



A new era in African Crisis Self-Management

The 5th cycle of the Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities, RECAMP 5, also known as SAWA 2006, was held within the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) beginning in June 2005-November 23rd 2006

The RECAMP concept, initiated in 1996, is to promote a system of preventive African diplomatic initiatives among the members of divergent economic and political groups that can anticipate crisis and act to reduce tensions should unrest occur.

To this end the program seeks to impart a common viewpoint of African se-

curity to politicians diplomats and military personnel through a series of diplomatic, military and social training exercises, forums and simulations.

The fifth cycle of the Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities, RECAMP 5 (known locally as SAWA 2006) was held within the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

beginning in June 2005 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and reached its climax with a VIP day in Douala, Cameroon November 23rd 2006.

The event was the culmination of four other RECAMP cycles that had been held across the African continent in: Guidimakha, Mauritania from 1996 to 1998 under the auspices of the Eco-



Cameroon troops gearing for peacekeeping missions

conomic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); in Gabon from 1998 to 2000 another member of ECCAS; in Tanzania from 2000 to 2002 with the involvement of the South African Development Community (SADC) and in Benin from 2002 to 2004 again with the participation of the ECOWAS. In each cycle training programs, exercises and exchange forums were held that simulated different critical developments in fictitious countries, to which member states of had to find a self-sufficient response.

Solidarity and Vision

Originally the brainchild of French military strategists, the RECAMP programs have grown into a solidarity movement among African nations and economic zones for the prevention and resolution of internal and transcontinental conflicts. The vision behind the programs is one of African nations managing their own crises with little or no foreign support or intervention by 2010. The cycles and programs are built on the four principal objectives of regional cooperation and training, generally accepted codes of practice among member states,

guidelines for deployment, and support. The RECAMP 5 cycle stands out as a milestone in the evolution of the concept and represents, through its strong ties with ECCAS, an increasing willingness on the part of African nations to reinforce the role of African sub-regional organisations on issues of collective security.

Approaching Peace from a different perspective...

This fifth cycle signalled an increased commitment by other continents to a new approach to global crisis management: one consistent with the new peace architecture for the continent defined by the African Union (AU):

To this end SAWA 2006 involved a Command Field Exercise (CFX) involving the imaginary oil-rich state of Wanamel, torn apart by ethnic conflicts. All crises control attempts by the Wanamel Armed Forces failed, provoking social division and serious humanitarian suffering. The exercise was designed to acquaint staff officers of ECCAS sent from Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, the Demo-

cratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tomé and Principe and Angola, with peacekeeping activities involving the implementation and enforcement of cease-fires, overseeing and assuring the protection of human rights, and the provision of security and humanitarian assistance.

Through creative crisis management

The CFX proved to be an exercise that took the human dimensions of crisis into account for the first time, providing a multi-dimensional response profile to situations that had traditionally been thought only to have had military solutions. RECAMP 5 proved the importance the development of civilian infrastructures in the rebuilding of a country; especially in areas of inland security and social stabilisation. The exercise ushered in major innovations which will help integrate current changes in African crisis management policies within the context of new trans-continental partnerships. Member states of the ECCAS were able to design a planning process from a realistic crisis scenario which resulted in the deployment of an African operational, tactical, infrastructure in which four countries took part: Ethiopia,

the seat of the AU; Gabon, the seat of ECCAS; Congo which held the political / military seminar in Brazzaville, and Cameroon, which hosted the actual field exercise.

Cameroon is committed to the RECAMP 5 Vision

Cameroon's contribution, in terms of manpower and infrastructure, to the success of the exercise was enormous. Cameroon coordinated the air transportation for the Officers of the 11 sub-region states with its fleet of C-130 aircrafts, undertook vast building and road infrastructure renovation programs, and ensured logistical support for the exercise by providing vehicles and fuel.

Non-member countries of ECCAS, invited by both France and ECCAS, supplied officers to train Staff during the exercise and supported ECCAS countries in setting up Command Posts used during the exercise as well as carried out humanitarian and medical services for the population in Cameroon.

Cameroonian authorities welcomed the acquisition of new peacekeeping skills by the army, marking a new training paradigm for its military forces. As part of the preparations for the RECAMP 5 CFX, the local population benefited from 15 micro-development projects carried across the country at a cost of over \$5,250,000 US. Projects funded by France, the USA and other countries, included portable water supplies in seven localities, a new health center in Douala Bonadibong, a medical warehouse in Garoua, a new reception and observation center in Bepanda Douala, new classroom construction, and the distribution of much needed material and equipment. The Laquintinie Hospital in Douala also received a new incinerator and sewage system.

Joint Oversight

The Co-directors of RECAMP 5, French Major General Roger Renard and Cameroonian Brigadier General Hector Marie Tchemo, inspected the peacekeeping and civil military action training programs accompanied by His Excellency Louis Sylvain Goma, former Prime

Minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo, now the Secretary General of ECCAS. The two training programs took place from November 13 to 17 at the Yaounde Combined Armed Services Military Academy (EMIA) and involved 110 military officers from all of the 11 ECCAS member states, including the host: Cameroon Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of Defence, Rémy Ze Meka.

After inspecting the program, the Secretary General of ECCAS described the

The process was also designed to test existing ECCAS and African Union infrastructures in accordance with plans drawn up during the cycle. To this end, the RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 project particularly focused on police operations that closely collaborated with military components of the African Standby Force.

Continental Scope

The RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 process was the culmination of a Pan-African ef-



Medical consultation of civilians in Japoma- Douala

training as a benchmark in the coordination of African continental peacekeeping capacities. Louis Sylvain Goma thanked the French and Cameroonian governments for their efforts to ensure the success of the programs, and the RECAMP 5 co-directors. ECCAS Secretary General, and training officials had a working session with heads of the delegations from the 11 participating countries.

Reality through simulation

The object of the RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 simulation exercise was to find effective ways of providing the Central African sub-region with an operational force capable of carrying out peacekeeping missions within the sub-region and elsewhere on the continent under the aegis of the African Union.

fort at coordinating peace keeping strategies and streamlining operational parameters between countries to help the African Union develop its own strategic infrastructures, and test the conformity of the ECCAS peace and security structures with the Central African Peace Council (COPAX), guidelines as laid out in Yaoundé, in February 1999, at a summit conference of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, where member states decided to create an organisation for the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in Central Africa. Further, the exercise encouraged participation by the regional standby forces of the Central African Multinational Force (FOMAC)

and cooperation between regional African peacekeeping schools.

Regional Impact

Besides the Pan-African impact from the RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 initiative, the project achieved very specific goals to benefit the member states of ECCAS

the French Government High Representative for Security and the Prevention of Conflicts, Pierre-André Wiltzer; African Union Commissioner for Peace, His Excellency Said Djinnit; Cameroon Chief of Defense, Major General René Claude Meka; French Chief of Defense, General Jean-Louis Georgelin, and mem-

portance of Africans to assume responsibility for their own security. He added that France was not retreating from Africa but, through RECAMP intends to rally partners for Africa's security problems and the multi-dimensional challenges inherent in peacekeeping operations.



ECCAS staff officers brainstorming on common operational procedures

and the Sub-Region as a whole. High on the list was the validation of the ECCAS brigade of the African Standby Force as part of a self-sufficient peacekeeping body within the African Union, the definition of common operational guidelines and the strengthening of ties between member states. The operation also was designed to improve the conduct and coordination of multinational peacekeeping operations and familiarise military and police personnel with the necessary civil, social, and relief bodies as well as the political, diplomatic and legal environment appropriate for any military action through multinational force training.

International Recognition

The ceremonies closing RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 brought together dignitaries from all over the world, among them: Cameroon Defense Minister Remy Ze Meka, Belgian Defense Minister André Flahaut, Gabonese Minister of Defense, Ali Ben Bongo Ondimba;

bers of diplomatic missions, the ECCAS Chiefs of Defense, plus representatives of international organisations and local authorities.

In his speech marking the closing ceremonies, His Excellency Louis Sylvain Goma, stated that the RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 peacekeeping exercise was the result of an extraordinary partnership between the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, France, G-8 countries and the European Union. He further said mobilisation within ECCAS to participate in RECAMP 5 in Douala, and the presence of top-ranking military officers from the 11 member countries of the sub-region was proof of their willingness to work together for their collective security and that of the entire African continent.

For his part the French High Representative for Security and the Prevention of Conflicts, Pierre-André Wiltzer, stressed the need for collective mobilisation of African resources, and the im-

The Government Delegate to the Douala Urban Council, Dr. Fritz Ntone Ntone, observed that the choice of Cameroon to host RECAMP 5 / SAWA 2006 was recognition of its position as the emerging capital of the sub-region and confirmation of the geo-strategic position of Cameroon within Central Africa. Cameroon's important seaports, airports and military facilities are pivotal to the success of any cooperative peacekeeping effort in the sub-region and serve the needs of neighbouring countries. Earlier, the Cameroon Minister of Defense, who happened to be the host, pointed out in his speech that it was thanks to the support of ECCAS Heads of States that the whole process of RECAMP 5 was made possible.

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