

THE AFRICAN UNION'S AFRICAN MISSION IN SOMALIA (AMISOM): WHY DID IT SUCCESSFULLY DEPLOY FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF THE IGAD PEACE SUPPORT MISSION TO SOMALIA (IGASOM)?



BY
Terry Mays

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL COMPLETION OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
The Certificate-of-Training in United Nations Peace Support Operations



Peace Operations Training Institute®

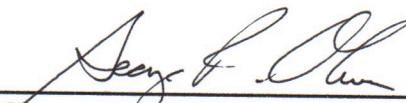
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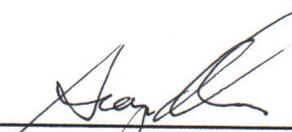
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OVERVIEW

In March 2005, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) officially agreed to assume responsibility for fielding a peacekeeping mission in Somalia on behalf of the African Union (AU) and in support of the peace process in the country.¹ In March 2006, Kenya's Foreign Minister declared that despite its best efforts, IGAD had failed in its attempts to deploy a peacekeeping mission to Somalia. In this admission of defeat by an African international organization, the Minister cited three specific reasons for the failure to field the peacekeeping operation: a fragmented political approach; the lack of funding; and the existence of a UN arms embargo on Somalia.² Members of IGAD continued to seek solutions to these problems throughout 2006 until the African Union (AU) assumed direct responsibility for the peacekeeping mission and fielded the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in January 2007.³ The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the problems cited by IGAD and determine if AMISOM's successful deployment can be at least partially attributed to correcting them between March 2006 and March 2007.

BACKGROUND TO IGASOM (November 2004 – March 2006)

As early as 2002, members of the AU and IGAD discussed the option to field an African mandated peacekeeping mission in Somalia. This mission would support the peace process and restore order in the country. Somalia suffered the lack of a true

national government since 1991 when civil war dismantled the government and left the country split between warring factions. United Nations (UN) attempts to reconcile the various factions failed, and the introduction of international peacekeepers to support humanitarian operations resulted in a withdrawal of the units following bloody confrontations with belligerents. Western states were not eager to return to Somalia. If a peacekeeping mission was required to support a new national government, it would have to be one mandated and fielded by African countries.

Planning for a peacekeeping mission in Somalia became more serious in 2004 with the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG) and later the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia on Kenyan soil. Planning for a movement of the TFG from Kenya to Somalia included the formation of an African regional peacekeeping mission to support the government. In fact, if the TFG was to succeed, it would require an independent military force to provide a sense of security for Somali citizens as the warlords stood down and, hopefully, disarmed.

The AU approached IGAD to assemble the operation. Under AU peacekeeping arrangements, sub-regional international organizations assume the lead for fielding AU peacekeeping missions within their areas of responsibility. IGAD holds this role for northeastern Africa. In February 2005, a meeting of the AU's Peace and Security Council officially mandated a peacekeeping operation for Somalia and requested IGAD to plan and deploy it in support of the TFG.⁴

In March 2005, IGAD officially agreed to accept the tasking and field a peacekeeping mission, the IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM).⁵ IGAD worked on plans for IGASOM for twelve months before frustrated members admitted a

failure to deploy the peacekeeping operation, citing the three factors the organization could not solve.

FACTORS IN IGASOM'S FAILURE TO DEPLOY

I. Factors External to Africa

1. Fragmented Approach

When discussing why IGAD had failed to field IGASOM, the Kenyan minister listed the fragmented approach by key players as the first explanation. In particular, he noted that Somalia's neighbors, Great Britain, and the UN were hampering the deployment of IGAD peacekeepers. Multiple organizations were involved in the planning process. The UN agreed to back the African-mandated peacekeepers in Somalia as proposed by the AU which in turn asked IGAD to actually provide the manpower and deploy the mission.

The AU and IGAD disagreed with the UN on an important issue related to the fielding of peacekeepers – the lifting of the UN arms embargo on Somalia. The AU and IGAD pleaded for the lifting of the embargo as a condition for providing peacekeepers and fulfilling the operation's mandate. The UN refused to comply. This issue will be discussed later in this paper as a third specific reason given by IGAD for its failure.

Second, despite the decentralization of the fielding from the UN down to the IGAD level, the three international organizations involved in the operation (UN, AU, and IGAD) disagreed on which should assume the lead in the negotiations with the Somali factions. The confusion intensified as discussions on the movement of the TFG to

Somali soil evolved. Each organization dispatched representatives to Somalia who reviewed the conditions for dispatching peacekeepers. In the end, the three organizations settled on the UN providing the “chief negotiator”. “We have agreed to use the offices of the UN special representative to Somalia as the focal point to convene the talks on a common position to the deployment of troops in Somalia.”⁶

Even the members of the UN Security Council were divided on the issue of deploying regional peacekeepers to Somalia. The United States opposed the IGAD peacekeepers. A State Department spokesman remarked, “While we (the US) appreciate IGAD’s intentions of stabilizing Somalia, we do not understand the rationale behind the IGAD deployment plan and do not support the deployment of troops from frontline states in Somalia...It is our strong view that the successful establishment of a functional central government in Somalia can only be achieved through a continued process of dialogue and negotiation, not force of arms.”⁷ Only three of the seven IGAD states did not border Somalia and were not referred to as frontline states. These included Sudan, Uganda, and Eritrea. (In 2007, Eritrea officially suspended its membership in IGAD in 2007 over Ethiopia’s military intervention in Somalia. The Ethiopian military intervention targeted the Islamic Courts Union and Eritrea is a supporter of various groups that had allied under that banner.) American opposition to the deployment of IGAD peacekeepers intensified in March 2005 to include a subtle threat to veto any UN Security Council mandate supporting the deployment. At the same time, the United States declared that it would not contribute to funding the operation.

2. Funding

Deploying and maintaining a peacekeeping force in the field is an expensive undertaking and IGASOM was certainly not an exception. Funding for this peacekeeping mission was a central issue; and without funding, the peacekeeping operation would never get off the ground. The AU, like the Organization of African Union (OAU) before it, consistently experiences funding shortfalls. Large scale projects, including peacekeeping, are beyond their limited capability. For example, the AU Peace and Security Council budget for 2005 was \$158 million while the AU's cost for its peacekeeping mission in Sudan during the same period was \$222 million.⁸ IGAD estimated the operations in Somalia would cost approximately \$413 million annually. The AU, and again the OAU before it, has been forced to rely on outside funding for its peacekeeping operations. While African states are fast to pledge money for the AU's programs, few are willing to actually come forward with the cash. Even annual dues become an issue.

IGAD members requested the IGAD Chairman, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, to secure funding and technical support for the mission from countries in the region, AU members, and states outside the continent. At the same time, IGAD members directed the organization to establish a special fund in cooperation with the AU for the mission.⁹ Within two weeks, Uganda officially offered soldiers to IGAD for inclusion in the peacekeeping operation. However, Ugandan officials made it very clear that the state could not afford to pay for the deployment. The Minister of State, Defence (Minister of Defense), Ms. Ruth Nankabirwa, announced that her country required "hundreds of

millions of shillings” to cover the costs of the deployment and looked to the AU and other countries for the funds.¹⁰

IGAD planned to deploy its peacekeepers by April 2005. The organization requested states providing troops to fund their own deployments and then await reimbursement from IGAD. Uganda immediately cancelled the deployment of their peacekeepers after the announcement.¹¹

In May 2005, when the force had not materialized, IGAD announced that a lack of funds and insecurity within Somalia was preventing the organization from fielding a peacekeeping mission. Despite establishing a fund in February and requesting assistance, Kenya’s permanent secretary for regional cooperation, Peter Nkuraiya, declared, “We are still waiting for funding from the African Union...Money has been the biggest obstacle that has caused delay in the deployment of troops.”¹² In June, Djibouti Foreign Minister, Muhammad Ali Yusuf, addressing a gathering of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), spoke about Somalia and asked the attendees to support the funding of IGASOM.¹³

IGAD requested the AU provide an initial \$10.3 million to fund the costs of airlifting the first two battalions of peacekeepers to Somalia. By the first week of June, even this money had not materialized. The Chief of the IGAD Secretariat’s Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution office, Peter Marwa, commented, “We have not received any funds yet, none of the donors has responded.” Marwa added that IGASOM cannot move without the funding and would require even more for sustainment in Somalia.¹⁴ IGAD turned to the European Union and dispatched officials to Scandinavian countries, Italy, and the Arab League for assistance.¹⁵

This situation continued through the remainder of 2005 and into 2006. Some states and organizations made pledges but never delivered; others refused to even offer financial pledges. By March 2006, IGAD admitted it had failed in its attempt to field IGASOM and cited the lack of funding as a major cause.

3. Failure to Lift the UN Arms Embargo

IGAD cited lifting of the 1992 UN arms embargo as the third specific reason behind the organization's failure to deploy peacekeepers into Somalia by March 2006. UN Security Council Resolution 733 (1992) states:

[The Security Council] Decides, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, that all states shall, for the purposes of establishing peace and stability in Somalia, immediately implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia until the Council decides otherwise;¹⁶

The 24th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers (17-18 March 2005) not only endorsed the organization's assumption of the peacekeeping mission bound for Somalia but also called upon the UN Security Council to lift the 1992 arms embargo on the country. The ministers recognized that the UN arms embargo on Somalia posed a problem for the deployment of the peacekeeping operation. In public, the organization stated the arms embargo would prevent the peacekeepers from arriving with weapons and being re-supplied with ammunition. The embargo also prevented the training and arming of a new military force that would back the TFG. The 1992 embargo essentially prevented the importation of weapons and ammunition for a new military force until lifted by the Security Council. Without its own fighting force, the TFG would have to

rely on the IGAD peacekeepers to defend it during any breakdown in the peace process. Many countries offering peacekeepers were not prepared to actively defend the new Somali government. In response, IGAD noted in its 18 March 2005 communiqué of the meeting that it would seek a waiver of the UN arms embargo.¹⁷ IGAD recognized that the arms embargo must remain in place to prevent the open arming of Somali factions. At the same time, the TFG needed its own military force to ensure it remained in power and this required a partial lifting of the UN embargo.

The AU summit of June 2005 endorsed the IGAD call for lifting the arms embargo. The AU ministers declared that the existence of the arms embargo was an obstacle to the fielding of the IGAD peacekeepers. Sudanese and Ugandan representatives at the meeting stressed they were prepared to deploy their peacekeepers as soon as the international community supported the mission – which included lifting the UN arms embargo.¹⁸ The UN Secretary General responded that lifting the embargo “poses a challenge for the international community and the UN in particular.” He added that increased enforcement rather than a partial lifting would better serve the security situation in Somalia.¹⁹

Debate on the arms embargo increased over the next two weeks. At the AU Head of States Summit meeting in Libya, Somali Prime Minister Ali Muhammad Gedi, called for the AU to persuade the UN to lift the arms embargo. Speaking before the body, he declared, “If the arms embargo is not lifted, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia would not get the international peacekeepers...”²⁰ The UN Security Council convened on 14 July to address this issue. Prior to the meeting, Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed announced, “...we urge prompt modification of the arms

embargo provisions to allow our national security forces and IGASOM peacekeeping forces to sufficiently stabilize conditions in Somalia as we return to govern...”²¹ The Security Council acknowledged the requests of the AU in May 2005. In July 2005, the Security Council discussed lifting the embargo in order to field the IGAD peacekeepers. However, the world body, utilizing carefully crafted language, opted to retain the embargo. The official press release of the 14 July session included:

The Security Council takes note of the PSC’s [AU Peace and Security Council] request to the Security Council for the authorization of an exemption on the arms embargo imposed against Somalia by resolution 733 (1992) of 23 January 1992, contained in the AU’s PSC Communiqués of 12 May and 3 July 2005...The Security Council stands ready to consider this matter on the basis of information on the mission plan mentioned in paragraph 6 in due course... The fact that the deployment of any foreign military force in Somalia will require an exemption from the Security Council arms embargo on Somalia poses a challenge for the international community, at large, and the United Nations, in particular. In its resolution 1587 (2005), the Security Council mandated the Monitoring Group to continue monitoring the proper implementation of the arms embargo. The enforcement of the arms embargo, with improved monitoring capacity and the establishment of enforcement measures, would considerably enhance security in Somalia.²²

Somalia’s president renewed his plea while addressing the UN General Assembly in September 2005. He informed the General Assembly:

The [arms] embargo directly undermines the [Somali] Government’s inherent right and genuine effort of forming its national security force that would protect the public and keep the peace by enforcing law and order throughout Somalia...In addition it discourages willing friendly countries from offering their help in Somalia, especially in the areas of security and the rule of law.²³

The Somali President offered that the UN should end the arms embargo, and in its place, utilize “punitive and targeted sanctions” against outsiders who violate the sanctioned

peace process in Somalia.²⁴ Two weeks later a UN monitoring group announced an increase in violations of the arms embargo on Somalia – a clear indication that the arms embargo simply was not working despite the UN’s insistence that it remain in force.²⁵

On 29 November 2005, at the 26th session of the IGAD Council of Ministers held in Jawhar, the attendees called again upon the UN to lift the arms embargo in order to permit the deployment of IGASOM. IGAD ministers and senior officials also asserted the TFG’s right to arm itself despite the arms embargo. The body released a statement declaring, “Somalia has a legitimate government and...the solemn right to establish, train, and equip its law enforcement authority while seeking regional and international cooperation towards achieving the goal of lifting the UN arms embargo.”²⁶ However, the UN Security Council announced that the embargo should be tightened in accordance with the Monitoring Group’s report. Various groups and think tanks including the TransAfrica Forum argued that the UN should not lift the arms embargo as requested by IGAD. One academic noted that lifting the arms embargo on behalf of the TFG would permit Somali President Abdullah Ahmed to monopolize the government with his supporters rather than provide the type of security outlined by IGAD.²⁷ The TFG of Somalia and IGAD continued to call upon the UN to lift the arms embargo while some of the Somali warlords acknowledged that they opposed the lifting of the ban since it would lead to the legal arming of the militia supporting the Somali government.²⁸

IGAD and the IGASOM contingent contributing states continued the campaign to lift the UN arms embargo. At the conclusion of the Sanna Forum Summit on 29 December 2005, the attendees (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen) appealed to the UN to grant a waiver of the arms embargo in order to deploy peacekeepers.²⁹ The

Executive Council of the AU, meeting 16 to 21 January 2006 in Sudan, adopted a resolution that asked "... the United Nations Security Council to provide an exemption on the arms embargo on Somalia with a view to facilitating the deployment ..." of the IGASOM and the follow-on AU peace support mission.³⁰ In January, the President, Speaker, and Prime Minister of Somalia met together for the first time since their political split in May 2005. During their session, both the President and Prime Minister requested assistance in securing a waiver to the UN arms embargo.³¹ An AU summit resolution of 25 January 2006 backed the call of Somalia and IGAD for an arms embargo waiver. In March 2006, the UN Security Council welcomed the AU resolution but only offered that it would "consider" an exemption to the arms embargo on Somalia.³² Five days after the remarks of the Security Council President, IGAD again called upon the UN to waive the arms embargo stating, "We urge the UN Security Council, particularly the five member states, to lift the UN arms embargo on Somalia."³³ The arms embargo remained in place and IGAD admitted its failure to field IGASOM.

II. Factors Internal to Africa

Although IGAD listed three reasons behind its failure to deploy peacekeepers into Somalia by March 2006, it should be noted that this was an oversimplification of the issue. IGAD discussed the problems facing IGASOM that required solutions external to the African continent. However, there were three additional issues requiring solutions internal to the African continent that were not openly discussed in the March 2006 meeting.

1. Consent of Belligerents

A key distinction between “peacekeeping” and “peace enforcement” operations centers on the consent of the belligerents. Acceptance of the mandate and fielding of multinational forces in support of the peace process means a greater chance of success for the operation. However, opposition by some, or even all of the belligerents endangers the successful completion of the mandate as well as the lives of the peacekeepers. The most successful United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the United Nations Emergency Force II and the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group, owed a tremendous debt to the cooperation of the belligerents.

IGASOM was intended to be a peacekeeping operation with the multinational force serving as a neutral body in support of the peace process. However, from the beginning, many of the major belligerents opposed the deployment of IGASOM which was not mandated to use force except in defense. Tracing the opposition to IGASOM between 2005 and 2006 could easily be a research project of its own. Therefore, this paper will simply highlight some of the major opposition – including factions within the TFG itself. The rejection took two forms – those who only disagreed with the inclusion of neighboring states in the operation and those who refused to accept any peacekeepers.

IGASOM faced Somali opposition immediately upon receiving its mandate. Many factions, including those participating in the TFG, stated they would not accept any regional peacekeeping operations on Somali soil that contained soldiers from the neighboring states. In particular, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Ethiopia have actively supported opposing factions in the Somali civil war. A joint statement of TFG factions declared,

“We endorse the deployment of troops from the international community without the involvement of contingents from Somalia’s immediate neighbors....” This automatically proved to be a challenge for IGAD, since the organization consists primarily of states that neighbor Somalia. Somali warlords attending a conference in Nairobi criticized the TFG for agreeing to the deployment of a peacekeeping mission without consulting them.³⁴

Within days the Somali parliament officially rejected the idea of peacekeepers from Somalia’s neighboring states. The debate was so heated that the session ended in a literal fist fight between parliamentarians. The vote also divided the Somali Prime Minister and Speaker with the former declaring it unconstitutional and the latter declaring the rejection of peacekeepers being within the mandate of parliament.³⁵

Complete opposition to the deployment of any peacekeepers to Somalia included the Defense Minister of the TFG, Muhammad Qanyre Afrah. The Defense Minister declared, “We won’t accept even one foreign peacekeeper because we see that they would not do anything for us as Somalis.”³⁶ The Umbrella Organization of Islamic Clerics, a federation of Islamic groups, also announced its rejection of peacekeepers for the country.³⁷ Declared opposition to IGASOM continued throughout the rest of 2005 and into 2006.

2. Achievable Mandate

The mandate is one of the key elements of success for a peacekeeping operation. A mandate provides the authorization and legitimacy for the introduction of the peacekeepers and outlines its mission. Mandates often list very generic and broad mission goals for the peacekeepers in order to meet the demands of all of the countries

approving them. Sometimes they provide goals that are simply not achievable due to the stage of the peace process and/or numbers of peacekeepers on the ground. Considerable work and negotiation is required to translate a mandated mission to one that succeeds on the ground.

The AU's Peace and Security Resolution of February 2005 served as the official mandate for the peacekeeping attempt that became known as IGASOM after IGAD accepted the task to assemble and deploy it. The AU resolution listed three missions for IGASOM that were reiterated by IGAD during its March 2005 summit:

- a. Security support to the TFG
- b. Guarantee sustenance of IGAD peace process
- c. Assist with reestablishment of peace and security including training of police and army³⁸

Despite the vocal support of IGAD for the AU mandate, the member states contemplating fielding contingents were not in favor of providing military protection to the TFG in Somalia. With many belligerents in the civil war opposing the introduction of peacekeepers, contingents faced a real possibility of armed conflict and taking casualties. Second, it's difficult to guarantee the sustenance of the IGAD peace process when the belligerents had yet to agree to it. Third, IGAD could not train a TFG police and army unless the UN lifted the arms embargo and permitted the arming of these new groups. The latter point brings us full circle – without a TFG police force and army, IGASOM would be responsible for providing internal security.

3. Political Will of Contingent Providers

IGAD member states were willing to demonstrate public support for IGASOM and even pledge contingents. However, when it came to actually fielding the contingents, states danced to their own tunes. Without guaranteed funding up front; a mandate that implied the deployed contingents would have to actively defend the TFG; an incomplete peace process; and open opposition of different belligerents for neighboring countries, IGAD member states were not ready to take the next step and deploy their contingents. The failure of a single state to deploy a peacekeeping contingent under IGASOM is a testament to the lack of political will.

BACKGROUND TO AMISOM (March 2006 – March 2007)

The development and mandating of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) must be understood in the context of the continued failure to deploy IGASOM after the March 2006 IGAD meeting. IGAD did not abandon IGASOM after March 2006 but continued to seek ways to solve its problems and deploy contingents to Somalia. However, the deterioration of the Somali peace process, increased Western backing for a peacekeeping mission, and the inability of IGAD to solve IGASOM's problems combined to give birth to AMISOM.

March 2006 witnessed an escalation in the Somali civil war. Western states, in particular the United States, were concerned about the growing strength of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), an alliance of Islamic-based factions, which reportedly harbored

terrorists including those who bombed the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. The United States also declared that the ICU maintained ties with the Al-Qaeda terrorist network. In response, the United States funded a second alliance of Somali factions known as the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT) founded in February 2006.³⁹ Street fighting increased in March 2006 as the ICU initiated a more aggressive offensive against its rivals. By early June 2006, the ARPCT were on the retreat and the ICU demonstrated that it held the upper hand in Mogadishu and other areas outside the capital. This collapse of the political situation in Somalia meant little opportunity existed for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission in support of the peace process.

By July 2006, Ethiopia grew increasingly concerned with the movement of ICU military forces along its border and opted, with United States backing, to actively intervene in the Somali civil war in support of the factions opposed to the ICU. Addis Ababa began discussions with the TFG to deploy troops into Somalia in order to protect the fledgling Somali national government and counter the rapidly growing presence of the ICU. Renewed calls for the deployment of IGASOM emerged in September as a means to protect and assist the TFG until it could muster enough strength to assume a greater role in the country and counter the ICU. The AU renewed its backing for IGASOM in the same month.⁴⁰ Despite the symbolic political support, the factors behind IGASOM's failure to deploy by March 2006 still existed six months later. Following the AU meeting, the ICU moved its troops southward to seize the southern port of Kismayo and seal the border with Kenya due to concerns that IGAD peacekeepers (or "foreign troops" in the words of the ICU) might cross the border from Kenya.⁴¹

Ethiopian skirmishes with the ICU intensified during September and October 2006 as the turmoil and Somalia continued. Despite the AU's renewed call in September for a deployment of IGASOM to support the TFG, the problems cited by IGAD in March 2006 remained unsolved. The situation changed in December 2006 when Ethiopian troops crossed the border in a large scale invasion of Somalia to counter the ICU. The UN provided an explicit authorization for IGASOM and partially lifted the arms embargo as Western states offered greater support for the mission. The December authorization for IGASOM also declared that states bordering Somalia should not participate in the mission.⁴² This statement in the resolution was a move to help maintain the neutrality of IGASOM and primarily an attempt to keep Ethiopian soldiers from officially deploying with IGASOM as an IGAD member since that state was already battling the ICU. Eritrea, another IGAD member and strong ICU supporter in men and equipment, already opposed IGASOM so there was little concern over an interest in Asmara in joining the operation. At the same time, the resolution officially prevented Kenya and Djibouti from participating in IGASOM leaving only Sudan and Uganda as IGAD members eligible for participation in the peacekeeping mission.

AMISOM's actual birth can be traced to January 2007 when the AU's Peace and Security Council voted to assume the mandate and responsibility from IGAD for a peacekeeping mission in Africa.⁴³ Transferring the mandate from IGAD to the AU was a result of needing greater African military involvement in the operation.

The UN did present its authorization in Security Council Resolution 1725 (2006) for non-IGAD African states to contribute forces to IGASOM in recognition of the few IGAD members available for deploying contingents. In recognition of this statement, the

AU assumed responsibility for a peacekeeping mission in Somalia on 19 January 2007 and officially mandated the operation. The AU by this action officially opened the peacekeeping operation to all AU members and not just those of IGAD. Members of IGAD officially backed the transfer of responsibility to the AU on 28 January. However, this left one possible legal technicality. The UN authorization of December 2006 specifically named IGAD and IGASOM in reference to a peacekeeping mission in Somalia. To eliminate any possible question of international authorization, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1744 (2007) on 20 February 2007. In the same resolution, the UN provided a specific partial exemption to the 1992 arms embargo for AMISOM.⁴⁴ A small advance element of Ugandan peacekeepers arrived in Somalia on 1 March 2007 and was quickly followed by a battalion sized unit under the banner of AMISOM.⁴⁵ Why was the AU able to successfully deploy the first contingent for AMISOM in March 2007 after assuming the responsibility and mandate for the operation only two months earlier?

I. Problems External to Africa

1. Fragmented Approach

As of March 2006, IGASOM was a proposed peacekeeping operation blessed by the UN and the AU, and carried out by IGAD with little Western backing. Even African states tended to pay lip service to backing the mission, specifically funding and military contingents. The United States originally backed a coalition of warlords in Somalia. Following the 2006 defeat of the warlords by the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), the United

States altered its position toward IGASOM. With greater Western backing, the UN Security Council met the requests of IGAD including the easing of the arms embargo. Following a December 2006 renewal of the UN's blessing for IGASOM, the AU met the next month and assumed the peacekeeping lead in Somalia. An AU resolution announced the establishment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to replace IGASOM and provided a new mandate and mission for the peacekeeping operation.⁴⁶ During the same month, IGAD met and released a statement noting and supporting the conversion of IGASOM to AMISOM under the AU. (The AU and IGAD documents will be examined in more detail later within this paper.) During February 2007, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1744 (2007) officially supporting AMISOM rather than IGASOM and repeating its easing of the arms embargo on Somalia.⁴⁷ By March 2007, AMISOM deployed its initial contingent of AU peacekeepers with Western backing. While the changes in approach did not guarantee success, they were essential in assuring international support and responsibility.

2. Funding

Once the West became more interested in supporting an African peacekeeping mission for Africa, they announced pledges of funding and logistical support. During the first week of January 2007, the United States pledged \$16 million while the European Union offered \$19.5 million for the peacekeeping force.⁴⁸ Additional countries, including the Peoples' Republic of China, pledged smaller amounts of funds over the next few weeks. Although, the AU received numerous pledges of cash, the organization declared it was still short of funds to fully cover AMISOM. However, when the initial

Ugandan contingent deployed, it received support from the United States. Although the funding solution was not perfect, support did materialize after the West shifted its focus to backing AMISOM.

3. Lifting of the UN Arms Embargo

IGAD did not give up immediately on IGASOM after admitting failure to field the operation. Two months after the March announcement, Kenya, serving as the Chair for the organization, announced that it would appeal to the UN for lifting the arms embargo on Somalia. In June, Louis Michel, the European Union Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Affairs, announced that the organization would consider an easing of the UN arms embargo in order to support the fielding of African peacekeepers into Somalia. If the TFG presented a stabilization plan for the country, this could provide what is necessary for “some exemptions, targeted exemptions on the arms embargo in order to make it possible for the national army to develop itself and also develop the police force.”⁴⁹ On the same day, a reporter asked State Department spokesman Sean McCormack if the United States had changed its opinion on the embargo given the IGAD request and softening of the EU position. McCormack replied that the American position had not changed.⁵⁰ Six days later, the UN announced that it might open new discussions reference the arms embargo on Somalia.

The Africa Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee met on 11 July to examine United States policy towards Somalia. During the meeting, Dr. Andre Le Sage, the Academic Chair for terrorism and Counter Terrorism at the National Defense University, remarked that lifting the UN arms embargo, as well as deploying the

IGAD peacekeepers, were divisive issues within the TFG “and will likely do far more harm than good.”⁵¹ However, two days later on 13 July, the United Nations Security Council presented its most positive statement to date on the easing of the arms embargo on Somalia. The resulting announcement declared, “The Security Council states its willingness, if it judges that a PSM [peace support mission] would contribute to peace and stability in Somalia, to consider the above request [“an exemption to the arms embargo”] for a PSM, on the basis of a detailed mission plan from IGAD or the AU.”⁵² The next day, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack fielded another question reference United States policy on the UN arms embargo. This time he replied, “It’s a topic for discussion right now among members of the international community. I’m sure it’ll be a topic of discussion among the Somalia Contact Group.”⁵³

On 18 July 2006, the Somalia Contact Group (formed in June 2006 and consisting of the United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Italy, Sweden, and Tanzania as well as representatives from the EU, Arab League, UN, and IGAD) met in Brussels and discussed the arms embargo. The resulting official statement called upon the UN “to consider with a sense of urgency modifying the arms embargo to allow for training, capacity building, and development of a broad-based, representative security sector building on successful dialogue between Somali partners.”⁵⁴ Yet, despite the endorsement as well as continued requests from the TFG, Kenya, and Uganda, the debate continued into September. On 25 September, John Bolton, the United States Ambassador to the UN, addressed the arms embargo in prepared remarks released by his office. Bolton, having just discussed the issue with the Kenyan Foreign Minister, declared, “We’ve

listened to the foreign minister's briefing, which was quite informative, and it's [lifting the arms embargo] something we would consider. But we're still considering it."⁵⁵

Debate continued through the fall with Kenya and Uganda renewing the call for lifting the arms embargo. On 1 December 2006, Ambassador Bolton informed the media that the United States submitted a draft resolution to the United Nations Security Council calling for the fielding of the African peacekeeping mission and "a partial lifting of the arms embargo for the purpose of assisting the force and associated training."⁵⁶ The Arab League and groups associated with Somalia's Islamic Courts Union remained opposed to lifting the arms embargo. The Security Council adopted Resolution 1725 (2006) five days later reiterating its support for a peacekeeping mission as well as the easing of the arms embargo stating the latter could include exceptions for the "supplies of weapons and military equipment and technical training and assistance intended for the support of or use by" the peacekeeping mission planned by IGAD and the AU.⁵⁷

II. Problems Internal to Africa

The three deployment problems not discussed by IGAD in March 2006 were not solved by March 2007. Despite the existence of the problems, Uganda dispatched a contingent, followed later by Burundi. These were internal African issues and are common problems faced by any peacekeeping operation regardless of being mandated by a regional, continental, or global international organization.

1. Consent of Belligerents

The groups associated with the ICU continued to oppose IGASOM and later AMISOM. The peacekeepers have not been welcomed as neutral troops supporting the general peace process. Supporters of the TFG view AMISOM as a necessary arm of the peace process while those opposed to the TFG see AMISOM as carrying out a mission that runs counter to their political objectives. Despite forming under an AU mandate with UN authorization, the ICU and other groups still declared AMISOM to be a body of foreign soldiers intervening in Somalia. In late February, the Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of the Two Migrations (PRMLTM) faction equated AMISOM with Ethiopian troops and warned in a statement posted on the ICU website that Uganda would be collecting the corpses of its soldiers in Somalia as a result.⁵⁸ The first 400 Ugandan peacekeepers were “welcomed” at Mogadishu airport on 6 March with eight mortar rounds.⁵⁹ Two days later, AMISOM suffered its first casualties as insurgents wounded two Ugandan peacekeepers.⁶⁰ By 14 March, the UN noted there had been three attacks on AMISOM peacekeepers and called upon all factions to respect their neutral mission.⁶¹ The first death of an AMISOM peacekeeper occurred on 1 April when a detachment of Ugandan soldiers guarding the presidential palace came under mortar fire resulting in the loss of a peacekeeper and the wounding of five others.⁶²

2. Achievable Mandate

The January 2007 conversion of IGAD’s IGASOM to the AU’s AMISOM required an official change in mandate. The AU Peace and Security Council released a resolution on 19 January 2007 assuming responsibility for the peacekeeping mission

bound for Somalia, renaming the operation as AMISOM, and declaring a new mandate.⁶³

IGAD members attending the AU summit gathered on the side as an extraordinary meeting of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government. They released a statement on 28 January 2007 backing the shift of the peacekeeping responsibility and mandate to the AU.⁶⁴

The new AU mandate established the following mission for AMISOM:

- a. support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia, working with all stakeholders,
- b. to provide, as appropriate, protection to the TFIs and their key infrastructure, to enable them to carry out their functions,
- c. to assist in the implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan of Somalia, particularly the effective reestablishment and training of all inclusive Somali security forces, bearing in mind the programs already being implemented by some of Somalia's bilateral and multilateral partners,
- d. to provide, within capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support to the disarmament and stabilization efforts,
- e. to monitor, in areas of deployment of its forces, the security situation,
- f. to facilitate, as may be required and within capabilities, humanitarian operations, including the repatriation and reintegration of refugees and the resettlement of IDPs, and
- g. to protect its personnel, installations and equipment, including the right of self-defense;⁶⁵

Without doubt, the AMISOM mandate was more carefully developed and written than that of IGASOM. The broad guidelines of IGASOM gave way to the more precise instructions of AMISOM. At the same time, AMISOM's mandate provided caveats including "as appropriate", "within capabilities", and "as may be required". However, it is difficult to imagine a fully fielded AMISOM (7,650 soldiers) could be capable of

carrying out the mandate in a country the size of Somalia. Certainly, AMISOM, as currently deployed, is not capable of this task. Fulfillment of the AU mandate demands that Somali factions must accept the peace process and AMISOM as a neutral body in a peace support role. As discussed earlier, AMISOM deployed without the benefit of acceptance by all of the Somali factions. It is difficult to complete a mandated task to support the reconciliation process when factions are not ready for reconciliation. It is impossible to assist in disarmament of factions when the latter consider AMISOM a hostile force and refuse to cooperate.

Second, AMISOM must have greater resources including thousands (if not tens of thousands) of more peacekeepers and access to all of the equipment and supplies required to complete the tasks outlined in the AU Communiqué. Somalia is a large country and the few peacekeepers authorized by the AU are too small to complete all of the mandated tasks. This problem is compounded by the reluctance of states other than Uganda and Burundi to contribute peacekeepers to the operation.

Third, the states providing contingents to AMISOM must have the political will to allow their peacekeepers to carry out the tasks. AMISOM peacekeepers relied on Ethiopian soldiers to provide the bulk of the security functions required to keep the TFG safe in its compounds and counter attacks from Somali factions opposed to the peace process and the TFG. A more active AMISOM will probably result in greater casualties. African states have something in common with Western countries – they cannot sustain unlimited casualties in an operation termed as “peacekeeping”.

It should also be noted that the AU mandated AMISOM as a peacekeeping operation. The peacekeepers have the right of self-defense and to protect their

equipment, installations, and other assigned personnel. AMISOM is not a peace enforcement mission mandated to force factions to the peace table. It is not even clear from the AU mandate whether AMISOM has the legal right to protect civilians from attack. AMISOM is dependent upon the acceptance of the Somali factions in order to conduct its mission and remain free from attack.

3. Political Will of Contingent Providers

Most AU members lack the political will for participation in AMISOM. While they provide political support for unity within the AU, many do not fulfill pledges to provide contingents of peacekeepers for the operation. The lack of a successful peace process and the hostility of factions to AMISOM and its mission signal the probability of casualties; the lack of guaranteed complete funding means a state willing to assist the AU might end up footing the bill when government funds are already short. International organizations (IO), including the UN, AU, and IGAD, do not demand compulsory military participation of members in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations. While proportional funding of a mandated operation is often theoretically mandatory within an IO, deploying soldiers is voluntary. It takes political will, whether from a realist or idealist political perspective, for a state to send its military personnel into a potentially hostile situation based on a request of an IO.

Several African states have publically pledged peacekeepers for AMISOM yet only Uganda and Burundi have actually deployed their soldiers in support of the AU. Upon mandating AMISOM, the AU requested peacekeepers from its members and received pledges from Ghana, Malawi, and Nigeria as well as Uganda and Burundi.

South Africa, Rwanda, and Tanzania were reported as considering the appeal.⁶⁶

Almost immediately, pledging states began to back out of their commitments when asked for specific details of deployment dates. As one *East African* (Kenya) reporter noted, “Many African nations [are] said to be nervous about committing troops to one of the world's most dangerous countries...where warlords and their gunmen have ruled unchecked for 16 years.”⁶⁷

The President of Malawi declared at the end of January 2007 that his government and parliament had not fully discussed the issue although the Defense Minister had pledged a contingent.⁶⁸ By 5 February, Tanzania announced it was willing to train Somali military personnel at a location in Tanzania but not in Somalia. A reporter for the Shabelle media network explained this decision as “a smart decision to assist in the peacekeeping operation without actually sending troops into Somalia.”⁶⁹ Ghana and Nigeria have regularly stated throughout 2007 and 2008 they were sending contingents but have not followed through with the pledges. Even Uganda, which provided the first AMISOM contingent, required the political intervention of the United States before it deployed troops. Despite having pledged peacekeepers for IGASOM and then AMISOM, Uganda announced it was withdrawing its offer after the UN’s 6 December 2006 authorization for the deployment of IGASOM. American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa to persuade the state to fulfill its pledge.⁷⁰ The lack of political will, along with other issues, has resulted in an under-manned AMISOM.

THE TWO LEVELS OF AFRICAN-MANDATED PEACEKEEPING

What happened to solve IGAD's problems after March 2006 and help prompt the deployment of AMISOM in March 2007? "Solving" might be an overstatement but one can certainly see all three issues being addressed after March 2006. Stated simply, the West became interested in fielding an African peacekeeping mission. Successful fielding of large African-mandated peacekeeping missions depends upon Western funding, political and logistical support. The three problems highlighted by IGAD in March 2006 required solving outside the African continent.

IGASOM's lack of Western support, in particular from the United States, resulted in the fragmented approach to peacekeeping in Somalia cited by IGAD. In addition, Western states were reluctant to fund a peacekeeping operation they tended to not back leaving IGAD without the resources to reimburse its members for military contributions. Without guaranteed funding, many states are reluctant to deploy military forces in a costly peacekeeping operation. Lifting the 1992 arms embargo also required Western support within the Security Council.

The requirement for Western backing also can be seen in the deployment of AMISOM. The successful military campaign of the ICU in 2006 prompted the United States and other Western states to shift their emphasis to the deployment of an African peacekeeping mission as a means of safeguarding the TFG. The United States and other countries/international organizations pledged monetary and logistical support. At the same time, this increased interest in a peacekeeping force can be seen in the UN as Security Council members dropped their opposition to the arms embargo on Somalia. In

the same resolution easing the arms embargo, the Security Council renewed its authorization for an African peacekeeping mission in support of the TFG and the Somali peace process. Thus, Western concern with the ICU presence in Somalia, along with a lack of other alternatives other than the Ethiopian military, resulted in a shifting of priorities reducing the problems associated with a fragmented approach, funding, and the UN arms embargo identified by IGAD in 2006. When AMISOM deployed its initial contingent in March 2007, it can be stated that all three problems identified by IGAD in 2006 had been addressed, if not solved, by the West.

Turning to the other three problems faced by IGASOM in 2006, one can see little improvement by March 2007 when AMISOM deployed. IGASOM experienced problems associated with consent of the various belligerents for its deployment. Achieving IGASOM's mandate would have been questionable and IGAD's members exhibited little political will to deploy military forces in a peacekeeping operation where belligerents had not accepted the peace process and funding was based on empty pledges. In contrast to the three problems external to Africa, consent of the belligerents, the lack of an achievable mandate, and the lack of political will exhibited by countries pledged to provide troops were issues that needed to be solved within the African continent. AMISOM deployed without these issues having been solved or at least adequately addressed. As of March 2007, many of the belligerents opposed the deployment of peacekeepers, the newly re-written mandate was not achievable with the current resources and under the current political situation, and the vast majority of African states continued to exhibit a lack of political will to become involved in the peacekeeping mission. As of the initial fielding of AMISOM in March 2007, opposition to the

peacekeepers still existed within groups supporting the ICU; the achievability of the mandate is still questionable; and the lack of political will among most contingent pledgers still hampered AMISOM from growing to its mandated size.

AMISOM faces a dim future if the AU is not able to solve the issues associated with belligerent consent, the mandate, and state political will. Addressing the issues related to the fragmented approach, funding, and the UN arms embargo permitted AMISOM to deploy following the failure of IGASOM. However, the AU must overcome the other three issues if AMISOM is to have any chance of success in Somalia.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Despite the best intentions of many to field a peacekeeping operation to assist the political process to stabilize Somalia, a mission failed to materialize by March 2006. A review of the situation indicates many difficulties behind the failure including a fragmented approach, lack of funding, disagreement over the UN arms embargo, consent of all belligerents, the lack of an achievable mandate, and the political will of the contingent providers. The OAU and AU have deployed several small military observer missions during the past two decades. However, to deploy a large peacekeeping operation each organization has required extensive Western support – not only funding, logistics, and transportation but also political. The necessity for Western support was clearly demonstrated with the OAU operation in Chad in 1981-1982 and continues today with the AMISOM in Somalia. American, French, and British peacekeeping training programs for African armies are necessary to produce military units capable of carrying

out peacekeeping duties. However, without Western political backing, funding, logistical support, and transportation assets, the deployment of African peacekeeping operations will remain hampered despite military training programs.

At the same time, it is important to note that Western political backing, funding, and logistical support do not ensure a successful deployment of African peacekeeping missions. Even with Western support, African peacekeeping operations face internal issues including the will of belligerents to accept the peacekeepers as part of the general peace process; the development of an achievable mandate that supports the peace process by the mandating international organization; and the demonstration by African countries of the political will to deploy their troops as contingents of the peacekeeping operation.

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