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With full UN support, the African Union's commitment to curbing **arms trafficking** can become a sustainable solution.

Heads of state are asked to insist on international solidarity for disasters caused by **climate change** in Africa during the General Debate at the UN later this month.

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The PSC is still finding its feet when it comes to intervening in instability caused by **climate change**.

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On the Agenda

The need for inclusive talks in South Sudan

The PSC is set to meet at ministerial level on the margins of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's opening session in New York later this month to discuss the continuing war in South Sudan. Neither the PSC nor the UN Security Council (UNSC) has so far come up with lasting solutions to the devastating war in Africa's newest state.

Since the resurgence of violence in South Sudan in July 2016, after a series of failed ceasefire agreements, the international community seems to have run out of new ideas on how to make peace in the war-ravaged country.

The latest report of the UN Panel of Experts on South Sudan, released in April 2017, states that at least 25% of the population have been forced from their homes since December 2013. As of 28 February 2017, more than 1.9 million South Sudanese were internally displaced and more than 1.6 million had fled the country – an increase of almost 280 000 internally displaced persons and 670 000 refugees since the panel's interim report in November 2016.

The international community seems to have run out of new ideas on how to make peace in the war-ravaged country

Since the failure of the August 2015 peace agreement, violence between the government and opposition forces has continued unabated. This includes an upsurge in ethnic violence that has led experts to call on the international community to act immediately to prevent genocide.

The latest intervention by the African Union (AU) and the UN – sending a protection force to Juba – is already running aground with a dispute between the UN force and the South Sudanese government over the control of Juba airport.

The one-sided national dialogue

The current dominant narrative in South Sudan is around the national dialogue initiated by President Salva Kiir in December 2016. It is difficult, however, to situate the national dialogue within the 2015 peace deal, which provided for the establishment of a hybrid court and a truth and reconciliation commission.

During the last AU summit in Addis Ababa in July 2017, the AU called on the South Sudanese government to ensure that the national dialogue is 'inclusive, independent and impartial'.

PSC Chairperson

H.E. Mamosadinyana Molefe

Botswana's ambassador to Ethiopia and permanent representative to the AU

Current members of the PSC

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

However, some critics hold that the dialogue has been one-sided, given that the only participants have been Kiir supporters. Others claim that the national dialogue is a ploy to deflect attention from the government's responsibility to implement the 2015 peace deal.

Yet as far as Kiir's government is concerned, the peace deal is being implemented and elections are scheduled for August 2018, despite the divisions and violence.

At the same time the international community largely agrees that the agreement has stalled and Western donors have recently taken formal steps to freeze support for the implementation of the failing peace deal.

Efforts to revitalise the peace process

On 12 June 2017 the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is in charge of mediation in South Sudan, said it would convene a High-Level Revitalization Forum of the Peace Agreement. The chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) said the forum would start on 22 September, beginning with a pre-convening phase that would consist of consultations with stakeholders to determine the participants and issues to be discussed.

Uganda, which is bearing the brunt of the refugee influx from South Sudan, earlier this year also attempted to hold talks to reunify factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). It remains to be seen how this will contribute to the overall peace process in the region.

Meanwhile, the opposition has expressed its misgivings about IGAD's role in the peace process. Recently, James Nguen, the chairman of the Nuer Supreme Council, said that IGAD was no longer a credible mediator in South Sudan because the organisation was mainly interested in financial profiteering (owing to the narrow interests of IGAD's members). He has called on the AU to take leadership of the mediation process.

It is imperative that IGAD, the AU and the UN have the full cooperation of the warring factions

It is imperative that IGAD, the AU and the UN have the full cooperation of the warring factions and that trust be restored in their ability and resolve to end the crisis.

Peace without Machar?

The opposition also rejects the effort to bar exiled former vice-president and opposition leader Riek Machar from participating in the Revitalisation forum. Kiir's government has consistently rejected any dialogue that will include Machar. The international community seems to be in accord with this approach, and with the continued effort to enforce Machar's exile to South Africa.

1.9 million
INTERNALLY DISPLACED
SOUTH SUDANESE

Kiir and Machar were the major signatories to the 2015 peace deal and the transitional government was meant to bring these leaders together to work for the good of the country. But the July 2016 violence exposed the deep fractures between them and their inability to overcome their differences.

While briefing the UNSC via a teleconference in June this year, Machar said that while his host, South Africa, had been 'hospitable' he wanted to be released from confinement and detention. In a statement following the briefing he called on the UNSC to 'end the international policy of isolating the SPLM(IO) [SPLM-in-Opposition] including my release from the confinement and detention so as to enable our full engagement in finding a peaceful resolution to this conflict'.

Despite the apparent political will from outside actors to keep Kiir and Machar apart, the unintended consequence of Machar's exile has been the proliferation of several armed opposition factions in South Sudan. Both IGAD and the UN Panel of Experts have warned that this complicates the peace process. New peace talks without Machar will only exacerbate the situation.

Machar's exile has led to the proliferation of several armed opposition factions

Where is the regional protection force?

In August 2016 the UN had agreed to establish a 4 000-strong regional protection force, in line with the recommendations of IGAD and the AU. The government, however, has always been reluctant to accept the force. The regional protection force – mainly from Rwanda and Ethiopia – is expected to supplement the 12 000-strong UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, but with a stronger mandate.

Thus far only about 120 Rwandan peacekeepers have arrived in Juba.

Kiir reportedly ordered his officials not to cooperate with the regional protection force, as it could undermine South Sudan's sovereignty. He also rejected the deployment of the regional force to Juba's international airport, saying that he wanted it to only provide an escort on and secure major supply routes to and from Juba.

The international community has to make a concerted effort to get the South Sudanese government and warring leaders to the negotiating table. It must also be willing to take decisive steps to impose punitive measures on those who violate the agreement. Such efforts will help to mitigate the suffering of South Sudanese, who have seen their country mired in violence since the end of 2013.

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RWANDAN PEACEKEEPERS IN JUBA

On the Agenda

Emerging initiatives for AU-UN arms control*



The African Union Commission (AUC) has taken important steps to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Through these initiatives, the AU has opened up a number of opportunities for enhancing its collaboration with the UN, ahead of the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), scheduled for next year.

On 4 September 2017, the AUC launched what will be an annual event aimed at voluntary civilian disarmament, namely *Africa Amnesty Month* for the Surrender and Collection of Illicit Weapons. During this month-long event, civilians across the continent are to be encouraged to surrender illegitimate arms in their possession.

This initiative stems from the AU's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, which was adopted in 2013 during the 50th anniversary of the AU. African heads of state and government pledged to stop the burden of conflict from being passed along to the next generation. They committed to end all wars in Africa by 2020. Also known as Vision 2020, this was a pledge to silence the guns by that year.

Civilians across the continent are to be encouraged to surrender illegitimate arms in their possession

To implement Vision 2020, the organisation developed the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020. The roadmap contains clear timelines. Between 2017 and 2020, the AU and its regional economic communities and mechanisms (RECs/RMs) will endeavour to stop both suppliers and recipients from illicitly acquiring and spreading arms – including by establishing inquiry groups where necessary, and investigating cases of illicit arms transfers in member states.

Implementing the AU Roadmap

The UN can help to ensure that the AU Roadmap is sustainably implemented by providing capacity building and other forms of support. This would further strengthen the implementation of sub-regional arms control instruments across Africa. These include the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa; the Southern African Development Community Protocol on the Control of

Vision 2020

THE COMMITMENT TO END
ALL WARS IN AFRICA

Firearms, Ammunition and Other Materials; the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Ammunition and other related materials; and the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition, Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly (the Kinshasa Convention).

The UN can help to ensure that the AU Roadmap is sustainably implemented

The Roadmap and related initiatives therefore reinforce global efforts around arms control, and anchors these commitments within the spirit of Goal 16, Target 4 of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs were launched in September 2015 at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly.

These initiatives by the AU and the RECs/RMs also directly complement the aims of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. However, the initiatives require strong backing at the UN level to reach their full potential.

The global trade in arms is a trans-national phenomenon that takes both licit and illicit forms. For the AU to be effective in curbing illicit arms flows in Africa, it needs to be able to lobby UN member states – with full support from the UN – to ensure that relevant legislation and regulations are ratified and implemented at a global level. Among the various instruments that control the manufacture and brokering of arms, and which countries should commit to, are the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), as well as the ITI.

Similarly, the AU should simultaneously ensure that its member states which haven't yet ratified these instruments do so swiftly, and develop policies to enhance implementation. This would allow the AU to advance its course of inhibiting the flow of arms into Africa, while at the same time tightening intra-continental mechanisms.

Enforcement of arms embargoes

Another important step would be for the AU and the UN to enhance their coordination in enforcement of arms

embargoes in Africa. The report of the 584th meeting of the PSC in 2016 underscored that institutional capacity of African states to monitor and enforce UN sanctions remains limited, particularly in enforcing arms embargoes. The report identifies porosity of borders controls and lack of effective information-sharing among African states and the UN sanction committees as some of the weaknesses.

At present, the AU is yet to establish a structure dedicated to supporting the implementation of UN-imposed arms embargoes on the continent. This is despite the reality that since 1977, when the UN imposed the ever first stand-alone arms embargo on apartheid South Africa, Africa has had the largest number of countries under UN arms embargoes.

There is therefore a need for the AU, with support from the UN, to put in place a structure that would support African countries to fully comply with the UN sanctions, while at the same time build the institutions of the countries under embargo, to prevent further violations. Such a structure would also act as a link between the UN sanctions committees and African countries.

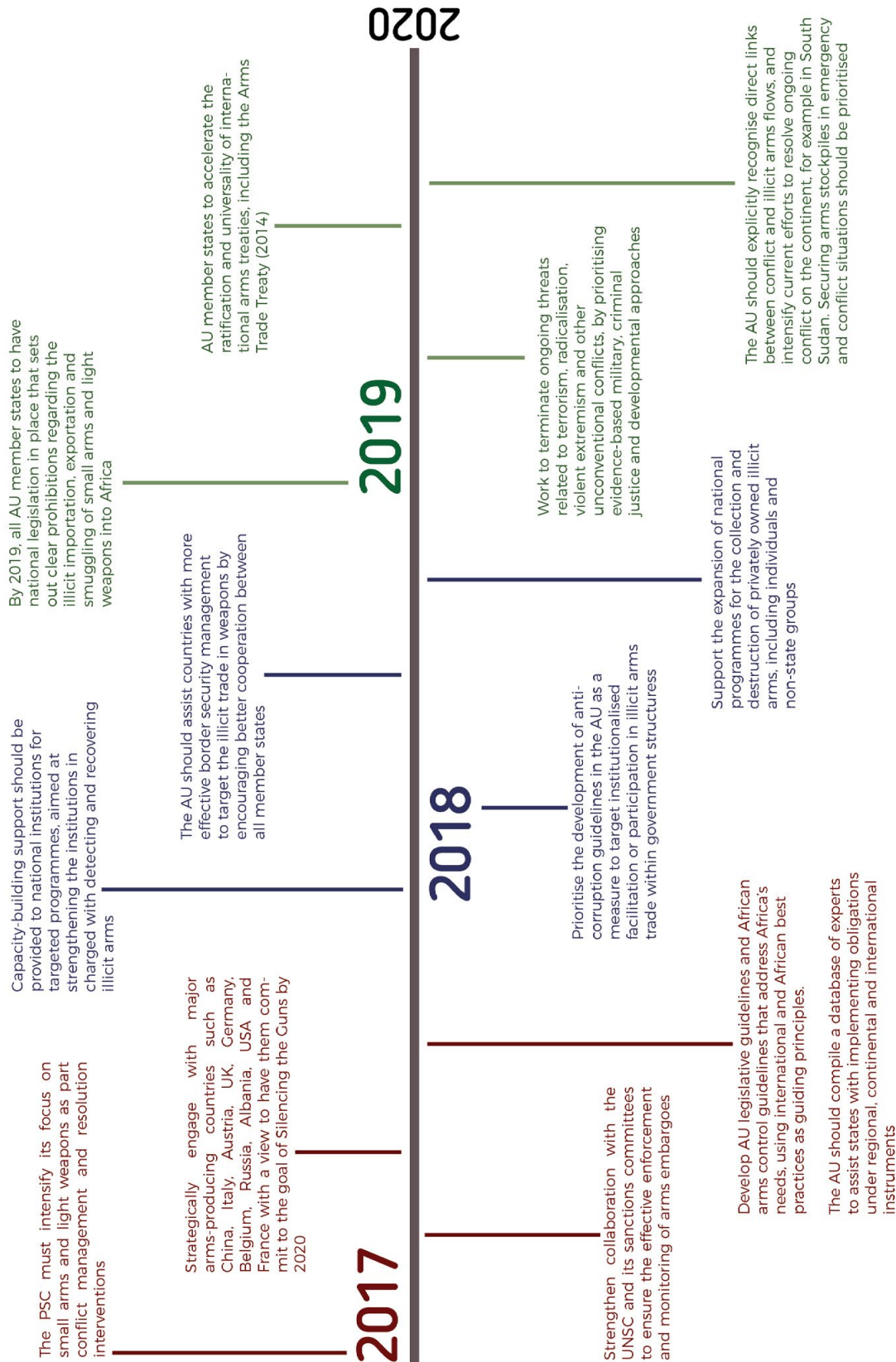
In recent decades, illicit small arms and light weapons in Africa have been readily available, and their trade relatively simple. This has left a disastrous mark on the continent. The AU initiatives outlined above are therefore among several others that demonstrate the commitment of the AUC to seek a sustainable solution to the nefarious act of illicit arms flows. The determination of the AUC opens a range of opportunities for international support, which is most likely to be effective if agreed to and actioned through the UN.

** This article was produced together with ENACT, a new EU-funded project, which focuses on enhancing Africa's response to transnational organised crime. ENACT works to produce knowledge and skills to combat arms trafficking, among other types of organised crime. ENACT is implemented by the ISS and INTERPOL in affiliation with the Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime.*

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enact Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 / practical recommendations





On the Agenda

Calling for climate change solidarity at the UN

The AU has developed a mechanism to help member countries in the case of drought and extreme weather conditions caused by climate change. However, as with many AU initiatives, it is still poorly supported on the continent.

At the 37th summit of heads of state and government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Pretoria last month, President of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Akinwumi Adesina asked African heads of state to appeal for more solidarity with Africa when it comes to climate change. He asked African leaders to make this call during their speeches at the upcoming opening session of the United Nations General Assembly.

It is acknowledged that Africa bears the brunt of the impacts of climate change, born by the most vulnerable populations

'Africa can no longer suffer in silence. I ask the heads of state of the SADC region to support my call for the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility to co-pay for disaster risk insurance premiums for all African countries,' he said.

The Green Climate Fund was put in place by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which underpins the Paris climate change agreement, and has over US\$10 billion available for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. The Global Environment Facility also works with UN agencies to give grants worth several billion US dollars to developing countries struggling with the effects of climate change.

Finding African solutions

Adesina said these international facilities should be called upon to contribute to the African Risk Capacity (ARC), a specialised agency of the AU, launched in 2012. The AfDB recently concluded a cooperation agreement with the ARC, which has received accolades internationally for its transparency and financially sound operations.

In July this year new AU Commission Deputy Chairperson Thomas Kwesi Quartey told a press conference at the AU summit in Addis Ababa that the ARC was an example of 'solidarity in action'.

'It is acknowledged that Africa, responsible for barely 4% of global greenhouse emissions, bears the brunt of the impacts of climate change,

4%

AFRICA'S SHARE OF
GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS

born by the most vulnerable populations – mostly small farmers – on the continent,’ said Quartey.

He welcomed the efforts to assist small-scale farmers through the ARC.

At the summit, Canada announced that it would give a grant of US\$40 million to the facility, which it considers a credible instrument through which to fund aid to risk-prone countries. French, British, German, American and Swedish development agencies also support the ARC.

It is up to four times more efficient to help farmers at the beginning stages of a drought rather than later

The facility is based on the principle that disaster prevention through early warning and early assistance is better than trying to remedy the effects of disasters after the fact. For early warning it relies on sophisticated weather imaging, in coordination with the World Food Programme. According to research cited by the ARC, it is up to four times more efficient to help farmers at the beginning stages of a drought rather than later, when they have already suffered immensely, have often sold their assets and cannot get back on their feet again.

Government cash transfers at the right time, for example, help small-scale farmers to keep some livestock and buy fertiliser and seeds so that they can recover from natural disasters as quickly as possible. This is much better than appealing for ad hoc international aid after disaster strikes, as is often the case. Such aid usually takes a long time to be paid out and only reaches the recipients when they have nothing more to lose.

Lacklustre African support for emergency fund

While laudable, the AU’s risk facility is still very much a work in progress. Following its launch in South Africa five years ago, 32 countries have signed up to the ARC. Only eight countries have so far participated in risk pooling through insurance. This enabled the facility to pay out US\$34 million to Senegal, Niger, Mauritania and Malawi, which had been affected by drought.

Some critics of the ARC say that its modelling, data and processes are faulty. In a report in May this year ActionAid said the payout to Malawi last year to mitigate the effects of the drought was ‘too little too late’. The organisation said Malawian government officials would prefer to use the money that it had paid over to drought insurance for social protection systems and to support sustainable agriculture that would be more risk-averse.

The ARC disputes the ActionAid report and says it is constantly updating its data to make sure its modelling works. From its viewpoint the aid to Malawi was a successful example of the insurance scheme, and over 800 000 people were helped through this intervention.

Whatever the case, the growing impact of climate change in Africa is evident and action is needed on various levels. Over the last few years drought has severely hit the Sahel, most of Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa. Severe conditions such as flooding have also caused suffering across the continent.

ActionAid said the payout to Malawi last year to mitigate the effects of the drought was ‘too little too late’

According to the AfDB’s Adesina, it is also the responsibility of rich countries to contribute to the AU’s initiatives through the existing climate change instruments.

This is easier said than done, given the many other global priorities and the fact that many international organisations and countries prefer to control how their aid to Africa is spent.

It also remains to be seen how many heads of state do indeed heed Adesina’s call. After all, they are also called upon by the AU to talk about other things at the UN General Assembly, not least the urgent call for reform of the UN Security Council.

The ARC is African-owned and AU-driven, with, it seems, some degree of initial success. This could be another example of implementing the AU’s famous ‘finding African solutions to African problems’.



Addis Insight

What could the PSC do about instability caused by climate change?

Last month the PSC held another in a series of meetings on the effects of drought on the state of peace and security in Africa. As mitigating the effects of climate change increasingly features on the international agenda, the PSC is still trying to find entry points to position itself on this critical issue.

Over the last two years the PSC has met four times on climate change's impact on the stability of the continent.

This followed the decision made during the 2015 PSC retreat in Abuja that the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) should address more non-military threats to peace and security. As a result, the issue of climate change and its effects has become a recurring item on the council's agenda.

A feature of all these discussions has been the acknowledgement of the linkage between peace and security and climate change. PSC members agree that the effects of climate change – such as erratic rainfall, flooding and desertification – could result in food insecurity and humanitarian tragedies. They also acknowledge that tensions between herders and farmers at a local level can have far broader repercussions.

PSC members agree that the effects of climate change could result in food insecurity and humanitarian tragedies

The responses advocated by the PSC can be summed up in three points. Firstly, member states are urged to invest in building disaster-reduction capacities and resilience. Secondly, member states and international partners should coordinate their responses to climate change-induced tragedies. And finally, member states should mainstream climate change in their national development programmes.

During a meeting in February 2017 the PSC called upon AU member states to 'accelerate the integrated implementation of existing international and regional agreements related to mitigation and the effects of climate change'.

Tension between herders and farmers

Climate change and the resulting tension between herders and farmers in Africa have been introduced in the methodology of the Continental Early

2015

PSC RETREAT IN ABUJA

Warning System (CEWS), a unit in the AU Peace and Security Department (PSD). There are also efforts to establish closer collaboration between the PSD and the AU's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, whose portfolio covers environment.

Consequently, a significant part of the horizon scanning received by the PSC from the PSD over the past year has included the challenge posed by climate change to peace and security.

Very few conflict situations are described in PSC decisions as being the direct result of climate change

Member states urged to implement climate change agreements

So far the PSC's response to the issue of climate change and peace and security has been to urge member states to adopt and implement various legal instruments linked to climate change agreements. Reactively it has also stressed the need to either provide the appropriate support to affected communities or to better coordinate responses to enhance their impact.

However, it is still not clear at what point the PSC should intervene and thus trigger actions from other APSA instruments. Very few conflict situations are described in PSC decisions as being the direct result of climate change. For example, there are no indications on how the PSC positions itself on the tensions between farmers and herders that are increasing due to climate change.

The CEWS benchmark methodology does include climate change and farmers/herders to determine when conflicts have escalated to such a point that they need PSC intervention.

However, it is yet to be seen what kind of action the AU Commission and PSC member states can take after being informed of these trends. While such benchmarks may be critical, the effect of climate change as a specific factor of instability has not been spelled out. Other factors that the CEWS takes note of, such as actors' behaviour or socio-economic structure, are much more clearly defined.

The specificity of 'climate change-induced instability' – a term that is still contested in some circles – and how the various instruments of the APSA can adequately respond to it still need to be defined and documented.

General recommendations

A consequence of this state of affairs is the fact that the PSC tends to repeat general recommendations whose implementation is difficult to track.

In addition, the fact that most of its meetings on the effects of climate change are open sessions with no binding statements limits their impact.

In conclusion, while the PSC has embraced the nexus between the effects of climate change and peace and security, it still needs to identify leverages to weigh in on this critical issue.



PSC Interview

‘Without political will, sending a SADC special envoy will be pointless’

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is sliding towards large-scale political instability, as it now seems increasingly unlikely that presidential elections will be held by the end of this year. On 20 August 2017 the Southern African Development Community (SADC), at its annual summit, ‘took note’ that it would be ‘unrealistic’ for the DRC to hold elections within the timeframe agreed to by stakeholders in December 2016. *The PSC Report* spoke to Institute for Security Studies (ISS) expert **Stephanie Wolters** about the latest developments in the DRC crisis.

What do you make of the SADC statement on the DRC election date? What are the implications for stability in the country?

The SADC statement on the DRC is a significant disappointment, but not a surprise. SADC has so far failed to play either an active or a constructive role in addressing the ongoing crisis in the DRC. Last year it rubberstamped the AU-led negotiations, which produced a transition arrangement that said elections should be held in 2018, and that did not address two key issues: that Kabila could not stand for a third mandate and that the constitution could not be amended during the transition period. Most observers knew that the arrangement lacked credibility and could not restore stability to the DRC, and so Kabila was forced back to the negotiation table, this time under the CENCO [National Episcopal Conference of Congo] mediation, which culminated in the December 31 accord.

SADC’s decision to state clearly that elections cannot be held in 2017 ‘due to a certain number of problems that have made it unrealistic’ is also very problematic. The December 31 accord stipulates that elections must be held by the end of this year, and SADC’s acceptance of a further delay signals a bias in favour of the Kabila government, which has yet to produce an electoral calendar and has violated the December 31 accord on a number of other levels.

SADC again asked the government to publish the ‘revised election calendar’ for elections. It has done so in the past, but the Congolese government simply ignored this. How likely is it that we will see this calendar some time soon?

31 December
2017

THE DEADLINE FOR ELECTIONS
SET BY THE CENCO AGREEMENT

The head of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) said at the end of August that the electoral calendar would be published in the coming days, and it remains to be seen whether he will stick to that promise. The voter registration process – which was the reason the government gave last year to delay the election – is completed across the country, with the exception of the Kasai region where registration was suspended due to insecurity.

Depending on the dates that the CENI gives, the publication of the calendar could be another explosive moment in the DRC. If the election date is 2018, or even 2019, as recent leaks have suggested, this will likely spark large-scale protests and a renewed response from the international community.

SADC now plans to send a special envoy to the DRC. Do you think this will make any difference to the current situation?

SADC does not need a special envoy to make a positive contribution to resolving the political tensions and instability caused by the election delay in the DRC. What it needs is the political will to push for credible elections to be held as soon as possible. If it does not have that political will, nominating a special envoy will be pointless.

The opposition in the DRC seems divided, with some important players, like Moise Katumbi, still outside the country. Who is taking the lead in the protests and stay-aways we have witnessed these last few months?

The Congolese opposition was weakened by two factors this year: first by the death of UDPS [Union for Democracy and Social Progress] leader Etienne Tshisekedi in February 2017, and then by the Congolese government's subsequent refusal to implement the December 31 accord in letter and in spirit. The government took advantage of the disarray in the opposition and encouraged the creation of splinter opposition groups, which it then co-opted into government; however, they lack credibility and a political base.

The opposition has also rallied in the last few months, and now seems to again have a strategy to maintain pressure on Kabila to leave office and hold elections. The *Rassemblement de l'opposition* – which is made up of the UDPS and various other political parties, including the G7, which is aligned with Katumbi – remains intact for now. The new strategy is to maintain popular momentum – in conjunction with civil society groups – aimed at forcing Kabila to leave power, paving the way for credible elections to take place. The transition period is to be short and to be led by a 'consensus personality' who will be barred from running for the presidency.

The new strategy is to maintain popular momentum aimed at forcing Kabila to leave power

Does SADC's rather lacklustre attitude to the DRC indicate regional support for Kabila? Or is the region divided?

SADC as a regional body has rarely spoken out against the head of state of a member country, and takes a very hands-off approach to domestic crises in its member states. It is not surprising that it is doing so again in the DRC, but it does not mean that there is a consensus in the region, or among SADC member states, to support Kabila. There are regional players who are opposed to Kabila's staying in power, but I think there is a reluctance to use SADC as a vehicle to criticise him for fear of setting a precedent that other member states would not themselves want to be held to. There are also powerful SADC member states, notably Zimbabwe and South Africa, that have close relations with Kabila and that have expressed their support for him in bilateral settings. This makes it difficult to achieve a consensus position in SADC.

Who are the main role players in the region that could put pressure on the government to resolve the impasse in Kinshasa?

The key player is undoubtedly Angola. It has been a long-time ally of Kabila's and has helped him out militarily on numerous occasions, but it has grown frustrated with his

inability to manage the growing political instability in the country related to the delayed elections. Angola has used several avenues to voice its disapproval, including voting against the DRC at the United Nations (UN) Security Council, and nudging Kabila back to the negotiating table after it judged the AU-brokered agreement too flimsy and exclusive to lead to a stable transition.

More recently, senior officials in the Angolan government have expressed concern about the instability in their giant neighbour, especially in the context of the growing humanitarian and security crisis in the Kasai region, which has displaced over 1 million people and sent over 30 000 refugees into Angola. The message has also been delivered clearly to Kabila himself that it is time for him to go.

Senior officials in the Angolan government have expressed concern about the instability in their giant neighbour

How do you judge Angola's actions so far in the DRC crisis?

What drives Angola's interests in the DRC is the need for stability in its biggest neighbour, with which it shares over 2 000 km of border, and the need for the Congolese head of state to be a close ally, rather than a real interest in upholding constitutional norms. Now that Kabila has demonstrated that he cannot get the population to simply accept a still indefinite election delay, Angola has decided that it is time for change. Whatever the nature of Angola's efforts to get Kabila to go, the real measure of its success for the Congolese population will be whether the DRC has free and fair elections that restore constitutional rule and ensure the credibility of the new government.

What about the wider international community?

The international community has been clear about the need for elections to be held in 2016 since as early as 2014, when doubts first emerged about the Kabila government's commitment to holding elections in the constitutionally mandated timeframe. Various special envoys from the United States (US), the United Kingdom, Belgium, the European Union (EU) and the UN have repeatedly made this clear. They have also said that they are willing to provide financial support for the elections if a credible electoral calendar is made public. In 2016, when the government's foot-dragging made it clear that the election would not be held on time, the UN and the EU supported the AU-led negotiation process in the false hope that it could lead to a consensus solution. The same organisations supported the December 31 accord, and continue to reiterate that it must be respected in letter and in spirit. To date none of these measures has been able to prevent Kabila from staying in office or to prevent the Congolese security forces from harassing and arresting human rights and civil society activists, journalists and opposition politicians,

2 000km

THE BORDER BETWEEN
ANGOLA AND THE DRC

or killing innocent civilians during public protests. They have also not been able to prevent Kabila from applying elements of the December 31 accord that suit him while discarding the principle of consensus and inclusivity. Sanctions may help to chip away at the edifice, but the real leverage lies in the region.

The issue of sanctions against certain Congolese individuals is a point of contention. SADC ‘deplored and condemned’ these sanctions. How effective are they?

So far both the US government and the EU have imposed sanctions on members of the DRC government and security forces. The grounds for imposing sanctions are both political and related to concerns about human rights violations committed during crackdowns on political protests in Kinshasa and in the Kasai region. Sanctions are generally aimed at deterring further abuses by demonstrating consequences, while they can also be used as leverage and to divide a ruling elite. There are signs that the US and EU sanctions have, to varying degrees, created a climate of fear among some senior officials that they could be on the next sanctions list. This could eventually lead to splits in the ruling alliance. However, large-scale human rights abuses have continued across the country and there are as yet no tangible signs that the people who have been sanctioned – many of whom are the hardliners in the Kabila government – now feel compelled to change their behaviour.

There are no signs that the people who have been sanctioned feel compelled to change their behaviour

Do you foresee that the crisis in the Kasais will be resolved some time soon or will it spill over into other parts of the DRC?

A key element driving the escalation of the violence in the Kasais is the disproportionate response that has been meted out by the Congolese security forces against the Kamuina Nsapu [a militia group named after its leader, who died at the hands of security forces in August 2016]. This has stoked further violence from the Kamuina Nsapu and dragged in the local population, leading to a cycle of violence, and widespread insecurity and displacement. One key issue is the government’s lack of credibility and legitimacy one year after the president’s mandate expired. In the current climate of tension and fear, and the ongoing uncertainty about when elections will be held, it is unlikely that the same government that is delaying the elections can restore stability in this area.

August 2016

THE DEATH OF MILITIA
LEADER KAMUINA NSAPU



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