



Peace & Security Council Report

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FemWise-Africa aims to include more women in peace processes

High-level African Union (AU) mediation efforts have in the past included very few women. Almost all AU special envoys to conflict zones are men – mostly former heads of state and other former senior officials. FemWise-Africa is a new AU initiative aimed at changing this through a network of accredited women mediators. Its success, however, will depend on whether it has the necessary support and capacity to carry out its mission.

On 16 May 2018 the Peace and Security Council (PSC) held a meeting on a continental framework that enables member states and relevant African institutions to monitor progress on women's rights and participation in peace processes.

Figures show that while some AU member states have developed national action plans to implement United Nations (UN) Resolution 1325, which urges the international community to enhance women's participation in peace and security, progress has been slow. This is true not only in Africa but also across the globe, as shown by the 2015 UN Women report (also known as the Global study on women, peace and security).

FemWise-Africa is made up of well-known personalities, youths and experts in mediation. About 60 professionals have been accredited so far

Few women are involved as negotiators and mediators in mainstream peace processes. UN Women noted that, globally, women made up only 2% of chief mediators, 4% of witnesses and signatories, and 9% of negotiators between 1992 and 2011. This highlights the limitations in women's representation both in Africa and worldwide.

The AU has developed instruments and policies for gender equity, including mainstreaming gender into the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). One such move has been the establishment of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) on 4 July 2017.

FemWise-Africa is a subsidiary mechanism of the Panel of the Wise and the expanded Pan-African Network of the Wise (PanWise). The five-member Panel of the Wise consists of respected personalities from Africa's five regions who are expected to leverage their influence to prevent conflicts and mediate crises in support of the PSC and the AU Commission chairperson. Currently, three of its five members are women.

Current PSC Chairperson

Hope Tumukunde Gasatura, ambassador of Rwanda to Ethiopia and permanent representative to the African Union.

PSC members

Angola, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe

FemWise-Africa is made up of well-known personalities, youths and experts in mediation. About 60 professionals have been accredited so far. The AU has also published an application form for new members to join. Apart from participating in the FemWise-Africa Assembly, organised at least once a year, accredited professionals would be called upon to support peace efforts in crisis states when necessary.

Limited role of women in high-level peace processes

FemWise-Africa has a daunting task ahead. In terms of AU-led mediations, the overwhelming majority of special envoys to conflict-affected zones are men. A July 2016 report by the AU indicates that while the AU Commission is the only continental organisation to have achieved gender parity in its executive leadership – enshrined in its Constitutive Act – ‘representation of women among Special Representatives and Envoys, as well as Heads of Missions/Liaison Offices, remains significantly low’.

Women’s involvement in leadership positions in member states can contribute to enlarging the pool of women mediators

Out of nine special representatives and 11 special envoys, the AU has only one female special envoy – the special envoy on women, peace and security, Bineta Diop. It is worth noting that most of the special representatives and envoys are former heads of state or senior government officials. This underpins the dominant perception that leaders in conflict zones prefer to speak to their peers.

A small number of outstanding women leaders have, however, played a role in AU-led mediation, such as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former president of Liberia, Catherine Samba-Panza, the former interim president of the Central African Republic, Dr Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe, the former vice president of Uganda, and Graça Machel, head of the Graça Machel Trust based in South Africa.

This shows that women’s involvement in leadership positions in AU member states can eventually contribute to enlarging the pool of women mediators in Africa.

Other AU efforts

The AU has made efforts elsewhere. Of its 11 heads of offices and missions, four are women. All of these women, as well as one female special envoy and the head of the AU/SADC in Madagascar, were appointed between 2013 and 2016 when Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma chaired the AU Commission. This is an indication of how greater gender representation within the AU could bring about progressive change. While these roles are extremely important, the AU liaison offices maintain low

2%

OF CHIEF MEDIATORS
ARE WOMEN

profiles and mainly provide support to special representatives and envoys with the mandate to mediate.

The slow pace in appointing women to top leadership positions also highlights the need for changes in thinking about how mediation works beyond structural constraints.

What needs to change?

Some studies show that peace agreements can be reached faster and the deals last longer when women are included in peace processes. In Burundi, for instance, since 2015, when the country plunged into turmoil, many women still serve as community mediators, addressing social and political conflicts. Their efforts have reportedly averted several violent incidents.

FemWise-Africa has to be given ample support in terms of resources and a dedicated secretariat to ensure its effective functioning

Women in conflict-affected areas have also played a central role in negotiations, as well as lobbying and advocating for peace.

While many studies and commentators highlight the benefits of women's participation, it is also women's right to engage in peace processes the same way as their male counterparts, regardless of any cost-benefit assessment.

There is also a need to examine the effectiveness of mainly using former heads of state as mediators. Does the use of these former heads of state signal a bias in favour of sitting leaders, to the disadvantage of the opposition? Are there more bureaucratic constraints on the mission? Are they effective? Can other dignitaries deliver better?

These are additional questions that should be considered when exploring the role of women in peace processes.

The need for dedicated support to FemWise-Africa

Notable progress has been made, but FemWise-Africa has to be given ample support in terms of resources and a dedicated secretariat, to ensure its effective functioning.

Lessons should be learnt from the Panel of the Wise and PanWise, whose impact has been constrained by limited human and financial resources. Except for a few cases, inadequate documentation means that there has not been an opportunity to learn from their experiences in mediation since 2007, when the first panel was appointed.

FemWise-Africa's activities could fall into the same trap of being relegated to the periphery if there is no proactive support for the network.

4
OUT OF
11

AU OFFICES
HEADED BY WOMEN

Calls for the AU to play a role in humanitarian crises – can it work?

The PSC earlier this year called for the operationalisation of the AU Humanitarian Agency by January 2019. It proposed to host a donor conference and also use more of member states' assessed contributions to do this. There are, however, many obstacles in the way of setting up such an agency, which ideally should be independent of the various commissions of the AU.

Africa hosts millions of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are the victims of armed conflict and natural disasters. Yet protecting and caring for the victims of humanitarian disasters are mostly left to various United Nations (UN) agencies such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme, as well as a plethora of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

At its meeting on 9 April 2018 the PSC decided that the AU Commission should speed up the establishment of the AU Humanitarian Agency. This would allow it to be present on the ground when disasters strike. In its press statement the PSC said: '[The] council noted with concern that in most humanitarian operations, the AU presence is glaringly lacking and dominated by other international organizations, and [this] underscores the need for the AU to step up its presence and action in humanitarian situations on the continent.'

'In most humanitarian operations, the AU presence is glaringly lacking and dominated by other organizations'

It is important for the AU to be seen on the ground, close to people in need. Some believe this will increase its visibility and popularise the institution among African citizens in disaster-stricken areas.

Carrying out these tasks is, however, much easier said than done. It is, above all, an extremely expensive undertaking, and it is crucial that such an agency be apolitical.

Who will pay for it?

Humanitarian organisations that can care for refugees and disaster victims have massive budgets. The UNHCR, for example, has asked for US\$2.6 billion

to fund its operations in sub-Saharan Africa in 2018 – amounting to 35% of its total budget. This is to care for up to 20 million displaced people. If the AU were to pursue a similar objective, a critical budget effort would be required in order to provide real added value on the ground, rather than just a presence.

The PSC, in its April 2018 statement, asked that assessed contributions to the AU humanitarian fund be increased from 2% to 4%, but it is unclear who administers this fund and how big it is.

Humanitarian organisations that can care for refugees and disaster victims have massive budgets

Meanwhile, the AU has, together with partners such as the African Development Bank, set up the African Risk Capacity (ARC). The ARC, a specialised agency of the AU, is an attempt to help African countries pool their efforts and save for times of crisis. So far uptake has been slow: only 34 countries have signed the ARC protocol since it was established in 2012. Eight countries subscribe to the ARC insurance scheme and four of them have so far received payouts.

The initiative has since been hailed as a success – having won various awards for financial efficiency – and is a stepping stone towards greater forward planning for disaster-prone countries. Such disasters are mostly linked to climate change and other catastrophes rather than conflict.

Independence will be key

At this stage, African member states are still debating whether the AU Humanitarian Agency should just be an overarching structure that coordinates efforts at a national level, or a separate agency within the AU Commission.

If the agency is housed in Addis Ababa (presumably in the Department of Political Affairs, which is currently leading this discussion), this could place a question mark over the independence of the agency. In disasters, especially where armed conflict is concerned, this could be tricky to manage. Humanitarian actors are often accused of taking sides in a conflict – the refugee camps in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo after the Rwandan genocide or the camps currently set up by the UN in South Sudan come to mind. In these cases humanitarian actors and foreign governments have been accused of allowing armed factions to operate in camps and have not been considered neutral in the conflict.

Humanitarian actors are often accused of taking sides in a conflict and allowing armed factions to operate in camps

In order to mark its distance from political actors, the European Union's humanitarian organisation, the European Commission Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Organisation is, for example, a separate department and not housed in any of the EU directorates.

Regional initiatives could be the building blocks

The AU Humanitarian Agency will not be created in a void. Some of the AU's RECs have fairly well-advanced initiatives to step in when their member states are in crisis.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), for example, has a disaster risk reduction unit at its headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana, that coordinates the efforts of member states. Much of the planning and early warning, however, is done by a small group of key states. South Africa's national disaster management centre, for example, does most of the climate risk planning and the key challenge is to coordinate responses between all 16 member states.

Progressive policies

While it may take some time to raise funding for the humanitarian agency, the AU has already started putting certain structures in place. In 2015 it drew up a humanitarian policy that has been described

as 'progressive' because it aims to protect not only refugees and IDPs but also asylum seekers and migrants.

The policy outlines a number of structures that could be described as the AU 'humanitarian architecture':

- An oversight body through the Subcommittee on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs within the Permanent Representative Committee
- The Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons Division as the focal point in the AU Commission – the mandate of this unit illustrates the emphasis on policy guidance, advocacy, capacity building and technical support
- An advisory body with the Coordinating Committee on Forced Displacement and Humanitarian Action that includes member states, RECs, UN entities, NGOs and other humanitarian actors

Interestingly, the 2015 policy framework barely mentions the AU Humanitarian Agency, which has now become an important issue for the PSC.

Addressing structural causes

As is the case with much of the AU and PSC's thinking on ending conflict in Africa, the AU's humanitarian policy also focuses on the root causes of conflict. The African Common Position, drawn up ahead of the 2016 Istanbul World Humanitarian Summit, also draws attention to this issue.

The 2015 policy framework barely mentions the AU Humanitarian Agency, which has now become an important issue for the PSC

In addition, the common position calls for a 'reconfiguration' of the humanitarian system, with a greater focus on country contribution or 'the primacy of the state' in humanitarian crises.

The AU wants to be seen to be effective in solving crises in Africa and helping African citizens in need. An effective humanitarian agency could play a role in this endeavour, but for now, the AU first has to create greater capacity to do so.

The dilemma of free movement of people on an insecure continent

This month, May 2018, the PSC will hold two meetings on the issue of mobility and its relation to peace and security. These will focus on the situation of African migrants in Libya, the impediments facing the AU continental free movement policy and the consideration of a report on security and migration in Africa. Member states are divided in their support for free movement, and the PSC can help to define the risks and clarify the implications of the new AU plans.

The upcoming PSC meetings on free movement come four months after the AU's adoption of a protocol establishing free movement of people and the right to residence and establishment. This issue is championed by, among others, Rwanda, which chairs the PSC in May. The implementation of the protocol on free movement is a critical challenge for regional integration in Africa, especially in terms of peace and security.

Dynamics in the new PSC in favour of free movement

By early May, the protocol on free movement had already been signed by 31 member states. However, the AU Commission has yet to receive any ratifications. While the number of signatures exceeds half of the AU membership, none of the top contributors to the AU budget – Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt and Morocco – has yet signed the protocol, with the exception of Angola.

The implementation of the protocol on free movement is a critical challenge for regional integration in Africa

From a geographical perspective, the Northern Region is the only region where none of the member states has signed the protocol.

Of the 15 current PSC member states, 12 have signed the protocol. The non-signatories are Egypt, Morocco and Nigeria. A key element to watch will be how the weight of these three states will affect PSC proceedings on the topic, given that Rwanda is chairing the council.

This uneven endorsement and the recurrence of PSC meetings on this issue illustrate the challenge of

establishing free movement of people on a continent where most regions still have pockets of insecurity, and where border control is almost non-existent in many remote areas.

No consensus on the benefits of free movement

A review of past PSC decisions on the protocol reveals two trends: one optimistic and another careful, if not pessimistic.

The Northern Region is the only region where none of the member states has signed the protocol

On the one hand, some PSC members believe that the benefits of free movement outweigh any perceived challenges.

On the other hand, the decision to adopt a phased implementation is an illustration of the more pessimistic view of other member states.

The protocol adopted in January stressed that one of the principles guiding its implementation should be respect for laws on the protection of national security. This provision illustrates one of the main challenges of addressing security risks resulting from free movement. The definitions of 'public order' and 'national security', for example, may vary considerably from one country or region to another.

Need to identify the security impact of free movement

In the debate over free movement within the AU, there is no clear identification of the areas that can be

affected by free movement of people or that could impede its implementation.

In the case of border disputes, for example, where some borders are heavily militarised it is obvious the protocol on free movement cannot be implemented any time soon.

In the case of porous borders resulting from a lack of state presence, free movement could simply mean that armed groups, terrorists and criminal entities would be able to carry out their activities without hindrance. This is already the situation in various parts of the continent: in the Sahelian strip, the Lake Chad basin and the Great Lakes region. The key question is then how to enhance border governance while allowing the free movement of people.

Options for the PSC

There are several possible areas of intervention by the PSC to ensure that free movement does not impact negatively on peace and security. This would include promoting a shared assessment of the risks; laying the groundwork for enhanced cross-border cooperation; and establishing the relevant structures in the AU Commission to oversee the implementation of the protocol.

Where borders are heavily militarised it is obvious the protocol on free movement cannot be implemented any time soon

Firstly, the PSC could order a risk assessment of the current situation, in order to clearly identify the impact of free movement before continuing with discussions and decisions on this issue. Such an assessment should be entrusted to a panel composed of national experts, international partners (e.g., the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Organization for Migration) and civil society actors. The current trend of handing such tasks to the Committee of Intelligence Services of Africa has limited relevance, as intelligence services' vision of security might differ from that of police, civil society actors or even border communities. Moreover, such assessments should be conducted both regionally and along cross-regional corridors (the Sahelo-Saharan strip; Great Lakes region; Lake Chad Basin).

Secondly, the PSC could strongly encourage member states to sign, ratify and implement the AU's Niamey Convention for cross-border cooperation. So far, this convention has been signed by 14 member states and ratified only by two (Burkina Faso and Niger). In order to give it more traction, the convention could be reviewed by member states in order to identify and overcome obstacles to a wider endorsement.

Thirdly, the PSC could set firmer deadlines than the current implementation plan to solve border disputes. It might consider convening either a ministerial meeting or a summit on the state of border disputes in order to reach a comprehensive solution by 2020, as set out in the Master Roadmap for Silencing the Guns in 2020.

The PSC could set firmer deadlines than the current implementation plan to solve border disputes

Finally, the PSC could encourage closer cooperation between the Peace and Security Department, the Department of Political Affairs – especially between the future unit in charge of free movement and the AU Border Programme – and the Department of Social Affairs, which holds the migration portfolio. As interdepartmental cooperation tends to be tricky in the AU Commission, consideration should be given to establishing an inter-departmental unit to address the comprehensive challenges induced by free movement.

There needs to be a debate among member states regarding the format of the unit in charge of this critical issue. Should it be a secretariat of an ad hoc committee composed of seconded experts from member states appointed regionally, in order to guarantee not only the full commitment of the signatories but also coherence in implementation across the continent? Should it be a classic unit within the AU Commission? Or should the PSC consider establishing a subcommittee on this issue?

Clearly, the choice of the structure in charge of overseeing this historical evolution in the integration of the continent will shape the effectiveness of its implementation.

Can Weah realise his pro-poor economic development agenda?

Having led his Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) to victory after coming short in 2005 and 2011, Liberian President George Weah now needs to deliver on the promise of change that brought him to power.

Liberia's last presidential election season was longer than usual due to protracted legal wrangling that stress-tested citizens as well as the country's elections management and legal institutions. However the president's inauguration at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Stadium in Monrovia on 22 January showed the resilience of those institutions.

It was also a symbolic affair for Weah, Liberians and their guests. The venue itself marked a break with past presidential inaugurations which took place on the Capitol grounds. This time, the inauguration opened a defining event in the country's history to a cross section of Liberians. It marked the first democratic transfer of power from one living president to another, since the Edwin Barclay-to-William Tubman transition in 1944.

Liberia open for business

In his inaugural address, Weah declared Liberia open for business, calling for unity and nation-building and inviting Liberians to join him in the fight against corruption. To drive his agenda, Weah's cabinet must work with a legislature in which the CDC needs support from both independent and opposition politicians. This shouldn't be hard though, given that during his campaign he succeeded in convincing some ruling party stalwarts to jump ship.

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Weah's cabinet is also now complete, after a hold-up caused by the nomination of a justice minister whose legal licence had been suspended in February 2017. This situation raised questions about the vetting process that preceded appointments. The nomination of former president Charles Taylor's finance minister Charles Bright as presidential adviser for economic affairs also generated suspicion about whether it signified a return to Taylor's agenda.

Weah's cabinet shows some degree of continuity with the previous administration in the area of national defence. Army chief of staff Daniel Ziankahn, who served under Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, succeeded Brownie Samukai, the only minister to have served through both of Johnson Sirleaf's

22 January 2018

WEAH INAUGURATED
AS PRESIDENT

terms. The Finance Ministry has seen a strategic reorientation, with the appointment of Samuel Tweh to craft Weah's pro-poor growth agenda on which he had campaigned.

Unlike Johnson Sirleaf's first cabinet that included four women occupying the finance, commerce and industry, justice and youth and sports portfolios, Weah's cabinet includes just two women – in charge of health and social services; and gender, children and social protection.

At his inauguration, Weah sat between two women – Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor and First Lady Clara Weah – as he took over from Africa's first democratically elected female president, Johnson Sirleaf. For a presidency well aware of the importance of symbols, hopefully this rollback in the number of female ministers won't undermine the enduring need to achieve women's empowerment.

Given the country's financial challenges, combating corruption should be a priority

Beyond the cabinet, Weah's CDC also controls both houses of Parliament – with 21 seats in Liberia's 73-member house of representatives to the Unity Party's 19, and 11 independents (the remaining seats are held by several smaller parties). These 51 legislators hold the key to the success or failure of Weah's agenda.

Growing a democratic culture

This is the first time in Liberia's post-war history that an opposition coalition has come to power, and now controls both the executive and the legislature. Given the slim edge it holds, the CDC needs to clearly articulate and defend its strategic priorities before reaching out to independents and the opposition, to build consensus around its agenda. This would help grow a democratic political culture in Liberia.

As Weah's cabinet settles in, their attention must turn to the country's bleak socioeconomic and security reality. Liberia's three main interconnected priorities remain: economic recovery; justice, reconciliation and social equity; and institutional consolidation.

When Johnson Sirleaf came to power in 2006, she issued the 150-day action plan, a roadmap for her first few months in office. Over the next eight years, Liberia averaged annual GDP growth rates of over 6%, but Liberians did not reap the benefits of this growth. This is something Weah must avoid.

The continuing negative economic consequences of the 2014 Ebola outbreak will make it difficult for the state to finance Weah's pro-poor economic development agenda. This agenda prioritises five pillars – health, infrastructure, education, youth development and the economy.

The fight against corruption

Given the country's financial challenges, combating corruption should be a priority. Equally important is strengthening institutional efficiency and attracting foreign direct investment, while safeguarding the rights of Liberian workers.

To show its commitment to addressing corruption, the Liberian justice system must prosecute past and present economic crimes, to ensure full accountability and with no amnesty. These trials should be done in a way that does not create the appearance of a selective political witch-hunt.

Another challenge for Weah is constitutional reform. Between 2013 and 2016 an attempt was made to revamp the country's 1986 constitution, focusing on socio-economic issues relating to identity, accountability, citizenship, land rights and religion. As Weah noted in his inaugural address, it might be time to finish the job of ensuring that Liberia has a constitution by and for the people.

Johnson Sirleaf might have laid the foundation for a post-war Liberia. But the challenge of sustaining the country's current trajectory and building on that foundation rests with Weah. While he strikes the right notes in his speeches and editorials, only action on the economic and social fronts in Liberia will deliver on his campaign promises.

Continuity more than change would surely attract the foreign investors Liberia needs in the next phase of its journey to sustainable economic recovery. For now, Weah seems to be balancing continuity and change rather deftly.

UAE port deal with Somaliland stirs up trouble in the Horn

Tensions between Somalia and the self-proclaimed independent Somaliland have flared up following a new tripartite deal between the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ethiopia and Somaliland over Berbera Port. This takes place against the backdrop of fragile federal unity and the Somali government's refusal to side with the UAE in its dispute with Qatar.

As Somalia makes relative progress in its fight against al-Shabaab, the dispute over Somaliland has once again come to the fore. Somaliland's decision to make a deal with the UAE and Ethiopia for the use of its Berbera Port has raised the ire of Somali politicians. Somalia argues that only the central government in Mogadishu can sign international agreements – such as those concerning the use of ports in its territory.

Tripartite deal an alternative to Djibouti

The Somali government has now called on the international community to intervene to prevent the crisis from escalating.

Somalia argues that only the central government in Mogadishu can sign international agreements

The AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) could play a key role in coordinating regional and international interests and fostering dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland in the interest of stability in the fragile region.

The disputed March 2018 deal between the UAE, Ethiopia and Somaliland accords 51% of Berbera Port to the UAE's DP World, which will manage and develop the port, while Somaliland holds 30%. Ethiopia acquired 19% of the shares in the port, which gives it an alternative to Djibouti, which currently handles 90% of its imports and exports.

Escalating discord with UAE

The tension over the port deal is part of a larger discord over Somalia's decision to remain neutral in the Gulf crisis. President Mohamed Abdullahi 'Farmajo' has

refused to cut ties with Qatar, which played a key role in funding the campaign that brought him to power, despite significant investments by Saudi Arabia and the UAE in the country.

Some federal member states such as Puntland, South West and Galmudug have opposed the government and declared their allegiance to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which they see as having greater influence in the region.

The UAE also began accepting the Somaliland passport for international travellers in 2018.

Impact of the UAE tensions

The tensions over Berbera Port have created other internal divisions in Somalia. The former speaker of parliament Mohamed Osman Jawari led a parliamentary vote on a bill that forbids the awarding of foreign contracts without the approval of the Somali Parliament. The bill was passed without the input of the presidency leading to a clash between Jawari and Farmajo, who have disagreed over other issues in the past. Jawari eventually resigned from his post on 9 April 2018, having served in that position since 2012.

Some federal member states have declared their allegiance to Saudi Arabia and the UAE

Yet despite his resignation the political divisions between Jawari and Farmajo continue to fester, adding to the challenge of unchecked international interests in the fragile country.

The politics of military bases in the Horn

One of Somalia's concerns is that the UAE will train Somaliland's police and military forces. This is part of

a separate deal by the UAE to build a military base in Somaliland, which is close to Yemen, where UAE troops have been fighting Houthi rebels as part of the Saudi-led coalition. The UAE has another military base in Eritrea, and this new deal challenges the military base of Turkey, which backs Qatar in the Gulf crisis.

Indeed, the rapid increase in military bases in the Horn is an indication of a new scramble for strategic control in the region. Superpowers such as France, China, the United States, Italy and Japan also have military bases in Djibouti. In addition, insiders claim that Russia is planning to build a military base in Somaliland.

The role of the AU and IGAD

For over a decade, the AU, through the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), has played a vital role in the fight against al-Shabaab. AMISOM's efforts also brought about conditions that allowed the 2012 elections to take place – the first since the collapse of Somalia in 1991. After years of failed peace deals, IGAD's mediation led to the formation of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004 and the 2012 elections were the first step towards a return to democracy in the country. AMISOM also oversaw the election of Farmajo in early 2017, which inspired further optimism for Somalia's stability.

The rapid increase in military bases in the Horn is an indication of a new scramble for strategic control in the region

As custodians of Somalia's relative progress and the major regional actors in the Horn, the AU and IGAD have to measure their success by their ability to anticipate and address future security threats, including the unbridled interference by external actors in the region.

While Somalia and Somaliland are responsible for handling their own issues, their institutional and governance weaknesses make them vulnerable to external actors whose interests could jeopardise regional security.

In October 2017 the AU, in collaboration with IGAD, convened a strategic consultation on the Horn of Africa, but the regional players first need to address various individual issues that threaten stability, beginning with the situation in Somalia. The AU and IGAD have to push for negotiations to avert violent clashes in the near future.

On 15 January 2018 the PSC met with the League of Arab States (LAS) in a bid to revive the consultative meetings and collaboration between the AU and LAS. Such a platform should provide an opportunity for the AU and IGAD to push the international community to prioritise the stability of Somalia and the entire region over the narrow self-interests of external actors.

15 January 2018

THE PSC MET THE
LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

PSC Interview: ‘Expect a more robust NEPAD Agency’

Uncertainty about the future of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and its committee of heads of state surfaced at the 30th AU summit in January 2018. *The PSC Report* spoke to Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Agency, about the future of the organisation.

Is there any truth to the rumour that NEPAD will be disbanded?

There is absolutely no truth to that rumour.

The rumour that NEPAD will be disbanded may have emanated from a proposal in 2017, which was subsequently withdrawn, not for NEPAD to be disbanded but for the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) to be disbanded. This proposal was rejected.

The AU Assembly will decide on the headquarters of any potential successor agency, if it is to move at all

On the contrary, AU member states are reaffirming their commitment to the NEPAD Agency as the union’s own instrument established to champion catalytic support to member states and regional bodies in advancing the implementation of the continent’s development vision – as articulated in the seven aspirations and 20 goals of Agenda 2063.

Therefore, in the coming years, you should expect to see a stronger and more robust NEPAD Agency.

Is a new AU Development Agency going to be created, based in South Africa?

I trust you are familiar with the essence and rationale of the AU reforms led by President Paul Kagame. A core aspect of these reforms is to streamline and improve effectiveness and efficiency in delivery in the implementation of AU decisions, policies and programmes across all AU organs and institutions. In this sense, as the NEPAD Agency is the technical implementation agency of the AU, one specific recommendation in the Kagame report is to transform it into the AU Development Agency.

However, it is important to note that a decision of the AU on the AU Development Agency has not yet been formally adopted, but it is a welcome plan that would strengthen the delivery capacity of the AU on agreed key priorities. The NEPAD Agency is currently headquartered in South Africa, and the AU Assembly will decide on the headquarters of any potential successor agency, if it is to move at all.

How many countries have signed up to NEPAD since its creation?

It is critically important to be clear on this point. The AU decision on the establishment of the NEPAD Secretariat in 2001 and the 2010 decision that transformed the secretariat into an agency are decisions that directly and practically implicate all the member states – now the 55 member states. So, there is no such thing as ‘member states signing up to or ratifying’ NEPAD.

A decision on the AU Development Agency has not yet been adopted, but it is a welcome plan

This is the reason why the NEPAD Agency has been collaborating and supporting all the member states and regional economic communities (RECs). At this very moment, the NEPAD Agency has a direct and active programme support footprint in 52 of the 55 member states. By virtue of its purpose and mandate, the NEPAD Agency is obliged to work with and support all the member states and is driven by their own needs and priorities. Whenever and wherever a country’s readiness and needs are expressed on any aspects of the implementation of Agenda 2063, as domesticated in their national development plans, the NEPAD Agency responds with available capacities and resources.

How does this affect the governance structure of NEPAD?

As implied in earlier points, the NEPAD Agency has been fully established by member states. Ultimately, its obligations and accountability are to the member states, through and in liaison with the AU Commission (AUC). On a practical level, this is realised through the NEPAD Steering Committee and the HSGOC. These committees involve 20 member states, including the five initiator countries of NEPAD – Algeria, Senegal, Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa – and as this is on a two-year rotational basis, every member state gets the opportunity to serve on the committee.

Like all other heads of state committees, within the AU Constitutive Act, the HSGOC remains an integral part of the AU system.

When will a new chairperson of the heads of state governing body be appointed to replace President Macky Sall?

The envisaged election of the next chairperson of the HSGOC will take place in January 2019, during the AU summit in Addis Ababa.

What exactly is NEPAD's role, compared to those of the Social Affairs and Economic Affairs Commissions of the AU, national governments and institutions such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)?

I would like to first underline the fact that the NEPAD Agency was established for a purpose that is unique in its form and value. In this way, the NEPAD Agency's role and value is complementary and supportive to the AUC and the RECs. Together, they bring utmost comprehensive and integrated value to national action (i.e. value in supporting and enhancing member states' ability and capacity to plan, execute and evaluate their development plans and policies) within the countries, and they connect across countries for economic integration.

In terms of the specific roles and value, after closing the loop by (a) providing expert input (data and analysis) to the AUC-led processes for advancing continental development priorities, policies and frameworks, the NEPAD Agency (b) picks up the continental development policy decisions, translates these into implementable frameworks and moves this collaboratively with RECs and member states 'to domesticate' the continental development policies into regional development plans and national development plans, respectively. With a focus on enhancing and aligning implementation capacity, the NEPAD Agency (c) continues to accompany member states and RECs on specific programme priorities in various ways, including planning and evaluations (impacting on the quality, appropriateness and bankability of investment programmes), as well as brokering technical and financing partnerships (thereby leveraging resources and expertise with an impact on enhanced and expended implementation capacity).

Intervening at all three levels, i.e. national, regional and continental, the NEPAD Agency is able to foster vertical and horizontal coherence – important in building continental and regional economic and social capital

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THE ELECTION OF
ANOTHER HEAD OF STATE
TO LEAD NEPAD

and value, which forms part of the essential ingredients of sustainable national success in terms of economic growth and development.

One element uniquely significant in Agenda 2063 is the AU member states' resolute commitment to delivering results (tangible impact on key development parameters). This is why the AU has gone further to define the specific role of the NEPAD Agency in organising and managing the overall Agenda 2063 First-Ten-Year-Implementation-Plan monitoring and evaluation (M&E) undertaking, as well as related reporting and learning. This work involves bringing in the desired standardisation in tools and templates to support individual member states in determining and enhancing national systems and capacity for monitoring development progress and performance, including linking to relevant national accountability platforms and planning systems.

I expect that the agency will attract and expand funding support from the private sector

Working with UNECA, the AfDB and other partners under the overall coordination of the AUC, the NEPAD Agency recently finalised the development of the Agenda 2063 First-Ten-Year-Implementation-Plan M&E Framework. The joint collaboration, especially with UNECA's involvement, is particularly welcomed in the context of the desired 'alignment and harmonization' between Agenda 2063 and the SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals, or Agenda 2030]. The First-Ten-Year-Implementation-Plan M&E Framework, which was validated and approved by member states, has been designed to foster and facilitate implementation of Agenda 2063 while fully reflecting some aspects of Agenda 2030. This is important in ensuring member states are not confused or led to run parallel Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 implementation arrangements.

Where does NEPAD get its funding?

Core operations, including core staff, are funded by member states through contributions to the AUC. Since 2017, the NEPAD Agency has also received programme funding from the AUC, i.e. from member states' contributions. I can only see this window increasing along with member states' commitments and

determination to have Africa's development programmes funded largely from its own resources.

At the moment, a large portion of the agency's programme funding comes from our development partners. Even as the agency expends programme funding from member states, complementary funding from partners will remain necessary and useful in many ways, including clearing for viable and bankable investment financing.

In this sense, I also expect that the agency will attract and expand funding support from the private sector – especially Africa's own private sector. In each aspect – member states, development partners or the private sector – the NEPAD Agency remains resolute in strengthening internal systems and mechanisms to ensure value for money, accountability and clear line of sight, linking all development financing resources to tangible results and impacts, ultimately enhancing capacity for national action.

How do you see NEPAD evolving in the next few years?

As mentioned earlier, the rationale and purpose for which the NEPAD Agency was set up – even as it transforms into the AU Development Agency – remains relevant and even greater now, in the light of the even stronger tenacity, determination and commitment by the AU member states – severally and collectively – to deliver tangible results and change on key economic growth (wealth creation and sustainable expansion in GDP [gross domestic product]) and inclusive development (from jobs and economic opportunities, food and nutritional security through to access to proper education, health and other welfare services for the continent's populations).

The reform to the AU Development Agency is also in the context of strengthening a focused delivery system for the agency and therefore enabling the continent to realise optimal value from the operations and work of the agency. I also remain highly optimistic on the future of the agency, as moving into the AU Development Agency will also enable the agency to rally the desired expertise and resources in order to be highly responsive to member states' needs, enhancing Africa's capacity and ability to compete and leverage value out of global geo-politics.

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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