

Strategy Research Project International Fellow

Peacekeeping, a New Challenge For Burkina Faso's Armed Forces

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

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The security situation in Africa is a wicked issue. If we consider the present cases of turmoil in Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, the countries of the Great Lakes, the two Congos, the Central African Republic, and Zimbabwe in Southern Africa, the threat is omnipresent and hinders the development of the continent. It is therefore important for Burkina Faso to build capacities in the view of preventing or dealing with coming internal crisis and to help quell conflicts on the continent or elsewhere through the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations channels. Peacekeeping missions require professionalism, good and sustainable equipment, physical and mental readiness. For these reasons, it is necessary to examine the issue by providing reflections and proposals for a better organization and engagement of Burkinabe Armed Forces to maintain peace at home and for a better engagement in Peace Support Operations abroad.

Peacekeeping, a New Challenge For Burkina Faso's Armed Forces

Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989¹ and the end of the cold war, the winds of change have blown through Africa, calling for democracy, freedom, and liberty for the people. The France-Africa summit in la Baule, France June 20, 1990² recommended that the African continent embrace the rule of law, to make democracy the perspective of governance. The acceptance of rule of law does not happen automatically. For a very long period the old political systems did not allow the participation of all the population in the conduct of national affairs. Therefore multiple internal conflicts broke out in numerous countries.³ The national armies in many countries could not deal with their internal crises because they did not have the organic capacities. Yet others are professional and do export their expertise for peacekeeping operations (PKO).⁴ Given the diplomatic, professional and economic advantages gained by participating in peace support operations, new members are offering their services for this type of operation without any solid peacekeeping background. Peacekeeping is demanding in terms of organization, human power, equipment and training. Burkina Faso's Armed Forces are part of the new candidates for PKO.⁵ Being a relatively peaceful country and having a rooted tradition of dialogue and quelling of disputes, Burkina Faso (Land of Dignity) is willing to contribute to the international construction of peace.

The aim of this study is fivefold. First, to provide an overview of the African conflicts issues; second, to show why Burkina Faso (Land of Dignity) has committed its troops on the fields of PKO; third, to identify the weaknesses of Burkinabe Armed Forces; and finally, to try to find perspectives and make some recommendations for a better and sustainable engagement.

Overview of African Conflicts and Their Impact on Regional Stability and Development

The intra-states issues in the five regions of Africa cause recurrent conflicts posing questions about the continent's future. Most of these conflicts remain unsolved because the root causes still prevail. This situation keeps some regions in Africa unsecured and undermines all durable human development. The "Arab Spring" in Tunisia, spread to Libya.⁶ This "Arab Spring" destabilized Mali⁷ and affected other neighboring countries like Mauritania, Niger, and Burkina Faso. Internal conflict in Cote d'Ivoire from 1990 to 2010,⁸ a country that owns more than 50% of the West African Monetary and Economic Union (UEMOA) wealth, has seriously endangered the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the said Union of which Burkina Faso is an active member.⁹ The presence of Boko Haram,¹⁰ an extremist organization in Nigeria is also telling in terms of security and development. The protracted conflicts in the Great Lakes region in central Africa and in Sudan are indicators of disarray.¹¹ All these internal turbulences constitute real threats that affect the stability, security and consequently the development of many African countries. They undermine political, social, cultural and economic stability and developmental ambitions. Political stability is a sine qua non condition for any economical, social and cultural development. Before the conflicts, some of these countries were relatively peaceful but under the rule of partisans or a lone political party that did not provide the opportunity to others to implement their vision, so the level of development remained very low until the 90s. The claims for democracy or the wind for change in the political systems brought internal turmoil and more chaos into those countries and spread throughout the respective membership regions because the armed forces and the security forces could not handle the crisis. The consequences were incommensurable in the impacted regions¹² in terms of human

aspects, economics, societal organization, the administration and political structure, and naturally in terms of defense and security forces.

Concerning the human domains, Africa has lost millions of people, mostly the youth that was the pillar for economical growth. It is irrefutable that during the time a country is fighting a war, its economy shrinks and even tends to be disorganized.

As far as the societal organization is concerned, many families have been displaced and jeopardized.¹³ The social organization in Africa is generally patriarchal; women take care of the children and men are head of families and are in charge of provided food and shelters. The societal organization provided different gender roles. But with the internal conflicts the societal organization has changed in the affected regions, making women lone parents, causing a de facto shift to a matriarchal societal organization. The internal and external displacement has been estimated in 2013 in Africa of probably six million, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).¹⁴ The displaced persons do not have a normal life and rely on the UNHCR and World Food Program (WFP) to survive.

The recruitment of child soldiers has a negative impact on the growing generation. Most of them will never recover from the horror of war and will hardly cope with normal life.

Moreover, the educational system does not function during war time and many children drop out very early, with no chance to go back to school to graduate. The opportunity for a decent job for those who did graduate is endangered by the collapse of the national administrative structures.

The political organization and structure became dysfunctional during the conflicts and were not effectively reestablished during the post conflicts periods. Political leaders have been silenced or have joined the war lords.¹⁵

The armed forces of the countries that experienced prolonged war need to be deeply reorganized and this remains both a national and continental concern. The military and the security forces after wars in Africa are in need of complete reform to commit them to their primary missions through a reorganization program, long term training and education. For this reason, African countries that suffered from internal conflicts need the support of stable countries, disposing of professional armies to help them reorganize, train and educate their armed and security forces after conflict termination.¹⁶

The Peace and Security Environment in Africa

The African continent is facing unprecedented security challenges due to internal instabilities that have rendered peace and security rare in the concerned countries. The political and security situations are volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. They are volatile because of chaotic elections after conflict termination, the lack of professional security and armed forces, the scarcity of the resources and the pressing demands for immediate solutions to long term problems. Non state actors are increasing and sometimes dispose of more means than the central government.¹⁷ We can enumerate some non-state actors as the United Movement for Jihad in West Africa, Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad and Ansardine, all in northern Mali,¹⁸ Boko Haram in Nigeria,¹⁹ the Salafist in Algeria, the M 23 in Congo Democratic Republic,²⁰ El Shabab in Somalia,²¹ and recently, the Seleka Rebel coalition in Central African Republic,²² and the Lord's

Resistance Army in Uganda.²³ These non state actors pose trans–national threats to stability throughout the respective sub regions in Africa. In addition to these anarchists acting separately here and there, there is, at a lower scale, the spreading of banditry and armed robbery spurred by an increase in small arms trafficking. Smuggling and drug trafficking are becoming daily activities. Forsooth the accumulation of such activities has worsened the security situation in Africa, causing each country to make necessary endeavors to preserve the minimum security remaining and support those in need to recover.

Addressing these security issues is a great challenge for the continent which is struggling to comply with the international norms, the rule of law. In this context, the stable countries should take advantage to build strong and professional armies and security forces, capable of containing internal and external threats and to help peers in need. For this reason, Burkina Faso with the advantage of its political stability, culture and unique geographical position, is now playing the role of mediator to quell disputes between fratricide factions in West Africa. It has decided in addition to diplomatic endeavors to join the Peacekeeping Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) but with predictable difficulties.

The Will of Burkina Faso to Seek For Peacekeeping and Peacemaking Leadership in Africa

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country, situated at the heart of West Africa. It is a “Carrefour” from where one can travel to each country of West Africa. It is populated with more than 60 tribes living together harmoniously. The “Land of Dignity People” is not advantaged in terms of natural resources but the population compensates for this weakness with solidarity, mutual support and a great dose of tolerance despite cultural

and religious differences. The historical links between the tribes helped create particular relationships where dialogue, patience and good sensitivity set the stage for peaceful resolution of problems. This common cultural strength is an asset that conditions the Burkinabe to live in peace together and with their neighbors.²⁴ Its regional and continental role as a conflict mediator has proved to be a positive asset. The choice of serving the cause of peace in Africa is rooted in the culture and contained in the country's constitution. Deciding to join the team of peacemakers and peacekeepers requires the fulfillment of some conditions. This includes the principles of political stability, and the full internal and external commitment for peace. But these mentioned principles are not enough. It is necessary to dispose well organized, equipped, trained and disciplined armed and security forces. In the context of Burkina Faso, building such professional forces to respond to peace support mission standards requires also trust and confidence between the civil and military authorities. We must have a common understanding of where do we come from, where are we now and where should we be.

Background of the Burkinabe Armed Forces

Most of the African armies were formed after World War II (WW II), following their independence. Burkina Faso Armed Forces were built with World War II veterans. Early after independence, the military was forced into politics by the will of the population. On January 3, 1966, the army seized power on the demand of the population. In 1981, another coup d'état changed the regime. In 1983, young captains proclaiming revolutionary ideals organized a third coup and seized power. Finally, in 1987 the last coup was internal to the revolutionary regime with the goal of bringing the country within the rule of law.²⁵ The military involvement in politics over this long period has affected

the organization, discipline, equipment and training of the forces. During this time, the army experienced considerable turmoil. It suffered and continues to suffer as it attempts to organize and professionalize itself as a coherent corps. During the revolutionary era, the military was wrongly assumed to be a civilian in uniform, and the civilian as military on leave. Promotion was based on political commitment or a special relationship with the revolutionary leaders. Appointments did not consider military competencies. Leaders adjusted rules at their own convenience for a particular purpose and for a given time. Rules existed in theory, not in fact. Rare daring public press called the army a “parade army” meaning ornamental soldiers, maintained to impress, to bluff but not for pure military missions. The statesmen and the military command were ringing different bells. The first were using the army as a political and military tool without providing it with the capability to play the military role while the second was willing to have a vocational army. The armed forces of Burkina Faso passed through a very difficult period where suspicions and mistrust became the ground on which the political officers could progress. Whether this situation had been sustained on purpose to disorganize and better control the military or not, the consequences are nowadays visible. Regarding this tumultuous period that the army experienced, it is necessary to retransform it for traditional and peace support missions. The fundamental tool for this transformation is the constitution, the sacred document that assembles the entire nation and binds all citizens together for a common agreed goal. From the constitution derives the defense policy, from the defense policy the doctrine, and from this latter the organization, training and equipment policies will be elaborated. These legal instruments are compulsory and must be coherent to engage political and military

actors. Here lie the challenges that Burkina Faso must overcome to build a well organized and professional army, capable of securing the country and providing peacekeeping services.

The Legal Frameworks

The constitution is the instrument that governs the domestic and international policies, among which are the defense and security policies. It sets the legal frameworks and provides guidance to the fulfillment of the nation's will. The preamble to the Burkinabe constitution states: "willing to promote peace, international cooperation, the just quelling of conflicts between states, in liberty, and equality and the sovereignty of the people, we Burkinabe approve and adopt the present constitution."²⁶ Then it stipulates that "the protection of life, security and physical integrity are granted." The document does not specify the means to be used to achieve these goals. It seems that the desire to live in peace has sacrificed the use of coercive or hard power. That confirms the difference of understanding between the military professional and the statesmen who should be reminded that war is a social fact that can happen at any time without warning. It is almost unavoidable for the fact that war is the result of frictions between interest, fear, and honor²⁷ which are innate in the human character. For these reasons each country should be permanently ready for war with strong and well trained armed forces. We may even need war or organized violence from time to time to rebalance the trends for a better future. It seems controversial but it is part of human behavior. Therefore strong, well organized and trained military power is a guaranty for sustainable peace, particularly in Africa where the rule of law is not yet well established.

If the Burkinabe want their armed forces to provide troops for international peacekeeping for a long duration, they must ensure in priority their own security in the

country, because no military force can pretend being successful abroad without securing its rear base. Brodie wrote: “To save wear and tear on their frequently overburden and frequently limited analytical powers, they must cling obsessively to commonly accepted axioms, some of which may be hold enough to have the aura of traditional policy.”²⁸ The success in the international and multinational environment depends on a suitable, acceptable and feasible Defense Policy.

In the Defense Policy, Defense is defined as: “resistance against attack; means, method, or capability of defending.”²⁹ In its defense policy draft, Burkina Faso considers that defense is: all principles and practices implemented by a community to preserve its vital space or territory and to guaranty the security of all citizens. The objectives are: First, guaranty all times, under all circumstances and against any type of aggression, the security, integrity and sovereignty of the national territory, the protection of national institutions and individuals and their belongings.³⁰ Second, promote the integration of the regional economy by providing security for the common economical space.³¹ Third, reinforce peace and stability in Africa and in the world.³²

The armed and security forces primary concept in the three objectives is to provide security and freedom. The concept and the missions of the forces are obvious but practically they are not sufficiently equipped and trained for these purposes. The political and military approaches are divergent in the interpretation of these concepts, causing the army to be considered by civilians as a useless budget consuming organization. Carl Von Clausewitz wrote that “the primary aim of any theory is to clarify concepts and ideas that have become confused and entangled. Only after terms and

concepts have been defined can one hope to make any progress in examining a question clearly and simply and expect the reader to share one's view."³³

The defense policy constitutes a general guideline or vision and determines the ends to achieve. Vision consists of scanning the external environment and making possible and feasible a future environment that achieves a desired end state. Its process begins with a thorough assessment of the current situation and all stakeholders, the organization background, its organization, missions and trends. It takes into account the competitors, the internal and external threats and the opportunities. "Defining the vision is the first step in the development of strategies and plans for change."³⁴ Vision eases the inception of strategies which are the coordination of a range of actions needed to achieve an aim, accomplish a mission and make the vision become true. Strategy shapes the allocation of resources and budget to sustain these resources. The defense policy and the strategies to implement it are the drive for building a desired army. As Burkina Faso is willing to project its troops in peacekeeping operations fields, it should have a clear vision supported by harmonious strategies. Clausewitz believed that "the main purpose of theory is to cast a steady light on all phenomena. It should show how one thing is related to another and keep important and unimportant elements separate"³⁵

The Shortfalls of the Ambition

Before we can assess the feasibility of Burkinabe defense policy to commit its troops into international PKO, it is necessary to survey the armed forces current situation, diagnose the organization and its components and find a durable therapy.

Actually, Burkina Faso does not have coherent written and approved policies and strategies that officially serve as agenda. Planning is executed with a very short term

vision, which does not provide enough metrics for good assessment to fix the shortcomings, realign the ends, ways and means, and therefore, avoid continuous recommencements and waits of resources.

The Legal Frameworks

The Military is an element of national power.³⁶ Its management and employment is delicate. The incoherence or the insufficiency of the legal frameworks and official strategies to monitor thoroughly all aspects of the armed forces creates unwanted effects. Studies on civil wars and internal conflicts in the developing countries, especially in Africa have shown that they are fed by the absence of good governance, cohesion within the armed the armed forces and the lack of loyalty to the nation. Burkina Faso is a land locked country which geographical position makes it a very sensitive node of West Africa. Formed from many nationalities the country still receives new immigrants because the opportunities it offers to live peacefully and succeed in businesses.

The current security trends in the region indicate a rise from simple to complex. Therefore, disposing of strong and well governed professional armed and security forces is fundamental to overcome possible threats inside and outside the country. This is essential for the survival of the Land of Dignity People.

The shortfalls mentioned above resulted in the insufficiency of human resources, in terms of quantity and quality, the lack of standardized organization and the absence of equipment and training policies.

Human Resources

Human resources are the key to success for any enterprise. The strength, health and sustainability of any armed forces depend on the quality and quantity of the men

and women serving. Flavius Vegetius Renatus, AD 378 said that “the peculiar strength of the Romans always consisted in the excellent organization of their Legions. They were so dominated ab eligento from the care and exactness used in the choice of the soldiers.”³⁷ The management of these human resources is very sensitive. It needs qualified staff and good strategy to keep the recruitment, training, employment, promotion and other administrative concerns working. Burkina Faso’s Armed Forces have considerable human resource shortfalls due to various reasons. First, there was a divergence of understanding between the military and the political leaders about the role of the armed forces. This resulted in the lack of trust among the leadership. Second, there was a time when wrong analysis found that the military were budget consuming; therefore, recruitment was suspended for about a decade. This has resulted in the shrinking of manpower, creating a gap between the last intake and the one coming ten years after. There are more senior Officers and Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) than junior Officers and NCOs³⁸. Another shortfall of the human resources management is health care.

Health Care

The Burkinabe Army has the best medical personnel of the country but do not have a modern military hospital. Consequently, 80% of the medical personnel practice their competencies in the national hospitals, compromising the development of the military medical clinic into a modern hospital. The health care policy is a free subscription to the “mutual health care”³⁹ organization. This project allows those who registered to be treated in case of sickness by paying a monthly fee varying from \$10.00 for the officers to \$4.00 for the enlisted. It covers 80% of the total cost of the treatment,

20% being charged to the patient. It is not supposed to cover long term treatment or complex surgery. When engaging in PKO, the risks of wounded and traumatized soldiers increase and there is no relevant platform to support them.

The Training Policy

Peacekeeping operations require better and better specialization. Africa's long standing contributors have begun to explore specific roles they can play based on their experience and particular skills honed during past conflicts on the continent.⁴⁰ Horace said "no man ever reached to excellence in any one art or profession without having passed through the slow and painful process of study and preparation."⁴¹ The countries that want to perform brilliantly and bring new input to the common peace should be skillful and creative. The building of skills and development of creative thinking come from training, experience, lessons learned and studies. In the case of Burkina Faso, insights have proven that the training systems are not functioning as needed due to the lack of infrastructure, training personnel and means. The whole mechanism works like a chain where one broken link hinders the overall function. The training policy needs the commitment of all concerned sectors to perform harmoniously and efficiently. Therefore it's necessary to have adequate training policy integrating various stakeholders. This policy should integrate human resources, the infrastructure, the specialized equipment, and financial means if we want to build professional military to achieve the ends that the political leadership has determined. True that that one must adjust his ends according to his means, the means too can be adjusted to the will if there is a real desire.

The Equipment Policy

Most of the African countries face modern equipment issues. This has been a matter of debate between the political and the military leaders, especially concerning

the armed forces. Seldom are the military satisfied due to the financial situation of the countries. Participating in peacekeeping builds confidence with the international community and financial aid partnership with the developed countries. Therefore the political leaders must invest in the army for the present as well as the future. It is usually said that there is no development without security. Investing on the armed forces secures the country and builds capacities to be sold at a better price. Burkina Faso's ambition to engage in Peace Support Operations is threatened by the lack of equipment policy. Beyond the professional and financial incomes, we should be considering the honor, pride and international responsibility of the country and keep in mind that every ambition has a cost.⁴²

The short experience with the United Nations and the African Mission in Sudan (UNAMID) BURKBATT 2 and 3 (Burkina Battalion in Sudan) exposed the shortfalls of the equipment policy. After having purchased some equipment and received others as aid from Partners such as the United States of America for the first deployment, Burkina Faso Armed Forces don't have a replacement or maintenance policy concerning the material. Actually, the lack of spare parts to support the field equipment constitutes a nightmare. Thus, the capability is being slowly reduced and that could handicap the mission in the short term if the shortfalls are not addressed in time to keep the standard.

The Technical Equipment

Technical equipment concerns are notably visible in the lack of engineering and construction means, low bed trucks, and medical materials. These materials are very expensive to procure and once done there should be a rigorous policy to sustain them. BURKBATT drained the construction equipment of the lone Field Engineers Battalion, thus depriving it of essential assets and rendering it non operational. This situation

handicaps the performance of the Engineers Corps in their normal duty in peace time like participating in the development of the country through construction, maintaining roads and building dams.

Land and Air Transportation Means

The armored personnel carriers that are actually deployed in Sudan are the result of fruitful cooperation between Burkina Faso and the United States of America. They were donated through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. The cost of the personnel carriers did not allow Burkina Faso to purchase extra vehicles or spare parts as reserves to support forces deployed in the peace mission in Sudan.

BURKBATT uses Toyota 4x4 pickups as light tactical vehicles. They are less expensive and were adopted by the Burkinabe Army as means of transportation and as combat vehicle for the peacekeeping mission in Sudan. There are none in reserve and no spare parts in stock to replace or repair those which are deployed.

Burkina Faso Armed Forces does not dispose of reliable air transportation means. This handicap renders the forces completely dependent on other air transportation providers, which are more expensive and can compromise the rotation schedule and consequently the operational aspect of the battalion.

In addition to these hindrances, the Burkinabe Armed Forces Branch of Acquisition (the Armed Forces Supply Direction) and the Logistics Division are in constant disagreement as far as ordering new equipment is concerned. This point highlights the lack of transparency in the missions assigned to each party. It sends us back to the question of legal frameworks.

Perspectives for a Better Engagement of Burkina Faso in International Peacekeeping Operations

Peacekeeping is a mission that requires a country's military to have internal stability, sufficient manpower, professionalism, and good operating equipment.

The higher the internal stability of a state the greater is its propensity to contribute to PKO. When comparing the contributors and non contributors, the greatest distinctions are the existence of democratic governance and stability. The countries which have strong democratic governance are stable and flourish enough to have the means to contribute to peacekeeping.⁴³ Good governance and stability are built on trust and loyalty of the armed forces to the people and the republic, and regulated by the constitution. Respect for the constitution is the key element, the cornerstone for the rule of law, and good governance. All categories of military must be educated and sensitized to respect the rule of law. This ought to be part of the professional military education and training curricula and be continuous throughout the career until it becomes a natural behavior, a culture of the military organization. This transformation must be a team effort, the commitment of all Officers, Non Commissioned Officers and enlisted. There must be frameworks to reinforce the civil military cooperation, the relationship between the civil and military authorities to build mutual trust and confidence.

The second condition to be a successful troop contributor is trained military manpower and professionalism.⁴⁴ It behooves Burkina Faso to develop military personnel capable of securing the country and providing professional well equipped troops for peacekeeping. In order to increase military manpower, Burkina Faso must overcome the current quality shortfall, and resource the necessary training, equipment

and infrastructure to achieve and sustain the desired level of proficiency. Insuring the quality of the soldiers who will serve the nation depends on the recruitment process, the quality of their training and the guidance of the senior leadership. The ethical excellence and the professionalism of the trainers are indicators of the quality of the training and this is an asset that is to be considered when selecting the training teams. In the domains where there is no local expertise the regional and international fields can be prospected to train the trainers first and then assist these new trainers in training the trainees to develop local capacities at a low cost. It is advantageous to learn from the experienced troop contributing countries, and the developed countries. These countries can provide training for trainers and fund the construction and equipment of training schools. A partial list of military aid providers includes: Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Switzerland. In the UN debates on 26 October 2004, on the African States responsibilities for peace, the common language about conflicts in Africa was the necessity of the African States to take ownership of African conflicts resolution.⁴⁵ Any African country which is willing to share the world peace burden can request support from the developed countries. The European Union builds peacekeeping capacities for that purpose.⁴⁶The United States of America assists in building capacities through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which is funded and managed by the US Department of State (DOS). The program is tailored to enhance African Military capabilities by providing adequate training and the necessary equipment for multinational peacekeeping operations.⁴⁷ The United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM)⁴⁸ supports the ACOTA program. At the

request of the State Department, it provides military mentors, instructors, trainers and advisors to participating African states.⁴⁹ It covers training, technical and maintenance assistance and the provision of some field equipment and provides the basics for lethal peace enforcement training. ACOTA trains, enables and facilitates the deployment of approximately twenty African battalions annually. It has trained and equipped with non lethal equipment more than 215 000 soldiers as peacekeepers.⁵⁰ The training modules include convoy escort, management of refugees, small arms unit command skills, battalion and brigade command post exercises, mine detection, field medical care and water purification. ACOTA provided equipment has included mine detectors, medical equipment, uniforms and water purification devices.⁵¹

Conclusion

The establishment of democracy and its institutions is a growing force in today's African culture. This seldom happens without violence, wars, and humanitarian crisis. The last decade of the twentieth century till now witnessed major degradation of human security and political instability in Africa. Yesterday, it was knocking on the doors of the sub Sahara countries and today the same need for democracy is shaking the Maghreb.

The continent, while struggling for more democracy, has experienced many types of crises that ended with wars, humanitarian emergencies and failed states. The United Nations Organization addresses these issues with peacekeeping operations (PKO). Today, the African continent hosts the major part of World peacekeeping operations. Africa's armed and security forces are more and more primary players in responding to destabilizing actions across the continent. Burkina Faso, a key player in the peace process in Africa has engaged itself in African peacekeeping operations. Such an engagement requires the fulfillment of some conditions to be successful. Among these

conditions is the establishment of legal frameworks that determine the ends, ways, and means.

Responding to the questions “What is an Army for?” and “How is it to be used?” has been the goal of this analysis. Burkina Faso has elected to be a key player in the peace process in Africa. The use of the armed forces to acquire peace in other countries is not a simple matter because of the political, local, and external impacts on the national interests.

Such a commitment requires the fulfillment of some conditions to be successful. Since any employment of military is always regulated by laws and rules of engagements, the establishment of legal frameworks that determine the ends, ways, and means must be accomplished. After a review of various African crises and their impacts on the continent, the shortfalls of Burkina Faso’s choice to be a peacekeeping troop contributor become apparent.

The will to be a TCC is not enough to successfully operate as part of an international force. A strong foundation must exist at the national level. In addition to a supporting constitution, defense policy and doctrine, national strategies for recruitment, equipping, and training must be in place and implemented to sustain homeland security and then later export this expertise.

Recommendations

To be a successful troop contributing country for international peacekeeping, Burkina Faso must harmonize its legal frameworks for the armed forces as well as the security forces. These legal frameworks must take into consideration the new data and give a new vision which integrates all aspects of national power to avoid permanent changes or a loss of transparency in achieving a determined goal.

Second, it is usually agreed that the means determines the ends. The means in this case are the armed forces and the security forces. Burkina Faso's will to fulfill its international obligations as a responsible country should align with the means and the ways the means are utilized. The National Armed Forces must be well organized, well trained and equipped, strong and professional, disciplined, loyal and self sufficient in manpower, capable of repelling any external and internal aggressor to the country.

Considering all this, it is recommended:

To the Legislative Body

First, changes in the constitution to take into account the new vision and enact supporting new defense laws. The security environment has changed with new players such as non-states actors, transnational criminals, and extremists. For the army to effectively intervene internally and externally to defend Burkina Faso interests, the law regulating the use of Burkinabe forces must be revised and take into consideration reserve forces that must be recruited, trained and on standby.

Second, to lean toward the increase of the size of the Armed Forces, pass a legislation that authorizes more recruitment and sets quality standards for the force. Think about the creation of a National Guard that could perform special internal security tasks, and the Special Military Training for Young Volunteers. The special training could be addressed in priority to the students and youth in quest of a job. The National Guard and the young volunteers will constitute a reserve and fuel the forces in case of need. With a larger force Burkina Faso will be better equipped to protect the country, struggle against unemployment and fulfill its international obligations. This cannot happen without the financial resources therefore, the fourth recommendation is to increase the

financial resources to support the recruitment, equipping, training, and employment of the forces.

Fifth, to maintain information systems that provide feedback to the nation about the state of their armed forces, and be up to date on international requirements to contribute to peace support operations.

Sixth, open channels of free exchange and communication to dismiss the fear among the political and the military and build mutual trust.

To the Executive Branch

It recommended its commitment to the inception of new laws with the legislative body in order to provide more transparency and guidance to the political deciders.

Pursuant to the above, it is further recommended that the Executive Branch appoint a “think tank” team to identify policies and concepts for legislation that covers the shady zones. The policies should be suitable, acceptable and feasible.

Third, I will recommend a common understanding of the policies and strategies to ease their implementation.

Fourth, it is suggested that the Burkinabe Executive maintain strong diplomatic ties with old partners and potential new ones to allow our ambitions to mature. The desire for peace and sustainable human development is a common goal. The western countries are engaged to support those in need for their own interest and for the good of humanity. Building strong relationships with these countries is a good policy. They provide the maximum funds for the purpose of peace and security. Therefore, Burkinabe diplomacy should strengthen the relationship with these countries to improve political support, funding, equipping and training.

Fifth, to conduct permanent inspections and assessments on the military to report, inform, guide and correct if necessary.

To the Chief of Defense Staff

The Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) is a key player to achieve the ends. As the leader of men and women, he is at the heart of those who will accomplish the field mission. He is also the person on whom the executive and legislative branches rely on. Having such a challenging responsibility requires loyalty and integrity, to both the political leadership and to the soldiers he commands.

He must be willing to tackle the numerous issues facing the transformation of the institution in this complex, versatile, complex, and ambiguous environment. In view to get Burkina Faso to be more qualified and sustainable as a TCC, the CDS should anticipate change and integrate peacekeeping modules in the various training schools, from the basic to the most qualifying level.

The CDS must also envisage the construction of a peacekeeping training center to specialize the deployable personnel. The training programs cannot be run if the country hardly disposes of equipped training centers, excellent trainers as mentioned before, and qualified administrative personnel. Peacekeeping and technical trainings require sufficient space and infrastructure to set the conditions for achieving the desired outcomes. The Burkinabe Armed Forces must take advantage of actual peacekeeping training centers in West Africa and exploit the lessons learned before establishing its own training school. For example, training and providing professional mechanics, logisticians, medical personnel and road engineers for PKO, are permanent needs of the UN but these sectors remain unsatisfied in terms of qualified personnel. In addition to training and infrastructure, Burkina Faso must establish the administrative structure

that will serve as the interface between the Armed Forces Command and the PKO training center, and the link between the political department (Ministry of Defense) and the Defense Staff Headquarters.

The Chief of Defense staff could use all available means and encourage the posting of a senior officer to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operation as a staff officer to have a permanent and better understanding of the system. This senior officer could be an informal support to the military adviser at the permanent mission of Burkina Faso to the UN, therefore provide clear guidance for better success.

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