

outcome. Nevertheless, the hope is that cultural affinity, awareness, and unbiased concern, can with time outweigh such conflicts of interest. The most recent diplomatic resolution of the coup in Lesotho by South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe again is a regional success story. It was an example of the usefulness of local knowledge combined with that real concern for a neighbour's well being. Liberia and other examples are not so promising.

Then there is the question of operational capacity. Conflict resolution with or without peacekeeping forces, is a complex and difficult process to conduct. It requires trained staff or troops who can not only operate on the ground, but staff who can direct operations or interventions from distant headquarters where bureaucratic and administrative constraints can prove to be insurmountable. It is not clear that the OAU has this operational capacity yet.

Even assuming the political will and the capacity to conduct an intervention, the costs of doing so can be prohibitive. At this point in time, the OAU and African countries just do not have the resources to unilaterally put together such operations. For example, their troops invariably do not have sufficient appropriate equipment. Sometimes this results from an unwillingness to redirect existing resources both nationally and regionally, more often it is because the money is just not there. However, if the financial resources were available, we return to the question of whether the OAU has the capacity to conduct peacekeeping.

While we have mentioned the success of Lesotho, the Liberian example of regional African peacekeeping has not proven to be particularly satisfying for any of those involved. It has failed and continues to fail for many of the reasons set out above. Initially there was no political will within the OAU, and they very quickly agreed that ECOWAS could take the initiative.

Then, despite some initial success, ECOMOG started to bog down and become part of the Liberian problem. It fell prey to the danger of becoming too closely allied with various factions.

For example, part of the Nigerian contingent began supplying arms and ammunition to the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) in what is alternately seen as strategic support or profiteering by Nigerians. At any rate there is now extreme distrust and antagonism between ECOMOG and the largest internal faction, the NPFL, which controls over half of the country. To resolve a rapidly deteriorating peacekeeping operation, both the UN and the OAU started to take a role. UNOMIL was created to help supervise and monitor the July 1993 Cotonou accord, which was a diplomatic way of saying that the UN through UNOMIL would quietly supervise ECOMOG. Then the OAU started to play a larger role behind the scenes, and attempted to involve troops from outside of the sub-region.

Also, ECOMOG and now the OAU involvement occurred in large part because the US was prepared to put up millions of dollars. In 1993 alone they first put \$19.83 million into the UN Trust Fund for peacekeeping in Liberia, and in November allocated another \$11 for