

# STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA 2019



SPSSA

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We acknowledge the research support provided by Dr. Wale Olusola, Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, and from Jesutimilehin Akamo and Olusola Obisesan, graduate students, in the same Department.

The views expressed in the paper are the personal opinion of the author and does not represent the views of the African Union Commission or their respective institutions.

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# PART 1

## CHAPTER ONE

# WHAT TO BEAR IN MIND IN READING THIS REPORT

## Introduction

In any particular year and on any particular issue, events and developments across Africa tend to evoke multiple and contrasting impulses. Due to its own making or by default, the continent routinely experiences brief spells of progress and then longer, often intractable cycles of challenges that could be misconstrued as its dominant narrative. Either way, the complexity of peace and security issues the continent contends with on regular basis end up defining not just how it is viewed by its citizens and outsiders, but also its status in world affairs. The State of Peace and Security in Africa (SPSA) has become the annual flagship Report of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, popularly called the Tana Forum, offering a synoptic analysis of the pressing peace and security issues on the continent during the previous year—2018, in this case— and provide explanations for them. It is not intended, and cannot even pretend, to document all the peace and security challenges the continent faced in any particular year, but draw attention to those considered to be the most salient and cross-cutting, particularly in terms of disruption and harm they caused African citizens and the states.

For this edition, two deliberate decisions were made. The first one is to give those accounts in two separate but complementary volumes; this present one, which is a general survey of key peace and security matters across Africa in 2018, and the changing internal and external factors that defined or undermine them, while the second volume focuses on the specific theme for the 8th Tana Forum- Political Dynamics in the Horn of Africa: Nurturing the Emerging Peace Trends. The two documents should, preferably, be read as companion volumes, although they also stand alone enough to be read separately. The second decision, common to both volumes, is the equally deliberate effort to present, in equal measures, the unpalatable but also positive sides to the narrative on peace and security in Africa. All too often, the continent is portrayed as a basket-case of woes while the remarkable achievements of its citizens in the face of difficult social, political, economic and environmental challenges are underrepresented or completely glossed over. To present the African continent, with 55 sovereign states, as a helpless monolith that is unable to tackle its own problems is off-mark in many ways. Treating it as such tend to miss out several key milestones the continent made in any particular year in different spheres. Undoubtedly, 2018 was the year Africa continued to experience daunting threats linked to the activities of insurgency and terrorist groups, the disturbing outbreaks of communicable and non-communicable diseases, the impacts of adverse climate change, and the persistence of civil wars in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and South Sudan.

When the coin is flipped, it was also the year in which Africa recorded a number of positive achievements. For one, some of the continent's long-drawn conflicts screeched to a halt and produced peace agreements, even if some of them were also frequently breached. It was the year when a fresh wind of change began to blow across the Horn of Africa; starting with the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and that between Eritrea and Djibouti, despite the troubles in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia. Notwithstanding the recurrent hiccups, a total of 27 African countries held elections in 2018.<sup>1</sup> They included the constitutional referendum in Burundi and Comoros in May and July,<sup>2</sup> presidential elections in eight countries and 17 local and parliamentary elections. It is now widely accepted that elections have become the preferred route to transfer of power even if the aftermath does not fully address the concerns and expectations of the citizens.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> During the previous year, 2017, presidential elections were held in six African countries, with the planned one in the DRC postponed until the following year. A total of 13 presidential elections are expected in 2019, and a referendum in Burkina Faso. See EISA, 2018 African Elections Calendar. [www.eisa.com](http://www.eisa.com)

<sup>2</sup> The two referenda proposed amendments to the constitutions of the two countries on, particularly on presidential term limits. See Aljazeera, "Burundi backs new constitution extending presidential term limits", 22 May 2018. [www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com) and DW, "Yes Vote in Comoros referendum gives president more power", 01/08/2018 [www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com)

<sup>3</sup> Those elections produced mixed results: some offering only offering temporary respite (Cameroon, CAR) others relaunching hope (Liberia, Sierra Leone).

Except for the abortive coup by rank-and-file soldiers in Gabon over welfare issues in 2018, African militaries have mostly taken a back seat in politics.<sup>4</sup> The space for civil society engagement also expanded, despite the considerable risks actors and stakeholders in that sector routinely face. Countries that once went through prolonged political crises, violent conflicts and civil wars continued to consolidate, even if slowly and painfully so. 2018 was also the year that all but three African countries met and signed the continental free trade agreement, which at the time of completing this Report in early April 2019, has reached the threshold of the 22 ratifications required for it to come into force. Finally, there was a greater sense of urgency to mobilize and amplify African agency and voice at the regional and continental levels, and within major global platforms such as the United Nations and the European Union. Some of the new initiatives that came on stream in the year under review included the establishment of the Africa Centre for Disease Control, and the conversion of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD, into a more holistic and all-encompassing African Development Agency (ADA). Overall, then, developments around the continent—good or bad—are taking place simultaneously and should be accorded the same space as it has been done in this part of the Report. A reflection on key positive developments across Africa is essential in order to keep track of- and learn from- them, towards achieving the goals encapsulated in the AU Agenda 2063 of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.

## Scope and Purpose

The 2018 SPSA, just like earlier volumes, will not only identify the key milestones during the year but also to provide the necessary context and narratives to help the reader, ordinary citizens or high-level policymakers, to make sense of the complexity of issues, opportunities and threats that the continent experienced in the sphere of peace and security. On the surface, Africa's myriad peace and security challenges in 2018 might seem isolated and disconnected from each other but on a closer interrogation reveal intricate connectivity to wider global dynamics.

It is important to reiterate the last point given the tendency to misconstrue the notion of African solutions to African problems to mean that external actors should either take a backseat or walk away from contributing to solving the continent's problems. It is clear from the twist and turns of events in the peace and security sector in 2018 that Africa's fortunes, and also misfortunes, are closely linked with those of other parts of the world, and that the latter cannot afford to treat the continent with contempt or leave it to its fate. Ultimately, as this Report warns, much would first and foremost depend on how African citizens, governments and institutions themselves are on the same page on key issues, and how they act in concert with global actors, state and non-state, to address critical peace and security concerns moving forward.

The 2018 SPSA will go beyond the unhelpful fixation with top-down perspectives often deployed in trying to understand and explain Africa and its peace, security and developmental imperatives, but also draw attention to small-scale but equally decisive efforts from below to tackle them. By paying attention to the agency of the 'local', therefore, the present Report amplifies the often ignored, or underplayed, hard truth that only Africans themselves can sustainably redeem their continent in the long term. Furthermore, by taking a view from the top as much as from below, with a focus on the daily grinds that are increasingly undermining human security on the continent, this year's Report will hopefully draw attention to those issues that tend to be ignored or 'lost' when seeking solutions to peace and security concerns in Africa.

The ultimate goal of this Report is to re-energize and strengthen African agency and commitment to the conceptualization and implementation of proactive and innovative measures in response to the challenges imposed by peace and security considerations on the continent. In so doing, it underscores the complexities that define and characterize Africa's security landscape and provide critical insights into the structural enablers behind those predicaments. It critically assesses African- and external- responses to those challenges, against the backdrop of developments around the world.

<sup>4</sup> See, Clayton Besaw and Matthew Frank, 'No coups occurred in 2018. Will next year be so stable?', *The Conversation*, 13 December 2018. Accessed in [www.google.com/amps/theconversation.com](http://www.google.com/amps/theconversation.com) on 10 February 2018.



## Methodology

Putting together the 2018 SPSA Report is both intensive and challenging precisely because, while so much happened in that year that should ordinarily be considered and included, only a handful can be taken in. It is important to bear in mind, in reading it, that the Report is the product of a collegiate effort- not just in terms of the lead authors but also the plurality of sources that it relied upon for the analysis and insights contained in it. It drew from a wide range of sources, either those individuals with deep knowledge of the continent or governmental and non-governmental institutions within and outside Africa that are at the forefront of tackling the very issues under consideration.

The Report relied on extensive desk research, which involved deep content analysis of official documents by African governments and inter-governmental institutions such as the United Nations, African Union and regional organizations; local and international non-governmental organisations; scholarly publications in books, journals, monographs and policy briefs; print and electronic media reports on specific events and countries; and datasets from African and international sources. In the case of datasets, this year's edition of the SPSA Report relied extensively on the daily situation reports distributed electronically by the Situation Room of the AU's Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) in 2018. A total of 267 daily situation reports were analysed using Atlas.ti 8.3, a workbench for the qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio, and video data to make systematic and meaningful sense of raw, disparate and unstructured data. The AU situation report was complemented with the datasets published during the year by leading think-tanks such as the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED),<sup>5</sup> the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK),<sup>6</sup> African Development Bank's African Economic Outlook, UNDP's Human Development Index, Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index on Governance in Africa, and Afrobarometer. The key insights from the diverse data sources were triangulated and duly embedded in the Report.

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5 See, Roudabeh Kishi and Melissa Pavlik, 'ACLED 2018- The Year in Review,' 11 January 2019 (hereafter, ACLED)

6 HIIK, Conflict Barometer 2018, No. 27, 2019, Heidelberg, Germany (hereafter, HIIK)

## CHAPTER TWO

# TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA IN 2018

## 2.1. Background

This chapter synthesizes key trends and developments in peace and security in 2018, and serves as a prelude to the more in-depth and case-specific analyses presented in subsequent parts. It tentatively showed a number of key highlights that 2018 should be noted for; not the least that the year was relatively peaceful, compared to the previous, but takes note the necessity to disaggregate and nuance such a broad conclusion. One of the key highlights for the year, paradoxically, is that the state was linked directly or indirectly with most deaths in Africa. This occurred against the backdrop of authoritarian excesses and continued erosion of the capacity of the state in several critical sectors such as the delivery of public goods, tackling corruption, stemming the collapse of social infrastructure and social safety nets, including employment creation, as well as reversing the decline of the health and educational systems.<sup>7</sup>

There is considerable risk of assuming that only the state is implicated in the misery and death of citizens in 2018. The African landscape is dotted by a plurality of non-state armed actors (NSAAs) that are engaged in treacherous activities that also undermine peace and security on the continent. The important questions, in this regard, relate to the characterization of such NSAAs, some of them directly linked or sponsored by state; understanding the conditions that predispose them to thrive; and also where they are located, their modus operandi and impact in 2018. They did not only continue to split into smaller factions but are changing their methodology and expanding into new theatres to ward-off or evade the state and external actors. In CAR, for instance, NSAAs have become fragmented yet deeply entrenched in different sections of the capital, Bangui, and across the country. Apart from the two leading ones; the Seleka and anti-Balaka, several others are splintered along “different but fluid lines-tribal, local power structure, and over the control of economic resources.”<sup>8</sup> The same is true for the DRC which has virtually become a gangster’s paradise with large numbers of them in different parts locking horns with the government. Such situations are compounded by the shrinking writ of the state as security forces are unable to extend their reach and presence across the country.

In 2018, state security forces battled insurgency and terrorist groups, leaving heavy casualties on both sides. In Egypt, the military killed suspected members of Hasm militant group in Qalyubiya Province, north of Cairo, and in Arish, North Sinai desert. The government also reported in February that security forces killed more than 300 suspected Islamist militants as part of a nationwide campaign to eradicate insurgency in the desert region. In what was believed to be its first jihadist attack, in October 2018, two policemen and 14 attackers were killed in Mocimbor da Praia, Mozambique. In the same year, a group called al-Shabaab by locals killed 40, some of them beheaded, in places such as Cabo Delgado Province and northern Mozambique. In CAR, 20 people were reportedly killed and more than 170 injured in the part of Bangui, the capital, controlled by the Muslim PK5 while eight soldiers were killed and 80 wounded by a blast and attack on the French embassy in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Ugandan Army claimed to have killed 30 al-Shabaab elements while the group issued a counter-claim that they killed 59 soldiers. How the African state- and external actors- responded, and the limitations they faced, will feature briefly here and more prominently in subsequent sections.

Finally, the growing- but often understated- impacts of unconventional threats; man-made and natural catastrophes, have become acute sources of disease, destruction and death in Africa. The frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by adverse climate change as well as the spread of diseases in epidemic proportions increased in 2018, but were not fully

<sup>7</sup> Education outcomes, according to IIGA (2018) “are worsening” for more than half (52.8%) of Africa’s youth population, despite improvements in human development, in general, and in health, in particular.

<sup>8</sup> Conciliation Resources, ‘Perspectives of Non-State Armed Groups in the Central African Republic’, December 2016, 12pp

captured due to poor documentation. Still, as disturbing as the impacts of irregular or no rainfalls is to countries in the Sahel, Horn and Eastern Africa regions, so were those along the coastal belt of the continent that experienced the rise in ocean sea levels causing massive flooding, homelessness and displacement. The outbreak of disease epidemics, and the long period it sometimes take to bring them under control as witnessed in the Ebola outbreak in the DRC, take a toll on lives and livelihoods, and weakened resilience opportunities.

## 2.2. Overview of violence and armed conflict in Africa in 2018

This section draws heavily from four major sources of data published in 2018: (1) AUCEWS Situation Room Daily Report; (2) HIIK Conflict Barometer;<sup>9</sup>(3) Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED); (4) Ibrahim Index on Governance in Africa (IIGA); and Afrobarometer. The HIIK Conflict Barometer identified a total of 372 conflicts worldwide; and classified 150 and 213 as non-violent and violent, respectively. It showed that full wars decreased from 20 in 2017 to 16 in 2018, while limited wars increased from 16 to 24 (HIIK, 2019: 4). Out of the 24 limited wars worldwide during the year, eight occurred in sub-Saharan Africa and another 6 out of 16 full wars.<sup>10</sup>

Out of the themes considered in this Report, episodes of riot and other forms of civil unrests were covered in AUCEWS Sitreps in 2018 especially their causes, perpetrators, spread and impacts. It is difficult to find any African country that was totally free from such non-violent and violent unrests. In 18 of the countries that featured prominently across virtually all the regions, the triggers behind public agitations ranged from ordinary 'bread-and-butter' issues such as soaring food prices and shortage of essential commodities to substantive ones such as lopsided allocation of state resources, horizontal inequality, collapse of municipal facilities, social injustices, clamour for governance reforms, allegations of state capture and corruption, resistance to attempts to manipulate constitutions and wade off authoritarian excesses by the state. The network of perpetrators also expanded from urban subalterns and unemployed to civil servants, professional groups and associations, students in tertiary institutions, opposition groups, civil society organisations, etc.<sup>11</sup>

Only disputes, the lowest of the five cadres of conflict intensities, and limited wars short of full-blown wars, increased by almost double in 2018 compared to the previous year. The other three categories of conflict intensities namely non-violent crisis decreased from 18 to 13; violent crisis, from 50 to 46; and war, from 10 to 6. The issues in contention, according to HIIK, included contestations over national power, sub-national predominance, resources, and system/ideology.<sup>12</sup> Full-scale war decreased significantly in sub-Saharan Africa in 2018, with four out of 10 of them, de-escalating and without new outbreaks. Two are particularly instructive: first, that in the DRC between the Kamuina Nsupu militants and government decreased to violent crisis, and the second, two separate wars in South Sudan, between government and SPLMA-OI, on the one hand, and those among different groups over cattle and pastures, on the other parts of the continent.

The six conflicts at war-level in sub-Saharan Africa in 2017 retained the same intensity in 2018: in Darfur, Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), Nigeria and Kenya. In the case of Nigeria, the conflicts resulted from multiple sources and occurred in different places such as the clash between pastoralists and farmers over pasture and arable land mostly in the Middle Belt region and those in the Northeast and around the Lake Chad basin, where two factions of Boko Haram that have pledged allegiance to IS continue to battle the Nigerian government and neighbouring countries.<sup>13</sup> Finally, in Kenya, Al-Shabaab is pitched against the governments of Somalia and Kenya.

Although peace agreements involving major parties such as government and key opposition in South Sudan, CAR and the DRC have received more media coverage whereas equally effective and long-lasting ones involving once belligerent inter-communal groups tended to be underreported or ignored. What this implies is that while focusing more and solely

9 The database analyses only political conflicts as a process rather than a threshold of casualties (as done by the equally prominent ACLED). For further clarifications on Conflict Barometer 2018, see Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, Heidelberg, Germany, 2019: 7-9 (hereafter, HIIK).

10 Along with Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, HIIK batches countries in North Africa, otherwise terms as the "Maghreb", as part of the Middle-East thereby separating them from the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. If Africa is taken as a monolith, with Libya and Egypt included, the number of limited wars and full-scale wars would increase to nine and eight, respectively.

11 AUCEWS Daily Sitrep, various sources, 2018

12 HIIK, 2019: 59

13 The number of deaths due to Boko Haram slightly decreased from previous year to over 2000 in 2018, fight between pastoralists and farmers caused 1200 death in 2018, twice the number in 2017 (HIIK, 2019: 13-14)

on omnibus national peace deals may be have its own symbolism, they are also easier to repudiate than those among communal groups who directly the bear the brunt of conflicts and are more committed to finding quicker and lasting solutions. It is therefore in the best interest of governments and external interlocutors to give as much attention to helping sub-state actors and groups to resolve their differences amicably than holding up the longer and sometimes more frustrating process of achieving big peace deals. Indeed, helping to achieve 'small peace' deals among sub-state groups can potentially dry the oxygen that trigger and sustain bigger conflicts.

Wars involving rebel, terrorist and insurgency groups were particularly prominent in the DRC, Somalia and Mali in 2018. Three of such took place simultaneously in the DRC over what HIIK categorises as contestations over "subnational pre-dominance"<sup>14</sup> and resources. They first involved more than 100 different armed groups and government; second, between the Front for Patriot Resistance and the government in Huri Province; and lastly, between Islamist group Allied Democratic Force (ADF) and government. In Somalia, on the other hand, the conflict pitched the regional government of the state of Somaliland against the semi-autonomous region of Puntland over common borders. Its escalation in 2018 reportedly led to the death of over 100 soldiers, and over 15,000 displacements. Inter-ethnic conflict also persisted between Fulani and Dogon in Central Mali, while the government and five others- Algeria, Niger, Tunisia, Libya, and Burkina Faso- fought AQIM and its affiliates as well as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahel (ISGS). In Egypt, government and Sunni militant groups continue fighting on the Sinai Peninsula while in Libya the Government of National Accord and the House of Representatives, supported by the Libyan National Army, respected the ceasefire but focused more on fighting the regional Islamist groupings and resolving internal political power struggles.<sup>15</sup>

It is not a surprise that the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) described 2018 as a year of "evolving disorder" to underscore the developments highlighted above.<sup>16</sup> Three of the seven conclusions the dataset drew are particularly instructive for this Report. First, was that disorder expanded into locations not too far away from areas previously affected; for instance, into Burkina Faso which shares boundary with Mali. This suggests that outbreaks were not necessarily new but merely ripples from existing conflicts. Second, the number of conflict actors in Africa and around the world grew by from 1,400 to 2,271 armed agents, respectively, between 2017 and 2018. Finally, that regardless of the proliferation of new NSAA state forces were responsible for the most direct civilian fatalities around the world, including Africa during the year. The reasons for this situation are not farfetched: peaceful protests and violent demonstrations are not only on the rise; government forces are also increasingly and brutally suppressing them. In the same year, Nigeria was characterised as one of the four deadliest countries for civilians due to the activities of the Boko Haram group and herders-farmers fights rampaging the country.

The political space for citizens and civil society organisations to operate freely is shrinking despite recorded progress in their participation and human rights.<sup>17</sup> As state security agencies deploy punitive measures to quell unrest, those who participate in protests, whether they are ordinary citizens or opposition figures, became targets of arrests, incarceration and extrajudicial killings as well as the clampdown on private and social media in Morocco, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Egypt, Uganda, etc.<sup>18</sup> In extreme situations, profiling citizens along ethnic, religious and gender lines worsened the experiences of citizens who are forced to flee persecution and harm, as happened in CAR, and DRC.

The indicators of personal safety, understandably, showed mixed results in 2018 (IIGA, 2018). Apart from the "absence of government violence against civilians" which recorded highest (65.6%), other indicators in order of significance were; absence of social unrest (57.5%), absence of crimes (48.9%), perception of personal safety (42.7%), reliability of police service (35.9%) and absence of human trafficking (26.9%). While nine countries showed "increasing improvement"- Morocco, Niger, Chad, Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Swaziland and Lesotho; three, Cote d'Ivoire, Botswana and Comoros showed "warning signs"; and eight classified as "slowly deterioration" namely South Africa, Madagascar, Benin, Togo, Liberia, Mali, Algeria and Libya. A dozen others countries registered "increasing deterioration."<sup>19</sup>

14 This involved "the attainment of the de-facto control by a government, a non-state organization or a population over a territory or population." See HIIK, 2019: 6

15 See, HIIK, 2019: 159-160.

16 The 2018 ACLED dataset covered 76 countries around the world, including 49 in Africa.

17 Mo Ibrahim Foundation and Africa Peer Review Mechanism, Launch of the 2018 IIGAs "Reflections on Governance Performance on the African Continent and in South Africa", Pretoria, South Africa, 5/11/2018

18 AUCEWS Daily Sitrep, various sources, 2018

19 These were Senegal, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, the DRC, Uganda, Burundi, Zambia, Mozambique and Ethiopia. See, IIGA 2018.

Incumbent governments are also increasingly bringing up charges against notable opposition elements, and doing so at politically importune times that sometimes end up overheating the polity. For instance, ahead of the polls in the South West State, SWS, the Somali government ordered the arrest of a leading presidential candidate and former Al-Shabaab leader, Mukhtar Robow on February 13. Although the SWS had accepted his candidature, the Federal Government insisted on his exclusion because the US Treasury Department sanctions on him for his “extremist ideologies” was still in place.<sup>20</sup> His subsequent arrest led to days of violent protests in Baidoa during which a Somali police officer and 14 civilians were killed. On account of his critical views on the disposition of the government to Robow, the SRSR and Head of UNSOM in Somalia, Nicholas Hayson, was declared *persona non grata* and expelled from the country not long after he assumed duty on October 8.

Once admired for its multiparty system, Tanzania showed increasing signs of a slide towards authoritarian rule. On 30th January 2018, the Parliament approved amendments to the Political Parties’ Act that was first passed in 1992, which effectively emasculated opposition elements and parties and granted sweeping powers to the government and its agencies. This decision sadly came 27 years after the country made the transition from one-party to multiparty rule. As far back as 2016, many opposition leaders had been complaining about the ban on public meetings and rallies, and the ban on criticising government officials in the social media.

Overall, evidence showed that when a government become more obtrusive towards their citizens, it might just be an indication of its struggling with what IIGA characterized as “effective Power to govern;” defined in terms of how much democratically elected political representatives have exercised effective power to govern, or the extent to which there are veto powers by individuals and groups with power to undermine democratic procedures such as the military, clergy, business or external actors, and the existence of political enclaves. What is significant is not just the 19 countries that showed “warning signs” or “increasing deterioration” but that all the ones that showed “improving improvements” are relatively smaller countries- Togo, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Liberia, and Madagascar. It could be concluded, with some certainty, that size matters: three other smaller countries- Cote d’Ivoire, Mauritius and Rwanda- also registered remarkable economic performance over the past decade and a half, lifting millions out of extreme poverty and making schooling and health care available, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).<sup>21</sup> These countries, along with Benin, Morocco, Senegal and Togo, have also become preferred destinations for foreign investments.

In terms of the number of organised political events in the year in review, South Sudan (with 380 events, or 36%) and Libya (with 161 events, or a 24% drop), witnessed major decreases in comparison with the previous year, 2017. Again, only Nigeria among five other non-African countries, experienced a significant increase in recorded numbers of organised political events in 2018; with an additional 316 events, or a 35%, from the 2017 figure. This was largely due to Fulani-farmers’ related violence, the concurrent attacks by Boko Haram, and spate of political violence which occurred in the build-up to the general elections in 2019 (ACLED, 2019: 11-12). Fatalities arising from organised political violence however increased in two countries; Cameroon and Mali. Again, although they both have had antecedents of separatist agitations and insurgency/terrorist activities long before their elections in 2018, there was no doubt that the election periods in the two countries further raised the political temperature and propensity to use violence.

Nigeria and Somalia are the only two countries with the highest number of new conflict actors as well as the highest increase in the number of actors in Africa in 2018. The number of actors increased from 105 in 2017 to 145 (36%) in Nigeria while actors that are no longer active dropped to 69 in 2018 at the same time that 109 new actors emerged. In Somalia, on the other hand, the number of actors increased by 27% from 137 to 174 in 2017 and 2018, respectively; out of which 62 actors became inactive in 2017, and 99 new ones emerged in 2018. Communal militias were dominant in both countries.

During the year in review, and in the previous one, the highest numbers of reported civilian fatalities came from clashes between state forces and rioters. The only exception to this trend was South Africa which recorded a total of 979 protests that did not necessarily involve state forces and experienced no fatalities. This could demonstrate the maturity of the state,

20 UNSC, “Somalia Consultations” in ‘What’s in the Blue’, Wednesday 6/2/2019 @ 2.58pm

21 Ernest Hirsch, “Obscene disparities: new UNDP study highlights chasm between rich and poor”, Africa Renewal: December 2017 - March 2018

but it was clearly due to the recognition of the right of citizens to freedom of expression and association. Whether or not citizens are willing to join others to request government action, and do so peacefully or via demonstrations and protests, would however depend on a number of reasons or factors such as the potential risks involved. A total of 54.4% respondents surveyed by Afrobarometer in 11 countries claimed that they did not join other citizens to request government action but would do so if they had the chance, while 19.5% insisted they “would never do this.”

In all the above trends, there is an understated gender dimension when public safety is infringed upon and peace undermined. Sadly, women continue to experience various kinds of victimizations and infringements on fundamental rights, rape, kidnapping and deaths. In 2018, women were more at risk of human rights violations and sexual exploitation in the Lake Chad Basin area at the same time that militia fighters attacked, kidnapped and mass raped women in isolated areas of CAR. In South Sudan, five female foreigners were reportedly gang raped, while a South Sudanese journalist and U.S. aid worker were killed. The most disheartening was the abduction of 110 school girls on 19 February 2018 by heavily armed Islamist militias in Dapchi, Yobe State, in Northern Nigeria. The Dapchi abduction came almost four years after 276 girls were kidnapped by Boko Haram, also from their school, in neighbouring Borno State.

## 2.2. A discomfoting increase in unconventional sources of threat and insecurity

Apart from the activities of state and non-state armed groups precipitating insecurity and deaths, 2018 witnessed a rise in the number of unconventional threats as sources of insecurity, especially human security. Unconventional security threats can be broadly categorised into man-made and natural causes, although the lines between them have become blurred.<sup>22</sup> The adverse effects of climate change and the outbreak of disease epidemics have become more frequency of their occurrence and impacts during the year under review.

Even in the absence of readily available, adverse climate change is predictably becoming the highest source of insecurity and cause of deaths in Africa. Climate change-induced threats trigger different types of environmental disasters: desertification and prolonged drought in the Sahel; erratic and inadequate rainfall across the East and Horn of Africa; the shrinking or disappearance of previously large water bodies such as Lake Chad; high extended temperature, with many parts of West, Central, Southern and Eastern Africa experiencing more days of temperature at or above 32 degrees Celsius; change in rainfall patterns; rise in ocean sea levels; mudslide in Sierra Leone and Kenya, etc.

The multiplier effect of climate change is not only evident in humanitarian and health challenges in the short and medium terms but also in the long-term social and economic burden it imposes on mostly poor and vulnerable communities directly affected, as the devastation recently caused by Cyclone Idai in Mozambique continues to reveal. Adverse climatic conditions are responsible for the intensification of deadly conflict between farmers and cattle herders in West Africa. Natural disasters like drought, flash floods, mudslides and landslides have increased; with 28 African countries experiencing one or several of them during the year in review, impacting negatively on lives and livelihoods opportunity. In 2018 alone, more than 200 people died in seasonal floods across Nigeria alongside the destruction of an estimated 122,653 hectares of agricultural land and crops as well as 13,031 houses. In the same year, those displaced, injured or died were put at 141, 369, 192, and 108, respectively.<sup>23</sup> In May alone, the number of people reportedly displaced by flash flooding were put at Kenya (210,000),<sup>24</sup> Rwanda (4,750);<sup>25</sup> Somalia (230,000)<sup>26</sup> and with over 400 deaths in the three countries. In Burundi, also, 2,000 were displaced by floods while roughly 12,000 others were affected one way or another.<sup>27</sup>

In Burundi, 2000 were displaced by floods although an estimated 12,000 people were affected one way or another.<sup>28</sup> Eastern and Southern Africa regions experienced persistent drought in 2018 raising the number of those already affected by food insecurity exacerbating food insecurity by the end of the year from 9.6 million to 10.8 million.<sup>29</sup> Also, mudslides in parts of Freetown, Sierra Leone, caused more than 3,000 displacements, and leaving over 141 persons dead or missing.<sup>30</sup> In Rwanda, the landslide that happened April 2018 destroyed about 5,000 hectares of crop land and led to the death of 201 people. In spite of the fact that climate change concerns and threats are real and urgent, however, a survey conducted in 11 countries in 2018 showed that a large number of respondents (about 45.7%) had never heard about it or knew what it entails.<sup>31</sup> This clearly underscored the need for greater advocacy and sensitization among those who are most likely to bear the highest brunt of adverse climate change.

22 The death of over 1000 people along with hundreds missing and rendered homeless was due as much to the waterlog caused by excessive rain in the coastal city of Freetown as much as years of poor urban and environmental planning. See, Joseph Macarthy, 'Sierra Leone mudslide was a man-made tragedy that could have been prevented', Conversation, 7 September 2017

23 National Emergency Management Agency 2018 Floods – Situation Report No 2 NEOC Date: 24 September 2018 NEMA/SR/2018/02

24 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/press-release/red-cross-responds-floods-displace-210000-people-across-kenya/>

25 DREF Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Rwanda Flood <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDRRW016do.pdf>

26 Flood Response Plan Somalia 15 May to 15 August 2018 <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/2018-somalia-flood-response-plan-15-may-15-august-2018-may-2018>

27 East Africa Flood Deaths Surpass 400 <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/east-africa-flood-deaths-surpass-400>

28 Burundi – 2,000 Displaced by Floods and Rain in 6 Provinces <http://floodlist.com/africa/burundi-floods-january-2018>

29 Southern Africa: Drought - Nov 2018 <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/dr-2018-000429-zwe>

30 The World Bank (2017). Sierra Leone. Rapid Damage and Loss Assessment of August 14th, 2017 Landslides and Floods in the Western Area (Report) IBRD/IDA

31 TaaWongbe and Marvin Samuel, "Climate change making life worse in Liberia, but only half of the citizens have heard about it", Afrobarometer, AD 208, 2018.

Equally a source of concern is the outbreak of disease epidemics in an increasingly number of countries. In 2017, epidemic outbreaks reported by the World Health Organisation (WHO) included dengue fever in Burkina Faso; Ebola in DRC; meningococcal in Liberia; plague in Madagascar; Cholera in Mozambique and Zambia; Hepatitis E in Niger, and Listeriosis in South Africa, etc. Since the first case in the current cycle of outbreak was reported in May 2018, the DRC continues to face the dreaded Ebola disease, with the total number of deaths during the year in review put at 357. A total of 91 cases of Lassa Fever were reported in Nigeria, and also in Liberia where 15 deaths occurred. The outbreak of Chikungunya and Rift Valley fever in Kenya resulted in high numbers of abortions and deaths among livestock. There were incidences of cholera in Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, and monkey pox in Nigeria.

Whether they occurred separately or at the same time, adverse climate change and disease epidemics in different parts of the continent impose considerable strain on human activities, particularly on already vulnerable groups and communities that are least able to prevent or ameliorate their multiplier effects. They also happen, or assume critical dimensions, partly because governments and the agencies set up to manage national emergencies they cause are too poorly resourced, inefficient, reactive rather than proactive, or simply become another cesspool of mismanagement and corruption.

In 2018, the AU-PSC held several sessions to consider the threat to peace and security as a result of climate change and epidemic outbreaks. The Council concluded that in view of the serious social, economic, political and security threats in many parts of the African continent, there was need for the AU to mainstream Africa's public health security issues into the African Union Peace and Security Architecture. The establishment of the African Centre for Disease Control, Africa CDC, in 2017, is a step in the right direction in order to mobilise a continental response to health issues and the outbreak of epidemics. African governments must redouble efforts and investments into designing and implementing interventions and mechanisms to tackle climate change and health epidemics in order to alleviate pressure on their citizens. In doing so, they must also prioritize education, health and basic amenities, including electricity,<sup>32</sup> for citizens if they are to enjoy relative peace, security and prosperity in the long run.

### 2.3. Game changers in 2018

The growing involvement of youth in political processes and enterprise bring up one of the most encouraging developments on the continent- even if there is still considerable room for improvement. In more countries across Africa, young people are braving the odds stacked against them in the political space- and leveraging their peers as a major voting bloc- to join politics, be elected into parliament and hold political offices. In Zimbabwe, for instance, 60% of 5.3 million registered voters in the just-concluded elections are under 40 years of age.<sup>33</sup> They are also taking advantage of the digital revolution to put developmental issues closer to them on the front-burner of national, continental and global issues. With hindsight, the use of technology for social mobilization gained prominence during the Arab Spring in 2011. In recent times, however, its potency has grown and is being felt in several other sectors. Without the Internet and social media, according to Honwana Alcinda, "it would be very difficult to organise a huge rally in 48 hours."<sup>34</sup>

Secondly, 2018 was marked by greater liberalisation of visa regimes compared to what obtained only five years ago: from only five countries, the number of countries implementing freer visa rules has climbed to almost 20, as well as an almost phenomenal growth in digital (Internet) penetration across the continent. Even if the growth rate has not kept pace with mobile phone diffusion,<sup>35</sup> the International Telegraphic Union, ITU estimated that the strongest growth occurred in Africa: from 2.1% in 2005 to 24.4% in 2018.<sup>36</sup> As game-changers in many respects, youth activism and visa liberalisation are making the free movement of people, goods and services across the continent easier. They are, in turn, producing impulses capable of improving regional integration and cross-border trade, and also significantly contribute to overall GDP.<sup>37</sup>

32 Almost two-thirds of Sahel people spread over 11 countries estimated to live without electricity- with far-reaching consequences and effects(AfDB, 2019: 98).

33 Busani Bafana, "African youth demand a seat at the table", Africa Renewal: April 2018 - July 2018

34 Eleni Mourdoukoutas, "The hashtag revolution gaining ground", Africa Renewal: April 2018 - July 2018

35 McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm, estimates that if Internet access reaches the same level of penetration as mobile phones, Africa's GDP could get a boost of up to \$300 billion. See, Eleni Mourdoukoutas, "Digital revolution holds bright promises for Africa", Africa Renewal: December 2017 - March 2018

36 See "Emerging Trends ICT4SDG, ITUNews, December 6, 2018 accessed in [www.news.itu.int](http://www.news.itu.int)

37 Kerry Dimmer, "A visa-free Africa still facing hurdles", Africa Renewal: December 2017 - March 2018



## 2.4. Conclusion

There is a sense of *déjà vu* that 2019 may replay several of the key trends that were predominant in 2018, as subsequent chapters in this Report indicate. For instance, three out of four African citizens now live in countries where governance has improved significantly.<sup>38</sup> This does not however imply that Elections in Africa are no longer characterised by drama, absurdities and violence but that such anomalies have diminished compared with the experiences of several countries in the immediate past.

Another important point to note is that in a number of African countries- Mozambique, Angola, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Nigeria, for instance, the quest to put in place credible anti-corruption initiatives have not relented;<sup>39</sup> whether in direct response to public demand or open agitations for greater accountability on the part of government.<sup>40</sup> Again, the results have been mixed. One distinctive trend, according to Transparency International, was that a handful of smaller countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Seychelles, Botswana, and Cape Verde, and more recently, Sierra Leone, have made progress in the fight against corruption due to political will and "the positive consequences of legal, policy and institutional reforms. The "decliners", on the other hand, especially Burundi, Congo, Mozambique, Sudan, and Somalia, are countries where political rights, rule of law, and press freedom are dwindling or compounded by internal conflicts and instability.<sup>41</sup>

A final key milestones in 2018 was the adoption of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) at the Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 21st March. At the time of completing this Report, in April 2019, the mandatory 22 countries required for the Agreement to take effect had been reached. It is estimated that AfCFTA would lead to a single market worth at least \$2.3 trillion across 55 countries (ADB, 2019). The development is perhaps, also one of the most tangible and non-securitized step towards the realisation of the AU's Vision 2063 of 'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.'<sup>42</sup>

38 MIF and APRM, Launch of the 2018 IIGA's "Reflections on Governance Performance on the African Continent and in South Africa", Pretoria, South Africa, 5/11/2018

39 See, TI, "Sub-Saharan Africa: Undemocratic Regimes Undermine Anti-Corruption Efforts", CPI 2018, 29 January 2019.

40 Abdur Rahman Alfa Shaban, 'Angola anti-corruption crackdown hits MPs, ex-Luanda Mayor', Africa News, 14/02/2019 @ 14.48

41 See: "Africa must strengthen pride and restore ownership in its public service", Kigali, Mo Ibrahim Foundation Forum, 30/4/2018

42 The biggest blow, of course, is Nigeria which has been consistently critical of the Agreement. See, Sore Halake, "one year on, Africa free trade deal nears reality", 06 March 2019 @ 10.23am on [www.voanews.com](http://www.voanews.com)

## CHAPTER THREE

# EXPLORING KEY THEMATIC ISSUES IN PEACE AND SECURITY IN 2018

This chapter will focus, in greater depth, on six cross-cutting themes that resonate across board and might help to explain the nature and dimensions of peace and security challenges in Africa in 2018, as follows: (1) corruption, social policy and protests; (2) political liberalization and election hotspots; (3) adverse climate change, conflicts and forced migration; (4) managing resource wars among farmers and pastoralists; (5) violent extremism; and (6) how the cyberspace is becoming the new epicentre of 'warfare.'

## 3.1. Corruption, Social Policy and Protests

The year 2018 saw the issue of corruption gain unprecedented public profile. Corruption charges and anti-corruption protests shook up politics almost everywhere in the world; in some, political leaders were driven out of office, and in others, their leadership was left hanging by a thread.<sup>43</sup> Still, in a number of others the citizens protested in large numbers against rampant corruption, subsidy reforms and other economic hardships.<sup>44</sup> In Africa, the "corruption dominoes"<sup>45</sup> stoked protests in South Africa, Malawi, Morocco, Kenya, Tunisia, Sudan and Uganda. In Malawi, civil society organizations protested against "worsening corruption and alleged theft of 4.2 million liters of fuel at ESCOM- the country's electricity supply commission."<sup>46</sup> There were also mounting calls for President Peter Mutharika to resign after a report by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) leaked online in June 2018 accused him and the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of participating in a fraud case involving a \$4m Malawi police food supply contract.<sup>47</sup>

As in Malawi, Kenya saw its own share of protests against corruption scandals. In May 2018, demonstrators took the street to voice their outrage at the revelations that tens of millions of dollars in public money were embezzled.<sup>48</sup> The growing popular anger at pervasive business-government corruption networks prompted Kenya's President and Deputy President to launch an anti-graft initiative whereby government officials would submit to a "lifestyle audit" to "show how they earned enough to afford the mansions, ranches and luxury cars so many of them own."<sup>49</sup> It is too early to say whether this proposal will be implemented but the realization is growing among senior political elites that the scale of corruption endangers state stability and national security. Indeed, the "sense that pervasive corruption is stifling young Kenyans' futures has been building for years, like pressure in a sealed, heated chamber."<sup>50</sup> This frustration is slated to be aggravated if the elite corruption continues to be carried out, as Auditor General Edward Ouko stated, "with increasing impunity and brazenness."<sup>51</sup> In 2016, Kenya's former anti-corruption commission chairman stated that corruption costs the country a third of the state budget.

In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni tried to get ahead of bubbling anger over widespread corruption by organizing an anti-corruption week at Kololo in December 2018, and promising to enact laws that would "confiscate property of

43 Popular examples were Armenia, Czech Republic, Malaysia, Mauritius, Peru, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Venezuela

44 Such citizens protests took place in Jordan, Iraq and Iran.

45 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/24/the-one-thing-modern-voters-hate-most-corruption/>

46 <http://www.africanews.com/2018/09/21/coordinated-anti-govt-protests-in-malawi-against-corruption/>

47 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44714224>

48 <https://www.voanews.com/a/kenya-protesters-march-against-new-corruption-scandal/4417698.html>

49 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.803e1f66da7c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923_story.html?utm_term=.803e1f66da7c)

50 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.803e1f66da7c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923_story.html?utm_term=.803e1f66da7c)

51 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.803e1f66da7c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/kenyans-have-had-it-with-corruption-their-leaders-may-finally-be-doing-something-about-it/2018/07/09/1a895830-7984-11e8-ac4e-421ef7165923_story.html?utm_term=.803e1f66da7c)

government officers accused of corruption.<sup>52</sup> Museveni, who also scrapped presidential age-limit to enable him remain in power,<sup>53</sup> showcased the establishment of a new anti-corruption unit as proof of his resolve to reduce the problem of corruption and punish the bureaucrats and public servants who abuse their office and steal public funds.<sup>54</sup> The president seems to recognize that financial malfeasance and maladministration are providing powerful fodder for his political challengers to mobilize increasingly angry Ugandan youth.<sup>55</sup> It is rising frustration at elite corruption and economic grievances that motivated young people—78 percent of the population is under the age of 30,<sup>56</sup> to take to the streets in 2018 to protest against the government's new tax on social media<sup>57</sup> and the arrest of Kyagulanyi, a.k.a. Bobi Wine, a 36-year-old pop-star-turned-opposition-politician.<sup>58</sup>

In Sudan, simmering anger over economic mismanagement, endemic corruption, and runaway inflation driven by rising costs of food and fuel, boiled over into massive protests against President Omar al-Bashir.<sup>59</sup> Major protests also erupted in Tunisia where demonstrators reiterated their frustration with the inability of successive post-revolution leaders "to reform the tax, investment and banking laws that have for so long enriched a well-connected business elite, and to redistribute spending to long-neglected regions of the country."<sup>60</sup> Similarly, in Algeria, tens of thousands of young Algerians have flooded the streets every Friday since late February 2019 to demand a "wholesale housecleaning" of the political system. Long simmering frustration with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's 20-year in office finally boiled over when the president announced his intention to seek a fifth term in office. With half of the Algerian population under age 28,<sup>61</sup> the unemployment rate for youth hovering over 25%<sup>62</sup> and big corruption scandals bedeviling the economy,<sup>63</sup> the Algerian regime was sitting on a powder keg waiting to explode. But regardless of how the transition plays out now that Mr. Bouteflika was forced to step down, systemic governmental corruption and mismanagement are bound to evoke anger in populations, contributing to social unrest and political instability.<sup>64</sup>

In Morocco, different forms of anti-corruption collective action took place. In April 2018, activists used the anonymity of online platforms to call on Moroccans to boycott three specific consumer products and brands controlled by powerful business and political leaders. The boycott, which had gone viral on social media, reflected an unprecedented moment that inspired hundreds of thousands of Moroccans, especially young ones, to actively voice their displeasure at an economic system they perceive to be prone to rent-seeking. The immediate goal of the boycotters was to force powerful companies to reduce their prices, as Centrale Danone did after months of pressures powered by the internet. At the heart of the consumer boycott, however, was to pressure the government to reform the country's developmental model and address the political economy of corruption. As the King of Morocco acknowledged in a speech during the opening session of Parliament on October 13, 2017, the "national development model no longer responds to citizens' growing demands and pressing needs; it has not been able to reduce disparities between segments of the population, correct inter-regional imbalances or achieve social justice."<sup>23</sup>

For the most part, citizens are blaming the corruption of the political elite for social policy outcomes that hurt low-income communities. This is paving way for citizens, particularly young Africans, to start claiming their democratic rights to challenge unfair socio-economic policies through street-level mobilization and consumer boycotts. In the final analysis, cases of corruption will continue to siphon off trust in government and business, threatening more instances of popular protests

52 <https://observer.ug/viewpoint/59451-the-hollowness-of-museveni-s-anti-corruption-rhetoric>

53 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/uganda-enacts-law-presidential-age-limits-180102182656189.html>

54 <https://observer.ug/viewpoint/59451-the-hollowness-of-museveni-s-anti-corruption-rhetoric>

55 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/09/20/why-are-ugandan-youth-so-angry-these-4-takeaways-illuminate-the-recent-protests/?utm\\_term=.85fccf72488a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/09/20/why-are-ugandan-youth-so-angry-these-4-takeaways-illuminate-the-recent-protests/?utm_term=.85fccf72488a)

56 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/31/protests-kampala-pop-star-politician-bobi-wine-blocked-leaving-uganda>

57 <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/ugandans-raise-volume-on-social-media-tax-protests-20180724>

58 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/31/protests-kampala-pop-star-politician-bobi-wine-blocked-leaving-uganda>

59 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/promoted-protests-sudan-181224114651302.html>

60 <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/08/opinion/tunisia-economy-essebsi-ennahda.html>

61 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/02/protests-are-growing-algeria-are-these-seeds-real-change/?utm\\_term=.3cc9df15c58d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/02/protests-are-growing-algeria-are-these-seeds-real-change/?utm_term=.3cc9df15c58d)

62 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/world/africa/algeria-protests-bouteflika.html>

63 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/algeria-suffers-long-hot-summer-political-scandal-again>

64 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/world/africa/algeria-protests-bouteflika.html>

and making desperately needed foreign investment unattractive. Hopefully, these rising wave of anti-corruption movements would pressure more African governments to revisit their compact with society and go beyond cosmetics reforms. It is instructive that the AU designated 2018 as the anti-corruption year, recognized the ominous nexus between corruption and insecurity, and acknowledged how concerted national, regional and continental and global efforts are crucial to tackle the menace.

### 3.2. Political liberalization and Election Hotspots

2018 saw the *winds of change* that blew through Southern Africa extend to the leading state in the Horn of Africa. In Zimbabwe, President Emmerson Mnangagwa has so far struggled to convince his compatriots of the dawn of a new era of political liberalization, impartial state institutions and economic stability. Unfortunately, his promises of “new” Zimbabwe that boasts “a thriving and open economy, jobs for its youth, opportunities for investors and democracy and equal rights for all” seemed to falter as citizens suffered severe *shortage* in foreign *currency*, devaluation of salaries and spiraling living costs. Anger at Mnangagwa’s management of the economy and his austerity measures boiled over in early 2019, and the reaction of his government was every bit as repressive as that under his predecessor, Robert Mugabe. Security forces unleashed a violent crackdown on protesters, cutting off in the process the internet and access to social media. As the country remains in economic crisis, the risks of social unrest keep rising, complicating prospects for democratic development.

The path to political liberalization in Angola has been surprisingly more hopeful than many had expected. Since he became Angola’s president in September 2017, João Lourenço has shown speed in taking apart the empire of José Eduardo dos Santos, the former president of Angola who was one of Africa’s longest-serving heads of state. In keeping to his promise to dismantle the system of patronage and state corruption that flourished under dos Santos, Lourenço targeted his predecessor’s inner circle, boldly investigating, charging or dismissing dos Santos’s key allies, including his powerful elder daughter, Isabel, who headed the state oil company Sonangol and his son José Filomeno (“Zenu”) who was in charge of the sovereign wealth fund. By early 2019, Lourenço has also managed to consolidate his hold on authority, concentrating the bulk of power in the presidency. Moving forward, the largest *looming question is whether* Lourenço will keep faith with the reform efforts he already initiated. Caution is in order, as Angola still lacks *institutional checks and balances*, and the temptation for the new government to further cement the MPLA domination of the system and protect its elite privileges and interests is too great to resist.

Ethiopia is making another ‘bright spot’ for democratic transition. Abiy Ahmed became prime minister in April 2018, the country has witnessed an unprecedented loosening of state control. Exiled dissidents have been welcomed home, opposition parties have been unshackled, and media organizations have become unfettered. His government also took up the *mantle of a peacemaker*, *astounding* seasoned Africa observers by its peace deal with Eritrea to end one of Africa’s longest-running conflicts. These bold reform steps, examined in more detail in the companion volume to this SPSA 2018, have naturally electrified Ethiopia.

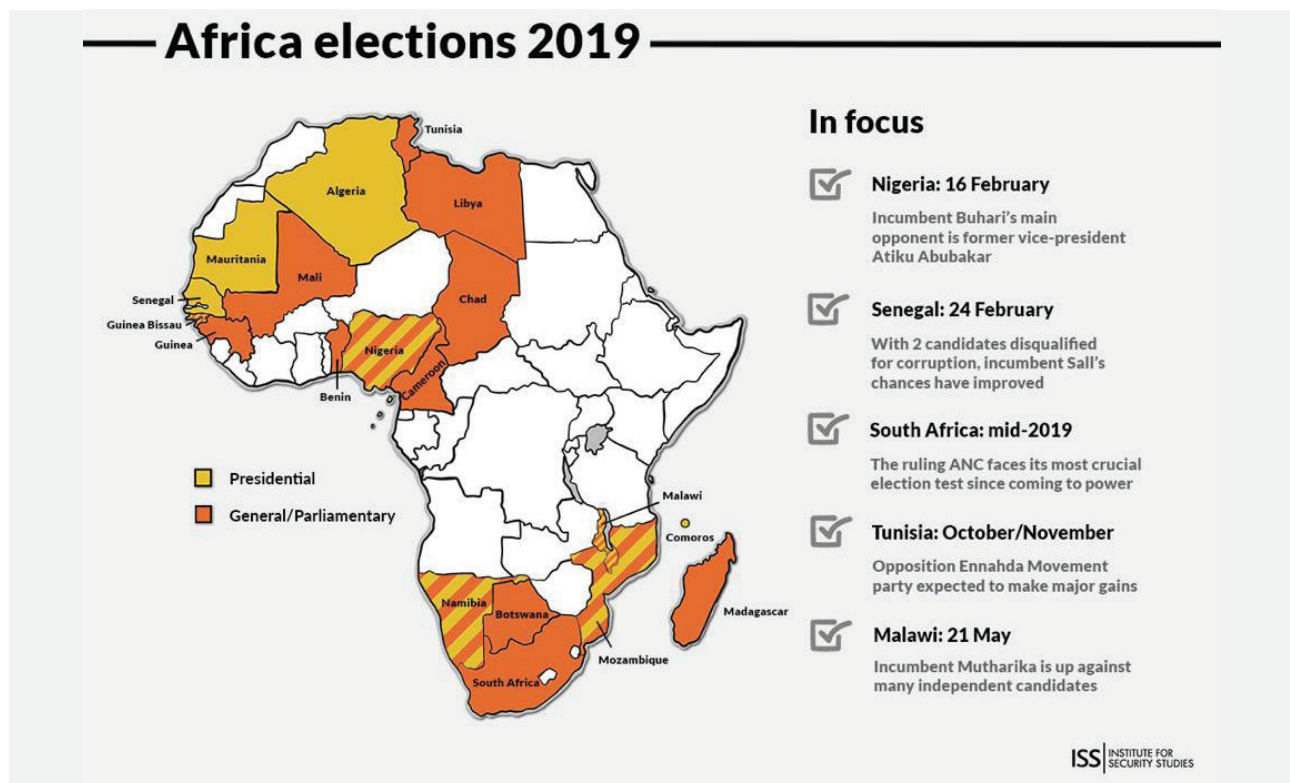
But as in previous waves of democratic transitions, especially in ethnically polarized societies, the process of political change grinds slowly and painfully, and can be punctuated by violence. The prospect for democratic setbacks and a slide back into authoritarian rule cannot also be ruled out. In many African countries that are ethnically polarized, political parties and movements mobilize support along ethnic lines, convincing “their voters about an existential threat to their group that necessitates them to vote for ethnic parties.”<sup>65</sup> Such polarization is deepened when hate speech and fear-mongering thrive on social media as they deepen public anxiety. In Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abiy’s government has promised to nip in the bud ethnic intolerance or violence. To succeed, its administration must act as neutral arbiters when addressing conflicts<sup>66</sup> and make sure that equity and justice is dispensed according to the rule of law. In the end, having *good intentions* are important but if they do not result in a visible reduction of the sense of injustices and deprivation that African citizens feel liberalization of the political space might be stalled and stability in peril.

The challenges that characterize the political transition in Ethiopia also threaten the democratization potential of other Afri-

65 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/15/dont-let-ethiopia-become-the-next-yugoslavia-abiy-ahmed-balkans-milosevic-ethnic-conflict-federalism/>

66 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/15/dont-let-ethiopia-become-the-next-yugoslavia-abiy-ahmed-balkans-milosevic-ethnic-conflict-federalism/>

can countries. The example of Tunisia is revealing in this regard. Eight years after the revolution that ousted Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, the country's political transition is still shaky. On the face of it, the country should be celebrated for transitioning from political ferment to consensual normalcy. Unfortunately, there is more to Tunisia's transition to consensual politics than meets the eye. The country is still caught in a turbulent grey zone where an ailing economy and increasing divisions between Islamists and non-Islamists threaten to pull down the country's tortuous march towards democratic stability. Anti-Islamists fear that the mainstream Islamist party, Ennahda, which has been in coalition governments since 2011, is strengthening its position in government and with it the prospect to dominate the "composition of patronage networks controlling state resources and access to credit, private monopolies and oligopolies."<sup>67</sup> Such competition for control of state resources threatens to upset the decades long economic dominance that the eastern Mediterranean coast exerted over Tunisia's neglected southern regions. This prospect has heightened political and social tensions at a time when anxiety is rising about the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled to be held at the end of 2019. Although the government felt besieged by rising pressure from global lenders like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to lift subsidies and from unions to raise salaries, without international assistance to bolster the country's financial and macro-economic stability, Tunisia's political and social troubles risk deteriorating further.<sup>68</sup>



67 <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/tunisia/tunisia-2019-pivotal-year>

68 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-01-22/tunisia-risks-explosion-over-austerity-ghanouchi-cautions-imf>

The trajectory of Africa's struggle to legitimize and consolidate the democratic process will also be tested in two leading countries: Nigeria and South Africa. Despite the controversies that marked the conduct of general elections in Nigeria between February and March 2019, the second term of President Muhammadu Buhari would be defined by how decisively he is able to tackle a plethora of security concerns around the country, especially the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast and around the Lake Chad Basin, farmers-herders, and other ethnic and religion motivated crises, along with other dire economic challenges. In South Africa, on the other hand, the 2019 general elections will be a major contest in the battle of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to regain public trust. Since replacing the controversial Jacob Zuma *as president* in December 2017, Cyril Ramaphosa has made some headway in restoring the country's system of democratic checks and balances and rolling back some of the most egregious practices of party and state corruption.<sup>69</sup> But as in any attempt to restore accountability and transparency to the political system and national institutions, including state-owned enterprises, those with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo are resisting reforms designed to weaken the patronage system they had grown accustomed to.<sup>70</sup> Whatever happens election day, the year 2019 will help "answer the question of whether the ANC is capable of undertaking fundamental reforms itself or whether genuine reform must wait for an opposition party to gain power nationally."<sup>71</sup>

In concluding, however, it merits noting that Mauritania is set to be a bright spot in terms of potentially contributing positively to the direction of democratization on the continent. Unlike in Burundi and a handful of others, the incumbent President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz is observing term limits, clearing the way for his designated successor, Defense Minister Mohamed Ould Ghazouani. Ould Abdel Aziz might still enjoy significant influence behind the scenes as his party controls parliament, but his "willingness to work within his country's fledgling democratic process is a notable departure from other African leaders of recent years who have maneuvered to evade term limits."<sup>72</sup>

### 3.3. Adverse climate change, conflicts and forced migration: the nexus

A recently World Bank report titled *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration* declared in no uncertain terms that climate change will soon transform tens of millions of people into internal "climate migrants" as they seek to escape land degradation, water scarcity, adverse weather conditions, persistent high temperature, rise in sea levels, and storm surges.<sup>73</sup> Unlike the prevalent representations of mass cross-border displacement and migration, the study zeroes in on what it considers as the much bigger challenge of in-country migration. Not surprisingly, Sub-Saharan Africa features as one of the hotspots most vulnerable to the flood of internal "climate migrants." The nexus between climate change, environmental stresses and forced migration is well established. In 2018 alone, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) published reports underscoring the role that climate change plays in driving internal migration.<sup>74</sup>

There is also an even more disturbing connection between climate change and violence, and insecurity. "Climate change did not cause the conflicts we see around the world," Barack Obama said in 2015, but "drought and crop failures and high food prices helped fuel the early unrest in Syria" - and in many other countries. Eight years earlier, former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described climate change as the culprit behind the conflict in Darfur. These studies and proclamations mark a field that is deeply polarized between those who disregard any empirical link between climate change and violence and those who are adamant that the connection is irrefutable.<sup>75</sup> There are of course those who chart a "middle way" between these two extremes, arguing that it is the combination of environmental factors with socioeconomic and political factors that determines the risk of conflict, displacement and migration.<sup>76</sup>

69 <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/an-overview-of-africas-2019-elections/>

70 <https://theconversation.com/why-the-anc-itself-is-the-chief-impediment-to-ramaphosas-agenda-108781>

71 <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/an-overview-of-africas-2019-elections/>

72 <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/an-overview-of-africas-2019-elections/>

73 World Bank (2018): *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*. World Bank, Washington, DC, United States

74 IPBES (2018): Summary for policymakers of the thematic assessment report on land degradation and restoration of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany; FAO (2018): *Water stress and human migration: a global, georeferenced review of empirical research*, in *Land & Water Discussion Paper 11*. Oregon State University, Rome, Italy.

75 <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/341/6151/1235367>

76 <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/does-climate-change-cause-more-war/553040/>

When they occur in countries already plagued by political instability, economic fragility, rapid population growth, lack of infrastructure and services, adverse climate variations end up having severe and long-term impacts especially on the most vulnerable groups. In such contexts of vulnerability, severe regional droughts and floods invariably lead to the displacement of large population.<sup>77</sup> East Africa has, for instance, seen the devastating effects of recurring droughts and floods on crops, harvest and livestock. In Kenya, the torrential rains that hit parts of the country in April and May 2018 dislocated more than 300,000 people. Weeks of *heavy rains* also swept through several parts of Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, further offsetting existing humanitarian crisis that had devastated many lives. Unfortunately, many African countries have weak disaster response and relief mechanisms that end up leaving many families trapped “in a complex mix of hunger, poverty and perennial humanitarian crisis.”<sup>78</sup>

The Sahel is arguably one of Africa’s most vulnerable regions to climate change, with 33 million people estimated to be facing food insecurity. According to Ibrahim Thiaw, UN Special Adviser on the Sahel, it is “most likely the region with the largest number of people disproportionately affected by global warming.” This does not mean that this troubling situation is caused solely by climate change, especially since the adverse impact of climate-related disasters have become more pronounced and acute during the year under review in areas ravaged by social and political tensions.<sup>79</sup> In such contexts, a sudden-onset of climate-related disaster or recurrent extreme weather events might aggravate the risk of conflict between livelihood groups and induce people to migrate internally.

For African states to cope with the impact of climate change necessitates a new approach at the national as well as multilateral levels that create not only economic growth but also place premium on social equity and environmental protection. After all, advancing justice and good environmental governance are two prerequisites of sustainable development. Morocco has so far taken the lead in improving its environmental governance to enhance the Kingdom’s environmental sustainability. “Morocco knows it will be affected by climate change, it’s just a question of how badly,” said the World Bank in 2016.<sup>80</sup> Like its North African neighbours- Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya-<sup>81</sup> the country has felt the effects of climactic variations, including decrease in rainfall, rising temperatures, and a severe drought in 2015. With 70% of the country considered water stressed,<sup>82</sup> water scarcity precipitated several protests in the south of Morocco in 2017. To address the threat of climate change, Morocco has invested heavily in conserving its underground aquifers, improving coastal zone management, developing sustainable aquaculture, and promoting renewable energy with the goal of generating 52% of the country’s electricity from non-fossil fuels by 2030. With these investments, Morocco ranked second in Climate Change Performance Index 2018.<sup>83</sup>

### 3.4. Managing Resource Wars among Farmers and Pastoralists

In several African states, violent confrontations between herders and farmers are becoming a powerful fixture in inter-group relations, impacting not only human security but also national and regional stability. Environmental degradation, the expansion of commercially cultivated agricultural areas,<sup>84</sup> competitive overexploitation of natural resources,<sup>85</sup> and the political and social instrumentalization of ethnic and religious prejudices have upset the traditional balance between populations and resources as well as the mutually-beneficial nature of what was once an interdependent relationships between different communities.<sup>86</sup> The good news is that African countries are increasingly cognizant of the necessity to both safeguard pastoralist livelihoods and and at the same time strengthen customary land tenure as a crucial step towards improving rural livelihoods. The bad news, however, is that the efforts of national governments to enact laws, harmonize protection regulations and strengthen enforcement structures still have a long way to go.<sup>87</sup> In Zambia, for example, “flaws in the gov-

77 <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/can-addressing-climate-change-alleviate-pressures-forced-migration-east-africa>

78 <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/can-addressing-climate-change-alleviate-pressures-forced-migration-east-africa>

79 <http://www.aidforum.org/Topics/environment/building-peace-in-the-sahel-depends-on-climate-resilience-says-un/>

80 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/11/17/5-things-morocco-is-doing-about-climate-change>

81 <https://www.csis.org/analysis/water-pressure-water-protest-and-state-legitimacy-maghreb-0>

82 See World Bank, *Beyond Scarcity: Water Security in the Middle East and North Africa*, World Bank MENA Development Series, 2018, xxv, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/publication/beyond-scarcity-water-security-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa>

83 <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/blogpost/morocco-ranked-second-climate-change-performance-index-2018>

84 <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/10/25/forced-leave/commercial-farming-and-displacement-zambia>

85 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/08/06/farmer-herder-conflicts-rise-africa>

86 <https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Responses-to-Conflicts-between-Farmers-and-Herders-in-the-Middle-Belt-FINAL.pdf>

87 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/08/06/farmer-herder-conflicts-rise-africa>

ernment's regulation of commercial agriculture" have left families "that have lived and farmed for generations on land now allocated to commercial farms" displaced and "without due process or compensation."<sup>88</sup>

In some parts of East and West Africa, inappropriate policies and practices have exacerbated both *pastoralists* and farmers' concern with the security of land tenure and grazing areas. In the case of pastoralists, who according to the African Union, constitute "a quarter of the total population" of Africa and live "on about 43 percent of the continent's total land mass", agricultural expansion and the large-scale infrastructure such as dams and airports have hindered the mobility of herders and their access to pastures. The cultivation of rice for instance has "encroached on traditional Burgu pastures."<sup>89</sup>

The shrinking of pasturelands is intensifying north-south migration patterns and driving more Fulani herders into savanna zones, deepening conflicts between herders and farmers in central Mali, southwestern Niger, northern Cameroon, northeastern Cote d'Ivoire, northern Ghana and central and southeastern Nigeria. The divides threaten to degenerate into larger conflicts when they overlap with ethnic, religious and political tensions. In Nigeria, a spike of deadly attacks between herders and farmers has claimed the lives of more than 1,300 people since January 2018, dangerously increasing tensions between Fulani Muslims and the mostly Christian farming populations. As chillingly described by one of the members of the Kaduna State Peace Commission, the mindset today is "You will eliminate me, or I will eliminate you, and the path to war is set."<sup>90</sup>

Pastoralists, for example, bitterly complain about the rise of insecurity in rural areas as they become more vulnerable to cattle rustling by criminal gangs and farming communities. This has led many herders to arm themselves, increasing the likelihood of violent confrontations with farmers, who in turn paint ethnic Fulani herders as roving bandits and violent militants masquerading as innocuous cattle grazers. In Burkina Faso, in December 2018, ethnic Mossi militia killed "dozens of Fulani in revenge for the killing of a village chief by jihadists."<sup>91</sup> In central Mali, the conflict between Dogon hunters and Fulani herders claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians in 2018. In one of the worst unspeakable acts of bloodshed, in March 2019, a cohort of Dogon armed groups raided Fulani villages and massacred more than 157 people. The Dogon regularly accuse the Fulani of sheltering militants, charges they vehemently deny.<sup>92</sup> The volatile mixture of inter-communal mistrust and grievances is compounded by a weak state that is suspected of continuing to delegate security responsibility to local militias. As Reuters journalist Tiemoko Diallo stated, "tacit outsourcing of the fight against jihadists to vigilante groups with scores to settle has unleashed ethnic strife across the Sahel."<sup>93</sup>

As conflicts fester over access to grazing areas, farmland, water and political representation, violent extremist groups are exploiting ethnic and religious divisions to expand their ambitions. *Today, it is* the Macina Liberation Front in Mali, the Burkina Faso-based Ansarul Islam and the so-called Islamic State in Greater Sahara, ISGS, that are mobilizing aggrieved Fulanis. *Already, militant groups are making inroads into rural areas where the writ of the state is limited and traditional authorities are unable to mediate disputes between and among populations.*

*It is not too late for national governments to reverse the course, but they must first gain credibility by delivering on demands for infrastructure development; equitable governance of land and natural resources; investment in rural development and agricultural adaptations; and new methods of ranching that protect herding. National governments, in close collaboration with local authorities and communities need to develop and enforce rules that regulate transhumance; that is, pastoral migrations and movements of cattle, and provide monetary compensation for farmers when their fields and crops are damaged by cattle.*

88 <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/10/25/forced-leave/commercial-farming-and-displacement-zambia>

89 <https://qz.com/africa/1584289/mali-weak-state-fuels-jihadism-mopti-rivalries-fulani-dogon/>

90 <https://www.latimes.com/world/africa/la-fg-nigeria-farmer-herder-violence-20190221-story.html>

91 [https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/un-to-investigate-massacre-of-157-malian-villagers-idUSKCN1R72V7?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=gapafzar&utm\\_medium=gapafzar&utm\\_campaign=GAPAFZAR](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/un-to-investigate-massacre-of-157-malian-villagers-idUSKCN1R72V7?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=gapafzar&utm_medium=gapafzar&utm_campaign=GAPAFZAR)

92 [https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/un-to-investigate-massacre-of-157-malian-villagers-idUSKCN1R72V7?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=gapafzar&utm\\_medium=gapafzar&utm\\_campaign=GAPAFZAR](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/un-to-investigate-massacre-of-157-malian-villagers-idUSKCN1R72V7?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=gapafzar&utm_medium=gapafzar&utm_campaign=GAPAFZAR)

93 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/un-to-investigate-massacre-of-157-malian-villagers-idUSKCN1R72V7>



In South Sudan's Wua region of Bahr el Ghazal, the development of such code of conduct has had positive results. In 2016, pastoralists and farmers signed the Marial Bai agreement which "stipulates rules on how to resolve migration related conflicts, procedures for seeking permission to move cattle and what compensation should be paid for crops eaten and cows killed."<sup>94</sup> In Nigeria, the federal government has recently outlined a National Livestock Transformation Plan (2018-2027) to put an end to the dangerous escalation of confrontations between farmers and herders. The challenge now is for the authorities "to elaborate on the plan properly, secure the buy-in of all relevant groups, start implementation as quickly as possible, and establish strong institutional frameworks that will drive implementation through the 10-year time frame."<sup>95</sup> Achieving progress in those areas would bring positive economic gain and other multiplier effects.<sup>96</sup>

### 3.5. Violent extremism on its own terms

The major paradox of our time is that Jihadi insurgents continue to thrive even when they have failed to translate their advantages into lasting positive outcomes for their followers. Since Algerian terror groups relocated to Northern Mali in the early 2000's, rebel groups in the Sahel, and elsewhere across Africa, have become more inclined towards adopting Salafi jihadism as a means to survive, recruit and outcompete other contenders.<sup>97</sup> This is a strategic choice that is more informed by the realities on the ground than by any express commitments to a core set of extreme values and beliefs. Rebel entrepreneurs and their rank-and-file supporters and sympathizers do not have to be die-hard ideologues or violent religious extremists to lead or buy-into transnational or local groups that embrace a radical ideological platform. They just need to believe that the choice they make would yield dividends in the contexts of deeply polarized societies that are run by illegitimate and abusive states.

In contexts of competing warring groups, ethnic or religious fractionalization, and a history of state misrule, the adoption of jihadism as a tool of war continues to be viewed as a rational choice to violently contest the status quo. While these groups are composed partly of a highly dedicated core and invest a great deal of time and energy on indoctrinating their recruits, it is also not rare to see the occasional softening of ideological constraints or *tweaks in ideological messages to fit the dictates of particular circumstances*. In some contexts, *religious ideology intermixes with* ethnicity, opportunism and shady criminal activities. The case of the Movement of Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) is revealing in this regard because it has a deeper ambivalent relationship to religion as a non-negligible part of its members are also drug traffickers. This implies that the Movement's embrace of radical ideology seems to be driven more by strategic imperative than religious purity. In an environment marked by intense fear, uncertainty, and competition among insurgent factions, the leaders of MUJAO understood that the embrace of radical ideology could quickly yield an early critical advantage in attracting the most dedicated fighters necessary to build a winning force that can overtime entice the support and acquiescence of the majority of the targeted population, who are often religiously moderate.

The basic challenge of rebel mobilization is therefore the typical collective action problem because individuals' natural inclination is to free-ride on conflicts, especially given the high risks and costs of participation. Extremist groups have the added advantage of using ideology wrapped in religion to motivate, coordinate and retain recruits. It explains why armed jihadi groups instrumentally emphasize the virtues of faith and self-sacrifice in redeeming the suffering and humiliation of targeted communities.<sup>98</sup>

Extremist ideology invariably helps rebel leaders kill two birds with one stone. As Barbara Walter showed in the context of the Middle East, violent extremism helps draw the most devoted recruits on the cheap, minimizing both the collective action problem and the principle-agent problem, the latter often arises because rebel leaders struggle to control the behaviour of their soldiers on the ground.<sup>99</sup> The assumption is that the most dedicated recruits are usually the most loyal fighters. This is extremely important in contexts of intense rebel competition where switching sides and realignment of alliances is more the

94 <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/agreement-cattle-migration-has-reduced-conflicts-between-farmers-and-herders-bahr-el-ghazal-region>

95 <https://www.upi.com/Nigeria-seeks-peace-amid-deadly-land-identity-conflicts/3071535425287/>

96 Mercy Corps estimates that the successful managing of conflict between farmers and pastoralists in the Nigerian states of Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Plateau could lead to economic gains of \$13.7 billion annually. See, <https://www.mercycorps.org/research/economic-costs-conflict-nigeria>

97 For more analysis, see Anouar Boukhars, "The Paradox of Modern Jihadi Insurgencies: The Case of the Sahel and Maghreb," Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, July 15, 2018.

98 Mohammed M. Hafez, "Martyrdom Mythologies in Iraq: How Jihadists Frame Suicide Terrorism in Videos and Biographies," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19 (Spring 2007): 95–115.

99 Walter, "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars."

norm than the exception. In such fractured environments, extremist groups can also appeal to moderate individuals as they appear as the only group able to fight and follow through on their commitments to reshape state-society relationships. This is critical in the early phases of conflicts as recruits tend to flock to groups that have the potential to win and a fearsome reputation for enforcing law and order.

In contexts rife with competing factions aiming to recruit from the same population, religious ideology and reputation for law and order is crucial to lure the most fervent believers and risk-acceptant fighters. As stated earlier, the first-movers are usually high quality rebels who create the impression that their armed struggle has a good shot at bringing about radical political change. Regardless of how extreme the ideology might be, the future prospect of radical political transformation, buttressed by the promise of immediate access to guns, protection, money, ends up luring more moderate individuals into the orbit of jihadi groups.<sup>100</sup>

Surveys of young Fulani people in the conflict-affected areas of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso<sup>101</sup> reveal how majorities associate the state and its defense and security services (DSF) with a threat to the security of their communities and assert the necessity to arm themselves as protection from state abuse and stigmatization. For an appreciable number of young men, jihadi groups appear as logical allies in environments teeming with myriad armed groups, some of whom are believed to be supported by the same abusive security services.<sup>102</sup> In the more immediate term, jihadi groups are appealing because they tend to possess enough fighting power to help Fulanis defend themselves as well as compete in the struggle over access to natural resources with rival factions.<sup>103</sup>

The Islamic State-West Africa (ISWA), which split from Boko Haram in 2016, has distinguished itself by smart governance operations that prioritize the provision of services such seeds and fertilizers to locals as well as digging wells, securing pastureland for herders and running slaughterhouses for the cattle in the Lake Chad basin, a large area long marginalized by state authorities. "If you are a herder, driver or trader, they won't touch you - just follow their rules and regulations governing the territory," said a herder. "They don't touch civilians, just security personnel."<sup>104</sup> ISWA has also extended protection to local constituents fearful of Boko Haram attacks, something the Nigerian Government has struggled to do. This focus on protection and service provision as well as the desire to establish a social contract with locals is what makes ISWA and other militant organizations much dangerous and difficult to tackle, especially in countries and regions where governments presence is weak or repressive.

### 3.6. Is the cyberspace the new domain of 'warfare'?

The diffusion of technology in Africa is picking up pace, but it also brings a double-edged public policy concern. As African countries are striving to redefine their economies' characteristics and accelerate their development process by adopting existing technologies and embracing digitization, the growth in Africa's technological ecosystem and the increasing role of tech start-ups, financial technology, agritech and insurance holds great potential for the continent to unlock its potential for inclusive economic growth. To sustain the momentum, however, necessitates addressing the vulnerabilities that come with the embrace of new technologies. For one, the development of the digital economy brings it with the inevitable risks of cyberattacks and cybercrime which African countries and businesses, unfortunately, are still unable to tackle effectively.<sup>105</sup>

Several reports have recently sounded the alarm bell about the damage that cybercrime is causing across Africa. IT services firm, Serianu, estimates the costs to the continent at \$3.5 billion in 2017. Yet, African businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises, continue to lack the basic safeguards to thwart opportunistic attackers. For example, most organizations

100 Luca Raineri, "If Victims Become Perpetrators: Factors Contributing to Vulnerability and Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Central Sahel," International Alert, June 2018, [https://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/SaheL\\_ViolentExtremismVulnerabilityResilience\\_EN\\_2018.pdf](https://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/SaheL_ViolentExtremismVulnerabilityResilience_EN_2018.pdf)

101 Anouar Boukhars, "The Geographic Trajectory of Conflict and Militancy in Tunisia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, July 20, 2017; Anouar Boukhars, "In the Eye of the Storm. Algeria's South and its Sahelian Borders", in Luis Martinez and Rasmus Alenius Boserup (eds.) *Algeria Modern: From Opacity to Complexity*, London, Hurst, 2016.

102 Ibid

103 Ibid.

104 Paul Carsten, Ahmed Kingimi, "Islamic State ally stakes out territory around Lake Chad," Reuters, April 29, 2018, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-nigeria-security/islamic-state-ally-stakes-out-territory-around-lake-chad-idUKKBN11006L>

105 <https://qz.com/africa/1303532/cybercrime-costs-businesses-in-kenya-south-africa-nigeria-billions/>

lack in-house cybersecurity experts and invest no more than \$1,500 a year on cyber defense technologies and services.<sup>106</sup> According to the Serianu report “60% of organizations didn’t keep up to date with cybersecurity trends and program updates” at the same time that about “96% of online-related security incidents went unreported.”<sup>107</sup> Security firm Symantec warned recently that African financial institutions have become a prime target of cyberattacks.<sup>108</sup> In 2018, cyber attackers used commodity malware and other off-the-shelf attack tools to infiltrate banks in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana and Ivory Coast.

Unfortunately, a number of governments do not fare any better. At a time when more official agencies are embracing a range of e-service automation platforms; from electronic biometric fingerprints and civil registration and vital statistics<sup>109</sup> to e-tax systems and e-voting,<sup>110</sup> most governments still do not appreciate the extent of the digital threat they face. The fact that several government sites in Kenya, Nigeria<sup>111</sup> and Zimbabwe, among others, have been successfully hacked demonstrate how vulnerable countries remain.<sup>112</sup> Some of those attacks have occurred to undermine or steal intellectual property, business assets, national security information, personal health information, insurance or pensions data, or to manipulate consumer behaviour or voters’ decisions. The data mining company, accused of using millions of personal Facebook accounts to sway the 2016 United States presidential election,<sup>113</sup> played a role in presidential elections in Nigeria<sup>114</sup> and Kenya.<sup>115</sup> Cambridge Analytica executive Mark Turnbull acknowledged in an undercover video by Channel 4 News of Britain that the company and its parent, SCL Group helped shape the campaigns of President Uhuru Kenyatta’s, in 2013 and 2017. “We have rebranded the party twice, we have written their manifesto, done two rounds of 50,000 surveys, huge amounts of analysis, research, messaging. Then we’d write all the speeches and we’d stage the whole thing so just about every element of his campaign,” Turnbull boasted.<sup>116</sup> This spectre of Cambridge Analytica “still haunts African elections,” recently wrote political analyst Nanjala Nyabola.<sup>117</sup>

As African countries hold routine elections, the danger that nefarious hackers are capable of causing disruption is real. Tampering with elections is not a new thing; as far back as 1994, an unknown hacker in South Africa “attempted to steal that country’s historic first democratic election” by manipulating “vote totals.” Fortunately, the “hack was discovered, and there was a delay as the counting method was switched from electronic to manual.”<sup>118</sup> Most recently, the Kenyan Supreme Court nullified the results of the 2017 election, “citing irregularities and possible hacking.”<sup>119</sup> With younger African democracies vulnerable to electoral violence, the risk that intruders could easily compromise electoral results can have severe consequences. This is one of the main reasons why Kenya designated its election system a critical infrastructure that must be defended.<sup>120</sup> African countries must, as a matter of urgent priority, invest in safeguarding election systems from tampering.

This also includes tackling the proliferation of online propaganda and fake news that manipulate “voters’ deepest fears and worries.”<sup>121</sup> These “digital dirty wars,” some run from overseas, risk fuelling internal divisions and conflict. The government of Kenya recently passed a Computer and Cybercrime Act 2018 to control and censor online crimes, and ten years earlier, in 2008, set up the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) in 2008 by the Act of Parliament with a clear mission “to facilitate and promote a society whose values are harmonious and non-discriminatory for peaceful co-existence and integration” (NCIC website). Several political figures and citizens have been indicted for perpetrating hate speech on-

106 <https://www.serianu.com/downloads/AfricaCyberSecurityReport2017.pdf>

107 <https://qz.com/africa/1303532/cybercrime-costs-businesses-in-kenya-south-africa-nigeria-billions/>

108 <https://www.symantec.com/blogs/threat-intelligence/african-financial-attacks>

109 <https://qz.com/africa/524909/in-tanzania-you-can-now-get-your-birth-certificate-by-mobile-phone/>

110 <https://www.serianu.com/downloads/AfricaCyberSecurityReport2017.pdf>

111 <https://www.ibtimes.com/anonymous-nigeria-hacks-government-websites-declares-cyberwar-against-corruption-2257401>

112 <https://qz.com/africa/1303532/cybercrime-costs-businesses-in-kenya-south-africa-nigeria-billions/>

113 <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/20/world/africa/kenya-cambridge-analytica-election.html>

114 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/21/cambridge-analytica-ruthless-bid-to-sway-the-vote-in-nigeria>

115 <https://www.voanews.com/a/cambridge-analytica-played-roles-in-multiple-african-elections/4309792.html>

116 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-03-20-cambridge-analytica-confirms-involvement-in-kenyan-elections/>

117 <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/nigerian-elections-money-190215080009476.html>

118 [https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Securing\\_Elections\\_From\\_Foreign\\_Interference.pdf](https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Securing_Elections_From_Foreign_Interference.pdf)

119 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/28/world/africa/kenya-election-uhuru-kenyatta-raila-odinga.html>

120 <https://www.lawfareblog.com/improving-electoral-cybersecurity-kenya>

121 <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/2018/03/cambridge-analytica-facebook-elections-africa-kenya>

line. Nigeria also strengthened its policy and legal regimes on cyber security, by adopting a series of policies such as the National Cybersecurity Policy and the National Cybersecurity Strategy (2014) and a Cybercrime (Prohibition) Act in 2015. While important, these measures, as Uzochina (2019) rightly noted, “are by no means an elixir to Nigeria’s vulnerability to cyberattacks and breaches.”

## **Key Takeaways**

(1.) There are some bright spots for democratic transitions in Africa, even if the process of political change is still bumpy, especially in societies polarized along ethnic and religious lines. The persistent wave of popular protests in several countries is a clear signal of a deep crisis of legitimacy that African governments are facing and their failure to address lingering political, economic and social challenges.

2) While the debate on the nexus between climate and conflict is still unsettled, the combination of environmental issues with socioeconomic and political factors have become crucial in determining the risk of conflict, displacement and migration.

3) Jihadi insurgents continue to thrive even when they have failed to translate the advantages they have into lasting positive outcomes for their followers. The adoption of jihadism as a tool of war is increasingly a rationalist choice to violently contest the status quo.

4) The diffusion of technology is picking up pace across Africa. To sustain the momentum, however, necessitates addressing the vulnerabilities that come with the digital economy. Unfortunately, African countries and businesses still lag behind in protecting themselves from increasingly sophisticated security breaches.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# STATE AND REGIONAL RESPONSES TO SECURITY THREATS IN 2018

## 4.1. The Context

Africa as a continent of stark contradictions, has made significant progress in many areas since the end of the Cold War, particularly in terms of political transitions, while on the other hand, critical sectors such as education, health and energy have experienced paralysis or outright failure. In spite of these contrasts, however, the state has virtually become the peg around which the hopes and expectations of many Africans hang. Like it or not, the state is writ large in the lives of most citizens from Bamako to Cairo. Since its inherent incapacities have not made it less attractive, the notion of the state as an organized, structured entity, created to guarantee both human and physical security to its citizenry, would remain contentious in the light of how the myriad of local and global transformations are affecting the continent, for good or bad. It is not surprising that the global changes Africa is experiencing are also inevitably making regional (and global) institutions, governmental and non-governmental, alternative actors to be relied upon in addressing the multi-dimensional and complex security problems of our world today.

The previous chapters in this Report have clearly shown that most of the contending security issues Africa currently faces revolve around lack of inclusive governance, poverty and widening inequality, violent conflicts, and corruption; much of which constitute the drivers of migrations, agitations for secession, demonstrations and protests, and the activities of terrorist, insurgency and other non-state armed groups that are locking horns with the state. Because the continent faces myriad and often protracted security challenges that typically transcend the capacity of any single state to tackle, the nature and scope of African states and institutional responses to perceived or real threats have become integral to any assessment of the state of peace and security in the continent.

The implications of all the above for peace and security in Africa is the focus of this chapter. The goal is to explore the changing nature of and conditions (or circumstances) under which African states and regional institutions are responding to threats in the peace and security sphere, with the hope that doing so might give useful insights into why the outcomes are decidedly mixed. A clear evidence of this is that the state of peace and security in Africa in 2018 assumed several complexities- and complications- with scenarios of improvements and worsening situations in near equal measures. With the emergence and proliferation of state and non-state armed groups, the widening of the sources and spread of lethal and non-lethal threats, and setbacks to the initial progress made in ongoing peace efforts across the continent, 2018 was indeed a year of mixed concerns and opportunities for Africa, described in the next section as “best” versus “worsening” cases in 2018.

## 4.2 Best Case Scenarios in 2018

2018 reflected a mix of continuity and change in events, scope and impacts of peace and security threats to African states and their citizens. Multiparty democracy and electoral transitions have now become fairly routine, even if they sometimes occur at painful and grave costs to the citizens. A total of 27 African countries held various elections in 2018:<sup>122</sup> ranging from constitutional referenda in Burundi and Comoros in May and July,<sup>123</sup> respectively; to presidential elections in another eight countries and 17 local and parliamentary elections. Without suggesting that they may signpost the vulnerability of any

<sup>122</sup> During the previous year, 2017, presidential elections were held in six African countries, with the planned one in the DRC postponed until the following year. Two constitutional referenda were held in Liberia and Sierra Leone, while others were for local and national assembly elections. A total of 13 presidential elections are expected in 2019, and a referendum in Burkina Faso. Generally, the stakes tend to be higher during presidential elections. See EISA, 2018 African Elections Calendar. [www.eisa.com](http://www.eisa.com)

<sup>123</sup> The two referenda proposed amendments to the constitutions of the two countries on, particularly on presidential term limits. See Aljazeera, ‘Burundi backs new constitution extending presidential term limits’, 22 May 2018. [www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com) and DW, ‘Yes Vote in Comoros referendum gives president more power’, 01/08/2018 [www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com)

country to peace and security threats, about half out of the “Tana Top 10 Situations to Watch in 2019” (Cameroon, the DRC, Nigeria, Algeria and Libya) either held elections in 2018 or are due to hold elections in 2019.<sup>124</sup> Despite the imperfections that tend to characterise elections, the nature of political engagements they foster either advance or undermine multiparty democracy around the continent; and, by extension, peace and security.

Four African countries--Mauritius, Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Namibia and Botswana-- maintained impressive records in key governance indicators<sup>125</sup> partly due to the economic openness and political stability they have experienced over time, with the attendant entrenchment of rule of law and multi-party constitutional systems.<sup>126</sup> The five countries ranked high on good economic management, stable government and inclusive governance in 2018 as they had done in previous years. Mauritius, for instance, did not only invest heavily in tourism, finance and ICT sectors with good infrastructure and educated workforce, its economy is also far more diversified in comparison with those of Nigeria and Angola that are heavily dependent on hydrocarbons, oil. Mauritius is ranked 25th out of 190 countries in the World Bank’s Doing Business Report for 2018, ahead of South Africa,<sup>127</sup> and moving 24 places higher than in the previous year. Countries like Zambia and Malawi experienced marginal improvements in the same rankings due to deliberate government policies aimed at attracting investors. Also, Senegal, Rwanda, Mauritania, Nigeria and Niger, implemented between 4 and 6 reforms during the year under review.<sup>128</sup>

#### TOP FIVE PERFORMING AFRICAN COUNTRIES, 2018

s/n	Countries	Human Development Index (Africa Ranking)	Doing Business Report (Africa Ranking)	Democracy Index (195)	Ibrahim Index of African Governance (54)
1	Mauritius	2	1	Free	1
2	Seychelles	1	9	Partly Free	2
3	Cabo Verde	11	16	Free	3
4	Namibia	12	11	Free	4
5	Botswana	5	5	Free	5

Source: HDI, 2018; Doing Business Report, 2019; Freedom House, 2018; ILAG, 2018.

Overall, the economic growth performance of African countries in 2018 showed relatively better results than during the previous year, but how different African countries responded to nagging socio-economic and political issues that sometimes have potential security implications varied, depending on a number of factors. For oil-dependent countries like Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, declining global oil prices brought to the fore the urgent imperative to pursue economic diversification and to initiate social welfare programs to cushion the adverse effects of extreme poverty on the citizens. It should not come as a surprise that during the last three quarters of 2018, Nigeria recorded positive growth in the non-oil sector by posting a 2.7% growth rate although whether the effects trickled down to the citizens evenly is a different matter altogether.<sup>129</sup>

Countries that previously experienced protracted violent conflicts and civil wars such as Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Liberia, are also bouncing back and consolidating peace building legacies. They did not only enjoy relatively peaceful elections and

124 Others countries in the same category are Egypt, Mali, Sierra Leone and South Sudan.

125 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance. Index Report. Mo Ibrahim Foundation

126 ‘Notes from a small island’: Reflections on Mauritius and Seychelles. Africa Can End Poverty. The World Bank. IBRD-IDA. 14 May 2018. Retrieved from [blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/notes-from-a-small-island-reflect](https://blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/notes-from-a-small-island-reflect) 15 February 2019.

127 Doing Business 2018. Reforming to Create Jobs. World Bank Group. Washington. P. 4.

128 Mauritius ranked 25th by the World Bank and overtakes South Africa with the leading position in sub-Saharan Africa region. Business Report, Business Tech. retrieved from [bravura.net/Mauritius-ranked-25th-by-the-world-bank-and-overtakes-south-africa-with-the-leading-position-in-the-sub-saharan-africa-region](https://bravura.net/Mauritius-ranked-25th-by-the-world-bank-and-overtakes-south-africa-with-the-leading-position-in-the-sub-saharan-africa-region) 15 February 2019.

129 National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Q2, Q3 and Q4 of 2018 Reports. Retrieved from [www.nigerianstat.gov.ng](http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng) 21 February 2019.

transfer of power in 2017 and 2018, but also stability. A notable development in the year under review occurred in July 2018 when Eritrea and Ethiopia signed a peace agreement that led to a thaw in decades of hostility, and the start of a new era of diplomatic relations.<sup>130</sup> The dimensions and implications of this new deal are taken up in the second segment of this Report. Suffice to note that the event marked a significant turning point in the search for genuine peace and reconciliation in the Horn of Africa, although there are concerns that it might also lead to serious expectation gaps within the two countries, and across the region.<sup>131</sup> Already, the rapprochement has also led to improved relations between Eritrea and Somalia, and Eritrea and Djibouti,<sup>132</sup> just as it is capable of opening a window of opportunity to address other substantive conflict issues in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Significant steps were also taken towards peace in two of the most prolonged conflicts on the continent; in the Central Africa Republic (CAR)<sup>133</sup> and South Sudan,<sup>134</sup> In the CAR, Disarmament, Demobilization, Re-integration and Repatriation (DDRR) programs were launched in December 2018, while warring parties in South Sudan signed another agreement to forestall further breach of peace and security.

Due to the transnational nature of the current peace and security threats that African countries are facing, there is an acute recognition of the need to pursue collaborative bilateral and multilateral approaches, even if they are ad-hoc at the minimum, to resolve conflicts in a creative, holistic and lasting manner. This implies that either established regional mechanisms or ad-hoc regional arrangements would increasingly gain salience in tackling security threats. However, whether or not those mechanisms and arrangements are adequate and responsive enough is another matter entirely. Thus, even though regional Economic Communities (RECs) are consolidating on numerous peace initiatives, it is also the case that the constraints most of them face in doing so are in sustaining the momentum of political will and finding adequate resources from within to consolidate them.

In 2018, the Southern Africa Development Commission (SADC) withdrew about 200 soldiers sent to Lesotho to help strengthen peace and security in the country following the killing of a top military officer in 2017.<sup>135</sup> The year also witnessed the continuation of inter-regional alliances and institutional approaches to cross border problems. This approach has been sustained through regular dialogue and review of progress and challenges at the Summit and Ministerial levels, including those involving heads of military, Police and intelligence services, between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), in assessing strategies for the war against terror and other security challenges. Ad-hoc security arrangements such as the Multinational Joint Task-Force against Boko Haram comprising Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Benin, or the one sponsored by the United States against the Lord's Resistance Army, LRA, in Northern Uganda, have become more established to fight the kind of asymmetrical warfare that insurgent and terrorist movements around Africa have gained notoriety for. The same collaborative approach has been extended to efforts in tackling maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, with the assistance of the US and the EU<sup>136</sup> while the G5 (Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Mali and Mauritania) Sahel Joint Force continues to work within a similar framework to stem the rising tide of threats from armed militias and terrorists in the Sahel region.<sup>137</sup>

### 4.3 Worst Case Scenarios

There were, sadly, countries and regions in Africa where security conditions continue to worsen in 2018. Many of these states can aptly be described as authoritarian, oppressive and dangerously assertive, such that the responsibility of the state to citizens particularly in terms of guaranteeing their safety and security, have been substituted with threats to fundamental rights. Several of these states are trapped in perennial conflict situations while others demonstrated lack of capacity

130 Eritrea – Ethiopia. 'Wind of Hope'. Ties Resumed. Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 56(9), 21998. September 1st-30th 2018.

131 'Roads to Peace: EU Supports Reconnecting Eritrea and Ethiopia'. Neven Mimica, International Cooperation and Development. Retrieved from [ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/roads-peace-eu-supports-reconnecting-eritrea-and-ethiopia\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/roads-peace-eu-supports-reconnecting-eritrea-and-ethiopia_en) 21 February 2019.

132 Djibouti – Eritrea. Ties Resumed. Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 56(9), 21997. September 1st-30th 2018.

133 Central African Republic: Dialogue a Milestone Step towards Peace in CAR. Retrieved from [allafrica.com/stories/20190128031.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/20190128031.html) 2nd March 2019.

134 South Sudan. Low Expectations? Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 56(9), 21995. September 1st-30th 2018.

135 Regional SADC Force Ends Lesotho Mission. News24. 28 November 2018. Retrieved from [m.news24.com/Africa/News/regional-sadc-force-ends-lesotho-mission-20181128](http://m.news24.com/Africa/News/regional-sadc-force-ends-lesotho-mission-20181128) 21 February 2019.

136 EU Maritime Security Factsheet: The Gulf of Guinea. 29 October 2018. Retrieved from [eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/52490/eu-maritime-security-factsheet-gulf-guinea\\_en](http://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/52490/eu-maritime-security-factsheet-gulf-guinea_en)

137 Rupesinghe, Natasja (2018) The Joint Force of the G5 Sahel: An Appropriate Response to Combat Terrorism? Conflict Trends. Accord. 18 September 2018. Retrieved from [www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/the-joint-force-of-the-g5-sahel/](http://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/the-joint-force-of-the-g5-sahel/) 15 February 2019.

to implement appropriate policies for managing protracted conflicts. It is not coincidental that the states with the most challenging security situations also face enormous governance problems across a spectrum of widely accepted indicators such as compliance with the rule of law; regulatory quality, control of corruption, inclusiveness, political stability, absence of violence and accountability.<sup>138</sup>

One of the immediate outcomes is the incubation and proliferation of pockets of public resistance and agitations against the state that have become common in many African countries, while the states have in return, responded with threats, brute force or tepid disregard. In the Central African region, old conflicts persist in different shapes and dimensions while the capacities for more creative and sustainable solutions are becoming few and far apart. The country with one of the most significant security challenges in the Central Africa region in 2018 is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These ranged from massive displacements resulting from ethnically motivated violence, repeated clashes between government and rebel forces, and the long cycle of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreaks, all of which have contributed greatly to worsening security in Eastern and Northern DRC.<sup>139</sup> That the dim signs of incremental progress in Central Africa Republic (CAR), especially with the perceived positive disposition of the government, which led to another round of peace framework in August 2018, quickly collapsed due to lack of trust and suspicion among the warring parties came as no surprise.

In Cameroon, agitations by the English-speaking region dominated much of Cameroon's security challenges in 2018 to the extent that another round of general elections was virtually held unnoticed, which returned President Paul Biya for another five-year term until 2023 making a total of 41 years in power.<sup>140</sup> Sustained and deliberate institutional practices to exclude the English-speaking population from governance continue to fester aggressive and sometimes, violent demands for secession. It would not be farfetched to conclude that the Biya administration has yet to show any genuine commitment and willingness to address issues of marginalization and discrimination, and would rather be content with clamping down heavily on protesters. One estimate suggested that more than 100 civilians may have lost their lives so far in the ensuing confrontation.<sup>141</sup> Hemmed-in by the large influx of Nigerian refugees fleeing Boko Haram in the north and CAR refugees in the south, it is not clear how much of a threat and pressure agitations for secession posed to the survival of the Biya administration and the Cameroonian state.

The attempted coup in Gabon on 7th January 2019 is symptomatic of the underlying problem of political fragility that has been ignored since the Bongo family took power in 1967. Although, this was the only coup attempt in 2018, the act triggered security concerns across the entire Central African region. The coup episode demonstrated that regardless of the fact that the country was strangely run by an ailing and mostly absentee President, Ali Bongo still had the full apparatus of government in his grips. The political vacuum created by his routine absence may have attracted a group of dissidents within the military hierarchy to test the waters, but the failure of the coup also point to the fact that such modes of transfer of power are no longer fashionable. It is instructive that the appeal by the coup plotters for citizens support also failed to gain any sympathy.

One of the unintended consequences of the type of governance deficit described here is not only that it encourages citizens to seek violent options to draw to their plights but also become a justification for unbridled state repression. While Bongo's loyalists were able to avert the potential fallout of the attempted coup, the government's overbearing power and the entrenched order of fear it is capable of inflicting have become somewhat mutually reinforcing. Rather than responding by improving and strengthening governance, we are likely to see much more securitized regimes across Central Africa in pursuit and maintenance of the repressive status quo with grave implications for future violence and potential crisis.

138 Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). Retrieved from [info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/home](http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/home) 21 February 2019.

139 DR Congo: Security Worsens in East. Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 55(12), 22122. December 1st-30th 2018; DR Congo: Civilians Demand and End to Massacres. Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 56(9), 22048. October 1st-30th 2018.

140 Cameroon: Slide towards Civil War? Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 55(10), 22048. October 1st-30th 2018.

141 Burning Cameroon: Images you are not meant to see. BBC News. 25 June 2018. Retrieved from [www.bbc.com/news/amp/world-africa-445619](http://www.bbc.com/news/amp/world-africa-445619) 15 February 2019.



## UNDERPERFORMING AFRICAN COUNTRIES, 2018

s/n	Countries	Human Development Index (Africa Ranking)	Doing Business (Africa Ranking)	Democracy Index (195) Not Free	Ibrahim Index of African Governance (54)
1	CAR	52	48	185	50
2	Eritrea	43	51	193	51
3	Libya	6	49	184	52
4	South Sudan	51	50	194	53
5	Somalia	--	52	188	54

Source: HDI, 2018; Doing Business Report, 2019; Freedom House, 2018; IIAG, 2018.

In East Africa, South Sudan and Burundi have witnessed intermittent disruptions to mostly delicate peace initiatives.<sup>142</sup> The recurrent violence in the two countries has generally frustrated efforts towards agreeable long-term compromises between warring parties. The security conditions faced by the two countries in 2018 were therefore undermined by frequent attacks as well as the absence of trust that is a minimum requirement for genuine and lasting peace. The situation was no different in Sudan during the same year as opposition parties and the general public that are calling for President Omar Bashir's resignation were met with force, which on one occasion, led to the killing 19 of protesters.<sup>143</sup> There is no doubt that turning on the heat on the regimes in Khartoum and Bujumbura, especially from within by opposition and civil society actors would push them towards more extreme violence against their own people but that might just also be the price to pay for change to take in the two countries.

Elsewhere in Somalia and the rest of the Horn of Africa, attacks by the extremists group Al-Shabaab was relatively pronounced when compared to 2017. It came no surprise, then, that Somalia also recorded the highest number of organized political violence and the second at the top in terms of new conflict actors in Africa, respectively, in 2018.<sup>144</sup> With the experiences of Somalia and Kenya, the greatest threat to the peace and security in East Africa and the Horn in 2018 came from the activities of terrorist groups. It is unfortunately becoming increasingly accepted that Kenya may continue to suffer attacks from Al-Shabaab on its eastern borders. While the domestic political environment has stabilized somewhat due to the rapport between Odinga and Kenyatta,<sup>145</sup> there is little to suggest that President Kenyatta can effectively secure Kenyans from the seemingly frequent terrorist attacks.

In Southern Africa, the post-Mugabe era in Zimbabwe is yet to usher in a clean break from the past. The exit of Mugabe has not led to the kind of quick and purposeful transition anticipated by the teeming youth population in the country. Entrenched party structures and the politicization of government institutions has continued to choke the political space, which made it impossible, at least in the short- and medium- terms for new and vibrant youth-led political parties and civil society movements to have a say in the supposedly new political environment. Series of events, including arrests of opposition members, harassment of protesters, and detonation of a bomb at President Mnangagwa's campaign rally, call for concern. Despite a relatively peaceful general elections in July 2018 that much hope was placed upon to usher a clean break from the Mugabe era and bring some relief to citizens, widespread violent protests calling the 'new' elections a fraud, was put

142 Burundi: Escalating Brutality. Africa Research Bulletin. Political, Social and Cultural Series. 55(9), 22013. September 1st-30th 2018.

143 Sudan: 19 killed, over 200 injured in protests. ALJAZEERA. 2 December 2018. Retrieved from [www.aljazeera.com/amp/news/2018/12/sudan-government-19-killed-200-injured-protests-181227191854282.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/amp/news/2018/12/sudan-government-19-killed-200-injured-protests-181227191854282.html)

144 ACLED 2018. The Year in Review. 11 January 2019. PP. 15&19.

145 'We Should Unite': Kenya's Top Political Rivals Hold Surprise Meeting. The New York Times. 9 March 2018. Retrieved from [www.nytimes.com/2018/03/09/world/africa/kenya-uhuru-kenyatta-ralia-odinga.amp.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/09/world/africa/kenya-uhuru-kenyatta-ralia-odinga.amp.html) 10th February 2019.

down by soldiers causing the deaths of at least six people.<sup>146</sup>In addition, approaches by the new regime to governance have significantly remained in the realm of rhetoric and repeated promises by Mnangagwa and his top aides with little to show in terms of promoting the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and participation under the new leadership. Zimbabwe is still classified as an authoritarian state, and rightly so, given the fact that no fundamental changes to the old political order have taken place since the ousting of Robert Mugabe.

In West Africa and the Sahel, security remains a grave concern. As violence continued in Mali, its intensity is likely to be felt more in neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger. These recurring- and most deliberate-acts of violence have stalled the implementation of the Bamako peace deal signed four years ago, in 2015. Continued attacks by terrorist groups have led to a more deteriorating situation with over 800 schools affected and more than 2.3 million people requiring humanitarian assistance.<sup>147</sup>There is also a geographical dimension to the violent activities as they are occurring in places where the authority and writ of most African states are either thinly spread or totally absent, in remote places and away from major towns and villages, towards border regions and territories with challenging topography. Typically, non-state armed groups are encouraged in the prevailing situation start to incubate and launch their activities in reverse order: they begin from spaces with limited state presence and work their way towards major towns, cities and then the capital. Then they begin to imitate and compete with the state for the control of territory, livelihoods value chain as well as the loyalty of the population, even if that is done with a measure of coercion just like the actions of the state.

The effects of the security challenges have been compounded by how the adverse effects of climate change are intensifying herders-farmers conflicts across the Sahel region, particularly in Nigeria, where the highest incidences and casualties occurred in 2018. The adverse impact of climate change on the environment partly explains the dimensions of heightened migration and concern over food security across the West African region as well. The United Nation's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) continues to play a strategic political role in facilitating the actualization of the peace deal in the country. The successful launch of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan in November 2018 and the imperative of security sector reforms essentially define the slow but steady progress made to address the dire security situation in the region. The role of the G-5 Sahel joint forces remains central- but also controversial-in the ongoing efforts to stabilize the Sahel region.

Apart from the sustained ability of Boko Haram to routinely launch small scale suicide attacks in countries of the Lake Chad Basin, security conditions worsened in Nigeria due to the activities of Fulani militias and armed bandits in mainly the North Central and North West of the country resulting into greater number of fatalities. The point had been made in Chapter Two of this Report in reference to ACLED data showing that Nigeria had the highest recorded fatalities in Africa for 2018.<sup>148</sup> More worrisome is the fact that much of these new actors and attacks are grossly underreported and there is, for politico-religious reasons, evidence of reluctance or political will on the part of the government to either admit that these incidences are happening in such magnitude and scale, or who the actual perpetrators are.

This has immensely incapacitated the government in responding decisively to bring judgment to victimizers and justice to victims, and also raises important questions on the ability and credibility of the government to engender trust among citizens in a country that is so deeply divided along ethnic and religious lines. Coupled with this, is the government's muscular handling of other protests across the country particularly those by pro-Shiite religious sects in the North and pro-secessionist agitators in the Southeast, two events which contributed to raising the tension levels in the country in 2018.

Responses by African states to difficult socio-economic conditions have generally involved introducing a mix of macro-economic policies and a political push to fight corruption. While institutional corruption is widely entrenched across the continent and deserves to be confronted head-long, most anti-corruption initiatives have often been tainted with accusations of being overly selective, by mostly targeting the opposition and individuals critical of government thereby raising questions on the credibility of government's action in the first place. Using access to power to settle scores with political enemies, or

146 See, Human Right Watch, 'Zimbabwe: Events of 2018' [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

147 Security Council 8445 Meeting, SC/13665, Peace Agreement Must be Intensified... 16th January, 2019. Retrieved from [www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13665.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13665.doc.htm) on 15th February 2019.

148 ACLED 2018. The Year in Review. Kishi, Roudabeh and Pavlik, Melissa. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), Madison. 11 January 2019. P. 20.

to pressure members of opposition parties to defect to the ruling party, have become common a practice in several countries. Despite noticeable economic reforms embarked upon by some countries, the continent received, overall, the lowest score in the Sustainable Economic Opportunity category according to the 2018 Ibrahim Index of African governance.

African countries faced considerable pressures in terms of finding alternative, predictable and secure funding to meet their myriad developmental needs. Although this has become a recurrent pattern, a growing number of African countries are resorting to Chinese loans to finance infrastructure and other development projects. It is estimated that more than one-third of countries in sub-Saharan Africa are exposed to considerable risk of strangulating debt burdens<sup>149</sup>raising concerns about another debt trap whose long-term impacts in economic and political terms may outweigh short-term gains. Debt repayment responsibility can have serious political consequences for governance capacity and sustainability, and ultimately undermine the capacity of countries to tackle security challenges.

#### AFRICA: DEBT DISTRESS PROFILE 2018

s/n	Countries in Debt Distress	Countries in High Risk of Debt Distress
1	Chad	Zambia
2	Mozambique	Togo
3	Republic of Congo	Sierra Leone
4	Sao Tome and Principe	Mauritania
5	South Sudan	Ghana
6	Sudan	Ethiopia
7	The Gambia	Djibouti
8	Zimbabwe	Cameroon
9		Cabo Verde
10		Central African Republic

Source: World Bank, 2018; IDA, 2018; IMF World Economic Outlook, 2018

How African states respond to the real and existential threats posed by cyber security challenges is also indicative of how they treat other lethal security threats. In an increasingly technology-driven world, the challenge for most African countries with a lean ICT backbone to survive where the more advanced countries are struggling is enormous. This theme has been covered in Chapter 3. The point to be made here is that at the same time that Africa is still far less integrated into the global digital system, it is also becoming vulnerable to the dark world of the Internet and cyberspace. A growing number of countries in Africa have reported cases of cyber threats; including Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt and Togo. Most of the policy frameworks currently in place to address cyber security threats are either inadequate or deployed in ways that further violate the rights, freedoms and safety of citizens, especially freedom of expression. The AU Convention on Cyber Security and Data Protection adopted in June 2018 reinforces the need for a common framework to address emerging cyber threats in Africa, but it is still a long way before it gains sufficient traction and holistic implementation across the continent.

The nature of responses to security threats has wide ranging implications for the stability of states and the potential role that African inter-governmental institutions are able to play in achieving same. One major consequence of identified patterns of state responses in 2018 is growing authoritarianism as is the case in Egypt, Cameroon, Burundi, Zimbabwe and Sudan, where governments under the cloak of security continue to exhibit profound repression through arbitrary arrests, intimidation, violence and extrajudicial killings.

In contrast, responses to security challenges in some other African countries are opening up the democratization space and opportunities where little or none were previously available. Critical reforms undertaken by governments in the top-performing countries, including several that are recovering from debilitating armed conflicts and full-blown wars, are having far-reaching impacts on the socio-economic and political sectors and fundamentally expanding the rights of participation for the citizens. Invariably, the bottom-line is that only a determined and sustained commitment to long-term governance reforms in political and economic spheres that guarantees and promotes inclusiveness, more openness and more economic opportunities, would deliver Africa from perennial instability.

#### 4.4 Implications of Africa's Responses

For much of 2018, responses to threats to peace and security defer from one state and institution to another depending on the peculiar circumstances they face, the character of the government in power, and the nature of the problem. Notable responses by states and institutions in 2018 have come in the forms of: (1) negotiated settlements (Khartoum Agreement, Bamako Peace deal, Power-Sharing agreement in South Sudan etc.) between and among warring parties; and (2) political or economic reforms, or both, as demonstrated in Mozambique, Angola, Tunisia and The Gambia. Political reforms in Ethiopia were largely due to the emergence of a new political leadership following the decision of the ruling coalition to reform itself. Long-term reforms in East and West African countries such as Rwanda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana and Guinea have produced growth averages of between 4% and 6%.<sup>150</sup>

It is important to add that most of the economic growth in 2018 came in the aftermath of a slowdown in 2017, which impacted on growth projections and actual growth rates in 2018. The economic recovery process has also been tougher for some countries especially where population growth is fast outpacing economic opportunities, and where the political class is not seen to be doing enough to tackle poverty and unemployment. In some of these countries like Nigeria, the largest economy on the continent, the effect of the 2017 recession is still biting hard despite steady recovery. The government's imposition of heavy fines on certain multinational corporations, the mopping up of money from the economy under the Treasury Single Account (TSA) and punitive dispositions of revenue collection agencies such as Customs and the Inland Revenue services, are all signs that the state might in actual fact be preying on citizens.

The point had been made in Chapter Two that a number of governments became openly intrusive and repressive to the extent that 2018 witnessed violent protests and demonstrations that led to considerable civilian fatalities, indiscriminate arrests and persecutions.<sup>151</sup> There are several implications from the types of state-led responses to public demonstrations and protests identified above. In direct contrast to their fundamental duty to secure and protect lives, African states now constitute a major threat to lives and property of citizens. Second, unchecked excesses or abuses of state power have grave implications for the consolidation and sustenance of democracy and, by extension, peace and security. The state has, in some cases, attempted or actually subverted the rule of law and ignored basic democratic norms, ethos and culture thereby, endangering the survival of democratic institutions. This state of affairs reveals a lot about the shape of democracy in countries like Sudan, South Sudan, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Togo, Egypt and Nigeria. It is not surprising therefore that the same countries are rated low on the 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index on Governance in Africa, IIGA. The third implication is that such high-handed state approaches will continue to be a source of future tension especially in multi-religious and multi-ethnic countries, and could provide the alibi for those affected by the punitive policies of the state to seek 'justice' by justifying armed rebellion in self-defence.

<sup>150</sup> Signe, Landry. The State of African Economies: Insight from the IMF and World Bank Spring Meetings. Africa in Focus, Brookings. Retrieved from [www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2018/04/24/the-state-of-african-economies-insights-from-the-imf-and-world-bank-spring-meetings/amp/](http://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2018/04/24/the-state-of-african-economies-insights-from-the-imf-and-world-bank-spring-meetings/amp/) 10th February 2019.

<sup>151</sup> ACLED 2018 Op. Cit.

Whereas certain unanticipated events prompted drastic and rash responses from the state in the year under review, others are greeted by hush silence and confusion. African states are sometimes also caught in the web of circumstances for which they are often-times ill-advised, ill-prepared or ill-equipped to handle. Such a description would apply to the killing spree by Fulani militias and armed bandits in Nigeria, killings and rape in northern Congo, DRC, Angola's expulsion of over 300 Congolese migrants, and the dire refugee situation in Cameroon.<sup>152</sup> Apart from its initial indecisiveness on what to do partly because it considered the killings as politically motivated, the Nigerian government does not seem to have a clear-cut strategy on how to stop them. Faced with pressure from the large influx of refugees fleeing Boko Haram and insecurity in CAR, Cameroon embarked on the expulsion of Nigerian refugees.<sup>153</sup>

While the Biya government may have acted in enlightened self-interest, the action is contrary to state party obligations under the UN and AU refugee conventions, including the principle of non-refoulement<sup>154</sup> and the spirit of African solidarity. Similarly, the mass exodus of Congolese on the order of the Angolan authorities, has thrown up unexpected humanitarian challenges since the Great Lakes region is itself already saturated with displaced persons that are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The reasons adduced for Angola's action is mainly economic but it is not exactly clear how the expulsion was going to significantly address the economic distress faced by its citizens. It is also unlikely that any short-term gain as a result of such expulsions could make up for the long-term damage between contiguous communities spread across the borders, or even for the relations between the two countries.

Furthermore, states in Africa attempted to address social and economic problems by combating institutional corruption at all levels. The 2018 assessment report by Transparency International (TI) shows that Cote D'Ivoire and Senegal were the only African countries with significant improvements on the Corruption Perception Index, while others only made marginal progress, remained unchanged or declined.<sup>155</sup> Corruption in Sudan, Angola, South Africa, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Zimbabwe and Nigeria is still very pervasive despite their much-touted fight against corruption.

It is even more disturbing that the anti-corruption laws and agencies in several African countries have become a vengeful political instrument employed to harass, intimidate, discredit and emasculate opposition members and their party structures for political advantage, while equally corrupt politicians who are members of the ruling party are spared the rod. In so far as anti-corruption efforts are not fully supported by effective governance frameworks that stress the elements of impartiality, redress, accountability, public service, public interest, inclusion, responsibility and discourage the need, incentive and opportunity for corruption, they are likely to become less impactful.<sup>156</sup>

152 Congolese Expelled from Angola Returning to Desperate Situation': UN Refugee Agency. Rulashe, Pumla. UN News. 16 October 2018. Retrieved from [news.un.org/en/story/2018/10/1023292](https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/10/1023292) 15 February 2019.

153 UNHCR Alarmed by Continuing Forced Returns of Nigerians by Cameroon. April, 2018. [www.unhcr/news/press/2018/4/5ad9e4bd4/unhcr-alarmed-continuing-forced-returns-nigerians-cameroon.html](https://www.unhcr/news/press/2018/4/5ad9e4bd4/unhcr-alarmed-continuing-forced-returns-nigerians-cameroon.html)

154 see section 1 (p.2) of the non-refoulement obligations under International Refugee Law. The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol stipulates that state parties and host states should under no circumstance, forcefully return refugees to territories where there are threats to freedom and life.

155 Corruption Perceptions Index 2018. Transparency International. Retrieved from [www.transparency.org/cpi2018](https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018) 25 February 2019.

156 Doig, Alan, Watt, David & Williams, Robert (2005). Measuring 'Success' in Five African Anti-Corruption Commissions. U4 Reports. P. 19.

Many African countries still struggle to make the expected transition to full-fledged democracy beyond the routine of elections. While election related violence has subsided, it remains a constant source of tension, uncertainty and fear. Elections around the continent continue to assume zero-sum dimensions between and among political parties. Virtually all the elections held in 2018 were contentious, with opposition parties accusing electoral umpires of biases in favour of ruling parties thereby heightening already tensed situations. Coupled with this is the phenomenon of hate speech infinitely enabled by popular social media platforms. This is not to discount the invaluable role that the new social media is capable of playing in deepening democracy and giving a voice to the marginalized. But for as long as the media space remains under-regulated, most African governments will be in a conundrum about how to control it without taking away people's rights and liberties.

The final conclusion to draw is that regardless of some of the complications they are experiencing, a collective approach towards tackling festering security threats is likely to become more popular in Africa, especially given how those threats have assumed regional and transnational dimensions beyond the capacity of any individual country to manage. Across different regions, alliance systems involving group of states such as the G5 in the Sahel, the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin, the C5-a High-Level Committee on South Sudan, more often than not supported by the AU and/or the UN, have contributed immensely to achieving relative stability in 2018. The degree of success attained and pending challenges vary across board but one major implication is that it has increased interaction on different levels and platforms, among the countries and given further credence to the AU's philosophy of 'African solutions to African problems'. There is evidence to suggest that regular interactions of the nature in vogue are capable of promoting trust and reducing misperceptions, fear and suspicion among partners. Likewise, for countries that share common borders, current ad-hoc security arrangements could invariably lead to more permanent, long-term collaboration on defence and security issues.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# MOBILISING AFRICAN SOLUTION IN 2018

## 5.1. The Politics of Collective Security

The establishment of realistic collective security mechanisms remains Africa's best hope to maintain peace and stability in the continent. Such collective arrangements stand along a continuum of arrangements that interact in complementary or competitive ways dependent on the place, tools, roles and responsibilities that AU member states play. Three particular models interact in a complex fashion: AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), the AU's regional blocs, and smaller but ad-hoc regional arrangements comprising of "coalitions of the willing." Skeptics of the latter arrangement see it as undermining the positions and role that the AUPSC and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) play while proponents point to their utility in filling the gaps in the framework for AU deployments of forces.

While waiting for AU member states to full operationalize and be in a position to deploy the African Standby Force (ASF), ad hoc coalitions such as the G5 Sahel force and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNTJF) can be efficient stop-gap response tools to tackling certain kinds of security challenges. In other words, instead of an either/or type of argument, the various peace architectures in the continent need not rival each other in mounting peace support operations. As the AU's evolving opinions and treatment of these ad-hoc forces show, the future "calls for a more flexible deployment system, one which entails reformed ASF structures, room for ad hoc forces, mergers with other Africa Peace and Security Architecture tools, and cooperation with international actors."<sup>157</sup>

Ample challenges and opportunities await such harmonization efforts. The good news is that the AU and its member states have been quite effective when they exhibited strong political will to back up political decisions with military deployments. Despite financial and logistical challenges, the strong determination to act and shoulder the costs and responsibilities of peace enforcement proved decisive in the rapid deployment of military forces by ECOWAS in the Gambia in 2017, and the quick support the regional effort received from the AU and the UN. In the same respect, the logic of national interest will continue to shape military deployments across Africa as the increased reliance on coalitions of states such as SADC Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in DR Congo, AMISOM in Somalia, or ad-hoc structures such the G-5 Sahel force to tackle security threats have proved. For now, the AU's deployment system will have to be adaptive, and flexible to accommodate to the recourse to ad-hoc arrangements.

## 5.2. Challenges facing the AUPSC

In 2018, the Peace and Security Council, PSC, reached fewer substantive decisions aimed at addressing existing conflicts but held more open sessions on health;<sup>158</sup> ICT and counter-terrorism;<sup>159</sup> prevention of ideology of hate, genocide, extreme ideology on the continent;<sup>160</sup> women, peace and security;<sup>161</sup> climate change and conflict;<sup>162</sup> and on elections.<sup>163</sup> The way the PSC responded to the situation in Burundi and the Boko Haram insurgency in 2018 may partly be a tell-tale of the procedural, institutional and political limitations such an inter-governmental body faces despite the responsibility on its shoulders towards the maintenance of peace and security in Africa.

157 <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/joint/military-art-a-science/the-african-peace-and-security-architecture-a-system-for-the-past-or-adapting-to-the-future/>

158 11/1/2018 Press Statement of 742nd PSC meeting on Public Health Threats to Peace and Security in Africa Ref:PSC/PR/BR. (DCCXLII) released on 11/1/2018

159 27/1/2018 Communiqué of the 749th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, at the level of Heads of State and Government, on the theme: "Towards a Comprehensive Approach to Combatting the Transnational Threat of Terrorism in Africa"

160 Communiqué of the 771st meeting of the AU PSC on the African Migrants Crisis: Imperative for expediting free movement policy in Africa, 11/05/2018

161 See, Communiqué of the 772nd meeting of the AU PSC on the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa. 16/5/2018

162 The 774th meeting of the AU PSC held an open session on "The link between climate change and conflicts in Africa and addressing the security implications" (21/5/2/2018).

163 22/2/2018 Communiqué of the 747th meeting of the PSC on elections in Africa

In a space of two years, between November 2016 and November 2018, the PSC at the Summit and Council levels met at least 10 times.<sup>164</sup> Whereas the Council met and issued four communiques on Burundi alone in 2015, only a press statement on the dire political and security situation in the country was issued throughout 2018 out of the 794th meeting held on 19/0/2018. It would seem that the Council has yet to recover from the decision by the Summit in 2016 to reverse the decision to impose stiffer sanctions and deploy peacekeepers to the country. Although the ‘compromise’ by the Assembly was eventually to deploy Human Rights Observers and Military Experts, the PSC seemed to have developed a cold feet on Burundi as Bujumbura has still not agreed an MoU with the AU on the status and work of the two missions citing “the relative peace and stability” in the country. At its 794th meeting, the PSC took a decision to scale down while extending the mandate- of the two teams.<sup>165</sup>

The Boko Haram insurgency featured only twice on the agenda of the PSC in 2018. The first one was by way of a press statement issued by the Chairperson of the Commission on “the barbaric attack” by the group in Chad (22/7/2018) while the second was in the context of developing regional strategy for the stabilization, recovery and resilience of the Boko Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin (816th, 15/12/2018). At best, the PSC only welcomed the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference of the LCBC Member States held on 30 August 2018, in Abuja Nigeria, which validated and adopted the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas and instructed the Executive Secretary to make the necessary arrangements for its submission to Council for consideration and endorsement, and also the convening of the High Level Conference on the Lake Chad region, in Berlin, 3-4 September 2018, and the pledges of 2.17 billion USD made to support enhanced humanitarian, development and peace building efforts in the region. Finally, Council requested the newly established AU Development Agency/NEPAD, CISSA, ACSRT to contribute towards the implementation of the Strategy.

Those who criticize the PSC for not acting quickly, proactively and decisively on pressing peace and security issues ignore the obvious fact that it is still a ‘conclave of states’ with unwritten codes of silence and ‘watch-my-back’ disposition among its members. Because the consent of an individual country and the consensus of member states within the same regional bloc is required to bring an issue before it, the PSC is severely constrained and incapacitated to act expeditiously. Even when it does act, the outcomes tend to be more declaratory and fall short of taking decisive steps on grave peace and security issues. Finally, those limitations account for why the most successful engagements of the PSC are those in which it focuses less on country-specific issues and more on generic- but no less topical- issues.

### 5.3. The G5 Sahel Joint Force: More than Just an Empty Shell?

Ad hoc security bringing together a handful of countries closest to a conflict spot also work well to combat specific transnational threats. A *common* perception of threat by a group of states can help foster cohesion within the coalition despite the unavoidable interoperability problems and internal asymmetries. Ad-hoc coalitions such as the G5 Sahel Joint Force allow for the adoption of an issue-specific approach, which yields a tailored engagement strategy that is limited in terms of goals and geographical reach. They also have several institutional and operational advantages over formal regional *or continental* security mechanisms that can be large and unwieldy. Indeed, part of the appeal of these collective defence mechanisms lies in their flexible and adaptive design. These advantages do not mean that these coalitions of the willing will necessarily be efficient. To do so, they need more than operational flexibility and adaptable institutional structures.

The G5 Sahel Joint Force was forged out of a genuine desire to collectively address a clear and present threat. After years of regional rivalries and persistent bickering and mistrust among the different heads of states, the fear from the diffusion of terrorism from its stronghold in northern Mali ended up galvanizing five countries of the region (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad) to act. The idea for this regional coalition initiative started to take shape in November 2013 when the Nigerien, Malian and French armies conducted Operation “Roussette” on the border between Mali and Niger. The joint military operation effectively *put into effect* the strategic decisions taken in Niger in October 2013 by an “operational coordination committee” (CCO) that the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad

<sup>164</sup> See, 812th PSC on 23/11/2018

<sup>165</sup> See also, Burundi, 808th, 19/11/2018



and France decided to create few months earlier during their meeting in Paris.<sup>166</sup> In terms of priorities, the CCO was tasked with analysing the threat data and building action plans to deal jointly with threats on the borders of Mali and Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Mali, as well as that between Niger and Chad.

It is important to note that the concept of joint military operations is not novel in the Sahel. It had been experimented during the short-lived joint Malian-Mauritanian arrangement whereby the forces of both countries carried out Operation “Benkan” (Unity) to dislodge AQIM militants from their base in the Wagadou forest on the Malian side of the Mauritanian-Malian border in 2011. After Operation “Roussette” in 2013, however, the practice gradually gained currency *with a handful of* joint cross-border military operations *carried out in early 2014 by the armies of the five countries concerned*. These *operations saw each army operate on the side of its border, empowered with a right of hot pursuit, and assisted by French troops who provided critical support in terms of planning, logistical, intelligence, air support and medical evacuations.*<sup>167</sup>

After one year of coordinated *military* action where the practice of coalition warfare proved promising, the imperative to move to the next stage to institutionalize their military consultation, planning and operations became pressing. Having already created **in early 2014** the G5 Sahel, an **intergovernmental cooperation** framework designed to prop-up regional development and security activities, Sahel leaders decided to sustain the continuity of their budding security partnership. In 2010, Chad and Sudan created a 3,000-strong joint border force that ended their five years of proxy war while, in November 2014, including to improve good practice in border management and rein in rebels on both sides.<sup>168</sup> Significantly, the force has been able to stand on its own without any support from France or other external actors.

The first military operation by FC-G5S, Operation Hawbi,<sup>169</sup> took place in November 2017 along the border zone between Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. The second operation, Pagnali,<sup>170</sup> took place in January 2018 in-between Mali and Burkina Faso. Since then, the G5 cross-border joint force has gained political momentum and international support. U.S national security advisor, John Bolton, recently praised the multi-national military force and called for more similar forces led by African states.<sup>171</sup> For now, the G5 Sahel joint force is still in a capacity development phase, heavily dependent on French military assistance and *the goodwill of external donors.*<sup>172</sup>

The fact that the *Security Council has so far refused to grant the force a peacekeeping mandate under the UN Charter's Chapter VII* has complicated the efforts of the G 5 member states *to secure a stable revenue stream.*<sup>173</sup> Without access to the UN peacekeeping operations budget, the force will struggle to sort out this funding challenge. The success of the G5 Sahel joint force is also dependent on its ability to differentiate itself in a crowded security market while coordinating action with the African and Western military forces present in the region. This question of cooperation, especially between the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the FC-G5S, which provides 35% of the troops assigned to MINUSMA, is not yet fully settled. The third major challenge for the joint force is to gain the support of the local populations. To become “legitimate guardians of regional security,”<sup>174</sup> the G 5 Sahel states need to professionalize their armies, police and intelligence services as well as seriously prosecute human rights violations.

## 5.5. Conclusions

It is clear that the PSC, and virtually the entire African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), is fixated on hard security issues, but far less so on borderline or unconventional security challenges that are on the rise and leading to untoward

166 Cyril Robinet, « Genèse de la Force conjointe du G5 Sahel », Institut français des relations internationales, Ultima Ratio, 16 janvier 2018, <http://ultimratio-blog.org/archives/8650>

167 <http://ultimratio-blog.org/archives/8650>

168 <https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2018/multilateral-damage/1-externalisation-of-border-control-regional-consequences/>

169 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-security/g5-sahel-launches-military-operation-in-african-scrublands-idUSKBN1D21VS>

170 <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20180206-niger-force-g5-sahel-mali-burkina-sommet-chefs-etat-general-didier-dacko-boulikessi>

171 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-national-security-advisor-ambassador-john-r-bolton-trump-administrations-new-africa-strategy/>

172 <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/africasource/bolton-s-risky-bet-in-the-sahel>

173 <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/africasource/bolton-s-risky-bet-in-the-sahel>

174 <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/establishing-regional-security-architecture-sahel>

misery and deaths across the continent. Incidentally, the PSC had also recognized this limitation and at least called for mainstreaming health issues in the architecture given especially the proliferation of disease epidemics and how they raise death toll. It will be necessary, for the same reason, to factor in how to prevent and manage growing incidences of man-made disasters, documented in different sections of this Report. In the final analysis, how quickly those issues are mainstreamed and tackled would very much depend on a number of factors, including human, material and fiscal resources, and a commitment to put African citizens at the centre of political, governance, socio-economic and developmental issues in the immediate and distant future.

## **Key Takeaways**

- 1) Collective-security regimes in Africa stand along a continuum of arrangements that interact in complementary or competitive ways dependent on the place, tools, roles and responsibilities that AU member states play.
- 2) The primacy of national interest will continue to shape military deployments in Africa, including those undertaken by the AU, and such a motivation explains the increased reliance on coalitions of states at the regional level such as SADC Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in DR Congo, AMISOM in Somalia, or ad-hoc arrangements to tackle security threats.
- 3) Ad-hoc security initiatives such as the G5 Sahel Joint Force has been forged out of a desire to collectively address a clear and present threat. *The success of joint force is dependent on its ability to secure a stable revenue stream and differentiate itself in a crowded security market.*

## CHAPTER SIX

# EXTERNAL ACTORS AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN AFRICA IN 2018

## 6.1. The Changing Global Environment as Context

External actors have always been prominent in shaping peace and security priorities in Africa since the first wave of independence in the 1960s. The involvement of established and new external actors in the affairs of the continent surged in 2018 going, at least, by the efforts they are making to broaden their engagements in, and with, African countries. This chapter seeks to understand the “quickenings of renewed international competition” on the continent<sup>175</sup> and also offer some explanations on how actors and factors that are exogenous to Africa shaped the nature, dimensions and outcomes of peace and security on the continent in 2018. One point to make upfront is that whilst external involvements in Africa have occurred with varying degrees of intensity and impact over time, there was no moment since the post-independence history of the continent that they were completely present or completely absent in the general affairs of African states, particularly in the area of peace and security. By focusing on their scope and scale in 2018, this chapter seeks to explore some of the key issues around why, how, where and when external responses occurred and also their ramifications for peace and security on the continent during the year.

It is important to begin with an account of how the changing nature of the international environment in 2018 may have conditioned the role and involvement of a wide range of external actors in the peace and security domain across the continent. This section partly draws from the debate on Africa in the global security architecture that was the theme of the 5th Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa in 2017. If indeed the role of external actors is writ large in the African landscape, the logical implication is that any solutions to the continent’s most intractable threats would also have to be inspired or come from outside, despite the sugary notion of finding African solutions to African problems.

## 6.2. Six global events that shaped peace and security in Africa in 2018

To catalogue all the major events that occurred around the world in 2018, many of which did not start during that year and which may well continue well beyond it, would be unwieldy and counterproductive. Not all the major developments around the world with far-reaching global ramifications are of equal significance for Africa. Given that individual’s perception of the importance of such events is locational, which ones should be prioritized would also ultimately vary.<sup>176</sup> Although by no means exhaustive or arranged in any particular order of significance, the six global events covered in this chapter have direct, tangible and far-reaching implications that shaped the directions and outcomes of peace and security in Africa in 2018, as follows:

- (1) the rise of far-right political parties and pro-nationalist movements in Europe;
- (2) the rancorous exit plan of Britain from the European Union;
- (3) the “America First” postures of the Trump Administration in the United States;
- (4) the paradoxes of multilateralism
- (5) Of Gulliver and the Lilliputians: what does unilateral multilateralism mean for Africa?, and
- (6) the consolidation of global franchise in dis/order and chaos.

175 Alex Vines, “Global engagement with Africa continued to surge in 2018”, Chatham House, 8 January 2019

176 See, for instance, Council for Foreign Relations, CFR, 20 December 2018; Munich Security Conference, “To the brink- and back”? Munich Security Report 2018

## 6.2.1. The rise of far-right political parties and pro-nationalist movements in Europe

Even for a trend that started long before now, it might still seem obliquely distant to establish a connection between the emergence and growing influence of far-right political parties and pro-nationalist movements in Europe and the changing imperatives for peace and security in Africa. Yet, that development should be right at the top of the basket-list of external factors that played a significant role in reconfiguring the peace and security landscape on the Africa continent in 2018, and this is likely to continue for many years. Virtually all the elections in Europe in the year under review<sup>177</sup> saw far-right political parties and pro-nationalist movements making considerable political gains but short of outright victory, that can no longer be ignored. This should not come as a surprise given how long-ignored but profound contradictions of capitalism, are undermining social cohesion and magnifying existing fractures along geographical (cities and countryside) and class (metropolitan elite versus others) lines across Europe.<sup>178</sup>

The spread of European far-right ideology has produced a number of profoundly disturbing impulses. One, it has substantially muddled up the political waters across Europe in ways that have left critical political constituencies to dissipate too much energy on domestic 'bread-and-butter' issues and less on external relations. Second, it has created a new wave of populism that has become a captive of the far-right; one that extols exclusionary virtues (nationalism) rather than inclusivity (patriotism). Third, taking a ride on the back of popular disenchantment in different European countries have allowed the far-right movement in Europe to push for radical change in, if not complete rupture of, existing relations of production and exchange. Finally, the ideology of the far-right movement is already showing the potential to further undermine European solidarity-or its spirit-as evident in the centripetal forces that are threatening to tear the European Union (EU) apart.

There are several broad ramifications from all the above, not only because multilateralism is now under siege in Europe; between and among countries in that region but also vis-à-vis the rest of the world, particularly Africa, where the EU is a traditional major player. Faced with myriad problems at home, African peace and security priorities are at the bottom of the scale of preferences of European countries, as shown by how quickly the EU is committed to excusing itself from Somalia by drastically cutting down on support to AMISOM. It also explains why recent issues around what to do with the large influx of migrants, especially from Africa, are provoking equally intense debates around terrorism and Islamophobia than was previously the case.

In key European countries with considerable historical ties and interests in Africa, especially Britain and France, far-right movements may not have gained much traction but the rhetoric they put in the public domain may further disrupt the proverbial ties that bind Europe and Africa as showcased by the uncertain future of UK's relations with Africa post-Brexit, also discussed in this chapter. As well, with European 'solidarity' waning, the capacity and willingness of major European countries to continue to present a 'united'- if increasingly discordant- voice in global and/or African affairs is restricted.<sup>179</sup>The bottom-line for Africa, especially in terms of peace and security, is that even if Europe cannot completely walk away from the continent by virtue of providence, the prospects that their relationship moving forward would not be stripped off certain elements they have long been used to, should be a source of deep concern, to sceptics and optimists alike.

177 Czech Republic (January), Finland (January), Italy (March), Russia (March), Hungary (April), Turkey (June), Sweden (September), and Ireland (October). See, Emma Anderson, '6 European elections to watch this year', Politico.eu, Updated 1/3/18

178 This point was forcefully made by Paul Collier in a recent interview. See, "We are witnessing a mutiny against the metropolitan elite", in *International Politics and Society*, 5th March 2019 accessed in [www.ips-journal.eu](http://www.ips-journal.eu)

179 Emma Anderson, '6 European elections to watch this year', Politico.eu, Updated 1/3/18

One important exception, by way of conclusion, is that while ‘mainstream’ European countries, individually or as a collective under the EU, are currently facing challenges capable of distracting or minimizing their attention towards Africa, 2018 saw how Russia, in particular intensified its engagements across the continent as visibly shown by how it weighed in on the dire security situation in CAR by deploying troops and playing a major role in the talks between the government in Bangui and rebels leading up to the peace agreement signed in Khartoum, Sudan in 2019. This trend is given more attention elsewhere in this chapter, and it shows how the growing involvement of countries like China, Russia, India, Turkey, Qatar and the UAE is becoming prominent feature in Africa’s relations with some of the emerging economies of the world.

### **6.2.2. The rancorous exit plan of Britain from the European Union**

The virtually stalemated Brexit negotiations between Britain and the European Union (EU) started when the conservative government of Prime Minister Theresa May took a gamble by calling a snap election following David Cameron’s exit from government. The hope was that it would strengthen her hand to holding the controversial referendum proposed by her predecessor on whether to remain or leave the Union in June 2016 - a process that is now popularly called BREXIT. Almost three years down the line, the process of disengagement seems to have become an unending, circuitous, humiliating and difficult process for the Prime Minister and the country. That a simple majority, 56%, voted to leave reflected both the growing disenchantment with the EU project in the UK, and elsewhere, but also the deep fractures that have become a potent and divisive force within and across Europe. Also, that a key member of the EU decided to take the exit route and the potential aftermath, clearly showed how much an unforeseen political twist in Europe could quickly set ripples around the world. Whether ‘to leave’ voters get their wish or not in the end, UK policy towards Africa is undergoing radical twists and changes that would have important implications for the continent in the near and distant future.

Several countries are already contemplating alternative options on the short- and long-term effects of BREXIT.<sup>180</sup> There is no question that a final decision by Britain to leave the EU is not only going to have far-reaching implications and consequences for pan-Europeanism, but also for UK-EU, EU-African and UK-African relations. There are two strands of opinion on the implications of BREXIT for Africa. In one corner are those who worry that apart from issues around the influx of migrants and refugees, or even substantive concerns over the intensification of radicalization, terrorism and political Islam in Europe, Africa is likely to feature less as the knotty process of formally detaching the UK from the EU approaches an uncertain end. Africa would, no doubt, miss in Britain-a key member of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy- a major interlocutor on numerous peace and security initiatives in general, and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), in particular.

The flipside to the above is the argument that whether or not the peace and security threats facing Africa remain the same or get worse, the material focus of Britain on BREXIT would not necessarily rob the continent of its strategic partnerships, but rather, bring about new thinking and direction. Although there is an initial measure of uncertainty over the direction it is taking, trade and strategic interests will gain more salience in ways that placed the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, FCO, in the lead (over, say, the DFID and its focus on developmental issues).<sup>181</sup> It is significant, in this respect, that 2018 coincided with the first official visit in five years to several African countries by Prime Minister Theresa May and, in the heels of a new African strategy to spend GBP 50million to increase the number of diplomatic personnel and posts on the continent.<sup>182</sup> The year also saw the opening/re-opening of five missions; in Chad, Djibouti, Swaziland, Lesotho and Niger, along with plans to open others in South Sudan, Madagascar, Cote d’Ivoire and Somalia. Given the strength of the existing close ties between the UK and many African countries regardless of occasional hiccups, the future will be determined by a calculation of enlightened national interest in the economic, political and security spheres. If Britain eventually leaves the EU, the grounds that it must cover in terms of cultivating existing and new relationships with African countries would make it less paranoid about migration and terrorism issues that are causing goose bumps in many countries in Europe.

### **6.2.3. The ‘America First’ postures of the Trump Administration**

180 See Nadine Ansorg and Toni Hastrup, ‘Brexit Beyond the UK’s Border: What it means for Africa’, GIGA Focus- Africa, No. 3, September 2016 in <[www.giga-hamburg.de](http://www.giga-hamburg.de)>

181 See, Tom Cargill, ‘More with less: trends in UK diplomatic engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa’, Africa Programme Paper: AFP PP 2011/03, May 2011

182 Alex Vines, ‘Global engagement with Africa continued to surge in 2018’, Chatham House, 8 January 2019

Another external game changer with implications for African peace and security in 2018 is the “America First” mantra and posture of the Trump Administration, which came to office on 20th January 2017. It is a strange paradox that the United States would invest heavily towards achieving and maintaining the post-1945 world order, and within a short span of three years, also become the proverbial undertaker that is responsibility for its collapse. For a world order that, for the most part, relied on shared values and rules anchored on multilateralism to maintain order in the international system, the tone and content of his election campaign, which mostly appealed to a large constituency of far-right voters, and his subsequent actions, were sufficient evidence that President Donald Trump would “do different things in foreign policy and do them differently” (CFR, 2019).

Recently, G. John Ikenberry warned that “[The] world’s most powerful state has begun to sabotage the order it created. A hostile revisionist power has indeed arrived on the scene, but it sits in the Oval Office, the heartbeat of the free world.<sup>183</sup> Almost halfway into his tenure, the Trump administration has become the quintessential disrupter of the world: undermining and repudiating agreements that took painstakingly long years to reach such as the Iran Nuclear Deal with Iran, and the Paris Climate Talks); placing the United States on a collision course with traditional Western allies notably Britain, Canada, Germany and France, including the G-7, whose communiqué following the summit in Quebec, Canada, he refused to sign. Washington has also issued an open threat to stand aside, or be excused, from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO alliance it helped to establish after the end of the Second World War, so that Europe could bear more of the burden of its own defence.

Finally, his speech during the UN General Assembly, UNGA, in September 2018, suggested that the US President will not shy away from repudiating the ideology of globalism in favour of the doctrine of patriotism, by insisting that his Administration will “never surrender America’s sovereignty to an unaccountable, unelected global bureaucracy.”<sup>184</sup> The cumulative effects of these developments is not only that the United States is alienating itself from the rest of the world at the very time that many expected it should take more on leadership responsibilities, but that it may also be deliberately stoking tension and rivalries reminiscent of the Cold War era in its engagement with China and Russia. The same argument holds in respect of its open romance with North Korea.

While the broad strokes of America’s engagements may have played out prominently around the world in 2018, there are many reasons why this is less so (and considerably toned down) in Africa during the same year. The first is that the continent did not seem to be of any substantial geostrategic value to the current administration in a way that would require it to upset the status quo currently in place in US-Africa relations. If some of the rhetoric accredited to him is of any value at all, and despite its initial “bumpy start”,<sup>185</sup> the current administration in Washington would only occasionally have reasons to put Africa on the front burner. It was on the basis of this that former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa under George W.H. Bush (1989-1993), Ambassador Herman Cohen, drew the conclusion that Trump’s foreign policy towards Africa during the first two years of his administration; has shown more of continuity with those of previous administrations than discontinuities. He justified this by insisting that at the same time the administration has not hesitated to abolish or modify programs instituted by his predecessors; all previous projects in Africa are “alive and well.”<sup>186</sup>

Secondly, Africa was only of measured importance to the United States when and where it is implicated in wider security considerations, especially in the US-led global war on terror and in combating piracy and maritime security challenges on African waters, especially on the Gulf of Guinea or waters close to the Horn of Africa. Data from the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) corroborates this point, and showed that the US carried out more than 30 airstrikes on Al-Shabaab in Somalia in 2018.<sup>187</sup> The highest number of strikes which occurred on 12th October 2018 reportedly killed 60 Al-Shabaab militants.<sup>188</sup> With nearly 200 security cooperation events across the continent, the year under review also witnessed nine military ex-

183 Munich Security Conference, “To the brink- and back”, Munich Security Report 2018: 6

184 Dave Boyer, “Trump defends ‘America first,’ threatens to cut foreign aid budget in U.N. speech” (The Washington Times, September 25, 2018)

185 Hannah Akuiyibo, “2018: Trump policy towards Africa takes shape”, in Wilson Centre Africa Program, Africa Year in Review 2018; Washington DC., 2019: 8

186 Ambassador Herman J. Cohen, “U.S. policy towards Africa during President Trump’s first two years in office: 2017-2018”, in Wilson Centre Africa Program, Africa Year in Review 2018; Washington DC., 2019: 7

187 BBC News, BBC Video, Africa Key Security Threats in 2018. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-42620067/africa-s-key-security-challenges-for-2018>. ACCESSED 19TH February, 2019

188 Africa Research Bulletin, Political Social and Cultural Series, Vol. 55 No. 10, October 1st–31st 2018. p.24

ercises involving the US Army Africa, the land forces component of AFRICOM, involving 35 African countries, to support national armies and enhance regional and continental peacekeeping capabilities.<sup>189</sup>

Finally, the United States maintained a wide range of strategic engagements with African states on peace and security in 2018. By retaining its network of military bases in 15 African countries, the largest number by any external power (see table indicating foreign military bases in Africa), the foot print of the US military will from time to time help to impose restraint on African governments and armed non-state actors across the continent. In March 2018, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, made a week-long trip to several Africa countries: Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Chad and Nigeria. It was clear from the visit that the Trump Administration's focus in Africa is mainly on stemming the tide of insurgency and extremism, especially in the Horn of Africa and around the Lake Chad basin, as evident in its commitment to support those countries up to the tune of \$533 million to promote food and human security.<sup>190</sup> Although trade with Africa is smaller when compared to that with other parts of the world, it is possible that growing emphasis on bilateral trade by the Trump administration would soon African states the United States against African countries, with wider implications for domestic stability and regional peace.

#### 6.2.4. The paradoxes of multilateralism

The activities of the UN and the EU are two exemplars of classical multilateralism which began after the Second World War, is no doubt deep and extensive across Africa. The UN engagements in Africa is far more than, or double, those with other parts of the world. In 2018, it covered a broad spectrum of topical issues, as listed in Table 3 below, while a total of 21 African countries featured very prominently in the deliberations and activities of the UN Security Council; the main organ responsible for global peace and security. By spread, the UNSC footprint was mainly in three regions: West Africa, the Horn and East Africa, and Central Africa, with Zimbabwe in Southern Africa as well as Libya and Western Sahara, dominating the Council's attention in North Africa. The UNSC also spent considerable time in 2018 on cross-cutting issues such as insurgency and terrorism in the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin, North Africa and the LRA, and on addressing institutional matters on how to deepen the operationalization of regional initiatives such as United Nations Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS) and the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), as well as greater cooperation between the UN and Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations.

The EU involvements in Africa is equally deep and extensive. In March 2018, the EU signed a memorandum of understanding with the AU on how to ensure sustainable financing of AU-led Peace Operations authorized by the UN side-by-side prioritizing cooperation on conflict prevention and mediation implementation. The most recent EU Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Peace, Security and Governance with Africa signed in May 2018 also sought to bolster AU capacity on its UN-approved peace operations.<sup>191</sup> It was on this basis these arrangements that both sides held joint field visits and a joint session; and developed in the process, a shared understanding and analysis on crisis situations on the continent.<sup>192</sup> The EU-AU joint consultative meetings in 2018 focused on key conflict hotspots zones/state such as Mali<sup>193</sup> and the Sahel, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, Niger Republic, Somalia and Burundi, and a further commitment to work together to achieve sustainable peace in Libya and Somalia through support for transition and democratic elections in the two.

Unfortunately, factors within and external to the UN and the EU are capable of undermining their ambitions towards peace and security in Africa. For one, the widely held view that the end of the Cold War and the transition from a bipolar to a multipolar world would steadily draw the world closer together and deeper towards multilateralism may have been too hasty, and presumptuous, given how traditional multilateralism is becoming difficult to sustain and advance. It is unlikely that Washington would wash its hands off the UN but what would become of the global institution if the current Trump administration decides to take it on frontally as it has consistently, and openly, threatened? Now that the current adminis-

189 See, Major General Roger L. Cloutier, Jr., "US Army Africa - A decade dedicated to Africa" in Wilson Centre Africa Program, Africa Year in Review 2018" Washington DC., 2019: 10

190 Landry Signe and Nathaniel Allen, "Trump's Africa Policy Takes form with Focus on Security (and China)" (Brookings, March 27, 2018)

191 African Union -European Union Relations: Joint Consultative Meeting on Peace and Security (October 23, 2018). Available at <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/african-union-european-union-relations-joint-consultative-meeting-peace-and-security>. Accessed on 20th February, 2019

192 Loc. Cit.

193 Joint Communiqué: Third African Union- European Union- United Nations Trilateral Meeting, September 23, 2018. Available at <http://au.int/en/pressreleases/20180923/joint-communique-third-african-union-european-union-united-nations-trilateral>. Accessed 20th February, 2019

tration has decided to withhold \$1Dollars contribution to the peacekeeping budget, what would be the overall impact on Africa, the continent that is host the bulk of UN peacekeeping missions, and which also takes the largest proportion of the UN's budget on peace and other security issues.

In the same vein, with the myriad crises facing the EU, from within and around the world, including severe funding constraints in the face of the influx of migrants, there should be genuine worry over its capacity to continue to support peace and security initiatives on the continent. The decision by the EU to end its long-standing support to towards security and stabilization in Somalia is widely recognised as one of the major reasons for the early exit of AMISOM. Although 2018 saw the UN working more closely with the AU and Africa's regional economic communities, RECs, it nonetheless faced difficult challenges and choices that present it with a double-edged sword. In the year under review, the UN continued to experiment with the regionalization of its operations by strengthening United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWAS) and United Nations' Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). Although these new offices may help the UN maintain closer institutional oversight on several security threats and report on them more openly and consistently<sup>194</sup> they could also potentially distract, contract or make existing regional arrangements redundant.<sup>195</sup>

One key question to contemplate in even greater depth is whether multilateralism as the world once knew it in the early days of the UN and Bretton Woods institutions- immediately after 1945- is currently facing a recession, or not? If it is in recession, the question that follows logically is whether or not multilateralism is able to reinvent itself in the light of the changing realities in current world order? Regardless of the answers, classical multilateralism is undoubtedly under serious pressure and the risk that it may just have reached its elastic limit, or point of diminishing return, is certainly upon us- paradoxically at the same moment that it is being called upon to keep the world safer and more prosperous.<sup>196</sup>

Either acting separately or in close consultation on peace and security matters in Africa, the UN and the EU as exemplars of classical multilateralism face considerable political, institutional and resource challenges capable of diminishing or undermining their long-established involvements around the continent in the immediate and distant future. Either way, the ability of the international community- or classical multilateralism- to work collectively towards tackling some of the most intractable global security challenges, including those in Africa, would be increasingly in doubt. Ultimately, whether the UN and the EU are able to continue- or expand- support towards peace and security initiatives at a level and scale that bring the desirable relieve to Africa would depend a lot on the second, and newer, strand of multilateralism described next as unilateral multilateralism.

<sup>194</sup> For instance, ECOWAS is not able to deliberate the plethora of security challenges in Nigeria while ECCAS has maintained a disturbing silence over governance and security issues in Cameroon.

<sup>195</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel", 29th June, 2018; p. 5

<sup>196</sup> MSC, "The great puzzle: who will pick up the pieces", Munich Security Report 2019.



## 6.2.5. 'Of Gulliver and the Lilliputians': What does unilateral multilateralism mean for Africa?

The second- and relatively new dimension of multilateralism takes the form of unilateral multilateralism; in which relatively newer global powers such as the United States, China, India, Russia, Brazil are unilaterally creating hybrid institutional platforms that are at once bilateral as they are multilateral. The broad goal of these new platforms is to facilitate direct access to and engagements with African countries, not individual but as a collective, on a wide range of economic, political and security issues. Although it has gained more salience since the end of the Cold War, the genesis of unilateral multilateralism actually started out of colonial relations such as the British-led Commonwealth of Nations established in 1931 and the Franco-African Summit started in 1973.

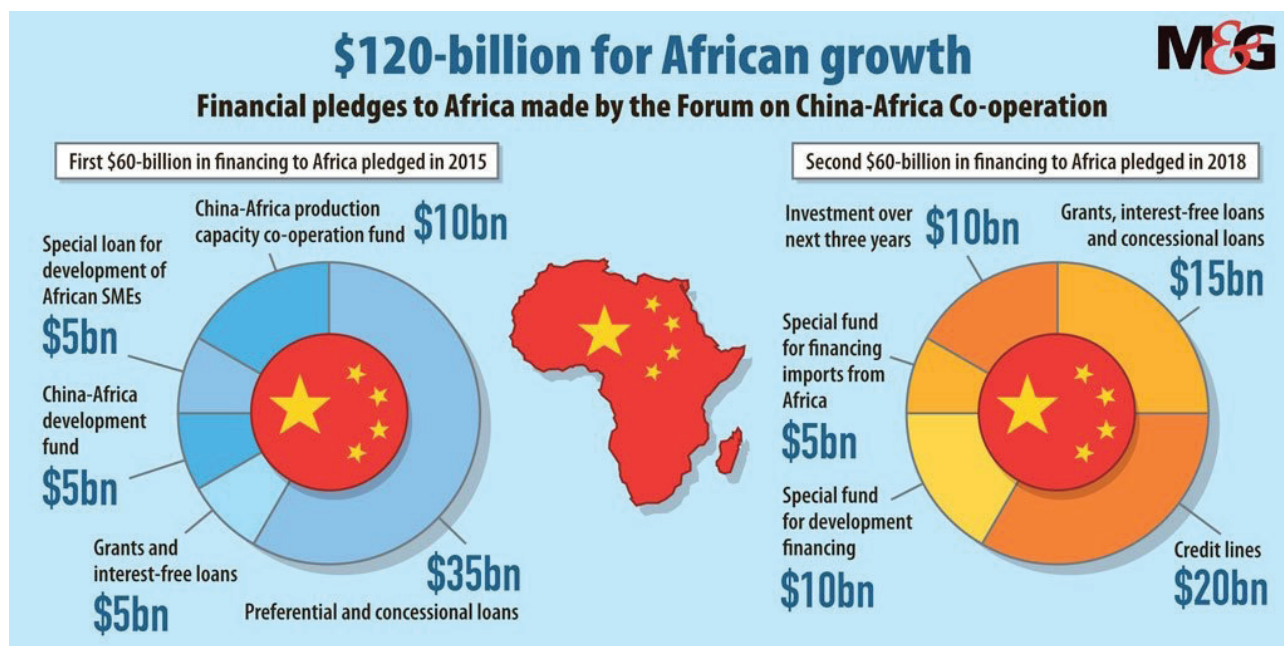
Since none of the external actors highlighted above was a colonial power in the classical sense, they only had very limited presence in Africa beyond those that were decidedly militaristic nurtured during the Cold War era when the superpowers fought proxy wars in Africa. It created a bipolar world order that subsisted for three decades, between 1960s and 1980s, but thereafter gave way to a multipolar order that de-emphasised the exercise of raw military power in preference for soft-power which the new entrants could easily, and quickly, muster than France and Britain. With the end of the Cold War, therefore, emergent external powers have swiftly become 'game-changers' not only in view of how they have become prominent actors making inroads across the continent but also how they are giving long-established colonial powers stiffer competition. It is partly for this reason that the question now commonly posed is whether we are entering another era of great power competition, and what the implications might be for Africa, especially in the sphere of peace and security. Even if the unfolding order does not lead us to back to the era of cut-throat competition characteristic of the Cold War era it has the potential to cause visible shifts and realignment of economic, geopolitical and strategic relationships in different parts of the world, including significantly in Africa where disruptions could affect peace and security efforts.

It is beyond the scope of this Report to explore in detail the different dimensions and degrees of the involvements of all the external actors but a number of incontrovertible trends and dimensions should be borne in mind. There has been a quantum leap in the number of such relatively newer external actors showing visible interests in Africa;<sup>197</sup> from the more obvious ones like China, India, Russia and Brazil, to countries in the Middle East such as Turkey,<sup>198</sup> Qatar and the UAE that are becoming key players in the Horn and North of Africa. Since the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, FOCAC,<sup>199</sup> was inaugurated in Beijing in 2011, virtually all African leaders or their high-level representatives have been attending subsequent annual meetings, with China making substantial financial commitment to critical African sectors, including peace and security. In the chart below, China pledged the second tranche of \$60billion over the next three years covering investment (\$10billion); grants, interest free loan and concessionary loan (\$15billion); special support for financing imports from Africa (\$5billion); special fund for financing development (\$10billion); and a \$20billion credit line during the just-concluded FO-CAC held in 2018.

197 Even if it does not have the same deep pocket as the defunct Soviet Union, as Alex Vines argues, Russia is able to flex muscles with the US and China in Africa as its recent activities, including a \$25billion loan of Egypt to build its first nuclear plant demonstrates. See A. Vines, 'Russia Rises in Africa,' Wilson Centre, 2019: 13

198 See, Elem Eyricetepeakliogu, "Turkey-Africa relations in 2018: Two decades after Turkey's opening to Africa", Wilson Centre, 2019: 14

199 Yun Sun, The Political Significance of China's Latest Commitment to Africa, (Brookings, September 12, 2018)



The India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) established in 2008, and which meets every three years, has become the multilateral window for New Delhi's engagement with African countries. In 2018, the Indian government approved the opening of 18 new diplomatic posts across Africa over a four-year period to 2021, increasing the number to 47.<sup>200</sup> In the four preceding years, 2014-18, the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister of India had collectively visited 25 African countries. A total of 40 Heads of States (out of 54) from African countries, attended its third edition in 2015 up from the 14 African leaders that participated in the maiden edition in New Delhi.<sup>201</sup> It is envisaged that a Russia-Africa platform and version would be launched in 2019, although its footprint has been growing in African peace and security sector. Russia has continued to maintain its troops for peacekeeping and advisory services in CAR, and the strength of its participation in UN peacekeeping across the continent in terms of troop numbers is higher than those of US, UK and France combined.<sup>202</sup> In 2018, Moscow signed a security agreement with Eritrea in exchange for the establishment of a logistics base in the country to give Russia access to the Red Sea.<sup>203</sup>

To illustrate the dilemma that unilateral multilateral poses for Africa would require turning the logic of the fabled experiences of Gulliver and the Lilliputians in "Gulliver's Travel" by the Irish satirist, Jonathan Swift, published 293 years ago in 1726. On one of his voyages to the Southsea, Gulliver's boat capsized and he was washed ashore on a lonely island that he soon discovered was inhabited by short people so afraid, perhaps even bemused, that they held the giant down with strings. In the unfolding unilateral multilateralism, therefore, Gulliver conjures the imagery of new external powers who finding themselves in Africa for several economic, geopolitical and strategic reasons while all of the continent's 54 independent countries are the Lilliputians: relatively small and weak in political, economic and military terms, and without exceptions overwhelmed by their prevailing circumstances. A number of questions logically beg for answer. What, for instance, is it about Africa that makes it possible- and inevitable- that new external powers prefer to lump them together under one umbrella that they determine when to

200 During an address to the Ugandan Parliament in July 2018, Prime Minister NarendraMordi openly stated that "Africa will be at the top of our priority." See Rajiv Bhatia, 'Is Indian foreign policy working? In Gateway House- Indian Council on Global Relations' 2018. Accessed in [www.gatewayhouse.in](http://www.gatewayhouse.in)

201 A total of 40 heads of states (out of 54 African governments) attended the third meeting in 2015 whereas its maiden gathering in New Delhi in 2008 attracted only 14 African leaders.

202 Ronak Gopalds, "Russia and Africa meet again" (Institute for Security Studies, May 2018). Also available at <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/russia-and-africa-meet-again>

203 The Guardian, "Russia's scramble for influence in Africa catches western officials off-guard" (Guardian, International Edition) Also available at <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/sep/11/russias-scramble-for-influence-in-africa-catches-western-officials-off-guard>. Accessed on 20th February, 2019

open and close? If in the fable Gulliver was held down by the Lilliputians, to what extent can African countries hold down the new Gulliver to either prioritize the continent's interests or be accountable for the implications of their growing involvements? Is it, in fact, possible for the 54 Lilliputians to muster what it takes, especially uniformity of purpose and goals, given how they typically approach the new Gulliver with competitive- sometime symbolic or grandiose- demands?

Furthermore, given that the basket of issues that the Lilliputians put before the new Gulliver is almost always full of desperate- and competitive- demands, how can they expect to exercise policy autonomy on critical peace, security and developmental priorities facing Africa? Finally, why are the Lilliputians happy to be present at every invitation and line-up for handshake and photo opportunities with the Gulliver? It does seem, in the final analysis, that while the new Gulliver might see the prospective mess dealing with the individual Lilliputians with discordant voice and interests very little major steps have taken by the latter to put their respective homes, and the continent, in order to negotiate better terms and agreements with the external powers. Invariably, as unilateral multilateralism continues to give the new external powers considerable direct access to and leverages in Africa without the necessary safeguards to secure the continent's interests it could potentially undermine classical multilateralism as new external powers find themselves less constrained to take advantage of alternative window of opportunity to engage with Africa, on their own terms.

### **6.2.6. The consolidation of global franchises for dis/order and chaos.**

The final external sources that imposed considerable challenges on Africa's peace and security in 2018 have much to do with the changing roles of key external powers, and the looming reinvention of multilateralism described above. It is also a product of the inability, or outright failure, of the post-Cold War world order to sufficiently harness and support the fulfilment of the aspirations of a vast majority of citizens around the world who have become so alienated and disenfranchised from global public good that they are left with only the option of repudiating the existing world order. The reality, finally, is that the shift from inter-state to intra-state conflicts and wars have become important enablers of the emergence and consolidation of the current global franchise for disorder and chaos. The new franchise of disorder and chaos is best represented in the activities of a growing number of terrorist and insurgent movements and intensity or impact of the havoc they caused in different African countries in 2018.

The recent report on "progress and setbacks in the fight against African Militant Islamist Groups", MIGs, captured the growth and consolidation of global terrorist franchise, and what they portended for peace and security in Africa in 2018. According to the African Centre for Strategic Studies (ACSS, 2019), there are four epicentres of such MIGs activities on the continent: around Somalia; Nigeria and Lake Chad Basin; the Sahel comprising Mali and border areas; and in Egypt. From an all-time high of 18,728 in 2015, there has been a decline in reported fatalities by 12% to 9,347 in 2018.<sup>204</sup> Still, 13 African countries still faced regular attacks by MIGs in 2018, roughly the same number as in the previous year. Also, while the decline happened in the areas where Boko Haram, BH, (35%), ISIS (20%) and Al-Shabaab (15%) operated, there has been a corresponding rise in violent activities by new splinter groups such as ISWAP (which tripled from 27 in 2017 to 83 in 2018) at the same time that the coverage of activities and number of fatalities linked with them also grew. As they build a truly globalised franchise, terrorist and insurgent groups of different shades are also taking advantage of globalisation and its multiple opportunities, including those available in the financial and digital media world. It is a win-win for groups that were previously localised because as soon as they embrace a global franchise such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, they move from relative obscurity to global limelight and attention.

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From an all-time high of 18,728 in 2015

## Key Takeaways

The state of peace and security in Africa is closely tied to the behaviour of key external actors that come in different guises; of the good, the bad and ugly. In varying degrees, the six developments highlighted have multiplier and profound effects on peace and security architecture and priorities across the continent. In the future, African security would continue to be tied to stability in those of key external powers but also on how those countries understand their roles and are able to exercise influence in a radically transformed world order.

Despite the current anti status quo leadership at the White House, the role that the US could play, by omission or commission, in improving or undermining peace and security in Africa, cannot be discounted and over-emphasized. The US continues to retain the capacity to alter the gains and constraints that international institutions have made or face on key global issues such as climate change, maritime piracy, mediation and peace keeping, that are themselves implicated in the quality of peace and security in Africa.

Emerging external powers such as China, India, Russia, Turkey and Middle Eastern countries such as Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia that are prominent in the Horn and North of Africa, are increasingly in a position to determine the continent's fortunes not only in peace and security, but also in terms of sustainable development.

While the role of multilateral actors such as the UN and the EU in promoting and safeguarding peace and security in Africa would continue, they are likely going to be constrained by the emerging trend towards unilateral multilateralism.

Even as external powers widen the scope of their engagements in (and across) Africa, the continent also faces creeping geostrategic rivalries and competition between and among major powers that are already affecting Africa's peace and security, for good or bad.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# TANA FORUM TOP 10 SITUATIONS TO WATCH IN 2019

For the first time, this year's SPSA report introduces a new concluding section under the title Tana Forum Top 10 Situations to Watch in Africa in 2019. The use of the phrase "situations to watch" emphasizes that the focus is neither on any specific country/countries/regions nor thematic issues, but a hybrid of issues. The choice is deliberate for a number of reasons, particularly that the factors or circumstances that precipitate most of the "situations" highlighted tend to occur in multiple African countries at the same time.

One thing that is clear, however, is that a number of salient points are readily decipherable from the 2019 list. First, is that none of them is necessarily new, although each would most likely assume greater salience with multiplier effects in 2019, or even beyond. Second, the Top 10 Situations have cross-cutting dimensions; none is unique to any specific kinds, or number of countries. This is the case with the sprouting violent social protests in several Africa countries, although for different reasons. Third, they share several commonalities. Algeria, Cameroon, Gabon and Sudan, for instance, have leaders who have been in power far too long often after questionable elections, borderline unconstitutional tenure extensions, and choking grips on power that frequently end up alienating key stakeholders and constituencies. Aside from Cameroon which has other complex problems that include separatist agitations, the ominous signs in the three countries do not appear significantly different.

Furthermore, some of the countries that have gained notoriety for chaos, instability and reversals in peace efforts, especially South Sudan, are not captured among the top 10 situations to watch in 2019. While the worrisome development in Africa's youngest independent state should automatically qualifies it for inclusion, it has also become a poster case of protracted violence in Africa. Only two countries in the Horn of Africa, the case study for the 2019 Tana High Forum on Security in Africa, and the focus of a major segment of this Report, are featured on this list. How the two countries, Ethiopia and Somali, manage widespread domestic expectations arising from their immediate circumstances would have implications for the entire Horn.

Some of the Tana Forum Top 10 Situations to Watch in 2019, have sadly not featured as they should have on the agenda or the deliberations of the two key organs of the African Union; the Assembly of Heads of States and Government (AHSG) and the Peace and Security Council (PSC). One example, in this regard, is Cameroon which, despite the human and materials costs of the ongoing Anglophone separatist agitations and the heavy-handed actions by the country's army and security forces, it has not featured on the agenda of the PSC or even the regional community, ECCAS.

This silence by the continental body, also applies to the establishment of new military bases by major external powers, not just within the Horn of Africa, but all around Africa, the continent despite their profoundly unsettling implications for national, regional and continental peace and security. Finally, since each of the situations highlighted have the potential to escalate, nursing them out of 'intensive care' would require considerable attention, effort and resources. By flagging the 10 is simply to draw the attention of policy makers at the highest levels and the public, on the need for urgent, proactive and strong action or risk a precipitous deterioration.

### **Cameroon: no reprieve in sight, forward march into a looming abyss?**

Cameroon has been outside the radar of the African Union community unlike its other neighbours like Burundi, CAR and the DRC. The common cliché is that the root cause of the dire situation in the country is bad governance, nevertheless it is the common denominator of the myriad crises rocking the country. Another round of elections in October 2018 predictably extended President Paul Biya's 36-year rule by another five years. The systematic use of coercion and co-optation is increasingly becoming insufficient to pull the country back from the brink. Even if it does not implode anytime soon, it is still important to begin to anticipate the succession struggle among those waiting in the wings hoping that the end of the long Biya rule would soon come to an end. His sudden demise could embolden dissidents in the western part of the country to take advantage of any temporary void to further push the secessionist card. Military operations by Cameroon forces, ostensibly against Boko Haram, continue to provide the cover to inflict violence against innocent citizens, including refugees fleeing Boko Haram.<sup>205</sup> With the myriad problems facing the country the AU/PSC must do the belated- but needful: put Cameroon on its agenda, and quickly review its political engagements with authorities in the capital to avert the looming consequences of a silent war, and the unprecedented humanitarian crisis trailing it within and outside the country.

### **Nigeria- is this the proverbial calm before the storm?**

Elections are a big deal in Africa's most populous country and biggest economy, Nigeria. Although the previous general election in 2015 was postponed on the eve of its commencement, the announcement of another postponement by one week citing unprecedented logistical problems momentarily put the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, on the spot. Contrary to claims by some international observer groups, including the AU, the elections were marked by excessive militarisation that may have been buoyed by the express warning issued in a nationwide broadcast by President Muhammadu Buhari, also a contestant, to the army and the police to shoot anyone tampering with the process. The polls were marred by incidences of violent clashes between supporters of the two major parties, vote-buying, death threats and abduction of senior electoral officials in Rivers, Katsina and Benue States. All of this eventually led to low voters' turnout put at 35%- the lowest in the country's history. The endgame is far from certain since President Muhammadu Buhari's main challenger, Atiku Abubakar, also from the North, has gone to court to challenge the results. At the time of writing, the elections tribunal, the first court of instance, has directed that INEC provide the certified copies of the results to the political parties of the two leading contenders starting what might end up becoming a long judicial process. It is too early to tell which way the judicial process would swing the results given that past judgements had almost always favoured the incumbent. Whichever way the final court verdict eventually goes, the implications for peace and stability could be dire. Besides putting more bite on his anti-corruption drive by securing convictions, even among members of his ruling party inner caucus, how quickly the government is able to leverage the second term to deal decisively with Boko Haram terrorism, farmer-herders conflicts and armed banditry across the country would be decisive.

### **Somalia-one step forward, two steps backwards?**

Somalia is a good example of what could happen to a country that has for too long been under international receivership, with responsibility for providing security almost totally in the hands of external actors: in this case AMISOM, which has been effectively on ground in the country since 2007. For the entire period, Somalia has not ceased to be in the news, almost always for the wrong reasons: ferocious inter-clan rivalries; heavy death toll among civilians and AMISOM peacekeepers from fighting the Islamist militant group, Al-Shabaab; and a general atmosphere of insecurity and instability, to name a few. Somalia's current administration under President Farmaajo has provided some leadership and direction, but the tasks before it remains daunting not the least the withdrawal of AMISOM troops and their replacement by Somali National Army (SNA). Whether the SNA has what it takes to tackle Al-Shabaab unaided have implications for the government and for the country's stability. Much would also depend on how quickly Al-Shabaab is degraded, and the willingness of external actors to continue to support the country. The future of Somalia might just continue to hang on a delicate balance, with implications for the country and the Horn of Africa, after the withdrawal of AMISOM thereby giving credence to the prediction that it just might take another decade for a lasting peace deal and normalcy to return. Overall, how quickly Somalia traces its path towards peace will be one of the big question for 2019, and beyond?<sup>206</sup>

205 See, WANEP, "Cameroon: Conspiracy of silence or feigned indifference? WARN Policy Brief, March 2019

206 See Paul D. Smith, 'After AMISOM: what will it take to secure Somalia?' African Arguments, 21 October 2018

### **Libya- paradise lost, forever?**

The situation in Libya will continue to resonate, and destabilize Africa in 2019, and even well beyond. Eight years after the capture and killing of Muammar Gaddafi on 20th October 2011 in Sirte, Libya has been a free-for-all spectacle, with several guerrilla fighters engaged in ferocious battles to gain, regain and retain territories. With the country virtually gaining notoriety as a gangster's paradise, Libya has become one of the major transit routes for human trafficking, illegal migration and a source of small arms and light weapons, SALW, proliferation in many parts of Africa, but especially West Africa, indiscriminately used by a plethora of insurgency and terrorist groups in the Sahel-Sahara region of Africa, including the notorious Boko Haram group in the northeast of Nigeria. The state of lawlessness in Libya slowly fading from the global media continues to defy logic as virtually all the initiatives by major global powers as well as those by the UN and the AU have failed to gain enough traction to succeed. Despite a joint UNSC-AUPSC visit in early March 2019, Libya's 'gift' to Africa in the year is likely to be more misery for its citizens and migrants, insecurity and instability for immediate neighbours in the Maghreb and in the Sahel region. More disturbing, Libya will remain one of the continent's worst humanitarian nightmares given the plight of African migrants making the perilous journey across the Sahara Desert only to end up as slaves, sex workers, militia men, drug peddlers, etc. For African migrants, Libya will remain a land of no return for many years and a source of worry for their families and countries in 2019 and beyond.

### **DRC- Political Transition at Last, Yes, but What Next?**

The departure of President Joseph Kabila is a turning point for the DRC, and also its neighbours in the Great Lakes region that have benefited or suffered from the unending political difficulties and short-lived peace. Amid the uncertainties and violence that almost marred the conduct of general elections in December 2018, the inauguration of President Felix Tshisekedi in January 2019 is not likely to bring quick-fix economic reform, stability, and more crucially, improved access to basic services by the citizens. Out of office, former President Joseph Kabila is still running the show from the side-line given how a coalition of smaller political figures openly pledged allegiance to him recently. It is obvious, for now at least, that Felix Tshisekedi and Joseph Kabila hold the aces on the future of the DRC. If the two men are able to find comfort in a new power sharing arrangement between the ruling and opposition parties that is in the offing, the country might heave a sigh of relief. There is genuine concern that Tshisekedi's ailing health may not allow him the luxury of an entire term, but the bigger worry is what might happen if other armed groups scattered across the country reject him. There is also the inability of the new government to effectively tackle what has turned out to be the longest round of Ebola outbreaks, with the adverse impacts on citizens, neighbouring countries and the world at large.

### **Gabon: A precarious regime continues to prevail, but for how long?**

Widespread hardships caused by prolonged economic crisis, including the possibility of the country becoming too broke not to service its huge foreign debts and its consequences, is partly fuelling instability in Gabon. The mutiny by rank-and-file soldiers in January 2019 was a sneak preview of growing public disenchantment, anger and frustration with the Bongo dynasty, particularly Ali Bongo, who is too ill to govern the country effectively, but who continues to receive strong support from senior military officers, senior civil servants and of course, France. If the Gabonese Democratic Party, the main opposition, is able to reinvent itself under a new charismatic leader, and civil society is able to quickly find its voice, the future of the country after Bongo may be full of uncertainties. What happens in Gabon and Cameroon would significantly influence the prospects for peace and stability in the Central African region in 2019.

### **Ethiopia: An Awakened Giant that is still trapped in its own Cobweb?**

Ethiopia remains a bundle of contradictions in many ways. It is Africa's second largest country by population size, the indisputable diplomatic capital of Africa, hosting the headquarters of both the African Union Commission and Economic Commission for Africa, along with other key multilateral and diplomatic missions. Ethiopia also has one of the fastest growing economies on the continent, with rates oscillating between 7.5% and 8.5%, respectively, in 2018 and 2019. Widely celebrated for the recent reforms introduced, the reform under Prime Minister Ahmed Abiy has come with equal mix of opportu-

nities and challenges. The external dimensions and implications of the détente, or relaxation of tension, between Ethiopia and neighbouring Eritrea, and the multiplier effects on the entire Horn of Africa, is the focus of the companion reader to this year's SPSA. Despite several concessions made to protesters and the opposition, including those in the diaspora, the fundamental issues that precipitated agitations in the first instance, could take some time to fully address. How quickly Prime Minister Abiy's government is able to close the expectation gaps among his increasingly vociferous compatriots at home, and make Ethiopia's neighbours to see the need for them to embrace peace and good neighbourliness, would determine the direction that the present wind of change in the Horn of Africa would eventually blow.

### **The wave of social protests in Africa-The people will just not be silenced?**

Almost simultaneously, mass protests have erupted in a number of African countries: Sudan, Senegal, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and at the time of completing this report, brought to an end the 20-year rule of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in Algeria. Unlike several such protests in the past, the latest ones are not mere episodic and short but trend over extended period. Their immediate triggers may vary from sudden hikes in food and fuel prices (Zimbabwe, Tunisia, Sudan) to protests over poor municipal facilities (South Africa, Senegal) or against attempts by incumbent governments to manipulate the constitution to remain in power (Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria). In all cases, they involved considerable human rights violations by state security agencies. Governments facing them invariably also use the pretext to become more ruthless as happened in Sudan where President Omar Bashir imposed a year-long state of emergency and gave himself more sweeping powers. Significantly, recent protests share similar root causes: collapse of national economies and livelihoods opportunities, bad governance and the authoritarian excesses of the state. In the absence of significant political concessions to opposition parties and the civil society, African countries presently witnessing waves of protests may be tipping towards political instability that may unsettle them and their immediate neighbours.



### **The Central African Republic: Where state and non-state armed groups play fiddle?**

It may be too hasty to give credit to the AU, or any of the countries and institutions that contributed to the successful signing of the February 2019 political agreement between the government and 14 armed groups in Central African Republic, CAR. The process that led to this important outcome and the temporary relief it has brought still raises a number of key questions about the APSA, particularly whether or not the AU is in any vantage position to mediate a long-drawn political crisis that has consumed many lives and left the country prostrate, solely on the basis of its own institutional leverage and legitimacy. It is unconscionable that some AU Member States have been generally opposed to more targeted sanctions thus limiting the ability of the continental body to propose any effective coercive measures against peace spoilers. The hope that the Khartoum Peace Agreement would usher a longer spell of peace might be forlorn with two key signatories, FRPC and FDPC, repudiating it over claims that the process that led to the announcement of new Ministers on 3 March 2019 did not carry them along. Invariably, whether the Peace Agreement endures or not would depend on whether parties, in the words of the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, “live up to their commitments.”<sup>207</sup>

### **The resurgence of unconventional threats to human security**

Lack of statistic mean that we may never know the exact number of understated deaths, diseases and destructions due to unconventional threats to human security in Africa. Whether it is large man-made or natural catastrophes, the human and fiscal costs of non-lethal threats are demonstrated by the continuing spread of Ebola in the DRC; massive flooding caused by Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, and the damages it caused in Malawi and Zimbabwe; mudslide in Sierra Leone; flash flooding in Nigeria’s Middle Belt region; and the human impacts of long bouts of drought and desertification in Mali and across the Sahel region. Unconventional threats are on the rise as capacity of many African countries to design and implement robust national health and emergency management systems lag behind. They are capable, in the final analysis, of rolling back the modest- and often, costly- progress African countries are making to build critical infrastructure such as hospitals, roads and bridges that sooner become overstretched or are completely destroyed. Institutions set up to tackle unconventional threats sometimes become part of the problem due to corruption, excessive bureaucracy, limited funding, and the general tendency to be reactive- rather than proactive- in responding to complex emergencies. Finally, due to delayed action or outright inaction, some governments wallow in self-denial until it is too late. Only by deploying the right mix of proactive social policies and making critical social investments in a timely manner can African government become better prepared to tackle unconventional threats to peace and security.

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See, ‘Central African Republic: UN Chief hails signing of new peace agreement’, UN News, 6 February 2019.

# **PART 2**

**CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON  
THE CHANGING PEACE AND  
SECURITY LANDSCAPE IN  
THE HORN OF AFRICA**

## 1.1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. With recent political developments in the Horn of Africa, particularly the multiplier effects of the push towards rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, along with their neighbors, the 8th Tana High Level Forum on Security in Africa is a most opportune time to address a wide range of governance, security and development in the region under the theme "Political Dynamics in the Horn of Africa: Nurturing the Emerging Peace Trends."
2. This Background paper provides a deeper overview of key issues that should hopefully form the basis for an engaging and robust discussions on current political and security developments in the Horn of Africa, and the alternative futures for the region and the entire continent. The goal is to examine, in detail, how countries in the region have been responding, individually and collectively, to the security dilemmas confronting them and to explore new paradigms and patterns likely to shape politics and security considerations, moving forward.
3. One of the key observations of the paper is that despite being home to some of the least developed economies in the continent, the Horn of Africa is now in the proverbial eye of the storm with growing attention from external powers and other global actors due to its strategic location at the intersection of three trade routes.
4. The paper examines external interventions during three distinct phases; the Cold War years, when a bipolarity world order constrained countries of the region in the pursuit of independent foreign policies; during the post-Cold War era, when alliances loosened a bit but did not alter the securitization of the state; and finally, the current period of realignment of geopolitical and strategic relations in new ways- and with a new set of actors- with several consequences, including increased intra and inter-state conflicts and suppression of plural and dissent views.
5. The paper also interrogates the role of regional and international organizations in mitigating old and new conflicts in the region, and particularly underscores the need for the African Union and the IGAD security architectures to work towards greater harmonization of efforts and burden-sharing responsibility in conflict prevention, management and resolution.
6. In discussing the role of major powers in the Horn of Africa, the paper discusses, the increased militarization of the Horn of Africa – Red Sea region as a consequence of the Horn becoming an extension of the politics of the Gulf region. In particular, the split between Saudi Arabia and UAE camp, on the one hand, and the Qatar/Turkey alliance, on the other, is making countries in the Horn to choose sides, with serious security implications for the region.
7. The paper also discusses the paradigm shifts that are emerging during the last year following the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and argues for the need to consolidating these positive changes by advancing democratization and good governance in individual countries and pursuing a broader drive towards economic integration throughout the entire region.

## 1.2. Introduction

This background paper provides a broad overview of developments in the Horn of Africa; comprising countries who are members of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)—Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. This is with a view to contribute to an understanding of the region's evolving geopolitical dynamics during and after the Cold War era with special emphasis on how each of the countries responded to their security environment and the overall impact on peace and security in the region. It reviews these developments against the wider post-Cold War environments and offer explanations as to how the region supposedly on the periphery of world politics came to be drawn into the Cold War vortex on account of its key geopolitical location close proximity to the Middle East sub-system. The paper finally explores how recent accommodationist foreign policy postures as well as drive towards greater regional economic integration, if successful, could have profound outcomes capable of altering the vicious cycle of war and violence that the Horn gained notoriety for during the past two decades or more.

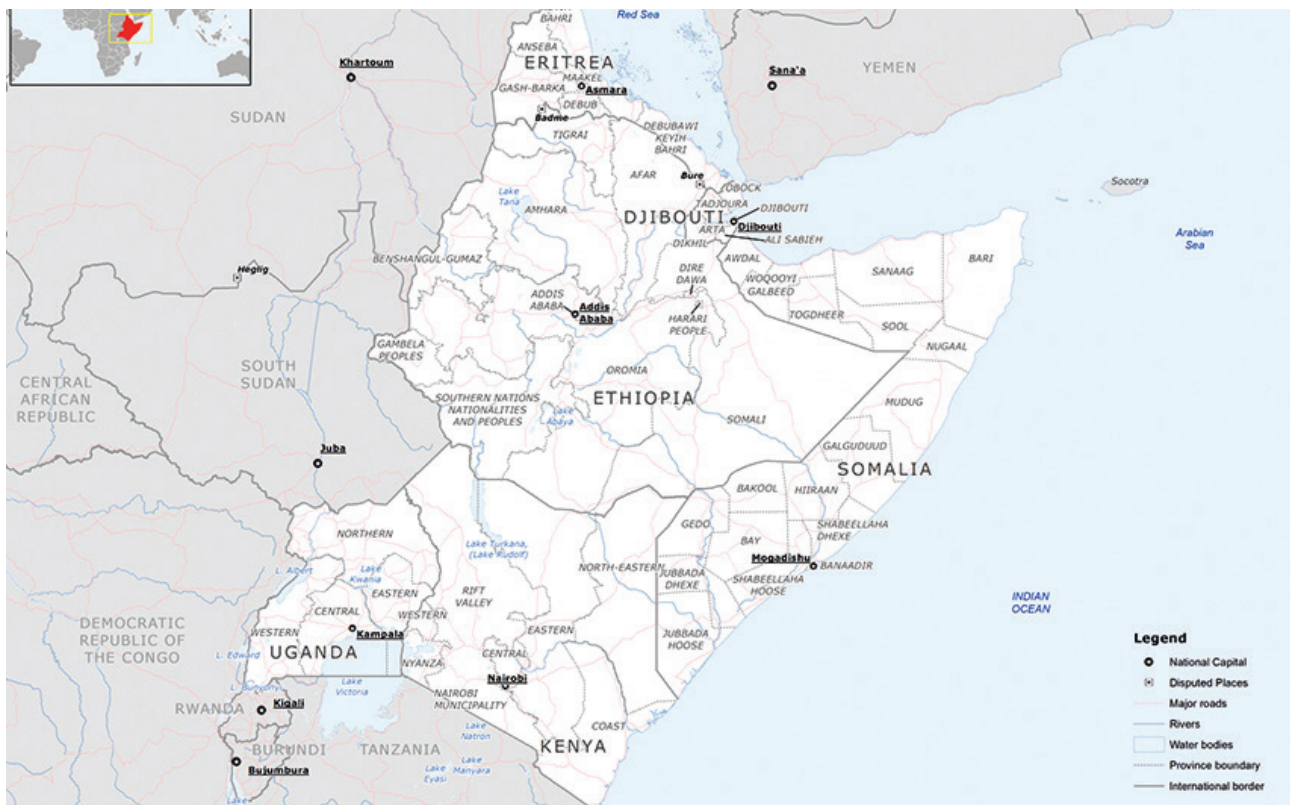


FIGURE 1: POLITICAL MAP OF THE IGAD COUNTRIES

One of the main purposes of the study, in my view, is to develop a broad framework for understanding current changes against the background of two difficult decades in the Horn of Africa. Of particular relevance therefore is the role played by regional, continental and international organizations, and the manner in which they responded to the region's endless wars and humanitarian complexities. This being the case, the paper further explores the appropriateness of the existing security architectures, or lack thereof, put in place by inter-governmental institutions to tackle peace and security challenges in the region. The final chapter outlines specific takeaways on how best to widen and sustain the enabling environment for security and developments in the region, especially following the ongoing peace overtures between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the final analysis, the recent 'wind of change' sweeping across the Horn of Africa may have come as a result of domestic reforms in Ethiopia, the regional powerhouse, and subsequent peaceful overtures by the new government towards neighboring countries, but its eventual success would very depend on how quickly, and deeply, the countries of the region all embrace democratic change and regional integration.

### 1.3. The Context

Africa emerged from the colonial era during the late 1950s and 1960s into a bipolar international system divided between the two superpowers, the United States and the defunct Soviet Union, with competing military, political and economic alliances. Because the superpowers generally defined their international role in ideological terms, the international order that the Cold War birthed was that in which African countries virtually had no hand in establishing and almost powerless to alter.<sup>1</sup> During the early years of the Cold War, the competition for spheres of influence in the Third World had already begun to show evidence of intensifying that a US National Security Council (NSC) study published in 1956 concluded that America cannot afford the loss “to communist extremism of constructive nationalist and reform movements.” The study concluded that the US should seek to cultivate these forces as they are likely to grow in influence even when they’re not “sympathetic to private enterprise, and democratic institutions.”<sup>2</sup>

By the 1970’s, especially after the crippling losses that America suffered in Vietnam, the competition between the two superpowers intensified in other critical strategic areas. In Africa, the Soviet Union had started projecting its military power by deploying interventionist forces in the Southern Africa and the Horn. The focus on the Horn, in particular, is no accident as the geopolitical importance of the region increased dramatically by virtue of its proximity to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. The interconnected maritime links between “East and West” gave the Horn of Africa a coveted strategic position that also brought it to the epicenter of international contestations.<sup>3</sup>

During this period, also, many of the countries in the Horn, including Ethiopia, pursued benign non-aligned foreign policies that did not prevent them from becoming a target of superpower intervention. It is in this context that the United States made Ethiopia the lynch-pin of its Africa policy aimed at checkmating the Soviet Union. The Soviets, in turn, used Somalia for the same purpose soon after that country’s independence in 1960. The façade of neutrality was however not deep enough as many countries in the Horn continued to depend on either of the superpowers for external economic, political and military support, a situation that considerably limited their freedom of action to maneuver. It is for these reasons that the Horn of Africa became a hotbed of fierce competition as each of the superpowers sponsored and aided competing states for influence.

One other unique feature of the Cold War years was that the superpowers entered into defense agreements with regional actors through a system of patronage that ensured the survival of loyal regimes on the continent. Such regional alliances were particularly intense in the so-called ‘arc of crisis’ stretching from the Indian subcontinent to the Horn of Africa and the Middle East.<sup>4</sup> The Washington-Moscow rivalry in the Horn of Africa resonate with the classic balance of power system: one in which the presence of the two superpowers’ was all the safety-valve necessary for antagonistic countries- especially Ethiopia and Somalia- to avoid open confrontation as the major powers establish spheres of influence across the region. As the nature of domestic politics in different countries of the Horn changed so did alliance dynamics involving the two superpowers. It was for this reason that the U.S. anchored its support to Ethiopia by establishing a military base on the tip of the Red Sea which served as a major global communication hub known as Kagnaw, in Eritrea, northern Ethiopia,<sup>5</sup> while the Soviet Union supported Somalia in order to locate itself strategically along the Blue Sea ports in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

The well-laid out plans of the two superpowers were upended when a socialist-oriented military regime took power in Ethiopia and reoriented the country’s foreign policy towards Moscow. When, in July 1977, Somalia attempted to preempt the fledgling Ethiopia-Soviet Union relations by invading the Ogaden, a vast desert outpost in eastern Ethiopia that So-

1 Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996) p.41.

2 John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 201.

3 Robert Patman, *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa: The Diplomacy of Intervention and Disengagement*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp; 34-36; For an interesting discussion on U.S-Soviet contention, see Louise Woodroffe, *Buried in the Sands of the Ogaden: The United States, the Horn of Africa, and the Demise of Détente*, (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2013)

4 Arc of Crisis is a term coined by the former U.S. national Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski. For a discussion on this, see George Lenczowski, “The Arc of Crisis: Its Central Sector,” *Foreign Affairs*, No. 57 (Spring 1979) pp. 796-820.

5 See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States [FRUS], Africa, 1958-1960*, Vol. 14, (Washington, DC, 1992,) p.180. This communication facility was used extensively as a link to a satellite tracking station at the Seychelles Islands, and a relaying station for diplomatic cables, allowing the U.S. to reach objectives beyond Africa. Indeed, as late as 1975, Kagnaw, along with two other stations in Heidelberg and Manila, served as only one of three ship-to-shore worldwide communications network for the American navy. See Chester A. Crocker, “The African Dimension of Indian Ocean Policy,” *Orbis*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Fall 1976), p. 658.

malia claimed as its own, the Soviets have provided arms worth \$US 1 billion to Ethiopia. As part of the immediate gains of supporting Addis Ababa, Moscow was allowed to establish a naval base in the strategic archipelago of Dahlak, on the Red Sea<sup>6</sup> and that the bilateral relationship between Addis Ababa and Moscow survived until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The U.S., on the other hand, was more than willing to abandon détente with the Soviet Union to confront Moscow's expansionism in the Horn. Washington chose the 1977-78 war between Ethiopia and Somalia in return for the establishment of a strategic naval and air bases at Berbera, in the Gulf of Aden, and Kismayo and Mogadishu, on the Indian Ocean.<sup>7</sup> Somalia also forged closer relations with American allies in the Middle East, including with Egypt, Saudi Arabia and at that time Iran.<sup>8</sup> Overall, at the center of US-Soviet alignment with client states lies the quest to gain strategic access to the Horn of Africa-Red Sea quadrant necessary to access bigger ports and strategic passageways. While the consequences are still visible, as it turned out, one of the several factors that contributed to political and social turmoil in the Horn of Africa during the Cold War was Somalia's invasion of Ethiopia. The 1977 invasion subsequently created a ripple effect as it also led to the fall of the government of President Siad Barre, followed by a cataclysmic civil war, and the eventual disintegration of Somalia in 1991. Also, the Collapse of the Soviet Union that same year deprived the military junta in Ethiopia crucial support and patronage, and eventually led to the demise of the junta and the coming to power of a coalition of rebel movements under the umbrella of Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). With the easing of tensions in the region, only two years later, Eritrea's de facto independence became de jure after a controversial referendum in 1993. The persistence of conflicts in the Horn of Africa is invariably also a throwback to the quasi-military and political alignments that were originally incubated during the Cold War era, and how it conditioned the behavior of countries in that region towards themselves.

#### 1.4. The Geopolitics of the Horn of Africa- Blessing and Curse?

It is not only modern superpowers that crave strategic foreign outposts and assets. Almost 2,000 years ago, a merchant's manual known as the *Periplus of the Red Sea* provided a guide to ports for trading vessels operating across the Indian Ocean between the coasts of India and East Africa, through Bab al Mandab up the Egyptian coast along the Red Sea.<sup>9</sup> The Red Sea is not only important on its own right as a strategic waterway but it is also the very reason for the building of the Suez Canal in the late nineteenth century to connect the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean.<sup>10</sup> With the completion of the Suez Canal, most of "the maritime commerce and international shipping that link the oil exporting Gulf States to Western economies must navigate the two regional chokepoints of the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandab."<sup>11</sup> As the only maritime point connecting three shipping routes—the Mediterranean Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait is the reason many of the medium and big powers scrambling to secure influence through security and commercial arrangements.<sup>12</sup> Not coincidentally, the seeds of many of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa can be linked to this period soon after the construction of the Suez Canal when major European colonial powers partitioned among themselves different parts of the region into colonial territorial units.<sup>13</sup>

6 Naomi Chazan, et al. *Politics and society in contemporary Africa*, (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner, 1999), Quoted in Nilton César Fernandes Cardoso, "Regional Security in the Horn of Africa: Conflicts, Agendas and Threats," *Brazilian Journal of African Studies* v.1, n.2, Jul./Dec. 2016 | pp.131-165]

7 See Ruth Iyob and Edmond J. Keller, "U.S. Policy in the Horn," 2006, pp. 101- 125; For Soviet policy on the Red Sea, See Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet Egyptian Influence Relationship Since the June War*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977) p.134.

8 See Iyob and Keller, " U.S. Policy in the Horn in the Horn," 2006, pp. 101-125. in the Horn

9 For an engrossing history on this, see G.W. Bowersock, *The Throne of Adulis: Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam*, (Oxford, University Press, 2013) p.22.

10 Naomi Chazan, Quoted in Nilton C.F. Cardoso, 2016, pp. 131-165

11 See International Maritime Bureau, *Annual Report 2009*, Quoted in Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, "The Geopolitics of Insecurity in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula," *Middle East Policy Council*, Volume XVIII, No.2 (Summer 2019), <https://www.mepec.org/geopolitics-insecurity-horn-africa-and-arabian-peninsula>, pp. 1-9.

12 Assaf Orion, "The Dragon's Tail at the Horn of Africa: A Chinese Military Logistics Facility in Djibouti," No. 791, 2019, <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/the-dragons-tail-at-the-horn-of-africa-a-chinese-military-logistics-facility-in-djibouti/>

13 Peter Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003) p. 14.



## 1.5. Regional Security Dynamics in the Horn of Africa

The countries of the Horn of Africa, in the classical sense, constitute a “security complex” precisely because they are “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot reasonably be considered apart from one another.”<sup>14</sup> Despite burgeoning attention from competing major powers, none of the countries in the Horn of Africa is strong on its own meaning that they must operate within a web of interconnections among themselves. They must therefore be conceived of as a security complex given that “security is a relational phenomenon and it involves not only the capabilities, desires and fears of individual states, but also the capabilities, desires and fears of the other states with which they had to interact.”<sup>15</sup>

Since “a security complex may exist where there is a high level of mutually felt insecurity among two or more regional states,”<sup>16</sup> a defining feature of the regional security complex that the Horn has become is characterized by a mixture of conflict and cooperation. For example, the conflict in Sudan is closely linked with Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia because of the existence of common ethnic groups across their contiguous borders.<sup>17</sup> This interdependence, unavoidably, created a perpetual security dilemma in the context of the Horn of Africa since the component units “have found it difficult to manage the demands of statehood, nationhood, and resource and environmental constraints. As a result, the region could

<sup>14</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*, (Brighton, Wheatsheaf Books Ltd., 1983) p. 106.

<sup>15</sup> Barry Buzan, “A Framework For Regional Security Analysis,” in *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*, Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, eds., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) pp. 4–5.

<sup>16</sup> Barry Buzan, “A Framework For Regional Security Analysis,” in *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*, Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, eds., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) pp. 4–5.

<sup>17</sup> John Koech, “Emerging Challenges of Security in IGAD,” in *Regional Security in the Age of Globalisation*, (Nairobi, Heinrich Böll Foundation Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa, 2004) ch. 10. pp. 125-132.

be accurately described as one in which states have existed precariously, as victims of their neighbor's insecurities; or conversely, as threats to their neighbors."<sup>18</sup>

The relationships that countries who see themselves as being part of a "security complex" are not necessarily simplistic, automated and without complications. Sometimes, they also contain within them, "socioeconomic disparities, societal heterogeneities, and geographical boundaries" that sometimes militate against the creation of a stable and robust security community.<sup>19</sup> This is vividly shown in the context of the Horn of Africa where close proximity to the Gulf region and the Middle East are having spill-over effects.<sup>20</sup>

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18 See Gilbert M. Khadiagala, "Eastern Africa: Security and the Legacy of Fragility," International Peace Institute, Africa Program Working Paper Series." 2008, p. 18.

19 See Gilbert Khadiagala, 2008, p.11.

20 Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, "The Geopolitics of Insecurity in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula," Vol. 18, Summer No 2, (2019), <https://www.mepc.org/geopolitics-insecurity-horn-africa-and-arabian-peninsula> 1/23/19, Page 1 of 11.



## CHAPTER TWO

# THE HORN OF AFRICA- CHANGING POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

## 2.1 States' Responses to post-Cold War Security Dilemmas

The immediate post-Cold War era was a brief period of modest optimism for the Horn of Africa. In quick successions, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda began to show signs of pursuing political and economic liberalization policies that included the introduction of hybrid, or controlled, democracy after several decades of guerilla insurgencies and unprecedented socio-economic upheavals. Three of the leaders- Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi, Eritrea's Isaias Afewerki, and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni- quickly became the darling of the West, with the Clinton administration at one point describing them as new breed of African leaders "who passed American tests for their commitment to democracy, economic renewal and civil rights."<sup>21</sup>

Even at that, the post-Cold War period did not bring sufficient respite to all the countries and their citizens uniformly. In Somalia, for example, after the government lost the gamble by invading the Ogaden region, the Siad Barre regime was besieged with intermittent civil unrest until the country was overrun by the United Somali Congress (USC), one of three rebel factions, in early 1991. Eventually, squabbles for political supremacy among the rebel factions further divided the country among the key warlords precipitating state collapse in the same year.<sup>22</sup>

In Sudan, in June 1989, the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation, led by Lt. General Omar Hassan al-Bashir, with the aid of the National Islamic Front (NIF), overthrew the elected government of Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi and seized power through a military coup. When reconciliation talks with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the leading southern rebel movement led by Colonel John Garang was suspended, fighting resumed in the South.<sup>23</sup> By the 1990s, Sudan increasingly came under the influence of radical Islamists whose attempt to impose Sharia Law led to heightened social unrest and instability. To compound the problem, the U.S. used the excuse of Sudan supporting Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Gulf War and also providing shelter to Osama Bin Laden and other terrorists, to intensify attack on Sudan. The American strategy of 'encircling and ostracizing' Sudan which also involved allying with her two neighbors, Ethiopia and Eritrea, by and large mirrored "the older framework of containment put in place to combat the spread of communism in Africa" as it was simply "reconfigured to tackle the new threat to U.S. interest—Islamic fundamentalism."<sup>24</sup> But this US strategy backfired when Eritrea launched a surprise border attack on Ethiopia on 6 May 1998, triggering a prolonged land war. While the unnecessary war lasted for two years and led to the signing of the Algiers Agreement in December 2000, the effects would last for over two decades. With hindsight, the Ethiopia-Eritrea war played a major part in the militarization of the Horn of Africa. Even when the temporary rapprochement between Sudan and Ethiopia faded, both countries continued with proxy wars by supporting dissident groups in each other's backyards.<sup>25</sup>

21 Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: From the Hopes of Freedom to the Heart of Despair—A History of 50 Years of Independence*, (Public Affairs, New York: 2005), p.678. Also see Dorina A. Bekoe, *East Africa and the Horn*, 2006, p. 119.

22 See Mary Harper, *Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and hope in a Shattered State*, (London: Zed Books: 2012) Ch. 4: A Failed State?; Peter Woodward, *Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Politics, Piracy and The Threat of Terror*, 2013). New York: I. B. Tauris), 2013)

23 For a scholarly analysis of the early years and the SPLM negotiation with Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, prior to the coup, see Bona Malwal, *Sudan and South Sudan: From one to Two*, (Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan) 2015, pp. 86-114; For a brief description of John Garang at the time of the start of the civil war, see Don Petterson, *Inside Sudan: Political Islam, Conflict and Catastrophe*, (New York: Westview Press, 1999) pp. 72-74.

24 See Dorina B. Bekoe, *East Africa and the Horn*, 2006, pp. 118-119.

25 Ruth Iyob and Gilbert M. Khadiagala, *Sudan: The Elusive Quest for Peace*, (London: Lynne Rienner Pub., International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series, 2006) pp. 101-132; K.G. Adar, "Conflict Resolution in a Turbulent Region: The Case of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Sudan" *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, Vol.1, No.2 ( 2000) pp. 39-66.

To further aggravate the tension between Ethiopia and Sudan, members of the Muslim Brotherhood that attempted to assassinate President Hosni Mubarak while he was in Addis Ababa for the OAU summit in June 1995 fled to Sudan. The cycle of rapprochement and belligerence continued, and by the end of the 1990s, and subsequent to the Ethio-Eritrea war, Ethiopia and Sudan agreed to cooperate and focused their energy to contain Eritrea. In this endeavor, they even managed to convince Yemen to join in an anti-Eritrean informal alliance.<sup>26</sup>

The securitization of the Horn became frequent when key countries in the region began to undermine each other during much of the 2000s. In addition to its complicated relationships with Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sudan also locked horns with Uganda by accusing it of providing military support to the SPLM and rebel movements in Darfur, both of which had already started agitating for independence. Uganda, on its part, accused Khartoum for providing financial support, intelligence, training and retreat base to the Lord Resistance Army (LRA).<sup>27</sup> The unresolved conflict in Darfur has taken its toll on the Government of Sudan, with the militarization of its politics, as well as increasing social resentment. After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the establishment of a Government of National Unity, the inability of the National Congress Party (NCP) to make the unity government attractive for the SPLM during the interim period, between 2005-2011, eventually paved the way for the independence of South Sudan. With that, Sudan lost half of its oil resources and that put further strain on the economy. But none of the countries faced a more deplorable situation than Somalia which confronted one of the most destabilizing post-Cold War political developments in the Horn of Africa, with the collapse of the central government in 1991 and a civil war well that continued well into the mid-2000s.<sup>28</sup>

Like other parts of the continent, the expectation that the demise of the Cold War would open new windows of opportunity for peace and stability did not fully materialize for countries in the Horn of Africa. Instead, the region's security dilemma dramatically changed with the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. A year later, Washington's new National Security Strategy (NSS) issued in September 2002 made the Horn of Africa the focus of Operation Enduring Freedom.<sup>29</sup> Specifically, the new Operation targeted terrorist activities in Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti at the same time that the Pentagon began to implement the Cooperative Security Locations and Forward Operating Sites.<sup>30</sup> With the spread of global terrorism, it became evident that statelessness in Somalia would pose existential security threats to the countries of the Horn, and beyond. The most consequential development, however, came when the Al-Shabaab movement incubated in Somalia as the armed wing arm of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) which came to power in Mogadishu, albeit very briefly in 2006.<sup>31</sup>

26 For Ethiopia's concern about Sudan's effort to spread radical islam in the Horn, see Don Petterson, *Inside Sudan: Political Islam, Conflict and Catastrophe*, (New York: Westview Press, 1999) pp.158-159; International Crisis Group, "Sudan Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence", *Africa Report*, no. 159 (2010).

27 For how Sudan and South Sudan used the LRA as bargaining chips in the triangular relationship among Sudan,, South Sudan and Uganda, see Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 202-206.

28 For Ethiopia's concept of extended deterrence in Somalia and the circumstances that led to its intervention in 2007, see Ken Menkhaus, "The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts," (*African Affairs*, 106/204 April 2007,pp.379-388; See lyob and Khadigila, *Sudan: The Elusive Quest for Peace*, 2006, pp. 133-165;

29 A military operation by the U.S. to combat militant Islamism and piracy in the Horn of Africa, See "EUCOM: Operations and Initiatives". United States European Command, <http://www.eucom.mil/english/Operations/main.asp>. (Retrieved 23 March 2019.)

30 "U.S. European Command Statement", G. W. Bush (September 2002), *The national security strategy of the United States*. White House, Washington DC. 2004.Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf>.

31 See Ruth lyob and Edmond J. Keller, "U.S. Policy in the Horn: Grappling with a Difficult Legacy," in Dorina A. Bekoe, 2006, pp. 101-126.

Because of the potential contagion effect of al-Shabaab operating freely next door, Ethiopia militarily intervened in Somalia in December 2006 in support of the newly formed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) seeking to oust the UIC.<sup>32</sup> It is important to note here that Ethiopia's extended deterrence over Somalia was meant and related to the damage the UIC could wreak on her own fragile security situation at the time. Indeed, Addis Ababa had claimed that the UIC was receiving transfer of arms and advisers from Eritrea and providing same to two armed insurgency groups in exile; the Oromo Liberation Front and the Ogaden Liberation Front, then based in Asmara, Eritrea's capital.<sup>33</sup> Following the ouster of the UIC, the TFG also failed to reverse the dire political, security, and economic situation in Somalia. Indeed, the ouster of the UIC drew it towards Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups that were already taking hold in large parts of central and southern Somalia. The UIC also widened its operation across the entire Horn of Africa, including attacks on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2013, which led to the killing of 67 people.<sup>34</sup>

The manner in which countries in the Horn of Africa responded to their security dilemma is a consequence of the myriad-and complicated- challenges each of them continue to face. Over the years, the intricacies and fragility of many of the countries were compounded by unending cycles of violent hostilities that they are still struggling to resolve despite numerous political agreements to resolve conflicts in South Sudan, Darfur and Somalia have vividly demonstrate.<sup>35</sup> Without exception, each of the countries in the region responded to their predicament with strengthening their security posture, clamping on internal dissent and to do the minimum necessary to promote democracy and civil liberties.

The excessive securitization of the state that is rampant in the Horn of Africa had the most dramatic impact on Ethiopia as 25 years of EPRDF rule reached a breaking point by 2018. Since 2014, widespread anti-government riots and violent protests erupted that drew attention to deep-seated grievances and marginalization as well as spike in the cost of living. The government, in turn, used excessive force against demonstrators and embarked on mass arrests and incarceration that continued until a state of emergency was declared in October 2016. With the country believed to be sliding towards civil war, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn resigned in March 2018 paving the way for the appointment of Abiy Ahmed as the new Prime Minister in April 2018. Even at that, there was no guarantee that the change of leadership would give the country the much-desired reprieve to sort out substantive social, economic and political issues especially in view of how security considerations had become so deeply entrenched.

## 2.2. The New Geo-politics of the Horn of Africa: Is the tectonic plate shifting?

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, himself a product of the EPRDF and his government came to realize that with the political paralysis in the country becoming unmanageable, the heavily securitized state apparatus has to be substantively reformed and that the ruling party, in particular, and the country, in general, have to make a fundamental reset. During the party Congress before his election as Prime Minister, there was a consensus that given the violent acrimony among the leaders, it was quite likely that the Party, and by extension the country, could split unless an acceptable consensus candidate emerge to lead the Party. Even after the election of Prime Minister Abiy, the key question then was whether the Party under the new leadership can manage, or reorganize the process of transition in an orderly manner to stem the looming implosion. After all, the process of reconstructing the new regime would require uprooting layers of vested interests and neutralizing potential enemies. The new leadership is willing to undertake a comprehensive reform agenda. In broad terms, the key components of the reform included lifting of the state of emergency, release of political prisoners, pardoning of people who have been indicted under various terrorism-related charges, increasing tolerance of political dissent by liberalizing opposition media and removing restrictions on access to the internet.

32 For the consequences of Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia in 2007, see "The Search for Peace: A History of Mediation in Somalia since 1988," Center for Research and Dialogue, International Peace Building Alliance, 2010, pp.52-53; Ricardo Real Pedrosa De Sousa, "External Interventions and Civil War Intensity in South-Central Somalia (1991-2010)," *Cadrenod de Estudos Africanos*, No. 28, 2014, pp. 57-86, <https://journals.openedition.org/cea/1678?lang=pt>; Peter Woodward, *Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Politics, piracy and the threat of terror* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013); R. Bereketeab, "The IGAD and Regional Relations in the Horn of Africa," in R. Bereketeab, ed., *The Horn of Africa: Intra- State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security* (London, Pluto Press, 2013) pp. 141-155.

33 Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping," *International Security*, Vol. 31, (2006/07), p. 89.

34 See Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa, AU Peace and Security Council, 455th Meeting, at the Level of Heads of State and Government, Nairobi, Kenya, September 2, 2014.

35 For a definitive account of the conflict in Darfur and the efforts of the African Union to resolve it, see "Report of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur, (AUPD)," 207th Meeting at the Level of Heads of State and Government, Peace and Security Council, 20 October 2009, Abuja, Nigeria.

In subsequent months, negotiations ensued with a number of active armed groups in exile in neighboring countries to return to the country and engage in peaceful political dialogue. In preparation for the upcoming national election and to provide all constituencies a level playing field by reforming the Electoral Commission and political parties became part and parcel of the reform process by agreeing on a joint code of conduct. Most significant was the decision of the EPRDF Party Congress held in October 2018 to depoliticize the state security structure. In foreign policy, the government set aside the underlying mistrust that had shaped Ethiopia-Eritrea relations for over two decades by reaching out to Asmara and other neighboring countries across the Horn.

Thus, it is instructive to note that the domestic reform policies of the new administration also ushered a foreign policy. Thus far, rapprochement with Eritrea has resulted in the borders (though currently they are closed), increased trade activities (though erratic), reestablishment of telecommunication, and air links. Moreover, over the last couple of months, the initiatives that were taken for a much broader and region-wide regional integration drive have come in full throttle. Only after two months in office, the new administration announced that the government would accept the 2000 Algiers agreement by returning the occupied border town of Badme to Eritrea. On 8 July 2018, Prime Minister Abiy made a historic visit to Asmara, and the next day the two countries signed a Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship which officially ended the state of war and committed the two countries to close ranks on political, social, cultural and security cooperation; resume transport, trade, communication and diplomatic ties; implement the decision on the Boundary Commission, and generally endeavor to ensure regional peace, development and cooperation.<sup>36</sup> In line with its policy of encouraging normalization of relations between member states, the Joint Declaration was welcomed by the AU as a courageous pathway to reconciliation, and reiterated the readiness of the Commission to accompany them in whatever way they deem appropriate.<sup>37</sup>

In furtherance of effort to push the regional integration process, the leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia held their first tripartite meeting in Asmara on 6 September 2018, to strengthen economic, security and political cooperation in the Horn of Africa.<sup>38</sup> The reopening of the border crossing points at Burre and Zalambessa is key to fast-tracking economic integration as the former would allow Ethiopia to access Eritrea's Assab port (and a passage to the Red Sea) while Zalambessa connects the main trade route linking Mekele, capital of Ethiopia's northern Tigray region directly with Asmara. On the same day, 11 September 2018, Eritrea followed suit by signing an accord with Djibouti after more than a decade of border disputes over the Dumeira mountain and its adjoining island along the Red Sea. During the second tripartite meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Bahr Dar, Ethiopia the three leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia virtually reiterated the same commitment to foster comprehensive cooperation that advances the aspirations of their peoples; build close political, economic, social, cultural and security ties, and promote regional peace and security. It is against this background that, Prime Minister Abiy and President Isaias visited Juba, South Sudan, for a meeting with President Salva Kiir Mayardit in March 2019.<sup>39</sup>

36 For full text of the Declaration, see [www.shabait.com/.../26639-joint-declaration-of-peace-and-friendship-](http://www.shabait.com/.../26639-joint-declaration-of-peace-and-friendship-)

37 See Statement of the AU Chairperson, Addis Ababa, 9 July 2018.

38 See Africa News, Nov. 10/2018. See <https://www.africanews.com/.../eritrea-ethiopia-pledge-to-respect-somal->

39 For full text of the declaration, see Africa News, March 4, 2018, <https://www.africanews.com/.../ethiopia-eritrea-leaders-visit-south-suda...>

### 2.3. Gulf diplomacy as a factor in the Horn

The extent of the involvement of Gulf countries, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia, as conduits, or back-channel interlocutors throughout the reconciliation process became evident when, on 17 September 2018, Ethiopia and Eritrea met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to sign the “Agreement on Peace, Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation.” In seven short Articles, the two countries reaffirmed the spirit and letters of the earlier Joint Declaration.<sup>40</sup> On the margins of the same meeting, the Saudis also invited the President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Gelleh, to meet with the President of Eritrea with the hope of kick-starting a new chapter of meaningful dialogue in the otherwise long and turbulent past. It is instructive to note that these UN was the only international organization to witness the Jeddah meetings and, according to the UN Security Council, the developments represent a historic and significant milestone with far-reaching positive consequences for the Horn of Africa and beyond.<sup>41</sup> Analysts may differ as to why the Saudis took the unusual step to facilitate the Jeddah meeting. In reality, that decision cannot be separated from the wider Gulf politics and the crisis impulses they provoke. At best, the Saudi-UAE effort was aimed at positioning the coalition to win-over Djibouti and Ethiopia or, at worst keep them neutral but leaning against the Qatar-Turkey alliance.

### 2.4. The implications of the emerging paradigms

The domestic and regional reforms embarked on by Prime Minister Abiy required a less securitized and more cooperative framework to succeed. While Ethiopia’s economy performed well for over a decade under difficult internal and external conditions, its future expansion would require a considerably improved enabling environment with adequate infrastructure and access to port facilities to deliver the benefits to citizens. It is clear that the port of Djibouti which Ethiopia had used to ship and receive over 90% of its economic and trade transactions cannot serve due to congestion and heavy militarization now that the Port has been parceled out among six foreign countries namely the US, Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, Italy and France, to build military base.

If on the basis of its current outreach policy Ethiopia is able to successfully bring countries in the Horn together under a regional cooperative framework, it would create an extremely conducive condition to utilize the ports of Assab and Massawa in Eritrea; Berbera in Somaliland; and Bossaso in Puntland, and also the relatively well-developed ports in Kenya. Whether there is a well-defined and articulated economic strategy behind current initiatives by Ethiopia for regional economic integration, in the first place, remains to be seen despite the fact that the effort so far is extremely promising. The critical question will be whether the extent that accelerated drive towards integration continue in light of the militarization of the Horn of Africa? This cannot be answered definitively because success will depend on a number of external factors coming into stream. But the most serious concern would perhaps be whether or not the reform of Prime Minister Abiy can be sustained and consolidated towards a more secure future. It is perhaps premature to draw conclusions as to how quickly the ongoing ‘peace offensive’ led by Ethiopia would yield the desired dividend, and if its prolongation would not also create new expectation gaps within Ethiopia and across the Horn.

40 For the full text of the Agreement, see Reuters: September 16/18 <https://www.reuters.com/...ethiopia-eritrea.../ethiopian-eritrean-leaders-...>

41 For the Security Council Statement, see Relief Web, September 20, 2018. The AU declined to attend the Jeddah summit.

## CHAPTER THREE

# THE REGIONALIZATION OF PEACE INITIATIVES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

## 3.1 A note on the evolution of IGAD Architecture for mediating peace and security

This section will further look into how IGAD managed to implement its conflict prevention, management and resolution mandate, and the mixed results doing so provoked. While it failed and need to overcome its limitations in some cases, (e.g. in South Sudan) it was effective in others and the scope for expansion is considerable (e.g. in Somalia). What factors contributed to success in one in contrast to other where the failure of IGAD was self-evident illustrate the challenges to carrying out conflict mediation in general.

In 2008, the AU and eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to coordinate their activities with regard to peace and security. One of the key provisions in the MoU is contained in Article 4.4 which specifies that all of the signatory RECs should “adhere to the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity, and comparative advantage, in order to optimize the partnership between the African Union, and the RECs in the promotion and maintenance of peace, security, and stability.”<sup>42</sup> But there was no clear definition as to which organization would act first during conflict situations even though, in principle, “the RECs...shall be encouraged to anticipate and prevent conflicts within and among Member States...to undertake peace-making and peace building efforts to resolve them.”<sup>43</sup> This ambiguity remains the central problem in the realignment of the Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) vis-à-vis the mandate of IGAD and other RECs. No systematic effort has been made, as yet, to improve this disjointed and contradictory mandate.

The Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is anchored on the principle of subsidiarity especially as it governs the triad of relationships between and among the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and African Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The IGAD is one of the eight regional mechanisms recognized by the AU, with its own security architecture tasked with additional conflict prevention portfolio following its restructuring in 1996. Article 7 of the IGAD Agreement underscored the desire to “promote peace and stability in the sub-region and create mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of inter- and intra-state conflicts through dialogue, and its “mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of inter-state and intra-state conflicts,” and was endorsed in 2000.<sup>44</sup>

The transformation of the erstwhile Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) to IGAD has given the organization the necessary legal basis for conflict prevention, resolution, and management, including to anticipate potential conflicts through its Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism (CEWARN) capabilities.<sup>45</sup> The third element of IGAD is the effort to establish a military cooperation framework and joint military formations to strengthen its ability for rapid deployment during crises.<sup>46</sup>

42 See Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Area of Peace and Security Between the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and the Coordinating Mechanisms of the Regional Standby Brigades of Eastern Africa and Northern Africa, (African Union, 2008), p.10.

43 See MoU, Article 20.1 (African Union, 2008) p.21.

44 See Agreement Establishing the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)”, [www.igad.org/library/docs/agreement\\_establishing\\_igad.pdf](http://www.igad.org/library/docs/agreement_establishing_igad.pdf), Art 13A; Also see Article 3.2, Khartoum Declaration of the 8th Summit of Heads of State and Government, 23 November 2000, available from: [www.igad.org/library/docs/8th\\_Summit\\_declaration\\_khartoum.pdf](http://www.igad.org/library/docs/8th_Summit_declaration_khartoum.pdf); For the application of the subsidiarity principle in the context of ECCAs, see “The Principle of Subsidiarity: The Examples of ECCAs in the Central African Crisis,” A Joint Economic Community of Central African State (ECCAS)–Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) Publication, Helsinki, November 2016, pp. 1-21.

45 Alemayehu Fentaw, “The Emerging Peace and Security Architecture in the Horn of Africa: Prospects and Challenges,” (<https://www.transcend.org/tms/category/africa/>), <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2011/01/the-emerging-peace-and-security-architecture-in-the-horn-of-africa-prospects-and-challenges/> 2/4/19, 12@30 AM Page 3 of 11.

46 Ludeki Chweya, “Emerging Dimensions of Security in the IGAD Region,” in Makumi Mwangiru, ed., *Regional Security in the Age of Globalisation*, (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2004), pp. 31- 49.

Its new mandate required that IGAD is responsible for dealing with several conflicts, including those between Uganda and Kenya, Uganda and Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Ethiopia and Eritrea. IGAD also considered internal conflicts such as the collapse of Somalia, civil war in South Sudan, and the LRA rebellion in northern Uganda.<sup>47</sup> Overall, IGAD has had mixed results in the implementation of its conflict intervention mandate. To date, the most successful IGAD's mediation has been of the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), in 2005 for example, as well as its successful undertaking in the Somali peace process, despite its many problems. The transitioning of the IGAD mediation process to that of the African Union in 2008 also reflected how important it is to calibrate the subsidiarity principle correctly. The crisis in South Sudan, on the other hand, best illustrates the many challenges IGAD is facing, especially where it has limited instruments to effectively play such role. In the same manner, the South Sudan case also demonstrates the challenge the APSA is facing both in terms of not clarifying, amending or realigning the issue of subsidiarity and complementarity, as stated in the APSA provisions.<sup>48</sup>

The capacity of IGAD to undertake such broad tasks for collective security is one of the key features of the current security regime which provides a cooperation platform "among community of states that is more than the following of [their] short-run self-interests."<sup>49</sup> The proliferation of regional security regimes, thus, provided a pacific environment as such regimes conducted a wide range of activities such as political mediations, preventive diplomacy, peace support operations and post-conflict reconstructions in a multilateral context.<sup>50</sup> It is also on the premise that security is indivisible and that the security of one tied to those of others that no country can be completely secure so long as the territory, independence, and populations of other states are seriously threatened.<sup>51</sup>

While some of its mechanisms are yet to be fully operationalized, the basic expectation for the provision of pacific settlement of conflicts provides the internalization of its accepted norms. In a region where state security is dominant, the regional security regime put in place could at least "provide information on the intentions and interests of the participants so that misperceptions, and miscalculations, that lie at the heart of the security dilemma would be reduced."<sup>52</sup> A commonality that unites all its members is what IGAD had faced collectively in terms of natural disasters, and the many intra and inter-state conflicts that lasted, in some cases, for more than four decades.<sup>53</sup>

Notwithstanding its efforts over the past two decades, IGAD's role in ameliorating conflict situations have produced mixed results due mainly to constraints imposed by inherent structural limitations.<sup>54</sup> Related to this, is that the regional security situation within which IGAD have had to operate in is changing in important and substantive ways, as evident not just in the militarization of the Red Sea but also the growing involvement of Gulf countries in the IGAD domain. While the politics of the Gulf region is complicated enough, it is quite likely that it could easily fracture some of the current realignments going on in the Horn, and across Africa.<sup>55</sup> Even the current efforts towards 'first track' regional economic integration involving Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea are done outside of the IGAD framework, is an example of some of the areas that could potentially weaken IGAD as a security regime.

47 Alemayehu Fentaw, "The Emerging Peace and Security Architecture in the Horn of Africa: Prospects and Challenges," (<https://www.transcend.org/tms/category/africa/>), <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2011/01/the-emerging-peace-architecture-in-the-horn-of-africa-prospects-and-challenges/> 2/4/19, 12@30 AM Page 3 of 11.

48 See African Union, African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), Assessment Study (Addis Ababa, 2010), Ch.7, p. 67.

49 Robert Jervis, "Security Regime," in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 173.

50 Laurie Nathan, "The Peacemaking Effectiveness of Regional Organisations," (*Crisis States Research Centre: London School of Economics*, 2010) No. 81. Pp. 1-26.

51 Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables", *International Organization*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1982), p. 186.

52 Robert O. Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structuralism and Beyond", in Robert O. Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and its Critics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 159; pp. 164-165.

53 See IGAD Regional Strategy, Vol.2, Implementation Plan—2016-2020, (January 2016), p.9.

54 Ricardo Real P. De Sousa, "African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Subsidiarity and the Horn of Africa: The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)," (*Center of African Studies (CFA): Lisbon*, 2013.), pp. 59-77.

55 Alexander Rondos, "The Horn of Africa - Its Strategic Importance for Europe, the Gulf States, and Beyond", <https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2016--issue--ts-strategic-importance-for-europe-the-gulf>

## 3.2 South Sudan and Somalia: Contrasting Approach to Managing Peace in the Horn

### 3.2.1. IGAD and conflict resolution in South Sudan

The South Sudan conflict is still trending, as an ongoing civil war between the government and opposition forces that started in December 2013. Though many peace agreements were reached under the auspices of IGAD, they have all failed to checkmate continuing fighting.

The long-simmering tension within the SPLM exploded at the meeting of the National Liberation Council (NLC), in Juba, on December 14-15, 2013. The immediate background to the meeting of the NLC was a split in the leadership of SPLM with several leading members, including Vice President Dr. Riek Machar, publicly announcing intention to run for the post of Chair of the SPLM and, by extension, the President of the country. In April 2013, the President had abruptly removed executive powers from his Vice President and in July, dissolved the government and removed Dr. Riek and other critics from their portfolios. It was against this background that the December showdown was set.<sup>56</sup>

After a belligerent opening speech by President Salva Kiir on the opening day of the NLC, on 14 December 2013, Dr. Riek and several senior members boycotted the rest of the meeting. On the evening of 15 December, renewed violence broke out on the pretext that the Presidential Protective Tiger Unit came under attack from the guards of Dr. Riek Machar, an allegation the latter vehemently denied. In the following days, fierce fighting continued between government forces and those loyal to Dr. Riek Machar. On 17 December, the President claimed that there was a coup attempt to oust him by the Vice President, and used that allegation as the basis to fire him from office in April. In the weeks and months that followed, the conflict took ethnic character as government forces targeted Dr. Machar's ethnic group, the Nuer. Dr. Machar fled Juba on 15 December through the border with the DRC. Dr. Riek Machar forces were reorganized but still predominantly relied on Nuer soldiers, and eventually became SPLM/In Opposition (SPLM/IO).

The IGAD mediation commenced on 3 January 2014. While the first cessation of hostilities agreement was signed on 23 January 2014, it took another four months before the parties agreed on the format of negotiations and a to complete the talks by 16 June 2014. The first major disagreement over the modalities of the negotiations came when the government accused the IGAD mediation of having a hidden agenda and grandstanding. They also objected that the Mediation went to the UN Security Council instead of the AU PSC to report on its assessment of progress, and expressed misgiving that it was in collusion with the Troika- UK, Norway and the US- whose agenda the Mediation was allegedly implementing. The government, finally broached the idea of conducting the negotiations directly with the opposition, the SPLM/IO, without the assistance of IGAD.

The role of IGAD and its relationship with the Troika, especially the United States, and how it was composed from the start was obviously a sensitive issues for the government as it believed that Washington was supporting the opposition SPLM/IO. There was also widespread concern that IGAD cannot be entirely independent and impartial given that the mediators have been directly implicated in the conflict, both currently and historically. This was in particular the case with Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Kenya.

In the subsequent years, and after reaching many political agreements and failed cessation of hostilities accords, the latest talks between President Salva Kiir and Dr. Riek Machar held in Addis Ababa on 20 June 2018, to facilitate an upcoming meeting of the two, in Khartoum, the following week. The Khartoum meeting led to the signing of the Khartoum Declaration of Agreement among the Government of South Sudan, the SPLM/IO and other political parties. The final meeting, the Entebbe Proposal, held on 7 July 2018, in Uganda, to outline power-sharing deals. Almost after ten months since the conclusion of that deal, there is still no certainty that these agreements would be faithfully implemented.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> For a first hand account of the circumstances leading to the 2013 crisis in South Sudan and its aftermath, see Hilde F. Johnson, *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, (I.B. Tauris, New York, 2016), pp. 179-223; Personal notes of the author as a member of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, 2014. Account is based on information in the author's possession in his capacity as

<sup>57</sup> See "South Sudan Conflict Insight: Situation Analysis," Institute for peace and Security Studies (Addis Ababa, August 2018), Vol.2, p.6.



### 3.2.2. IGAD and Conflict Resolution in Somalia

State collapse in Somalia in 1991 led to a localized but protracted armed conflict that contributed to the realignment and consolidation of clans as the legitimate interlocutors and power brokers in the country. In part due to the inability of the international community, including the United Nations, and the African Union, to effectively intervene in the Somali civil war made it to drag for over a decade until IGAD's substantive consideration of the crisis through the Arta reconciliation talks in 2000, leading to the establishment of The Transitional National Government (TNG) in the same year. With the failure of the TNG to become operational, and after two years of negotiations, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established in 2004, and was the internationally recognized government of the country until 2012. Indeed, IGAD's success, along with the international community, in shepherding the protracted mediations, in supporting the TFG, was considered a major achievement.

Even after its establishment, the TFG lacked the kind of broad-based local and regional supports to succeed regardless of the strong backing it received from Ethiopia. By 2005, the traditional divisions and suspicions among the different clan leaders resurfaced again and undermined the TFG which was itself unable to fully establish in Mogadishu. In mid-2006, the Islamic Court Union (ICU) defeated rival factions and took over much of south-central Somalia. Still in support of TFG, Ethiopia intervened militarily and defeated the ICU in early 2007<sup>58</sup> causing a backlash as different factions on the ground backed by Djibouti and Eritrea became vocal critics of the TFG, accusing it of doing the biddings of Ethiopia.<sup>59</sup>

In spite of the growing opposition from TFG critiques, IGAD managed to mobilize support for it from the AU and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), including a 2006 UNSC Resolution 1725, authorizing an AU Peacekeeping Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). IGAD further mobilized the international community and successfully established a representative government in Somalia. Subsequent to the signing of the Djibouti Peace Accord in 2008, the signatories demanded for the immediate withdrawal of Ethiopian forces and the deployment of AMISOM. It was under this condition that the AU PSC convened on 19 January 2007 and authorized the deployment of AMISOM to, inter alia, "create conducive conditions for long-term stabilization, reconstruction and development in Somalia,"<sup>60</sup> With the deployment of AMISOM, Ethiopian troops withdrew from Somalia in December 2008. In January 2009, the Djibouti peace process continued until the election of the new TFG President.

As shown in the above brief narrative, each time period required IGAD's delicate negotiation for the calibration of the various forces with their external backers. Indeed, the gradual transfer of authority to the AU arose, with continuous IGAD support, but with a recognition that the deployment and sustenance of a full-fledged peacekeeping force would be above the capacity of IGAD to deliver. While Somalia politics is far from stable, and still facing serious security challenges persist, the transition from IGAD mediation to AU-led state stabilization has been a major achievement. This, perhaps, reflected the best calibration of AU-REC relations and instructive application of the subsidiarity principle.

## 3.3. Key insights from IGAD/AU involvements, including implications for APSA

The divergent responses by the African Union in South Sudan and Somalia understandably produced different outcomes that underscore how critical it is that proper assessments be made by the AU and RECs on how to approach any conflict situation. The internal complications of the South Sudan conflict, the sheer magnitude of external intervention, the suspicion and enmity among IGAD member states, and the prospect that the negotiation will be long and windy required serious deliberation at the level of the AU to develop a proper course of action. The fact that the crisis was taken for mediation by IGAD, without proper resort to the AUPSC reduced, from the outset, IGAD's effectiveness and a positive outcome to the protracted negotiation.

<sup>58</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the role IGAD played in efforts to resolve the conflict in Somalia, see Kidist Mulugeta: "The Role of Regional and International Organizations in Resolving the Somali Conflict: The Case of IGAD," (Addis Ababa, Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung, Addis Ababa, 2009).

<sup>59</sup> The Search for Peace: A History of Mediation in Somalia since 1988, Center for Research and Dialogue, International Peace Building Alliance, 2010, pp.52-53.

<sup>60</sup>

There was also a palpable degree of political deference towards IGAD such that irrespective of the challenge facing the South Sudan mediation was experiencing, the AU was willing to observe only from the sidelines. Even when the mediation process was beset by technical problems created by the mediators, including their inability to designate a lead mediator among the three co-equals, there was no joint AU-IGAD reflection and consultation to overcoming that. There was no formal coordination or brainstorming sessions between the AU and IGAD throughout the entire mediation process despite the fact that the former designated a high-level committee of 5 African leaders, and a High Representative of the Chairperson, to provide necessary support to the IGAD mediation.

In contrast, the Somalia process saw the AU and IGAD playing their proper and complimentary roles at different times. Facilitating a rigorous, grassroots level, political mediation and reconciliation process in Somalia during the critical years between 2005 and 2007 was easier for IGAD given its deep familiarity with regional political dynamics at play. On the other hand, leaving the AU to coordinate international support, mobilize resources and undertake peacekeeping missions was crucial. Ultimately, only a complimentary AU-REC engagements would make intervention in crisis easier to deliver based on the ideals of finding African solutions to intractable conflicts. Finding the right balance between capabilities, political will, dependable and secured funding, and commitment on the part of external interlocutors will remain sources of constant challenge for both the AU and regional actors. For the Horn of Africa, this is all the more urgent as the region is entering a fast changing security environment that requires a more calibrated and coherent set of interventions both from within and outside the region.

The last point to make relates to how the principle of subsidiarity played out in both cases, and how it became the Achilles Heel of implementing mediation interventions in South Sudan within the spirit of APSA. At the heart of APSA is the understanding that regional mechanisms will act as first responders whenever a crisis breaks out. Yet, evidence so far suggests two competing claims on whether this understanding applies in reality and if it offers an effectiveness pathway to conflict management, or not. This is especially the case given that there is not guarantee that a REC could singlehandedly muster what it takes to start and successfully complete conflict prevention or mediation as a first responder, consistent with the principle of subsidiarity.

It should not come as a surprise, as noted above, that one of the biggest hurdles that hindered AU's full involvement in mediating the South Sudan conflict was that the principle of subsidiarity was repudiated from the onset as IGAD opted to go it alone without the capacity to do so in the first place. Indeed, the IGAD decision to mediate the crisis was taken prior to the AU meeting to deliberate on the conflict and the best continental response. This point is important since from the outset of the conflict and the first meeting of IGAD, questions over the credibility, impartiality and neutrality of Uganda and Sudan "already deeply involved with factions that later broke into the competing civil war" had been raised but left unanswered.

The AU was also only allowed to participate, at its own request, as an "observer." When the IGAD mediation failed to make any substantive progress, the AU "observer" in the talks advised the AU Commission that the regional mediation scheme in place was in no position to effectively conduct the talks and that direct AU intervention would be necessary to salvage the negotiations. One of the proposals made by the AU team to agree to an AU-IGAD co-mediation arrangement faltered because the PSD, whose task would include following up with the talks, felt that such a proposal may be viewed by IGAD as undue interference and it was shelved.

Throughout its lifespan, the IGAD mediation on South Sudan faced tremendous challenges, including lack of expertise, limited resources, inability to smoothly shepherd the mediation towards identifying situations of compromise, stonewalling and outright belligerency by the two leading protagonists. Under such conditions, scaling up the involvement of the AU would have been consistent with its APSA mandate. Another key lesson is that it would have been useful very early before the start of a mediation process for a candid discussion to take place on what subsidiarity should entail between the AU and a REC in different situations. Such preliminary discussion would also enable both institutions to assess the requisite capacity and resources required for a successful mediation before its authorization.

It is also imperative to undertake regular revision of MoUs with RECs and to assist them to develop the necessary capacities to mediate conflicts. After all, what the experiences of the past decade in mediating conflict in the Horn of Africa has shown is that the APSA requires fundamental realignment with the tasks expected of the RECs. Although the capacity and resources available to RECs vary, the question that continues to linger is how to strike the necessary balance between encouraging the involvement of RECs as first responders and the inherent limitations they face in terms of promptly arresting a situation without the assistance of the AU or other external parties. While ambiguities remain in terms of burden-sharing, there is also no practical conceptualization of how the transfer of responsibility from a regional mechanism to continental platform can be effected as the example of IGAD and the AU in Somalia demonstrate.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE AU AND THE HOA: A MORAL GUARANTOR OF PEACE, OR WEAKLING INTERLOCUTOR?

The multiplicity of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa certainly seems to be constraining the abilities of IGAD and the AU act effectively. It is undoubtedly the case that the Horn of Africa has been one of the most daunting brief for the AU, in particular. Although its primary role, consistent with the provision of the APSA, is to define and authorize appropriate measures to address peace and security issues in the continent, evidence shows that AU handled the series of crises in the Horn by resigning to playing a secondary and supporting role to IGAD as was the case in Somalia until the deployment of AMISOM and in the Sudan-South Sudan talks that led to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, CPA, in 2005. At another level, the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) successfully took full charge of the Darfur mediation and the various negotiations that followed, such as that between the government and armed groups in Darfur, and the implementation of ceasefire. With regard to the finalization of the residual issues between Sudan and South Sudan following the latter's independence, the Cooperation Agreement of 2012 facilitated by the AUHIP continued to serve as the basis for cooperation between the two countries as well as the implementation of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zones on Abyei. Until the recent and still evolving political situation in Sudan, (The AUHIP) is also still involved in the further talks over national political processes between the government of Sudan and opposition parties.

Even for the African Union, the Horn of Africa shows a dense network of entangled relationship one in which countries in the region are all closely linked by centuries of history, culture and trade. In the words of former South Africa President Thabo Mbeki, it is "a place of extraordinary rich history and diverse cultures; a place where three monotheistic faiths of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism have been present from the earliest days; a place where the foreign colonizer was resisted longest and most successfully." Sadly, however, as Mr. Mbeki continued, the Horn of Africa has been "subjected to some of the longest and some of the most destructive armed conflicts [and that] resolving the conflicts...and setting the region on a path to cooperation and prosperity is a priority and an obligation for all of us."<sup>61</sup>

Despite concerns over unresolved issues in South Sudan and Somalia, however, the question of what issues that changing developments in the contiguous countries that share the Red Sea are likely to produce in terms of the overall peace and security agenda of the AU had been anticipated since 2013. At its 397<sup>th</sup> meeting on 23 September 2013, the AU PSC examined how best to approach emerging trends in peace and security in the Horn of Africa and the adjacent area of the Red Sea. It underscored the urgent imperative to promote a regional and holistic approach to the challenges of peace, security, stability and development in support of IGAD. It was in the light of this understanding that the PSC requested the AUHIP, in close consultation with IGAD, to contribute on the basis of more sustained engagement to the promotion of peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.<sup>62</sup>

61 See PSC communiqué, Decision on the Activities of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan and South Sudan, 750th Meeting, 6 February 2018.

62 See PSC Communiqué, 397th Meeting at the Level of the Heads of State and Government, New York, 23 September 2013

After four years since the PSC decision on the issue, the first conference on the Horn of Africa was convened in Khartoum, in October 2017, titled the “Khartoum Strategic Consultation in the Horn of Africa.” The consultation identified economic integration, the environment, natural resources, democratization and state fragility as key issues in “developing a security complex in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea area.” Since the Khartoum decision was taken, neither IGAD nor the AU have systematically engaged to deal with the growing scramble in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea arena as well as the potential security fallouts. Even at the last PSC session on the issue, in February 2018, where it further reiterated that the Horn of Africa is in a unique geopolitical position, the AU only committed itself to address the many challenges through a comprehensive and inclusive approach and with the active engagement of all relevant actors. Over a year has elapsed since the latter declaration and no concrete plan of action has still been agreed upon.<sup>63</sup> The AU must utilize the APSA as an umbrella to initiate not only an inclusive peace and security strategy for the Horn of Africa-Red Sea region but also to work towards ensuring that countries in the region vigorously pursue economic integration. Only such a regional-wide strategy can provide the appropriate mechanism or framework for political partnership among countries and echo Africa’s collective voice on critical issues.

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63 Assab, Eritrea, opened in April 2015; Mogadishu, Somalia, opened in May 2015; Berbera, Somaliland, opened in February 2017; Perim Island, Yemen, Opened in April 2017; Socotra Island, Yemen, Opened in May 2017.

# MAJOR POWERS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The ongoing quest by external powers to influence the security systems in the Red Sea zone will have several repercussions for the Horn of Africa as a region as well as for bilateral relations among different countries. This section presents a brief outline of what is generally described as the 'new scramble' for Africa by external powers, and assess the benefits, opportunities as well as risks they entail for the Horn of Africa.

## 5.1. The Red Sea and the Horn of Africa as emerging geopolitical priorities

The introductory remarks had highlighted the strategic importance of the Red Sea, underscoring how it has always been as an important trade route for global commerce, particularly at the turn of the century. The Red Sea has nearly 2000 km of navigable waters that connects at the south with the Indian Ocean, and very nearly join the Mediterranean Sea with the Gulf of Suez to the north. Seven countries have shorelines along the Red Sea, including some of the richest as well as poorest nations in the world. Egypt lies to the north, the Sudan borders the central section, and Eritrea lies to the south. On the eastern shore, Saudi Arabia occupies the northern and central sections, while Yemen borders the southern sections. In between, Israel and Jordan have tiny but strategically important footholds on the Red Sea at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. Even at its widest point in the south, near Massawa, the Sea is only 354 km wide while narrowing to 29 km at the shallow Straits of Bab al-Mandab.<sup>64</sup>

Over the years, the Horn of Africa has emerged as a distinctive region, one in which an intermingling of global trade and potent geopolitical relations have left imperial and colonial power since the Ottoman empire to lock horns in the Horn. Today, virtually all the major powers in the world have established military bases and politico-diplomatic presence in the region, including new entrants like China, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Turkey.

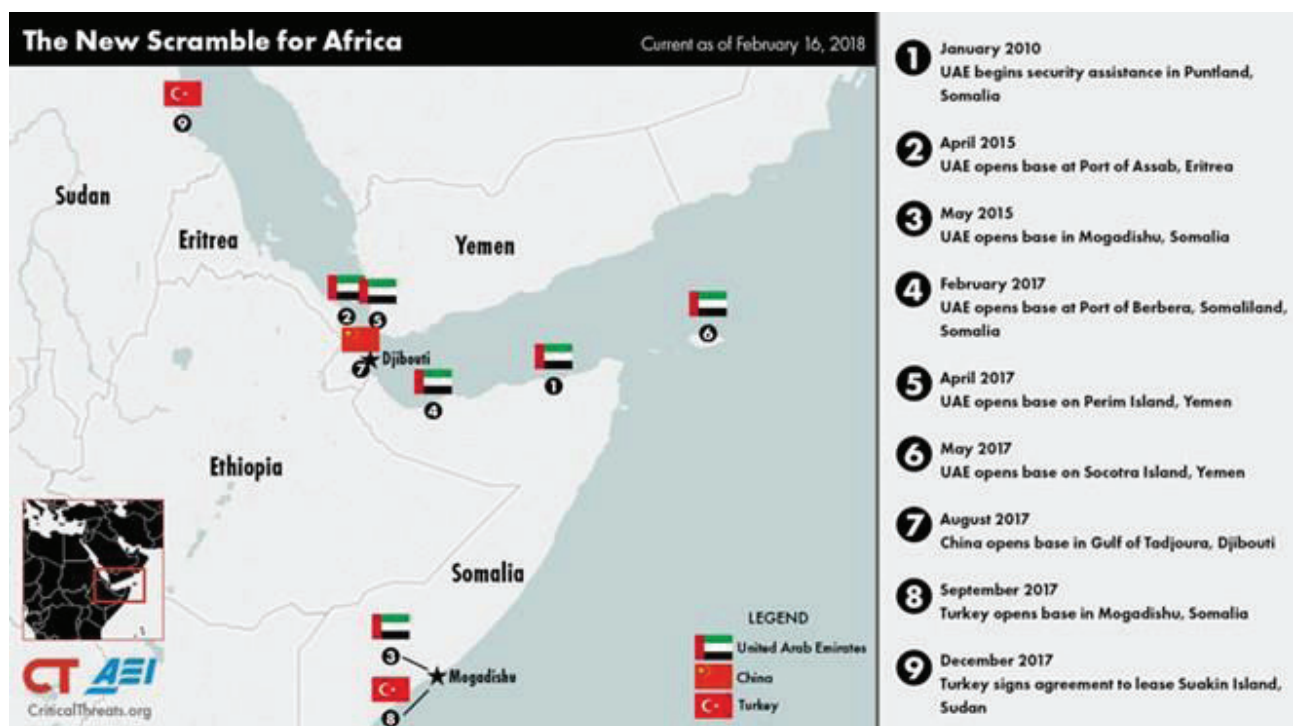
In a way, the new scramble is not substantively different from the old one since external powers have a singular objective of accessing warm waters intersecting the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. While the sea routes have always been useful for trade, what has been trending over the last one decade is the acquisition of port facilities along the littoral countries as strategic logistical hubs for immediate and potential military use. The growing presence of external actors is not only influencing the behavior of countries in the Horn of Africa but in some ways also changing the geopolitics of the region, the most consequential of that being its militarization. New entrants like Saudi Arabia and the UAE illustrate the trend towards militarization as they have established military bases in Eritrea for the projection of their military campaign in Yemen, and will be augmenting that with new bases in Berbera, the autonomous regions of Somaliland, as well as in Bossaso, in Puntland.

A security perspective is therefore the best explanation for the new scramble by external powers in the Horn of Africa. The perspective argues that on a range of issues, it would be essential that a country will have a comparative advantage to advance its economic and security interests by establishing military facilities, bases, and ports to secure those assets. As of February 2018, there are a total of 8 military bases in and around the Horn of Africa. Camp Lemonnier, the United States military base in Djibouti which opened as far back as in 2003, houses about 4,500 U.S. personnel who monitor the activities of suspected terrorists in the Horn of Africa, train the militaries of U.S. allies in the region, and lately launch countless drone flights into Somalia and Yemen. The UAE has a total of 5 military bases in and around the Horn of Africa.<sup>65</sup> China opened its

64 Alasadair J. Edwards, ed., *Red Sea: Key Environments*, (New York: Pergamon Press, 1987) pp. 1-3.

65 There is a proliferation of articles assessing the extent of the reforms under the new administration, the many challenges it faces and the opportunities ahead. Sober assessments include: "Managing Ethiopia's Unsettled Transition," Crisis Group Africa Report No. 269, 21 February 2019, pp.1-25; "Ethiopia-Eritrea Rapprochement and the Economic Dynamics of the Horn of Africa," OEF Research, September 12, 2018, pp.1-8; "Change and Continuity in Protests and Political Violence in Prime Minister Abiy's Ethiopia," ACLED, Feb.17, 2019, pp.1-11; Andrew Korybko, "Ethiopia-Saudi Arabia Relations: Geopolitical and Economic Alignments, Will Ethiopia Become a Member of the GCC+," Global Research, September 2018, pp. 1-5, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/ethiopia-saudi-arabia-relations-g...a-member-of-the-gcc/5655494/amp/>; Rene Lefort, "Ethiopia: Climbing Mount Uncertainty, Open Democracy, 21 October 2018, pp. 1-12; Sonia Le Gourielle, "Ethiopia, an Imperfect Hegemon in the Horn of Africa," *International Affairs*, 10 September 2018, Vol. 94, No. 5, pp.1-8; G. Teressa, "Democratic Transition in Abiy's Ethiopia: Managing the Bad, the Good and the Troubling," *Addis Standard*, September 25, 2018, pp.2-10.

first overseas military base in the Gulf of Tadjoura, Djibouti, in August 2017 while Turkey opened its largest in Mogadishu, in September 2017, and have already signed a lease agreement with Sudan for Suakin Island. France and Italy, also operate base facilities in Djibouti. The overall objective behind these investments is not only to gain access to bases and ports but also some of the most populous African countries, with Ethiopia, Egypt, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, and Kenya accounting for 300 million inhabitants. In trade terms, Turkey has already increased its trade with Africa by six-folds, to \$17.4 billion, and opened a total of 29 embassies across Africa. Indeed, some of these engagements are also meant to project the rising international power stature of countries like Turkey.<sup>66</sup>



In the long run, the most problematic aspect of expanding external involvements in the Horn of Africa will be bilateral in nature. Undeniably, many of the transactions now being negotiated between the external actors and individual countries are not anchored on or moderated by existing institutional mechanisms, and are therefore subject to manipulation. The second aspect is the opportunistic nature of lopsided bilateral relations created under the prevailing condition of unequal relationships. This is exemplified, for example, in how the UAE negotiated base facilities with the two self-declared republics of Somaliland and Puntland, mere administrative regions that are still technically part of Somalia. Apart from widening the divisions between Mogadishu and the self-declared republics, such a deal has the potential to complicate the delicate political balance across the entire region. In specific terms, also, this will have consequences for Ethiopia whose interest in Somalia is anchored on stabilizing the central government of Somalia while maintaining links, without officially recognizing, the regional administrations. In view of current Ethiopia's reorientation of its relations with the UAE, how can these divergent policies be reconciled? Or, would it be possible for Ethiopia to maintain the new relations with UAE, and still reject Abu Dhabi's divisive policy that recognizes the regional administrations as sovereign? Ethiopia continues to maintain a strategic relationship with Djibouti, bilaterally and within the multilateral framework of IGAD, but there are still unresolved issues following the eviction of UAE from Djibouti in 2015. How should Ethiopia's strategic alliance with Djibouti be reconciled with its new realignment with UAE?

66 See for example: Jason McLure, "The Troubled Horn of Africa: Can the war-torn region be stabilized?" CQ Global Researcher, Vol. 3, Issue 6 (June 2009); Ismail N. Telci, "A Lost Love between the Horn of Africa and UAE," Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, May 28, May 2018; Will Todman, "Gulf Scramble for Africa: GCC states' foreign policy laboratory," CSIS Briefs, November 20, 2018; Onur Sazak and Auveen Elizabeth Woods, "Thinking Outside the Compound: Turkey's Approach to Peace-building in Somalia," in C.T. Call and Cedric de Coning eds., *Rising Powers and Peace-building, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2017, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-60621-7\_8," pp. 167-189.

Although the new deal between Ethiopia and Eritrea has brought a breath of fresh air to bilateral as well as multilateral relations between and among countries in the region, it is likely that there are still a number of residual- but serious- concerns such as the manner that Ethiopia pushed for the revision of key IGAD decisions on Eritrea, including the lifting of sanctions, without undertaking the necessary regional consultations. In other words, one of the many consequences of the intervention of Gulf countries in the politics of the Horn could be the weakening of IGAD and its security architecture, including raising suspicions among traditional allies, especially with Sudan and Djibouti.

A related concern will be that some countries, especially Djibouti, Sudan, and Eritrea, are already part of the Saudi-led coalition in the conflict in Yemen. This, undoubtedly is affecting IGAD even though it is difficult to assess what the long-term impacts would be. It is also the case that the Emiratis are currently using the port of Assab as the main military logistics hub to prosecute the war in Yemen, hosting helicopters, jets, drones, and naval vessels at the same time that Ethiopia is preparing to use the same port for commercial purposes. For the short and medium term, then, it may not be easy to insulate these activities from the vagaries of a widening security challenges in the region, unless collective actions is taken to that effect. What is certain, in the final analysis, is that the strategic-security relationships between countries of the Gulf and those in the Horn of Africa will continue to remain uncertain for a considerable time to come.



## CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSIONS

This contribution has sought to examine past and current developments in the Horn of Africa, and its immediate security implications for the region against the backdrop of the ongoing militarization in the Red Sea. It showed how a number of countries in the Horn are also gradually being sucked into intricate web of political, economic and military relations with Gulf countries but also at the long-term trajectory for them.

It further focused on the regional components of the securitization of the Red Sea region in light of the recent rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and its snowball effect towards galvanizing concerted efforts towards regional economic integration in the Horn of Africa.<sup>67</sup> From the two case studies, on South Sudan and Somalia, the study drew attention to the fluidity and uncertainties that increasingly characterize political and security situations in the region, and how the involvement of external actors might end up compounding the fragility of almost all countries in the region.

The study further focused on the role of regional and continental organizations, particularly IGAD and the AU, as interlocutors capable of addressing peace and security threats in the Horn of Africa. While the contributions of these institutions in making a difference is duly noted, the failings of existing mechanisms in terms of capacity to mobilize bipartisan consensus and political will could potentially diminish the quest towards a robust and sustainable regionalism.

67 There is a proliferation of articles assessing the extent of the reforms under the new administration, the many challenges it faces and the opportunities ahead. Sober assessments include; "Managing Ethiopia's Unsettled Transition," Crisis Group Africa Report No. 269, 21 February 2019, pp.1-25; "Ethiopia-Eritrea Rapprochement and the Economic Dynamics of the Horn of Africa," OEF Research, September 12, 2018, pp.1-8; "Change and Continuity in Protests and Political Violence in Prime Minister Abiy's Ethiopia," ACLED, Feb.17, 2019, pp.1-11; Andrew Korybko, "Ethiopia-Saudi Arabia Relations: Geopolitical and Economic Alignments, Will Ethiopia Become a Member of the GCC+," Global Research, September 2018, pp. 1-5, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/ethiopia-saudi-arabia-relations-g...a-member-of-the-gcc/5655494/amp?>; Rene Lefort, "Ethiopia: Climbing Mount Uncertainty, Open Democracy, 21 October 2018, pp. 1-12; Sonia Le Gourielle, "Ethiopia, an Imperfect Hegemon in the Horn of Africa," International Affairs, 10 September 2018, Vol. 94, No. 5, pp.1-8; G. Terressa, "Democratic Transition in Abiy's Ethiopia: Managing the Bad, the Good and the Troubling, Addis Standard, September 25, 2018, pp.2-10.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Since the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea regions are co-joined in political, economic and geostrategic terms, there are serious security implications for countries in the former that can only be addressed through collective regional approach and burden-sharing in peace maintenance. AU/IGAD leadership is central in advancing a realistic Red Sea security policy.
- **Despite the** growing militarization of the Horn of Africa, neither the AU nor IGAD have developed an adequate and integrated regional political and security strategy to ameliorate adverse security effects. Yet, this development will continue to have serious security implications in ways capable of complicating ongoing conflicts in Somalia and Sudan (Darfur) as well as the spillover effects of the war in Yemen as Gulf countries join other global powers in pursuing military options.
- At the level of the organization, the AU must raise the danger posed by the excessive militarization of the Red Sea region and work with IGAD, League of Arab States, as well as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to see to it that the contestation are better managed in an institutional or multilateral format.
- The danger currently facing countries in the Horn, individually and as collective is not only the potential conflicts but also the likelihood of reversals in some of the gains previously made to bring peace and security over the past decade, including in Somalia.
- At a time when the involvement of foreign powers in the region are assuming complex ramifications, they are likely to further compound the multidimensional challenges facing the Horn of Africa, including those linked to terrorism, insurgencies and intra-state wars that only the African Union can give the necessary leadership to engage the international community about the danger the new scramble and militarization would pose for regional stability.
- There is need for greater urgency at the level of the AU and IGAD to anticipate, understand and consistently follow-up on changing developments in the Horn of Africa to be able to proactively develop policies to ameliorate their adverse impacts.



# ABBREVIATIONS

- ACB- Anti Corruption Bureau  
 ACDC- African Centre for Disease Control  
 ACLED- Armed Conflict Location and Event Data  
 ACSRT- African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism
- ACSS- African Centre for Strategic Studies  
 ADA- African Development Agency  
 ADB- African Development Bank  
 ADF- Allied Democratic Force  
 AfCFTA- African Continental Free Trade Area  
 AFRICOM- United States Africa Command  
 AMISOM- AU Mission in Somalia  
 ANC- African National Congress  
 APSA- Africa Peace and Security Architecture  
 AQIM- Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb  
 ASF- African Standby Force  
 AU- African Union  
 AUHIP- AU High-Level Implementation Panel  
 AUPSC- African Union Peace and Security Council  
 BREXIT- British Exit  
 CAR- Central African Republic  
 CCA- Computer and Cyber Crime Act  
 CCO- Operational Coordination Committee  
 CCPI- Climate Change Performance Index  
 CEWARN- Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism
- CEWS- Continental Early Warning System  
 CIRS- Customs and the Inland Revenue services  
 CISSA- Committee and Intelligence on Security Services  
 CPA- Comprehensive Peace Agreement  
 CPI- Corruption Perception Index  
 CSO- Civil Society Organisations  
 DDR- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration  
 DDDR- Disarmament, Demobilization, Re-integration and Repatriation
- DPP- Democratic Progress Party  
 DRC- Democratic Republic of Congo  
 DSF- Defence and Security Service
- ECCAS- Economic Community of Central African States  
 ECOWAS- Economic Community of West African States  
 EISA- Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa  
 EPRDF- Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front  
 ESCOM- Electricity Supply Commission  
 e-tax- Electronic Tax  
 EU- European Union  
 EUCSDP- EU Common Security and Defense Policy  
 EVD- Ebola Virus Disease  
 e-voting- Electronic Voting
- FAO- Food and Agricultural Organisation  
 FCO- Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
 FDPC- Democratic Front for Central African People  
 FIB- Force Intervention Brigade  
 FOCAC- Forum on China-Africa Cooperation  
 FPR- Frontier for Patriotic Revolution  
 GCC- Gulf Cooperation Council  
 GDP- Gross Domestic Product  
 HDI- Human Development Index  
 HIIK- Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research  
 HOA- Horn of Africa  
 IAFS- India-Africa Forum Summit  
 ICM- Internal Climate Migration  
 ICT- Information and Communication Technology  
 ICT- Information and Communication Technology  
 ICU- Islamic Court Union  
 IEC- Independent Electoral Commission  
 IGAD- Inter-Governmental Authority on Development  
 IGADD- Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development
- IIGA- Ibrahim Index on Governance in Africa  
 IMF- International Monetary Fund  
 INEC- Independent National Electoral Commission  
 IPBES- Inter-governmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity on Ecosystem Services
- ISGS- Islamic State in the Greater Sahel  
 ISWA- Islamic state – West Africa  
 IT- Information Technology  
 ITU- International Telegraphic Union  
 LCBC- Lake Chad Basin Commission  
 LRA- Lord's Resistance Army  
 MINSUMA- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission
- MINUSMA- United Nation's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali  
 MNJTF- Multi-National Joint Task Force  
 MoU- Memorandum of Understanding  
 MUJAO- Movement of Oneness and Jihad in West Africa  
 NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
 NCIC- National Cohesion Integration Commission  
 NCP- National Congress Party  
 NCP- National Cybersecurity Policy  
 NCS- National Cybersecurity Strategy  
 NIF- National Islamic Front  
 NLC- National Liberation Council  
 NLTP- National Livestock Transformation Plan  
 NSAA- Non-state Armed Actors  
 NSS- National Security Strategy  
 PSC- Peace and Security Council

RCCNS- Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation

REC- Regional Economic Communities

SADC- South African Development Commission

SALW- Small Arms and Light Weapons

SDPZ- Safe Demilitarized Border Zones

SEO- Sustainable Economic Opportunity

SNA- Somali National Army

SPLM- Sudan's People Liberation Movement

SPLMA-OI-

SPSA- State of Peace and security in Africa

SRSO- Special Representative of the Secretary General

SWS- South West State

TFG- Transitional Federal Government

TI- Transparency International

TNG- Transitional National Government

TSA- Treasury Single Account

UAE- United Arab Emirates

UIC- Union of Islamic Courts

UK- United Kingdom

UN- United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Report

UNGA- United Nations General Assembly

UNOCA- United Nations Office for Central Africa

UNOWAS- United Nations Office for West Africa and Sahel

UNSC- United Nations Security Council

UNSOM- United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

US- United States

USC- United Somali Congress

USD- United States Dollars

USNSC- United States National Security Council

WB-World Bank

WHO- World Health Organisation

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