities. Personnel responsible for the maintenance of the equipment and the entire facility have already been trained and the equipment is maintained using state of the art technology. ready to be deployed when the need arises (AU Report, 2017).

V. CONCLUSION

study concludes that The а contemporary peace and security debate that leans on the back of a well-structured EASF is preponderant. EASF as currently structured is limited to comprehensively execute its mandate in maintaining peace and security in Kenya and Somalia. The many factors that contribute to insecurity in the region exacerbate this situation. Kenya and Somalia are caught up in territorial supremacy battles occasioned by cross border Al-shabaab asymmetrical activities, which are beyond structures configured for peace operations.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Other than EASF being the only mechanism for promoting peace and security in Kenya and Somalia, a more collaborative structured and entity; comprising all security apparatus like the National Cohesion Commission be established in the Eastern African region to comprehensively address peace and security concerns in the region along the lines of non-state actors for proper and expeditious handling of peace and security concerns especially in Kenya and Somalia.

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