

IPI

INTERNATIONAL
PEACE
INSTITUTE



diplomatische
akademie wien

Vienna School of International Studies
École des Hautes Études Internationales de Vienne

Vienna, Austria

The 38th IPI Vienna Seminar, “Coping with Crisis in Africa: Strengthening Multilateral Capacity for Peace and Security,” was held at the Austrian National Defense Academy and the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna on June 1-3, 2008. Representatives of the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), African subregional organizations, and the European Union (EU), as well as experts and policymakers from across the African continent, convened to examine contemporary peace and security challenges on the African continent. At a time of overlapping and worsening crises throughout Africa, participants focused on identifying policy areas of acute relevance to African peace and security. They also took a hard look at gaps, inconsistencies, and contradictions in multilateral response capabilities and strategies, both within the UN system and among key regional and subregional partners. The meeting focused on identifying concrete recommendations for strengthening multilateral security capacities in the region, including through regional and subregional partnerships.

The discussions were conducted under the Chatham House rule. This meeting note was drafted by John Hirsch, Christoph Mikulaschek, and Pim Valdre of the International Peace Institute. It reflects the *rappoteurs'* interpretation of the seminar discussions and does not necessarily represent the view of all other participants.

Coping with Crisis in Africa: Strengthening Multilateral Capacity for Peace and Security

DECEMBER 2008

Executive Summary

The rapidly changing and increasingly interlinked peace and security environment in Africa is too complex for African states, the African Union, the United Nations, or any other multilateral actor to handle alone. It calls for effective and mutually reinforcing global, regional, and subregional partnerships that are flexible and responsive to the complex realities on the ground.

The transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002, combined with the proliferation of subregional security mechanisms, contributed to a more robust African peace and security architecture. At the same time, the rise of new and enhanced security mechanisms has not been matched by adequate coordination and integration on the ground. As a consequence, regional and subregional cooperation remains fragmented, uncoordinated, and often conceived on an ad-hoc basis with no long-term strategy. The UN, the AU, and African subregional organizations should make it a priority to address these shortcomings and create more effective partnerships on the basis of their respective comparative advantages.

Building the capacity of Africa's security mechanisms is complicated by the dual challenge of sustaining short-term capacity to cope with ongoing crises, while at the same time building long-term institutional, diplomatic, and military capabilities. Challenges for effective capacity building also include addressing shortcomings in funding and human resource management, and, importantly, a lack of effective and sustained political leadership. Overcoming these shortcomings will require the political will of African leaders to empower the commissions of regional and subregional organizations to enhance their operating procedures.

Peacekeeping remains one of the chief challenges for the relationship between the AU and the UN. In addition to the surge in the volume of operations, the AU and the UN are increasingly in charge of more complex and multidimensional operations. The mixed experience of the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has led to significant differences between the AU and the UN on how to structure future peacekeeping partnerships, and on whether to conclude more hybrid arrangements.

In order to assess whether the AU and the UN are succeeding or failing in Africa, both organizations need to develop better tools to assess the impact of their conflict management work. This remains particularly urgent for postconflict strategies where clear end-state goals and benchmarks remain weak and poorly coordinated. While elections are central to the democratic process, their value as an indicator for the success of a postconflict transition should

not be overstated. Such a narrow approach overlooks the potential of elections to refuel existing tensions and political divides, heightening the risk of a relapse into conflict. Sustainable exit strategies for postconflict stabilization efforts also need to include benchmarks related to effective disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration as well as security sector reform. The AU policy on postconflict reconstruction and development remains a promising tool for the improved coordination of reconstruction efforts. However, for the policy to meet its full potential, strategic and operational structures for the evaluation of its implementation need to be put in place.

Introduction: The Evolving Nature of Crisis in Africa

The 2008 Vienna Seminar took place at a time of major change on the African continent with new challenges facing the international community, and particularly the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and the regional economic communities (RECs).

Almost two decades since the end of the Cold War, the African continent is marked by sharp contrasts: a number of countries, especially in West Africa, have effectively resolved their conflicts with the support of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the United Nations—for example, Sierra Leone and Liberia; while countries in the Horn of Africa and Central Africa still struggle to resolve complex conflicts—for example, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Furthermore, “traditional” interstate conflicts in Africa have largely given way to new and more complex challenges including illicit exploitation of natural resources, disputed borders, and the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons. Adding to these complexities are the deepening social and economic challenges of poverty, health pandemics, environmental degradation, uncontrolled refugee flows, and mass internal population displacements to escape war zones.

Notably, all these challenges overlap each other, involving international actors often from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as well as Africans, as warlords, illegal arms merchants, and criminal drug cartels. Of particular relevance is the emergence of transnational organized crime as a growing phenomenon, especially in West Africa, replacing the cross-border and internal civil wars of the previous decade as the new major challenge for the United Nations, ECOWAS, and national authorities.¹ Illegal exploitation of natural resources remains among the major drivers of conflict from the mineral wealth of the DRC to the oil wealth of the Niger Delta in Nigeria and the offshore oil resources of the Gulf of Guinea from Cameroon to Angola. Piracy off the coasts of Somalia and Nigeria adds to the pressures for effective international and continental responses.² Finally, al-Qaida has become increasingly active in northwest Africa, posing an additional transnational security challenge to a fragile African subregion.

The interconnectedness of these challenges places greater demands on the African Union and the United Nations to improve the operational effectiveness of current peace operations as well as to strengthen their cooperation, together with the European Union and key bilateral actors, in long-term planning for an effective African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF).

Global, Regional, and Subregional Partnerships

The Evolving Relationship between the UN and African Security Mechanisms

Over the past fifteen years, the relationship between the UN and regional organizations in Africa has undergone very significant changes and remains in flux. The crises in the 1990s, in particular in Liberia and Rwanda, contributed to a crisis of legitimacy for the UN which spurred efforts to create new regional and subregional security mechanisms in Africa. These events also contributed to organizational and doctrinal changes within the UN. With

1 See, for instance, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Transnational Organized Crime in the West African Region*, 2005; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat in West Africa*, 2008.

2 The number of pirate attacks off the East African and West African coasts nearly doubled in 2007 and further increased in 2008. See International Maritime Organization, *Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships: Annual Report 2007*, Doc. MSC.4/Circ.115, April 12, 2008; International Maritime Organization, *Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships: Issued Monthly: MSC.4/Circ.*, January-September 2008, pp. 116-122 and 124-126.

the emergence of these new regional and subregional security mechanisms the need for coordination among them and with the UN significantly increased.

The prospects for efficient collaboration between the UN and Africa's regional security mechanisms are sometimes jeopardized by a basic dilemma: everybody likes coordination in theory, but nobody likes to be coordinated. In addition, there is growing concern in Africa that the international community does not give the new African institutions sufficient time to resolve crises on their own before seizing the agenda. While the international community needs to remain actively engaged in addressing Africa's security problems, it should seek a delicate balance between displaying commitment in global fora and leaving space for the African collective security mechanisms to resolve crises themselves.

Several recent examples of successful cooperation between the UN and African regional organizations were discussed, starting with regional cooperation in Sierra Leone. When doubts arose as to whether the results of the most recent elections in Sierra Leone would be universally accepted, the UN mission asked the ECOWAS chairman to intervene. He went to Sierra Leone twice, and succeeded to convince all parties to accept the outcome, in part due to his leverage as representative of the West African region. During the February 2008 postelection violence in Kenya, the conflict parties were hostile toward outside intervention, but they were finally convinced to accept AU mediation. The UN partnered with the AU and quietly deployed a team to support the AU, led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The AU framework also became the entry point for Annan's successful mediation effort in Kenya. In Guinea-Bissau the UN Security Council has been working hand in hand with ECOWAS to resolve the current crisis. The UN Department of Political Affairs has recently started to implement a desk-to-desk dialogue to involve its AU counterpart in the analysis of crisis situations in Africa.

The division of labor between the UN and

African regional organizations should be made on the basis of comparative advantage. At the seminar speakers referred to the concept of legitimacy to explain both the comparative advantage of the UN and of African regional security mechanisms. The UN's universality affords it a comparative advantage in generating legitimacy for a policy and in mobilizing resources for its implementation. On the other hand, when African regional or subregional organizations take the lead, they create a sense of regional and local ownership that enhances the policy's legitimacy in the eyes of many Africans.

The collaboration between the UN and Africa's regional security mechanisms needs to be adjusted, on a case-by-case basis, to varying degrees of integration in different subregions. ECOWAS and SADC have proved more successful than other African subregional organizations in their efforts to promote peace and security in their subregions. In West Africa, Nigeria's role as subregional hegemon has allowed ECOWAS to develop an effective conflict resolution capability, including the ongoing formation of a military standby force. In East Africa and in the Horn of Africa, the absence of a regional hegemon has rendered similar efforts more difficult to implement. The East African Community, for instance, has failed to find a consistent and cohesive response to the recent crisis in Kenya. The UN's relationship with each of Africa's subregional security mechanisms needs to reflect the degree and effectiveness of subregional integration.

Collaboration on Peacekeeping in Africa

The UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council should strengthen their process of mutual consultation, building on the progress achieved since the first meeting of the two organs in 2007.³ In this regard, peacekeeping requires particular attention. UN peacekeeping is frequently called upon to take over from AU peace operations, but the terms and circumstances of such transitions have sometimes given rise to bitter sentiments. For example, in the case of Darfur, the AU rejected the idea that the UN-AU hybrid force (UNAMID) was the result of the failure of the AU peace operation

3 See United Nations, *Report of the Security Council Mission to Addis Ababa, Khartoum, Accra, Abidjan, and Kinshasa, 14 to 21 June 2007*, UN Doc. S/2007/421, July 11, 2007; United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security*, UN Doc. S/2008/186, April 7, 2008; UN Security Council Resolution 1809 (April 16, 2008), UN Doc. S/RES/1809.

(AMIS). The AU felt that it had been persuaded by the international community to intervene in Darfur in the first place, that AMIS had gone as far as it possibly could go, and that an early transition to a stronger UN presence had been part of the original understanding. In Somalia, the UN is now facing significant pressure to take over from the AU peace operation (AMISOM) even though it was not consulted when the mission was established. Some participants held that the AU's decision to establish AMISOM was taken hastily, at the insistence of one AU member state, and without a prior assessment mission, and that the mixed success record of the force has now created a problem for the UN. One participant proposed that sequential AU and UN peace operations should not be established on an ad-hoc basis, but that there should be a trigger mechanism for transitions from AU peacekeeping by the UN or a hybrid force. Otherwise, it was noted, there is a danger that the UN would be held responsible for the results of decisions taken by the AU Peace and Security Council without prior consultation.

At present, the AU believes strongly in establishing more hybrid operations with the UN, while the UN has grown skeptical of this type of operation. An alternative way of cooperating would be the provision of UN financing for AU missions. This approach is currently being analyzed by a recently established AU-UN panel, which will submit a report before the end of 2008.⁴ Two alternative options are on the table, namely, a trust fund financed through voluntary contributions, and the provision of UN funds through assessed contributions to certain AU peace operations. The experience of existing trust funds leads to the presumption that the amount of funds generated through voluntary contributions would be limited. Countries in the Global North can be expected to be skeptical about a mechanism based on assessed contributions, but at the same time they would likely not want to be seen as publicly opposed to it.

The deployment of armed forces by non-African states—such as the British intervention in Sierra Leone, or the French operation in Côte d'Ivoire,

and the creation of the US AFRICOM—are problematic insofar as they constitute a parallel track to the generally favored multilateral frameworks of the AU and UN. At the same time, interventions in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and elsewhere have left the countries much better off than they would have been without them.

Collaboration among a Variety of International, Governmental, and Nongovernmental Actors

There is a need for the relationship between the AU and subregional security mechanisms to be more clearly defined. Subregional institutions should engage in more lessons-learned exchanges to gain from each other's experiences in establishing peace and security mechanisms. Think tanks and academics from within and outside the region can make valuable contributions to the institutional learning process of the new African security mechanisms.

There is also a need for greater collaboration within the UN system. To address Africa's interconnected security challenges that cut across the mandates of different UN agencies and programs, the UN system needs to overcome its silo structure.⁵ For instance, the UN Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should establish closer ties with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL. For example, UN police contingents should be linked to INTERPOL computers.

African actors appreciate the transnational and regional dynamics of security challenges, such as international terrorism, organized crime, and small arms and light weapons proliferation, and are increasingly adopting transnational and regional responses. For instance, the African Security Sector Network was created as a group of institutions and individuals working toward harmonizing various initiatives aiming at security sector reform (SSR), transformation, and good governance in Africa. National police services are cooperating through subregional Police Chiefs Committees, which maintain relationships with regional bureaus of INTERPOL.

4 United Nations, *African Union-United Nations Panel on Peacekeeping To Hold 15 September Meeting With Secretary-General, Submit Report By End of Year*, UN Doc. SG/A/1155, September 12, 2008.

5 See, for example, James Cockayne and Christoph Mikulaschek, "Transnational Security Challenges and the United Nations: Overcoming Sovereign Walls and Institutional Silos" (New York: International Peace Academy, 2008).

The experience of the campaign against drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau, a major transit hub linking the South American drug producers to the European markets, shows that many security challenges can only be addressed effectively through a regional strategy. As drug traffickers are being driven out of Guinea-Bissau, they increasingly operate in Guinea. In response, ECOWAS recently convened a regional high-level conference and an experts meeting in Cape Verde in cooperation with UNODC and the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA). Participants recommended that peace operations also increasingly look beyond the borders of the host country to address the transnational and regional aspects of the conflict. For instance, they should take into account the role of diasporas and international banks as channels of financing for conflict parties. To allow them to perform these tasks, the analytic capabilities of peace operations should be strengthened. In addition, the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General could be given regional mandates instead of national ones.

Building the Capacity to Respond

Closing the Capacity Gap of the AU and African Subregional Organizations

The international community needs to assist Africa's new security mechanisms to build and strengthen their capacities. At present, the African Union is confronted with shortcomings both in funding and human resources, as well as a mismatch between its mandate and its capabilities. The AU's annual core budget amounts to a mere \$90 million, with additional special programs and other projects funded by donors at a similar value. To this point, its peacekeeping mechanism is being built at a faster pace than its social policy, economic development, and peacemaking capabilities. One participant explained this discrepancy by citing the fact that the AU was better organized in the field of peacekeeping than it was in other areas, leading donors to focus on providing assistance to the

peacekeeping sector.

Simultaneous initiatives by subregional organizations to establish standby forces are competing for the same donor funds as the AU. For example, one participant described capacity building by the ECOWAS Standby Force as largely donor driven, while another speaker questioned whether this was in fact necessary. According to this argument, ECOWAS has a good internal funding mechanism at its disposal by taxing imports into the region, and it should implement the plan to earmark half a percent of these funds for its initiatives in the peace and security sector.

Member states sometimes treat the AU with disrespect, sending discredited national public officials and politicians to serve at the organization. Member states need to change this mindset and empower the AU Commission to recruit the right people, and to adopt more efficient operating procedures. Successful development of Africa's new security mechanisms depends on the political will of their members to strengthen the regional organizations' capacities. For instance, member states of ECOWAS should confront the perception of a sliding political will to strengthen the organization's peace and security mechanism which results from mounting problems in fielding sizable numbers of troops in recent years.

Providing capacity-building assistance is generally rather popular with donors and recipients since it usually does not involve steep political costs. The EU is currently the biggest donor to the AU, but the UN is catching up. The latter has adopted, together with the AU, a Ten-Year Capacity Building Program for the AU.⁶ The UN is also currently trying to strengthen its own capacities in Africa by fine-tuning the mandate of its Office for West Africa, and by considering the establishment of similar regional antennae through its Department of Political Affairs. This would help the UN understand African conflicts through a regional perspective.⁷

On AU-EU peace and security relations, it was noted that the EU has established a Peace Facility

⁶ United Nations, *Enhancing AU-UN Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union*, declaration of the UN Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission, UN Doc.A/61/630, November 16, 2006.

⁷ See United Nations, *Revised estimates relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 3, Political affairs, section 28D, Office of Central Support Services, and section 35, Staff assessment, related to the strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs. Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/62/521, November 2, 2007.

for Africa,⁸ which was originally designed to finance capacity-building efforts of African actors. So far, however, the Peace Facility has mostly covered the expenses of peacekeeping missions in Sudan (AMIS), Somalia (AMISOM), and the Central African Republic (COMUC). Last year the EU and AU adopted their first joint strategy, and they agreed to prepare an annual joint report on the progress made in its implementation.⁹

Strengthening State Capacity in Africa

The international community has been so strongly focused on building multilateral crisis response capacities that it may not have paid enough attention to the crucial need to build national capabilities which are able to take over local leadership during the postconflict transition period. In the aftermath of a war-related brain drain it is difficult for national authorities to build state institutions able to fulfill sensitive government functions (e.g., electoral commissions, anticorruption commissions, etc.). International intervention can mitigate such capacity gaps in the short run, but it can also create a culture of dependency in the long run. Multilateral statebuilding efforts have to strike a sensitive balance between establishing working institutions in a timely manner on the one hand and realizing local ownership of the postconflict transition on the other.

The strategies for postconflict institution building vary as widely as the many types of African conflict do. In Somalia, the state has to be rebuilt from scratch, while in many other countries the state's capacity and effectiveness has to be remodeled. State institutions established during the conflict may often be unable to address peacetime challenges effectively, and may need to be reformed. In many African war-torn societies there is an urgent need to close major state capacity gaps in rural areas. Strengthening state institutions should not stop at merely enhancing governmental capacity, as it sometimes requires changing the identity of a state, broadening inclusiveness, and improving the character of governance over all.

In many African countries that recently experienced civil wars, including Uganda, Somalia, and Sierra Leone, the rebels were militarily inferior to

the national army. Yet those insurgents managed to overwhelm the armed forces. In pursuing security sector reform, national and international actors need to take into account the fact that these armies were unable to defend their country against a politically motivated armed group. It would be a mistake to merely replenish the stocks of the armed forces, and thereby recreate the military that existed before the war. In order to build a more effective armed force, more radical reforms in the army's structure, training, and sense of civic duty need to be undertaken.

Improving AU and UN Mission Management

The multifaceted challenge of managing peace operations cuts across a vast array of interlinked issues, ranging from entry to exit strategies to challenges of coherence and coordination on the ground. Recent years have witnessed an unprecedented surge in multilateral field operations in Africa. Despite the growing commitment to Africa, participants noted that resources for deployment and maintenance of AU, UN, and ECOWAS peace operations in the region remain poor and inadequate. Little attention has been given to how to strengthen mission management, nor how to establish mechanisms for predictable funding of peace operations managed by the AU. Several recommendations were identified in order to move forward.

While peacekeeping is a fundamentally political activity which requires a "peace to keep" for multilateral efforts to be sustainable, success on the ground also depends on effective planning, organizing, financing, and evaluation. Furthermore, the way the AU and the UN exit is largely defined by the way they enter. Here, both the AU and the UN have struggled with developing strategic capabilities for crafting entry strategies. Many times, the AU enters into areas where the UN is reluctant to go (such as Somalia and Darfur), paving the way for a more robust UN force to take over. While this has at times been the only realistic alternative to inaction, this approach is problematic. The recent case of AU deployment into Somalia was highlighted by some as an example of

8 On the extension of the EU Africa Peace Facility for the 2008-2010, see European Commission Regulation (EC) No. 617/2007 of May 14, 2007, on the implementation of the tenth European Development Fund under the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement.

9 "The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. A Joint-Africa-EU Strategy," declaration adopted by the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika meeting of October 31, 2007.

where a more strategic entry strategy should have been applied.

Any successful entry strategy must be based on an accurate assessment of the particular context of a conflict or postconflict situation. To this end, mission planning—an activity today primarily directed from AU and UN headquarters—should allow greater input from those in the field who possess strong situational expertise, so that each mission fits the special challenges of a given conflict. Mission planning should also not only be part of a start-up strategy, but be seen as a continuing activity throughout the life of a mission. Involving a civilian planning officer in each mission could help improve long-term planning and the convergence of strategic priorities between field and headquarters.

The rising demand for increasingly complex and multidimensional peace operations in Africa brings its own set of challenges, in particular for decision-making by the mission leadership. Mission managers need to respond to an ever-changing environment in a flexible and comprehensive manner. They need to seek cooperation with a growing number of international, regional, subregional, and local actors. In addition, they are ultimately responsible for the safety and actions of all mission staff and troops on the ground. Despite this increased complexity and accountability, the mandates given by the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council are often weak or ambiguous. These mandates frequently fail to provide heads of missions with the appropriate level of authority for effective decisionmaking. Participants pointed out that more leverage and decisionmaking power should be delegated to the senior mission management, in particular to the heads of missions. In the case of the UN, this would require strengthening the role of both the SRSG and the DSRSG. At the same time; such expansion of authority needs to be coupled with increased transparency in the appointment procedures of senior mission managers.

At headquarters level, the challenge of poorly coordinated institutional silos was identified as a key obstacle to more effective mission management. Both the AU and the UN suffer from

compartmentalization and a lack of established procedures and structures for coordination. At the mission level, this problem is often solved by interagency coordination meetings. While such meetings may help bridge institutional silos temporarily, they are not a permanent solution to the problem. Ultimately, overcoming institutional silos takes both the necessary political will to transcend narrow bureaucratic interests and priorities, as well as more flexible mechanisms for coordination and coherence. One example to learn from could be the County Support Team (CST) initiative in Liberia which assisted UNMIL in decentralizing decision-making and improving coordination between local and regional actors.¹⁰

Another arena for improvement is the monitoring and evaluation of field operations. Here both the UN and the AU remain weak and poorly equipped to measure and monitor the successes as well as the failures of mission objectives. Where they exist at all, the so-called “end of assignment reports” resemble more a personal memoir than a comprehensive assessment of what went right and wrong. The UN’s results-based budget (RBB) system provides some means of monitoring budgetary output; however, it is primarily a budget tool and does not provide any means to assess the level of implementation of mission objectives.

A key component of strengthening mission management should also include building strategy for communication—both internal and external. Too often, the successes of UN and AU peacekeeping go unrecognized due to the lack of strategy on how to engage with international media and key stakeholders. Although some missions have public information officers, their duties are mainly to inform “upon request” and not to actively promote public awareness of AU and UN peace efforts. Strengthening internal communications routines in the mission would also help promote coherence and convergence of strategic priorities and mission objectives.

Finally, ensuring predictable funding for peace operations remains a key challenge for the sustainability and effectiveness of peace efforts in Africa. There is room for considerable institutional improvement in this area, particularly in strength-

10 See UNDP/DPKO, “The Example of County Support Teams as an Integrated Mission Approach at the Local Level in Liberia,” New York, November 2007. Available at http://humanitarian-space.dk/fileadmin/templates/billedeer/dokumenter/event_Early_Recovery/CST_Liberia_Best_Practice_2007.pdf.

ening human resources and internal management capacities of the AU. Funding for AU peace and security activities seems to be less a problem of donor attention, and primarily a problem of the limits of the AU's capacity to absorb donor contributions. Financial structures and mechanisms for accounting and donor follow-up remain weak and fragmented. The result is the rise of "informal" donor coordination structures, where donors often bypass formal mechanisms by financing personnel within the AU on an ad-hoc basis. This is not a viable long-term solution, since it carries the risk of a further politicization of the AU. Given that the AU is increasingly called upon to resolve acute crises on the continent, as well as to sustain long-term reconstruction efforts, more attention needs to be given to how to strengthen the AU's internal management procedures and capacities.

Rethinking International Engagement

Realizing the Responsibility to Protect

Attitudes toward international intervention have been driven by both the successes and failures of the international community to stop mass atrocities, as well as by fears of abuse of a right for third-party states to intervene in situations of intrastate violence. Relative successes in ending recent mass atrocities in Liberia, Burundi, and Sierra Leone strengthened confidence in international engagement and AU and UN peace and security efforts. On the other hand, failures such as the tragedies of Rwanda and more recently Darfur have led to increased suspicion toward international intervention in Africa.

Despite these ambivalent trends, participants noted that the concept of a "responsibility to protect" (RtoP) has made considerable progress in recent years. While many associate the concept with the outcome of the 2005 UN World Summit, key features of the concept were already reflected in the 2002 African Union Constitutive Act, which, in its Article 4h, established "the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State [...] in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and

crimes against humanity."¹¹ Even earlier, the 1999 ECOWAS Protocol relating to the mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, and security, and the 2001 SADC *Protocol on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation* introduced this notion in subregional African fora.¹² Subsequent AU documents have strengthened the normative framework of RtoP and helped to generate constructive debates in many African countries.

While progress has been made in the operationalization of RtoP, much more needs to be done to turn promise into practice. Three issue areas were highlighted as essential in order to move forward. First, there is a need to achieve greater conceptual coherence and clarification. To avoid further conceptual confusion, the international community needs to reaffirm the three pillars on which RtoP stands. The first pillar reconfirms the primary and continuing legal obligations of states to protect their populations—whether citizens or not—from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. The second pillar emphasizes the central role of the international community in assisting states to meet these obligations. Finally, the third pillar emphasizes the international community's responsibility to respond in a timely and decisive manner, in accordance with the UN Charter, if national authorities manifestly fail to protect their population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. This response can take many forms and is not limited to coercive action under Chapter VII, which should be understood as a measure of last resort. A combination of diplomatic, economic, and military components may be used as appropriate, on the legal basis of Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the UN Charter.

Secondly, in order for the international community to respond effectively to RtoP violations, there is a need to develop tools and institutional arrangements. In accordance with the third pillar of RtoP, these tools should not be limited to military components, but responses should utilize the whole tool kit available to the UN system and its regional and subregional partners.

11 See African Union, "Constitutive Act of the African Union," July 11, 2002, available at www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Constitutive_Act_en.htm.

12 ECOWAS, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security*, December 10, 1999; SADC, *Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation*, August 14, 2001.

Ultimately, the responsibility for prevention and protection lies within member states, and the role of the AU and the UN is to build capacity to fine-tune early warning mechanisms and assessment. Here much needs to be done in promoting information-sharing systems and mechanisms for structural prevention.

Thirdly, there is a need for dialogue and consultations within the UN, the AU, subregional organizations, and African states on how to advance the implementation of the concept. Informal fora for exchange among key stakeholders should be encouraged, and the participation of civil society in this dialogue should also be encouraged. This would help eliminate conceptual confusion and generate momentum to move forward.

Measuring the Success of International Engagements

While Africa remains a strategic priority for both AU and UN conflict management activities, neither organization has developed adequate tools for measuring the effectiveness of multilateral engagement. This remains particularly true in postconflict strategies where multilateral actors lack clearly defined end-state goals and benchmarks for measuring progress. Compounding these challenges are the diverging strategic priorities of regional, subregional, and local actors active in peacebuilding activities in Africa. The AU policy on postconflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) was identified as a way forward to enhance coherence and combine strategic objectives with local ownership and legitimacy.¹³

Current postconflict recovery challenges throughout Africa remain daunting, ranging from social and youth empowerment to challenges of democratization and good governance, rule of law, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) as well as security sector reform. As such, peacebuilding is a complex and long-term process requiring persistent and coordinated efforts by all actors involved.

It was noted that benchmarks for successful peacebuilding remain vague and frequently inconsistent. In many African postconflict situations, the electoral process has become a key

indicator for successful peacebuilding. Although elections remain central to the democratic process their value should not be overstated. Adopting such a narrow approach risks ignoring their potential to defuse existing tensions and heighten the risk of a relapse into conflict. A more comprehensive indicator for stability includes other measures of recovery such as effective DDR, as well as SSR. Thus, instead of considering the electoral process as an “exit-cue” for international engagement, the international community should regard elections as one single component of a more comprehensive and long-term postconflict recovery strategy.

Like elections, SSR has become a standard component of peacebuilding strategies. Participants noted that unreformed or poorly constructed security sectors in Africa remain decisive obstacles to the promotion of security and sustainable development. As such, current SSR programs should make concerted efforts not to merely replenish the stocks of a structurally flawed national security sector. One way for international actors to avoid this is to link up with regional and subregional organizations that carry the institutional memory and contextual understanding of the root-causes that led to the collapse of the security sector in the first place.

On democratization and good governance, participants emphasized that much more attention needs to be paid to historical and cultural factors that form the basis of the social fabric of a country. Too often political reforms are applied in “a vacuum,” without taking into account the specific context and history of each postconflict environment. In this regard, concern was raised that, while African institutions are being developed, they are often given very little time to mature and arrive at their full potential. Under the banner of “good governance” the international community sometimes prematurely dismisses these young institutions as failures, without allowing them an opportunity to become sustainable and effective.

In light of these challenges, the common objective of the AU and the UN should be to mobilize their institutional machineries to develop sustained and coherent approaches to the complex

¹³ See Executive Council of the African Union, *Decision on the AU Policy Framework on Postconflict Reconstruction and Development*, Doc. EX.CL/274 (IX), June 2006.

and difficult needs of postconflict societies. For the AU, this will mean solidifying the African Union policy on postconflict reconstruction and development (PCRD). Many challenges remain however, in order to translate the first continentally driven postconflict policy into deliverables on the ground. Several steps were considered as essential. First, clear operational guidelines need to be developed with benchmarks for SSR, DDR, justice reforms, human rights, and reconciliation. Second, on partnerships, the policy should work toward clarifying the comparative advantages and division of labor among African regional, subregional, and local actors. And third, strategic and operational structures for the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy's implementation need to be put in place.

Seminar Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the seminar discussions, several recommendations were identified in order to strengthen multilateral, regional, and subregional capacities to better address Africa's peace and security challenges:

Global, Regional, and Subregional Partnerships

1. Today's interlinked peace and security environment is too complex for the United Nations or any other international actor to handle alone. It calls for effective and mutually reinforcing global, regional, and subregional partnerships that are flexible and responsive to the complex realities on the ground.
2. The creation of the African Union (AU) in 2002, combined with the proliferation of subregional security mechanisms, has contributed to a more robust African peace and security architecture. However, regional and subregional cooperation remains fragmented, uncoordinated, and often conceived on an ad-hoc basis with no long-term strategy. The UN, the AU, and African subregional organizations should translate cooperation from the political level to day-to-day collaboration at the working level, and leverage the comparative advantages of the AU, UN, and subregional organizations.
3. There is need for greater clarity in the relationship between regional and subregional security

mechanisms. The relationship between the regional economic communities and the AU is not clearly defined, in particular their respective roles in mediation and peacekeeping. In the same vein, subregional organizations should engage in more lessons-learned exchanges to gain from each other's experiences with establishing peace and security mechanisms.

4. The AU and African subregional organizations should bring their ambition to be a "first line of response" in closer synchronization with current capabilities. In multidimensional peace operations, they should define their roles with a view to balancing their ambition, the sustainability of their leadership, and their staying power. Over time, the AU and the UN should work toward developing more effective transitional arrangements between AU- and UN-led peace efforts.
5. The UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council and their secretariats should increase interaction and coordination through mutual processes of consultation, building on the progress achieved since the first joint meeting of the two bodies in 2007.

Capacity Building

6. In order to effectively build the capacity of Africa's new security mechanisms it will be necessary to address current crises and long-term capacity building at the same time. This presents a considerable challenge. Other challenges include shortcomings in funding and human resources management, and just as importantly, a lack of effective and sustained political leadership. Overcoming these challenges will require the political will of African leaders to empower the commissions of regional and subregional organizations to change their operating procedures.
7. Funding for AU's peace and security activities is less a problem of donor attention, and primarily a problem of the limits of the AU's capacity to absorb donor contributions. To address these shortcomings, AU member states should commit to building more effective financial mechanisms and to implementing the financial reforms recommended by the independent audit of the 2007 High-Level Panel.

8. Strengthening Africa's subregional rapid deployment capacities will take greater coordination of funding streams between the AU and its subregional partners. Currently, simultaneous initiatives to establish subregional standby forces are competing for the same donor funds envisaged for the AU, leading to a mismatch of funds.
9. Three years after the 2005 World Summit, the AU-UN Ten Year Capacity Building Program has yielded few concrete outcomes. The AU and UN should seek greater clarity on the priorities of the ten-year plan and take a sequenced approach to regain momentum.

Challenges for Peace Operations in Africa

10. Peacekeeping remains one of the chief challenges for the relationship between the AU and the UN. Recent years have witnessed an unprecedented surge in peace operations in Africa. In addition to the surge in the volume of operations, the AU and the UN are increasingly in charge of more complex and multidimensional operations.
11. When determining the comparative advantages of multilateral, regional, and subregional actors, there is no perfect or simple solution. Each conflict has its own dynamics and each actor its own comparative advantage. But this should not prevent the AU and the UN from seeking closer and more effective cooperation on a flexible case-by-case basis.
12. There is a need for a common understanding of the nature, merits, and challenges of hybrid operations. The mixed experience of UNAMID, the AU-UN force, has led to significant differences in the approach and willingness to continue hybrid arrangements by the AU and the UN.
13. African actors increasingly appreciate the transnational and regional dynamics of security challenges such as international terrorism, organized crime, and small arms and light weapons proliferation. The UN Secretary-General should support this approach by giving regional mandates to his special representatives and mission heads.

Measuring Successes of International Engagement

14. Both the AU and the UN need to develop adequate tools for measuring the effectiveness of their efforts in Africa. This remains particularly urgent for postconflict strategies where multilateral actors need to define clear end-state goals and common benchmarks for successful recovery.
15. A comprehensive indicator for postconflict stability includes elections together with disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and security sector reform. The international community should not overstate the value of elections as an indicator for successful peacebuilding. Such a narrow approach would risk neglecting the potential of elections to refuel existing tensions and political divides.
16. The AU policy on postconflict reconstruction and development provides a unique platform to leverage local ownership in Africa. To improve the implementation of the PCRDR, strategic and operational structures for monitoring and evaluation should be put in place.

APPENDIX

Conference Agenda

Coping with Crisis in Africa:
 Strengthening Multilateral Capacity for Peace and Security
 Vienna, Austria
 June 1-3, 2008

June 1, 2008

Venue: National Defence Academy

14:00-14:30

Introductory Remarks

Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen, *President, International Peace Institute*
 General Raimund Schittenhelm, *Commandant, Austrian National Defence Academy*
 Minister Gerhard Reiweger, *Deputy Director, Diplomatic Academy Vienna*

14:30-15:30

Coping with Crisis, Conflict, and Change – Global Perspectives

Presentation by Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen

We live in an increasingly complex world. Challenges to global peace, security, and development evolve in more dangerous configurations, revealing alarming interlinkages and overlaps. They reinforce and feed off each other. The ill-effects not only form “hot spots” around the world, but are also felt at the global level. In an increasingly connected world and fast-evolving environment, it is imperative that multilateral institutions and policies keep pace with the changing face of global insecurity.

Discussion

15:30-15:45

Coffee Break

15:45-17:30

Session 1: Multilateral Approaches to Peace and Security in Africa – Leveraging Comparative Advantage

Africa remains a key arena for multilateral activity in peace and security and the location for major UN and AU peace operations. This panel will examine the key challenges facing these organizations in developing and strengthening norms, assisting state and local capacity, as well as providing security and other related public goods. It will also look at the comparative advantages of the UN, AU, and other partners and consider how these can be used to best effect.

Chair

Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen

Speakers

Professor Margaret Vogt, *Deputy Director, Africa 1 Division, UN Department of Political Affairs, New York*

“The Role of the UN and AU in Supporting Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking Efforts in Africa”

Dr. Columba Blango, *Consultant, Governance Decentralization Program, Government of Sierra Leone*

“Security and the Challenge of Economic and Political Development in Africa”

Discussion

17:30-20:00

Reception, Dinner, and Opening Address**Introductory Remarks**

Gen. Edmund Entacher, *Chief of Defence Staff, Austrian Ministry of Defence*

Speaker

Ambassador Said Djinnit, *Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, United Nations Office in West Africa, Senegal*

“Cooperating for Peace and Security in Africa”

June 2, 2008

Venue: Great Hall, Diplomatic Academy Vienna

Making, Keeping, and Building Peace in Africa

09:00-10:30

Session 2: Making Peace in Africa – Bringing an End to Crisis

Africa remains a central focus of UN conflict prevention, mediation, and peacemaking efforts, from Western Sahara to Sudan and from Côte d'Ivoire to Uganda. This panel will offer first-hand observations from the three practitioners in seeking to achieve the dual objectives of peace and justice for countries confronted by or emerging from protracted conflicts.

Chair

Ambassador Jiří Gruša, *Director, Diplomatic Academy Vienna*

Speakers

Professor Francis M. Deng, *Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide, New York*

“Preventing Genocide: Prospects for Implementing the North/South Agreement in Sudan”

Mr. Shola Omoregie, *Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Guinea Bissau*

“Making Peace in Africa – Bringing an End to Crisis in West Africa”

Professor Mwesiga Baregu, *Department of International Relations, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*
 “The East African Community and Prospects for Peacemaking in Eastern Africa”

Discussion

10:30-11:00

Coffee break

11:00-12:30

Session 3: Keeping Peace in Africa –Rethinking Partnerships for Peace

Since 2002, the UN, AU, and EU have embarked on new efforts to develop effective partnerships in peacekeeping in Africa. More recently, new emerging actors, especially China, are impacting the strategic context for peace and security on the African continent. This panel will explore potential and ongoing partnerships for peace and security in Africa. It will also address partner challenges in building African institutional capacities for conflict prevention, as well as assess the changing strategic value of Africa to global actors.

Chair

Dr. Edward Luck, *Senior Vice President and Director of Studies, International Peace Institute; Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General, New York*

Speakers

Dr. Philipp Schauer, *Head, UN Policy Division, Federal Foreign Office, Germany*
 “Challenges of Building Capacity of African Organizations for Conflict Prevention: European Perspectives”

Dr. Siphamandla Zondi, *Programme Director, Africa, Institute for Global Dialogue, South Africa*
 “New Actors in African Peace Operations”

Discussion

12:30-14:00

Lunch and Special Address

Introductory Remarks

Dr. Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl, *Director-General for Development Cooperation, Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs*

Speaker

Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, *Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Vienna*
 “The Security and Development Nexus: Developing and Implementing Mutually Supporting Security and Development Strategies in Africa”

14:00-15:30

Session 4: Managing Peace Operations in West Africa – Challenges from the Field

West Africa, once characterized as the most volatile region in Africa, has made important progress with the end of the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This panel will explore ongoing challenges in maintaining stability and averting new crises in the region. It will also

explore the manifold management and organizational challenges faced by current UN missions in the region including in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau.

Chair

Ambassador John L. Hirsch, *Senior Adviser, International Peace Institute*

Speakers

Mr. Sunday Ochoche, *Senior Political Affairs Officer, Peace and Governance Section, UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone*

“Managing Peace Operations in the African context”

Brig. Gen. Hassan Mamman Lai, *Chief of Staff, ECOWAS Standby Brigade, Nigeria*

“Managing Peace Operations in West Africa: Perspectives from ECOWAS”

Mr. Francesco Mancini, *Associate, International Peace Institute*

“Managing UN Field Missions: Lessons from West Africa”

Discussion

15:30-16:00

Coffee Break

16:00-17:30

Session 5: Peacebuilding in Africa – Beyond Empirical Sovereignty

It is now widely recognized that simply signing peace agreements does not in itself ensure sustainable peace. In countries emerging from conflict, it is important to promote mechanisms that avert recurrence. This panel will examine the relationship between statebuilding and peacebuilding in the African context, and the special challenges for the UN and the AU not only in strengthening national governments but also on the deeper challenges of achieving economic development and viable democratic institutions.

Chair

Professor Mwesiga Baregu

Speakers

Dr. Naison Ngoma, *Head, Security Sector Governance Program, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria*

“The African Union Postconflict Reconstruction Policy: Challenges and Prospects”

Dr. Timothy Murithi, *Senior Research Fellow, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, UK*

“Tension and Contradictions between Peacebuilding and Statebuilding”

Discussion

18:30-20:30

Reception and Dinner Hosted by the Austrian Ministry of European & International Affairs

Introductory Remarks

Ambassador Dr. Johannes Kyrle, *Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Austria*

Speaker

Ambassador Dr. Georg Lennkh, *Special Envoy for Africa, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Austria*

“From Joint Strategy to Joint Action”

June 3, 2008

Venue: Great Hall, Diplomatic Academy Vienna

Responding to New Challenges

09:00-10:30

Session 6: The Crime-Conflict Nexus in Africa – The Role of Multilateral Responses

This panel will consider how transnational criminal networks sustain armed conflict in Africa and how these activities adversely impact UN peace operations. It will evaluate ongoing efforts to link traditional peacekeeping effectively with INTERPOL and national police forces in order to check organized crime. It will address the various impediments to effective cooperation between peacekeepers and police organizations, and offer recommendations to strengthen this relationship.

Chair

Ambassador Dr. Thomas Stelzer, *Assistant Secretary-General, Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York*

Speakers

Mr. Shola Omoregie, *Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau*

“Responding to Criminal Networks in Guinea-Bissau”

Mr. Antonio Mazzitelli, *Regional Representative, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, West Africa*

“Building Capacity to Respond to West African Crime Networks”

Mr. James Cockayne, *Associate, International Peace Institute*

“Pilfering the Peace: Responding to Transnational Crime as a Peace Spoiler in Africa”

Discussion

10:30-11:00

Coffee Break

11:00-12:30

Session 7: Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: Lessons from Rwanda to Darfur

At the World Summit in September 2005, the UN endorsed the “responsibility to protect” as a major commitment of the international community. Three years on, continued violence in Darfur and elsewhere underscores the tremendous challenge of translating this important norm into operational reality. The panel will consider how to develop an effective consensus in fulfillment of the “responsibility to protect” and suggest steps that the UN, AU, Africa’s partners, and civil society organizations can take to advance this important normative concept.

Chair

Ambassador John L. Hirsch

Speakers

Dr. Edward Luck

“From Word to Deed: Realizing the Responsibility to Protect”

Professor Margaret Vogt

“Conflict Prevention in Africa: Has it Worked and Can it Work?”

Discussion

12:30-14:00

Lunch

14:00-15:00

Session 8: Conclusion and Way Forward: What Future for African Peace and Security Operations?

Chair

Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen

Speakers

Brig. Gen. Walter Feichtinger, *Head of the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management, Austrian National Defence Academy*

Dr. Edward Luck

15:00

Close of Seminar

The **INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE (IPI)** is an independent, international institution dedicated to promoting the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts between and within states through policy research and development.

Since its founding in 1970, IPI has run a series of annual seminars designed to foster the professional development of practitioners, policymakers, and influential figures in the field of peace and security, with a particular emphasis on the needs and interests of the broader UN community. The annual seminars are residential workshops which take up a different topical theme each year, bringing in eminent speakers and scholars to engage with participants. The result of almost forty years of IPI professional development activities has been the building of an impressive worldwide network of experienced policy-makers and practitioners.

IPI's longest-running series is its flagship **Vienna Seminar**, held annually since 1970 with a special focus on bringing military and civilian personnel together to address issues critical to their roles in peace operations and related conflict management activities.



777 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017-3521 USA

TEL +1-212 687-4300 FAX +1-212 983-8246

www.ipinst.org