Preface

This research fills a major gap in the rapidly growing literature on conflict management (resolution). It shows how theory can help the conflict analyst and practitioners to understand and deal with conflict - especially violent protracted conflict at all levels worldwide.

The research provides specific information on contemporary conflict in the field of international relations. It presents case studies of conflict management (resolution) drawn from events of the first decade of the post-war era. Although African scholars have displayed considerable interest in the problem conflict approach, there has been no systematic study of the general field of international relations. The method offers an opportunity to progress beyond the familiar generalizations, to test theoretical hypotheses against specific facts, and to group the ideological complication and political interrelationships inherent in the modern states system of Sub-Saharan Africa. On the whole, the conflict approach has the advantage of providing:

1. A framework for systematic analysis.
2. Illustration of basic principles in the field of conflict management (resolution).
3. Specific information of OAU’s role in managing conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa in post-cold war era.
4. The priorities of the Post Cold War era, have been identified from a series of statements issued periodically by major actors who make most of the decisions in the international society. These include a wide range of socio-economic and political concerns. However, due to constraints upon some issues, (of conflict management, resolution), Sub-Saharan Africa has been selected as a testing ground for these issues because it is convenient to study a region while being a resident of its most prominent state, i.e. Sudan. It provides greater access to research material and daily happenings, being based in Sudan also provided the necessary concern and impetus for delving into...
the dynamic of Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, a research plan had been initiated at Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) level of my studies. Thus, the research undertaken for a dissertation on, “State and the Problem of External Intervention in Secessionist Civil Wars in Sub-Saharan Africa”, proved to be an added advantage familiarity with the realities of the region. It provides insights into the issues of conflict management (resolution) and concerns of the continent, which could also be integrated into a Ph.D. research.

As regards the theoretical framework, to the best of my knowledge, none of the recent theories of international relations have adequately explained the conflict scenario in Sub-Saharan Africa. Hence the selection of an appropriate theory to integrate all issues raised in this research became crucial. Exhaustive discussion with my guide, Dr. H.C. Shukul led to the selection of conflict management (resolution) theory of international relations. The conflict management (resolution) theory has been formulated by John W. Burton and his colleagues for studying patterns of regional and international conflicts in Europe, Asia and Africa. Having grasped the fundamental utility of the present research study. With ethnic cleansing in other parts of the world - partly vindicates the growing significance of conflict management within the realm of pacific settlement of disputes. The emphasis is to undermine the role of power approach whatever the nature of conflict:

Despite this advantages, it must be admitted that this research (thesis) is limited in scope and comprehension. Moreover, one has to rely on secondary sources of data as a direct access to research material is often impossible. Given these limitation, this thesis is an humble attempt at research theorising.

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