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on the evaluation of the African Peace Facility after ten years: effectiveness and prospects for the future

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1. Introduction

The interdependence of security and development has been widely debated at the beginning of the new millennium. The various crises in Africa have shown that existing instruments did not cover the entire scope of possible action. Neither the European Development Fund nor the budget of the Common Foreign and Security Policy or the Instrument for Stability (IfS) provided for the financing of per diem allowances to African soldiers taking part in peace-support missions.

At the same time, the creation by the African Union of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) also required support in the field of security. It is for this reason that the African Peace Facility (APF) was established in 2004 as a separate component of the European Development Fund. The political vision behind this innovation was to give the AU a lever to better manage conflicts on the continent by itself.

The APF thus reinforces mainly the African Union and, through it, the eight regional economic communities (RECs).

Furthermore, the **Joint Africa-EU Strategy**, adopted in Lisbon in 2007, defined peace and security as one of eight areas of partnership. After the two action plans, the EU-Africa Summit in April 2014 confirmed support of the APSA through the APF.

Since its inception, part of the budget has been reserved for capacity-building, but the situation on the ground in Darfur and in Somalia absorbed most of the budget in the first few years.

After ten years, it is time to take stock and assess the prospects for the future of this instrument.

2. Implementation

The Cotonou Agreement (Article 11) forms the overall legal framework on which the APF is based, although this instrument only concerns the African party to the agreement. The rationale behind the APF is that of the interdependence of security and sustainable development in a country or region.

The APF is thus naturally a **pan-African instrument** that can only contribute to common African initiatives at the level of the African Union or RECs (via the EU), which have a mandate in the areas of peace and security.

Since its inception in 2004, the APF has developed on two separate levels. Firstly, starting as an autonomous structure, it has become an instrument forming part of a broader strategy of the European Union (Joint Africa-EU Strategy). Secondly, whereas at the beginning it mainly funded peace support operations and the operational strengthening of the APSA, its scope has been expanded to include conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilisation.

Based on the principle of **African ownership**, the APF has now become the main tool for implementing the Africa-EU Peace and Security Partnership. In total, more than EUR 1.2 billion **has been allocated to the APF since it was set up**.

Since 2005, over 90% of this amount has been contracted for peace support operations in six countries, namely for AMIS (Darfur), Amisom (Somalia), Miopax followed by Misca (Central African Republic - CAR) Afisma (Mali) and RCI-LRA (CAR, DRC, South Sudan, Uganda).

Approximately 8.3% of all contracts have been allocated to APSA capacity-building activities, particularly since 2007. This component aims to **boost the basic institutional capacity and the effectiveness of the African Union and RECs** regarding the planning and conduct of peace-support operations in Africa. The long-term goal is to enable the AU and the RECs to ensure peace and security by themselves without outside help. Part of this budget has also been used to pay the salaries of experts of the African Union's Peace and Security Commission and the African Union's liaison offices in countries emerging from crisis, as well as support for the operational training programme AMANI AFRICA, support for African training centres for peace and security and the command, control, communication and information system.

Finally, since 2009, 1.3% of the budget has been allocated to activities related to the early response mechanism. These involve essentially mediation, start-up and fact-finding missions - led by the African Union and the RECs to launch peace-support operations - and missions aimed at temporary reinforcement of the planning cell.

Within the European Union, other instruments such as budget for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Instrument for Stability and some regional indicative programmes of the European Development Fund complement the efforts of the APF, and major work is under way to ensure greater consistency between the peace and security activities of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

It should be noted that the European Union is not the only player providing assistance to the AU and the RECs in the field of security and peace. A whole range of other donors, such as international organisations (UN and others), political and military alliances (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO) and states (the US, China, Japan and the Member States of the European Union) are also active in this area. Complementarity is ensured by the **African Union partners' group on peace and security**, which meets regularly in Addis Ababa.

3. Evaluation 2004 - 2014

The APF should be evaluated, firstly, in the light of its original objectives and, secondly, in terms of the capacity this instrument has had to adapt to new needs in Africa.

The APF has firstly enabled **the link between security and development to become operational** and has been very successful in engaging a far-reaching dialogue on the peace and security challenges.

Since 2004, the APF has funded a series of major peace-support operations, including Amisom in Somalia and Afisma in Mali, which have been authorised and carried out by the African Union and regional organisations. By providing **predictable and reliable** resources to enable these bodies to act, the APF has enabled African countries to take collective actions to provide security, based on the emerging political role of the African Union's Peace and Security Council, putting it to the test and making it operational. From this perspective, the APF has indeed respected the principle and the goal of African ownership.

Moreover, the APF has provided significant support to **make the APSA operational**, a development that would probably not have been possible otherwise, because of the constraints on African countries in terms of resources and due to the shaky commitment of African States towards the APSA project.

The basic principles of EU-Africa partnership, namely African ownership and solidarity, which underpin the APF, **thus** mark a break with the former interventionist policies of European countries. As far as the European partner is concerned, the APF has helped to promote a **genuine common European approach** to the security and peace challenges in Africa and to go beyond the national visions of each Member State vis-à-vis that continent. With the APF, an **innovative and flexible instrument**, the European Union has also gained credibility in terms of security and peacekeeping.

The APF has demonstrated flexibility by evolving in response to circumstances and needs, unlike many other European financial instruments. In response to the concerns of African partners, the APF extended its scope in 2007 to include a broader range of conflict prevention activities. The development of a rapid response mechanism two years later helped **boost mediation efforts to manage political crises**.

However, the crucial importance of ensuring that the African Union and its Member States have the capacity to plan and conduct peace-support operations has been clear from the first few years. A second key to success is the **allocation of sufficient qualified human resources** to management and financial control, both by the European Commission and the African Union. Finally, the limited resources mean that prioritisation is necessary.

4. Prospects for the future

The results of the evaluation are thus broadly positive. However, this success means greater expectations for the future, although the APF's resources will remain limited. Even though the link between development and security has been widely recognised, the fact that the APF is not eligible for development spending limits the scope of the EU and its Member States to increase their contribution.

(a) Building on the principle of ownership

The principle of ownership by African countries should be further pursued, particularly by setting a limited number of clear priorities. Boosting the institutional capacities of the African Union and the RECs will thus be a major issue in future, but the APF is not necessarily the best tool to tackle it, since this is a more general issue than peace and security.

(b) Coordination and complementarity of the various players

Moreover, peace-support operations are at risk from mission creep, as the experience of some UN missions has shown. New missions could be considered under the banner of the ‘responsibility to protect’. A compensation fund for families in the event of casualties may be necessary to ensure the future participation of African Union member countries in peace-support operations. The fight against terrorism and the reform of the security sector are also new projects. Finally, the United Nations tends to withdraw from some missions before their objectives are fully achieved, creating a fragile situation that may mean that a new peace-support operation by the African Union becomes necessary. It is therefore necessary not only to think about better coordination and complementarity of the donors mobilised in the field of peace and security in terms of financial support, but also to develop complementarity over time.

As regards complementarity and coordination, the future prospects of the APF also depend on greater efforts by the European Union, in particular through joint programming with other instruments and as part of other policies, and by strengthening the role and capacity of EU delegations.

Faced with this plethora of new needs, the APF can only be an instrument that complements collective international efforts. The link between development and security also means that, with the economic development of a country or region, it must assume increasing responsibility for its security. The growth rate of 5 to 10% in some African countries shows the way forward. However, despite what the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, or the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, say, more than 70% of funding for the general budget of the African Union still comes from outside Africa and the African Peace Fund remains empty. The predictability and the financial stability of the APF remain a work in progress that requires greater input by African countries, on the one hand, by making a financial contribution and, on the other, participating in the coordination of other international donors.

(c) APSA capacity-building

Avoiding war perhaps has a lower profile internationally, but is certainly less expensive than military intervention. This is why more needs to be done to build APSA capacity, in particular the strengthening the structure of command and coordination, intelligence, rapid projection and logistics capacities. Furthermore, special attention should be paid to the rapid response mechanism and procedures prior to the ‘hot’ phase of conflicts.

(d) Visibility

At the same time, the European Union and the African Union must make further symbolic political efforts to give make citizens more aware of this instrument and especially its results.

5. Conclusion

The APF has played a catalytic role at a time when no other instrument was prepared to finance African troops for African Union or REC peace operations, and it can continue to play this role for some time to come.

Peace in Africa will depend, above all, on the political will of the African partners to work together, including by strengthening the structures of the African Union so that they can address the security challenges facing them. The European Union should continue to be a committed partner in this enterprise, but optimum results will only be obtained if there is real African leadership.

If the political will is present, financial solutions are always possible, but an enormous amount of work remains to be done to build up technical capacity before a sustainable APSA can be achieved.

The success of the APF, which forms part of the European Development Fund, will necessarily be part of the discussion on the future of the Cotonou Agreement.