

APSA's development and the EU*

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The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has evolved at a remarkable pace in the six years since the establishment of the African Union (AU). Underpinned by a strong interventionist commitment in the AU charter it offers a real prospect of African solutions for African problems. The European Union has been heavily involved in the successful development of APSA to date and has made a firm commitment to remain so.

In recent times humanitarianism has emerged as the driving force behind European efforts towards Africa. This phenomenon, most notably expressed in the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty report 'Responsibility to Protect', was inspired by the experience of genocide in Rwanda and strengthened by the crisis in Sudan. In parallel, over the last decade African states have become more active in seeking their own solutions to the challenges they face.

The peace and security architecture in Africa has evolved over the last forty years. The most significant steps have been taken since the establishment of the African Union (AU) in 2002. The AU has moved away from the approach taken by its predecessor – the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) - of absolute respect for national sovereignty, to one where the duty to protect and the right to intervene are enshrined in the constitutive actⁱ.

African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) describes the various elements developed, or in development, by the African Union (and some Regional organisations) to bring about peace and security on the continent. The structure, provides for a political decision making body (the Peace and Security Council - PSC), an intelligence gathering and analysis centre (the Continental Early Warning System - CEWS) a military element (the African Standby Force – ASF - and Military Staff Committee – MSC), an external mediation and advisor body (the Panel of the Wise - POW) and a special fund to cover costs (the Peace Fund). The different elements are intended to provide a comprehensive set of tools for addressing the security concerns of the continent by African

actors. The PSC receives advice and information from the POW, CEWS and Military Staff Committee and then instructs the ASF on the actions it deems necessary.

In December 2005, the EU adopted its Africa Strategy the aim of which is to “support Africa’s efforts to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and make Europe’s partnership with Africa more efficient”ⁱⁱⁱ. Much of the EU’s involvement is in terms of financial support channeled through the European Development Fund (EDF) which, as a formal EU mechanism under the EU’s first pillar, comes primarily under the direct control of the European Commission.

The new EU strategy also recognizes the central role that peace and security plays in achieving development goals and commits the European Union to supporting the development of APSA. The Africa-EU strategic partnership adopted at Lisbon 2007 makes peace and security one of the central issues for cooperationⁱⁱⁱ. The EU is involved directly in promoting security in Africa, with CFSP-mandated EU missions to African countries, such as the mission to the DRC and Chad and the Central African Republic, or the initiative by EUPOL (the EU’s new effort to support the development of policy capacity in key countries such as Afghanistan) to help develop police capacity in Kinshasa, and indirectly through financial and technical support to African actors. These EU military missions are financed through the Athena Mechanism, a special fund that is used to finance EU military or defence operations. The mechanism meets common costs such as communications or headquarters, but operational costs are the responsibility of the participating member states.

In terms of APSA, EDF money may be used for conflict prevention, but not for anything with lethal implications. This means that, if the African Peace Facility (APF) is financed out of the EDF, these funds may not be used to provide military hardware to African missions^{iv}.

The new African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has grown out of previous attempts to create a stable and peaceful continent. A major influence on its development has been the principle of African solutions for African problems, epitomised by the operations of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in West African conflict situations. African states have a variety of motivations for participating in peacekeeping operations. South Africa intervened in Lesotho for the sake of regional stability, and in the DRC to bolster its position as a leading African nation. Uganda sees advantages in deploying to Somalia in support of US anti-terrorism concerns, while Rwanda’s interest in Darfur is motivated by their experience of Genocide. Some states will join a mission to generate funds for their armed forces and some for more idealistic ends. Europe’s role in peacekeeping has moved towards support for African missions and short-term interventions, like Operation Artemis, rather than contributing

troops to long-term operations. Individual member states, the UK and France in particular, continue to be involved in certain countries, but interventions are increasingly being 'Europeanised'.

The AU is trying to deal with almost every aspect of life on the continent, yet its staff is small, of variable aptitude and its most effective members are swamped under an ever growing workload. Superficially, the AU looks like an African version of the EU, but it is built on different foundations and operates in a radically different, and more difficult, environment. Understanding the realities of the AU should enable EU money to be better targeted at those areas where it can be deployed most usefully. Key to the success of any project is not just the finance for frontline operations but the quality of the structures underpinning them. Providing a reliable and consistent source of funds, over the long-term, for the employment by the AU of key people in these backroom service areas could be highly beneficial.

The development of APSA is heavily dependant on the 'buy in' of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), because without regional cooperation there will be no African Standby Force and the CEWS and POW will be severely weakened.

- West Africa stands out as the region that has done most to meet the APSA timetable and looks likely to be the most effective region in terms of peace and security for some time.
- Southern Africa has potential to support APSA although in practical terms it has some way to go.
- East Africa has overcome some obstacles to put architecture in place albeit in a limited manner.
- Central Africa has made limited progress: the political fragility of the region and lack of a strong regional body mean this area would benefit from external help.
- North Africa could make a significant contribution as the best equipment and resources at its disposal. Despite tension within North Africa and competing demands for its attention on Middle East issues, the region has made some progress towards the APSA goals.

As stated earlier, the EU has taken an active interest in supporting APSA with an original allocation of €250 million to the APF, much of which went towards the AMIS mission and finally totalled around €400 million. This seemingly large allocation of funds should be seen in proportion, the 9th EDF had a total budget of €13.5 billion and the 10th €22.7 billion^v. Questions of what exactly can be funded will need to be resolved if money from Europe is to be used in the most effective way. At the moment money from the APF can only be used in support of Peace

Support Operations^{vi}. While it seems unlikely that the EU will be able to use EDF funds for direct military support, finding new ways to enable the direct funding of military development would be fruitful. For example, it might be helpful if EDF funds could be used in the future to help standardise military equipment. The need for the EU to find ways of supporting APSA that allow for a greater military element has been made by many who are involved with the AU. As the Athena mechanism for ESDP operations has shown, a special fund into which member states can donate directly, coordinated by the EU, could be one solution.

Conclusions

The Lisbon summit in December 2007 marked a new stage in the partnership between the EU and Africa. African Peace and Security Architecture is at the heart of this partnership^{vii}. Africa has made remarkable progress to be in such a position, just five years after the inception of the African Union. The ability to move so quickly is due to political will within the continent, but also the willingness of outside partners, particularly the EU and its member states, to finance the setting up of APSA.

Successfully operationalising APSA offers the prospect of more African solutions to African challenges. APSA is a holistic approach to peace and security that recognises the importance of prevention and mediation as much as peacekeeping, hence the prominent place for Continental Early Warning and the Panel of the Wise. The adoption of the AU constitutive act and its commitment to intervention in extreme circumstances shows an acknowledgement that events such as Rwandan genocide should not happen again on African soil. It would be naïve to think that even a fully operationalised APSA will solve all African conflicts but it does offer a very good chance of improving security on the continent.

The emergence of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) for concerted EU action and as a forum for internal consultation and diplomatic communication demonstrates the development of the EU into an important global player on the political as well as economic front. Combined with the European Security and Defence Policy, the EU is now willing and able to carry out operations in diverse parts of the globe. CFSP is about more than just military missions, and the EU is committed to building a comprehensive approach to security that combines traditional dimensions of security with support for economic development, good governance and institutional strengthening in countries at risk. The connection between development and security in Africa is recognised in the use of European Development Fund monies for the African Peace Facility and in the EU's commitment to APSA. Although EU member states are less willing than in the past to commit troops to UN missions, the development of EU military operations acting as precursors to

longer-term missions means EU soldiers will continue to play a direct role in creating peace and stability.

Although progress in the five years since the AU was inaugurated has been impressive there is still much to do before APSA is fully operationalised. The readiness of the ASF brigades is primarily a regional political issue and there is little external actors can do to quicken their formation. However continued and expanded assistance in the areas of training and logistics to those that are more developed would be welcome. The AU is well funded by external partners but it could be from investment in improving backroom services. The EU could offer important long term support if a new mechanism could be found to finance activities that may carry lethal consequences. The importance being placed on the relationship by the EU is welcome; the appointment of an EU representative to the AU in Addis Ababa will strengthen this relationship further.

The commitment to civil society and parliamentary involvement is clear, at least on paper, from both sides. The Pan African Parliament may eventually play an important role in APSA but in the meantime the EP can use the PAP as an entry point for supporting the involvement of national parliaments in APSA. Civil society plays an important part in assessing and supporting APSA, both the AU and EU should try to find ways to make real the aspiration to involve civil society in peace and security. Focusing solely on the military aspects of peace and security risks neglecting the equally important part that non-military developments play in securing peace. It is to be hoped that parliamentary and civil society involvement will ensure this does not happen.

Recommendations.

Operational issues

- **Military Logistics.** African militaries lack much of the hardware necessary for operations in support of APSA. EU member states could, on a case by case basis, provide either funds or equipment directly to forces engaged in AU sanctioned peace and security operations. This problem is particularly acute with regards to helicopters and heavy lift capacity.
- **Direct assistance to most developed regional brigades.** Given that it seems unlikely that all regions will be ready with ASF brigades by 2010, assistance should be concentrated on those that are most likely to achieve this target, West, East and Southern Africa.

- **More attention on non-military aspects.** While military peacekeeping is the most high profile aspect of APSA, establishing the rule of law is central to the long term success of any mission. Support for police African Standby Force (ASF) units and the inclusion of human rights advisors with ASF missions would be a useful development.

Political relations

- **EU Ambassador.** The new Commission/CFSP representative to the AU, Koen Vervaeke, should be given a strong mandate with discretionary powers over funds. This will provide the EU with a well informed decision maker and help support initiatives that are most pressing and respond quickly to changing events.

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Organisational structure

- **AU backroom capacity.** Without effective finance and human resource capabilities the efficacy of investment in operations, planning or early warning is reduced.
- **A standardised reporting system.** The EU as the major donor to the AU is well positioned to seek a standardised method of reporting back to donors. This will save time and increase the quality of reporting by AU staff.

Financial issues

- **New source of Funding.** At present the APF is prevented from contributing towards potentially lethal ends, however the Athena mechanism could be a model for the EU develop a special fund to finance African military needs in pursuit of APSA objectives.

Parliamentary

- **Support for the Pan African Parliament (PAP).** The PAP can play a central role in developing a democratic approach to APSA, however it will need long term financial and political support from the EP-if it is to achieve this objective.
- **Firm commitment to inter parliamentary dialogue.** The EP can foster strong parliaments in Africa through a continued commitment to the EU-ACP Joint Parliamentary forum.
- **Support Civil Society and national Parliaments interaction with APSA.** Civil society and parliaments should play an important role in ensuring APSA remains on target and within mandate. However there is as yet little critical analysis of how national governments, civil society and APSA may best interact. The PAP may be well placed to

promote and facilitate such consultation given its members are also members of national parliaments, and the EP might use its relationship with the PAP to encourage this.

ⁱ http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAU/Constitutive_Act_en.htm The constitutive acts is the constitutional treaty of the AU.

ⁱⁱ http://ec.europa.eu/development/Geographical/europe-cares/africa/eu_strategy_en.html Africa Strategy

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071209PARCEST.htm

^{iv} **Africa: What will it finance** http://ec.europa.eu/world/peace/geographical_themes/africa/what_finance/index_en.htm
^v <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/92&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&quiLangua>
[ge=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/92&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&quiLangua)

^{vi} **Africa: What will it finance** http://ec.europa.eu/world/peace/geographical_themes/africa/what_finance/index_en.htm

^{vii} See The Africa-EU Strategic partnership