

TANA FORUM

TANA FORUM BOOKLET 2026

PATHWAYS TO PEACE IN AFRICA: ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY AND GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

IPSS
Institute for Peace & Security Studies
Addis Ababa University

FRANK,
RELEVANT,
AND CANDID
DIALOGUE.

CONTENTS

Tana Board	**4**
Technical Committee	**5**
IPSS, Tana Forum Secretariat Leadership	**6**
Concept Note	**7**
Summary on the Theme	**17**
Agenda	**25**
Participant list	**38**

TANA BOARD

H.E. John Dramani Mahama (Chairperson)
President of the Republic of Ghana

H.E. Dr. Lassina Zerbo
Former Prime Minister, Burkina Faso

H.E. Dr. Joyce Banda
Former President, Republic of Malawi

H.E. Catherine Samba-Panza
Former President, Central Africa Republic

H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta
Former President, Republic of Kenya

H.E. Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan
Former President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

H.E. Amb. Hadera Abera Admassu
State Minister for Political and Economic Diplomacy at the MOFA Ethiopia

H.E. Dr. Tekeda Alemu
Former State Minister of Ethiopia and Permanent Representative of the UN Security Council

H.E. Michelle Ndiaye
Africa Director, Open Society Foundations, former Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AUC in the DRC

H.E. Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Former United Nations Under- Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

Prof. Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba
Former Director and Chief Executive Officer, Kenya School of Laws, Kenya

TANA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Prof. David Monyae
Co-Director, University of Johannesburg Confucius Institute; Director for the Centre for Africa-China Studies (CACS) and Member of the University of Johannesburg Senate (Representing Southern Africa)

Dr. Dawit Toga
Visiting Senior Research Fellow, King's College London. Expert in conflict prevention, mediation, and peacekeeping across Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

Fitsum Girma Demissie
Deputy Director General for African Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia.

Dr. Seydina M. NDIAYE
Head of ALIVE (AI Living lab for Innovation and Viable Ethical policies and systems) multidisciplinary research group at Université Numérique Cheikh Hamidou Kane (UNCHK)

Dr. Philip Attuquayefio
Senior Research Fellow (Security and the African State), Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, University of Ghana, Ghana; Consultant, Conflict Management Directorate, Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department, AUC (Representing West Africa) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Njoya TIKUM
Director, Sub-Regional Office for West and Central Africa and Resident Representative of UNDP Senegal

Cynthia Chigwenya
Leads Research on the United Nations Youth Compass as a Consultant at the Club of Rome

Faten Aggad
Chief of Staff of the Cabinet of the Deputy Chairperson at the African Union Commission

Ms. Ruth Aluoch
Political/Gender Affairs Officer Department of Peacekeeping Operations UNHQ (Representing East Africa)

Ms. Aya Chebbi
Pan-African Feminist and Diplomat; Founder and President of Nalafem Collective (Representing North Africa)

Dr. Isabela Moses Warioba
Partnerships and Child Protection Adviser, Office of the Commissioner Political Affairs, Peace and Security, AUC (Representing East Africa)

Donald Deya
Chief Executive Officer, Pan African Lawyers Union

Ms. Lettie Tembo Longwe
Director, Africa Peace and Security Programme, Institute for Peace and Security Studies and Head of the Tana Forum Secretariat (Representing Southern Africa)

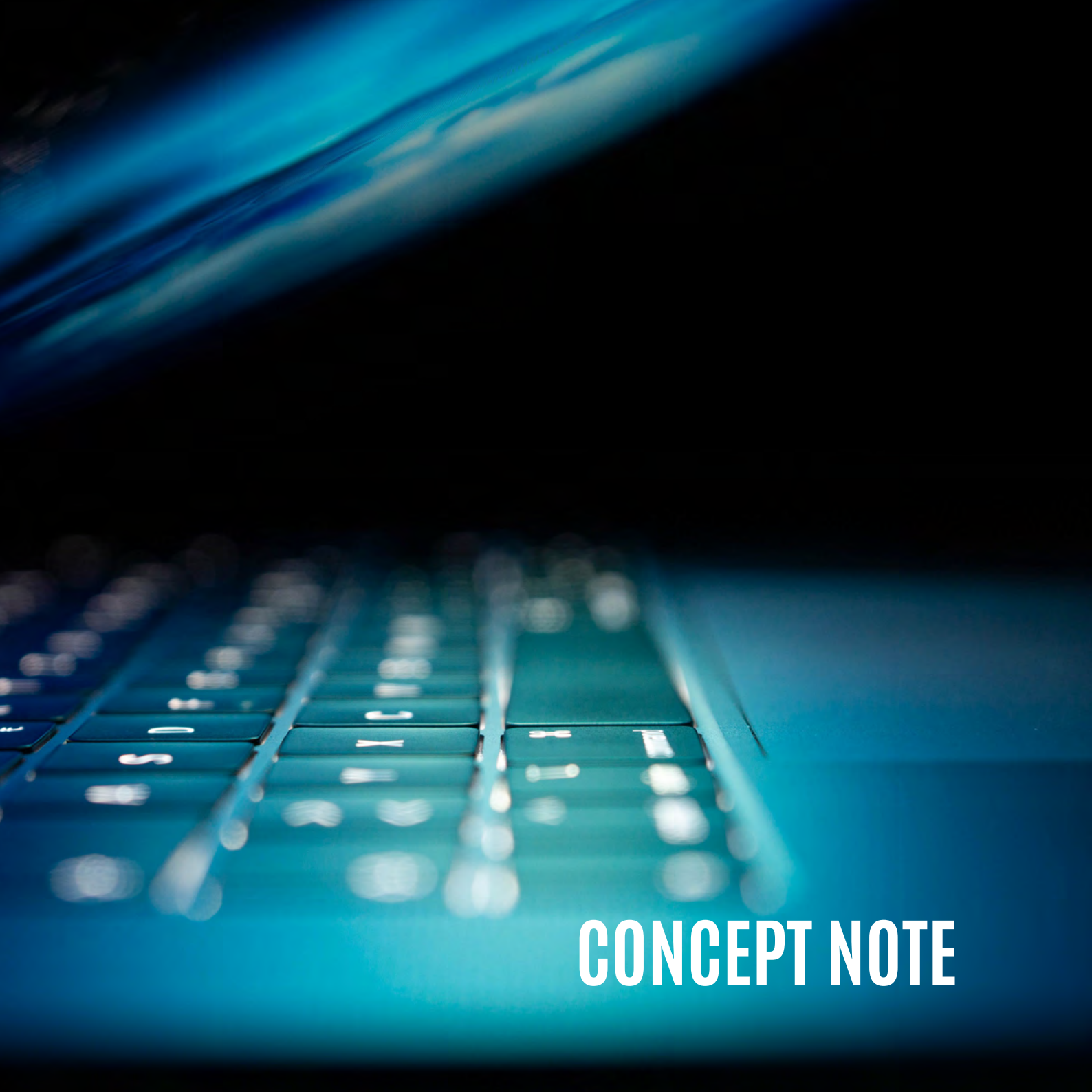
IPSS, Tana Forum Secretariat Leadership

Mercy Fekadu (PhD), Associate Professor

Director,
Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)
Addis Ababa University

Lettie Tembo Longwe

Head of Secretariat, Tana High-Level
Forum on Security in Africa
Director, Africa Peace and Security Programme (APSP)
Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)
Addis Ababa Universityy



CONCEPT NOTE

Section I: Background

1. Introduction: concept and origin

To support sustainable peace and advance implementation of the African Union's Tripoli Declaration of August 2009, the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) at Addis Ababa University convenes the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa (commonly known as the Tana Forum) annually. The Forum responds to the Declaration's call for African-led solutions and frames peace and security as a shared intellectual challenge. Over the past decade, it has become a flagship annual platform that brings together eminent personalities, including policymakers, intellectuals, continental stakeholders, and representatives of regional and global organisations.

Since its inception, the Tana Forum has provided an informal, open, and candid space for political leaders and other stakeholders to examine Africa's most pressing peace and security challenges. This tradition has continued across eleven editions. As the continent faces increasingly complex challenges, the Forum remains an important venue for frank, substantive dialogue on global issues in which Africa has a direct, strategic stake.

The 12th Edition of the Tana Forum, scheduled for 23–25 October 2026 in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, under the theme "Pathways to Peace in Africa: Economic Sovereignty and Geopolitical Transformation", aims to continue the tradition of candid discussions. High-level policy decision-makers, heads of regional, continental, and global organisations, and thought leaders from across the spectrum are expected to attend the event.

2. Overarching theme – Pathways to Peace in Africa: Economic Sovereignty and Geopolitical Transformation

> "There are multiple routes to the market.[1]

The above quote serves as a normative and epistemological frame for bringing African knowledge systems into closer dialogue with African-led approaches to peace and security. In this context, market functions as a metaphor for peace: a condition that encompasses spatial, temporal, physical, and psychological dimensions. The organisation and spatial logic of traditional African markets show that access rarely follows a single route. If peace is the destination, this metaphor suggests the continent offers multiple pathways to sustainable peace. Beyond their physical locations, traditional African markets are open markets of ideas, where insights, methods,

1 A saying from West Africa that resonates with other parts of the continent, albeit in various versions.

experience, and solutions meet. Accordingly, the 12th Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, as an open market for fruitful exchanges and intersections, foregrounds two interrelated pathways it deems timely and urgent: economic sovereignty and geopolitical transformation.

The interdependence of these two pathways positions them as central analytical entry points for examining the structural drivers of conflict. At the macro- and meso-levels, such drivers include, but are not limited to, power competition, contestation over strategic resources, structural inequalities, exclusion, and marginalisation. It also includes the micro-level, where most violent conflicts brew and where they have their most devastating long-term impact.

The underlying proposition is therefore to examine economic sovereignty and geopolitical transformation as mutually reinforcing pathways to peace, with a view to enhancing Africa's agency within contemporary power configurations, optimising the use of its resources, and ensuring that Africa and Africans define, shape, and realise sustainable peace on their own terms.

Debates on economic sovereignty expose enduring constraints on Africa's ability to extract, process, trade, and leverage its resources for development. External control over value chains, limited policy autonomy, debt dependence, and structural dependence in global trade and finance reproduce historical patterns of exploitation. These dynamics are not only economic concerns; they also shape the structural drivers of conflict by affecting employment, state legitimacy, social welfare, resource competition, and governments' capacity to deliver public goods. The Forum therefore treats economic and peace policies as mutually reinforcing fields rather than separate agendas.

Geopolitical transformation further complicates this landscape. As global power rivalries intensify, Africa faces opportunities for investment and security partnerships but also risks of fragmentation and new forms of dependency. Resource politics (historically central to conflict) now extend into the digital domain. Africa's digital transformation, while promising integration and innovation, is undermined by a persistent digital divide that reinforces inequalities and heightens the risk of conflict. At the same time, digital technologies reshape conflict dynamics through disinformation, cyber threats, and emerging forms of digital imperialism, even as they offer tools for peacebuilding and resilience.

To a significant degree, this calls into question the liberal stance that has dominated the global political economy for over two decades, as Africa's reality is farther away from the key tenets of equality and cooperation and seems closer to Thucydides' treatise that the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must. Ergo, what Africa makes of its reality, and how it should proceed, requires deeper reflection, while prioritising cooperation over confrontation in the quest for sustainable peace within the context of Agenda 2063.

Given the above context, overall discussions at the Tana Forum seek to:

1. Interrogate the links between economic sovereignty, geopolitical transformation, and sustainable peace in Africa.
2. Examine how Africa can translate its natural wealth and digital advantage into inclusive industrial wealth for sustainable peace.
3. Assess the readiness, coherence, and resilience of African institutions and regional mechanisms to meet the demands of Africa's economic sovereignty, and to anticipate, prevent, and respond to evolving peace and security challenges in a contested geopolitical environment.
4. Identify practical policy pathways to deepen regional integration, harness the developmental potential of informality, and counter illicit economies that undermine governance, sovereignty, and peace across the continent.

3. Sub-themes

i. Resource Wealth and Monetary Sovereignty for Industrial Development

Africa's strategic resources are central to both global economic transformation and the continent's aspirations for industrialisation, peace, and sovereignty. Yet, extractive structures, unfair international financial architecture, illicit financial flows, opaque resource-backed financing, external control over pricing and settlement systems, and limited value addition have often turned resource wealth into dependency, fiscal vulnerability, instability, and conflict. Resource and monetary sovereignty must therefore go beyond ownership to include African control over the full financial and industrial circuit through which resources are priced, financed, processed, traded, settled, and reinvested, ensuring that revenues support domestic credit creation, value chains, employment, public goods, and peacebuilding. Africa's resource wealth can drive industrial development only if paired with monetary sovereignty. This requires moving beyond extraction toward domestic value addition, transparent resource financing, and stronger control over pricing, invoicing, banking, settlement systems, credit creation, and revenue management. It is also worth considering what this means for Africa's young population, particularly through the peace and security lens.

By retaining more value within African economies, reducing reliance on external currencies and opaque resource-backed loans, and reinvesting resource revenues into productive sectors, states can build industrial capacity, create jobs, strengthen fiscal resilience, and reduce conflict risks. Young people also play a role. Resource sovereignty must therefore include control over both natural assets and the financial systems that convert them into broad-based transformation, while also ensuring that the role and aspirations of young people are not neglected.

Building on this premise, this sub-theme examines how Africa can secure sovereignty over its strategic resources and the monetary and financial architecture through which resource wealth translates into industrial development, and what this implies for Africa's peace and security agenda.

ii. Leveraging African Institutions and Capabilities at the Intersection of Peace and Macroeconomic Governance

Africa's peace and security landscape is being reshaped by global geopolitical transformation, demands for economic sovereignty, and renewed concerns about the autonomy, legitimacy, and effectiveness of African institutions. While the African Union, Regional Economic Communities, and related bodies have advanced conflict prevention, mediation, peace support operations, and normative governance frameworks, persistent crises in the Sahel, Sudan, eastern DRC, and the Horn of Africa continue to expose deeper institutional constraints that go beyond capacity gaps to include financial dependence, donor-driven priorities, limited policy space, operational weaknesses, and reduced state sovereignty. As global power competition expands opportunities for investment, infrastructure, and security cooperation while also creating risks of fragmentation, rivalry, and new dependencies, African institutions must strengthen collective agency, epistemic sovereignty, state capabilities, and continental coordination. This requires linking peace to macroeconomic governance, reducing reliance on external financing, and building robust capabilities in mediation, crisis response, cybersecurity, border management, and security funding to achieve a more sovereign and self-reliant continent.

Notably, the linkage between peace and macroeconomic governance in the modern world will be incomplete and proverbially half-baked if digital transformation is understood only as a matter of access or technological modernisation. In this context, digital transformation requires an approach that holistically intersects questions of sovereignty and agency with inclusion and peace. Africa must move beyond tokenistic participation towards meaningful influence over strategic digital resources, including data, infrastructure, platforms, cloud systems, algorithms, payment technologies and artificial intelligence. This requires stronger local and continental authorship and ownership of technologies; capabilities in data governance, regulation, computing infrastructure, research and development, Artificial Intelligence (AI), skills, and innovation; and more effective participation in global digital rulemaking. Externally controlled technologies can deepen strategic dependency, reproduce (digital) imperialism, limit African policy space and restrict fair value capture, despite the continent's role in supplying critical minerals. Inclusion is also incomplete unless women, youth, platform workers, informal workers, and disadvantaged groups can shape and benefit from the digital economy, as weak macroeconomic governance may, in the long run, intensify threats, disinformation, algorithmic bias, and technology-mediated instability.

This sub-theme will examine practical pathways for building capable, resilient, self-reliant, and knowledge-producing institutions that can reduce dependence on external actors, strengthen African ownership of the

peace and security agenda, and contribute to a more peaceful sovereign continent, while ensuring that the digital options and explorations do not generate new (forms of) dependency, exclusion, and insecurity. Reasonably, this discussion should include inter-generational solidarity, co-leadership of institutions, and co-exploration of mechanisms to maximise African capabilities.

iii. Untapped Leverage, Unnoticed Movements: Regional Integration and Illicit Economies

Regional integration is not only a trade agenda, but also a peace and resilience agenda. The African Union conceptualises it as a multidimensional process through which states deepen economic, political, and socio-cultural cooperation to enhance trade, mobility, stability, and collective influence in the international system. In a global economy defined by interdependence and competitive markets, integration is essential for Africa, where many national economies remain small and fragmented. By facilitating the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, regional integration can expand intra-African trade, stimulate growth, and strengthen resilience. This vision aligns with the mandates of Regional Economic Communities, the UN 2030 Agenda, and Agenda 2063, and is institutionally anchored in the African Continental Free Trade Area, a major milestone toward a unified continental market.

However, the effectiveness of regional integration cannot be understood without accounting for the scale of informality across African economies. The informal sector constitutes a major share of employment and GDP. It functions as a form of bottom-up integration, enabling cross-border trade, livelihoods, and social cohesion among border communities. Yet operating outside formal regulatory systems creates challenges for taxation, labour protection, state authority, and policy planning. This conflates informal economies with illicit economies in many spaces. Thus, while disciplinary and regulatory policy actions tend to target informal economies, large corporations have been central to illicit financial flows. These illicit flows undermine governance, security, and development, particularly in regions with weak state presence. They also harm the environment and often violate regulatory frameworks designed to protect it. These include smuggling, trafficking, and illegal resource extraction, among others. Additionally, young people's cross-border mobility can deepen regional integration through trade, skills exchange, and social networks. Yet, many unaddressed precipitating factors expose them to exploitation and draw their movements into illicit economies and sometimes encourage or reward their contribution to violence.

The success of regional integration thus depends not only on strengthening formal markets and mobility frameworks but also on designing policies that protect vulnerable livelihoods and disrupt illicit networks that fuel instability. A comprehensive approach to integration must therefore reconcile economic inclusion with security governance to advance sustainable development and continental cohesion.

On these premises, the 12th Edition of the Tana Forum for 2026 will continue its customary uncensored approach, under Chatham House Rule, to tackling crucial challenges with input from decision-makers. Additionally, frameworks will be in place to involve more stakeholders through side events and pre- and post-forum activities.

Section II: The Tana Forum in Context

1. Overall and specific objectives

The Tana Forum provides a platform to discuss African peace and security issues, enabling high-level decision-makers and other partners to develop innovative solutions to the myriad peace and security challenges confronting the continent. Specifically, the Forum will:

- Provide opportunities for decision-making leaders and institutions to exchange experiences and insights on peace and security issues, gaining new perspectives needed to resolve critical peace and security problems.
- Provide opportunities for political decision-makers to interact and consult with a critical mass of the African constituency and key global actors in the peace, security, and development sectors.
- Contribute to an open and substantive debate on peace and security issues of strategic importance to the continent vis-à-vis the rest of the world.
- Facilitate inclusive dialogue among governments and African security stakeholders, including diverse African voices on the ground, on various dimensions and components of peace and security concerns across the continent.
- Sensitise and mobilise a broad spectrum of actors and stakeholders to promote awareness of, and the imperative for, African ownership of peace and security solutions.

2. Expected results.

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

- The continuous conceptualisation and projection of the peace and security issues affecting the continent from the perspective of African citizens and governments. In that regard, substantial attention will be

given to the emerging body of "home-grown" African approaches to peace and security challenges and prospects.

- The building of a vibrant and broad-based constituency on peace and security issues through the establishment of non-threatening platforms for dialogue, networking, and exchange of information between policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. To sustain such platforms, a cross-section of leaders from different sectors will be called upon to act as interlocutors and champions to mobilise "top-down" and "bottom-up" African voices on the peace and security priorities that the continent should pursue.

- Progressively engaging Africa in the strategic and pro-active management of peace and security in the continent. Key to that effort will be the development of foresight capacities throughout relevant national, regional, and continental organisations across the public, private, and civil society sectors.

3. Forum strategy

Participation: The Forum will bring together high-level decision-makers on peace and security drawn from the governmental sphere (Heads of State and Government, AU organs, and RECs), non-African regional institutions (UN, EU), the African private sector and civil society networks, and scholars and practitioners of peace and security.

Discussion format: Discussions at the Forum aim to achieve three main goals: (i) encourage an open and informal exchange of views and experiences, (ii) focus on action-oriented and forward-looking outcomes, and (iii) remain a consultative forum rather than a decision-making one. To achieve this, the Forum will primarily use interactive panel discussions that actively involve all participants. After the Side events and official opening, two high-level panels will sandwich the main sessions. This will include heads of state and former heads of state to set the tone (at the beginning) and round off (at the end) with key practical policy takeaways. This approach aims to ensure that economic sovereignty and geopolitical transformation.

Impact and effectiveness: The Forum is convened annually. In its short existence, it has become a flagship platform and institution – in its own right. This sustains continuous dialogue among top African leaders and various stakeholder groups. It enables leaders to explore options for innovative and joint action in peace and security. The Forum also builds trust among key players who often meet only in settings mediated and constrained by diplomatic protocol.

4. The Tana Forum Secretariat

IPSS at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia serves as the Forum's Secretariat. Alongside the Forum and its Secretariat, IPSS hosts the Africa Peace and Security Programme (APSP), a joint project with the African Union. The APSP's mission is to build African capacities to develop and implement African-led solutions in the peace and security sector. In this context, the Forum's outcomes will also inform the Institute's activities in education, research, and policy dialogues.

5. Forum status

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

2nd Tana Forum: 20 to 21 "Security and Organised Crime in Africa"

- Paid tribute to the Forum's foremost champion, the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi [2]

3rd Tana Forum: 26 to 27 April 2014 "Impact of Illicit Financial Flows on Peace and Security in Africa"

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Nelson Mandela.

4th Tana Forum: 18 to 19 April 2015 "Secularism and Politicised Faith"

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Kwame Nkrumah.

5th Tana Forum: 16 to 17 April 2016 "Africa in the Global Security Agenda"

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Patrice Lumumba.

6th Tana Forum: 22 to 23 April 2017 ''Natural Resource Governance in Africa".

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: Dr Wangari Muta Maathai.

---

2 The annual Meles Zenawi Lecture Series was also established this year.

7th Tana Forum: 21 to 22 April 2018 "Ownership of Africa's Peace and Security Provision: Financing and Reforming the African Union".

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Gamal Abdel Nasser

8th Tana Forum: 4 to 5 May 2019 "Political Dynamics in the Horn of Africa: Nurturing the Emerging Peace Trends".

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the South African anti-apartheid activist and politician.

9th Tana Forum: 24 to 26 April 2020 "The AfCFTA: A Milestone for Pan-Africanism and Conflict Transformation."

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Julius Nyerere.

10th Tana Forum: 14 to 16 October 2022 "Managing Security Threats: Building Resilience for the Africa We Want"

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Kenneth Kaunda.

11th Edition: 24 to 26 October 2025 "Africa in an Evolving Global Order"

- Meles Zenawi Lecture Series: President Samora Machel.

6. Participation

According to the Secretariat's policy, participation is by invitation only, and invitations are non-transferable.

7. Contact

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



SUMMARY ON THE THEME

PATHWAYS TO PEACE IN AFRICA: ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY AND GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

Background

The metaphor *There are multiple routes to the market* provides a distinctly African epistemological frame for re-imagining peace as a dynamic, multidimensional destination accessible through diverse pathways. The *market* functions as a metaphor for peace: a condition that encompasses spatial, temporal, physical, and psychological dimensions. The organisation and spatial logic of traditional African markets show that access rarely follows a single route. If peace is the destination, this metaphor suggests the continent offers multiple pathways to sustainable peace. The *market* also serves as a metaphor for a place where insights, methods, experience, and solutions from Africa's peace and security stakeholders intersect through frank, relevant, and candid dialogue.

The 12th edition of the Tana High-Level Forum foregrounds economic sovereignty and geopolitical transformation as interconnected routes toward sustainable peace. Africa's ability to govern resources, finance development, regulate digital transformation, strengthen institutions, and shape regional integration directly affects the continent's capacity to prevent conflict, build legitimacy, and pursue its own security priorities. These raise numerous geoeconomic and geopolitical questions that the 12th edition of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa seeks to address.

Economic sovereignty is the freedom and ability to exercise agency, legitimacy, and institutional autonomy within an interconnected global order. This raises questions about Africa's ability to define and pursue its own economic priorities, mobilise and govern its resources, shape the terms of its participation in the global economy, and protect the policy space required for inclusive development and durable peace. Deficiencies in these respects have had direct, traceable implications for peace and security.

Debates on economic sovereignty expose enduring constraints on Africa's ability to extract, process, trade, and leverage its resources for development. External control over value chains, limited policy autonomy, debt dependence, and structural dependence in global trade and finance reproduce historical patterns of exploitation. These dynamics are not only economic concerns; they also shape the structural drivers of conflict by affecting

employment, state legitimacy, social welfare, resource competition, and governments' capacity to deliver public goods. The Forum should therefore treat economic policy and peace policy as mutually reinforcing fields rather than separate agendas.

Geopolitical transformation further complicates this landscape. As global power rivalries intensify, Africa faces opportunities for investment and security partnerships but also risks of fragmentation and new forms of dependency. Resource politics (historically central to conflict) now extend into the digital domain. Africa's digital transformation, while promising integration and innovation, is undermined by a persistent digital divide that reinforces inequalities and heightens the risk of conflict. At the same time, digital technologies reshape conflict dynamics through disinformation, cyber threats, and emerging forms of digital imperialism, even as they offer tools for peacebuilding and resilience.

These challenges place renewed emphasis on African institutions' role. Despite normative and operational advances, gaps in financing, coordination, and readiness persist. Strengthening institutional autonomy, sustainable security financing, and adaptive capacities is essential to navigate pressures from economic sovereignty and geopolitical shifts. Ultimately, Africa's pursuit of peace requires coherent regional integration, effective management of informal and illicit economies, and resilient institutions capable of shaping a sovereign and peaceful continental order.

Sub-Themes

Sub-Theme 1: Resource Wealth and Monetary Sovereignty for Industrial Development

Africa's strategic resources occupy a central place in global economic transformation and in the continent's aspirations for industrial development, peace, and sovereignty. Yet extractive economic structures, weak governance systems, illicit financial flows, opaque resource-backed financing, external control over pricing and settlement systems, and limited domestic value addition have often converted resource wealth into leakage, dependency, monetary and fiscal vulnerability, and conflict. Resource sovereignty must therefore be understood not only as ownership or control over natural assets, but as the capacity to govern the full financial and industrial circuit through which resource wealth is priced, financed, processed, traded, settled, and reinvested. This includes strengthening African control over pricing, invoicing, insurance, banking, settlement systems, credit creation, revenue management, and value chains so that strategic resources generate industrial capability, employment, public goods, and peacebuilding dividends.

Across the continent, state and non-state actors contest strategic resources, particularly where governance deficits, inequitable benefit-sharing, environmental degradation, geopolitical competition, and illicit extraction undermine legitimacy and stability. Although Africa remains a major supplier of critical minerals and other strategic resources to global markets, much of the value addition continues to take place outside the continent. At the same time, revenues are frequently diverted through external financial systems, debt service, or illicit channels. Export earnings often accumulate as foreign reserves or finance external obligations rather than expanding domestic credit, productive investment, and job creation. Reliance on third currencies for trade settlement further drains foreign exchange reserves and exposes the economy to external shocks. At the same time, a growing share of resource output is pre-committed through collateralised, opaque, resource-backed loans, exposing states to fiscal crises, austerity pressures, and social unrest.

Notably, Africa's youth must be positioned not merely as beneficiaries of resource wealth, but as central actors in transforming it into industrial capability and shared prosperity. Expanding youth access to technical skills, enterprise finance, decent work, and decision-making across mining, processing, manufacturing, and related value chains can help retain value on the continent, reduce exclusion and unemployment, and strengthen social stability. A sovereign resource and monetary agenda should therefore enable young Africans to innovate, build enterprises, and shape how Africa invests resource revenues in its productive future.

This sub-theme therefore asks how Africa can move beyond the ownership-extraction cycle toward a more sovereign model of strategic resource governance that links natural assets, monetary flows, industrialisation, and peace. Panellists will examine what resource sovereignty means in an increasingly competitive and unsettled global order; how African states can strengthen ownership, pricing, revenue management, payment, and settlement systems; and what roles governments, regional institutions, development banks, private sector actors, and communities should play in promoting equitable, transparent, and sustainable governance. The discussion will also explore how domestic value addition, transparent resource financing, regional cooperation, and reinvestment of revenues into productive sectors can strengthen fiscal resilience, reduce conflict risks, and consolidate peace. The ultimate objective is to generate practical policy recommendations for governing Africa's strategic resources and related monetary flows in ways that advance industrial development, promote peace and security, and strengthen sovereignty.

Sub-Theme 2: Leveraging African Institutions and Capabilities at the Intersection of Peace and Macroeconomic Governance

Africa's peace and security landscape is increasingly shaped by transformations in the global geopolitical order, growing demands for economic sovereignty, and renewed questions about the autonomy, legitimacy,

and effectiveness of African institutions. Institutional weaknesses should therefore be understood not only as conventional capacity deficits but also as financial dependence, donor-driven priorities, limited policy space, epistemic dependence, operational constraints, and the weakening of state sovereignty. As African states, the African Union, Regional Economic Communities, and related continental and regional bodies seek to strengthen autonomy and collective agency, the relationship between macroeconomic governance, institutional capability, and peace and security becomes central to the continent's ability to prevent conflict, build legitimacy, and pursue its own strategic priorities.

African institutions have made important advances in conflict prevention, mediation, peace support operations, crisis response, and the development of normative governance frameworks. Yet persistent conflicts in the Sahel, Sudan, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, and parts of the Horn of Africa continue to reveal financial, epistemic, institutional, and operational constraints. Many interventions remain heavily dependent on external financing, technical assistance, logistical support, and externally shaped priorities, raising questions about ownership, sustainability, institutional autonomy, and the ability of African institutions to define and finance their own peace and security agendas. Global power competition, evolving security partnerships, and increased engagement from emerging powers sharpen these concerns, creating opportunities for investment, infrastructure, and cooperation but also fragmenting regional approaches, intensifying rivalries, and generating new forms of dependency.

Transformation within this theme's reality today also requires an approach that holistically links sovereignty and agency with inclusion and peace in the digital space. As a result, the link between peace and macroeconomic governance in the modern world will be incomplete, and proverbially half-baked, if digital transformation is understood only as access or technological modernisation. Data, digital infrastructure, algorithms, platforms, cloud systems, payment technologies, and artificial intelligence have become new resource frontiers requiring sovereignty, governance, and accountability. Africa's digital transformation should therefore be understood not only as a matter of access or technological modernisation, but as a question of agency, inclusion, fair value distribution, and peace. Over the past decade, digitalisation and information and communication technologies have become central to Africa's socio-political and economic transformation. Continental policy institutions, including the African Union, have consequently positioned science, technology, and innovation as pillars of development, as reflected in the Africa Digital Transformation Strategy (2020–2030), which seeks to build an integrated and inclusive digital society and economy, promote continental ownership of digital tools, diversify economies, and support regional integration through initiatives such as the Digital Single Market linked to the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Yet Africa must think beyond access. Digital subservience is not limited to exclusion from connectivity or utility; it also concerns who authors, owns, governs, and benefits from data, infrastructure, platforms, algorithms, cloud systems, payment technologies, and global digital rules. Externally controlled technologies may reproduce patterns of dependency by embedding African economies within systems governed by external actors. Contemporary digital imperialism operates less through territorial conquest than through control over data ecosystems, communication networks, digital markets, and technological standards that shape economic, social, and political life. Africa must therefore move beyond tokenistic inclusion by strengthening local and continental authorship and ownership of technologies; building capabilities in data governance, regulation, computing infrastructure, research and development, Artificial Intelligence (AI), skills, and innovation; and participating more effectively in global digital rulemaking. Furthermore, externally controlled technologies can deepen strategic dependency, reproduce (digital) imperialism, limit African policy space and restrict fair value capture, despite the continent's role in supplying critical minerals. Inclusion is also incomplete unless women, youth, platform workers, informal workers, and disadvantaged groups can shape and benefit from the digital economy, as weak macroeconomic governance may, in the long run, intensify threats, disinformation, algorithmic bias, and technology-mediated instability.

Furthermore, African institutions should embed intergenerational solidarity in their governance through meaningful co-leadership, shared decision-making, and sustained knowledge exchange between established and emerging leaders. By jointly exploring institutional, financial, technological, and policy mechanisms, generations can combine experience, innovation, and diverse expertise to maximise Africa's capabilities at the intersection of peace and macroeconomic governance. This approach can strengthen institutional legitimacy, continuity, adaptability, and collective African agency.

This sub-theme will examine practical pathways for building capable, resilient, self-reliant, and knowledge-producing institutions that can reduce dependence on external actors, strengthen African ownership of the peace and security agenda, and contribute to a more peaceful sovereign continent, while ensuring that the digital options and explorations do not generate new (forms of) dependency, exclusion, and insecurity.

These explorations may include, but are not limited to, how to expand digital transformation and inclusion while strengthening meaningful agency over strategic digital resources, including data, infrastructure, platforms, cloud systems, algorithms and payment technologies; what capabilities to prioritise to enhance Africa's position and positionality; promoting digital markets without creating vulnerabilities and exclusionary structures; constructive engagement within the global technology space without weakening domestic, continental capabilities; and the contribution of digital technologies and AI to peacebuilding, among others.

Sub-Theme 3: Untapped Leverage, Unnoticed Movements: Regional Integration and Illicit Economies

Regional integration is as much a trade agenda as it is a peace and resilience agenda. The African Union conceptualises regional integration as a process through which states within a shared geographic space deepen economic, political, and socio-cultural cooperation. Such cooperation aims to reduce trade barriers, promote political stability, facilitate mobility, and strengthen African states' collective influence in the international system. In a global context characterised by economic interdependence and intensified international trade, regional integration has become a central driver of development, competitiveness, and resilience. For Africa, it matters especially because many national markets are relatively small and there is a need to expand intra-African trade and economic exchange. Through the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, regional integration can stimulate growth, competitiveness, and collective resilience. This agenda links to Regional Economic Communities as foundational pillars of integration and aligns with the UN 2030 Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area in 2018 therefore represents a major institutional milestone in the pursuit of a prosperous, integrated, and peaceful Africa.

However, any analysis of regional integration in Africa must also account for the scale and significance of informal economic activity. The informal sector accounts for a substantial share of employment and contributes significantly to gross domestic product across the continent. Much of Africa's economic activity, employment, and cross-border exchange occurs outside formal regulatory frameworks. Informality may therefore be understood as bottom-up integration driven by economic actors rather than regional institutions alone. By expanding livelihood opportunities, income generation, and market access for vulnerable populations, informal cross-border trade can help reduce socio-economic tensions and strengthen cohesion among border communities. At the same time, operating outside formal regulatory systems raises important questions for state authority, economic sovereignty, taxation, labour protection, customs management, and policy planning.

It is therefore important to distinguish analytically between informal and illicit economies. While the informal economy often provides livelihoods through lawful but unregistered or weakly regulated activities, illicit economies involve activities that are prohibited by law or conducted in violation of existing regulations. These may include smuggling, trafficking in natural resources, illicit arms flow, drug trafficking, trade mis-invoicing, capital flight, and the illegal exploitation of mineral and forest resources. In contexts where cross-border spaces are characterised by limited state presence and weak regulatory capacity, illicit economies can finance armed groups, enable weapons acquisition, strengthen trafficking networks, undermine governance, and weaken peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, young people's cross-border mobility represents an under-recognised driver of regional integration, enabling trade, skills exchange, innovation, and the formation of social and economic networks across Africa. Yet unresolved drivers of migration (including unemployment, exclusion, insecurity, and weak mobility governance) can expose young people to exploitation, trafficking, recruitment into illicit economies, and incentives to participate in violence. Harnessing this untapped leverage therefore requires safer mobility pathways, stronger protection and livelihood systems, and regional cooperation that channels youth movement towards integration, shared prosperity, and peace.

The success of regional integration therefore depends not only on expanding formal markets and facilitating mobility, but also on developing policies that support gradual formalisation, protect livelihoods and vulnerable demographics, strengthen customs and financial oversight, and combat illicit economic networks that threaten stability and development. Ultimately, this sub-theme will examine regional integration not only as a trade agenda, but also as a peace, sovereignty, and resilience agenda.

A Note on Historicization

Historical lessons that can help enhance the discourse at the upcoming 12th edition of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa are highly welcome. However, historical enquiries regarding the above sub-themes should not be constrained to frames, lenses, and queries that draw their reference points from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the colonial, or the post-colonial era. Africa had sovereign, independent entities and underwent various forms of transformation long before then, even if conceptualised differently from the Westphalian and post-colonial models. Thus, interrogating how sovereignty and transformations in the era preceding the Westphalian context and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonial, or post-colonial era warrant their place in such a conversation as that to be held at the 12th edition of the Tana High-Level Forum on security in Africa.



AGENDA

Programme Directors:	**Mr. Donald Omondi Deya,** Chief Executive Officer of Pan African Lawyers Union and Member of the Tana Technical Committee **Elma Akob,** CEO, Elevate Africa Academy
Chief Rapporteur:	**Dr. Andrew Yaw Poku Tchie,** Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)
Timekeeper:	**Martin Mburu** Institute for Peace and Security Studies / Tana Forum Secretariat

Time	Day 1: Friday 23 October 2026
Morning	**Arrival of participants to Bahir Dar**
14:00 - 16:30 EAT (GMT+3)	**Vice Chancellor's Dialogue** **From Knowledge Consumers to Knowledge Producers: The Role of African Universities in Shaping Africa's Future** African universities sit at the center of this process, acting as upstream catalysts for stability rather than passive, downstream outcomes of development. In this vein, this session interrogates issues concerning Research Agenda Ownership, Publication, Validation, and Epistemic Standards, University–Industry Linkages as the Delivery Mechanism, and Partnerships and Sovereignty. Overall, it how universities can shape Africa's future in contemporary times. **Speakers** • **Dr. Mohamed Sulub,** President, University of Hargeisa. • **Professor John Gyapong**, Secretary General, African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA). • **Professor Abebaw Yirga Adamu**, Professor of Higher Education, Addis Ababa University (AAU). • **Professor Said Ali Hamad Vuai**, Vice-Chancellor of the State University of Zanzibar. **Moderator:** • **Dr. Mengesha Ayene**, President, Bahir Dar University

14:30 – 17:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Tana Special Envoy's Dialogue**	**Special Envoys' Dialogue on Regional Security in The Horn of Africa and the Red Sea** **Speakers:** • **H.E. Getachew Reda**, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia (on East Africa Affairs). • **H.E. Guang Cong,** UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. • **H.E. Frédéric Clavier,** French Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. • **H.E. Ambassador Heiko Nitzschke,** Germany's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. • **H.E. Pekka Haavisto,** Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan. **Moderator:** • **Dr. Paul-Simon Handy,** Regional Director East Africa and Representative to the African Union.
17:00 – 18:00 EAT (GMT+3)		**Break**

18:00 – 20:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Side Event 1 – AU DPAPS AU/ GIZ-AU/Tana Forum**	**Climate Pressures, Resilient Communities, and Sustainable Peace in Africa** Climate pressures are already reshaping livelihoods, mobility, natural resource governance and community resilience across Africa and beyond, with profound implications for peace and security. But what does this mean in practice for communities, policymakers and institutions? And how can African responses move beyond identifying climate-related risks towards strengthening resilience and sustaining peace? Bringing together policymakers, practitioners, researchers and civil society, this interactive side event will explore African experiences and solutions at the intersection of climate, resilience and peace. **Speakers:** • **Professor Philip Attuquayefio**, Climate, Peace and Security Advisor, AUC, and Senior Research Fellow, Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, University of Ghana. • **Dr. Gracsious Maviza,** Regional Lead - Southern Africa CGIAR Climate Security Hub, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. • **Professor George Nwangwu,** Convener, Africa Climate Forum. • **Dr. Kemoli Sagala,** National Defence University-Kenya. • **Dr. Abdurahman Osman Gaas,** Researcher, University of Hargeisa. **Moderator:** • **Max Middeke:** Sector Coordinator Peacebuilding & Conflict prevention at GIZ African Union and Head of Programme AUPSG, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

18:00 – 20:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Side Event 2 – the Royal Danish Embassy/Tana Forum**	**Illicit Economies: Money Flows in the Sudan and South Sudan Conflict** This side event interrogates illicit economies within the frame of the conflicts Sudan and South Sudan. It specifically focusses on the money flows and profitability of violence and peace. Overall, it seeks to explore lessons and tools that may be useful to enhance the viability of peace in both contexts. **Speakers:** • **Dr. Andrews Atta-Asamoah**, Senior Advisor, International IDEA. • **Ms Ayak Chol Deng Alak**, Independent Expert Peace. • **Hubert Kinkoh**, Senior Researcher at CARPO. **Moderator:** • **Hallelujah Lulie Wondimu**, Regional Security Expert.
18:00 – 20:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Side Event 3 – IJR/Amani Africa/ FES-AU/Tana Forum**	**African Agency at a Time of Global Disorder: Mobilising Support for Article 109 on United Nations Charter Review** This side event contributes to identifying a strategy for mobilising "a coalition of the leading" African countries to amplify, assert, and project Africa's agency, in collaboration with other regions of the world, to initiate the process of transforming the multilateral system; possibly drafting and adopting a UN General Assembly Resolution to invoke Article 109. **Speakers:** • **Professor PLO Lumumba**, Member Tana Forum Board. • **Dr. Yonas Adaye Adeto**, Commissioner, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission. • **Dr. Solomon Dersso**, Founding Director Amani Africa Media and Research Services. **Moderator:** • **Professor Tim Murithi**, Senior Advisor, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR).

18:00 – 20:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Side Event 4 – ICRC/Ethiopia MoFA/UNFPA/ Tana Forum**	**Upholding International Humanitarian Law as a Foundation for Peace in Africa** This side event interrogates International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as a critical tool in peace and security architectures, reiterating its role towards strengthening African-led prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding by reducing suffering, preserves trust, supports recovery, and enables reconciliation. Notably, also, it showcases the Global Initiative on IHL which promotes stronger compliance, highlighting that adherence to IHL is essential for achieving sustainable peace. **Keynote Address:** • **H.E. Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie**, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. **Speakers:** • **Yibekal Gizaw**, Director-General of legal division of Ethiopia MFA/Co-chair of IHL and Peace workstream. • **Ms. Ndeye Rose Sarr**, Chief of the UNFPA representation Office to the AU and UNECA. • **Mr. Mamadou Sow**, Regional Director for Africa, ICRC. • **Christopher Orina**, the Senior Policy Officer-Dialogue & Reconciliation at Mediation and Dialogue Division, Political Affairs, Peace & Security Department of the African Union Commission. **Moderator:** • **Dr. Sali Bouba Oumarou**, Member, IPSS AfSol Journal Editorial Board.

18:00 – 20:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Side Event 5 – UNDP / Tana Forum**	**Trade for Peace** This side event questions if the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) could work as a practical complement to peacebuilding in Africa's fragile regions, and under what conditions. Conflict, especially in cross-border areas and along economic corridors, undermines prosperity, while limited opportunity pushes some young people towards armed groups and organised crime. There is no integration without peace, and integration cannot deliver shared benefits without stable political and economic conditions. **Speakers:** • **Mr. Djamel Ghrib,** Director of Economic Development, Investment and Trade (EDIT). • **H.E. Amb. Maureen Achieng**, Permanent Representative of IGAD to the African Union. • **H.E. Dr. Abdel Fatau Musah**, Commissioner for Political Affairs Peace and Security, ECOWAS. • **Ms. Christine Odera,** Co-Chair, Kenya Coalition on Youth Peace and Security and Board Member, Kenya National Youth Service. **Moderator:** • **Professor Charles Ukeje**, Obafemi Awolowo University.

Time	Day 2: Saturday, 24 October 2026
6:30 AM to 7:30 AM	**Tana Park Visit**
08:00 to 09:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Book Launch** – "**Redefining Peace in a Shifting World: IGAD, South Sudan, and the New African Security Paradigm**" This session is a platform to launch and advance critical literature on peace and security in Africa. This selected book written by Dr. Ibrahim Sakawa Magara examines African regionalism, Pan-Africanism, hybrid governance, and the decolonisation of peace theory and practice. **Author**: Dr. Ibrahim Sakawa Magara, Author of the winning book. **Discussants** - **Moderator:** • Ms. Christine Odera, Co-Chair, Kenya Coalition on Youth Peace and Security and Board Member, Kenya National Youth Service.
09:00 to 10:15 EAT (GMT+3)	**Meles Zenawi Lecture Series** – Tribute to the late Pan-African Scientist, Scholar, and Politician, Cheikh Anta Diop. **African Sovereignty and Ideological Integration: Lessons from the Life and Works of Cheikh Anta Diop.** Peace in Africa requires ideological integration and strategic unity amid global competition for resources. Drawing on Cheikh Anta Diop's life and work, this lecture asks how the continent can overcome colonial and neo-colonial constraints, assert genuine sovereignty, shape global institutions proactively, and build transformative movements that secure Africa's resources, agency, dignity, and their shared future. **Panellists:** • Dr. Dialo Diop, Physician-Biologist and close associate of Cheikh Anta Diop. • Dr. Yoporeka Somet, Professor, Director of the Centre for African Renaissance Studies, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology in Nyeri. **Moderator:** • Ms. Cynthia Chigwenya, Researcher at the Club of Rome and Member of the Tana Technical Committee.
10:15 – 10:30 EAT (GMT+3)	**Break**

10:30 to 11:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Welcoming Remarks:** • **H.E. Arega Kebede**, President, Amhara National Regional State/Host Region. • **H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed**, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). • **H.E. John Dramani Mahama**, President of the Republic of Ghana, Chairperson of the Tana Forum Board.
11:00 to 11:10 EAT (GMT+3)	**Keynote Address:** • **H.E. Ambassador Selma Malika Haddadi**, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission. • **H.E. Évariste Ndayishimiye**, President of the Republic of Burundi.
11:10 – 11:30 EAT (GMT+3)	**State of Peace and Security in Africa Report** State of Peace and Security Report, January 2025 to June 2026, examines how Africa can pursue durable pathways to peace while strengthening economic sovereignty amid a rapidly shifting geopolitical order. Its central argument is that conflict on the continent cannot be reduced to the presence of armed groups or the weakness of formal security institutions. Rather, they are symptoms of deeper tensions in political authority, economic distribution, and social legitimacy. • **H.E. John Dramani Mahama**, President of the Republic of Ghana, Chairperson of the Tana Forum Board.

11:30 to 13:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**High-Level Panel** **From the Margins to the Centre: Building an African Model for Peace and Sovereignty in an Age of Geopolitical Rivalry** Africa's path to peace requires asserting economic sovereignty, strengthening institutions, and navigating geopolitical rivalry on its own terms. The continent must control its resources, digital systems, and financial architecture, while advancing regional integration, inclusive governance, and resilient institutions. This session will examine how Africa can finance peace and security priorities and shape a sovereign future. **Panellists:** • **H.E. Évariste Ndayishimiye,** President of the Republic of Burundi. • **H.E. Daniel Francisco Chapo**, President of the Republic of Mozambique. • **H.E. Professor Kithure Kindiki**, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya. • **Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka**, Minister of Defence, The Republic of Uganda. • **H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma**, Former President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. **Moderator:** • **H.E. Getachew Reda**, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia (on East Africa Affairs).
13:00 to 14:15 EAT (GMT+3)	**Lunch**

	Session I **Resource Wealth and Monetary Sovereignty for Industrial Development** Africa's resources can drive industrialisation when matched by monetary sovereignty, domestic value addition, transparent financing, and control over pricing, banking, credit, and revenues. Retaining and reinvesting more value locally can build industry, create jobs, strengthen fiscal resilience, and reduce conflict, thereby turning natural wealth into broad-based transformation. Resource sovereignty must therefore include control over both natural assets and the financial systems that convert them into broad- based transformation.
14:15 to 15:45 EAT (GMT+3)	**Panellists:** • **Mr. Djamel Ghrib,** Director of Economic Development, Investment and Trade (EDIT). • **Dr. Redge Nkosi,** Executive Director, African Heterodox Economics Network (AHEN). • **Professor Fadhel Kaboub**, Associate Professor of Economics, Denison University, President Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity. • **Mr. Mesfin Tasew**, CEO, Ethiopian Airlines. **Moderator:** • **Dr. Rhuks T. Ako**, Expert in African Governance, Peace, and Security, Specializing in Natural Resource Conflicts and Transitional Justice.
15:45 to 16:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**Break**

16:00 – 17:30 EAT (GMT+3)	**Session II** **Leveraging African Institutions and Capabilities at the Intersection of Peace and Macroeconomic Governance** Africa's peace and security depend on stronger, self-reliant institutions that connect stability with macroeconomic and digital sovereignty. This session examines how to reduce external dependence, strengthen financing, mediation, crisis response, cyber security, data governance, infrastructure, skills, innovation, and inclusion, while ensuring digital transformation advances African agency, resilience, peace, and equitable participation without creating new vulnerabilities. **Panellists:** • **H.E. Ambassador Selma Malika Haddadi,** Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission. • **H.E. Hanna Tetteh**, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. • **Amb. Dr. Adeyemi Dipeolu**, The Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town. • **H.E. Amb. Maureen Achieng**, Permanent Representative of IGAD to the African Union. **Moderator:** • **Professor Charles Ugochukwu Ukeje**, Professor of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University.
19:00 to 21:00 EAT (GMT+3)	**State Dinner – (Sponsored by Regional Government)**

Time	Day 3: Sunday, 25 October 2026
08:30 – 09:15 EAT (GMT+3)	**African University Essay Competition Winners' Discussion** Lita Wanjiru Ngure, a Kenyan and student at the University of Cambridge, UK, questions our dominant understanding of resource sovereignty and calls our attention to the social infrastructures that sustain life. She focuses on Sudan, a country that is currently riddled with armed conflict and uncomfortable political dynamics. Fadzai Nyamarebvu, a Zimbabwean, studying in Namibia, at the International University of Management, uses an inclusive lens to examine cross-border trading and invites us to consider an approach that may enhance economic enfranchisement. In her words, regional institutions should be more "responsive to the economic actors whose daily business actions provide practical meaning to regional integration." • **Winner 1: Lita Wanjiru Ngure**, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK. *The institutions that remained: local governance and community resilience in Sudan* • **Winner 2: Fadzai Nyamarebvu**, International University of Management (IUM), Windhoek, Namibia. *Beyond the formal: cross-border trading and economic enfranchisement for peace* **Moderator:** • **Mr. Patrick Kumi**, Youth Ambassador for Peace, East Africa.

09:15 to 10:45 EAT (GMT+3)	**Session III** **Untapped Leverage, Unnoticed Movements: Regional Integration & Illicit Economies** Regional integration is a mechanism for African strength that must not conflate informal cross-border trade with illicit economies. This session examines its significance for regional integration and the role it plays in terms of resilience while advancing the realities of economic sovereignty. Overall, this session advances that regional integration is not only a trade agenda, but also a peace & resilience agenda. **Panellists:** • **H.E. Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas**, CEO AUDA-NEPAD. [Opening statement]. • **Ambassador William Awinador-Kanyirige,** Senior Adviser, Governance & Peacebuilding in the Office of the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace & Security. • **H.E. Dr. Abdel Fatau Musah**, Governance, Peace and Security Expert and Former Commissioner for Political Affairs Peace and Security, ECOWAS. • **Dr. Vasu Gounden**, Executive Director, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). • **Mr. Mamadou Sow**, ICRC Regional Director for Africa. **Moderator:** • **Professor Pierre Nguimkeu**, Senior Fellow and Director of the Africa Growth Initiative at Brookings.

10:45 – 12:15 EAT (GMT+3)	**Closing High Level Panel** **Charting Africa's Geopolitical and Economic Future** Using all previous sessions as background, the closing high level panel seeks to converge all the debates, ideas, approaches, and recommendations, to discuss how to chart Africa's Geopolitical and Economic Future and highlight the urgencies required, where they are required. • **H.E. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan**, Former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. • **H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta**, Former President of the Republic of Kenya. • **H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn**, Former Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. • **Hon. Dr. Kaire Mbuende**, Director-General of the Namibia National Planning Commission. • **H.E. Amb. Willy Nyamitwe**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Burundi to Ethiopia, Djibouti, Chad and South Sudan, AU and UNECA [Burundi as Chair of the African Union]. **Moderator:** • **H.E. Michelle Ndiaye**, Africa Director, Open Society Foundations, former Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AUC in the DRC.
12:15 to 12:45 EAT (GMT+3)	**CLOSING SESSION** **Chief Rapporteur:** • **Dr. Andrew Yaw Poku Tchie**, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). **Closing Remarks and vote of thanks:** • **H.E. John Dramani Mahama**, President of the Republic of Ghana, Chairperson of the Tana Forum Board.
12:45 to 13:45 EAT (GMT+3)	**Lunch**
13:45	**Departure to Addis Ababa**



Participant list

Name	Organization	Position	Country
Abay Mengistie	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Abdella Nuru	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Abdu Hussen	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Abdulrkerim Mengistu	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Ahmedin Mohamed	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Alemnew Gebeyehu	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	Project Manager	Ethiopia
Amanuel Ferede	Amhara National Regional State	Deputy President	Ethiopia
AMB ANNELIES VERSTICHEL	EMBASSY OF BELGIUM	Ambassador	Ethiopia
Amb. Berk Baran	Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Addis Ababa	Ambassador	Ethiopia
Amb. Feng JIANG	Mission of China to AU	Ambassador	Ethiopia
Amb. Galma Boru	EMBASSY OF KENYA	AMBASSADOR/PR	Ethiopia
Amb. MAUREEN ACHIENG	IGAD	Permanent Representative of IGAD to the African Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development	Kenya
Amb. Nirmala Paranavitana	Embassy of Sri Lanka in Ethiopia	Ambassador of Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
Amb. William Awinador	African Union	Senior Advisor	Ghana
Amina Bello	African Union	AYAP Central Africa	Central Africa
André BARRY	OIF - Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie -	Senior Political Analyst	Guinea
Andreas Danevad	Norwegian MFA	Councellor	Norway
Asme Berele	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Asnake Kefale	Good Governance Africa-Horn of Africa (GGA-HoA)	Senior Researcher	Ethiopia
Ayak C. ALAK	Inclusive Peace/AU_Femwsie	Peace Process Support Advisor	South Sudan
Bakary D. Sonko	African Union	African Union Youth Ambassador for Peace - West Africa	Gambia

Brig. Roba Wario	Embassy of Kenya	Defence Attache	Ethiopia
Christine Achieng Odera	Kenya Coalition On Youth Peace and Security/National Youth Service	Co-Chair / Council Member	kenya
Commissioner Abebe Wube	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Cynthia Chigwenya	Tana Forum	Technical Committee Member	Zimbabwe
DALAYA ASHENAFI	Tricontinental Institute for Social Research	Research Fellow	Ethiopia
Daniel Dessalegne	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Davie Malungisa	Southern Africa Resource Watch	Senior Advisor	South Africa
Denise Blackstock	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	Policy and Advocacy Adviser	Ethiopia
Dereje Engida			
Dereje Mandefro	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Dereje Tesema	Good Governance Africa-Horn of Africa (GGA-HoA)	Associate Program Officer	Ethiopia
Donald Deya	Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)	Chief Executive Officer	Tanzania
Dr Andrews Atta-Asamoah	International IDEA	Senior Advisor for African Union Support	South Africa
Dr. Abdurahman Gaas	University of Hargeisa	Associate Professor	Ethiopia
Dr. Abel Abate	Chatham House	Associate Fellow	Ethiopia
Dr. Alemayehu Gurmu	IPSS, AAU	Lead Researcher	Ethiopia
Dr. Asrat Dereb	Bahirdar University	Executive Director, Total Quality Management	Ethiopia
Dr. Bamlaku Tadesse	Addis Ababa University, IPSS	Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies	Ethiopia
Dr. Beza Dessalegn	Addis Ababa University	Assistant Professor, Center for Peace and Security Studies	Ethiopia
Dr. Dawit Toga	King's College, London	Visiting Sr. Research Fellow	Ethiopia

Dr. Dialo Diop	Cheikh Anta DIOP University, Faculté de Médecine, Pharmacie et Odonto-Stomatologie	Medical	Senegal
Dr. Dresse Sahlu	Amhara National Regional State	Vice President & Agriculture Bureau Head of the Amhara Region	Ethiopia
Dr. Fana Gebresenbet	Rift Valley Institute	Head of Ethiopia Office	Ethiopia
Dr. Frank Owusu		Expert	Ethiopia
Dr. Hubert Kinkoh	CARPO	Senior Researcher	Germany
Dr. Ibrahim Magara	Elizabeth School of London	Research Fellow	United Kingdom
Dr. John Gyapong	African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA)	Secretary General	Ghana
Dr. Jonathan Sandy	Regional Center for Governance & Security Policy Initiatives (RCGSPI)	Executive Director	Sierra Leone
Dr. KENNETH ABOTSI	EMBASSY OF GHANA	DEPUTY HEAD OF MISSION	Ethiopia
Dr. Khabele Matlosa	Strategic Institute for Research and Dialogue (SIRD)	Democracy & Governance	Lesotho
Dr. Laeed Zaghlami	Algiers University Algerian Media	Professor	Algeria
Dr. Manendante Mulugeta	Bahirdar University	Director, External Relations and Partnerships	Ethiopia
Dr. Markus Koerner	AHEAD Institute	Board Member	Germany
Dr. Mercy Fekadu	IPSS, AAU	Director	Ethiopia
Dr. Obiageli Ezekwesili	Human Capital Africa (HCA) / School of Politics, Policy and Governance (SPPG) / Africa Economic Deve	Founder/ President	Nigeria
Dr. Pitro Salini	We Build Group	CEO	Ethiopia
Dr. Redge Nkosi	African Heterodox Economics Network	RR	South Africa
Dr. Rhuks Ako	GPS-Africa	Consultant	Nigeria
Dr. Rita Bissoonauth	UNESCO Addis Ababa Liaison Office	Director and Representative	Ethiopia
Dr. Sali Oumarou	AfSOL IPSS	Member, IPSS AfSol Journal Editorial Board	Morocco

Dr. Samuel Kifle	Addis Ababa University	President	Ethiopia
Dr. Semir Yusuf	IPSS, AAU	ARUA 2026 Fellow	Ethiopia
Dr. Sisay Geremew	Bahirdar University	Vice President for Administration and Development	Ethiopia
Dr. Solomon Dersso	Amani Africa Media and Research Services	Founding Director	Ethiopia
Dr. Vasu Gounden	ACCORD	Founder and Executive Director	South Africa
Dr. Yohannes Tekalign	Addis Ababa University	Assistant Professor	Ethiopia
Dr. Yonas Tariku	Addis Ababa University	Assistant Professor	Ethiopia
Dr. Zewdu Emiru	Bahirdar University	Vice President for Information and Strategic Communication	Ethiopia
Elise Nalbandian	Center for Civilians in Conflict	Regional Advisor - African Union and RECs	Ethiopia
Elma Akob	Elevate Africa Academy	CEO	South Africa
Emmanuel HOL-ODURO	GHANA EMBASSY, ETHIOPIA	MINISTER-COUNSELLOR	Ethiopia
Fadzai Nyamarebvu	AfriEmerge Global	Lawyer & Researcher	Namibia
Fisseha Dessalegn	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Getachew Alemu	Frontline Policy and Research	Managing Partner	Ethiopia
Gilles Foadey	African Union	Media Consultant	Ethiopia
Goshu Endalamaw	Amhara National Regional State	Mayor of Bahir Dar City Administration	Ethiopia
H.E. Amb. Baak Wol	Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan -AA	Ambassador	South sudan
H.E. Amb. Hadera Abera	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia	State Minister, Political and Economic Affairs	Ethiopia
H.E. Amb. MCARIOS AKANBONG	Embassy of Ghana	Ambassador/Head of Mission	Ethiopia
H.E. Amb. Nezha M'Hammdi	Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco	Ambassador	Ethiopia

H.E. Amb. Nuno Tomás	Embassy of Mozambique in Ethiopia	Ambassador	Ethiopia
H.E. Amb. Tebelelo Boang	Botswana Embassy	Ambassador	Botswana
H.E. Arega Kebede	Amhara National Regional State	President	Ethiopia
H.E. Dr. AbdelFatau MUSAH	ECOWAS	Former Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security	Nigeria
H.E. Dr. Goodluck Johnathan	Goodluck Jonathan Foundation	Founder / Chairman	Nigeria
H.E. Ernest Koroma	Republic of Sierra Leone	Former President of Sierra Leone	Republic of Sierra Leone
H.E. Guang Cong	United Nations	United Nations Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa	Ethiopia
H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn	Office of former Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn	Former prime minister	Ethiopia
H.E. Hanna S. Tetteh	UN Support Mission in Libya	SRSG/USG	Libya
H.E. Heiko Nitzschke	German Foreign Office	Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa	Germany
H.E. JeanMarie Safa	Embassy of France in Sudan	Special Envoy for Sudan and the Horn of Africa	France
H.E. Lassina Zerbo	Burkin Faso	Former Prime Minister	Burkina Faso
H.E. Michelle Ndiaye	Open Society Foundations	Africa Director, Open Society Foundations, former Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AUC in the DRC, Member of the Tana Forum Board	South Africa
Hallelujah Lulie	University of Oxford	PhD Candidate	Ethiopia
Hassen Jerar	Hiraad Institute for Public Policy Studies	Executive Director	Ethiopia
Hassnaa Tamam	African Union	African Union Youth Ambassador for Northern Africa	Egypt
Henry Koffi	United Nations	Special Assistant/Political Affairs	Ethiopia

Hillary Muchiri	International Committee of the Red Cross	Deputy Head of Delegation	Ethiopia
Hon. Alemante Agdew	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Hon. Dr. Kaire Mbuende		Director General (Ministerial Level) of the National Planning Commission	Namibia
Hugo Da Silva	Embassy of Portugal in Addis Ababa	Deputy Head of Mission	Portugal
Ibrahima Tounkara	International Committee of the Red Cross	Head of Delegation	Ethiopia
Janah Ncube	Crisis Action	CO-CEO	Zimbabwe
John Magok	African Union Commission	Coordinator, African Union Commodity Strategy	Ethiopia
John Ó Liodáin	Embassy of Ireland	First Secretary (Multilateral & Regional Affairs) and Deputy Permanent Observer to the African Union	Ireland
Joseph Tucker	International Crisis Group	Senior Analyst, Horn of Africa	Kenya
Kawsu Sillah	African Youth Commission	Senior Technical Advisor	
Kholood Khair	Confluence Advisory	Director	United Kingdom
Khouloud Baghouri	African Union	Former Youth Ambassador for Peace	Tunisia
Kristin Fedeler	European Union	Political Advisor	Ethiopia
Lagizaber Beyene	AFRICAN UNION ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL (ECOSOCC)	Senior Legal Officer	Zambia
Lita Ngure	University of Cambridge	Student	United Kingdom
Mamadou Sow	ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross	Regional Director for Africa	Switzerland
Maraba Edosa	Center for Peace and Leadership Development (CPALD)	Managing Director	Ethiopia

Max Middeke	GIZ African Union	Sector Coordinator	Germany
Melkamu Tsegaye	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Mengesha Ayene	Bahir Dar University	President	Ethiopai
Mengesha Fentaw	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Mikias Sissay Assefa	World Bank		Ethiopia
Mohamed Sulub	University of Hargeisa	President	
Ms. Lettie Longwe	Tana Forum Secretariat, Institute for Peace and Security Studies	Head	Ethiopia
Mulunesh Dessie	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Ndeye Ndiaye	African Youth Commission	Commissioner for Peace and Security	
Ndeye Sarr	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	Chief, UNFPA Representation Office to the AU and UNECA	Ethiopia
Patricia Kimani	EMBASSY OF KENYA	Minister Counsellor	Ethiopia
Patrick Kumi	African Union	AYAP East Africa	Uganda
Prof. Adeyemi Dipeolu	Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance	Adjunct Professor	South Africa
Prof. Charles Ukeje	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	Professor	Nigeria
Prof. Dessalegn Ejigu	Bahirdar University		Ethiopia
Prof. Enyew Adgo	Bahirdar University		Ethiopia
Prof. Fadhel Kaboub	Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity	President	Tunisia
Prof. George Nwangwu	Stellenbosch University	Extraordinary Professor of Law	South Africa
Prof. Habtamu Wondimu	IPSS, AAU	Professor	Ethiopia
Prof. PATRICK LUMUMBA	LUMUMBA & LUMUMBA ADVOCATES	PARTNER	Kenya
Prof. Pierre Nguimkeu	Brookings Africa Growth Initiative	Professor	US
Prof. Tim Murithi	INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION	SENIOR ADVISOR	South Africa
Prof. Yonas Adaye	Addis Ababa University	Professor of Peace Studies	Ethiopia

Prof. Yoporeka SOMET	Dedan Kimathi University of Technology	Professor	Kenya
Rebecca Minkus	GIZ African Union	Component Lead	Ethiopia
Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki	All Africa Conference of Churches	GENERAL SECRETARY	Kenya
Rubiyat Mohammed	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Ethiopia	Peace Security &Governance Program Manager	Ethiopia
Ruth Aluoch	UNDPO	Political/Gender Affairs Officer	United States
Ruth Kay Kangwa	African Union	AU Youth Ambassador for Peace- Southern Africa	Zambia
Said Ali Hamad Vuai	State University of Zanzibar (SUZA)	Vice-Chancellor	Tanzania
Samson Itodo	Yiaga Africa	Executive Director	Nigeria
Shewit Gebrehiwot	Embassy of Ireland	SPM Multilateral and Regional Affairs	Ethiopia
Signe Gilen	Permanent Mission of Norway to the African Union	Deputy Permanent Representative	Norway
SRSG Anita GBEHO	United Nations Mission in South Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General	South Sudan
Susanne Stollreiter	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Ethiopia	Resident Representative	Ethiopia
Tahiru Iddrisu	GHANA EMBASSY, ETHIOPIA	MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY	Ethiopia
Tegbaru Yared	ISS	Researcher	Ethiopia
Tigist Gebru	ICRC delegation to the African Union	Humanitarian Affairs Advisor	Ethiopia
Worash Getaneh			
Yibekal Agonafir	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Director General	Ethiopia
Yirga Sisay	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
Yitbarek Aweke	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
Zerihun Fikru	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia
Zewdu Malede	Amhara National Regional State	Representative	Ethiopia



IPSS | Institute for Peace & Security Studies
Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University
P.O.Box: 1176
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

T + 251 (1) 11 541 464
E info@ipss-addis.org
W www.ipss-addis.org
www.tanaforum.org