

# THE SECURITY VECTORS IN AFRICA

Zeferino Cariço André Pintinho<sup>1</sup>

## The African Context

The analysis of African security has been taking on a crucial role in the theoretical and empirical development of the science of African International Relations. This intensity is due, in large part, to the growing of the so-called “critical” approaches. However, these changes appear in the scope of expanding the reach of analysis, but also in introducing an important qualitative leap, regarding the paradigm of the African security vector.

Even though its positioning in the international context does not represent a significant influence regarding economic development, Africa is seen as a strategic actor in International Relations in different areas of action.

Since the African continent is defined as the cradle of mankind, scarred from one side by a colonial past imposed by Western powers, that divided and crushed it, leaving it with a heavy colonial legacy, and from the other side carries in itself the weight of the biggest conflicts balance ever seen in the history of humankind, added to the volume of the poverty index, illiteracy, chronic diseases and a precarious catalog of political models of governance that converted itself into a competition of “dictatorial” political administration by most states.

Even though, 54 African states represent a set as actors of the international society, out of which 53 are members of the African Union. They are an integral part of a paradigmatic systemic plurality that guide the continent and keep it in the context of African security.

Thus, it can be said that contemporary Africa, in a specific manner, “emerged from a group of states delimited by borders created by colonialist states for their administrative convenience without considering the ethnic re-

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor at the Private University of Angola (UPRA) and at the Higher Polytechnic Institute Inocência Nanga (ISPIN) and member of the Center for Investigation in Political Science at the University of Évora. E-mail: zecapri@yahoo.com.br

alities or pre-existing states” (Tshiyembe 2014, 11). In this case, the colonizing states treated it, ultimately, as an “empty territory that they partitioned according to their interests” (Action 1998, 287).

Therefore, it continues to be the field of competition among other powers and mining and oil companies, but the direct territory occupation has disappeared. The competitors and the forms of competition have diversified. Under a realist understanding, there is no lasting prosperity without military power or strategic influence (Action 1998, 287).

Under this point of view, the feeble geoeconomic indexes join the fragility of the military indexes (army organization, lack of nuclear and diplomatic weapons, weak relative weight of votes in international organizations) to turn African states into less significant powers, secondary or quasi-powers<sup>2</sup>. However, in the context of modernity it is presented with an abysmal deviation of the infrastructures in view of the multiplicity of scarcity of strong institutions capable of competing and elevating a different image of the continent.

This colonial activity left underlying damages in the positioning of the African continent that was unable to surpass this stage with the formulation of a conscious strategy for development, related to the reordering of the world’s new geopolitics. So far, since obtaining autonomy, the fragmentation remains unaltered and all attempts of regrouping and creating a huge unity resulted in failure.

Thus, Ruth B. Collier defends that independency represented an administrative crisis to the new political leaders, that were confronted with the need to consolidate their position through the creation of cohesion among different factions of disputing elites and the need to obtain popular support. In this context, the multiparty regimes were substituted by single party or military regimes that allowed for a better satisfaction of the interests of the new African ruling elites (Collier 1982).

Then, a new identity for establishing a different Africa began to be built where “the cultural issues and the history, the fight for wealth and prestige and the vicissitudes related to poverty and resource scarcity contributed to the formation of authoritarian models of governance in Africa” (Fatton 1990, 445).

While the co-called winners of the War of 1939/45 immediately created a requalification project for Europe and developed democratic models as societal pacifying instruments, in Africa, a solidarity profile had no effect. The

---

2 Power: relational and dynamic concept, that integrates the material resources (army, finances, population, resources, and immaterial ones (ideology, information) available to the states.

dream of progress and of infrastructure was materialized into oblivion and true abandonment. It began to be disregarded as the cradle of benevolence to the continent of the “last thousand million of the poverty” as said by Paul Collier (2007, 5).

It is important to consider the complexity and reach of the recently installed regimes. Diamond points out that this is mainly due to the fact, that these new regimes faced a weakness State authority, deepened by another set of historical and structural obstacles, among which ethnic divisions, the weak sense of belonging to the nation, the fragility of the political institutions established with little experience, the absence of technical and administrative capabilities at the local level, the extreme economic dependence and the revolutionary popular expectancies created by the independence struggles can be mentioned. (Diamond 1988, 32).

However, norms of all kinds were developed, from dictatorship to successive coup d'états, to the absence of the rotation of universal suffrage or of the political power. Alternatively, and in permanence, the promotion of peace and sustainable development, constitute a challenge to African security (Diamond 1988, 32).

In this context, on one hand unfavorable conditions for democratization were created and, on the other, favorable ones for the emergence of authoritarian regimes in the post-independence African states (Chabal 1999, 20).

Almost the whole of sub-Saharan Africa faced similar problems in relation to the proposals of nation-states in the republic that formed during their emancipations. In a condensed way, Feliz Gaeta observes that:

With the exception of Mauritius, from Mali to Madagascar, including the countries of Western Africa Niger, Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Senegal, Chad, and the former Belgian Africa, Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi, the countries of Eastern Africa and Indian Ocean Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Comoros and Madagascar, and the countries of Southern Africa Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, South Africa and Angola, as countries, are being able to manage their political-parliamentary and liberal systems left by their former colonial power although in all this countries there can still be verified identical forms of contestation (Gaeta 1994, 713-729).

Since the end of the political pluralism of the beginning of the 1960s, several coups d'état occurred in Africa, that created a geostrategic map shaped by the Cold War, a factor of destabilization of the wills of the African peoples in the building of their models of nation-state and, therefore, “turned the

surroundings of the political power into governing States” (Tshiyembe 2014, 15).

Effectively, the continent began to be characterized by inescapable paradoxes of a system blocked in its transition, marked by some distancing between the institutional-normative structure and the concrete materiality; by conflicts and tensions between the traditional and the contemporary and between the real and the apparent; by the opposition between the charming fortress of the “*Leviathan*”<sup>3</sup> and its inherent fragility; and by a bidirectional projection of the local and of the external (Cilliers and Dask, 2013).

This image of Africa is justified, among other reasons, because the same paradigms that legitimized the slave trade and the European colonization, still reside in the thinking of many scholars of those sciences (Hugon 2009).

However, Gilberto Veríssimo examines this anachronistic context as the result of factors considered of:

[..] archetypes, spread by the most relevant international media and generally presenting the African peoples as: the barbarian, the inferior against which is necessary to protect or whom is necessary to civilize, importing the benefits of the revealed religions, of the science and of the institutions; the child, that must be educated, behind in the evolution of humankind, before which the motherland has an educational role, or that is not yet ready for democracy; the noble savage, of the “superior” that lives in caring communities, in harmony with nature, and must be preserved; the brother, our equal, with whom it is necessary to cooperate; the foreign that we cannot comprehend and whose difference makes us, in the last case, indifferent; the chained slave that must be freed from its owner and its bonds; or the poor that requires assistance or help to develop (Veríssimo 2013, 30).

The way Gilberto Veríssimo theorizes the fulcrum of the African image is indeed interesting, with peculiarity of its instrumentalization. In this attractive analysis by Gilberto it is interesting to us to stress the role of the media of the main international agencies that contradict power management in Africa and its underdevelopment index, characterized as insufficient to express the current paradigm of modern times. The image defined as vision or perception of Africa remains in the respective consciousness necessary related to a true representation of the African reality.

---

3 *Leviathan* or *The Matter, Forme and Power of a Common Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*, commonly called the *Leviathan*, is a book written by Thomas Hobbes and published in 1651. The title refers the biblical *Leviathan*.

This conflicted scenario, added to the endemic underdevelopment of some regions and countries in Africa, accentuates the frailty of the states and societies themselves, representing a greater challenge to lasting peace, sustainable development and human rights, situations that risk the accomplishment of the Development Objectives of this continent in the current millennium (Nação e Defesa 2012, 6).

However, it is not strange that the security issues more autochthonous to Africa, even though similar to those of other region, are added, through the global connection projected over the continent, to the great security issues from the world and a panoply of questions covered by its expanded concept (Moller 2009).

Currently, these issues cover not only the traditional security of the state regarding its counterparts, but also the security of its citizens, many times forcing them to counter one vector with another as a way to prevent the damages each could cause<sup>4</sup>.

However, when African people states, in its saying, that even “as hot as the fountain waters are, they do not cook your rice”, it articulates with shocking simplicity a fundamental principle of physics as well as a political science one. We are aware that the guidance of development of a dynamic event, whatever its external constraints are, depends mainly on its internal characteristics to transform its own reality, based on its concrete knowledge and its own efforts and sacrifices (Cabral 2008, 174).

In fact, the geostrategic insertion of African security appeals to an articulation between the internal and external options of cooperation, which is translated into the development of relations with the neighboring countries and the strategic partners.

In view of the series of varied and incalculable conflicts in a dissimilar political and cultural argument, the attempt to build a security policy that justifies the mobilization of individuals and means raises debates on their political, legal and moral bases that allow to sustain action and lead to some measure of success beyond the subjective analysis of the advantages of pacification and security. That, for instance, is not clearly shared by those who are part of the conflicts or so ingrained in a dynamic of violence, that they cannot perceive any way out. (Nação e Defesa 2012, 16).

Admiral A. Sanguinetti recognizes that the fusion of internal and external antagonism generates confusion about the legitimate concerns of de-

---

<sup>4</sup> See the perspective adopted and the themes stressed in William, Paul. 2008. *Security Studies: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, and in the classic study by Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. 1997. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

fense and security, about the responsibilities of the army and the police, thus causing the progressive transformation of the police forces into armies, and forming, at the same time, armies meant to intervene internally, violating its normal ethics, under the excuse of the defense of the nation (Sanguintetti 1985, 498).

In other terms, by associating the national security to the promotion of this nefarious doctrine at the systemic level of fundamental values, African power lost track of intelligences, patriotisms and intense devotions (Tshiyembe 2014, 19).

For decades, the harvesting of violence and death could be seen. In other words, the perception that makes violence a declared norm of individuals and groups and that functions as an addiction, now and foremost, to justify the need for a despotic governance, through force, to the political and social stabilization and the contention of conflicts, a horizon that people exhausted by catastrophes and violence, and, we dare say, the prevalence of belligerent discourses and attitudes. (Nação e Defesa 2012, 16).

The attempt to understand current reality, allows one to agree with the argument of some theorists that the central problem relies on the state in Africa. The application of the theoretical conceptions of the state to Africa posed issues that blocked the place of the continent in the theory of International Relations (Veríssimo 2014, 31).

The question of the neo-patrimonial state, of the debility of civil society, that was characterized during the debates of the post-independence period, overall during the 1980s/90s, until the question of the governance regime of the 2000s provoked serious issues to states in Africa. It influenced the implication on how to understand the theories of African international relations and the place they occupy (Veríssimo 2014, p.31).

In this context, the efficacy of the whole African regional security system is affected by the frailty of the state and the lack of legitimacy of many rulers, bringing as consequences the excessive use of means of social control, disseminated corruption in many groups of society, incapacity of providing goods and basic services, such as health, education, social security and housing, stagnation of the economies, without any perspective of evolution and creation and distribution of riches; and sometimes, appropriation of the public structure by ethnic, political or economic factions (Delgado 2016, 329).

Definitely, it is this structural and institutionalized insecurity that the post-colonial state classifies as national security, in the absence of the creation of conditions for an objective security, defining as “a confident and calm state of spirit resulting from a countries capacity of using force to repress a foreign

aggression and also to promote civil peace and national concord thanks to the satisfaction of political, economic, social and cultural needs of the citizens, including the physical protection of men and their belongings and the guarantee of the exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the men and citizens” (Robert 1985, 265).

However, according to Luís Saraiva (2010, 106), “the threats to the African security may be reduced if its countries in greater risk search for the path of development. For that, security structures are necessary, capable of guaranteeing the minimum conditions to the success of the development programs”.

Nevertheless, the vulnerability of some of the most fragile African countries is reflected, still in accordance to the author, “in their incapacity to face the drug trafficking networks, the scarcity of naval means to oppose the clandestine migration networks and to protect the riches of their waters, and also in the difficulty to succeed in adapting their laws and systems to the monitoring and combat of the terrorist phenomenon, preventing them from collaborating with greater efficiency in the international community’s combat efforts” (Saraiva 2010, 106).

Even though, it is considered that the security and defense paradigm are one of the most important fronts on which Africa will have to make efforts for its development, both in relation to the African military capabilities, to the technical-military level, and to, in general, the capabilities in the scope of peacekeeping and security. In this way, a number of theorists, as well as analysts and politicians, have been unanimous in the idea that those are far from the needs of Africa (Saraiva 2010, 107).

We can consider that historical factors, such as the decolonization processes, the Cold War, the crises and the civil wars that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall were factors that created obstacles to the development of the military capabilities in sync with world processes (Saraiva 2010, 107).

In this sense, it allowed that the frailty observed in the African institutions, spread even to the African Union. Considered the biggest political center of the continent, it was seen as an institution without much prestige in the level of the continent itself, representing a number of problems of both material and organizational order.

In this context, it can be considered that after the bipolar period, the African continent lost its relevance, the military advisors and specialists abandoned the region and the military means and financial help started to decline. Politically, since the independence from their European colonial managers, Africa brings to our mind the idea of civil wars, famine, generalized corrup-

tion, incapable governments, coup d'états and human rights violations (Thaker 2006, 10).

According to Augusto Trindade (2006, 7), “the limited development of the African military capabilities is directly linked to the issues of development in Africa”.

Although he considers that the signals of rupture in Africa are positive, and that many countries benefited from foreign debt forgiveness in the most recent years, and also that the year of 2005 was dedicated to the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Objectives, the truth is that Africa failed to achieve these same goals by 2015. So, “the next years will continue to struggle against some contradictions: between the marginalization and the political emergence; between the global recovery and the failure of many states; and between the opposing trends of reducing conflicts or dealing with the shadow of their continuity” (Trindade 2006, 7).

It is the instability that spreads through most of the continent that can bring forward a discussion over the pacification efforts, of democratization and of economic recovery in the respective regions (Trindade 2006, 8).

From this point of view, it is considered that without peace, without the exercise of democracy by the states, it will be difficult to look at the dream of integration, of a united Africa, characterized as one United States of Africa.

In this scope, the rebuilding of the state, of the institutions, and the overall increase of the human capital is imperious, as we are dealing with states on the verge of failing because of war, or for having recently left highly destructive conflicts.

In order to fight against systemic debilities, one of the greatest priorities must be the correct mobilization and management of the resources available in the continent then. In this sense, the first priority must be the establishment of peace and security, because the economy can only thrive in environments free of crisis or war (Trindade 2006, 11).

Another priority is related to the investment on human capital through the professional capacitation, through schooling and the promotion of the health sector (Trindade 2006, 11).

## The dialectic of political power in Africa

One of the most relevant issues that is being discussed in the context of Africa International Relations, is the interdependence of the security vector previously analyzed. It assimilates the policy patterns of governance of the

African “political” man, as if the answer to find extraordinary solutions to the problems of the continent were in the same exact measure as the concentration of its command. Constantly, the issue of power in Africa receives special relevance in concealed local zones of conflict, mainly in areas of current added strategic value, in which one can notice a proliferation of regional and intrastate conflicts, leading to a serious structural underdevelopment and, to a certain measure, to the failure of the states that lead them (Bernardino 2001, 133).

Following the emancipations, that led the states to political uniformity, but not to their citizens liberty and citizenship, African leaders suppressed the divergences, ruling in a despotic, if not cruel, way.

Therefore, “instead of being the will of the people that creates and legitimates power, it is force that creates power, legitimating it and engendering the will of the people” (Tshiyembe 2014, 18). The incapacity or impossibility to coexist with adversity led to conflicts. It could be said that this was the inclination of the leaders in face of the covert obstacles and the cultural heterogeneity.

Originated from unequal institutions, this diversity resulted in different understandings of values and laws, and of procedures and rights related to the human life. However, these anathemas of the conquered power, continue to be exclusive property of their owners, even though they are not shared and have no tendency to change their holder (Tshiyembe 2014, 18).

The fierceness of this reality, raised the challenge of the rulers to a current model according to which “the ideal is the preservation of power, and such preservation became the main national interest, if not the only one” (Tshiyembe 2014, 18).

Thus, since then, according to the view of the rulers, the highest objective of the state is neither economic and social development, nor the national unity, but power (Tshiyembe 2014, 18).

In our perspective, this security ideology leads to national insecurity, since it considers political power as the only constitutive component of the State and a fundamental condition for social peace and national harmony.

In this way, even if in a purely empirical way, the same author adds that, this truth is applied as the result of two motives, in which the first “lays the African power as a dialectic relation of external dependence that escapes the control of the post-colonial state” (Tshiyembe 2014, 18).

In the second place, the “true enemy, if not the exclusive one of African power, is not this hypothetical external enemy, so vilified. The true enemy of African power is effectively the organized people, refusing to grant its po-

litical legitimacy” (Tshiyembe 2014, 19).

Defending the same idea, George Balandier presents his theory crafted from the power and image of domination in Africa, in a generic way, comparing the power with the theatrical assembly. And characterizes Africa in this way:

In Africa, there is an image that conveys power. In my book, *Le pouvoir en scène*, I intend to show how the political is constantly fabricating its own image to exert what is called power... There is an author (a poorly known one) that makes some notes regarding Shakespeare’s proposed concept of theatrical drama (...) that suggest that beyond regimes or specific constitutions (...) there is one commonality in all regimes, the «mise en scène», the geo-theatrical regime: the true regime is that politics are also actors.... The political order favors the representation of images (...) This is the case of traditional power, therefore powers are potentially images (...) there is a scenario and the actors play a role, in which the famous, and the political, are present, (...) and it is cyclical. (...) It is the case of Benin, where the sovereign dies, it is said: darkness has fallen over the country, justice, order, has disappeared [...] Thus, the need to reestablish light, justice or order [...] There is a whole structure, a machinery, whose actors intervene to reestablish the lost light or order (Balandier 1989, 19).

By bringing more complexity to the analysis of this political circumstance of Africa, we can consider that all repressive forces (or most of them), namely, the army, the guard, the police, the popular militias and the secret services, are created, trained, equipped and financed by eastern and western countries, these foreign powers have both the ability to protect the power, to destabilize it, or yet to invert it, in service of its own main national interests (Bernardino 2001, 133).

The battalion chief Le Seigneur uses the same kind of argument: “These armies materialize new sovereignties in enormous spaces, sovereignties over which it is necessary to inflict political orientation, and that play a fundamental role in the survival of their acting rulers, or those who believe to be their rulers. These Lilliputian organs are then revealed to be essential political forces of black Africa, which must be controlled” (Guillermin 1979, 8).

The political power, as a manifestation of public force, and whose prerogatives the colonial authorities had used, affected African leaders even more deeply. In this scope, the idea of political power as a common good did not take root in the minds of the leaders of humankind. In contrast, it was understood as the force of a man or a group that imposes its world conception

to the whole of the society it governs (Tshiyembe 2014, 26).

This politization of differences may seem, at first sight, incoherent or contradictory with the fact that many African leaders defend as their first task the development of a national unity and an idea of standardization to the building of the Nation. However, these are processes that happen simultaneously and are interconnected (Ferreira 2014, 18).

However, as perceived by P. F. Gonidec, this everyday reality does not mitigate the constitutional democratic appearances that proclaim the principle according to which the “sovereignty belongs to the people” (Gonidec 1983, 70).

As an example, the constitution of Gabon declares the institution of the “government of the people, by the people and for the people (article 2nd)”. Profitable in the same sense, the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau stresses that the national sovereignty of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau resides in the people (article 2nd) (Constituições 1986, 145). While the Nigerian constitution indicates that the people has the power to define the rules of the political game by the adoption of a constitution, the supreme law of the state (article 1st of the Constitution of 1979).

Within a context of expressive long-term perspectives, it can be observed that African constitutions are seen as mere paperwork in accordance to the political will of the group in power at that time.

In this way, Y. Faure proves that, the constitution is not established with the intent of simplifying power in accordance with the will of the people or the of the diverse juridical or intellectual fictions underlying it (the nation, the country, the homeland, the common good, the general interest). But it is exercised in order to immobilize the political functions, of the definitive location of agents in the relation [...] (Faure 1981, 34).

The African constitution is a technic of political supremacy, as stated by the “lifelong holder of the power” (that must last through the life of one person, and not beyond it). When, because of crises, the military take over power, they do not demand the free consent of the people to exercise it. They assume that it is in a childish condition and decide to replace it, alleging that their revolts were dictated by the will to protect the people against the violence of the overthrown rulers (Faure 1981, 35).

However, the difficulties to deal with the social asymmetry and heterogeneity derive from the dysfunctions and conflicts in the core of the state, overtaken by groups and actors, who would be important to identify and name. Without it one could speak endlessly about the predatory role of the states, while it loses significance. On the other hand, pragmatically, to identify

the owners of the state, ethnic chiefs or of any other affiliation or allegiance, may force a dialogue with them in order to achieve a possible commitment in the built of policies to prevent conflicts (Nascimento 1992, 20).

These questions lead us back to the problems of the political architecture in Africa. In a viable time frame, projects of political integration or refoundation in Africa will probably not erase the states and the national identities created in the period. For some time, however, states will be, mostly, the external link that works against the closer interdependence with the social fabric. The development and protection of this social fabric is, and should have been, its main commitment. (Nascimento 1992, 22).

This is the framework in which the management of political power in Africa is idealized: it figures out as a mere utopic instrument in defining the partition of security, that benefits some and not others, marginalized from the process of political values distribution and the recognition of internal conflicts, that bring a deep division all over Africa.

## **The Action of the Organization of African Unity on the Security in Africa**

The creation of the African Union, in 2002, was an important step change the pattern of action in the landscape of African conflicts and to abandon the rigid conception of sovereignty and no intervention defended by the predecessor Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Thus, the African Union defends a more interventionist regime of a regional organization, affirming in its constitutive act the right of intervention in grave circumstances, which include war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity (African Union 2000).

In this context, the Charter of the Organization of African Unity of 1963 did not include a well-developed mechanism of collective security, despite being considered one of the Security Council's collaborating regional organizations in matters of regional peace and security (Delgado 2016, 326).

Although one cannot argue that these juridical limitations were the cause of the three types of conflicts that erupted in Africa before the end of the Cold War (namely interstate conflicts, internal and anticolonial ones), on the long run the main contribution of the OAU was precisely the positive support it provided to the concretization of the national liberation processes (Dugard 1967). It remained conservative in the matters related to intervention in internal affairs, adopting an almost absolute non-intervention principle (Murithi

2005), and ineffective in the resolution of the regional conflicts.

However, it is observed that security in Africa is considered, by almost everyone, a strategic priority, for without security there is no sustainable development. Not the classic security of the state or its organizations, but the “real” security dimension, felt by and focused on the human person<sup>5</sup>. Such dimension abandons the stereotyped concept of identity of national security, focused on the state, and replaces it for that of human security, focused on the societies, in the populations and the human beings (Bernardino 2008, 80).

This new paradigm of human security is seen as the one comprising multiple security issues, that affect the world’s peace and security, defined as:

Human security means to protect fundamental freedoms. It means to protect people from critical and omnipresent threats and situations. It means to use processes based on the people’s qualities and aspirations. It means to create political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that can together guarantee the bases for the survival, sustenance and dignity of people (United Nations 2003, 4).

The concept of security reaches in this way a third dimension<sup>6</sup> that comes to prioritize the human population as object, widening the scope of the application of collective security<sup>7</sup>, and includes an even greater number of situations in the list of threats to international peace and security.

The African capabilities also face a varied group of challenges, among which the materialization of the AU’s new plans related to African peace and security can be highlighted. These challenges represent an important part of the weaknesses Africa must learn to overcome (Saraiva 2014, 108).

Indeed, the Constitutive Act of the African Union, initially called Organization of the African Unity, in its 3rd article, called “Objectives”, in the subheading f, states that it is the obligation of the signatory countries of the

---

5 Human security consists in the way as the people lives and breathes in a society that freely makes their own various choices and has access to the market and social opportunities.

6 Considering that, up until now, there were three dimensions of the security concept the history of the contemporary world: a first traditional view that was limited to the protection of the territory of a state against external military threats known as the national security (see Kelsen, Hans. 1957. *Collective Security under International Law*. Washington: United States Government Office); a second notion that, as we have already demonstrated, through the development of a collective security system, transformed a limiting definition of the concept of state sovereignty into an idea of international security; and, lastly, the coming of sustainable human security, the last stage of development of the concept, and adopted by the UN in its last official documents and operational strategy that followed.

7 These principles were already defined in the directives of the Responsibility to Protect.

Constitutive Act of the African Union “to promote peace, security and stability in the Continent” (African Union 2000).

This new model of security was developed to grant higher protection and consistency level, close to the populations, for these are constantly affected by the many regional conflicts.

Luís Bernardino defends the need to adopt an understanding of security that surpasses the security of the state, focusing on the security of the individual, the person, and creating security systems that directly protect the populations (Bernardino 2008, 81). That leads us to stress that the intervention of the human security constitutes the nuclear core of stability of any nation.

Couto Lemos apud Saraiva (2014, p. 179) states that “the security and development processes must be intimately connected, for one depends on the other. If security is not omnipresent, if citizens notice, people will be more inclined to accept the entrance of stabilizing factors for it to be an acquired condition”.

Focusing in the interests of the African security, the Constitutive Act of the African Union, in its 4th article (Principles) of the same document, in the subheading “e” through “j” alerts for the need to create means for the peaceful resolution of conflicts among member states of the Union through appropriate means that must be decided by the Conference of the Union (e); prohibits the use or the threat to use force among member states of the Union (f); declares that the AU has the right to intervene in a member state in accordance with a decision of the Conference in grave situations, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity (h); defends the pacific coexistence of member states of the Union and their right to exist in peace and security and to seek help, through the AU Conference, as well as the right of non-interference through a member state in the internal affairs of another member state (i) as well as the right of the member states to require the intervention of the Union, aiming to reestablish peace and security (j) (African Union 2000).

In this sense, it is understood that these fundamental principles of the African Union, in the account of peace and security for the African continent, provided for the creation of juridical or political norms or instruments, such as the cases of the (Delgado 2016, 326):

- Protocol that establishes the Peace and Security Council (PSC) (2002) (Gumedze 2011, 327);
- Protocol on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defense (2005);
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance

(2007);

- Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa (1977);
- African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (1996);
- Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (1999);
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981);
- Regional instruments on the protection of refugees (1969), children (1990), women (2003), youth (2006) and internally displaced persons (2009).

In the same line, the regional instruments of promotion of economic integration do not falter to justify this presence, through the creation of the African Economic Community (1991), combat to corruption (2003), promotion of public service values (2011), and the one related to the protection of the African culture(s) (2006) (Gumedze 2011, 327).

Stephan Klingebiel, a German political scientist specializing in matters of development in Africa developed by himself how the dynamics currently involved with foreign assistance in Africa is in large scale related to the military capabilities (Klingebiel 2007, 71).

The institutions created in Africa or by the international community have not been competent or have not had sufficient will to military intervene in situations of extreme emergence to protect the civilian populations (Klingebiel 2007, 71).

However, many doubts were expressed on the reason of being of some military actions, and the motives that led to military initiatives and actions by foreign actors in Africa. Thus the reason for the main problems of the former African organization, the "OAU", which would be derived of the inhibiting principles of sovereign equality and the non-interference on the affairs of other member states (Klingebiel 2007, 71).

Nicolle Gnesotto<sup>8</sup>, a specialist in African security, defends that "the growing poverty in Africa is seen as one of the gravest phenomenon, constituting itself as an obstacle to the combat of the weakness of the African capabilities in matters of peace and security. And, in truth, without a strong state, capable of taking over the regulatory functions, the African countries will not be able to escape the economic fragility" (Gnesotto 2017, 17).

However, Charles Goerens stresses that the built or rebuilt of this capacity of providing peace and security should not be a synonymous of exces-

---

<sup>8</sup> Nicolle Gnesotto was the director of the European Union Institute for Security Studies between 2002 and 2007.

sive bureaucracy (Goerens 2007). Such a scenario contributes to a regional system with inefficiency indexes still not sufficient to guarantee the continent's security through the African Union.

Said Djinnit, Algerian ambassador and politician, when he was the acting Commissioner to the Peace and Security of the Commission of the African Union (AU), stated, as his opinion, before the parliamentarians of the WEU, in a plenary session in December 2005, that "the new determination illustrated the ambitions of the continent, but also the limits of what Africa can do. In other words, alone it did not have the human resources necessary to the execution of this immense peace and security mandate", he stated, referring to the challenge of Africa conducting its own destiny (Assembly of Western European Union 2005).

It can be noted that one of the greatest issues the African continent continues to face is the attempt to consolidate peace and security. In this sense, we can affirm that African states must seek to uphold and support its actions in the recommendations and resolutions adopted on the summits of the African Union, the Executive Councils, the Specialized Committees, which, in the present case, are the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as well as the African Regional Organizations, political, economic and military (Gnesotto 2007, 17).

In spite of its weakness, the African Union fits in a context of relative stability and learning, and is still considered the main regional organization of the African continent. Despite being in a context of clearly and permanent ongoing armed conflicts, that coexist with a number of current instability situations, the security theme in the African continent is being highlighted (Gnesotto 2007, 17).

Because of this, it is observed that despite the AU's constant efforts and its specialized committees, the political-military peace and security in the continent constitute an apathetic embryonic tool, allowing to the projecting of some scenarios that facilitate the predisposition to conflict, in which the functioning of institutional schools of prevention, management and resolution of conflicts become core, aiming an approach that is at the same time preventive and simultaneously has capabilities for the management and resolution of crises (Gnesotto 2007).

However, the future of global action of African security will be based on methods of strategic revision founded on successful practices, more than in the creation of new security functions or new military capabilities that are often created to protect certain groups.

In this way, despite the fact that some of the security problems that

affect the continent do not constitute conventional and direct threats to its continental counterparts or to the international security, the internal conflicts and the reduced territorial control capabilities, on one side, and the corruption and financial fragility of the state, on the other, make it able to become a problem with potential externalization risks, and that poses a direct threat to the security of its neighbors, through the indirect promotion of people's flight to border states to conflict zones or the acceptance of the use of its territory as base for criminals or political-military groups hostile to a third party (Delgado 2016, 324).

## Final Considerations

The dialectic of the comprehension of the security vector, which we inferred in this paper, constitutes an unprecedented issue for the African continent. It puts into evidence that the efficacy of the entire African regional security system is affected by the frailty of the state and the absence of legitimacy of many rulers, with the consequent use of excessive means of social control, widespread corruption in a number of sectors of the society, lack of ability to provide basic health, education, social security and housing goods and services, stagnant economies without perspectives of evolution and creation and distribution of riches; and at times the appropriation of the public structure by ethnic, political or economic factions (Delgado 2016, 329).

However, all these aspects contribute to a regional system with efficiency indexes still too low to guarantee security in the continent. In this way, the ambitious mechanisms planned and the robustness they possess in comparison to the universal system cannot still be fully explored for a number of reasons, as stated by Delgado (2016, 331), "related to the availability of financial and logistical-military means, the hesitant support to the grandiloquent and progressive values and principles, organizational issues, lack of economic articulation, natural particular national and strategic interests, among others".

Another fundamental aspect, which is related to the surprising paradox of the security vector in Africa, resides in the fact that it is not the will of the people that creates and legitimates power; instead, it is force that creates power, legitimates it, and fabricates the will of the people (Tshiyembe 2014, 112). Thus, security is characterized as fragile, scarce, because of the failure to follow the norms created by the constitutions to an effective management.

Thus, the power obtained in this way remains a private property of its holders, is not shared, and does not contemplate a change of owner; it can be

perceived that in a certain way it is a key vector of the political violence in the continent, among other factors.

Despite this, the negative chain reaction of the phenomena in the political space led us to define the post-colonial state as an autocratic and feudal power of a monarchic tendency that, however, rules over a slave republic and whose goodbye is configured in a utopia.

In relation to the small contribution on the African Union, it is visible that its remarkable inefficiency is, ironically, criticized by the member states, sometimes with an excess of naivety. Effectively, it is curious to observe that a number of African Heads of State ignored that the AU represented an inter-governmental organization and that, in this sense, its field of action is limited by the powers that member states grant it.

However, it is the same to say that these member states still had not yet understood that they are, themselves, the agents of this paralysis, and that despite what they say or do, the failure of the AU represents their own failure. Thus, it is necessary that the continent creates a combination of the wills and actions of the individuals with the aim to pursue determined objectives or to accomplish certain ends in order to obtain the urgent change into a new paradigm. It is necessary that the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) be activated with special determination, having it been elaborated based on the structures, objectives, principles, values, decision making processes in matters of prevention, administration and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict rebuilding and development in the continent, as well as the Protocol related to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union<sup>9</sup>, which describes the many components of the APSA and its respective responsibilities to make it a more present organization in the leading of the continent.

## REFERENCES

- African Union. 2000. *“Constitutive Act of the African Union”*. Lome, Togo: African Union.
- Assembly of Western European Union. 2005. *Proceedings Vol. IV, Fifty-First Session, First Part, December 2005 – Minutes and Official Report of Debate of Seventh Sitting*.
- Balandier, Georges. 1980. *Le pouvoir sur scènes*. Paris: Ballard.
- Bernardino, Luís. 2008. *Estratégias de intervenção em África: uma década de se-*

---

<sup>9</sup> Approved in July 2002, in Durban, and came into force in 2003.

*gurança e defesa na comunidade dos países de Língua Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Editorial Prefácio.

- Cabral, Amílcar. 2008. *Documentário “África Minha”*. Apresentação de António E. Duarte da Silva. Lisboa: Cotovia.
- Chabal, Patrick, and Jean-Pascal Daloz. 1999. *Africa works: Disorder as political instrument*. London: The International African Institute.
- Cilliers, Jakkie, and Timothy Sisk. 2013. *Assessing long-term state fragility in Africa: Prospects for 26 ‘more fragile’ countries*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
- Collier, Paul. 2010. *Os milhões da pobreza: Por que motivos os países mais carenciados do mundo estão a ficar cada vez mais pobres?*. Lisboa: Casa das Letras.
- Delgado, José Pina. 2017. “Segurança em África”. In *Segurança Contemporânea*, 321-336. Lisboa: Pactor.
- Diamond, Larry. 1988. “Introduction: Roots of failure, seeds of hope”. In *Democracy in developing countries: Africa – Vol. II*. London: Adamantine Press.
- Fatton, Jr. Robert. 1990. “Liberal democracy in Africa”. *Journal Political Science Quarterly* 105 (3): 455-473.
- Faure, Yves. 1981. “Les Constitutions et l'exercice du pouvoir en Afrique noire”. *Politique Africaine* 1981 (1): 34-52.
- Ferreira, Patrícia. 2014. ““Estados Frágeis” em África: a intervenção externa nos processos de construção do Estado (Statebuilding) e da paz (Peacebuilding)”. PhD thesis, Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa.
- Gaeta, Feliz. 1994. “État-nation face au processus de transition en Afrique noire”. *Omalý Sy Anio* 1994 (31-33): 713-729.
- Gnesotto, Nicolle. 2007. “Préface”. In *Sécurité et développement de l’Afrique: une nouvelle approche pour l’EU*. Paris: Institut d’Études de Sécurité.
- Gonidec, Pierre-François. “Esquisse typologique des régimes politiques africaines”. *Pouvoirs* 1983 (25) : 63-79.
- Guillemin, J. 1979. “Coopération internationale: politique militaire de la France en Afrique noire et Madagascar”. PhD thesis, Université de Nice.
- Gumdze, Sabelo. 2011. *The peace and security council of the African Union: Its relationship with the United Nations, with the African Union and with sub-regional mechanisms*. Abo: Abo Academy University Press.
- Hugon, Philippe. 2009. *Geopolítica da África*. Rio de Janeiro: FGV de Bolso.

- Jobert, Michel. 1985. *Maghreb, à l'ombre de ses mains*. Paris: Albin Michel.
- Klingebiel, Stephan. 2007. "Peace and Security Policy of the African Union and the Regional Security Mechanisms". In *Africa and Fortress Europe*, 71-84. Alderhot: Ashgate.
- Moller, Bjorn. 2007. "The security sector: leviathan or hydra?". In *African Security Governance: Emerging Issues*, 19-36. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Murithi, Timothy. 2005. *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, Peacebuilding and Development*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Nação e Defesa. 2012. *Revista de Assuntos Políticos Económicos Científicos e Militares do Instituto da Defesa Nacional 2012 (131)*.
- Nascimento, Augusto. 1992. "Vetores políticos e operacionalização da segurança em África". *Nação e Defesa: Revista de Assuntos Políticos Económicos Científicos e Militares do Instituto de Defesa Nacional 1992 (131)*: 11-26.
- Saraiva, Luís Eduardo. 2010. *As Relações entre Angola e a Guiné-Bissau. Comunicação apresentada na Conferência sobre A Política Externa de Angola no novo contexto internacional na Universidade Lusíada de Lisboa*, em 15 de Abril de 2010. p.96.
- Saraiva, Luís Eduardo. 2014. *Segurança e desenvolvimento União Europeia-África: o caso da Guiné-Bissau*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda.
- Thaker, Pratibha. "Transafrican watch". *Aspenia* 2006 (29-30): 11-30.
- Trindade, Augusto. 2006. *Desenvolvimento económico, integração regional e ajuda externa em África*. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas.
- Tshiyembe, Mwayila. 2014. *O Estado pós-colonial: factor de insegurança em África*. Luanda: Edições Mulemba.
- Veríssimo, Gilberto. 2014. "A posição estratégica de Angola no Golfo da Guiné". PhD thesis, Universidade de Lisboa.

**ABSTRACT**

Since the early times, security has always been a permanent feature, a fundamental condition and a concern of people living in society. However, in seeking this goal, people have established alliances, agreements, partnerships and multiple forms of cooperation to solve their specific security problems, which in certain historical contexts were decisive for the course of their own history and for the survival of societies. In this context, the African continent presents itself as the cradle of mankind, where the level of insecurity qualifies as critical, which in our opinion allowed studying the vectors of these events. In turn, we try to articulate and explain in the light of African International Relations, the strategic vectors that embody a differentiated approach to security in Africa, revealing the roots of the problems that plague the continent, scrutinizing the situation, identifying the constraints and threats before bringing a set of proposals for the solution of various problems that arise on the continent.

**KEYWORDS**

Security; Foreign Policy; Cooperation, Africa and Armed Forces.

*Received on December 12, 2016.*

*Approved on June 25, 2016.*

*Translated by Salvatore Gasparini Xerri*