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Operationalizing the African Standby Force

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Executive Summary

Since the early 1990s, the international community's increased focus on peace and security issues in Africa has been accompanied by a greater willingness to take action. However, the impact of conflict on the continent required Africa to take the lead in transforming and organizing its underdeveloped security structures into a more formal framework. Upon the creation of the African Union (AU), the African Peace and Security Protocol was adopted at the 2002 Summit in Durban, South Africa. With the AU Peace and Security Council as its centerpiece, the protocol also features the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force (ASF)—including its Military Staff Committee—the Panel of the Wise, and the Peace Fund as a new African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). These dimensions of APSA are being developed, respectively, to take the lead in political decision making; to gather and process information in crises; to provide a standby mechanism for peacekeeping; to prevent and mediate disputes and provide good offices for the AU; and to mobilize financial and other resources for supporting peace efforts.

The high-profile nature of conflict has thrust the ASF and military peacekeeping to the center of the APSA. When fully operational in 2010, the force is to provide rapid-response capabilities for a variety of crisis scenarios, including conflict and humanitarian emergencies. Notwithstanding the positive response from Africa's partners to this initiative, the ASF still faces significant obstacles, as illustrated by the varied pace of its implementation in the respective regions of the continent. The most crucial obstacles relate to mandates and coordination, institutional capacity building, political will, funding, logistics, training, and the role of external partners.

To seek a common understanding and to explore options for addressing these challenges, a high-level African civilian and military leaders' retreat was convened by the AU, the UN, and the International Peace Institute (IPI) in Kigali, Rwanda, from May 18-19, 2009. Generously supported by the government of Denmark, the retreat was attended by over forty representatives from the AU, the UN, and the regional economic communities (RECs), as well as academic and policy experts from around Africa. The agenda was organized around presentations, roundtables, and working groups. Key recommendations focused on encouraging member states to transfer their contributions to the AU in a timely manner, identifying appropriate locations for logistics bases for the ASF, clarifying ASF mandate structures, and enhancing management skills at AU, REC, and mission headquarters. Underlying these points was recognition of the continuing need to bring senior leaders of the African



On May 18-19, 2009, the International Peace Institute (IPI), in cooperation with the African Union and the United Nations, convened a high-level African civilian and military leaders' retreat in Kigali, Rwanda entitled "African Peace and Security Architecture: Operationalizing the African Standby Force—Strategic Considerations."

Generously supported by the government of Denmark and hosted by the government of Rwanda, the retreat was attended by over forty representatives from the AU, the UN, and the regional economic communities (RECs), as well as academic and policy experts from around Africa. This meeting note highlights the key issues raised at the retreat and synthesizes the recommendations that emerged from the discussions. Mashood Issaka and Elijah Dickens Mushemeza served as *rapporteurs* at the meeting, which was held under the Chatham House Rule. This meeting note reflects IPI's interpretation of the discussions and does not necessarily represent the views of all participants.

IPI owes a debt of gratitude to its many donors. In particular, IPI is grateful to the governments of Denmark and the Netherlands for their support of the Africa Program.

Union and the regional economic communities into a closer and more sustainable dialogue on key challenges facing the African continent, and to improve their decision-making processes. This report highlights the key issues raised at the retreat and synthesizes the recommendations that emerged from the discussions.

Introduction: Challenges to Africa's Peace and Security Architecture and the African Standby Force

Africa's peace and security architecture has been evolving over the last forty years, but its establishment as a formal framework for conflict management took place in 2002 when, at the African Union Summit in Durban, South Africa, African leaders adopted the African Peace and Security Council Protocol. The protocol outlines the main elements and purposes of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The APSA comprises the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the Panel of the Wise (POW), the AU Peace Fund (PF) and the African Standby Force (ASF), which includes the Military Staff Committee (MSC). Their corresponding roles include political decision making at the continental level; crisis-information gathering and analysis; conflict prevention, good offices, and mediation; financial-resource mobilization for peace and security; and military command and peacekeeping, respectively. Together, these functions and pillars provide a broad-based and innovative set of tools for addressing the security challenges of the continent.

In light of the surge in demand for regional, as well as UN, peacekeeping in Africa, the ASF constitutes one of the most important and ambitious dimensions of the new peace and security architecture. To date, however, the development of the ASF has proceeded unevenly in different regions. The most critical obstacles relate to (1) mandates and coordination, (2) institutional capacity building, (3) equipment, logistics, and training, and (4) funding.

To address these challenges, the AU, the United Nations, and the International Peace Institute (IPI),

with the support of the government of Denmark, convened a senior leaders' retreat in Kigali, Rwanda, on May 18 and 19, 2009. The retreat provided an opportunity to discuss the current development of the ASF within the wider context of the APSA and to prioritize ways to assist the AU in fully operationalizing the Standby Force by 2010. Another objective was to identify areas in which the original thinking about the African Standby Force has been overtaken by events, and to recommend ways to refine the concept as necessary. More than forty representatives from the AU, the UN, and the regional economic communities (RECs), as well as leading academic and policy experts, participated in the meeting.

The agenda of the retreat was focused on (1) key presentations, which set out the broad contextual background and operational challenges of APSA and ASF; (2) roundtables, which provided substantive debate on specific strategic, operational, and tactical issues; and (3) working group sessions, which explored core planning, coordination, resource mobilization, deployment, logistics, equipment, human resources, and communication issues. The retreat considered lessons that other multilateral models, from the United Nations, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) peacekeeping experience, could provide for the ASF.

In the context of enormous strains on global peacekeeping, participants contended that African policymakers are frustrated with the slow and uneven progress of the APSA and the ASF, in spite of the urgency of the tasks to be accomplished. Discussion focused on proposals to overcome the continued obstacles to the development of the ASF, including strengthening the management of the African Union and the RECs. Noting that weak leadership and poor governance have been the biggest threats to security in Africa, the meeting called for a resolute focus on the development of responsible democratic institutions. The key challenges facing APSA and ASF were identified as follows:

Mandates and Coordination

- **Multiple demands from parallel mandates:** At the continental level, the AU is the mandating

authority.¹ However, the combination of high demand for peacekeeping capabilities and parallel mandates from the UN and AU has the potential to hamper coordination between the two organizations. Given that decisions of the UN Security Council often take a long time to be implemented, some participants suggested that mandates from the AU should take precedence when quick and effective action is needed.

- **Limited REC civilian and military representation at the AU:** Civilian and military representation of the regional economic communities in Addis Ababa is inadequate. The same is true of the UN DPKO liaison office in Addis Ababa. A memorandum of understanding on peace and security cooperation between the AU and RECs was adopted in 2008, five years after the ASF was initiated, but it has yet to be fully implemented.²
- **Antiquated communications technology:** Despite some advances in technology, the AU's telephone and electronic communication systems need to be significantly modernized. This remains a major impediment to the effective operation of the ASF management units in the AU, such as the Peace Support Operations Division, and, more generally, the AU Commission.

Institutional Capacity Building

- **Decline in political will:** Participants felt that the energy and enthusiasm that led to the creation of the AU in 2002 have declined. This is manifested in the limited involvement by senior REC officials in the management of the ASF (no senior-level REC official attended the retreat), the lack of adequately trained military forces for African peace operations, and the insufficient transfer of assessed dues to the AU.
- **Inconsistent AU/partner capacity-building models:** The implementation of UN and EU assistance programs needs to be more closely coordinated with AU priorities. An example is the limited complementarity between the ASF and the UN Standby Arrangement Systems for rapid response to emergency situations.

- **Limited influence of the Permanent Representative Council (PRC):** The Permanent Representative Council has been unable to wield strong leverage due to the limited capacity of some member states on the council. This affects the ability of the council to work effectively and constructively on crucial security issues. It was pointed out, for instance, that some of the members do not have military advisers at their missions in Addis Ababa, which makes them ineffective in the Council.
- **Weak African capacity to support AU missions:** The capacity of the AU to plan, manage, and support peacekeeping deployments is affected by limited home-grown capabilities. For example, a significant number of non-African personnel are working to support the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM). While such a large external presence may produce short-term results, it does not build long-term local and regional capacity.

Equipment, Logistics, and Training

- **Incompatibility of logistics framework with operational doctrine:** Participants pointed out that ASF's framework for organizing logistics is not fully synchronized with its operational doctrine nor with current UN operations and does not fully clarify responsibilities at various levels in the AU and UN.
- **Need for better management training:** Current levels of training do not enhance the management capacities of senior decision-makers, although they are responsible for taking major policy decisions on force generation and deployment.
- **Inadequate auxiliary functions:** There are significant deficiencies in expertise at the AU in the areas of property management, supply, procurement, information technology, engineering, transport, and medical capabilities. These deficits severely hamper the capacities and potential of peace operations conducted by the AU.

Funding

- **Poor financial-resource mobilization:** This remains a key subject in the follow-up to the

¹ See African Union, "Roadmap for the Operationalization of the African Standby Force," AU Doc. EXP/AU-RECs/ASF.4(1). It elaborates the process of authorizing an ASF deployment: UN Security Council's first approval of AU action, and AU authorization of RECs before they intervene.

² African Union Division of Communication, "Signing of MOU Between the African Union, RECs, and Coordinating Mechanisms of Regional Standby Brigades of Eastern and Northern Africa," Press Release No.15/2008, January 29, 2008.

Prodi Panel report.³ Consistent and sustainable donor financing for ASF missions is yet to be achieved. Additionally, financial-management capacity at the AU is deficient, presenting major challenges for the efficient oversight and control of African peacekeeping missions.

- **Insufficient and late transfer of funds:** The process for transferring assessed contributions from member states to the AU needs to be streamlined. It is unclear which member states are expected to make voluntary contributions. Furthermore, the PSC has not decided how much money should be generated. Though partner pledges are often robust, they are also sometimes conditional.
- **Disparities in resource-mobilization strategies:** Participants suggested that the method of mobilizing AU's peacekeeping funds is not consistent with the UN's assessed contributions mechanisms or in-kind packages. The different models hinder the development and implementation of a coherent approach to mobilizing or managing funds between the AU and its partners.

APSA: An Infrastructure for Peace

BACKGROUND

A paradigm shift in the approach to African conflict management occurred with the adoption of the *Protocol on the AU Peace and Security Council* at the AU Summit in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002.⁴ Until then, the principles and norms for maintaining peace and security in Africa had centered on the work of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution, and before it, the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration (CMCA).⁵ The shortfalls of the latter approach—in particular the ad hoc nature of its interventions in conflict, poor resource mobilization, and weak decision making—were demonstrated in the ineffective

mediation efforts in the Chad and Algerian civil wars in the 1980s.

Recognizing the increasing intensity and prevalence of conflicts after the Cold War, and concerned about the marginalization of Africa in a period of declining international attention, OAU leaders decided to review the Mediation Commission. At the Kampala Summit in 1991, the Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) was adopted. CSSDCA emphasized the regional dimensions of conflict management and a “collective responsibility” for security on the continent. However, disappointments with both CSSDCA and the CMCA led the OAU to take steps towards developing another model that incorporated elements outside the CSSDCA's “limiting” scope. Other African states maintained that the Nigeria-led CSSDCA was overly intrusive and they were, therefore, reluctant to assent to it. Subsequently at the Cairo Summit in 1993, the OAU adopted the mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution. The Mechanism maintained some characteristics of the CSSDCA, including the clause on noninterference in the internal affairs of member states, which was one of the guiding principles of the OAU at its establishment in 1963.⁶

A key reason for the failure of the mechanism was the retention of this noninterference clause, which illustrated the continued unwillingness of African leaders to address internal conflicts. This in turn accounted for the lack of a strong OAU capacity to undertake sustained peacekeeping missions and its deferral of that crucial role to the UN and subregional organizations. The mechanism did, however, inspire the development of peacekeeping partnerships with the still evolving regional organizations, which had begun to broaden their focus beyond economic development as conflict increased—e.g., the Economic Community of West Africa States' (ECOWAS) peacekeeping role in Liberia. Nevertheless, it remained unable to facilitate an effective continental role for the OAU. The

3 See UN Secretary General's identical letters to the General Assembly and Security Council on *Report of the African Union-United Nations Panel on Modalities for Support to African Union Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/63/666, S/2008/813, December 2008.

4 *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security and Security Council of the African Union*, July 2002, Durban, South Africa, available at [www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/psc/Protocol peace%20 and%20security.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/psc/Protocol%20peace%20and%20security.pdf).

5 See Sam G. Amoo, “The OAU and African Conflicts: Past Successes, Present Paralysis and Future Perspectives,” Washington, DC, Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, May 1992, available at http://icar.gmu.edu/wp_5_amoo.pdf.

6 OAU, “Resolutions Adopted by the Twenty-Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government,” Decl. 3(14), June 28-30, 1993, Cairo, Egypt; AHG/DECL. 1-3 (XXIX), AHG/DECL. 1-3 (XXIX), AHG/Res. 218-227 (XXIX).

OAU's limitations were also reflected in the fact that it dedicated only 5 percent of its small budget to peacekeeping.⁷ Then Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim did not even have the funds to fly within Africa to crisis areas, and had to be supported by various leaders. Another weakness of the mechanism was the limited decision-making capacity of the OAU Central Organ and its mandating authority. Several member states did not have embassies at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

Participants agreed that the OAU's inability to have a more positive impact on peace and security on the continent reflected the collective failure of its member states. These weaknesses were the main reason for the OAU's slow and insufficient reaction to the crises in Somalia and Rwanda.

A NEW SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

The transition from the OAU to the AU in 2002 provided an opportunity to review the functions of the OAU Central Organ. The AU PSC Protocol proposed an African Peace and Security Architecture, including the establishment of a Peace and Security Council (PSC) to anticipate and prevent conflicts. These new initiatives were intended to facilitate partnerships among the AU, the UN, and other relevant international organizations. The Protocol also required full accreditation in Addis Ababa and at the United Nations for a country to be elected to membership on the PSC, which mandates short- and long-term missions. The PSC's decisions are binding for all member states, and states party to conflict cannot participate in PSC discussions if the agenda relates to them. The PSC Protocol also declared a collective responsibility and reserved the right to intervene in cases of unconstitutional changes of governments, and in "grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity," or conflicts that threaten states or regions. The last two provisions were incorporated to avoid repeating the experience of the UN Security Council in 1994

when Rwanda, then a Council member, was present for debates on the genocide it was perpetrating against its own people.

The African Peace and Security Architecture is intended to operationalize the principle of "nonindifference." The PSC is the center of the APSA and its implementation arms are the POW, CEWS, the ASF—including its Military Staff Committee—and the Peace Fund. The POW is a five-member body composed of senior African statespersons who advise the PSC and the chairperson of the AU on conflict prevention and mediation issues.⁸ The objective is to provide proficient diplomacy and mediation for preventing and resolving disputes as a way to ensure that the AU does not become inert in instances where the PSC is unable to take action.⁹ The CEWS was formed to help the AU to take preventive action and to respond rapidly and effectively to emergency situations. The system originally drew from the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) Conflict Early Warning and Response (CEWARN) Mechanism, but it has adapted mechanisms from other regions over time, principally ECOWAS and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The Peace Fund is the AU's autonomous source of funding for peace and security operations in Africa. The Fund is financed directly from the AU regular budget. In August 2009 the percentage of the budget transferred to the Fund was doubled from 6 percent to 12 percent annually.¹⁰ In this area, as in many others, the AU shares the same frustration as the UN. Assessed contributions are often insufficient or are not paid on time due to the considerable economic difficulties faced by many African states.

The ASF is by far the most robust component of the APSA. With its Military Staff Committee, the ASF was conceived to conduct, observe, and monitor peacekeeping missions and support

7 "The OUA: From Establishment to AU" *The African Economist* 4, no. 12 (February 2003), available at <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/.../UNPAN012275.pdf>.

8 The Panel comprises former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella (representing northern Africa), Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, a former OAU Secretary-General (eastern Africa), Ms. Elizabeth Pognon, Benin's constitutional court president (western Africa), Mr. Miguel Trovoada, former São Tomé and Príncipe president (central Africa), and Dr. Brigalia Bam South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission chief (southern Africa).

9 Within the context of a memorandum of understanding between IPI and the AU, IPI helped to conceptualize and commission an expert report on "Impunity, Justice, and Reconciliation in Africa," and jointly hosted a major workshop in Monrovia, Liberia, in May 2009 to guide the panel's 2009 plan of action. A summary of the meeting can be found at International Peace Institute, "IPI, African Union Examine Justice/Impunity at Workshop in Liberia," June 1, 2009, available at www.ipinst.org/events/conferences/details/147-ipi-and-the-african-union-examine-impunity-and-justice-at-workshop-in-liberia.html.

10 African Union, *Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace*, Tripoli, August 31, 2009, AU Doc. SP/ASSEMBLY/PS/DECL.(I), p. 3.

operations. The ASF can also intervene in member states, if security is gravely threatened.

The African Standby Force

The establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF) in 2004 was a significant development in African peace operations. The ASF with its Military Staff Committee was conceived to conduct, observe, and monitor peacekeeping missions in responding to emergency situations anywhere on the continent requiring rapid military responses. In May 2003 African Chiefs of Defence and Security (ACD) adopted the AU Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee.¹¹ The framework called for five brigades comprised of military, civilian, and police components in each of the continent's five geographic regions. The AU Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) in Addis Ababa is the coordinating mechanism and is anticipated to command an Africa-wide integrated communication and information system linking the brigades to the PSOD at the AU, as well as the regional headquarters.¹² The target date for the ASF to be fully operational is June 2010.

The proposal for the establishment of the ASF was developed in reference to the following six conflict scenarios as stated verbatim in the policy framework document:¹³

Scenario 1: AU/regional military advice to a political mission;

Scenario 2: AU/regional observation mission co-deployed with UN mission;

Scenario 3: Stand-alone AU/regional observer mission;

Scenario 4: AU/regional peacekeeping force for [UN Charter] Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions;

Scenario 5: AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping mission low-level spoilers (a feature of many current conflicts);

Scenario 6: AU intervention, for example, genocide situations where the international community fails to act promptly.¹⁴

CHALLENGES TO ASF IMPLEMENTATION

There are a number of significant requirements for full implementation of the ASF: Lengthy decision-making procedures at the African Union need to be revised. This is critical, because in case of emergencies requiring urgent AU action, the decision to proceed with force deployment can be activated only by initial PSC recommendation to the Assembly of the AU.¹⁵

Participants observed that the relationships among the CEWS, the PSC, and ASF military units are poorly defined. In addition, the role of the Planning Element (part of the AU Peace Support Operations Division) needs to be clarified. The AU will need to improve the internal connections among these bodies once the ASF is functional. Coordination between the regional economic communities, which are to provide the forces, and the African Union headquarters, which is responsible for their deployment, requires much closer consultation and agreement than exists at present. Practical mechanisms for coordination between the AU and the regional ASF headquarters are not yet firmly in place.

Most states have yet to introduce the necessary national legal frameworks for carrying out their ASF obligations. A number of states remain unable to provide troops for financial and/or logistical reasons. Lines of political and military authority within each REC are unclear. Even for those member states that have adopted legislation, the requisite organizational steps (e.g., identification of units, the provision of equipment and communication, etc.) remain inadequate for rapid deployments and need to be enhanced. Another issue that needs to be addressed is funding at the regional level. As was noted, none of the regional economic communities except the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which has its own

11 African Union, "AU Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part 1)," Addis Ababa, May 2003, AU Doc. Exp/ASF-MS/2(1).

12 J. Cilliers, "The African Standby Force: An Update on Progress," Policy Paper Series no. 160, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, March 2008).

13 See African Union, "Roadmap for the Operationalization of the African Standby Force."

14 African Union, "AU Policy Framework," p. 3.

15 *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, Article 7(e).

“peace fund,” is able to mobilize its own financial resources. Many erroneously believe that the AU will be covering all the operational costs of the ASF. This misconception needs to be addressed.

The ASF was originally conceived primarily to respond to major emergencies, including large-scale armed conflict (like the civil war in Liberia) or other “grave circumstances.”¹⁶ However, one participant cautioned, a failure to prepare adequately for lower-intensity conflict scenarios as well could reduce the relevance of the ASF in the medium to long term.

More broadly, participants noted that the most crucial challenges that will likely confront the ASF will be caused by poor governance and/or unresolved local tensions over access to and control of land, water, or natural mineral resources. Thus participants emphasized the crucial role of multidimensional approaches to the resolution of future crises. In recent crises on the continent, such as in Kenya and Guinea, there had been sufficient early warning, but regional and continental responses were slow in coming. Clearly there is a need to look beyond the issue of early warning and the technicalities of the ASF processes to examine the underlying political impediments to more effective and responsive policymaking.

Partners for African Security

THE UN PERSPECTIVE

The 2005 World Summit included a commitment by the United Nations to a Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. In 2006, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) established an AU Peace Support Team both at UN headquarters in New York and at the AU Commission in Addis Ababa. In the same year, the two organizations signed the declaration formally launching the ten-year program.¹⁷ The agreed framework encompasses the priorities of the APSA, including “institution building; peace and security; political, legal, and electoral matters; and human rights.”¹⁸

The exponential rise in the number of UN peacekeepers deployed globally over the last decade, with over 110,000 military, police, and civilian personnel serving in eighteen missions in 2009, illustrates the immensity of the responsibility on the UN both at headquarters and in the field. Moreover, the scope and scale of peacekeeping missions has become increasingly complex. Security Council mandates range from institution building to security-sector reform to protection of civilians. At the same time, resources to meet the mandates are few, with the critical capabilities difficult to find. The challenges in Darfur, the Central African Republic, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo illustrate the point. The divergence between mandates and limited resources underlines the need for the AU and UN to develop effective partnerships.

In the context of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union, the UN and the AU need to direct available resources towards key objectives in a more coherent way. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that the global responsibilities of the UN shape its priorities in different ways than those of the AU. In this respect, developing common approaches while reconciling differences of perspective requires significant understanding and cooperation at all levels.

Available peacekeeping capacities for the UN and in Africa need to be mutually reinforcing. But achieving this is often easier said than done. The mixed experience of the most recent partnership, UNAMID, underscores the complexity of achieving an approach that is satisfactory to both parties. From the UN viewpoint, UNAMID has presented a number of positives, cumbersome as the mission management has been. For instance, the AU was instrumental in persuading the Sudanese government to accept its establishment and, albeit with difficulties, to facilitate its deployment. At the same time, UNAMID as a hybrid peace operation remains a work in progress. Among the lessons learned are (a) the need to avoid duplication of effort and competition; (b) the need to maximize the advantages of respective partners, while minimizing disadvantages or weaknesses; and (c)

¹⁶ *African Union Constitutive Act*, Article 4(h).

¹⁷ *Declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union*, November 16, 2006, available at www.aumission-ny.org/declaration.htm.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

the need to develop a shared vision that articulates objectives and roles that the respective parties need to play in a mutually supporting way. It is also important to distinguish between the deployment of a peacekeeping mission and the achievement of long-term stability. A peacekeeping mission should not be seen as a panacea or solution to the underlying causes of conflict. Peacekeeping missions are an adjunct to, not a substitute for, effective mediation and conflict resolution. Deployed in the wrong circumstances, a mission can become part of the problem rather than the solution.

THE EU PERSPECTIVE

By far the largest donor to AU peace and security initiatives has been the European Union (EU). Four developments have spurred European interest in African peace and security issues: (1) the 2002 transformation of the OAU into the AU; (2) the new emphasis on the principle of nonindifference; (3) the development of the African Peace and Security Architecture as a continental framework for peace and security; and (4) the AU's demonstration of its willingness to assume responsibility for peacekeeping, as in its mission in Sudan (AMIS). The EU-funded African Peace Facility (APF) was established in December 2003 following an African-Caribbean-Pacific and European Commission (EC) Council of Ministers meeting.¹⁹ It has assisted African-led peace support operations in Somalia, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, and Darfur. The APF promises to have a marked impact on the development of the Peace and Security Architecture.

An initial commitment of €250 million from the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) supported the deployment of AU operations in the Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Comoros, as well as capacity building for the AU Peace and Security Department. The acceleration of the ASF was given high priority as the EU became the lead partner for the development of its doctrine and procedures. In December 2005, the EU decided to replenish the African Peace Facility with more long-term and flexible funding, and, in February 2009, it provided

an additional €300 million to the African Peace Facility.²⁰ The EU also established AMANI Africa, a training program that aims to develop a long-term management capacity for the ASF by evaluating and enhancing the decision-making competencies of senior military, civilian, and police officials of the ASF. The program draws in large part upon France's experience in the *Reinforcement of the African Peacekeeping Capacities* (RECAMP) program.

THE NATO PERSPECTIVE

Discussion of NATO's sixty years of experience offered some useful guidelines to the relatively new African Union. In a very different context, NATO has expanded from fifteen member states in 1949 to twenty-eight states in the post-Cold War era. Since 1991, it has been called upon to meet new challenges in the Balkans and, most recently, to respond to piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia. By virtue of having established a coherent and effective civilian and military decision-making process (the Council of Ministers and the Supreme Allied Headquarters Command), NATO has been able to effectively meet major new challenges unforeseen at its inception. This structure has enabled NATO's military headquarters to respond quickly, once political authority was provided, to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans (Bosnia and Kosovo), humanitarian disaster in Pakistan, and the Taliban and al Qaida in Afghanistan.

NATO's military capacity depends upon the capabilities of its member states, which quickly transfer authority over their forces to the NATO commander once a NATO council decision has been taken on a particular operation. Sixty years of military cooperation, training, and exercises have done "miracles" for interoperability. The decision making process is based on Article 5 of the NATO treaty, which in turn is based on Article 51 of the UN Charter authorizing states to use force in self-defense if attacked. NATO invoked its Article 5 commitment to collective defense in responding to the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. At the same time, political consensus on key NATO decisions is achieved by allowing for

¹⁹ European Union Commission, "The Africa Peace Facility," Information and Communication Unit of the Directorate-General for Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States of the European Commission, July 2006, available at http://bookshop.europa.eu/eubookshop/download.action?fileName=NH7606456ENC_005.pdf&eubphfUid=450100&catalogNbr=NH-76-06-456-FR-C.

²⁰ Ibid.

“constructive abstention,” or opt-outs in specific cases—e.g., individual countries now are deciding on deployments to Afghanistan. In sum, there is political cohesion but also flexibility in case individual countries choose not to participate in a particular operation. NATO also allows non-NATO states (such as Australia, Finland, and Sweden) to participate in NATO operations in Afghanistan.

While the African Union functions in a different political, social, and economic context, the political cohesion and operational coordination of these NATO arrangements are pertinent to the evolving political and military structure of the African Standby Force. As useful, NATO is prepared to offer its competences to assist the African Union in achieving the ASF objectives.

Concluding Observations

The retreat was intended to provide an opportunity for senior African leaders at the continental and regional levels to consider the outstanding conceptual and operational challenges to the implementation of the African Standby Force. While to some extent this objective was achieved, the discussions also highlighted significant gaps in the commitment and engagement of African leaders, differing views as to the African continent’s principal priorities, and the political and operational challenges arising from the different agendas, capacities and constraints of the AU’s primary external partners (i.e., the United Nations and the European Union).

African leaders in Addis Ababa and in the RECs clearly attempt to present common viewpoints on the continent’s priorities. However, in practice this is not always possible. Regional agendas are inevitably more localized, while AU priorities are generally broader. In Addis Ababa, the priority at the Peace and Security Council is the implementation of the African Standby Force. Leaders of the subregional organizations are more concerned about immediate challenges of governance, poverty, and development. Whether it was due to scheduling problems or lack of interest, no senior official of any REC was in attendance at the Kigali meeting.

A critical issue voiced by several participants was the continued misunderstanding, on the part of the international community and many of Africa’s leaders, of the causes of conflict. A state-centric

approach, based on building state capacity to respond to regional or internal conflicts, fails to understand or accept that much of the violence in a number of African countries—e.g., in the Niger Delta in Nigeria or in Kenya after the 2007 elections—was based on legitimate grievances and popular anger aimed at elite dominance of power and resources, and the marginalization of large strata of the population. The focus of the AU and donors on the practical organizational and financial challenges of setting up the ASF, including training and equipment needs, could divert attention from seeking solutions to the core political issues underlying conflict—namely, the systemic gaps in governance, accountability, the rule of law, the administration of justice, and the equitable sharing of resources that continue to plague many African countries.

While significant resources have been provided to the African Union, and to a lesser extent the regional economic communities, not all of these resources are being well utilized. The absorptive capacity of the AU and the RECs is limited by their structural weaknesses and lack of sufficient qualified personnel in managerial and oversight positions. Beyond the operational issues (e.g., equipment, financing, and communication) are the complex issues of ownership and partnership. The African Union wants both ownership and partnership, while donors press for accountability to their parliaments and publics for the use of the resources provided. The acknowledgement of this inevitable tension can result in a more constructive relationship. There is an urgent need for greater understanding and a convergence of views on both the broader goals of the continent’s evolving security architecture and the elements of the road map needed to reach them

Recommendations

In evaluating the progress of the ASF one year before its scheduled operationalization, participants at the Kigali retreat acknowledged its ambitious scale. Nonetheless, the accomplishments to date illustrate the potential of the force to provide the AU Peace and Security Council with the means to respond to crises in a timely and effective manner. The discussion identified the following recommendations for moving closer to a fully

functional ASF by the target date of June 2010:

1. Clarify operational structure of UN-AU-REC coordination.

Participants recognized that the current multitier arrangement for authorizing deployments can delay decision making in urgent situations. The arrangement outlined in the ASF framework provides for the AU Peace and Security Council to authorize military deployments with the approval of the UN Security Council, while the RECs receive their authority from the AU. There needs to be more flexibility in these arrangements. It was recalled, for example, that ECOMOG forces went into Liberia in 1993 without a UN mandate in order to stop the fighting in Monrovia. How the ASF will operate in similar situations in the future will likely depend on the nature of the crisis.

Participants also emphasized the importance of clarifying the operational structure of this three-tier (UN-AU-subregional) system. Working-level coordination between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council needs to be improved. Similarly, there needs to be more effective liaison between the AU and the RECs. The AU-REC memorandum of understanding on cooperation in conflict prevention, management, and resolution can serve as a basis for improving coordination.

There is also an urgent need for improved communications technology to facilitate timely and efficient decision making between the UN and the AU, as well as between the AU and the RECs. As a separate issue, participants pointed out the need for agreed terminology—e.g., a “standby brigade” for some policymakers connotes only a military force, whereas at the AU the force is seen as a multidimensional entity including civilian and police components.

2. Improve capacity building and better align top priorities.

Participants highlighted the need to involve all AU member states in decisions and operations rather than allowing these matters to be

addressed by only a few large states. There is a need to overcome the perception that large states discount or disregard the interests of smaller ones. A related problem is that many Africans still do not understand the objectives of the African Union given its limited public information strategies. Greater public awareness of the AU’s major goals and objectives—ending conflict, reducing poverty, etc.—would generate greater support among African constituencies.

The relationship between the AU and the donor community needs to be improved. AU senior leadership needs to clarify its priority capacity-building requirements in its dialogue with key donors. The dialogue needs to ensure that partner assistance is consistent with these priorities. Capacity-building programs need to be viewed as complementary and not as alternatives to the AU’s priorities. Closer alignment of priorities would avoid duplication and high transaction costs for all stakeholders.

As regards the relationship between the Peace and Security Council and the Permanent Representatives Committee, participants pointed to the need for all governments to send qualified permanent representatives to Addis Ababa. Additionally, in light of staffing shortfalls at the AU, accelerated staff recruitment would augment the Peace and Security Department as well as the overall work of the commission in Addis Ababa.

3. Maximize efficiency in logistics planning and develop multidimensional training.

Participants recognized that at present the capacity of African countries to provide logistical support is limited. The proposed logistics arrangement, with one continental base in Addis Ababa and five regional depots, probably was not feasible. Instead, participants favored the establishment of four regional logistic depots: north, south, east, and west. Moreover, AU-UN logistics planning needs to be closely coordinated so as to maximize efficiency in the use of limited resources. There was also concern that donor support remained uncertain—e.g., UNAMID’s continued diffi-

culty in obtaining helicopters for the transport of equipment and manpower to Darfur.

Participants also urged close coordination of training programs conducted by the AU and the RECs drawing primarily on the ASF strategic framework.²¹ This training needs to be multidimensional including police and civilian elements of the Standby Force, not just the military component. Training should be balanced by including units from smaller countries so as to reduce the perception that the force is dominated by only a few relatively powerful and large countries that contribute the most troops.

4. Establish agreed procedures for the timely funding of ASF operations.

The African Union has limited capacity to effectively utilize large-scale multilateral support, such as the €300 million EU Africa Peace Facility authorized in February 2009 and other multilateral and bilateral funds.²² At the same time, participants were aware that the current global financial crisis could lead to demands for greater oversight to assure that these funds are properly utilized. The AU Commission has still to put in place proper accounting and oversight systems to effectively manage these funds. The AU Commission also urgently needs to develop its internal human resources capacities to improve its financial management and administration. Moreover, participants agreed that the AU's aspiration for ownership of the ASF would be more credible if African countries carried more of the financial burden. In that regard, it would be helpful if the AU established clear criteria for assessed

contributions.

In March 2009, the UN Security Council reviewed a joint AU-UN Panel Report commissioned under the leadership of former European Commission President Romano Prodi to explore options for improving UN support for AU peacekeeping operations.²³ The panel's two main recommendations were (1) the use of assessed funding to support AU peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council for up to six months and (2) the establishment of a voluntary multidonor trust fund to assure timely, consistent, and sustainable external funding to AU peacekeeping operations. It remains to be seen whether these recommendations will be implemented by the UN Secretary-General with the consent of the General Assembly, as they depart from established UN practice. Participants at the retreat, however, supported the Prodi panel's recommendations for the funding component of the UN-AU Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme.

As the ASF becomes fully operational, greater resources will be needed to sustain the force both in a "standby" mode (e.g., for the maintenance of equipment and communication) and to enable its rapid deployment (e.g., for the airlift of manpower and equipment from one zone to another) following decisions by the Peace and Security Council. There is an urgent need to establish agreed procedures for the timely transfer of assessed and voluntary contributions by AU member states to the AU commission.

22 Sudan Watch, "AU, EU sign Financing Agreement for New Africa Peace Facility," February 4, 2009, available at <http://sudanwatch.blogspot.com/2009/02/au-eu-sign-financing-agreement-for-new.html>.

23 UN Secretary-General, *Report of the African Union-United Nations Panel on Modalities for Support to African Union Peace Operations*.

Annex 1. Agenda

African Peace and Security Architecture: Operationalizing the African Standby Force— Strategic Considerations

Kigali, Rwanda

Monday, May 18, 2009

09:00 – 09:30 **Welcome and Introduction**

Chair

Mr. El Ghassim Wane, *Acting Director of Peace and Security and Head of Conflict Management Division, African Union Commission (AU)*

Opening Remarks

Hon. Marcel Gatsinzi, *Minister of Defense, Republic of Rwanda*

Mr. Edmond Mulet, *Assistant Secretary General, UN Department Peacekeeping Operations*

Dr. Edward C. Luck, *Senior Vice President and Director of Studies, International Peace Institute, and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General focusing on the Responsibility to Protect*

09:30 – 11:00

Session I

The African Peace and Security Architecture: The Challenges

Chair

Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, *Chairman, Botswana Radiation Protection Board, former UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and former Permanent Representative of Botswana to the UN*

Speakers

Mr. El Ghassim Wane

“The Political and Security Situation in Africa: Achieving Political Cohesion and Collective Security.”

Dr. 'Funmi Olonisakin, *Director, Conflict, Security and Development Group School, King's College*

“Africa's Challenges in the UN Agenda”

Discussion

11:00 – 11:15

Coffee Break

11:15 – 11:30

Session II

Introduction to Roundtables

Introduction

Mr. Nick Seymour, *DPKO AU Peace Support Team, New York*

- 11:30 – 13:30 **Session III**
Roundtable I: The African Standby Force and the Regional Capabilities
- Chair**
Mr. Salvatore Matata, *Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Zambia*
- Speaker**
Mr. El Ghassim Wane
“Political Will and Regional Preparedness for Prevention and Early Warning”
- Facilitator**
Dr. Margaret Vogt, *Deputy Director, Africa I Division, UN Department Political Affairs, New York*
- Responses from the Regions:**
Eastern Africa (Mr. Peter Marwa, EASBRIG), Southern Africa (Mr. Joao Ndlovu, SADC Secretariat), Central Africa (Amb. Sebastien Ntahuga, ECCAS PLANELM), Northern Africa (Col. Alnefate Alfitouri Zrass, NARC)
- 13:30 – 14:30 Lunch
- 14:30 – 15:45 **Session IV**
Roundtable II: Rapid Deployment of the ASF: Strategic, Operational and Management Considerations
- Chair**
Brig Gen Norbert Kalimba, *East African Community*
- Speaker**
Mr. Sivuyile Bam, *Head, Peace Support Operations Division, AU*
“Preparedness of the African Standby Force”
- Facilitator**
Major General (Ret.) Samaila Iliya, *Head, AMANI Africa*
- Responses from the Regions:**
Eastern Africa (Mr. Peter Marwa, EASBRIG), Southern Africa (Mr. Joao Ndlovu, SADC Secretariat), Central Africa (Amb. Sebastien Ntahuga, ECCAS PLANELM), Northern Africa (Col. Alnefate Alfitouri Zrass, NARC)
- 15:45 – 17:15 **Session V**
Effective Response: Other Multilateral Models
- Chair**
Major General Emanuel Karenzi, *UN-AU Hybrid Operations in Darfur (UNAMID) Khartoum, Sudan*
- Speakers**
Mr. Edmond Mulet, *Assistant Secretary General, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations*

Ambassador Maurits Jochems, *Deputy Assistant Secretary-General (Planning), North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

Discussion

19:00 **Dinner and Keynote Address**

Chair

Mr. El Ghassim Wane

Remarks

Hon. Marcel Gatsinzi, *Minister of Defence, Rwanda*

Speaker

Mr. Kristian Fischer, *Deputy Permanent Secretary of State for Defense, Denmark*

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

09:00 – 09:15 **Session VI**
Introduction to the Working Groups

Brig. Gen. Jean-Bosco Kazura, *Senior Military and Security Advisor to the President of Rwanda*

09:15 – 11:00 **Session VII**
Working Group 1: Mandating and Coordination

Facilitator

Dr. Tim Murithi, *Programme Head, Peace and Security Council Report Programme, Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa*

Rapporteur

Ms. Fatou Camara-Houel, *Special Assistant to the Director, Human Rights Council and Treaty Division, United Nations, Geneva*

Working Group 2: The ASF Funding, Logistics and Equipment

Facilitator

Mr. James Mutiso, *Director, Joint Support Coordinating Mechanism (Addis Ababa), UN Department of Field Support*

Rapporteur

Col. Festus B. Aboagye, *Senior Research Fellow, Training for Peace, Institute for Security Studies, South Africa*

Working Group 3: Institutional Capacity

Facilitator

Mr. Walter Lotze, *Coordinator, Peacebuilding, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)*

Rapporteur

Dr. A. Sarjoh Bah, *Senior Fellow and Program Coordinator, African Security Institutions & Global Peace Operations, Center on International Cooperation New York University*

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- 11:15 – 11:30 Coffee Break
- 11:30 – 13:00 **Session VIII: Plenary: Break-out Group Reports**
- Chair**
Brig. Gen. Jean-Bosco Kazura, *Senior Military and Security Advisor to the President of Rwanda*
- Working Group 1: “Mandating and Coordination Report”**
Facilitator
Dr. Tim Murithi, *Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa*
- Rapporteur**
Ms. Fatou Camara-Houel, *United Nations*
- Working Group 2: “The ASF’s Funding, Logistics and Equipment Report”**
Facilitator
Mr. James Mutiso, *UN Department of Field Support*
- Rapporteur**
Col. Festus Aboagye, *Institute for Security Studies*
- Working Group 3: “Institutional Capacity Report”**
Facilitator
Mr. Walter Lotze, *Executive Director, ACCORD*
- Rapporteur**
Dr. A. Sarjoh Bah
- Discussion
- 13:00 – 15:00 Working Lunch
- AMANI Africa Exercise (EURO/RECAMP)**
- Chair**
Mr. El Ghassim Wane
- Speakers**
General Pierre-Michel Joana, *Special Advisor to the European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy*
Mr. George Kilburn, *EURO/RECAMP*
- 15:00 – 16:30 **Session IX: Conclusions and Actions**
- Chair**
Dr. Edward C. Luck
- Presenter**
Mr. El Ghassim Wane

Annex 2. List of Participants

1. **Col. Festus Aboagye**
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2. **Ambassador Adonia Ayebare**
International Peace Institute
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3. **Dr. A. Sarjoh Bah**
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4. **Mr. Sivuyile Bam**
Peace Support Operations Division,
African Union Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5. **Ms. Meiko Boynton**
International Peace Institute
New York
6. **Ms. Fatou Camara-Houle**
Human Rights Council and Treaties Division,
United Nations Secretariat,
Geneva, Switzerland
7. **Mr. Kristian Fischer**
Ministry of Defense
Copenhagen, Denmark
8. **Hon. Marcel Gatsinzi**
Minister of Defence
Republic of Rwanda
9. **Mr. Abdel-Kader Haireche**
United Nations Department of Peacekeeping
Operations, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
10. **Maj. Gen. Rtd Samaila Iliya**
AMANI Exercise
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
11. **Mr. Mashood Issaka**
International Peace Institute
New York
12. **Gen. Pierre-Michel Joana**
European Union Council
Brussels
13. **Ambassador Maurits Jochems**
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Brussels, Belgium
14. **Brig. Gen. Nobert Kalimba**
East African Community
Nairobi, Kenya
15. **Maj. Gen. Emanuel Karenzi Karake**
United Nations-Africa Union Hybrid
Operations in Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan
16. **Brig. Gen. Jean-Bosco Kazura**
Rwanda Defense Force Headquarters
17. **Mr. George Kilburn**
EURORECAMP, France
18. **Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila**
Radiation Protection Board
Gaborone, Botswana
19. **Mr. Walter Lotze**
African Centre for the Constructive
Resolution of Disputes, Durban, South Africa
20. **Dr. Edward C. Luck**
Senior Vice President, International Peace
Institute; Special Adviser to the UN Secretary
General focusing on the Responsibility to
Protect, New York
21. **Mr. Peter Marwa**
Eastern African Standby Brigade Coordination
Mechanism, Nairobi, Kenya
22. **Mr. Salvator Matata**
Common Market for Eastern and Southern
Africa, Lusaka, Zambia
23. **Major General Kurt Mosgaard**
COMSHIRBRIG and Danish Task Force
Africa
Copenhagen, Denmark
24. **Mr. Edmond Mulet**
United Nations Department of Peacekeeping
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25. **Col. Muzungu Munyaneza**
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26. **Dr. Tim Murithi**
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27. **Dr. Elijah Dickens Mushemeza**
Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara, Uganda
28. **Mr. James Mutiso**
Joint Support Coordinating Mechanism, UN
Department of Field Support, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia
29. **Mr. Alfred Ndabarasa**
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Rwanda
to the United Nations, New York
30. **Dr. Joao Ndlovu**
Southern Africa Development Community
Gaborone, Botswana
31. **Ambassador Sebastien Ntahuga**
Economic Community of Central African
States
Libreville, Gabon
32. **Dr. Funmi Olonisakin**
Conflict, Security and Development Group
School, King's College, London
33. **Col. Alhadi Ali Rahuma**
North African Regional Capacity
Tripoli, Libya
34. **Brigadier Gen Richard Rutatina**
Rwanda Armed Forces
Kigali, Rwanda
35. **Mr. Nick Seymour**
United Nations Department of Peacekeeping
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36. **Brig. Gen. Osman Soubagle**
Brigade Commander, Brigade HQs
Djibouti
37. **Mr. Daniel Venturi**
European Union Delegation to the AU
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
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