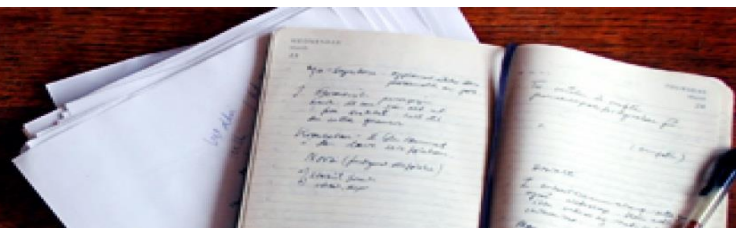


# Research Notes



## Peacekeeping Conference in Ghana

Elikem Kofi Tsamenyi

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I have been in Ghana since the first week of October 2017, for my field research. Prior to starting my field work, I had the opportunity to co-organize a workshop on peace and security governance in Africa. The workshop was held at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC), in Accra, Ghana.

A collaborative project between the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative (RDCSI), the Centre for the Study of Security and Development (CSSD), and KA IPTC, the workshop, dubbed “Canada’s Re-Engagement with Peacekeeping Operations in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities,” was funded through the Defence Engagement Programme of Canada’s Department of National Defence.

With Canada’s recent commitment to re-engage in peace operations in Africa, the two-day workshop explored how Canada would most effectively support and contribute to peace operations on the continent, emphasizing African insights and perspectives. The meeting produced discussions around the scope and nature of the current security threats and challenges with peace operations in Africa, exploring some of the ways these issues challenge African states’ capacities to anticipate, prevent, and deal with such security threats.

Additionally, the workshop aimed to clarify and assess existing security mechanisms related to peace operations, especially in areas crucial for policy and operational coordination between African forces, on the one hand, and Western/United Nations (particularly Canadian) forces, on the other. Thus, presentations were directed at uncovering the most fruitful areas (in terms of local capacity) for collaborative efforts to manage pressing security challenges and peace operations. Speakers expanded our understanding of these issues, while exploring viable solutions to the various challenges to contemporary security and peace operations and policy coordination in Africa.



Specific themes discussed include:

- The terrain and realities of contemporary peace operations in Africa;
- Lessons and insights from hard cases in Africa;
- Planning, performance, and coordination of peace operations: early warning; rapid deployment; easing the capability gap;
- Strategic and operational challenges with protecting individuals at risk; female participation; dealing with child soldiers; undertaking people-centered operations;
- Achieving 'smarter' contributions to peace operations: pledges, peacekeeping forces, post-conflict transition, development assistance;
- Effective Partnerships in peace operations: innovation, training and capacity building; and
- Canada's future role in peace operations in Africa.

This combined focus on conceptual, policy and practical operational issues, was deliberately aimed at generating rich discussions, drawing on both African and Canadian insights, and thus informing better decision making and improved outcomes regarding peace operations.

The workshop attracted a diverse group of speakers comprising academics, diplomats, military personnel, and politicians. The organizers were fortunate to have as key note speakers, for both the opening and closing sessions, the following distinguished individuals:

- AVM Griffiths Evans, Commandant, KAIPTC;
- Ms. Heather Cameron, Canada's High Commissioner to Ghana and Sierra Leone, Ambassador to Togo;
- Gen. Romeo Dallaire, Founder, Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative;
- Dr. Kwesi Aning, Director of Academic Affairs and Research, KAIPTC.

Personally, this workshop has been tremendously beneficial on several levels. First, the experience of organizing and running a workshop with several international speakers, has tremendously enhanced several skill sets, including my organizational and people skills. Crucially, the exposure to important network needed for my research project in Africa has been an added benefit. I have been able to connect with academics, practitioners, and military personnel in the area of peace and security governance on the continent. Their deep insights and experiences with these issues has immensely helped move my research along effectively.

I would like to use this opportunity to acknowledge the RDCSI, the CSSD, the KAIPTC for their incredible backing in organizing this workshop. Special thanks to Dr. David Black, Dr. Shelly Whitman, LGen. (rtd) Romeo Dallaire, Dr. Brian Bow, Dr. Kwesi Aning, Dr. Emma Birikorang and Ms. Susan Nelson, whose support made sure this workshop was a huge success. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Department of National Defence for their financial support through the DEP.

In the next couple of weeks, I plan to travel to Addis Ababa, Pretoria, Abuja, and Nairobi to continue with my field research. On these trips, I hope to speak to some officials of both the African Union and the Foreign Affairs ministries in South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya about AU member states' commitment to emerging norms around security governance in Africa.