

The Organization of African Unity. The OAU has only recently returned to playing a role in security-related matters on the continent after a hiatus of some years. Historically, modern African states have been very reluctant to enter into any discussions that might prejudice the question of sovereignty, particularly with respect to international borders. The OAU has no provision for the enforcement of peace and security and must rely on the moral suasion of its membership. Thus, the Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission has been largely dormant. In the last few years, however, the OAU has been active in two major conflict areas. One of its subregional groups, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has been the main proponent of a settlement in Liberia, including the mounting of a significant peacekeeping force. This force is now being expanded to give it a more Pan-African character and has been joined by a UN observer mission in the first joint effort where the UN has become part of an operation set up by another organization.

In the second case, the OAU helped broker the so-called Arusha Accord, which is attempting to end the civil war in Rwanda. These accords call upon the UN to provide the peacekeeping mission and to incorporate in it the OAU Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG). Both missions, Liberia and Rwanda, incorporate provisions for disarmament among the aspects of the settlement. It is too early to tell if these initial efforts by the OAU, first alone and then in conjunction with the UN, will be successful and serve as models for future missions. At this time it appears that the UN may have to be the implementing agency for agreements reached at the OAU.

The Organization of American States. The OAS was for many years one of the "background" regional organizations in the global system. Its collective security systems, including the Rio Treaty, place emphasis on preventive diplomacy and peacemaking rather than peacekeeping or

peace enforcement. Although the Treaty of Tlatelolco created the first nuclear-free zone in a populated part of the world, and the OAS has the experience of mounting a peacekeeping mission (in the Dominican Republic in 1965-66, in part in co-operation with the UN), it was not until the publicity surrounding the various agreements leading to the Central American peace accords that this regional organization began to be noticed.

The physical disarmament carried out under the supervision of UN peacekeepers in Nicaragua and El Salvador, but with close co-operation of the OAS, is, as mentioned earlier, one of the success stories in this area. Like the OAU, the OAS may have to call on the UN to actually implement some of its agreements, especially where there is a requirement for a military or police presence. In the Central American region, ongoing efforts have centred on the Esquipulas II agreement, which established goals for the limitation of arms by country, based on legitimate defence needs. Although actual progress in this regard has been slow, the concept remains valid and is accepted by the subregional states. More recently the OAS has been working with the UN in developing the political and security apparatus designed to restore President Aristide to power, an effort that seems unlikely to come to fruition in the near term. Nevertheless, like the OAU, the OAS is gaining experience in working with the UN and benefiting from the latter's broader experience in peace operations and arms control.

The Asia-Pacific Region. This major region of the world does not have a regional organization of the same scope as Europe, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. There appears to be a move toward developing subregional organizations first, the best known of which is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This group of six nations, traditionally focused on development matters, has now begun to venture into the political/security field. It has established, along with its seven

