



Peace & Security Council Report

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Peace Fund lies dormant as member states discuss its use

The African Union (AU) Peace Fund, revitalised in 2018, almost three decades after its establishment in 1993, is yet to be operationalised. Funds from member states totalling over US\$231 million have not yet been used as intended in conflict and crises on the continent.

Given the urgency of achieving and sustaining African peace and security, delays establishing modalities and criteria for disbursements bring into question the Peace Fund as an African Peace and Security Architecture pillar. This is particularly so as the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) identifies the fund as a mechanism for African ownership and leadership of peace efforts. It is also regarded as imperative to upholding the 'principle of African solutions to African problems'.

The PSC, however, reached consensus in October on milestones for Peace Fund implementation, which were recommended during a high-level retreat in January 2020. They include setting a common African position on financing peace and security activities, and preparing a revised draft United Nations Security Council resolution on accessing UN-assessed contributions by the AU. Also flagged are Peace Fund workflow processes and strategic priorities to be funded. These items are expected to be endorsed during the AU Assembly summit in February 2022.

Despite progress, however, disagreement remains on assessment scales for member state contributions and mechanisms for replenishing the Peace Fund. These will have to be overcome before the executive council meeting in February if the summit is to endorse use of the Peace Fund in 2022.

Financial oversight mechanisms a must

Accountability and oversight of the AU's finances are major concerns for member states and partners alike due to allegations of unaccounted funds from various missions and projects by some states. Before the Peace Fund comes into effect, therefore, member states are eager to put in place strict oversight frameworks.

A board of trustees that includes representatives from the five regions was appointed to undertake financial and administrative oversight of the Peace Fund in 2018. However, the institutionalisation of the fund's additional administrative and governance structures, including its secretariat, was delayed. About 90% of management instruments required for the fund are now in place and the structure has been embedded in AU financial rules and regulations, with set political and fiduciary oversight mechanisms.

Pending the recruitment of a Peace Fund director to manage the secretariat, day-to-day operations are coordinated by the AU Commission deputy

Current PSC Chairperson

HE Mohamed Omar Gad,
ambassador of Egypt to Ethiopia
and permanent representative to the
African Union.

PSC members

Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon,
Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia,
Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi,
Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal

chairperson and the commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department. Reservations by some member states about management and oversight of the fund, once operating, therefore has largely been addressed. Also, one major challenge to the use of the Peace Fund – its management – has been resolved.

Funding windows open for priorities

The PSC has identified 21 peace and security priorities to be financed by the fund and has approved the budget line for each. These include crosscutting continental issues, regional crises and country-specific situations under three funding windows.

The PSC's decision to prioritise use of the Peace Fund enables the council to tap into the fund's reserve facility to respond better to crises on the continent

The first window includes mediation and preventive diplomacy, and covers early warning, prevention of violent conflict, and management and resolution of conflicts. The second focuses on institutional capacity building for effective implementation by AU liaison offices of window one and financial oversight by regional economic communities. The third window includes AU-led or -mandated peace support operations (PSOs), including observer missions, preventive deployments, peace enforcement and stabilisation interventions, and response to complex national and transnational security threats.

As the political mandate to set the fund's priorities and direction lies with the PSC, the adoption of priorities and budgets signifies that the council is keen to use the fund even as it works towards reaching its target of US\$400 million.

The PSC's decision to prioritise use of the Peace Fund is praiseworthy as it constitutes progress in the search for adequate and sustainable financing to implement council decisions. It also enables the PSC to tap into the fund's crisis reserve facility to respond better to crises on the continent.

African consensus on financing AU peace and security activities

Since 2018, disagreement has endured on whether the Peace Fund was designed to finance 25% of African-led PSOs. The confusion arose largely through a lack of clarity in several AU decisions guiding fund use. In October 2020, the PSC reached consensus on how AU peace and security activities will be financed. The draft consensus document has helped to define the role of the AU in financing PSOs, which falls under the third financing window for the Peace Fund.

The PSC has now agreed that the AU will finance 25% of Africa's peace and security activities but will try to secure sustainable funding from UN-accessed contributions, including for AU-led PSOs. This is based on

US\$231
million

IN THE PEACE FUND
FROM MEMBER STATES

agreement that responsibility for responding to insecurity in Africa should not be placed solely on AU member states. Rather, the UN should recognise its responsibility to respond to crisis on the continent in the context of the Security Council's role as the actor with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The PSC has agreed that the Peace Fund contribution for financing PSOs will be limited to pre-deployment phases, human rights observers and other smaller missions. In addition, it will support the strategic airlifting of troops, deployment of the African Standby Force, needs assessment missions and the continental logistics base.

Clearing the last hurdles

While the progress of the past year has been encouraging, obstacles remain to the implementation of the Peace Fund in a way that provides sustainable and predictable financing. The assessment for countries' contributions and the fund replenishment strategy have divided member states. States in central, eastern, western and southern AU regions have agreed to use the general assessment scale for the fund's regular budget. However, most northern African countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Mauritania, Western Sahara and Libya, have objected to the decision.

The Peace Fund contribution for financing PSOs will be limited to pre-deployment phases, human rights observers and other smaller missions

Instead they advocate a regional scale, through which the central African region would contribute 10% and other regions 22.5% of the expected total of US\$325 million. They also suggest that each member in each region pay according to the general assessment scale.

Their argument is that three northern African countries are among the highest contributors to the AU budget based on the general scale. Using the same scale to calculate contributions to the Peace Fund skews the burden to northern countries. Notwithstanding reservations from the countries mentioned, the executive council in October 2020 endorsed the general assessment scale to calculate contributions.

The northern region has not been paying its assessed contributions to the Peace Fund on time, but it's not the only defaulter. An executive council decision in February 2021 lifted sanctions imposed in 2018 on 18 non-paying member states. More states may be sanctioned at the February 2022 meeting, including those from the northern region unless they agree to abide by the February 2021 decision.

How and when the Peace Fund will be replenished is another issue for tabling at the upcoming meeting, as parties seek sustainable and predictable financing for the continent's peace and security priorities.

February 2022

FINAL DECISIONS
EXPECTED ON THE
PEACE FUND

Tackling the outsourcing of security in Africa

Recent reports indicate the presence of the Russian Wagner Group in Africa, particularly in the Central African Republic (CAR), and talk is of its imminent arrival in Mali. This raises questions about the resurgence of private military and security companies (PMSCs) activities on the continent.

Wagner's role in conflicts and its alleged human rights and humanitarian law violations in countries such as CAR are concerning for the continent's peace and stability. Criticism has come from countries around Mali and that country's partners, causing a diplomatic spat between Malian transitional authorities and France.

Beyond the Wagner Group, however, the use of PMSCs and mercenaries in Africa should be addressed comprehensively. States' outsourcing of their security prerogatives to these private entities or to individual security operators presents a serious challenge for Africa's peace and security.

At times, security privatisation has also blurred the lines between PMSCs as 'legal' and 'legitimate' providers and mercenarism as a primarily subversive and lucrative activity. Both groups are paid for services rendered. Furthermore, some PMSCs recruits were mercenaries, while the activities of certain PMSCs also amount, by definition, to mercenarism.

A longstanding concern

From the former Zaire, now Democratic Republic of the Congo, to Liberia and Sierra Leone, through Angola and Mozambique, mercenarism has long been a concern. It began in the 1960s and 1970s, when many nascent post-independence African states and governments were targets of mostly external, but also internal, destabilisation attempts. Mercenarism was still rife throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with well-known participants including former French soldier Bob Denard and companies such as Executive Outcomes, which operated in several African countries.

According to the United Nations (UN) working group on the use of mercenaries, the nature of contemporary conflicts and PMSCs involvement have undermined the implementation of existing norms. These include the African Union (AU) Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism and the UN International Convention

Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. The latter has not been signed nor ratified by any of the five permanent UN Security Council members (United States, France, Russia, China and United Kingdom).

Far-reaching tentacles

PMSCs provide services to numerous actors, including states, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and private companies particularly in the extractive industries. Thus, PMSCs operate on a spectrum, from acting as combatants alongside a national or regular state army, to providing security services to humanitarian missions, to securing private corporation mining operations.

The working group on mercenaries notes that PMSCs escape the usual accountability and responsibilities that typically apply to a country's regular armed forces. They also do not fall specifically and easily within the ambit of international criminal procedures.

A recent Institute for Security Studies (ISS) report on foreign intervention in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province shows how the government used private military companies' troops and equipment to combat terrorism, including the Wagner Group and South Africa's Dyck Advisory Group.

It appears that Wagner wanted to bomb what it believed were identified insurgent bases, but the Mozambican army opposed the move. This seeming difference in military doctrine illustrates how PMSCs can threaten the safety and security of civilians, as has been seen by Wagner violations in CAR. Mozambican state security forces have also been 'implicated in serious abuses, including arbitrary arrests, abductions, torture, use of excessive force against unarmed civilians, intimidation and extrajudicial executions'.

The Mozambique case also illustrates the inadequate preparedness and, therefore, inability of many national security forces to deal with a domestic insurgency. Hence their resorting to external security and military services, which leads to potential humanitarian and human rights laws violations with little possibility of justice for victims.

The same is true of PMSCs in humanitarian situations and acting as private security contractors for UN peacekeeping missions. The working group notes that the use of PMSCs by humanitarian actors creates potential for human rights and international humanitarian law abuses, or ordinary criminal offences.

Transferring civilian tasks to these companies, it stresses, embodies risks, as they lack training in gender, race, ethnic and class equality promotion in social goods and humanitarian aid distribution. This should be particularly concerning to Africa, which hosts six of the world's 12 ongoing UN peacekeeping missions and a large humanitarian presence.

PMSCs in peace operations, the working group points out, are market-driven and ongoing instability sustains the industry, which raises questions about their interests in peace process outcomes.

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PMSCs also provide security for private corporations in the extractive industries, particularly in unstable regions of the continent. Thus, they operate in environments with weak or no state (security) presence, leaving civilians to cope with whatever private security multinationals deploy to protect their financial interests.

Even where state security is present, the use of force mandate conferred to PMSCs is not always clear or, at least, not always applied with a strict respect for human rights. This can be exacerbated when PMSCs work alongside state security forces that themselves behave outside the law. Incidentally, the deployment of private military companies in Mozambique went hand-in-hand with the building of huge liquid natural gas infrastructure that is being threatened by the violent extremist groups.

Distinct actors or birds of a feather?

Although they are considered to be distinct actors, there is a strong commonality among PMSCs, armed groups and mercenaries in that they often form part of what are commonly considered 'soldiers for hire'. Often, PMSCs are regarded as mercenaries or as engaging in mercenary-like activities simply because of the transactional nature of their business.

Former mercenaries or those who have conducted mercenary-like activities may also be recruited by PMSCs. The porosity of the borders among PMSCs, armed groups and mercenaries adds to the challenge of dealing with the pervasiveness of armed individuals who contribute to instability.

A current, emblematic case of this murky situation is in Libya, where thousands of mercenaries for the different warring factions have become a major obstacle to a return to peace.

Sealing the cracks prevents the cure

Beyond the headlines that tend to focus on particular PMSCs, African countries need to address the existing gaps in their national and continental security. From a purely 'hard' security standpoint, this entails strengthening national public security systems, including capacitating national security forces to deal with less traditional security threats. States resorting to private security providers, particularly when threatened, should not become the norm.

National and continental (and international) norms around PMSCs (and mercenaries) should be reviewed to fit with existing realities. The use of PMSCs must be considered not only in direct classical combat, but in the extractive industry and in humanitarian efforts where violations have also taken place. Legislation should be tightened to prevent mercenarism on the continent.

Some African states have cracked down on mercenarism by using their laws against mercenaries. South Africa did so when its citizens were hired by the Nigerian state to go into combat with Boko Haram. However, it did little to prosecute or even reprimand DAG in Mozambique.

Prevention being better than cure, plugging governance gaps in human security and the security sector will yield better results than having to deal with instability and insecurity stemming from governance deficits.

Focus on PCRD:

After 15 years, the AU should revamp its peacebuilding approach

The African Union's (AU) efforts to rebuild societies divided and damaged by conflict should be reconsidered to match the continent's current needs and realities.

The body's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy adopted 15 years ago signalled a commitment not just to manage disputes but tackle their root causes in the search for sustainable peace. To mark this pledge, the AU's PCRD Awareness Week from 7 to 13 November aimed to reflect on and strengthen Africa's peacebuilding efforts.

For the AU, putting the 2006 policy into practice has been difficult for three reasons. First, the recurring nature of conflicts on the continent has left little room for peacebuilding, which follows once clashes have ended.

Second, most PCRD work is directed from AU headquarters in Addis Ababa and carried out by several AU liaison offices. These offices have played a key role so far but require more support from the AU and member states. The liaison offices' function should be strengthened to enable direct engagement with local, national and regional stakeholders. Sustained financing is needed, along with better coordination of PCRD within the AU. Peacebuilding should also be included in AU-related strategies.

Third, despite the formation by the AU of the African Solidarity Initiative in 2012, funding commitments from member states have been inadequate. The initiative was set up to facilitate intra-African cooperation and mobilise resources for PCRD. It recognised Africa's capacity to provide financial and technical support, which would reduce the continent's reliance on international funding for peacebuilding.

Innovative approaches

Perhaps the AU's most innovative approach to PCRD was in The Gambia. In 2019, a 10-member team – the AU Technical Support to The Gambia (AUTSTG) – was deployed in response to government requests for support to the political transition after president Yahya Jammeh's fall.

The small AUTSTG team was a departure from the usual approach and is worthy of replication in other contexts. In contrast to the AU's relatively large missions, a small group of civilian experts and military personnel was seconded and co-located within government institutions. They mentored and advised officials on effective responses to the post-Jammeh political transition.

This approach gave the team considerable access to implement PCRD initiatives from within the government. Among other tasks, the AUTSTG helped get The Gambia's Human Rights Commission working, developed the

AU liaison
offices

NEED MORE SUPPORT

first National Security Policy, structured the Office of the National Security Adviser, and restructured vital security institutions. These results were achieved despite funding shortages that eventually forced the AU to end the team's deployment.

New opportunities for better synergy

In considering the AU's role in peacebuilding, there seems to be a mismatch between objectives and outcomes. So, where can the AU provide more value?

There are several opportunities to bring post-conflict reconstruction and development back to the core of the AU's peace and security work. One is the new Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) department that merged the AU's political affairs and peace and security commissions. By linking the AU's work on peace, security, politics and governance, its responses to instability should improve. With a synchronised institutional environment, PCRD policy can be better integrated with AU policy and strategy.

Another opportunity is the new AU Centre for Post-Conflict and Reconstruction and Development that is expected to start work in Cairo in 2022. When the AU's institutional reforms are complete, the centre can link stakeholders in the AU Commission, regional economic communities and African states working on sustainable peace.

The centre will provide a new space, capacity and better positioning for the AU on peacebuilding. Success could hinge on how quickly the division of labour between the centre and PAPS is agreed upon, given their potential duplication of roles. PAPS Commissioner Ambassador Bankole Adeoye's action plan suggests he is confident that the overlapping functions won't present an insurmountable challenge. The plan highlights the full operation of the centre and its role in promoting coordination on PCRD work.

With the spotlight on peacebuilding this month, the AU should consider four steps to increase its impact across the continent. First, it should kick-start a review and alignment of AU PCRD approaches to match the current nature of conflict in Africa, including the growing threat of climate change.

Second, it should revitalise the African Solidarity Initiative. Progress on increasing the contributions to the AU Peace Fund shows a growing appetite among member states to mobilise continental resources. Coordination between governments, regional economic communities, the United Nations and the European Union is also essential.

Third, innovative approaches such as those in The Gambia would prevent the AU from spreading itself too thin and having little impact on the ground. In doing so, the AU should work closely with local and national actors, including civil society organisations, which could spearhead PCRD implementation.

Most fundamentally, the AU and its member states must commit to unravelling the problem of recurring conflicts. This requires going back to the drawing board and adhering to the AU's peace, security and democratic governance norms and principles.

Cairo

HOSTS THE NEW
PCRD CENTRE

The AU should recognise women's role in peacebuilding

The AU Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy framework turned 15 in November 2021, offering the perfect opportunity to reflect on its stance on women in peace processes.

While the framework recognises women's importance in post-conflict reconstruction and development, their involvement in peace processes on the continent is driven largely by two other structures. One is United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000), which calls for more equal and comprehensive involvement of women in peace processes. The other is the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Rights of Women in Africa (2003), or Maputo Protocol.

The AU has declared gender equality and mainstreaming normative and policy imperatives, especially in peace and security structures and processes. The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC)'s 987th meeting on 22 March 2021 reiterated the imperative of women's inclusion in conflict prevention, peacemaking, negotiations, agreements and peace support operations. This would ensure that women's needs and security are addressed and comply with AU and universal frameworks on rights and equality.

The AU should popularise the PCRD framework among its own gender structures

Yet, over the last 15 years, African women's role in building sustainable peace frameworks has been based on the work of local networks. Women have addressed insecurity and conflict in their countries, arguably with little use of the PCRD framework to connect disparate efforts at sustaining peace. Instead, as the PCRD framework states, women's tendency to solidarity occurred organically. The framework could, however, make a difference in how African women approach peacebuilding.

The framework is not gender-blind, but it is not well known publicly. It remains a high-level AU structure with little connection to women's organisations, unlike UNSCR 1325, which is localised and speaks directly to daily realities of African women. Taking cues from other frameworks, the AU should popularise the PCRD

framework among its own gender structures, such as the Directorate of Women, Youth and Gender.

Through lobbying of African women civil society and AU gender offices, the Maputo Protocol, for example, has become one of few AU instruments widely accepted and popular across the continent. The protocol is ratified in 41 African states and is legally binding. Using a similar lobbying and sustained engagement approach, the PCRD framework could be a 'go-to roadmap' for women's engagement in peace processes.

Women's involvement on track 3, but far from on track

Women's role in building sustainable peace is often relegated to the private domain and disarticulated local processes. It is not part of formalised peace processes and is often confined to track 3 mediation. Women have been instrumental in building social capital in communities, where they have demonstrated that they are influential in peacebuilding, especially in motivating communities to participate in peace talks. The Palave peace huts in Liberia are an example of sustained peace.

While the local setting is important for engaging women in peacebuilding, the challenge in most post-conflict areas is how to reconnect communities and streamline women's role to rebuild social capital. Women have proved invaluable in building these networks.

Women-led community-based organisations are uniquely placed for robust, inclusive and vigilant approaches, *Femmes Africa Solidarite* (FAS) a prime example. FAS is a crucial continental role-player in peacebuilding, significantly amplifying the voices of African women internationally as well. It promotes women's prevention, management and resolution of conflict initiatives. The AU could streamline these activities with PCRD processes by partnering with FAS through meetings or training. More importantly, the work of women's networks could inform the development of innovative PCRD processes.

FemWise-Africa: a wise move?

To promote women's involvement in peace processes, the AU in 2014 created an association of women in mediation. This led to the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa), established in 2017. Although FemWise focuses primarily on unleashing women's leadership potential at community – track 3 – level, it should enhance their participation in track 1 mediation. This will ensure that they are not only seen as community mediators but are represented in peace negotiations and plan implementation.

Women are under-represented in negotiations and implementation due not to lack of capacity but to lack of power and access. Patriarchy continues to exclude them from formal processes, while cultural perceptions entrench this. Women's networks consolidate women's experiences and ease access to mediation processes.

The PCRDR framework could enable FemWise-Africa to demand greater inclusivity from their governments. With the framework as an entry point, a more comprehensive and integrated approach could be taken to implement measures to enhance women's participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

Overlooked or excluded

Most gender frameworks in Africa have a reporting mechanism. UNSCR 1325 implementation in Africa is tracked through the Continental Results Framework. The PCRDR report to the PSC should highlight achievements and provide more nuanced reporting on gender-sensitive implementation.

The report submitted to the PSC in September 2020 mentions only the importance of women in sustaining peace. There is not much on what they do or how they contribute to PCRDR initiatives. Gender-blind reporting means that women are, at best, overlooked in the implementation of peacebuilding processes and, at worst, excluded.

While there is growing recognition of the importance of gender on the agenda, women's participation in formal peace processes remains unfulfilled. The AU has done well in adding gender and women issues to peace processes, but the PCRDR framework should be mainstreamed in gender processes and a progress-tracking mechanism introduced.

The continent has 30 national action plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The framework could include a section on the implementation of these plans, thus reinforcing its position as a normative framework underpinning women's peacebuilding initiatives. While it rightly placed development and reconstruction as one process, with gender crosscutting, in the last 15 years, women have shown that they contribute to building peace. It is a disservice that their contributions are not highlighted more in PCRDR reporting.

The AU's peacebuilding architecture needs to better articulate the role of women and their contributions to peace processes to ensure that building and planning for sustainable peace is inclusive. Local initiatives in which women are involved should influence the new framework or process that will come out of the review.

2014

THE CREATION OF
FEMWISE-AFRICA

Lessons from The Gambia about Africa's evolving post-conflict realities

A bird's eye view of Africa's peace and security environment may give the impression that good peacebuilding stories are in short supply. Yet, AU involvement in The Gambia offers useful insights into the progress and challenges of peacebuilding efforts, particularly in post-authoritarian situations.

In 2021, the AU Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) celebrates the 15th year as part of the African Peace and Security Architecture framework. The AU's engagement in the Gambia offers an opportunity to reflect on the progress of and ways of enhancing the peacebuilding architecture.

An evolving context

The policy was designed to support post-conflict countries to consolidate peace and prevent relapse into turmoil through comprehensive, inclusive, nationally owned processes for short-, medium- and long-term stabilisation, recovery, reconstruction and development. It is underpinned by the assumption that 'post-conflict' conditions exist that allow PCRD and peacebuilding interventions to proceed. However, the nature of conflict dynamics on the continent has changed the implementation context.

The AU's engagement in the Gambia offers an opportunity to reflect on the progress of enhancing the peacebuilding architecture

Conflicts in Africa display great intractability, thus low-intensity conflict and episodic violence persist even after main hostilities cease. The ensuing uncertainty often underscores the AU's current approach to stabilisation, which allows for intervention at different stages of the conflict cycle. PCRD initiatives are launched in member states such as Somalia, South Sudan and the Central African Republic amid continued insecurity and instability. Thus, PCRD initiatives such as quick impact projects have had to be implemented alongside conflict prevention and mediation processes, which dilutes the AU's strategic focus, and its human resource and financial capacity.

The post-Jammeh puzzler

The Gambia reflects the shifting context in which the PCRD policy framework continues to be implemented. While it has not experienced armed conflict, the country was in dire need of political, economic and social transformation after the 22-year authoritarian rule of former president Yahya Jammeh ended in 2018.

The Gambia experience indicates that, increasingly, the AU's PCRD efforts also have to be directed towards post-authoritarian contexts and the management of difficult political transitions. Even without a history of widespread violence, post-authoritarian states have limited institutional capacity, a history of human rights abuses, economic challenges, political instability and high risk of relapse.

In such countries, PCRD processes promote democratisation, good governance, institutional capacity building, national reconciliation and transitional justice. The AU focus must be on the political legitimacy of state institutions and national ownership of PCRD efforts. However, lack of stability remains a significant obstacle to successful peacebuilding, as prevailing structural weaknesses tend to reinforce further fracturing of the state.

Experts show the way

Initially, The Gambia's government showed strong political commitment to post-Jammeh reforms, developing an ambitious national development plan and actively engaging international partners. At the government's request, the AU deployed a needs assessment mission in 2017 with the United Nations (UN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union.

In 2018, the AU Technical Support Team to The Gambia (AUTSTG) was constituted as the main structure to support local PCRD efforts. This support was based on national ownership, institutional development and direct engagement with government officials. AUTSTG was a small team of experts embedded in government

institutions. Five members were military experts working at the Ministry of Interior, the Gambian Armed Forces and Office of the National Security Adviser to support security sector reform (SSR) processes.

A rule-of-law expert with the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) supported efforts to replace the 1995 constitution, while a human rights expert provided strategic guidance in establishing the National Human Rights Commission. AUTSTG also assigned an expert to work with the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC).

AUTSTG provided a lighter footprint and cost than would have a full mission or a liaison office. In view of the struggle with mission financing, this approach enhances the AU's ability to respond to more of such situations on the continent.

Several achievements are detailed in the AUTSTG's end-of-mission report. Military experts played key roles in the establishment of the Office of National Security, restructuring of the Ministry of Defence and development of the country's security policy framework. AUTSTG also supported the development of The Gambia's first-ever national security policy, national security strategy and security sector reform strategy.

The team also promoted reconciliation and constitutional reform. Following two years of public testimonies, the TRRC is scheduled to submit its final report to the president by the end of the year. The CRC implemented its mandate and, after extensive national consultation, presented a draft constitution to the president in March 2020. Unfortunately, the country's lawmakers rejected the proposed Constitution Promulgation Bill to replace the 1995 constitution. The rejection perpetuated The Gambia's political uncertainties, which continue to affect its ability to implement PCRD interventions effectively.

A light mission with a weighty agenda

The Gambia shows that smaller deployments of experts from different, relevant professional backgrounds make for integrated implementation of PCRD pillars, which delivers better results. AUTSTG's format, its work close to the field and its multidisciplinary composition proved helpful in aligning SSR, human rights, transitional justice and constitutional review processes. For example, the military experts were pivotal to the inclusion of provisions for civilian oversight of security institutions in

the draft constitution. This implies that smaller, targeted PCRD teams could be viable alternatives for effective operational coordination.

The experience of The Gambia also indicates that national ownership and leadership of PCRD processes are subject to political realities and interests. Persisting contestations within the Gambian political elite adversely affected the implementation of key PCRD processes, for example stalling the constitutional review and implementation of the TRRC's recommendations.

This calls for the AU to design PCRD interventions on the understanding that the framework remains an inherently political process. Such interventions involve active and consistent interaction with political actors through strategic engagements, including through the AU Peace and Security Council.

The Gambia shows that smaller deployments of experts from different, relevant backgrounds deliver better results

Thirdly, while coordination of PCRD processes, notably SSR, is a prerogative of national actors, the AU, ECOWAS, the UN and international partners could enhance strategic coordination and provide complementary technical support. This could be achieved by, for example, reinforcing the legitimacy and capacity of national coordination mechanisms. A starting point would be identifying appropriate entry points and strengthening structures of coordinating SSR processes.

Lastly, AUTSTG's experience further underscores the enduring imperative to address the AU's PCRD financing challenges. The mission used fewer resources than a larger mission or an office, but PCRD – a long-term, resource-intensive process – could not be completed within its two-year mandate and with donor-dependent funding.

The deployment shows that the AU could adopt an increasingly pragmatic PCRD approach in a policy context that departs from the original thinking underlying the framework. However, small, agile and embedded teams have shown to be effective for integrated implementation of the different PCRD pillars. But PCRD efforts need also to pay attention to strategic engagement and financial sustainability.

PSC interview: Concrete successes of Mozambique's chairship of the PSC

The *PSC Report* spoke to HE Alfredo Nuvunga, Mozambique's permanent representative to the AU and chair of the PSC for October 2021.

What were Mozambique's priorities as chair of the PSC in October?

Our objectives were aligned with our mandate, namely promotion of peace, security and political stability in Africa through respect for shared values and AU legal instruments. These instruments are the Constitutive Act, the PSC Protocol, the African Peace and Security Architecture, the African Governance Architecture, and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Also included are the 2000 Lomé Declaration on Unconstitutional Change of Government and Ezulwini Framework for Enhanced Implementation of AU Measures in Situations of Unconstitutional Change of Government (2009). Finally, there is the Organisation of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

These were the general objectives pursued by Mozambique during its chairmanship. From these, two priorities were singled out – risk disaster management and human security, and prevention and combating terrorism and violent extremism on the continent.

Managing the risk of disasters is a global concern that requires action and assertiveness

The threat of terrorism and violent extremism has been growing, reaching alarming proportions that are hindering the quest of Africans for the safe and prosperous continent envisaged by Agenda 2063. We see it in the Sahel, North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central and Southern Africa. Because of its global nature and network, combating it requires countries to expand and strengthen cooperation beyond their individual national interests and areas of operations.

Africa in particular is witnessing increasing numbers of natural and manmade disasters, which impede and undermine continental development and stability. Managing the risk of disasters is a global concern that requires action and assertiveness individually by countries, regions, continents and the world. Mozambique deemed it relevant and timely to share experiences in these two pivotal areas, to create an enabling environment for the successful implementation of Agenda 2063.

Until August 2021, Mozambique chaired the South African Development Community (SADC), and defined as priorities *building peace and security, and promoting development and resilience in the face of global challenges*. These are being tackled nationally and regionally in the belief that success will enable us to bring peace and prosperity to the continent and the world. As candidate for the United Nation Security Council non-permanent seat for 2023–2024, Mozambique hopes to scale up the focus on these issues, which we believe are of concern to the world at large.

What do you view as Mozambique's biggest achievement as chair of the PSC?

We achieved concrete results, with follow-up activities that brought structural impact to our strategy as mandated by the council. These results stem from the collective action of the council and individual member states, with the support of the secretariat. We understand the secretariat's human resources and funding limitations, but it has shown dedication, professionalism and excellence in its performance, discharging all its duties for the good of the continent. The opportunity to chair the PSC was an honour and privilege for Mozambique. I believe the biggest achievement lies in the deliberations of heads of state and government on risk disaster management in Africa, and on challenges and perspective for human security.

To combat natural disasters requires use of modern technologies that detect and predict as accurately as possible, allowing monitoring and mitigation through early warning mechanisms to reduce impact.

I would like to underline some decisions and recommendations from the communique of the 1043rd session of the PSC of heads of state and government:

- Importance, for outputs and outcomes, of enhanced coordination among AU departments and programmes, including the AU humanitarian response mechanism and the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Also included are the AU Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit at the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment and the African Risk Capacity.
- Need to implement the African Humanitarian Agency (AfHA) to empower and further strengthen member states' prevention, and early warning, response and post-conflict or post-disaster recovery and reconstruction capabilities. This may encourage member states to increase AfHA funds. This would ensure AfHA's independence and effectiveness, and create predictable, reliable and sustainable resources to enable the AU to fulfil its humanitarian responsibilities.
- Agreement on creating a continental civilian capacity for disaster preparedness and response, which will draw from national individual capacities to provide timely assistance to disaster-stricken countries on the continent.

Implementing these decisions will enhance the disaster management efficacy and efficiency of member states, the AU and international cooperating partners, minimising the human security damage of disasters.

What major decisions emerged from the October PSC ministerial and heads of states and governments meetings?

The two sessions showed that the collective wisdom of African leaders prevails. Leaders renewed their commitment to fighting terrorism and climate change to create a better future for coming African generations. They recognise that terrorism and violent extremism, and climate change are international threats with

continued negative impacts on the daily livelihoods of Africans. They agree that to combat them will require all African nations to join hands, and that the international community must be called on to assist.

The heads of state and government at their meeting recognised that regardless of the causes of any disaster, be it natural or manmade, the human security consequences are similar, demanding our commitment in addressing their impact.

The many unconstitutional changes in our continent are a very unfortunate trend and are unacceptable

The ministerial meeting discussed continental efforts to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. The PSC decided to encourage the terrorism-combating capacity of the AU and of individual member states. Thus, it mandated the AU Commission to develop comprehensive counter-terrorism train-the-trainer programmes and manuals, and to organise regional exercises on counter-terrorism and transnational organised crime. The Commission will also develop and integrate counter-terrorism modules in peace support operations pre-deployment training.

The council also asked the Commission to expedite the establishment of an African counter-terrorism coordination task force in the office of the AU Special Representative for Counterterrorism Cooperation. This would improve cooperation and coordination in counter-terrorism. It would also promote the Commission's prevention of violent extremism work, enabling it to respond to pressing counter-terrorism situations, and strengthen support and assistance to member states, including capacity building.

What is the major lesson learnt by the PSC in responding to this year's unconstitutional changes of government in Mali, Guinea, Chad and Sudan?

The many unconstitutional changes in our continent are a very unfortunate trend and, no matter their cause, are unacceptable. They contravene principles embedded in the constitutions of individual countries and subscribed to by the AU through Article 4 of

the Constitutive Act and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, in Articles 3 (f), 4 (c) and 7 (g).

In all the cases cited in the question, the PSC's immediate reaction was to boldly and firmly condemn and demand the unconditional restoration of constitutional order to ensure that the democratic processes are consolidated rather than derailed.

As per the relevant AU provisions, there is no prescribed recipe as to how the restoration of the constitutional order should be pursued in terms of its time frame. Although, in practice, the AU preference is for a period of six months, it could take a considerable amount of time, depending on the assessment of the circumstances in the given situation. Indeed, since the unconstitutional change and the restoration of the constitutional order is a sensitive matter, it requires wisdom and discretion of the PSC in the application of the relevant AU provisions.

Occasionally, dealing with the process of restoring the constitutional order has posed a dilemma because in some instances the challenge is how to treat the actors responsible for the unconstitutional change in the transition and post-transition periods.

From these experiences, the PSC may have learnt that the AU legal framework on combating unconstitutional changes of government need to be reviewed to ensure an adequate and timely response to the emerging trends. Ultimately, the bottom line is the need to ensure the respect and observance of the relevant AU provisions.

In this process all AU structures interacting with regional mechanisms should be seized. Above all, AU intervention has to go beyond the mere restoration of the constitutional, in so doing addressing the root causes of unconstitutional changes of government.

Based on Mozambique's experience with violent extremism, how should Africa respond to terrorism and violent extremism on the continent?

Mozambique has been affected by terrorism and violent extremism since 5 October 2017. The government's three-pronged response to the evolving situation has been clear from the beginning, namely a

military and defence offensive, a social and economic developmental approach, and a humanitarian element.

The first-mentioned approach entails not only combating the terrorists on the battlefield, but stepping up cooperation with regional, continental and international actors to yield better results. Terrorism is an international phenomenon with cross-border elements. Therefore, Mozambique first assessed the nature and character of the threat nationally, then framed policies in response and finally, involved regional and international actors.

Given the international nature of terrorism, Mozambique invited SADC to deploy the SADC Mission to Mozambique (SAMIM) to support the defence and security forces in combating terrorism in Cabo Delgado. In the same vein, the country invited support from Rwanda. It has also forged partnerships with other international partners in areas such as training and logistics.

Mozambique's approach promotes sustainable and effective ownership of capacity building in combating terrorism

In addition, Mozambique has introduced the Agency for the Integrated Development of the North, which is aimed at implementing development projects in close collaboration with local communities. The agency works across government departments to boost economic development in Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula provinces under four pillars: economic development, humanitarian assistance, community resilience and communication.

From the humanitarian perspective, local people have been doubly hit, as they are having to deal with terrorism when they are still recovering from the Idai and Kenneth tropical cyclones. More than 800 000 internally displaced people (IDPs) require humanitarian aid, including 12 tons of food a day. The government has been integrating all IDPs into local communities in the areas surrounding the IDPs centre to enable them to become productive and resilient. Mozambique's three-dimensional approach promotes sustainable and effective ownership of capacity building in combating terrorism.

About the PSC Report

The *Peace and Security Council Report* analyses developments and decisions at the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC). The monthly publication is the only one of its kind dedicated to providing current analysis of the PSC's work. It is written by a team of ISS analysts in Addis Ababa.

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The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) partners to build knowledge and skills that secure Africa's future. Our goal is to enhance human security as a means to achieve sustainable peace and prosperity. Using its networks and influence, the ISS provides timely and credible analysis, practical training and technical assistance to governments and civil society.

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The publication of the *PSC Report* is made possible through support from the Government of the Netherlands, the Government of Denmark and the Hanns Seidel Foundation. The ISS is also grateful for the support of the following members of the ISS Partnership Forum: the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, the European Union and the governments of Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

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ISSN 2075-6232

