

Karin Dokken, African Security Politics Redefined, Palgrave/Macmillan, 2008, ISBN 13. 978-1-4039-7761-8.

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Issues of security in Africa have been at the centre stage of attention given their importance in as far as development of Africa is concerned. *Africa Security Politics Redefined* is an endeavour to show how issues of security in Africa have evolved and the extent to which they need to be redefined.

The introduction gives an overview of the conflict situation in Africa. It analyses the debates relating to the nature of the conflict situation in Africa paying particular attention to causes, dimension, scale and impact. Issue of terrorism in Africa was also alluded to and the author holds that 'Africa is the continent most affected by terrorism- albeit domestic not international, terrorism'.p.14. The introduction also managed to examine the major theoretical frameworks that have guided analysis of African security, noting the strength and weaknesses of their explanatory power with regards to the African situation.

In chapter two the author examined the nature of the state in Africa tracing the historical origins of the modern day states. The chapter gave an outline of the nature of the African state and factors that have contributed to its complexity, largely alluding to pre-colonial history, trade relations with Europe, colonisation and decolonisation processes, the impact of cold war and its demise. Various interpretations on the nature of the African state were examined, especially in relation to issues of authoritarianism, democracy, degrees of statehood, neo-patrimonialism, hybridity, transplanted state, failed state, fragile state, weak state and state collapse.

Chapter three analyses new phenomenon in Africa security, in which conflict has been transnationalised/or regionalised. Using the case studies of West Africa and the Great Lakes Region the author pointed out the major issues and dimensions to regionalisation of conflict espousing the motivations for intervention in conflicts by states and regional bodies.

Chapter four is an analysis the regional nature of conflict resolution that has come to dominate Africa's security landscape. According to the author various intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) 'have established their own mechanisms for the prevention and management of violent conflicts'.p.79. To which the author analysed how these IGOs have tried to curtail conflicts in their zones of operation.

Chapter five and six is devoted to the role played by international organisations in dealing with security issues bedevilling the Africa. Particular attention was given to the Organisation of African Unity and its successor organisation the African Union, and the United Nations. The author elucidated on the challenges and successes which these organisations have met in their various intervention measures.

Chapter seven illuminated on the challenges to addressing conflicts in Africa. The author noted: 'too many attempts at resolving conflicts in Africa have failed.....reason for this....the economic opportunities many actors see in violent conflict'.p.169, and citing the important actors that thrive in conflict situations like, robber barons, drug barons, gunrunners, mercenaries, private military and security companies, war lords and money launderers. The issue of privatisation of security in Africa was analysed paying particular attention to its origins, dimension and its consequences for Africa security especially in relation to its creation of multiple centres of power.

Africa Security Politics Redefined is a well informing text on contemporary issues regarding issues of security and conflict in Africa. It is highly recommended texts for anyone interested in comprehending security in Africa. For academics and researchers the text offers an excellent use of modern literature regarding the subject matter being analysed and its consistent reference to theoretical issues in its examination and analysis of the problem of security in Africa.

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