



## **POLICY BRIEF 2**

# **Pax Africana and Africa's Post-Cold War Security Architecture: Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding**

**Date of Publication:**  
August 2023

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## 1. Introduction

The University of Pretoria's Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship (CAS) in South Africa; the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) in Uppsala, Sweden; and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, convened a high-level policy dialogue on **"Pax Africana and Africa's Post-Cold War Security Architecture: Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding."** The meeting was held on 19 and 20 May 2023 in Addis Ababa. Representatives of the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as key policymakers from the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU); joined by leading academics, diplomats, and civil society activists, participated in the policy dialogue. The meeting addressed the role of key domestic, regional, and external actors in strengthening Africa's post-Cold War security architecture across the continent's five sub-regions. This report is based largely on key discussions and policy recommendations from the policy dialogue.

Late Kenyan scholar, Ali Mazrui, had coined the concept of "Pax Africana" in a seminal 1967 study which called for Africans to create and consolidate peace on their continent through their own exertions. His idea of "continental jurisdiction" urged meddling outsiders to stay out of the continent and let Africans resolve their own problems. Twenty-five years later, Egyptian UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992-1996), crafted *An Agenda for Peace*: a landmark 1992 document on the tools and techniques of conflict management for a post-Cold War era that remains relevant three decades later. *Agenda* outlined a continuum from conflict prevention to peacemaking to peacekeeping to peacebuilding. It called for "preventive deployment"; a \$1.7 billion rapid reaction UN force of 16,000 troops, 3,600 police, and 1,000 staff to make action possible without the need to seek new troops for each mission. It also advocated heavily armed peace enforcers for dangerous missions, and the use of regional security arrangements to lighten the UN's heavy peacekeeping burden. Though only some of these ideas were adopted by the UN Security Council, they remain important to achieving Pax Africana.

## 2. Pax Africana: Strengthening Africa's Security Architecture

The recent spate of military *coups d'état* in Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Chad were noted as worrying trends that reflect the failure of African governments to tackle the root causes of conflicts by addressing issues of poverty, marginalization, and the effective management of ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. The conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan have involved diverse identities, ethnicities, and religions. In Sudan, violence between the armed forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) stems from power struggles over Arab, African, and Islamic identities. South Sudan's civil war has been similarly fuelled by ethnic tensions. Africa's "conflicts of identities" thus need to be adroitly managed to achieve effective state-building.

The meeting addressed the role of key domestic, regional, and external actors in strengthening Africa's post-Cold War security architecture across the continent's five sub-regions.

PARTICIPANTS AT THE "PAX AFRICANA AND AFRICA'S POST-COLD WAR SECURITY ARCHITECTURE: PEACEMAKING, PEACEKEEPING, AND PEACEBUILDING" POLICY DIALOGUE IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, IN MAY 2023.

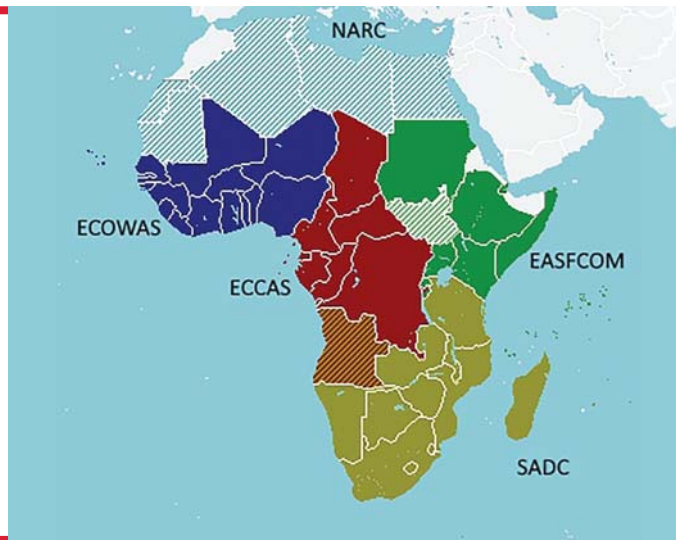
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A proposed 25,000-strong African Standby Force (ASF) which should have been established in 2010, remains a work in progress. In order to strengthen Africa's security architecture, funding and logistics must also be prioritized.

MAP OF THE PARTITIONING OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECs) AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS (RMs) OF THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE (ASF).

IMAGE CREDIT - Wikipedia



A proposed 25,000-strong African Standby Force (ASF) which should have been established in 2010, remains a work in progress. In order to strengthen Africa's security architecture, funding and logistics must also be prioritized. The AU Peace Fund has raised \$348 million, which should help support African-led missions in Somalia and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Portuguese UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, has suggested that a "New Agenda for Peace" must necessarily entail peace enforcement missions led by regional organisations, with predictable funding provided to such missions. Some participants at the Addis Ababa policy dialogue also expressed support for the AU's initiative of contributing 25 percent of funds to peacekeeping missions on the continent, while the UN provides the remaining 75 percent. It was further highlighted that the UN Security Council is not keen to repeat the joint cooperation entailed in the AU/UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID) between 2007 and 2021, preferring to retain control under a single chain of command.

The fact that funding and logistics were not provided to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), until the French-backed UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was established in 2013, was criticized. The 26-year French dominance of the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) – now the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) – at Undersecretary-General level, was also negatively perceived. Paris was accused of manipulating the creation of UN operations in areas of its own parochial interests such as Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Chad, and Central African Republic (CAR). The UN was further accused of failing, while "re-hatting" regional peacekeepers as "Blue Helmets", to recognize the sacrifices – in blood and treasure – of African peacekeepers.

The European Union has been the largest external funder of peace and security initiatives in Africa, contributing 90 per cent of the funds to the AU-managed African Peace Facility (APF) between 2004 and 2022, to the tune of €3.2 billion. Brussels has also supported more than 30,000 African military and police contingents. The EU has further backed calls for the UN Security Council to use assessed contributions to support African-led missions authorized by the world body. Brussels's new European Peace Facility (EPF) has set aside €5.6 billion to support African and other peace and security efforts between 2021 and 2027. The EU has proposed six main building blocs for its renewed security engagement with Africa: first, strategic cooperation involving joint decision-making; second, conflict prevention and early warning; third, respect for governance, human rights, and humanitarian law; fourth, strengthening the joint fight against terrorism in regions such as the Sahel and the Horn of Africa; fifth, supporting African conflict management efforts through capacity-building; and finally, strengthening multilateralism and promoting convergence in multilateral fora.



### 3. Peacemaking: Mediating African Conflicts

In relation to peacemaking, the role and interaction of national, regional, and external actors was highlighted as critical to successful mediation. It is thus urgent to build trust among domestic parties in mediating conflicts, and this often requires time and patience that is frequently lacking. The painstaking process of reconciling grassroots communities has sometimes been abandoned for rehabilitation and inadequate peacebuilding, which has thus sometimes led to the resumption of conflicts. Some of these mediation efforts in Sudan and South Sudan tend to represent elite pacts that do not properly consult grassroots actors, and thus fail to be effectively implemented. The inclusion of women in peace processes was particularly difficult to achieve in places such as northern Uganda and the DRC. In some cases, mediators often had to hold meetings at night in displaced persons camps, as women were frequently overloaded with domestic and other chores. There is also a need to ensure that women who are included in negotiating teams are independent, impartial, and credible, and not controlled by male-dominated delegations.

IGAD leaders were said to be fatigued with the tortuous South Sudan peace process initiated in 2005. Some governments were also accused of pursuing their own parochial agendas, and backing different sides in the dispute. The 2018 Addis Ababa peace accord on South Sudan was said to be limping along due to a lack of political commitment by the leaders of the domestic parties who are said to have acted as “ethnic warlords” rather than national statesmen. The military roles of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda in Somalia was also said to have heightened historical tensions.

In the DRC, the UN worked closely with the mediation led by South African president, Thabo Mbeki, which produced the 2003 Global and Inclusive Agreement: a power-sharing deal that envisaged a 24-month transitional period. It was important, in this case, to craft strategies to deal with regional “spoilers” - Rwanda and Uganda - which were intervening in the Congo. The accords in the DRC were, however, criticized as representing elite pacts in which power was shared to the exclusion of civil society and local communities. It was also noted that president Joseph Kabila was able to use his continued control of the country's security structures to retain an advantage during the transitional period.

The UN mission in CAR helped create a forum in 2014 in which disputing parties could seek to reconcile their differences in the lead-up to presidential elections in 2015/2016. National actors, however, lacked a common vision for their country, and the UN was thus unable to consolidate peace efforts, as instability continued throughout the country involving religious and ethnic-based militias.

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MS MAUREEN ADHIAMBO ACHIENG, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IGAD TO THE AU, ADDIS ABABA; AND AMBASSADOR PARFAIT ONANGA-ANYANGA, UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AU, AND HEAD OF THE UN OFFICE TO THE AU (UNOAU), ADDIS ABABA.

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At the external level, powerful actors in the UN Security Council have sometimes obstructed successful mediation. The case of the US and France in protecting Morocco in the Western Sahara dispute was cited as having stalled implementation of the UN peace accord since 1991. Likewise, the role of the US, Turkey, and Gulf Arab states was said to have prolonged the stalemate in Somalia. Washington's drone warfare and support for the Somali army was further highlighted as having fuelled instability in the East African country.

**Nigerian-led ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s helped to stabilize both countries at the cost of over \$2 billion and more than 1,000 peacekeeping fatalities.**

ECOMOG TROOPS AT ROBERTS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LOCATED OUTSIDE OF MONROVIA, LIBERIA, IN FEBRUARY 1997.

IMAGE CREDIT - [Wikimedia Commons](#)



#### 4. Peacekeeping: From Caprivi to Central Africa

Peacekeeping operations in Africa have had mixed results. Their success has depended on having clear and achievable mandates, adequate resources, and coordination and cooperation between the UN, Africa's regional organisations, and, in a few cases, the EU.

In Southern Africa, UN peacekeeping missions in Namibia (1989-1990), Angola (1989-1997), and Mozambique (1992-1994) all occurred at the end of the Cold War's liberation struggles. While Namibia and Mozambique succeeded, Angola was a spectacular failure. Southern Africa highlights the importance of the consent of conflict parties, organisational learning, and the capacity of the UN leadership to adapt to changing dynamics. Successful peacekeeping in Mozambique and Namibia was closely tied to the commitment of domestic parties to resolve the conflict and implement peace agreements, while Angolan warlord, Jonas Savimbi, acted as a "spoiler" in rejecting the outcome of the 1992 election.

In West Africa, ECOWAS played a pioneering role in implementing African-led peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali. Decade-long Nigerian-led ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s helped to stabilize both countries at the cost of over \$2 billion and more than 1,000 peacekeeping fatalities. France dominated the intervention in Côte d'Ivoire from 2004 with its own rapid reaction force, and exerted control over the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI). Paris also intervened militarily in Mali through its 2013 Operation Serval, and later Operation Barkhane. The UN mission in Mali was deployed to support the country's political processes and transitional authorities, along with the EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP). The UN Security Council expanded its mandate without increasing its resources and capacity to protect civilians and itself, resulting in 309 peacekeeping fatalities. The French military was forced to withdraw from Mali in August 2022, due to protests by sections of the Malian population and the military regime in Bamako which is increasingly reliant on Russian mercenaries from the Wagner Group.

In Eastern Africa, the security complex has involved regional and internationally-led peace processes. UN and AU missions have tried to resolve conflicts between states such as Ethiopia and Eritrea (2000-2008), keep peace in the oil-rich Abyei region between Sudan and South Sudan (since 2011), and end civil wars in Darfur (2007-2021),

South Sudan (since 2011) and Somalia (1992-1995; and since 2007). Peacekeeping has helped to bring a temporary end to open hostilities, saving lives, and allowing warring parties time to craft new strategies to end conflicts. However, the efforts of African regional bodies and the UN have not always resulted in durable peace.

Finally, in Central Africa; Chad and CAR share a common colonial and post-independence history. The EU deployed a mission in Chad/CAR (EUFOR Chad/CAR, 2008-2009) and the UN in CAR/Chad (MINURCAT, 2007-2010). EUFOR Chad/CAR cost over €900 million, but lasted only one year. It built and rehabilitated important infrastructure in Chad, and secured humanitarian assistance for refugee camps. Chad became a significant player in peace operations in Mali and CAR, but its involvement reinforced autocracy at home. The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in CAR (MINUSCA), since 2014, was a re-hatting of the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA). Like previous missions in the country, MINUSCA was mandated to restore state authority. This implies reviving a state that is disconnected from remote rural areas, and is run by elites that do not promote the rule of law and human rights. Russia's Wagner Group has also played an important role in securing the regime and protecting mines.

## 5. Peacebuilding: From West Africa to the Great Lakes

Moving from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, in West African states such as Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the UN and ECOWAS took up the core tasks of facilitating peacebuilding. The world body supported civil society organisations, security sector reform and governance, and transitional justice. In Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS has promoted security sector governance processes, trained security actors, and supported the construction of barracks. West Africa's hybrid courts and transitional justice processes illustrate the role of international experts in peacebuilding, and the importance of national ownership. Peacebuilding, however, still has a way to go to succeed, lacking adequate means of effective state-building. Over-centralization of political authority remains ubiquitous, with poor local participation in decision-making amidst an enduring winner-takes-all mentality. Peacebuilding thus requires sustained and long-term engagement in the host country; a variety of actors working together; and effective approaches, frameworks, and flexibility.

In the Great Lakes, regional and external efforts in the DRC and Burundi have resulted in incomplete democratisation processes. The UN played an important role in facilitating a transition to an electoral system in the DRC in 2006, 2011, and 2018, with Joseph Kabila eventually agreeing to step down in favour of the declared winner, Félix Tshisekedi. Nevertheless, the UN mission (MONUSCO) has often failed to protect civilians, quell violence, and maintain stability. This failure has been due to a limited understanding of local dynamics, and the refusal of troop-contributing countries to put their peacekeepers in harm's way.

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PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN THE DRC IN  
NOVEMBER 2011.

IMAGE CREDIT - [Wikimedia Commons](#)



## Policy Recommendations

Six key policy recommendations emerged from the Addis Ababa policy seminar in May 2023:

1. First, Africa's security architecture requires an effective division of labour, based on the principle of subsidiarity between the AU and Africa's sub-regional bodies in which decisions and actions are taken at the level closest to conflicts.
2. Second, the UN must maintain its primary global peacekeeping role in Africa, strengthening such missions with the support of African regional organisations; the support package of \$1.5 billion that the world body provided to the AU mission in Somalia could be used as a model of capacity-enhancement for fledgling African regional bodies.
3. Third, peacemaking initiatives in Africa should actively involve grassroots communities, including independent and capable women negotiators; peace accords should also contain effective monitoring mechanisms with clear timetables, means of implementation, and the power of sanctions.
4. Fourth, peacebuilding efforts in Africa must ensure greater financial resources as well as national ownership and the involvement of local actors, with external actors adopting flexible approaches, maintaining long-term engagement, and drawing upon the advice and lessons of strategic partnerships with legitimate national role players.
5. Fifth, the military bases which the US, France, and China have established in Africa must be dismantled, consistent with the principle of non-alignment that many African governments profess to practice. The scourge of Russian-funded mercenaries is also antithetical to achieving Pax Africana.
6. Finally, African think tanks and research communities should provide policy advice to the AU on peace and security issues. The AU Network of Think Tanks for Peace (NeTT4Peace), launched in February 2023, could serve as an effective vehicle for promoting such policy-oriented academic advice. Such research must, however, be independent and rigorous, with African think tanks being able to offer constructive criticisms to strengthen Africa's security architecture.

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