

In this issue

■ On the Agenda

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) open sessions this month focused on **migration, natural resources and arms control**. The question can be asked, how effective are these open sessions?

■ Situation Analysis

Somalia is seeing promising changes, with thousands of visitors streaming into the country on commercial flights. Yet terror attacks by al-Shabaab are becoming more and more violent.

■ Addis Insight

The decision by the heads of state of the PSC not to send a military force to Burundi has sparked new debate over decision-making within the PSC. What policy **lessons can be learnt from the Burundi saga?**

■ PSC Interview

The *PSC Report* speaks to veteran mediator and former UN representative to Burundi **Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah** about the role of the AU in solving conflicts.



Peace & Security Council Report

“Mogadishu is attracting more and more maritime traffic

Page 5

“Regional mechanisms have taken the lead in managing crises

Page 8

“The AU can't be the *gendarme* – it doesn't have the means

Page 10



On the Agenda

Links between conflict and natural resources up for discussion

In February 2016, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) held open sessions on themes related to migration, natural resources and arms control. These sessions are a regular feature of the PSC's monthly agenda. However, what are the outcomes and impact of these open sessions on the activities of the council?

An open session is the rare occurrence where external actors can interact with and contribute to the proceedings of the PSC in areas usually reserved for member states. The meetings on migration and natural resources illustrate the interaction between the PSC and civil society organisations and international partners. Yet there is little scope for real dialogue during these sessions.

Transparent management of natural resources a key tool to preventing conflicts

On 11 February 2016 the PSC held a session on the theme 'Natural resources and conflict in Africa'. Desiré Assogbavi, Oxfam's representative to the African Union (AU), delivered a presentation stressing the contrast between a continent endowed with natural resources such as arable land and minerals, and poverty and conflict. The link between natural resources and conflicts has not yet been fully accepted, but the presentation identified many drivers of conflicts related to natural resources. These include competition over the control of natural resources; corruption and mismanagement of oil and mining revenues; and the lack of perceived benefits to communities. Assogbavi appealed for a continental response in the form of an African Mining Charter. This, he said, should be a binding document providing a comprehensive framework for the management of Africa's natural resources.

Assogbavi appealed for a continental response in the form of an African Mining Charter

In its press release following the session, the PSC stated that 'fairness, transparency and accountability in the management of natural resources is critical to preventing conflict and promoting sustainable development in Africa'. It also asked the AU Commission 'to integrate [the] peace and security dimensions of natural resources in its existing conflict prevention and early warning process, as well as into conflict management, peace-making and peace support policies and programmes'. Regarding a continental framework for the management of natural resources, the PSC did not include the suggestion of a binding instrument. It instead emphasised the role of states in 'developing [the] necessary legal regulatory framework as requested by the African Mining Vision with a view to promoting policies on natural resources that contribute to reinforce national cohesion through fair and inclusive exploitation and distribution of natural resources, as well as through beneficiation

PSC Chairperson

H.E. Mass Axi Gye
Ambassador of the Gambia to
Ethiopia and to the AU

Current members of the PSC

Algeria, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia,
Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia,
Guinea, Libya, Mozambique, Namibia,
Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania,
Uganda

to the entire population'. The council urged international partners and the AU Commission to support member states in this regard.

PSC favours a comprehensive approach to mitigate forced migration

At the open session dedicated to migration, peace and security held on 16 February, Maureen Achieng, the representative of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Gary Quince, the Head of the European Union (EU) delegation to the AU, both delivered presentations on the current migrant crisis. Achieng called on the PSC to assess not only the impact of peace and security on migration but also how the forced movement of people affects peace and security. She identified several challenges, among others drafting an effective response to the current movements of forced migration; balancing the effective regulation of people's movement with the free circulation of people and goods; searching for policy coherence across countries and cooperation at national, regional and global levels; and addressing the lack of opportunities in departure countries and the failure to integrate migrants in host countries. The IOM presentation proposed as a key solution 'coherent interrelated policies that take full account of the strategies of receiving as well as sending countries'.

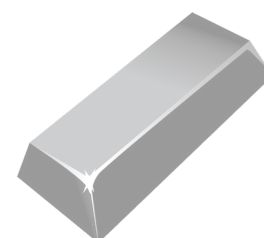
Member states pleaded for more responses to the root causes of migration, such as poverty and governance

The PSC emphasised the fact that 'poverty, conflict and lack of opportunities play a strong role in the decision of people and groups to move'. It also underlined the fact that 'conflicts are a major cause to forced/irregular migration; a cause of income for smugglers; and migrants are potential victims of terrorism'. The council recognised that current forced migration patterns could contribute to insecurity and stability. It therefore emphasised that one of the priorities of Agenda 2063 was creating 'inclusive peaceful societies [that] are the main remedy to forced and illegal immigration'.

This session demonstrated the different points of view on this key question between some AU partners and the PSC. While the EU delegation's presentation dealt with immediate responses to the current migrant flows, it also acknowledged that '[t]he refugee crisis will not end until its root causes – instability, war and terror – including in Europe's immediate neighbourhood are addressed in a long-term and sustainable way through coordinated international efforts acting in partnership'. Some AU member states such as Algeria and Chad more or less openly criticised the EU migration policy, which they say is too narrowly focused on security responses. Despite acknowledging the impact of 'forced migration' on peace and security, many member states pleaded for more responses to root causes such as poverty, lack of opportunities and governance.

Public relations effort with few policy achievements

Given the above, it is clear that the current format of PSC open sessions does not allow for real exchange and debate between participants. The open sessions usually start with an introduction by the PSC Chair of the month, then a brief statement by either the commissioner for Peace and Security or the Peace and Security Department's (PSD) director, followed by the key presentation by an external actor.



AFRICA IS ENDOWED WITH
NATURAL RESOURCES LIKE
ARABLE LAND AND MINERALS

Time is then allocated for reaction on the issue by the PSC and other AU member states and finally international partners get a chance to state their views. After these interventions, the PSC member states convene in a closed session to discuss a press statement. In this configuration, there are few real exchanges and debates between the PSC and other actors. Most participants prefer to present the position of their institution on the theme rather than react to the keynote speaker.

As a result, the open sessions could seem like an exercise in public relations, where the PSC acknowledges the input of external actors, where embassies can assert and showcase their engagement with the AU to their headquarters and where civil society organisations have an opportunity to engage the PSC.

The themes of open sessions are rarely the dynamics of current crises like Somalia or Burundi

The policy impact of these events is difficult to assess. Unlike normal PSC meetings, a press statement reflecting the deliberations – not a communiqué – follows open sessions. This description of the proceedings may provide guidelines for future courses of action by the AU. Unlike a communiqué, these provisions are not binding on the PSC, member states or the AU Commission. This crucial difference can explain why the impact of external actors remains marginal.

Views of external actors only heard on thematic issues

If the open sessions provide a window for interaction between member states and relevant stakeholders, the former remain the key decision makers. The fact that open sessions tackle thematic issues that can seem less relevant than the core business of the PSC is another limitation on the impact of the open sessions. The themes of open sessions are rarely the dynamics of current crises (e.g. Somalia or Burundi).

From this perspective, part of the challenge for the PSC lies in its capacity to make its proceedings more public. While the crucial issue is the insular nature of most African states, which are often unwilling to hear perspectives from external actors, a greater opening up of these sessions could be a first step.

According to a regular participant in these open sessions ‘a greater engagement between the PSC and the participants [in the open sessions] would build understanding of the value of this institution among the African public and beyond. Improved understanding of the PSC and its weaknesses would build greater constituencies for domestic and international funding of African peace operations and broader collective security efforts.’

From this perspective, some options could be considered to improve the impact of open sessions:

- Make the presentation available before the session in order to allocate more time for exchanges between the participants.
- Convene monthly open sessions on current crises and conflicts where the PSD can present the situations and its responses.
- Allow participants to question AU officials on the themes.
- Include a binding provision in the press release for follow-up by the AU Commission to the PSC and partners on a six-monthly basis.

Situation Analysis

Closing up regulatory gaps key in Somalia's fight against al-Shabaab



After 25 years of protracted clan-based conflict, Somalia is finally seeing some positive changes. The country had become a failed state after former president Siad Barre's dictatorial regime was overthrown in 1991. In the years that followed, the dynamics of the conflict changed substantially. What started as grievance-based insurgencies turned into a war economy with widespread looting. The situation then turned increasingly violent, led by extremist groups such as the Islamic Court Union, which was succeeded by al-Shabaab.

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) conducted various field trips to the capital city of Mogadishu in early 2014 and late in 2015. On the second visit, ISS observed noticeable differences, which pointed to social and economic development in the country.

Shops have opened and buildings have been constructed and renovated. People moved about freely, roads were busy and many residents could be seen relaxing on the beach. Security personnel were seen visibly patrolling the streets, with armoured vehicles and machineguns.

Local sources told ISS that the city's nightlife and the general social climate had greatly improved

Local sources told ISS that the city's nightlife and the general social climate had greatly improved, and the Aden Adde International Airport in Mogadishu was abuzz with domestic and international commercial flights. According to a source, the airport sees an approximate average of 1 500 travellers per day, most of whom belong to the Somali diaspora.

China Central Television (CCTV) has reported that the port of Mogadishu is attracting 'more and more international shipping traffic and foreign investors,' while Kenyan news channel KTN recently described Mogadishu as 'the newest business destination in East Africa.'

These changes can be seen not only in Mogadishu, but also in other key areas of the country, including Kismayo, Beletweyne and Baidoa.

Improvements have also been seen in Somalia's security situation, with United Nations envoy Nicholas Kay recently saying that the country is steadily recovering. 'At last, Somalia is facing the problems of a country coming together rather than falling apart,' Kay is quoted as saying.

Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke told CCTV Africa that 'after 25 years of feeling unable to come home, the positive changes in the country have given them [members of the Somali diaspora] hope, and they want to return and help rebuild Somalia into a prosperous and successful nation.'

1 500

THE NUMBER OF TRAVELLERS
ENTERING SOMALIA EVERY DAY

The drivers behind these changes remain unclear, however. Some analysts have linked developments to the Sunni-Shia conflict in the Gulf, based on reports that Somalia might receive financial support for joining the Saudi-led forces against the Shia Houthi group in Yemen.

Somalia is reported to be one of three East African states (along with Sudan and Eritrea) to have joined the coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, to fight in Yemen. Sudan and Eritrea are said to have received billions of dollars to be part of the anti-Houthi coalition; and it is presumed that the same would apply to Somalia. The latter allows the coalition to use its air space, land and territorial water. Another noteworthy development is the Federal Government of Somalia's (FGS's) recent decision to cut diplomatic ties with Iran, which is said to support the Houthi group.

The positive changes in the country have brought hope to members of the Somali diaspora

Other analysts link the various changes seen in the country to the federal system of government and the forthcoming election in 2016. Despite following a federal system historically, the country began to re-implement federalism after endorsing the Provisional Constitution of 2012. In accordance with Vision 2016, the aim is to fully federalise the country by the end of the term of the current government.

Regardless of whether change is being driven by these factors, or perhaps something else entirely, the effects seem to be encouraging. However, a big question mark is placed over the *regulation* of these developments. Somalia does not yet have effective state institutions in place to guide and regulate activities in the country. In a recent book titled *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa*, author Alex de Waal says that 'at no point in its history has Somali political life been governed by formal institutions since 1991; but it has been regulated by element of societal consensus.'

According to De Waal, the economy in Somalia is largely based on foreign wages (remittances), trade and services (especially the telecommunication sector) – which are not regulated by the FGS. A 2013 report described how the country has not had an effective central bank since the demise of Barre's regime. The bank was since re-established, but is still not functioning effectively. Specialised private financial institutions, which are not monitored by the FGS, are therefore the key players in the economy. Many of these financial institutions operate along the same lines as Somalia's entrenched clan system.

The 2013 report, authored by Victor Owuor, identified the ways that investors use to get resources, including money, into Somalia. The first and main method is via informal money-transfer schemes known as 'hawala', which are operated by remittance institutions or banks such as Dababshiiil, Amal Express, Mustaqbal, and Kaah Express.

An official United Kingdom-Somalia remittance factsheet published in March last year estimated that a minimum of US\$1.3 billion is remitted annually to Somalia by members of the diaspora; and that this accounts for around half of Somalia's gross national income and 80% of investments.

There are no financial records of these transfers, and the transactions are based on trust. A customer deposits money at a remittance institution abroad, and the recipient receives the money from a networked dealer in Somalia. According to Owuor, hawala is 'cost effective, efficient, bureaucracy-free and reliable, and yet it does not leave a paper trail.'

Somalia does not currently have the institutions or systems to allow for conventional financial protocols, where money is accessed via established banks or financial institutions – which are in turn controlled by a central bank through established mechanisms. Money flows primarily through mobile telephony schemes.

A reliable estimation indicates that at least 70% of Somali people have access to mobile services, which could be used for money transfers. Mobile telephony not only provides a cheap means of communication, but it also serves as a financial lifeline to inhabitants. According to the Owuor report, individuals can transfer up to US\$1 220 at a time to another mobile user, even if the recipient is not subscribed to the same mobile provider.

Considering how poorly regulated financial flows and transactions are in Somalia, it's easy to see how extremists and other criminals could exploit these gaps. Groups like al-Shabaab rely on unregulated money transfer systems to receive and channel their finances. It is also claimed that al-Shabaab enjoys significant support among members of the diaspora; and many say that the bureaucratic structure of al-Shabaab is more deeply entrenched in the clan system than the state apparatus.

In a way, the social and economic improvements seen in Somalia could therefore serve to strengthen al-Shabaab's financial capacities and social bases. To combat this, the FGS must prioritise measures to regulate changes. The Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) could also be engaged, given its mandate to take all measures needed to reduce the threat posed by al-Shabaab and assist the FGS in establishing effective and legitimate governance structures.

Addis Insight

In hindsight: policy lessons from the PSC's efforts in Burundi



At the PSC summit on 29 January 2016 in Addis Ababa, the 15 heads of state and government who are members of the PSC suspended the decision taken by this body one month earlier to send a force to Burundi to halt the deteriorating security situation in the country. This move has raised many questions. There are also lessons to be learnt about decision making within the PSC. Clearly, the heads of state of the AU are not ready to intervene in a member state without its consent.

What exactly happened between the December 2015 decision by AU ambassadors to send a force to Burundi and the subsequent suspension of the mission by the PSC heads of state a month later? Was the initial decision not well thought through? Did the PSC ambassadors not have a clear idea whether AU heads of state would go ahead with it, even without consent from Bujumbura? And what does it say about the use of drastic measures, such as Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act, to intervene in a member state?

The high-level delegation travelled to Burundi on 26 February, but no mention was made of MAPROBU

Whereas the PSC on 17 December 2015 called for the deployment of an African Mission for Prevention and Protection in Burundi (MAPROBU), even without the consent of the host government, the heads of state have now backtracked on this audacious stance. The communiqué issued by the PSC after two weeks of further negotiations at the AU included the following decisions:

- '[N]ot to deploy MAPROBU because it is ... premature to send such a force to Burundi, and that an inclusive political dialogue [is] to be supported, under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Uganda'
- '[T]o dispatch a high level dialogue to Burundi to meet with the highest authorities of the Republic of Burundi'

The fate of MAPROBU remains uncertain. The press release naming the high-level delegation (the presidents of Mauritania, Senegal, Gabon and South Africa, and the prime minister of Ethiopia) states its mandate as 'to consult with the Government, as well as with other Burundian actors, on the inclusive dialogue and the deployment of the African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU), if accepted by the Government of Burundi'. The high-level delegation travelled to Burundi on 26 February and no mention was made of MAPROBU. A planned field mission of PSC members – from 20–22 February – was cancelled.

Tactical retreat

Apart from sending a high-level delegation, the AU's only other task is to assist the East African Community (EAC) with the inter-Burundian dialogue and obtain

MAPROBU

THE AFRICAN PREVENTION AND
PROTECTION MISSION IN BURUNDI

international support in this regard. This new stance is a break with the last few months, when the AU took the lead in supporting stronger international action in Burundi by, among others, sending a special envoy of the AU Commission chairperson and deploying human rights observers and military experts.

This new stance is a break with the last few months, when the AU took the lead

Despite the confusion surrounding the AU's actions on Burundi, several lessons can be drawn from this episode. This crisis has tested various principles and instruments of the Architecture for Peace and Security in Africa (APSA). The last PSC summit highlighted four challenges: the implementation of Article 4(h), the principle of subsidiarity; the decision-making process at the PSC; and the fight to assert continental interests over national preferences.

Article 4h: the end of a deterrent

Since the creation of the AU, Article 4h has been considered a break with the Organization of African Unity's tradition of non-intervention, especially after what transpired in Rwanda in 1994. The indirect invocation of '4h' contributed to the specific nature of the PSC decision in December. By calling the PSC's bluff and uniting enough hesitant heads of state, the Burundian government has revealed the challenges in implementing this article. As the Institute for Security Studies has stated, the deployment of a peacekeeping force without consent raised more questions than it answered.

For many heads of state, this proposed deployment was a red line because it was associated with regime change. Moreover, the situation in Burundi was not considered as serious as the other crises in Somalia, Libya or South Sudan. In this regard, the PSC decision of 17 December contained a slight contradiction. While it referred to Article 4h to impose the deployment of MAPROBU, the force was a preventive mission corresponding to scenario 4 of the African Standby Force rather than scenario 6, which is designed to stop genocide and crimes against humanity.

Beside these circumstantial elements, many questions were raised during the PSC summit about the implications of a deployment without consent. How does one intervene in a country where the ruling government still has a broad political base? Are its supporters considered enemies of peace and security? How does one ensure the safety of the opposition during the deployment? The suspension of MAPROBU provides an opportunity to think about the modalities of implementing Article 4h. Most heads of state

seemingly consider it to be a deterrent and a tool of last resort. In the absence of consensus on the gravity of the situation in Burundi, the invocation of Article 4h was thus not considered credible.

Limits of subsidiarity

Over the years, regional mechanisms (RMs) have taken the lead in managing crises on the continent. The problem with this approach is that its proximity to the theatre of conflict makes the regional body both more legitimate and more wary of the conflict dynamics. Therefore, the AU is trapped into supporting regional efforts in solving various crises. In Burundi, subsidiarity achieved few results. The EAC leaders could not halt the controversial presidential and general elections last year.

The mediation led by the Ugandan president also has not led to an inclusive dialogue between the parties. During a retreat in Abuja last year, the PSC and the regional economic communities (RECs) decided 'in [a] case where the REC/RM concerned does not have a common approach on how to address a specific conflict/crisis situation, the peace-making responsibility shall revert to the PSC'. This approach does not take account of the possibility of a regional body's failure to achieve results. In such a context, the AU does not have the option to take over the mediation process without disavowing the subsidiarity principle. Moreover, proximity – supposedly an asset – can become a liability. For example, the hypothetical deployment of a Rwandan contingent in the framework of MAPROBU would have been highly controversial due to the tensions between the two governments.

Decision making inside the PSC: consensus versus unanimity

Traditionally, the PSC relies on consensus in making decisions. The underlying principle of this method is that every decision is taken in the continental interest, rather than looking to the outcome of narrower foreign policies. Thus, any hesitation by a member state hinders decisions taken by the PSC. Tanzania's public reservations about the December decision thereby prepared the ground for the suspension of MAPROBU a month later.

Traditionally, the PSC relies on consensus in making decisions

In a way, the practice of consensus in the PSC tends more towards unanimity. In this perspective, a discording voice is more likely to be heard over an acquiescent one. Over the last few months, those in opposition to and reluctant about

MAPROBU have been more vocal than those in favour. This raises the question of whether the PSC should vote more regularly. Indeed, the current state of affairs at the PSC – characterised by an overreliance on consensus – dilutes national accountability for decisions often motivated by domestic concerns. Such a change has the potential to make member states more accountable for their decisions at the continental level. It would also reduce the occurrence of reversal by member states.

Attempt to champion continental interests over national preferences

The suspension of MAPROBU by the heads of state could be explained by a trend we call ‘Addisization’. ‘Addisization’ is the fact that decisions taken at the level of the AU in Addis Ababa increasingly defend continental interests – defined by the values included in the Constitutive Act and the African Charter of Democracy, Elections and Governance – rather than national preferences.

The decision-making process at the PSC contributes to this trend. The Peace and Security Department enjoys pre-eminence in the drafting of solutions to crises, whereas national representatives do not have the institutional and human resources to fulfil this role. Even if drafted decisions are amended by member states, the AU Commission frames the debate and selects policy options in line with the aforementioned continental interests. The social ties among AU officials and delegation members contribute to creating a close-knit community that shares the same set of beliefs, values and conceptions of the instruments needed to tackle crises on the continent.

The suspension of MAPROBU by the heads of state could be explained by a trend we call ‘Addisization’

Moreover, since this so-called community sees itself as having a mission, every crisis is viewed as an opportunity to strengthen the APSA. This trend is even more visible since the regional organisations dispute any pre-eminence the AU might have in the resolution of crises on the continent.

Gap between capitals and diplomats

The trend toward ‘Addisization’ can explain the gap observed between capitals and diplomatic representatives about Burundi over the last two months. Whereas the 17 December decision saw consensus among member states in Addis Ababa, it did not in many capitals. In Addis Ababa, creating a preventive mission was merely a logical step after sending a

special envoy and deploying military experts and human rights observers amid the deterioration of the crisis in early December in Burundi.

In a way, the decision was taken on technical grounds, while the political aspects were understated. In this regard, following the PSC’s decision Commissioner Smail Chergui stressed that the purpose of the mission was to protect the Burundian people, and downplayed its political implications. However, these considerations were prevalent in the perception of many capitals about a hypothetical deployment in Burundi without the consent of the government.

The regionalisation of the African Standby Force is another constraint when there is no consensus

It is important to remember that these factors (a normative community, the view of crises as opportunities) are used by the European Union (EU) in operationalising its security and defence policy through military interventions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad.

Such a process could not occur in the AU for two reasons; the first being the requirement of unanimity inside the organisation on decisions taken by the PSC. In the case of the EU, Germany’s reluctance did not stop the deployment of a force in Chad and the Central African Republic in 2008, since a number of countries supported it. In the AU, the hesitation among some heads of state led to the suspension of MAPROBU.

Second, the regionalisation of the African Standby Force constitutes another constraint in a situation when there is no consensus among member states. The division among EAC states makes the deployment of a force unlikely without the consent of Burundi. Had the African Capability for Immediate Responses to Crises been the dominant concept of the APSA, such an option would have been plausible, because it relies on voluntary contributions and the principle of a willing lead nation.



PSC Interview

'We are asking too much from the AU'

Veteran Mauritanian mediator Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah was the United Nations (UN) special representative to Burundi (in the early 1990s), Sudan and Somalia, and headed the UN Office for West Africa. *The PSC Report* asked him how successful the AU is in dealing with conflicts in Africa.

There are a number of conflicts on the continent where the AU is trying to intervene. Does the AU have the capacity to solve these conflicts?

The major problem is the AU has very good intentions to solve conflicts, but it doesn't have the capacity to do so. This is what we are facing in Burundi, for example. In my view, we speak a lot about prevention [of conflicts], but that's easier said than done. You need to have a strong moral authority and the material and financial capacity to carry this out. Burundi remains the best example because it is an old problem. I was representative in Burundi since the 1994 agreements, which led to the Arusha Accord of 2005. But for countries to implement these you need a *gendarme* [policeman], otherwise it won't work.

We speak a lot about prevention of conflicts, but that's easier said than done

Can the AU play the role of *gendarme*?

The AU can't fix this problem [of Burundi], in the same way that the Union of South American Nations can't solve the problems in Latin America, like in Colombia, for example. The Arab League can't solve the problems between the Arab countries. We are asking the AU to do things that don't correspond to the global reality. We have given the AU a mandate and responsibilities that do not exist in international relations. What I'm saying is very serious.

The AU cannot solve these problems, partly because it doesn't have the material and financial capacity – it has the moral capacity, which is good – but one has to find a way to strengthen its capacity. Still, the AU can't be the *gendarme*, it doesn't have the means to do so.

Whenever there is a conflict, we see a multiplicity of special envoys, of the UN, the AU, regional organisations. There is also the AU's Panel of the Wise. How effective are these envoys?

Today, mediation has become a problem, but it's not the fault of the AU. There is a multiplicity of external actors in every conflict – some are freelance, some represent governments and organisations. It's become so bad that we need a mediator to mediate between the mediators. But there is also an advantage to this because every one of these brings their own sensibilities, their own approach. It has really become a problem that has to be sorted out.

When it comes to intervention in conflicts, the last word seems to be with the regional organisations, as we are seeing in Burundi. Is this more effective?

The question of the relations between the AU and regional organisations is very complicated. Take the case of Burkina Faso. It was very difficult for ECOWAS [the Economic Community of West African States], which is a very respected organisation, to intervene. In the end the people and the army stood together to solve the problem. The East African Community, to which Burundi belongs, has a lot of expertise, but we always come back to the same problem, the interests of individual states: Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda and others.

Is there a country in Africa today that has the moral authority and the means to successfully intervene in conflicts?

The neighbours can play an important role, but the problem is that in many African countries there is not a proper integration of everyone in the country. So it is difficult to give moral and ethical lessons while you have problems at home. You have to set an example. There has to be a model recognised by all. Between the desire [to make peace] and the capacity to do so, there is a big gap.

The question of sanctions comes to mind. The AU is doing a good job and it is looking at ways to convince countries to do the right thing, without resorting to sanctions.

The AU does impose sanctions against regimes that came to power through a coup d'état. How effective is this?

One of the perverse effects of these sanctions is that where a leader comes to power through rigging elections, you're telling him: you're safe, whatever happens, there won't be a coup d'état because we'll impose sanctions. It is a good rule, but it must be imposed when there are coups against a government that was freely and fairly elected. But when you rig an election and people say you can go on governing, that isn't good. The AU's position is good, but it has to be qualified.

Many say that the nature of conflicts in Africa has changed and so it needs a new approach. What do you think of that?

Every region and every country has its own specific problems, but we mustn't push this too far to make Africa a separate case. Africans, just like all other communities, stand up to defend themselves when their vital material, spiritual, moral or political interests are under threat. Then, when you have irresponsible and populist politicians, they exploit these same political and ethnic considerations. When you have presidents who don't have a vision for their country, they do the same to marginalise regions or communities. The nature of conflicts is the same everywhere. In fact, conflict forms part of daily life. Only violent and bloody conflicts don't form part of life.

The specificity when it comes to Africa lies in the level of exclusion. When one group takes power, they simply don't want to share the power or apply the rules that they helped to make. Secondly, they don't contribute to the development of the country. The country stays poor, so there is not enough wealth to go around. Besides that, the demographic explosion in Africa is a time bomb. I know people say it could be an advantage for Africa, but it is something we can't control.



About the ISS

The Institute for Security Studies is an African organisation that aims to enhance human security on the continent. It does independent and authoritative research, provides expert policy analysis and advice, and delivers practical training and technical assistance.

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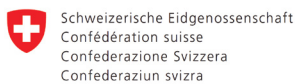
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About us

The *Peace and Security Council (PSC) Report* is an initiative of the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) through its office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was established in 2009 with the principal aim of supporting and complementing the work of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Council through the provision of regular, independent and research-based information on and analysis of the PSC and its activities. The *PSC Report* offers the wider constituency of the AU, as well as African civil society organisations, the media and the international diplomatic community a reliable means of following and tracking the work of the PSC.

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