Managing Security Threats:
Building Resilience for the Africa We Want
Managing Security Threats: Building Resilience for the Africa We Want
Editorial Team:

Authors

Professor Tim Murithi

Head of Peacebuilding Interventions Programme, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, South Africa Extraordinary Professor of Africa Studies, University of Free State, South Africa.

Review Editors:

Dr. Fana Gebresenbet
Ms. Lettie Tembo Longwe
Frank Djan Owusu

Layout Design:

Blaine Gidey
CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 9

2. INTRODUCTION 12
  2.1 CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT: 13

3. METHODOLOGY 14

4. THE CHANGING TRENDS IN CONFLICTS: NATIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL CONFIGURATIONS 15
  4.1 UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTS 15
  4.2 REGIONALISATION OF STATE-ARMED MILITIA CONFLICT 16
  4.3 VIOLENT EXTREMIST AND IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT 17
    4.3.1 Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) 18
  4.4 TRANSNATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS 18
    4.4.1 Geo-political Reconfigurations and their Impact on Governance, Peace and Security in Africa 18
    4.4.2 Drone Warfare and African Conflicts 19
    4.4.3 Mercenarism and its Effects on Regional Stability 20
  4.5 TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF CRIME IN AFRICA 21
  4.6 CONTESTED REGIME TRANSITIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL TENSION 22
  4.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC UNREST, ETHNIC TENSION AND XENOPHOBIA 23

5. MAJOR FACTORS AND DRIVERS OF INSECURITY AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES 24
  5.1 GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA (WPS) 24
  5.2 THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA (YPS) 25
  5.3 MONEY LAUNDERING AND ILLEGAL FINANCIAL FLOWS 27
  5.4 INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA 27
6. PEACE INITIATIVES AND RESPONSES BY AFRICAN CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

6.1 CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (CEWS)

6.2 PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND MEDIATION

6.2.1 AU Mediation Support Unit and AU Special Envoys
6.2.2 Conflict Prevention, Mediation and the Panel of the Wise
6.2.3 Challenges Facing the Panel of the Wise
6.2.4 Pan-African Network of the Wise (PANWISE)
6.2.5 AU Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation

6.3 THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS

6.3.1 The Politics of the Operationalisation of ASF

6.4 AFRICAN UNION TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE POLICY (AUTJP)

6.4.1 Towards a Framework of Regional Reconciliation

6.5 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS, RESEARCH, ACADEMIC, THINK-TANK CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE INITIATIVES

6.5.1 The Livingstone Formula
6.5.2 The Maseru Conclusions
6.5.3 A Model of APSA and CSO Collaboration: The ECOWAS and WANEP Partnership

7. THE AFRICAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS COOPERATION ON THE PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

7.1 AFRICA AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE UNSC: INVOKING ARTICLE 109 OF THE UN CHARTER

8. CHALLENGES TO AFRICAN OWNERSHIP OF PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES AND INTERVENTIONS

8.1 FINANCING AND REFORMING THE AFRICAN UNION

8.1.1 The Limitations of the AU Peace Fund

9. THE MERGER OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY

9.1 REFORMING BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEMS WITHIN THE AU COMMISSION
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African continent experienced a turbulent year in 2021 in terms of the provision of peace and security. Africa in 2021 witnessed a reversal of some of the democratic gains that were achieved in the 1990s and 2000. The resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government, the contestation for state power, the regionalisation of violent conflict and return to authoritarian rule and the undermining of the rule of law have become drivers of violent conflict. In addition, disputes punctuated with incidences of gender-based violence have placed an emotional, mental and psychological strain on the people of the continent.

The 2021 State of Peace and Security Report undertakes an analysis of these issues and has identified the following findings and key recommendations:

- AU member states need to prevent the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government by reacting much more swiftly to ensuing crisis and invoking the provisions of the AU Constitutive Act and PSC Protocol to sanction errant countries from descending the path of military regime take-overs;
- AU, RECs and member states need to strengthen and implement measures already in place to prevent violent extremism, including establishing processes to negotiate crisis situations with the armed militia if required;
- AU, RECs and member states need to assert the link between organized transitional crime, violent extremisms, political corruption, money laundering, and the instability of regions by adopting more stringent policing and legislative processes to arrest and prosecute criminal networks at the national, regional and global level;
- AU, RECs and member states need to develop continental-based pharmaceutical industries to manufacture and distribute their own Covid-19 vaccines to African citizens;
- The AU should adopt a continent-wide policy and legislative framework to regulate and manage the escalation of drone-warfare, particularly in situations in which the incursion of non-African drones undermines the sovereignty of countries;
- A key finding in the paper is that the African Peace and Security Architecture and African Governance Architecture needs to be revitalized and reinvigorated with a renewed sense of urgency and decisiveness through providing the necessary support to enabling of the full operational capacity of the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and support the strengthening of its interface with RECs and RMs;
- AU member states and the wider AU system should pursue the financial sovereignty of the APSA. This requires AU member states to ratify and implement the 0.2% levy on eligible imports. Those African governments that have not done so should uphold their obligations and continuously transfer their 0.2% tax on their imports directly to the African Union to reverse the out-sourcing of the continents peace and security processes and systems;
- AU member states, coordinated by the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, should lead the process in mobilising the UN General Assembly for the triggering and activation of Article 109 to convene a UN Charter Review Conference, as stipulated in the UN Charter, to design a UN Security Council body that is more reflective of the twenty-first century;
- African governments working in close collaboration with the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and the Department of Human Resources should urgently act on the appointment of dedicated full-time staff to ensure that the CPAPS can operate at maximum efficiency to address the
recurring crises across the continent;

- The AU leadership and member states should reassert the independence and autonomy of the AU Panel of the Wise by providing it with a stand-alone secretariat, with an adequate staff complement, so that it can work on its own volition in a manner that complements the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;

- The levels of cooperation between the AU and RECs should be strengthened significantly, through an alignment of AU PAPS/RECs/RMs workplans, which requires addressing the institutional interface and degree of collaboration, by drawing lessons the intervention of ECOWAS, with the support of the AU and UN, in The Gambia.

- The purpose of mediation training should be reconfigured, and there should be initiatives to retain and continue to work with AU trained mediators;

- Greater effort should be put into engaging CSOs in the work of the APSA and AGA, notably in supporting mediation, peacemaking, transitional justice and peacebuilding processes;

- Implement mediation efforts in a more planned and structured manner and avoid ad hoc processes. This requires additional resources, human and financial, should be dedicated to professionalizing the expertise of mediators, including AU Special Envoys, through high-level briefings and the training and deployment of mediators.

- Support the development of specific modalities of how to operationalise regional reconciliation and link the APSA and AGA structures to strengthen the impact of both structures to achieving the peace, security, governance and development aspirations of the African Union;

- Provide support to processes that will assist operationalising the merged Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security. Such action will strengthen the interface between APSA and AGA, as well as operationalise regional reconciliation through policy dialogues, knowledge management, lesson learning and training and capacity building interventions;

- The Office of the Special Envoy for Women Peace and Security and FEMWISE should be provided with an increased budget of dedicated and predictable financial support to ensure that it can effectively deliver on its mandate;

- The Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security should develop dedicated programmes of work with the AU Special Envoy for Youth and the African Youth Ambassadors to mobilize the continent’s youth to proactively work to prevent and resolve conflict as well as promote post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding and transitional justice;

- Regional civil society actor networks should be supported to ensure that they develop integrated workplans with all of their partner organisations, clearly outlining the division of labour, which will ensure their sustainability in engaging and collaborating with APSA and AGA institutions;

- Regional civil society actor networks should establish dedicated programmes of work to enhance the capacity of their partner organisations to implement effective policy dialogue, knowledge management, training, capacity building, communication, advocacy and outreach strategies with the wider Pan-African citizenry and processes necessary to engage APSA and AGA institutions;

- The AU and RECs international partners should support and ensure the independence and autonomy of the AU Panel of the Wise, notably by contributing towards enhancing the technical capacity of the Panel’s secretariat, which should operate as a stand-alone entity and work in a complementary manner with the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;
• The AU and RECs international partners should ensure dedicated support to the AU Office of the Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, as well as the peace and security programmatic activities of the AU Envoy on Youth and African Youth Ambassadors, through a collaborative inter-departmental initiative with the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;

• Given the aspirations to “Silence the Guns”, the AU, RECs, and its partners should adopt strategies to support peace and security interventions based on a “regional reconciliation” approach, which encourages APSA and AGA institutions to work regionally to address national crisis;

• In addition, AU and RECs partners should ensure an asymmetrical balance in terms of the support they provide to conflict management initiatives, and the conflict prevention and specifically post-conflict reconstruction, transitional justice and peacebuilding initiatives which are necessary to ensure an effective exit strategy for AU peace support operations;

• AU and RECs partners should support policy dialogues, knowledge management, training and capacity building initiatives, working with African think-tanks and civil society actors, to support the merger between APSA and AGA architectures, including developing the strategic and operational modalities to enable the two architectures to work in mutual support of each other;

• AU partners should establish technical support frameworks for civil society actors, which are multi-year and based on enabling networks of civil society actors working on peace and security to ensure the viability, in a manner that builds their capacities and strengthens their systems to deliver concretely in engaging APSA and AGA institutions, to deliver on outcomes on the ground collaboratively.
2. INTRODUCTION

The African continent experienced a turbulent year in 2021 in terms of the provision of peace and security. In 2021, Africa witnessed a reversal of some of the democratic gains that were achieved in the 1990s and 2000, with the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government, contestation for state power, the regionalisation of violent conflict and return to authoritarian rule and the undermining of the rule of law, both of which are drivers of violent conflict. Furthermore, disputes punctuated with incidences of gender-based violence have placed an emotional, mental and psychological strain on the people of the continent from Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic (CAR), Cameroon, Libya, Mali, the Darfur region of Sudan, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo’s border with Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and ongoing strife and political tension in Eswatini, Lesotho, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. In addition, the prevalence of transnational violent extremism in the form of radical religious extremism in the Cabo Del Gado region of Mozambique, Boko Haram in West Africa, al-Shabaab in Eastern Africa, Al-Quaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Islamic State in Great Sahel (ISGS) in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, is a persistent threat to the future peace and security of the African continent.

In 2021, there were increasing incidences of xenophobia, and sectarian violence, which undermines national cohesion, regional integration and cooperation, and witnessed governments pose security measures that threaten democratic consolidation on the continent. Moreover, in 2021, limited economic growth, an immense youth bulge, and high levels of rural-urban conflict and forced migration have created conditions for extremism to spread into vulnerable countries.

The problem of radicalization is linked to the issue of inequality, and the propensity of alienated and marginalized African citizens to buy into the narrative of the extremists, with their promise of an illusionary paradise in the after-life, because of present conditions for existence are degraded due to economic mismanagement and corruption. Migrant flows from West Africa into North Africa and Europe are the side-effects of these theatres of instability. This also speaks to the issue of inequality, the forces of globalization and Africa’s inability to trade itself out of its socio-economic crisis. Africa’s responses to the regional peace and security challenges should not only be limited to more troops, more hardware, drone technology but the time and tested spirit of entrepreneurship so that we can fight the trade war rather than simply expend our energies trying to put out the extremist fires - and behaving like a fire brigade, only reacting when is too late. It is necessary for Africa and its institutions to rather find the source of the regional insecurity fire and extinguish the flames before they engulf the continent.

To a large extent, efforts to ensure sustainable peace, security, governance and development in Africa have consistently undermined the day’s dominant international and geopolitical agendas. After colonialism, it was the Cold War, and in the post-Cold War world, the pressures of globalization are impacting Africa’s peace and development efforts. However, African states have undermined the continental ability and capacity to promote peace and their failure to find ways to address their differences and hold each other accountable. Moreover, Africa’s leadership deficit leaves the continent extremely vulnerable to internal fissures and external penetration and exploitation. For example, the fuel that adds to the flame of conflict in Africa is globalization’s role in perpetuating and sustaining wars.

While the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) remains appraised of crisis situations around the continent, the combined and collective interventions of APSA and AGA institutions have not yet delivered peace outcomes to the situations which continue to afflict the continent.1 Even though the Continental Early

---

Warning System continues to produce timely responses, the translation of this information into early response interventions leaves several countries exposed and vulnerable to conflict escalation, continued violence and unsustainable peacebuilding and reconciliation processes.

In addition, in Africa, crises have been framed as national crisis which needs to be addressed at the state-level primarily by state actors. However, the degree of cross-border interaction and exchange, and the deepening reach of globalization, means that we now need to frame Africa’s conflict situations as regional crises with national dimensions. Therefore, this report will propose adopting a regional reconciliation framework from a strategic perspective to pursue regional peace and security interventions, which draws in and engages with the regional players implicated in a particular crisis. Ultimately, what is evident in 2021, is that the African continent seems unable to proactively prevent these crises despite the availability of key institutions and mechanisms to pre-empt and resolve conflict. This State of Peace and Security Report will analyse these issues and outline a range of key recommendations on the way forward for further promoting peace, security and governance on the African continent.

2.1 CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT:

The State of Peace and Security in Africa report will focus on a number of issues and will be structured as follows:

1. Assess changing trends in conflicts;
2. Outline the major factors or drivers of insecurity and violence and their consequences in African countries;
3. Examine the cross-cutting trends of various extant security and structural predicaments of the from 2020 to 2021 - such as terrorism, violent extremism, inequality and marginalization, gender and youth issues, contested regime transitions, environmental stresses, forced migration, illicit trade in people, drug and arms trade, money laundering, illicit funds, infectious diseases including COVID-19;
4. Discuss peace initiatives and actors that have emerged and prospects by analyzing the responses by African continental and regional institutions and non-governmental actors to these security prospects and threats;
5. Provide an overview of the AU/United Nations’ (UN) security cooperation on addressing and mitigating the continent’s peace and security agenda;
6. Interrogate challenges to African-led peace and security ownership in general and financing and reforming the AU and provide reflections on the merger of the Political Affairs Department and the Peace and Security Council of the AU (now CPAPS), with an emphasis on the synergies and complementarities of the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA);
7. Provide recommendations on the way forward.
3. METHODOLOGY

This State of Peace and Security Report will utilise a qualitative research methodology based on drawing perspectives from African Union documents, research documents, media reports and analytical documents from various institutions.
4. THE CHANGING TRENDS IN CONFLICTS: NATIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL CONFIGURATIONS

Over the last decade, Africa has seen increasing unrest and a democratic recession, a deterioration in human rights, physical security and the rule of law in many states. Across Africa, there has been an increasing restriction on civil society space, free press, oppositional political parties, and the increasing influence of the military on politics across many states on the continent. The number of conflicts within the African continent remains high compared with other parts of the world. The following are some of the key trends that have been identified in the peace and security arena. In terms of national, regional and global configurations of conflict, the continent continues to be afflicted by a range of factors discussed below.

4.1 UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTS

In 2021, Africa experienced a series of coups d’état and the military take-over of sitting governments. In particular, Mali, Guinea, Chad and Burkina Faso in West Africa and Sudan in the Horn of Africa all experienced coups in 2021. There was also an attempted coup in Niger and indications of similar trends in Guinea-Bissau. Among the drivers of unconstitutional changes of government are linked to issues relating to livelihoods and access to opportunities for employment. In addition, the resurgence of military takeovers has been ascribed to the loss of confidence in the ability of the state to contain the threat from violent extremists as a key driver of these developments.

The African Union’s policy framework for addressing the unconstitutional change of government became more salient in 2021. Specifically, the need for the continent to return to first principles when it comes to the issue of military coups was front of mind throughout 2021. Accordingly, the AU has highlighted its commitment to enhancing democratic governance across the continent through its proposed African Governance Architecture (AGA) with the African Governance Platform (AGP) as a centrally coordinating and monitoring mechanism for the gradual domestication of the principles of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). In addition, the African Union has established a normative framework on unconstitutional changes of government in Africa which include:

1. The Constitutive Act of the African Union, of 2000;
2. The Lomé Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government, of 2000;
6. The Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights;

In addition, several regional economic communities (RECs), which are building blocks of the African Union, have developed a normative framework on the phenomenon of unconstitutional changes of government. These include, for example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance of 2001. There have been frequent calls to harmonize the existing AU normative framework on unconstitutional changes of government. Unconstitutional changes of government (UCG) in this instance are understood to include:
a) coup d’état against democratically elected governments;
b) interventions by internal armed militia and mercenaries to replace democratic governments;
c) the refusal of an incumbent government to relinquish power to the victorious political party after free and fair elections.

The return of unconstitutional changes of government in 2021 is a worrying trend for the continent, which has spill-over effects and the potential to destabilise regions further. In Sudan, the first coup took place on 16 September 2021, but subsequently, the then Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok signed an agreement with the military on 21 November 2021 to restore his power, and this was viewed as a premature restoration of prior arrangement on the basis that the armed forces retained the control. Subsequently, Prime Minister Hamdok resigned on 2 January 2022 from his position and in a personalised message, he stated that “I tried as much as I could to avoid our country slipping into a catastrophe, and now our country is going through a dangerous turning point that may threaten its entire survival if it is not remedied soon.”

Socio-political protests afflicted Sudan throughout 2021, with protesters stating that the civilian-military partnership was not based on openness and trust. In addition, as far as Sudan is concerned, the loyalists to the previous regime of Omar Al Bashir remained in control of the military, which in turn did not want to enable a genuine democratic transition.

In Mali’s case, the country experienced its first coup on 18 August 2020, and subsequently, on 24 May 2021, the military junta consolidated its power and duly suspended the constitution. ECOWAS subsequently issued a suspension of Mali’s membership after the military regime set a date for the election to December 2025. Again, this was ECOWAS demonstrating its resolve to address the emerging scourge of unconstitutional changes of government on the African continent. In its statement, ECOWAS stated that “the proposed calendar for a transition is totally unacceptable...this calendar simply means that an illegitimate military transition government will take the Malian people hostage during the next five years.” The African Union similarly suspended Guinea, from all Union activities and decision-making bodies, after the overthrow and deposition of Alpha Conde as head of state. However, it is evident that the AU’s and RECs tend to selectively invoke their powers to sanction countries in which unconstitutional changes of government have occurred, which raises the question of double standards. For example, while Guinea was suspended by the AU, Chad did not receive a formal sanction from the Union. In some instance, the AU and RECs tended to respond to unconstitutional changes at a stage much later than when the event transpired. Consequently, these belated interventions by the AU and ECOWAS point to the need for the continent’s institutions to adopt a much more proactive approach to addressing escalating tensions in countries and regions to offset the regrettable trend of unconstitutional changes of government. Concretely, it means that the AU and RECs need to focus more resources on conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy and post-conflict reconstruction, transitional justice and peacebuilding to stabilize societies and deepen the processes of sustaining peace across the continent.

4.2 REGIONALISATION OF STATE-ARMED MILITIA CONFLICT

In 2021, the African continent endured the debilitating effects of violent conflict for several decades. Despite policy frameworks and the utilisation of significant resources to stabilise countries, conflicts in the region have remained resistant to resolution. The continent continues to experience a significant level of violent

---

4. Economic Community of West African States, Final Communiqué, Fourth Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government on the Political Situation in Mali, p.3.
conflict between government forces and armed militia groups, taking on regional configurations of sourcing and execution, notably in West Africa, the Lake Chad Basin, Horn of Africa and central Africa. Africa's crises demonstrate that conflicts tend to spill across borders, affecting communities in more than one country.\(^5\) Intra-state conflicts have increasingly replaced traditional inter-state wars in the region. However, these intra-state conflicts have an inter-state or regional, transnational and global dimension in how they are resourced and executed.

Furthermore, intra-state conflicts with a regional dimension, include more than one state as primary or secondary actors. For example, the South Sudan crisis drew Uganda and Sudan into its dynamics. Similarly, the Ethiopian crisis included Eritrea and Sudan in the conflict dynamics. In 2021, it was evident that the continent's regional conflict systems were notoriously difficult to stabilise, as the implicated state actors did not adopt a coordinated regional strategy to promote and consolidate peace.\(^6\) Therefore, it is increasingly evident that regional reconciliation is required to ensure consolidated peace. However, the absence of a coordinated approach to regional reconciliation across Africa and the lack of resources and capacity means that these mechanisms remain incapable of promoting and sustaining regional peace, justice and reconciliation.

4.3 VIOLENT EXTREMIST AND IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT

In 2021, Africa saw a continued increase in violent extremism and associated terrorist activity and limited success in resolving crises. The peril of violent extremism fuelled by the politicization of religious ideology to spread terror continues to afflict a number of countries across the continent, including Somalia; Cabo Del Gado region, Mozambique; Burkina Faso; and the Sahel countries, notably Mali; Niger; and Libya. Regrettably, the spread of violent extremism has also emboldened some governments to roll back the democratic gains by imposing draconian and restrictive authoritarian rule by using the pretext of upholding national security in the face of extremists threats. These democratic gains, which were achieved in the early 1990s, were achieved through long-suffering initiatives by African civic actors, working with the opposition and media, to open up political systems that were highly centralised and controlled by the cult of personalities. In 2021, the efforts to consolidate these democratic gains remain a challenge, evident in the security-related challenges related to electoral transitions during this period, for example, in Zambia and Somalia.

In Mozambique, in 2021, the militant group Ahlu Sunnah Wa Jama’a continued its violent activities in the Cabo Del Gado region in an ongoing conquest to control one of Africa’s most lucrative liquefied natural gas reserves, which are situated in the region. In March and April 2021, there were extensive clashes with the armed militia, which required a concerted response. Therefore on 15 July 2021, eight African countries contributed personnel and troops to launch the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), including Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania. The force commander is Major General Xolani Mankayi of the SA National Defence Force.

SAMIM’s mandate is to support Mozambique’s Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique (FADM), to “combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado by neutralising terrorist threat and restoring security to create a secure environment; strengthening and maintaining peace and security; restoring law and order in affected areas of Cabo Delgado Province and supporting the Republic of Mozambique, in collaboration with humanitarian agencies, to continue to provide humanitarian relief to population affected by terrorist activities, including internally displaced persons”, according to the SADC Communique of Heads of State, issued on 12 January 2022. To date, SAMIM has contributed to recapturing villages and disrupting the operations of armed

---

militia, capturing arms and creating humanitarian corridors to transmit much-needed assistance to war-affected communities in the region.

However, the SAMIM is confronted by a challenging situation, and the limited resources available to its Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) means that the mission cannot adequately project its authority. In addition, the continuing deployment of SAMIM places a significant strain on the resources of the contributing states, which means that the pressing domestic challenges remain unaddressed, which does not augur well for stability in the southern Africa region. Emerging analysis suggests that “ordinary Mozambicans are driven to joining the insurgency as a result of marginalisation, disenfranchisement and limited prospects for change”, and therefore, a strategy for ensuring the long-term stability of the country should focus on addressing the underlying cause of the violence, which is linked to socio-economic deprivation and the absence of opportunities to improve livelihoods.  

As noted above, the gains have been achieved across Africa since the early 1990s during the era of democratization remains under threat. Unfortunately, the current trend towards some African countries views the current trend toward regressive authoritarianism as a necessary model for pursuing development. However, with regressive authoritarianism, the closure of civic and political space and the killing and arrest of opposition leaders and journalists do not augur well for a more peaceful future in Africa. As a way forward, it is necessary to strengthen the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) by adopting an awareness-raising and empowerment strategy based on an ‘whole-of-society’ approach to countering violent extremism, which engages civil society, community leaders, youth, and women. This means adopting a more community-engagement approach to countering violent extremism, which will require building bridges between civic and state actors.

4.3.1 FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS (FTFs)

The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) analyses how to ensure that key stakeholders work in tandem and avoid duplicating their efforts to combat violent extremism. The Centre has also identified the precipitous increase of so-called Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) on the African continent who proactively engage in executing violent extremism, specifically in Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Somalia, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia as well as Mozambique. The ACSRT, together with other African and international agencies, is developing mechanisms for identifying and locating FTF’s, including improving data and information collection. In particular, many of these fighters emerge from the crisis in Syria and Iraq and extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. As a result, the FTF’s are a clear and present danger to African countries’ sovereignty and territorial integrity, fuel insecurity and undermine peacebuilding processes.

4.4 TRANSNATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS

4.4.1 GEO-POLITICAL RECONFIGURATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

The historical exclusion and marginalization of Africa from designing, framing and engaging with global governance processes is an issue that continues to impact on governance, peace and security processes in Africa. Given the undemocratic nature of the United Nations system it is necessary to redress this democratic deficit, and to restructure and transformation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to address geopolitical insecurity, as well as Africa’s historical exclusion from the international system. In terms of the competition between the US, Europe on the one side, and China and Russia on the other, to dominate the African continent this has a significant impact on governance, human rights and democratic processes. China’s

---

stated non-interference in internal governance processes has given license to some African leaders to close down the democratic space for societal participation in the affairs of their country.

In addition, Russia has actively inserted itself in military supporting a number of governments, with questionable legitimacy, such as in the Central African Republic and Mali, where the Wagner private military group has waged combat operations against local armed militia. Similarly, the US and UK, despite allocating their resources to supporting governance and human rights programmes, have continued to conduct their “war against terror” notably through a significant number of military bases spread across the continent. Djibouti for example most of the global powers through military bases to prosecute the war against terror in the Horn of Africa. The collateral damage suffered by innocent African civilians as a result of the interventions of these geopolitical powers is a clear violation of their human rights and the continent’s actors should continue to raise their concerns about these injustices on multiple policy platforms, including the UN, AU and RECs.

In terms of the transnational and international dimensions of peace and security in Africa, Mali, 2021 witnessed the draw-down of France’s counter-terrorism initiative known as Operation Barkhane, which was deployed in 2014 to contain the insurgency threat posed by violent extremists in the country. President Macron announced this draw-down of French operations as part of its determination to close its military bases in the Sahel region by the first quarter of 2022. In the absence of an effective African fighting force, the ensuing security gap, despite the presence of the European-led Task Force Tabuka, which was initiated in 2020, was promptly occupied by Russia, which sent troops to Mali. This was closely followed by private military security companies, which are utilised to project informal and unaccountable power to secure the interests of external actors. In addition, Mali’s shared border with Burkina Faso and Niger is fraught with cross-border violence fuelled by the operations of the extremist group Islamic State in the Greater Sahel (ISGS) and Jama’at Nusratul Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM). In particular, these cross-border skirmishes are fuelled by livestock theft and competition over natural resources. The transnational dimensions of these incursions remain a recurring feature on the African continent.

4.4.2 DRONE WARFARE AND AFRICAN CONFLICTS

In 2021, the African continent witnessed a steep increase in drone technology, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), across the continent. Initially, the technology was deployed by external actors with operational bases on the African continent, including the United States, France, and China. For example, US Naval Expeditionary Base Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, is an operational drone base from which US forces project their airpower across the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden, ostensibly targeting violent extremists. Camp Lemonnier is an operational base of the US AFRICOM and is one of six US drone and surveillance bases across the African continent. This drone base has been utilised to deploy “hunter-killers” to target armed militia groups in the Horn of Africa and beyond. Djibouti is also home to many other naval bases, including a Chinese naval base, a French air-force base, and Italian and Japanese bases. The physical presence of these external actors on the African continent means that they can project air power across the continent and significantly alter the nature of warfare in AU member states.

As the Ethiopian Tigray crisis has revealed, there has been a precipitous upscaling of the use of drone warfare to conduct war when the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey and China provided the Ethiopian government with drone technology and operatives who were effectively deployed to contain the encroaching Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF)/Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) in late 2021. In particular, there were reports of

---

Chinese drone operatives supporting the execution of drone warfare in Ethiopia during this crisis period. In particular, the news broadcaster Al Jazeera noted that reports point to “the presence of Chinese Wing Loong 2 UAVs at Ethiopian military bases, while a Bellingcat investigation in August found strong indications that Iranian armed drones, along with their ground control stations, had been spotted at Semera Airport.” In addition, the Al Jazeera stated that “the government has also reportedly reached out to Turkey and requested a number of Bayraktar TB2 drones. These are relatively cheap and combat-proven.” These developments are significant for African states, because, as Chamayou notes:

“the generalization of such a weapon implies a change in the conditions that apply in the exercise of the power of war, this time in the context of the relations between the state and its own subjects. It would be mistaken to limit the question of weaponry solely to the sphere of external violence. What would be the consequence of becoming the subjects of a drone-state be for that states’ own population?”

This suggests that African countries need to enhance their awareness of the morality, functionality and utility of using drones to prosecute wars. Furthermore, there are indications that non-state armed militias are also positioning themselves to utilise and deploy drones to execute their own military campaigns, which does not augur well for peace and security on the African continent.

4.4.2 MERCERNARISM AND ITS EFFECTS ON REGIONAL STABILITY

Mercenaries have been a persistent and recurring feature of human warfare since the era of antiquity. In the 1990’s the wars fought in Sierra Leone and Liberia were fuelled by the infusion of mercenaries. Notably, in 1998, the Sandline International private military company, headed by the ex-British soldier Tim Spicer, was contracted by the government of President Kabbah, of Sierra Leone, to maintain power. Subsequently, in 2003, Sandline International was contracted by the armed militia groups that were attempting to oust Charles Taylor from Liberia. In 2002, Spicer drew down Sandline’s operations and established the Aegis Defence Services which was involved in Libya, Somalia and Mozambique. More recently, the Russian Wagner Group, a private military company, has been increasing its operations across Africa, notably in the Central African Republic (CAR), where it is in effect propping up the fledgling and embattled government. Similarly, Mali has witnessed the precipitous withdrawal of France, its erstwhile colonial power, mirrored by an increase in Russia’s presence through the operations of the Wagner Group. This has implications for the protection of human rights and the restoration of peace and security in the region. Typically, mercernarism does not follow a discernible code of conduct, given the clandestine nature of its operatives, evident for example, in the massacres that were allegedly committed by the US mercenary group Blackwater, headed by Erik Prince, in Iraq during the occupation of the country. The persistence of mercernarism in the G5 Sahel region as well as in other parts of Africa does not augur well for the continent, given the fact that the operations of these private armies has a negative impact on the countries that they operation in as well as on neighbouring countries.

4.5 TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF CRIME IN AFRICA

Geo-strategic interests and pipelines for transnational crime are also undermining the ability of state actors to manage and resolve their internal tensions and conflicts on the African continent. In particular, organized crime, including illicit trade in natural and mineral resources, drugs, arms, human trafficking, cybercrime as well as wildlife crime, has provided extremists groups with a conduit through which to finance their nefarious activities, which continues to undermine the stability of a number of countries across the continent, notably in the Sahel, Horn of Africa and Central African regions. For example, in Mali, the organized criminal element operates with impunity despite the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the actions of the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

The transnational criminal networks in Mali operate to conduct their illegal trade in drugs, arms, people, as well as the extraction of the country’s cultural heritage, for example, the ancient literary manuscripts and artefacts from Timbuktu, to be auctioned off to the highest bidder in underground global markets, facilitated by a nefarious network of actors and banks that provide financial service to enable this exploitation of these resources. This has been documented, for example, in the case of cocaine being transported from Venezuela to the Malian town of Tarkint, in the Gao region, with the knowledge of local politicians, which reinforced the notion of Mali as a conduit for transnational organized crime.

The Malian situation indicates that it is necessary to incorporate an overt approach to addressing organized crime within the mandate of peace support operations and peacekeeping missions, for example, with specific reference to arms and drug trafficking. However, this approach is complicated because Mali experienced a military coup in May 2021, with the ascendancy of Colonel Assimi Goita, as the de facto head of state, with Choguel Maiga, as the Prime Minister. The absence of a democratically accountable government means that the opportunities increase for transnational criminals to conduct insidious business dealings with the military junta, further perpetuating instability and insecurity in the region.

In August 2021, MINUSMA’s mandate was renewed, and in tandem with the G5 Sahel Joint Force, the efforts continue to contain the spread of transnational organized crime in the country and region. A key challenge for the continent is establishing processes that will address the interconnected nature of transnational crime and violent extremism. Specifically, addressing transnational crime and violent extremism requires AU member states to operate based on a regional approach, which necessitates transcending national boundaries and operating on the basis of fluid and dynamic cross-border interventions. This requires concretely ensuring the free movement of national and regional law enforcement personnel and equipment to ensure a timely and rapid response to transnational crime.

The AU is collaborating with the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa (CISSA), the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) to promote enhanced cooperation in confronting organized crime as a prerequisite for sustaining peace and security in Africa. In particular, AU member states require technical support to address the interface between violent extremism, terrorism and transnational organized crime. This is particularly evident in situations in

which state institutions are weak and a significant portion of a country’s territory remains ungoverned or beyond the reach of national authorities. In addition, a substantial number of organized crime networks in Africa that local actors fuel are directly linked and supported by global criminal actors, who contribute towards creating the channels for the trafficking of illicit goods and providing offshore banking services to enable and facilitate the global financial exploitation on the continent. Moreover, political corruption and politicians with links to organized crime networks continue to sustain a steady flow of small arms and light weapons which sustain the myriad of crises that continue to afflict the continent.

The AU-CISSA-AFRIPOL-INTERPOL collaboration is actively exchanging data and information and pursuing technical cooperation, including the investigative capacity of the personnel in these institutions to more effectively confront and address the threats posed by transnational organized crime. In addition, it is necessary also to strengthen the capacity of national, regional and continental judicial systems to ensure that the statutes are adequately designed to enable and facilitate the prompt and effective prosecution of criminal cases. Specifically, AU member states need to ratify the Malabo Protocol on the African Court of Justice and Human Rights (ACJHR), the first regional court with jurisdiction over international, transnational organized crimes.

4.6 CONTESTED REGIME TRANSITIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL TENSION

The contestation relating to regimes in transition and tensions generated by the lack of respect for constitutional provisions continue to the peace and stability of countries. It is evident that the AU and RECs tend to selectively target small states in terms of mediating contested transitions and avoiding the more prominent states in terms of direct intervention or sanctioning the violation of constitutional order. For example, ECOWAS with the support of the AU and UN, was able to intervene in The Gambia through a combination of diplomatic, political and military interventions to facilitate the departure of former President Jammeh, to enable the democratically elected government to assume power. However, in other contexts, more prominent states are not subject to the same degree of scrutiny and intervention, because they assert their sovereignty and reject the external interventions of regional and sub-regional actors.

On 25 July 2021, Tunisian President Kais Saied removed Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi and duly suspended the activities of the Assembly of Representatives of the People and invoked emergency powers through Article 80 of the Constitution of Tunisia. The crisis has its roots in long-standing grievances relating to adequate access to socio-economic resources and a heightened degree of pressure on the Tunisian health system brought about by a precipitous increase in Covid-19 cases. Paradoxically, this triggered national protests and claims that the actions by the President were unconstitutional, which led to the imposition of a curfew across the country. In October 2021, in a move designed to ease tensions in the country, the President appointed Najla Bouden as the first female Prime Minister of Tunisia. The political opposition has called for creating a national unity government to assuage concerns that the incumbent Saied intended to establish an authoritarian system in the country. However, by the end of the year, the situation in Tunisia was still tense as opposing views continued to contest and defend the actions of the President.

The southern African region was also affected by significant governance challenges in Eswatini, which witnessed pro-democracy protests against the absolute monarchical rule by King Mswati, which was met with a government clampdown. On 21 October 2021, Ramaphosa, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the SADC Organ, sent former cabinet minister Jeff Radebe as a Special Envoy to Eswatini in a delegation that included officials from South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. The SADC Statement on the crisis in the country determined “that the conduct of a national dialogue should be the appropriate platform to address the
current challenges facing the country.” The SADC Statement further identified “the need for a peaceful and conducive environment for the dialogue to take place.” However, the situation remains tense, and there is a continuing need to ensure that the dialogue translates into a political arrangement which can address the concerns of the wider Eswatini citizenry.

4.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC UNREST, ETHNIC TENSION AND XENOPHOBIA

The legacy of socio-economic deprivation has seen increased social unrest, including ethnic and xenophobic dimensions. For example, as demonstrated by the South African social unrest and protests of July 2021, which witnessed widespread looting, pillaging and xenophobic attacks, specifically in Phoenix, Kwa-Zulu Natal, which demonstrated the persistence of re undercurrents of instability within South African society which need to be addressed. The persistence of xenophobia is linked to systemic socio-economic challenges that continue to confront the country, and the migrants from other African countries, who are among the most vulnerable members of society, are targeted by disgruntled members of society who blame their own challenges on these non-South Africans. In particular, the ongoing journey towards a more inclusive democratic society is faced with significant obstacles relating to the need for dialogue, introspection, building trust, reducing inequality and ensuring the well-being of a wider spectrum of societal actors and communal groups.

A key priority will be creating spaces for the wider South African society to more actively participate in processes that will promote social cohesion, peacebuilding, and democratic processes to bridge the societal gaps in awareness and knowledge. There is also a need to intervene through mediation, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding initiatives to build and restore relationships to foster social cohesion. This effort to build a more inclusive society has to be continuously nurtured and strengthened despite the challenges that are confronted. It is also evident to pre-empt future outbreaks of violence, South Africa needs to establish an early warning and response mechanism that can respond to emerging tensions in society relating to gender, race, ethnicity as well as structural socio-economic issues that were not properly redressed despite the transition from the apartheid regime.

18. Southern Africa Development Community, Statement by the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, regarding the Mission of the Special Envoy to the Kingdom of Eswatini, 22 October 2021, p.1.
5. MAJOR FACTORS AND DRIVERS OF INSECURITY AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES

In 2021, a range of cross-cutting issues that intersect to exacerbate the conflicts across the continent will be discussed below.

5.1 GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA (WPS)

A key priority is working towards an enhanced awareness of the interdependence between gender, peace and security. This should be based on drawing from and leveraging the Women's Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) to inform Africa's conflict resolution and peacebuilding policies and processes.

Article 4 (I) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which formally established the organisation in 2002, adopted as one of its principles “the promotion of gender equality”. The AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality of 2004 states that “while women and children bear the brunt of conflicts and internal displacement, including rapes and killings, they are largely excluded from conflict prevention, peace negotiations and peacebuilding process in spite of African women's experience in peacebuilding.” The Declaration emphasised that the AU would “ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.”

The AU’s gender mainstreaming initiatives regarding peace and security processes have historically been top-down. Still, there have been efforts to ensure a more pronounced mobilization of national, communal and grassroots initiatives to promote gender inclusion in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. However, the AU still has to genuinely focus on the implementation of these provisions to manifest its commitment to ending the siege under which women are affected by war and are excluded from the promotion of peace and security.

Two decades have passed since UN Resolution 1325 was adopted, and the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality to ensure National Action Plans (NAPs) as guidelines for implementation. However, the presence of women at the heart of peacemaking and peacebuilding processes has not shifted significantly. African nation-states are paying lip service to women’s empowerment to play the role of special envoys and mediators in African conflicts. Yet, in 2021, the continent had a poor record regarding the prominence of women leading these processes. It has only a marginally better record of women leading in peacebuilding processes at the communal level and within civic actor formations. The fundamental nature of the problem is a cultural transformation that needs to happen at the level of African heads of state and government, and it is necessary to support the vital role civil society actors play to begin to engage directly with the leadership in the countries that are affected by authoritarian rule, social unrest and violent conflict.

Women continue to be under-represented as AU and RECs special envoys and mediators for high-level peace negotiations. While there have been increasingly more women serving in AU peace operations, for example, in AMISOM in Somalia and the Joint Hybrid Mission in Darfur, they do not occupy a significant number of leadership positions in these missions. The AU Commission conducted a Gender Audit of its approach to women’s empowerment in its policies and programmes. It concluded that management “needed to do more to achieve the AU’s commitments and objectives on gender equality”.
There has been an incremental approach to operationalising the key tenets of gender equality and internalising the principles of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. This is partly due to deeply held cultural beliefs and practices. Again, the leadership of the AU is composed of men and the majority of decision-makers at the level of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Executive Council of Ministers and the Permanent Representatives Committee of Ambassador’s are still overwhelmingly dominated by men. There is a need for continuing emphasis on upholding and implementing the principles of gender equality to achieve the aspirations of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa.

2021 witnessed a continuing range of advocacy and campaign initiatives, led by the Special Envoy of the African Union Chairperson on Women, Peace and Security with a mandate to promote and elevate the role of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as advocate for the protection of their rights, including putting an end to sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, in 2021, the African Union also established the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FEMWISE-Africa) to complement its initiatives to professionalise the role of African women in conflict prevention, mediation and peacemaking initiatives.

The AU adopted a Continental Results Framework (CRF) for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the WPS Agenda in Africa, 2018-2028, which continued to be implemented in 2021. The CRF is an essential reference tool, and it provides twenty-eight indicators for tracking and reporting on the effective assessment of the implementation and reporting of the WPS Agenda at the continental, regional and national levels in Africa. By 2021, more than 30 countries have developed National Action Plans (NAP) to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. In addition, a number of RECs have adopted regional action plans (RAP), including ECOWAS, IGAD, Mano River Union, and the Great Lakes Region. Furthermore, throughout 2021, the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security was involved in establishing national chapters of the African Women Leadership Network (AWLN), which has convened in-country forums and enhanced the role of women in engaging in escalating crisis situations across the continent.

The AU Special Envoy contributes to raising the profile of national chapters of the AWLN, and their conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, by supporting them through official statements, for example relating to Mozambique, Burkina Faso and the protest action in Nigeria, and showcasing the work of these country processes in her high-level engagements across the continent and world. Despite the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, the Special Envoy supported women’s initiatives through online campaigns and engagements, including social media campaigns such as #AfricanWomenLeaders and #SheLeadsPeace. In AU member states, individual countries have made efforts to ensure that women play a prominent role in decision-making and leadership structures. For example, in national institutions mandated with peacemaking and peacebuilding, such as Virginie Baikoua, the Minister for Humanitarian Action and National Reconciliation portfolio is headed by a woman in the Central African Republic.

5.2 THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA (YPS)

In 2021, Africa had one of the youngest populations in the world, with a median age of 20 years. Regrettably, it is still largely the case that state actors simply tolerate young people rather than proactively being empowered to drive peace and security processes. This challenge also has cultural dimensions. Again, there is a vital role to be played by youth civic actors to engage Africa’s leadership and to begin to transform attitudes at the higher levels of political engagement. Practical processes that create platforms for youth to engage with governments to collective drive peacebuilding processes are an urgent strategic necessity.
On 2nd July 2006, the 7th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Banjul, The Gambia, adopted an African Youth Charter which stipulates, in Article 17, the important role that youth actors play in promoting peace and security. Subsequently, on 30 and 31 January 2016, the 26th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly designated its theme for 2017 as “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in the Youth”, which laid the foundation for the increased participation of youth actors in the programmes of the African Union Commission, notably in the area of peace and security. In its 665th Meeting, the AU PSC issued a communique that called for the convening of a process through APSA institutions “with youth on how to mainstream the youth in all tracks of mediation and conflict prevention efforts in Africa to develop guiding tools and best practices.”

The African Union launched the Youth for Peace Programme in Lagos, Nigeria. The former AU Peace and Security Department was involved, with the former Department for Political Affairs and the Youth Division, in establishing an Inter-Departmental Task Force on Youth Peace and Security. The Youth for Peace Programme seeks to actively engage, involve and collaborate with young women and men and organized youth groups to promote peace and security on the continent. At the request of the PSC, the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace, and Security appointed five regional African Youth Ambassadors. They would work closely with the African Youth Envoy to mobilize to promote peace and security across the continent. These five regional African Youth Ambassadors representing the five geographic regions of Africa are: Mr. AlHafiz Hassan Ahamat (Central Africa), Mr. Mohammed Edabbar (North Africa); Ms. Emma Ng’ang’a (East Africa); Mr. Moctar Kane (West Africa); Ms. Karabo Mokgonyana (Southern Africa). This is a progressive development in terms of the historical absence of youth actors within the institutional edifice of the African Union’s decision making structures and APSA’s institutions. The challenge ahead will be for the AU and APSA institutions to ensure that they engage in a meaningful manner with these African Youth Ambassadors to raise awareness, mobilize and build the capacity of youth actors in conflict situations to contribute proactively as drivers of peace and security processes. This will require the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security to ensure that the African Youth Ambassadors are provided with the access and resources to contribute to mobilizing youth across the continent. In addition, it will require a cultural and paradigm shift within the institution regarding how it works with youth and civic actors, particularly in peacemaking and peacebuilding situations.

On 12 November 2020, the AU PSC dedicated its 963rd Meeting to an Open Session on the theme of: “Youth, Peace, and Security: Advancing Youth Roles in Silencing the Guns in Africa”, which was also part of the Africa Youth Month commemoration interventions. The former Special Envoy of the AU Chairperson of the Commission on Youth, Aya Chebbi, provided an intervention during this PSC meeting to highlight the achievements and challenges faced by youth actors across the continent. In addition, through extensive social media campaigns, Chebbi reported on the ongoing projects that youth actors have been undertaking across the continent to raise awareness about human rights violations and injustices which are drivers of conflict. As a result, the AU PSC meeting resolved and committed to working in collaboration with the AU Commission, RECs and RMs, to implement regional consultations, and launch additional youth campaigns inter-generational dialogues and, undertake capacity building processes and challenge youth actors to lead in innovative processes to promote peace, security, development, vocational training, and entrepreneurship to address youth unemployment, which is a source of recruitment for conflict agitators, in their countries.

These developments represent a gradual shift away from the traditional practices of APSA institutions paying lip service to youth actors. However, the impact of these developments will only become evident when youth actors are proactively driving peace and security processes in their countries and regions in tandem with governments and RECs. Therefore, a more dedicated approach to aligning the youth programmes with the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security will be necessary. In 2021, Chido Cleopatra Mpemba...
was appointed as the new Special Envoy of the AU Chairperson on Youth. Through her, there is scope to ensure more deliberate interaction and engagement between AU CPAPS and youth actors across the continent. This means that beyond the rhetoric and aspirational statements, the AU Commission must allocate a significant budget and design workplans to engage with youth actors and their programmes for promoting peacemaking and peacebuilding across the continent.

The African population continues to grow significantly, and it is necessary to focus on youth education, entrepreneurship, employment creation, and infrastructure development to lay the foundations for effective peacebuilding. This will ensure that the ‘youth bulge’ is harnessed as an opportunity rather than a detriment and ensures stability and prosperity in the long run. While the ‘youth bulge’ can be considered a destabilising force within countries, especially where economic opportunities remain scarce, young people are also the innovators within society. Therefore, if relevant and up-to-date education in peace, addressing the injustices of the past, climate change and alternatives of energy is supported through training and capacity building in resilience strategies are prioritised along with job creation and investments in social infrastructure, the continent’s vulnerable youths can be harnessed as an opportunity. Therefore, youth and civic actors should be proactively involved and engaged in all interventions relating to mediation and conflict resolution processes, and in the implementation of peacebuilding and reconciliation processes.

5.3 MONEY LAUNDERING AND ILLEGAL FINANCIAL FLOWS

In 2021, a key challenge in resolving disputes in Africa was to find ways to effectively deal with the role of international actors in fuelling conflict through money laundering and illegal financial flows. Africa’s experience with misrule is evident in the willingness of the continent’s so-called ‘leaders’ to collude with foreign governments and transnational corporations to extract mineral resources, and these resources are being used to launder money and finance endless wars and withhold health, education and infrastructure services to the continent’s citizens. Examples of these include multinational oil companies extracting oil and gas from South Sudan, Angola and Mozambique; global diamond cartels excavating in Zimbabwe and Congo-Brazzaville; timber conglomerates culling and extracting trees in Sierra Leone and Liberia; and industrial giants extracting gold, copper, chromium, and coltan from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

The issue of whether these natural resources are exploited by a corrupt government that is not often legitimate or a militarised group are all adding fuel to the fire of autocracy, conflict and feeding into illegal small arms trading and drug dealing networks that make the situation very difficult for one country to control or manage by itself. This reality has been made possible or easier by the emerging global networks of trade and instant financial transactions, the ability to shift huge amounts of capital at the click of a button to off-shore accounts beyond the investigative reach of unsuspecting citizens and civil society organizations, as has now been revealed by the infamous Panama Papers. In addition, private military companies, or what we used to call “mercenaries”, flourish in this new environment and can operate undetected, unidentified and out of sight.

5.4 INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

In 2021, infectious diseases such as Covid-19 and Ebola continued to afflict communities across the continent. Furthermore, the collective trauma resulting from Covid-19 further exacerbates existing fault lines necessitating a focus on building and strengthening collective resilience to mitigate long-term societal damage. In addition, it is necessary to leverage peacebuilding strategies that will mitigate the spread of the virus support and strengthen the resilience of communities affected by Covid-19. As a priority, national
and continental peacebuilding actors can contribute towards mitigating Covid-19 as well as addressing the current and subsequent effects of Covid-19, at the communal, national, regional and continental levels, by programmatically engaging in providing psychosocial support and advice, promoting social cohesion, leveraging technology, analysing economic fallout, environmental damage, effect on governance, the rule of law, through transitional justice, dialogue, and peacebuilding lens.

In terms of future trends, it is also necessary to leverage and adapt mediation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes so that they can contribute to mitigating the spread of Covid-19, as well as supporting and strengthening the resilience of communities that have been affected by Covid-19. For example, psychosocial peacebuilding processes, which are outlined in the African Union Transitional Justice Policy, can be utilized to contribute toward strengthening resilience to confront Covid-19. Specifically by addressing the current and subsequent psychological and societal effects of Covid-19 at the communal and national and by programmatically engaging in providing psychosocial support and advice to societies across the country. The work of mental health, psychosocial support workers, peacemakers and peacebuilders is to heal and restore the social fabric that binds and supports people within their communities. It is essential to break cycles of violence and build sustainable peace across Africa. The ability of individuals and societies to cope with such harrowing experiences caused by post-conflict situations creates mistrust and fear.

The breakdown of coping strategies is often related to the mistrust and fear caused by traumatic experiences, the compounding factor of exposure to different types of violence and the duration of the conflict. Due to the conflict, the natural ties, norms and bonds between people and communities that strengthen coping and resilience are often destroyed or weakened. Consequently, future interventions need to support the work of civil society networks and state actors to design and implement psychosocial interventions in post-conflict situations to improve the well-being of individuals and communities, which in turn contributes toward creating more peaceful societies.
6. PEACE INITIATIVES AND RESPONSES BY AFRICAN CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

In 2021, it was evident that a culture of complacency had afflicted the APSA institutions. It is now evident that the much-lauded AU APSA Roadmap 2016-2020 and the campaign to “Silence the Guns by 2020” did not materialize as anticipated by the organisations’ leadership. The key problem underlying this is linked to the internal leadership, operational challenges within the AU Commission, and the AU member states’ collective failure, is the continued out-sourcing of Africa’s peace and security processes and systems. The AU’s slow pace in taking over the financing and implementation of APSA processes and institutions is at the heart of the failure to achieve the silencing of the guns, which was a stated policy objective of the African Union.

6.1 CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (CEWS)

Article 12(1) of the PSC Protocol specifies that a “Continental Early Warning System to be known as the Early Warning System shall be established”. The purpose of the CEWS is to provide early warning information which can be relayed to the AU’s decision-making structures to implement an early response to crises on the continent. The AU Continental Early Warning System collects and analyses data and provides its insights to the Chair and Commissioners of the AU Commission and the Peace and Security Council. CEWS operates a Situation Room, which analyses incoming data for onward transmission. It is nominally supposed to be fully integrated with the early warning, observation and monitoring systems of the RECs and RMs, to ensure that cross-continental detection and response measures are activated. In addition, the AU developed a Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework. As well as CEWS Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessments (CSVRA) and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Assessments (CSVMA), which have been developed through the Inter-Department Task Force on Conflict Prevention (IDTFCP), which guide efforts to promote in-country structural prevention and mitigation processes, as they relate to socio-economic development, the rule of law, gender equality, youth engagement, and climate change. This enables AU member states to develop their own domestic infrastructures for peace (I4P). Ghana was the first country to engage with the process, and its CSVRA report was launched in October 2018.

Despite the existence of CEWS, the events of 2021 regrettably demonstrated that the AU has consistently remained behind the curve in anticipating and resolving conflicts prior to their escalation. The lack of political action in crisis situations prior to their escalation is a persistent feature in the failure to effectively deploy the insights generated by the CEWS. This is primarily due to the politicisation of the information that is generated by CEWS and the lack of its timely transmission, or according to a respondent in the AU Commission, the non-transmission of information, particularly to the PSC, due to the instructions from the former senior leadership of the preceding AU Commission for Peace and Security.

6.2 PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND MEDIATION

The PSC Protocol mandates institutions of the African Union to engage and undertake preventive diplomacy and mediation interventions. Through the decisions of the PSC, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, and

22. Interview with Respondent in the former AU Division of Conflict Prevention and Early Warning (CPEWD), in the former Peace and Security Department.
other institutions such as the AU Panel of the Wise, RECs and RM{s}, the Union is mandated to utilise a number of instruments to prevent and resolve conflicts. Concretely, the AU Chairperson has appointed a number of special envoys and special representatives.

In 2021, a cursory assessment of the period of its existence revealed that the PSC has convened more than 1000 meetings and issued as many communiqués and statements relating to crisis and conflict situations in Burundi, CAR, Chad, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, and Zimbabwe, among others. Furthermore, the Council, in line with Article 4(h), has authorised the deployment of peace operations in Burundi (2003 to 2004), Sudan (2004 to the present and now being jointly undertaken with the UN), the Comoros (2008 to present), and Somalia (2007 to present). In addition, the AU was the convening institution to address post-electoral violence in Kenya in 2008 through a mediation process led by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

More recently, following the AU Summit in January 2013, the PSC authorised the deployment of troops from Member States to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and the African-led International Support Mission in the Central Africa Republic (MISCA). Undoubtedly, the Council has demonstrated its ability to draw attention to crisis situations in Africa and utilise its mandate to authorize AU interventions. However, the Council still has a lot to do to adopt a culture of prevention and proactive interventionism in situations of the unconstitutional change of government and in crises where there are threats of mass atrocities.

The PSC Protocol established the MSC through Article 13 to advise and assist the Council in assessing the military aspects of their discussions, recommendations and decisions. Specifically, the Protocol stipulates that the MSC shall be composed of senior military officers or Defence Attachés of the member states of the PSC. However, the MSC does not meet regularly and is subsequently not as functional as it should be, notably in providing military advice to the political decision-makers within the AU PSC.

6.2.1 AU MEDIATION SUPPORT UNIT AND AU SPECIAL ENVOYS

In March 2021, the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeyole, recognised the importance of strengthening peacemaking and mediation to deepen regional integration. Therefore, continuing the investment in training mediators is integrally important to APSA’s conflict prevention agenda. Although the retention of mediators within the AUs formal structures may be questioned, it is important to note that imparting mediation skills to people who can use them within their local contexts may affect the escalation of conflict at a local level. However, measuring that impact is incredibly difficult as the absence of conflict within a given area cannot be attributed to one particular intervention or training.

African Union Mediation efforts, in most cases anchored by AU Special Envoys, have led to negotiated peace agreements in the Central African Republic (CAR), South Sudan, and historically in Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Therefore, conflict prevention and mediation processes will play an important role in fostering and consolidating peace and laying the foundations for sustainable peace in Africa.

The African Union Mediation Support Unit (MSU) is mandated to work collaboratively with APSA institutions to pursue early warning, conflict prevention and promote peacemaking in a timely manner. The Standard Operating Procedures for Mediation Support (SOP) and the Report on the Operationalisation of the MSU outline the need for the AU Mediation Support Unit to work in tandem with a broad range of partners, including civil society actors.
The objectives of the AU MSU are to:

I. provide support to mediators by providing briefing materials to mediation teams and acting as secretariat for the annual retreat of African mediators;

II. establish analytical and early-warning capacity with other departments, divisions and research centres;

III. provide technical expertise in designing, supporting and conducting mediations;

IV. serve as a centre for the documentation of African peacemaking, including archiving records and making them accessible to mediators and researchers;

V. maintain a roster of mediation experts and support staff with qualifications for specific mediations.

Therefore, the MSU is strategically located to provide timely analysis and support to APSA institutions as they undertake early warning, preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and mediation interventions. Unfortunately, the MSU is still not operating as widely across the APSA institutions as it should due to capacity constraints and the need for additional personnel. However, in 2019 and 2020, the MSU provided support to mediators and special envoys, including developing conflict analysis, compiling conceptual notes, undertaking the administrative planning of missions, and communicating with in-country partners, for example, in Sudan, to facilitate the work of its emissaries on peacemaking missions, as well as compiling briefing notes and reports related to these missions.

In addition, the MSU has provided some tangible support to ongoing peacemaking processes, such as its intervention to support the work of the AU Special Representative for the Central African Republic (CAR) during the process of mediating the Khartoum Agreement was signed on 6 February 2019. In addition, the MSU established the “Fire Side Chats” with AU Special Envoys, Special Representatives and the former Commissioner for Peace and Security at the Annual High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa, which was convened from 1 to 3 November 2021, in Nairobi, Kenya. These sessions enabled the mediators to debrief and share their experiences and challenges in a number of crisis situations, including in CAR, Sudan, and South Sudan, to identify strategies to strengthen mediation and peacemaking processes across the African continent.

The MSU has also engaged in initial interactions with the AU Liaison Offices in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes to enhance coordination and collaboration in addressing in-country situations. APSA institutions are still confronted with ensuring that peacemakers involve CSOs in their mediation interventions. AU Mediation Support Handbook advocates for the inclusion of civil society actors at different stages of the mediation process, from conflict analysis to stakeholder identification and throughout the intervention process. In addition, AU guidelines emphasise NGO experts’ role in technical teams to backstop mediators, training and sharing mediation knowledge. However, the comprehensive implementation of these provisions remains to be achieved in a much more consistent and recurrent manner.

6.2.2 CONFLICT PREVENTION, MEDIATION AND THE PANEL OF THE WISE

Article 11 (1) of the PSC Protocol states that to support the efforts of the PSC and those of the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly in the area of conflict prevention, a Panel of the Wise shall be established.’ In particular, Article 11(3) states that “the Panel may, as and when necessary and in the form it considers most appropriate, pronounce itself on any issue relating to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa.” The Panel was officially inaugurated in Addis Ababa on 18 December 2007. As the AU’s preventive diplomacy and mediation institution, the Panel of the Wise is composed of five distinguished elder statesmen and women. Therefore, the Panel’s mandate is to prevent conflict rather than resolve conflict,
which is tasked to the AU’s peace and security institutions. Specifically, the Panel is an integral aspect of the African Union’s dedicated preventive diplomacy framework, given its mandate to anticipate potential crisis situations and intervene in a timely fashion to prevent the escalation of a dispute or resolve existing tensions to reduce the likelihood of a return to violence.

The AU Peace adopted the Modalities for the Functioning of the Panel of the Wise and Security Council at its 100th meeting held on 12 November 2007, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It stated that the Panel could ‘facilitate the establishment of channels of communication between the Council and the Chairperson of the Commission, on the one hand, and parties engaged in a dispute, on the other hand, to prevent such dispute from escalating into conflict’. In addition, it can ‘carry out fact-finding missions as an instrument of conflict … conduct shuttle diplomacy between parties to a conflict in cases where parties are not ready to engage in formal talks’. When it deems it necessary, the Panel is also mandated to issue a press release or a statement on any matter it is considers. This, in effect, constitutes an array of tools for deploying preventive diplomacy.

The Panel’s modalities of action also include providing its members to support AU mediation teams in their efforts. For example, in cases where a dedicated AU Special Envoy or Representative has been appointed, the Panel can support by undertaking additional shuttle diplomacy or behind the scenes confidence-building between parties. In post-conflict situations, the Panel can also ‘assist and advise parties on resolving disputes related to the implementation of peace agreements and encourage parties to ‘carry out reconciliation processes’. The Panel members have been involved in preventive diplomacy initiatives relating to Somalia, the Central African Republic (CAR), and South Africa.

6.2.3 CHALLENGES FACING THE PANEL OF THE WISE

In 2021, the Panel of the Wise had to face the intransigence of Member States even when there is a case for countries to receive it to undertake early warning or mediation interventions. Typically, governments like to maintain the external perception that there are no internal problems until the situation has escalated to the point of social unrest or political violence. Therefore, the presence of the AU Panel of the Wise, particularly if it is high profile, will naturally make governments nervous. In some scenarios, the Panel has been rebuffed even before attempting to intervene in a particular country by denying the necessary protocol clearances vital to engaging with a country’s government and the wider society. In other instances, the Panel may be given the authorisation to travel to a particular country but will be met with obfuscation and non-compliance by the target government. In an ideal scenario, the AU Panel of the Wise will undertake an intervention and hold productive discussions with the government, the political opposition, business leaders and civil society to ascertain the urgency of conflict prevention and peacemaking efforts.

However, the most significant challenge facing the Panel of the Wise has been the constraints imposed upon it by the AU’s own internal management and administrative processes. Even though the Panel was supposed to be an independent structure within the AU system, the senior management of the former Department for Peace and Security, in effect, centralised and controlled the agenda of the Panel of the Wise and, in effect, determined which country situations it could intervene in and which it had to avoid. The control and disbursement of the resources of the Panel, through a unit embedded into the Peace and Security Department, meant that over time the Panel has become hamstrung and has been rendered an in-effectual instrument for conflict prevention and peacemaking within the APSA constellation of institutions. This is a tragic situation in the sense that conflict prevention and mediation is a much more cost-effective way to anticipate and resolve disputes before they escalate to the stage where they require a costly peace support operation to be established and implemented. This is a self-defeating posture that the internal management practices of the former AU Department for Peace and Security instrumentalised, which undermined the efficacy of APSA in transforming conflict.
Irrespective of which of these scenarios the Panel confronts, the important thing is for its members to recognise that it has the authority and mandate from the AU to undertake early warning investigation and intervention. The extent to which it will succeed in making a genuine impact on the African continent will be based on its ability to operate and initiate interventions of its own volition and its analyses of potentially problematic situations that are under the radar of the AU Peace and Security Council as well as the AU Commission.

The Panel of the Wise can add value to the initiatives of the AU Peace and Security Council or the Chairperson of the Commission and contribute effectively to conflict prevention and mediation if it is enabled and empowered to do its work. Unlike the PSC, the Panel is not politically encumbered and, therefore, has the remit to genuinely engage in preventive diplomacy at an early stage. The Panel Modalities stipulate that it has the independence to pursue any conflict situation that it believes warrants its attention. However, the Panel has confronted some internal constraints and political obstacles in its efforts to undertake its conflict prevention work. Therefore, the importance to ensure political buy-in from the rest of the APSA system and AU Member States. In the absence of adopting a paradigm shift away from the way the Panel operated during the implementation of the APSA Roadmap to promote system-wide coordination, there is a genuine danger that the Panel's activities will be routinely undermined. Ultimately, a pragmatic appreciation of the nexus between preventing conflicts, making peace once conflicts have escalated, and keeping peace following agreements will determine how effective the Panel of the Wise can become.

6.2.4 PAN-AFRICAN NETWORK OF THE WISE (PANWISE)

The lack of harmonisation and coordination between the AU and its RECs is a persistent institutional challenge. In some instances, the RECs establish and operationalize mandated institutions to achieve the same outcomes as pre-existing AU departments. An illustration of this is the establishment of autonomous frameworks for conflict prevention and mediation, such as the AU Panel of the Wise, the ECOWAS Council of Elders, the Southern Africa Development Community Panel of Elders and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa Committee of Elders. These formations are nominally mandated to achieve the same outcome of the early detection and prevention of violent conflict, including the analysis and mitigation of bad governance practices, which can trigger the escalation of tensions.

Yet the practice has been a lack of effective synergy among these institutions and, on occasion, competing mandates that can undermine efforts to confront and prevent the escalation of tensions on the African continent. However, this specific issue is being addressed by establishing the Pan-African Network of the Wise (PANWISE), which seeks to link and coordinate these formations. Despite the number of retreats that these formations have convened to discuss their efforts to harmonise and coordinate their work, the present reality in Africa is that this has not translated into the desired outcomes of improved governance and the early prevention of violent conflict.

The PANWISE concept was introduced to break down the silos that persist between peer institutions in the AU and REC’s. There are initial efforts at the strategic level that PANWISE is playing an important convening role, which, however, has not fully translated into effective coordination on the ground in terms of the early prevention and resolution of crisis.

6.2.5 AU NETWORK OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION

In 2021, to increase the ability of women to drive peace processes, the African Union further elaborated the work of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FEMWISE-Africa). The “network provides a platform for strategic advocacy, capacity building and networking aimed at enhancing the
implementation of the commitments for the inclusion of women in peacemaking in Africa.”

FEMWISE is working to professionalize the role of women in peacemaking, ensure that women lead high-level mediation missions and contribute toward establishing local and national infrastructures for peace.

6.3 THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS

In July 2021, the SADC Mission in Mozambique was deployed to contain the violent extremist threat in the country. Interestingly, SAMIM was not constituted deliberately as the activation of SADCBRIG as the southern Africa component of the ASF. Still, it is composed of eight troop contributing countries from the SADC region who would typically constitute the core of the brigade. This has raised questions about the operability of the ASF and how sub-regional organisation can instrumentalize it.

Through the creation of the ASF, the AU was mandated to coordinate the activities of Africa’s sub-regional mechanisms. On 16 May 2003, the Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee was adopted in Addis Ababa. The ASF comprises five brigades from Africa’s five sub-regions: Southern, Western, Central, Eastern and Northern brigades. These include brigade formations drawn from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), notably: the Southern Africa Development Community; the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Economic Community of Central African States; and two respective regional mechanisms: the East Africa Standby Brigade Co-ordination Mechanism or EASBRIGCOM in East Africa and the North African Regional Capability in North Africa. Collectively, these institutions comprise the APSA, and the plan is to link them to the UN’s Standby arrangements eventually.

In November 2015, the AU convened the final episode of a long series of AMANI exercises in South Africa, which were designed to test the readiness of the ASF. Following this test, AU leaders confirmed that the ASF would have Full Operational Capability. However, the formal pronouncement of the deployment of the ASF remains a contentious issue among African Union member states. Moreover, the reluctance by the AU’s political leadership to provide the ASF with the means to pursue and implement its missions has undermined this crucial APSA institution’s ability to contribute to conflict transformation in Africa.

6.3.1 THE POLITICS OF THE OPERATIONALISATION OF ASF

To reinforce this right to intervene, the PSC Protocol also stipulated the establishment of an African Standby Force (ASF), which was initially due to be operationalized in 2010. The ASF comprises five brigades from Africa’s sub-regions: South, East, Central, West and North. In addition, the initial intention was for the AU to operationalize its own Pan-African Stand-by Rapid-Reaction force composed of 15,000 troops by 2010. The ASF’s Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) concept was developed to frame how the AU would intervene in situations that required urgent attention, notably situations of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. However, the further development of the ASF-RDC concept would require the development of a broad range of modalities so that the Force could tailor itself to address the peacekeeping and peace enforcement demands of the African continent. These barriers and obstacles relating to the process have hampered and continually postponed the official pronouncement of the Full Operational Capability (FOC) of the ASF.

It gradually became self-evident that the African Standby Force could only be effective if there were the political will to operationalise it, as well as frameworks to ensure the close coordination and co-operation between the AU’s defence and foreign affairs ministries, and if a stable source of funding is found for the force. The intention

---

was that the ASF would cooperate where appropriate with the United Nations and other international partners to enhance the deployment capability within the African continent.

In October 2010, the operational readiness of the ASF and the decision-making process utilised by the PSC was tested through the first of a series of Command Post Exercise (CPX), called the AMANI Exercise. AMANI conducted a simulation exercise on how the various pillars of APSA would interact with each other, including early warning information from CEWS to the decision-making processes of the PSC and, ultimately, the processes that lead up to the deployment of the ASF.

As of 2021, despite multiple ‘dress-rehearsal’ events, the ASF remains a work-in-progress. Whether the deployment of SAMIM in Mozambique constitutes an ad hoc activation of SADCBRIG as the southern Africa component of the ASF still needs to be clarified. Nevertheless, it is significant that the eight troop contributing countries from the SADC region, who compose SAMIM, would constitute the core of a SADCBRIG element within the framework of the ASF.

Despite the reluctance of African Union member states to fully embrace the ASF due to fears of its potential use to infringe upon their sovereignty, the policy arguments against such short-sightedness and political self-indulgence must continue to be made. The insecurity in the majority of crisis in African countries, such as Mozambique, will have a spillover effect into neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini and Lesotho, as well as to other parts of the continent. In the absence of a dedicated framework for intervening and robustly securing countries and regions, the continent will remain beholden and subservient to the prevarications and infiltration operationalisation of the ASF. The AU Commission, in partnership with African civic organisations, needs to scale up its advocacy agenda on the operationalisation of the ASF, notwithstanding efforts in states to place the issue on the backburner in the AU Commission perpetuity.

**6.4 AFRICAN UNION TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE POLICY (AUTJP)**

In February 2019, the African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government formally adopted the African Union Transitional Justice Policy (AUTJP), which outlines a broad range of processes, including national dialogue, peacebuilding, restorative justice and reconciliation, for addressing the legacies of past violations and mechanisms for building peaceful and inclusive societies.\(^{24}\) The AU’s adoption of this policy is a unique innovation. It is the first time that the African continent has enumerated and institutionalised its approach to addressing the past as a necessary pathway to building more inclusive and stable societies in the future. However, despite its adoption, both governmental and societal actors, and regional economic communities, in AU member states have not fully engaged and implemented it at a national or regional level.

Some countries have designed institutions to guide their national processes, such as in Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Uganda. Other countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR), Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zimbabwe, have established processes that have faltered and suffered from political interference. African countries also need to revive or develop new institutions, such as Cameroon, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Libya, and Senegal, to address the tensions within their societies. Transitional justice interventions, including reparations and socio-economic redress, are pre-requisites to strengthening the fabric of society and promoting conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

It is necessary for peacebuilding processes that seek to manage transitions to align and reference themselves to the provisions stipulated in the African Union Transitional Justice Policy. Concretely, international, regional

---

and civic peacebuilding actors can contribute towards creating safe dialogue spaces, psychosocial support, and other peacebuilding and transitional justice processes, which might equip communities to organise better so that they can develop a collective voice to advocate for peacebuilding processes themselves.

6.4.1 TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK OF REGIONAL RECONCILIATION

In 2021, conflicts and crisis in Africa demonstrated a tendency to spill across borders, affecting the safety of communities in more than one country. Intra-state conflicts across Sub-Saharan Africa have an inter-state or regional dimension in how they are resourced and executed, as witnessed in the Horn of Africa, Lake Chad Basin attempting to resolve the crisis within the framework of a unitary nation-state. However, these conflicts are essentially regional and require a regional approach. In particular, regional conflict systems are notoriously difficult to stabilise. Therefore, affected state actors need to adopt a coordinated regional strategy to promote and consolidate peace and reconciliation.

In line with the recommendations of the AUTJP for transboundary approaches to addressing crises, the concept of regional reconciliation is based on an approach that frames these intra-state conflicts as having cross-border dimensions and therefore requires a transnational framework for their resolution. Regional reconciliation processes can be further disaggregated into three pillars, including:

i) Leader-to-Leader engagement;

ii) Government-to-Government engagement; and

iii) People-to-People engagement.

The idea is that all of the actors in a particular conflict in a given region, for example, in South Sudan, this would include Uganda, Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia; similarly, the crisis in Ethiopia would consist of Eritrea and Sudan would sit around the table at the outset to engage in a regional reconciliation process. This would also include secondary actors, who can otherwise function as spoilers to the crisis in the Ethiopian case. This would consist of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), China, Turkey, Iran, and the US, who have all played a secondary role in the crisis through financial, political or drone technology support to the belligerents in the conflict.

The historical reality is that state-based divisions across Africa are barriers to deepening social, political and economic linkages based on a sense of belonging and a shared vision among communities within countries. Even though the existing borders have formally separated African people, the cross-border affinities offer an opportunity to forge transnational links that enhance social, political and economic linkages, particularly during peacebuilding transitions. Consequently, in 2021, it was evident that regional peacebuilding and reconciliation approaches are a strategic priority for the pursuit of peace and security in Africa.

6.5 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS, RESEARCH, ACADEMIC, THINK-TANK CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE INITIATIVES

In 2021, non-governmental actors, research, academic, think-tank contributions continued to intervene across the African continent to promote political and socio-economic redress and psychosocial restoration through the provision of analysis, technical support and capacity building for early warning transitional justice, reconciliation, and peacebuilding processes. However, decisions relating to peace and security that concern the future of ordinary citizens are still made at high diplomatic levels without adequately consulting civil society. In some cases, these peace agreements cannot be implemented because they do not have the support of the wider community.
The Constitutive Act of the African Union states that one of the objectives of the Union is ‘to build a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society and promote the ‘participation of the African peoples in the activities of the Union’.

The AU has, from the outset, therefore articulated a normative commitment to engaging with civil society in the implementation of its objectives. The AU PSC has established a record of inviting and engaging CSOs in its deliberations, which has set a positive tone in terms of the ability of African citizens to influence the work of the Council and the wider APSA. A number of CSOs, including women and youth associations, have taken advantage of the Livingstone Formula and the Maseru Conclusions to engage with the PSC directly and interface with other institutions of APSA. Given the number of CSOs who work thematically on issues related to APSA’s peacemaking, peace support operation and peacebuilding processes, this analysis assesses the scope for enhancing the coordination and collaboration between the AU and non-state actors by liaising and engaging with these citizens organisations to achieve the mission of the AU on the ground.

In terms of non-governmental actors engaging with transitional justice, the AUTJP states that “it is imperative that national and local actors take the lead in planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on lessons learned in all phases of the implementation” of peacebuilding processes. In effect, the AUTJP mandates local actors, including community leaders, to play a proactive role in implementing the AUTJP and creating national spaces for dialogue on the approach appropriate for specific countries and communal groups. Therefore, future interventions need to consider supporting the strengthening and deepening of the dialogue and collaboration between state and non-state actors, which will enable closer cooperation in the promotion of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which can have positive side-effect in terms of forging platforms that can increase the interaction and exchanges between the state and society.

In terms of ongoing efforts to promote peace and security on the African continent, empowering and coordinating the most vulnerable in society by utilising innovative approaches, such as communal network-building and civil society solidarity coalitions, using anchor civic associations. This will enhance the likelihood that those who are marginalised will be able to channel their voices collectively to drive local peacebuilding processes.

6.5.1 THE LIVINGSTONE FORMULA

From 27 to 29 November 2008, an AU-Civil Society Organizations Consultation was held in Lusaka, Zambia, to assess the framework for the operationalization of Article 20 of the PSC Protocol. Specifically, Article 20 of the PSC Protocol states that “the Peace and Security Council shall encourage non-governmental organizations, community-based and other civil society organizations, particularly women’s organizations, to participate actively in the efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa.”

From 4 to 5 December 2008, the AU PSC convened a Retreat in Livingstone, Zambia, to consider an appropriate mechanism for interaction between the PSC and CSOs, to promote peace and security in Africa. The ‘Conclusions on a Mechanism for Interaction between the Peace and Security Council and Civil Society Organizations in the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa’ became referred to as ‘The Livingstone Formula’ in recognition of its location where it was agreed. The Livingstone Formula outlines the criteria for CSOs to be invited to brief the PSC, and it also identifies the areas of contribution by CSOs toward the promotion of peace and security in Africa.

Despite this comprehensive and extensive framework of interaction with the PSC, the relationship between the AU, APSA, AGA institutions and non-state actors in 2021 had not shifted substantially since the Livingstone Formula was issued. A key challenge has been the AU’s criteria for eligibility for being recognized as a non-

state actor that could work and interface with the African Union had been established in the requirements for engaging with the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the organization. The criteria of eligibility are restrictive, and demand among requirements that African non-state actors receive a majority of their funding from African sources, and a majority of non-state actors who were working on peace and security issues, were not able to fulfil the stipulated criteria because they obtained a majority of funding from non-African sources. Yet the paradox is that African governments also rely on the same funding sources to implement some of their national programmes. Non-state actors have often pointed out this discrepancy to the AU, but it has not fundamentally altered the Union’s stance on the criteria for engaging with non-state actors. This restrictive criterion was put in place because member states of the African Union have always been wary of the infiltration of agendas from external actors through the prism of mistrust between state and non-state actors in Africa.

6.5.2 THE MASERU CONCLUSIONS

In February 2014, the AU PSC under the Chair of Lesotho convened a Retreat “to review the implementation of the Livingstone Formula and to find ways and means of enhancing the interaction between the PSC and CSOs in the area of peace and security in Africa.” The meeting requested that the PSC “consider putting in place an enabling arrangement to facilitate the effective implementation of the Livingstone Formula.” Specifically, the meeting called for a “…a flexible interpretation of the Livingstone Formula Mechanism which requires CSOs to comply with the ECOSOCC criteria for membership” and “…a review and broader application of the modalities of interaction which will not only allow for a more robust engagement of the PSC and CSOs but also provide an opportunity for African philanthropists to support the work of the PSC.” The meeting also calls for establishing a dedicated focal point within the PSC Secretariat to facilitate the interaction between the PSC and CSO.

6.5.3 A MODEL OF APSA AND CSO COLLABORATION: THE ECOWAS AND WANEP PARTNERSHIP

The West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), based in Accra, Ghana, began as a network of organisations in the region. However, WANEP adopted a trajectory that saw it increasingly implementing programmes and projects rather than only serving as a coordinating agency of regional partners.

In 2021, the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) and WANEP worked directly with ECOWAS in developing its early warning and response capabilities. Specifically, WANEP assisted the ECOWAS Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security Commission in “capacity building, drafting policy frameworks, election monitoring and early warning.” In addition, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ECOWAS, WANEP embedded staff members within the organization’s Early Warning Directorate to work from within the premises of the inter-governmental organisation. This is perhaps one of the best examples of a fully integrated collaboration framework between a regional economic community and a network of regional non-state actors on early warning and conflict prevention.

The depth of this REC/non-state actor engagement is mainly due to the progressive nature of leadership within the ECOWAS Commission and the significant degree of support from member states of the region. However, the ECOWAS relationship with non-state actors is also based on the fact that the organisation has significantly much more experience than all other regional groupings on the continent, including the AU. In particular,

30. West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Summary of Proceedings of Stakeholders Interactive Forum, to mark the 40th Anniversary of ECOWAS, Dakar, Senegal, 25 June 2015, p. 7-10.
ECOWAS has acquired significantly more experience in mediation and peacemaking processes, as well as in the provision of peace support operations, for example, during the 1990’s when ECOMOG played an initial role in countries such as Liberia to try to assist them in transitioning from crisis. During the 2018 transition in The Gambia, when diplomatic, military and civil society actors were mobilized to assist in stabilizing the country. ECOWAS has made its own mistakes in its trajectory to where it is today, but it has learned from these mistakes, and its integration of non-state actors into its work is a key outcome of this learning curve that the body went through. The ECOWAS/non-state actor collaboration model needs to be emulated elsewhere in other regions of the continent, even though one should be cautious of expecting similar results in regions where the dynamics between states, as well as the prism of mistrust towards non-state actors, is much more pronounced than in the West African region.
7. THE AFRICAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS COOPERATION ON THE PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

The relationship between the AU and UN in cooperation on the peace and security agenda has evolved and grown. There are now more regular meetings between the AU PSC and the UNSC. Historically, the AU PSC and the three elected African members of the UNSC, also known as the A3, were not sufficiently coordinated to harmonize their positions and speak with a collective voice on peace and security matters on the continent. However, over-time there has been a significant shift in the strategic engagements between the AU PSC and the A3.

On 4th March 2021, the PSC convened a session during which the Council emphasised the need to provide strategic guidance to the A3 to more “effectively discharge their role of articulating, defending and promoting common African positions on issues of interest within the UNSC.” On 17th January 2022, the AU PSC convened a ministerial session to hold a general debate on the relationship between the PSC and the three elected African members of the UNSC, including Gabon, Ghana and Kenya. The AU PSC meeting focused on financing AU-led Peace Support Operations through UN Assessed Contributions. Given the number of African countries that the UNSC has on its agenda, there is a case for deepening the harmonization and coordination of the work of both institutions. The UN Office to the African Union (UNOAU) has the mandate to facilitate the UN’s engagement with the African Union and it can contribute towards this process of deepening the harmonization and coordination of the collaborative programme between both institutions.

7.1 AFRICA AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE UNSC: INVOKING ARTICLE 109 OF THE UN CHARTER

The increased coordination and strategic engagement between the AU PSC and the A3 augur well for a much more coherent Pan-African position at the UNSC on continental matters. In the early decades of the UN, there was an asymmetrical partnership between the body, Africa and the African Diaspora. Newly independent African and Caribbean states began to establish their political, social, and economic footing. As a collective, African and Caribbean countries were not in a position to influence policy at the UN. In most instances, postcolonial African and Caribbean states were beholden and still are, at least economically, to their former colonial powers. In November 2021, the decision by Barbados to dispense with the British Monarch as their formal head of state is a manifestation of the cultural power that former colonial powers yield over their erstwhile colonies. This cultural power, which was also wielded by the US and Russia during the Cold War, further contributes to the perpetuation of a “paternal” attitude by the UN system toward Africa and its Diaspora. Given the asymmetrical relationship that the UN had with Africa and its Diaspora, particularly in the early years, a culture of paternalism developed between the organization and the continent. Since then, Africa has been trying to challenge and dispense with paternalistic attitudes from the UN system and, more specifically, within the UNSC.

In 2021, it was evident that the reality of negotiation processes in the UN Security Council perpetuates and reproduces this paternalistic exclusion of the African continent. More than 60 per cent of the issues discussed by the UN Security Council in 2021 are focused on Africa. Yet the continent does not have any representation among the Permanent Five members of the Council. Given that the P5 can veto all manner of decisions before

---

the Council, it is a travesty of justice at its most basic level that African countries can only participate in key deliberations and decision-making processes as individual non-permanent members of the Council.

Furthermore, there is no guarantee that African non-permanent members of the Council will, in fact, articulate and advance positions that are in the interests of African citizens and vulnerable communities in the countries that they do represent. UN Security Council negotiation and decision-making processes are the highest manifestations of unfairness in the international system. If achieving fairness in negotiations among states is the preferred route to achieving global legitimation, then a fundamental transformation of the UN Security Council and the elimination of the veto provision is a necessary pre-requisite action. The P5 are among the beneficiaries of the status quo within the international system, reproducing a form of diplomatic apartheid. From a transitional justice perspective, given the fact that the asymmetrical distribution of global political, economic and military power has remained relatively unchanged since the end of the Cold War means that the potential beneficiaries of global democratic transformation would, in effect, be the societies in the so-called developing regions of the world – Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

The attempt by the African continent to propose reform of the UNSC through the Ezulwini Consensus in 2005 has largely been rebuffed by the self-involved and self-interested powerful members of the UNSC, notably the P5, which has exposed the fallacy of the United Nations reform process. Consequently, it is time for Africa to participate in dismantling the current global system directly and replacing it with a more inclusive system of global democracy. It is incumbent for our citizens and the leaders they have chosen not to wait for ideas to come elsewhere because they will not come in a manner favourable to the collective but only to the self-interested minority elite.

Through media manipulation, humanity is increasingly bombarded by a certain way of thinking, which prevents us from questioning the existing order. The first step is to pierce through the veil of this deception and see the world as it is. Africa has to put forward its proposals to remake the global order along more democratic lines. Sentiments emerging from the African Union Annual Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January 2016 was that African countries should “pull out” of the UN system. This might be a necessary stepping stone towards dismantling the current system and replacing it with a system that deepens global democracy. While the prospects for exiting the dysfunctional UN system are appealing, there are a number of challenges that have to be taken into account. For example, it is impractical to withdraw from engaging with the international system, particularly if you have to continue engaging and interacting with other actors worldwide. Consequently, the case for global democracy needs to continuously be made by deploying the conceptual tools of transitional justice.

Concretely, it is time for a two-thirds majority of the countries within the UN General Assembly to build a coalition of the willing and trigger Article 109, calling for a review of the UN Charter. Article 109 of the UN Charter cannot be vetoed by the permanent members of the UN Security Council. They are the main beneficiaries of the global status quo and prime instigators of some of the chaos in parts of the world. The initiative to revive multilateralism would require global powers to make a bold commitment to support the will of a two-thirds majority of the members of the General Assembly rather than play a divisive and nefarious role behind the scenes, which has been the common practice of the P5 for the 77-year history of the UN.

African countries, coordinated by the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, should lead the process of mobilising the UN General Assembly for the activation of Article 109, which is several decades-long overdue because the UN Charter calls for the periodic review of its continuing relevance and effectiveness. The members of the General Assembly are in “legal” breach of the stipulations of the UN Charter, which specifically and explicitly calls for a Charter Review Conference ten years after the establishment of the UN, which was launched in 1945. In 1955, there were efforts to launch a Review Conference of the UN Charter. However, this
process became stalled. Therefore, there is a solid case to re-launch the campaign to convene a UN Charter Review Conference before the 80th anniversary of the UN in 2025.

Drawing upon the principles of human freedom, solidarity, justice and reconciliation, which many people and communities around the world have fought and continue to fight for, a new global system can be designed. In this noble quest to review, rethink and redesign the international system, the historical exclusion of a majority of the world in designing and upholding global order also needs to be redressed. Like some other parts of the world, Africa was excluded from the design and construction of global order. Given Africa’s historical exclusion, exploitation, and oppression, it is vital in terms of global transitional justice for Africa to assert its right to shape and mould the future global order.
8. CHALLENGES TO AFRICAN OWNERSHIP OF PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES AND INTERVENTIONS

In 2021, it was evident that as long as key African governments continue to perceive that their interests lie in outsourcing their security to non-African powers, they will not succeed in establishing an indigenous capacity to ensure their continental peace and security. Concrete action to ensure Africa’s capacity to advance and promote its processes and systems requires, first and foremost, that the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (CPAPS) needs to be adequately staffed and capacitated. The perils of outsourcing Africa’s peace and security are evident in the continuing crises across the continent. Moreover, there is now a realisation that the UN collective system is a victim of geopolitical control by the Permanent Five (P5) members of the Security Council. Consequently, it is time to consider dismantling the UN Security Council and replacing it with a new collective security architecture that will assign decision-making functions to African countries to participate actively and, by extension, own the processes and systems for ensuring peace and security of their continent.

In 2021, it was evident that the AU’s slow pace in taking over the financing and implementation of APSA processes and institutions is at the heart of the failure to achieve the silencing of the guns, which was a stated policy objective of the African Union. Paradoxically, the AU’s leadership has consistently voiced its grave concern about how the Union’s system has become dependent on external donors to run some of its core functions and maintain vital staff within its departments. This has been a perennial challenge for the APSA and has raised questions about the true “ownership” of Africa’s institutions. In July 2016, Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government, the Member States committed to allocating 0.2% of tax on eligible exports in the Member States to be transferred to the coffers of the African Union, which represents the first real attempt to wean the Union and its institutions off its donors.

8.1 FINANCING AND REFORMING THE AFRICAN UNION

Despite having been operational for more than two decades, there is a troubling nexus between peacekeeping, peacebuilding, governance and development at the institutional level within the AU. This phenomenon also replicates itself at the United Nations (UN), so it is not unique to Africa. Specifically, as far as horizontal dynamics are concerned, there is a lack of effective institutional interface at the level of strategic decision-making and operational implementation within the AU Commission. In addition, this also impacts the vertical dynamics and the efforts to harmonize and coordinate interventions of the APSA institutions through the RECs and RMs. While all African Union staff members are encouraged to sing from the same song sheet of inter-departmental collaboration, and despite efforts to initiate concrete activities to operationalize this rhetorical harmony, the effects on horizontal institutional efficiency, as well as on frontline operations on the ground in terms of conflict prevention, conflict management, post-conflict reconstruction and governance interventions, do not yet translate into a coordinated strategy to deliver as one to the victims of war and injustice across Africa.

This lack of effective institutional interface reveals the challenging horizontal dynamics within the AU system and highlights the perils of actualizing inter-departmental collaboration on the ground. Well-intentioned platitudes at the policy and decision-making levels about the urgency of promoting synergy between peace support operations, peacebuilding and governance processes have become routine. Still, the follow-through has been less than evident. Consequently, this has traditionally created a silo effect in the vertical dynamics of the interventions, with the AU-RECs-RMs peace support operations, peacebuilders, governance and
development practitioners virtually operating in isolation from each other, even when they are in the same vicinity.

In January 2017, to mark the fifteenth year since the organisation was formally launched, the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted a report entitled: The Imperative to Strengthen our Union: Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union. This report was compiled by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, with the collaboration of a panel of senior African states women and men, in response to a decision ‘on the need to conduct a study on the institutional reform of the African Union’ which emerged from a Retreat of Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Finance, which was held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 16 July 2017.

The Kagame Panel Report observed that ‘as unprecedented challenges multiply and spread across the globe at a dizzying pace, new vulnerabilities are increasingly laid bare, in rich and poor nations alike.’ In particular, the Report identifies several issues, including ‘climate change, violent extremist ideologies, disease pandemics, or mass migration’, as among some of the key issues that urgently need to be addressed ‘by focused and effective regional organisations.’ Furthermore, the Kagame Panel Report laments that ‘the unfortunate truth is that Africa today is ill-prepared to adequately respond to current events because the African Union still has to be made fit for purpose.’ In particular, the Kagame Panel Report appealed for the AU to increase its relevance to citizens through implementing comprehensive reforms of the African Union Commission.

In March 2021, the implementation phase of AU reforms was formally launched with the re-organization of the Commission and the re-alignment and reprioritisation of some key departments, notably the creation of the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, which will have some key implications for the horizontal and vertical dynamics within the institution. In addition, the AU reforms will impact the vertical dynamics and the relationship between APSA and AGA institutions, as well as RECs and RMs, which is further elaborated in the discussion below.

8.1.1 THE LIMITATIONS OF THE AU PEACE FUND

In 2021, it was still evident that a key constraint in the AU’s ability to assert itself on the international stage is its reliance and dependency on donors to pay salaries and finance its operations and programmes. The AU Commission’s leadership reiterates its concern about how the AU system depends on external donors to run some of its core functions and maintain vital staff within its departments. This has been a perennial challenge for the APSA and has raised questions about the true ‘ownership’ of Africa’s institutions.

In July 2016, the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government adopted a decision on Financing of the Union to institute a 0.2% levy on eligible imports. The importance of this decision was subsequently reiterated in a report entitled: Securing Predictable and Sustainable Funding for Peace in Africa, which was compiled by Donald Kabureka, the AU High Representative for the Peace Fund. This decision represents the first genuine attempt to wean the Union and its institutions off its donors, particularly promoting peace. Such initiatives should be encouraged to avoid insinuations that Africa is not “owned” by AU. It will be necessary to encourage African governments to continue paying the 0.2% levy to the AU to ensure that it achieves the autonomy

---

34. Kagame, The Imperative to Strengthen our Union, p.1.
required to make the aspirations within APSA a living reality. In addition, it will be necessary for the AU to ensure that the taxes raised through the levy on its member states are also utilized further to integrate non-state actors into the work of the Union as it pursues the goal of continental peace and security.

The initial intention of financing APSA was to establish an AU Peace Fund, which would be sustained by a combination of resources for the Union’s regular assessed budget from voluntary contributions. In practice, the Fund has remained notably underfunded, which means that the AU does not have all its resources to conduct its operations and enhance its professional capability. Adopting the policy to levy 0.2% of eligible imports of each AU member state and transmit this to the AU Peace Fund has generated some resources. It is estimated that approximately USD 200 million has been generated for the AU Peace Fund from the countries implementing this policy. However, this amount is insufficient in the broad spectrum of APSA related processes, notably the peace support operations, whose missions require three to four times the Peace Fund’s current account. Therefore, as a priority, AU member states need to take the necessary steps to implement the 0.2% levy provision in their own countries to bolster further the resources required to achieve conflict transformation on the continent.

Some African governments are prevaricating with the idea of paying a 0.2% tax on eligible imports to finance the Union and to finance its peace and security processes and systems, which the Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted at the AU Summit in July 2016, convened in Kigali, Rwanda. There are already indications that there is some pushback to the idea of this tax which is set to continue for a number of years to come. This is because some African governments believe that they are better off if they succumb to letting their external patrons pay for the security of their countries rather than supporting their APSA institutions. By drawing upon the domestic analogy, a home-owner in Africa would not out-source the security of their family compound to an external actor because their well-being and safety would, in effect, not be under their control.

Yet, paradoxically, African leaders are ready and willing to out-source the security of their continent to external actors, some of whom have nefarious agendas to extract natural resources to their advantage. This act of out-sourcing Africa’s peace and security processes and systems is, in fact, an act of self-sabotage. It places the Pan-African body politic in a state of vulnerability and subject to the whims of external actors who do not have the continent’s interest at heart. This suggests that the phenomenon of out-sourcing is not a political or financial one but a psychological one of weaning the mindset of African leaders from a culture of dependency, which is self-sabotaging and self-defeating.

As long as key African governments continue to perceive that their interests lie in out-sourcing their security to non-African external partners, then they will not succeed in establishing an indigenous capacity to ensure their continental peace and security. Concrete action to ensure Africa’s capacity to advance and promote its own processes and systems requires the merged AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security to be adequately staffed and capacitated.
9. THE MERGER OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY

In March 2021, the merged AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (CPAPS) was faced with the challenge of enhancing and strengthening the nexus and synergy between the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA). Since its inception in 2002, the AU has prioritized peace and security over governance and democracy. Still, the inability of this approach to consolidate peace across the continent is now under increasing scrutiny. Ultimately, giving precedence to peace and security issues over governance and democracy issues was a self-defeating delusion. This false dichotomization of priorities has now been definitively exposed for its short-sightedness, given the extent to which the failure to ensure transparent and accountable governance and democratic processes has continued to fuel military coups, instability, crisis and conflict across the African continent. Ensuring the effective adoption of norms of governance and democracy is the missing dimension towards preventing the outbreak of military take-overs and the consolidation of peace and security in African countries.

Consequently, rather than treating governance issues as an after-thought, the AU system should recognise that democratic practices are inextricably linked to the maintenance of peace and security. Regrettably, the Union’s budget goes to peace and security interventions, and there is still a perception that governance and democracy initiatives are treated with a degree of lip service and lack of seriousness.

The events across the continent in 2021 demonstrated that the security approach is necessary but not sufficient for the gradual stabilization of societies and regions across the continent. The challenging work of winning the hearts and minds of local populations through the transformation of societies through peacebuilding and governance processes is an equally vital complement to the security initiatives in these war-affected regions. Moreover, the cyclical nature of conflict points to the critical need to move beyond temporary stalemates and ceasefires, peacekeeping deployments and military operations that are so common in this era toward a regional policy informed by intentionally confronting the underlying grievances have fuelled decades of animosity and violence on the continent.

9.1 REFORMING BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEMS WITHIN THE AU COMMISSION

The AU inherited a cumbersome bureaucracy from its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which it has struggled to transcend. Consequently, there are remnants of the “OAU-way” of doing things that continue to hamper the AU’s daily management and administrative processes. The persistence of this culture of bureaucracy has serious implications when it, for example, creates a situation in which peace support operations personnel in Somalia are not paid in a timely manner, despite their sacrifices in a challenging conflict situation. This is only one example of many that continue to afflict the operations of the African Union in supporting peace, security, and governance process across the continent. In addition, the operationalisation of APSA has suffered from a weak implementing capacity due to the low budget execution rates. Therefore, there is a need to directly address the horizontal dynamics within the AU Commission and streamline bureaucratic systems and make them more efficient.

There are also archaic management practices that foster territoriality in the controlling and distributing service provision goods across the AU. In particular, this is evident in the organisation's recruitment processes which remain encumbered and mired in bureaucratic inertia. A tangential effect of this bureaucratic system is the infamous manifestation of “office politics” between the office of the AU Chairperson of the AU Commission and the individual Commissioners. They sometimes behave as though they have an “independent” mandate to run the affairs of their own Commission, as though they did not belong to a larger whole which needs to function in a seamless and coordinated manner.

This phenomenon replicates itself at the director’s of departments, some of who are less inclined to enhance inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration. Since the inception of the AU, its Peace and Security Department has been the best endowed and best-resourced division due to the emphasis and focus on the Member States and donors on the continent’s peace and security challenges. Since the AU’s inception and during the implementation of the APSA Roadmap, the Peace and Security Department acquired functions that its sister department has equally undertaken, the Department of Political Affairs. However, due to “office politics”, this devolution of responsibility was slow to materialize.

The merger of the AU PSD and DPA in 2021 both bureaucracies means that there is now a need to seriously engage with the issue of closer collaboration, coordination and distribution of functions if the ideal of greater synergy between APSA and AGA is to become a reality. Establishing the Inter-Departmental Task Teams, regular pre-mission meetings and efforts to coordinate interventions on the ground is a step in the right direction. This needs to be built upon to enhance the ability to achieve the required outcomes, specifically related to conflict transformation initiatives buttressed by post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding and transitional justice processes.
10. SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES BETWEEN THE AFRICAN GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE (AGA) AND THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE (APSA)

There is a degree of thematic alignment between APSA’s and AGA’s mandate, which now needs to be translated into operational efficiency and effectiveness in terms of managing threats, transforming the peace and security landscape on the ground, and building the peaceful and resilient Africa that we collectively want to achieve. The 2021 merger between the AU Commission for Peace and Security Department and the Commission for Political Affairs requires enhancing and strengthening the nexus and synergy between AGA and APSA to achieve the mandate that has been assigned to both of these architectures. The African Union Commission Strategic Plan 2009-2012, approved by the Heads of State and Government, provided the AU Commission’s mandate “to achieve good governance, democracy, human rights.” In February 2010, the 14th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government committed the Union to establish a Pan-African Architecture on Governance. The intention was not to create a new institution but to enhance coordination among AU organs and institutions with the formal mandate for governance, democracy and human rights. However, the emphasis in creating this architecture was that Member States would continue to “have the primary responsibility of building and consolidating governance” based on the recognising that “a strong and effective AGA requires solid, functioning and accountable national structures.”

In June 2012, the African Governance Architecture Platform was launched in Lusaka, Zambia. The Platform “is the coordinating arm of the African Governance Architecture.” The AGA Platform was envisaged “as an interactive and non-decision making mechanism.” AGA’s function is to coordinate the:

1. effective implementation and enforcement of AU norms and standards on Shared Values;
2. provision of technical support and capacity strengthening to Member State; and
3. review and assess compliance to AU norms, including state reporting on the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance.


The APSA has been mandated to prevent and manage conflict on the continent. In essence, within the context of structural conflict prevention, the APSA has the mandate to promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law, as part of efforts to preventing conflicts.

This clearly expresses the “natural” nexus between APSA and AGA. The challenge is to ensure that within the highest decision-making bodies of the African Union, there is a pre-conceived strategic collaboration in policy formulation between the APSA and AGA lead institutions.

A thematic alignment between APSA’s and AGA’s mandate relates to operations within the complex humanitarian crisis. In addition, the AU’s human rights and transitional justice interventions should contribute toward the early warning mechanisms, which is a mandate explicitly embedded in APSA’s structure through the Continental Early Warning System.\textsuperscript{45}

The specific focus that the AGA Platform intends to engage with in terms of early warning is the monitoring of safeguards against the loss of independence of constitutionally-mandated institutions of the state; deterioration of the separation of powers, or a refusal of the executive arm of government to execute the decisions of judicial bodies.\textsuperscript{46} This responsibility is directly aligned with the mandate of the AU Peace and Security Council, which suggests that there should be a framework of engagement between the APSA and AGA institutions.

Challenges at the strategic and administrative levels inevitably lead to significant constraints at the tactical level of operations. As a result, there are real and persistent challenges in the operationalisation and implementation of joint interventions across Africa. Peace operations in Somalia, for example, are afflicted by the constraints of adequate resources. Still, the interface between the AU’s peace and security sector and the governance sector on the ground also needs to be enhanced. In effect, the complementarity identified in the founding documents of both Architecture needs to be operationalised to ensure that peace operations segue into well-thought-out governance and stabilisation initiatives to allow countries to consolidate peacebuilding and lay the foundations for constitutionalism and the rule of law.

Since the operationalisation of APSA and the establishment of AGA, the challenge has been to undertake joint interventions to harness and consolidate the energies of both institutions. There are notable developments which provide a basis to enhance further the work of both Architectures, including the constitution of officials from both APSA and AGA as part of joint AU joint political fact-finding teams and joint election monitoring interventions. Moreover, there is additional scope to enhance synergy across various activities, specifically early warning, peacebuilding, and national and regional reconciliation interventions.

\textbf{10.1 REGIONAL RECONCILIATION AS A FRAMEWORK FOR STRENGTHENING THE NEXUS BETWEEN APSA AND AGA}

In terms of projecting forward, one dimension that both APSA and AGA need to engage further is how to mitigate against the cross-border effects of violent conflict in Africa. As noted at the outset of this report, the state-centric approach to dealing with the crisis in Africa is now anachronistic and self-defeating. Political violence has real spill-over effects on neighbouring countries, and armed militia resisting the authority of a particular state are inevitably camped out in neighbouring countries, which illustrates the inefficacy of dealing with a “national” crisis. Therefore, there is a need to adopt a regional lens when promoting peace, security and governance, whether in the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes region, the Mano River Union or the Sahel. As we saw above, the AUTJP’s focus on addressing transboundary issues enables us to engage with the notion of “regional reconciliation” as an important framework through which the nexus between APSA and AGA can be enhanced and further developed.\textsuperscript{47}

The idea is that crises are addressed through regional fora, which brings together the leaders of neighbouring states to address a particular crisis in a formal setting. By extension, this calls for government-to-government...
collaboration at a regional level to complement the people-to-people interventions, which are already common in situations like the one in the eastern DRC. The African Union can provide the overall framework through which APSA and AGA can co-jointly pursue early warning, early intervention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and reconciliation to ensure that the phenomenon of cyclic violence is once and for all expunged from the continent of Africa. The specific modalities of operationalisation of regional reconciliation and linking the APSA and AGA structures need to be further elaborated through future programmatic support to the African Union.

The effective communication and real-time interaction between all AGA institutions is a key challenge that persists. Prior to the 2021 merger, the former AU DPA was enhancing its functions in this regard by ensuring “that all communication and documents relating to AGA and the Platform are widely disseminated and shared to ensure that the roles, responsibilities and relationships within AGA … are clearly defined.” The merged Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security should build upon this experience by increasingly using social media to get their messages out to the wider African citizenry.

The notion of focusing on a regional reconciliation approach to peace and security is an important framework through which the nexus between the APSA and non-state actors can be developed further. In addition, the developments towards the AU Protocol on the Free Movement of People and the establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will further enable and facilitate efforts to approach peace and security interventions through a regional prism.

In a regional reconciliation framework, the leader-to-leader processes are initiated to address particular crises in a formal setting. This also requires a regional reconciliation approach based upon government-to-government collaboration across borders to pursue peace and security outcomes. Across Africa, regional reconciliation initiatives are predicated on cross-border interactions through people-to-people interventions. For example, this has been ongoing in the Karamoja Cluster in the Horn of Africa, which encompasses South Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda. Therefore, specific modalities need to be developed for operationalising regional peace and security interventions that link the institutions of APSA, AGA, and the regional non-state actor networks based on anchor organisations.

The AU and regional mechanisms can provide the overall framework through which the APSA, AGA and non-state actors can jointly pursue regional reconciliation by operationalizing early warning, early intervention, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding to ensure the phenomenon of cyclic violence is expunged definitively from Africa. In addition, the AU and regional mechanisms can improve its institutional credibility by adopting and integrating the correct processes and procedures into its daily work. This means upholding the policies designed to ensure the effective functioning of its operational, administrative, financial and human resource activities.

Concretely, when assessing interventions, it will be necessary for the APSA and AGA institutions to adopt a regional reconciliation lens toward stabilising countries and consolidating peace and security. Unfortunately, the AU is still entrapped in seeking national solutions or inward-looking state-centric solutions to problems that require a more expansive regional perspective.

---

48. Africa Union Retreat, p.4.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The 2021 State of Peace and Security Report has identified the following key recommendations and way forward:

- AU member states need to prevent the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government by reacting much more swiftly to ensuing crises and invoking the provisions of the AU Constitutive Act and PSC Protocol to sanction errant countries from descending the path of military regime take-overs.

- AU, RECs and member states need to strengthen and enhance measures to prevent violent extremism, including establishing processes to negotiate crises with the armed militia if required.

- AU, RECs and member states need to assert the link between organised transitional crime, violent extremisms, political corruption, money laundering, and the instability of regions by adopting more stringent policing and legislative processes to arrest and prosecute criminal networks at the national, regional and global level.

- AU, RECs and member states need to develop continental-based pharmaceutical industries to manufacture and distribute Covid-19 vaccines to African citizens.

- The AU should adopt a continent-wide policy and legislative framework to regulate and manage the escalation of drone warfare, particularly in situations in which the incursion of non-African drones undermines the countries' sovereignty.

- A key finding in the paper is that the African Peace and Security Architecture and African Governance Architecture needs to be revitalized and reinvigorated with a renewed sense of urgency and decisiveness by providing the necessary support to enabling of the full operational capacity of the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and support the strengthening of its interface with RECs and RMs.

- AU member states and the wider AU system should pursue the financial sovereignty of the APSA. This requires AU member states to ratify and implement the 0.2% levy on eligible imports. Those African governments that have not done so should uphold their obligations and continuously transfer their 0.2% tax on their imports directly to the African Union to reverse the out-sourcing of the continent’s peace and security processes and systems.

- AU member states, coordinated by the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, should lead the process of mobilising the UN General Assembly for the triggering and activation of Article 109 to convene a UN Charter Review Conference, as stipulated in the UN Charter, to design a UN Security Council body that is more reflective of the twenty-first century.

- African governments working in close collaboration with the AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the Department of Human Resources should urgently act on the appointment of dedicated full-time staff to ensure that the CPAPS can operate at maximum efficiency to address the recurring crises across the continent.

- The AU leadership and member states should reassert the independence and autonomy of the AU Panel of the Wise by providing it with a stand-alone secretariat with an adequate staff complement so that it can work of its own volition in a manner that complements the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

- The levels of cooperation between the AU and RECs should be strengthened significantly through an alignment of AU PAPS/RECs/RMs work plans, which requires addressing the institutional interface and degree of collaboration by drawing lessons from the intervention of ECOWAS, with the support of the AU and UN, in The Gambia.
• The purpose of mediation training should be reconfigured, and there should be initiatives to retain and continue to work with AU trained mediators.

• Greater effort should be put into engaging CSOs in the work of the APSA and AGA, notably in supporting mediation, peacemaking, transitional justice and peacebuilding processes.

• Implement mediation efforts in a more planned and structured manner and avoid ad hoc processes. This requires additional resources, human and financial, should be dedicated to professionalizing the expertise of mediators, including AU Special Envoys, through high-level briefings and the training and deployment of mediators.

• Support the development of specific modalities of operationalising regional reconciliation and link the APSA and AGA structures to strengthen the impact of both structures on achieving the peace, security, governance and development aspirations of the African Union.

• Provide support to processes that will assist in operationalising the merged Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, strengthening the interface between APSA and AGA, and operationalising regional reconciliation through policy dialogues, knowledge management, lesson learning and training capacity building interventions.

• The Office of the Special Envoy for Women Peace and Security and FEMWISE should be provided with an increased budget of dedicated and predictable financial support to ensure that it can effectively deliver on its mandate.

• The Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security should develop dedicated programmes of work with the AU Special Envoy for Youth and the African Youth Ambassadors to mobilize the continent’s youth to prevent and resolve conflict proactively and promote post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding and transitional justice.

• Regional civil society actor networks should be supported to develop integrated work plans with all of their partner organisations, clearly outlining the division of labour, which will ensure their sustainability in engaging and collaborating with APSA and AGA institutions.

• Regional civil society actor networks should establish dedicated programmes of work to enhance the capacity of their partner organisations to implement effective policy dialogue, knowledge management, training, capacity building, communication, advocacy and outreach strategies with the wider Pan-African citizenry and processes necessary to engage APSA and AGA institutions.

• The AU and RECs international partners should support and ensure the independence and autonomy of the AU Panel of the Wise, notably by contributing towards enhancing the technical capacity of the Panel’s secretariat, which should operate as a stand-alone entity and work in a complementary manner with the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

• The AU and RECs international partners should ensure dedicated support to the AU Office of the Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, as well as the peace and security programmatic activities of the AU Envoy on Youth and African Youth Ambassadors, through a collaborative inter-departmental initiative with the Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

• Given the aspirations to “Silence the Guns”, the AU, RECs, and its partners should adopt strategies to support peace and security interventions based on a “regional reconciliation” approach, which encourages APSA and AGA institutions to work regionally to address national crises.

• In addition, AU and RECs partners should ensure an asymmetrical balance in terms of the support they provide to conflict management initiatives and the conflict prevention and specifically post-conflict reconstruction, transitional justice and peacebuilding initiatives necessary to ensure an effective exit strategy for AU peace support operations.
• AU and REC partners should support policy dialogues, knowledge management, training and capacity building initiatives, working with African think-tanks and civil society actors, to support the merger between APSA and AGA architectures, including developing the strategic and operational modalities to enable the two architectures to work in mutual support of each other.

• AU partners should establish technical support frameworks for civil society actors, which are multi-year and based on enabling networks of civil society actors working on peace and security to ensure the viability in a manner that builds their capacities and strengthens their systems to deliver concretely in engaging APSA and AGA institutions, to deliver on outcomes on the ground collaboratively.
12. CONCLUSION

In 2021, the escalation of military coups as was witnessed in West Africa and the resurgence of political tension, violent extremism, transitional organized crime as well as a range of other challenges continued to undermine the continent’s efforts to achieve its aspirations of peace, security, governance, livelihood improvement for its people in line with Agenda 2063. Despite more than two decades of operationalisation, the challenge for APSA and AGA institutions has been the willingness to convert the rhetoric of its policy and normative frameworks into a tangible reality of conflict transformation and peacebuilding on the ground.

The continent is plagued with a number of post-conflict situations which urgently need to be addressed. The long march to Africa’s self-sufficiency in promoting and consolidating its peace and security processes and systems will continue beyond the stated ambition of “Silencing the Guns by 2020”, which was regrettably not achieved. In 2021, a major problem facing the AU was the lack of integrity among some of the governments of African countries, who have committed themselves to principles, norms, and values of human rights and democratic governance and the establishment of APSA and AGA institutions, but continue to practice suppression, dominion, and exploitation of their people. In terms of its limitations, not all of Africa’s heads of state and government are taking the African Union or APSA and AGA institutions seriously. The norms and values they have signed up for should be enough to encourage them to change their behaviour. However, many leaders behave as though the AU does not exist by continuing to act in an autocratic manner in their own countries by committing human rights atrocities with impunity.

In 2021, it was evident that another primary obstacle to attaining this objective would be the propensity of African governments to out-source their peace and security processes and systems. To reverse this culture of out-sourcing, the AU member states will need to commit to transferring the required levies generated by the 0.2% tax on imports directly to the coffers of the Union. If given the necessary backing, a pragmatic APSA system that is appropriately funded can go a long way to improve our success rate in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in war-affected countries in Africa.51

In the short term, even if all governments consistently submit their taxes to the AU, it will still take time to transform the culture of dependency, which continues to psychologically sustain the phenomenon of Africa out-sourcing its peace and security processes and systems. In 2021, it was evident that it was necessary to consolidate the nexus and synergy between AGA and APSA to achieve the mandate that has been assigned to both of these architectures. The evidence from the period of the APSA roadmap implementation demonstrates that giving precedence to peace and security issues over governance and democracy issues was a self-defeating delusion. This false dichotomization of priorities has now been definitively exposed for its short-sightedness, given the extent to which the failure to ensure transparent and accountable governance and democratic processes has continued to fuel military coups, instability, crisis and conflict across the African continent. Therefore, ensuring the effective adoption of norms of constitutionalism, the rule of law, governance and democracy is the missing dimension towards the consolidation of peace and security in African countries and should be prioritized in the next phase of the implementation of APSA and AGA instruments.

A security approach is necessary but insufficient for the gradual stabilization of war-affected regions across the continent. The challenging work of winning the hearts and minds of local populations through the transformation of societies is equally a vital complement to the security initiatives in these war-affected regions. The cyclical nature of conflict points to the critical need to move beyond temporary stalemates and ceasefires, peacekeeping deployments and military operations that are so common in this era toward a regional policy informed by intentionally confronting the underlying grievances that have fuelled decades

51. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General Address to the World Summit, 14 September 2005.
of animosity and violence on the continent. Yet we seek national solutions or inward-looking state-centric solutions to problems that require us to adopt a more expansive regional perspective.

There is a need for the notion of regional reconciliation to gain currency anchored by deepening collaboration between APSA and AGA if these cyclical conflicts are to be extinguished permanently. The APSA system rests on the principles of situating the African citizen as the primary benefactor of improved peace and security systems. Yet the AU system remains asymmetrically skewed towards the privileging of states in its interventions. The primacy of the needs and aspirations of the African citizen needs to become a reality if the APSA system ultimately fulfils its historic mission. Consequently, it is time to integrate non-state actors, in a more meaningful and focused manner, as key drivers of peace and security processes and outcomes in Africa.

The AU Peace and Security Council has established a record of inviting and engaging non-state actors in its deliberations, which has set a positive tone in terms of the ability of African citizens to influence the work of the Council and the wider APSA. A number of CSOs have taken advantage of the Livingstone Formula and the Maseru Conclusions to engage directly with the PSC and interface with other institutions of the APSA. However, the proactive interventionism required to effectively “Silence the Guns” can only succeed if African citizens are also empowered to contribute to this process.

An uninformed population is easy to manipulate, so a key strategy has to be to build the capacity of Africans to know how to address the challenges that confront them. This is the challenge of education, skills training on conflict prevention and proactive interventionism through Pan-African and international partnerships. These partnerships and exchanges could range from collaboration with training centres, universities, and educational institutions in Africa collaborating with governments and non-state actors on peace and civic education.

In the absence of a dedicated framework for intervening and robustly securing countries and regions, the continent will remain beholden and subservient to the prevarications and infiltration of global powers. Consequently, there is a strong Pan-Africanist argument to find a way to push through the political, diplomatic and financial obfuscation, which is stalling, and threatening to kill, the cooperation between the APSA and AGA structures.52

Africa’s leaders have undermined the continental ability and capacity to promote peace and their failure to find ways to address their differences and hold each other accountable. Africa’s leadership deficit leaves the continent extremely vulnerable to internal fissures and external penetration and exploitation. The first order of protection of the interests of African citizens has to be its leaders. Unfortunately, the inverse remains the case across the continent as leaders connive with insidious external actors. The point is that the promotion of peace, security and development in Africa is no longer the task of an individual “leader” or nation-state in the context of globalization.

It is at the very least a continent-wide challenge. At the very most, it is a global responsibility that implicates the citizens and governments where these multi-national companies are registered, specifically in the Europe, America, China, Russia and India, that are making a profit from the exploitation and misery of people in war-affected and under-developed parts of Africa. This global responsibility also invokes the need for active citizenship in confronting these corrupt practices where they persist and in holding Africa’s so-called leaders to account through the self-ascribed promotion of civic leadership, both in Africa and around the world.

The AU Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, in partnership with regional economic communities, and African civic organisations, needs to scale up its advocacy agenda to promote greater synergy between its various thematic interventions. The security and governance of one can only be achieved by ensuring the security and governance of all. Every African is every other African’s keeper, which reaffirms the notion of Pan-African solidarity. However, in the absence of a genuine commitment across the entire AU system to facilitate and enable synergy, the pursuit of the Pan-African vision of a peaceful and prosperous continent will remain an elusive aspiration.

**ABOUT THE TANA FORUM**

The Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa (THLF) is an independent initiative of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of Addis Ababa University and eminent African personalities. The Forum intends to inform the gathering of concerned African decision-makers, peace and security stakeholders’ groups, and their larger constituencies about an open and frank discussion of security issues and challenges faced by the continent.

www.tanaforum.org

TANA Forum 2021