Feedback Tutorial Letter

Governance and Politics in Africa

GPA621S

Assignment number 1
Course Name: GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS IN AFRICA
Course Code: GPA621S
Department: SOCIAL SCIENCES
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NQF Level and Credit: LEVEL 7; 15 CREDITS

Dear students

Mrs Puleinge, would like to thank all students for your dedication, hardwork and effort put in Assignment 1. The overall performance is good, but more emphasise must be placed on the following:

➢ Applying the correct (APA) referencing style, correct font size and style
➢ Acknowledging authors of sources consulted during research
➢ List alphabetically only sources/ reading materials that were actually consulted
➢ Providing practical and relevant examples related to topic

Remember: Please feel free to contact Mrs Puleinge for any assistance regarding your assignment.

Definition of military intervention

The deliberate act of a nation or a group of nations to introduce its military forces into the course of an existing controversy. Military intervention can lead to different outcomes. Sometimes, this strategy can indeed restore peace within a certain country. More important, it can eventually contribute to economic and political stability in the region. However, at the same time, this military intrusion can only increase hostilities.
What are the advantages and disadvantages of military intervention?

The deployment of peacekeepers can avert a disaster such as genocide. Overall, this argument is based on the premises of the just war theory which postulates that a military action be justified when it is necessary to stop injustice (Al-Haj, 2013). Over the twentieth century, there have been many military interventions into sovereign states. They have been aimed at stopping or reducing violence within certain countries. The critics of this strategy argue that such an approach can turn into an instrument of coercion. In their opinion, this main purpose of this interference is to impose one’s geopolitical interests upon another country (Manokha, 2008, p. 11).

Furthermore, one can say that this form of interference is more likely to endanger the lives of many innocent people. However, at the same time, this intrusion can also save millions of people who can be victimized by dictatorial governments. Moreover, in many cases, there are ethnic conflicts within societies. Under such circumstances, it is vital to stop different ethnic groups from entering a military confrontation with one another. These are the main issues that should be discussed.

First, humanitarian intervention is particularly necessary when there is a risk of violence that is based on national, religious, or ethnic prejudice. For instance, one can mention such a country as Rwanda in which Hutu political leaders provoked the ethnic genocide of Tutsi people (Chatterjee & Scheid, 2003, p. 5). One should bear in mind that international organizations were aware about these threats, but unfortunately no action was taken. Similarly, it is possible to mention the ethnic hostilities in the former Yugoslavia. The deployment of peacekeepers can avert a disaster such as genocide. Overall, this argument is based on the premises of the just war theory which postulates that a military action be justified when it is necessary to stop injustice (Al-Haj, 2013).
Additionally, it is possible that during this ethnic conflict, a dictatorial and totalitarian government can come into power. In the long term, this government can turn into an enemy of the United States and its allies (Seybolt, 2007, p. 3). This is one of the main threats that should be considered. This is another rationale for implementing a military intervention. The argument is particularly important when one speaks about the international intervention into the Korean War which broke out in 1950 (Krieg, 2012). In turn, contemporary Southern Korea is one of the most advanced countries in the world, and it is a long-term ally of the United States. Therefore, a humanitarian intervention can be critical for protection the geopolitical interests of a country as well as its national security.

Certainly, one can also offer arguments against this intrusion. It is possible to say that this military action can be motivated primarily by political or economic interests, rather than the intention to save innocent people (Kegley, 2011, p. 364). For instance, the critics of this strategy point out that this military intrusion is more likely to boost the geopolitical aims of economically and military advanced countries. This is of the main pitfalls that should be avoided.

One should mention that the War in Iraq. This case is important because it shows that sometimes political leaders may not have accurate information (Amstutz, 2013). One should bear in mind that the U.S. troops could not find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, even though the existence of these weapons was one of the pretexts of the invasion of this country (Terzuolo, 2005, p. 93). So, these objections can be used by the critics of a humanitarian intervention.

Finally, it is important to mention that a military intervention can result into the deaths of many American citizens. For instance, the invasion of Iraq took lives of more than 4400 American soldiers (Gelpi, 2009, p. 258). Therefore, the critics of military intervention can say that the deaths cannot be justified by any geopolitical or economic interests. Additionally, one should not forget that this humanitarian intervention resulted in the deaths of approximately 50000 Iraqi civilians (Gelpi, 2009, p. 258). In other words, the losses caused by the humanitarian intervention...
turned out to be even more disastrous than the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein. Overall, these arguments should be kept in mind by political leaders who take a decision to start a humanitarian intervention.

It is possible to provide several examples of successful and unsuccessful military interventions. For example, one can speak about the operation of NATO forces in Kosovo. This intrusion helped to stop the violence against Albanians. This violence was staged by the government of Slobodan (Kerton-Johnson, 2010, p. 81). In turn, the international community wanted to stop this ethnic cleansing. Moreover, modern Balkan states have begun to recover economically and politically (Kerton-Johnson, 2010, p. 81). They have become more integrated into the European community. This is one of the possible outcomes that can be identified. As it has been said before, modern South Korea is also the result of a humanitarian intervention.

In contrast, there are examples of failed operations. Much attention should be paid to the situation in modern Iraq. Certainly, the U.S. troops succeeded in destroying the regime of Saddam Hussein. However, this country is still torn apart by ethnic and religious hostilities. Similarly, one should not forget about the Gulf War which also resulted in heavy losses. At this point, one cannot tell when this country can cope with the legacies of a totalitarian regime and continuous war. Therefore, political leaders should be very careful while launching any form of intervention. Furthermore, the failure of these humanitarian interventions can be partly explained by the fact that foreign military planners and politician lacked understanding of local culture as well as the tensions existing in the Iraqi society.

However, one should mention that the results of inaction can also be catastrophic. One of the most notorious cases is the Rwandan Genocide which took place in 1994 (Schimmel, 2011). The U.N. peacekeepers entered the territory of the country when the violence against the Tutsi people was already rampant (Cohen, 2007).
As a result, they could not protect the victims of the genocide (Baarda, 2009). Similarly, one should not forget the failure to prevent the Holocaust. This is another example that should not be disregarded by political leaders.

This discussion suggests that that military intervention can lead to different outcomes. Sometimes, this strategy can indeed restore peace within a certain country. More important, it can eventually contribute to economic and political stability in the region. However, at the same time, this military intrusion can only increase hostilities. Therefore, military, and political leaders must ensure that the actions are based on verified information. They should use force only in those cases when there is a risk of eminent danger. Nonetheless, a humanitarian intervention can still be a valid strategy when it is necessary to avert an ethnic conflict. This is one of the main arguments that can be put forward.

*Students should provide practical and relevant examples throughout the discussion.*