

In this issue

■ Special Focus: 71st UN General Assembly

African leaders attending the UN General Assembly debate stressed the need for **UN reform and a focus on the effects of climate change**.

The UN Summit for Refugees heard that African countries bear a great burden to host **refugees and migrants**.

The government of **South Sudan** has reneged on its earlier commitment to accept a new protection force without any preconditions.

■ Situation Analysis

An important donor conference is being organised to raise funds for post-conflict reconstruction in **the Central African Republic**.

■ Addis Insight

The AU's new funding model has profound implications for the organisation, which includes a shift in focus to early warning and preventative diplomacy.

■ PSC Interview

The *PSC Report* spoke to **Dr Alhaji Sarjoh Bah**, head of the crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction division at the AU Peace and Security Department, about assisting countries emerging from conflict.



Peace & Security Council Report

“ Ban accused the South Sudanese leaders of betraying their people

Page 2

“ Donors' conferences are fraught with unfulfilled pledges

Page 14

“ The levy should contribute US\$325 million to the Peace Fund

Page 15



On the Agenda

Syria overshadows African conflicts at UN General Assembly debate

On the first anniversary of the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African leaders at the 71st United Nations (UN) General Assembly warned that the success or failure to implement these goals could determine the future security of the continent. The conflicts in South Sudan and Libya both warranted separate meetings by the Peace and Security Council (PSC). Overall, however, the conflict in Syria and the recent failed ceasefire loomed larger than any other discussion.

The recent outbreak of violence in South Sudan was the African conflict uppermost in the minds of many leaders at last month's UN General Assembly from 13–26 September 2016. South Sudanese Vice-President Taban Deng Gai's presence in New York was seen as a bid to seek endorsement for his leadership. He took over from Riek Machar, who went into self-imposed exile after fresh violence had broken out in July. However, many in the international community dispute Deng's appointment, saying Machar should return to his post for the August 2015 peace agreement to be restored.

Taban Deng Gai's presence in New York was seen as a bid to seek endorsement for his leadership

PSC Chairperson

H.E. Catherine Mwangi

Kenya's Ambassador to Ethiopia, the Republic of Djibouti and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

Current members

of the PSC

Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Egypt, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, Zambia

Deng explained that his party, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In-Opposition (SPLM-IO) had appointed him 'to allow peace and stability to prevail' and to allow the governing Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to have a partner in the implementation of the peace agreement. He hinted that South Sudan's transitional government of national unity still had issues with the UN-mandated Regional Protection Force. More engagement was needed to 'avoid derailing national healing and reconciliation. External intervention often affects negatively internal reconciliation,' he said.

Deng said South Sudan was 'stable [and] peaceful', and added that the 'government is functioning and life is returning back to normal'. He told leaders he bore a 'white bull' from President Salva Kiir to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon as 'a sign of peace, and it has grown now ready to be delivered'.

Ban, however, accused the South Sudanese leaders of betraying their people.

Deng was also present at the PSC meeting on South Sudan on 19 September. South Africa's permanent representative at the UN, Jerry Matjila, said African leaders accepted Deng's appointment in the hope that this would move the peace process forward. 'People have very difficult choices to make, and Deng was best under the circumstances. It was more realistic [to accept him]. We all hope things will improve and go back to normalcy,' he said.

People have very difficult choices to make, and Deng was best under the circumstances

New initiative for reconciliation in Libya

Three days after its meeting on South Sudan, the PSC called an unscheduled meeting to find continental mechanisms to establish reconciliation in Libya. South African government officials said Libya was considering a reconciliation model similar to the one South Africa had used before 1994, and the intervention could be similar to the AU high-level panel established before former ruler Muammar Gaddafi's death.

President Faye al-Sarraj told the UN General Assembly efforts had been made to bring together the different voices in the country, and that the government would continue with peaceful dialogue. The fragmented country has been struggling to establish a government since the killing of Gaddafi in 2011, with the UN-backed Government of National Accord failing to get the endorsement of all the groups in the country.

South Africa's President Jacob Zuma said a fractured Libya also 'provided a fertile ground for the terrorists to carry out their unjustified terrorist activities'.

Call for leaders to end war and poverty

In their farewell speeches to the UN General Assembly, Ban and United States President Barack Obama – both of whom are at the end of their terms – had strong words about recent election-related conflicts and controversies, many of which took place in Africa.

In a forceful speech Ban said after his 10 years in office he was convinced world leaders had it in their power to

end wars and poverty, and prevent conflict. However, leaders all too often were seen 'rewriting constitutions, manipulating elections and taking other desperate steps to cling to power'.

Obama similarly criticised strongmen and advocated a liberal political order. 'I know that some countries, which now recognise the power of free markets, still reject the model of free societies,' he said.

The AU's Agenda 2030

It was too early to report back on real progress in the SDGs, launched last year, but with this year's assembly themed 'Sustainable development goals: a universal push to transform our world', African leaders incorporated the topic into their speeches.

Many reported that they had already incorporated the goals into their national plans and linked them to the AU's Agenda 2063. The goals are aimed at ensuring that economic development does not just favour small elites.

Leaders also pointed out stumbling blocks. Senegalese President Macky Sall said the electricity question was one such problem holding Africa back. 'Without competitively priced energy, there can be no industrialisation and development,' he said. 'Africa cannot enlighten other continents with its resources while remaining itself in the dark.'

Africa cannot enlighten other continents with its resources while remaining itself in the dark

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said poor countries were 'making every possible effort' to improve people's lives while faced with crises such as an influx of migrants and droughts.

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, who has seen various protests against his government in recent months, said 'the burden of sanctions, notably imposed by the United States and other Western countries for 16 years' kept his country from realising the SDGs.

Several leaders linked the SDGs to security. Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou urged for 'a new kind of

economic governance' in the world to 'strike a balance between speculative financial capital and industrial capital', which would give the least-developed countries the money to invest in economic growth.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari said corruption 'freezes development' and undermined the achievement of the SDGs, and urged governments to fight it on all levels, channelling the recovered money into development. He started his speech saying his country was experiencing a financial crisis but was implementing reforms in an attempt to diversify the economy.

Justifying a clampdown on social media to fight terrorism

Much of the focus in talks around terrorism was on Syria and Libya, with some calls for a clampdown on media used to propagate extremist ideas. Ethiopia, which had shut down some social media communications during recent protests, said while social media could enhance information exchanges and public participation, it also had negative impacts.

'We are seeing how misinformation could easily go viral via social media and mislead many people, especially the youth, who are our future. Social media has certainly empowered populists and other extremists to exploit people's genuine concerns and spread their message of hate and bigotry,' Desalegn said. He implied that social media 'and other media outlets financed by friendly governments' were used to destabilise his country.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi asked the international community to prevent terrorists from using new information technology 'which have contributed to endowing the phenomena of terrorism and ideological extremism with dangerous new dimensions that have gained them global reach'. He called for a clampdown on the hosting of websites that incite violence and

extremism. Egypt has seen various protests in recent years fuelled by social media.

Obama said terrorist networks 'use social media to prey upon the minds of our youth, endangering open societies and spurring anger against innocent immigrants and Muslims', but in the same breath he spoke out against governments censoring the flow of information and quashing dissent. He said: 'An explosion of social media has given ordinary people more ways to express themselves, and has raised people's expectations for those of us in power.'

African leaders were unanimous about the need for UN Security Council reforms to give the continent representation on decision-making bodies

African leaders were also unanimous about the need for UN and UN Security Council reforms to give the continent representation on decision-making bodies. Some praised the current efforts to increase transparency in the appointment of the next secretary general, but said more needed to be done.

Urgent need to mitigate the effects of climate change

African leaders hailed the Paris Agreement on climate change signed earlier this year, but said developed countries could do more. Nigeria, Malawi, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Namibia were among the countries reporting that the recent drought brought about by climate change has affected them adversely.

Angolan Vice President Manuel Domingos Vicente said his country was only responsible for 0.17% of greenhouse emissions, 'but the effects of climate change are already being felt among us in many ways'.

On the Agenda

Migration crisis reveals 'the failure of burden-sharing'



African leaders attending the recent UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants said African countries bear a responsibility disproportionate to their resources to host refugees and migrants. As 193 countries committed to the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**, African countries wanted to know why it took a crisis in Europe for the UN to respond.

Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto has harsh words for richer countries that do not take an equal responsibility for hosting refugees. Speaking at the 19 September UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants, on the eve of the UN General Assembly debate, he said nothing better demonstrates the failure of international burden-sharing than the fact that 86% of the world's 22 million forced migrants and refugees are hosted in 10 developing countries. Kenya is one of them.

Ruto was scathing about the lack of financial support to his country to deal with the refugee crisis

Ruto was scathing about the lack of financial support to his country to deal with the refugee crisis. Less than 1% of the US\$500 million pledged to help Kenya to deal with refugees had materialised, he said. One of the consequences was the country's decision to close its Dadaab refugee camp, the biggest in the world.

Environmental degradation and security were additional considerations for wishing to close the camp, he said. Dadaab, situated near the Somali border, was seen as a recruitment ground for al-Shabaab. The decision to close the camp, in October 2015, came soon after the European Union had signed a multibillion-dollar deal with Turkey to stem the flow of refugees headed for Europe. Kenya at the time said that voluntary international funding for the camp, near the Somali border, had been reduced in favour of 'raising budgets in the northern hemisphere to [deal with] refugees headed to the West'.

Both big and small movements of people should get attention

South African President Jacob Zuma also emphasised Africa's experience of the refugee crisis and said 'the forcible displacement of people has always, and continues to occur, across the globe. While we recognise that the large

86%

OF REFUGEES ARE HOSTED
IN TEN COUNTRIES

movements of refugees and migrants present unique challenges to affected states, South Africa also cautions member states not to forget that the plight of forcibly displaced persons should be treated with equal concern, whether they form part of large or small movements of people.' The New York Declaration deals mainly with large movements of people.

South Africa's Minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba, in an interview with the *PSC Report*, said Africa had been experiencing large migrant flows, including fatal journeys across the Mediterranean Sea, but no summits were called. 'That would seem to suggest that the lives of Africans don't matter,' he said. He added that the New York Declaration 'still reflects a bias towards the dominant countries' and that Africa would continue to push its position on this issue after the summit.

Africa had been experiencing large migrant flows, including fatal journeys across the Mediterranean Sea, but no summits were called

African countries described as model hosts

However, the summit did recognise that African countries were models of how refugees should be hosted. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said the Ugandan government had an 'open door' refugee policy and has mobilised a broad range of partners and institutions in an innovative response centred on education and livelihoods, including for host communities.

Uganda's Minister for Disaster Preparedness, Relief and Refugees Hilary Oniek told the summit Uganda had received over 120 000 South Sudanese refugees since July 2016 and, together with an influx from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, expected to have over 810 000 refugees by year-end.

The government has a policy to protect refugees, he said, but it needs commitment from the international community to ensure sustained interventions in the protection regime in the country and to build strong partnerships internally, regionally and globally to address the question of forced migration.

Senegalese President Macky Sall emphasised the right to dignity. 'In many cases migrants are good people who work hard to make a living and therefore contribute socially and economically in their host countries,' he said. 'Rather than a systematic policy of returning migrants, the situation of migrants should be stabilised and this should be done by the appropriate regularisation of their status.'

Sall expressed concern about possible detention centres in African countries. 'This question needs to be looked at seriously in light of the rules which

120 000

SOUTH SUDANESE
REFUGEES IN UGANDA

govern the right of persons and their assets in integrated areas such as the Economic Community of West African States,' he said.

Anti-poverty non-governmental organisation Oxfam International noted at the summit that the world's six richest countries hosted less than 9% of the world's refugees.

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Ban Ki-moon upbeat about solutions

Despite the reservations expressed by the African leaders, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the meeting 'represents a breakthrough in our collective efforts to address the challenges of human mobility', which was at unprecedented levels.

Ban said the main commitments in the New York declaration were:

- To protect the human rights of all refugees and migrants, regardless of their status
- To increase support for the hardest-hit countries
- To assist despairing people in protracted crises
- To ensure that children get an education
- To improve search and rescue operations

- To boost humanitarian funding and resettlement of refugees

According to the UN, although there is nothing legally binding about the New York Declaration, countries are morally bound to their commitment by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and other fund-raising agencies. Countries were thus likely to pressure each other to honour these commitments.

UN member states would now work towards ratifying a convention in 2018, similar to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, giving specifics on how to deal with migrants.

Big pledges to deal with the refugee crisis

Following the UN summit, US President Barack Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees brought together leaders from 50 countries. Several big pledges were made to help countries deal with the refugee crisis. Obama acknowledged that refugees in places such as Ecuador or Kenya 'don't always get as much attention as some of the recent migrations, but they need help too'.

Pledges to the UN and humanitarian organisations working with refugees increased this year to \$4.5 billion. This is still woefully short of what is needed.

Whether the gathering has caused enough unease to help leaders overcome reluctant electorates and spring into action will likely only be known at the report-back session due in a year's time.



On the Agenda

The search for consensus on a regional protection force for South Sudan

The PSC convened a summit of heads of state and government in New York on 19 September 2016. The meeting, on the margins of the UN General Assembly, focused on the on-going crisis in South Sudan, two weeks after the visit of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to Juba. Questions remain over whether the South Sudanese government will accept a regional protection force. Little progress has also been made on a long-term process to ensure peace and accountability in South Sudan.

Accusations that the UN is standing by while atrocities are being committed in South Sudan have tainted the reputation of its peacekeepers in that country. To try to remedy this, plans are afoot to strengthen the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) through a regional protection force consisting of African troops.

Countries such as Zambia, Rwanda and Egypt have volunteered to be part of the future regional protection force

The deployment of the force, with 4 000 troops to secure Juba and protect civilians, was included in the renewal of UNMISS's mandate by the UNSC in early September. Following this decision the UNSC travelled to Juba, where the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) made several commitments. It officially consented to the deployment of the regional protection force as a part of UNMISS. It also reiterated its commitment to remove obstacles to the free movement of the force to allow it to carry out its mandate to protect civilians.

On its way back to New York the UNSC stopped in Addis Ababa to meet the PSC and the AU Commission.

4000

AFRICAN PEACEKEEPERS TO
BE SENT TO SOUTH SUDAN

A growing role for the AU in the protection force?

Since then, however, South Sudan has gone back on its word. While it earlier gave its unconditional consent to the deployment of the force, it now asks that the force does not consist of troops from the region. It clearly does not want the increased involvement of some of its neighbours.

Several countries outside and inside the region, such as Zambia, Rwanda

and Egypt, have reportedly volunteered to be part of the future regional protection force. At the summit meeting of the PSC in New York, African heads of state called for Africa to 'take advantage of all available African capabilities to address the situation in South Sudan'. The involvement of states that do not belong to the Intergovernmental Organisation on Development (IGAD) would open the possibility of the AU's becoming involved in the planning and deployment of the force. Up to now IGAD has largely been spearheading attempts to make peace in South Sudan.

The search for consensus among various actors (IGAD, the PSC, the UNSC and other African states) is therefore now the main challenge in getting the force up and running. Some states neighbouring South Sudan have expressed reservations about the deployment of non-regional troops.

Relations between South Sudan and Ethiopia appear to be strained. According to the International Crisis Group, South Sudan is moving closer to Egypt – currently a member of both the UNSC and the PSC – which is at odds with Ethiopia over Ethiopia's construction of the Grand Renaissance Dam in the Nile River. Ethiopia is set to join the UNSC in 2017, which raises the prospect of a division among the three non-permanent African members of the UNSC regarding South Sudan.

The fact that Riek Machar, the former South Sudanese first vice-president and leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In-Opposition (SPLM-IO), recently found refuge in the Sudanese capital Khartoum has raised eyebrows regarding Sudanese involvement in its former southern province.

There were also rumours of a trade-off agreed to during new First Vice-President Taban Deng's visit to Khartoum on 21 August. Deng is also a member of the SPLM-IO. Reportedly it was agreed that Sudan would forbid Machar from launching an offensive from its territory while, in return, South Sudan would cease its support to armed groups in the Two Areas and Darfur. Juba's lack of action in this regard led Sudan to threaten to close its border with South Sudan in retaliation.

Contentious appointment of Deng as first vice president

Salva Kiir's appointment of Deng as first vice-president has been criticised by the international community, including the AU. The last PSC meeting on South Sudan endorsed the decision of an IGAD summit 'encouraging Riek Machar to re-join the peace process and the commitment by General Taban Deng Gai to step down ... with a view to returning to the status quo ante in line with the Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan [ACRSS]'.

Salva Kiir's appointment of Deng as first vice-president has been criticised by the international community

The monitoring body of the agreement, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Committee chaired by Festus Mogae, stated: 'We recognize First Vice President Riek Machar as the legitimate leader of the SPLM-IO. A change to the leadership depends on the IO itself and we are not here to speculate as to any change of leadership. We do not see any value in speculating when the friends of South Sudan are working hard to ensure a return to the peace agreement.'

The situation evolves very quickly, however, and support for Machar has now declined. The joint communiqué of the TGNU and the UNSC did not mention him, while many diplomatic envoys seemed to have withdrawn their insistence on his return. United States Special Envoy Donald Booth said that it would be 'unwise' for Machar to try to return to Juba, while French Deputy Representative to the UN Alex Lamék said: 'Taban Deng is serving as vice president and he will stay in that position until the return, if there is a return, of Riek Machar.'

More recently, South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa received Deng and congratulated him on his appointment 'replacing Riek Machar, who has now fled South Sudan'.

The question is how the current splintering of the SPLM-IO will have an impact not only on the dynamics

of the crisis and the implementation of the peace agreement but also on international efforts, including that of the AU.

Wrangling over the protection force a diversion?

The focus on the regional protection force, which mainly addresses the outbreak of violence in July, could draw attention away from the search for a sustainable peace process in South Sudan. There is a risk that the focus on South Sudan's consenting to the regional protection force and the appointment of Deng will lead to the selective implementation of the peace agreement.

The concessions made by the government of South Sudan to accept the new first vice-president can be seen as part of such a selective process. The political capital and time spent by the international community on these issues overshadow other drivers of instability, such as the decision by the government to divide the country into 28 new states.

The creation of a hybrid court to try those responsible for war crimes is the main issue on the agenda of the AU

The AU and the fight for accountability in South Sudan

The creation and operationalisation of a hybrid court in order to try those responsible of war crimes and crimes against humanity is the main issue on the agenda of the AU regarding South Sudan. In New York the PSC stressed the need 'to hold those who committed atrocities accountable in order to end and prevent impunity in the future'.

In its joint communiqué with the UNSC, the TGNU signalled its readiness 'to implement the provisions of the ACRSS regarding the creation of a hybrid court in cooperation with the African Union'.

The Office of the Legal Counsel of the AU Commission was tasked with creating this ad hoc mechanism in order to deal with the issue of impunity in South Sudan. The legal counsel drafted a proposal with a timeline for implementation, but this has not been formally adopted yet by the AU and the government of South Sudan. The challenge for the AU is to avoid the pitfalls encountered by a similar proposition in Sudan five years ago.

In 2010 Sudan had rejected the AU's proposition of a hybrid court, citing its opposition to foreign judges trying Sudanese nationals and its own efforts to prosecute those responsible of human rights violations in Darfur. Moreover, any attempt to operationalise the court would have to contend with a volatile security context and the divisions within the opposition. The negative and quasi-unanimous reaction of the South Sudanese political classes to a recent report on corruption in the country shows the difficulty that any judiciary process targeting both warring parties in South Sudan would encounter.

Situation Analysis

Life support for the Central African Republic



The fragility of peace in the Central African Republic (CAR) was highlighted in mid-September 2016 when violence broke out in Ndomete village north of the capital Bangui. The clashes between ex-Séléka rebels and locals left 26 people dead. The AU is desperate to help the CAR to its feet after the devastating conflict that started in 2012. However, past experience shows that pledges by international donors do not always translate into concrete funding for aid projects.

A donors and investors' conference for the CAR has been scheduled for 17 November in Brussels to support post-conflict reconstruction in the country. The conference is co-organised by CAR authorities and the European Union (EU), with the support of the UN and the World Bank

This was confirmed at the 9th meeting of the International Contact Group on the CAR (ICG-CAR) on 25 August. At the meeting, international partners under the leadership of the AU reaffirmed their commitment to address the insecurities in the CAR through post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD).

A lot still needs to be done to rebuild the country after the war and to reconcile communities

The conference follows the restoration of constitutional order and the completion of the transition process, marked by successful elections and the swearing in of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra on 30 March. Despite the political and security gains in the region, however, a lot still needs to be done to rebuild the country after the war and to reconcile communities.

Call for help with post-conflict reconstruction

The AU has taken a leading role in spearheading the PCRD effort in the CAR. It is trying to re-invigorate its role in the region after having handed over peacekeeping responsibilities to the UN. The Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) was established in April 2014 to replace the African-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA).

From 7–17 August the AU Commission conducted a needs assessment in the CAR to assess critical areas for peacebuilding and reconstruction in line with its Policy on PCRD. The outcomes of the PCRD assessment will be

17 November 2016

A DONOR'S CONFERENCE FOR THE
CAR TO BE HELD IN BRUSSELS

presented to the PSC in October to inform priority issues to be flagged at the planned conference in November.

To complement the international donors and investors' conference, the AU Commission also intends to convene an African Solidarity Conference in October to mobilise support within Africa in support of the CAR.

Addressing the challenges of armed groups

While there has been a commendable reduction of insecurity in the country, violence continues in various parts of the CAR, perpetrated by armed groups/communities affiliated with ex-Séléka and anti-balaka. This highlights the imperative for effective disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) and security sector reform (SSR).

The AU Commission intends to mobilise support within Africa in support of the CAR

The AU and the government of the CAR convened a two-day sensitisation workshop on DDR and SSR in Bangui in August. The workshop sought to build the capacity of government officials to engage with the much-needed DDR/SSR processes.

In 2015 about US\$10 million provided by MINUSCA was used towards a pre-DDR process involving the grouping, identification and sensitisation of potential candidates for DDR. However, the identification and vetting of these potential candidates has been a challenge given that the conflict is not only among armed groups but between armed communities as well. The process also faces other daunting challenges, such as the limited capacity of the state to reach ungoverned spaces in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

The implementation of the DDR/SSR initiatives is further constrained by limited funds. The cost of the DDR process has been estimated at US\$28.5 million and that of the supplementary Community Violence Reduction programme at US\$20 million.

In an interview in July, Touadéra summed up the DDR/SSR priorities of the nation: 'We need experience, expertise and patience to see this through. We also need financing. We have to identify all the combatants and only after the census is done can we begin the process of possibly rehabilitating and reintegrating them back to the community. We're also looking into the possibility of training some of them and assimilating them into the national forces if they are eligible and interested.'

The process thus requires confidence building and the support of civil society organisations, political parties, the media, faith-based groups and the international community.

US\$20 million

THE COST OF REDUCING
COMMUNITY VIOLENCE IN THE CAR

Return to normalcy

The CAR conflict has led to a significant displacement of the country's population, whose return is contingent on stability and support to rebuild their lives. The 2015 UNHCR Global Trends report highlights that about 471 100 refugees from the CAR are hosted in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and the Republic of Congo. There are also about 421 000 internally displaced persons in the country.

To return to normalcy, the government needs to work on reconciliation between religious and ethnic groups, and create economic and education opportunities.

The government will also need to address the issue of the centralisation of the state authority and services around Bangui, which has a negative impact on the peripheral regions. The Bangui Forum for National Reconciliation, which took place from 4–11 May 2015, started this process, to enable regional authorities to pay more attention to the challenges faced by communities outside the capital.

Combating impunity

One of the priority areas that were discussed during the recent AU PCRD Needs Assessment was the operationalisation of the Special Criminal Court for the CAR. The court was promulgated into law on 3 June 2015 to investigate and prosecute the alleged perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the CAR since 2003.

The Lord's Resistance Army has long taken advantage of the conflict and limited presence of the state in the eastern part of the CAR

The court, which will have national and international staff, is expected to operate within the national justice system to complement the work of the International Criminal Court. The functioning of the court is, however, hampered by insufficient human and financial resources.

Decisive action needed against the LRA

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has long taken advantage of the conflict and limited presence of the state in the eastern part of the CAR to terrorise civilians. This continues to pose a threat to the political and security gains in the country.

With a mandate extended until 22 May 2017, the AU-led Regional Task Force (RTF) of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA) faces a number of human and financial constraints that limit its ability to tackle the LRA onslaught in Central Africa. Uganda recently announced its decision to withdraw its troops from the 3 085-strong

421 000

INTERNALLY DISPLACED
PEOPLE IN THE CAR

RTF. Uganda contributes 2 000 troops to the force, and its withdrawal will significantly weaken the RTF, which is already struggling to reach its authorised force strength of 5 000.

At its 624th meeting the PSC asked MINUSCA to consider the possibility of expanding its presence beyond the centre to the peripheral regions of the CAR. This is to support the RTF in combating the threat posed by the LRA and other armed and criminal groups operating in the region.

The conference organisers will have to emphasise the urgency of the call for aid to the CAR

What happens after pledges are made?

Donors' conferences are fraught with unfulfilled pledges. Pledges made at the donors' conference in January 2014 to address the humanitarian crisis in the CAR, for example, took a long time to be disbursed.

At the time, the United States (US), European countries, the European Commission, the World Bank and the African Development Bank pledged a total of US\$496 million to respond to the crisis in the CAR. A report by the non-governmental organisation Refugees International said the disbursement of aid was hampered by the fact that many embassies, including the US embassy in Bangui, were closed at the start of the crisis in 2012. The US embassy has since been re-opened.

The conference organisers will have to emphasise the urgency of the call for aid to the CAR.

Need for strategic investment in the CAR

The CAR is infamous for its dependency on aid, as evident from the number of foreign aid and donor conferences organised to assist the government to run the country. This is ironic for a country rich in natural resources such as diamonds, uranium, timber, gold, oil and hydropower.

There is therefore a need for a significant shift from aid to investments that empower the government to use the country's vast natural resources for development. This will enable the CAR to shake off its 'donor syndrome'.

Investments in the region will, however, require international checks and balances under the strong leadership of the AU to avoid the exploitation of CAR resources. This should ensure that investors maintain a balance between making a profit and contributing to the development of the weak state, which is on life support and desperate for an economic boost.

2000

UGANDAN TROOPS
FIGHTING THE LRA

Addis Insight

The AU's new funding model to focus on preventing conflicts



The clock is ticking for the implementation of the new funding model for the AU, based on a proposal by the former head of the African Development Bank, Donald Kaberuka. Kaberuka's plan, to finance the AU through a levy of 0.2% on imports, was adopted unanimously by heads of state at the 27th AU summit in Kigali in July 2016. AU member states committed themselves to implement the levy from 2017. Many questions remain, however, about the modalities of this funding and whether the deadline will be met.

The new mechanism to fund the AU, proposed by Donald Kaberuka, the AU High Representative for the Peace Fund, could have far-reaching repercussions for the pan-African organisation. The plan, which has been adopted by the AU Assembly, entails a 0.2% import levy on all eligible imports entering the continent, to fund the AU. The expected revenue is US\$1.2 billion in 2017. The import levy will fund 'the AU's operating, programme and peace and security operations budget'. It should contribute US\$325 million to the Peace Fund in 2017, rising to US\$400 million in 2020, while the remainder will fund the AU's general budget.

The new mechanism to fund the AU could have far-reaching repercussions for the organisation

African ministers of finance adopted guidelines on the modalities of implementing the import levy during a meeting in Addis Ababa on 15–16 September. This was after Kaberuka had briefed the PSC on 5 September.

These guidelines – which have not been made public – are likely to include details regarding the delimitation of regions, the definition of 'eligible imports' and the regional mechanisms for collecting the funds.. The challenge would be to meet this ambitious timeline for operationalisation starting in 2017.

Secure funding for the AU's preventative efforts

A new report on the Peace Fund, which will also be financed through the 0.2% import levy, has been published by the AU's Peace and Security Department. According to the report, entitled 'Securing predictable and sustainable financing for peace in Africa' and dated August 2016, the Peace

US\$1.2 billion

THE EXPECTED REVENUE FROM
LEVY'S TO FUND THE AU

Fund will finance three sets of activities: mediation and preventive diplomacy; institutional capacity building; and peace support operations. Moreover, a crisis Reserve Facility will be established to fund rapid responses to unforeseen crises. The report advocates that the budget of this facility should not be less than US\$50 million.

A major innovation of the report is its proposal to earmark funding for activities related to mediation and preventive diplomacy. The activities concerned are: the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the mediation support unit, the special envoys appointed by the AU Commission (AUC) chairperson and the AU liaison offices.

Until now, the funding for these activities was on an ad hoc basis and relied mostly on support from AU partners. The report proposes to allocate US\$37 million to these activities starting 2017, increasing the amount to US\$43 million by 2020. This means that almost 10% of the Peace Fund will be allocated to preventive efforts.

An increased effort to prevent conflicts from erupting could avoid the high costs of peacekeeping operations

The rationale behind this shift is that an increased effort to prevent crises and conflicts from erupting could avoid the high financial costs associated with peacekeeping operations. In the past, the lack of available funding for preventative action ended up affecting the impact of the AU's response to emerging crises.

The challenge in implementing this provision lies in the eligibility criteria for the activities to be funded. Since there is an increased call to address not only the immediate causes but also the roots of conflicts, the AU would have to balance its funding between direct and structural prevention.

A closer partnership between the UN and AU on peace operations

The target of collecting US\$325 million in 2017, and US\$400 million in 2020 for the Peace Fund, would meet the requirements set by AU member states in Johannesburg last year. Member states committed to funding 25% of the AU peace and security budget by these dates, with the remaining 75% to be funded by the international community, mostly through UN-assessed contributions.

The report on the Peace Fund proposes that UN-assessed contributions to AU-led peace support operations be undertaken under UN Chapter VIII, related to regional mechanisms, and Chapter VII, related to peace enforcement missions. The report acknowledges that such funding would be on a case-by-case basis.

US\$400 million

EXPECTED REVENUE FOR
THE PEACE FUND IN 2020

A new decision-making process

Another innovative proposal by the report is a new decision-making process for AU-led peace support operations receiving UN funding. This process would include an initial appraisal of the crisis by the AUC; a letter of intent by the AUC chairperson to the UN secretary general to participate in a joint assessment of the situation; an AU–UN joint assessment mission on the ground, to develop a strategic mission concept; and a report by the AUC to the PSC that includes a strategic mission concept, a preliminary budget and the overall funding of the operation. Then the PSC would decide whether to adopt a decision acknowledging the financial implications for the AU and requesting authorisation from the UN Security Council (UNSC). The UNSC would then decide whether to vote on a resolution authorising the operation.

These operations will necessarily have to comply with UN standards regarding financial management, human rights, transparency and access to information.

The mission would therefore be jointly implemented, with the AUC chairperson appointing the head of the mission and the force commander. In terms of reporting, the AUC chairperson would report to the PSC and the UNSC. Only the PSC would decide on the review and adjustment of the operation's mandate.

Will the UN and troop contributors relinquish control?

This decision-making process creates an opportunity for a close partnership at various stages – from the situation assessment to the consultations between the PSC and the UNSC. However, there are questions regarding the flexibility of the UNSC when it comes to PSC decisions. The implementation of this provision will depend on the acceptance by UN troop and financial contributors to relinquish their control over peacekeeping operations for which the UN provides 75% of funding.

There is a shared view among AU member states, that if they reach their target of funding 25% of the budget for AU peace support operations, then it is the responsibility of the UN to fund the rest. Many UN member states, especially its top contributors, do not

agree with this. Among the reasons for their reluctance to guarantee such funding is the possibility that assessed contributions could be used for missions that may not fit within the UN peacekeeping doctrine. For example, the UN usually insists that there is an existing peace agreement before deploying blue helmets, something the AU does not require.

The UN usually insists that there is an existing peace agreement before deploying blue helmets

The challenge then would be to align what the AU considers to be its comparative advantage – offensive peace enforcement missions in high-intensity conflicts – with the doctrinal requirements of the UN.

AUC chairperson to oversee management of the Peace Fund

The report proposes a governance framework for the Peace Fund that will be located in the office of the AUC chairperson. The following structures would be established:

A secretariat in charge of the management of the fund that will report to the AUC chairperson. The secretariat will be responsible for approval of the project eligible for financing, monitoring and evaluation, administration, partnerships, resource mobilisation and advocacy.

An executive committee will provide the executive oversight of the fund. It will be presided over by the chairperson and consist of the deputy chairperson, the commissioner for peace and security and commissioner of political affairs.

An Independent Evaluation Group will be in charge of assessing the impact of the fund, and review its performance and management.

A board of trustees will provide oversight. It will be composed of the AUC chairperson and deputy chairperson, the commissioner for peace and security, eminent persons with experience in peace and security and two non-African partners contributing to the fund.

Region-based funding could reduce the power of big states

Another important aspect of this new mechanism is the shifting of the overall funding from a state-based to a regional arrangement. Each region of the AU is supposed to contribute US\$65 million through the collection of the import levy, starting 2017. The modalities of the collection are still under discussion.

Each region of the AU is supposed to contribute US\$65 million through the collection of the import levy

One of the implications of this change is that it will reduce the organisation's dependency on a small group of contributors (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa and Angola). It will democratise AU funding by empowering regions.

It will also have an impact on the decision-making process regarding peace operations. The assumption is that regional mechanisms would play a more important role since the funding is regionally based. However, the governance structure proposed by the report does not include regional mechanisms, despite the critical role they play in preventive diplomacy and mediation. The proposed structure is only composed of AUC officials based in Addis Ababa. This situation, which creates a gap between the origins of the funding and the governing structure of the Peace Fund, could hamper coordination between the AU and the regions.

PSC Interview

AU efforts to sustain peace after the guns have been silenced are gathering momentum



The African Union's (AU) policy on post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) is 10 years old this year – 2016. The *PSC Report* spoke to **Dr Alhaji Sarjoh Bah**, Head of the Crisis Management and Post Conflict and Reconstruction Division at the AU Peace and Security Department, on progress made with implementing this policy.

What are the key achievements of the AU in terms of PCRD so far?

One of the major achievements of the AU in terms of PCRD is the establishment of the ASI [African Solidarity Initiative]. In addition to being a platform for demonstrating solidarity with post-conflict countries, the ASI provides a framework through which the necessary financial and in-kind resources are raised from the continent to support post-conflict countries. In 2014 member states pledged US\$3 million during the first African solidarity summit and we expect this positive response to gain momentum in the years to come.

The ASI provides a framework through which the necessary financial and in-kind resources are raised

In addition to the above, there have been specific interventions in a number of countries. Recognising the need for a physical presence on the ground, 12 liaison offices have been established in 12 post-conflict countries to support political dialogues, the coordination of partners and reconstruction efforts in these countries. We are supporting a range of processes, from DDR [disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration] in Guinea-Bissau and SSR [security sector reform] in Madagascar to transitional justice in the Central African Republic [CAR] and South Sudan, as well as political dialogue in Mali. These interventions are guided by the comprehensive reconstruction and stabilisation standards and guidelines set by the PCRD policy.

To what extent has African states and regional economic communities (RECs) supported the African Solidarity Initiative?

The ASI has received tremendous support from member states. Going forward, costs for identified PCRD priority areas would be covered through

US\$3 million

RAISED DURING THE FIRST
AFRICAN SOLIDARITY SUMMIT

the ASI and partner support. Currently, processes for an ASI for the CAR is ongoing. The ASI, which will be held ahead of the pledging conference for the CAR in Brussels, is to provide an opportunity for African member states to support the CAR. Already, some member states have pledged scholarships for the CAR's military and police officers. The support from African member states will be consolidated in a common document ahead of the pledging conference on 17 November 2016.

How do the AU PCRD initiatives reflect national and local ownership?

The major objective of the AU's engagement is to ensure sustainability in the short, medium and long term. This is done by ensuring that all our interventions are closely aligned with the priorities of the countries we support.

The task force provides the UN with a one-stop shop on how they interact with the AU

To sustain momentum on PCRD after political gains have been made, we have decided to transform the International Contact Group [ICG], established to support countries during conflict, to an International Support Group [ISG] during the post-conflict period. We just did this for the CAR. The AU, which was the coordinator of the ICG, remains the coordinator of the ISG. This ensures that all support provided to a post-conflict society comes through that framework and the AU leads the process with the support of the UN [United Nations], RECs and the wider international community.

How does the Inter-Departmental Task Force work to promote the implementation of the PCRD policy?

The Inter-Departmental Task Force is made up of all the directorates of the AUC [AU Commission], the RECs with liaison offices to the AUC and the Bureau of the Chairperson. Chaired by the Directorate of Peace and Security, all other directorates are members of the task force. As evinced by the pillars in the policy, PCRD covers a wide spectrum and each of the directorates has specific responsibilities for aspects of the six pillars

of the policy, namely security, humanitarian assistance, political governance and transition, socio-economic reconstruction and development, human rights, justice and reconciliation, and women and youth.

Yet the efforts are so interrelated that working individually undermines the potential of the support we provide. The task force is therefore one of the essential elements for the implementation of the PCRD policy because it is the platform for coordinating the efforts of the different directorates and the RECs, to foster complementarity and leverage their strengths in order to maximise the benefits of the support we provide to post-conflict countries. The task force is driven by the spirit of 'Delivering as one', which captures the essence of the whole-of-institution approach we have adopted.

The task force conducted the first needs assessment in the CAR in August this year. Based on the identified needs in the report, each department would lead implementation on the areas that fall directly under their mandate. The process provides a sense of ownership and responsibility among all directorates in the AUC. The task force meets at various levels – directors, heads of divisions and top technical committees. This multi-level provision allows flexibility for timely decision-making.

How does the AU work with the UN Peacebuilding Commission [UN PBC] and other international actors for post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa?

The task force provides the UN with a one-stop shop on how they interact with the AU. Instead of interacting with the different directorates on their specific areas of responsibility in PCRD, a request can be sent to the Crisis Management and Post Conflict and Reconstruction Division, from where the relevant directorates are contacted to facilitate collective interactions. The subcommittee on PCRD in the Peace and Security Council [PSC] has recently been reactivated, giving us a direct link to the PSC on PCRD-related matters. As our voice at the PSC, the subcommittee is the bridge between the UN PBC and the AU on PCRD. Efforts are underway on operationalising our working relationship at the various levels of the PBO [Peacebuilding Support

Operations] inter-departmental task force and the PSC. During the scheduled visit of the PBC later this month, we will deepen consultations on the way forward in terms of our partnership.

What are the future aspirations for Africa's peacebuilding architecture?

The AU is not new to PCRDR and peacebuilding. However, most of the efforts in the past were ad hoc, disparate and piecemeal. We have, however, learned very useful lessons from the practice – even with all its challenges – and so now, we are utilising the positive aspects of our experiences, to bring everything together and develop a composite overarching architecture. The architecture will make it possible to bring the different efforts together, ensure that it is structured in a way that allows us to complement rather than compete with each other and be able to leverage our strengths effectively. The task force provides the first building block of the architecture. PCRDR processes will be initiated at the PSD and all relevant actors would be drawn to it through the inter-departmental task force.

What we are currently lacking is a robust engagement with civil society. Although we do a lot of work with civil society organisations [CSOs], there is no structured platform for them to work systematically with us on PCRDR and peacebuilding. Such a platform will allow us to have a structured engagement through which CSO activities in post-conflict countries can be better coordinated and aligned to our objectives while they also serve as sounding boards for some of our initiatives. In the end, what we envisage is an architecture that comprises the AU Commission, the task force, the PSC (through its task force), RECs, international support groups and CSOs, which interacts with the international community including the PBC, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, USAID, the Arab Development Bank and other banks.

What are the major operational challenges facing the AU in its interventions in post-conflict countries?

PCRDR is a political process that is fraught with sensitivities. Although in the most part, states are

appreciative of our support at the initial stages, tensions begin to emerge when there is some degree of stabilisation. Yet when interventions and processes are not sustained they can atrophy the reconstruction, stabilisation and development gains made.

The biggest challenge at all times therefore is when to disengage. Leaving too soon can have dangerous repercussions. We did that and had our fingers burned. Staying too long can also be disempowering for the state. Getting that fine balance is critical and something we are constantly working on.

A major challenge we are confronted with relates to actor coordination. Despite the fact that we all know that our efficiency as external actors would be better enhanced through effective coordination, the jostle for space and perhaps quest for recognition often leads to competition rather than cooperation. So, it is not surprising to find two or three actors in a single country, all working on security sector reform for the army. This promotes forum shopping and, in the end, undermines all partners. We hope that through the support group concept the challenge of coordination would be addressed.

Although states are appreciative of our support at the initial stages, tensions begin to emerge when there is some degree of stabilisation

A third challenge facing our ability to effectively undertake PCRDR is limited resources. While financial resources are absolutely critical, there is also the need to support the development of human capital; and in the short to medium term, devise means of providing that critical human resource that post-conflict countries may need. In some instances that may be providing human resource assistance for a period of time. However, states tend to be uncomfortable with such arrangements. Negotiating that space is something that we are constantly engaged in.

Sequencing and prioritising needs is also a major challenge. When a country emerges from a complex emergency there is so much to be done. The challenge

is further compounded if the state *ante bellum* was significantly weak. While our objective is to support the state to be able to get back on its feet in order to manage its affairs, there is so much we can do. Our aim and, perhaps I should say, mandate, is to support the state to a point where it is able to continue to build and consolidate the gains made with minimal risk of a relapse. So, we have to pick and choose from the many things to be done; and sometimes, while we may be in agreement with the government on what needs to be done, we may not have consensus on the sequencing and prioritisation.

The final challenge for PCRDC is internal. At the commission, we are severely constrained both financially and human resource-wise. We are so thin in the commission that we are very stretched. Augmenting the human resource capability of the commission would greatly enable us to better deliver on the things we have set out to do.

If we are to silence the guns by 2020, we must provide the right support to post-conflict countries to prevent relapses

What are the PCRDC targets for the next 10 years?

Given the nature of PCRDC, a 10-year target may not be very helpful. We have therefore decided to limit ourselves to a five-year roadmap, which would also be aligned to the APSA roadmap and the AU's Vision 2020, both of which end in 2020. We are commemorating the 10th anniversary with a reflections workshop to ponder on where we are at and agree on where we need to go. If we are to silence the guns by 2020, we must provide the right support to post-conflict countries to prevent relapses.

We have already undertaken one needs assessment and have identified a number of priority countries for interventions. Prioritisation for us is important to ensure that our engagement with the state is meaningful enough to yield tangible outcomes after two to three years of our intervention. So, while we do not disengage from other countries, we prioritise those countries that require substantial support and significant political capital to attain success.

At the commission we are committed to providing the political and resource support to post-conflict countries; and with the initiatives we have begun, I have no doubt that it will lead us to where we need to be in the next five years and beyond.

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