



## **REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA: THE CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD)**

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper examines the concept of regional integration as a process in which neighboring states enter into an agreement in order to upgrade cooperation through common institutions and rules. The paper adopts the secondary methodology for data gathering, and findings show that as a result of the integration process, states hand over part of their decision-making powers and authority to a supranational level. Regional integration also involves just eight important functions which are: the strengthening of trade integration in the region, the creation of an appropriate enabling environment for private sector development, the development of infrastructure programmes in support of economic growth and regional integration; the development of strong public sector institutions and good governance; the reduction of social exclusion and the development of an inclusive civil society; contribution to peace and security in the region; the building of environment programmes at the regional level and the strengthening of the region's interaction with other regions of the world. However, the challenges confronting the body had stymied the effectiveness to a large extent. The paper concludes that the vested interests of member countries, which override the shared interests of the region, have also contributed to the limitations on the IGAD integrative arrangement. However, in spite of the challenges, the benefits that have accrued to the region are such that, without IGAD, the region would have possibly been the perfect archetype of the Hobbesian state.*

**Keywords:** IGAD; Regional; Integration; Africa; Challenges & Achievements

### **Introduction:**

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was established on 25 May 1963, with its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as the initial significant effort at continental level integration. And the OAU had some successes and challenges, but the exigencies necessitated a shift in the paradigms undergirding the integration effort. On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2000, the African Union was adopted during the Lomé Summit of the OAU. Apart from this continental effort at integration, there are other regional bodies, that have arisen across Africa, in the bid to harness the advantages of complementarity rather than competition.

It has been argued that Africa's stunted growth has been attributed to the absence of a large economic platform, expansive market and productive base, which can support and drive economies of scale, which is a prerequisite for genuine economic development. This stems from the fact that large markets are needed to drive competitive production needed to satisfy demand and supply. However, the African continent, broken into a set of incongruent fifty four independent nations has not been able to muster the much needed critical mass of population for an effective market, and had thus lacked the sustained economic base to indispensable to the achievement of the dream of a prosperous continent. The other issues of numerous armed conflicts within and between nations have brought to fore the need for regional integration.

This is in line with the dictates of Classical Realism Theories who see the desire of man, as fundamentally to dominate his environment and community. The human nature extrapolates to nation state behaviour, wherein states enter into regional integration for the purpose of extending their own particular interests and also to have a functional platform to dominate other states. The anarchical nature of international relationships thus sets the stage for conflicts and unbridled search for self-expression, at the expense of other states. "no permanent friends but permanent interests" then become the reigning maxim, in this state of "winner takes it all". However, in order to achieve a mutual benefit of maximizing self-interests, nations go into regional cooperation.

### **Results and Discussion:**

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was founded in 1996 in the Eastern part of Africa. The organization's main strategic objectives are geared towards alleviating the recurrent problems of drought and development, resolving conflicts and maintaining peace within the region. The issues of natural disasters are quite germane to the Region. Though the African Continent has always witnessed severe natural disasters, mostly floods and famine, the eastern IGAD region seems to be the highest hit by these phenomena. And while the international community has often assisted significantly, the problems confronting the region supersede the resources, leading to suffering and deprivation for the great majority of the people (sheriff, 2013).

Before IGAD was established, there was an initial body in the region in 1984, which was the IGADD (Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development). The IGADD was initiated due to the consistent and severe droughts. Thus the main objectives of IGADD were to tackle and provide solutions to the problems of famine, which follows the many droughts. However, the regional body - IGADD was inevitably seeing an expansion of its initial objectives to take on other issues, such as peace keeping, security and conflict resolution, therefore the need to form another body, with a broader scope than IGADD and thus, IGAD was formed.

### **The Member States of IGAD:**

Membership of IGAD cuts across the horns of Africa states, such as Djibouti (founding member, 1986), Ethiopia (founding member, 1986), Somalia (founding member, 1986) criteria (admitted in 1993). Other members include the Nile valley states which are: Sudan (a founding member, 1986) and South Sudan (which was admitted in 2011). The African Great Lake states as members of IGAD are: Kenya (a founding member, 1986) and Uganda (a founding member, 1986) respectively (sheriff, 2013).

### **Mission and Vision of IGAD:**

The mission of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development was to help with supplying food, protecting the environment, and to maintain peace and security. According to Wikipedia IGAD works to develop and institute effective policies in social, technological, and scientific fields. The group forms policies for trade, transport, along with many other projects and programs. They work toward forming free trade and free movement of people throughout the region. IGAD also starts up and promotes programs for food security and environmental protection to work against drought. Together with the six countries that make up this organization, IGAD as a regional body endeavours to create harmonious living environments, which also affect all fields of business and everyday life. They encourage and enable foreign trade, which is essential to African survival (sheriff, 2013).

Their goal is to ensure that people who are experiencing problems due to floods, or other turbulent times have economic security and safety. While food is important as

well, they focus on all areas. During disastrous times, crime is ramped and the environment can often become a battlefield for both young and old. The entire focus of the group is to supply the needs of the people, thus eliminating the need for such violence and assist in cleanup efforts.

**Strategic approach of IGAD:**

The strategy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development is to set up a structure to help achieve peace, prosperity, and regional integration. It uses experiences from the past, the current structure of development cooperation, along with challenges and issues that come up that the region faces (sheriff, 2013).

**Operational Structure of Intergovernmental Authority on Development:** According to IGAD (2001), The IGAD is made up of four policy parts:

- i. **The Assembly of Heads of State and Government:**This group makes the policies that are to be followed.
- ii. **The Council of Ministers:**This group helps to come up with policies, approves work programs, and the annual budget.
- iii. **The Committee of Ambassadors:**This group comes together when needed to advise the Executive Secretary.
- iv. **The Secretariat:**This group helps brainstorm to come up with and implement projects and programs that have been approved.

**Vision, Mission, Principles, and Major Activities of IGAD:**

As enunciated by the IGAD Secretariat (2001) **the vision of IGAD** is of “becoming the premier regional organization for achieving peace, prosperity, and regional integration in the Horn of Africa.” **The mission of IGAD** is to assist and complement the efforts of the member states to achieve, through increased cooperation: (a) food security and environmental protection (b) promotion and maintenance of peace and security (c) economic cooperation and integration. **The principles and values of IGAD** include: (a) promotion of good governance and protection of human rights through institutionalization of democracy and transparency (b) promotion of a sense of community that aspires to maintaining peace in the region and the peaceful resolution of disputes between and within member states (IGAD 2003). **The core activities of IGAD**, according to the IGAD Strategy include: (a) promoting compatible policies in the IGAD priority areas (b) developing strategies and concepts of regional relevance (c) capacity building. IGAD’s approach is to be proactive towards the relevant emerging issues both regional and international in nature

**Major Achievements of IGAD:**

IGAD has achieved some significant results in its history. These revolve around leading the process of peace making in Sudan, Somalia and also of driving towards economic development and alleviating poverty within the member states. These results have not been unqualified successes, but it could be argued that without the interventions of IGAD, the bad situations would have been much worse. With its limited resources, and challenges within its member States, the following results can be attributed to the efforts of IGAD.

**The Sudan Peace Process:**

- i. IGAD initiated a peace initiative to resolve conflict in Southern Sudan in the mid 1990s. A committee of the member states which have common borders with Sudan - Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda - was set up and a unit to serve the Peace Initiative established in Nairobi. IGAD’s initiative was the only one during the last twenty years of civil war, but has become the sole meaningful one in the last few years.

- ii. The intensive IGAD-led talks during 2002 and 2003 led to the following signed agreements between the Governments of Sudan (GOS) and the SPLA/SPLM:
- iii. Machakos Protocol (20 July 2002), which spelled out a basic formula for a future Sudan, where there would be a federal government and a separate government entity in Southern Sudan, and a system of shari'a governance in the rest of the country, for an interim transitional period of six years, after which there would be an opportunity for the South to vote on self-determination.
- iv. Memorandum of Understanding on Cessation of Hostilities (15 October 2002), which provided for a cease-fire in all arenas, and refraining from attacks on civilians, plus the addendum to it of 4 February 2003, in which both Parties gave commitments to notify troop movements and locations, and allowed a Verification and Monitoring Team to investigate alleged attacks.
- v. Agreed Aspects of Power and Wealth Sharing (6 February 2003)- these outlined a possible basis but the two dimensions have still to be translated into concrete agreements.
- vi. Agreement on Security Arrangements during the Interim (25 September 2003)- these crucial provisions represent the one area of substantive final agreement so far achieved.

#### **Somalia Peace Process:**

Somalia is the only country in the world without a functioning government controlling the entirety of its territory for nearly two decades. Since 1991, while Somaliland and Puntland have enjoyed relative stability, the southern part has been raked by violence as various clans, warlords and Islamist groups have repeatedly competed for power and resources. Somalia's ongoing conflict in one of the most unstable regions of Africa has been a source of concern for regional States as well as regional and International Organisations. Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as a regional organization, has been consistently engaged in trying to resolve the prolonged conflict of Somalia. IGAD member states have committed their resources, time and energy in dealing with this conflict, essentially neglected by the international community. The major obstacles to various peace initiatives, however, are within Somalia. The conflict has complicated the issue of power sharing, resource allocation, land and properties. It has also deepened the existing clan division which was always manipulated by political elites in order to achieve their narrow interests at the expense of the national agenda (Mulugeta, 2009).

In order to achieve peace in Somalia, the IGAD mediators had to accept a greater inclusivity of relevant stakeholders, These interested parties included (1) internal political groupings, warlords, traditional leaders, religious leaders and civil society, including the business community (2) External stakeholders included the frontline states: Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen. They also included Egypt, Italy with its historical links and the United States with its strategic security interests (Mulugeta, 2009). An agreement was reached and signed on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 at Eldoret, Kenya. The agreement had seven main principles, which include: Decentralized Governance, Decentralization, Cessation of Hostilities, Enhanced safe access for aid, Combating Terrorism and Monitoring of the declaration (Mulugeta, 2009).

Achievements since Eldoret Agreement included (1) the sustainability of the process itself, that the facilitators remained engaged and financial support from the international community gave hope for the future conclusion of peace; (2) signing of the Cessation of Hostilities by 24 signatories. IGAD was now trying to upgrade this

agreement to a ceasefire. (3) Six commissions worked on different issues for Somalia , five of which had been adopted by the plenary (Mulugeta, 2009).

According to Mulugeta (2009), motivations for the Somalia conflict had been blurred over time. IGAD was not dealing with political grievances in Somalia so much as with the consequences of a failed state thus the approach agreed upon was one of rebuilding state structures. The next challenge was to achieve peace building among communities and regions with indigenous conflict resolution methods. Restitution for victims of the conflict would then be required. A process of trauma counselling and healing was envisaged as a long-term process to achieve sustainable peace.

There was an agreement in Eldoret that Somalia would be a federal state, but it remained a major issue in the ongoing discussions. The Charter was in its 7th draft, but power-sharing was the underlying issue still to be resolved. The Charter provided for the Parliament, once it is constituted , to amend the Charter, therefore the parties could amend it later on. IGAD had the support of the donor community and thus was the “peace process of choice” for Somalia and the international community expected IGAD to alleviate the responsibility for peacekeeping on organizations external to the region. Provision of a just and fair environment for the negotiations was the most critical role for IGAD to play (Mulugeta, 2009).

IGAD had limited resources to establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance of signatories to the Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities, thus AU announced the launching of an AU Observer Mission to Somalia during the Summit in Maputo . However, due to security considerations in Somalia as well as the difficulties experienced by the political process at Mbagathi, the deployment of the AU monitors was yet to materialize. Obviously, any serious discussion about monitors and/or a peacekeeping force would have to await the realization of a meaningful political agreement. The UNSC continued to support IGAD, as an observer to the process, and would avoid giving the opportunity to parties to the conflict to engage in “forum shopping” (Mulugeta, 2009).

#### **Challenges Facing IGAD's Development Initiatives:**

According to DPMF/EIIPD Capacity Building Sensitization Workshop Report (sheriff, 2013), the Challenges confronting the efforts of IGAD at developing the socio-economic basics of the member states can be grouped as follows:

##### **i) Socio-Political Factors**

- a) Continuing proliferation of small arms and light weapons resulting to heightened insecurity in both rural areas and urban centers of the sub-region
- b) Intra-communal conflicts (i.e. cattle-rustling, natural resource-based conflict over water, pasture and land)
- c) Inter-state violent crises and tensions that characterize relationships between member states (Ethiopia-Eritrea, Uganda-Sudan)
- d) Failed or collapsed states/governance crisis (i.e. Somalia)

##### **ii) Economic**

- a) Poor economies that are redundant or shrinking
- b) Effects of globalisation (poor economic returns and terms of trade due to continued reliance on raw commodities and declining foreign investments)
- c) Rising poverty levels (some of IGAD members are in "the most poor nations in the world" category)

##### **iii) Environmental**

- a) Environmental degradation and change, natural resource stress and scarcity
- b) Recurrent droughts and famines

- c) Food insecurity due to crop failure and livestock epidemics which occasion cross-border refugee flows

**iv) Poor infrastructure development and telecommunications among member countries**

- a) Has greatly impeded sharing of resources, intra-regional trade and effective exploitation of human and material resources endowed in the IGAD region.

**The Challenges of IGAD in Peace Making and Lessons to be Learned:**

IGAD has been active in peace keeping operations, especially in the case of Somalia and Sudan. Of particular interest is Somalia, which is the only case of state failure in modern times. The total disintegration of the state made the issue of representation, power and resource sharing and reconciliation a difficult task. It is of note also that sustainable peace requires committed internal actors and in this regard, IGAD lacks partners within the region who are committed to the peace process. Again in Somalia, the collapse of the central state, with one of the biggest armies in Africa resulted in a flood of arms and ammunition overrunning the Somalian space (Mulugeta, 2009).

According to Mulugeta (2009) and Medhane(2003, 101–102), the effectiveness of IGAD in preventing and minimizing the impact of armed conflict is stymied by the following factors:

- i. **Rivalry amongst member states:** important as mutual respect and collaboration is to effective partnership within regional member states, the case of IGAD had always been of rivalry and mutual suspicion among its members. The rivalry amongst member states had led to a situation of difficulty in framing and achieving common positions on Somalia and Sudan. For instance, Ethiopia and Eritrea had extended their own wars to Somalia by supporting and arming different Somalia factions, thereby aggravating and extending the conflict, since 1998.
- ii. **Regional Instability:** the IGAD is inundated with significant regional issues. Member states are confronted by many intra and inter state conflicts. Sudan had gone from crisis to crisis; Ethiopia had fought long, bitter wars and is still battling internal insurrections; Kenya remains a fragile state whilst the duo of Uganda and Eritrea are faced with internal issues of armed rebellion and political challenges. The regional states have a long history of intervening in each others internal affairs and supporting rebel groups for mutual destabilization. Generally, the regional governments are characterized by “bad governance, poor human rights records and weak democratic institutions and culture”. (Mulugeta 2009) Apart from the intra and inter state conflicts the roles of the Arab States in undermining the effectiveness of IGAD is significant. Egypt has repeatedly been accused of undermining the peace initiatives in Somalia, while Qatar and Saudi Arabia have been accused of funding arms support to Al-Shabbab.
- iii. **Lack of a regional power:** the fact that the region lacks a regional power has meant that no country has the capacity to assume an unchallenged regional leadership, close to Nigeria’s leadership of ECOWAS and South Africa’s leadership of SADC. Ethiopia has the military and population required but lacks a strong economic base whilst Kenya does not have the military power to assume regional leadership. Sudan has oil wealth, but is weakened by internal conflicts whilst South Sudan is engaged in multiple ethnic armed conflicts
- iv. **Lack of Sufficient Political Will:** In terms of peace and security, the role of the IGAD Secretariat is marginalized. The Secretariat does not influence

decisions. It just implements decisions taken by the Council of Ministers and the Assembly. In the whole Somali peace process— both before and during Eldoret—one barely saw the role of the Secretariat and the Executive Secretary of IGAD. The front line states were in charge of the management of the peace processes. Some observers argue that member states do not want to see IGAD as a strong regional organization. They all want to use the organization as a forefront to promote their agenda.

- v. **The Limited Capacity of the Secretariat of IGAD:** Despite its broad mandate, the revitalized IGAD was not provided with sufficient capacity, resources, and political commitment (Healy 2009). The IGAD Secretariat is weak with only few professional and administrative staff
- vi. **Financial Constraints:** IGAD lacks the necessary institutional capacity to play a significant role in Somalia's peace processes. IGAD has been dependent on donors, mainly the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), comprising donor states and organizations, to execute its projects. The operational cost of IGAD, however, has been covered by member states' contribution. Except for Ethiopia the other IGAD member states do not pay a substantial amount of their contributions. As a result, IGAD faces serious financial constraints
- vii. **IGAD's Enforcement Capacity:** IGAD has not been able to successfully implement its decisions. IGAD usually issues communiqués. Nonetheless, it is not often taken seriously even by the members themselves. And even when they do, they have financial and other constraints. There is a tendency of enforcement on issues that are less sensitive and political, such as environment and health issues
- viii. **Lack of Regional Policy on Peace and Security:** The Somali peace processes exposed IGAD's lack of a comprehensive regional peace and security policy to address the fundamental causes of regional crises. IGAD does not yet have a common policy and objective on regional security issues, although a draft strategy has been debated for some time now (Interview with IGAD official two). The attempts within IGAD to forge a common approach to conflict resolution have focused more on revitalization of the organization than on common security policy and strategy. Priority is given to short-term political gains. The absence of political values such as democracy, respect for human rights, tolerance for diversity as well as weak economic bondage are the factors that hamper the development of common policy (Medhane 2003, 101–102)

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations:**

If sustainable and effective milestones were to be reached in achieving its set goals and objectives over the long run, the following must be taken into cognizance: IGAD must remain mindful of its own limitations and avoid stretching itself too thin in venturing deeper into areas beyond its resources and capabilities. As the organization is constrained by limited resources and capacity, with limited effective practice in maintenance of post-conflict peace, member states must be encouraged to contribute from their own experiences, and strategic knowledge. Attempts to bypass the member states or upstage them will continue to limit the effectiveness of IGAD. This is particularly relevant in the ongoing efforts of maintaining peace in Sudan and Somali. IGAD must continually seek to cultivate the support and goodwill of the international community in accessing the much needed political and financial support for its efforts in respect of building regional security. The international community has much to offer and contribute to IGAD in the process of regional engagements towards development, economic empowerment, issues of environment and peace building activities.

IGAD must consolidate its prime position as the mechanism for conflict resolution; preservation and enhancement of its reputation as a neutral facilitator and mediator. In this vein IGAD must give attention to the set-up of sustainable and integrated security architecture for the region including provision for the eventual conclusion of a mutual non-aggression treaty/arrangement among its member states that would compel countries to actively disavow support to groupings engaged in armed subversion into neighboring states.

There is a significant gap in the IGAD architecture, that is evidenced by the fact that there is no defined working relationship between the peace secretariats serving the peace negotiations in Nairobi and the IGAD secretariat. IGAD should ensure that the peace secretariats are situated directly under the supervision of the Executive Secretary of IGAD. This coordination should be encouraged by the member states, thus the IGAD Secretariat in Djibouti and the peace Secretariats in Nairobi, which oversees the peace making processes in Sudan and Somalia.

Commitments of the member states must be obtained for the following: fully engaging in IGAD's regional mediation; supporting facilitation efforts; desist from promoting other forums for regional conflict resolution; commit to conflict resolution through IGAD, the AU and UN Systems. African and Arab States, and other international actors should be encouraged to recognize and support IGAD as the principal forum for negotiations concerning peace and security of IGAD states.

IGAD should encourage the adoption of a general principle of inclusivity of parties when dealing with conflicts that have a regional dimension, the encouragement of democracy within its member states, a respect for human rights, good governance and the establishment of and adherence to the rule of law. Appropriate national mechanisms and constitutions such as independent electoral commissions, anti-corruption bodies etc, may be established within its constituent member states.

Member states accept that the prevention of conflict should be the priority. In achieving this objective the expansion of the present role of the Conflict Early Warning and Response Network (CEWARN) is recognized. The Network is presently confined to one type of conflict only, that of cross-border violence involving pastoralists, and to two geographical clusters. The future expansion of CEWARN or additional mechanisms of this type in areas such as along the borders of Ethiopia and Eritrea could be priorities in this regard.

The proliferation of and illegal trade in arms is a major source of conflict and instability in the IGAD region. Thus IGAD should expand its engagement in issues of arms management and control in which it has collaborated with countries in the Great Lakes areas and East Africa.

International terrorism threatens IGAD and its relationships with other countries. The IGAD secretariat should accelerate the implementation of the decisions taken in terms of the Implementation Plan to Counter Terrorism in the IGAD Region as approved by the 10th IGAD Summit meeting held in Kampala on 24th October 2003, including the development of a research and analysis capacity that would serve to build regional knowledge and confidence in this matter.

Ongoing border disputes and cross-border interventions present IGAD member states with a major source of instability. IGAD should engage itself in a process to promote mechanisms that would handle such border issues and tensions at a technical level between countries to prevent escalation. Many options present themselves in this field, including joint bilateral ministerial committees or commissions, regular



meetings between countries at technical levels. Peace councils or committees of chiefs or civil society representatives have also mediated conflicts between localities across borders and may include traditional authorities.

The IGAD secretariat should play a leading role in fundraising for peace processes such as those for Sudan and Somalia through the office of the Executive Secretary who should be the authorizing agent who deals with the IPF to avoid duplication and enhance coordination. The IGAD secretariat should seek a mandate from the IGAD Council of Ministers to draw up terms of reference to regulate the specific duties and responsibilities of peace secretariats. These should be presented to the IGAD Council of Ministers for endorsement.

IGAD and its member states should constantly bear in mind that peace processes do not come to an end with the signing of a peace agreement, however comprehensive. The appropriate role for IGAD is to ensure that the subsequent phases of peace building, reconciliation and reconstruction are conducted within a regional framework where necessary, appropriate and practical.

Two tasks deserve priority to tackle some of the contextual and underlying factors that will affect the prospects of peace building and promoting its sustainability, namely: xiv.1 to widen the provisions of any agreements coming out of the IGAD Peace Process, which may essentially be between two parties only, so as to obtain the greatest inclusivity such as involvement of civil society groups. The aim must be to achieve comprehensive peace settlements - not only desirable in itself but essential for the future security of the IGAD region. xiv. To ease the cross-border and inter-state conflicts and tensions affecting relationships amongst IGAD member states. This is a task which is central to IGAD's concerns and mechanisms for such initiatives must be contemplated by the Secretariat.

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