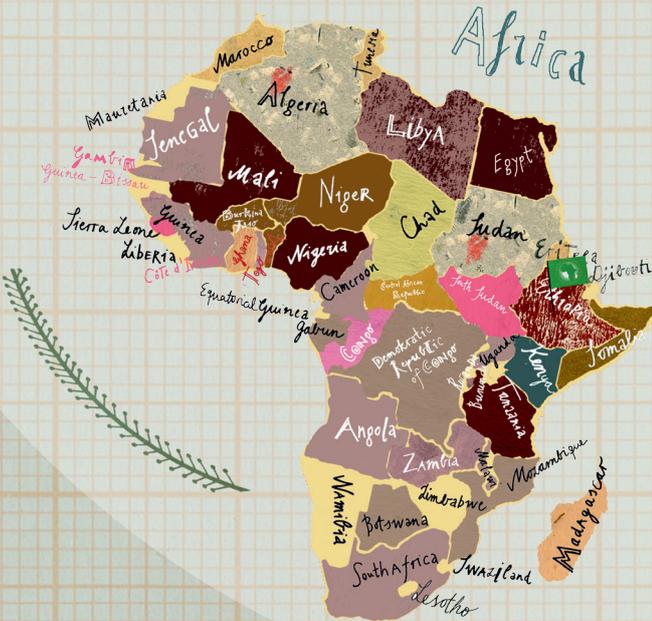




* TOGETHER TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY *

UN-EU-AU COOPERATION IN PEACE AND SECURITY: THE NEED FOR MORE COHERENCE AND COORDINATION

Faith Mabera
October 2020



→ Strategic partnership on conflict management in Africa should be grounded on conflict prevention and long-term engagement to address structural drivers of conflict.

→ UN-EU-AU cooperation in peace and security should carry forward the proposal of a virtual trilateral collaborative platform.

→ Clarity, dialogue and open channels of communication should guide deliberations on the AU peace operations and sustainable co-financing.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Multilateral responses to conflict have had to adapt to complex and evolving dynamics in the African peace and security context. Prevalence of asymmetric security threats interlinked with religious extremism, terrorism and transnational criminal networks has raised the stakes for conflict prevention, management and resolution initiatives that include mediation, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and development. The global-local interface of conflict, compounded by complex drivers of conflict with regional and transnational dimensions, has also underscored the need for pragmatic and collective responses to conventional and unconventional security threats. This policy brief considers the evolution of strategic partnerships between the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). In addition to outlining the technicalities of inter-organizational arrangements in peacekeeping, the issue of sustainable financing for African peace and security initiatives and policy implications for trilateral UN-EU-AU cooperation are also analyzed.

(MICOPAX) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), among others, and its pivotal role as a strategic partner in international peace and security alongside the UN. The principles of subsidiarity and comparative advantage are at the heart of the division of labor between the UN Security Council and regional organizations as provided in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. While the UN retains primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the delegation of responsibility to regional organizations is seen as a crucial aspect of fostering local political legitimacy to UN-led missions and providing scope for sharing of limited resources and capabilities.²

The institutional reforms and enhanced institutional capacity of the AU aimed at strengthening homegrown initiatives and playing a more prominent role in conflict management, through the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), have also crafted the niche for the emergence of a nascent model of African peace operations. The AU model of Peace Operations which could be led by the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms (RMs) or African-led ad hoc Coalitions has deviated from the traditional UN peacekeeping in some aspects.³ First, the AU model of peace operations has taken the form of 'stability operations' deployed in the midst of ongoing conflict with the aim of stabilizing security situation and protecting civilians against aggressors. Secondly, the AU peace operations are often deployed within a short timeframe, with the goal of handing command and control over to the UN upon restoration of basic stability. Thirdly, these missions have been mostly dependent on donor support by international partners, given the AU's limitations on sustainable financial and operational capabilities, with implications on African ownership over mandate size and duration of missions.⁴

Nevertheless, willingness of the AU to take on peace enforcement and counterterrorism missions such as AFISMA and MISCA, as well as ad hoc security coalitions like the MNTJF and G5 Sahel has to be viewed against the backdrop of the debates around the 'robust turn' in peacekeeping. The trend toward peace enforcement in the UN peacekeeping has triggered political and doctrinal debates within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) centered on foundational principles of impartiality, limited use of force and consent at the normative level vis-à-vis the tactical level, which has demanded increased assertiveness of mandates and the use of force to protect civilians.⁵

2

PARTNERSHIPS OF NECESSITY IN A COMPLEX AND EVOLVING PEACE AND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

A number of material and ideational incentives have underpinned the imperative for partnerships in peace operations on the African continent, which accounts for half of the UN peace operations. First, the overall consensus that no single organization can address the wide range of peace and security challenges by itself has foregrounded the need for collaboration. Secondly, the possibility of overstretch and limitations on financial and operational resources also present inter-institutional collaboration as a strategic and necessary policy choice. The third category of incentives for collaboration stem from ideational considerations such as shared values, legitimization, burden sharing and accountability, among others.¹ Furthermore, as the largest regional contributor to the UN peace Operations, the AU has demonstrated an upscaling of its troop deployment capacity to both international and regional operations. This includes the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA), ECCAS Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic

3

TRILATERAL UN-EU-AU COOPERATION IN PEACE & SECURITY: IMPROVING COHERENCE, COORDINATION & CORRESPONDENCE

The recommendations of the UN's Independent High-level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) Report⁶ which underscored 'the primacy of politics' and the imperative of inclusive global-regional peace and security partnerships called for flexible, multi-actor and multi-dimensional peace operations in the changing global landscape. The inter-organizational arrangements in peace operations have entailed three kinds of modalities; namely, transitions, co-deployment and hybrid missions. In transitions or sequential partnerships, different organizations take on command of operations at different phases. The transition has often moved from a regional or multilateral organizations to the UN. For instance, in 2013, AFISMA was handed over to the UN under the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The second format of inter-organizational arrangement, co-deployments or parallel operations, entails different organizations operating in the same theater. For instance, in the CAR, the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) is deployed alongside the EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM-RCA) and the UN Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The second example is Somalia where AMISOM operates alongside the European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (EUCAP Somalia), the EU Naval Force Atalanta (EU NAVFOR), the UN Support Office in Somali (UNSOS) and the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOS). The third kind of arrangement, hybrid missions, refers to a combined or joint operation in a particular area of responsibility conducted by forces from different organizations under a common command and control arrangement for the purpose of achieving a common objective or end-state with each force retaining the organization's identity throughout the operation.⁷ The UN-AU mission in Darfur (UNAMID) is a prime example of a hybrid mission which emerged as a compromise solution to address the AU's shortfall in financial and logistical capabilities on one hand, and the Sudanese government's unwillingness to accept a UN-led force and the international community's lack of political legitimacy, on the other. As such, the UNAMID hybrid arrangement encapsulates joint decision making by the UN Secretary-General and the AU chairperson on the appointment of Force Commander, operational command at field level and joint reporting to the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the UN Security Council (UNSC).⁸ Overall, hybrid peace operations have been lauded as a positive development with respect to operational capabilities and legitimacy considerations as well as enhancing experience-sharing and organizational learning. However, challenges persist in strategic management of the mission particularly the differences between the UNSC and PSC over political leadership, integrated command and control in

practice, mandated activities and engagement with the Sudanese government.⁹

In spite of mutual acknowledgement of the importance of strategic partnerships between the AU and its international partners, informed by a range of political, material and normative rationales, the collaborative partnerships have been undermined by perennial issues of lack of coordination and harmonization, divergences over doctrinal interpretations on the use of force and ambiguity on the division of labor. Furthermore, there is a room for improvement in terms of deepening cooperation, advancing a common approach to the mission objectives, clear division of labor and identification of lead organization on the basis of comparative advantages and functional capabilities. Flexibility and adaptability of peace operations to the evolving tactical and operating environment also necessitate a coordinated approach to joint planning, analysis and implementation of mandates.¹⁰

Organizational learning and regular assessments by each partner is also a key success factor for trilateral cooperation in the African context. Drawing on experiences, the UN has sought to improve analysis, planning and intelligence capabilities. The EU is working to bolster its threat assessment frameworks, intelligence capabilities as well as prioritizing a coherent and multi-dimensional approach to crisis management. On the AU's part, multi dimensionality and strengthening the police and civilian capacities of its peace operations and development of effective and efficient mission support systems have been identified as organizational priority issues.¹¹ Additionally, at the doctrinal level, there is a pressing need to update the policy framework and concept of the African Standby Force (ASF) which has not kept pace with the demands of the evolving strategic and operating demands in line with the African model of peace operations. The AU's doctrine of the ASF should be reformulated to give strategic guidance to the ASF's multidimensionality, interoperability and rapid deployment capability across a wide range of operations including traditional peacekeeping, peace enforcement and stabilization operations.¹²

The persistent challenge of predictable and sustainable financing, coupled with growing acceptance of multilateral engagement and partnerships has underscored the utility of trilateral cooperation in peace and security on the continent. The UN provides a mandate endorsed by the international community as well as bureaucratic support. The AU or RECs provide political legitimacy and additional military and police personnel while the EU brings aboard financial support alongside logistical, intelligence and training capabilities to peace operations. UN-AU partnerships in peace and security

are informed by a number of reference documents and frameworks including the 2016 Declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation and the Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Program for the AU, the UN Office to the African Union, established in 2010, the UN-AU Joint Task Force on Peace and Security and the 2017 Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.¹³

The EU-AU cooperation draws from the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy which outlined peace and security as one of the priority areas of partnership. In addition to JAES, EU-AU institutionalized cooperation builds on political dialogue including EU- AU summits, college to college meetings between the AU and EU Commissions and the Joint Annual Forum. The main vehicle for EU financial support to AU is the African Peace Facility which prioritizes African-led PSOs, capacity-building and early response mechanism. The EU's integrated approach to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development has also informed its preference for a supplementary role along the UN and EU mainly through parallel civilian missions, as well as logistical support in train and equip packages.¹⁴

The UN-EU cooperation has coalesced around crisis management and peace operations premised on the 2003 Joint UN-EU Declaration on UN-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management and the 2007 Joint Statement on UN-EU cooperation in crisis management. The EU-UN Strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management 2019-2021 identified eight joint priorities including strengthening cooperation between missions and operations in the field; enhancing complementarity of transitions across operations and missions; strengthening cooperation with and support to African-led peace operations and exploring possibilities to deepen UN-EU-AU trilateral cooperation.¹⁵ On the ground in Africa, parallel EU and UN missions have been deployed in Mali, CAR and Somalia.¹⁶

Deployment experiences of the three organizations in the CAR, Mali and Somalia have underscored the need for enhanced structural dialogue, establishment of trilateral coordinated mechanisms for areas of operation and standardization and harmonization of troop contribution countries (TCCs) and police contributing countries (PCCs) to African peace operations in enhancing interoperability and mission support. The growing demand on EU financial support to AMISOM has accelerated the timetable towards drawdown in 2021 as well as elevating the agenda for predictable and sustainable financing of multilateral peace operations across the board. In the case of MINUSMA, where the EU provides logistical and operational support to the G5 Sahel force and capacity building through the EU Capacity Building in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali) and ECOWAS. The AU have expressed concerns of being sidelined by the UNSC and European actors especially since the transition of AFISMA to MINUSMA. As such, the long-term sustainability of MINUSMA and AMISOM has come under question in view of the heavy dependency on external funding and the political will of external actors as a key variable in shaping the size, duration and mandates of the mission.¹⁷

4

FINANCING OF MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

The main mechanisms for financing UN-led peace operations are UN-assessed contributions and voluntary contributions.^A The methodology for peacekeeping funding was formulated in 1973 and updated in 2000 to adjust assessment scales based on each member state's ability to pay and grouping member states according to different levels of economic development. In spite of broad administrative and financial reforms to streamline budgetary processes, sustainable and predictable financing is confronted by a number of persistent challenges. The first challenge is the issue of withheld payments and arrears by some member states negatively impacting cash flow for missions and reimbursements for TCCs and PCCs. The second challenge is misalignment between budget process and billing which adds on to backlog and bureaucratic delays. The third challenges are the constraints linked to rules and regulations which have not kept pace with the operational and tactical demands such as evolving mandate size of missions and devolution to regional organizations.¹⁸ In January 2019, UN Secretary General Guterres urged member states to address the severe financial crisis¹⁹ in the UN underscoring the imperatives of financial reform and urgent consensus on sustainable financing. In this regard, several proposals have been put forward including creating cash reserves for peacekeeping, consolidating peace accounts and issuing year-long assessments.²⁰

On its part, the EU and its member states make up the largest financial contributor to the UN system providing almost 25% of the UN's funds and programmes and covering 24 % of the UN's peacekeeping budget as of 2018.²¹ Although the EU cannot directly finance the UN peacekeeping operations, the proposed European Peace Facility (EPF), an off-budget fund aimed at financing military and defense-related operations under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), could provide an avenue for the EU to finance peace support operations led by international partners such as the UN and the AU.²²

^A Voluntary contributions can take the form of trust funds, cost-sharing projects, and parallel financing. A trust fund is created for a specific purpose, theme, region, country, or project and can be administered by an independent financial institution, alternatively UN trusts are managed by the UNSC or the UNGA. Cost sharing refers to contributions by governments, multilateral organizations, international financial institutions, nongovernmental organizations, or private sector entities to complement the funds of an agency administering a project. Parallel financing refers to the joint funding of a project by one or more multilateral organizations. See Jentzsch, C., 2014. The financing of international peace operations in Africa: A review of recent research and analyses. APN Working Papers No, 1.

5

CO-FINANCING THE AU PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS USING UN-ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS : IS THERE A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE ?

In view of the growing recognition of the indispensability of the AU as a partner in peacekeeping and a pivotal actor in the global peace and security arena, a strong case has been made for the UN to fund AU peace operations through UN-assessed contributions.²³ Affirming the AU's glaring need for predictable, sustainable and flexible financing in view of its comparative advantages in contributing to peace and security in the continent, engagement between the AUPSC and the UNSC since 2007 has led to a proposal that would see a 25:75 funding split between the two organizations to the AU peace operations. However, negotiations on the prospective UN-AU burden-sharing arrangement have reached an impasse as a result of three main issues. First, there has been no consensus on how the 25:75 ratio would work out in practice given doubts about the AU's ability to meet its financial obligations. Secondly, some UNSC members have raised concerns about compliance of AU-led peace missions with international human rights law and the UN financial transparency and accountability standards. Finally, there have also been contentions around which organization should lead the command and control.²⁴

Although there have been positive developments on the AU's part such as reinvigoration of the AU Peace Fund and endorsement of the Kaberuka financing reforms towards enhancing the AU's self-sufficiency, the amount raised so far through AU member states' contributions and the 0.2% import levy falls woefully short of the annual target of \$400 million. Another obstacle to the agreement is the refusal of UNSC members to commit themselves in-principle to directly finance UN-authorized AU peace operations via UN-assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis.²⁵ In spite of the attempts by African members of the UNSC (A3), namely, Ethiopia and South Africa to accommodate some of the issues identified by some of the UNSC members particularly the UK and US, the threat of the US veto coupled with lack of internal consultation between the A3 and Addis Ababa led to a deadlock on negotiations during 2019 and entrenched friction between AUPSC and UNSC.²⁶

The postponement of submission of the African draft to UNSC in September 2019 in order to give time for the formulation of a common African position has not only exposed rifts among African stakeholders, but has also proved how fraught the issue of financing is for both the AU and the UN. Ultimately the onus is on both parties to prioritize dialogue and clarity on the main sticking points while not losing sight of the overarching importance of partnership and cooperation in addressing common peace and security challenges.

6

CONCLUSION

The importance of regional and global partnerships, as an essential component of effective and integrated approaches to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, cannot be overstated. The operational and strategic demands of the evolving peace in security landscape have also highlighted the utility of multi-actor and multi-dimensional arrangements and the convergence around shared values, burden-sharing and comparative advantages. Pertinent to trilateral cooperation among the UN, EU and AU, the lessons drawn from experiences in Mali, Somalia, and the CAR have illustrated the need for constant organizational learning and deepening of the coordination through an institutionalized framework for trilateral cooperation. Furthermore, joint commitment to enhancing the capabilities and mechanisms of APSA and mounting effective peaceful operations underscore the centrality of coherence, coordination and correspondence in the context of trilateral cooperation and strategic partnerships.

Complementary to in-theatre cooperation in peace support operations and missions, strategic partnerships among the UN, EU and AU have also extended to conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; security sector reform (SSR); capacity-building and training and technical support to priority areas such as compliance and accountability, protection of civilians, gender and human rights and monitoring and evaluation.²⁷

7

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING TRILATERAL UN-EU-AU PARTNERSHIP

- i. Peace operations should be seen as part of broader political solution premised on mediation and negotiation and long-term engagement to address the structural drivers of conflict. The emphasis of strategic partnerships should be on conflict prevention as a central component of an integrated approach to conflict management in the African context. Enhanced cooperation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding should be aimed at deepening collaboration in mediation support, joint initiatives on women and peace and security agenda and youth, peace and security agenda, joint conflict analysis,

horizon scanning, situational awareness and strategic reflections on conflict sensitive engagement.

- ii. Positive momentum of trilateral engagement should be premised on mutually reinforcing narratives, experience-sharing and acknowledgement of niche roles, comparative advantages and functional capabilities of each partner. Notably, although inter-institutional cooperation in peace and security will be driven by considerations of resources, capacity and legitimacy among partners, the type of cooperation will mostly be determined by the particular context of each peacekeeping mission.
- iii. Trilateral UN-EU-AU cooperation should also carry forward the proposal of a virtual trilateral collaborative platform that would build on already existing cooperation frameworks to allow for a flexible, comprehensive and context-specific synergy to identified priorities.
- iv. Clarity, dialogue and open channels of communication should guide sensitive deliberations on sustainable co-financing of the AU peace operations. Contentious issues and concerns should not be allowed to take away from the material and ideational incentives for partnerships and cooperation in the complex and evolving global peace and security arena.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

A3	African members elected to non-permanent seats of the UNSC
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
AMIS	African Union Mission in Sudan
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPF	European Peace Facility
EU	European Union
EUAM RCA	EU Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic
EUCAP Sahel Mali	European Union Capacity Building in Mali
EUCAP Somalia	European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia
EU NAVFOR	EU Naval Force Atalanta
EUTM Mali	European Training Mission in Mali
EUTM RCA	European Training Mission in the Central African Republic
G5	Group of 5 Sahel countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MISCA	African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic
MNTJF	Multinational Joint Task Force
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
TCCs	troop-contributing countries
UNAMID	United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur
UNOAU	United Nations Office to the African Union
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSOS	United Nations Support Office in Somalia

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UN-EU-AU COOPERATION IN PEACE AND SECURITY

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCED COOPERATION IN PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA



Strategic and enhanced partnership on conflict management in Africa should be grounded on conflict prevention, among others, mediation and negotiation support and joint conflict analysis. Peace operations should be seen as part of broader political solution and long-term engagement to address structural drivers of conflict and should be the main peace and security cooperation and collaboration agenda.



UN - EU - AU cooperation in peace and security should carry forward the proposal of a virtual trilateral collaborative platform to allow flexibility, comprehensiveness and synergy.



Clarity, dialogue and open channels of communication should guide sensitive deliberations on sustainable co-financing of the AU peace operations.

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