Ching Cheng MUN Chair Report

Committee: United Nations Security Council

Topic: Peace Consolidation in West Africa

Dais: Timmy Chang (Chair), Thomas Liu (Co-Chair)

Committee Overview - The Security Council

The Security Council is the most powerful and important body of the United Nations[1]. The purpose of this council is to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction, to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments...etc[2]. Based on these purposes, this committee has the authorization, as agreed upon all members to accept the Security Council's decision, to deploy peacekeeping (or other types) troops from its member countries, operate economic sanctions to nations, as well as mandate ceasefire during conflict.

Its main structure composes of 15 nations with 5 as its permanent members which are China, Russia, United Kingdom, United States, and France. The current 10 rotating members are Angola, Chad, Chile, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Spain, and Venezuela.[2] These members are chosen based on the the regional groupings: Western Europe & Others, Eastern Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Asia, and Africa.

During a security council conference, the 5 permanent members hold veto power [3], meaning they can vote off a resolution even if it passed with a simple majority; nations also hold unilateral decisions, which are resolutions that are brought up by a single nation and will operate without a voting procedure (unilateral resolutions though, will not be entertained during this conference).
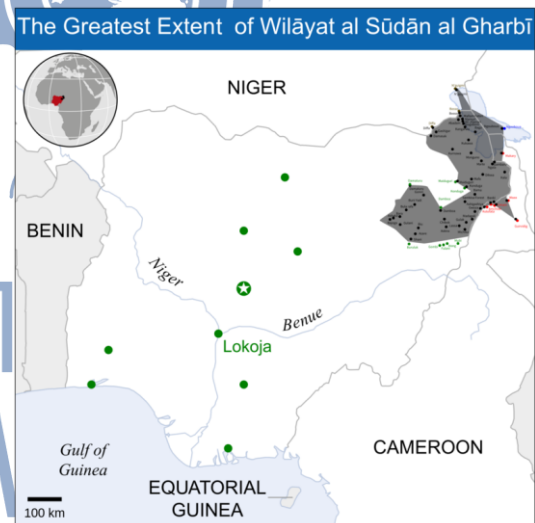
Introduction

Peace is definitely not the first word to describe the West African nations. Till today, sexual abuse, public health crisis, government tensions, terrorism, and high poverty rate have

been such a great issue and is something that the Security Council should not neglect in order to build peace coalition.

The main cause of most of the current issues stopping the maintenance of peace is the nation's' fragile political situation. Country leaders such as Blaise Compaore, the president of Burkina Faso, had refused to step down from reign[4] and continued hoping to amend the constitution for longer terms. This resulted in the starting of coups, people started protesting on streets while the government tries everything they could to stop an overthrow, which definitely in the process, had caused extreme violence.

In response to this issue, the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), African Union, and the United Nations have been trying to aid these nations and prevent violent as much as possible such as creating a more justifiable voting system and online voting [5]. So far, they had all turned their attention towards the presidential elections coming up in 2016, which includes Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo[6].

While having the government election issue in hand, terrorism has never stop haunting these nations as well. Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group, has continuously caused conflicts in Northern Nigeria and the nations bordering, which includes Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. One of the most significant events was the Baga Massacre in 2013[7], an attack in the village of Baga, Nigeria which 200 civilians were killed, hundreds wounded, and over 2,000 houses and businesses that worthed millions of Naira (its currency) were destroyed. In 2014, these terrorists kidnapped 276 girls from Chibok, Born. Although more than 50 of them soon escaped, the remainder have not been released, most of them were forced for marriage these terrorists [8]. As time went by, Boko Haram has never stop attacking as apparently complained by the Nigerians, the government wasn't efficient enough in combatting

these issues. On January 2015, another Baga Massacre took place again as well as a massive attack on Cameroon [9]. More recently, during March, the terrorist group had pledged to form alliance with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), such alliance predictably will form more massive attacks, worsen the current status. Till now, more than 300,000 Nigerians had fled to north-western Cameroon and south-western Niger.
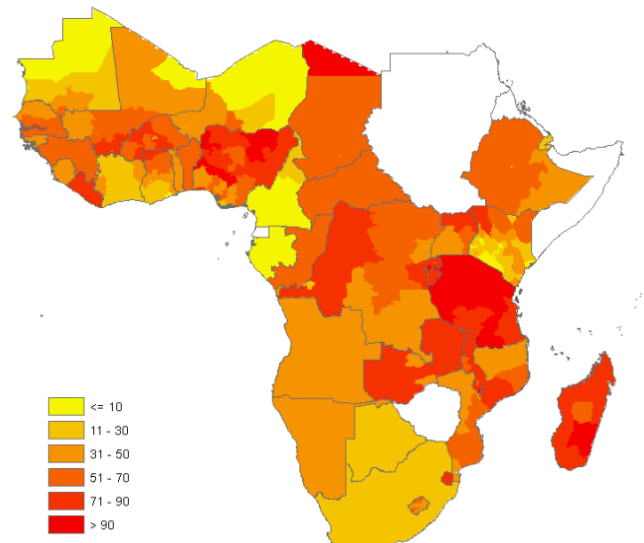
Another issue to combat in order to form peace coalition is maritime security. Violent piracy has been found in the Gulf of Guinea affecting economy and trade. Although security has been increasing [10] through time, there is still the issue of maritime border disputes.

11298 deaths, this is the approximate amount of people that had died because of the Ebola outbreak, first reported in March 2014, since then, it had caused the North and West Africa nations (Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia in particular). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) has stressed that it is a necessity that such aftermath shall not reverse the years of peacebuilding activities. As the pandemic ended in ended August 2015, its effect is still severe [11], for the Ebola outbreak has decimated families, health systems, economies, and social structures. Though the amount of deaths has dropped since then, it will be utmost important for the government to consider: how can Africa ever be prepared if such outbreak happens again and how could Africa improve its environment (both in environment and in its medical area) [12].

Terrorism, government tension, health and disease, and more, all of these are factors that form the most important issue in this region - poverty. Though economy, GDP, and markets has been improving, it is still far from other nation's status around the world. The

Poverty headcount ratio at below '05 PPP $1.25/day (percent) (2005)

Sub-national poverty headcount ratios derived from 23 nationally representative household surveys and population census information conducted in various years. Rates are for the $1.25/day (extreme poverty) expressed in 2005 international equivalent purchasing power parity (PPP) dollar

Source: Multiple national household surveys; PovcalNet; The World Bank; and Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT), 2011

▮	<= 10
▮	11 - 30
▮	31 - 50
▮	51 - 70
▮	71 - 90
▮	> 90

Note: Visit http://labs.harvestchoice.org/readme_poverty/ for additional documentation.

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poverty rate is still high [13]; and as long as any of the factors mentioned above still exists, reducing poverty will still stay as a likely impossible mission to accomplish. Yet, it will still be the Security Council's responsibility to reduce these factors as much as possible, for this is the only way, the long-run way, to reduce poverty and maintain peace in West Africa.

Key Terms

West Africa - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

- **Peace Coalition**

    The alliance of peace; to form peace among nations, governments, and political parties.

- Boko Haram

    An Islamic extremist group based in northeastern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon, responsible for most of the terrorist attacks in West Africa.

-UN Peacekeeping Forces

    Provide security and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace. UN Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles: Consent of the parties; Impartiality; Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

- Conflict Zones

Areas of that are currently plagued by civil or inter-border disputes, often affecting civilians and innocent people.

- Post-conflict Zones

Areas that have just been in conflict, and are vulnerable to further disruptions of peace.

- World Health Organization

A specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that is concerned with international public health. It played a major role in the search of cure for Ebola, health care for Ebola, and the dealing of post aftermath tarumas

- United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA)

An organization that focuses on the humanitarian problems in the West Africa region, such as maintaining peace and helping people cope after long conflicts and civil wars in the region. UNOWA also focuses on cross-border developments which they actively work with ECOWAS

- ECOWAS (Economic Community for West Africa States)

An organization for West Africa that was founded in order to achieve self-sufficiency for its member states by creating a single large trading bloc through an economic and trading union. It also serves as a peacekeeping force in the region. This organization consists of two institutions, the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development. It members consists of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo (Mauritania had withdrew in December 2000)

Current Nation's Status

-Burkina Faso

Former president Blaise Compaore, who held the office since 1987, seeking to amend the constitution in 2014 in hope for reelection. Protests were demonstrated at Ouagaduoguo, the country's capital, as well as in other cities, which included the setting of fire upon several key government buildings. Subsequently, Compaore withdrew the constitutional amendment and stepped down from his office as President of Burkina Faso. General Honore Traore assumed the office as interim head of state until the presidential election. Yet on September 17, 2015, just weeks prior to the election, the presidential guards launched a coup, and General Gilbert Diendere emerged with the unanimous support of the presidential guards as the president of the nation, and quenched the hope of a peaceful transitional process. Demonstrations against the coup was dispersed by shooting, which caused at least three deaths. This action, as well as the coup itself, is widely condemned throughout the United Nations.

-**Gambia**

On December 30, 2014, a coup attempt took place at the State House of Gambia. Lieutenant Colonel Lamin Sanneh, former commander of Gambia's presidential guard, was behind the attempt, after his removal from office. President Yahya Jammeh, who was not in the country during the event, gained power through a coup himself in 1994, had experienced several previous attempts in his two-decade long reign. The coup attempt was crushed within hours when it became evident that resistance was fiercer than anticipated. However, this coup attempt once again demonstrated the political instability in Gambia.

-**Togo**

President Faure Gnassingbe came to power in 2005 with the military's support, when his father died after 38 years of presidency. But following intense domestic and international pressure he called elections. Hundreds died challenging his victory in those polls. In 2015, he was elected the third time, but his main opposition, Jean-Pierre Fabre, declared the vote fraudulent and invalidate.

-**Benin**

A neighbor of Togo, Benin's recent history has seen no less bloodshed than its neighbor. Coups after coups in the last decades, Benin's president is basically one with most military

support. A triumvirate was formed in 1970, as an effort to prevent a civil war, only to be overthrown in 1972. However, the country does see improvement in recent years.

-**Nigeria**

Nigeria is under threat from Boko Haram since its creation, and is a major theatre of the terrorist group's operations. From January 3 to January 7, 2015, Boko Haram launched several attacks in the state of Borno, a series of events that was eventually known as the Baga Massacre. Casualties was estimated at over 2000. The country's presidential election was postponed by six weeks, because the military had advised it would be unable to provide security as its soldiers were committed to the fight against Boko Haram. United States Secretary of State John Kerry later "[warned] the Nigerian government against using 'security concerns as a pretext for impeding the democratic process." While British Foreign Secretary Phillip Hammond announced that "The security situation should not be used as a reason to deny the Nigerian people from exercising their democratic rights. It is vital that the elections are kept on track and held as soon as possible." Moreover, According to Manji Cheto, vice-president of a corporate advisory firm, President Goodluck Jonathan "by acknowledging the scale of the violence, [would be] acknowledging a certain degree of his failure as a president, so he's not going to talk about security with less than six weeks to go before the election." Goodluck Jonathan later became the first incumbent president of Nigeria to fail in reelection.

-**Gulf of Guinea**

The Gulf of Guinea's economic importance increased dramatically since the discovery of oil and other natural resources in the region. Yet without cooperation between local nations, economic crime and criminal network to spread. Moreover, the profits gained from oil export was seized by governments, private companies, and local elites, while the people remain poor. Without incomes, the people turn to crimes, most notably piracy, which continues to ravage the Gulf of Guinea with increasingly audacious and well-planned operations. Refusal of recognize the local hegemon is a contributing factor to the lack of cooperation between the local governments, and without cooperations, crimes like smuggling, illegal trade, and siphoning of crude oil will continue, and hamper regional economic development.

-Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia

Since the Ebola outbreak in 2014, the three countries suffered multiple impacts. The combined GDP lost is estimated to be at 2.2 billion USD. Even before the epidemic the three countries were among the world's poorest, only to be made worse with the plummet of price on iron ore. Job losses is also an issue, while World Food Programme is actively monitoring the food security situation across the three primary countries affected by Ebola.

-Cote d'Ivoire

After the election in 2010, when both side claimed victory to the vote, a civil war unfolded. Violence and human right violations were reported, while foreign military supports and the United Nations moved in to secure Cote d'Ivoire. During the conflict, coffee and cocoa export were restricted, as a result Cote d'Ivoire was forced to default 2.3 billion USD bond. However, according to researches conducted by the World Bank, Cote d'Ivoire has seen significant improvement since the beginning of the century, but political reconciliation is still an issue waiting to be addressed.

UNSC's Position

-China

Being so far away from West Africa, the People's Republic of China does not wish to remain actively seized upon the issue itself and believed the problems in the region all boiled down to development in the region. China believed that stability in the region will come along with region development, and advised the United Nations, particularly the ECOWAS, to do just that in a previous Security Council session.

-France

During the council session in August 2006, the representative of France believed, and pointed out, that the lack of good governance was at the root of the disturbances the region had experienced. Three years later, following the firing by Guinean government upon a peaceful demonstration, a recommendation of actions by the International Commission of Inquiry(COI) was composed, and France reportedly requested that the council take immediate action in

accordance with it. On 2010, following the announcement of a new presidential election in Guinea, France circulated to the Council members a draft presidential statement, reiterating its concern on the issue.

-Russian Federation

Itself being even more ignorant than China upon the issue, Russian Federation made relatively few statements in the past. The most significant action is the statement made by the representative of the RA during a past session, which stated that the most important means of preventing internal conflicts was strengthening the rule of law and developing democracy and good governance.

-United Kingdom

The African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme of the United Kingdom focuses primarily on education and training. The United Kingdom, together with France and the United States, announced their "P-3 Initiative" back in 1997, which sought to begin a dialogue with African countries as to how to best promote peace and security on the continent. Despite being successful upon some of its objectives, the desired and necessary partnership between Western and African countries has yet to be established. Many African states remain sceptical of Western capacity-building initiatives.

-United States

Not only did it contributed efforts in the P-3 Initiative(aforementioned above), The representative of the United States stated upon the issue that "lasting stability and development in West Africa is most likely to be achieved through the link of democracy and economic freedom. International aid, of course, is a part of the mix as is private investment." In addition to the efforts of the international community, as further incentive for good governance, President Bush proposed in 2002 the Millennium Challenge Account as a mechanism, linking development assistance to developing countries, invest wisely in the local people and to encourage economic freedom.

Past Resolutions and Actions

The Security Council's actions in the region may date as far back as 1998, when it passed Resolutions 1196 and 1197, which addressed the strengthening of arms embargoes in Africa, and the enhancement of African peacekeeping and conflict prevention capabilities respectively. Later that year Resolution 1208 and 1209 provided security to refugees and maintenance of civilian character in the refugee camps, as well as the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa. Resolution 1467(2003) further addressed the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, this time in West Africa specifically. In 2005 S/RES/1625 declared the United Nations Security Council's role in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. In addition, several other documentations composed by the United Nations was also made since 1998, including several presidential statements, reports of council missions to West Africa, and Secretary General's reports. Most important, a concept paper from Ghana was formed, which held presidency of the UNSC during August 2006, as an intention to keep the momentum on West African issues and reiterate the importance the Council attached to the consolidation of peace process which currently take place in West Africa. The concept paper is by far the latest documentation by the Security Council on the issue and is important for all nations to keep in mind when making future decisions upon solving the issue.

Questions to Discuss

- How can peace consolidation actually take place?
- Is peacekeeping force necessary to prevent terrorism attacks as well as maintaining the relationship between governments and citizens?
- Should these nation's election be interfered by other nations or the United Nations?
- How can the Security Council nations aid these nations in order to improve their economy?
- Should developed countries (such as USA, UK, France..etc) be the one providing financial or humanitarian aid?
- Is amending past resolutions on peace coalition necessary?
- Does by improving the hygienic status of nations help improve its poverty, economy, and social structure?
- Should nations or the Security Council improve border security? If yes, in what ways and methods?

- How can nations be prepared for another disease pandemic?
- How can the Security Council aid the nations when it comes to defense towards terrorist groups?
- Should the sustainable development goals be considered when drafting resolutions?

Appendix

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