

AFRREV IJAH

An International Journal of Arts and Humanities

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

Vol. 1 (4), November, 2012:291-306

ISSN: 2225-8590 (Print)

ISSN 2227-5452 (Online)

**Supra-National Organisations and Conflict Resolution
during the Nigeria Civil War: A Historical Review**

Akinbi, Joseph Olukayode, Ph.D.

Department of History,
Adeyemi College of Education,
P.M.B. 520,
Ondo, Nigeria.

E-mail: akinbikayode@yahoo.com

Cell Phone No: +2347035221595

Abstract

Supra-national Organisations like the United Nations Organisation, Organisation of African Unity now called African Union (AU) and Commonwealth of Nations are inter-state governmental organisations or part of the non-state actors that impinge on the international environment. More importantly, due to the various crises that plagued the world ranging from civil wars to border clashes etc., the importance or roles of Supra-national organisations in conflict resolution through mediatory diplomacy or otherwise cannot be over-emphasised. This is especially geared towards making the World a Haven of Peace where nations and people could dwell together and interact meaningfully among themselves. It is against the above

background, that a historical analysis will be made on the roles of these organisations in conflict resolution during the Nigerian Civil War. Frantic efforts were made by these bodies especially the O.A.U. and Commonwealth of Nations towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict. But unfortunately, all these efforts ended up in failure. A lot of factors could be adduced for this development. The most important of which was the internal contradiction or incapacitation entrenched in the provision of their charter as regards the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member States. This made it difficult for such organisations to deal realistically with crisis situation such as the Nigerian civil war apart from resorting to the diplomacy of persuasion. Finally, some recommendations are proffered on how Supra-national organisations can make more meaningful impact on conflict resolution and reconciliation in the international environment.

Key Words: Supra-national Organisations, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Civil War.

Introduction

Supra-national organization otherwise called international organization is a phenomenon of the multi-state system. According to Claude (1956), there are four pre-requisites for the development of international organization. The first two relate to the existence of object facts or conditions: The World must be divided into a number of states which function as independent political unit and a substantial measure of contact must exist between these subdivisions. The other requirements according to him are subjective in nature: the states must develop an awareness of the problems which arise out of their existence and on this basis come to recognize the need for creation of institutional devices and systematic methods for regulating their relations with each other. It needs be emphasized that parts of the problems which arise out of the existence of such states include the menace of civil wars.

Thus it can be succinctly said that the various supra-national organisations in the world today, such as the United Nations Organisation (U.N.O), the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U) now known as African Union (AU) and the Commonwealth of Nations had emerged out of the four pre-requisites stated above. Also, although the central focus of international relations (politics) has been (and still is) on relations between and among sovereign states, there are many non-state actors that fall within its scope. Thus Supra-national organisations such as the defunct O.A.U., although composed of

sovereign states, have come to play a role partly separate from their constituents.

Miall et al (2001:21) has also indicated that by conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer; while the structure of the conflict has been changed. Mitchel and Banks (2004:94) use conflict resolution to refer to:

- i. an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between the parties that were previously hostile adversaries;
- ii. any process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved.

Putting these ideas together, it can be said that in principle, conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense.

The Nigerian Civil War lasted for three agonizing years (1967-1970). Countless number of lives perished in it, while there were also mass starvation and other forms of civilian suffering.

While it may be said that the Nigerian civil war had purely internal origins (Akinbi, 1991), the desire of both the Biafran Regime and the Federal Military Government of Nigeria to secure diplomatic support as well as military assistance from the outside world could not be lead to the internationalisation of the conflict, which also had contributed to the prolongation of the war (Akinbi, 1999).

However, emphasis in this paper shall be given to Supra-national Organisations during the Nigerian Civil War, while the work shall be rounded off with recommendations and the conclusion.

Supra-national Organisation and the Nigerian War

Three supra-national organisations became prominent as possible mediators when the Nigerian Civil War broke out in July, 1967. They were the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations Organization and the Commonwealth of Nations.

The Organization of African Unity

The policy of support for the Federal Government of Nigeria by most African States was staunchly backed by the O.A.U., which frowned at secession in Africa (Agbi, 1986). This stand-point could be better understood against the background of the argument that the break-up of Nigeria would spell the break-up of every other African state, since the boundaries of these states are all artificial and as they contain different tribal groups that have often been in conflict in the past. Thus, it was argued that the secession of one tribal group in Nigeria would encourage the Somalis in Ethiopia and Kenya, the Ashanti in Ghana, the Baluba in Congo, the Ewes in Dahomey, Togo and Ghana and so on to make similar attempts (Cervenka, 1975). In Africa, there are strong feelings about secession. For loosely United States, some still economically and politically unstable, to admit the validity of Biafra's cause would have given rise to trouble and re-opened the disputes on the definition of boundaries and the re-grouping of ethnic and tribal groups. This eventually would have multiplied the difficulties of the continent and jeopardise its economic development (Cervenka, 1975). No wonder then that the O.A.U. could not afford to sit on the fence in the Nigerian crisis; while it made some frantic efforts at settling the Nigerian crisis. For instance, it set up a consultative mission to this effect during the O.A.U. Summit meeting in Kinshasha in September, 1967. There were also peace negotiations at Niamey (July, 1968), Addis Ababa (August-September, 1968), Algiers (September, 1968) and some others (Cervenka, 1975:152-171, Agbi, 1986:59-71).

However, all these efforts turned out to be exercises in sheer futility, as the O.A.U. could not take any concrete action apart from resorting to the diplomacy of persuasion (which failed), and thereby indirectly ensuring that the war dragged on longer than necessary.

The O.A.U.'s incapacity to deal realistically with the threats to peace posed by the Nigerian war stemmed from obvious reasons. Most importantly, the O.A.U. floundered in the webs of its own internal contradictions. Firstly, this could be seen in the O.A.U.'s declaration of secession as a matter within a member's domestic jurisdiction which precludes external interference and in the passing of resolutions that condemned secession (Brownlie, 1971:354). Obviously, this is contradictory because in effect, the O.A.U. is disregarding its own principles by condemning the action supposedly an internal matter of

a member state. The fact that such resolutions are in favour of the recognized government does not nullify them as interference.

Despite the existence of the O.A.U.'s Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, the non-interference provision of its character has been seen as preventing any active meditative role for the organisation in internal conflicts (Kamanu, 1974:364). But according to Kamanu (1974:364), strictly construed, there is nothing in this document that prohibits such role. Under article 3, 'the member states... solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of states'. It appears that while this imposes an obligation on member states, it does not apply to the organization itself, or to agencies acting on its behalf. He made an analogy with the United Nations that makes a distinction between obligations imposed on member states and those on the organization itself. This distinction was also reflected in the O.A.U. charter (Kamanu, 1974:371). Though all this might appear trite or unduly legalistic, the fact should not be ignored that International organizations like the U.N. have sometimes found it necessary to use legalisms to maneuver around otherwise burdensome legal obstacles when the political will to act is present. "In this particular case, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the O.A.U. lacking the will to act, has chosen to interpret Article 3, restrictively to favour inaction" (Kamanu, 1974:364).

Therefore with the non-interference provision of its charter completely construed to prevent any active mediatory role in internal conflict, the O.A.U. found itself in a quandary in resolving the Nigerian crisis. In contrast, the charter of the U.N. prescribing non-interference in matters of essentially domestic jurisdiction is not operative in cases that constitute a "threat to the peace" or 'breach of the peace' (Kamanu, 1974:364). No wonder therefore that the U.N. has been able to deal with the Cyprus and Congo crises (Lowe, 1997:168-173), as well as some other situations which ordinarily could be classified under the domestic sphere of member states.

The O.A.U. cannot hope to contain and resolve conflicts within its region, if it regards as internal affairs of its member states, conflicts that pose a danger of external intervention, or in which non-African powers are already directly or indirectly involved. The Congo crisis was not seen as a purely domestic conflict because of the fact that the crisis was being fuelled with arms and financial resources supplied to at least one of the factions by outside powers. While the Nigerian-Biafran war had purely internal origins; it ceased to be an

exclusively internal affair when Britain, the Soviet Union, and France became involved in fuelling the conflict. A civil war ceases to be an internal affair, when third parties intervene to such an extent as to upset the balance between the protagonists and determine the outcome. By following a policy of non-interference in such cases, the O.A.U. was in effect allowing the outcome of the Nigerian conflict to be determined by the actions and preferences of non African powers (Kamanu, 1974:364).

The O.A.U.'s hands in dealing realistically with the Nigerian conflict were further tied by Article 2 of the charter that imposes an obligation that goes beyond that embodied in similar provision of the U.N. charter. For instance, while Article 2 of the U.N. Charter merely calls upon members to refrain from threatening or violating the political independence and the territorial integrity of any state, that of the O.A.U. (Article 2) commits it to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its member states (an active obligation). Technically, the O.A.U. at the orders of the affected member states has an obligation to intervene to contain an internal secessionist problem.

The obligation to 'defend' the territorial status quo theoretically precludes the participation of the O.A.U. in any settlement of an internal conflict whose terms might favour the break-up of a member state. This creates a dilemma for the O.A.U. which was made startlingly and embarrassingly apparent by the Nigerian-Biafran war. According to Kamanu (1974:365), while one of the costliest wars in African history was raging out of control and hundreds of African lives were being lost, all the O.A.U. Assembly of Heads of State could do was to reiterate its "condemnation of secession in any member state" and to "send a consultative mission of six Heads of State... to the Head of the Federal Government of Nigeria to assure him of the Assembly's desire for the territorial integrity, unity and peace of Nigeria". No wonder then that the mediative role of this consultative mission was compromised and doomed to failure as it did not even bother to consult with Ojukwu (Akinbi 1991:30).

Kamanu (1974:344) has also opined that the O.A.U. must be able to mediate in major internal conflicts, particularly those that potentially threaten the peace of the continent. This might require the establishment of an adhoc Board of internal mediation, with members drawn from a standing list of distinguished personalities, like the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and placed at the disposal of the contestants. A body of this sort might have been invaluable early in the Nigerian crisis, between November 1966 and March

1967 when both parties were apparently groping for a way out of their impasse, but could not agree on the advisability of mediation by outside states. The establishment of such a body is not a novelty as the O.A.U. Council in September, 1964 recommended the creation of an adhoc committee, under the chairmanship of Kenya's Premier, Jomo Kenyatta, to assist Congolese leaders in achieving national reconciliation. Although this committee never did intercede among the contestants because of objections from the Congolese Premier, Moise Tshombe, its creation set an important precedent, which regrettably the O.A.U. failed to follow during the Nigerian conflict. Thus, a good opportunity that might have averted the Nigerian crisis was lost by the O.A.U.

Another commentator, Cynthia Khan has also accused the O.A.U. of impotence in its handling of the Nigerian conflict which according to her was due to the provision of the charter and the lack of independent thinking among African leaders (cited in *Africa Today*, 1968:1-2).

Though the O.A.U. made some frantic efforts to preserve the unity of Nigeria, all such endeavours foundered. It is not difficult indeed to conclude as Kamanu did that the O.A.U. found it convenient to hide under the non-interference provision of its charter in order to avoid facing up to the difficult issues raised by secessionist conflicts within member states. However, it is germane to point out that the O.A.U.'s situation was compounded by the irreconcilable position of Nigeria and Biafra during the war, while the recognition of Biafra by four African States – Tanzania, Gabon, Ivory Coast and Zambia, basically did not help the situation either (Akinbi, 1991:32).

Be that as it may, the O.A.U. gave Nigeria full political support and diplomatic cover in the civil war. All members of the O.A.U., except the four that recognized Biafra, gave Nigeria moral and diplomatic support and O.A.U.'s solidarity helped Nigeria to score diplomatic points. Nigeria utilised the O.A.U. support to win British support, while both the Eastern and Western Blocs also gave diplomatic support to Nigeria (Nwolise, 1989:206).

The United Nations Organization

However, the U.N. was not actively involved in the efforts geared towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Some reasons have been advanced for this passivity. Firstly, the U.N. had traditionally found it difficult to deal with domestic crises because of the provisions of the charter (Article 2.7) which prevented interference in matters that falls under the domestic

jurisdiction of member states. This provision was one reason why the 'Biafra' crisis was not discussed at all in the U.N. (Luard, 1979:5).

Besides that traditional problem, it has been indicated that the United Nations Secretary General – U. Thant – was for much of 1967, pre-occupied with the aftermath of the six days war between Israel and some Arab countries, and by 1969, the Vietnam war which has been regarded as 'the world's most important trouble – spot for nearly ten years was approaching the climax (Luard, 1979:5).

However, the U.N. has a way of going round the clause of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states when the political will to act is present. Thus, the charter of the U.N. prescribing non-interference in matters of essentially domestic jurisdiction is not operative in cases that constitute a 'threat' to the peace' or 'breach of the peace' (Kamanu, 1974:364). Not surprisingly, therefore, the U.N. has been able to deal with the Congo and Cyprus crises as well as some other situations which ordinarily could be classified under the domestic sphere of member states.

The U.N. involvement was limited to the humanitarian relief carried out with the consent of the federal government of Nigeria. In this regard, the U.N. sent a relief organiser as well as a military observer to Nigeria to report on the federal conduct of the war, according to Ajibola (1978:39) when Biafra propaganda of genocide was gathering momentum.

U. Thant's position on the Nigerian crisis was based on the O.A.U.'s Resolution at the Kinshasha summit. The resolution recognized the "sovereign and territorial integrity of Nigeria" and pledged "faith in the federal government". It further recognized the Nigerian war as an internal affair and expressed "concern at the tragic and serious situation in Nigeria (Kirk-Greene, 1971:173). On this basis, U. Thant believed that the O.A.U. should be the "most appropriate instrument for the promotion of peace in Nigeria (Ajibola, 1978:39). Thus, the posture of the U.N. was pro-federal, since the organization regarded the situation as internal to Nigeria and continued to recognise the federal government as the bona fide government of the country (Ajibola, 1978:39).

Subjected to critical analysis, the excuse that the Nigerian Civil War did not receive any serious attention from the U.N. on the ground that it was classified as a domestic affair of Nigeria is not a strong one. The excuse would have been accepted if the U.N. had not interfered in the civil war in

Congo in 1960, on the basis that it posed a threat to international peace and security even though Congo was not yet a member of the organization at the time; since the civil war broke out immediately after independence was granted (Lowe, 1997:172, Agbi, 1986).

The Katanga secession and the Biafra insurgency were alike in that they were attempts by a group of people to break away from their nations. The Nigerian case was worse because of some reasons. First, the war was one of the greatest African tragedies as it involved a heavy loss of life and property within the country. The Federal government did not give any figure for the number of deaths but it has been estimated to be 3,000,000 lives lost on both sides of the war (Madiebo, 1980:388).

Also, the war witnessed the intervention of other powers in the international community, either in support of the federal Government or the Biafra secessionists. It was amusing to note that the Secretary General of the U.N. himself came to Nigeria during the crisis and other specialised and relief agencies including the UNICEF were functioning trying to relieve the suffering of the people with supplies got mainly from the major United Nations members who were the very ones fuelling the war by providing support for either one or the other of the conflicting parties (Akinbi, 1991). Despite all these, the UN as a body did not participate at all in the efforts geared towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Against the back-drop of the above, it can be succinctly said that the U.N. failed to be involved in the efforts geared towards the conflict resolution of the Nigerian crisis because the political will to act was absent. This point can be further corroborated in the light of several other African disputes before the U.N. on which the World body had done nothing. The Somalia-Ethiopia conflict of 1963 over the mineral rich Amazon strip was an example. In February 1964, Somalia requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council over the dispute. Despite the urgency of the matter, all that was done by the Secretary-General was to appeal to the parties concerned for a ceasefire (Ogunloye, 2004:27).

Another example was the Algerian-Moroccan dispute, which arose from poor demarcation of boundaries between the two states. Due to this and other political differences, war eventually broke out in 1963 between the two states and the assistance of the UN was sought. However, France and the US were opposed to Morocco's attempt to invoke Article 35 of the U.N. Charter calling for U.N. intervention. The position ended all U.N. participation in the

war (Spanier, 1998:58). This was clearly a case where the great powers influenced the decision and actions of the U.N.

In fact, out of thirteen (13) peacekeeping operations the U.N. carried out during the cold war era, only two had been in Africa (Gross, 1992:114). The United Nations Security Council has been found to be inactive, biased, partial and reticent to African issues particularly in its peace-keeping operations as buttressed by not only its response to the Nigerian civil war but by the two other case studies cited above. No wonder that various African scholars doubt the organisation's ability to promote peace in the developing countries, Africa in particular, as the perception is that the U.N. is used by major powers of the U.N. to pursue their objective (Mohammed, 1992:51, Ogunloye, 2004:30).

The Commonwealth of Nations

In September 1967, Gowon invited Arnold Smith, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations to act as an intermediary for exploratory talks between the two warring sides to seek a solution to the Nigerian problem, within the context of one Nigeria (Jorre, 1972:192). Like the O.A.U., the Commonwealth of Nations made some painstaking endeavours towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict. For instance, in January 1968, Michael Okpara led a Biafran delegation to Arnold Smith in Paris where proposals for a confederal Nigeria were considered. The document that emerged from the meeting was signed on February 8, 1968. This package of proposals was taken by Arnold Smith to Lagos on February 9, 1963 which was rejected by the Lagos regime who frowned at a confederal Nigeria. Also, there were peace negotiations between representatives of the warring parties under the auspices of the Commonwealth in Kampala on 23 May 1968 (Akinrinade, 1986). However, all these peace initiatives failed to bring about any solution to the Nigerian conflict. Many reasons could account for this.

Firstly, the Commonwealth of Nations was also not devoid of the handicap afflicting both the U.N. and the O.A.U. as the stance of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states is also a regulative principle of the Commonwealth. But this non-interference principle was a minor cause of the ineffectiveness of the Commonwealth Heads of Governments meeting with regards to the Nigerian war. The principal reason was the differing and conflicting attitudes, which different commonwealth governments had towards the Nigerian crisis (Akinrinade, 1986:86). For instance, initially, British policy towards the Nigerian war was that of ambivalence before it

later declared open support for the federal government (Cronje and Waugh, 1972:24). On the contrary, Australia and New-Zealand accorded outright recognition to the federal government as the only legitimate government in Nigeria. Canada also attempted to involve the U.N in the crisis without success (Smith, 1971:86). This lack of uniform approach effectively hindered concerted action being taken by the commonwealth governments.

Thus as the Commonwealth governments were divided within their ranks on what approach to adopt to the Nigerian situation, the Secretary-General was merely acting alone with certain members of his senior staff (Akinrinade, 1986:60). His action in this regard could be said not to have received the full support of all the governments and as such did not carry much force.

Furthermore, the efforts of the Commonwealth Secretariat were rendered futile by the fact that the two parties in the conflicts were arguing from diametrically opposed points which made compromise very difficult to attain. Thus Nigeria was bent on Biafra's renunciation of secession and the acceptance of the twelve state structure for Nigeria, while to Biafra her sovereignty could not be negotiated (Kirk-Greene, 1971:450).

Finally, the unpopular nature of some aspects of the proposals put forward by Arnold Smith and the Secretariat staff with the federal side could be another reason for the failure of peace initiatives. For instance, the proposal for a commonwealth peace keeping force was not palatable to most of the senior military officials in Nigeria, when the issue was raised in the meeting that Arnold Smith held with federal authorities in February 1968, it was sharply rejected. This was because some of the federal leaders regarded the force to be an occupation force, or interference in the country's internal affairs, contrary to Smith's thinking that the proposed force was a neutral body capable of giving the Biafrans the confidence that their territory will not be occupied (Akinrinade, 1986). It was also felt in Nigeria that if the suggestion for a peace keeping force was accepted, it would mean recognition of Biafra's sovereign status, according to Akinrinade (1986). Similarly, the proposal by Arnold Smith, that the administrative machinery of Nigeria should be confederal was severely frowned at by Nigeria (Akinrinade, 1986).

Consequently, just like the O.A.U. all the efforts of the Commonwealth Secretariat to peacefully resolve the Nigerian crisis and thus shorten the war failed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The incapability of supra-national organisations to deal realistically with the threat to peace posed by the Nigerian war had further raised the issue of the extent to which they could successfully intervene in crisis situations and help resolve problems of this nature that are characterized as “internal affairs” of member states. Supra-national Organisations were faced with the problems of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states that was well-articulated into their charter, as a result they could not take any concrete action apart from resorting to the diplomacy of persuasion during the Nigerian civil war. It is also germane to note that in the present state of international relations, no extra-state organization possesses any power of veto over the action of its individual members. This situation became complicated with the irreconcilable position of Nigeria and Biafra during the war.

Drawing from insights gained from the study, certain recommendations could be proffered. First, there should be a call for supra-national organizations like the O.A.U. now AU to face reality rather than finding it convenient to hide under the non-interference provision of their charters in order to avoid facing up to the difficult issues raised by secessionist conflicts within member states. As Kamanu (1974) has rightly indicated, a civil war ceases to be an internal affair when third parties intervene to such an extent as to upset the balance between the protagonists and determine the outcome and more importantly, when the war constitutes a threat to the peace of the continent. Thus, there is the need for supra-national organizations to devise a concrete means of resolving conflicts.

On 9 July 2001, the O.A.U. took the decision to transform itself into continental African Union, following the signing and ratification by fifty Heads of State and Government of the constitutive Act of the African Union in Lusaka, Zambia. Unlike the O.A.U. charter, the constitutive act of the AU allows for interference in the internal affairs of member states in cases of unconstitutional change of governments, genocide and conflicts that threaten regional stability (Dokubo, 2005:144-145). While the development is a positive one viewed against the backdrop of the clause of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states entrenched into the O.A.U. charter and which had prevented the O.A.U. from taking any concrete action in resolving conflicts in Africa as evidenced by its failure in resolving the Nigeria-Biafra

conflict, it remains to be seen whether the AU will build on the capacity of its predecessor in the area of conflict management, resolution and prevention.

Revitalizing the A.U. will therefore require political will and commitment on the part of the A.U. to address conflicts in Africa. Also, the African standby force which the organization decided to establish should be well-organized and equipped in order to live up to the challenges posed by conflict situations in any part of the continent.

The launch of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the A.U. on 25 May 2004 is a right step in the right direction vis-a-viz the organization's resolve to ensure peace and stability in Africa. The PSC has since met regularly in numerous sessions, at various levels, to discuss conflict situations on the continent, peace processes, A.U. peace keeping initiatives and efforts to maintain an integrated and holistic approach to the continent's peace and security agenda (Akinbi and Olupayimo, 2009:173). The PSC has come to stay as a permanent organ of the A.U. saddled with the responsibility of ensuring peace and stability in Africa by co-ordinating peacekeeping and peace making activities of the A.U.

The activities of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone as portrayed by Iheme (2004), have depicted the readiness of Supranational organizations to tame ugly situations before they degenerate into serious conflicts. In spite of the non-interference clause in the internal affairs of member states, ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone was almost timely to have prevented a great catastrophe. Acting in conjunction with the "blue berets", the ECOMOG forces was able to prevent an entirely Liberian crisis from degenerating into an African crisis (Babangida, 1991:92).

This new thinking and orientation vividly shows the realization of supranational organizations like the A.U., and ECOMOG that "a threat to peace anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere"; more importantly, in the age of globalization when the web of interconnectedness has made the notion of territoriality a myth.

Another lesson learnt from the study was that supra-national organizations should not wait till war bursts, out, and when many things might have been in disarray before they mediate. For instance, when latent tensions are discovered, there might be the need for the establishment of an adhoc Board of internal mediation, with members drawn from such a body as the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and placed at the disposal of the contestants.

A body of this sort might have been invaluable early in the Nigerian crisis, between November 1966 and March 1967 when both parties were apparently groping for a way out of their impasse but could not agree on the advisability of mediation by outside states.

Also, while there is need for the United Nations Organization to rise up effectively to challenges posed by conflict situation in Africa, there is greater need for the regional and sub-regional organizations to be more actively involved in resolution of crisis of nations that falls under their jurisdiction. Thus supranational organizations that are African based are expected to be more concerned and initiative as regards efforts that will facilitate peace and conflict resolution in any part of the continent, rather than waiting for, or over-relying on, the U.N.'s mediatory and peace keeping roles in view of the fact that the world body has many global concerns that need its attention. This matter is particularly significant while bearing in mind the lackadaisical attitude exhibited by the UN towards the Nigerian Civil War, as it believed that there were other areas that need its urgent attention such as the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 and the Vietnam war which was approaching its climax by 1969 (Akinbi, 1991:91).

References

- Agbi, S.O. (1986): *The OAU and African Diplomacy*. Ibadan: Impact Publishers.
- Ajibola, W.A. (1978): *Foreign Policy and Public Opinion: A Case Study of British Foreign Policy Over the Nigerian Civil War*. (Ibadan, Ibadan University Press).
- Akinbi, J.O. (1991): "The International Dimension of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970" M.A. Thesis, University of Ibadan.
- Akinbi, J.O. (1999): "External Involvement in the Nigerian Civil War: Lessons for the International Environment" in Akinbi, J.O. (ed.) *Towards A Better Nigeria: Reflections on Contemporary Issues in the Socio-Political Economic Development of Nigeria*. Ibadan: Ben Quality Prints, pp. 262-275.
- Akinbi, J.O. and Olupayimo, D.Z. (2009): "An Overview of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Now called African Union, in Ajayi, G. Akinbi, J.O. and Alao, F.O. (eds). *Themes in Humanities and African Experience*. Ibadan: Ben Quality Prints, 159-176.

- Akinrinade, O. (1986): "The Commonwealth Involvement in the Search for Peace in Nigeria, 1967-1970". *Odu*, 29, 55-65.
- Babangida, I. (1991): *Nigeria and the OAU in search of an African Reality*. Lagos: Third Press Publishers.
- Brownlie, I. (1971): *Basic Documents on African Affairs*. (London, OUP).
- Cervenka, Z. (1975): "The OAU and the Nigerian Civil War" in El-Ayonty, Y. (ed). *The OAU after Ten years: Comparative Perspectives*. New York: Praeger).
- Claude, I.L. (1956): *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization*. New York: Randon House Inc.
- Cronje, S. and Waugh, A. (1972): *Biafra: Britain's Shame*. London: Longman.
- Dokubo, C. (2005): "Towards an Agenda for Peace and Security in Africa: The Role of the AU Peace and Security Council" in Adeniji, A. (ed.) *Transformations in International Relations since 1945*. Lagos: Triad Publishers, pp. 138-155.
- Gross, A. (1992): *The United Nations: Structure for Peace*. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Iheme, F. (2004): "The Role of ECOWAS in Conflict Management" in Best S.G. (ed.) *Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited), 252-271.
- Jorre, J. (1972): *The Brothers War: Biafra and Nigeria*. Boston: Houghton Miffling Company.
- Kamanu, O. (1974): "Secession and the Right of Self Determination: An OAU. Dilemma in *Journal of Modern African Studies*. 12 (3), 355-365.
- Khan, C. (1968): "The OAU Hurrying Nowhere", *Africa Today*, 15 (5) 1-2.
- Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. (1971): *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Sourcebook*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Lowe, N. (1997): *Mastering Modern World History*. New York: Palgrave.

- Luard, E. (1979): *The United Nations: How it works and what it does*. London: Macmillan.
- Maiiall, H. Ramsbotham, D. and Woodhouse, T. (2001): *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Mitchel, C. and Banks, M. (1998): *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: The Analytical Problem-solving Approach*. London: Pinter.
- Madiebo, A. (1980): *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Nwolise, O.B.C. (1989): "The Civil War and Nigerian Foreign Policy" in Akinyemi, A.B., Agbi, S.O. and Otubanjo, A.O. (eds.) *Nigeria since Independence*. The first 25 years. Ibadan: Heinemann, 192-224.
- Ogunloye, P.A. (2004): "The United Nations and African Development in the 21st Century" B.A. Long Essay, Olabisi Onabnajo University.
- Smith, A. (1971): *Third Report of the Commonwealth Secretary General. November 1968 - November, 1970*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Spanier, J. (1998): *Game Nations Play: Analyzing International Politics*. New York: Praeger.