

Since that time, conflict management has been pursued primarily with three major approaches:

The *Commission on Mediation, Conciliation, and Arbitration* was intended to be the main body of the OAU, and was designed as an autonomous entity. However, since the Algerian-Moroccan War of 1963 it has been largely dormant for two reasons. The Commission's jurisdiction was restricted to inter-state conflicts, and its procedures for dispute resolution favoured judicial approaches. Most conflicts in Africa have been intra-state, and would have benefited from less technical solutions, such as the provision of good offices.

In response to the ineffectiveness of the Commission, a series of ad hoc and improvised approaches were introduced. Chief among these was the appointment by the OAU Assembly of a series of *ad hoc committees* to address specific conflicts. The most successful cases included the 1973 Ethiopia-Somalia conflict, the 1978 Western Sahara dispute, and the 1994 Rwanda-Burundi fact-finding mission. This approach has had more success because it can address internal conflicts as well, and because it can consider less formal/political as well as technical approaches to dispute resolution. However, due to the fact that they are formed only after a conflict has erupted, these ad hoc committees have also dealt only with conflict management.

The OAU Assembly has also sanctioned *mediation by African heads of state*. This has the advantage of political credibility, but is restricted to the infrequent (usually annual) occasions when heads of state meet in large sessions.

As of 1993, the OAU has been working to establish a new institutional mechanism to deal with the *prevention* of the emergence of internal conflict. Assisted by a series of consultations with the International Peace Academy (IPA), the OAU adopted a declaration at its 1993 Cairo summit on the establishment of an OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. This new initiative reflects a substantial evolution in the political willingness of African governments to consider a role for the OAU in the prevention of intra-state conflict. Within the organisation, a new conflict management division has been set up in the secretariat, and work has been initiated on the creation of a Conflict Management Centre.