

Local Legitimacy Deficit and Peacekeeping Missions in the Horn of Africa

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Abstract: In the Horn of Africa, the UN has deployed seven peacekeeping missions to maintain peace and security since the early 1990s. Despite this UN's efforts, the region is still one of the most destabilized sub-regions in Africa. This paradox has caused doubts over the missions' performances and ability to promote sustainable peace and security. This study examines the influence of lack of local legitimacy on peacekeeping operations' performances and outcomes using a qualitative method, which relied on secondary data analysis. The study found that host governments and other conflicting parties have perceived most peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa as inappropriate, partisan, and against the principles of peacekeeping. As a result, the local actors became less cooperative and supportive and, in some cases, resistant to the missions. The study concludes that the lack of local legitimacy made the peacekeeping missions inefficient and incapable of resolving the conflict situation and promoting sustainable peace and security.

Keywords -Horn of Africa, Legitimacy, Peacekeeping, United Nations

I. Introduction

The Horn of Africa is a region that includes six states, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan. The sub-region has characterized by frequent violent conflicts between states and within states. To ensure peace and security in the sub-region, the UN has deployed many peacekeeping missions since 1992 aimed to resolve interstate and intrastate conflicts and restore peace and security in the sub-region. A total of seven UN peacekeeping operations have been deployed so far. These are United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I and II) from April 1992 to March 1995, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) from July 2000 to July 2008, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) from 2005 to 2011, the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) from July 2007 to 2020, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) since June 2011, and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) since July 2011. Among these, the last two operations are continuing. In addition, there is an AU-led African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which deployed with the approval of the UN Security Council since July 2007 (United Nations, 2021).

Despite the continuous efforts of the UN and African Union to prevent violent interstate and intrastate conflicts, persistent internal conflicts and hostile inter-state relations are still common in the Horn of Africa. Countries like Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and very recently Ethiopia are suffering from ethnic-based intrastate conflicts. The situation in Somalia has been horrible since the early 1990s. The country is under protracted intra-state conflicts and continuous terrorist attacks. The central government is still fragile and dependent on AMISOM peacekeeping. Fighting, insecurity, lack of state authority, protection and maintenance of public order, and recurring humanitarian crises have had a disastrous effect on the life of Somali civilians for the last three decades. South Sudan is also another state which is under critical political instability and insecurity for almost a decade. Since its independence in 2011, South Sudan has been under continuous political turmoil. Conflicts between the government and opposition armed groups have been recorded so many times since December 2013. Although political violence among the government and opposition forces has recently shown reduction, intercommunal violence and criminal activities still affect significant portions of the country.

The current political situation in Sudan is characterized by widespread conflicts between the government forces and the opposition armed groups and inter-communal violence. Conflicts in Southern Kordofan, the Blue Nile, and Darfur areas of Sudan are continued. A no-war and no-peace situation characterized the Ethio-Eritrea relationship for the last two decades until 2018. The border clash between Ethiopia and Eritrea is still an unresolved issue. The relationship between South Sudan and Sudan is also full of hostilities, mutual suspicions, and mistrusts. They accuse each other of supporting one another's opposition groups. These instabilities and insecurities in the Horn of Africa pose questions on the contributions and actual effects of the ongoing and the previous UN peacekeeping missions in promoting peace and security.

Many studies have been done to assess each peacekeeping mission. These studies have identified the challenges that hindered the missions from achieving their stated goals. However, most of these studies focused on the material aspects of the peacekeeping missions. They did not address the impact of the perception of the local actors, mainly host governments, towards the peacekeeping missions. The perception of national actors towards the appropriateness of the peacekeeping operations is fundamental for the success of the missions. Thus, the study attempts to answer how and to what extent the legitimacy problems of peacekeeping missions affected host states' consent and subsequently the missions' effectiveness and success. It focuses on the local legitimacy of the peacekeeping missions. It tries to show how the lack of local legitimacy undermined the contributions of the missions in promoting sustainable peace and security.

The study's objective is to examine how and to what extent the legitimacy deficit affects the operational performance and the outcome of the peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa region. The study employs the theory of legitimacy. The theory helps to understand how the perception of national actors determines the level of their cooperation and compliance to the missions. It also helps to identify the extent to which the legitimacy problems undermined the efficiency of the peacekeeping missions.

The first section of the study discusses the theoretical framework. The third section analyses the importance of local ownership for the success of peacekeeping missions. The fourth part examines the influence of local legitimacy on the performances and outcomes of peacekeeping missions. The fifth part summarizes the main arguments and findings of the study.

II. Legitimacy Theory and Peacekeeping

As defined by Mark C. Suchman(1995:571), legitimacy is a "generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, and appropriate within some socially constructed norms, values, beliefs, and definitions." It is a social status audiences give to an actor or an action, proving common acceptability to the actor or action. It is being recognized or perceived as proper, good, appropriate, right, or commendable by a group of others. The opposite of which is illegitimacy that asserts that an actor or action is socially offensive, undesirable, and unacceptable that contradicts a specific set of communal rules (Coleman, 2007:20). The term legitimacy can be interpreted differently and used in various senses depending upon the context. In this study, however, legitimacy is used to understand the international and local compliance the UN peacekeeping, as an international institution, needs to attain in order to achieve its goals. Legitimacy is too much necessary for the success and smooth running of peacekeeping missions.

According to the theory of legitimacy, an institution is legitimate when other groups or people perceive its purposes, actions, and outcomes are right and appropriate to the social context without any fear of coercive actions of the institution and self-interest of the groups or the people. International and local actors give their consent and support to an international institution only if they perceive the actions of the institution are appropriate and worthy. Unless international institutions, including UN peacekeeping compatible with the demands of their audiences, they cannot retain their legitimacy. If institutions cannot maintain their legitimacy, they will not be able to achieve their goals effectively. Regarding peace operations, peace may be temporarily secured through coercion or incentives; but its sustainability cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, in order for the peacekeeping mission to ensure lasting peace and security, it is imperative that the legitimacy be secured and retained.

UN peacekeeping missions require two types of legitimacy: international and local. Since UN peacekeeping is entirely dependent on the contribution of the members of the UN, international legitimacy is fundamental for peace operation to ensure global peace and security. UN peacekeeping's success depends mainly on the willingness and contribution of its member states and troops contributing countries.

Equally, local legitimacy is crucial for the efficiency of peacekeeping missions. The local legitimacy of a peacekeeping operation, as explained by JeniWhalan (2017:7), is "the extent to which it is perceived to be right, proper and appropriate by actors within the state of deployment." By local legitimacy in this study does not mean only at the community level but also at the national level. As contemporary peacekeeping missions pursue a wide range of goals that are intended to transform a conflict-affected society into lasting peace, the role of local actors such as government officials, political and military leaders, combatants, and community groups has become crucial. Without their support and cooperation, it is not possible to achieve the purposes of a peacekeeping mission. In order to obtain the unreserved cooperation and support of the actors, the mission needs to be seen as legitimate by these local actors and the conflicting parties (Whalan, 2017:4-5). Recognizing peacekeeping as legitimate by the local actors (host state governments, warring parties, influential groups, and the broader population) makes the people recognize its authority and comply and cooperate with it.

When local actors consider peacekeeping as legitimate, it is more likely to provide their support and enable the peacekeeping mission to be effective and efficient rather than resisting and undermining it. Although peacekeepers can force local actors to induce compliance coercively or using incentives, they cannot gain full and consistent cooperation. Legitimacy makes the quality of local cooperation high than inducement or coercive approaches by the strong powers because it provides internalized reasons to comply (Whalan, 2017:7). Arguing about the importance of local legitimacy, Michael Barnett says that an attempt to create a state with legitimacy by external actors and international peacebuilders potentially contradicts the substantive and procedural dimensions of legitimacy. The values or institutions perceived as legitimate by westerners might not be legitimate in the eyes of the local community. Therefore, outsiders may initiate peacekeeping, but sustainable peace must be the work of the host country's people (Barnett, 2006: 93).

Local legitimacy is not only limited to the initial or one-time invitation for consent or acceptance of the host state's government for the deployment of an international force in its territory but also needs to be maintained throughout the mission period for the success of a peacekeeping mission. It can be obtained or lost throughout an operation. States grant legitimacy to the operation or withhold legitimacy from it (Dwan&Wiharta, 2005:149). Therefore, managing the legitimacy of peacekeeping is the best mechanism for maximizing and retaining local actors' consent and avoiding active opposition to peacekeeping operations.

III. Local Ownership in Peacekeeping Missions

Local ownership is necessary to make peacekeeping missions more legitimate and sustainable. Without local ownership or the ownership of the host government, the post-conflict transformation and reconstruction may not be effective because they cannot be imposed by outsiders (von Billerbeck, 2017:16). Rather than imposed peace, locally constructed peace is more durable. Any peace operation designed and led by outsiders will not be able to effectively build and sustain peace. Outsiders can start restoring and building peace, but if the local actors return to conflict after the withdrawal of peacekeepers, the result cannot be sustainable (van der Lijn, 2009:3). So, allowing the local actors (host governments and other parties) to participate in the planning and implementation of the mission and giving them a say definitely increase the legitimacy and sustainability of the operation (von Billerbeck, 2017:17).

As noted by Sharon Wiharta (2009:96), political consensus or agreement among the international community and the host state's government on the appropriateness of a peace operation is very critical to legitimize the operation. Political consensus is one of the most important factors that determine the legitimacy of the mandate of a peace operation. Its absence directly undermines the legitimacy and subsequently affects the efficacy and success of the operation.

One of the crucial normative factors behind the inefficiency of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (UNPKO) in ensuring enduring peace and security in the Horn of Africa was the lack of consent from the host governments to cooperate with the missions and their seeming hypocrisy in their relations with the UN mission. The full consent and cooperation of all parties in conflict is vital for the successful completion of a mission and enhances its contribution to sustainable peace and security in a host country. Although this challenge was/is not unique to the region, all the UN peace operations operated in the sub-region have faced the challenge of unwillingness and lack of cooperation from host states' governments or other parties with varying levels of intensity. This challenge has significantly undermined the effectiveness of the missions and, in some cases, led to the failure of the missions. The main reasons behind the unwillingness of the host states'

governments and other parties to cooperate with peacekeeping missions were normative. When one or both the parties perceive that the UN or the peacekeeping mission is illegitimate (probably due to its partiality, weak performance, deviation from the governing rules, or others), they either formally withdraw their consent or fail to fulfill their obligation.

In this regard, Sofía Sebastián and Aditi Gorur (2018:24) have identified five situations under which the consent of host states can deteriorate. Among these, the two most important factors in the context of the peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa were activities of the mission that are viewed by the government of the host-state as threats to its own sovereignty and the failure of the peacekeeping mission to achieve its mandate. These two situations have significantly contributed to the deterioration of the host government's consent and their cooperation with the missions in all peacekeeping missions of the sub-region. Except for the humanitarian intervention in Somalia, the UN has got the consent of the host governments while establishing the peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa. However, in the course of the operation, the consent of host governments or other parties have deteriorated, and the local actors became less cooperative. The deterioration or fluctuation of the host governments' or other parties' consent have become critical challenges to the implementation of missions' mandates and undermined the long-term outcomes of the missions.

IV. Influence of Legitimacy Deficit on Outcomes of Peacekeeping Missions in the Horn of Africa

When a peace operation is imposed without the genuine consent of the host nation, it creates suspicion among the host nation of powerful states advancing and imposing their own interests under the pretext of human rights and humanitarian crisis. Many African countries are suspicious of peace operations and tend to view it as a means of western interventionism. This poses a critical question on the legitimacy of the peace operation itself. A peace operation lacking the compliance of local actors or a mission deployed coercively develops a defeatist attitude among the local actors of the host countries. It can also weaken the cooperation of host governments or other parties to the conflict and subsequently lead to the inefficiency of the mission. This section tries to examine the peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa in terms of local legitimacy.

4.1. Illegitimacy and Absence of Consent: The Case of UNOSOM (1992 - 1995)

One of the reasons that contributed to the failure of the first humanitarian intervention and peacekeeping mission in the Horn of Africa – the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) - was the lack of consent and willingness of the most powerful Somali warlords to cooperate with the mission. The United Nations Security Council established the joint UN and US-led military intervention in Somalia to use force to enforce its mandates without the consent of a sovereign government (Wheeler, 2000:172). Since there was no central government following the downfall of Mohamed Siad Barre's regime, the warlords divided the country among themselves. Mohamed Farah Aideed was the most influential and powerful of all warlords who controlled Somalia's central part, Mohamed Omar Jess controlled the port city of Kismayu in Southwestern Somalia, Mohamed Ali Mahdi controlled Mogadishu, and Mohamed Siad Hersi was ruling the rest of Southwest Somalia. The UN did not obtain the consent of these clan-based warlords who had divided Somalia among themselves (The US Army, 1997:1-3).

Securing the consent of the parties proved time-consuming and tiresome for the UN and the United States. Although the Security Council established the operation in April 1992, agreement on the deployment of a 500-strong infantry force was not reached until mid-August. Without consulting the parties to the conflict, the Council authorized the expansion of UNOSOM in late August and early September. These actions antagonized the parties (Berman & Sams, 2000:34). Especially when UNOSOM changed to UNOSOM II with an extended mandate of nation-building and other political objectives, the clan leaders began to perceive the United States as partisan, violating the basic principles of peacekeeping (The US Army, 1997:9). This led the mission to lose its local legitimacy and endangered the peacekeepers, mainly the US forces. Even local actors started to take violent actions against peacekeepers due to this reason in Somalia.

Particularly General Mohamed Farah Aideed perceived that the UN was undermining the principle of impartiality by supporting his rival, Ali Mahdi, which would shift the balance of power. Aideed and his commanders became unhappy and stood against the peacekeeping operation. They orchestrated attacks on Pakistani peacekeepers engaged in distributing food and weapons inspections in the capital Mogadishu, which caused the death of 24 Pakistani soldiers, and 57 were wounded. Following this incident, the UN and the United

States decided to retaliate to Aideed's attacks and declared that military operation is necessary to enhance the credibility of United Nations peacekeeping not only in Somalia but also globally. In October 1993, the US began an operation to capture Aideed, hoping a show of force would cripple his militias and bring him and his commanders to justice. However, the US forces encountered unexpected resistance. Aideed's fighters shot down two US Blackhawk helicopters, and a bloody battle followed. Finally, 18 US soldiers and hundreds of Somalis, dominantly civilians, were killed (Glanville, 2005:9).

This UN and US decision and action seriously undermined the impartiality and neutrality of the mission and subsequently led to the loss of legitimacy and credibility of the operation among the Somali population. It seriously eroded the legitimacy of the UN mission in the eyes of the Somalis. It also led to the loss of international support that was important to achieve the determined objectives. Finally, the US decided to withdraw its troops from Somalia, leaving the Somalis to their fate and making the region a favorable ground for terrorist groups. The UN has also decided to terminate its mission after one year.

4.2. Legitimacy Deficit and Deterioration of Consent: The Case of UNMEE (2000 - 2008)

Another UN peacekeeping operation in the Horn of Africa that suffered from the deterioration of consent of the host state was the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE). The mission has established following the end of the destructive and the deadly border conflict between the two countries in July 2000. One of its mandates was to monitor the implementation of the Algiers Peace Agreement, in which both countries agreed to a ceasefire. Besides, they decided on the establishment of an independent boundary commission to demarcate the boundary. The principal tasks of UNMEE were to monitor the cessation of hostilities, creating a Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), ensuring that the troops of the two countries remain 25 kilometers away from one another, coordinate human rights and other humanitarian activities in and around the TSZ (Johnstone, 2006:100).

The Eritrea–Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) announced its proposal in April 2002. Following the border commission's decision, the UN Security Council determined to amend the mandate of the UNMEE to support the Eritrea and Ethiopia Boundary Commission in its effort to implement the demarcation (Kebebew, 2018:5). Although the two states agreed that the ruling of the commission to be final and binding, Ethiopia rejected the decisions arguing that it would be impossible to implement on the ground and would not bring lasting peace between the two countries. Addis Ababa called for direct talks. On the other hand, Eritrea insisted that the decision of the commission was final and binding and must be implemented (Johnstone, 2006:101). As a result, the EEBC could not demarcate the border, which led to continued hostilities and tensions between the two countries for years.

Although Ethiopia and Eritrea did not formally withdraw their consent, they implicitly and explicitly undermined the UNMEE operational ability (Kebebew, 2018:5). Protesting Ethiopia's stance and the inability of the UN to enforce the decision, Eritrea started undermining the mission's operation by blocking helicopter flights and expelling Western personnel (Gowan & Whitfield, 2011:9). Even though the mission has opened headquarters in Addis Ababa and Asmara, its troops have been deployed entirely in Eritrean territory. When Eritrea accepted the deployment of the mission, it expected that the boundary demarcation would be materialized quickly. However, it was not implemented due to Ethiopia's rejection of the decision of the commission. Therefore, Eritrea perceived the presence of UNMEE as 'an imposition on its sovereignty' (ICG, 2005:8) and questioned the legitimacy of the mission due to its inability to enforce the commission's decision. The Eritrean government frequently accused the UN and the Western powers of their reluctance to pressure Ethiopia to implement the decision. Particularly, the US's close partnership with Ethiopia in its counter-terrorism campaign in the region made Eritrea suspicious of the neutrality and impartiality of the United States – the Dominant permanent member of the Security Council. Then, it began to restrict the movement of the UN staff and vehicles in the TSZ and other parts of its territory.

In November 2005, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1640 demanding that Ethiopia accept the boundary commission's decision and that Eritrea reverse its restrictions on UNMEE. Both parties pull their troops within thirty days (Johnstone, 2006:100). However, it could not bring the required result. The refusal of Ethiopia to accept the decision of the border commission and the growing restrictions imposed by Eritrea on the UNMEE led to the unanimous decision of the UN Security Council to terminate the mission's mandate by Resolution 1827 in 2008 (Kebebew, 2018:5). The peacekeeping mission ended without realizing its final goal,

which was to complete the delimitation-demarkation process of the border. The mission was unable to ensure sustainable peace between the two countries, and a no-war and no-peace situation continued for two decades.

4.3. The Rise of Legitimacy Question and Fluctuating Consents: The Case of UNMIS (2005 - 2011)

The United Nations Mission in Sudan has deployed due to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the two main parties of the conflict in 2005. This agreement has ended one of the longest civil wars in Africa. The mission was mandated to assist the implementation of the CPA.

The mission has established with the consent of the two main parties of the conflict. However, in the course of the operation, the consent of both sides fluctuated. The position of the Government of Sudan towards UNMIS has become less cooperative and favorable. The Government's hesitation to cooperate with the mission became stronger when the United Nations became more concerned about Darfur's issue. The UN intervention has advocated as a solution for the conflict. The UN Security Council also mandated UNMIS to support the transition of the peacekeeping mission from AMIS to UN peacekeeping in Darfur in 2006. Its involvement in Darfur affected its relations with the Sudanese Government. As a result, government-backed campaigns and protests against the United Nations were held in early 2006. The Government also opposed the Radio broadcasting of UNMIS in the North and Darfur.

Moreover, the Government has restricted the freedom of movement of UN personnel, obstructed the full deployment in the mission area, and the long custom process delayed the deployment process. Sometimes blocking the delivery of logistic support and refusing visas for UN personnel by the Government happened (Hansen, 2015:5; van der Lijn, 2008:10). The unwillingness of the Sudanese Government has hindered the success of the mission.

Similarly, SPLM/A was reluctant to cooperate with the mission in the beginning because its leadership was suspicious of the international community and the United Nations cooperating too much with the Government. However, following the death of Garang, his successor SalvaKiir has become more willing to cooperate with the mission. Kiir's willingness to cooperate with the UNMIS was motivated by self-interest. When he assumed the leadership, he found SPLM/A had limited capacity to govern the South. As a result, it started to cooperate with the international community expecting gains (van der Lijn, 2008:11). Later on, negative perception towards the mission among the south Sudanese has reemerged. They began to perceive that the peacekeeping mission at Khartoum was impartial and leaning towards Northern Sudanese positions on most matters. The South Sudanese also believe that mission did nothing when the Sudanese forces killed civilians (Johnson, 2016: 99). This shows that compliance motivated by self-interest can sustain as long as the actors maintain their gains. Whenever they feel that their gains are not secured, they withhold their compliance as the leaders of SPLM/A did.

Through the UNMIS has successfully supported the parties to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and the Sudanese people peacefully determined the future of Southern Sudan through a referendum, some important issues remained unresolved. Issues related to the peace and security along the common border - the Abyei question, the future status of the Blue Nile and the Southern Kordofan States, were not settled at the departure of the mission. In addition, the issue of former Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers from both sides - has not been resolved when the Security Council decided to end the mission (UN Security Council, 2011). The low cooperative behavior of the parties with the mission has a significant impact on limiting the effectiveness of the mission to support the settlement of the pending issues.

The UN was planning to extend the mission's mandate at least for an interim period to prevent the escalation of tension in the border areas. However, the Government of Sudan was not willing and decided on the termination of the mission. Then the mission terminated its operation on 9 July 2011 (Hansen, 2015:5). The inability of UNMIS to enforce the boundary demarcation led to the outbreak of border conflict between Sudan and South Sudan soon. Then, another UN mission has deployed in the Abyei region to help the two countries settle the borders disputes peacefully.

4.4. Legitimacy Crises and Consent by Coercion: The Case of UNAMID (2007 - 2020)

The peacekeeping mission in Darfur Sudan was one of the most controversial and complicated missions in the world. The first peacekeeping mission in the Darfur region, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), was established by African Union in 2004 to manage the conflict between the Government forces and local rebel groups. AMIS was hindered by obstructions of the host state - Sudan. Due to these reasons and other

normative challenges, AMIS was unable to achieve its goals and was later replaced by the UN-AU joint mission in 2007.

When the idea of replacing the African Union Mission in Sudan with a new AU-UN joint mission emerged, the Sudanese government had expressed its discontent and opposition to the involvement of the UN and Western powers in the Darfur issue. It also firmly rejected the Western countries' officials, civil societies, and Media allegations that the government had committed genocide in Darfur and strongly opposed the UN engagement in any peace negotiations and the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The government perceived the idea of shifting the peacekeeping responsibility of AU in Darfur to the UN as an attempt to carry out a Western intervention in its internal affairs. The president of Sudan expressed his commitment to the peace process within an African framework, emphasizing the principle of 'African solutions to African problems.' He refused any attempt beyond the African framework, labeling the western attempts as imperialism and interventionism (Jumbert, 2014:291).

However, after continuous and strong pressure from the international community, the government of Sudan finally accepted the deployment of a joint UN and the AU hybrid mission with an African character in Darfur in June 2007 (Day, 2020:48). This led to the adoption of Resolution 1769 by the UN Security Council on 31 July 2007, which approved the deployment of 26,000 troops within the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). The mission formally replaced AMIS on 31 December 2007 (Jumbert, 2014:286).

Although it gave its consent for the establishment of UNAMID, the Sudanese government was unable to show its full commitment and real consent on the ground. The mission was severely hampered by the hostile behavior of the Sudanese government. The government restricted the mission's freedom of movement, blocked its access to areas where violence is ongoing, hindered the activities of the mission in various ways, such as by denying visas to human rights monitors and others, and undermined the day-to-day operations of the mission (IPI, 2017:2). The International Criminal Court (ICC) invocation further aggravated the government's hostility towards the mission and significantly complicated the whole peace process.

Despite AU's unanimous and continuous call for the suspension of the investigation of the ICC prosecutor, the Security Council referred Sudan to the ICC (Duursma & Müller, 2019:891). The International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir and other key officials of Sudanese government on 4 March 2009. The court accused the president and other officials of committing "war crimes and crimes against humanity" in Darfur. Later on, the crime of genocide was added to the charges (Akuffo, 2010:82). It created a huge obstacle in the relationship between the Sudanese government and the UNMID and negatively affected the day-to-day activities of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers. The Sudanese government became suspicious of the UN activities in general and the peacekeeping mission in particular, which deteriorated its relations with the mission. In 2014, for example, the President of Sudan, Al-Bashir, demanded the withdrawal of the peacekeeping mission from his country, stating, "the UNAMID forces have become a security burden for us more than a support, and they are incapable of defending themselves. These forces came to protect the rebellion and not the citizen." The government questioned the mission's legitimacy, arguing that it was not efficient, neutral, and impartial.

The legitimacy challenge of UNAMID was not only limited to the government of Sudan but also the rebels and the local population of Darfur. The people of Darfur were suspicious of the ability of UNAMID to protect civilians. The rebels have also denied their consent for the mission and frequently restricted it from accessing at-risk areas in the early years of its deployment (Gelot, 2012:131). The impact of these local perceptions of legitimacy on the mission's mandate implementation was paramount. All such kinds of legitimacy issues created hurdles in the way of the mission to get success.

The UN and the US attempt to get the consent of the Sudanese government through coercive way did not bring real consent. In fact, the government of Sudan confers its compliance due to fear of further sanctions and other punishments. However, its hostile relations with the mission in the course of the operation prove that compliance motivated by fear and threats of punishment cannot be sustainable.

4.5. Weakening Local Legitimacy and the Erosion of Consent: The Case of UNMISS (2011 – Until now)

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) also experienced the same challenges as UNAMID and others. During the first two years, the mission had operated smoothly with the full cooperation

and consent of the host government. However, after the civil war broke out in 2013, the government's cooperation with the mission on the tasks related to monitoring human rights violations began to deteriorate and the government became resistant. This happened following the decision of the UN Security Council to send more troops and police to de-escalate the conflict, and re-prioritize the mandate of the mission towards the Protection of Civilians (PoC), monitoring of human rights, and facilitating the supply of humanitarian aid (Lux, 2017). When the violence became worse, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2155 on 27 May 2014 unanimously, renewing and extending the UNMISS operation for another six months. This resolution has formalized the practical changes on the ground since the eruption of conflict and redirected the focus of UNMISS. The new resolution also adjusted the protection of civilian mandate to request that UNMISS "protect civilians under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source of such violence." The inclusion of this phrase in the mandate statement means acknowledging that government forces were responsible for abuses. Even though the Protection of Civilian and human rights aspects of the mission's mandate were not welcomed by the South Sudanese government from the very beginning, the inclusion of this new phrase further depreciated the relations between the UN and the government (Hunt, 2020:72).

This Security Council's decision made the government unhappy. As the focus of the mission diverted completely to protection, the government began to perceive the UN as an 'adversary' and took umbrage. Resolution 2155 led to the tension between state sovereignty (the South Sudanese government's priority) and individual human rights (the priority of the UN) (Rhoads, 2019:291). Hilde F. Johnson, who was serving as the special representative of the Secretary-General of the UN and head of the UNMISS from 2011–14, explained the reaction of the South Sudanese leaders when the UN Security Council authorized the mission to shift its focus to the protection of civilians as "they interpreted the so-called Chapter VII mandate, authorizing the UN to intervene with force if the government failed to protect civilians under imminent threat, as an insulting infringement of sovereignty" (Johnson, 2016, 98). She also stated that from the very beginning many SPLM-leaders felt that 'they had got rid of one colonial power after decades of struggle only to face another.' Therefore, the South Sudanese officials developed a perception of being 'invaded.' While the mission started operation, they complained that the concerned body had not consulted them about its mandate. They also viewed the UN intervention as a threat to their country's sovereignty (Johnson, 2016, 99). This means that the South Sudanese officials perceived the mission as illegitimate.

Another reason behind the suspicion of the government, especially following the revision of the mission's mandate, was that in most of the PoC sites, except, the Malakal site, which is mixed, the residents are ethnically Nuer, RiekMachar's ethnic group. The government was repeatedly condemned these IDP sites as strongholds of the opposition group and accused UNMISS of supporting the rebels, violating the norm of impartiality (Rhoads, 2019:292).

Hence, the South Sudanese government continued obstructing the UN peacekeeping mission. On so many occasions, the government restricted the ability of UNMISS by denying its forces to move freely in the country and hampering the ability of the mission to achieve its mandate. The South Sudanese government's lack of cooperation was not only limited to denying access to the UNMISS to patrol some spots of conflicts, but also impeding aid supplies. The government was accused of continuing blocking mission personnel from entering the country and delivering equipment and fuel (IPI, 2019). In such a case it became very difficult for the peacekeepers to achieve the mission's determined objectives as it denied movement, work and restrict its supply to the field offices. UNMISS and the whole NGOs operating in the country faced restrictions, the threat of being de-registered, and expulsion of staff. As the Chief of the mission, Nicholas Haysom said, the government of South Sudan disallows the peacekeepers to patrol some areas where both the government forces and rebel groups attacked civilians. These government actions were against the agreements it signed with the UN on 8 August 2011, to allow the UN peacekeepers to operate in the country (Tanza, 2021). As argued by Walt Kilroy, refusal to avail land to expand UN facilities in the country, refusal of visas requests for key personnel, refusal to allow the use of surveillance drones, and other administrative hindrances have negatively impacted the peace operation in South Sudan (Kilroy, 2018:141). The government was also engaged in anti-UN activities that could undermine the UN's actions through anti-UN demonstrations, anti-UN media reports, and the harassment of UN staff (Koos&Gutschke, 2014:7). These actions have significantly hampered the government's relations with the UN and created local legitimacy issues for the operation.

In his report to the Security Council on the UNMISS, the former Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon warned that the government's frequent restrictions had paralyzed the mission. Moreover, the government forces were regularly harassing the peacekeepers and other staff of the mission, especially during the July 2016 violence (Roberts, 2017). The government considered the UN actions and the pressures from the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States by threatening to impose sanctions on the South Sudanese as interference in the country's internal affairs. It dismissed the threats as a violation of the state's sovereignty.

V. Conclusion

Legitimacy is working as strong social bondage in favor of any action, including the UN peacekeeping mission. It increases the opportunities for the success of the particular mission, and its lack leads to the failure of the UN missions. Legitimacy deficit is one of the main issues behind the failure of the peacekeeping missions in the Horn of Africa. The study has investigated how the perceptions of parties to the conflict towards the peacekeeping missions' legitimacy affect the performance and outcomes of the missions in the Horn of Africa. It identifies that among other factors, weak local legitimacy had a significant contribution to the inefficiency of the peacekeeping missions to promote sustainable peace and security in the sub-region. Almost all peacekeeping missions deployed by the UN to maintain peace and security in the sub-region suffered from the lack of local legitimacy and subsequently poor cooperation of the host governments and other parties to the conflicts.

Deterioration of host states' governments' and other parties' consent and absence of compliance and cooperation made the peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and South Sudan inefficient and, in some cases, failed. The United Nations Operation in Somalia, United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur have been concluded without tangible political solutions. The ongoing United Nations Mission in South Sudan was also ineffective in implementing its core mandates of protecting civilians, de-escalation of conflicts, and stabilizing the country. Among others, the lack of consent of the parties to the conflicts was the reason behind the low performance of the missions. The lack of consent was directly associated with the local actors' perceptions towards the appropriateness of the missions. Thus, the study concludes that the lack of local legitimacy of the peacekeeping missions eroded the conflicting parties' consent and cooperation with the missions. This lack of cooperation among the local actors limited the contribution of the missions to promote sustainable peace and security in the sub-region and host countries.

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