CONTINENTAL SOVEREIGNTY

THE RIGHT TO PROTECT, NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT, IN AFRICA

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Introduction

Continental sovereignty is the authority of the Assembly of the African Union (AU) over decisions on intervention for human protection. It involves regional security governance mandate: The "right to intervene", herein described as the Right to Protect, enshrined in Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the AU. The Right to Protect is conflated with global security governance mandate: The Responsibility to Protect. However, the Right to Protect is about "regional multilateralism." What implications for the future of global security governance?

Conceptual Approaches:

Global (UN-led) multilateralism	Regional (AU-led) multilateralism
Emphasises UN monopoly in promoting and providing global security governance (Thakur & Langenhove, 2006: 235, 237-8).	Recognizes regional security governance; notes the future of global security governance depends on regionalism (Hettne & Söderbaum, 2006: 227-9, 231).

Rationales for Security Governance:

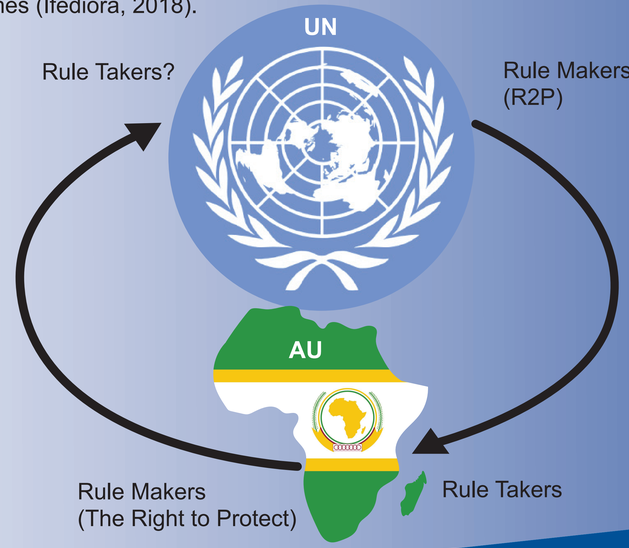
The Right to Protect	The Responsibility to Protect
"Africa recognizes its own primary responsibility to protect the lives of its citizens … [AU should] establish appropriate structures to enable [the Assembly] respond effectively to enforce the peace" (IPEP, 2000: 24).	'We believe … the language, a "right to intervene" … is outdated and unhelpful. Changing the language … can remove a barrier to effective action' (ICISS, 2001: 11-12, 17. See Thakur, 2016: 419).

Policy Differences:

The Right to Protect	The Responsibility to Protect
Although yet to be implemented, the Right to Protect is robust, stable and focuses on the use of force for human protection. It does not allow pre-emptive intervention.	R2P is broad, despite the narrow focus on four crimes (UNGA, 2005: 138-140). R2P is unstable, controversial, and consensus-free. It allows pre-emptive intervention.

The Future

Globalization makes the governance of contemporary security threats an actor-specific responsibility. The Right to Protect offers credible "regional multilateralism" for effective global action to prevent atrocity crimes (Ifediora, 2018).



References

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