

NO: 12, ISSUE: 1, 2024

Journal
of Global Politics
and Current Diplomacy

 [Center for
European Dialog
and Cultural Diplomacy]
DEDiC

Journal of Global Politics and Current Diplomacy

GLOBAL POLITICS AND CURRENT DIPLOMACY (JGPCD)

The JGPCD is a biannual (Summer and Winter), open access, peer-reviewed international journal that will consider any original scientific article without being predisposed nor fostering any particular methodology.

The issues of the journal will include multi and interdisciplinary papers. Occasionally, individual issues may focus on a particular theme.

ISSN 2344 – 6293 ISSN-L 2344 – 6293

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief:

Mihai Alexandrescu, PhD

Deputy Editor-in-Chief:

Marcela Sălăgean, PhD

Editorial Board:

Editor: Paul Popa, PhD

Indexing and Abstracting: Ștefan Maroșan, MD

Design Editor: Mihai-Vlad Guță

PUBLISHER:

Centrul pentru Dialog European și Diplomație Culturală/Centre for European Dialogue and Cultural Diplomacy (DEDIC)

READERSHIP

The JGPCD aims to publish high contributions across the wide-range topics of International Relations from theoretical debates to historical and cultural analyses of scholars and practitioners in the IR community. The Journal provides a platform to develop and promote research and practices in current diplomacy and its interconnection with International Relations, Euro-

pean Studies, Socio-Anthropology, History, and Cultural Studies.

The JGPCD keeps with its European roots and assumes its commitment to producing a European journal with a global impact, encouraging broad awareness and innovation in this interdisciplinary field. In this respect, authors outside of the European area are welcome to submit their works in order to promote different theoretical methods approaching particular topics in International Relations.

The Journal intends to establish an effective channel of communication between policymakers, diplomats, experts, government agencies, academic and research institutions and persons concerned with the complexity of international relations, especially *global politics*, and various forms of *diplomacy*.

Open Access Statement

This is an open-access journal which means that all content is freely available without charge to the user or his/her institution. Users are allowed to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without asking prior permission from the publisher or the author. This is in accordance with the BOAI definition of open access.

SUBMISSION

Authors are invited to visit the JGPCD website <http://journal.centruldedic.ro/sample-page/about-igpcd-2/author-guidelines/>

COPYRIGHT RULES

This Journal publishes its articles under the Creative Common 4.0 License ([CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/))

Journal
of **Global Politics**
and **Current Diplomacy**

ISSN 2344 – 6293 ISSN-L 2344 – 6293

CONTENTS

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN
CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

Itzhak MASHIAH 5

INVESTIGATING THE EFFICACY OF ECOWAS AND THE
AFRICAN UNION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND
PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Abraham Ename MINKO 30

INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY
RULE/ REGIME IN WEST AFRICA: A POST-MORTEM
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MALI, GUINEA AND BURKINA
FASO CONUNDRUM IN THE PAST THREE YEARS

Mustapha A. HARUNA | A. T. AYEBUSI |
Muhammad Saheed SULAIMAN 53

BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY: A DIFFERENT
TYPE OF AMERICAN PRIMACY

Dario CRISTIANI 75

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

Itzhak MASHIAH*

Abstract:

This article delves into how factors within the high-tech industry can shape a nation's image, exploring the intricate dynamics between tech corporate diplomacy and the public diplomacy of the state. It presents a strategic approach for tech companies to fortify their image, with a particular focus on highlighting the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) narratives. It discusses how such initiatives not only have the potential to enhance the reputation of tech companies on a micro level but also offer industrial and diplomatic advantages for the nation on a macro scale.

Keywords: Tech Diplomacy; CSR; Tech Marketing; High-tech Industry

Introduction

The economic and business dimensions are intricately connected to the diplomatic initiatives of nations. Frequently, the official representatives of nations utilize aspects of the private business sector in their diplomatic efforts (Uyar et al., 2020). Therefore, the presence of robust enterprises, businesses, and a strong private sector is beneficial for nations. Beyond the business realm, contemporary enterprises worldwide are increasingly dedicated to advancing social causes, reflecting a global trend that emphasizes prioritizing social agendas. In addition to seeking profitability, companies now acknowledge their dual responsibility to fulfill obligations to the environment and society (Puchakayala et al., 2023).

* Dr. Itzhak Mashiah is a visiting scholar in the Integrated Marketing Communication Department at the School of Journalism and New Media, UM, Oxford, USA. Email: ltzhak.mashiah@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4533-0735>.

The question of whether to engage in social responsibility is no longer in doubt; rather, it is now a matter of determining when and how such involvement should occur. Corporate social responsibility (CSR), encompassing a range of social initiatives, has gained widespread acceptance as a means to foster employee satisfaction (Bauman and Skitka, 2012), promote employee retention, enhance employer branding (Puncheva-Michelotti et al., 2018), improve financial performance (Cho et al., 2019; Okafor et al., 2021; Wokutch et al., 2013), affect consumer perceptions (Currás-Pérez et al., 2018), stimulate organizational innovation (Jia et al., 2022), and strengthen credibility and relationships with the public (Lee et al., 2019).

CSR scholarly research holds many insightful dimensions. For example, Currás-Pérez, Dolz-Dolz, Miquel-Romero, and Sánchez-García explored and delved into three necessary dimensions of CSR: Social, Environmental and Economic and three consumer-perceived value (PV): Utilitarian, Emotional and Social (Currás-Pérez et al., 2018). Conte, Vollero, Covucci, and Siano explored three dimensions, too: CSR penetration, explicitness, and symbolic communication practices (Conte et al., 2020). They claim that "the three dimensions help provide a global assessment of CSR communication" (p.1427).

When exploring different aspects of CSR, it can be classified into two distinct typologies: "act" and "talk". The first typology relates to the operational dimension of CSR, encompassing concrete actions taken by businesses to advance social welfare. These actions are driven by voluntary engagement and are devoid of profit-driven motives. The second typology concentrates on CSR reporting and communication (Conte et al., 2020), encompassing marketing and advertising endeavours, as well as the dissemination of information regarding the organization's societal involvement, agenda, and initiatives aimed at improving society.

The typologies exhibit a notable disparity, with the first type emphasizing the act of "social" initiatives and the second type primarily centred around the marketing, promotion, and communication of these social messages (Vollero et al., 2022). Since "Messages about corporate ethical and socially responsible initiatives are likely to evoke strong and often positive reactions among stakeholders" (Morsing and Schultz, 2006: 323), this article primarily addresses the second typology, with a specific focus on the high-tech business sphere, and argues that CSR needs to become integral to decision-making and media management in the tech industry. Moreover, as this study claims, these talks by entity (micro) have implications on a much broader scope of industry and country (macro).

Tech entities, similar to other organizations, actively engage in CSR practices (Ferrat et al., 2023; Moyano-Fuentes et al., 2019). In today's landscape, they are increasingly focusing on communicating their CSR initiatives to improve their brand image and overall performance (Chang, 2009; Cormier and Magnan, 2015;

Tangngisalu et al., 2020). Given the escalating criticism directed at the technology ecosystem in recent years (Weiss-Blatt, 2021), companies often find the need to adopt communication strategies to counter negative sentiments and protect their public image. While such actions may benefit the specific brand, they also play a role in shaping the broader image of the locale from which the brand originates.

In routine, tech brands employ various marketing strategies to showcase their innovation (Mashiah, 2021). Our current focus is on developing a conceptual management framework for effective social context messaging to reshape the reputation of the tech sector during the new ongoing crises and clashes. This framework is grounded in the understanding that CSR, in both normal and crisis situations (Ham and Kim, 2019), not only provides a financial advantage in the competitive market (Gong and Grundy, 2019) but also carries symbolic diplomatic significance, positive social value, and reputational benefits (Conte et al., 2020; Morsing and Schultz, 2006). From micro to macro, as the subsequent chapters illustrate, the strategic promotion of this CSR symbol by tech actors can confer reputation advantages (Morsing and Schultz, 2006), serve image management purposes in international relationships (Beise-Zee, 2011; Hayes et al., 2022; Li et al., 2013; Moliner et al., 2019; Prasad and Holzinger, 2013; Sanclemente-Téllez, 2017).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. *The Social Responsibility*

There have been many versions of social agenda management in business, including “corporate social responsibility”, “corporate social performance”, “corporate responsibility”, and “social responsibility”. Although they have many different names, they all offer the same principle, dealing with businesses and organizations practical ways to take responsibility for a wide range of social issues. Various books, articles, and guides describe how to take proactive steps to address environmental issues (physical action) while making profits from the sale of a product or service (Blowfield and Murray, 2014; Melo and Galan, 2011; Rajak, 2011; Zadek, 2007). Largely speaking, researchers argue that this activity has positive implications for businesses worldwide (Zairi and Peters, 2002). A business entity that adopts social codes, adopts the norm of “doing good”, and dedicates resources, will return the investment and ultimately profit, because it also sees the interest of the whole, and not just its narrow business interest (Adams and Zutshi, 2004; Rowe, 2006).

In the organization prism, CSR is identified as a broad field that is studied from different angles, all of which focus on the need of organizations to pay back to society by doing good (Meyer, 2015). Moyano-Fuentes, Rodríguez-

Martínez and Jiménez-Delgado (2019) study CSR in the context of organisation location and geography. As they stated, "Companies could be observed to want to pay back society in return for the benefits that they obtained from being located in a science and technology park" (p.198). In other words, the place in which the organization is located affects the CSR tempo. Being in "tech areas" can "encourage companies to implement a greater number of actions in the sphere of CSR" (Moyano-Fuentes et al., 2019: 197), and CSR information flow. Ferrat, Daty, and Burlacu examined CSR in the context of firm size and investments (Ferrat et al., 2023). They focus on the CSR factor using environmental, social, and governance ratings (ESG) and find that its impact is based on firm size, with larger CSR-leading firms showing diminished returns compared to their CSR-lagging counterparts, while the traditional CSR factor premium persists in smaller corporations.

According to Moir (2001), all organizational actions in the field of CSR are divided into two main types: (1) normative and ethical actions and (2) utilitarian instrumental actions. The first type is a product of the organization's view of the social norms and environment that surrounds it and primarily the organization's motivation to look at foreign factors outside of it (Cannon, 2005). The second type emerges from the perspective of the organization and essentially the preservation of the interests of the organization by social action (Moir, 2001). Both these types of CSR can be observed within the technology industry. Moreover, the geographical location of a tech organization can also impact the way social responsibility practices are carried out. One can argue that the presence of a tech company in a particular area influences the scope and character of the social initiatives undertaken by that organization (Moyano-Fuentes et al., 2019). In addition, it is important to note that taking social responsibility or "doing good" has two main paths: inside and outside the organisation.

The first path is doing a good deed to a factor outside the organization, for example, participating in a protest or initiative of a social nature or actual volunteering of staff or managers and contributing their time, energy, resources, and knowledge to the "other" (external factor), keeping the environment, recycling, human rights and community (Moir, 2001). The second way is to promote a social agenda and initiative inside the organization and for the in-house factors. For example, promoting a green agenda inside the offices, making social policy in the manner of recruitment, diversity, equality policy, and more (Ely and Thomas, 2001; Ferdman and Deane, 2014). In both instances, organizations use social action as a storytelling, and a means to inform relevant audiences about its social action (Barker and Gower, 2010; Brown et al., 2005; Sole and Wilson, 2002).

2.2. *CSR Communication and Storytelling*

Storytelling is an important and essential tool for brands. According to Morgan and Dennehy (1997), stories can enhance the memorability and credibility of information: They suggest that stories "are a powerful means of communicating values, ideas, and norms (Morgan and Dennehy, 1997: 495). Barker and Gower (2010) also emphasize the significant impact of stories and storytelling in the realm of organizational effectiveness (Barker and Gower, 2010). One area where storytelling thrives is in the context of CSR. Despite the challenges organizations may face in maintaining a positive reputation, narratives that showcase an organization's good deeds and implemented CSR programs inside and outside the business, serve as valuable tools for promoting enduring positive values. In fact, the symbolic representation of CSR initiatives becomes instrumental in shaping the organizational myths and collective social understanding of reality and effectively engaging stakeholders (Barker and Gower, 2010; Boyce, 1996; Morgan and Dennehy, 1997).

In essence, through CSR storytelling, organizations and businesses possess the ability to shape and influence people's knowledge and recollection of their identity and actions. While it is important to acknowledge that the misuse of CSR communication can lead to "organizational hypocrisy" (Christensen et al., 2013), there are also good functional reasons and proper ways to use CSR communication in diverse areas. Hence, the next section will focus on the specific reasons why companies in the tech industry are increasingly compelled to actively engage in and allocate significant investments towards CSR communication and storytelling today, more so than ever before.

2.3. *Anchor of Marketing Communication in International Relations*

Innovation plays a critical role for technology firms, as it is widely recognized as a primary source of competitive advantage, particularly for high-tech enterprises, which must navigate rapid and disruptive changes (Makri and Scandura, 2010). Thus, technology organizations strive to be at the forefront of innovation and embrace a culture of innovation (Sai Manohar and Pandit, 2014). Such entities are widely accepted in society for their innovative spirit, as evidenced by their ability to invent and market products that enhance human life. Nonetheless, in recent times, certain technology firms have been embroiled in scandals and controversies, leading to their portrayal as negative and detrimental (Colombo et al., 2016; Eriksson and Olsson, 2016; Etter and Vestergaard, 2015; Weiss-Blatt, 2021).

Coombs and Holladay (2002) argue that an organization's reputation is "how the organization is perceived by its publics" (p.167). The media has a significant

impact on public perceptions and beliefs and serves as a catalyst in portraying technology firms in a positive or negative light. Historically, technology firms have received favourable media coverage (Mashiah, 2022), but recent high-profile scandals have led to negative portrayals of many technology brands (Weiss-Blatt, 2021). Consequently, technology firms may aim to reshape their public image by adopting different management strategies. Technology firms may argue that improving their public image can be achieved by engaging in socially responsible practices and contributing to various sectors of society (Adams and Zutshi, 2004; Rowe, 2006). Thus, these firms engage in socially oriented operations and management approaches, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate social performance (CSP), corporate social and environmental responsibility disclosure (CSERD), corporate responsibility, or social responsibility. After they draft formal "policies and procedures" for socially orientated activities (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013: 698), and implement the social agenda, they then aim to report their actions to different stakeholders (Bouten et al., 2011; Michelon et al., 2015; Nielsen and Thomsen, 2007).

In practice, tech companies not only make a socially oriented form of action, but also highlight and promote positive stories, and report about their social impact on society (Golob and Podnar, 2019). A recent study by Vollero, Yin, and Siano delves into the institutional disparities that contribute to the diversity in CSR communication strategies among companies based in North America, Europe, and Asia (Vollero et al., 2022). But of course, this phenomenon of CSR reporting and communication happens in many other parts of the world and diverse fields, one of which is the high-tech field.

In fact, CSR, CSP, marketing, and branding have become closely related (Beise-Zee, 2011; Hayes et al., 2022; Lii et al., 2013; Moliner et al., 2019; Prasad and Holzinger, 2013; Sanclemente-Téllez, 2017). In the context of CSR promotional talks and communication (Morsing and Schultz, 2006), it can be asserted that the strong implementation of CSR practices by influential players in the technology industry is significantly present in society. The coordinated CSR messaging efforts of tech brands have the potential to contribute to public perceptions. In response to the challenge posed by the tech-clash phenomenon, tech brands today can integrate CSR into organizational corporate diplomacy, thereby creating a link to the nation's diplomatic endeavours and image management. In other words, establishing a framework for CSR within the technology sector effectively aligns corporate practices with national diplomatic goals and contributes to the cultivation of a positive national image.

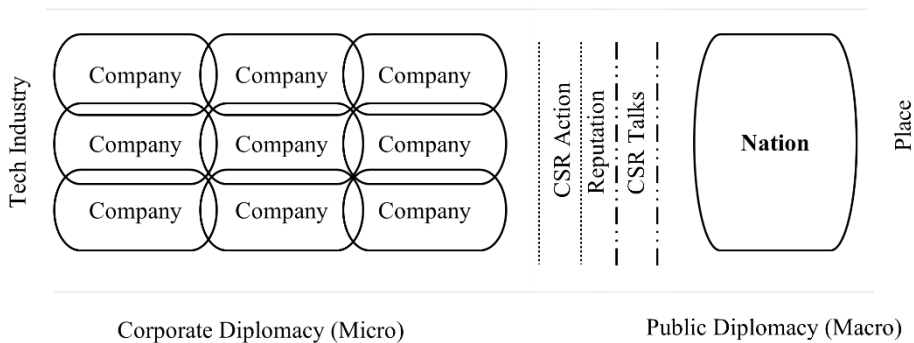
2.4. *From Corporate Diplomacy to Public Diplomacy*

Corporate diplomacy involves implementing a range of strategic initiatives by an organization to foster positive relationships with various stakeholders and establish

trust. These diplomatic endeavours aim to enhance and fortify the organization's standing within the target audience (Asquer, 2012; Henisz, 2017; Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte, 2009). Notably, the predominant theoretical discourse in organizational diplomacy revolves around individual entities (such as a single company operating within a specific industry, market or segment). Nevertheless, the practical landscape frequently entails numerous entities collaboratively participating in organizational diplomacy, collectively steering towards a specific direction.

When multiple entities engage in diplomatic activities with a shared objective within a particular industry, their combined impact extends beyond individual entities (micro) and can contribute to broader objectives, including those on the political-national level (macro). The diplomatic initiatives undertaken by a consortium of companies within a particular industry, exemplified here by the high-tech sector, have the potential to influence political diplomatic efforts at the national level (Figure 1). Through the adoption of strong CSR discussions, public relations strategies, and effective communication practices, high-tech companies collaboratively highlight their socially responsible dimensions. According to Mashiah (2023), nations can strategically “utilizing various elements to present the state positively, encompassing technological products, companies, entrepreneurs, and buzzwords”. This collective endeavour indirectly enhances the positive attributes of the locale. Consequently, countries engaged in public diplomacy can leverage the actions of industry companies to enhance their diplomatic marketing initiatives.

Figure 1. From Micro to Macro



2.5. *Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)*

In situations where many technology companies within a country are subject to ongoing public criticism, the associated nation or region can experience an image crisis.

After delving into the practical application of CSR, it becomes apparent that a theoretical link is needed to connect corporate diplomacy (involving social activities and the talks of social action) with the public diplomacy of the state. Given that this concept has emerged in response to the challenges posed by the tech-clash and criticism of tech entities, one applicable theory to contemplate is the established Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT). This prominent theory in public relations, devised by Coombs and his colleagues, has its "evolved from a number of studies that examined how a crisis might shape the selection of crisis response strategies" (Coombs, 2004: 266). Coombs employed Attribution Theory as a framework to establish links between crisis situations and suitable crisis response tactics (Coombs, 1998, 1995). Over time, various studies delving into SCCT have associated the domain of crises with potential damage to the reputation of specific organizations (Coombs, 2017). Moreover, these studies have proposed strategies for responding to crises that align with the level of responsibility assigned to the organization based on the particular type of crisis (Ma and Zhan, 2016).

In the midst of an era marked by a profusion of crises, the question has evolved beyond the probability of a singular crisis occurring to the broader challenge of identifying industrial crises within a larger context. Both public relations practitioners and policy makers are intrinsically compelled to navigate through these crises (Coombs, 2007), encompassing not only those originating from organizational actions but also those arising within the broader industry framework. This accentuates the significance of examining SCCT from a sectoral perspective, extending beyond a confined view. This fundamental approach constitutes the essence of the current study, as exemplified by the analysis of the crisis confronted by the high-tech industry. More broadly, integrating CSR communication can serve as a practical strategy to effectively navigate ongoing tech crises. We, therefore, argue that this approach is not only beneficial for the specific entity involved but also contributes to addressing tech crises at the national level within countries.

Schultz and Wehmeier (2010) underscore the significance of institutionalizing CSR within an organization's communication framework. Consequently, technology entities, their management stakeholders, and PR professionals can effectively integrate CSR storytelling. So, relying on a wide prior knowledge of CSR communication (Verk et al., 2021), the current attempt intends to structure a theoretical and practical model for utilizing CSR efforts broadly. While existing studies have discussed CSR initiatives of individual companies at a micro level, the objective now is to expand the discussion and provide insights into how high-tech stakeholders and places can use corporate communication to promote their social initiatives and cultivate a positive reputation. As such, first, we need to get familiar with some key ideas of CSR communication and promotion (Table 1).

Table 1. Key Ideas of CSR Communication

Themes discussed in the context of CSR	Example
The activism Mentioning of different types of CSR, examples of actual social actions	"Companies engage in CSR activities with various motivations and goals" (Shim et al., 2017: 818).
The process Processing information from an actual CSR action to a piece of corporate news	"Many corporations showcased the volunteer and donation efforts of their employees on their websites as part of the CSR culture of the organization" (Harrison, 2021: 346).
The timing When the CSR implemented (crisis, routine)	"Companies with higher CSR performance before the pandemic experience fewer losses and take a shorter time to recover" (Shang et al., 2022: 635).
The voices Who talking about CSR (company, CEO, employee)	"Nowadays, it is not uncommon for chief executive officers (CEOs) to make their positions on societal issues known" (Bojanic, 2023)
The topics Company CSR custom policy and social issues	"Companies in the Technology industry were the most likely to speak out on all three issues" [LGBTQ, racial injustice, immigration] (Sterbenk et al., 2022: 415).
The channels The platform for publishing CSR organizational actions (such as PR, website)	"Companies can convey their CSR messages through two types of communication channels, controlled and uncontrolled" (Lee, 2016: 438).
The formats Styles of communication to deliver the CSR news	"CSR messages often use visuals, such as illustrations, photographs, animations, and videos, to reinforce the messages' central content related to a CSR cause" (Lee and Chung, 2018: 354).
The outcomes Benefit of CSR action or/and the need for CSR	"Most corporations are pragmatic or utilitarian in their management, even in their use of corporate social responsibility (CSR), through which they shape the narrative to define responsible corporate behavior and sometimes to take a stand on social issues" (Erzikova and Bowen, 2019: 5).
The communication path CSR as a rooted strategy	"Since legitimacy is vital for the sustained success of a company, corporate legitimacy communication, including CSR communication, is an important issue of strategic communication" (Lischka, 2019: 10).

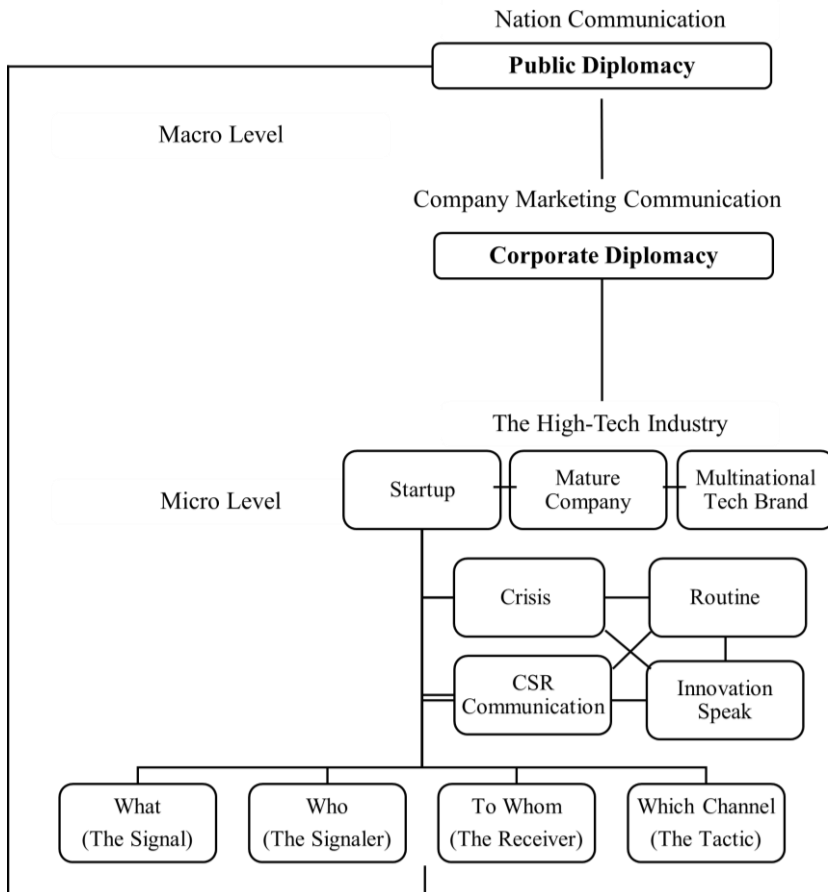
3. Tech and CSR Storytelling

According to Asquer (2012), the nation-diplomacy objective is "To build and sustain positive and constructive relations between states", and corporate-diplomacy objective is "To establish favourable conditions for business companies' activities" (p.56). In both scenarios, whether at the national or corporate level, the fundamental aim is

consistent: the improvement of the entity's competitive position. To facilitate this objective, we propose a conceptual framework for the proficient marketing communication of CSR messages by high-tech-related actors (*Figure 2*).

Through the application of corporate-diplomacy and a resolute commitment to gaining stakeholder support, organizations initiate and carry out CSR initiatives, followed by strategic communication and storytelling endeavours. The widespread adoption of this approach within the tech sector has the potential to make substantial contributions to national communication strategies, reshape international reputation, and foster enduring positive relations ([Melissen, 2006](#); [Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte, 2009](#)). As Mashiah (2024) stated that: “marketing activity of individuals, organizations, and nations may ensure the body in question is promoted in a positive manner through suitable content. Moreover, each party can benefit from the transaction and spreading of content about the other party”.

Figure 2. Tech CSR Marketing Communication Conceptual Framework



This chapter presents a clean model that incorporates the various types of CSR communication elements. This potentially serves and feeds tech entities' organizational storytelling and is a tool that serves the tech industry and the nation as a whole (Barker and Gower, 2010; Boyce, 1996; Morgan and Dennehy, 1997). However, prior to delving into the various elements of the model, it is crucial to bear in mind that CSR functions as a powerful storytelling tool employed by organizations to cultivate a positive reputation internally and externally (Hall et al., 2021). Moreover, tech companies use organizational rhetoric to convince others of their efficiency and necessity in society and to build trust with others.

The marketing effort of companies - at every stage of the organizational life cycle - focuses on creating an innovative image and creating a dialogue that focuses on the features and characteristics of innovation (Godin, 2019; Schramm, 2017). Or, in short, to publish 'innovation-speak' (Vinsel & Russell, 2020). That is, for a tech company, from the start-up stage, a growing company to a tech corporation with hundreds of thousands of employees, it is important to first use the rhetoric that places the organization in a technological-innovative position, as an organization that creates "disruptive innovation" as defined by Christensen (1997).

Disruptive innovation is an innovation that leads to the production of new paradigms repeatedly, disrupting and repressing the old. This effort is indeed bearing fruit and many technology companies are identified as good, rewarding, efficient companies and contributing essential tech products and services (Mashiah, 2022). Innovation is a main part of tech storytelling in everyday routines. Tech brands are required to push innovation narratives and stories to portray themselves as cutting-edge innovators (Mashiah, 2024). However, recently they have added another story type, which is the social impact narrative. As mentioned, this is due to the recent "technology clash" criticism that tech companies have received (Weiss-Blatt, 2021). There is a clear motivation for linking social issues to the tech brand. Indeed, CSR narratives have "emotional appeals" (Danciu, 2014: 24), and more stakeholders in tech industry implement CSR. Getting a better understanding of how CSR spending affects performance is important for tech companies, according to Okafor et al., (2021). Based on the prior studies of branding via CSR activity (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2020; Carlini and Grace, 2021; Polonsky and Jevons, 2009; Pratihari and Uzma, 2018), we may assume that tech brands can also use social oriented messaging and marketing to imply or promise they are good for society. Marketing teams will highlight that the technology, the people behind the development, and all organizational structures have a positive appeal.

Having to develop a versatile identity as well as a clean image is important since the business may be associated with negative issues. Tech companies balance business activity by adding, amplifying, or participating in soft activities, environment and community oriented. In practice, many companies run social initiatives, and community and environmental agendas. It is important to note that potentially

CSR communication is diverse in different types of stories that may serve tech entity. For instance, Verk and others (Verk et al., 2021) show the large scale of studies dealing with CSR communication. Vollero and others (Vollero et al., 2022) stated there are four types of potential CSR messaging, CSR identity, CSR organization and management, CSR interactivity, CSR as a business case (p.3). As of today, these four categorized types may be implemented in tech brands marketing activity.

In the current tech atmosphere, social action aims to do good for society, but also aims to create a positive image for those who do good (Carlini and Grace, 2021). Tech organizations publish stories and use storytelling to establish a positive perception. In a crisis, CSR stories are used to glorify the company and whiten its image (Coombs, 2017; Coombs and Holladay, 2002). According to Cho and partners (2017) approach, we can dichotomously divide the brand's messages into two types: (a) messages without a social context centred on content that includes: "product information - service", "corporate-organizational information", "holidays, events, greetings and best wishes", "content on policy and law" (p. 61). (b) Messages with a social context such as: "environmental protection", "philanthropic contribution", "educational commitments", "community / employee involvement", "commitment to public health", "cultural / sports sponsorship" and more. The question that arises pertains to the implementation and publication of these messages.

In our context, a discourse on crafting an effective message pertains to messaging strategies for a corporate brand (company) or a regional brand (place, country). Avraham & Ketter's (2013) model for reshaping brands' prolonged negative image of places is divided into two marketing strategies. "The cosmetic approach" (p.151) is when the brand solely tries to portray itself in a positive light with marketing activity. Moreover, the second one is "The strategic approach" when the brand "takes an active, comprehensive approach to the image problem and tries to relate to both the physical and communication sides" (p.156). In the strategic approach, a tech actor implements a proper CSR activity (physical act) and then reports, pushes, and promotes the message (communication sides).

To explain the CSR communication sides we shall elaborate further on the signalling theory (Boateng, 2019; Connelly et al., 2011; Dunham, 2011). Signalling theory "focuses primarily on the deliberate communication of positive information in an effort to convey positive organizational attributes" (Connelly et al., 2011: 44). Signalling theory consists of three main characteristics: "the signaler (the service provider), the receiver (the customer), and the signal" (Boateng, 2019: 227). One of the main purposes of signalling theory is to understand information transmission (messages) from one side (brand) to another (stakeholder), (Dunham, 2011). In the CSR context, prior academic studies have examined the signalling process in different fields such as logistics, finance, and more (Carroll and Einwiller, 2014; Su et al., 2016; Uyar et al., 2020). The current review extends our knowledge by providing a schematic model for CSR marketing signalling in the tech sector solely.

Although tech actors are primarily interested in marketing positive messages about innovation, today some efforts should highlight their CSR efforts. In other words, in the tech sector, CSR promotion is a "neutralizing strategy" (Szybillo and Heslin, 1973: 396) intended to the neutral bad image of the tech entity in a strategic manner (Avraham and Ketter, 2013). Marketing CSR shapes and designs the public reputation (Golob and Podnar, 2019). Simply saying, this strategy is based upon the constant publishing of soft stories, mixing innovation stories with stories that hold a social viewpoint, as an effective marketing defence technique (showing the good sides). A variety of tactics can serve a brand, company or nation, to tell its story and defend its image, including PR, social media, websites, ads, etc., but more importantly, there are three core components more important than the tactics: the signal, the signaller, and the receiver.

3.1. What: The Signal of Tech-CSR

As the concept of 'innovation' gains popularity in our modern culture (Vinsel & Russell, 2020), brands frequently speak about innovations. Moreover, the tech idea (theme) can be the focus of strategic marketing and communication activities for brands and entities (Mashiah, 2021; 2022; 2023; 2024). While tech entities are committed to implementing 'tech' and 'innovation' in organizational rhetoric, it is also crucial to consider new signals nowadays (Cheney and McMillan, 1990). Thus, management can choose CSR-oriented rhetoric for marketing purposes. The marketing process here aims to define a specific symbol, sign, or social signature that the company can promote publicly. Credibility and relevance are the two factors that make a marketing message effective (Dunham, 2011). Thus, tech company images may rely on credible CSR designed to convey the simple message: "We are good for society", "We are good for you". For instance, the organization can publish content dealing with social initiatives it conducts outside the organization, such as volunteering or activities serving the community. Alternatively, the organization may report actions taken within its borders, such as a social act that benefits employees and managers, children, families, or any group within the company (Connelly et al., 2011). In addition, there are times when tech entity management can make a public statement regarding a social issue and push that same statement. To increase the credibility of the message - it is important to choose an initiative that the organization follows over a long period.

According to Connelly et al (2011) definition and examples for signals, we may generally consider CSR physical initiatives as a "quality" signal (p.53). Yet, it is important to remember that the current component refers to intelligently highlighting the CSR quality message. Lower the tone by adopting a marketing signal. According to Herbig & Milewicz (1995), Marketing Signal is "a marketing activity that provides information beyond the mere form of that activity" (p.38).

Therefore, tech firms can gain a positive reputation by constantly signalling CSR initiatives, CSR 'behind the scene', intention for new CSR fields, the people that do CSR, etc. In this element, whether the sender is a representative of a nation or a business company, there is a deliberate and informal disclosure of comprehensive information regarding CSR activities.

3.2. Who: Tech-CSR's Signaller

Within a nation's tech industry, there exists a spectrum of entities at different lifecycle stages. Despite this diversity, a tech actor can effectively communicate CSR messages throughout each stage. Therefore, it is imperative to expound on these distinct phases. Much like the life cycle of a living organism, the life cycle of a tech organization follows a parallel pattern (Samuel, 1996). Any innovative tech company is born, grows, and moves forward to growth. Largely speaking, the growth path is divided into three main categories: (1) Start-up: a newly born organization that makes its first steps. Small startups have dozens or sometimes hundreds of employees. (2) Mature company: A well-established organization with actual product sales and thousands of employees scattered in a few locations around the world. (3) Multinational organization: A multinational corporation (MNCs), usually with many branches around the world, employs hundreds of thousands of workers. Has strong brand and public recognition.

In each of these three types, CSR messages are used differently. Identifying, analysing, and formulating a message strategy based on the self-evolutionary stage is a critical part of corporate communication management for any tech organization. Upon developing a technological product, a privately held company wishes both to publish messages to promote and sell the product and in parallel to shape its public image. Therefore, in recent years, we have seen rapid adoption of a social approach by non-social private businesses across sectors and industries, types and sizes of organizations, small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), and large corporations. Many are motivated to assimilate content about social activity and voluntary actions (Stanwick and Stanwick, 1998; Udayasankar, 2008).

Previous studies discussed CSR messaging an organizational prism of corporation on Asia, Europe, and North America (Vollero et al., 2022). Indeed, CSR messages and stories are perceived as a good basis for tech storytelling worldwide. Scholars also claim that the size of a company plays a pivotal role in shaping its level of CSR. The social activity may impact the organization's overall success, encompassing not only financial accomplishments but also wider societal perception (Ferrati et al., 2023).

Ham and Kim (2019) stated that CSR message "may be very effective and positively affect consumer behaviour when a company has a long history of CSR involvement or when the company shows intrinsic motives behind its CSR communication

if the CSR history is short" (p.369). From a long-term marketing perspective, it is now evident that combining social messages serves the purpose of balancing straightforward messages, creating a more diverse image, and thereby presenting the company in a new light. Social signals, which stem from physical activities in the social environment, are intended to counterbalance marketing efforts and provide an alternative to the typical business image.

Any tech entity can publish different CSR narratives but no less important, each entity has a different scale of CSR messages. The volume of the promotion is also divided into three main classes: (1) High volume: strong integration of CSR stories and content in the marketing activity and full use in the social agenda as a storytelling component. (2) Medium volume: mid-integration of CSR publications. The social agenda is sporadically used in tech marketing activity. (3) Low volume: weak integration of CSR messaging in the promotional activity of the tech brands. Other messaging highlighted whereby the CSR messaging arises from time to time.

Signallers carefully need to define the tempo of CSR messaging and the timing, aiming to portray the as one that contributes to the masses. By linking and engaging in areas that are publicly perceived as good, a tech company strives to be portrayed as a "good company" (Epstein, 2007). Morsing and Schultz stated: "communicating messages that claim to represent a true image of corporate initiatives such as CSR will benefit from a proactive third-party endorsement, i.e. that external stakeholders express their support of corporate CSR initiatives" (Morsing and Schultz, 2006, pp. 333–334). Aside from third-party endorsements, the signaller component also refers to the identity of the persona in the brand. A variety of factors within the organizations are busy with CSR. In parallel with the production of a product or service that generates economic profit by selling it – different factors engage, do, promote activities with a social orientation, and take responsibility for addressing issues for the community and environment. Hence, having established that tech firms employ this technique, it becomes essential to identify the potential sources driving this message. These sources may include CEOs, founders, or other high-level managers within the organization, mid-level managers, and the employees themselves.

In this context, an individual from a specific company has the potential to align with numerous counterparts similar to them (other tech actors in the industry). This alignment results in a powerful message emanating from the collective stance of these entities. Essentially, the individual disseminator of the CSR message, motivated by corporate diplomacy, is not only advancing the interests of the company by promoting a positive message. When many individuals engage in this effort out of utilitarian motives, the country can benefit from a widespread diplomatic initiative, creating an image of an innovative technological industry with significant societal contributions.

3.3. To Whom: The Receiver of CSR Messages

The element of the 'target audience' is crucial in the global context. When tech industry companies undertake CSR initiatives on a broader scale, it becomes evident that nations can leverage these messages to communicate with international stakeholders. Yes, the fundamental purpose of a business is to promote and sell its products or services to specific target audiences through marketing operations aimed at persuading diverse groups of individuals. Therefore, every organization is obliged to communicate and persuade others regarding a particular matter. In the context of CSR, effective signalling can significantly impact the perception of the business among the intended audience, thereby shaping its image (Amoako and Dartey-Baah, 2020). A successful marketing campaign in the tech CSR domain is contingent upon not only the sender and message but also on the receiver's ability to comprehend and interpret the signal (Dunham, 2011).

In high-tech cases, the receiver component includes diverse audiences inside and outside of an organization. We can divide CSR receivers into two types in the tech industry. According to Wang & Huang (2018), the first is "internal CSR" (p. 328). A promotion of this kind is intended to persuade employees. According to Tangngisalu et al., (2020): "transparent CSR implementation and the link between company reputation and company performance can be optimal as long as the level of employee trust is also obtained" (p.179). Moreover, the internal receiver includes managers, midlevel managers, board members, suppliers, marketing service providers (public relations representative), Human resource department, etc. Furthermore, there is "external CSR" (Wang and Huang, 2018: 328), namely diplomatic actors, investors, business partners, regulatory agencies, government agencies, potential employees, clients, and the public.

The CSR signal is both intended for "insiders" and "outsiders" of the organization (Connelly et al., 2011). For better optimization of the signal to the potential receiver, tech organizations can adopt a marketing segmentation approach which "involves clustering a whole market into several meaningful segments. It is clear that different people have different needs" (Huang et al., 2007: 316). Hence, marketing teams, management, and decision-makers, in tech entities, need to define the target audience and aim the signals accordingly. That way the signals can effectively reinforce "firm values" in their eyes (Wang et al., 2015: 2236), during routine (Lawal et al., 2017), and during a crisis (Chang et al., 2021). As previously mentioned, the promotion efforts of individual companies can ultimately yield benefits at the national level. Representatives on behalf of the state should strategically convey the societal message to the relevant target audience in diplomatic engagements: ambassadors, presidents, administrative officials, and policymakers. Consequently, the message extends from regional initiatives to the international stage.

3.4. Which Channel: The Tactic

The study of CSR communication focuses on the tactics employed by organizations to disseminate information about their CSR actions but it lacks a coherent structure definition. In line with this, this study proposes to strongly integrate the well-established PESO model (Dietrich, 2014; Macnamara et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2018) into the concept of CSR communication. The PESO model encompasses "four 'quadrants'-paid, earned, shared, and owned" (Macnamara et al., 2016: 377). While many CSR initiatives have historically relied on sporadic tactics, both in theoretical and practical realms, it is prudent to adopt a structured and strategic media model. Consequently, actors can strategically select and define which of the four tactics is most suitable for CSR communication at any given time: (1) Paid media: "Traditional advertising and other forms of content commercially contracted" (p. 377). (2) Earned media: "Editorial publicity that is generated by organizations through media releases, interviews" (p. 377). (3) Shared media: "Popular social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, and Pinterest, national networks" (p. 378). (4) Owned media: "Publications and digital sites established and controlled by organizations, such as corporate magazines, newsletters, reports" (p. 377).

Table 2. The CSR Components

What (The Signal)

- What is the primary social sign, signature, or symbol associated with the brand?
- What is the CSR story the brand aims to convey and what narrative does the brand intend to emphasize?

Who (The Signaller)

- Who within the brand serves as the source of communication of the CSR symbol? (e.g., managers, mid-level employees)
- Who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of CSR communication efforts?

To Whom (The Receiver)

- To whom does the brand intend to deliver the CSR messages? (e.g., internal stakeholders or external audiences)
- To whom are the messages specifically tailored for in the long term and short term?

Which Channel (The Tactic)

- Which communication tactics does the brand employ for CSR story?
- Which communication channel is deemed most appropriate for the publication of the brand's CSR narratives?

Governments and officials should persist in promoting innovation while simultaneously fostering social initiatives that can be seamlessly integrated with technology producers within their jurisdictions. Yet, while this brief review article introduces a tool for enhancing reputation and image management through CSR for stakeholders in the high-tech field, it is essential to acknowledge the potential risks associated with its misuse. The concept of "greenwashing", which has been extensively examined in the business and CSR contexts (Bazillier and Vauday, 2009; Delmas and Burbano, 2011), holds relevance to the present discussion on technology and CSR communication. Greenwashing refers to the practice of disseminating misleading or false information, creating an illusion that lacks substantive actions. In other words, when there exist disparities between rhetoric and actions in the CSR domain, it may result in perceived hypocrisy (Christensen et al., 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize that the use of communication tools to portray CSR-related virtues should only be employed when genuine actions substantiate the conveyed message.

With their motives under constant suspicion, exploring the tech industry through the lens of SCCT highlights the necessity for technology actors to embrace a CSR strategy from the outset to shape their reputation. This could potentially help nations' diplomatic efforts, and by highlighting good tech-industry, the nation wins a positive point in global reputation.

To assist diplomacy practitioners in achieving this objective, we propose a conceptual model of Tech-CSR communication (from micro to macro). The model incorporates essential components such as the company lifecycle, symbol (message type), source, audience, and communication tactics, which collectively form the foundation of the model and significantly contribute to its overall effectiveness. Yet, it is crucial to ensure that these components are aligned with actual CSR actions within the tech organization and industry to avoid situations of perceived hypocrisy. Moreover, messages promoting social issues may be met with scepticism by certain target audiences (or during specific periods). Opportunistic CSR marketing can elicit further criticism from critics, accentuating the perception of tech companies exploiting social actions solely for reputation building. As we have seen, integrating the CSR communication model is crucial for technology entities, benefiting both the tech companies and the overall industry and nation. Subsequent research can delve into various tech brand categories, and examining specific nations will provide valuable insights into the efficacy of the suggested model.

References

- Adams, C., Zutshi, A., 2004. Corporate social responsibility: why business should act responsibly and be accountable. *Australian Accounting Review*, 14(34), 31-39.

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

- Amoako, G.K., Dartey-Baah, K., 2020. Corporate social responsibility: strategy for boosting brand perception and competitive advantage, in: *CSR and Socially Responsible Investing Strategies in Transitioning and Emerging Economies*. IGI Global, pp. 65–78.
- Asquer, A., 2012. *What is Corporate Diplomacy?*. Available at SSRN 2009812.
- Avraham, E., Ketter, E., 2013. Marketing destinations with prolonged negative images: Towards a theoretical model. *Tourism Geographies*, 15(1), 145-164.
- Barker, R.T., Gower, K., 2010. Strategic application of storytelling in organizations: Toward effective communication in a diverse world. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 47(3), 295-312.
- Bauman, C.W., Skitka, L.J., 2012. Corporate social responsibility as a source of employee satisfaction. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 32, 63-86.
- Baumann-Pauly, D., Wickert, C., Spence, L.J., Scherer, A.G., 2013. Organizing corporate social responsibility in small and large firms: Size matters. *Journal of Business Ethics* 115, 693–705.
- Bazillier, R., Vauday, J., 2009. *The greenwashing machine: Is CSR More Than Communication?*. Available at: <https://hal.science/hal-00448861>
- Beise-Zee, R., 2011. Corporate social responsibility or cause-related marketing? The role of cause specificity of CSR. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 28(1), 27-39.
- Blowfield, M., Murray, A., 2014. *Corporate responsibility*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Boateng, S.L., 2019. Online relationship marketing and customer loyalty: a signaling theory perspective. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 37(1), 226-240.
- Bojanic, V., 2023. The positioning of CEOs as advocates and activists for societal change: reflecting media, receptive and strategic cornerstones. *Journal of Communication Management*, 27(3), 398-413.
- Bouten, L., Everaert, P., Liedekerke, L., Moor, L., Christiaens, J., 2011. Corporate social responsibility reporting: a comprehensive picture?. In *Accounting forum* (Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 187-204).
- Boyce, M.E., 1996. Organizational story and storytelling: a critical review. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 9(5), 5-26.
- Brown, J.S., Denning, S., Groh, K., Prusak, L., 2005. *Storytelling in organizations: Why storytelling is transforming 21st-century organizations and management*. Routledge.
- Cambra-Fierro, J.J., Flores-Hernández, J.A., Pérez, L., Valera-Blanes, G., 2020. CSR and branding in emerging economies: The effect of incomes and education. *Corporate Social Responsibility And Environmental Management*, 27(6), 2765-2776.
- Cannon, T. (2005). *Corporate responsibility: a textbook on business ethics, governance, environment: roles and responsibilities* (Pearson Education print on demand). Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Carlini, J., Grace, D., 2021. The corporate social responsibility (CSR) internal branding model: Aligning employees' CSR awareness, knowledge, and experience to deliver positive employee performance outcomes. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 37(7-8), 732-760.

- Carroll, C.E., Einwiller, S.A., 2014. Disclosure alignment and transparency signaling in CSR reports. In *Communication and language analysis in the corporate world* (pp. 249-270). IGI Global.
- Chang, C.P., 2009. The relationships among corporate social responsibility, corporate image and economic performance of high-tech industries in Taiwan. *Quality and Quantity*, 43, 417-429.
- Chang, S.C., Lu, M.T., Chen, M.J., Huang, L.H., 2021. Evaluating the Application of CSR in the High-Tech Industry during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Mathematics*, 9(15), 1715
- Cheney, G., McMillan, J.J., 1990. Organizational rhetoric and the practice of criticism. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 18(2), 93-114.
- Cho, M., Furey, L.D., Mohr, T., 2017. Communicating corporate social responsibility on social media: Strategies, stakeholders, and public engagement on corporate Facebook. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*, 80(1), 52-69.
- Cho, S.J., Chung, C.Y., Young, J., 2019. Study on the Relationship between CSR and Financial Performance. *Sustainability*, 11(2), 343.
- Christensen, C.M., 1997. *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. Boston Harvard Business Review Press.
- Christensen, L.T., Morsing, M., Thyssen, O., 2013. CSR as aspirational talk. *Organization*, 20(3), 372-393.
- Colombo, M.G., Piva, E., Quas, A., Rossi-Lamastra, C., 2016. How high-tech entrepreneurial ventures cope with the global crisis: changes in product innovation and internationalization strategies. *Industry and innovation*, 23(7), 647-671.
- Connelly, B.L., Certo, S.T., Ireland, R.D., Reutzel, C.R., 2011. Signaling theory: A review and assessment. *Journal of Management*, 37(1), 39-67.
- Conte, F., Vollero, A., Covucci, C., Siano, A., 2020. Corporate social responsibility penetration, explicitness, and symbolic communication practices in Asia: A national business system exploration of leading firms in sustainability. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 27(3), 1425-1435.
- Coombs, W.T., 2017. Revising situational crisis communication theory: The influences of social media on crisis communication theory and practice. In *Social media and crisis communication* (pp. 21-37). Routledge.
- Coombs, W.T., 2007. Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10, 163-176
- Coombs, W.T., 2004. Impact of past crises on current crisis communication: Insights from situational crisis communication theory. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 41(3), 265-289.
- Coombs, W.T., 1998. An analytic framework for crisis situations: Better responses from a better understanding of the situation. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 10(3), 177-191.

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

- Coombs, W.T., 1995. Choosing the right words: The development of guidelines for the selection of the “appropriate” crisis-response strategies. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 8(4), 447-476.
- Coombs, W.T., Holladay, S.J., 2002. Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets: Initial tests of the situational crisis communication theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 16(2), 165-186.
- Cormier, D., Magnan, M., 2015. The economic relevance of environmental disclosure and its impact on corporate legitimacy: An empirical investigation. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 24(6), 431-450.
- Currás-Pérez, R., Dolz-Dolz, C., Miquel-Romero, M.J., Sánchez-García, I., 2018. How social, environmental, and economic CSR affects consumer-perceived value: Does perceived consumer effectiveness make a difference?. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 25(5), 733-747.
- Danciu, V., 2014. Manipulative marketing: persuasion and manipulation of the consumer through advertising. *Theoretical and Applied Economics*, 21(2), 591.
- Delmas, M.A., Burbano, V.C., 2011. The drivers of greenwashing. *California Management Review*, 54(1), 64-87.
- Dietrich, G., 2014. *Spin sucks: Communication and reputation management in the digital age*. Que Publishing.
- Dunham, B., 2011. The role for signaling theory and receiver psychology in marketing, in: *Evolutionary Psychology in the Business Sciences*. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, pp. 225–256.
- Ely, R.J., Thomas, D.A., 2001. Cultural diversity at work: The effects of diversity perspectives on work group processes and outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46(2), 229-273.
- Epstein, E.M., 2007. The good company: Rhetoric or reality-corporate social responsibility and business ethics redux. *American Business Law Journal* 44, 207.
- Eriksson, M., Olsson, E.K., 2016. Facebook and Twitter in crisis communication: A comparative study of crisis communication professionals and citizens. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 24(4), 198-208.
- Erzikova, E., Bowen, S.A., 2019. Missed opportunities to make PR great again: How public relations agencies responded to the Trump Presidency. *Public Relations Review*, 45(5), 101793.
- Etter, M.A., Vestergaard, A., 2015. Facebook and the public framing of a corporate crisis. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 20(2), 163-177.
- Ferdman, B.M., Deane, B., 2014. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*. Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand.
- Ferrat, Y., Daty, F., Burlacu, R., 2023. The role of size effects in moderating the benefits of sustainable investing. *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*
- Godin, B., 2019. *The invention of technological innovation: languages, discourses and ideology in historical perspective*. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK.
- Golob, U., Podnar, K., 2019. Researching CSR and brands in the here and now: An integrative perspective. *Journal of Brand Management* 26, 1–8.

- Gong, N., Grundy, B.D., 2019. Can socially responsible firms survive competition? An analysis of corporate employee matching grant schemes. *Review of Finance*, 23(1), 199-243.
- Hall, K.R., Harrison, D.E., Obilo, O.O., 2021. Building positive internal and external stakeholder perceptions through CSR storytelling. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 31(7), 1317-1338
- Ham, C.D., Kim, J., 2019. The role of CSR in crises: Integration of situational crisis communication theory and the persuasion knowledge model. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 158, 353-372.
- Harrison, V.S., 2021. Does your corporation “care”? Exploring an ethical standard for communicating CSR relationships online. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 10(3), 333-356
- Hayes, J.L., Holiday, S., Park, H., 2022. Corporate social responsibility & the advertising strategic planning process: a literature review & research agenda. *International Journal of Advertising*, 41(2), 210-232.
- Henisz, W.J., 2017. *Corporate diplomacy: Building reputations and relationships with external stakeholders*. Routledge.
- Herbig, P.A., Milewicz, J., 1995. The impact of marketing signals on strategic decision-making ability and profitability. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 13(7), 37-46
- Huang, J.J., Tzeng, G.H., Ong, C.S., 2007. Marketing segmentation using support vector clustering. *Expert systems with applications*, 32(2), 313-317.
- Jia, Y., Gao, X., Billings, B.A., 2022. Corporate social responsibility and technological innovation. *Journal of Management Accounting Research*, 34(1), 163-186.
- Lawal, E., May, G., Stahl, B., 2017. The significance of corporate social disclosure for high-tech manufacturing companies: Focus on employee and community aspects of sustainable development. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 24(4), 295-311.
- Lee, S.Y., 2016. How can companies succeed in forming CSR reputation?. *Corporate communications: An international journal*, 21(4), 435-449.
- Lee, S.Y., Chung, S., 2018. Effects of emotional visuals and company–cause fit on memory of CSR information. *Public Relations Review*, 44(3), 353-362.
- Lee, S.Y., Zhang, W., Abitbol, A., 2019. What makes CSR communication lead to CSR participation? Testing the mediating effects of CSR associations, CSR credibility, and organization–public relationships. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 157, 413-429
- Lii, Y.S., Wu, K.W., Ding, M.C., 2013. Doing good does good? Sustainable marketing of CSR and consumer evaluations. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 20(1), 15-28.
- Lischka, J.A., 2019. Strategic communication as discursive institutional work: A critical discourse analysis of Mark Zuckerberg’s legitimacy talk at the European Parliament. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(3), 197-213.
- Ma, L., Zhan, M., 2016. Effects of attributed responsibility and response strategies on organizational reputation: A meta-analysis of situational crisis communication theory research. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 28(2), 102-119.

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

- Macnamara, J., Lwin, M., Adi, A., Zerfass, A., 2016. 'PESO' media strategy shifts to 'SOEP': Opportunities and ethical dilemmas. *Public Relations Review*, 42(3), 377-385
- Makri, M., Scandura, T.A., 2010. Exploring the effects of creative CEO leadership on innovation in high-technology firms. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), 75-88
- Mashiah, I., 2021. "Come and join us": How tech brands use source, message, and target audience strategies to attract employees. *The Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 32(2)
- Mashiah, I., 2022. *Communication and High-Tech: Journalism, Public Relations, and Media Culture*. Orion-Books Publishing House.
- Mashiah, I., 2023. *Tech-Diplomacy: High-Tech Driven Rhetoric to Shape National Reputation*. E-International Relations.
- Mashiah, I., 2024. The Rhetoric of Innovation in Non-Tech Personal Branding: Utilizing Tech Buzzwords as a Strategy for Political Messaging. *Political Studies Review*.
- Melissen, J., 2006. Public diplomacy between theory and practice. In *The present and future of public diplomacy: A European perspective*. The 2006 Madrid conference on public diplomacy. Madrid: Elcano.
- Melo, T., Galan, J.I., 2011. Effects of corporate social responsibility on brand value. *Journal of Brand Management*, 18, 423-437.
- Meyer, M., 2015. Positive business: Doing good and doing well. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 24, S175-S197.
- Michelon, G., Pilonato, S., Ricceri, F., 2015. CSR reporting practices and the quality of disclosure: An empirical analysis. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 33, 59-78.
- Moir, L., 2001. What do we mean by corporate social responsibility?. *Corporate Governance: The international journal of business in society*, 1(2), 16-22.
- Moliner, M.A., Tirado, D.M., Estrada-Guillén, M., 2019. CSR marketing outcomes and branch managers' perceptions of CSR. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 38(1), 63-85.
- Morgan, S., Dennehy, R.F., 1997. The power of organizational storytelling: a management development perspective. *Journal of Management Development*, 16(7), 494-501.
- Morsing, M., Schultz, M., 2006. Corporate social responsibility communication: stakeholder information, response and involvement strategies. *Business ethics: A European Review*, 15(4), 323-338.
- Moyano-Fuentes, J., Rodríguez-Martínez, A., Jiménez-Delgado, J.J., 2019. Territorial agglomerations and corporate social responsibility: the role of science and technology parks. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, 23(2), 180-203.
- Nielsen, A.E., Thomsen, C., 2007. Reporting CSR—what and how to say it?. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 12(1), 25-40.
- Okafor, A., Adeleye, B.N., Adusei, M., 2021. Corporate social responsibility and financial performance: Evidence from US tech firms. *Journal of cleaner production*, 292, 126078.

- Ordeix-Rigo, E., Duarte, J., 2009. From public diplomacy to corporate diplomacy: Increasing corporation's legitimacy and influence. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(4), 549-564
- Polonsky, M., Jevons, C., 2009. Global branding and strategic CSR: an overview of three types of complexity. *International Marketing Review*, 26(3), 327-347
- Prasad, A., Holzinger, I., 2013. Seeing through smoke and mirrors: A critical analysis of marketing CSR. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(10), 1915-1921.
- Pratihari, S.K., Uzma, S.H., 2018. CSR and corporate branding effect on brand loyalty: a study on Indian banking industry. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 27(1), 57-78
- Puchakayala, N.V. V, Nallamalli, U.B., Narapareddi, V., 2023. Corporate social responsibility: a way of enhancing financial performance—evidence from select NSE listed companies. *SN Business & Economics*, 3(7), 118
- Puncheva-Michelotti, P., Hudson, S., Jin, G., 2018. Employer branding and CSR communication in online recruitment advertising. *Business Horizons*, 61(4), 643-651.
- Rajak, D., 2011. *In good company: An anatomy of corporate social responsibility*. Stanford University Press.
- Rowe, J., 2006. Corporate social responsibility as business strategy. In *Globalization, governmentality and global politics* (pp. 122-160). Routledge.
- Sai Manohar, S., Pandit, S.R., 2014. Core values and beliefs: A study of leading innovative organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 125, 667-680.
- Samuel, Y., 1996. *Organizations: Features, structures, processes*. Zemora-Bitan and Haifa University [Hebrew], Or Yehuda.
- Sanclimente-Télez, J.C., 2017. Marketing and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Moving between broadening the concept of marketing and social factors as a marketing strategy. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC*, 21, 4-25
- Schramm, L., 2017. *Technological innovation: An introduction*. Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
- Schultz, F., Wehmeier, S., 2010. Institutionalization of corporate social responsibility within corporate communications: Combining institutional, sensemaking and communication perspectives. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 15(1), 9-29.
- Shang, Y., Liou, R.S., Rao-Nicholson, R., 2022. What to say and how to say it? Corporate strategic communication through social media during the pandemic. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 16(4), 633-648.
- Shim, K., Chung, M., Kim, Y., 2017. Does ethical orientation matter? Determinants of public reaction to CSR communication. *Public Relations Review*, 43(4), 817-828.
- Sole, D., Wilson, D.G., 2002. Storytelling in organizations: The power and traps of using stories to share knowledge in organizations. LILA, *Harvard, Graduate School of Education*, 9(1), 1-12.
- Stanwick, P.A., Stanwick, S.D., 1998. The relationship between corporate social performance, and organizational size, financial performance, and environmental performance: An empirical examination. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17(2), 195-204.

FROM CORPORATE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOW TECH BRANDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL REPUTATION

- Sterbenk, Y.M., Ward, J., Luttrell, R., Shelton, S., 2022. Silence has no place: A framing analysis of corporate statements about racial inequity, immigration policy and LGBTQ rights. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 27(2), 404-421
- Su, W., Peng, M.W., Tan, W., Cheung, Y.L., 2016. The signaling effect of corporate social responsibility in emerging economies. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 134, 479-491.
- Szybillo, G.J., Heslin, R., 1973. Resistance to persuasion: Inoculation theory in a marketing context. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 10(4), 396-403.
- Tangngisalu, J., Mappamiring, M., Andayani, W., Yusuf, M., Putra, A.H.P.K., 2020. CSR and firm reputation from employee perspective. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 171-182.
- Udayasankar, K., 2008. Corporate social responsibility and firm size. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(2), 167-175
- Uyar, A., Karaman, A.S., Kilic, M., 2020. Is corporate social responsibility reporting a tool of signaling or greenwashing? Evidence from the worldwide logistics sector. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 253, 119997.
- Verk, N., Golob, U., Podnar, K., 2021. A dynamic review of the emergence of corporate social responsibility communication. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 168, 491-515
- Vinsel, L., & Russell, A. L., 2020. *The innovation delusion: How our obsession with the new has disrupted the work that matters most*. Crown Currency
- Vollero, A., Yin, J., Siano, A., 2022. Convergence or divergence? A comparative analysis of CSR communication by leading firms in Asia, Europe, and North America. *Public Relations Review*, 48(1), 102142
- Wang, D.H.M., Chen, P.H., Yu, T.H.K., Hsiao, C.Y., 2015. The effects of corporate social responsibility on brand equity and firm performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(11), 2232-2236
- Wang, R., Huang, Y., 2018. Communicating corporate social responsibility (CSR) on social media: How do message source and types of CSR messages influence stakeholders' perceptions?. *Corporate communications: An international journal*, 23(3), 326-341.
- Weiss-Blatt, N., 2021. *The Techlash and Tech Crisis Communication*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Wokutch, R.E., Singal, M., Poria, Y., Hong, M., 2013. Crisis situations and role of strategic CSR in decision-making. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2013, No. 1, p. 16136). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management
- Xie, Q., Neill, M.S., Schauster, E., 2018. Paid, earned, shared and owned media from the perspective of advertising and public relations agencies: Comparing China and the United States. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 12(2), 160-179.
- Zadek, S., 2007. The path to corporate responsibility. In *Corporate ethics and corporate governance* (pp. 159-172). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Zairi, M., Peters, J., 2002. The impact of social responsibility on business performance. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 17(4), 174-178.

INVESTIGATING THE EFFICACY OF ECOWAS AND THE AFRICAN UNION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Abraham Ename MINKO*

ABSTRACT. This research examines the effectiveness of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) in resolving conflicts and promoting peace in Africa. Through comparative analysis, the study evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, and different strategies of these regional organizations. The methodology includes qualitative examination through documentary analysis and case studies. By analysing official documents, reports, and scholarly articles, the study explores the institutional structures and mechanisms used by ECOWAS and the AU. Case studies of conflicts in Mali, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo are used to understand the practical applications of their conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. The research aims to assess the effectiveness of ECOWAS and the AU in fostering peace and reconciliation in conflict-affected regions, identifying the challenges and limitations they face. Additionally, it provides recommendations for improving the capacity and effectiveness of these regional organizations in sustaining peace in Africa. By highlighting the comparative performance of ECOWAS and the AU, this study seeks to enhance the understanding of the role of regional organizations in managing conflicts and promoting peace on the African continent.

KEYWORDS: ECOWAS, African Union (AU), Conflict Resolution, Peacebuilding, Comparative Analysis.

Introduction

Background and Context

IN RECENT DECADES, AFRICA HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY NUMEROUS conflicts, ranging from interstate wars to internal strife fuelled by ethnic tensions, political instability, and economic grievances. These conflicts have had devastating consequences, including loss of life, displacement of populations, and hindrance to socio-economic development. Regional organizations have emerged as key actors in addressing these challenges, playing crucial roles in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts across the continent. Among these organizations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union

* ABRAHAM ENAME MINKO. Senior Researcher in Peace, Security, and Conflict Resolution. Ph.D. candidate in Political Science and International Relations. Istanbul University. Türkiye. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0565-0973> | Email: abrahamminko@gmail.com

(AU) stand out for their proactive interventions in managing conflicts and promoting stability in their respective regions. ECOWAS, founded in 1975, has been instrumental in fostering cooperation and integration among its member states in West Africa. It has deployed peacekeeping missions, mediated peace agreements, and facilitated political transitions in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau. For instance, ECOWAS played a pivotal role in resolving the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone by deploying military forces and mediating peace talks, ultimately contributing to the restoration of peace and stability in these countries.

Similarly, the African Union, established in 2001, has been actively involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts across the continent. One notable example is its intervention in the Darfur conflict in Sudan, where the AU deployed peacekeeping troops as part of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). While the mission faced challenges, including limited resources and coordination issues, it demonstrated the AU's commitment to addressing conflicts and protecting civilians in Africa. Despite the efforts of regional organizations like ECOWAS and the AU, challenges persist in achieving lasting peace in Africa. Conflicts continue to erupt, often fueled by complex socio-political dynamics and external influences. Moreover, regional organizations face constraints such as inadequate resources, institutional capacity gaps, and conflicting interests among member states. Therefore, understanding the background and context of conflicts in Africa, as well as the role of regional organizations in addressing them, is crucial for formulating effective strategies to promote peace and stability on the continent.

Research Objectives and Questions

The research objectives and questions of this study aim to delve into the efficacy of regional organizations, particularly ECOWAS and the African Union, in managing conflicts and fostering peace in Africa. By scrutinizing their approaches, mechanisms, and outcomes, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the role of these organizations in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts on the continent.

One primary objective is to analyse the institutional structures and mechanisms employed by ECOWAS and the AU in addressing conflicts in Africa. This involves examining the frameworks, protocols, and decision-making processes within these organizations to understand how they coordinate and implement conflict resolution initiatives. Through this analysis, the study aims to identify the strengths and weaknesses of ECOWAS and the AU in effectively managing conflicts within their respective regions.

Another objective is to assess the strategies and interventions deployed by ECOWAS and the AU in resolving conflicts in Africa. This entails examining the tools and methods utilized by these regional bodies, such as diplomatic mediation, peacekeeping operations, and peacebuilding initiatives. By evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies, the study seeks to discern which approaches yield positive outcomes and which encounter challenges in achieving sustainable peace.

Furthermore, the research aims to evaluate the impact of ECOWAS and the AU in promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in conflict-affected regions. This involves analysing case studies of specific conflicts, such as the crises in Mali, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, to assess the contributions of ECOWAS and the AU to peacebuilding efforts. By examining the outcomes of their interventions, the study aims to identify lessons learned and best practices for enhancing peacebuilding initiatives in Africa.

Overall, the research objectives and questions are geared towards providing a comprehensive understanding of the roles, challenges, and effectiveness of ECOWAS and the AU in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa. Through rigorous analysis and empirical evidence, the study aims to generate insights that can inform policy recommendations and enhance the capacity of regional organizations to address conflicts and promote peace on the continent.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa, particularly in understanding the role and effectiveness of regional organizations like ECOWAS and the African Union. In recent years, Africa has witnessed numerous conflicts with devastating human, social, and economic consequences. Amidst these challenges, regional organizations have emerged as key actors in facilitating peace processes and fostering stability across the continent.

By examining the experiences of ECOWAS and the AU in managing conflicts in Africa, this study offers valuable insights into the strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned from their interventions. Understanding the institutional structures, mechanisms, and strategies employed by these regional bodies is essential for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars seeking to develop effective approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa.

Moreover, the study's focus on comparative analysis adds further significance by enabling a nuanced understanding of the differences and similarities between ECOWAS and the AU in their approaches to conflict management. By analysing real-life examples, such as ECOWAS' involvement in the Liberian civil war or

the AU's peacekeeping mission in Darfur, the study sheds light on the factors that contribute to the success or failure of regional peace efforts.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have practical implications for policymakers and practitioners involved in peacebuilding initiatives in Africa. By identifying best practices, challenges, and areas for improvement, the study can inform the design and implementation of more effective conflict resolution strategies at the regional level. Additionally, the study's recommendations can guide policymakers in enhancing the capacity and coordination of regional organizations to address emerging security threats and promote sustainable peace on the continent.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform evidence-based policymaking, enhance the effectiveness of regional peace efforts, and contribute to the broader discourse on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, the study aims to make a meaningful contribution to efforts aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts in the region, ultimately contributing to peace and stability in Africa.

Theoretical Framework

Conceptualizing Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

Conceptualizing conflict resolution and peacebuilding involves understanding the multifaceted nature of conflicts and the strategies employed to address them effectively. Conflict resolution encompasses a range of processes aimed at managing, mitigating, or resolving disputes between parties. This can include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, or, in some cases, coercive measures such as sanctions or military intervention. Peacebuilding, on the other hand, goes beyond simply ending violence to address the root causes of conflict and build sustainable peace. It involves fostering reconciliation, promoting social cohesion, and addressing underlying grievances to prevent the recurrence of violence (Ogwu, 2008).

One real-life example of conflict resolution is the peace agreement brokered by ECOWAS in the Liberian civil war. In the early 1990s, Liberia was torn apart by a brutal civil war that claimed thousands of lives and displaced countless civilians. ECOWAS intervened diplomatically, facilitating negotiations between warring factions and eventually brokering the Abuja Accord in 1996. This agreement led to the establishment of a transitional government and paved the way for democratic elections, ultimately bringing an end to the conflict (Jaye, 2011).

Another example of conflict resolution is the Arusha Accords in Burundi, brokered by regional and international actors to end years of ethnic violence. The agreement established power-sharing mechanisms and addressed grievances

between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority, paving the way for a transitional government and ultimately contributing to stability in the region.

Peacebuilding efforts often extend beyond formal agreements to include grassroots initiatives aimed at fostering reconciliation and social cohesion. In Rwanda, following the genocide in 1994, community-based organizations such as the Association of Widows of the Genocide (AVEGA) played a crucial role in promoting healing and rebuilding trust among survivors and perpetrators. Through support programs, trauma counselling, and economic empowerment initiatives, AVEGA contributed to the long-term process of reconciliation and reconstruction in Rwanda (Terwase et al., 2018).

Moreover, transitional justice mechanisms, such as truth commissions and reparations programs, are integral to peacebuilding processes in post-conflict societies. In Sierra Leone, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) provided a platform for victims and perpetrators of the civil war to share their experiences and seek accountability. By acknowledging past atrocities and providing opportunities for healing and redress, the TRC aimed to promote reconciliation and prevent future conflicts.

Similarly, another notable example is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) established in South Africa after the end of apartheid. The TRC provided a forum for victims and perpetrators to testify about human rights abuses committed during the apartheid era. Through public hearings and amnesty provisions, the TRC sought to promote reconciliation and national healing, laying the groundwork for a peaceful transition to democracy.

Analysing these examples illustrates the complexity of conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes and the importance of tailored approaches to different contexts. While diplomatic negotiations and peace agreements may be effective in some cases, addressing deeper root causes of conflict such as inequality, injustice, and historical grievances requires sustained efforts over the long term. By conceptualizing conflict resolution and peacebuilding in this holistic manner, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies for promoting peace and stability in conflict-affected societies (Zied, 2017).

Role of Regional Organizations in Conflict Management

The role of regional organizations in conflict management is critical in addressing intra-state and inter-state conflicts within their respective regions. These organizations often possess a deep understanding of the local context, cultural dynamics, and geopolitical complexities, allowing them to leverage their unique position to facilitate dialogue, mediation, and peacebuilding efforts. One notable example is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has played a

pivotal role in managing conflicts in West Africa. During the Liberian civil war in the 1990s, ECOWAS deployed a peacekeeping force known as the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to enforce a ceasefire and facilitate negotiations between warring factions. ECOMOG's intervention helped stabilize the region and paved the way for a peaceful transition to democracy in Liberia ([Enaifoghe, 2018](#)).

Similarly, the African Union (AU) has emerged as a key actor in conflict management across the African continent ([Akinola, 2017](#)). The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) is responsible for preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts in Africa through diplomatic means, peacekeeping operations, and mediation efforts. One notable example of the AU's role in conflict management is its intervention in the Darfur crisis in Sudan. In 2004, the AU deployed a peacekeeping mission, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), to monitor the ceasefire agreement and protect civilians in Darfur. While AMIS faced challenges in its mandate and capacity, its presence demonstrated the AU's commitment to addressing conflicts and promoting peace in Africa ([Van Nieuwkerk, 2021](#)).

In the Great Lakes region of Africa, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) has been instrumental in addressing conflicts and promoting peace. For example, ICGLR facilitated the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, which brought together regional leaders and international partners to address the root causes of conflict in the DRC and neighbouring countries. Through diplomatic engagement and cooperation, ICGLR has contributed to mitigating tensions and fostering stability in the region ([Idike et al., 2014](#)).

Moreover, regional organizations often deploy peacekeeping missions to monitor ceasefires, protect civilians, and facilitate peace processes in conflict-affected areas. The East African Standby Force (EASF), a regional standby force established by the Eastern African states, has been involved in conflict management efforts in Somalia. EASF has deployed peacekeeping troops as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), contributing to the stabilization of the country and the restoration of government authority in areas previously controlled by militant groups like Al-Shabaab ([Idris Erameh, 2021](#)).

Additionally, regional organizations play a crucial role in post-conflict reconstruction and development by supporting peacebuilding initiatives and promoting socio-economic recovery. In the aftermath of the civil war in Mozambique, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitated the peace process and supported the country's transition to peace and democracy. SADC assisted demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, as well as initiatives for reconciliation and nation-building, contributing to the consolidation of peace and stability in Mozambique.

Furthermore, regional organizations often collaborate with international partners, such as the United Nations (UN) and other regional bodies, to enhance their capacity and effectiveness in conflict management. For instance, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has worked closely with the UN and other stakeholders to mediate political crises and promote stability in the Southern African region. In Zimbabwe, SADC facilitated negotiations between the ruling party and the opposition to resolve the political impasse following the disputed elections in 2008, leading to the formation of a unity government and the restoration of stability.

The role of regional organizations in conflict management is crucial in addressing the diverse challenges and complexities of conflicts in their respective regions. By leveraging their local knowledge, diplomatic networks, and institutional resources, these organizations can play a significant role in preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts, ultimately contributing to peace and stability in Africa (Williams, 2020).

Comparative Analysis Framework

The comparative analysis framework employed in this study allows for a systematic examination of the approaches, mechanisms, and outcomes of conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts by regional organizations, specifically ECOWAS and the African Union (AU). By comparing and contrasting the experiences of these two organizations, insights can be gained into their respective strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in managing conflicts and fostering peace in Africa.

One aspect of the comparative analysis framework is the examination of institutional structures and mechanisms within ECOWAS and the AU. This involves scrutinizing the organizational mandates, decision-making processes, and resource allocations of both organizations to understand how they operate in conflict management contexts. ECOWAS, with its smaller membership and more decentralized approach, often exhibits flexibility and agility in responding to crises within West Africa. In contrast, the AU, representing the entire African continent, faces challenges in achieving consensus among its diverse member states but possesses a broader mandate and greater resources for conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives. ECOWAS operates under a more decentralized structure with a history of robust military interventions, while the AU relies heavily on consensus-based decision-making and collaboration with external partners such as the United Nations.

Furthermore, the comparative analysis framework allows for an assessment of the strategies and interventions deployed by ECOWAS and the AU in resolving conflicts in Africa. By analysing specific case studies, such as ECOWAS' intervention in Liberia and the AU's mission in Darfur, the study can evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. For instance,

ECOWAS has a history of deploying military intervention forces, such as ECOMOG in Liberia, to enforce peace agreements and stabilize conflict zones. In contrast, the AU emphasizes diplomatic mediation and peacekeeping missions, as seen in its efforts to resolve the crisis in Darfur through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). ECOWAS' direct military intervention in Liberia may have contributed to the cessation of hostilities, but questions remain about its long-term sustainability and impact on reconciliation efforts.

Moreover, the comparative analysis framework facilitates an exploration of the outcomes and impact of conflict resolution initiatives by ECOWAS and the AU. This involves assessing factors such as the durability of peace agreements, the extent of societal reconciliation, and the prospects for sustainable development in conflict-affected regions. By examining the successes and failures of both organizations, the study can identify lessons learned and best practices for enhancing future peacebuilding efforts in Africa.

The comparative analysis framework provides a structured approach for understanding the role of regional organizations in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa. By systematically comparing the experiences of ECOWAS and the AU, the study aims to generate insights that can inform policy recommendations and contribute to the advancement of peace and stability on the continent. Through rigorous analysis and empirical evidence, the study seeks to contribute to the broader scholarly discourse on conflict management and regional integration in Africa.

Case Studies: ECOWAS and the African Union in Conflict Resolution

Overview of ECOWAS: Structure and Mechanisms

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) serves as a regional organization focused on promoting economic integration, peace, and stability in West Africa. Structurally, ECOWAS consists of several key institutions designed to facilitate cooperation and collaboration among its member states. At the heart of ECOWAS is the Authority of Heads of State and Government, which serves as the highest decision-making body. Comprising the presidents and heads of government of member states, the Authority sets the overall policy direction and guides on issues related to peace, security, and development in the region (Jaye, 2011).

In addition to the Authority, ECOWAS operates through a network of specialized institutions and bodies responsible for implementing its policies and programs. These include the ECOWAS Commission, which serves as the

executive arm of the organization, coordinating and implementing regional initiatives across various sectors. The Commission is supported by specialized directorates and departments focusing on areas such as peace and security, trade and industry, and human development, reflecting ECOWAS' multifaceted approach to regional integration and development (Ogwu, 2008).

Mechanisms within ECOWAS are designed to address a wide range of issues, including conflict prevention, mediation, and peacekeeping. One notable mechanism is the ECOWAS Standby Force, a multidimensional military force established to respond rapidly to crises and conflicts in the region. The Standby Force consists of military, police, and civilian components and is deployed by the ECOWAS Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (Zied, 2017).

A notable example of ECOWAS' mechanisms in action is its intervention in the conflict in Mali. In 2013, following a coup and the subsequent occupation of northern Mali by jihadist groups, ECOWAS deployed a peacekeeping mission known as the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). AFISMA, later integrated into the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), played a crucial role in stabilizing the country, supporting the restoration of state authority, and facilitating peace negotiations between the government and armed groups.

An example of ECOWAS' mechanisms in action is the organization's intervention in the conflict in Guinea-Bissau. In 2012, following a military coup in Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS deployed a peacekeeping mission known as ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) to restore constitutional order and stability. ECOMIB provided security assistance, facilitated dialogue among political stakeholders, and supported the transition to democratic governance, demonstrating ECOWAS' commitment to upholding peace and stability in the region (Ugo, 2018).

The overview of ECOWAS' structure and mechanisms highlights the organization's institutional framework and operational mechanisms for promoting peace, security, and development in West Africa. Through its various institutions and mechanisms, ECOWAS plays a crucial role in addressing conflicts, fostering cooperation, and advancing regional integration in the region.

ECOWAS Case Studies: Mali, Liberia, and Sierra Leone

ECOWAS has been involved in several notable case studies across West Africa, including Mali, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, where its interventions have played a significant role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts (Arthur, 2019).

In Mali, ECOWAS responded to the 2012 coup d'état and the subsequent occupation of northern Mali by jihadist groups by deploying the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). This peacekeeping mission aimed to stabilize the country, restore state authority, and facilitate peace negotiations between the government and armed groups. AFISMA's efforts were later integrated into the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), highlighting ECOWAS' collaboration with international partners in addressing complex security challenges.

Similarly, in Liberia, ECOWAS played a pivotal role in ending the country's protracted civil war through diplomatic mediation and military intervention. During the 1990s, ECOWAS deployed a peacekeeping force known as the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to enforce peace agreements and facilitate the transition to democracy. ECOMOG's intervention helped stabilize the country, pave the way for democratic elections, and ultimately contribute to the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia. ECOWAS's leadership in Liberia exemplifies its proactive approach to resolving conflicts and promoting peace in the region (Sampson, 2011).

In Sierra Leone, ECOWAS supported efforts to resolve the country's civil war through diplomatic mediation and peacekeeping operations. In 1999, ECOWAS deployed a peacekeeping force as part of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to support the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement and disarmament process. ECOWAS' engagement in Sierra Leone contributed to the cessation of hostilities, the reintegration of former combatants, and the consolidation of peace and democracy in the country. This example highlights ECOWAS's capacity to support peacebuilding initiatives and facilitate post-conflict reconstruction in conflict-affected regions (Enaifoghe, 2018).

These case studies illustrate ECOWAS' commitment to promoting peace, security, and stability in West Africa through diplomatic engagement, mediation, and peacekeeping operations. By addressing complex security challenges and supporting peace processes, ECOWAS has played a crucial role in resolving conflicts and advancing the cause of peacebuilding in the region. However, challenges remain, and ECOWAS continues to work alongside its member states and international partners to address emerging security threats and promote sustainable peace and development in West Africa.

Overview of the African Union: Structure and Mechanisms

The African Union (AU) serves as the premier continental organization in Africa, established to promote unity, peace, and development among its member

states. Structurally, the AU comprises several key institutions designed to facilitate cooperation and integration across the continent. At its core is the Assembly of the African Union, which consists of heads of state and government from all AU member countries. The Assembly sets the overall policy direction and provides strategic guidance on issues ranging from peace and security to economic development and governance, reflecting the diverse priorities and interests of AU member states (Magliveras et al., 2016).

In addition to the Assembly, the AU operates through a network of specialized organs and bodies responsible for implementing its decisions and programs. The AU Commission serves as the organization's executive arm, tasked with coordinating and implementing AU policies and initiatives. Led by the Chairperson, the Commission oversees various departments and directorates focusing on areas such as peace and security, political affairs, and social development, reflecting the AU's multidimensional approach to addressing the continent's challenges (Akinola, 2017).

Mechanisms within the AU are designed to address a wide range of issues, including conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding (Henke, 2019). The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) serves as the principal organ responsible for promoting peace, security, and stability in Africa. Comprising 15 member states elected by the Assembly, the PSC has the authority to take preventive and decisive action to address conflicts and crises on the continent, including the deployment of peace support operations.

An example of the AU's mechanisms in action is its intervention in the conflict in Somalia. In 2007, the AU deployed the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to support the Transitional Federal Government in its efforts to stabilize the country and combat insurgent groups like Al-Shabaab. AMISOM's peacekeeping efforts have played a crucial role in restoring security and creating space for political reconciliation in Somalia, demonstrating the AU's commitment to addressing complex security challenges on the continent (Kuster, 2018).

Moreover, the AU's engagement extends beyond traditional peacekeeping, encompassing preventive diplomacy, conflict mediation, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. In Sudan, the AU's involvement in mediating the Darfur crisis exemplifies its commitment to resolving complex conflicts. Through initiatives like the AU High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan, the organization has sought to facilitate dialogue and negotiate peace agreements, demonstrating its proactive approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

The overview of the AU's structure and mechanisms underscores the organization's institutional framework and operational mechanisms for promoting peace, security, and development in Africa. Through its various institutions and

mechanisms, the AU plays a central role in addressing conflicts, fostering regional cooperation, and advancing the collective prosperity of its member states (Pagoaga Ruiz de la Illa, 2017).

AU Case Studies: South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia

The African Union (AU) has been actively involved in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts in various regions of Africa, including South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Somalia. In South Sudan, the AU played a critical role in mediating the peace process and supporting efforts to end the civil war that erupted in 2013 (Hammed, 2015). Through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) mediation process, the AU, along with regional partners, facilitated negotiations between the government of South Sudan and opposition groups. The culmination of these efforts was the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan in 2018, which paved the way for a ceasefire, power-sharing arrangements, and the formation of a transitional government of national unity (Idike et al., 2014).

Similarly, the AU has been actively engaged in addressing the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly in the context of the ongoing instability in the eastern provinces. The AU, through its Peace and Security Council (PSC) and in collaboration with regional bodies like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), has supported diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. Additionally, the AU has deployed peacekeeping missions, such as the African Union Mission for Support to the DRC (MONUSCO), to facilitate the protection of civilians, support peace processes, and contribute to stability in the region (Kikvi, 2021).

In Somalia, the AU has been actively involved in peacekeeping operations through the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) since 2007. AMISOM's mandate includes supporting the Federal Government of Somalia in its efforts to stabilize the country, combat extremist groups like Al-Shabaab, and strengthen state institutions. The mission has made significant strides in improving security and creating an enabling environment for political reconciliation and state-building efforts in Somalia. Despite facing challenges, including asymmetric warfare and resource constraints, AMISOM remains committed to supporting Somalia's transition to peace and stability (Roy et al., 2015).

Overall, these case studies demonstrate the AU's multifaceted approach to conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa. Through diplomatic mediation,

peacekeeping operations, and support for political processes, the AU has played a crucial role in addressing conflicts and promoting peace and stability in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and other conflict-affected countries on the continent.

Comparative Analysis and Findings

Comparative Assessment of ECOWAS and AU Approaches

A comparative assessment of the approaches employed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) reveals distinct strategies and methodologies for addressing conflicts and promoting peace and stability across Africa.

ECOWAS has often demonstrated a more proactive and interventionist approach to conflict resolution within its West African region. The organization has utilized military interventions, such as the deployment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), to enforce peace agreements and stabilize conflict zones. For example, during the Liberian civil war, ECOMOG played a crucial role in restoring stability and facilitating the transition to democracy. Similarly, in response to the 2012 coup in Mali, ECOWAS swiftly deployed troops as part of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) to combat insurgents and restore constitutional order. Also, in response to the political crisis in The Gambia in 2017, ECOWAS deployed troops to enforce the outcome of democratic elections, demonstrating its commitment to upholding constitutional order and democratic principles within the region.

In contrast, the African Union tends to prioritize diplomatic mediation and multilateral cooperation in addressing conflicts continent-wide. The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) serves as a key mechanism for conflict prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding. For instance, in Sudan, the AU has played a leading role in mediating peace talks and facilitating the implementation of peace agreements, such as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, which led to the independence of South Sudan. Additionally, the AU has supported peacekeeping missions, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), to stabilize conflict-affected regions and combat extremist groups.

Despite these differences, both ECOWAS and the AU share common objectives of promoting peace, security, and development in Africa. While ECOWAS focuses primarily on regional conflicts within West Africa, the AU adopts a continental approach, addressing conflicts across the entire African continent. Moreover, both organizations recognize the importance of

collaboration with regional and international partners, including the United Nations and other regional bodies, in their peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts (Maiangwa, 2016).

A comparative assessment of ECOWAS and the AU approaches reveals complementary strategies aimed at addressing conflicts and promoting peace and stability in Africa. While ECOWAS adopts a more interventionist approach within its regional sphere, the AU emphasizes diplomatic mediation and multi-lateral cooperation on a continental scale. By leveraging their respective strengths and capabilities, ECOWAS and the AU contribute significantly to conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts, ultimately advancing the collective goal of a peaceful and prosperous Africa (Terwase et al.,2018).

Effectiveness of Conflict Resolution Strategies

The effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies employed by regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) can be evaluated through real-world examples of their interventions in addressing conflicts across the African continent.

ECOWAS has demonstrated the effectiveness of its conflict resolution strategies through its proactive and interventionist approach to regional conflicts. For instance, during the civil war in Liberia, ECOWAS deployed the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to enforce peace agreements and stabilize the country. ECOMOG's intervention not only contributed to ending the conflict but also facilitated the transition to democratic governance in Liberia, underscoring the efficacy of ECOWAS's military intervention in restoring peace and stability.

Similarly, the AU has proven the effectiveness of its conflict resolution strategies through its diplomatic mediation and peacebuilding efforts. In Sudan, the AU played a pivotal role in mediating the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, which ultimately led to the independence of South Sudan. By facilitating peace talks and negotiations between conflicting parties, the AU demonstrated its ability to resolve complex conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy, showcasing the effectiveness of its conflict resolution strategies in achieving lasting peace.

Furthermore, both ECOWAS and the AU have shown effectiveness in their peacekeeping efforts, contributing to stabilizing conflict-affected regions and creating conducive environments for peacebuilding. For example, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has played a crucial role in supporting the Federal Government of Somalia in combating extremist groups and stabilizing the country. Likewise, ECOWAS has deployed peacekeeping missions, such as the

ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB), to support political transitions and restore stability in conflict-affected countries.

The effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies employed by ECOWAS and the AU is evident in their tangible contributions to resolving conflicts, promoting peace, and fostering stability across Africa. Through their diplomatic, military, and peacekeeping interventions, both regional organizations have demonstrated their capacity to address complex security challenges and advance the cause of peace and security on the continent (Ebegbulem, 2011).

Challenges and Limitations Faced by ECOWAS and AU

While ECOWAS and the African Union (AU) have made significant strides in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, they face several challenges and limitations that impact their effectiveness in addressing conflicts across Africa.

One prominent challenge is the limited capacity and resources of both organizations. ECOWAS, comprised of West African states with varying levels of economic development and political stability, often grapples with resource constraints and logistical challenges in deploying peacekeeping missions and implementing peacebuilding initiatives (Foley, 2004). Similarly, the AU, representing 55 member states with diverse interests and priorities, faces challenges in mobilizing adequate financial and human resources to support its peacekeeping operations and conflict resolution efforts continent-wide. These limitations can hinder the organizations' ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emerging conflicts and crises.

Additionally, both ECOWAS and the AU encounter institutional and governance challenges that undermine their effectiveness in conflict resolution (Kumar, 2008). Weak institutional frameworks, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and limited coordination among member states can impede decision-making processes and hinder the implementation of peace agreements. Furthermore, political divisions and rivalries among member states may undermine the unity and coherence of ECOWAS and the AU, affecting their ability to act collectively and decisively in addressing conflicts.

Another significant challenge is the complex and evolving nature of conflicts in Africa, characterized by ethnic tensions, religious extremism, and transnational threats (Kateřina, 2019). ECOWAS and the AU often struggle to address the root causes of conflicts and manage multidimensional security challenges effectively. For example, in the Sahel region, where terrorism, organized crime, and inter-communal violence intersect, ECOWAS and the AU face difficulties in developing comprehensive strategies to address these interconnected security threats.

Furthermore, both organizations encounter external challenges, including interference from external actors and geopolitical rivalries that exacerbate

conflicts and complicate peacebuilding efforts. For instance, interventions by external powers in Libya and the Central African Republic have further destabilized these countries and undermined regional stability, presenting challenges for ECOWAS and the AU in managing the spillover effects of these conflicts.

While ECOWAS and the AU play crucial roles in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa, they confront a myriad of challenges and limitations that impact their effectiveness. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to strengthen institutional capacity, enhance coordination among member states, mobilize adequate resources, and develop comprehensive strategies to address the complex and evolving nature of conflicts on the continent.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Enhancing Peacebuilding Efforts

Lessons learned from the experiences of ECOWAS and the African Union (AU) in peacebuilding efforts offer valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing conflict resolution and stability across Africa. One key lesson is the importance of regional ownership and leadership in peacebuilding processes (Apuuli, 2020). ECOWAS and the AU have demonstrated that regional organizations are often better positioned to understand the root causes of conflicts and design context-specific solutions tailored to the needs and dynamics of the region. For example, ECOWAS's leadership in mediating conflicts in West Africa, such as in Liberia and Sierra Leone, highlights the effectiveness of regional actors in fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and sustainable peace.

Moreover, effective coordination and collaboration among regional organizations, international partners, and local stakeholders are essential for successful peacebuilding efforts. ECOWAS and the AU have emphasized the importance of partnerships and synergies in mobilizing resources, sharing expertise, and leveraging comparative advantages to address complex security challenges (Pagoaga Ruiz de la Illa, 2017). For instance, the joint efforts between ECOWAS and the AU in deploying peacekeeping missions, such as in Guinea-Bissau and Mali, demonstrate the value of collaborative approaches in enhancing the impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives.

Furthermore, promoting inclusivity and ensuring the participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups in peacebuilding processes are critical for sustainable peace and development (Magliveras et al., 2016). ECOWAS and the AU have recognized the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and voices in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. For example, the AU's Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and ECOWAS's Gender Policy Framework

advocate for gender-sensitive approaches and the inclusion of women in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding activities.

Additionally, building strong institutions and promoting good governance are essential for fostering peace and stability. ECOWAS and the AU have underscored the need for effective governance structures, rule of law, and respect for human rights as foundational elements of peacebuilding (Kikuvi, 2021). For instance, ECOWAS's engagement in supporting democratic transitions and electoral processes in countries like Nigeria and Ghana demonstrates the organization's commitment to promoting democratic governance as a means to prevent conflicts and consolidate peace (Abatan, 2015).

The lessons learned from ECOWAS and the AU underscore the importance of regional leadership, partnership, inclusivity, and good governance in enhancing peacebuilding efforts in Africa. By applying these lessons and recommendations, regional organizations, international partners, and local stakeholders can work together to address conflicts, promote sustainable peace, and advance the collective goal of a peaceful and prosperous Africa.

Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

The summary of key findings from the analysis of the conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts of regional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) underscores several significant insights and outcomes (Ayissi, 2020).

Firstly, it is evident that both ECOWAS and the AU play vital roles in addressing conflicts and promoting peace and stability across Africa (Akinola, 2017). Through their diplomatic mediation, peacekeeping operations, and peacebuilding initiatives, these regional organizations have made notable contributions to resolving conflicts and preventing the escalation of violence in conflict-affected regions.

Secondly, the analysis highlights the importance of regional ownership and leadership in conflict resolution processes (Udo, 2020). ECOWAS and the AU have demonstrated that regional organizations are often better positioned to understand the root causes of conflicts and design context-specific solutions tailored to the needs and dynamics of the region. Examples such as ECOWAS's mediation efforts in Liberia and Sierra Leone and the AU's role in Sudan and Somalia underscore the effectiveness of regional leadership in fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and sustainable peace (Williams, 2020).

Moreover, effective coordination and collaboration among regional organizations, international partners, and local stakeholders are essential for successful peacebuilding efforts (Henke, 2019). Both ECOWAS and the AU have emphasized the value of partnerships and synergies in mobilizing resources, sharing expertise, and leveraging comparative advantages to address complex security challenges. Examples such as joint peacekeeping missions and collaborative peace initiatives demonstrate the significance of collective action in enhancing the impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives (Mushtaq, 2019).

Furthermore, promoting inclusivity and ensuring the participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups emerge as critical factors for sustainable peace and development (Apuuli, 2020). ECOWAS and the AU have recognized the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and voices in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. Initiatives such as the AU's Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and ECOWAS's Gender Policy Framework highlight the significance of gender-sensitive approaches and the inclusion of all stakeholders in peacebuilding processes (Kuster, 2018).

In summary, the analysis of ECOWAS and the AU's conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts reveals key findings that underscore the importance of regional leadership, partnership, inclusivity, and good governance in fostering peace and stability in Africa (Van Nieuwkerk, 2021). By leveraging these insights, regional organizations, international partners, and local stakeholders can work collaboratively to address conflicts, promote sustainable peace, and advance the collective goal of a peaceful and prosperous Africa.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The implications drawn from the analysis of conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts by regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) have significant ramifications for policy and practice in addressing conflicts across Africa.

Firstly, policymakers and practitioners should recognize the importance of strengthening regional capacities and institutions for conflict prevention, management, and resolution. Investing in the institutional capacity of regional organizations like ECOWAS and the AU can enhance their ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emerging conflicts, thereby preventing the escalation of violence and instability in conflict-affected regions. For example, providing financial and logistical support to bolster ECOWAS's mediation efforts and AU's peacekeeping operations can contribute to strengthening regional mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Moreover, policymakers and practitioners should prioritize the promotion of inclusive and participatory approaches to peacebuilding, ensuring the meaningful involvement of women, youth, and marginalized groups in decision-making processes. By incorporating diverse perspectives and voices, policymakers can develop more comprehensive and context-specific strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. For instance, implementing quotas for women's representation in peace negotiations and integrating youth-led initiatives into peacebuilding programs can help address underlying grievances and promote social cohesion in conflict-affected communities.

Furthermore, policymakers and practitioners should adopt a holistic approach to addressing the root causes of conflicts, including addressing governance challenges, socioeconomic inequalities, and marginalization. By addressing structural drivers of conflicts, such as political exclusion, economic deprivation, and social injustice, policymakers can create the conditions necessary for sustainable peace and development. For example, supporting initiatives to strengthen democratic governance, promote respect for human rights, and address socioeconomic disparities can contribute to building resilient societies that are less prone to conflict and violence.

Additionally, policymakers and practitioners should prioritize the strengthening of partnerships and collaboration among regional organizations, international partners, and local stakeholders. By leveraging complementary strengths and resources, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and impact of peacebuilding efforts. For instance, fostering closer coordination between ECOWAS, the AU, the United Nations, and other regional and international actors can facilitate information-sharing, resource mobilization, and joint initiatives to address complex security challenges and promote peace and stability in Africa.

In conclusion, the implications for policy and practice are drawn from the analysis of ECOWAS and the AU's conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts underscore the importance of strengthening regional capacities, promoting inclusive approaches, addressing root causes of conflicts, and enhancing partnerships and collaboration. By incorporating these insights into policymaking and practice, stakeholders can work collaboratively to address conflicts, promote sustainable peace, and advance the collective goal of a peaceful and prosperous Africa.

Future Research Directions

Future research directions in the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa offer opportunities to deepen our understanding of the dynamics, challenges, and best practices in addressing conflicts on the continent.

One area of future research could focus on examining the role of emerging regional actors and non-state actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. With the changing geopolitical landscape and the rise of new regional powers and non-state actors, such as China, Turkey, and private military contractors, there is a need to understand their influence on conflict dynamics and peacebuilding processes in Africa. For example, research could explore the impact of China's growing involvement in peacekeeping operations and infrastructure development projects on conflict-affected countries in Africa and assess its implications for regional stability and governance.

Moreover, future research could delve into the intersectionality of conflicts, including the nexus between climate change, environmental degradation, and conflict dynamics. As climate change exacerbates resource scarcity, competition over land, water, and natural resources may fuel conflicts and exacerbate existing tensions in fragile contexts. Research could examine the linkages between environmental stressors, conflict dynamics, and peacebuilding efforts, and explore innovative strategies for addressing environmental drivers of conflicts and promoting sustainable peace and resilience.

Furthermore, there is a need for research that evaluates the effectiveness of innovative peacebuilding approaches and methodologies, including technology-enabled peacebuilding, arts-based peacebuilding, and youth-led peace initiatives. By harnessing the potential of digital technologies, creative arts, and youth engagement, researchers can explore new avenues for promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and social cohesion in conflict-affected communities. For example, research could assess the impact of digital platforms, such as social media and mobile applications, in facilitating dialogue and reconciliation among conflicting parties, or evaluate the role of arts-based interventions, such as theatre and music, in fostering empathy and understanding across divides.

Additionally, future research could focus on assessing the long-term outcomes and sustainability of peacebuilding interventions, including transitional justice mechanisms, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. By conducting longitudinal studies and comparative analyses of peacebuilding initiatives in different contexts, researchers can identify lessons learned, best practices, and areas for improvement in building durable peace and resilience in conflict-affected societies.

In conclusion, future research directions in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa offer opportunities to explore new frontiers, address emerging challenges, and advance innovative solutions for promoting peace and stability on the continent. By embracing interdisciplinary approaches, leveraging new technologies, and engaging diverse stakeholders, researchers can contribute to

building a more evidence-based and effective framework for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Africa and beyond.

References

- "Investing In peace and security in Africa: the case of ECOWAS." In Robert Picciotto, Rachel Weaving (eds,) *Security and Development. Investing in Peace and Prosperity*, 343–58. Routledge, 2007. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781315879222-28>.
- Abatan, J. E. A. "Challenges facing the African Union (AU) in the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P): a case study of the 2010/2011 intervention in Côte d'Ivoire." Diss., 2015. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/44206>.
- Akinola, A. O., and Ufo O. U. "Ubuntu and the Quest for Conflict Resolution in Africa." *Journal of Black Studies* 49, no. 2 (October 28, 2017): 91–113. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0021934717736186>.
- Aning, E. K. "Investing in peace and security in Africa: the case of ECOWAS." *Conflict, Security & Development* 4, no. 3 (December 2004): 533–42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1467880042000320050>.
- Apuuli, K. P. "The African Union and Peacekeeping in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities." *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations* 20, no. 4 (December 15, 2020): 667–77. http://dx.doi.org/10.22363/2313-0660_2020-20-4-667-677.
- Arthur, P. "Economic Community of West African States, Regional Security and the Implementation of Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: Rhetoric or Reality?" *Insight on Africa* 11, no. 2 (July 2019): 162–83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0975087819845195>.
- Ayissi, A. "Three Decades of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Africa: Lessons Learned and Challenges Ahead." In Terence McNamee · Monde Muyangwa (Eds.) *The State of Peacebuilding in Africa*, 141–62. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46636-7_9.
- Ebegbulem, J. C. "Nigeria and conflict resolution in Africa: The Darfur experience." *Civilizar* 11, no. 21 (July 1, 2011): 69. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22518/16578953.34>.
- Enaifoghe, A. O. "Conflicts Intervention and Peace-Building Mechanisms in the West Africa Sub-Region." *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies* 10, no. 4(J) (September 14, 2018): 300–310. [http://dx.doi.org/10.22610/jebbs.v10i4\(j\).2429](http://dx.doi.org/10.22610/jebbs.v10i4(j).2429).
- Foley, E. A. "Taking a critical look at conflict resolution and human rights from the Organisation of African Unity to the African Union." Diss., University of Pretoria, 2004. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/1083>.
- Hammed, H. A. "Appraising the Role of African Union: the New Partnership for Africa's Development in Conflict Prevention and Management in Africa." *International and Comparative Law Review* 15, no. 2 (December 1, 2015): 69–88. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/iclr-2016-0036>.

INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/ REGIME IN WEST AFRICA

- Henke, M. E. "Resisting Rebels in Chad and the Central African Republic." In *Constructing Allied Cooperation*, 134–50. Cornell University Press, 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7591/cornell/9781501739699.003.0007>.
- Idike, A. N., and Agu, S. U. "African Union and Intra-State Conflict Resolution: A Return to the Libyan Crisis (2011)." *International Journal of Public Administration* 37, no. 8 (July 2014): 466–73. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2013.837071>.
- Idris E. N. "The African Union and its expanding role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution in the post-Cold War era." In Ernest Tooche Aniche, Ikenna Mike Alumona and Innocent Moyo (eds.) *Regionalism, Security and Development in Africa*, 207–22. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2021. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781003025856-17>.
- Iwilade, Akin, and Uchechukwu Agbo, J. "ECOWAS and the Regulation of Regional Peace and Security in West Africa1." *Democracy and Security* 8, no. 4 (October 2012): 358–73. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2012.734228>.
- Jaye, T. "Consolidating Regional Security:" In *ECOWAS and the Dynamics of Conflict and Peace-building*, 195–208. CODESRIA, 2011. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvk8w0dp.17>.
- Kikuvi, M. M. "Challenging Issues in the Horn of Africa (2016- 2021): The Role of the African Union Commission in Conflict Resolution." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 05, no. 07 (2021): 120–26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2021.5703>.
- Kumar, M. "The African Union: Its Contribution to Conflict Resolution." *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 64, no. 3 (July 2008): 106–37. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/097492840806400305>
- Magliveras, Konstantinos, and Asteris H. "Understanding Success and Failure in the Quest for Peace: The Pan-African Parliament and the Amani Forum." *Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 11, no. 2-3 (March 11, 2016): 275–91. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1871191x-12341336>.
- Maiangwa, B. "Assessing the Responses of The Economic Community of West African States to the Recurring and Emerging Security Threats in West Africa." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 52, no. 1 (July 28, 2016): 103–20. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0021909615570951>.
- Mushtaq N. "Amisom." In *War and Peace in Somalia*, 167–76. Oxford University Press, 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190947910.003.0014>.
- Ogwu, U. Joy. "ECOWAS and Regional Security Challenges." In *Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace*, 791–800. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2008. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-75977-5_62.
- Pagoaga Ruiz de la Illa, A. "International dispute settlement in Africa: Dispute Settlement and Conflict Resolution under the Organization of African Unity, the African Union, and African Traditional Practices: A Critical Assessment." *Deusto Journal of Human Rights*, no. 3 (December 11, 2017): 57–92. http://dx.doi.org/10.18543/aahdh_3-2006pp57-92.

- Prinsloo B. L. "The AU/UN hybrid peace operation in Africa: a new approach to maintain international peace and security / Barend Louwrens Prinsloo." Thesis, 2012. <http://hdl.handle.net/10394/11076>.
- Roy, Goode, Kronke H., and McKendrick E., eds. *Part V International Dispute Resolution, 18 International Civil Procedure*. Oxford University Press, 2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/law/9780198735441.003.0019>.
- Rudincová K. "African Solution to African Problems: AU and the Conflict Resolution in South Sudan." *Politeja* 15, no. 56 (June 18, 2019): 169–91. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12797/politeja.15.2018.56.10>.
- Sampson, I. T. "The Responsibility to Protect and ECOWAS Mechanisms on Peace and Security: Assessing their Convergence and Divergence on Intervention." *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 16, no. 3 (December 1, 2011): 507–40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/krr022>.
- Terwase, Isaac T., Olubukola S. A., Gloria S. P., and Asmat-Nizam A-T. "The Role of ECOWAS on Peace and Conflict Resolution in Nigeria and Gambia." *IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences (ISSN 2455-2267)* 12, no. 3 (September 15, 2018): 55. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss.v12.n3.p1>.
- Udo, E. J. "The Dialogic Dimension of Ubuntu for Global Peacebuilding." In *Handbook of Research on the Impact of Culture in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding*, 302–22. IGI Global, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-2574-6.ch018>.
- Ugo, V. *Part 2 The Post-Cold War Era (1990–2000), 37 The ECOWAS Intervention in Liberia—1990–97*. Oxford University Press, 2018. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/law/9780198784357.003.0037>.
- Van Nieuwkerk, A. "Peacekeeping and security through the African Union." In *Conflict Resolution and Global Justice*, 148–67. London: Routledge, 2021. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781003026747-10>.
- Wicomb, W. "Testing the water while the house is on fire: a critical approach to the African Union conflict management system." Diss., University of Pretoria, 2008. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/8066>.
- Williams, P. D. "Learning Lessons from Peace Operations in Africa." In *The State of Peacebuilding in Africa*, 15–32. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46636-7_2.
- Yusuf, Abdulqawi, and Fatsah Ouguergouz. 2012, *The African Union: Legal and Institutional Framework: A Manual on the Pan-African Organization*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, pp. 303-333.
- Zied, A. *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Area of Peace and Security between the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities, and the Coordinating Mechanism of the Regional Standby Brigades of Eastern Africa and Northern Africa, 1st June 2008, OXIO 243*. Oxford University Press, 2017. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/law-oxio/e243.013.1>

INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/ REGIME IN WEST AFRICA: A POST-MORTEM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MALI, GUINEA AND BURKINA FASO CONUNDRUM IN THE PAST THREE YEARS

Mustapha A. HARUNA | A. T. AYEGBUSI |
Muhammad Saheed SULAIMAN *

ABSTRACT. This paper examines the recent surge of military coups in West Africa, which threatens the region's democratic principles. These coups have spread across countries like Chad, leading to the suspension of elected governments. The study conducts a comparative analysis to explore the underlying issues of these military interventions. Although the rise of constitutionalism and popular democracy suggested that military rule was outdated, recent events in Myanmar, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Chad indicate otherwise. Key factors contributing to these coups include corruption, inefficiency of the political class, electoral malpractice, dictatorial leadership, ethnicism, nepotism, and socio-economic crises. The study suggests solutions such as promoting good governance, addressing economic and social defects with regional and global support, ensuring resolute regional bodies against coups, supporting international measures to punish coupists, and resisting external interference in African affairs. The paper relies on secondary data and employs the coups contagion theory as its analytical framework.

Keywords: Civil-Military relations; Coup d'etat; military adventurism; military intervention; professionalism.

INTRODUCTION

THE OCCURRENCE OF MILITARY COUPS AND INCURSION INTO countries' political life have been features of some West African people in this century. From Latin America to Asia, the Middle East and Africa, the displacement or the threat of the displacement of elected governments by overt military action have been recurrent incidences in statecraft, which could be from minimum influence to direct martial rule (Karabeliae, 1998:

* Mustapha Ayodele Haruna PhD. Department of Political Science, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo state, Nigeria. Correspondence Author: harunmustapha721@gmail.com

A. T. Ayegbusi Ph. D Department of Political Sciences, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Muhammad Saheed Sulaiman Ph.D Department of Sociology, Federal University Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria.

9). The very apparent reason for the military rise to power is that it is the sector most accurate at using force, as force continues to be the most prevalent strategy of political change in Africa since the early 1960s. More than eighty (80) leaders have been deposed through military takeover. At the same time, numerous coup attempts have been foiled as it has been noted that violence is the major vehicle for a change of government with no other means. However, some of the civilian elected governments were at one time or the other military heads of their states coming into power through a coup d'etat in the first place (Clifford, 1984: 5; Source, 2010:2; Abang, 2022: 140; Kamanu, 1974: 362).

The politics of the continent has been changing these days thoughtfully as engineered by the re-surface of the military to power, as being called "The grand coming to politics by the barrel of the gun" as noted by three segments of coups: (i) constitutional coup by current presidents ruthlessly destroy the ideal platform on their own initiated exercise of sit-tight manner for tenure extension whereby affecting and destroying the political legitimacy of the system; (ii) the military takeover has participated in electoral malpractices to bisect the electoral results and consequently crisis of legal dimension, while (iii) is the combination of one and two above that leads to the military incursion into power (Ibrahim, 2022, p. 9; Wells, 1974: 4).

According to Ballie (2018):

... democracy's reverse waves, the overwhelming transitions from democracy ... took the form either of military coups that ousted democratically elected leaders or executive coups in which democratically chosen chief executives effectively ended democracy by concentrating power in their own hands. The latter could not have occurred without the backing of the military or the support of other elements of the security sector more broadly (Ballie, 2018: 7).

Recent military interventions in politics have demonstrated the growing securitisation of governance. The army suspends the constitutional system and presents itself as an alternative to civilian governments that cannot adequately execute the people's affairs (Obisie-Orlu, 2022: 6).

According to Ibrahim (2021):

The military forces of yesteryears are coming back fully. They seek signs of the people's dissatisfaction with the bad governance of incumbent governments and popular protest, and they ride on that (coverage) to power in the promises of quick returns to new regimes of proper democratic governance; however, they promptly institute (constitute) and other rounds of lousy governance (Ibrahim, 2021: 10).

These happenings depend on the division between authoritarianism and constitutionalism of democratisation in a region where governments for few years have witnessed democratic normalcy in governance, which by their

recurrent occurrence of military coups have undermined regional cooperation and partnership, resulting in states' fragilities and weak credence, to military apologists, extremist groups and ultra-nationalist groups who believe in just existence of the state regardless of who governs them (Sany, 2022: 11). The reason the coupists or, more precisely, segments among the military view the takeover of political power as a necessary means to correct the problems or challenges of political elites. In most cases, it arrests the people's minds through their widespread approval or disapproval of the critical defect of democratic acceptance and ownership as governance has been negatively practiced by the political elites (Onunaiju, 2022: 6).

Military coups have been a source of hope for Africans who have suffered under corruptive and repressive governments over the years and sought intervention somehow from any quarters to stop the abuses and carnage inflicted on their people by their civilian governments (Bellie, 2018: 20). The duration of transitions after coups is worrisome as countries and international and regional organisations usually decide on a certain number of months for the time of the transition, while the Junta often accepts but fails to the promises (Tsafac, 2022: 4; Baboucarr & Bosco, 2020: 68).

According to Yabi, cited in ADF (2022):

People are fed up and want results from their governments. There is certainly a trend of democratic regression in the region. What the countries of the region need is not only elections, out only democracy, but also states that work for the interests of the people. As long as they are not going to offer adequate responses to the governance deficit, coups are going to multiply (ADF, 2022: 3).

Military intervention has come from several factors like their background and typologies; they represent another disposition of the struggle for political power, prevention, and control elites in single-party states, leading to military incursions to seize power from the incumbent civilian administration. Thus, a specific reason for coups in West Africa has been ethnic rivalry arising from cultural disparities, political differences and the existence of a powerful army and security services with polarised officers' corps. Rivalry among the elites within the military and the political class in the political system have greatly encouraged military intervention in the region (Marc et al., 2015, p. 103); the scenario made the current Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation Anthony Guterres (2022) to describe Africa and the occurrence as "epidemic of military coups", which by implication, Africa and precisely West Africa is known as the land of military rules as against the norms of international law of political legitimacy and representation with power vested in the electorates and its mandates given to them to elect their leaders democratically (Johari, 2013: 372 Megan & Brian 2022) noted that military interventions had become exponentially situated

to the poorest states in the world as the current trend of the military takes over match into that path as a reference point.

Timeline of the history of military coups in Africa from the 1950s to date.

In Africa, various countries gained independence from their Colonial masters or within for political administration. Shortly afterward, their sovereignties became truncated internally through the interventions of military coups and counter coups, which have held states hostage, by armed security forces who have abandoned their own traditional functions of security, maintenance of law and order and, above all, preserving both the internal and external sanctity of the states to governance. Below is the timeline of countries that have been affected by military coups from the 1950s to date in different periodisations:

Table 1: Coups in Africa from 1950 – 1999

S/N	NAME OF COUNTRY	YEAR OF COUP	CAUSES OF COUP
1.	Benin	1963, 1972, 1977.	i. Economic decline ii. To prevent civil war
2.	Burkina Faso	1966,1974,1980, 1982,1983, 1983, 1987	i. Demonstration against austerity, ii. Economic decline iii revolution introducing a leftist programme. iv. Officers' personal grievances.
3.	Gambia	1981, 1994	i. failed coup ii. decline in government legitimacy.
4.	Ghana	1966,1972,1975, 1978,1981	i. Economic decline incurred by high foreign debt ii. Ethnic and class differences iii corruption iv mal-administration v.. Military attitudinal cohesiveness.
5.	Guinea	1984	i. power struggle between Conte and members of his party.
6.	Guinea Bissau	1980	i. power struggle between Viera and members of his cabinet.
7.	Ivory coast	None	None
8.	Liberia	1980	i. Corruption ii. economic decline.
9.	Mail	1968, 1991.	i Economic decline ii. Domestic problem.
10.	Niger	1974,1995.	1974- i. political crisis in the single party system ii. Civil disorder iii. Misappropriation 1995- i. social and economic crisis ii. Conflict between the president and prime minister.
11.	Mauritania	1977, 1979,1980.	i. accusation of president Daddah’s participation in Western Sahara war ii. Economic decline.
12.	Nigeria	1966,1967,1976, 1983,1985,Nov 1990, 1993.	i. <i>Wetie</i> crisis in western Nigeria ii. Marginalization iii. Counter coup due to the first coup tagged Igbo officer organised coup ii Economic

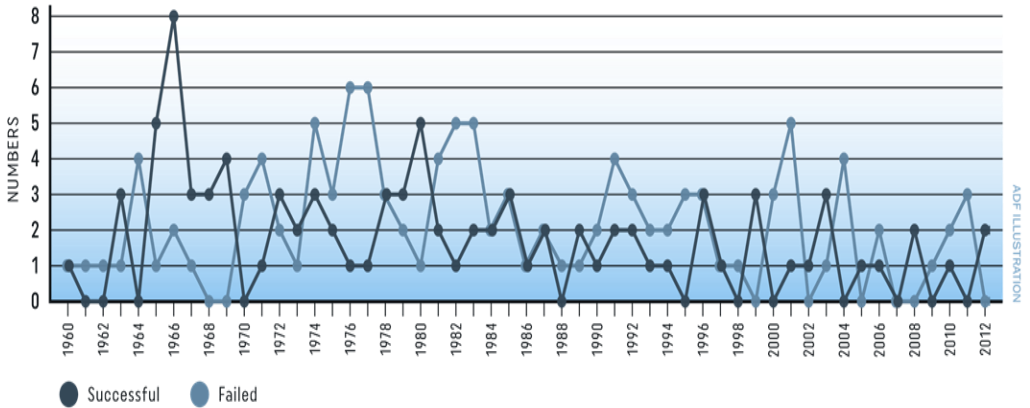
INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/
REGIME IN WEST AFRICA

S/N	NAME OF COUNTRY	YEAR OF COUP	CAUSES OF COUP
			decline iv. domestic political crisis v. Officers' personal grievances vi. Corruption.
13.	Senegal	None	None
14.	Sierra Leone	1967, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997	i. armed forces dissatisfied with their low wages ii. Officers' personal grievances iii. corruption, mismanagement conspiracy leading to arrest of officers.
15.	Togo	1963, 1973	i. Officers' personal grievances, president Olympio rejected the plea of Sergeant Eyadema Etieme from the French army to join the Togolese army ii. Military attitudinal cohesiveness.
16.	Central African Republic	1963	i. Corruption, slow economic growth, political rebels at the border.
17.	Burundi	1966, 1993 abortive and 1996	i. Accusation of Ethnic cleansing due to assassination of the prime minister.
18.	Cameroon	1984	Abortive attempt.
19.	Gabon	1964	Military uprising.
20.	Chad	1975	i. army mutiny, accusing president Tombalbaye of tribalism and disregard for the military.
21.	Congo	1963, 1986, 1977, 1979 and 1997	i. Congolese soldiers against their white Belgian commander at the Thysvillie military base for high pay ii. Economic decline iii. Political crisis.
22.	Equatorial Guinea	1979	i. fighting between loyalist and rebel ii accusation of genocide against Budi people ii External influence.
23.	Rwanda	1979	i. Betrayal between the chief of army staff who is a friend to the president Kayibanda ii genocide.
24.	Zaire	1960, 1965, 1997	1960- i. division of power between the president and Parliament ii. Political instability 1965 - Popular uprising 1997- ii. Destabilization of the eastern part of the country.
25.	Djibouti	None	None
26.	Ethiopia	1960, 1974	1960- i. attempted coup 1974- ideology, a non-ideological middle ranking officers abolished monarchy and adopted Marxism and Leninism.
27.	Kenya	1981	i. failed attempt.
28.	Somalia	1969, 1991	i. Economic decline ii Domestic political crisis iii. Officers' personal grievances.
29.	Tanzania Zanzibar	1964	Failed coup.
30.	Uganda	1971, 1980	i. Officers' personal grievances- Idi Amin afraid that president Obote would dismiss him from the army. ii. Class action by the military.
31.	Angola	None	None

S/N	NAME OF COUNTRY	YEAR OF COUP	CAUSES OF COUP
32.	Botswana	None	None
33	Lesotho	1970, 1986, 1991	1970- i. Coup was triggered by the victory of the opposition Bastoland congress party 1986 and 1990 Power struggle between General Lekhanya and the King Moshoehoe II iii. Military grievances.
34.	Malawi	None	None
35	Mozambique	1975	Failed attempt.
36	Namibia	None	None
37.	Swaziland	None	None
38.	South African	None	None
39.	Zambia	1997	Abortive attempt.
40.	Zimbabwe	None	None
41.	Cape Verde	1980,	i. Guinea Bissau coup led to the abandonment of the unification with Cape Verde.
42.	Comoro Island	1995	i. due to rotational presidency ii impoverished country.
43.	Madagascar	1972, 1975, 1992	i. political transition crisis ii popular unrest iii. abuse of power over the killing of hundred people.
44.	Mauritius	None	None
45.	Sao tome & Principe	1995	i. Military attitudinal cohesiveness due to six months delay in their salary ii, poor living condition of the soldier.
46.	Seychelles	1977,1980,1986,1995	1980 failed attempt ii external influence iii political crisis
47.	Egypt	1952	i. for political, economic and social change ii. Military attitudinal cohesiveness.
48.	Libya	1969	i. . Officers' personal grievances- al-fateh revolution carried out by 70 free unionist officers led by Col Gaddafi ii. Abolished the Libyan monarchy.
49.	Tunisia	None	None
50.	Morocco	None	None
51.	Algeria	1965	i. bad governance ii revolutionary army iii. Military attitudinal cohesiveness.
52.	Sudan	1958, 1968, 1990	i. Contagion from other regional coups, ii. Economic decline iv. Domestic political crisis v. Officers' personal grievances.
53.	Southern Sudan	None	None

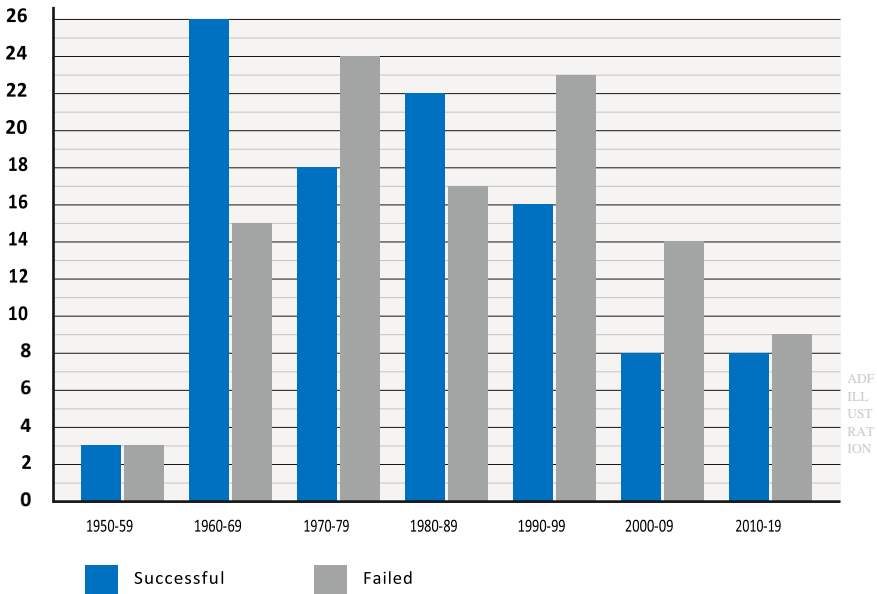
INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/
REGIME IN WEST AFRICA

Fig 1: TRENDS IN AFRICAN MILITARY COUPS, 1960-2012



Source: Africa Defense Forum (2021) Professionalism with a Purpose. Pp. 16

Fig 2: MILITARY COUPS IN AFRICA OVER THE DECADES



Source: Africa Defense Forum (2021) Professionalism with a Purpose. Pp. 16

Table 2: Timeline of Military coups in Africa from 2013-2022

S/N	Name of country/state	Date of occurrence(s) of military coups in that country	Remark (either attempted or actual)
1	Algeria	-	-
2	Angola	-	-
3	Benin	2013	Attempted Coup
4	Botswana	-	-
5	Burkina Faso	2014, 2015, 2016, 2022	Both
6	Burundi	2015	Attempted
7	Cameroon	-	-
8	Cape verde	-	-
9	Central African Republic	2013, 2021	-
10	Chad	2013	-
11	Comoros island	2013	-
12	Congo	-	-
13	Cote 'd ivoire	-	-
14	Democratic Republic of Congo	2013	Attempted Coup
15	Djibouti	-	-
16	Egypt	2013	-
17	Equatorial Guinea	2017	-
18	Eritrea	2013	-
19	Ethiopia	2019	Attempted coup
20	Gabon	2019	Attempted coup
21	Gambia	2014,2017	-
22	Ghana	-	-
23	Guinea	2008, 2021, 2022	Attempted coup
24	Guinea – Bissau	2003, 2004, 2010, 2011, 2012	-
25	Kenya	-	-
26	Lesotho	2014	Attempted coup
27	Liberia	-	Attempted coup
28	Libya	2013, 2014, 2018	Attempted coup
29	Madagascar	-	-
30	Malawi	-	-
31	Mali	2022, 2020, 2021	Real coups
32	Morocco	-	-
33	Mauritania	-	-
34	Mauritius	-	-
35	Mozambique	-	-
36	Namibia	-	-
37	Niger	-	-

INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/
REGIME IN WEST AFRICA

S/N	Name of country/state	Date of occurrence(s) of military coups in that country	Remark (either attempted or actual)
38	Nigeria	-	-
39	Rwanda	-	-
40	Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)	-	-
41	Sao Tome & Principe	2022	Attempted coup
42	Senegal	-	-
43	Seychelles	-	-
44	Sierra Leone	-	-
45	Somalia	-	-
46	South Africa	-	-
47	South Sudan	-	-
48	Sudan	2019, 2021	-
49	Swaziland	-	-
50	Tanzania	-	-
51	Togo	-	-
52	Tunisia	-	-
53	Uganda	-	-
54	Zambia	-	-
55	Zimbabwe	2017	-

Source: (i) Ibrahim, J. (2021) *Coups and the Spectre of Military Rule in West Africa*. (ii) Author's Compilation from countries' Database and Website (2023).

THEMATIC AREA STUDIES.

(i) *Malian Army in Statecraft*

The narrative and assumption that the military is a key factor and a formidable institution in Malian politics, in which it has been involved and sustained as far back as decades ago, is evidently proved by recent events, while it has remained a mediator greatly to the state of Mali both in peace (governance) and war (terrorism) periods. It has come to be a consolidating force in the politics of Mali (Sow, 2021: 232). The country was created in 1960 with Modibo Keida as the president. Lt. Moussa Traore later ousted him, was deposed in 1991 by Amadou T. Toure, Alpha Oumar Konare in 1992, Amadun Sanogo in 2012, and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita from 2013 – to 2020.

It has witnessed several military coups since its independence in 1960, where the military has significantly influenced the country's governance. As such, the history of Mali is not complete without the role of the Military, which it has played and continues to play in the country's affairs (Akinterinwa, 2022:

6). Intermittent Military intervention of the military in Malian politics has led to the government's inability to resolve political crises, respect democratic principles and ensure the provision of social services, the escalation of security and military challenges in the Sahel region of the country where hundreds of security forces have been killed by terrorist groups operating along northern Mali which have paralysed many activities and make the country ungovernable for the government especially, civilian governments where the stability of any government rests upon (Ibrahim, 2021, p. 8).

To Ibrahim (2021) that:

The Malian tragedy has been exacerbated by the 2021 coup d'etat, which began on the night of May 24 2021, when the army led by Vice President Assimi Goita arrested President Bah N'daw and Prime Minister Modar Quane. Assimi Goita, the head of the Junta that led the 2020 Malian Coup d'etat, announced that N'daw and Qane were stripped of their powers and that new elections would be held in 2022. It is the country's third coup d'etat in ten years. Nine months before the 2021 coup, in August 2020, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was removed from power by a military alliance. This followed months of unrest in Mali following irregularities in the March and April Parliamentary elections and outrage against the kidnapping of opposition leader Soumaila Cisse (Ibrahim, 2021, p. 6).

Inferring from the above indicates that the factors of terrorism (violent extremism), security challenges, political transition question and controversy, issues of governance, state and institutions are existential indicators for the Malian Military coups and the people of Mali for continuous reign or incursion of the military in governance. At the same time, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) desires to impose Mali with an embargo or military intervention, which has not worked based on the 2001 ECOWAS supplementary protocol on Democracy and Good Governance for the above-mentioned reasons within the country. West Africa is now the focal centre of military takeover of civilian governments as the region witnessed 69 attempted coups over 70 years (Lowe, 2022: 7; Maclean, 2022: 6; Dan-Suleiman, 2022: 3). The government's mismanagement of insurgencies, corruption, the impact of COVID-19 and the bad state of the economy were principal reasons for the coup (Misra & 18 Track, 2022: 8).

(ii) *Guinea's Military in the Power Play Politics.*

To Bah (2015) that:

The military establishment has been heavily involved in Guinean Politics for many years, exhibiting varied political behaviours. This protected military involvement in Guinean political affairs presented a threat to

Guinea's stability in a region where large-scale armed conflicts are often associated with military intervention in politics (Bah, 2015: 69).

The current military incursion to power was staged on September 5, 2021, when former president Conte contested in the third term presidential election, which he won after the change of the nation's constitution allowed him to run in October 2022 election by one Col. Mamadi Doumbouya, head of the *Gouvernement des forces spéciales* (GPS), an elite unit of the Guinean army announced the overthrow of the government and took over the affairs of state from the nation's independence in 1958. The first coup took place, led by Colonel Lansana Conte, who ruled for 24 years from the first president who died until Col. Lansana died in 2008. He was rushed replaced by Captain/Moise Dadis Camera, who was equally removed from office as many military and external actors ganged up to work out a democratic transition in 2010; while Mr Conte emerged from the democratic process of the election, he became autocrat and dictatorial where his administration represented widespread poverty, bad governance, political instability and weak governmental institutions for political expediency till 2021 (Zounmenou, 2021: 8; Kaledzi, 2021: 4; Floratta, 2021: 12)

The amendment of the constitution by former president Conte triggered the recent military coup principally when he changed the normal two terms to three terms for the president's office. The economic mismanagement, the regime's corruption, and the perception and reception of the international community to the change of government hardly condemned or opposed the military coup in reality (Devermont, 2021: 10).

(iii) Burkina Faso's Military in Power Struggle in Governance with the Civilian Administrators

Impoverished by decades of misgovernment and political instability characterised by military coups and counter-coups, Burkina Faso is currently freewheeling, and urgent intervention and actions are required to halt its slide into lawlessness and restore constitutional authority. The deposition of Burkina Faso's military leader (a captain) in September is the country's second coup in a year. The world should unite to oppose the serial usurpation of constitutional authority there... (Editor, 2022: 3)

It gained independence from France in 1960 with relative peace and stability in the country. After six years as a sovereign state, the country was plunged into a political crisis with the first military coup on January 3, 1966, where President Maurice Yameogo was deposed and replaced by the chief of staff in person of Aboubakar Sangoule Lamizaria. By 1980, the then head of state was again overthrown, led by Colonel Saye Zerbo. In 1982, another military coup occurred,

which ousted the then Saye Zerbo led by Major-Jean Baptiste Quedrago, while in 1983, another coup d'etat happened led by captain Thomas Sankara and the eventual takeover of the country by Blaise Compaore (through the seizure of power) from 1987 to 2014, while his regime was authoritarian to a free press and extending his tenure beyond the limit term as social, economic and political crises were prevalent. A popular uprising eventually deposed him because he wanted to remain in office. Marc Roch Christian Kobrore replaced him in the first transition of power from military regime to democratic civilian rule (Cohen, 2015: 10; Editor, 2022: 15). By 2022, President Kobore was removed from power because of the deteriorating security challenges and internal insurgency in the country and his failure to unite the country together. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damida led the coup, and lately, within a few months in 2022, there was a palace coup where the head of state in the person of Paul – Henri Sandago, was removed and replaced by Ibrahim Traoke due to the reasons that the former leader failed to address the armed uprising and terrorism issues in the country. As such, the military coups over the years have induced social divisions, caused economic hardship, deprivation, and the failure to institutionalised political culture (Sawo, 2017: 8; Redaction Africanews, 2022: 2)

Essentially, from the preceding comparative analysis of selected countries' military coups (Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso) and those ones like Guinea Bissau, Chad and Niger which were not examined but belonged to their household. It can be argued that the issue of francophone, neocolonialism, armed struggles, foreign powers and dependency are indicative features in French colonised African countries than British anglophone nations, where they gained their independence mostly through negotiations, constitutional conferences rather than through armed struggles, protests and confrontations inherent in French colonised states which make ultimately the struggle for powers part of their political socialisation and culture in their policy of assimilation though with their different and various reasons for staging coups with different results and consequences to their states and citizens.

The argument is further stressed as noted by Sanny (2022) that:

These upheavals cement this African region as the most pronounced global crisis centre. Poor and authoritarian governance is breeding extremism and transitional criminality, igniting violence and undermining efforts to build democracies (Sanny, 2022: 12)

While Omokiri (2021) noted:

The military incursion into politics has transmitted all the West – Africa with the domineering effect that is staggering and unflattering as a result of military coups (Omokiri, 2022: 4)

Irabor (2022) observed that "one single factor for these negative events is when a leader stays beyond his/her time, which makes such leader lose focus and eventually weakens the governmental institution, paving the way for a non-democratic force to take over governance."

CAUSES/REASON ASSOCIATED WITH MILITARY COUPS

Notwithstanding the utility and contending issues on military coups, the following reasons/ causes have been advanced that aided their incursion/intervention into statecraft and governance, among others:

- Weak electoral performances: - some democratic practices are not enduring, sustainable and formidable enough to withstand long-term exercises. They are too fragile and weak to grow for years. They break down over time to create cracks and holes for military opportunists to come in as correcting partners. This is more peculiar in developing countries where the democratic principles are not stable, concrete and consolidated (Aytogo, 2022: 4)
- Structural conditions such as economic policies, social mobilisation, and political pluralism are not constant and do not last beyond a limited period.
- Sudden policy changes, structural adjustments or environmental impacts on agricultural goods sometimes increase the possibility of coups.
- Polarisation of the military and lack of professionalism could trigger coups.
- Lack of free and fair elections and the effect of sit-tight syndrome.
- Mismanagement and marginalisation of critical sectors of the country involved.
- Unwillingness to admit electoral defeats after elections
- Greed and selfishness of political leaders
- Political instability and the spread of insurgency that have manifested into extreme violence in the societies.
- Foreign interests and interference by foreign powers for economic, strategic, and ideological reasons, especially during the Cold War (Singh, 2022: 72).
- Contagious effects of military intervention in neighbouring countries.
- Lack of definite responsibility for the military in a period of peace.
- Inefficiency of the political parties. (Isilow, 2022: 4; Chukweumeka, 2022: 4; Hi-roi & Omori, 2013: 52; Lehouca, 2021: 12; Handy, Akum & Djlo, 2020: 6; Duzor & Williamson 2022: 6)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

The study adopted the coup contagion theory as the framework for analysing the work. The theory anchors on the contagion effects of military intervention in power politics as it is usually transmitted, copied and emulated from one country to another. To Richard and Thompson, "it is the extent to which military groups in one country influences in some fashion the occurrence of coups in other countries" What this paper addresses is the analysis of some of the popular contending issues on the theory that has brought to fore by scholars and writers as vast number of studies done on the concept of military intervention in politics and its linkages to recent coups in three west African countries.

Richard & Thompson (1975) explored the theory of coup contagion using a world sample and noted that a coup is very likely in one country after a coup happened in another country, while James Lutz (1989) and Luned (2016) observed that one coup in a country increased the likelihood of a coup in the neighbourhood countries. Coup spread because coup planners learn from other actions as contacts and common experience any military elites which have promoted the stage for mutual influence across national boundaries; others observed imitated actions of their colleagues in other states whose leaders encourage military intervention in other countries for their personal gains. It is a phenomenon that emphasises the possibility of behavioural reinforcement processes operating within global and regional communication networks. Among the writers, theorists, and proponents of coup contagion include Feller, W. (1943), Fossum, E. (1956), Huntington S. P. (1962), Johnson, J. (1962), and Decalo, S. (1976), amongst others. The utility of the theory lies in the fact that it is easily transmitted by others, mutually exclusive and competing. It gets help and support from external powers and influence to undertake its task. The theory has defected that: (i) the aftermath of a coup is less important to agitators, (ii) what might anticipate coup contagion, (iii) without capturing post-coup reality, (iv) findings are not likely to get the condition that leads to coup rightly and (v) Government can prevent coup through corrective measures put in place. Above all, the linkage of the theory to the study means that military personnel can get attracted to coup-making, planning and execution easily because of fellow security men succeeding in establishing one or many, as the case may be, without any penalty whatsoever from any quarter. The leverage to military intervention is at their will sequel to the similarity of occurrences and events abound to their emulations anytime. The asymmetrical relationship between a state being currently ruled by the military and its immediate neighbour(s) not ruled by such (but democratic in principle and practice) could get attracted by its military elites into the coup contagion style and conundrum saga (Toprak & Mishra, 2022: 8; Pat & Thomas, 1984: 634).

DYNAMICS OF POST-MORTEM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MALI, GUINEA AND BURKINA FASO CONULDRUM.

Though France colonised the three countries in the 1950/60s, the three states are currently being administered by the military through coup d'etats with different fundamental factors/reasons for their political incursions. Regardless that they are situated in West Africa, they have their past governed by the military with violent histories of protection and resistance to intra and interstate administrations. Their people, regardless of acceptance or rejection, have different views on military interventions, democracy and security challenges. Internal Structures in the three countries are also similar in terms of Governments' institutions, political elites' perceptions of governance, nation-building, civil-military relations and level of a sustainable tendency to social, economic, cultural, and identity crises and development problems.

The countries' coups have raised decisive conflicting interests that threaten regional peace and security at various stages (France, ECOWAS and the African Union). At the same time, they intend to replace France with Russia as a replacement for their security challenges. Their people always support coup d'etat when it occurs, and their problem is always the same. As such, Mali and Burkina Faso have asked for the withdrawal of French troops from their countries with an ultimatum for France to leave within a few periods, while Russia has been seen playing a substitute role to France. Essentially, they share critical similarities and differences in their states' relations with the military coup d'etat and military establishment at large.

THE CONCEPT/MODEL OF POLITICAL NEUTRALITY OF THE MILITARY AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS.

The concept of political neutrality means every government would like to command an army of loyal, trustworthy, competent and dedicated people who are committed to its causes and core values and strictly execute its actions and decisions independently without any political influence (Caiden, 1996: 23). It connotes that the military should stay out of partisan politics. The military should not engage in activities relating to or supporting candidates, issues noted with national and state, political parties and their associated organisations/programmes or group discussion, or agent/ advocate for or against a political party. This is necessary to prevent policies from dividing the military from discharging its role in society since such acts will bring cohesion and maintain/preserve

authority (Davidovi, 2021: 4). The principle of non-partisanship serves as one core factor in the element of the military profession (Friend, 2017:2). It means the military concentrates on defending the territorial integrity of the country, it must not be partisan in its dealings with all political interests, it must be apolitical (Olaniyi;1998: 19)

However, an evaluation and critique by scholars sometimes reviewed the opposite of the above narratives and assertions. To Olaniyi (1998) that:

The concept of political neutrality of the military is problematic. For instance, while the instrumental factor argues that the military is formed to safeguard the nation's territorial interests, the same reason has been advanced to justify their political intervention. The military has often claimed to be motivated to intervene in order to sanitise the political process and protect the constitution, law and order. Thus, if the instrumental rule is to keep the military out of politics, it can also bring them into the political system. The impartial principle also seems contradictory. While the military is expected to be indisposed to any act, the political class has, over the years, been instrumental to the military seizure of power. In some instances, the politicians publicly unto the military to seize power from political opponents.

Similarly, many coup d'etats have taken place in the past following the arbitrary use of power by the party in power. It happened under President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, who outlawed opposition parties. Politicians, in their bid to perpetuate their authority, often invite their military allies to either suppress opposition or take over the reins of government completely (Olaniyi, 1998: 20).

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The idea of civil control of the military is rooted in the notion of a representative government, which means the supremacy of civilian institutions based on popular sovereignty over the defence and security-making apparatus, including the military leadership. (Kujat, 1998: 3). It is the interdependence of the two realms-politics and military in every society as they mutually depend on one another where statecraft and warfare exist (Olaniyi, 1998: 16). It is equally the control of the military and civilian administration in their power distribution/relationship where the civilian leaders are the principal, and the military is their agent created for their own needs and for the society at large (Gaub, 2016: 9). It is to have a positive atmosphere of working relationships between them and to let the public know the contribution the military makes locally, internally, and globally under the watch of the civilian leaders.

The relationship must be in the model below:

- Assist in collaborative peace and security;

- Be accountable to civil authorities, society and relevant oversight parastatals;
- Adhere to internal and global rule of law;
- Conduct planning and budgeting transparently;
- Respect human rights and oblige to cultural diversities;
- Subject itself to political control of operational and financial matters;
- Conduct regular consultations with civil society and;
- Conduct itself professionally (Africa-Defence forum); and
- Including civil education programmes for better understanding and commitment.

Civil-military relations have typologies that theorists like [Finer \(1962\)](#) propounded on four types of civil-military relations: (I) the military often exercise their legal and constitutional influence on the civilian leadership (ii) military uses the threat of some sanctions of blackmail to achieve their goals (iii) whenever they topple a civilian government with another one because the former failed to governed well towards them (iv) military decided to take away the civilian governments and assume the political leadership. [Huntington \(1962\)](#) opined on the three types of civil-military relations: (i) he distinguished cases which resembled a 'palace coup', (ii) those that resembled a 'reform coup' and (iii) those that resembled a 'revolutionary coup'. [Janowitz \(1964\)](#) noted three typologies: (i) aristocratic, (ii) democratic and (iii) totalitarian. [Luchan \(1961\)](#) argues that the military establishment's role in a country's political affairs is based on objective and subjective controls. [Nordlinger \(1977\)](#) based the typology on three: moderators, guardians and rulers. [Clapham & Philip \(1985\)](#) based their typology on the veto, moderator, factional and breakthrough ([Karabelias, 1998, p. 11](#)). The above civil-military relations typologies are based on the countries' peculiarities, perspectives, and cultural and ideological factors available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Military coups and their intervention tendencies are endemic in nature and practice and could be tamed structurally and systematically. The following measures could be adopted as policy options for its end to military incursions into politics:

- The government should strengthen security sector governance to promote civil-military relations and professionalism in the security sector and democratic control, e.g., of the military.

- Regional bodies like ECOWAS and the African Union must be decisive, frank, and unbiased in their contempt for all manners of military coups. The AU should uphold its anti-coup norms.
- Prevent the sit-tight syndrome in the Executive term limit and institutional checks and balances.
- Protection of fundamental human rights and address economic, social and political deficits.
- Punishing coup plotters by refusing to grant them asylum, placing them on the travel ban and freezing their accounts/assets
- They are liberalising African states for radical change and to move in the direction of good governance.
- Budgetary, institutional training and a doctrinal model will be needed to prevent a military coup, and the government must improve its oversight functions.
- Address the socio-economic exclusion of the youths, nepotism and colonial mentality of imperialism for perpetual subjugation.
- Demilitarising the political process in African states.
- Prevent external control and influence over military coups through an internal strong mechanism for resistance and popular movement for sustainable platforms.

CONCLUSION

The paper examined the history of military coups in three West African countries, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, because of the constant and perpetual military intervention/incursion in politics in recent times, which was reviewed three years back and conducted a post-mortem assessment of the reality in these countries. Findings revealed that colonial background (France's imposition of its policy of assimilation), security and terrorism challenges in the Sahel region had accentuated reasons for coups, fragile democratic platforms, the contagion effect in the neighbourhood as well as the political history of the affected countries, the sit-tight syndrome of political leadership and the emergent economic/social contradictions in the world, which have given rise to military intervention and their various reasons to stay put. The study, therefore, concludes that good governance, inclusive democracy, transparency and accountable, formidable governmental institutions and robust civil-military relations will bring enduring democratic consolidation to these countries if the above indicators are adhered to in order to place the military establishment within its

traditional/constitutional role of protection and preservation of the countries from external attacks through defence and security of their respective people.

REFERENCES

- Abang, SO (2022) The Emerging Realities in Military coups in Africa: An Explanation. *KIU Journal of Humanities*, 7 (2):139-146
- Africa Defense Forum (2021) *Professionals with a purpose*. Retrieved from ADF.MAGAZINE.COM Accessed online January 20, 2023
- Africa Defense forum (2022) *What's Behind West Africa's Rash of coups?* Retrieved from <https://adf-magazine.com>. Accessed online June 6, 2022.
- Ajayi, A. I. & Olu Adeyemi, I. (2015). Resurgent Military Political Adverturism in West Africa: Implications for the survival of democracy. *African Research Review* 9(2): 91- 103.
- Akinterinwa, B.A (2022) Coups d'etat as instrument of France Non-grate in Africa: The cases of Mali and Burkina Faso. *This Day*. Retrieved from www.thisdaylive.com. Accessed online January 20, 2023.
- Ayitoga, N. (2022) 2023: *Military influence dwindles in Nigerian elections*. Retrieved from <https://www.premiumsng.com>. Accessed online July 10, 2022.
- Baboucarr, J. & Bosco, V. (2022) United Nations-African union cooperation conflict prevention and mediation" in Sharamo. R & Ayangatac, C. (eds) *The space of human security in Africa: An assessment of institutional preparedness*. Pretoria institute for security studies.
- Bah, M.D (2015) The military and Politics in Guinea. *Armed Forces and Society*, 41 (1):69-95.
- Ballie, C. (2018). *The African Military in a Democratic Age*. Retrieved from <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/the-african-military-in-a-democratic-age/> 2018/2. Accessed online June 7, 2022.
- Barka, H. B. & Ncube, M. (2012) Political fragility in Africa: Are military coups d'etat a Never-ending phenomenon? *African Development Bank*. Retrieved from www.afdb.org/files/publications. Accessed online April, 25, 2022.
- Caiden, G.E (1996) "The concept of neutrality" In Asmerom, H.K, Reis, E.P (eds) *Democratized and Bureaucratic Neutrality*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chukwuemeka, E.S (2020) *11 Reasons for Military intervention in Nigerian politics*. Retrieved from scholarly.com/reasons-for-military... Accessed online January 20, 2023.
- Clapham, c. & Philip, G. (1985) (eds) *The political Dilemmas of Military Regimes*. London: Croom Helm.
- Clifford, D.M (1984) Military Rule is contagious in Africa. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1984/05/06/weekinreview/military-rule-is-contagious-in-africa.html>. Accessed online June 6, 2022.

- Cohen, H.J (2015) *Civil conflict, civil society: a history of political and social change in Burkina Faso*. Retrieved from [www.peaceinsight.org>articles>ci](http://www.peaceinsight.org/articles/ci). Accessed online January 20, 2023.
- Dan-suleiman, M. (2022) Why West Africa has had so many coups and how to prevent one. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/why-west-africa-has-how-so-many-and-how-to-prevent-one/>. Accessed online June 6, 2022.
- Davidavic, J. (2021) Should the military leadership speak up on partisan politics? *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 35 (1):1-12. <https://doi.org/10.5840/ijap20211220159> .
- Decalo, S. (1976) *Coups and Army Rule in Africa. Studies in military stage*. New Server: Yale University Press.
- Devermont, J. (2021) Guinea: the courses and consequences of West Africa's latest coup. *Centre for strategic and international studies*. Washington DC.
- Duzor, M., & Williamson, B. (2022). By the numbers: Coups in Africa. *Voice of America News*. Retrieved from <https://projects.voanews.com/african-coups/> Accessed online July 3, 2022.
- Editor. (2022) Save Burkina Faso from Military Adventurers. *Punch*. Retrieved from <https://punchng.com/save-burkina-faso-from-military-adventurers/> Accessed online January 22, 2023.
- Feller, W (1943) On a general class contagious distributions. *Annals of mathematical statistics*. 14(4):389-400.
- Finer, S (1962) *The man on Horseback*. London: Pall mall.
- Floratta, S. (2021) Guinea has a long history of coups: here are five things to know about the country. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from theconversation.com>guinea.has-a. Accessed online January 20, Fossum
- Fossium E. (1967) Factors influenced the occurrence of military coup d'etat in Latin America. *Journal of Peace Research* 4(3): 228-251.
- Friend, A. H. (2017, May 5). Military politicization. *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. Retrieved from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/military-politicization> Accessed online January 12, 2023.
- Gaub, F. (2016). *Civil-military relations in the MENA: Between fragility and resilience*. European Union Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS). EUISS Chailot Papers, No. 139. Retrieved from <https://www.europeansources.info/record/civil-military-relations-in-the-mena-between-fragility-and-resilience/> Accessed online January 12, 2023.
- Handy, P. S. Akum, F. & Djilo, F. (2020) What courses Africa's coups? That is the question institute for security studies. *ISS Today*. Retrieved from <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/what-causes-africas-coups-that-is-the-question> . Accessed online January 12, 2023.
- Hiroi, T. & Omori, S (2013) Causes and Triggers of coups d'etat: An event history analysis. *Politics & Policy* 41 (1): 36-64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12001>

INTERROGATING THE CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF MILITARY RULE/ REGIME IN WEST AFRICA

- Huntington, S.P. (1962) Patterns of violence in world politics in Huntington S.P. (ed) *Changing patterns of military politics*. International year political behaviour research Vol. 3, New York Free Press.
- Ibrahim, J. (2021) Coups and the spectre of military rule in West Africa. *Premium Times*. Access online: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/opinion/...> April 24, 2022.
- Ibrahim, J. (2022) African Politics: Return of the Military. *Premium Times*. Access online: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/opinion/...> June 12, 2022.
- Irabor, L. (2022) Coups in Africa: Probability of non-democratic leadership in Nigeria is Zero. *Vanguard News*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/03/coups-in-...> Accessed online June 6, 2022.
- Isilow, H. (2022) Why are military coups on the rise in Africa? *Anadolu Ajansi*. Retrieved from: www.aa.com.tr>why-are-... Accessed online January 22, 2023.
- Jamovitz, M. (1964) *The military Political Development of New Nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Johari, JC (2013) *Principles of Modern Political Science*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Ltd.
- Kaledzi, I (2021) Guinea faces an uncertain future the after the coup. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieve from www.dw.com>guineas-future-unca-... Accessed online January 24, 2023.
- Kamanu, O,S (1974) Secession and the Right of Self-Determination: an OAU Dilemma. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 12(3): 355-376.
- Karabelies, H. (1998) Civil-military Relations: A comparative analysis of the role of the military in the political transformation of post-war Turkey and Greece: 1980-1985. Brassule: North Atlantic Organizationization (NATO).
- Kujat, GEAF (1998) The Role of the Military in Democracy. Retrieved form. Accessed online January 23, 2023.
- Lehoucq, F. (2021) Military coups d'etat and their courses. Retrieved from. Accessed online January 12, 2023.
- Lowe, T. (2022) Bracing against the Tide; ECOWAS and recent Military coups in West Africa. The Yale Review of international studies. Retrieved from yris. Yira. Org/comments/Africa-comments 15657. Accessed online July 2, 2022.
- Luchan, A.R (1961) A comparative typology of civil-military Relations. Government and opposition, 6:21
- Lunde, J.K (2016) modernisation and political instability: coup d'etat in Africa 1955-85 Acta sociological, 34(1):18-36.
- Lutz, J. (1989) The diffusion of political phenomena in sub-Saharan Africa. Journal of political militiaryary sociology, 93-114.
- Maclean, R. (2022) five African countries, six coups. Why now? d from <https://www.ny-times.com>world>Africa>. Accessed online April 25, 2022.
- Marc, A, Verjee, N. & Mogaka, S. (2015) Managing the competition for power to reduce the fragility of cal institution in Marc, A, Verjee, N & Mogaka, S. *The challenges*

of stability and security in West Africa. Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

- Nordlinger, S (1977) *Soldiers in politics* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Obisie-Orlu, V (2022). A snapshot of the Roots of instability in West Africa. *Good Governance Africa*. Retrieved from <https://gga.org/a-snapshot-of-the-roots-of-governance-instability-in-west-africa/>. Accessed online May 2, 2022.
- Olaniyan, A. (1998) *Military in politics (lecture notes)*. Department of political science, University of Ilorin, Ilorin Nigeria.
- Omokri, R. (2022) what is behind the resurgence of coup in West Africa? *This Day*. Retrieved from <https://www.thisdaylive.com>> Accessed online April 25, 2022.
- Onuanaju, C. (2022) West Africa: Democracy and military rule. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com>>[viewpoint](#). Accessed April 25, 2022.
- Pat. McGowan and Thomas. H. Johnson (1984) African Military coups d'etat and underdevelopment: A Quantitative Analysis. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 22(4):633-666.
- Redaction Africanews (2022) 1960-2022: The long history of coup d'etat In Burkina Faso. *Africa News*. Retrieved from www.africanews.com>[2022/01/25](#). Accessed online January 18, 2023.
- Richard, P.Y, Li & William R. Thompson (2016) The coup contagion Hypothesis. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 19(1):63-84
- Sany, J. (2022) *A sixth coup in Africa? The West needs to up its game*. United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved from <https://www.usip.org>>[publications/](#). Accessed online April 24, 2022.
- Sawo, A. (2017) The chronology of military coup d'etats and regimes In Burkina Faso: 1980-2015. *The Turkish yearbook of international relations*, 48 (2017):1-18
- Singh, N. (2022) The myth of the coup contagion. *Journal of Democracy*, 33 (4): 74-88
- Souare, K.I (2010) *The challenge of unconstitutional change*. Retrieved from www.ru.ac.za>[latestnews](#)>[archives](#). Accessed online January 8, 2023.
- Sow, A. (2021) Military Parade in Mali: Understanding Malian Politics through spectacle. *Journal of African Studies*. 59(2): 219-235.
- Toprak, K., & Mishra, A. (2022, February 11). Africa's coup contagion: Factors driving an upsurge in military intervention. *Observer Research Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://www.orfonline.org>/[expert-speak/](#) Accessed online June 5, 2022.
- Tsafack, D. (2022) The Endless Transitions After coups in Africa: Democracy in Turmoil. *On Policy*. Retrieved from <https://onpolicy.org>. Accessed online June 5, 2022.
- Wells, A. (1974) The coup d'etat in theory and practice: independent Black Africa in the 1960s. *American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (4): 871-887.
- Zounmenou, D. (2021) Can coups be removed from Guinea's political culture? *ISS Today*. Retrieved from issafrica.org>[iss-today](#)>[can-coups...](#) Accessed online January 13, 2023.

BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY: A DIFFERENT TYPE OF AMERICAN PRIMACY

Dario CRISTIANI*

Abstract. President Biden's National Security Strategy (NSS), released in October 2022, provides a somewhat clear understanding of the administration's primary focus areas, despite the complexity of a document that should summarize the points of view of all the pieces of the complex American administration machine. This specific NSS combines traditional Democratic features, such as an emphasis on alliances and democracy, with novel elements like the assertive identification of China as the primary strategic challenge. It highlights China's rise as a global competitor, capable of shaping the international order, and acknowledges Russia as a threat. In this document, it is evident that the Indo-Pacific region is now the focal point of American geopolitical strategy, with the Western Hemisphere (Mexico and Canada) and Europe remaining crucial. Significant departures from the prior administration's approach include a strategic reorientation towards competition between governance systems, encapsulated in the 'democracy vs. autocracy' dichotomy, and a heightened focus on climate change as an existential threat, advocating for international cooperation to mitigate it, even with strategic rivals such as China.

Keywords: National Security Strategy (NSS); China; Biden; Climate Change; Terrorism

Introduction

On October 12, 2022, President Joseph Biden's administration released the National Security Strategy of the United States (NSS), a pivotal document outlining the presidency's foreign and security policy directives. The development and release of the NSS are mandated by the Goldwater - Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1985-86 Public Law 99-433 ([H.R.3622 - 99th Congress \(1985-1986\): Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, 1986](#)).

This act requires each administration to provide which requires the Administration in charge to prepare an "exhaustive description and discussion" of "US global interests, goals, and objectives ... [and] US foreign policy, global commitments, and national defence capability." ([H.R.3622 - 99th Congress \(1985-1986\): Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, 1986](#)).

* Dario CRISTIANI is a Senior Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington DC, United States. d cristiani@gmfus.org | Visiting Senior Researcher. Institute for Middle Eastern Studies, King's College, University of London. dario.1.cristiani@kcl.ac.uk

The NSS aims to coordinate all foreign and security policy-making agencies, facilitating a united front. Although it represents the collective consensus of the national security establishment, the NSS inevitably reflects the imprint of the President and his closest allies. From a procedural perspective, the President must submit the NSS to Congress. However, the audience extends beyond Congress, reaching internal and external stakeholders, allies, adversaries, and the general public. Although not the primary target, the latter has a vested interest in the Strategy, as it reveals how their tax dollars are deployed in foreign affairs and defence.

Interestingly, each NSS publication attracts criticism, not necessarily for its content, which naturally varies and is thus subject to differing assessments, but for its perceived lack of utility. National security experts, such as Justin Logan and Benjamin Friedman, have gone as far as to label the NSS a "predictable farce" (Logan and Friedman, 2022).

The two experts argue that the NSS should be abolished due to three primary concerns. First, they argue that the NSS essentially enumerates goals or priorities that are not actual priorities but attempts by various government agencies and offices to secure their specific interests within the Administration's agenda. This approach fails to meet the strategic requirement of prioritization, providing no clear directive on the hierarchy of importance among the listed priorities.

Second, they contend that the term 'national security' has been excessively and poorly used over the years. It is virtually indistinguishable from anything the authors deem significant, further complicating prioritization. Finally, NSS tends to generalize, creating confusion between specific incidents and broader issues, often interpreting these incidents as products of larger trends rather than distinct, localized situations. This confusion can precipitate disproportionate and excessive responses (Logan and Friedman, 2022).

Despite these criticisms, the NSS holds a pivotal role: it serves as a guide, indicating the hierarchy of interests and action imperatives each Administration deems characterizing its foreign policy. Indeed, within the lists of objectives presented in the NSS, certain issues are prioritized over others, even when it is unclear how they will be pursued, what costs will be incurred, and what red lines demarcate action from inaction.

Legally, the NSS must include a discussion of international interests, commitments, goals, and policies and the defence capabilities the United States needs to enact the Strategy. As alluded to earlier, this mandate often goes unfulfilled, as National Security Strategies generally outline means and methods of achieving strategic objectives only in broad strokes. Yet, each NSS serves as an interesting 'narrative' of a specific epoch of world history and America's role within it. More than a true strategy, the NSS offers the international political philosophy of the current administration, outlining not only national security interests but also broader geopolitical

considerations. Hence, examining various NSSs allows us to appreciate the evolution of different administrations' approaches to recurring issues and analyse continuity and change elements. Consequently, a comprehensive analysis of President Biden's recently published NSS cannot occur without comparing it to that of his predecessor and potential electoral rival, Donald Trump.

The first NSS was released in 1987 and the original intention was for annual releases. Yet, the complex, time-consuming inter-agency coordination process, which is central to the document's creation, often resulted in late or entirely absent reports. Since the George W. Bush administration (2001-2009), the practice of releasing one NSS per presidential term, typically in the first year, has been established. The Biden administration deviated from this pattern. In March 2021, the administration published a relatively brief document entitled *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, which broadly outlined the anticipated priorities and actions for foreign and defence policy, with the full NSS expected in early 2022* ([Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, 2021](#)).

However, the realization that Russia was planning an invasion of Ukraine not only delayed the NSS's release but also its development. In February 2022, Russia launched its war of aggression against Ukraine. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine demonstrated that Russia should be conceptualized as a colonial power and not as merely a power searching for security or status ([Oksamytna, 2023: 502](#)).

This military invasion aiming at territorial conquest and the potential use of hybrid warfare against Ukraine and its partners necessitated a broader reimagining of American involvement in global security affairs. The administration responded through several actions aimed at supporting Kyiv, from military support to financial sanctions ([Welt, 2023](#)). This response to the war helped define two significant themes in the NSS: the emphasis on American leadership and the role of alliances and the focus on rivalries. This included an intensified focus on Russia and the anticipated and even more relevant focus on China, which, despite everything, remains the crucial, systemic rival of the US ([Tierney, 2024](#)). Even if Biden keeps stressing that there is no need to talk of a new Cold War with China ([Viser et al., 2022](#)), one of the key elements of his White House term has been his strict approach toward Beijing ([Zengerle, 2021](#)). In particular, by bringing decoupling to full speed ([Black and Morrison, 2021](#)) and launching a number of initiatives, for instance, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), to challenge China's growing economic power. Currently, this is one of the few issues that keep Washington's politics united ([Goldberg and Schneider, 2020](#)).

In the document, Biden seeks to rejuvenate American leadership, underpinned by the belief that the US alliance system and the multilateral (though US-led) management of collective security is a crucial foreign policy asset. This perspective, which Biden expressed explicitly during his election campaign, is reinforced in the

NSS using the war in Ukraine. The document serves to underscore the strategic choice of basing American foreign and security policy on asserting international leadership to garner the consensus of allies and partners on shared interests. The NSS emphasizes, in this regard: "The need for a strong and purposeful American role in the world *has never been greater* [emphasis added]" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 7*). The United States, the Strategy underlines, "will ...build the strongest possible coalition of nations to enhance our collective influence to shape the global strategic environment and to solve shared challenges" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 11*).

The discrepancy with the Trump administration's general and philosophical approach (2017-21) is striking. In his National Security Strategy released in December 2017, Trump aimed to ensure US world primacy rather than international leadership, so much so that he renamed his 2017 NSS the *America First National Security Strategy* (*National Security Strategy 2017, 2017: 3-4*). Trump also mainly addressed his constituents in documents that have as primary users the political-cultural machine of Washington's foreign policy, as well as allies and rivals. Whereas, for Trump, the national interest is served by an instrumental and selective vision of partnerships (*National Security Strategy 2017, 2017: 17-24*), for Biden, it is preserved by seeking collaboration and coordination with allied countries and, in some cases - such as the fight against climate change - even with rivals such as China. As noted by scholar Emma Ashford, while the document does not outright say "America is back" (*The White House - BRIEFING ROOM SPEECHES AND REMARKS, 2021*) – a sort of mantra for the Biden administration's first year – the message is precisely the same (Ashford, 2022).

The geopolitical approach

This NSS underscores a geopolitical reality that has become increasingly evident in recent years: the Middle East is a region of diminishing interest to American diplomacy. After the surge of presence in the early years of this century following the invasion of Iraq, the Obama administration began a shift in approach—a trend that has continued under both Trump and Biden, despite their differing styles. In this region, the goal is to promote regional stability through economic integration and military cooperation. In this context, the "Abraham Accords"—the agreements to normalize relations between some Arab countries, particularly in the Gulf, and Israel, brokered by the Trump Administration—are regarded as a critical step (Guzansky and Marshall, 2020). Furthermore, the Biden Administration reasserts its support for a two-state solution along 1967 lines "with mutually agreed upon exchanges, remain the best way to achieve an equal measure of security, prosperity, freedom, and democracy for both Palestinians

and Israelis." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 41*). Although the terrorist massacre carried out by Hamas on October 7, 2023, and the ensuing war launched by Israel forced the US administration to return to being more active in the region, its approach has not been as strong as it was in the past.

As always, a commitment to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon is featured. The war in Ukraine and protests in Iran have complicated the efforts of the United States and Europe to reinstate the *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)*—the 2015 nuclear deal now existing only in theory after the Trump Administration unilaterally withdrew from it in 2018, which led Iran to lessen its compliance from 2019.

The one defined as the region that most directly impacts the United States is that of *the western hemisphere* (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 40*), where Mexico and Canada are inevitably seen as pillars of US foreign policy. Within this context, immigration is a central issue requiring a regional response. After Trump's fraught relationship with Europe, the Biden administration has reaffirmed the importance of ties with the continent.

In this sense, the NSS reiterates the foundation of transatlantic relations: "shared democratic values, common interests, and historical ties". The alliance with the Europeans, barely mentioned in Trump's NSS in 2017, is again presented as a central axis of American foreign policy and influence in the world. "[T]he transatlantic relationship", it reads, "is a vital platform on which many other elements of our foreign policy are built", and Europe has been, and will continue to be, "a key partner in addressing the full range of global challenges". (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 38*). Biden's transatlantic agenda extends beyond European security, which is primarily entrusted to NATO, to include cooperation in defending a rules-based international order (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 39*). Europe is framed as the front line in defence of freedom, territorial sovereignty, and non-aggression. Biden unambiguously commits to the collective defence bond of NATO's Article 5 and pledges continued collaboration with NATO allies to deter, defend against, and build resilience to aggression and coercion (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 39*).

The NSS then highlights the need for allies to assume greater responsibilities by increasing defence spending, capabilities, contributions, and investments (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 39*)¹, although this approach is still not

¹ As we step up our own sizable contributions to NATO capabilities and readiness—including by strengthening defensive forces and capabilities and upholding our long-standing commitment to extended deterrence—we will count on our Allies to continue assuming greater responsibility by increasing their spending, capabilities, and contributions. European defense investments, through or complementary to NATO, will be critical to ensuring our shared security at this time of intensifying competition. (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022, p.39*).

particularly popular in the US defence industry as they fear that, a Europe more active on defence, could bring more competition (Bergmann and Besch, 2023). Of note is the call to adapt to new challenges like cybersecurity, climate security, and most notably, the "growing security risks presented by the policies and actions of the PRC (People's Republic of China)," explicitly named as a challenge to transatlantic security for the first time (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 39*) in line with the message that since 2019 has become an integral part of the transatlantic rhetoric on the importance of containing China (Morcos, 2021).

Inevitable, then, is the reference to the freedom of Ukraine as a precondition "for the pursuit of a whole Europe, free and at peace." Russia's invasion of Ukraine represents a radical challenge to the realization of this vision, which is why the Americans confirm their determination to "support Ukraine in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity, imposing heavy costs on Moscow for its attack" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 39*).

The American response, and more generally the Euro-Atlantic one, to the Russian invasion of Ukraine took place on various levels: diplomacy; military-economic support to Ukraine; sanctions; reduction of energy imports from Russia; strengthening NATO defence and deterrence capabilities; enlargement of NATO itself, with Finland and Sweden ready to join the Alliance, and of the EU; and EU-wide management of refugees. Support has remained constant, and in the military field, it has indeed grown, although always avoiding however always avoiding direct intervention by NATO and/or the countries of the Alliance on the ground. The American role has been crucial in keeping the transatlantic front united. Despite these unified fronts, some of Biden's decisions have caused friction among Europeans. Energy relations between the United States and Europe have become particularly problematic, especially with the ongoing war in Ukraine (Brew and Gordon, 2022). The potential for a new trade war due to the impact of inflation on transatlantic relations and the US's proposed *Import Reduction Act (IRA)*² also concerns Europeans.³

French President Emmanuel Macron, during his state visit to the White House in December 2022, spoke of the risk of "fragmentation" of the West and described the IRA as a "super aggressive" law (*Euractiv.com, 2022*). These sentiments echo those of European trade ministers, who had previously expressed "very concern" about new US incentives for consumers to buy electric vehicles.

² Approved by Congress in August 2022, the IRA contains a series of measures to reduce health costs but above all to support the fight against global warming. The IRA has committed over \$369 billion in investment and subsidies to promote renewable and more sustainable energy solutions. However, the aid favours US companies, indirectly discriminating against European companies in the sector.

³ Inflation Reduction Act, August 2022 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/19/fact-sheet-the-inflation-reduction-act-supports-workers-and-families/>

They fear that European companies might shift their operations to the US to take advantage of federal subsidies and compete with American rivals (Propp, 2022).

However, looking at the entire globe, it is clear from this document that the *Indo-Pacific*, a macro-area extending from South Asia to the Western Pacific, is becoming more and more central in global politics (He and Feng, 2020; Kuo, 2018; Li, 2022; Pardesi, 2020). The American Asian pivot started, on paper, with the Obama administration (Clinton, 2011). Now, it is the centre of gravity of current American strategic interests and the primary arena for its competition with China (Gaens and Sinkkonen, 2023; Harding, 2019; Scobell, 2021; Yoshihara, 2013). The NSS labels it as crucial to the global economy and "the geopolitical epicentre of the 21st century". In this sense, the United States has a "vital interest ... in a [Indo-Pacific] region that is open, interconnected, prosperous, secure, and resilient" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 37*). This strategic importance naturally arises from the fact that the region is where China's expanding influence is most pronounced. China is the only country with the economic, technological, and military resources to rival the United States.

The document refers to the need for the USA to bolster "open societies through investments in democracy, institutions, the free press and civil society". There is also a more geopolitical passage that demonstrates how Americans, despite everything, continue to consider free access to waterways a cornerstone of their foreign policy (*Council on Foreign Relations, 2019*). In particular, the document states: "We will work on a shared regional system in support of open access to the South China Sea, a passageway for nearly two-thirds of global maritime trade and a quarter of all global trade" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 37*).⁴

The control of the South China Sea has long been a sensitive issue in relations with China, which has built artificial islands equipped with military installations. The NSS reasserts the United States' firm commitment to supporting allied countries in the region, including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia. The alliance treaty with Japan also covers the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which China claims as its own (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 38*).

The focus on China necessitates significant attention to India, defined as the "largest democracy in the world" (despite the notable decline of the rule of law under Narendra Modi's government) and a crucial "defence partner". The NSS

⁴ Open and accessible and ensure that nations are free to make their own choices, consistent with obligations under international law. We support open societies through investments in democratic institutions, free press, and civil society and are cooperating with partners to counter information manipulation and corruption. And we will affirm freedom of the seas and build shared regional support for open access to the South China Sea—a throughway for nearly two-thirds of global maritime trade and a quarter of all global trade.

promises that the United States and India "will work together, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 38*). This is interesting. India is a member of the Quad, a collaborative forum also comprising the US, Australia, Japan (*Deshpande, 2021*). Yet, it also maintains a substantial relationship with Russia, something that the war in Ukraine did not change, in which New Delhi has remained mostly neutral (*Jagtiani and Wellek, 2022; Konwer, 2023; Verma, 2023*).

This relationship between New Delhi and Moscow is a legacy of the Cold War when India, firmly non-aligned, considered the Soviet Union a reliable supplier of arms and energy and a champion of anti-colonialism central to India's post-British ideology (*Budhwar, 2007*). This bond has persisted post-Cold War and through the gradual rapprochement between Washington and New Delhi (*Pande, 2022*). Economically, India continues to profit from its ties to Moscow. The significance of this relationship has been on display in relation to the war in Ukraine. India has resisted conforming to Western sanctions and has only tepidly condemned the war, viewing it less as a conflict between Russia and Ukraine and more as an expression of a broader clash between Russia and the West - a narrative not dissimilar from that espoused by Moscow's propaganda (*Tellis, 2022*). From this perspective, the importance of India in countering China causes the United States to tolerate a degree of flexibility in India's relationship with Russia that it likely would not accept from other partners as, against this backdrop, Washington has realized that, by working with India and establishing this "Great Power Partnership", the two countries will be "stronger together in deterring Beijing's hegemonic designs" (*Arha and Saran, 2024*).

The NSS describes North Korea and Burma as problematic situations. In the case of North Korea, Washington pledges to seek "sustained diplomacy with North Korea to make tangible progress toward the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula while strengthening extended deterrence in the face of North Korean weapons of mass destruction and missile threats." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 38*). As for Burma, the NSS notes that "The brutal military coup in Burma has undermined regional stability, and we will continue working closely with allies and partners, including ASEAN, to help restore Burma's democratic transition "will continue to work closely with allies and partners, including ASEAN, to help restore democratic transition in Burma." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 38*).

Systemic rivals

The NSS identifies China and Russia as the main competitors of the United States (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 23–26*). This outlook shares some similarities with

BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY: A DIFFERENT TYPE OF AMERICAN PRIMACY

Trump's approach, although significant differences exist. In Trump's view, China and Russia were parts of the same problem. They "challenge American power, influence, and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity" (*National Security Strategy 2017, 2017: 2*) and wanted "to shape a world antithetical to US values and interests." (*National Security Strategy 2017, 2017: 25*). For Trump, these nations were aiming to erode American security and prosperity by undermining the market economy, enhancing their military power, and manipulating data and information to expand their foreign influence.

For Biden, however, China and Russia represent separate issues. China "is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 23*). The rivalry with Beijing is primarily centered in the Indo-Pacific but is seen to be expanding globally. This position differs significantly from the previous Democratic administration of Barack Obama (2009-17), in which Biden served as Vice President. Obama viewed the rise of a "stable, peaceful, and prosperous China" as a positive development. This cooperative stance has been abandoned, although China is still considered an essential partner in some issues, such as climate change.

Biden met with the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Xi Jinping, at the G-20 summit in Bali on November 14, 2022. Both leaders emphasized the importance of diplomacy, dismissed the notion of a *New Cold War*, and expressed the desire to reorient US-China relations. However, the meeting did not result in any agreements or help bridge the extensive range of differences between the two superpowers (*Viser et al., 2022*). However, the meeting did not lead to any understanding or bridge the gap on the wide range of differences between the two major powers (*Rogers and Buckley, 2022*).

In the past years, the US-China relationship has further soured. The visit of former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan - the de facto independent island claimed by the PRC as part of its territory - provoked a strong reaction from Beijing. In response, China conducted large-scale military exercises in the waters and skies near Taiwan. Formally, the Biden Administration adheres to the "one China policy", according to which the United States does not recognize the independence of Taiwan (which, moreover, has never proceeded with formal secession) (*Green and Glaser, 2017*). However, the US guarantees political and military support to Taiwan, and Biden has implied that any forceful attempt to unite Taiwan with the mainland would trigger an American military response (*Wang, 2022*).

A major issue shaping relations between China and the Western bloc is the so-called *decoupling between* Western and Chinese economies. Decoupling does not pertain to the internal US-China trade, worth approximately 600 billion annually, but targets strategically sensitive sectors. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen expressed

concern over US companies importing critical products, including minerals needed for electric vehicle batteries, from China excessively. As a result, worries about dependence on China are growing in the United States. This underpins the sensational decision made by the Biden Administration in October to ban the export to China of US materials and technologies for developing next-generation semiconductors (chips). The barely concealed goal is to slow down China's technological progress significantly. However, for these export controls to have a long-term impact, they must be adopted by other countries, prompting the US government to pressure allies to follow its strict stance. (Bilotta, 2024)

The goal, not too disguised, is to slow down China's technological progress drastically. To have long-term effects, however, the export controls introduced by the Biden administration must also be shared by other countries. As a result, the US government has increased pressure on allies to adopt the strict American line. The Europeans are directly involved in the affair since they have four of the major companies (two Dutch, by far the largest, and two German) that manufacture the materials for the production of the latest generation chips. Several European countries have significant exposure to the Chinese market, particularly Germany. Given the systemic importance that Germany has for the European economic system, the marked decoupling sought by the United States is bound to have a continental impact and, therefore, fuel some transatlantic animosity, not least because the United States does not offer immediate forms of compensation. In early November, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said during his first visit to China that Germany does not believe in the decoupling idea *and* is seeking a deeper economic relationship with Beijing. (Scholz, 2022)

In the NSS, there is a particular focus on wanting to differentiate between China as a state apparatus, formed by the government and the Communist Party of China (it is always referred to as the People's Republic of China) - and the population, with a reference to the history of Chinese immigration to the United States. Indeed, the section on China concludes with a peremptory note which, while underlining the profound differences existing with the Communist Party of China, also reiterates that these differences exist "between governments and systems, not between our people", underlining the ties of family and friendship existing between the two peoples. (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 25*)

As for *Russia*, it is explicitly referred to as a threat to the international order since it is a nuclear power determined to subjugate (if not conquer, as in the case of Ukraine) its neighbouring countries and divide its enemies by half of intimidation, sabotage, disinformation and propaganda. The document also asserts, "Over the past decade, the Russian government has chosen to pursue an imperialist foreign policy with the goal of overturning key elements of the international order... Russia now poses an immediate and persistent threat to international peace and stability." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 25*). For the United States, the

goal is "to help make Russia's war against Ukraine a strategic failure" (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 26*), a goal to be achieved together with allies, especially European ones.

The Crucial Issues

Biden perceives competition with China and Russia as more of a clash of governance systems rather than a traditional geopolitical conflict. This struggle is often encapsulated in the 'democracy vs. autocracy' dichotomy. Although the NSS does not overtly use this language and sparingly uses the term 'autocracy', it emphasizes the intrinsic link between protecting democracy from internal and external threats and defending American security interests. The NSS differentiates between democratic countries and autocracies, emphasizing a "strategic competition to shape the future of the international order." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 1*). It also underscores the need to "sharpen our competitive edge for the future" against rivals who stake the finger at the alleged weaknesses of democracies to reaffirm the legitimacy, and indeed the superiority, of alternative (inevitably more or less autocratic) governance systems (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 1*).

Biden's NSS identifies climate change as the most important global issue: "The climate crisis", reads the document, "is the existential challenge of our time", which poses the "urgent need to accelerate the transition from fossil fuels." (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 27*). The Biden Administration recognizes that managing global warming is complicated not only by the natural difficulties of forging global agreements but also by the escalating geopolitical and ideological competition with US adversaries. Hence, climate change increasingly impacts American national security.

Biden's position is diametrically opposed to Trump's. In his NSS, climate change was never openly mentioned. For Trump, American primacy was crucial to counter an energy agenda deemed harmful to US economic and energy security interests. Acknowledging that "climate policies will continue to shape the global energy system", Trump stressed the need to preserve the US leadership, considered "indispensable to countering an anti-growth energy agenda" seen as "detrimental to US economic and energy security interests" (*National Security Strategy 2017, 2017: 22*).

In Trump's view, His objective was to ensure American energy independence without any restrictions on the use of domestic energy resources, even fossil fuels, openly saying that "reducing traditional pollution, as well as greenhouse gases" should be the result of "innovation, technology breakthroughs, and energy efficiency gains, not from onerous regulation" (*National Security*

Strategy 2017, 2017: 22). For Biden, energy independence is also vital, and increased gas production has been crucial in helping Europe replace imports from Russia during 2022. However, for Biden, the solution is not the unrestricted exploitation of fossil fuels but the development of renewable energy, which also carries geopolitical significance, as it would diminish fossil fuel-producing nations' capacity to pressure their importers (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 27–28*).

The NSS frames climate change as a common challenge requiring international cooperation rather than competition importers (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 27–28*). While advocating for collective action, Biden's NSS emphasizes that the effort begins domestically, referring to the support for green technology development in the IRA. The administration is committed to facilitating a domestic transition to clean energy, enhancing disaster preparedness and resilience, and altering the national security paradigm to incorporate climate change considerations into national security planning and policies.

The NSS dedicates significant attention to the terrorist threat (*National Security Strategy 2022, 2022: 30–31*), a particularly sensitive area where the Biden administration - despite the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan (Rohde, 2021) and a generally cautious approach in the Middle East (Traub, 2020) - does not intend to take steps backward. This is demonstrated by the killing of the al-Qaeda leader, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, in Kabul in early August 2022 (Baker et al., 2022), as well as that of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi, self-styled 'caliph' at the head of the Islamic State, in northern Syria in February 2022 (Clarke, 2022). The NSS thus reaffirms Biden's intent, stated at the time of his withdrawal from Afghanistan, to adopt an over-the-horizon approach to terrorism - surveillance, control, and possibly targeted intervention without a direct presence on the ground (Hoffman and Ware, 2022).

Like Biden, Trump's NSS also identified jihadist terrorism as a priority threat (*National Security and Strategy 2017, 2017: 10–11*). However, Trump's NSS entirely overlooked issues related to domestic terrorism tied to white supremacy and radical right-wing groups, which since 2015 have been the main source of terrorist violence within the United States (Jones et al., 2020). Biden has tackled this issue head-on, committing the administration to counter "growing threats from a range of domestic violent extremists," groups that include individuals "motivated by racial or ethnic bias, as well as anti-government or anti-authority sentiments." To address this problem, the Biden administration launched the *National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism* in June 2021, which the NSS pledges to implement (*National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism, 2021*).

Conclusions

Despite the inherent complexity, the NSS' general absence of specific policy directives, and some perceived vagueness regarding data and commitments, a thorough examination can provide policymakers, analysts, experts, observers, and those interested in American foreign policy a fairly clear understanding of the primary areas where President Biden intends to concentrate his efforts.

President Biden's National Security Strategy manifests traditional elements of the Democratic approach to foreign and security policy, such as the emphasis on alliances and democracy. However, there are some novel elements, such as the assertive and pervasive identification of China as the primary strategic challenge throughout the document. It highlights the rise of China as the main global competitor, increasingly capable of shaping the international order. While also acknowledging Russia as a threat, the NSS frames these two nations differently, emphasizing the different challenges they pose to the United States.

The Indo-Pacific region is currently at the core of the American geopolitical Strategy, while the Western Hemisphere—Mexico and Canada—and Europe also remain crucial. As for the Middle East, it is clear that this space is not that relevant to Americans anymore. In this area, the endorsement of the Abraham Accords as a critical step towards the long-term stabilization of the Middle East is particularly notable and represents an element of continuity with the previous administration.

That said, numerous sections reveal a significant departure from the previous administration's approach, ranging from America's global role to the distinct characterizations of the Chinese and Russian threats to the divergent overall views on democracy, climate change, and terrorism.

The Biden Administration's NSS underscores the existential threat of climate change, advocating for international cooperation to mitigate it and internal policy reforms to accelerate the transition from fossil fuels. The NSS reveals a strategic re-orientation towards competition between governance systems, encapsulated in the 'democracy vs. autocracy' dichotomy, heralding a new era in American national security policy under the Biden administration. Counter-terrorism efforts, both international and domestic, feature prominently in this Strategy, with a commitment to tackling jihadist terrorism and growing threats from domestic violent extremists. In regard to terrorism, the Biden administration is progressively emphasizing domestic challenges, differently from the previous administration, although recent operations in Afghanistan and Syria indicate that there remains a steadfast resolve to combat jihadist groups.

References

- Arha K and Saran S (2024) The US needs a new paradigm for India: 'Great Power Partnership'. *New Atlanticist - Atlantic Council*, April 1. Available at: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-us-needs-a-new-paradigm-for-india-great-power-partnership/> (accessed April 14 2024).
- Ashford E (2022) Why the US Still Can't Have It All: Biden's National Security Strategy. *Just Security*, October 14. Available at: <https://www.justsecurity.org/83568/why-the-us-still-cant-have-it-all-bidens-national-security-strategy/> (accessed November 24 2022).
- Baker P, Cooper H, Barnes JE, et al. (2022) U.S. Drone Strike in Kabul Kills Top Qaeda Leader. *The New York Times*, August 1. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/01/us/al-qaeda-leader-killed> (accessed August 2 2022).
- Bergmann M and Besch S (2023) Why European Defense Still Depends on America. *Foreign Affairs*, March 7. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/why-european-defense-still-depends-america> (accessed May 14 2024).
- Biden, J. (2021) 'Remarks by President Biden on America's Place in the World', *The White House*, February 4. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/04/remarks-by-president-biden-on-america-place-in-the-world/> (accessed January 14 2024).
- Bilotta, N (2024) Chips: EU's Ambition in a Transatlantic Technology Bridge. *IAI Paper*, February 28. Available at: <https://www.iai.it/en/publicazioni/chips-eus-ambition-transatlantic-technology-bridge> (accessed July 17 2024).
- Black JS and Morrison AJ (2021) The Strategic Challenges of Decoupling. *Harvard Business Review*, May 1. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2021/05/the-strategic-challenges-of-decoupling> (accessed January 17 2023).
- Brew G and Gordon N (2022) Europe's Energy Partnership With the U.S. May Not Last. In: *World Politics Review*. Available at: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/energy-crisis-europe-Ing-us/> (accessed January 2 2023).
- Budhwar PK (2007) India-Russia Relations: Past, Present and the Future. *India Quarterly* 63(3). SAGE Publications India: 51–83.
- Clarke CP (2022) Biden Just Took Out ISIS' Top Leader. What's Next? *POLITICO*, March 2. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/02/03/whats-next-for-isis-after-leader-death-00005455> (accessed February 5 2022).
- Clinton H (2011) America's Pacific Century. *Foreign Policy* (189): 56–63.
- Deshpande DPP (2021) Quad & its significance for India. *The Times of India*, November 2. Available at: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/truth-lies-and-politics/quad-its-significance-for-india/> (accessed January 13 2023).
- Euractiv.com (2022) Inflation Reduction Act 'super aggressive,' Macron tells his US hosts. December 1. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/inflation-reduction-act-super-aggressive-macron-tells-his-us-hosts/> (accessed January 17 2023).
- Gaens B and Sinkkonen V (2023) Contentious Connectivity—the USA, Japan, and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific. *East Asia* 40(3): 265–291.

BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY: A DIFFERENT TYPE OF AMERICAN PRIMACY

- Goldberg C and Schneider J (2020) A Divided Washington Is (Sort of) United on China. *Foreign Policy*, November 9. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/11/09/biden-china-republicans-democrats-congress/> (accessed November 11 2020).
- Green MJ and Glaser BS (2017) What Is the US "One China" Policy, and Why Does it Matter? CSIS Commentary, January 13. Available at: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/what-us-one-china-policy-and-why-does-it-matter> (accessed May 26 2023).
- Guzansky Y and Marshall ZA (2020) The Abraham Accords: Immediate Significance and Long-Term Implications. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 14(3). Routledge: 379–389.
- H.R.3622 - 99th Congress (1985-1986): Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (1986). Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/99th-congress/house-bill/3622> (accessed January 6 2023).
- Harding B (2019) The Trump Administration's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Approach. *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2019(1). ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute: 61–67.
- He K and Feng H (2020) The institutionalization of the Indo-Pacific: problems and prospects. *International Affairs* 96(1): 149–168.
- Hoffman B and Ware J (2022) The Terrorist Threats and Trends to Watch Out for in 2023 and Beyond. *CTC Sentinel* 15(11): 1–9.
- Jagtiani SL and Welke S (2022) In the Shadow of Ukraine: India's Choices and Challenges. *Survival* 64(3). Routledge: 29–48.
- Jones SG, Doxsee C and Harrington N (2020) The Escalating Terrorism Problem in the United States. CSIS Briefs, June 17. Available at: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/escalating-terrorism-problem-united-states> (accessed January 6 2023).
- Konwer S (2023) The Ukraine crisis and India: quandaries and implications. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 29(3). Routledge: 317–331.
- Kuo MA (2018) The Origin of 'Indo-Pacific' as Geopolitical Construct. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-origin-of-indo-pacific-as-geopolitical-construct/> (accessed March 24 2023).
- Li H (2022) The "Indo-Pacific": Intellectual Origins and International Visions in Global Contexts. *Modern Intellectual History* 19(3). Cambridge University Press: 807–833.
- Logan J and Friedman B (2022) The Case for Getting Rid of the National Security Strategy. *War on the Rocks*, November 4. Available at: <https://warontherocks.com/2022/11/the-case-for-getting-rid-of-the-national-security-strategy/> (accessed November 24 2022).
- Masters, J. (2019) 'Sea Power: The U.S. Navy and Foreign Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, August 19. Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/sea-power-us-navy-and-foreign-policy> (Accessed: May 14 2024).
- Morcos P (2021) NATO's Pivot to China: A Challenging Path. *Commentary - Center for Strategic and International Studies*, June 8. Available at: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/natos-pivot-china-challenging-path> (accessed January 13 2023).

- Oksamytna K (2023) *Imperialism, supremacy, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine*. *Contemporary Security Policy* 44(4). Routledge: 497–512.
- Pande A (2022) *Russia Ties Will Not Impede India's Growing US Partnership*. *The Diplomat*, November 17. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2022/11/russia-ties-will-not-impede-indias-growing-us-partnership/> (accessed January 13 2023).
- Pardesi MS (2020) *The Indo-Pacific: a 'new' region or the return of history?* *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 74(2). Routledge: 124–146.
- Propp K (2022) *The big problems you won't hear about at the EU-US Trade and Technology Council*. *Atlantic Council*, December 2. Available at: <https://www.atlantic-council.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-big-problems-you-wont-hear-about-at-the-eu-us-trade-and-technology-council/> (accessed January 2 2023).
- Rogers K and Buckley C (2022) *Biden Sees No Imminent Invasion of Taiwan by China*. *The New York Times*, November 14. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/14/world/biden-xi-meeting> (accessed January 17 2023).
- Rohde D (2021) *Biden's Chaotic Withdrawal from Afghanistan Is Complete*. *The New Yorker*, August 30. Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/bidens-chaotic-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-is-complete> (accessed March 11 2022).
- Scobell A (2021) *Constructing a U.S.-China Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific and Beyond*. *Journal of Contemporary China* 30(127). Routledge: 69–84.
- Tellis AJ (2022) *"What Is in Our Interest": India and the Ukraine War*. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 25. Available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/04/25/what-is-in-our-interest-india-and-ukraine-war-pub-86961> (accessed January 13 2023).
- The White House. (2017) *'National Security Strategy of the United States of America'*, December. Available at: <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>. (Accessed: May 14 2024).
- The White House. (2021a) *'Interim National Security Strategic Guidance'*, March. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf> (Accessed: May 14 2024).
- The White House. (2021b) *'National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism'*, June. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/National-Strategy-for-Countering-Domestic-Terrorism.pdf> (Accessed: May 14 2024).
- The White House. (2022) *'National Security Strategy'*, October. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf> (Accessed: May 14 2024).
- Tierney D (2024) *Forever competition: the end-game of Sino–US rivalry*. *International Affairs* 100(1): 361–383.
- Traub J (2020) *Under Biden, the Middle East Would Be Just Another Region*. *Foreign Policy*, September 9. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/09/biden-is-planning-change-not-hope-for-the-middle-east/> (accessed November 20 2020).
- Verma R (2023) *India's quest for security and its neutrality in the Russia–Ukraine war*. *The Round Table* 112(1). Routledge: 14–26.

BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY: A DIFFERENT TYPE OF AMERICAN PRIMACY

- Viser M, Abutaleb Y and Shepherd C (2022) Biden says no 'new Cold War' after meeting with China's Xi. *Washington Post*, November 15. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/11/14/biden-xi-meeting-bali-g20/> (accessed January 17 2023).
- Wang AB (2022) Biden says US troops would defend Taiwan in event of attack by China. *Washington Post*, September 19. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/09/18/biden-taiwan-military-china-attack/> (accessed May 26 2023).
- Welt C (2023) *Russia's War Against Ukraine: Overview of US Assistance and Sanctions*. IN11869, CRS INSIGHT. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service.
- Yoshihara T (2013) The US Navy's Indo–Pacific challenge. *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 9(1). Routledge: 90–103.
- Zengerle P (2021) Biden talks tough on China in first speech to Congress. *Reuters*, April 29. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-talks-tough-china-first-speech-congress-2021-04-29/> (accessed March 14 2022).