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AU Summit, January 2015

The PSC Summit: deferred promises and raised expectations

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its summit meeting in Addis Ababa decided not to discuss the much-anticipated report of the Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, led by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. The problems surrounding the report are in part due to the lack of a clear strategy to mobilise political will for its adoption and implementation. Heads of state of the PSC also decided to send a regional intervention force to fight Boko Haram. Questions remain, however, over the command and control of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF), the scope and flexibility of contingents to undertake cross-border operations and the timelines for its mobilisation.

The PSC held its first summit-level meeting of the year on 29 January 2015 on the sidelines of the 24th session of the African Union (AU) Assembly. According to the agenda circulated to member states on 22 January, four items were to be discussed, two of which dealt with South Sudan. The state of the conflict and the peace process in South Sudan was the first item. The other, last on the summit agenda, was consideration of the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (ACISS). The two other agenda items were Boko Haram and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

South Sudan: tabling of the Obasanjo report deferred

When the summit convened after 7pm on 29 January, the two agenda items relating to South Sudan were collapsed into one. Following the adoption of the agenda, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, chairperson of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), briefed the Council on the IGAD peace process on South Sudan and the region's concern over the continuing failure of the parties to sign a comprehensive deal. The AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, informed the PSC that the ACISS had finalised the report on its investigations and that the establishment of the high-level ad hoc committee for South Sudan was being finalised. South Sudan's Foreign Minister Dr Barnaba Marial Benjamin also made a statement in which he implored the AU and the international community to be patient with the parties, as South Sudan was still a very young nation.

Signs emerged very early in the week that the report might be put on hold

Despite the fact that the AU Commission (AUC) formally notified member states of the PSC that the report would be considered and shared with them, signs emerged very early in the week that the report might be put on hold. Within the AUC, the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Office of the Chairperson expressed concern that the timing of the report would derail the peace process. On 27 January, two days before the PSC summit, AUC chairperson Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma met

PSC Chair for February

H.E. Mahfud R. Rahiam

Ambassador of Libya to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the AU and UNECA

Current members of the PSC

Algeria, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Guinea, Libya, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda

the Chair of the ACISS, former president Obasanjo, but they reportedly did not agree over the report. Ahead of the PSC summit, other consultations behind closed doors were also held with key members of the PSC on deferring consideration of the report.

In anticipation of the scheduled consideration of the report, Obasanjo was meant to hold a press conference a few hours before the PSC summit started at the AUC headquarters. This was, however, cancelled at the last minute due to lack of consensus over the timing and format of the press conference.

By the time the PSC summit was convened, member states were ready to put the report on hold. However, there was an apparent lack of clarity or communication during the proceedings. President Alpha Condé of Guinea, who chaired the session, was handing the floor to Obasanjo when Desalegn intervened and proposed a motion to defer the consideration and release of the report until the peace talks were concluded. With the motion seconded by South Africa's President Jacob Zuma, followed by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, it was the end of the discussion on the report. The session ended shortly thereafter and Obasanjo left without making any statement.

In the communiqué that the PSC adopted at that session, it decided 'to defer the consideration of the report of the Commission of Inquiry to a later date'. The PSC also reiterated its readiness 'to impose sanctions against those obstructing the cessation of hostilities agreement and the political process'. Additionally, in welcoming the establishment of the high-level ad hoc committee, the PSC urged the committee 'to take all necessary steps in order to enhance the IGAD-led mediation process'.

On 30 January, Obasanjo held a media briefing on the activities of the ACISS. At the briefing, which was not open for questions, Obasanjo read a statement outlining the mandate of the Commission, the work done and what remains to be done. Regarding the decision of the PSC on deferring consideration of the report, he said, 'We hope that IGAD mediation and peace process efforts will succeed soonest and will be immediately followed by the consideration and publication of the Commission's report.'

The PSC reiterated its readiness to impose sanctions against those obstructing the cessation of hostilities agreement

Despite expectations that the two warring factions would sign a power-sharing deal, the talks, which ran for five days, ended without such a deal. At the conclusion of the talks on 1 February, the parties only managed to sign a deal identifying

areas of agreement and issues requiring further negotiation. Unlike the Protocol of Principles signed by the parties and IGAD in August 2014, the 1 February 2015 agreement makes no reference to the ACISS report.

New plans for the fight against Boko Haram

The PSC also looked into the regional and international efforts to combat Boko Haram. At this session, Chergui presented a report of the AUC chairperson to the PSC. The PSC also heard statements from the representatives of the member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Ghana, as chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Increasing demand from the region for collective action and the escalation in Boko Haram attacks contributed to mobilising high-level interest

Increasing demand from the region for collective action and the recent escalation in Boko Haram attacks, including the destruction of the MJTF base in Baga and the use of children in suicide bombings, contributed to mobilising high-level interest and attention. Building on the outcome of the 5th ministerial meeting held in Niamey, Niger on 20 January 2015, there were at least two major issues this session had to address. The first was the establishment of the legal framework necessary for the deployment of the MJTF, which the LCBC and Benin decided to establish to jointly combat Boko Haram. The second was the adoption of decisions on the steps needed to meet the operational requirements necessary for the speedy operationalisation of the MJTF.

Nigeria, which previously expressed reservations over the establishment of such a collective framework for countering Boko Haram, did not raise any objections to the agenda. In fact, despite these reservations, Nigeria allowed, apparently on the basis of a bilateral deal, Chadian troops to engage in a battle with Boko Haram on Nigerian soil in the days leading up to the PSC summit. Although Nigerian authorities and diplomats did not seem keen on the AU or regional actors playing a major role, they embraced the PSC's ability to mobilise international political, financial and logistical support as and when needed.

The communiqué the PSC adopted at the end of its session contains a number of important elements. Significantly, the PSC decided to authorise the deployment of the MJTF for an initial period of 12 months (renewable) with a strength of up to 7 500 military and other personnel. The communiqué mandates the MJTF a) to create a safe and secure environment in Boko Haram-affected areas to reduce violence

against civilians within the bounds of international law; b) to facilitate the implementation of stabilisation programmes, including the restoration of state authority; and c) to facilitate humanitarian assistance.

One of the issues that limited progress during the course of 2014 in terms of the establishment of the MJTF was a lack of consensus between Nigeria, on the one hand, and other LCBC countries and Benin, on the other, on the scope of the MJTF's operational flexibility in terms of cross-border operations. The formulation that was agreed upon and contained in the PSC communiqué envisages the MJTF contingents undertaking 'operational coordination amongst the affected countries in the fight against Boko Haram' and '[conducting] joint/simultaneous/coordinated patrols and other types of operations at the borders of the affected countries'.

The PSC also called on the UN Security Council to urgently adopt a resolution that would, among others, a) endorse the deployment of the MJTF and b) authorise the establishment of a trust fund to sustain the MJTF's operations.

The PSC also called on the UN Security Council to urgently adopt a resolution that would endorse the deployment of the MJTF

Other notable elements of the PSC communiqué include the provisions relating to humanitarian assistance and follow-up on decisions. The PSC mandated 'the Sub-Committee of the Permanent Representative's Committee on Refugees, IDPs and Humanitarian Affairs to urgently undertake a visit to the region, in order to assess the situation and make recommendations on how best to mobilise, from within the continent, additional support to complement the assistance being provided by international partners'. As a framework for follow-up on its decisions, the PSC requested the AUC chairperson 'to provide monthly updates to Council on the implementation of this communiqué'.

Issues for follow-up

On South Sudan, the decision deferring the consideration of the ACISS report does not specify a timeline. In the statement Obasanjo gave, he said the ACISS believed that the timely implementation of the report was essential in charting a course for peace, justice, healing and reconciliation in South Sudan. While this offers some assurance that the report will not be shelved indefinitely, it is not known when, or how, the report will be made public.

This can in part be blamed on the lack of a clear strategy for the adoption and implementation of the report, including

implementing the various recommendations as part of the transitional process. Although the mandate of the ACISS is confined to preparing the report, the objectives behind its establishment will not be achieved without mobilising political will for the adoption, release and implementation of the report. For both the AU and the PSC, delivering on the promise of the ACISS (in terms of reconciliation, national healing, accountability and justice) also demands the establishment of a mechanism for the follow-up and implementation of all aspects of its recommendations.

Obasanjo said the timely implementation of the report was essential in charting a course for peace, justice, healing and reconciliation in South Sudan

With respect to the decision on the regional effort to combat Boko Haram, a number of issues remain. One such issue is the command and control of the MJTF, particularly the role of the AU as a mandating authority vis-à-vis that of the LCBC countries and Benin on strategic and operational decision-making. The establishment of the headquarters of the MJTF and its operationalisation is another outstanding issue. Following Boko Haram's attack on Baga, the original base of the MJTF, the ministerial meeting of 20 January decided to establish its headquarters in Ndjamena, Chad. While the PSC's request for its sub-committee to undertake a visit to the region is commendable, the timeline and processes for its implementation were not defined.

Some of these issues were considered when the concept of operations (CONOPs) for the MJTF was drawn up and adopted. The technical meeting for drawing up the CONOPs took place in Yaoundé, Cameroon on 5–7 February. This was expected to bring together representatives of the LCBC member countries, Benin, the AU and the UN.

AU Summit, January 2015

Review of outcomes on pressing peace and security issues



The African Union (AU) summit which concluded with the adoption of Agenda 2063 – the continent’s blueprint for development – once again gave African leaders and international role players an opportunity to engage on pressing issues affecting the continent.

While the theme of the summit was ‘Women’s empowerment and development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063’, peace and security unsurprisingly dominated both the agenda and the high-level sideline meetings, with mixed results. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) held its first summit-level meeting for 2015 on 29 January, where it took a decision on action against Boko Haram and deferred the tabling of a crucial report on South Sudan (See *Addis Insight* page 2).

Divisions undermine the International Contact Group on Libya

Libya has been a major concern for the AU due to the deteriorating security situation and deepening political divisions in the country. The second meeting of the International Contact Group on Libya (ICG-L) took place on the sidelines of the summit. The meeting, which was held at ministerial level, was co-chaired by AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Smail Chergui and Special Envoy of the United Nations (UN) Secretary General to the AU Haile Menkerios.

Libya has been a major concern for the AU due to the deteriorating security situation and deepening political divisions in the country

Chergui noted that despite recent positive developments, including the start of the UN-led talks in Geneva, the situation in Libya remained ‘generally bleak’. Menkerios emphasised that without an inclusive process, the recent gains would remain fragile.

Regional and global rivalries – both ideological and strategic – continue to affect efforts to resolve the Libyan conflict. These divisions had a direct impact on the meeting, held behind closed doors in Addis Ababa. First the meeting was interrupted due to an objection from the internationally recognised Libyan government about who should be included in the ICG-L. Libya’s Foreign Minister Mohammed Al-Dairi then walked out of the meeting because he was against the invitation extended to Doha and Ankara – two governments which he accused of supporting terrorist groups in Libya. In addition, the Egyptian foreign minister Sameh Shoukry was notably absent from the opening session and Egypt was represented at a lower level in the later sessions. The AU, however, stood its ground on the participation of Qatar and Turkey in order to ensure a cohesive international effort involving everyone with influence over the various Libyan actors.

The latest meeting was also divided over the idea of an international military intervention to resolve the Libyan crisis. Algeria is strongly opposed to the idea, while two unidentified countries are said to favour military intervention to prevent a regional crisis.

Africa to cover 25% of AU peace budget

One of the crucial issues discussed at the summit was the AU's request for member states to increase their contributions, and the consideration of the report on alternative sources of funding for the AU. Although the report did not receive the required support of member states when considered at the ambassadorial level, consensus had been reached by the time the report reached the Assembly. The adoption of the report by heads of state was considered one of the successful outcomes of the summit, contrary to early expectations.

Applying the principle of fairness and solidarity, countries' contributions to the AU budget have been reassessed

A proposal made by AU finance ministers, led by Nigerian Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, to increase member states' contributions to the AU's operational budget to 100%, its programme budget to 75% and its peacekeeping budget to 25%, was accepted. This is to be phased in within five years from 2016.

The finance ministers are giving countries an option to pay from their treasury or consider other proposed sources, such as a US\$10 levy on tickets for international flights originating in Africa; a US\$2 hospitality levy; or an SMS levy.

'Applying the principle of fairness and solidarity', countries' contributions have been reassessed, and they have been grouped into three tiers: 60% of the budget is to be covered equally by countries with shares of gross domestic product (GDP) above 4% of the total of the continent; 25% of the budget equally covered by countries with shares of GDP between 1% and 4%; and 15% of the budget equally shared among countries with shares of GDP lower than 1%. Six countries (Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and South Africa) are in the first tier; the next 12 (Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo [DRC], Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia) are in the second tier; and the remaining 36 member states make up the third tier.

Disarming the FDLR

Efforts to disarm the rebel Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) in the eastern DRC, which is believed to have between 1 500 and 2 000 soldiers, also attracted

particular attention on the sidelines of the summit. Shortly after the start of the summit, the DRC government announced that it was launching a military campaign against the FDLR after the deadline for the group to disarm expired on 2 January. In a statement issued on 30 January, after a meeting held on the sidelines of the summit, the Southern African Development Community again expressed its concern about the failure of the FDLR to disarm voluntarily.

In its decisions, the Assembly reiterated the AU's support for the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement on the DRC and the Region. It also emphasised the crucial importance of the initiative for the neutralisation of the FDLR and other armed groups in eastern DRC.

Dealing with Ebola

The threat of Ebola and the AU's efforts to deal with the disease in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone was visible at the summit in Addis Ababa. Delegates to the summit were routinely checked as they entered the AU conference centre and warnings about Ebola were widely distributed.

The AU Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA) has mobilised over 800 health workers so far, according to Social Affairs Commissioner Dr Mustapha Sidiki.

Representatives of the three affected countries told the AU that the situation in their countries was encouraging and thanked the AU for its support. However, a lot still needs to be done to rid these countries of the disease and to mitigate the after-effects of the epidemic.

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AU Commission Chairperson Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma pointed out that many lessons had been learnt from the Ebola epidemic. The AU, for example, decided to set up an African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in 2015. UN Economic Commission for Africa executive secretary Carlos Lopez also called for the debt of Ebola-affected countries to be scrapped, to help them overcome the devastating socioeconomic effects of the disease. Currently these countries' debt totals US\$3 billion and earnings from exports are falling below the payments they have to make to service their debt.

ICC again under fire

One of the items that were proposed for inclusion, at the request of the East Africa block, as agenda items of the summit during

the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee was the implementation of previous AU decisions on Africa and international criminal justice. After reviewing the issue, the AU Assembly welcomed the withdrawal of charges against Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta late last year. It reiterated previous calls to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to withdraw the case against Sudan's President Omar al Bashir and Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto, and it called for follow-up on previous decisions concerning the revision of the Rome Statute to give immunity to heads of state and government.

The AU Assembly welcomed the withdrawal of charges against Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta late last year

Additionally, the AU also urged member states to sign the Malabo Protocol on the criminal jurisdiction of the African Court on Human and People's Rights so that it could come into operation and try international crimes in Africa. The Malabo Protocol guarantees immunity from prosecution for current heads of state and government, as well as senior officials.

In an apparent attempt to address the problem of funding the court, the Assembly called for the establishment of a special fund and the convening of a resource mobilisation conference to raise funds for this purpose. Speaking at the Summit, Kenyatta announced that his country was donating US\$1 million to the African Court.

Zimbabwean chair to focus on Western Sahara

The Western Sahara conflict, one of the longest running issues on the continent, was also on the agenda of the summit and included in the report of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to the Executive Council. The Commission expressed 'grave concern' over the continued 'illegal occupation of the territories of Western Sahara' and recommended that the AU organise some of its activities in the liberated territories of Western Sahara to show solidarity with the struggle for an independent Saharawi Republic.

The chair of the Council, Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, also announced that Western Sahara would be one of the priorities of Zimbabwe's AU presidency for 2015.

In his first speech as the new chairperson of the AU Assembly, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe stressed that 'Africa's failure to decolonise Western Sahara would be a negation [of the] African ideals and principles' of the founding fathers of the continental organisation. Mugabe, who was applauded

for the above statement, also called for the implementation of all relevant UN resolutions requiring that the Saharawi people hold a referendum on self-determination and emphasised that Africa would not be completely free 'as long as our brothers and sisters in Western Sahara remain under Moroccan occupation'.

African contributions invaluable to UN Peace Support Operations Review

In his address at the opening of the AU Assembly, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the UN was reviewing its peace support operations. While urging AU member states to operationalise the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis, he emphasised that Africa's contribution to this review was invaluable, as Africa formed the backbone of the UN's peacekeeping capacity. During a press conference on the sidelines of the summit, Ban also said that the changing nature of security and conflict forced the UN to change peacekeeping principles. Responding to a question on doctrinal differences between the AU and the UN on when and how to deploy peacekeeping missions, Ban hinted at a shift in UN policy, saying, 'Because of the changes of the situations these days, peacekeepers are now being deployed in difficult conditions ... we have to deploy peacekeepers where there is no peace to keep.'

Ban said that the changing nature of security and conflict forced the UN to change peacekeeping principles

The 17-member UN Review Panel, chaired by Jose Ramos-Horta, will consider issues facing peace operations, including 'the changing nature of conflict, evolving mandates, good offices and peacebuilding challenges, managerial and administrative arrangements, planning, partnerships, human rights and protection of civilians'. Ban said a report of the panel was expected later this year. The report of the PSC to the Assembly on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa anticipated that the AU Commission and the PSC would facilitate a successful interaction with the UN Panel during its visit to Addis Ababa, which is scheduled for 9–13 February 2015. To this end, the report also envisaged that a common African position on the matter would be developed and adopted by the PSC to feed into the review.



AU Summit, January 2015

Late-night talks fail to produce a conclusive deal for South Sudan

Talks in Addis Ababa on the sidelines of the African Union (AU) summit produced a partial agreement between the warring parties in South Sudan. The agreement was signed on 1 February 2015. Many issues, however, remain outstanding and the mediator, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), says the upcoming round of talks, starting on 20 February, will be the final round. IGAD insists that a comprehensive power-sharing deal be signed by 5 March.

The situation in South Sudan was one of the major items on the agenda at the first summit-level meeting of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the year, which took place on 29 January. The meeting was expected to be the most critical of all the meetings the PSC had held on South Sudan. (See *The PSC summit: deferred promises and raised expectations* page 2)

The PSC meeting came shortly after a new round of IGAD-led peace talks on South Sudan commenced. Despite the failure of previous negotiations, there had been an expectation that the new round of talks could deliver progress towards the signing of a power-sharing deal.

Although there is still no regional or international consensus on sanctions, both IGAD and its partners – notably China and the troika of the United States, United Kingdom and Norway – have increased pressure on the parties to bridge their differences on the structure and division of executive power, and to sign the power-sharing deal.

IGAD insists that a comprehensive power-sharing deal be signed by 5 March

This round of talks came soon after the various factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed a re-unification deal on 21 January 2015 in Arusha, Tanzania. The agreement, which is 12 pages long, commits the signatories to 'expedite the conclusion of the peace agreement in order to end the war'.

The report of the Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan was also expected to be tabled during the 29 January PSC meeting. Both sides are clearly anxious to hear the details of the report, which is said to contain the names of individuals responsible for the outbreak of the war and for atrocities committed during the course of the conflict. The report will be the basis for disqualification from holding public office, and for prosecution. By drastically upping the stakes, the expected release of the report gave new impetus to the IGAD peace process.

A new partial agreement

On 1 February 2015 a partial agreement was signed by the two parties, following five days of talks in Addis Ababa. IGAD chair Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of

20 February

START OF LAST ROUND OF TALKS

5 March

THE DEADLINE FOR SIGNING OF
PEACE DEAL

Ethiopia warned that a failure to stick to this deal and finalise negotiations would have grave consequences both for the leadership of the two parties and for the region. In a clear sign of IGAD's frustration and for the first time, chief IGAD mediator Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin stated that the next round of talks scheduled for 20 February 2015 would be the last and said he hoped that the parties would finalise negotiations and sign a comprehensive agreement by 5 March 2015.

Both the UN and the EU expressed their disappointment over the failure of the parties to sign the power-sharing agreement during this round of talks

Both the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) expressed their disappointment over the failure of the parties to sign the power-sharing agreement during this round of talks. The EU in particular stated that it was essential that the negotiations were completed no later than 5 March and supported the repeated IGAD and AU warnings of sanctions if the two sides continue to violate the cessation of hostilities agreement.

Major sticking points in the IGAD-led peace talks

The talks in Addis Ababa held between 27 January and 1 February were crucial, as the issues up for negotiation have to be settled before the transitional government of national unity can be installed. IGAD mediators had consulted with both sides prior to the talks. Following the meeting China had convened in Khartoum on 12 January, the mediators met South Sudan's President Salva Kiir in Juba on 19 January, after which Kiir agreed to attend the talks in Addis Ababa. The IGAD mediation team made the necessary preparations to ensure the smooth running of the talks.

Although the two sides have already agreed to jointly establish a national unity government, they remain divided over the division of power in the transitional national unity government. There were at least three major sticking points between the two warring factions when they resumed talks on 27 January.

The first was the structure of the executive. During the previous talks in August 2014, the discussion focused on the proposed establishment of the new position of prime minister, but the government of South Sudan did not accept the proposal. Related to this was the issue of how executive power will be divided between the president and the prime minister. The second disagreement is over the proposal for both sides to maintain separate armies for an agreed period of time. Finally, the use of federalism in the reorganisation of the country remains another contentious point.

Still no compromise on power-sharing

The chief negotiators, who arrived on 25 January, laid the groundwork and prepared the agenda for the talks between Kiir and his former deputy, Riek Machar.

At the start of the talks, IGAD presented a compromise deal as a basis for negotiation. The proposal had Kiir retaining his post and Machar becoming the first vice president, instead of the earlier proposal for prime minister. In terms of the division of executive power, the mediators proposed a 60–30–10 distribution of portfolios among the government, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO) and others. While the proposed structure of the executive was not a subject of major disagreement, Kiir and Machar held talks for long hours over the distribution of executive power.

Despite the fact that he is militarily on the back foot, Machar insisted that there be a 50–50 division of power between the government and the SPLM-IO. He also demanded that the division of power should be reflected at all levels of government, from the top down to local government structures.

The proposal by the opposition that no decision can be made in government without the agreement of 80% of members was strongly opposed by the government. It argued that such a high threshold for decision-making was not only contrary to democratic principles of decision-making but would also lead to a gridlock that could paralyse the government.

The two days of intense negotiations between the two sides, first through their negotiating teams and later in direct talks between the two leaders, failed to produce a compromise. On 28 January, after long hours of talks, Kiir fell ill with a nose bleed and the talks were adjourned until the following day. As the two sides failed to reach an agreement, IGAD urged them to continue their negotiations until 31 January. With no breakthrough made, Kiir and Machar held direct talks with their negotiators on 31 January that lasted until 2am the following day.

Kiir and Machar held talks for long hours over the distribution of executive power

A late-night agreement

During the final sessions of the talks Desalegn and Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta joined Kiir and Machar to help them bridge their differences. However, none of these last-minute efforts yielded the breakthrough that IGAD and the region sought.

Late at night on 1 February, however, the two sides agreed to sign a document on the issues that they had agreed upon and made a commitment to continue talks after consultations with their respective constituencies on the outstanding issues.

The agreement envisages that a transitional government of national unity will be established no later than 9 July 2015, the end of Kiir's current presidential term.

On the question of the division of power between the two sides, the agreement signed on 1 February only states that 'ministerial portfolios shall be allocated amongst the parties to this agreement according to percentages to be negotiated'. With respect to decision-making, while it stipulates that decisions on procedural issues will be made by simple majority, it is silent on the decision-making formula for substantive issues.

There are a number of headings that do not have any content. One such heading is 'Federalism'. The provisions on 'Justice, Accountability, Reconciliation and Healing' are also not the same as those contained in the 'protocol of principles' considered during the talks in August 2014. Unlike the protocol, this agreement does not make any reference to the AU Commission of Inquiry's report. But the latest agreement envisaged the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission and an independent hybrid criminal court for investigating and prosecuting those individuals carrying the greatest responsibility for violations of 'international humanitarian law, and or applicable South Sudanese law, committed since December 15, 2013'.

Late at night on 1 February the two sides agreed to sign a document on the issues that they had agreed upon

Major issues for the PSC

The first major issue for the PSC is how to contribute to the success of the IGAD peace process, which seems to be closer to achieving comprehensive peace.

The second major issue for the PSC is the consideration and adoption of the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan.

Options for the PSC

The most significant contribution that the AU can make to the peace process is to strengthen the effectiveness of the IGAD process. The PSC can decide on four steps.

The first is to operationalise the AU high-level ad hoc committee of heads of state and government in support of the IGAD mediation with clear terms of reference.

Second, the PSC should adopt a decision requiring all AU member states to extend their full support to the IGAD peace process, including curbing the proliferation of parallel processes that divide the focus of the negotiating parties and thereby undermine the peace process.

Third, the PSC is expected to welcome the outcome of the 1 February agreement and warn the parties that it will take all necessary measures, including sanctions, if the parties breach their commitment to respect the cessation of hostilities agreement and finalise talks on outstanding issues by 5 March.

The most significant contribution that the AU can make to the peace process is to strengthen the effectiveness of the IGAD process

Finally, the PSC should agree on a date to consider and adopt the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. Since adopting the report will not be enough, the PSC could also take measures to implement all the recommendations of the report. These could include a) establishing a strong mechanism that oversees and supports the implementation of the recommendations or, preferably, assign this responsibility to the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan and b) calling on the UN Security Council to endorse these and other measures to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission's report.

Addis Insight

PSC focuses on high-risk elections



While the 14 African elections monitored by the African Union (AU) last year were largely peaceful, the same might not be said of those coming up in 2015. In several countries the polls are taking place following political conflict, while others are being held even before the fighting has died down, such as in South Sudan or the Central African Republic (CAR). Peace and Security Council (PSC) members are concerned that AU instruments, including those on elections, are not being implemented by member states. So far only 23 countries have ratified the AU's 2007 Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

At least 18 AU member states are scheduled to hold either parliamentary or presidential elections, or both, this year. Many of these are being held in a context that increases the risk of political violence. Risk factors include structural and institutional weaknesses; issues of citizenship and voting rights; eligibility of candidates; attempts at extending constitutional term limits; politicisation of state institutions, including security institutions; lack of autonomy of electoral management bodies; an uneven playing field and highly restricted political spaces; and issues of inequality, marginalisation and youth unemployment.

On 14 January 2015, as part of the effort to assess those countries facing a risk of violence or political crisis around elections and chart the preventive course of action available to the AU, the PSC held an open session on 'The prevention of election-related conflicts in Africa'. The session included a briefing by Dr Khabele Matlosa, AU Director for Political Affairs, on major issues concerning elections and election-related violence on the continent.

Elections in many parts of Africa mean much more than just a vote destined to transfer political power. They are also processes to foster and strengthen democratic culture and civil liberties. Despite the possible risk of violence and political instability, regular elections are critical to ensuring the development of democratic values. In her presentation, Matlosa noted that all of the 14 elections that took place in 2014 and were observed by the AU Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) were conducted in a relatively peaceful and orderly manner with no reports of significant cases of election-related violence.

However, this year the increase in the number of countries holding elections and their state of peace and security has raised concerns. Four of the countries holding elections (Côte d'Ivoire, South Sudan, Sudan and the CAR) host some of the major ongoing peace support operations in Africa. While the CAR, Nigeria, South Sudan and Sudan are affected by major conflicts, others, including Burundi, Togo and Egypt, have experienced incidents of violence during the past year.

Elections in conflict and post-conflict countries are challenging and risky. The PSC session discussed the elections in South Sudan and the CAR in light of the debate surrounding 'elections in the absence of institutions and norms'. It was highlighted that

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ELECTIONS ARE TAKING PLACE IN
AFRICA IN 2015

only one-third of the CAR is under the direct and effective control of the government. Support for elections in these countries comes from a belief that elections facilitate the emergence of legitimate political leadership and the transition to stability. However, member states and international organisations were concerned that elections in post-conflict and conflict countries could cause a relapse into violence and instability. In the absence of meaningful reconciliation and transition, election victories in these countries could be used as ‘the continuation of war by other means’ in winner-takes-all political systems. There were calls for the fulfilment of the conditions needed for democracy, national reconciliation, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, and the establishment of proper institutions to manage the electoral process.

Interventions from PSC members and partners, as well as international organisations, have emphasised the importance of building an effective early warning mechanism. The idea of putting in place preventive diplomacy mechanisms – including mobilising regional and international attention and diplomatic efforts, and eventually sending delegations to countries at risk of election-related violence – were proposed as steps that the AU should start working on immediately to prevent such incidents. Members of the Council also noted the importance of extending the deployment of election observation teams to countries before and beyond the polling day. It was suggested that such missions should monitor media coverage and other elements of the election process, including campaigns and voter registration.

Discussions on electoral reforms favouring proportional representation were also part of the open session, and the role played by civil society groups in voter education and the

promotion of election dialogue and initiatives to defuse conflicts was also highlighted. In addition, the independence and impartiality of security forces was mentioned as a vital element to ensure the integrity of elections.

Members of the Council and other participants repeatedly raised the issue of the non-implementation of relevant AU instruments. The AU has a set of well-designed normative frameworks on democracy and elections, including its Constitutive Act, the 2002 OAU/AU Declaration on the Principle Governing Democratic Elections and the 2007 Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. However, the lack of political commitment to sign, ratify, domesticate and implement these instruments remains a major obstacle to the AU’s democratisation project. There have not been any new signatories to the 2007 Charter on democracy since 2013, and thus far only 23 member states have ratified the Charter.

In light of the above, it is clear that attention has to be drawn to the need to regularly assess countries facing election-related violence, the nature of the risk and the preventive measures that should be taken, tailored to the specific needs of each country. The PSC also has to prepare itself for the management of election-related conflicts, should preventive measures fail or not be deployed in due time. To this end, the PSC should continuously monitor the course of events in all the countries facing a risk of violence and task the AU to put in place the relevant strategies. This includes the issuing of early warnings; the deployment of preventive tools such as the use of good offices and the dispatch of missions of the Panel of the Wise. These are aimed to prevent, as well as to manage and resolve, election-related violence through preparing conflict resolution and management plans, particularly for high-risk countries.

Upcoming elections in Africa – 2015*

Country	Type of election	Main contenders	Major issues	Risks
Burundi	Presidential: 26 June (1 st round) Legislative: 26 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Council for the Defence of Democracy–Forces for the Defence of Democracy (ruling party) Democratic Alliance for Change National Liberation Forces 	Lack of clarity around constitutionality of third-term election; narrowing of political space; incidents of conflict among rival political actors (involvement of the ruling party’s youth league in instigating violence); and issues around land	High risk: Political intimidation, violence and curtailment of political space, as well as contestation over the legality of the president’s running for a third term, may escalate during the election, which may significantly affect the relative peace and stability the country has seen the past decade
Burkina Faso	Presidential, parliamentary: 20 September (proposed date) Municipal: 8 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democracy and Socialism Party (Parti pour la démocratie et le socialisme) Union for Rebirth/Sankarist Movement (Union pour la renaissance/Mouvement Sankariste) Congrès pour la démocratie et le progress (former ruling party) 	First election in the post-Compaoré era; keeping the military from interfering in politics; lack of credible and capable institutions that can oversee the election process; and other legacies of authoritarianism	Medium risk: A relatively smooth transition period between Compaoré’s regime and the upcoming election may contribute to a stable electoral process. However, there is still a possibility of political unrest, mainly because of the country’s long history of authoritarianism and the role of the military
Central African Republic	Presidential, parliamentary: expected before end of August		Remains in conflict since 2013; lack of national institutions able to provide the necessary legal, administrative, and security support to the electoral process; and division between Christians and Muslims creates a highly charged political environment	High risk: Unresolved conflict; lack of reconciliation between the two main armed political forces; absence of institutions to oversee the administration and conduct of the election and may even further deepen the conflict in the country

Country	Type of election	Main contenders	Major issues	Risks
Côte d'Ivoire	Presidential: October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rassemblement des Républicains, led by the incumbent Alassane Ouattara Front Populaire Ivoirien, formerly led by Laurent Gbagbo and currently led by Pascal Affi N'Guessan 	Legacy of the 2010 post-election conflict; post-conflict political processes; problems of reconciliation and inclusive reconstruction; and sustained rivalry between Gbagbo supporters and those of the incumbent	Medium risk: While the incumbent is expected to win, existing political and regional divisions and instability affecting parts of the country may lead to limited instability
Egypt	Parliamentary: March and April		Conflict in the Sinai; continuing political tension due to violent crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood; sporadic incidents of protests and violence; and suppression of political freedom	High risk: A highly charged political environment, and continuing tension between supporters and opponents of the military regime, may lead to incidents of violence similar to those witnessed around the presidential election in 2014
Ethiopia	Parliamentary and Regional Assembly: 24 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incumbent Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front, led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn Main opposition parties: Unity for Democracy and Justice, All Ethiopians Unity Party, Blue Party, Medrek and the Ethiopian Democratic Party 	Continued narrowing of political space; weak and deeply fragmented opposition parties; highly controlled electoral process and the conclusion of the transition after the untimely demise of former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in 2012	Medium risk: The incumbent admits that there is a possibility of election-related 'political tension and unrest' in some urban areas, but no risk of this getting out of hand
Guinea	Presidential: planned for November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée L'Union des Forces Républicaines Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National 	History of political instability; divisive ethnic politics; weak or fragile institutions; and the effects of the Ebola outbreak	Medium risk: The effects of the Ebola outbreak and the fragility of relevant institutions are set to present significant challenges to the organisation and conduct of the election including the manipulation of the outbreak by political elite
Lesotho	Parliamentary: 28 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Basotho Convention Lesotho Congress for Democracy Basotho National Party 	Political instability; and partisan security institutions	Medium risk: The parties' willingness to go to the polls and significant regional oversight will limit the risk of violence, although contestation over the credibility of the election could trigger instability
Nigeria	Presidential: 28 March State: 11 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peoples' Democratic Party, led by incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan All Progressive Congress, a new coalition established in February 2013 	On-going conflict with Boko Haram; volatile political environment (along the north/Muslim and south/Christian divide); protracted violence in Niger Delta; and the establishment of a new coalition of opposition parties, which may give the ruling party a real test	High risk: A number of factors, including the nature of the electoral campaign, a history of electoral problems, lack of full confidence in state institutions involved with the election, a highly charged political atmosphere and Boko Haram's campaign of terror, could all contribute to both pre- and post-election-related incidents of violence
Sudan	Presidential and legislative: 2 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Congress Party, led by President Omar Al-Bashir National Democratic Alliance National Umma Party Sudan Revolutionary Front 	Political dialogue between the ruling party and the main opposition parties unsuccessful thus far; on-going conflicts in different parts of the country (Darfur, South Kordofan, Blue Nile State); history of election malpractices and manipulation of both the election process and results	High risk: A number of factors including the building of alliance by the opposition, the contestation over the national dialogue, incidents of protests witnessed over the course of the past two years, spike of violence in Darfur during the past year, the continuing state of conflict in the two areas are likely to heighten tension that may induce incidents of violence as various political forces use the election to mobilize various sections of society
South Sudan	Presidential and parliamentary: 9 July		First election in post-independence era; deeply fragmented political elite; on-going conflict; lack of capable institutional and administrative capacity	High risk: The current ethnic conflict significantly compromises the possibility of having a smooth electoral process
Tanzania	Presidential, parliamentary and local: October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chama Cha Mapinduzi (ruling party) Civic United Front Chadema 	Incumbent President Jakaya Kikwete is ineligible to run for a third term; increasing capacity of opposition parties may force the establishment of a 'unity' government; concerted effort is needed to ensure the democratic consolidation process since the first multi-party democratic election in 1992 remains intact	Low risk: Given that elections in the last two decades were seen to be peaceful and credible, the upcoming election is also expected to be smooth. However, issues such as the constitutional review process, increasing youth unemployment and corruption remain major issues
Togo	Presidential: planned for March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rally for the Togolese People, led by President Faure Gnassingbe National Alliance for Change, led by Jean-Pierre Fabre 	Third-term candidacy of the incumbent; strong opposition coalition created to challenge the incumbent; rising opposition to the Gnassingbe regime	High risk: Tension is mounting in the country as the incumbent insists on running for third term and opposition protests become commonplace, stoking fears of a violent electoral contest or even a Burkina Faso-style popular uprising
Zambia	Presidential: 20 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patriotic Front Party, led by Edgar Lungu United Party for National Development, led by Hakainde Hichilema 	Ensuring a smooth transition from the presidency of the late Michael Sata	Low risk: Given the track record of the country in holding peaceful elections, it is expected that the electoral process will not see any political unrest

* Other countries holding elections include Benin, Comoros, Mauritius and São Tomé & Príncipe.



Situation Analysis

Escalating crisis in Libya despite peace talks

The dramatic attack on Tripoli's luxury Corinthia Hotel on 27 January is just the latest in a long list of violent incidents in Libya in recent months. The war between rival militias continues despite peace talks in Geneva, mediated by the United Nations (UN). The International Contact Group for Libya, which met for the second time on the margins of the African Union (AU) summit in Addis Ababa on 28 January, is a potential vehicle for a coordinated response to the crisis.

Despite progress in the UN-led peace-making efforts in Geneva, where the cessation of hostilities was announced in mid-January, the crisis in Libya is not subsiding.

Two rival governments seated in different parts of the country are still at loggerheads and the country's major cities are engulfed in devastating violence. Two of Libya's largest airports, including a large number of aircraft, have been destroyed. The country's oil infrastructure, other economic facilities, residential neighbourhoods and government institutions are constantly bombarded and shelled. On 22 January, fighters linked to the renegade General Khalifa Haftar took control of the Benghazi branch of the Central Bank, which has estimated reserves of US\$100 billion in cash and gold in Benghazi and Tripoli. This heightened fears of a scramble among rival militias for the bank's reserves, as the militia broke into the safe and cleared it out. Taking advantage of the deepening insecurity, on 27 January a group claiming allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) bombed the Corinthia Hotel in Tripoli, killing five people and damaging the hotel.

According to reports, more than 600 people have been killed in Libya since October 2014. More than 30 people were killed in January alone. The humanitarian crisis is worsening as 350 000 Libyans are internally displaced and more than 100 000 have fled to neighbouring countries.

The International Contact Group for Libya is a potential vehicle for a coordinated response to the crisis

The Tubrok parliament, based in the east, is considered the base of the secular forces fighting the Islamist forces in the west. The Tripoli-based group, which calls itself Libya Dawn, is an alliance of hard-line and moderate Islamist groups and members of the ethnic Berber minority, cooperating with factions from Misrata. Both groups are loose confederations of numerous armed groups with regional, tribal or local affiliations. Following the ceasefire, the Libya Dawn militia alliance announced that it would allow safe passage to channel humanitarian aid to displaced and distressed civilians.

Geneva talks a step in the right direction

The start of the first round of UN-sponsored talks between the different warring factions is considered a positive step towards finding lasting solutions to a conflict that is dragging Libya down. The cessation of hostilities agreement accepted by the parties that took

100 000

LIBYAN REFUGEES HAVE FLED TO
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350 000

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part in the Geneva talks from 14–15 January 2015 was widely welcomed. The talks are aimed at ending the violence and ensuring the withdrawal of armed groups from Libyan cities. It also aims to get both parties to reach a consensus on a unity government, and to get Libya's constitutional transition back on track. Issues surrounding state structure, governing arrangements, the role of Islam, oil distribution, the purpose of the military, treatment of members of the former regime and regional autonomy will dominate the next round of talks.

The start of the first round of UN-sponsored talks is considered a positive step

Apart from the incidents of violence registered since the conclusion of the first Geneva talks, the UN-brokered talks also face opposition from some hard-line groups. On 24 January one of the biggest Islamist groups in Libya, Ansar al-Sharia, confirmed the death of its leader Mohammad al-Zahawi. It was reported that his death resulted from wounds sustained in a battle with Haftar's troops in Benghazi last October. Both the United States (US) and the UN have designated Ansar al-Sharia as a terrorist organisation.

Tensions between Tubrok and Tripoli rose after the attack on the branch of the Central Bank. The UN-led talks also risked being compromised when the Tripoli government refused to take part in talks outside Libya.

Sahel leaders call for external intervention

As international efforts to stop the conflict continue, some regional powers are siding with different factions in the conflict. There are concerns that the conflict has turned into a proxy war, with regional rivalries deepening. Beyond causing divisions in organisations such as the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic States, the conflict continues to spill over into the already precarious Sahel region. The Sahel, with a swath of ungoverned areas, has become a major route for arms and human trafficking from and to Libya, and provides safe havens to extremist groups with links to al-Qaeda and ISIS abusing Libya's porous border. Various Sahel countries feel Libya has become the source of many of the problems in their region.

In recent months, an increasing number of Sahel countries have called for an urgent intervention in Libya. The issue was high on the agenda during the Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security, held in Senegal on 15 and 16 December 2014. During the meeting, heads of state from Senegal, Mali, Chad and Mauritania said that to stop terrorism in the Sahel, something had to be done about the crisis in Libya, which has a spillover effect in the entire region.

During the closing session, there was agreement at the forum that the current crisis was due to the fallout from the NATO intervention to oust former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. 'The West didn't ask us our opinion when they attacked Libya,' Chad's President Idriss Deby told Yves Le Drian, the French Minister of Defence. 'They achieved what they wanted. The destruction of Libya, the death of Gaddafi,' he said. According to Deby, NATO created the chaos in Libya and should now intervene to make sure order is restored. The other leaders echoed similar views.

This call for military intervention not only lacks wider African support but is also strongly opposed by other countries neighbouring Libya, including Algeria, Sudan and Egypt, albeit for different reasons. Some have also argued that renewed intervention could backfire, especially within the context of a general breakdown in the rule of law and the proliferation of weapons in the country. Several thousand Libyans are also said to have joined ISIS and Western intervention could again play into the hands of extremists.

Within the AU, although much of the emphasis is on seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Smail Chergui, speaking at the second meeting of the AU-led International Contact Group on Libya, held on 28 January, said that 'we should support those willing to seek [a] solution to their grievances, while acting resolutely against spoilers'. The AU's Panel of the Wise, at its meeting held on 9 January 2015, expressed its concern over the worsening security situation and political instability in Libya and called for renewed efforts to address the conflict, which is also negatively affecting regional peace and security.

In recent months, an increasing number of Sahel countries have called for an urgent intervention in Libya

Efforts to forge a united international approach

Efforts by the UN, through its Special Representative Bernardino León and the UN Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), have been the most notable peace initiatives in Libya so far. León succeeded in getting a large number of stakeholders together in Geneva, including members of the former parliament, the General National Congress (GNC). The dialogue resulted in the cessation of hostilities agreement and the facilitation of the flow of humanitarian aid to those who have fled the fighting.

Western powers that played a leading role in removing Gaddafi from power in 2011 have mostly been passive, taking a back seat in responding to the current security crisis.

On 17 January the European Union discussed the possibility of imposing an oil embargo to pressure Libyan forces into finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict. According to a confidential document on Libya, obtained by the Reuters news agency, the embargo is presented as one of a range of options to push for peace in the country. Another option is freezing the overseas assets of the Libyan Central Bank should the crisis turn into a full-fledged civil war. Italy's Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, also recently indicated that a peacekeeping force could be considered if the talks failed.

Western powers that played a leading role in removing Gaddafi from power in 2011 have mostly been passive

The International Contact Group for Libya, which held its inaugural meeting on 3 December in Addis Ababa in the presence of León, met for the second time on 28 January 2015 on the sidelines of the 24th AU summit in Addis Ababa. Given the diversity of actors involved and the divergent positions they hold, the contact group could be used to facilitate coherence and consolidate united support for the peace-making efforts. It can play such a role only if it wins the confidence of all actors, not least of all that of Libyan actors. The group's second meeting was meant to review the evolution of the situation in Libya, as well as the regional and international efforts to address it. (See article on page 5)

Major issues for the PSC

A major issue for the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) is how to support the peace effort, including the cessation of hostilities agreement and the opening of humanitarian access to communities in need of international aid.

The other major issue is how to leverage the international contact group to build a common approach by countries in the Sahel and North Africa.

Another issue is how to ensure that regional and international action is coordinated and complementary.

Options

The PSC could endorse the outcome of the contact group meeting and request the AU Commission to submit a report on the follow-up to and implementation of the steps agreed at during the meeting on 28 January.

The PSC could also follow up on its previous decision on the establishment of the AU High Level ad hoc committee and to that end task the Commission to ensure that the establishment and operationalisation of the committee is geared towards

achieving a unified approach and mobilising Africa-wide support for the ongoing peace effort.

The PSC could also reiterate its previous statement that there can be no military solution to the crisis in Libya.

Documentation

AU documents

- Press release: (28 January 2015) Conclusions of the 2nd meeting of the International Crisis Group for Libya
- <http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/conclusions-of-the-2nd-meeting-of-the-international-contact-group-for-libya>
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UN documents

- Resolution 2014S/RES/2144 (14 March 2014) Extension of the mandate of UNSMIL until 13 March 2015 and the mandate of the Panel assisting the 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee until 13 April 2015
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PSC Interview

The high cost of defeating al-Shabaab



On the margins of the 24th African Union (AU) summit, held in Addis Ababa from 23 to 31 January 2015, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission for Somalia, Ambassador Maman Sidikou, appealed to the international community to help the peace efforts in the country. He said the AU Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) has been increasingly gaining ground against the terror group al-Shabaab in large parts of Somalia.

The PSC Report spoke to him following his press conference at the summit.

Mr Sidikou, you said in your press conference that AMISOM has 'liberated' 80% of Somalia's territory. Why does one then get the impression that al-Shabaab is stronger than ever and increasingly perpetrating terror attacks in neighbouring countries like Kenya?

Somehow we have to be better at informing and utilising modern media to get our message across. al-Shabaab are experts at this. Their daring actions grab the headlines. Like the terrible things they've done in Kenya, like simply stopping a bus and killing people. This is awful, it is criminal and that captures more attention.

That's one of reasons that despite 80% of the territory being liberated, despite the booming economy, despite people in Somalia going to the beach, that is never shown on television. Networks like CNN are fonder of reporting the violence than of the stories of the reconstruction of Somalia.

So, clearly al-Shabaab will do anything to get attention, but this only strengthens our resolve. I want you to know that the effort to rid Somalia of al-Shabaab is pursued relentlessly. We will not spare any areas where they are hiding.

What is clear is that al-Shabaab is defeated. Don't be fooled by the bombs and terrorist acts. Their propaganda of fear is no longer working. We can see that in rural areas where people are for the first time starting to speak up against al-Shabaab.

Neighbouring countries have been bearing the brunt of a lot of the conflict in Somalia. If things are going better, as you say, does that mean refugees, who are for example in camps in Kenya, will be returning home?

Two weeks ago the UN [United Nations] announced that people have started to return. This is something Somalia and the UN have to keep working on. I know because that is my role, to talk to both presidents [of Somalia and Kenya] about many things, including refugee issues. We have talked about the mechanisms to prepare people from both sides so that when they go back they don't just return but that provision has been made for their return. This is important for Kenya and obviously for Somalia as well.

Somalia is also a place where the diaspora is playing a fantastic role. We just had an international Somali diaspora conference in Kigali where plans were put in place

and people were discussing candidly with government. The Rwandan experience is of course a model to follow. These refugees are not all destitute people. Many had somewhere to go so they left Somalia. They have a lot to offer their country.

AMISOM is training the Somali army and police force. How far are you with this process?

We have to be patient. Somalia did in the past have a strong army. Now, 24 years later, we are starting from scratch. They are receiving training from us and from other partners as well. Helping the Somali army and police force is our exit strategy. Of course that doesn't mean we are leaving Somalia; that would be a huge mistake at this stage.

You have asked for more international help, why is this necessary?

We launched an appeal to the international community to continue supporting AMISOM and also to help the people of Somalia. The needs of the women and children are immediate. They need basics like clean water, health care, education and a situation where law and order prevails.

The AU is involved in a number of peace missions across Africa. It has now also launched a new force to fight Boko Haram in Nigeria. Are African armies not overstretched?

AMISOM has around 22 000 personnel. These are professionals and they're doing a good job. Nevertheless, you never have enough troops to go around, because it is about keeping a territory. It's not just about coming in and liberating an area, it's how you keep it. You have to be able to patrol, you also have to do training, capacity building of the Somali army. Our personnel are very busy.

So it would be good that when our troops have moved into an area the police can come in and do the policing. They should be trained so that communities can ensure their own security, and that way we can sow the seeds of law and order and policing in general.

You said in your press conference that African soldiers are the 'unsung heroes' of Africa.

If we look at this from a higher level, from the African perspective, it is generally regions being asked to send troops, not just one country. This is one reason I say I'm proud to be African and I'm proud to be part of this [AMISOM]. It is because these are Africans saying this is our business. We start intervening in a crisis and only then we go to other partners to say support us.

Fighting al-Shabaab is a concern of everyone in the region. If today, for example, we say this is the end of AMISOM, you go home, the other countries won't accept that. Do you think Kenya and Ethiopia will just stay and look at what is happening in Somalia and not feel concerned? President Uhuru [Kenyatta] will say, 'Guys I don't agree; my first responsibility is the security of my people. And the security of Somalia is linked to my security.'

Yes, it's true that some armies are small, but if you look at a country like Chad for example, they had a civil war, they fought against [Muammar] Gaddafi, and now they have one of the strongest armies in the region. They intervened where they felt they were needed. Security of people is paramount.

Now the AU is preparing its African Standby Force, which is really necessary. It can't come fast enough.

There is a lot of debate here at the summit about terrorism in Africa that is a global phenomenon. Do you believe terror groups like al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, ISIS and others are linked?

We are all concerned about the links between these groups and it's not as if we're not aware of the international movement of terrorism. It is, of course, important that infiltration and the flow of funding be curtailed.

I also believe that the countries that are fighting terrorism, whether from IGAD [Intergovernmental Authority on Development] or inside Somalia, should do more to share information. It is not about having information, it is about sharing it, so that it can be used to curtail or to prevent some of the things al-Shabaab does.

Some say al-Shabaab is above all a nationalistic Somali group and the solution must come from inside Somalia.

Some time in history al-Shabaab may have been a nationalistic group. They even worked together with others in government at some stage. But the ideology that came later on is not a local ideology. It came from elsewhere.

I'm a Muslim and have been practising this religion since I was four. Then someone comes along and says you shouldn't talk to so and so; you should pray this way; you should wear these clothes. This is unthinkable.

Is it possible to negotiate with al-Shabaab?

Clearly, in al-Shabaab you have a core group of hardliners, then another group that is more nationalist and the young folks who don't know why they are there. How can you discuss with the hardliners, somebody who says that your brand of Islam is no

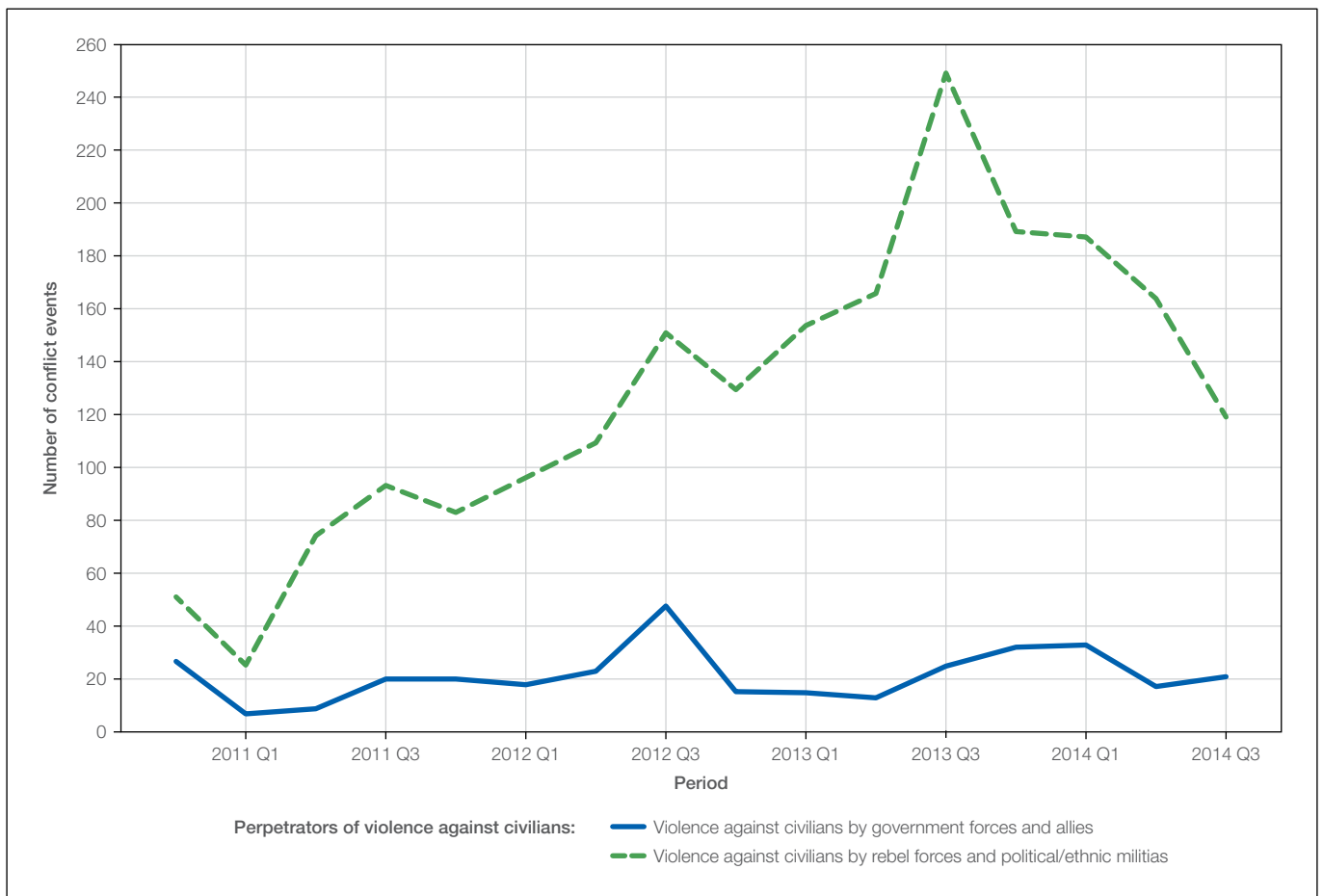


Figure 1: Violence against civilians, Somalia, October 2010 – September 2014
 Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)

good, so you shouldn't exist? They are no longer Somalis. If they were Somalis, negotiations would be feasible.

One would, in fact, imagine that negotiations should be possible. I am a Fulani, a nomad. Nomads are always going around and talking right through the night. Somalis are experts at that. Despite the issues of clans and sub-clans they've

always talked and found a solution. If these people weren't so ideological, surely they would have found some solution or consensus? Now, not only are they ideological but they are also manipulating the clan system. That's why I'm not so sure it's about a nation. This is in the past. We know the history and they fought Ethiopia and Kenya, but this is no longer the issue.



About the ISS

The Institute for Security Studies is an African organisation that aims to enhance human security on the continent. It does independent and authoritative research, provides expert policy analysis and advice, and delivers practical training and technical assistance.

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