



International Peace Academy

**35th IPA Vienna Seminar on
Peacemaking and Peacekeeping**

DEVELOPING PEACE PARTNERSHIPS IN AFRICA

BACKGROUND PAPER

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I. BACKGROUND

The 35th IPA Vienna Seminar on Developing Peace Partnerships in Africa comes at a time of major initiatives in Africa and the broader international community to respond to the threats and challenges of the 21st century. African leaders have taken the initiative at the start of this century to build institutions for security and prosperity on the continent. Efforts have been taken to strengthen the new African Union (AU), founded in 1999 to succeed the Organization of African Unity, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), promulgated in 2001 by leaders from Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa to provide a "strategic framework for Africa's renewal." These continental initiatives come along with processes at the subregional level to develop operational capabilities for peace support, including efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The United Nations Secretary-General has given special attention to security and development in Africa in his March 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom* (A/59/2005). The report sets out an ambitious agenda for the United Nations' sixtieth anniversary summit in September 2005. In the report, the Secretary-General indicates that our interest in a more secure and prosperous world could hardly be better served than through concerted international efforts to enhance partnerships for peace in Africa.¹ In addition, the current surge in demand for peace operations in Africa and the risk that current capacities will be overstretched makes it imperative to find ways to transform the broad concept of partnership into a more effective reality.² Such efforts should draw on the comparative strengths of international and African capabilities. As the Secretary-General put it in his November 2004 report on Enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity, "[t]he challenge today is to move beyond

¹ United Nations, *In Larger Freedom: Toward Development, Security, and Human Rights for All* [Report of the Secretary-General], (A/59/2005), 21 March 2005.

² Eight of the sixteen active UN peacekeeping operations are in Africa, as are seven out of the UN's current eleven joint peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations (<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp#>).

purely ad hoc arrangements and to put in place a system capable of generating a rapid and flexible response to crises in Africa and elsewhere.”³

Africa’s major development partners have taken important preliminary steps toward building partnerships in recent years. The Group of Eight (G8) initiated its Africa Action Plan (AAP) at Kananaskis in 2002 to complement NEPAD and support the AU. The United Kingdom, which holds the current G8 presidency, has promised that the July 2005 Gleneagles Summit will provide a much-needed push, building on the recent report of the UK-initiated Commission for Africa. The European states have established the European Union (EU) Africa Peace Operation Support Facility and employed it in 2004 and 2005 to assist AU deployments to Sudan. SHIRBRIG has played an increasingly useful role, most recently with the UN advance mission in Sudan and previously in Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire, and Ethiopia and Eritrea.⁴ These multilateral processes come in addition to bilateral training and initiatives for logistical support, as well as improvement in private sector arrangements to address logistical needs.

Yet, these impressive developments represent only a beginning. Many in the international community still wonder how the ghastly brutalities in Darfur can continue, whether the commitment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo is sufficient to end terror and exploitation in the massive country, and whether the support structure exists to ensure sustained peace in West Africa. Frameworks for partnership are a necessary and desirable solution, but they also necessarily involve complex coordination challenges at headquarters and in the field. For the challenges to be met, initiatives must be made operative through action plans and clear articulation of roles, responsibilities, and priorities. Institutions and organizations must be further rationalized to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Political will must be galvanized to turn promises into realities.

³ United Nations, *Enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity*, (A/59/591), 30 November 2004, p. 4.

⁴ SHIRBRIG stands for “Multi-national Standby Force High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations”, established in 1996 to serve UN peacekeeping operations. Current active members are Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. Key activities have included planning, early entry, and headquarters set-up for UN peacekeeping operations.

II. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This year's Seminar will include discussions of security challenges facing Africa; Africa's evolving security architecture; developments within the continent's regional and subregional organizations; enhancing partnerships for peace operations; cooperation in peacebuilding; and African ownership of peace operations. Breakout groups will be tasked to explore key issue areas for enhancing African peacekeeping capacity and for bridging the security-development divide. The overall objectives of the seminar are as follows:

- To deepen and broaden the knowledge and expertise of participants on critical policy issues relating to peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa,
- To provide a forum where participants can share insights and develop their professional relationships, and
- To promote the creation of a well-informed, worldwide leadership cadre of practitioners who have a broad, sophisticated understanding of peace operations and are well-equipped both to make policy and to lead operations in the field.

III. FORMAT AND THEMES

The seminar will include keynote speakers, panel presentations, plenary discussions among participants, and small working groups. The topics to be addressed are described below, along with some issues for consideration, to help guide the discussions.

Introductory Panel: Security Challenges Facing Africa

In a sense, the surge in peacekeeping activity in Africa is a welcomed signal. It reflects the possibility that a number of the continent's devastating violent conflicts may be ending. It also reflects increased interest in the international community to work toward ending these conflicts. These positive

developments come along with the spread of democratic governance on the continent, a number of peaceful leadership transitions recently, and collective efforts to reverse and prevent coups.

However, as the Secretary-General notes in his report, In larger freedom, the people of Africa continue to suffer disproportionately from the scourges of violent conflict, poverty, and disease.⁵ The Darfur experience has shown the limits of the international community's commitment to the "responsibility to protect." Progress towards good governance in some places is matched by obduracy elsewhere. In some recent instances, it has been unclear whether African leaders' formal commitments to NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism really demonstrate willingness to take the steps necessary to entrench respect for human rights, transparency, and democracy. Without progress on these fronts, multiple threats to individual well-being and a high likelihood of violent conflict will persist.

Issues for consideration

- In efforts to end violent conflict, poverty, and disease in Africa, in what cases is lack of resources the key obstacle, and in what cases is the key obstacle lack of cooperation? In what cases is it lack of attention by the international community and national governments? What kinds of mechanisms are necessary to sustainably overcome these obstacles? Whose responsibility is it to act?
- Do multilateral and bilateral assistance programs give adequate attention to the links between the democracy, human rights, economic development, and security agendas in Africa? Are existing programs to expand and deepen commitment to human rights, transparency, and democracy—such as those associated with NEPAD and the G8's AAP—real forces for change on the continent?

⁵ United Nations, *In Larger Freedom* (A/59/2005).

Panel 1: Africa's Security Architecture

The institutions of the AU provide a framework for revising the continent's political and economic relations in order to end cycles of poverty and devastating violent conflict. The AU has worked to implement a Continental Peace and Security Architecture for addressing Africa's security challenges.⁶ The AU institutions are laid over the five subregions of the continent, and the subregional organizations (including the Regional Economic Communities [RECs]) serve as a second institutional layer in the architecture. Some tangible progress has been made in operationalizing this architecture. The Peace and Security Council has been active since its fifteen members were elected in March 2004, notably in overseeing the AU's Darfur observer mission and mediation efforts. The Military Staff Committee (MSC) and other related working bodies have convened regularly to outline requirements for establishing, by 2010, an African Standby Force (ASF).⁷

Still, much work remains in rationalizing and implementing the security architecture. There are at least forty-two subregional organizations that will need to be integrated into AU's architecture, and a planned memorandum of understanding to work out AU-REC relations has not been completed. In implementing the ASF plan, inconsistencies exist in that some countries' memberships in RECs are mismatched with their assignments to regional ASF brigades.⁸ This aberration comes in addition to the many operational capabilities that need to be developed (discussed in the next section). The Panel of the Wise has not been constituted and a work plan is still to be created for operationalizing the Continental Early Warning System in cooperation with the RECs. Finally, and more generally, some have expressed concern about the absence of quality national-level discussion (a

⁶ The AU defines the Continental Peace and Security Architecture to include five elements: the Peace and Security Committee (PSC), Panel of the Wise (POW), Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), African Standby Force (ASF), and Military Staff Committee (MSC).

⁷ The ASF is to consist of five subregional brigades and include a police and civilian expert capacity. The goals are outlined in the AU's *Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee*, Annex I EXP/ASF-MSC-(2), 15-16 May 2003.

⁸ Tanzania, for example, is a member of SADC, but not IGAD. But Tanzania is included in the East Africa Region under the AU architecture, and thus participates in the East African Standby Brigade, which is led by IGAD. Such mismatches create obstacles to operationalizing the Brigade concept. Only in West Africa (in ECOWAS) have such mismatches been avoided.

“democracy deficit”) in developing regional arrangements like the security architecture.

Issues for consideration

- How are security and development priorities related in AU, REC, and development partner programs?
- How can the UN, EU, G8, and other partners harmonize their support for the development of the African peace and security architecture? What capacity areas are receiving too little attention, and which ones are receiving too much? What are the next steps to enhance capacity-building partnerships?
- Should new mechanisms be established to monitor implementation of commitments?

Regional and Subregional Organizations in Africa

In addition to developments in the AU’s agenda, African leaders have continued to work to develop operational capacities at the subregional level, particularly through the RECs.⁹ ECOWAS has continued to apply lessons learned from its multiple deployments in developing its “security mechanism”, which resembles a miniaturized version of the continent wide AU architecture. SADC and IGAD are attempting to accomplish similar goals. Given the conflict that continues to rage in the DRC, there has been little progress in developing a similar arrangement for Central Africa, despite attempts through the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The countries of the Maghreb have found a regional security consensus to be elusive.

Despite the ambitious agendas, a recent study of their implementation processes has found that “chronic human resource shortfalls in African institutions seriously undermine African strategic management capacity at the

⁹ Adekeye Adebajo, “Africa’s Evolving Security Architecture,” in *Peace Operations in Africa, Favorite Paper 03/2004*. Vienna: Vienna Diplomatic Academy, 2004.

AU and in the regions”.¹⁰ The limited pool of trained and skilled managers exacerbates the trade-off between responding to urgent short-term demands and committing to long-term institution-building. The strategic-level human resource gap has also limited the AU's and the RECs' abilities to offer clear proposals to external partners. As a result, human resource development is a major priority both for improving the functionality of AU and the RECs and enhancing partnerships.

Issues for consideration

- Are the RECs and AU working toward common purposes in most cases? If there are instances of cross purposes or redundancy, what steps should be taken to harmonize efforts?
- What are the perspectives among development partners from the G8, EU, and UN about the steps the AU and subregional organizations should take to make partnerships easier to establish?
- What kinds of partnerships could be enhanced or established to overcome the strategic-level human resources gap in the AU and subregional organizations? What lessons could be shared from EU, OSCE, and NATO programs for developing strategic management capacity? What kinds of partnerships could be established to link these programs with efforts in Africa?

Breakout Groups 1-3: Strengthening Africa's Peacekeeping Capacity

In responding to the surge in demand for peacekeeping in Africa, both the UN and the AU have taken the initiative in identifying priority areas for capacity building. In his report on Enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity, the Secretary-General identified four key systemic capacity gaps that hinder UN peacekeeping in Africa, as well as elsewhere:

¹⁰ Alex Ramsbotham, Alhaji M.S. Bah, and Fanny Calder, *The Implementation of the Joint Africa/G8 Plan to Enhance African Capabilities to Undertake Peace Support Operations*, A Project of Chatham House, UNA-UK, and ISS, Pretoria, April 2005, p. 3.

- The absence of a common doctrine and training standards;
- Lack of equipment and adequate logistical support, including strategic sea and airlift capabilities;
- Inadequate funding; and
- Lack of institutional capacity for planning and management of peacekeeping operations within the African Union and subregional organizations. ¹¹

In its own prioritization effort, the AU set out a Road Map for establishing the African Standby Force in a Communiqué issued after the 22-23 March 2005 Experts' Meeting. The Road Map identified four priorities:

- The establishment of Planning Elements (PLANELMs) both at the level of the AU and the Regional Economic Communities;
- The completion, by 30 June 2006, of studies relating to the different aspects of the ASF (logistics, communication, training, SOPs, etc.), including through the convening of sectorial and technical workshops;
- The establishment of regional brigades; and
- Funding, collaboration, and cooperation with partner countries and institutions¹²

In relation to these prioritization efforts, the G8 itself has set out a plan for supporting peace operations' capacity building, particularly in Africa. At the US-hosted summit in Sea Island in 2004, the G8 undertook to "train and where appropriate equip" 75,000 peacekeepers, mostly in Africa.¹³ The G8 initiative builds on the US' African Contingency Operations (ACOTA) and France's Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities (RECAMP) programs, as well as the UK's peacekeeping-related activities through its African Conflict Prevention Pool.

¹¹ United Nations, *Enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity* (A/59/591), p.5.

¹² African Union, *Experts Meeting on the Relationship Between the AU and the Region Economic Communities (RECs) in the Area of Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution*, EXP/AU-RECs/ASF/Comm.(I), 22-23 March 2004.

¹³ G8, *G8 Action Plan: Expanding Global Capability for Peace Support Operations*, Sea Island, June 8 – 10, 2004) <http://www.g8usa.gov/documents.htm>).

The challenge remains for the AU, subregional organizations, UN, and other partners to address these priority areas and build institutions to ensure that responses are quicker, more consistent, and more effective. Some funding and support arrangements need to be institutionalized rather than always being mission-specific. Technical and operational concerns must be seen within the broader strategic and normative context on the continent. Peacekeeping should serve to create a foundation for broader goals of sustained peace and development.

Given this context, Breakout Groups 1-3 will be tasked considering key operational issue areas for enhancing African peacekeeping. The aim will be to raise questions and, whenever possible, develop specific, actionable recommendations. Facilitators will give brief presentations to set the context for the Group discussions. The themes will include the following:

- Enhancing Rapid Response
- Meeting Military Requirements
- Building Planning Capacity

Panel 3: Partnerships in Peace Operations

Capacity-building partnerships have been essential sources of support, but have also been sources of divisiveness. The links between the continental organizations and the UN are, of course, vital and should be deepened, and efforts are underway to coordinate the various operations deployed on the continent. In his report on inter-mission cooperation in West Africa, the Secretary-General indicated that cooperation could be significantly improved in the whole range of peace operations tasks.¹⁴ However, arrangements such as the UN Office in West Africa (UNOWA) may sometimes serve as little more than an extra bureaucratic layer. Externally

¹⁴ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on inter-mission cooperation and possible cross-border operations between the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire*, (S/2005/135), 2 March 2005. Areas for improved coordination include information-sharing and joint planning military operations, DDR, small arms counter-proliferation, civilian policing, human rights promotion, child protection, humanitarian assistance, civil affairs, rule of law promotion, public information, and administration and logistics.

supported capacity-building programs, amounting to about half a billion dollars per year, ¹⁵ have been crucial. Still, bilateral interests and other internal divisions, such as the francophone-anglophone divide, sometimes complicate the G8's and EU's cooperative initiatives on the continent. Given that the G8 has neither standing implementation machinery nor a formal relationship with the AU, the coherence of the implementation of the G8's plans for Africa has suffered.¹⁶

Creative support arrangements have been devised repeatedly over the past decade to facilitate African-organization-initiated operations across West Africa, in Burundi, and most recently for the AU mission in Darfur. Such experiences could serve as models for useful institutional arrangements for funding and outfitting missions. Operational areas that require attention include mandating, funding, command and control, and logistical support. The application of the EU Africa Peace Operation Support Facility for the Darfur deployment represents an interesting step in this direction.

- Are partners coordinating with the UN and AU and contributing adequately to develop capacity in key niche areas (e.g. strategic planning and analysis, logistical planning and management, francophone police, midlevel police managers, corrections and penal experts, etc.)?
- Are current funding mechanisms consistent with optimal peace operation strategies? Should assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping sometimes be used to finance operations by regional organizations, such as the AU and subregional organizations, as proposed by the UN's High Level Panel?
- What ad hoc arrangements should be replaced by institutionalized arrangements to meet financial, logistical, troops, and other operational needs?

¹⁵ Cyrus Samii, "Peace Operations in Africa: Capacity, Operations, and Implications. Report from the 34th Annual Vienna Peacemaking and Peacekeeping Seminar." *Peace Operations in Africa, Favorita Paper 03/2004*. Vienna: Vienna Diplomatic Academy, 2004, pp. 29-30.

¹⁶ Ramsbotham et al, op. cit.

Panel 4: Cooperation in Peacebuilding

A number of recent studies have shown that the signing of a ceasefire or peace agreement represents only the beginning of a very uncertain process toward sustainable peace.¹⁷ Many cases in Africa over the past fifteen years show that the danger of a country sliding back into war is great.¹⁸ Recognizing this challenge, the Secretary-General noted in *In Larger Freedom* that “there is a gaping hole in the United Nations machinery: no part of the United Nations system effectively addresses the challenge of helping countries with the transition from war to lasting peace.”¹⁹ He has proposed a Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office to fill this gap. The proposal has garnered momentum, but questions remain about whether these new institutions will facilitate or impede operations, expand or divert development assistance, or assert or undermine sovereign authority. Practitioners have also voiced concern about whether the new bodies will help to overcome key impediments to sustained cooperation: personality clashes, scarce resources, irreconcilable priority differences, and different “organizational cultures.”

Burden-sharing between the UN, AU, RECs, and other partners has typically varied through phases of peace operations, and most operations have been assembled ad hoc. The AU or regional actors have provided the start for peacekeeping operations followed by absorption into a broader UN-led operation. However, when the situation stabilizes, it may be preferable for regional actors to assume again a more prominent role. But the AU and subregional organizations are limited in their ability to mobilize expertise in core tasks of peacebuilding, including strategic planning; DDR; building rule of law institutions; conducting elections; repatriation, resettlement, and

¹⁷ Examination of civil war negotiated settlements in the post-World War II period shows that the “mean survival time for a single civil war settlement is approximately 42 months.” Caroline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild. “Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables.” *International Organization*. Vol 55 (Winter 2001), p. 195.

¹⁸ According to data collected by Page Fortna (Columbia University, USA), these include resumption of hostilities after ceasefires in Angola (1992, 1998), the Republic of Congo (1997), the Democratic Republic of Congo (1998), Eritrea/Ethiopia (2000), Liberia (1993, 2003), Rwanda (1994, 1998), Sierra Leone (1996, 1999), and Somalia (1991).

¹⁹ United Nations, *In Larger Freedom* (A/59/2005), p. 31.

reintegration of displaced persons; conducting reconciliation processes; and demining and ordnance clearance.

Finally, an objective of peacebuilding is the establishment of state institutions that allow for the provision of public goods. Such public goods include legal mechanisms for peaceful dispute resolution; communications and transport infrastructure; public health services; and property rights, contract enforcement, and other protections for market exchange. The provision of public goods is associated with democratic governance, policing and enforcement, and public finance and taxation. If peace operations are to be terminal activities, then it is necessary to strengthen state institutions to perform these functions and provide these goods. A recent study of UN peacebuilding has identified four ways in which recent UN peace operations have weakened, rather than strengthened, state institutions²⁰:

- By insufficiently incorporating local and national participation;
- By bypassing the institutions of the state;
- By failing to build national capacities in post-conflict situations as promptly, rapidly and aggressively as they might; and
- By conceptually overlooking the medium-term.

The implication of these findings is that peace operations have had difficulty in finding the right balance between local capacity building on the one hand, and responding to urgent needs on the other hand.

Issues for consideration

- What are the steps for boosting African peacebuilding capacity? Are the AU and the subregional organizations working to meet these needs (and not making the UN's mistake of overlooking them)? What kinds of partnerships could be forged to meet these needs?
- What is the appropriate timeframe for peacebuilding efforts in Africa? What are the optimal financing arrangements for peacebuilding over

²⁰ Charles Call, "Institutionalizing Peace: A Review of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Concepts and Issues for DPA." United Nations Department of Political Affairs. 31 January 2005.

the short, medium, and long run? What is the appropriate distribution of responsibilities for the AU, subregional organizations, UN, IFIs, EU, state leaders, and other development partners?

- When a post-conflict situation is sufficiently stabilized, but third-party security provision is still necessary, should strategic transfer to an AU or subregional organization peace operation be the objective? Is EUROFOR (Bosnia) an appropriate model for the AU or ECOWAS?
- What have been the key obstacles to greater cooperation between security, development, and humanitarian actors in Africa? Which peace operations in Africa are models of effective sustained cooperation, and which have been exceptionally bad? How will the UN Secretary-General's proposal for a Peacebuilding Commission help in improving such coordination?
- How can current peace operations in Africa be improved to ensure that state institutions are being strengthened, rather than weakened?

Breakout Groups 4-6: Bridging the Security-Development Divide

These breakout groups will allow participants to delve deeper into key issues relating to peacebuilding and the links between security and development. The facilitators will each provide some context for each Group, drawing from current research and policy-development processes. Again, the aim will be to raise questions and, whenever possible, develop specific, actionable recommendations. Topics will include the following:

- Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration.
- Security Sector Reform
- "Securitisation" of the African Development Agenda

Panel 5: African Ownership of Peace Operations

The final seminar panel will deal with the issue of "African ownership". Ownership is a principle applicable to both capacity development programs and to operations. At the level of capacity development, key concerns for all

actors involved include respecting (and enhancing) decision-making autonomy, in order to set proper priorities, and the clear designation of responsibilities, to ensure proper implementation. These issues relate to financing and mandating arrangements, among others. Respect for decision-making autonomy should operate at multiple levels, not only pertaining to partnerships between the AU, subregional organizations, and external partners, but also (as discussed above in relation to the “democracy deficit”) in subjecting these regional processes to national level scrutiny.

At the operational level, key concerns include the manner in which operations are mandated, staffed, and outfitted. The consultative and authoritative relationships between the AU, RECs, UN Security Council, and external partners should be assessed for effectiveness. The nature of UN procedures for selecting mission staff and troops lends to suspicions of favoritism and has raised questions about UNDPKO’s commitment to regional capacity building. Similar concerns surround the manner in which operations are outfitted. Of course, in order to revise procedures to address these concerns, regional actors like the AU and RECs would have to demonstrate their own capacity to mobilize resources with sufficient quantity, quality, and speed.

- How should the AU and/or RECs be involved in establishing mandates for UN operations? How should other partners, like the EU, NATO, or SHIRBRIG be engaged?
- Are the AU Peace and Security Committee and the UN Security Council likely to agree in most instances on how to respond to crises? What mechanisms exist for dealing with disagreements? What role should the AU leadership (including the PSC) play for operations under UN command?
- What resources can Africa itself mobilize to contribute to the continent’s peace and development? What challenges does the AU face in using its internal funding mechanisms for peace operations (e.g. the Peace Fund)? How about for the RECs in funding their security mechanisms?

- Are development partners willing to provide more to an enhanced AU and subregional organizations than what has been provided to African peace operations through the UN?