The history of peacekeeping mission’s dates back to the period just after the Cold War when the United Nations sought to intensify peacekeeping missions from observations by military personnel to strategies that were to become the blueprint for sustainable global peace. This era also witnessed a dramatic change to the types of conflicts in various pockets of Europe, Middle East and throughout Africa. Initially, peacekeeping missions were only meant to prevent and contain inter-state conflicts but with the new turn of events the missions expanded to include intra-state conflict containment and resolution. The responsibilities of peacekeepers expanded to include a multitude of complex assignments of human rights protection and supervision, helping build sustainable governments in failed states, disarmament, overseeing security reforms and demobilization. Peacekeeping operations grew from being the affair of the men in uniform to that of economists, human rights advocates, administrators, experts in communication and information and humanitarian aid and development. The period after the Cold War the world witnessed an increase in the number of peacekeeping missions which was based on a new consensus and the realization of a common sense of purpose- world peace.

The success of peacekeeping missions meant that the UN was under constant pressure to deliver. The expectations were high and certainly beyond the capacity. At times, peacekeepers were sent to regions where conflicts were at peak with no peace in sight; for instance, in Somalia, Rwanda and Yugoslavia. The three missions were the source of disagreements and criticism because the peacekeepers were sent to regions where peace agreements were not valued and yet they were not provided with enough resources to carry out their mandate. The resulted in the number of civilian casualties doubled, further worsening the hostility. This affected the reputation of the UN peacekeeping operations. The failures during these three missions set the stage for the debates which resulted in a reduction in the number of peacekeeping operations.

At the dawn of the 21st century the UN took an initiative to scrutinize the challenges that faced peacekeeping missions and introduced a reform that was meant to strengthen its capacity in the wake of the century’s challenges. The examination of previous failures open the potential for effective peacekeeping missions that would see the restoration of peace and stability in African countries like Chad, Sudan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo.

* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/somalia/11513886/Al-Shabaab-profile-A-history-of-Somalias-insurgent-movement.html>
* <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1995/MLM.htm>
* <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush/readings/lessons.html>
* <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unosom1backgr2.html>

One of the greatest challenges throughout the African continent has been a been a lack of peace and stability. Unlike the Middle East and Latin America, the region has always been a victim of lack of interest by Americans and others. Since the end of the Cold War, traditional strategies that has worked to provide a level of stability in conflict area during the course of the Cold War seem to challenge the traditional successful approach during the Cold War (Willie, 1998). Over the last two decades, the United Nations has been the tip of the spear to address regional threats and assist weaken states to a path of peace and stability. The increasing conflicts in the world and particularly in Africa have the potential to create a series of problems which the United States and the United Nations cannot ignore.

the increase of terror organizations in the region some of which with ties of Al-Qaedano only threaten the regions stabile the security of other nations.

The United States of America, like any other country, does not exist in isolation but as an extension of the global interactions. In this sense, therefore, the involvement of the US in global affairs is inevitable.

Maintaining world peace and order is one of the key reasons that lead to the formation of the United Nations. It was formed on the basis of maintaining security in the wake of the failures of the League of Nations in preventing the Second World War. While the war edged off, several world leaders found it necessary to create such an understanding between major world powers to reduce tension caused by the increasing development of weapons. Since its inception UN has had successes and failures in different peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Srebrenica.