



## Preventing Mass Atrocities in Sub-Saharan Africa through Strategic Engagement

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**T**HE 2010 NATIONAL Security Strategy established the principle of “responsibility to protect” (R2P) as one of the keystones of national policy. The concept of R2P is to protect populations from genocide and other atrocities, and it recognizes, first and foremost, that it is the responsibility of sovereign governments to protect the populations located within their borders. Under the principle of responsibility to protect, members of the international community should only intervene when the sovereign government in question proves unable or unwilling to protect members of a persecuted population. When either the sovereign government or the international community offers protection, prevention of atrocities is emphasized over crisis response.<sup>1</sup> NATO’s intervention in Libya was a recent example of internationally implementing a national policy involving the responsibility to protect.

The challenges of an R2P policy, as seen in Libya and the on-going debate over an intervention in Syria, are deciding in which conflict to commit the United States and in operationalizing R2P to prevent or, if necessary, respond to atrocities that occur across the globe.

We assert that prevention of atrocities is the preferred and only viable option. We must develop creative solutions to prevent atrocities. This is the only way to responsibly protect populations. We offer a cost-effective solution for a complex geographic area that can prevent mass atrocities and help lead to democratic development for long-term security. We believe the U.S. military is in a good position to overcome the challenges inherent of R2P in this effort by harnessing the skills our soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen have gained during a decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chief of Staff of the Army General Raymond Odierno has recognized the value of soldiers experienced in combat and issued guidance to harness their potential. He notes in his recent “Marching Orders” that the Army is focusing on three interconnected roles: prevention, shaping, and winning. He states that Army forces will prevent conflict by building relationships with partner nations and enhancing their capacity.<sup>2</sup> Preventing the atrocities that lead to R2P interventions requires the increased capacity and professionalism of local security forces.

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PHOTO: U.S. Army BG William Glasgow, left, greets instructors with the Tanzanian People’s Defense Force Command and Staff College in Arusha, Tanzania, 8 July 2011. (U.S. Air Force, CPT Jennifer Pearson)

Developing capacity and professionalism is a long-term process and should begin with education. This is evident in the military forces that support the African Union who are striving to handle crises across the continent and require support to further their professionalism. Developing an educational institution under the aegis of the African Union is a possible way to address this. This institution would focus on key leaders of African militaries—the mid-grade officer.

## The Case for Prevention

While the United States can respond to mass atrocities, we believe that the damage will already be done by the time U.S. forces arrive in sufficient numbers to make a difference. We base this belief on a study conducted on the conflict in Somalia and the U.S. response time. The U.S. Army planned on delivering and supplying 13,400 personnel to Somalia during Operation Restore Hope. The actual number deployed was a little over 10,000. Initial planning for the operation started in November 1992 when President George H. W. Bush directed the Secretary of State to work through the UN to stop the famine in Somalia. The execution order came on 5 December 1992. Within 30 days, 82 percent of U.S. personnel and over half of U.S. equipment had been delivered. The initial equipment goal was reached by using prepositioned stocks located in the Indian Ocean and Europe. The military did not deliver all material shipped from the United States until mid-February. The limited infrastructure in Somalia was the “bottleneck” in the operation. Only one ship could offload at the port in Mogadishu, and no ship carried a full capacity load because of the shallow draft in the port, further complicating the efforts to fully deploy the task force. Air Mobility Command did not start regular sustainment flights until 27 December 1992 (the initial “push” was mainly used for personnel), three weeks after President Bush gave the execution order.

The deployment occurred when the environment permitted it and the threat was low. Planners were given weeks of lead-time to prepare for the operation, and although it was limited, maritime access was available. Nevertheless, even with all of these favorable factors, it took almost 100 days to complete the full deployment of U.S. forces into Somalia.<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations reports that during the same length of time it took to complete the full deployment of forces into Somalia, approximately 800,000 individuals were killed in Rwanda.<sup>4</sup> While the numbers reported by the UN are sobering, other sources note that the killing was even more efficient. Hintjens states that within five weeks of the Rwandan conflict erupting, 5 to 10 percent of the national population had been eradicated.<sup>5</sup> While U.S. forces could have deployed into Rwanda in the required numbers, the amount of air support needed would have been immense. In addition, given the rushed nature of the operation, the risk to U.S. forces would have been far greater than it had been in Somalia. Vice President Gore pointed out these logistical difficulties when he spoke with then-UN Secretary General Butros Butros-Ghali.<sup>6</sup> This principle is likely to repeat itself since many of the world’s locations where atrocities are likely to occur, such as Darfur, South Sudan, and inland regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are landlocked or difficult to access.

## Building Capacity for Prevention

An educational institution for mid-grade officers, an East African Staff College (EASC), would provide a step toward a more professional, interoperable African Union (AU) through an education in basic military skills such as leadership, tactics, sustainment, and humanitarian support. As in the United States, such an institution would build personal contacts between militaries that could last for decades. Partner nations could leverage these contacts to help each other work through future conflicts.

Perhaps the best justification for an EASC is that it provides a way to help the African Standby Forces (Figure 1) achieve the goals African chiefs of defense and security envisioned while also fulfilling the security interests of the United States and allied nations. There are six scenarios that the standby brigades may face:

- AU/regional military advice to a political mission.
- AU/regional observation mission co-deployed with a UN mission.
- Stand-alone AU/regional observer mission.
- AU/regional peacekeeping force for [UN Charter] Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions.



**Figure 1**  
**Africa**

- AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping mission low-level spoilers (a feature of many current conflicts).

- AU intervention in genocide situations where the international community fails to act promptly.<sup>7</sup>

All but the last of the above scenarios converge with the U.S. desire to prevent atrocities.

Peer-to-peer military contact that occurs in an educational setting is a proven method to produce lasting results. A 2006 study conducted that examined over 165 countries from 1972 to 2000 found that security relationships such as education exchanges and a troop presence on foreign soil increased the chances that the host nation would adopt a more liberal worldview, while security cooperation activities such as military sales did not have a noticeable effect on changing political identities because those activities did not involve a significant amount of peer-to-peer interaction.<sup>8</sup>

Alternatives such as an expanded International Military Education and Training program are not desirable because they force African nations to rely upon foreign educational institutions. There is

no guarantee that we can get officers in sufficient numbers from all of the nations participating in the standby brigade program.

## Why East Africa?

President Barack Obama said that becoming “the security partner of choice” was a key goal for the United States in the security cooperation arena. He sees the United States fulfilling this role by using limited, relatively inexpensive approaches that focus on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.<sup>9</sup> We believe that establishing an educational institution on the African continent focused on developing officers to support the African Union Security Forces can achieve this goal by means of its location and its limited focus.

Ideally, the EASC would be in East Africa near the standing joint task force in Djibouti. Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), formed in 2002 to target terrorist cells in East Africa, could be augmented to initially operate the institution and provide oversight. In 2006, CJTF-HOA’s expanded mission included regional stability, capacity building,

and humanitarian missions. In 2009, CJTF-HOA added to its responsibilities by including Japanese Self-Defense Forces into its organization. The Japanese play a key role in anti-piracy efforts throughout the region.<sup>10</sup> The standing joint task force is a vibrant organization that has taken on many roles over its 10-year existence. While we must augment CJTF-HOA to manage the EASC effectively, there is no reason to believe that it could not successfully take on this role with sufficient resource allocation and planning.

As to the future, if the EASC is successful and if the African Union wishes to fully participate in the program, CJTF-HOA could expand to handle mid-grade officers from across the continent. If our foreign partners desire, this expanded institution could be built in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the political capitol of the African Union, which inaugurated a new \$200 million facility in January 2012.<sup>11</sup> In addition to its political importance, the Headquarters for the East Africa Standby Force (EASF) is located in Addis Ababa. A CJTF-HOA-sponsored program (leveraging the resources and capabilities of organizations such as the EU and NATO) to build a university for the continent's mid-grade officers would be a natural fit for a city of such high strategic value. Eventually, as the institutional capabilities of the regional militaries grow, member nations will transfer responsibility for teaching and administration in such a university to the African Union.

Another reason to use East Africa as a pilot is the fact that it is one of the most unstable regions in the world and it is possible that a mass atrocity will occur there in the near future. The Failed States Index lists all nations in or near the region as either being critical or in danger of becoming failed states. (Table 1 provides individual country rankings.)<sup>12</sup> If we can stabilize this precarious area of East Africa, we will greatly reduce the chance of a mass atrocity and provide a foundation to expand to other areas of the continent. From 1956 to 2001, this region experienced 188 military coups (108 failed while 80 were successful).<sup>13</sup> The institution we propose complements the effort to prevent mass atrocities and could help establish a secure environment that fosters the development of democracy across Sub-Saharan Africa.

As envisioned, the EASC could support requirements for the EASF across the entire East African region, but the crisis in Somalia deserves special mention. As part of a broader effort, the EASC can do much to reinvigorate regional efforts to establish stability there. While Somalia had a bumper harvest owing to heavy rainfalls that occurred in late 2011, the situation remains precarious. The United Nations estimates that tens of thousands, mostly children, died last year in the war-torn nation because of drought.

Both the Ethiopian and Kenyan armies are fighting across Somalia while African Union troops battle Al-Shabab in the outskirts of Mogadishu.<sup>14</sup> While the

<b>Nation</b>	<b>World Ranking</b>
Somalia	1
Sudan	3
Kenya	16
Burundi	17
Ethiopia	20
Eritrea	28
Uganda	21
Rwanda	34
Djibouti	60

**Table 1**  
**Instability Rankings (of 193 in UN)**

<b>Nation</b>	<b>Armed Forces Totals</b> (Active components and reserves, paramilitary forces excluded.)	<b>Major National Languages</b>
Sudan	109,300	Arabic/English
Ethiopia	138,000	Amharic
Eritrea	201,000	Semitic/Cushitic
Djibouti	10,450	French/Arabic
Somalia	N/A	Somali
Kenya	24,120	English/Swahili
Uganda	45,000	English/Swahili
Rwanda	33,000	Kinyarwanda, French,
Burundi	20,000	English
Tanzania	28,000	Kirundi/French
Comoros	N/A	Kiswahili/English
Seychelles	200	Shikomoro/Arabic/French
Madagascar	13,500	Creole/English/French
Mauritius	2,000 (paramilitary only)	Malagasy/French/English
Total	624,570	Creole/English/French
Estimated Mid-Grade Officer Population (3%)	18,737	
Estimated Mid-Grade Officers for Schools (5%)	936	

**Table 2**  
**EASF Military Populations and National Languages**

United States has been a stalwart ally of Kenya for many decades, there was an apparent lack of communication between Kenya and the United States about Kenya's invasion of Somalia. The *New York Times* reports that many U.S. Kenyan specialists were not aware of the invasion. Analysts are left wondering how Kenya can hope to succeed where other powers such as the United States, Ethiopia, the African Union, and the United Nations have failed.<sup>15</sup>

We believe that the world can avoid situations such as this in the future with enhanced situational awareness, communication, and interoperability that will come from member nations' participation in the EASC.

## Structuring the EASC

Development of a leader development institution must begin by understanding the throughput such a program would require. We can determine a total student population for the EASC by estimating the

total military strength of EASF militaries. We estimate this population by basing it on the percentage of majors in the U.S. military since these figures are easily accessible. The approximate percentage of majors in the United States military is three percent.<sup>16</sup> Finally, we reach our final tally by allocating five percent of this total for school slots.

In addition, there will be minimum standards for entrance to the academy, and we forecast that not all of the available population will meet these standards. Based on this formula, the EASC should be prepared to educate approximately 900 to 1,000 officers per year.<sup>17</sup> Table 2 also lists the official national languages, a significant factor in educating officers from different countries with different language capabilities. Based on the diversity of languages in the EASF nations, EASC should be a two-year program with one year devoted exclusively to language training. The two languages to teach are French and English because almost every nation in the region uses one

of these languages, sometimes both, as an official language. The training will provide a common basis for learning across the institution at the beginning of the second year. There are other benefits to this dual track as well. French and English are the official languages of NATO, and this will help facilitate communication between all members of the African community and many of their instructors. In addition, this structure will also increase interoperability with other African standby brigades in Western Africa where French is more common.

After the first year of language training, the focus of the EASC should be on four core areas—leadership, tactics, sustainment, and humanitarian relief. The educational blocks on leadership are the foundation for military professionalism. These courses include instruction on ethics and moral decision making, the military's place in society, tenets of leadership, and the basics of management. How to overcome cultural and linguistic differences for service in a multinational brigade will be important to graduates working on the EASF staff and in command positions.

Instructors will support leadership and management instruction blocks by training basic military tactics. This instruction will include discussions on current tactics, military history and theory, and practical application to the contemporary environment. In addition, the curriculum will feature military science and technology and the basics of planning. Instruction will create an in-depth understanding of force capabilities and how to array these in an area of operations. It will also teach basic techniques for establishing security and interacting with populations in civil conflict.

Studying sustainment will be crucial to officers who have dealt very little with logistics, maintenance, and other sustainment functions. We believe that limiting motorized transportation and concentrating on rugged transport aircraft that can operate in austere environments will harness EASF's capabilities. There are two main reasons for this.

The first reason is that the African Union has mandated that the standby forces will primarily concentrate on atrocity, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief as primary missions. To alleviate suffering, time is critical in such missions.

Therefore, the second challenge is simply "getting there." Air transport would be the best way. In

many instances, road networks are limited or non-existent, which complicates ground transport efforts. For example, there are only 31 kilometers (km) of road density per 100 square km of arable land in sub-Saharan Africa compared with 134 km of road density per 100 square km of arable land in other low-income countries.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, many nations where disasters are likely to occur are landlocked and hundreds of miles from established port facilities. This limits or even precludes the effectiveness of water transport.

Finally, the EASC should teach skills to provide humanitarian relief and maintain essential services while in the field, including basic engineer and medical training that supports disease alleviation, promotes sanitation, and helps build roads and host nation medical capabilities.

The United States and partner nations that have signed up to support the EASC will create and initially teach all of these blocks of instruction. Instructors at the EASC can be provided by modifying a recent model that was developed for our Afghan allies. As part of its efforts to bolster Afghan security forces, the Army is taking elements from multiple brigade combat teams and various other units and forming an ad hoc unit of 1,460 soldiers. This unit is comprised of senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and officers who will form 18-person teams to mentor the Afghans.

In addition to the soldiers, the unit will be augmented with 300 Department of the Army civilian workers.<sup>19</sup> We forecast that instructor demand will be only approximately 10 percent of that needed for Afghanistan. A total instructor cadre of approximately 150 individuals will provide quality instruction at the EASC. One hundred of these instructors will be officers and NCOs who will teach subjects in the second year of the course, while 50 of the instructors will concentrate on language instruction. One hundred instructors will

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provide a 1:10 teacher to student ratio for the second year. A lower student-teacher ratio is desirable in the EASC setting to overcome anticipated problems that will arise because of the diversity of the students in attendance. Another 50 NATO military personnel will be needed for security missions and 50 local contractors for support activities. We estimate an annual cost of \$240,000 for each individual (an average for NATO members and contractors).<sup>20</sup> In total, this endeavor will cost \$60,000,000 in annual operating expenses and another \$10,000,000 to house and feed the student population.

There will also be an initial cost to build the training compound in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We estimate this cost by examining the cost of the Afghan National Security University Project. The total cost of this facility was \$230 million.<sup>21</sup> However, it was much larger and was designed to accommodate seven different schools and have 6,000 students at any given time. Since we only intend to have 900 to 1,000 students on hand at any given time and will only develop one training institution, we believe that 20 percent of the National Defense University total, or \$46,000,000, is a reasonable estimate of the cost to build the institution. Therefore, first-year costs

will amount to approximately \$116,000,000 with approximately \$70,000,000 for each subsequent year. This figure will decrease sharply as we transition to our African partners. While the figures may seem high, compare them to the cost of operating a single Arleigh Burke Class destroyer off the coast of Somalia to counter the efforts of the Somali pirates. The annual operating cost of one such destroyer is \$20,000,000.<sup>22</sup> So, for the cost of keeping four destroyers on patrol off the Horn of Africa to temporarily relieve the symptoms a problem, we can build an institution that can potentially eradicate the problem itself.

This type of mission will also facilitate Army and Marine Corps training as they move toward a new force structure. As the Army and Marine Corps end strength decreases, they will retain more mid-level NCOs and officers to develop a group of experienced leaders who can rapidly expand the force if future conflicts require ground forces.<sup>23</sup> Instruction opportunities at institutions like the EASC will help build the expertise of these groups by increasing cultural knowledge and language expertise. Army forces are already conducting missions similar to this.



(U.S. Air Force. CPT Jennifer Pearson)

**A student asks a question of U.S. Army BG William Glasgow during the general's visit to the Tanzanian People's Defense Force Command and Staff College in Arusha, Tanzania, 8 July 2011.**

## A Model for Comparison

Establishing an educational institution to develop partner capacity is not a far-fetched concept. Today men and women from the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan continue to develop a robust education system, from entry to retirement, for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This institution, the Afghan National Security University (ANSU), is a contemporary example of how international forces support non-Western partners in military education. It incorporates many disparate pieces of military education, from the Afghan Sergeants Major Academy to a Command and Staff College, and from a Foreign Language Institute to the National Military Academy of Afghanistan (NMAA).

Each year NMAA graduates approximately 600 new lieutenants for the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan Air Force. Most of these new officers take positions in the field commanding troops. Each year a lottery fills ANA requirements around the country to prevent political influence on the process and enable Afghanistan's most capable young officers to fill the most needed positions.

The National Military Academy of Afghanistan is also an example of local leaders taking responsibility and control of their educational institutions. While the Afghan military leadership runs most of the ANSU (and will run future expansions), NMAA is the best example of an institution developed by Western forces and transitioned to local control. Today the Afghan Ministry of Defense and the ANA plan and execute all aspects of NMAA, and ANSU, and the NMAA commanders manage, develop, and approve the program of instruction and strategic direction. Afghan instructors are the lead for all the courses, which focus on basic education like math, science, and literacy; military leadership and character; military principles; and physical development. Like the EASC's proposed curriculum, these courses increase soldier professionalism and provide the necessary skills to lead troops. While this institution only produces about 600 Afghan officers per year, its development of a higher caliber officer corps has shown its value to the ANSF accession system.

One area of concern that must be examined is the role of coalition militaries partnering with foreign militaries. The lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan clearly show there is a danger in partnering with developing foreign militaries. The close proximity affords insurgents the opportunity to target coalition soldiers

who are training host nations soldiers to become more professional. For example, the *Long War Journal* reports that as of 29 August 2012, there have been 29 green-on-blue attacks for the year that have resulted in 45 coalition casualties. These 45 casualties account for 14 percent of total coalition casualty figures. It is difficult to ascertain the causes for these attacks, but the journal notes cultural differences played a role. It is also likely that there were mistakes made in vetting the individuals who committed the attacks. This is highly possible considering the rapid expansion of the Afghan military over the last few years.<sup>24</sup>

To help combat this disturbing trend, over 300 counterintelligence specialists have been appointed by the Afghan Army to root out potential saboteurs and assassins. The chief of the Afghan Army has also ordered that 150,000 Afghan soldiers, approximately three quarters of the army, be revetted and enrolled in a biometrics database. Hundreds of Afghan soldiers have received discharges due to this increased security posture.<sup>25</sup>

## Conclusion

Regardless of whether the United States Army is ready for R2P, it is clear our forces will be required to undertake operations in support of R2P in the future. As the 2010 National Security Strategy and CSA's "Marching Orders" state, our best option is to prevent mass atrocities that lead to R2P operations through military-military engagement. This has happened in the recent past, when the Egyptian forces refused to murder their people during the revolutions in early 2011.<sup>26</sup> Decades of developing a relationship between Egypt and the United States through peer-to-peer training and education, as well as military funding, played a role in preventing a massacre

Any efforts to support professionalization in the officer corps of African militaries, as well as their capabilities to prevent mass atrocities, will take years to pay off. An educational institution like the EASC for mid-grade officers will require significant planning and "buy-in" by the African Union, the African nations of EASF, and the nations supporting its establishment. However, years from now, as members of the EASC graduating classes assume important roles as their nations' military and civilian leaders, the effectiveness and interoperability of African militaries will lead to increased regional cooperation and a decrease in mass atrocities. **MR**

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