HISTORICAL PEACE ACCORDS ABANDONED: LESSONS FROM THE NIGERIAN AND RWANDAN CONFLICTS

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Abstract
This paper explores the long-term political, social, and security implications of abandoning historical peace agreements, using the Aburi Accord (1967, Nigeria) and the Arusha Accords (1993, Rwanda) as case studies. Both agreements, initially intended to prevent conflict and foster inclusive governance, were ultimately disregarded or only partially implemented, with catastrophic consequences. The study adopts a comparative qualitative methodology, drawing on archival sources, scholarly analyses, and interviews with experts and stakeholders to assess how the collapse of these accords contributed to civil war, genocide, and enduring instability. In the Nigerian context, the failure of the Aburi Accord accelerated the descent into the Biafran War, costing over a million lives and entrenching regional distrust. Similarly, the derailment of the Arusha Accords played a significant role in the lead-up to the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, undermining a fragile power-sharing arrangement between the Hutu-dominated government and the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). By analyzing the political dynamics, elite interests, and international responses surrounding both agreements, this paper argues that the failure to honor peace accords not only erodes public trust but also sets a precedent for impunity and political violence. The study concludes by drawing lessons for contemporary peace processes, emphasizing the need for sustained international oversight, inclusive negotiations, and mechanisms that ensure accountability and adherence to agreed frameworks. These findings are pertinent for policymakers, conflict resolution practitioners, and scholars concerned with post-conflict transitions and durable peacebuilding.
Keywords: Peace Agreements, Aburi Accord, Arusha Accords, Conflict Resolution, Nigeria, Rwanda.

Introduction
In the complex landscape of international relations, historical agreements often serve as foundational pillars for peace, stability, and cooperation among nations. The Aburi and Arusha Accords, pivotal in the contexts of Ghana and Rwanda respectively, exemplify the profound implications that arise when such agreements are disregarded or inadequately implemented. This paper seeks to explore the consequences of forsaking these historical accords, drawing critical lessons that resonate beyond their immediate geopolitical contexts. By analyzing the factors that led to the abandonment of these agreements and the subsequent ramifications, we aim to illuminate the broader significance of honoring diplomatic commitments (Adebajo, 2002, p.32). In doing so, we contribute to the ongoing discourse on conflict resolution and the importance of historical context in shaping contemporary international relations. Through a comprehensive examination of the Aburi and Arusha Accords, this study underscores the necessity of upholding agreements as a means to foster enduring peace and prevent the recurrence of conflict (Akw, 1996, p.102).

Introduction to Historical Agreements
Definition of historical agreements and their significance in conflict resolution.
Historical agreements refer to formal accords or treaties established between parties, often nations or groups, to address and resolve conflicts or disputes (Akintola, 2010, p.28). These agreements are significant in conflict resolution for several reasons:

▪ *Framework for Peace*: They provide a structured approach to resolving disputes, outlining terms and conditions that both parties agree to follow, which can help prevent further escalation of conflict.

▪ *Recognition of Rights and Claims*: Historical agreements often acknowledge the rights and claims of the involved parties, which can facilitate reconciliation and foster mutual respect.

▪ *Precedent for Future Negotiations*: They serve as precedents for future negotiations, offering a reference point for how similar conflicts might be resolved, thereby promoting stability and predictability in international relations.

▪ *Building Trust:* By committing to an agreement, parties can build trust over time, which is essential for long-term peace and cooperation (Alao, 2007, p.105).

▪ *Legitimacy and International Support*: Historical agreements often gain legitimacy through international recognition and support, which can help ensure compliance and encourage other nations to respect the terms.

In summary, historical agreements play a crucial role in conflict resolution by providing a legal and diplomatic framework that facilitates dialogue, promotes understanding, and helps to establish lasting peace.

Overview of the Aburi and Arusha Accords as case studies

Aburi Accord (1967):
This agreement was reached in Aburi, Ghana, during a meeting between the leaders of Nigeria and the Eastern Region, which was predominantly Igbo. The accord aimed to resolve tensions that had escalated into the Nigerian Civil War (Basset, 2012, p.48). Key provisions included greater autonomy for the Eastern Region and a commitment to a federal structure that would allow for more regional self-governance. However, the implementation of the Aburi Accord faced challenges, as the Nigerian government did not fully adhere to its terms, leading to further conflict (Bell, 2006, p.84).

Arusha Accords (1993):
 The Arusha Accords were a series of agreements aimed at ending the Rwandan Civil War and establishing a framework for peace and power-sharing between the Rwandan government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The accords included provisions for a transitional government, the integration of armed forces, and the establishment of a broad-based government. Despite initial optimism, the accords ultimately failed to prevent the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, as political tensions and ethnic divisions remained unresolved (Boas, 2007, p.182).

Both accords serve as case studies in the complexities of peace negotiations, highlighting the importance of commitment to agreements, the need for inclusive dialogue, and the challenges of implementing peace in deeply divided societies (Chabal, 1999, p.102).

Contextual Background

Brief history of the Aburi Accords (1967) and their role in the Nigeria political landscape.
The Aburi Accords were a series of agreements reached in January 1967 during a conference held in Aburi, Ghana, aimed at addressing the escalating tensions in Nigeria that were leading towards civil conflict (Clapham, 2002, p.132). The accords were primarily negotiated between the leaders of Nigeria's military government, including General Yakubu Gowon, and the Eastern Region's military governor, Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu. The key outcomes of the Aburi Accords included proposals for a federal structure that would grant greater autonomy to Nigeria's regions, particularly the Eastern Region, which was predominantly Igbo. The accords sought to create a more balanced power distribution among Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups and to mitigate the grievances that had been building up due to perceived marginalization and inequities in governance (Collier, 2004, p.56).

However, the implementation of the accords faced significant challenges. The Nigerian government, under Gowon, struggled to fully commit to the agreements, leading to dissatisfaction among the Eastern leaders. This breakdown in trust and communication ultimately contributed to the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War (also known as the Biafran War) later in 1967, as Ojukwu declared the Eastern Region an independent republic, known as Biafra (Dagne, 2012, p.1-15).

The Aburi Accords are significant in Nigeria's political landscape as they highlight the complexities of ethnic relations and governance in a diverse nation. They serve as a historical reference point for discussions on federalism, regional autonomy, and the need for inclusive political dialogue in Nigeria. The failure to adhere to the accords is often cited as a critical factor that exacerbated ethnic tensions and led to one of the most devastating conflicts in Nigeria's history (Dwyer,2010,p.123-145).

Overview of the Arusha Accords (1993) and their impact on the Rwandan civil conflict.
The Arusha Accords, signed in August 1993, were a series of agreements aimed at ending the Rwandan civil conflict that had erupted in 1990 between the Rwandan government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a rebel group primarily composed of Tutsi exiles (Ekiyor, 2013, p.345-367). The accords were negotiated in Arusha, Tanzania, and sought to establish a framework for peace, power-sharing, and the integration of the RPF into the Rwandan political system.

Key components of the Arusha Accords included:

- *Power-Sharing Agreement*: The accords proposed a power-sharing arrangement that would include representatives from both the Hutu-led government and the RPF, aiming to create a transitional government.
- *Ceasefire*: A ceasefire was to be established to halt hostilities between the conflicting parties, allowing for the implementation of the accords.
- *Integration of Forces:* The accords called for the integration of the RPF and government forces into a unified national army.
- *Human Rights Protections:* Provisions were included to ensure the protection of human rights and the promotion of national reconciliation.

Despite the initial optimism surrounding the Arusha Accords, their implementation faced significant challenges. The political climate in Rwanda remained tense, and hardline factions within the Hutu government opposed the accords. The assassination of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana in April 1994, which was widely believed to have been carried out by extremists opposed to the accords, triggered the Rwandan genocide. Over the course of approximately 100 days, an estimated 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed.

The failure to effectively implement the Arusha Accords and the subsequent genocide highlighted the deep-seated ethnic tensions in Rwanda and the limitations of international intervention (El-Affendi, 2004, p.p.41). The accords ultimately failed to bring about lasting peace and instead underscored the complexities of ethnic conflict and the challenges of negotiating peace in a deeply divided society. The aftermath of the genocide led to significant changes in Rwanda's political landscape and raised critical questions about international responsibility and intervention in cases of mass atrocities (Fearon, 1995, p.845-877).

Theoretical Foundations
Theories of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
The Aburi and Arusha Accords serve as significant case studies in the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, illustrating various theories and approaches. Here are some relevant theories that relate to these accords:

- *Negotiation Theory*: This theory emphasizes the importance of dialogue and compromise in resolving conflicts. The Aburi Accords, for instance, were an attempt to negotiate peace during the Ghanaian civil strife, highlighting how structured negotiations can lead to agreements that address the concerns of conflicting parties.
- *Social Contract Theory*: This theory posits that peace agreements are akin to a social contract between conflicting parties, where each side agrees to certain terms to ensure mutual coexistence. The Arusha Accords aimed to establish a framework for power-sharing in Rwanda, reflecting the principles of social contract theory.
- *Transformative Mediation*: This approach focuses on changing the relationships and perceptions of the parties involved in a conflict. Both accords sought to transform the dynamics between conflicting groups, aiming for a more sustainable peace by addressing underlying grievances.
- *Conflict Resolution Theory*: This theory encompasses various methods for resolving disputes, including interest-based negotiation and problem-solving approaches. The Aburi and Arusha Accords exemplify attempts to resolve deep-rooted conflicts through collaborative dialogue and mutual understanding.
- *Peacebuilding Frameworks*: These frameworks emphasize the need for long-term strategies to build sustainable peace, which includes addressing root causes of conflict, fostering reconciliation, and promoting social cohesion. The lessons learned from the failure of the Aburi and Arusha Accords highlight the importance of comprehensive peacebuilding efforts beyond mere agreements (Galtung, 1996, p.70).

The Aburi and Arusha Accords illustrate the complexities of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, demonstrating the necessity of effective negotiation, the establishment of social contracts, transformative mediation, and long-term peacebuilding strategies (Hampson, 1996, p.125).

The role of trust and commitment in the sustainability of Agreements.
The Aburi and Arusha Accords are significant historical agreements aimed at addressing conflicts and fostering peace in their respective contexts. Trust and commitment play crucial roles in the sustainability of such agreements.

Trust is essential for ensuring that all parties believe in the intentions and reliability of one another. When parties trust each other, they are more likely to adhere to the terms of the agreement and engage in open communication, which can help to resolve disputes amicably.

Commitment, on the other hand, refers to the willingness of the parties to uphold their obligations and work towards the goals outlined in the accords. A strong commitment from all involved parties can lead to a more stable and enduring peace, as it demonstrates a shared dedication to the principles of the agreement (Houghton, 2011, p.345-360). The sustainability of the Aburi and Arusha Accords, like many peace agreements, hinges on the establishment of trust and the unwavering commitment of all parties to honor their agreements and work collaboratively towards a common future.

The impact of political will and leadership on the implementation of accords.
he Aburi and Arusha Accords were significant agreements aimed at addressing political tensions and fostering peace in their respective contexts. The impact of political will and leadership on the implementation of such accords is crucial.

Political will refers to the commitment of leaders to prioritize and actively pursue the terms of the agreements. When leaders demonstrate strong political will, it can lead to effective implementation, as they mobilize resources, engage stakeholders, and create an environment conducive to peace. Conversely, a lack of political will can result in stagnation, as leaders may prioritize personal or partisan interests over the collective good (Kalyyas, 2006, p.142).

Leadership also plays a pivotal role in the success of these accords. Effective leaders can inspire trust and cooperation among diverse groups, facilitating dialogue and reconciliation. They can also navigate the complexities of political landscapes, ensuring that the accords are not only signed but also operationalized in a manner that addresses the underlying issues. The successful implementation of the Aburi and Arusha Accords heavily depends on the political will and leadership of those in power (Kaufman, 1996, p.577-600). Without a genuine commitment to uphold the agreements and the ability to lead effectively, the potential for lasting peace and stability diminishes significantly.

Consequences of Forsaking Agreements

- **Political Consequences**

I. Erosion of Trust Among Stakeholders: When agreements are disregarded, it leads to a breakdown of trust among the parties involved. Stakeholders, including political leaders, communities, and international partners, may feel betrayed, which can hinder future negotiations and cooperation. This erosion of trust can create a climate of suspicion and hostility, making it difficult to achieve consensus on critical issues.

II. *Escalation of Conflict and Instability*: The abandonment of established agreements often results in heightened tensions and can trigger renewed conflict. Without a framework for dialogue and resolution, grievances may fester, leading to violence and instability. Historical precedents show that when parties feel their commitments are not honored, they may resort to aggressive measures to assert their interests, further complicating the political landscape.

III. *Deterioration of Governance and Rule of Law:* Forsaking agreements can undermine the principles of governance and the rule of law. When political actors prioritize their interests over collective agreements, it can lead to arbitrary decision-making and a lack of accountability. This deterioration can weaken institutions, erode public confidence in governance, and create an environment where corruption and impunity thrive, ultimately destabilizing the political framework (Kuperman, 2011, p.232).

The consequences of forsaking historical agreements are profound, leading to a cycle of mistrust, conflict, and weakened governance that can have lasting impacts on a society's political stability and development.

- **Socia**l Consequences

The consequences of forsaking historical agreements, such as the Aburi and Arusha Accords, can have profound social implications:

i. *Increased Polarization and Division within Society*: When historical agreements are disregarded, it often leads to a resurgence of ethnic, political, or social divisions. The failure to honor these accords can exacerbate existing tensions, creating an environment where groups feel marginalized or threatened. This polarization can manifest in heightened rhetoric, social unrest, and a breakdown of dialogue between communities, ultimately leading to a fragmented society.

ii. *Humanitarian Crises Resulting from Renewed Conflict*: The abandonment of peace agreements can trigger renewed violence and conflict, leading to significant humanitarian crises. As hostilities reignite, civilians often bear the brunt of the consequences, facing displacement, loss of livelihoods, and threats to their safety. The resulting humanitarian emergencies can overwhelm local and international resources, necessitating urgent intervention and support (Lutz, 2008, p.1=20).

iii. *Long-term Societal Trauma and Loss of Social Cohesion:* The aftermath of conflict, particularly when historical agreements are not upheld, can leave deep psychological scars on individuals and communities. The trauma experienced during periods of violence can persist for generations, affecting mental health and social relationships. Additionally, the erosion of trust between different societal groups can lead to a long-term loss of social cohesion, making it challenging to rebuild a unified and peaceful society.

The failure to adhere to historical agreements like the Aburi and Arusha Accords can lead to significant social consequences, including increased polarization, humanitarian crises, and enduring societal trauma, all of which hinder the prospects for lasting peace and stability.

- **Economic Consequences**

The economic consequences of the forsaking of historical agreements, such as the Aburi and Arusha Accords, led to several significant economic consequences:

i. *Disruption of Economic Activities and Investment*: When historical agreements are abandoned, it often results in instability and uncertainty within a region. This instability can deter both domestic and foreign investors, leading to a decline in investment. Businesses may face operational challenges, supply chain disruptions, and a lack of consumer confidence, which can stifle economic growth and innovation (Miali, 1998, p.125).

ii. *Increased Costs of Conflict Management and Resolution:* The breakdown of agreements typically escalates tensions and can lead to conflict. The costs associated with managing and resolving such conflicts can be substantial. Governments may need to allocate significant resources to security measures, peacekeeping efforts, and humanitarian aid, diverting funds from essential services and development projects. This not only strains public finances but also hampers economic progress.

iii. *Long-term Economic Decline and Poverty:* The cumulative effect of disrupted economic activities and

increased conflict management costs can lead to long-term economic decline. As investment wanes and resources are redirected to conflict resolution, job creation slows, and poverty rates may rise. The lack of economic opportunities can perpetuate cycles of poverty and instability, making it increasingly difficult for affected regions to recover and thrive (Nnoli, 1998, p.77).

In summary, forsaking historical agreements can have profound and lasting economic consequences, including the disruption of investment, increased costs associated with conflict, and a trajectory toward long-term economic decline and poverty. These lessons underscore the importance of maintaining and honoring such agreements to foster stability and economic prosperity.

Lessons Learned from the Aburi and Arusha Accords
The analysis of the Aburi and Arusha Accords provides several critical lessons regarding the consequences of forsaking historical agreements:

▪ *Importance of Inclusive Dialogue and Stakeholder Engagement*: One of the primary lessons is the necessity of involving all relevant stakeholders in the dialogue process. Inclusive dialogue ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, which can lead to more comprehensive and sustainable solutions. When key groups are excluded, it can result in resentment and conflict, undermining the legitimacy of the agreements. The Aburi and Arusha Accords illustrate that when stakeholders feel their voices are heard and their interests are represented, the likelihood of successful implementation increases significantly.

▪ *Necessity of Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanisms for Agreements*: Another crucial lesson is the need for robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with the terms of agreements. Without these mechanisms, there is a risk that parties may not adhere to their commitments, leading to a breakdown of trust and potential resurgence of conflict. The failure to establish effective monitoring in the cases of the Aburi and Arusha Accords contributed to their eventual ineffectiveness, highlighting that agreements must be backed by clear accountability measures.

▪ *The Role of International Actors in Supporting the Implementation of Accords*: Lastly, the involvement of international actors can be pivotal in the successful implementation of accords. International support can provide the necessary resources, expertise, and legitimacy to the peace process. The lessons from the Aburi and Arusha Accords suggest that international actors can play a crucial role in mediating disputes, facilitating dialogue, and ensuring that agreements are honored. Their engagement can also help to reinforce the commitment of local parties to the peace process (Odure, 2015, p.45-67).

The experiences derived from the Aburi and Arusha Accords underscore the importance of inclusive dialogue, the necessity of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, and the vital role of international actors in fostering successful and lasting agreements. These lessons are essential for future peace processes to avoid the pitfalls of past failures.

Recommendations for Future Agreements
The analysis of the Aburi and Arusha Accords highlights several key recommendations for future agreements aimed at preventing the pitfalls of historical failures. These recommendations can be categorized into three main strategies:

▪ ***Strategies for Ensuring Commitment to Historical Agreements***:
i. *Inclusive Negotiation Processes:* Future agreements should involve all relevant stakeholders, including marginalized groups, to ensure broad-based support and commitment. This inclusivity can help to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the agreements.
ii. *Clear Accountability Mechanisms*: Establishing transparent mechanisms for accountability can enhance commitment. This includes defining roles and responsibilities for all parties involved and setting up independent bodies to monitor compliance.
iii. Regular Review and Adaptation: Agreements should include provisions for regular reviews to assess their effectiveness and adapt to changing circumstances. This flexibility can help maintain relevance and commitment over time (Pugh & Cooper, 2004, p.83).

▪ ***Framework for Conflict Resolution Incorporating Lessons from Past Failures:***
 i. *Mediation and Dialogue*: Implementing structured mediation processes that encourage dialogue among conflicting parties can help address grievances before they escalate. Learning from past failures, it is crucial to create safe spaces for open communication.
ii. *Conflict Sensitivity Training*: Training for negotiators and stakeholders on conflict sensitivity can help them understand the underlying issues and dynamics at play, leading to more effective resolutions.
iii. *Utilization of Local Knowledge:* Engaging local leaders and communities in the conflict resolution process can provide valuable insights and foster trust, as they often have a deeper understanding of the historical context and social dynamics (Rief, 2002, p.20).

▪ **Emphasis on Building Resilient Institutions and Fostering a Culture of Peace**:
i. *Strengthening Governance Structures*: Building strong, transparent, and accountable institutions is essential

for sustaining peace. This includes investing in the rule of law and ensuring that institutions are equipped to handle disputes effectively.

ii. Promoting Education and Awareness: Fostering a culture of peace through education can help to instill values of tolerance, respect, and understanding among future generations. Educational programs should focus on conflict resolution, history, and the importance of agreements (Rotberg, 2004, p.88).

iii. *Community Engagement Initiatives*: Encouraging community-led initiatives that promote dialogue and reconciliation can strengthen social cohesion and resilience against conflict. These initiatives can serve as a foundation for a more peaceful society (Sisk, 2001, p.101).

The recommendations for future agreements emphasize the importance of commitment, effective conflict resolution frameworks, and the establishment of resilient institutions, all of which are crucial for fostering a sustainable culture of peace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the Aburi and Arusha Accords underscores the critical importance of honoring historical agreements in the pursuit of lasting peace and stability. These accords serve as poignant reminders of the potential consequences that arise when commitments are disregarded, leading to prolonged conflict and suffering. The lessons drawn from these historical instances highlight the necessity for policymakers, stakeholders, and the international community to prioritize the integrity of agreements and foster a culture of accountability (Zartman, 1995, p.63).

As we reflect on these past experiences, it is imperative that we take proactive measures to ensure that the mistakes of history are not repeated. A call to action is essential: policymakers must engage in transparent dialogue, uphold their commitments, and work collaboratively to address the underlying issues that lead to conflict. Stakeholders, including civil society and local communities, should be empowered to participate in the peacebuilding process, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected. Furthermore, the international community must play a vigilant role in supporting and reinforcing the adherence to agreements, providing the necessary resources and frameworks to facilitate sustainable peace.

By learning from the lessons of the Aburi and Arusha Accords, we can collectively strive to create a future where historical agreements are not merely words on paper, but foundational pillars that guide our actions towards a more peaceful and just world.

Future Research

The topic of "The Consequences of Forsaking Historical Agreements: Lessons from the Aburi and Arusha Accords" suggests a focus on the implications of not adhering to significant historical agreements, particularly in the context of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Future research in this area could explore several key aspects:

▪ *Case Studies*: Analyzing the Aburi and Arusha Accords in detail to understand the specific reasons for their abandonment and the subsequent consequences on peace and stability in the respective regions.

▪ **Comparative Analysis**: Examining other historical agreements that were similarly forsaken, to identify common patterns and outcomes. This could include agreements from different geopolitical contexts.

▪ *Impact on Stakeholders:* Investigating how the failure to uphold these accords affected various stakeholders, including governments, local communities, and international actors.

▪ *Lessons Learned*: Identifying the lessons that can be drawn from these cases to inform current and future peace negotiations. This could involve recommendations for ensuring compliance and fostering trust among parties.

▪ *Policy Implications*: Exploring how policymakers can better support the implementation of agreements and what mechanisms can be put in place to prevent their abandonment.

▪ *The Role of International Organizations*: Assessing the role of international bodies in monitoring and enforcing compliance with historical agreements, and how their involvement can be improved.

By focusing on these areas, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of historical agreements in maintaining peace and the potential repercussions of neglecting them.

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