

Concept Note

8th Tana Forum | 4-5 May 2019 | Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

1. Introduction: Concept and origin

With the aim of playing a crucial role in bringing about sustainable peace and contributing to the implementation of the African Union Tripoli Declaration of August 2009, the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) at Addis Ababa University convenes an annual forum on security called the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, or Tana Forum in short. This initiative is a response to the declaration's appeal for "African-centred solutions", and its call for the treatment of peace and security as a collective "intellectual challenge".

As a result, the annual Tana Forum emerged as an independent platform initiated by IPSS and eminent African personalities, including Meles Zenawi, the late Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The Forum is an informal gathering of African decision-makers, peace and security stakeholder groups, and their larger constituencies for an open discussion of security issues and challenges faced by the continent.

2. Overall and specific objectives

The overall objective of the Tana Forum is to facilitate a platform where African peace and security issues are discussed and followed up by African decision-makers and peace and security stakeholder groups in an open and unceremonious setting. Specifically, the Forum aims at:

- Providing opportunities to decision-making leaders and institutions to exchange experiences and insights on peace and security issues among themselves with a view to taking home inspiration and practical lessons;
- Giving opportunities to political decision-makers to interact and consult with a broad-based African constituency as well as with key global actors;
- Contributing to a substantive African open debate on peace and security issues of key and strategic importance to the continent and its regional institutions;
- Communicating with and listening to "profound African voices on the ground" on various dimensions and components of peace and security on the continent, thus facilitating an inclusive dialogue among governments and other African security stakeholder groups;
- Sensitizing and mobilizing other stakeholders, actors and the overall African opinion for larger ownership of Africa-owned solutions on peace and security.

3. Expected results

In achieving its main and specific objectives, the Forum will result in:

- The conceptualization of peace and security matters from an African perspective. In that endeavour, substantial attention will be given to the emerging body of African-grown approaches to peace and security challenges and prospects;

- The building of a strong and broad-based constituency for peace and security through the establishment of non-threatening platforms for dialogue, networking and exchange of information between policy-makers, researchers and practitioners. To sustain such platforms, a cross-section of leaders from different sectors will be called upon to act as champions with a view to building an African voice for both the African and global security agendas;
- Progressively engaging Africa in the strategic and pro-active management of peace and security in the continent. Key to that effort will be the development of foresight capacities throughout relevant African organizations in the realm of public, private and civil society sectors. Equally important will be the development of strategic planning capacities and skills for the operationalization of national, sub-regional and continental long-term visions.

4. Forum strategy

Participation: The Forum will bring together high-level decision-makers on peace and security from the government/political spheres (HoSGs, AU organs and RECs), non-AU regional institutions, the private sector, critical segments of continental/regional civil society networks, as well as peace and security experts/resource persons. Representatives of selected stakeholders in global peace and security will also be invited.

Discussion format: Discussions will be designed in order to: (i) share views and experiences in an informal and independent manner, (ii) be action-oriented and forward looking and, most importantly, (iii) keep the essence of its concept: a consultative forum that is not intended to become a decision-making forum. The main format will be panel discussions and interaction with the floor. Further, introductions to these discussions are expected to be short statements.

Impact and effectiveness: The Forum is convened on an annual basis, thus, is an institution in its own right. This contributes to a continuous dialogue among top African leaders and various stakeholder groups. It enables leaders to explore options for innovative and joint action in peace and security. The Forum also allows for trust building among key players who would often only meet in settings that are mediated by diplomatic protocol. Altogether, it enables African leaders to develop and implement adequate and pro-active initiatives in peace and security on the continent.

5. Tana Board

Current board members serving for a three-year term (renewable once):

- **H.E. John Dramani Mahama (Chairperson)**, former President, Republic of Ghana
- **H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn**, former Prime Minister, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- **H.E. Catherine Samba-Panza**, former interim President, Central African Republic
- **H.E. Dr. Joyce Banda**, former President, Republic of Malawi
- **Amb. Lakhdar Brahimi**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of Algeria and former United Nations and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria
- **H.E. Temesgen Tiruneh**, Director General, Information Network Security Agency (INSA) and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- **H.E. Hirut Zemene**, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

- **Dr. Lassina Zerbo**, Executive Secretary, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Austria/Burkina Faso
- **Amb. Soad M. Shalaby**, Director General, Egyptian African Centre for Women (EACW), Egypt
- **Mr. Alain Foka**, Journalist, Radio France International, France/Cameroon
- **Prof. Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba**, former Director, Kenya School of Law

Former board members (2012-2018):

- H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria (former Chairperson)
- H.E. Thabo Mbeki, former President of the Republic of South Africa
- H.E. Pierre Buyoya, former President of the Republic of Burundi
- H.E. Luisa Diogo, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Mozambique
- Prof. Andreas Eshete, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister with the rank of a Minister, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (former Deputy Chairperson)
- Amb. Berhane Gebre-Christos, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia with a rank of a Minister
- Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Director General, World Health Organization and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Prof. Ndioro Ndiaye, former Minister for Social Development/former Minister for Women's, Children's and Family Affairs, Republic of Senegal
- Prof. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, USA
- Ms. Betty Bigombe, former State Minister of Water Resources, Republic of Uganda and former Director of Fragility, Conflict and Violence, World Bank
- Dr. 'Funmi Olonisakin, Vice President/Principal (International), King's College London and Founding Director, African Leadership Centre
- Prof. Mahmood Mamdani, Executive Director, Makerere Institute of Social Research, Uganda
- Dr. Hashim Mohammed Tewfik, Assistant Professor, Center for Federal Studies, Addis Ababa University

6. The Technical Committee

The Technical Committee's role is to provide advice to the Tana Secretariat on agenda setting and the organization of the Forum. The Committee aims to advise the Secretariat on procedures and content to strengthen the Forum's capacity to generate fruitful discussions and give participants a meaningful experience. The current members of the Technical Committee are:

- **Dr. Hespina Rukato (Chair)** - Zimbabwe - Development consultant and board member of Great Dyke
- **Mr. Alex Ratebaye Tordeta (Deputy Chair)** - Chad - Deputy Chief of Staff, African Union Commission
- **Prof. Timothy Murithi** - South Africa/Kenya - Head of the Justice and Reconciliation in Africa Programme, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
- **Dr. Noha Bakr** - Egypt - Professor Adjunct Faculty, Political Science Department, American University in Cairo

- **Dr. iur Mehari Taddele Maru** - Ethiopia - International Consultant on African Union affairs and a Research Fellow at the NATO Defense College
- **Ms. Semiha Abdulmelik** - Ethiopia - Governance and policy analyst and former Senior Political Affairs Officer, Peace and Security Department, African Union Commission
- **Ms. Haja Saramba Kandeh** - Sierra Leone - Legal and Gender Associate, AIDS-Free World
- **Ms. Michelle Ndiaye (Ex-Officio)** - Senegal - Director, Africa Peace and Security Programme, Institute for Peace and Security Studies and Head of the Tana Forum Secretariat.

7. The Tana Forum Secretariat

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of Addis Ababa University acts as the Forum's Secretariat. Parallel to the Forum and hosting its Secretariat, IPSS runs the Africa Peace and Security Programme (APSP), a joint project with the African Union.

APSP aims to build African capacities to develop and implement African-led solutions in peace and security in Africa. In this context, the outcomes of the Forum will inform the Institute's activities in education, research and policy dialogues. This will further contribute to creating a platform where ideas and synergies on African-centred solutions in peace and security can converge with wider objectives to inform decision-making, policy formulation and implementation at the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs).

8. Forum status

The maiden Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, held on the theme **"Managing Diversity and State Fragility"**, took place from 14 to 15 April 2012 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Current and former Heads of State and Government, distinguished leaders of regional and sub-regional bodies, representatives from the private sector, concerned civil society from Africa, eminent personalities from politics and media, representatives of African and non-African multi-lateral bodies, and other important partners attended the Forum.

The 2nd edition of the Forum took place from 20 to 21 April 2013 in the same location. Stakeholders met to discuss the theme **"Security and Organized Crime in Africa"**, and to pay tribute to the Forum's greatest champion, the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi. The annual Meles Zenawi Lecture Series was also established this year.

The 3rd Tana Forum took place from 26 to 27 April 2014 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, and discussed a timely and salient topic for the continent, the **"Impact of Illicit Financial Flows on Peace and Security in Africa"**. The Forum's annual Meles Zenawi Lecture paid tribute to Africa's greatest icon, the late President Nelson Mandela.

The 4th Tana Forum met under the theme of **"Secularism and Politicized Faith"** and took place from 18 to 19 April 2015 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. African Heads of State and stakeholders together with eminent leaders from all religious sectors convened in Bahir Dar to discuss the importance of disestablishing state

religion and developing an agenda of secularism that underlines tolerance. The annual Meles Zenawi Lecture paid tribute to the influential advocate of Pan-Africanism, Kwame Nkrumah.

The 5th Tana Forum convened on 16 to 17 April 2016 under the theme **“Africa in the Global Security Agenda”**. Following the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, Africa looked at its role in the international security arena. In addition, the annual Meles Zenawi Lecture debated the legacy of Patrice Lumumba.

The 6th Tana Forum was convened on 22 to 23 April 2017 under the theme **“Natural Resource Governance in Africa”**. Whereas debates around the governance of natural resources have understandably been fixated within the extractive sector, the 6th Tana Forum broadened the scope to include issues around the governance of other natural resources, specifically: (a) land, (b) water, (c) the seas, and (d) forests and biodiversity. The Forum’s annual Meles Zenawi Lecture paid tribute to the late Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai, a Nobel Peace Laureate and Kenyan environmental and political activist.

The 7th Tana Forum took place on 21 to 22 April 2018 on the theme **“Ownership of Africa’s Peace and Security Provision: Financing and Reforming the African Union”**. In a rapidly changing global and African policy environment, there is an obvious need for more powerful and effective AU institutions with the capacity to assume strong ownership on continental and global peace and security matters. Understanding ownership helps to strategically examine the roles and functions of external actors in the goals of peace-building and state-building.

The 8th Tana Forum, taking place from 4 to 5 May 2019 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, will discuss the theme of **“Political Dynamics in the Horn of Africa: Nurturing the Emerging Peace Trends”**. In line with recent political developments in the Horn of Africa and the remarkable rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea to address the border conflict through negotiation, this year’s Tana Forum will deliberate on ways to support the political dynamics and pertinent geopolitical matters unfolding in the region.

As per the tradition of the Forum, the annual Meles Zenawi Lecture will pay tribute to a prominent African leader. In 2019, the lecture will examine the legacy of the late Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the South African anti-apartheid activist and politician.

According to the Secretariat’s policy, attendance is non-transferable and by invitation only. 200 selected floor participants are expected to attend the 2019 Tana Forum.

For more information please visit our website www.tanaforum.org or forward enquiries to the organizing team at tanaforum@ipss-addis.org.

END.