



**6<sup>TH</sup> TANA FORUM**  
Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa



# 2017 TANA FORUM REPORT

No Retreat, No Surrender



**INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES**  
**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
TANA FORUM SECRETARIAT





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## Preface

Dear friends of the Tana Forum,

Since 2012, it has been a tradition to provide our participants and readers with in-depth knowledge on the theme of each year. The State of Peace and Security in Africa report, presented annually by the Tana Forum Chairperson, has become a significant contribution to the field of peace and security. This year's trends will fuel your thoughts on the mixture of progress and obstacles facing the sector today:

- Various security indices on armed conflicts (total number, spread/distribution and trend analysis)
- The lack of progress of peace agreements
- Atomised violence and low intensity conflicts
- An overview of African interventions in peace and security
- Containment and rollbacks of violence extremism, focusing on three case studies: Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State (IS)
- Political protests and riots

It is also important to highlight some of the most salient security challenges:

1. In 2016, the threats posed by violent extremist groups were neutralized or reduced, with the main epicentres of attacks in Africa including Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin area; al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya; and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar-Dine, Mokhtar Belmokhtar's katibat (battalion) al-Murabitun and IS elements in Northern Mali and the Sahel region; and IS in Libya (Sirte and parts of Benghazi), Tunisia and Egypt.
2. In spite of subsisting ceasefires and peace agreements, the peace processes in a number of countries stalled or broke down in 2016. The lack of progress reveals a complex interplay of failed implementation, belligerency amongst factions, lack of requisite political will, and emergence of new armed groups and factions.
3. New armed groups emerged or old armed groups were revived in countries such as Nigeria, DRC, South Sudan and Mozambique. This emergence/revival resulted in: insurgency campaigns and further exacerbated armed conflict in Nigeria; the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) and affiliated new militia groups in the Delta region; Eastern DRC: Kamwina Nsapu (KN) militia formed in August 2016 and based in the province of Kasai-Central.
4. The use, number and landscape of mass protests and street power to effect or influence changes in socio-economic and/or political circumstances increased in 2016. Protests are often a reflection of structural conditions and imbalances such as inequality, economic systems and inter-group dynamics and socio-economic and political issues have tended to trigger outbreaks. (Economic triggers: Sudan, South Sudan, Namibia, South Africa, Libya, Ethiopia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. Political triggers: Cameroon, DRC, Gabon, Uganda, and Zimbabwe).

5. Finally, the analysis of ownership by Africans in the provision of security provides a silver lining to Africa's peace and security landscape with noticeable progress in 'African Solutions' (AfSol) approaches in managing armed conflict and insecurity. In Gabon, Burundi, Gambia, Libya and Sudan, the prospect of open armed confrontation or surges in the scale and intensity of violent clashes was averted or modulated by AU/REC-led mediation and political settlement initiatives.

I look forward to a vigorous debate on these and more issues.

Olusegun Obasanjo,  
Chairperson of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa

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## Institutions

Addis Ababa University / African Development Bank (AfDB) / African Union Commission (AUC) / Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) / Greenpeace Africa / Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development / International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) / International Crisis Group (ICG) / International Development Research Centre (IDRC) / International Water Management Institute (IWMI) / Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) / Tax Justice Network-Africa / The Mo Ibrahim Foundation / United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

## Report Team

### IPSS/Tana Forum Team

Dr. Kidane Kiros  
Ms. Michelle Ndiaye  
Prof. Charles Ukeje  
Dr. Mesfin Gebremichael

### Contributors

Dr. Wale Ismail  
Dr. Akin Iwilade  
Dr. Rhuks Ako







**6<sup>TH</sup> TANA FORUM**

Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa

Background Paper on

# **NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA:**

**Conflict, Politics and Power**



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# 1. Introduction

Natural resource extraction shapes social, economic and political relations in Africa in multiple and complex ways. One of its most visible impacts is the tendency to generate a spectrum of violent conflicts; ranging from low-intensity everyday tensions in the Zambian copper belt to large-scale insurgencies in the oil rich Niger Delta of Nigeria. These conflicts tend to erupt on the back of long term disruptions to local livelihoods that are caused both by environmental implications of resource extraction (Percival 1995, Jagger 2012) and by (il)licit capital flows (World bank 2016) as well as tensions generated by inequitable distribution of revenues as a lack of local participation. As the complexities of extraction and distribution of resources deepen, the need to intervene in the governing of the process also naturally increases, as do the attempts to accomplish this (Grant, Nadege-Compaore & Mitchell 2015).

The incentives to construct credible and sustainable governance processes for natural resources emerge from both locally specific circumstances as well as broader global governance agendas. These incentives focus on regulating not just the extractive practices of private companies (for instance, the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights) but also the ways in which governments manage the resources that accrue therefrom (as in Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, EITI). These multiple entry points to natural resource governance have been described by Acosta (2010) as ‘the set of strategies aimed at improving the transparency and accountability of governments and private companies during the licensing, exploration, contracting, extraction, revenue generation and allocation of natural resources’. Violent conflict further complicates these governance processes and necessitates innovative strategies that can link resources to peaceful development (Alao 2007).

This background paper explores various themes that link natural resource extraction and governance to violent conflict in Africa. It not just captures the state of practice in natural resource governance from the vantage point of various key actors like the state, global governance institutions and civil society but also explores the more recent ideational trends which could be important indications of the future of governance processes in the sector. By situating the discourse within the broader context of peace building and conflict in Africa, the reflections draw attention to the tensions and cooperation that the entire value-chain of natural resource governance, rather than just the extraction process, can potentially generate.

These issues are addressed through four sections. The first section broadly explores the intersection between natural resources and conflict in Africa. It looks at how governance deficits have deepened the correlation between resource extraction and conflict, and notes the current state of affairs in that critical sector. It draws on data from a variety of sources, including the grey literature generated by multilateral organisations, news media and NGOs, to show what the natural resource sector currently looks like. The second section then goes on to situate this discussion within the context of global politics by addressing how global resource politics impacts on natural resource governance in Africa. It will also examine what the nature of transnational and non-state based relationships involving a retinue of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), environmental social movements, indigenous rights movements, to name a few, mean for natural resource governance and policy making. These are crucial in terms of current perspectives with regard to local ownership and inclusion as well as the impact of multinational corporations and capital on the ability of states to effectively govern their natural resources.

The third section focuses on the various legal instruments (both binding and non-binding) and institutions through which states manage natural resources. It will explore how global norms on natural resource governance are developed and highlight, along with how they are incorporated into legal and institutional infrastructures at the national and sub-national (local) levels. It also draws on important regulatory processes like the Kimberly Process and the EITI, and show how regulatory benchmark by the private

sector intersects with public regulation and public good. The section will also touch on how these processes either exacerbate or mitigate conflict. The final section explores emerging ideas about and alternative futures on how to govern natural resources. It looks at how the current governing processes can be strengthened and suggests new ideas that can link emerging global normative consensus with local realities in order to create effective institutional frameworks.

## 2. Natural Resources in Africa: The Complex Politics of Extraction, Revenue Distribution and Violence

Michael Ross' (2004) review of the literature on the relationship between natural resources and civil wars highlights consensus on four main points. The first is that resources have different levels of impact on conflict. In this regard, while oil increases the likelihood of conflict, others like agricultural products have almost no impact. The second consensus is that while so called 'lootable' commodities like diamonds do not necessarily induce conflict, they tend to make violence intractable when it does erupt. The third one is that there are certain commodities, namely legal agricultural products, that have no apparent link with civil war and finally that the correlation between resources in general and the onset of civil wars is weak.

This work, as well as many like it (see Le Billon: 2001 and Snyder: 2006) focuses on large scale civil wars as a measure of violence. Yet, there are many low level everyday violent conflicts which may not hit international news headlines but are nonetheless critical to the stability of fragile states. Good examples are the farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Nigeria's 'middle belt' (Higazi 2016) as well as similar violence in Kenya's Turkana region (Lind 2003). These examples also raise questions about the general assumption in the literature that

agricultural resources have almost no impact on civil wars (Collier and Hoeffler 2004).

In a study published by Oxford University's Center for the Study of African Economies (CSAE), Arezki, Bhattacharyya and Mamo (2007) drew on a geocoded dataset to argue that unlike what is generally assumed, there is no empirical correlation between resource discovery and the emergence of violent conflict. To say the least, this line of argument is difficult to sustain in the face of widespread evidence of seemingly intractable violence that appears to be so apparently linked to the politics of resource extraction and the accompanying social inequalities. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), for instance, more than five decades of violence over huge mineral deposits have reportedly resulted in the death of some three million people.

The Eastern provinces, especially North and South Kivu, Orientale, Maniema, and Katanga have been sites of prolonged violent struggles by a multitude of local, regional and global actors over the control of the vast mineral deposits available. This conflict has not just undermined the development of Congolese statehood, it has resulted in some of the most alarming environmental devastations seen in Africa

in the 21st century (Burnley 2011), including the depletion of aquatic life and water in the Congo River Basin reputed to be the world's second largest after the Amazon. This cyclical causative pattern of natural resource exploitation and conflict is repeated in places as far apart as Nigeria's volatile oil rich Niger Delta (Ako 2013, Iwilade 2015) and Sudan's Darfur region (Behrends 2008).

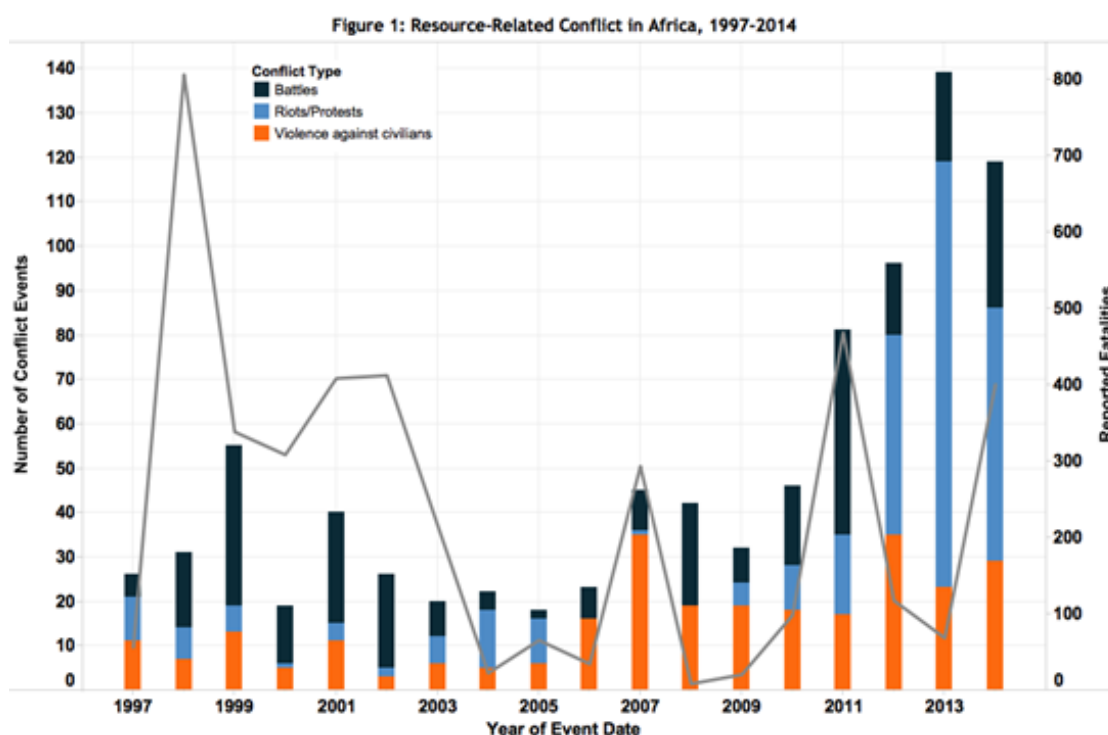
Behrends (2008) even goes further to show that natural resources do not even need to be physically extracted for them to generate brutal conflict. He argues that simply by being discovered, natural resources have the

potential of generating violent contestations that may ironically prevent them from actually being extracted. He described the Darfur conflict as one such example in which violence erupts even before the natural resource becomes a key revenue earner. This pattern of violence linked to the exploitation of natural resources can also be found in the Mano River Union countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea where the brutal civil wars of the 1990s and early 2000s were inextricably linked to struggles over the control of timber, diamonds and rubber deposits (Richards 1996, Vigh 2006).

**Table 1: Selected African Civil Wars Linked to Resource Wealth, 1975-2003**

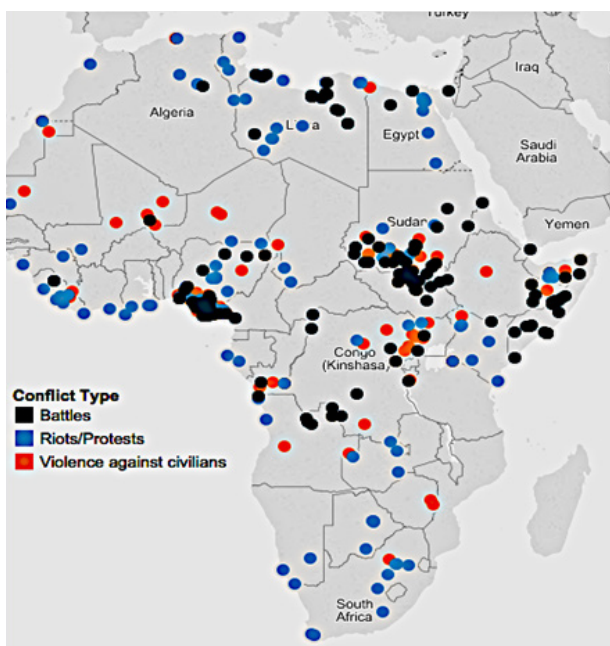
Country	Duration	Resources
Angola	1975–2002?	Oil, diamonds
Congo, Rep. of	1997	Oil
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	1996–97, 1998–	Copper, coltan, diamonds, gold, cobalt
Liberia	1989–96	Timber, diamonds, iron, palm oil, cocoa, coffee, marijuana, rubber, gold
Morocco	1975–	Phosphates, oil
Sierra Leone	1991–2000	Diamonds
Sudan (Darfur)	2003	Water, Oil

**Figure 1: All resource related conflicts in Africa 1997-2014**



Source: Kishi (2015)

Figure 2: Locations of resource related conflict in Africa



Source: Kishi (2015).

This disconnection between the CSAE study and the general perception of the links between violent conflict and natural resources as graphically shown by Figures 1 and 2 above illustrates both the contentious nature of the politics associated with the extraction of natural resources as well as how explanations on the nexus between resources and conflicts have not been conclusive.

This is more so when the other natural resources such as land and water, for instance, are the subjects of violent contestations. Although these resources are not discovered and extracted as oil and diamonds for instance, access to them instigate conflicts in much the same way and reasons. Governance issues including regulatory, institutional and cultural frameworks that define and determine economic access as well as their socio-political ramifications culminate to instigate or escalate tensions and conflicts. As scarcity of these natural resources is likely to increase, so is the likelihood of escalation of conflicts related to their management. For instance, the Lake Chad, a major wetland in the semi-arid Sahel corridor has decreased

by over 90% since the 1960s and could generate tensions in the future among the four countries - Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria – whose citizens benefit as farmers, pastoralists and fishermen. It is also important to note however that resources like water could also serve to foster cooperation. The international dialogue around the use of the waters of the Nile between the ten countries through which it flows as well as ongoing cooperation in the Lake Chad basin indicates the potential of resources to be a source of cooperation rather than conflict.

There is however a general consensus that there is a connection between social relations in states (or sites) with natural resources and the subsisting nature of governance. That is, where governance processes, institutions and actors are strong and equitable, the chances of natural resources generating violent conflict diminish significantly. In this sense, one may argue that natural resources are not conflict triggers in and of themselves, but that for this to be the case, the extractive and distributive logics governing resource use must be embedded in broader and mostly contentious political contexts; for example, over race relations (Zimbabwe), over class relations (Marikana South Africa), over minority rights (the Niger Delta) or over generational crisis (Sierra Leone).

In order to effectively trace the correlation between natural resources and conflict, therefore, it is useful to disaggregate the discussion using by using specific markers like conflict financing and resource type as analytical frames.

Before doing that however, it is useful to briefly highlight the specific mechanisms through which natural resources can conceivably generate violent conflict? Many studies have attempted to show the conditions (or mechanisms) under which natural resources could be an indicator of violent conflict (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, Ross 2004, Humphreys 2005). These mechanisms can be broadly grouped into four. These are internal, external, resource and space mechanisms.



The internal mechanisms relate to those conflict triggers that relate directly to the country's internal political economy. For instance, are there significant ethno-religious (or racial) cleavages that could exacerbate the politics of natural resources? Is there an endemic problem of corruption in the extractive and distributive architecture of natural resources or more generally in the country? Is the state strong or weak in its capacity to maintain order and in its capacity to distribute public goods? (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). The external mechanisms that could trigger violent conflict in a natural resource context relate to factors that derive from the state's relationship with foreign interests. For instance, is there a substantial external interest in the resource? How much power do foreign multinationals wield in the entire natural resource value chain? Who possesses the expertise for extracting, managing and marketing these resources? (Alden and Davies 2006, Bradshaw 2009, Ukeje and Ela 2013). The third one is resource mechanism. This covers a number of issues ranging from whether the resource in question is a 'lootable' one like diamonds (Ross 2004) to whether it is scarce (Homer-Dixon 1994) or whether it is being developed for the future (Ross 2002, Behrends 2008). Any of these could profoundly impact on the nature of social and political contestations over resources.

The final broad mechanism is the extraction mechanism. This refers to the level of violence around extraction sites, the nature of land ownership and claims and the de-facto control of sites of extraction (Alao 2007). While these are not exhaustive descriptions of the different ways in which natural resources can intersect with violent conflict, they do indicate the complexity of the various triggers that analysts and policy makers must look out for in order to understand the resource driven conflicts.

## 2.1 Natural Resources and Conflict Financing

As the preceding discussion suggests, natural resources can have different impacts on social relations, depending on what phase of violence is being examined. This is especially true if one considers how the illicit extraction and commercialization of natural resources can provide long term financing for conflict. For instance, where violence erupts over political disagreements, as was the case in the first Liberian civil war, access to and illicit market for natural resources can profoundly impact on the severity, scope and duration of the violence. Invariably, two main types of war economies develop (Taylor, 2013). The first, and more classic one, is that in national resources- skills, labour, capital and natural- are mobilized to service the war effort of state and non-state entities. It is possible for a militaristic state to have a war economy even when not in active conflict of a kind that threatens national survive. Many critics have contended that the United States runs such a war economy driven by its military industrial complex (Hackemer 2001, Byrne 2010). Taylor (2013) argues that this type of war economy is actually embedded in the very nature of industrialised capitalism, and to that extent, receives protection under international law.

The second war economy is more relevant in the context of the present discussion about natural resources. In this case, informal economic activities, including the extraction and sale of natural resources co-exist with widespread-armed violence. More than simply co-existing, access to sites from which the extraction of natural resources can be guaranteed becomes the primary goal of conflict entrepreneurs in ways that make the resolution of political differences extremely difficult.

Over the last three decades, the nature of violent conflict has evolved significantly. For instance, while inter-state violence has become less common, internal insurgencies, civil wars and political instability have been

on the rise. This evolution has done much to complicate the landscape of conflict financing. In order for armed groups to be able to continue fighting, they need to be able to pay fighters, and sometimes provide services and infrastructure in the territories they control. The illicit trade in natural resources is one of the main avenues for rebel groups to earn the funds needed to pursue their war goals. A good example is the case of the notorious illicit diamond trade in Angola, DRC, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In Angola, for instance, the rebel group UNITA led by Jonas Savimbi was said to have earned an estimated 3.7 billion US dollars in the sale of illicit diamonds in the space of five years between 1992 and 1997. This money was largely used to fund arms purchases and to pay fighter salaries. The impact of this trade was also felt outside of Angola itself as the smuggling routes in neighboring Zambia's Mwinilunga and Mongu regions often became unstable as different armed gangs competed for a piece of the pie. This pattern is repeated in the DRC where the rebel movements RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani-MLC and their Rwandan and Ugandan allies, controlled the Equateur province, which is one of the most lucrative diamond-producing parts of the DRC. In 1999, official exports were valued at \$261,361,308 (35 percent), while an estimated \$490,613,333 (or 65 percent) was smuggled out of the DRC by armed actors. According to Ndumbe and Cole (2005), more than 75 percent of all the diamonds produced in the DRC before 2000 were smuggled out of the country.

Mary Kaldor's (2013) postulation of a 'new wars' thesis captures the argument being made here quite aptly. Her work highlights how the line between crime and political conflict has blurred significantly in recent times and the important role that non-state actors play in this process. There are perhaps few places which symbolize this relationship better than at sites of resource extraction where the control of access is a major factor in the prolongation of violence. This point

is relevant across varying natural resource contexts, from agricultural products like timber, rubber (Richards 1996) to diamond mining (Bone 2004).

The control of mining sites does not however guarantee that armed groups would be able to profit from illicit extraction of natural resources. They also have to be able to create effective distribution networks as well as plug into the global financial infrastructure. This aspect of the natural resource-conflict linkage underlines the important ways in which the formal (legal) and informal (illegal) systems of globalization can be deployed in the service of illicit and violent ends. In a World Bank report, Winer and Roule (2003), argue that the very same infrastructure that has allowed unprecedented global connectedness in legal cross-border trade and exchange has also made it very easy for armed groups to profit from criminal and/or violent activities. They have been able to trade with companies, and sometimes even states, as they launder the proceeds of those illicit trades.

Many of the multilateral responses to the connection between natural resources and conflict have focused on this financing dimension. The logic is that if the funding infrastructure is effectively tightened and monitored, armed groups- the same applies for terrorist groups- would have fewer incentives to extract natural resources and lesser funds to embark on protracted and violent political contestations. Some of the key initiatives in this regards are the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) set up by the G-7 in 1989, the 1998 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Financial Stability Forum in 1999, and the 2000 UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (The Palermo convention). These initiatives address, only to an extent, the financial architecture through which conflict resources are funneled through the international banking system.

Attempts have also been made to prevent resources extracted illicitly from being

sold on the international market. The Kimberly process for diamonds is one of such measures to determine the source of all diamonds, whether or not they are the product of illicit extraction or are so called 'blood diamonds'. In order for these various measures to work effectively, they need to be integrated and embedded within a broader movement for peace and stability in the various resource-endowed regions. Broader questions of equity and social justice must also be fully addressed in those regions otherwise the multilateral processes will bear little fruit.

## 2.2 Resource Type

Is the impact on conflict more significant if the natural resource available or over which stakeholders compete is easy to extract and distribute? So for instance, are resources like diamonds which can be extracted with relatively crude methods, transported very easily and sold very easily, more likely to generate conflict than resources like oil which require more sophisticated extraction methods? These questions suggest that the type of resource could have an effect on how they are able to shape social relations, and invariably the likelihood to generate or exacerbate conflict.

In a 2014 article, Koubi et al. noted two categories of impacts that natural resource type can have on conflict. The first category is where there is a scarcity of resources with typically low market value like cropland and water. Even though such resources may have low market value in relation to global trade, they are often central to the livelihood and social mobility of the local consumers. As a result, violent conflict over access to these resources can be brutal, long-running and intractable. A very good example of this type of resource based conflict can be found in the Turkana area of Kenya where violence over grazing land and cattle have claimed thousands of lives and caused instability. This situation is also playing out in various agrarian communities across Nigeria with

competition between pastoralists and farmers heating up significantly in the last two years.

In the case of scarcity, scholars like Homer-Dixon (1999) and Kaplan (1994) have argued that it is the scarcity of natural resources that generate violence rather than abundance. They argue that even where resources appear to be abundant, the scarcity created by socio-economic distortions of livelihood that the process of extraction often causes is the key trigger of violent conflict rather than the fact of abundance. This suggests that conflict is likely to increase where access to resources becomes increasingly precarious as a consequence of scarcity.

Climate change and rapid population growth has increased the chances that such vital resource scarcities will become more common (Kaplan 1994, Homer-Dixon 1994), thereby threatening stability in many parts of Africa. This is further exacerbated by skewed water ownership and use ratios which threaten to inflame nationalist and materialist tensions among countries. Kaniaru (2015) writes for instance that whereas South Africa accounts for 80 per cent of water used in Southern Africa, it owns only 10 per cent of total available water resources. The implication of this is that it has to depend increasingly on its neighbors for its water supply. While this may of course engender international cooperation, the explosive mix of climate change induced droughts, growing population and increased industrialization of the surrounding countries means that they themselves will begin to demand for more internal water use at a time that supplies will drop dramatically. The Okavango, Zambezi and Orange River Basins are critical potential hotspots of conflictual hydro-politics in this regard within Southern Africa.

The second category identified by Koubi et al. (2014) is the abundance of resources with high market value. In this type of resource complex, the abundance of resources is likely to generate violent conflict as the market value significantly raises the stakes for

competition so much so that the abundance of the resource merely incentivizes violent conflict rather than mitigate the impact of scarcity as discussed earlier. High worth resources like oil, diamonds and gold fall into this category. It is not difficult to find multiple examples across Africa where the combination of high value and abundance provide incentives for violent competition over access and control. The examples of Nigeria's Niger Delta, Angola and DRC are particularly instructive in this regard.

These two categories suggested by Koubi and his colleagues do not however capture all the various dynamics that resource types may introduce to conventional thinking about natural resources' correlation with violent conflict. For instance, they do not account for how the ease of extraction and the actual physical properties of the resource can affect the way armed groups use natural resources. If natural resources are difficult to extract in that they need high levels of technical expertise and capital investments, one can assume that rag-tag rebel groups will find it difficult to directly engage in extraction and sales. Yet, evidence suggests that in a number of hotspots where this is the case, armed groups can often find innovative ways around this barrier. For instance, there is no shortage of legitimate (if often unscrupulous) business concerns that would quickly jump at the opportunity to risk doing business in such volatile regions. These companies can often provide the technical expertise and markets in exchange for access to the sites of resource abundance. They also build very dynamic relationships with armed groups in ways that allow them to continue and intensify resource extraction irrespective of the carnage going on around them (Bray 2003).

Another question to consider is whether it matters if the resource in question has global strategic relevance? For instance, is it more likely for conflicts linked to resource

to become intractable if the resource is timber as against uranium, oil as against water? In this resource type scenario, the extent of external interest can be expected to increase significantly if the resource is globally strategic like oil. The militarization of the Gulf of Guinea region is an important case in point which illustrates the potential for wider stakeholder interests complicating the conflict landscape if the resource is a strategic one (Ukeje and Ela 2013). One may even argue that the international responses, with regards to the development of norms as is captured in the third section of this paper, is more focused on 'higher value' resources such as diamonds and oil.

In spite of this apparent focus on globally strategic resources, there is growing interest in other resources like land which are also rupturing social and economic relations in profound ways. The World Bank (2010) reported for instance, that of the 45 million hectares of land being negotiated for large scale commercial acquisitions globally in 2009, about 70 percent were in Africa and were being negotiated for by foreign interests. This investor rush for land, as Ruth Hall (2011) described it, is often directed at land already occupied and used by local people (Sullie and Nelson 2009), thus displacing thousands and ultimately generating violent resistance. However, these land transfers have varying impacts on local communities according to the World Bank (2010) and some of them are acquired to attempt to resolve another resource related crisis- the energy crisis. As Table 2 below indicates, a good percentage of the land grabbed by foreign interests are used to service a growing biofuel industry. Unfortunately, while this tries to solve one problem, it exacerbates another perhaps more urgent one, which is the food crisis. It is important to note that the food crisis is often more pressing for the local communities whose lands and livelihoods are hijacked by large corporations pioneering biofuels.

Table 2: Land Grabs for biofuels in Africa, 2013

Country	Hectares Transferred	Major Investor
Benin	263,300	Italy
Ghana	210,461	UK
Guinea	106,415	UK
Ivory Coast	47,000	Singapore
Liberia	689,800	Singapore, Malaysia
Mali	473,334	Libya, Saudi Arabia
Mauritania	52,000	Saudi Arabia
Niger	15,922	Saudi Arabia
Nigeria	362,292	UK
Senegal	375,570	India, China
Sierra Leone	705,450	Vietnam, Portugal

Source: Elliot 2013

### 3. Global Power Relations and Natural Resource Governance

Like many other aspects of contemporary international politics, natural resources are profoundly amenable to the complex nature of global power relations and competitions. From multinational companies to super powers, natural resources usually tend to attract deep and extensive interests. With this often comes significantly higher likelihood of violent conflict. In order to feed the giant global industrial complex, natural resources have to be extracted, processed and distributed. Because they are mostly located in places far and apart across the planet, the political boundaries of statehood only serve to slow down the logic of access and distribution. Bradshaw (2009) touched on this point when he argued that geographical factors such as the distribution of centers of supply and demand of natural resources could potentially have important implications for state and non-state behaviour. How states perceive their options and how they animate the choices they make with regard to access to natural resources, in turn, shapes the global politics of energy security.

Some of the main signposts of the contemporary global politics of extraction

include the ‘new’ role of emerging economies like China, India and Brazil; the role of social movements, business and multilateral institutions in shaping norms; the continuing securitisation of resource extraction; and the gale of resource nationalisms manifesting in citizens’ demands for greater control of natural resources and accruable benefits.

#### 3.1 Emerging Economies and Resource Extraction

Global politics has changed significantly in the last decade with the growing clout of emerging economies like China, India and Brazil in the extractive sectors of many African states. It is now difficult to have a discussion of global power relations and natural resources without engaging with the seismic shift of power towards emerging economies. As the sources of new investment, these countries now wield tremendous power in Africa’s extractive sectors and will thus be critical to the governance infrastructures that will emerge over the next decade. As at 2009, for

instance, China was responsible for 30% of global growth in the demand for oil, a figure that means by 2030, it will be consuming some 15 million barrels of oil per day (Alden and Alves 2009).

In order to firmly secure its continued access to natural resources, the Chinese government has linked its growing bilateral infrastructure aid program to mining rights. For instance, China's Export-Import bank funded major infrastructure projects in Angola for \$4.5 billion in 2004 in exchange for oil; \$3 billion in Gabon in 2006 for manganese exploration; and \$6 billion for DRC infrastructure in exchange for copper and cobalt from the Kolwezi Copper Mine in 2008. These investments highlight how China's foreign policy has effectively integrated both its diplomatic goals with the energy security concerns it has in relation to its growing, resource hungry economy.

India is also making similar resource focussed investments and foreign policy decisions as illustrated by the Indian Prime Minister's announcement in 2011 of a \$5 billion credit line to African States. Prior to that, Indian investments in oil extraction had grown steadily, especially in Sudan through the ONGC Videsh (OVL). According to Large (2010), India's petro-partnership with Sudan began in 2003 when OVL bought a 25 percent stake in Sudan's main oil consortium. Further investments made Sudan one of the largest destinations for Indian foreign investment between 1995 and 2005. It fits within the broader energy security logic that these investments focused on securing India's access to resources.

Such investments by emerging economies have not been without controversy. For one, they do not necessarily reflect the economic goals of the states involved but are part of a broader global struggle by new powers to unseat- or at least compete on an equal footing with- key western countries that have dominated global economic politics for decades. In the context of this competition, there seems to be a new scramble for the natural resources of African states. Pdraig Carmody (2011) writes that commodities

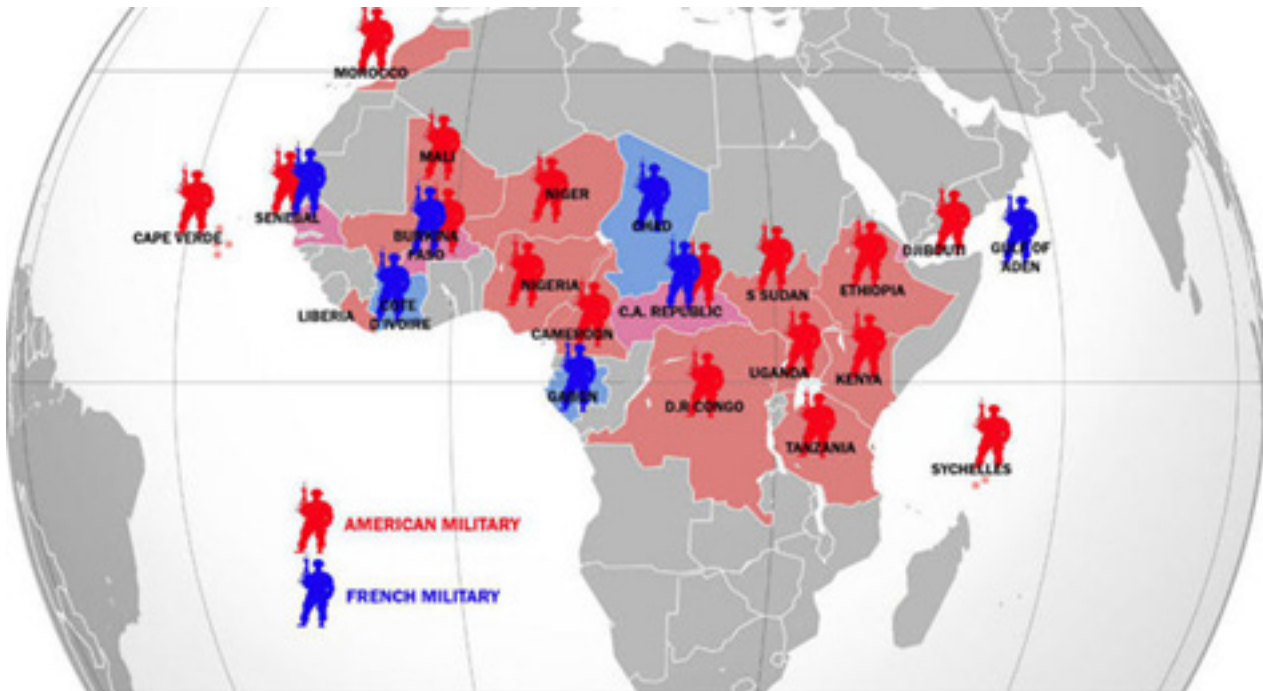
have been at the very core of this new scramble and that emerging markets are now both the destinations and partners of choice for many African states. One reason for this is that investments from states like China and India are cloaked with a language of non-interference and shared history of marginalization. While this obviously makes them less meddlesome partners, their efficient investments in elite or middle class aspirations for grand infrastructural projects or presidential palaces means that they are often able to quietly take over the space being lost or abdicated by the West.

### 3.2 Security of Access and Militarisation

One of the implications of this new scramble for resources in Africa and its impacts on global strategic balances is the militarisation of many of the sites of resource extraction. This militarisation is designed to ensure energy security and preserve or build strategic alliances, yet, it seems to be having the opposite effect as the growing instability of many of the sites of resource extraction would suggest. This has meant that energy security has become precarious for the destination industrialised and newly industrialising states.

There is a growing deployment of foreign troops in African states. Many of these deployments are linked to instabilities in sites of resource extraction and are often explained away as part of the global war on terror led by the United States. Figure II below shows the military deployments of the US and France, the two states with the largest military presence on the continent and illustrates how much foreign presence there is on the continent. From Nigeria's oil to Niger's uranium, it is interesting to note that virtually all of the states on this map possess resources of global strategic relevance. While other considerations also inform the deployment of troops, it is safe to assume that instability takes on a major significance if it occurs in a state with a globally relevant natural resource.

Figure 3: US and French Military Deployments in Africa 2014



Source: Halahke (2014).

Perhaps even more alarming than the deployment of troops by foreign states is the growing role of Private Military Corporations (PMCs) or Private Security Companies (PSCs) in resource rich sites. In the ways they are set-up, PMCs represent a very different type of danger for the stability of states as they often have much lower levels of accountability and are implicated in many of the most appalling human rights abuses that has been seen in the last decade.

Table 3: PMCs Linked to African Civil Wars, 1990-2008

Warring Groups	War Onset/End	PMC intervention	Year(s)
Rwanda	1994	Ronco	1994
Liberia/NPFL & ULIMO	1992-95	MPRI	1995
Sierra Leone/RUF	1991-96	Specialist Services Int.	1991
		Marine Protection	1992
		Executive Outcomes	1995-96
		Ibis Air International	1995-96
		Gurkha Security Guards Ltd.	1995
		Control Risks; Group 4	1995
		Sandline	1996
		Lifeguard Management	1996
Sierra Leone/Kabbah Faction	1998-99	Teleservices	1996
		Sandline	1998
		Lifeguard Management	1998
		Executive Outcomes	1998
		Pacific Architects Engineers (ICI)	1998
		Cape International Corporation	1998

DRC/AFDL	1996-97	Omega Support	1996-97
		MPRI	1996-97
		Kellogg Brown and Root	1996-97
		Geolink	1997
		Executive	1997
		Outcome/Sandline	1997
		Stabilico	1997
		IDAS	1997
DRC/RCD/MLC	1998-2002	DSL	1998
		Safenet	1998
		IRIS Service	1998
		Executive Outcomes spinoffs	1998
Somalia/SCIC	2006-08	ATS Tactical	2006-08
Angola/UNITA	1992-94	Executive Outcomes	1992-94
		Capricorn	1994
		Teleservices	1994
Angola/UNITA	1998-2002	Stabilico	1998
		Panasec	1998
		IDAS	1998
		Omega	1998
		IRIS Service	1998
		Airscan	1998
Algeria/Islamic Front	1992-99	Eric SA	1992

Source: Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski (2012: 817-8)

Table 2 above shows the wide range of organised PMCs that are inserted into conflicts in Africa and whose activities serve to complicate the conflict landscape. These organisations however do not show the entire picture of private armed groups or corporations involved in resource conflicts. For instance, in sites where there are no active civil wars but low-intensity insurgencies as in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, PMCs are often contracted to provide security for company facilities and staff. The mid 1990s was a particularly notorious period in Nigeria's oil delta where the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, Shell, was regularly accused of gross human rights abuses committed through private armies they had been permitted to employ by the Nigerian government (Okonta and Douglas 2008).

What the above suggests is that the extraction of natural resources is often such a volatile and destabilizing process that

many countries feel the need to securitize the sites. Unfortunately, militarisation does not necessarily guarantee peace and stability as it sometimes incentivises stakeholders to commit human rights abuses, ultimately generating new forms of conflict.

### 3.3 Global Social Movements

Because the extraction of natural resources can and does often have profound consequences for the environment, it has become the focus of an increasingly powerful global movement. This movement, including organizations such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, is global in its norm making and advocacy primarily because actors recognize that the consequences of environmental degradation are transnational in nature. As key players in the natural resource governance debate, global



environmental movements focus on a wide range of general or specific issues linked to the environment. They have contributed to the debate mainly by publicly holding companies accountable for activities that undermine environmental security or by lobbying governments for greater regulation of the extractive sector. They have also advocated for local communities whose livelihoods can often be destroyed and/or distorted by the actions of large multinational corporations.

While it would appear that there is a coherent global environmental agenda that attempts to impose norms and rules that regulate natural resource extraction and mitigate its overall impact on the planet, this is actually hardly the case. The environmental movement is itself hardly immune from the structural power relations that African states have to contend with on the global stage. Local environmental concerns are

often tied to the distortions to livelihoods that multinational corporations create when they extract natural resources. In this regard, the concern is more about the economic and cultural implications of extraction rather than the environment itself. Yet, this is not always reflected in the global environmental agenda that tends to focus on broader planetary issues like climate change. There is also the problem of dependency given that local movements often have to rely on funding support from foreign donors; a relationship that robs local movements of ownership of the narratives on which their advocacies derive.

These structural dependencies nonetheless, environmental NGOs have effectively inserted themselves into the global politics of natural resource extraction and have been instrumental to many of the norms, institutions and regulations that we will be discussing in the next section.

## **4. Laws, Norms and Institutions in the Governance of Natural Resources**

The discussion thus far illustrates the complexity of the politics of natural resources in Africa and underscores the need to develop effective mechanisms to govern processes and outcomes. This section examines the existing national and international natural resource governance mechanisms and institutions currently in place to regulate access to and the control of natural resources on the continent. It evaluates the current state of these mechanisms especially from the vantage point of inclusivity, transparency and furthering sustainable development in the continent. As noted previously, there has been more traction on the international regulation of 'high value' resources. Hence this section examines in particular the national regulation of these resources as well as the evolution of key relevant international norms. The discussion in this section

provides the basis for making suggestions for the future of natural resource governance in Africa in the subsequent section.

As noted earlier, Africa's natural resources have shaped the continent's integration into the global economic and political system. Three waves of this integration process may be identified, with each one governed by the prevalent political situation. The advent of trans-continental exploration by Europeans governed the first wave of natural resource extraction in Africa. Characterized by the imperialistic ambitions of the West, this phase was marked by the forced exploitation of natural resources across the continent during the long period of trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1807. In that period, global commerce was essentially determined by norms and directives from the West and coincided with the pre-colonial era.

The second phase of resource extraction was during the era of colonization when the regulations and laws governing access and exploitation were designed by colonial governments to serve their own narrow interests. During this period, colonial powers such as France, Great Britain, Portugal, Belgium and Spain, designed systems that facilitated the extraction of natural resources for the benefit of their home governments. For instance, in Nigeria, the Mining Regulation (oil) Ordinance of 1907 made by the British colonial government granted exclusive rights to exploit oil to firms, syndicates or companies that were "British". Section 15 of the Ordinance stated that:

*No license or lease shall be granted under the provisions of the Ordinance to any firm, syndicate, or company which is not British in its control and organization, and in the case of a company, all the directors shall be, and shall at all times continue to be, British subjects, and the company shall be registered in and subject to the laws of some country or place which is part of His Majesty's dominions, or in which His Majesty has jurisdiction.*

Notably, this principle was retained in the 1914, 1925, 1950 and 1958 amendments to the Mineral Oils Ordinance. In principle, until Nigeria was granted independence, its oil was only to be exploited by the British Colonial authority. During the colonial era, Western colonizing authorities such as the British controlled territories and resources in Africa building their economies based on their naval capacity to enforce compliance and a global economy predicated on political dominium.

Colonialism deprived communities of decision powers concerning (valuable) natural resources on and underneath the land they depend on. Colonialism was not simply about economic subjugation but also about the ability to wrest control of the local economy from African rulers. The end of colonialism and the emergence of post-colonial African states led to the

initial phase of resource nationalism in which newly independent African countries pursued nationalistic policies which aimed to assert "independence" from their colonial heritages. They considered their new positions as an opportunity not only to get over the economic subjugation they suffered under colonialism but also to wrest control of their economies from former colonial authorities. The exercise of absolute ownership and control of natural resources by governments in newly independent African states was considered integral to, and evidence of, political independence. In quick successions, the new central governments vested in themselves the (same) absolute ownership and control of natural resources attracted by the substantial revenues that would accrue to the state.

None of the newly independent states at this stage seemed to consider that these laws were made by the colonial authorities to wade off or at least limit local participation in the decision-making processes regarding natural resource management. Such colonial regulations, for the most part, ignored the fact that local communities feel a sense of ownership of natural resources in their domains even if they lack the technical resources to exploit them. Consequently, a plural system of management of natural resources became the norm on the continent; one in which local perceptions guided by "ancestral heritage and identity as well as religious beliefs" competed with (and exists alongside) laws inherited from colonial authorities that did not change much in the post-independence era.

The existence of a plural system regulating land ownership and by extension, access, has created challenges that have consistently contributed to conflicts on the continent. The divergence between indigenous traditional laws and state laws that define ownership of natural resources has led to contentious relations within several countries in Africa (Klaus & Mitchell, 2015). For instance, land is a vital natural resource in Africa and is appreciated for more than

tits economic value and benefits. Land, is more fundamentally considered as a source of familial and cultural identity; individual and communal, as well as the link between generations – past, present and future. Thus, for the majority of Africans - most of who inhabit the rural areas where most of the exploitation of natural resources occurs – the significance of land extends beyond the comprehension of post-colonial laws that tends to place value and considers ownership and access based on its economic value and benefits.

It is for this reason that national legal frameworks tend to grant the State the authority to appropriate “value-added” land, whether rich in forestry, oil, diamonds, or, as more recent events have revealed, arable. Regarding arable land, it is becoming a common phenomenon across the continent for the State to acquire vast estates of land from local inhabitants for the purpose of mechanized farming, usually by foreign interests. Such land-grab has occurred with resultant conflicts across the continent with a Rights and Resources Institute (2016) study concluding from a review of 37 case studies from West, East and Southern Africa that 70% of the disputes related to private sector land and natural resource investments on the continent began when communities were forced to leave their land while 30% was related to compensation. When considered against the backdrop of the fact that about 70% of land grabbing occurs in Africa (Deininger et al. 2010), its potential for increasing the spate of conflicts on the continent cannot be ignored. This is more so that land grabbing has impacts on access to drinking water, a factor that also feeds into the conflict dynamics with regards to local inhabitants access to their natural resources.

With regards other extractive resources, the post-colonial laws emphasized state ownership with the intent that such resources would be used for the development of the country rather than limiting the benefits to the immediate region they are extracted. While embracing state

ownership and control of natural resources is in itself not a bad thing – as the Botswana experience has proved – access to political power across the continent has become synonymous with gaining control of natural resource revenues, mostly for personal aggrandizement. Botswana, it seems, is the only African country with a history of using its resource revenues to further strengthen national institutions. Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson (2006) flag three elements that have contributed to Botswana’s success to include: (i) the existence of inclusive pre-colonial institutions such as the *kgotla* (or community forum) for airing public dissent and reaching consensus. For Acemoglu and his colleagues, it was not only the case that this pre-colonial system was not impacted in any significantly negative way by British colonial rule but also that it served the interests of the elite to maintain the status quo after independence following the discovery of diamonds. In essence, unlike the rest of Africa where natural resource wealth became the impetus for convulsive elitist struggle for control of political power, the legal framework in Botswana has evolved to promote the optimal use and benefit of resource revenues.

The fundamental role that legal frameworks play the mis (management) of natural resource is at the heart of the qualitative difference between Botswana and other resource-rich countries on the continent (Brunnschweiler and Bulte 2008). They argue that the resource curse is only a red herring; that it is the legal framework of resource-rich countries that determines how much of autonomy or dependence they are on the resource and the consequences. An overview of provisions of Botswana’s Mines and Minerals Act (No. 17 of 1999) reveals that like most African countries, the ownership of minerals is vested in the State. However, the law cast aside ministerial discretions that permitted the acquisition and transfer of mining properties in favour of more transparent procedures. It also revised the taxation regime to make the industry more attractive to foreign investors,

without leaving them to act in ways that undermine the sovereignty of Botswana. Furthermore, the regulatory framework promotes sustainable use of resource revenues by, for example, following an implicit self-disciplinary rule contained in the Sustainable Budget Index (SBI) that require mineral revenues to be used solely to expand the economy's productive base rather than fund consumption expenditure (Ako and Uddin 2013).

On the contrast, regulatory frameworks in other countries have contributed to the opacity in natural resource management apart from fuelling unprecedented corruption in the sector. In Angola, for example, three laws – the Access to Administrative Documents Bill, the National Security Bill, and the State Secrecy Bill – adopted between 2002 and 2003 reduced the efficacy of Constitutional provisions to tackle corruption (Ako and Uddin 2011). The laws severely restrict access to information thereby restricting the possibilities of exposing fraud and corruption of government officials. The State Secrecy Bill criminalizes possession of documents that the government considers sensitive, even if obtained lawfully by individuals not employed by the government. Article 2 of the law specifically provides that 'financial, monetary, economic, and commercial interests of the State' can be classified as "secret." This phrase can be broadly interpreted as a euphemism that data on oil revenues (amongst others) are not for public scrutiny.

Furthermore, the law has extraterritorial reach; a move deemed to ensure that representatives of multilateral institutions, international NGOs, the international press, or other institutions couldn't publish materials that may be considered embarrassing or revealing by the government (Ako and Uddin 2011). For instance, the Angolan government threatened BP with the termination of its licence after the company, following pressure from Global Witness, promised to publish figure on its payments

to the Angolan government. Almost a similar framework, if less blatant, applies in Nigeria, another country continuously hit by resource-revenue scandals, as the oil minister is vested with wide discretionary powers that are open to flagrant abuse. It is not surprising that over the past three decades, several oil ministers in Nigeria have either been implicated or indicted for on one corruption charge or another, and that none of them have been convicted.

Invariably, then, the institutional arrangement for natural resource governance on the continent seems to reveal a plethora of inadequacies in the legal regime in many African countries. Angola's Sonangol and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) are two examples of the state-led but quasi-commercial institutions given the responsibility to manage the natural resource sector – both as operators and regulators. Both institutions have been at the receiving ends of allegations ranging from revenues mismanaged, unaccounted for, embezzled, and/or misappropriated. In one instance, the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI) reported that the NNPC failed to pay US\$15 billion in oil revenues to the State coffers. Top officials of the Corporation and in the oil sector as well as their cronies are standing trial in various cases on charges related to fraud and money laundering. The loss of natural resource revenues to the national coffers; particularly in countries that rely heavily on natural resources, have been compounded by the global financial meltdown and declining global commodity prices.

With grossly inadequate regulatory frameworks to manage national revenues, international benchmarks for the management of the natural resource sector have become a prerequisite for the intervention of international financial institutions and aid agencies in Africa. A set of international norms regulating natural resource governance have since developed that are integrated into national legislative frameworks in ways that nudge

institutions to promote transparency and accountability in the natural resource sector. It is anticipated that these norms will, in effect, ensure that the continent's resource base will serve as a fulcrum for poverty alleviation and national (sustainable) development. Also, these norms aim to make it difficult for conflict actors and their benefactors to fund violent conflicts with natural resource revenues. The Kimberly Process (KP) and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) which both directly relate to the extractive industry are used as examples of global norms that have an impact on the development of regulatory frameworks that contribute to natural resource management in Africa. On the continental level, the Agenda 2063 and the African Mining Vision (AMV), two homegrown visions that implicate natural resource management are discussed. While the AMV is limited to the extractive industry, mining to be precise, Agenda 2063 is a much broader vision. Thereafter, a discussion on evolving frameworks on the marine environment and land, two other important natural resources that have potential to contribute to the conflict matrix on the continent.

## The Kimberley Process

The Kimberly Process (KP) emerged in response to the trade in "conflict diamonds" from countries experiencing civil war such as Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone (Bone, 2004). Under the regulation, the United Nations prohibited private investors from trading diamonds sold by the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) (Bone, 2004). It originated from extensive international campaign led by leading international Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) such as Global Witness and through the efforts of governments led by Botswana and South Africa. Briefly, the Kimberly process sets out the standard for verifying the origin, quality and ownership of diamond minerals to ensure that those

traded in the international market neither originate from conflict areas nor that they directly or indirectly, fund violent conflicts. Since it was conceived and implemented, it has become an established norm within the diamond industry and plays a fundamental role in governing the conduct of institutions involved in the buying and selling of the resource.

The trade in 'conflict diamonds' has reduced significantly as a result of the institutionalization of the KP since it has become difficult for non-state armed groups to mine and trade them.

However, President Trump's plan (leaked to the press) to suspend the Dodd-Frank Act by executive order has serious implications for conflict in Congo. Suspending the Act will mean that section 1502 that requires U.S. companies to avoid using conflict minerals from Congo and surrounding countries will be ineffective for the duration of the suspension. This means that US companies may trade in conflict minerals and by extension, seeing a new market, non-state armed actors will re-emerge from the shadows to exploit what they are sure to see as an economic opportunity. Although some companies have already noted that they will continue to purchase ethical minerals, the viability of a market, however small, is portends danger of conflicts minerals and the attendant issues including violent contestations over access.

Thus far, the KP was able to achieve its immediate aim, and by cutting off the supply chain of non-state armed groups, not only did the incentive to engage in resource-related conflicts reduce, States were in a position to increase revenues from minerals. Nonetheless, other than Botswana where the management of the diamond industry is largely determined by local indigenous policies rather than the consequence of global norms such as the KP, example of resource-rich African countries that have managed to close poverty gaps and stave off resource-related conflicts are few (Iimi, 2006). Unfortunately, where

the KP succeeded in increasing resource revenues accruing to the State, as in the case with Zimbabwe, incidences of gross misappropriation were reported (One, 2016).

As a signatory to the KP that was partly responsible for rise in diamond production by more than 500% between 2008 and 2013, the country also witnessed a steady decline in revenues in that period. In 2011 and 2012, shipments of diamonds grew from US\$238 million to US\$563 million but treasury contributions dropped from \$81 million to \$45 million, with US\$15 billion reportedly misappropriated from the sale of diamonds in 2016 alone. The failure to properly manage the resource revenues have fed directly into pockets of popular protests witnessed across the country over the last one decade at least.

Nonetheless, the KP has succeeded in stemming the flow of conflict diamonds and has contributed to the evolution of other norms on the continent such as the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Certificate for Designated Minerals. The Certificate for Designated Minerals aims to function much in the same way as the KP by awarding permitting only shipments of designated minerals (tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold) that can demonstrate “conflict free” origin, transport and processing. The main aim of this initiative, much like the KP, is to eradicate the use of resource revenues to fund violent conflicts in the region. The imperatives of the initiative are being harmonized and integrated into national legislation as stipulated by Article 22 of the Protocol of the Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR) in the Great Lakes Region.

In 2012, Rwanda and DRC integrated the ICGLR RCM into domestic law. In May 2012, within four months of transposing the law, the DRC government enforced the domestic law retroactively against two Chinese mineral traders - TTT Mining (exporting as Congo Minerals and Metals) and Huaying Trading Company. Both companies were suspended for having sold untagged minerals to Chinese

smelters/refiners that did not require tags or due diligence checks on their supply chains in 2011. While the suspension was lifted in May 2013, the government banned all cross-province mineral transfers in June 2012 to combat smuggling. The application and enforcement of this regulation has resulted in the overall decrease of mineral exports from east of the DRC.

A key lesson, then, is that the governance of natural resource processes is determined less by global norms but by local and regional natural resource governance regulations, laws and institutions. This assertion does not deviate from the fact that global norms pave the way to address local or national governance failures. The point being made is that the manner national regulatory frameworks and institutions evolve and respond to global norms are central to the extent to which the intentions of these international norms are attained. Countries like Botswana that have benefitted from resource endowments have done so based on well-developed local regulatory and institutional structures. When they are in place and enforced, local laws and institutions are more effective in the governance of natural resources for the benefit of ordinary people in ways that ultimately reduces the potential of such resources to instigate and/or fuel violent conflicts.

## Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)

Like the KP, the EITI was an outcome of campaigns led by International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) such as Global Witness, Open Society Institute, Oxfam, Save the Children and Transparency International. However, it gained popularity following the endorsement it received from the Tony Blair administration in the United Kingdom (Ocheje, 2006). The initiative was designed to “improve the management of natural resources, reduce corruption, and mitigate conflict” (Haufler, 2010).

There are 6 operational criteria within which EITI seeks to achieve its core objective to improve transparency in natural resource governance. These are:

1. Regular publication of all material oil, gas and mining payments by companies to governments (“payments”) and all material revenues received by governments from oil, gas and mining companies (“revenues”) to a wide audience in a publicly accessible, comprehensive and comprehensible manner.
2. Where such audits do not already exist, payments and revenues are the subject of a credible, independent audit, applying international auditing standards.
3. Payments and revenues are reconciled by a credible, independent administrator, applying international auditing standards and with publication of the administrator’s opinion regarding that reconciliation including discrepancies, should any be identified.
4. This approach is extended to all companies including state-owned enterprises.
5. Civil society is actively engaged as a participant in the design, monitoring and evaluation of this process and contributes towards public debate.
6. A public, financially sustainable work plan for all the above is developed by the host government, with assistance from the international financial institutions where required, including measurable targets, a timetable for implementation, and an assessment of potential capacity constraints.

These criteria set out the norms upon which the future of transparency in the extractive sector was to be built. To be considered ‘transparent’ therefore, companies and countries with natural resource are expected to sign up to the EITI and adhere with its

objectives. A total of 27 African countries - more than the number that joined the KP - have signed up to the EITI.<sup>2</sup> Many countries signing up to the EITI, particularly those without relevant extant transparency regulations are obliged to establish new laws that primarily create institutional structures to implement the initiatives principles. Consequently, national EITI institutions have emerged across resource-rich countries on the continent alongside their existing natural resource governance structures, legal and institutional. Although the alignment of these laws to EITI standards is a major factor in determining whether a country has become more transparent in natural resource governance, they are necessary but grossly insufficient to promote transparency.

For example, in Nigeria, despite the promulgation of the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI) (NEITI Act, 2007), lack of transparency and corruption in the oil industry are rife, contributing to conflicts in the Niger Delta area. In the latest report on Year 2014 report released in 2016, the national oil corporation, the NNPC, was indicted of not remitting over US\$4.7 billion to the federation’s account, while the report for the previous year had indicated that the NNPC withheld over US\$13.29 billion over a nine-year period. While the NEITI reports reveal rampant corruption in the natural resource sector, new oil-related corruption scandals continue to unfold; including allegations of fraud and money laundering against government officials, as highlighted earlier, a factor responsible for the restiveness in the Niger Delta region and contributing to the prevalent conflicts in the area.

<sup>2</sup> Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia.

Notwithstanding the lack of transparency in the Nigeria, the country is deemed to be fully compliant, a clear indication that full compliance with EITI imperatives is not tantamount to good governance of natural resources. Nonetheless, it suffices to say that the EITI has had considerable impacts on natural resource governance in Africa despite the challenges that are still manifest.

The EITI has made it possible for stakeholders with different interests – governments, corporations, companies, NGOs, and so on – to collaborate more effectively. Even if there are still many proverbial rivers to cross, it is pertinent that EITI is capable of shaping national legislation in ways that promotes increased transparency and accountability in natural resource governance. For example, there is legislation in the works to ensure that there is full disclosure of company ownership details under the beneficial ownership scheme. Government institutions are also benefitting from the influence of EITI; for example, the office of the Auditor-General in the DRC has become re-energized to deliver on its mandate with regards monitoring and reporting on public finance.

Two conclusions may be drawn with regards the role of EITI in developing national legal regimes in Africa. First, is that in adopting the EITI principles, countries are obliged to implement legal reforms as preconditions including the creation of national EITI institutions to promote progress in adhering to the imperatives of the initiative. Secondly, several countries are going through the motions of accepting and implementing global norms and institutions while maintaining a level of opacity that allows corruption to continue. Interestingly, the Centre for the Study of Economies of Africa (CSEA) posits that the multiplicity of laws governing the management of natural resources – including international norms and national regulations – sometimes end up creating the lacunae exploited to corrupt the process of transparency and accountability in the extractive sector. Hence, there is urgent need to harmonize the global and

national guidelines to enhance transparency in natural resource governance.

## Continental Initiatives: Agenda 2063 and the African Mining Vision (AMV)

Africa has further seized the initiative in terms of norms building and implementation in the extractive sector with Agenda 2063 and the AMV, amongst others. Agenda 2063, adopted in 2015 by the AU Summit, is a framework formulated for the purpose of guiding Africa's development in the next fifty years adopted by the AU. It was developed from extant African frameworks, programmes and declarations, consultations with a broad spectrum of African stakeholders at the grassroots level, synthesis of 35 national and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) strategic and action plans, situational analysis and study of global mega trends. This bottom-up approach builds on the past experiences and initiatives as well as taking contemporary global trends into consideration. Article 66(b) of Agenda 2063 clearly outlines the Agenda's historical background and expressly refers to an African turning point wherein there is a determination to end wars and conflicts, to build shared prosperity, to integrate, to build responsive and democratic governance as well as end the marginalization of the continent.

There are a few instructive ideas that come through the above provision. First and foremost is that ending wars and conflicts, many of them either over or funded by natural resources, is seen as integral to a renaissance for Africa. Reference to shared prosperity will include the economic growth of nations based on their natural sources as well as common resources such as vast oceanic space that harbors the blue economy, the new resource frontier, for example. The reference to the integration and building of responsive and democratic governance suggests that governance, broadly speaking



to include the management of resources, will be based on responsive and democratic governments with a responsibility to promote good governance.

Agenda 2063 Aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063

is to “have a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development” has implications for natural resource governance. Relevant goals and priority areas within this aspiration are captured below:

Goals	Priority areas
Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production	Agricultural productivity and production.
Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth	Marine resources and energy. Port operations and marine transport.
Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities	Sustainable natural resource management Biodiversity conservation, genetic resources and ecosystems. Sustainable consumption and production patterns. Water security. Climate resilience and natural disasters preparedness and prevention. Renewable energy.

The vision and roadmap as laid out in Africa’s Agenda 2063 provides a framework to develop sectoral and normative, national, regional and continental plans into a coherent whole which could form the basis of natural resource governance in Africa. The different goals in the priority areas identified in Agenda 2063 also demonstrates the ambition of policy makers in the continent to maximize all forms of natural resources in the continent.

With the adoption of the African Mining Vision (AMV) by the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union (AU) at the February 2009 Summit held in Addis Ababa, it is expected that countries in Africa may be moving towards achieving the agenda 2063. The AMV is intended as a holistic approach to the exploitation of resources for development (AMV 2009). The key objective of the AMV is to recognize the use of mineral resources as a catalyst to broad-based growth and development, rather than a means to revenues that have not transformed the lives of Africans in the past decades. The Vision proposes a shift from the current model inherited from the colonial era characterised by a high dependency on global export of resources, mostly to the former colonial metropolis in ways that sustains an uneven relationship between African governments

and external actors involved in the extractive industry. For example, the high dependency on international exports has failed most African countries as they lack the capacity to enhance the value of their commodities locally thereby sacrificing opportunities socio-economic development.

Broadly, the key objectives of the AMV include: the enhancement of retained value by promoting linkages; obtaining an adequate share of mineral revenue; improving public participation and accountability; pursuing an integrated view of rights of various stakeholders; and, valuing environmental resources. Other objectives are to use mineral revenue efficiently; promote local development; encourage regional cooperation and harmonization; and strengthening institutions by building capacity and developing networks (AMV 2009).

The objectives of the AMV indicate that its mandate goes beyond matters bordering on transparency to include those issues linked to the optimal utilization of the continent’s natural resources. By adopting a holistic approach to understanding and responding to the myriad issues that plague mineral exploitation in Africa, the focus of the AMV is on the enhancement of retained value in such a way as to retain substantial value-

added within- not outside - the continent. Again, Botswana's beneficiation policy is an example of how an African country might take the initiative in promoting a value chain (for its diamond industry) to the benefit for the local population.

Without detracting from the benefits that global norms have had on Africa's extractive sector, the imperative to develop and implement homegrown norms capable of contributing to effective natural resource governance is overdue. Such sets of norms would be expected to consider the peculiarities of the continent's situation and designed in a way that is easier for African countries to muster the requisite political will to implement them. Agenda 2063 and the AMV are both endogenous thus the AU's member states and the five regional blocs can identify and 'own' both their processes and outcomes. Africa has developed several mission statements often categorized as declarations, aspirations and visions that can serve the continent well in terms if they can be concretized. One may posit that the AMV is already evolving from a "vision" to a norm as it has become the basis for reform of mineral policies as well as establishing legal and regulatory framework at the both the national (e.g. Mozambique, Ethiopia, Lesotho and Tanzania) and regional level. With regards the latter, ECOWAS has begun the process of developing an ECOWAS Minerals Development Policy (EMDP) that was validated in June 2011. The EMDP though considered separate from the AMV is related to, and shares important features with it and the Action Plan.

However, there are hindrances that may limit the evolution of such visions and mission statements to the level of norms that will precipitate the required changes to Africa's natural resource governance structures. Using the AMV as an example, it is suffice to say that the Vision and its Action Plan are quite vague and offer a number of ideas rather than a concrete governance framework that can be readily implemented. This includes, for example, goals such as

"create a mining sector that generates adequate income and rents to eradicate poverty and finance African growth and development"; a provision general enough to be popularly supported but without concrete guidelines. Thus, the alignment of sectorial policies of mineral rich African countries with the AMV goals is therefore often going to rather implicit.

Secondly, resource-rich countries on the continent are faced with a plethora of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements (from traditional partners and new ones particularly China and India) with the renewed global rush to Africa. Meandering these, in addition to the AMV and Action Plan, will not be an easy task. With terms of engagement in these "international" alliances looking more attractive – the Chinese investing heavily in infrastructure in return, for example – it may take a considerable time for the AMV and Action Plan to take a foothold in terms of actualizing its intents. This may lead to delays in the initiatives evolving to become norms in the real sense of the word.

In summary, Africa needs to harness its drive for a renaissance by looking inwards to develop normative frameworks that address the challenges that affect the ability to utilize its rich and diverse natural resource base to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. Resource related conflicts, especially those related to the extractive industry, are one of the main stumbling blocks that must be addressed. With several countries having gone through the subsequent difficulties that these conflicts cause, there is more than enough experience on the continent to develop a comprehensive set of norms that will provide the requisite changes in regional and national regulatory and institutional frameworks to promote the proper exploitation and utilization of Africa's natural resources.

## Non-Extractive Natural Resources

As noted previously, Africa's natural resource base is extensive. In addition to the extractive industry that has gained more prominence over the decades due to the huge revenues associated with it. As a result, the norms that regulate these other resources including the marine environment (including inland water ways and resources of the sea), land as well as forests and biodiversity, have been relatively slow in developing to the levels of regional and national responses, regulatory and institutional. In other words the management of these other resource bases has been, generally speaking, more lax.

In fact, the immense value these resources hold have sometimes been undervalued until recently. For example, the sea as a resource had till quite recently been regarded as a means of transportation. However, with the conflicts occurring inland and new technology to explore resources resulting in huge discoveries of reserves of natural gas in the marine environment, for instance, more attention has been given to this resource.

There have been a series of attempts at the AU level to develop a maritime strategy that takes cognizance and places the right value on the continent's vast marine resources. The challenges of piracy in Africa's Maritime's space led to the evolution of the AU-led 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIMS) that the AU Assembly adopted in 2014. While expanding the scope of the 2050 AIMS to include development and governance issues is laudable, including the blue economy among the major goals of the Agenda 2063 10-year implementation plan registered a sign of intent that Africa was preparing to ensure it reaped optimal benefits from its Maritime domain. However, the institutional structure to actively pursue the realization of this important agenda is not in place. While several recommendations have been made in this regard, nothing concrete has taken place on the continental

level to provide the necessary push for 2050 AIMS to evolve from an expansive strategy document to a continental normative framework (Walker 2017).

Nonetheless Africa has a history of regional and multilateral arrangements to govern shared marine resources. The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) for instance is an intergovernmental partnership of 10 Nile Basin countries,<sup>3</sup> established in February 1999 to "provide a forum for consultation and coordination among the Basin States for the sustainable management and development of the shared Nile Basin water and related resources for win-win benefits" (NBI website). In West Africa, the Niger Basin Authority (NBA), created in 1964, brings together the countries<sup>4</sup> that are connected by the Niger River and its tributaries to promote cooperation among the Member States and to ensure an integrated development of the Niger Basin in the fields of energy, water resources, agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing and fisheries, forestry, transport, communications and industry.

This area that is already experiencing conflicts, political instability, poverty, heavy reliance on natural resources is prone to even more conflicts, especially as it grapples with the challenges of climate change (World Bank 2016). Notably, the NBA has a developed a Climate Resilience Investment Plan (CRIP) to tackle the challenges of climate change and improve the livelihoods of the population that live in the Niger Basin (World Bank 2016). There is also the Lake Chad Basin comprising of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria that is already enmeshed in violent conflicts originating from the Boko Haram terrorist group. These Basins have played a significant role to promote mutual co-operation in the management of marine resources and have an even more a critical role to play in mitigating disputes

<sup>3</sup> Members include Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Eritrea participates as an observer.

<sup>4</sup> These are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria.

and managing conflicts that are bound to occur as the impacts of climate change increasingly manifest. In the absence of a continental framework that effectively manages the marine environment, the Basins have to live up to the modern day reality by recognizing that water is also a conflict-prone resource.

The AU officially recognized the “centrality of land to sustainable socio-economic growth, development and the security of the social, economic and cultural livelihoods” of Africans with the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges In Africa. The Declaration adopted in 2009<sup>5</sup> noted that there was a need to have “strong systems of land governance rooted in principles of sustainability in an effort to ensure preservation, protection and renewability of Africa’s land and related resources”. However, progress has been slow continentally and regionally to address the issues the Declaration highlighted. Indeed, it is an onerous task to achieve the desired task of adopting a continental Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy that will ensure the effective management of land to ensure equitable access.

The AUC-ECA-AfDB Land Policy Initiative (LPI) has launched a pilot project to track progress in the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges. The project launched in March 2017 has the broad objective to track the progress that has been made on the continent with regards implementing the key decisions and commitments of the AU Declaration on Land at continental, regional and national

level, beginning with ten (10) pilot countries. Specific objectives of the project include the development of a comprehensive baseline that will form the basis for tracking progress in implementation of the key decisions of the AU Declaration on Land; track progress made at the continental, regional and national levels since the launch of the implementation of the Declaration; document and disseminate best practices; and build capacity to sustain efforts of member states in regular tracking and reporting on land governance.

In a nutshell, the development of normative framework, at least at a continental framework that may precipitate changes in national frameworks that characteristically grant the state unfettered access to land is slow. As discussed in earlier sections of this paper, land-related conflicts – whether precipitated by access to the land simpliciter or to other resources harbored - obstruct the effective and optimal exploitation natural resources. These conflicts have not only negatively affected the economic performances of many countries on the continent, but is continually disrupting the social fabric of African societies, a tendency that portends more danger for the future unity of the continent and member states. Hence, it is time to refocus attention from the extractive industry to recognize the essence of other natural resources both in the ways they can contribute to development but also as they are conflict drivers to enable the development of an effective natural resource governance structure for Africa.

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<sup>5</sup> [Assembly/AU/Decl.1\(XIII\) Rev.1 adopted at the at the Thirteenth Ordinary Session in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 1 to 3 July 2009.](#)

## 5.0 Governing for the Future: Strengthening Current Mechanisms

The natural resource sector in Africa has been plagued by conflicts of varying dimensions from mostly localized skirmishes between pastoralists and farmers over access to land to those of extremely violent civil wars over and funded by resource revenues. The conflicts as noted are not likely to reduce if the due attention and focus on governance strategies is not prioritized in Africa. Indeed, the continent is not bereft of initiatives and strategies but what is required is not simply the introduction of another framework to the fold but to address the issue of natural resource governance holistically.

Issues to be considered is why the Continent's natural resource sector has become the bedrock of violent conflicts rather than the basis of development to alleviate widespread poverty. Fundamental issues relate to how the experiences of resource-related conflicts in Africa may benefit the development of a continental framework to avoid recurrences of conflicts. Also, how can the framework be broad-based to ensure it captures the range of the continent's natural resources in a holistic manner? How may the diversity of the continent – regional and national legal arrangements for instance, be harnessed to develop a viable continental framework on natural resource governance?

Issues that cause conflicts in Africa's natural resource sector, broadly include the foreclosure of democracy, rule of law and the inequitable distribution of national resources, as well as the lack of transparency and accountability in the sector. Most resource-related conflicts are implicated by the inequitable distribution of benefits of the resource. This may be the environmental 'goods' and 'bads' of the resource; a situation typical of the extractive industry. While the State and elite, in alliance with foreign corporations, enjoy the benefits of the exploited resource, host-communities face the debilitating negative environmental

impacts. Also, investments in the host-communities have been inadequate with the quantum of compensation paid for appropriated land, contaminated land and waters, for examples, have been below economic values leading to angst and violent reactions.

The situation is aggravated by the absence of rule of law leaving aggrieved parties without legal and administrative recourse as well as undemocratic management and decision-making in the natural resource sector. Regarding the latter, for example, land is often appropriated without consultation of affected local communities; or host-communities are not consulted with regards resource revenue investments in their domains. Given the relationship these communities have with 'their' land that is also their fundamental natural resource, experience has revealed that reactions after a while turn violent. Lack of accountability and transparency also feed into the conflict matrix as the situation empowers and emboldens corruption, misappropriation and embezzlement of resource revenues that ought to be expended on development-related projects and investments. In essence, these broad governance issues must be factored into a framework on natural resource governance if resource-related conflicts are to be tackled.

The next issue relates to how a framework can be broad-based to ensure it captures the range of the continent's natural resources. While the extractive industry has received immense attention, no doubt because of the high value of its products, other resources must be accorded equal recognition and protection. For instance, land is a resource every African has a personal and communal connection with, yet it is arguably the most unprotected resource and one that sparks conflicts more than the other resources. These range from the disputes over

appropriation of land for use of the extractive industry highlighted previously to land grabbing as well those between pastoralists and farmers that is on the rise as a result of shortages in grazing land, a consequence of climate change in many areas.

Also, more attention needs to be given to the marine environment and the vast economic opportunities it holds. The current lack of understanding on the conceptual understanding and definition of the blue economy for instance must be overcome. Thinking should move beyond considering the oceans as a means of transportation to the appreciation of biodiversity resources it harbors, to vast reserves of deep shore oil and gas reserves, fisheries, etc. The challenges posed by piracy should also be considered as a fundamental issue because as the resources of the maritime environment are increasingly exploited, so is the likelihood of increase in the rate of piracy.

Developing continental norms for a continent with 54 countries is not an easy task as these countries have different legal systems and backgrounds as well as cultures and institutional frameworks. However, the advantage of multiple systems should be harnessed rather than it being considered a disadvantage. At the regional level, with regards management of in-water resources for example, cross-cutting lessons can be learned from the approach and experiences both from normative and institutional arrangements from the Senegal River Basin Organization, Okavango River Basin Commission, SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems, the Niger Basin Initiative, amongst others. Regions are facing and prioritizing different challenges, in some instances as the case with the Lake Chad Basin, including cross-border conflicts.

While this is not a situation common to all the Basin Authorities on the continent, those not facing this particular challenge can learn lessons to prevent or manage disputes that occur to ensure that they do not escalate to the levels experienced in the Lake Chad

Basin. At the national levels, the experiences of countries on the continent may contribute to shaping and influencing both continental normative frameworks and adaptation at the national level by other states. Botswana is a good example with regards the extractive industry while Cameroon is a good instance of management of forestry management that other countries and the continent can learn from in developing legal and institutional arrangements.

It is imperative to take into cognizance all the issues discussed above to address the challenges of natural resource governance in Africa in a manner that is sustained and sustainable will require adopting a holistic approach. While some of the merits of existing norms cannot be discounted, streamlining and integrating them into a holistic continental framework is more desirable than an attempt to completely reinvent the wheel. The advantage of this kind of integration is that it avoids the existence of a multiplicity of norms that, in turn, makes it an onerous task for national regulatory institutions to keep up with, adapt and implement.

Invariably, an African Natural Resource Governance Architecture (ANRGA) is suggested as a framework to engage with the broad management of the continent's natural resources. It is proposed that the ANRGA should develop organically from Agenda 2063 with the key elements of good governance (especially democracy, rule of law, transparency and accountability, as well as efficient and equitable management of resource revenues being core issues. These themes are notably expressed in Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063. In proposing the ANRGA, the expectation is not for policy makers to re-invent the wheel but to fuse existing- but disparate- processes into a comprehensive framework.

## 5.1 Democracy

The expectation is that within the context of

democracy in natural resource governance, key principles of democracy such as collective decision-making must be embraced and elevated. In applying collective decision making to natural resource governance, decisions leading to the exploration and use of natural resources should take on board the contrasting views of different actors that are expected to benefit or be impacted, by the exploitation of the natural resource. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) laws that govern the exploration and extraction of natural resources is one such law that already promotes the principle of democratic governance, even if the latter is only one aspect towards sound and efficient natural resource governance.

The principle of democratic collective decision-making also needs to be consistent across the different cycles of natural resource management, from exploration to production and how revenues are utilised. This will limit the resort to armed violence by local actors and communities constantly jostling to reap the benefit from lax natural resources governance framework. Nigeria's Delta region is one example where the dearth of democratic decision-making has triggered violent conflicts with local communities claiming that they are left out of the decision-making process. Even within that mostly restive region, one cannot miss the contrast that the relatively peaceful Akassa community represents as a unique model of community-led approach to natural resource governance. Pro Natura International Nigeria, a community development organization has worked with Statoil; the main multinational oil company operating in Akassa to develop a unique and participatory model that allow communities to audit their own needs, plan projects and monitor their implementation through established structures. This inclusive process can easily be reproduced elsewhere with only slight modifications.

The lesson from Akassa is that when systems of democratic inclusions are factored into natural resource governance, there will be

fewer incentives for actors to act outside these systems. Therefore, even though grievances over issues such as the impact of exploration and production of natural resources and the distribution of natural resource revenues may arise from time to time, there will always be opportunities to democratically address these grievances before they lead to violent conflicts.

The absence or weakness of institutions that manages grievances could pose a risk that could undermine the stability of resource rich countries. Such institutions, as seen in the case study from Akassa, provide a democratic framework for the resolution of conflicts and the allocation of resources at the local level. Therefore, as Africa seeks to develop a new vision that governs natural resources, it is important that this new vision promotes the development of strong institutions that can democratically address the grievances associated with the management of natural resources.

## 5.2 Rule of Law

With regards to the principle of rule of law within natural resource governance, the emphases should be on the equality before the law along with unfettered access to judicial and/or administrative systems for dispute resolution. Three elements of the rule of law make its presence crucial for any legal system; these are the supremacy of the law and the absence of arbitrariness, equality before the law, and constitutional law as part of the ordinary law of the land. Generally, rule of law is often applied in its political context to ensure that political power is not abused. In natural resource governance sphere, the rule of law will function to ensure that laws regulating the sector do not allow individual and/or sectional interests of political actors to disadvantage the citizenry. If it ever does, multinationals are held liable under the laws in the countries in which they operate.

Regarding the former, the "above the law"

stance of the ruling elite in Africa has contributed immensely to the vicious cycle of corruption in many societies. There is barely any African ruler (and their family) in a country that is rich in natural resource that has not been caught in the web of resource-revenue related corruption. With regard to multinational corporations, there are several examples of locals seeking justice in foreign jurisdictions regardless of the immense costs and uncertainty involved simply because they cannot guarantee rule of law in their respective countries. From Nigeria, cases relating to the operations of oil multinationals have been instituted in England, The Hague and the USA while South African miners have sued in England.

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### 5.3 Accountability and Transparency

The principle of accountability and transparency is central to natural resource governance. However, there is a need to design a framework of accountability and transparency that reflects the local context and political realities on the continent. There are transparency indexes that seeks to measure accountability and transparency in the use of extractive natural resources in Africa. It is common for African countries to meet some of the requirements of transparency and accountability indexes without embarking on any fundamental

or radical reforms agenda in the use natural resource revenues. One reason for this is because the current measures of accountability and transparency have mostly focused on declaring the earnings of natural resources and not in how such earnings have been utilized, or by whom.

Beyond reliance on payments to national governments, accountability and transparency must also focus on how such proceeds are used within the countries. Additional proposals may relate to the vetting of personal and corporate investment funds to ensure that they are not illegally obtained from revenues from illicit natural resource governance. This proposal will require the cooperation of the international community. This is because of the nature of the different laws that govern the movement of capital across different countries. These different laws have facilitated the flow of profits from trade in illegally extracted natural resources. The international community would need to develop a common standard and mechanisms that enhance transparency of financial flows. Again, this is not really re-inventing the wheel as most financial institutions scrutinize funds to ensure they are not from drugs and money laundering. The measurement of transparency and accountability within the context proposed could focus on identifying how much of natural resource revenues go into different sectors that are directly related to development or how a particular natural resource contributes to education, healthcare, infrastructure, arts and culture, and other sectors of the economy beneficial to the ordinary people. Such an approach would ensure that the use of natural resources directly benefits ordinary people.



## 5.4 Efficient and Equitable Management of Resource Revenues

The efficient and equitable management of natural resources is at the heart of virtually every initiative to promote the efficient management; including the proposed natural resource governance architecture framework. Although they run through the different principles outlined earlier, they are identified as separate principles for the purpose of clarifying the important of efficiency and equity in the use of natural resources. One factor that drive grievances and contributes to the

emergence of violent conflicts in resource rich countries is the perception of inequity in the distribution of resource revenues. There needs to be a democratic framework that reflects the diversity of interests and actors within resource-rich countries. Such a framework would recognize the needs of local communities where natural resources are extracted vis-à-vis the general population of the country. It will also address environmental concerns and the impact of natural resource production on the livelihoods of local communities where resource production takes place.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has taken a broad look at the politics of natural resource extraction and governance in Africa. It explored various themes through which the causative relationship between natural resources and violent conflict can be discerned. It also noted that the political economy of natural resources is embedded within the broader global power relations. It noted in particular that emerging economies like China are fundamentally shifting the locus of power within Africa's natural resource landscape and that the implications of these new shifts are not yet fully understood. Nonetheless, they will have profound impact on the next few decades of resource politics on the continent of Africa.

The important role that global environmental movements also play was discussed. It was noted that while it may appear that there is a homogenous global environmental agenda, it is in fact also framed by the same global relations of power that shape broader aspects of inter-state relations. These relations of power, it was noted, are inducing an increase in the militarization of resource extraction, a situation that has had dire implications for local human rights. The paper also discussed the growing role of private military contractors in this dynamic of securitization and argued that because they are hardly accountable to anything but the logic of profit, they complicate the landscape of conflict and extraction in profound ways.

The important global norms, regulations and institutions that attempt to impose some form of order and accountability on the extractive sector was also discussed. Here, the paper argued that while regulation was critical to the effective management of natural resources in Africa, there are cases like in Angola where it in fact facilitates opacity and corruption. In this regard, the paper argued that regulation must be embedded within an infrastructure that can effectively monitor compliance and which promotes transparency. The paper examined the impact of global norms (the KP and EITI) and continental visions (Agenda 2063 and AMV) on the management of natural resources in Africa and conflicts. It noted that these frameworks have had mixed results. The paper in the discussion of the development of normative frameworks regulating non-extractive resources noted that progress is relatively slower due the uneven attention placed on the extractive industry. It noted that this is the case mainly because the extractive industry yields more revenues. This suggests that the broader legal, political and social environment plays a significant role in determining the success or otherwise of natural resource governance models. The implication is that interventions must look at the totality of laws as well as the social justice issues that drive resource governance.

The paper suggested that there is a need to have a broad framework on natural resource governance for the continent. It recommended an African Natural Resource Governance Architecture (ANRGA) that should be developed organically from the Agenda 2063. The ANRGA would emphasize elements the key elements of good governance (especially democracy, rule of law, transparency and accountability, as well as efficient and equitable management of resource revenues) that are vital to governance, broadly speaking.

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## Governing natural resources for security, stability and prosperity

These two significant reports highlight the interconnectedness between a range of developmental issues and the current state of play in the security landscape of the continent.

The **Background Paper** provides an in-depth analysis of the status of natural resource governance in Africa in comparison to the rest of the world. It highlights the undeniable nexus between the role of the state, citizens and external actors in the natural resource governance debate.

In the same vein, **the State of Peace and Security in Africa** underlines the need for security, stability and prosperity in light of the conflicts and security trends in 2017.

Africa, while endowed with natural resources, is deemed cursed due to instabilities caused by the manner in which natural resources have been managed. The cases of oil mismanagement in South Sudan and minerals exploitation in DRC are classic examples of this paradoxical paradigm. According to the African

# Background Paper on NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: Conflict, Politics and Power



# STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA 2017

## The Provision of Security in Africa: No Retreat, No Surrender

Development Bank, between 40 and 60 per cent of on-going internal armed conflicts are linked to natural resources. Nevertheless, it is not that Africa is cursed with its resources but rather that the continent has not taken control and ownership in governing and managing them.

Resource governance frameworks such as the Kimberley Process and the Africa Mining Vision are already in place. Additionally, the AU and RECs/RMs are mandated to

govern and monitor resources at all levels from the local, national, regional and continental levels. The continent is not short of tools required to facilitate the management of its resources. Rather, Africa is still challenged by existing governance gaps that remain one of the fueling factors of the current peace and security threats and trends.







**6<sup>TH</sup> TANA FORUM**

Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa



# STATE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA 2017

**The Provision of Security in Africa:  
No Retreat, No Surrender**



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# Executive Summary

## Key Continental-Level Trends of Peace and Security In 2016

The following are the key observations regarding continental-level trends in peace and security in Africa in 2016.

- Overall, the 'meta data' of conflict and violence in Africa in 2016 was largely unchanged from 2015; albeit the levels for both years are dangerously high. The continent recorded 17, 539 violent events in 2016, compared with 17, 537 recorded in 2015. The range of violent events includes battles, violence against civilians, remote violence, strategic events, riots and mass protests etc.
  - The number of large scale wars and field battles are either stagnating or declining, but there is an increasing explosion of non-state conflict agents and the violence perpetrated by them; militias, vigilantes, violent extremist groups and spontaneous movements (rioters and protesters). Moreover, conventional battles with clear cut government versus opponents continue to decline while rioting, protesting, and violence against civilians remain high or increasing in some cases.
  - Conflict-affected states like Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria recorded the highest number of conflict events in 2016. These countries cumulatively accounted for a third (33%) of all violent conflict in Africa in 2016; a slight decrease from 35% in 2015, and 40% in 2014. In 2016, Somalia was by far the epicentre of violent event in Africa in 2016 with over 2200 recorded events, followed by Nigeria, South Sudan and Libya.
  - Somalia displaced Nigeria as the topmost country for total fatalities (including civilians, soldiers, battle-related and other forms) from violent events in 2016 (See Figure 1 below).
- The number of reported fatalities increased in Somalia and Sudan in 2016, while Nigeria experienced a decline. According to ACLED, Somalia accounted for 20% of all reported fatalities, and Nigeria accounted for nearly 16% of total fatalities in 2016. Nigeria's share declined considerable from almost 30% in 2015.
- Government security forces and political militias were the two most active categories of conflict actors in Africa in 2016. State security outfits accounted for 34% of conflict events in 2016, a two percent increase over 2015. Government security forces were most active in conflict-affected states in the Horn of Africa, specifically Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan; for example, between 2015 and 2016, there was a geometric surge in government military activities in Sudan (from 332 to 460 events) and Ethiopia (from 155 to 448).
  - The scale of human fatalities in 2016 was 30,000, a decrease over 2015 (36,000) levels. According to ACLED, both the estimated total fatalities and reported civilian fatalities from organized armed conflict events declined in 2016. However, civilians continued to be targeted or caught in crossfires; violence against civilians across Africa increased for the second year in a row to 45%, up by three percentage points from 2014 levels. It contrasts sharply with the overall decrease in reported civilian share of conflict-related fatalities; Africa recorded on 8.050 civilian fatalities (27%) in 2016. This is a significant decline (a 42.5% decrease) from the preceding year which stood at 37.5% of all conflict-related fatalities. In fact, this is lowest share of civilian fatalities since 2002.

- The topmost sources of risk and violence to civilians are political militias and state security forces; during the period 2011-2016, militias accounted for 58.2% of violence against civilians. In 2016, state security forces perpetrated a quarter (25%) of reported civilian fatalities. Communal militias (community-based armed groups) are equally deadly for civilians; in 2016, they were linked to 24.5% of reported civilian fatalities, compared with about 11% in 2015. The countries with most reported cases of rape and gender-based violence in 2016 were Sudan, South Sudan, CAR and DRC. Of note is the decline in reported cases of gender-based violence in the DRC. Most of the reported cases of gender-based violence in Sudan were perpetrated by armed groups such as pro-government militias, Janjaweed, the Rapid Support Forces, the military and other unidentifiable armed groups. In South Sudan, the complicit groups include the South Sudanese military and allied paramilitary groups, the SPLA/M-In Opposition, and several ethno-communal militias.
- Notwithstanding the unchanged overall levels of violence in 2016, there was a marked qualitative change in the character of armed conflict and violence in Africa; armed conflicts and violence became more diffused as evidenced by the noticeable increases in the number and spread of mass protests, and rise in militia activities. Political militias were involved in nearly a third (30%) of all organised armed conflict events in Africa 2016. The Imbon-erakure of Burundi was the most active in Africa as it was involved in 202 conflict events in 2016, nearly double its record of 138 events in 2015. New armed groups and militias that changed the conflict landscape emerged in Nigeria's Niger Delta region (Niger Delta Avengers, NDA); and in Eastern DRC (Kamwina Nsapu militia). Other splinter groups were recorded in Sudan, and South Sudan, while RENAMO's fighting capability (and attacks) became more evident in Mozambique in 2016.
- The changing character of violence and conflict also manifested in increased instances of 'low intensity' conflicts or 'quasi-war' situations. Examples of this in 2016 abound, including Mozambique, Burundi, Cameroon, Nigeria, DRC, Northern Mali, border regions across the Sahel, etc. These situations are characterized by lower media coverage; low levels of armed violence but equally deadly internecine violent episodes; and they are rooted in unresolved or badly managed historical-political grievances. They are also extremely fluid situation with huge potentials for escalation, often responding to short term triggers such as policy changes, electoral disputes, and particular arrest or brutality and/or killings by security officials.
- Another evidence of the change in the character of violence and armed conflict across Africa in 2016 was the surge in the number of riots and protests (increased of nearly 5% over 2015 levels) as evidenced by events in Tunisia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Mali, Gabon and Chad. More countries experienced protests in 2016, the countries affected cut across conflict-affected and relatively stable ones; West Africa was least affected; and 2016 witnessed the increasing securitization of protests by governments through rise in cases of crackdown, arbitrary arrests and detentions, shutdown of communication systems, etc. In 2016, mass protests gained traction as they were 'Weaponised' and transformed into 'Street Power' to bring about far-reaching political changes. Going forward, it is logical to expect further instances of riots and protest by citizens in years to come; events in Southern Cameroon, DRC, South Africa, and Nigeria in the first two months of 2017 are pointers.



- Africa experienced a fair share of stalled peace agreements and processes in 2016 in places such as Libya, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan. Across these countries, the lack of progress or setbacks reveals a complex interplay of failed implementation, belligerency amongst factions, lack of requisite political will, emergence of new armed groups/factions, etc.
- Africa recorded progress in the use of African-centred Solutions in Peace and Security (Afsol) in managing armed conflict and insecurity in 2016. Notwithstanding the scale of violence and fatalities, there was evidence of progress in finding and using African solutions (based on historical, socio-political and cultural orientations) to peace and security challenges in 2016. African states and institutions such as the AU and RECs, were active in preventing, de-escalating and forging negotiated solutions (through political dialogue) to violence and conflict situations. In Gabon, Burundi, Gambia, and Sudan, the prospect of open armed confrontation or surge in the scale and intensity of violent clashes was averted or modulated by AU/REC led mediation and political settlement initiatives.
- Data and trends in the activities of violent extremist groups in Africa in 2016 signpost a 'game changing' moment – that containment measures undertaken by African states, the African Union and RECs, and foreign partners were achieving strategic results in most cases. In 2016, the threats posed by violent extremist groups were either neutralized or reduced. The majority of violent extremist groups active across Africa experienced in varying degrees, one or more of the following: loss of territory and constricting spaces to operate, degraded capability to undertake 'audacious' and high-profile attacks, loss of fighters, collapsed or limited sources of support and infrastructures, etc.

# 1. Introduction

This State of Peace and Security in Africa (SPSA) Report is a background paper for the 2017 Tana Forum. It provides contextual information that informs the nature and quality of debate on peace and security issues broadly and in particular, the thematic focus of Tana Forum 2017 (Natural Resource Governance). The theme speaks to the gamut of laws, conventions and practices relating to the ownership and control of the exploitation of natural resources, and the management of receipt from such resources.

As in previous years, this report sets the stage, guides the conversation and helps to shape the debate on the linkages between peace and security trends and natural resource issues in Africa. In doing this, this report provides a succinct<sup>2</sup> overview and analysis of the most salient conflict trends and offers a nuanced understanding of the efforts and responses that are designed to manage complex peace and security challenges on the continent. It also documents and presents the broad and thematic overview of peace and security in Africa broadly, and in relation to natural resource governance issues, in 2016. It covers the number and scale of armed conflict and violence, their spatial distribution (by country and region), the fatalities recorded, and the outline of key actors (government forces, armed opposition groups, militias, citizens, etc.). The report also analyse the nature of responses and interventions by states, the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms, the United Nations, and foreign partners.

## 1.1 Specific Aims and Objectives

- i. To map Africa's peace and security landscape for trends of subsisting and emerging threats; flash points; major

<sup>2</sup> The author (Wale Ismail, [muyiwale@yahoo.com](mailto:muyiwale@yahoo.com)) wish to acknowledge Jacob Kamau (African leadership Centre, Nairobi, Kenya) for his excellent research assistance in the course of producing this SPSA.

actors and interventions; and patterns of continuities, changes and mutations in 2016.

- ii. To document 'game-changing' dynamic in the peace and security environment in Africa in terms of underlying drivers and factors, regional variations, and interventions, and connections with regional, continental and global processes in 2016.
- iii. To provide background information and analysis for understanding natural resource governance issues and processes in Africa's peace and security trends for 2016.
- iv. To highlight gaps in extant regional, continental and global response mechanisms to peace and security threats broadly and pinpoint options for way forward.

## 1.2. Analytical Approach

The analytical approach of this report involves the following:

- **Trend Analysis:** The identification and breakdown of thematic events/threats, actors/groups, area/geography affected, impacts, and responses/interventions. The trend observed for 2016 were compared with 2016 and previous years to highlight similarities and differences.
- **Level of Analysis:** This is the dissection of peace and security threats and underlying cross-cutting factors at three levels, namely national, regional/continental and global. This enabled the analysis to uncover potential linkages, similarities, and differences in the nature, and dimensions of particular peace and security issues in Africa in 2016.
- **Disaggregated Underlying Drivers:** This probes into the structural foundations

and causes of armed conflict and violent events across Africa in 2016. It enabled a more nuanced analysis and exploration of connections between and among peace and security issues/threats in Africa in 2016.

- **Case Studies (flashpoints and examples):** This is the use of empirical instances, events and incidents in specific countries or regions as signposts of a particular trend or scale of threat or unique dimensions. It enabled the analysis to provide detailed description and interrogation of trends observed in 2016. The choice of flashpoint was guided by factual and thematic relevance, and where possible, regional spread.

### 1.3 Data Sources and Methods

This SPSA was prepared through desk-based research and content analysis of qualitative and quantitative data from open sources. The range of data sources includes the following:

- Official Documents of national governments, AU, RECs, UN, and other inter-governmental institutions.
- AU-PSC and UNSC Resolutions and Reports on particular countries, events/incidents, etc.
- Reports of Specialized Missions such as Peace Missions, Election Observation Missions, Human Rights Commission, Expert Panels, etc.
- Academic Publications such as scholarly articles, books, monographs and op-eds on particular incidents/themes, countries and regions.
- Reports of Non-Governmental Actors such as local and international NGOs, CSOs, and major advocacy groups such as Amnesty International, International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, etc.
- Media Reports into particular events/

incidents in countries/regions of interest in 2016.

- Existing International Datasets such as the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) Project, Heidelberg Conflict Barometer, Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), UNFPA State of the World's Population Report, Mo Ibrahim Governance Index/Report, Global Peace Index, ADB's Africa Economic Outlook, Human Development Index, UNFPA's State of the World's Population, World Development Report, etc.

### 1.4 Organisation of Report

The rest of the report is divided into six parts; the next section provides the broad statistical overview of armed conflict and violent events in Africa in 2016. It highlights the scale and distribution of violence, key actors, scale of fatalities, and cross-cutting structural issues. Section four provides a theme-based overview of stalled peace agreement and processes in 2016 with case studies of Libya, Mali and South Sudan. Section five provides the overview of low intensity conflicts and atomized violence with examples from Mozambique, Cameroon, and South Sudan. Section six reports on progress made in conflict management and peace processes in Africa through intra-African approaches and solutions (African Solutions in Peace and Security, Afsol) using Gambia, Gabon and Burundi as case studies. Section seven provides instances of containment and roll back of violent extremist groups in Africa in 2016 with examples of counter-terrorism offensives in Lake Chad Basin (against Boko Haram), Horn of Africa (against Al-Shabaab), North Africa (against Islamic State and its affiliates), and in Northern Mali/Sahel (against a number of groups). Sections eight and nine summarize continental level trends of peace and security in 2016, and provide recommendations for the relevant stakeholders.

## 2. Natural Resource Governance Issues and Peace and Security in Africa

The link between natural resource and violent conflicts in Africa has been a central theme in security-development nexus since the 1990s. The debate has evolved over the years, shifting from scarcity to abundance and then governance issues. Natural resources have played key roles in major armed conflicts between and within states, and emerged as the major driver of Africa's quest for development. Natural resources continue to shape the pattern of Africa's international relations at bilateral and multilateral levels. The onset of the 'Africa Rising' narrative in the last decade was directly linked to natural resources, especially in triggering high rates of economic growth in many resource-rich countries.

Africa's natural resource fields have attracted a range of national, multinational and state-backed foreign companies seeking to capitalize on emerging demand and supply dynamics. Domestically, power elites and local power brokers in many Africa countries have monopolized control over resource revenues, concentrating their personal wealth at the expense of local citizens. This has triggered armed uprisings on the part of local communities. In fact, many communities have become hostile to resource investments, challenge the right of governments to licence exploitation, and disrupted exploration. Attempts by governments and sometimes in collusion with private firms, to enforce the right to exploration (often by crushing resistance by local communities) have led to violent conflicts. On the other hand, armed groups and criminal networks have exploited the weaknesses of state institutions and natural resource regulatory frameworks to illegally tap from natural resource deposits by directly taking natural resources or deriving rents from illegal operators. In such cases, natural resources proceeds have been used to finance and sustain armed conflicts.

Still, natural resources harbour great potentials for Africa's development where and when the environmental fallouts are properly anticipated and managed; host communities appropriately consulted and equitably benefitting; value chains created and enhanced; and receipts handled in transparency and accountable manner.<sup>3</sup> The AU Peace and Security Council underlined this in 2016 in its statement that "weak management and inequitable distribution of these resources can be, among others, a key factor in triggering, financing and prolonging conflicts."<sup>4</sup> The PSC also "stressed the imperative need for effective and transparent management, as well as for equitable distribution of a country's natural resources that ensures the interest and wellbeing of the local population, communities and the country at large."<sup>5</sup>

What are latest trend in natural resource and its links conflict and violence in Africa? Five major patterns are discernible; first, the scope of actors in the field has broadened to include traditional (Western) and new, non-Western companies. The new entrants include Chinese, Indian, Brazilian, Russian, and South Africa companies. Of this, China is the biggest player in Africa's natural resource landscape; it has built elaborate financial and trade infrastructures, and political frameworks (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation). China has gained major concessions in oil and gas, iron ore, timber, manganese, cobalt and copper in a number of Africa countries, especially Sudan, Gabon, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, DRC, Ghana, and Liberia. China and some of the entrants

3 UNEP 2015 Addressing the Role of Natural Resources in Conflict and Peacebuilding: A Summary of Progress from UNEP's Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding Programme, UNEP Nairobi, Kenya, p.8.

4 Peace and Security Council 575th Meeting, Press Statement, 11 February 2016, <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/press-statement-575th-11-02-2016.pdf>

5 Ibid.

have added infrastructure financing, large scale infrastructure works, and cultural exchanges to their interest in Africa's natural resources. It is instructive that the entrance of the new players has coincided with new or exacerbated old conflicts in resource bearing many communities and countries in Africa. For example, Chinese large scale investment in the natural resource sectors has influenced the security dynamic in conflict-affected states such as DRC, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Sudan.<sup>6</sup>

The second major trend is the emergence of new African countries in the resource boom as more natural resource deposits are discovered and exploration activities kick-started. In the hydrocarbon sector for instance, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Malawi, and South Sudan have joined the league of countries with oil and gas deposits. The new discoveries have ignited old border disputes (e.g. Tanzania and Malawi over Lake Malawi) or worsened relations between government and communities.

Third is emergence of national, regional and continental frameworks intended to harmonize standards and procedures for natural resource exploitation and infuse greater transparency in the management of receipts. The African Mining Vision (AMV) and its implementation body, the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC), were established in 2009 to streamline the governance of mining in Africa. Other initiatives include the Kimberly Process, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), International Voluntary Principles Initiatives, the Kofi Annan's Africa Progress Panel and the Thabo Mbeki-led High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows etc. Much of these initiatives continue to be plagued with implementation challenges, and lack of coordination and alignment of various processes and initiatives.<sup>7</sup>

6 Dollar, D. (2016), *China's Engagement with Africa: From Natural Resources to Human Resources*. Washington, The John L. Thornton China Center at Brookings, p. xi

7 Bello, O. (2014) *Africa's Extractive Governance*

Fourth is constricting spaces for civil society groups and local communities to influence decisions on natural resource exploitation in Africa. The huge scale of foreign investment in Africa's natural resource sector has meant that many countries and government have securitized the sector and exploration sites. Civil society advocates and resource bearing communities that protest lopsided exploration concessions are either wrongly termed as 'anti-development', saboteurs, or placed under legal restrictions or arrested.<sup>8</sup>

Fifth, there is a broad consensus that in many cases, the short and medium term benefits of natural resource boom have remained a mirage in many resource bearing communities and for most citizens in resource rich countries in Africa. Notwithstanding impressive economic growth figures, the resource boom has failed to deliver corresponding social, economic and human development gains, especially in resource bearing communities. In most cases, communities in and around natural resource fields are often some of the most deprived, and face many negative impacts, including resettlement, environmental pollution, health hazards and the disruption of livelihoods. Natural resources are contributing little to improve the overall welfare of local communities, in spite of the few jobs they may provide.<sup>9</sup>

Much of the problem about natural resource governance in Africa is underpinned by four things, namely the limited (ineffectual) recognition of local communities as legitimate stakeholders with major interests; the securitization of the sector by governments; limited and affirmative action to encourage and build the capacity of local actors to participate in natural

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Architecture: Lessons to Inform a Shifting Agenda, SIIA Policy Brief 90, pp. 1-2.

8 Blair, A. (2015) *Africa's Natural Resources: 3 Things Governments Need to Get Right*, 02 April 2015, <https://politicsofpoverty.oxfamamerica.org/2015/04/africas-natural-resources-3-things-governments-need-to-get-right/>

9 Henrich Boll Stiftung (April 2016). *Rights and Resources Building Community Voice in the Mining Sector, Perspectives*, Issue 1, p.5.

resource exploration; and limited progress in building value chains. In few instances where schemes to increase the economic participation of communities have been introduced, such as community share-

ownership trusts, ordinary members are often misrepresented by local traditional elites who follow their own narrow interests.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Henrich Boll Stiftung (April 2016), p.5.

### 3. Broad Overview of Violence and Armed Conflict in Africa in 2016

The headline data ('Meta Data') is that the total number of violent events, including armed conflicts, militia activities, insurgency, protests, etc. in 2016 was unchanged from the previous year. According to the University of Sussex based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) project, the total aggregate of armed conflict and violent events in Africa was more or less the same (unchanged) from 2015. The continent recorded 17, 539 violent events in 2016, compared with 17, 537 recorded in 2015. The range of violent events includes battles, violence against civilians, remote violence, strategic events, riots and mass protests etc. It is instructive to note that the distribution by categories of violent event for 2016 was also similar in large parts to 2015; for instance,

Correspondingly, the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer for 2016 reported that Sub-Saharan Africa witnessed a slight increase in the total number of conflicts; 94 cases in 2016, compared with 93 in 2015, representing almost 25% of the world's political conflicts. Oceania recorded the highest number of conflicts with a total of 123 (30 percent of total), Middle East and Maghreb (69 conflicts), Europe (62 conflicts), and the Americas (54 conflicts). Globally, the total number of highly violent conflicts decreased from 43 to 38 in 2016, but Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for a third.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the number of limited wars

decreased from ten to seven, while the number of full-scale wars decreased from nine to seven in 2016. Some of the major wars in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016 include Sudan (Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile); South Sudan (the Dinka-dominated SPLM government and the Nuer-dominated SPLM-IO); Somalia (Al-Shabaab conflict in Somalia and spill-over into Kenya); and Nigeria (the Boko Haram conflict and armed confrontation between herders and farmers).

In 2016, there were 16 active United Nations-led peace operations, involving 117,306 personnel across the globe. The overall annual budget is estimated at \$7.87 billion. This is in addition to peace operations by regional bodies, including the AU and African RECs.<sup>12</sup> Some of the active peace operations in Africa in 2016 include the following:

1. UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) with 13,098 personnel in 2016.
2. UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization in Mali (MINUSMA).
3. UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).
4. AU-UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) with 19,248 personnel in 2016.
5. UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) with 434 personnel in 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK), (2017). Conflict Barometer 2016, Heidelberg, Germany, HIIK, p. 15. [https://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer\\_2016.pdf](https://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2016.pdf)

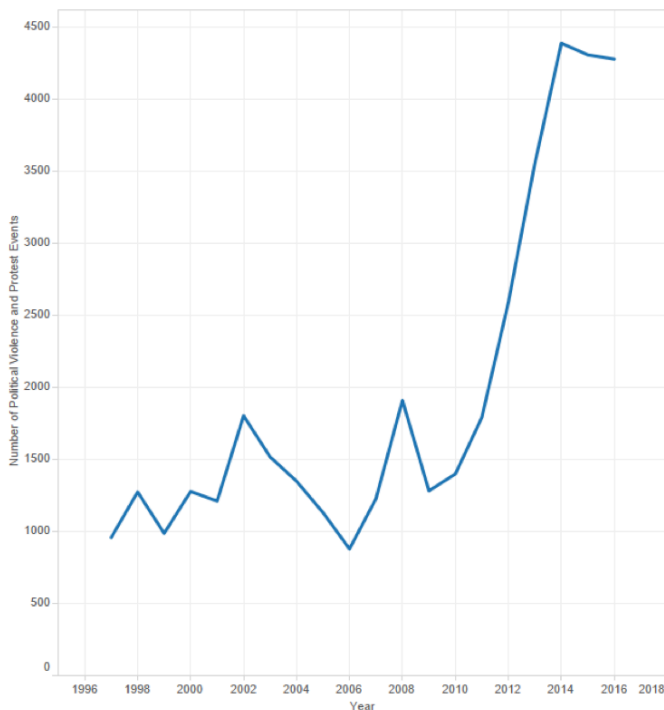
<sup>12</sup> HIIK 2017, Conflict Barometer 2016, p. 23.

6. UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) with 3,656 personnel in 2016.
7. UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) with 15,171 personnel in 2016.
8. UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) with 4,719 personnel in 2016.
9. AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with 22,000 authorised personnel (actual deployment is estimated to be lower).

Curiously, the scale of human fatalities in 2016 was 30,000, a decrease over 2015 (36,000) levels. According to ACLED, both the estimated total fatalities and reported civilian fatalities from organized armed conflict events declined in 2016; "approximately 27% of all reported conflict deaths resulting from organized armed conflict events (over 8,030 fatalities) resulted from violence against civilians in 2016, compared to more than 37% in 2015 (over 13,400 fatalities)."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See ACLED (2017). Trend 1: Rates of Violence in 2016, <http://www.acleddata.com/trend-1-rates-of-violence-in-2016/>

Figure 1: Political Violence Events and Incidents in Africa 1997-2016



Source: ACLED, <http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Trend-1-Fig-1a.png>

Beyond the meta-data, there are interesting parallels and details that emerge from a careful disaggregation of the data and eagle-eyed analysis of trends in 2016. It is expected that this will reveal more interesting details and issues of possible concern and interests alike for stakeholders within and outside of Africa.

The disaggregation and trend analysis of the data for 2016 was guided by the following line of inquiries:

- a. What kinds of violent events are predominant?
- b. In which places (countries or regions) are the violent events taking place the most?
- c. Who are the major actors in conflict and violence in 2016?
- d. What scale and kinds of fatalities, including civilians, were produced in 2016?
- e. What is the standout observation from 2016?

### 3.1 The Dominant Kinds of Violent Events in 2016

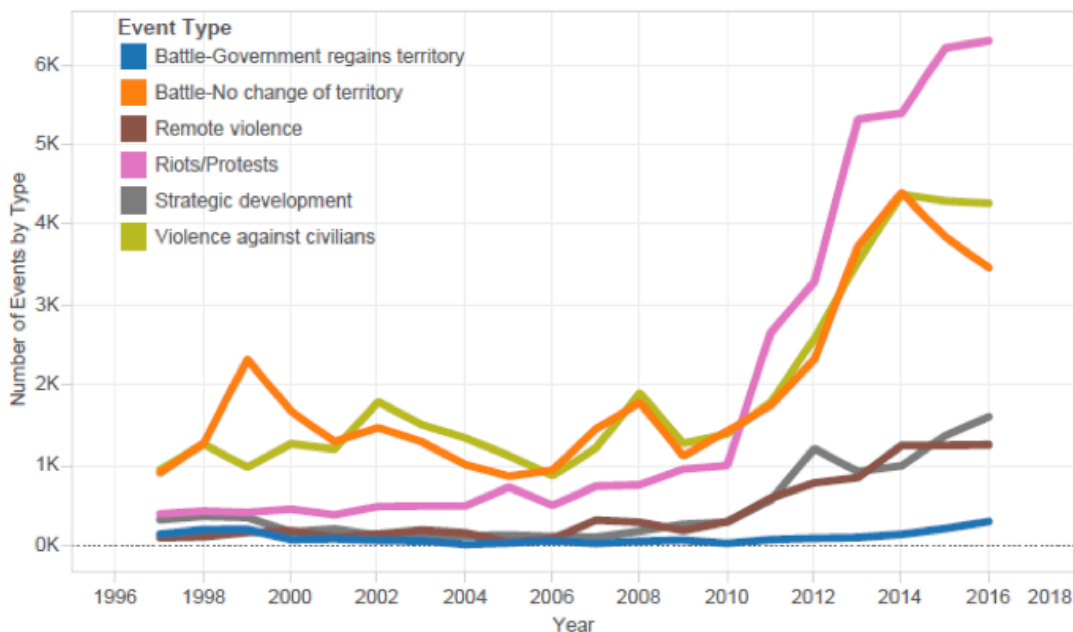
The proportion of violent events classified as organised armed conflict events (those involving clashes between armed groups, violence against civilians and remote violence) was the dominant category of conflict activity in 2016; it accounted for

41.3% of all conflict events in 2016, compared 43.2% in 2015. When disaggregated further by types, violence against civilians was 45%; followed by clashes between and among armed groups at 41%; and remote violence (13%). The distribution for 2016 aligns with those of 2015. Notwithstanding the slight decline, the overall trend is consistent with patterns in recent years.

Remote violence tactics and events including bombings, improvised explosive device attacks, mortar and missile attacks, etc. was also a major category of conflict activity; it accounted for 13% of conflict activity in Africa in 2016. This is similar to the record for 2015 but a 3 percent increase from 2013. Importantly, remote attacks across Africa in 2016 showed increased deadliness; according to ACLED, the proportion of reported conflict-related fatalities attributed to remote violence increased from 7.5% of reported fatalities in 2015 to 9.5% of reported fatalities in 2016.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See ACLED (2017). Trend 1: Rates of Violence in 2016.

Figure 2: Political Violence and Protest Events by Types in Africa 1997-2016



Source: ACLED, Trend 1 : rates of Violence in 2016, <http://www.acleddata.com/trend-1-rates-of-violence-in-2016/>



## 3.2 Spatial Distribution of Violent Events in 2016

When disaggregated by regions, in the Central Africa region, the conflict between the Anti-Balaka and ex-Seleka groups in the CAR de-escalated (reduced violence) to a limited war. Conflict also erupted in Gabon following disputed election results. In North Africa, violent conflicts continued in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya between and among armed groups (militias and violent extremist groups) and government forces.<sup>15</sup>

In East Africa and the Horn, the war between the Islamist group al-Shabaab and the Somali and Kenyan governments continued. This is in addition to conflict in conflict between the autonomous region of Puntland, the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, and Khatumo State continued. There were on-going conflict and tensions between the government and opposition parties in Kenya ahead of elections in 2017. In Ethiopia, anti-government protests increased, with intermittent attacks against government forces by the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). Violent conflicts continued in Sudan and South Sudan continued with escalation in the clashes between the SPLM and SPLM-IO in South Sudan. In the DRC, four limited wars continued in the Eastern Province, in addition to protests over postponed elections and suspected attempts to extend President Joseph Kabila's terms of office. In Burundi, the conflict continued, though de-escalated, over elections and the extension of President Pierre Nkurunziza office term.

In West Africa, a new conflict erupted in the run up to elections and over election results, especially the refusal by the then incumbent Yahya Jammeh regime to accept electoral defeat. Additional violent opposition conflicts were recorded in Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone,

and Togo. In Nigeria, the Boko Haram conflict continued in Lake Chad area for the sixth year running (though with lower number of attacks and fatalities), involving Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon. Nigeria recorded additional conflicts between herders and farmers in the Middle Belt area and other locations in the South. In Mali, while the conflict between the government and the Coordination of Movements of Azawad in the north de-escalated to non-violent, violent extremist groups continued to launch attacks against peacekeepers. In Gambia, a new conflict took place between the opposition, and the government under President Yahya Jammeh over election results. Further violent opposition conflicts were observed in Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

In Southern Africa, violent protests took place in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe over socio-economic issues, as well as xenophobic violence against immigrants in South Africa. In Mozambique and Angola, conflicts between the government and opposition groups (former liberation movements) escalated from disputes into violent crisis.

Expectedly, conflict-affected states like Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria recorded the highest number of conflict events in 2016. These countries cumulatively accounted for a third (33%) of all violent conflict in Africa in 2016; a slight decrease from 35% in 2015, and 40% in 2014. In 2016, Somalia was by far the epicentre of violent event in Africa in 2016 with over 2200 recorded events, followed by Nigeria, South Sudan and Libya. It is estimated that Somalia's profile of violent event was equal to the combined total for Nigeria, South Sudan and Libya in 2016.<sup>16</sup>

Of interest, Somalia displaced Nigeria as the topmost country for total fatalities (including civilians, soldiers, battle-related

<sup>15</sup> HIIK 2017, Conflict Barometer 2016, p. 58.

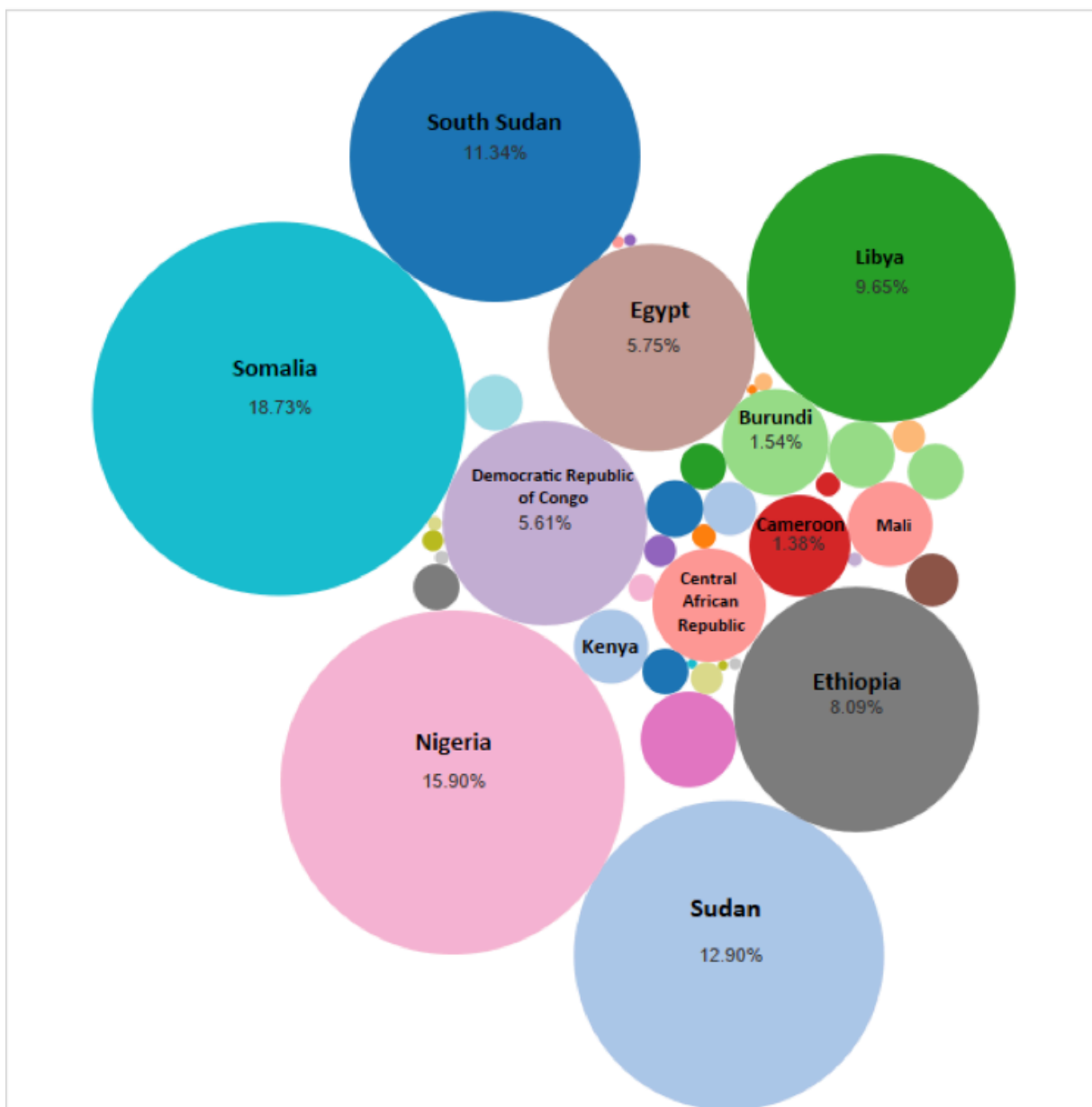
<sup>16</sup> ACLED Conflict Trends No. 55, February 2017, pp. 4-5, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.55-February-2017\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.55-February-2017_pdf.pdf)

and other forms) from violent events in 2016 (See Figure 1 below). The number of reported fatalities increased in Somalia and Sudan in 2016, while Nigeria experienced a decline. According to ACLED, Somalia accounted for 20% of all reported fatalities, and Nigeria accounted for nearly 16% of total fatalities in 2016. Nigeria's share declined considerable

from almost 30% in 2015.<sup>17</sup> The reported fatalities from political violence from Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria equalled 55% of all fatalities recorded in Africa in 2016, down from 58% in 2015. Somalia's share of over 20% of all battle-related deaths is linked to clashes between Al-Shabaab and AMISOM, and other communal militias.

<sup>17</sup> ACLED February 2017, pp. 4-5,

Figure 3: Conflict-Related Fatalities by Country in Africa in 2016



Source: ACLED, Trend 4 : Trends in Violence by Country in 2016, <http://www.acleddata.com/trend-4-trends-in-violence-by-country-in-2016/>

### 3.3 Major Actors in Conflict and Violence in 2016

Government security forces and political militias were the two most active categories of conflict actors in Africa in 2016. State security outfits accounted for 34% of conflict events in 2016, a two percent increase over 2015. This pinpoints the continued efforts and struggles by African states and governments (and regional organisations) to arrest the myriad of security challenges confronting the continent. Predictably, government security forces were most active in conflict-affected states in the Horn of Africa, specifically Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan. According to ACLED, between 2015 and 2016, there was a geometric surge in government military activities in Sudan (from 332 to 460 events) and Ethiopia (from 155 to 448).<sup>18</sup> The reasons, nature and outcomes of the surge in military activities are different in the two countries; in Sudan, the breakdown of ceasefire and lack of progress in political talks led to renewed hostilities between the government and armed opposition groups in the first half of 2016. In Ethiopia, the surge parallels the government's efforts to contain protests in the Oromia region, especially in October 2016 following wider police action against protesters in Bishoftu area.

In 2016, the second dominant conflict actors in Africa were political militias – groups or armed gangs using violence to seek relevance and influence the status quo without necessarily seeking to overthrow

sitting governments. This reconfirms the episodic shift in key actors and perpetrators of conflict and insecurity in Africa from rebel groups in the period up to the 1990s, to different types of militias. New armed groups and militias that changed the conflict landscape emerged in Nigeria's Niger Delta region (Niger Delta Avengers, NDA); and in Eastern DRC (Kamwina Nsapu militia in Kasai-Central province). Other splinter groups were recorded in Sudan, and South Sudan, while RENAMO's fighting capability (and attacks) became more evident in Mozambique in 2016.

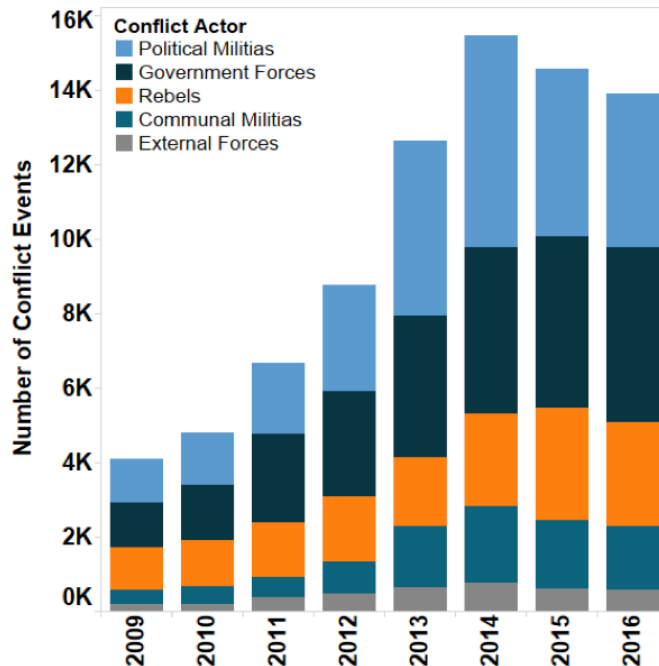
As violence and conflicts become more diffused, so has the range of actors across Africa. Political militias were involved in nearly a third (30%) of all organised armed conflict events in Africa 2016. The Imbonerakure of Burundi (militant youth wing of the CNDD-FDD) was the most active in Africa as it was involved in 202 conflict events in 2016, nearly double its record of 138 events in 2015. Other political militias include the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries (Benghazi, Libya); and the Seleka militia and the Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation (RRR militia) in the Central African Republic.<sup>19</sup>

Rebel groups (armed opposition force) are the third most active conflict actor in Africa in 2016, constituting 20% of organised conflict. The prominent ones include Al-Shabaab (responsible for 7.5% of all conflict activity), followed by Boko Haram, Islamic State in Libya and the SPLA/M-In-Opposition in South Sudan.

<sup>18</sup> ACLED Conflict Trends No. 55, February 2017, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> See ACLED (2017) Trend 5: Violent Conflict Actors in Africa in 2016, <http://www.acleddata.com/trend-5-violent-conflict-actors-in-africa-in-2016/>

Figure 1: Political Violence by Conflict Agent, Africa, 2009-2016



Source: ACLED, <http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Trend2-Fig1.png>

### 3.4 The Scale and Kinds of Fatalities in 2016

When disaggregated further, violence against civilians across Africa increased for the second year in a row to 45%, up by three percentage points from 2014 levels. It contrasts sharply with the overall decrease in reported civilian share of conflict-related fatalities; Africa recorded on 8,050 civilian fatalities (27%) in 2016. This is a significant decline (a 42.5% decrease) from the preceding year which stood at 37.5% of all conflict-related fatalities. In fact, this is lowest share of civilian fatalities since 2002.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See ACLED (2017) Trend 3: Violence Against Civilians in 2016, p. 1. <http://www.acleddata.com/trend-3->

This raises two curious questions, who are those killing civilians in Africa? Where are civilians being killed the most? The topmost sources of risk to civilians are political militias and state security forces; according to ACLED, the period 2011-2016, militias accounted for 58.2% of violence against civilians. In 2016, state security forces perpetrated a quarter (25%) of reported civilian fatalities.<sup>21</sup> Communal militias (community-based armed groups) are equally deadly for civilians; in 2016, they were linked to 24.5% of reported civilian fatalities, compared with about 11% in 2015. The Fulani militias in Nigeria, and

[violence-against-civilians-in-2016](#)

<sup>21</sup> ACLED (2017) Trend 3: Violence against Civilians in 2016, p. 1.

Murle militias in Sudan were the deadliest communal militias for civilians in 2016; they killed 884 and 246 civilians in 2016.<sup>22</sup> The increased deadliness of communal militias is significant and it signposts the increasing diffusion and diverse nature of violence and conflict in Africa, and the threats posed to civilians. Curiously, the share of civilian fatalities attributed to rebel/armed opposition groups dropped sharply to 20.77 in 2016, compared with 52.3% in 2015.

Burundi recorded the highest number of violent attacks (707) against civilians in 2016, followed by Somalia (597) and Sudan (578), respectively. However, Nigeria was the deadliest place for civilians in Africa in 2016 as it produced 25.7% (2063) of all civilian fatalities. In fact, the continental trend on civilian fatalities in 2016 was largely shaped by events in Northern Nigeria, namely the activities of Boko Haram and armed Fulani herdsmen and communal militias. The combination of Fulani herdsmen and militias singlehandedly perpetrated for 11% of civilian fatalities in Africa in 2016. This was due to the series of armed clashes and killings in the Middle Belt/ Central region and some Southern states over grazing and ethno-religious rivalries. What is also striking about the Fulani militias is their disproportionate share of civilian fatalities (4.4%), compared with the share of organised conflict activity (0.6%).<sup>23</sup> Boko Haram perpetrated 10% (800 civilian fatalities) of all reported civilian fatalities in Africa during 2016; a significant decline from the 43.8% (6,100 civilian deaths) in 2015.<sup>24</sup> This

underscores the reduced frequency and intensity of Boko Haram attacks, and the battlefield successes recorded by Nigeria and other members of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin area in 2016.

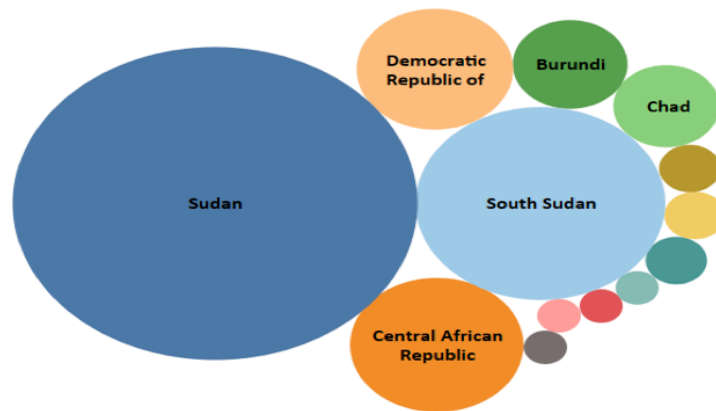
Beyond the killing, there are other harmful physical and psychological consequences of armed conflict and violence for civilians in 2016, of which sexual and gender-based violence was prominent. Sadly, any analysis of violence in Africa is never complete without acknowledging how sexual violence is being used as a weapon of choice in virtually all types of conflict and across territories. It is also an issue where data can be difficult to get. According to ACLED, the countries with most reported cases of rape and gender-based violence in 2016 were Sudan, South Sudan, CAR and DRC. Most of the reported cases of gender-based violence in Sudan were perpetrated by armed groups such as pro-government militias, Janjaweed, the Rapid Support Forces, the military and other unidentifiable armed groups. In South Sudan, the complicit groups include the South Sudanese military and allied paramilitary groups, the SPLA/M-In Opposition, and several ethno-communal militias. The DRC, notorious for high incidence of rape in previous years, is estimated to have recorded a significant drop (decrease of 59%) in reported cases of gender-based violence in 2016. Given previous trends, the data for the DRC requires caution as it does not suggest the disappearance of the problem or a conclusive reduction in its intensity; it may still be high but only under-reported for the year. It is only with a consistent decline in reported cases over a period of three or more years that any strong claim on the reduction in the scale of the problem in the DRC could be made.

22 See ACLED (February 2017) *Conflict Trends No. 55*, pp. 5-6.

23 See ACLED (2017) *Trend 5: Violent Conflict Actors in Africa in 2016*.

24 See ACLED (2017) *Trend 3: Violence Against Civilians in 2016*.

Figure 4: Gender-Based Violence by Country, Africa, 2016



Source: ACLED <http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Trend3-Fig-4.png>

### 3.5 Non-Violent Conflict Fatalities: Migrant Deaths

Several thousand fatalities are recorded from non-conflict situations in Africa from criminal activities, homicides, and inter-personal violence. While most of these are treated as part of the repertoire of internal public order issues, illegal migration across international borders, especially towards Europe has assumed geostrategic importance in recent years. A standout data for 2016 was the increase (highest as yet) in the number of fatalities recorded by illegal migrants through the Mediterranean. According to the Missing Migrants project, the number of deaths and missing persons from the multitude seeking to cross into Europe through North Africa, especially Libya, topped 5,098. As indicated in Box 1 below, the spike in recorded fatalities in 2016 represents about 35% increase over 2015 levels, and 40% over 2014 fatalities. Importantly, the Mediterranean was the deadliest forced migration route in 2016 as it accounted for nearly 66-70% of the global (7763) fatalities recorded for missing or dead migrants.<sup>25</sup> According to the UNHCR,

this data means that “on average, 14 people have died every single day this year in the Mediterranean” in 2016.<sup>26</sup>

**Box 1: Data of Death/Missing Migrants in the Mediterranean**

2014: 3,279 deaths

2015: 3,789 deaths

2016: 5,098 deaths

2017: 559 deaths (Jan-March)

Source: Missing Migrants Project, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/mediterranean>

The increase in migrant deaths in the Mediterranean in 2016 underscored the aftermath of the Arab Spring in North Africa, especially the emergence of Libya as the preeminent transit route for intending migrants.<sup>27</sup> Since the fall of the Gaddafi government in 2011, Libya’s lack of effective central authority had made it attractive for a number of organized criminal networks involved in human trafficking. Other

25 Munich Security Conference (2017), Munich Security Report 2017: Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order?, p. 46. <http://report2017.securityconference.de/>

26 <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/mediterranean-migrant-deaths-2016-pass-5000-161223130357172.html>

27 Munich Security Report 2017, p. 46.

underlying push and pull factors of forced migration through North Africa include rise in environmental stress and limited adaptive capacities to the effects of climate change, Africa's youth bulge, low fertility rates and skills gaps in developed countries, failing or collapsing states, armed conflicts and insecurity.<sup>28</sup> This makes some of the communities and countries in and around the Sahel most susceptible due to the combination of two or more of these factors. Much of the migration route run through the Sahel and Sahara desert and it is not a surprise that migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa were the highest recognisable group with 935 dead or missing migrants, although persons classified as mixed origin were much higher (see Table 1 below). The North Africa and Horn of Africa had 228 and 30 persons (nationals), respectively.

The level of migrant fatalities compares and

28 Munich Security Report 2017, p. 46.

competes with those violent conflicts; in most cases, migrant deaths in Mediterranean surpassed fatalities from individual conflicts in Africa in 2016. Besides the reported fatalities, there are numerous reports and cases of rape, kidnapping, executions and other atrocities committed by militias and organized crime syndicates along the migration routes and in and around Libya. Yet migrant fatalities are either ignored or get fleeting mentioned in major policy debates and interventions on peace and security in Africa. Much of current efforts (interventions) are undertaken by the European Union. Given the increasing scale and strategic nature of migrants and fatalities recorded through the Mediterranean, questions as to why and how to consider it a continental peace and security challenge and efforts to halt the northward flow, disrupt the organized human trafficking networks and address the underlying structural causes becomes pertinent.

Table 1: Recorded deaths in the Mediterranean by migrants' region of origin, 2016

Region of Origin	Number Dead and Missing
Unknown	334
Mixed	3,174
Sub-Saharan Africa	935
Horn of Africa	30
Middle East and South Asia	397
North Africa	228
TOTAL	5,098

Source: Missing Migrants Projects, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/mediterranean>

### 3.6 Cross-cutting Structural issues

The incidence of armed conflicts and violence in 2016 differ across Africa in terms of the trigger issues, actors and overall dynamic. However they are reflect similar underlying root causes linked to structural weaknesses. The most prominent cross-cutting issues include the following: first is youth bulge – when young people under 24

years are more than 40% of adult population. According to the UNFPA's State of the World's Population Report, Africa accounts for 1.133 billion (16%) of the world's 7.3 billion population.<sup>29</sup>As indicated in Table 1 (below), Africa states have the highest proportion of population aged 0-14, and 10-24 years compared with the global average, as well as twice the global average for fertility rate.

29 UNFPA, 2015. State of the World's Population 2015: Shelter from the Storm. New York: UNFPA, p. 127, [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/sowp/downloads/State\\_of\\_World\\_Population\\_2015\\_EN.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/sowp/downloads/State_of_World_Population_2015_EN.pdf)

Africa is expected to produce 53% of addition to the global population by 2050 with further ‘youthening’ of the continent’s population expected to continue for another decade at least.<sup>30</sup>

So far, youth bulge has is proving to be a challenge, rather than an opportunity in most Africa countries as indicated by the sheer number of young people involved

in militias, armed groups, armed gangs, and violent protests. Youth bulge has been transformed into a security challenge thus far due to high unemployment and under-employment (in general and especially among youth), limited social mobility, easy access to small arms and light weapons, subsisting inter-group animosities, etc. For instance, most of the fragile and conflict-affected states in Africa have some of the highest proportion of their population that are youth and/ or highest rates of youth unemployment – e.g. CAR, DRC, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda, Tunisia, etc.

<sup>30</sup> UNFPA. 2014. State of the World’s Population 2014: Factsheet – Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa. New York: UNFPA, p. 1, <http://www.unfpa.org/resources/state-world-population-2014-fact-sheet-youth-sub-saharan-africa>

Table 2: Demographic Table of Africa

Region	Population (million)	10-24 year-olds (%)	0-14 year-olds (%)	15-64 year-olds (%)	65 year-olds+ (%)	Fertility Rate
Algeria	39.7	24	29	66	6	2.9
Egypt	91.5	27	33	62	5	3.4
Libya	6.3	25	30	66	5	2.5
Morocco	34.4	26	27	67	6	2.6
Tunisia	11.3	23	23	69	8	2.2
East/Southern Africa	547	32	42	54	3	4.8
West Central Africa	403	32	44	53	3	5.5
World	7349	25	26	66	8	2.5

Source: Compiled from UNFPA 2015, pp. 125-127.

The second cross-cutting structural issue is rise in the scale and intensity of environmental stresses associated with the effects of climate change and limited adaptive capacities across Africa. Much of the Africa continent reels from rapid environmental change and stresses related to degraded soils, water resources, biodiversity and increased frequency of extreme and unusual weather conditions. Such stresses amplify pressure on already fragile states, exacerbating the failure to provide sufficient food and water to populations.<sup>31</sup> It is not a

coincidence that many fragile and conflict-affected countries in Africa are highly food insecure, and produce the most forced migrants. Moreover, environmental stresses remain a direct factor in several violent conflicts as affected population seek redress or compete for scarce resources, especially in and around the Sahel.

Third is poor governance that often manifests in the mis-management of economies (corruption and economic decline), political repression and authoritarian rule, violations of human rights, and attempts to manipulate elections or change constitutional term limits. This has triggered mass protests,

<sup>31</sup> USA National Intelligence Council (2017) Global Trends: Paradox of Progress, p. 224. [www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends](http://www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends)



rebellions, and other violent reactions in some of the countries that experienced violent events in 2016. According to the US National Intelligence Council Global Trends Report (2017), denationalization and alienation arising from disconnection from sociocultural mainstream; the inability to participate in the political process; diminished opportunities for marriage or the inability to attain perceived 'deserved' socio-economic benefits and status will remain consistent sources of grievance-driven violence in years to come.<sup>32</sup>

Fourth is the mismanagement of ethno-religious diversity in many countries. The absence of all-inclusive models of political representation and participation (or the undermining of such where the framework exists), and the general lack of tact in the management of extremely delicate diversity issues have conditioned feelings of alienation, and under-representation. In most cases, this has undercut the legitimacy of governments and state institutions, and increased real or perceived inter-group inequality. This underlies violent events in countries such as Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan, South Sudan, etc.

Fifth are enabling factors, specifically the availability and easy access to illicit small arms and light weapons, which transform mundane disagreements, grievances, and tensions into violent, deadly affairs. It is estimated that there are over 100 million illicit SALW in circulation in Africa.<sup>33</sup> It is

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<sup>32</sup> USA National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends*, p. 224.

<sup>33</sup> See Matt Schroeder and Guy Lamb (2006). *The Illicit Arms Trade in Africa: A Global Enterprise*, African Analyst, Third Quarter.

true that SALW do not cause armed conflict per se, however they are important 'game changers' in turning grievances into violent episodes, and increasing the deadliness of conflicts. With the exception of mass protests, it is hard to imagine any conflict situation without substantial use of SALW in Africa.

The final structural weakness is the rise in self-help strategies by groups and communities to guarantee their physical safety, socio-economic survival, political representation, and cultural survival. The prominent expression of this is the formation of communal militias, defence forces, vigilantes, and warrior sects. The self-help mechanisms have increasingly filled the spaces created by de-legitimized governments and state institutions; in some cases, they have been co-opted by governments thus averting violent clashes. Not unexpectedly, the rise in self-help mechanisms has contributed to the rise in violence and armed conflicts across Africa in 2016 and in previous years.

In subsequent sections, this report highlights the granular details and thematic insights from the statistical overview by identifying and reflecting on important theme-based patterns from 2016. It also reflects on the impact and implications (outcomes) of some of the data presented above for peace and security in Africa, and pinpoints critical policy and practical issues that should hopefully engage the attention and interests of policy actors, researchers, social commentators, development partners in Africa.

## 4. No Retreat, No Surrender: Stalled Peace Agreements in 2016

The process of ending armed conflicts and building peace and security is arduous with inherent setbacks, and reversals along the way. Africa recorded a fair share of stalled peace agreements and processes in 2016 in places such as Libya, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan. Across these countries, the lack of progress or setbacks reveals a complex interplay of failed implementation, belligerency amongst factions, lack of requisite political will, emergence of new armed groups/factions, etc. Admittedly, the nature of the challenges to the implementation of peace agreements was rooted in the historical and political peculiarities of each conflict.

In Libya, little progress was made in the implementation of the December 2015 Libyan Political Agreement (LPA). The political agreement made provisions for the establishment of key institutions such as the Government of National Accord (GNA), the Presidency Council, Cabinet, House of Representatives and State Council.<sup>34</sup> The Presidency Council pushed to expand and consolidate power in the first half of 2016 through the creation of new military units (e.g. Presidential Guard) and the push to formalize a new army structure (Bunyan Marsous). However, the Presidency Council struggled to extend its outreach beyond Tripoli throughout 2016 and a vote of no confidence was passed on it by the Tobruk-based House of Representative (Parliament) in August 2016 as it rejected the proposed composition of the Government of National Accord.<sup>35</sup>

34 Institute for Security Studies. 2016. Peace and Security Council Report No.83, August 2016, p.15, <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-83>

35 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 2, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011)

The implementation of the LPA stalled due to the challenging political-security environment, lack of political will, and trust among signatories to the LPA. Key elements of the LPA are yet to be implemented, namely the setting up of interim security arrangements, delivery of basic services, formation of a new government (GNA); the establishment of a formalised structure and command of the Libyan armed forces; and the appointments to senior military and civilian leadership positions.<sup>36</sup> Another challenge to the LPA was the escalation in militia activity in 2016 – Libya witnessed increased battles among militias (e.g. Bab al-Tajoura Brigade, Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade, Abu Salim Brigade and the National Mobile Forces) jostling for influence and control in and around Tripoli.<sup>37</sup> It is estimated that the number of militia groups doubled between February and June 2016, and Tripoli remained under the control of a patchwork of armed groups with differing agendas and loyalties, from both Tripoli and the surrounding areas.<sup>38</sup> As a consequence, widespread violation of human rights, including abductions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture, and unlawful killing of civilians (including migrants) continued.<sup>39</sup> Finally, the LPA, especially the institutions it created (Presidency Council) suffered dwindling support due to the failure to address the acute security and economic

36 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 1.

37 ACLED. 2016. Real time analysis of African political violence, June 2016 Conflict Trends No.49, p. 3, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.49-June-2016\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.49-June-2016_pdf.pdf)

38 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 3.

39 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 7.

problems across Libya.<sup>40</sup> There were increased public protests against power cuts, lack of water, and financial squeeze in major cities in September 2016.<sup>41</sup>

Natural resource issues, specifically the control of Libyan oil fields and receipts are central to the stalled peace process and the broader conflicts (including fleeting alliances and in-fighting among militias). Clashes, alliances and agreements have been concluded and violated in relation to calculations over access and control of oil fields. Armed groups have targeted oil fields and terminals for financial and strategic reasons. In fact, an armed group known as the Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) was created (assigned) by the presidency council to protect critical oil fields and restore oil production, and take control of sovereign funds.<sup>42</sup> Some of the attacks in 2016 related to the control of oil infrastructures include the following:

- In late 2015 and early 2016, IS-Libya targeted and took full control of Ben Jawad, and conducted a series of attacks on oil terminals at Sidra and Ras Lanuf, clashing with the PFG. The IS attacks indicate a strategic move to use the coastal road for rapid offensives and to control the oil terminals (production and export) to finance war efforts.<sup>43</sup>
- In September, the LNA displaced the LPG from key oil terminals of Ras Lanuf, Sidra and Brega. The Haftar-led LNA ceded control of the oil facilities to

the National Oil Corporation, thereby insulating his forces from counter-attacks from the Tripoli government and to regain control and to create meaningful partnerships with key brokers Libya's economic landscape.<sup>44</sup>

- In late September, the PFG attacked the LNA positions at Sidrah and Ra's Lanuf in an effort to retake control of the area, but they were repelled with the support of airstrikes.<sup>45</sup>

The AU and UN continued to be strongly engaged in the peace process by facilitating the December 2015 political dialogue that produced the LPA, and the AU's establishment of the High Level Committee of Heads of State and Government to support peace and reconstruction in Libya.<sup>46</sup> In late 2016, new initiative to rescue the LPA – by encouraging national reconciliation, political dialogue and the implementation of the LPA – was launched by a troika of the League of Arab States, the UN and the AU.<sup>47</sup> The implementation of the LPA (or its failure) in 2017 will shape the prospect of peace and security in years to come.

In Mali, the implementation of the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation signed by the government, the Plateforme coalition of armed groups and the Coordination des mouvements de l'azawad suffered considerable delays and setbacks throughout 2016. In particular, there were delays in the implementation of key defence and security provisions such as the restructuring of the security sector,

40 Security Council Report.2016.Libya December 2016 Monthly Forecast. 30 November 2016. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-12/libya\\_28.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-12/libya_28.php)

41 ACLED.2016.Real time analysis of African political violence, October 2016 Conflict Trends No.52, p.5, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf)

42 Security Council Report.2016.Libya September 2016 Monthly Forecast. 1 September 2016. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-09/libya\\_25.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-09/libya_25.php)

43 ACLED.2016.Real time analysis of African political violence, January 2016 Conflict Trends No.45 [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.45-January-2016\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.45-January-2016_pdf.pdf) p.8

44 ACLED.2016.Real time analysis of African political violence, October 2016 Conflict Trends No.52. [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf) p.4

45 United Nations Security Council.2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011 [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011) P.5

46 Institute for Security Studies.2016.Peace and Security Council Report No.83.August 2016, p. 16, <https://www.issafrika.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-83>

47 Security Council Report.2016.Libya December 2016 Monthly Forecast. 30 November 2016. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-12/libya\\_28.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-12/libya_28.php)

cantonment of armed groups, divisions and lack of trust among parties, boycotted elections and the postponement of a national reconciliation conference.<sup>48</sup>

The first quarter of 2016 recorded marked progress in the implementation of the peace deal as steps were taken to advance political and institutional reforms, decentralization and the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. Also, the parties participated in all deliberations of the Agreement Monitoring Committee and renewed their commitment to accelerating the implementation of the agreement. Equally, parties to the agreement succeeded in de-escalating tensions and avoided direct clashes through the Comité de Suivi de l'Accord (follow up mechanism for the accord), and the efforts of MINUSMA, the Malian government and Niger.<sup>49</sup>

The implementation slowed down and the peace deal stalled from April 2016 due to delays in the establishment of interim authorities in the north, repeated violations of ceasefire in Kidal; failure to kick-start cantonment (in spite of agreement on the membership of the oversight commission), absence of joint patrols, and demonstration against MINUSMA and French forces.<sup>50</sup> Disagreement over the validity of local elections in some northern towns in November led to the voluntary withdrawal by the Comité de Suivi de l'Accord and calls for a high-level meeting of parties and mediators to review the slow implementation of the peace agreement.<sup>51</sup> Clashes among other armed groups, especially violent extremist groups and communal militias, despite

efforts to de-escalate tensions among armed groups which signed the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali

As a consequence, the security situation remained volatile (deteriorated) in 2016 – violent extremist groups expanded their activities to Central and Southern Mali, and increased the frequency and intensity of attacks against civilians, MINUSMA, French troops, and Malian security forces.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, there was a surge in armed banditry, increasing the threat to civilians; it accounted for accounting for 45% of all incidents in Timbuktu and 25% in Gao and Mopti.<sup>53</sup> Inter communal clashes also increased as local gangs and militias renewed hostilities over socio-economic issues, especially in Menaka (Daoussak versus Fulani/Ibogaletane); Mpoti (Bambara versus Fulani) and Timbuktu regions.<sup>54</sup> The multiplicity of armed groups, particularly in the north, as well as their complex and rapidly changing relationships and widespread availability of small arms and light weapons are key factors in the deterioration of security.

In South Sudan the peace process suffered major setbacks in 2016 after initial optimism and muted progress in the implementation of the August 2015 IGAD-brokered Peace Agreement. At the start of 2016, the SPLM controlled government and the opposition SPLM-IO secured agreement in respect of the power-sharing – the appointment of Riek Machar as First Vice President and distribution of ministerial positions for the Transnational Government of National Unity, TGNU.

However, major disagreement and deadlocked persisted regarding the

48 United Nations Security Council.2016. Resolution 2295(2016) on Mali. S/RES/2295(2016), p.2, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295\(2016\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295(2016))

49 Security Council Report.2016.Mali October 2016 Monthly Forecast. 30 September 2016.(Online) [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-10/mali\\_23.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-10/mali_23.php)

50 Security Council Report.2016.Mali October 2016 Monthly Forecast. 30 September 2016.

51 Security Council Report.2016.Mali January 2017 Monthly Forecast. 28 December 2016.(Online) [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/mali\\_24.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/mali_24.php)

52 United Nations Security Council.2016. Resolution 2295(2016) on Mali. S/RES/2295(2016), p. 2. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295\(2016\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295(2016))

53 United Nations Security Council.2016. Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Mali. S/2016/281, p.8, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/281](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/281)

54 UN Security Council.2016.Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Mali. S/2016/281, p. 8.

October 2015 re-districting plans by the SPLM government – the change to a 28 state structure from a 10-province plan as contained in the August 2015 peace agreement. The disagreement transcended the major parties (SPLM government and the SPLM-IO) as it percolated to local communities and ethnic groups over fears the new structure was veiled attempt to secure undue territorial advantage for the Dinkas (dominant ethnic group in the SPLM government).<sup>55</sup>

Natural resource issues feature prominently in the series of violent conflicts in South Sudan for a variety of reasons; first, the country reflects the broader pattern in the Horn of Africa with a predominance of small subsistence farmers, agro-pastoralist and pastoralist communities. Recent and ongoing effects of climate change and the limited adaptive capacities have increased the level of food insecurity and socio-economic vulnerability, and triggered contestations over land, water and access to pasture. The place of oil in the clashes between the government and the SPLM-IO is well established; 95% of government revenue comes from oil receipts and the drop in oil prices in 2016 affected public finances by reducing foreign exchange availability and triggering inflation. More importantly, some of the fiercest clashes have been in and around oil-rich areas, namely Unity State. In most cases, South Sudan's oil fields are managed by Chinese firms. For instance, heavy fighting resumed in Bentiu (Unity State) in August 2016 over the control of some of largest oil fields – the government sought to wrestle control from the SPLM-IO. To underline the centrality of oil to the conflict, South Sudan's Petroleum Minister, announced plans to increase oil production from 130,000 to 350,000 barrels a day, in spite of the ongoing armed conflict

55 Institute for Security Studies.2016. Peace and Security Report No.77.February 2016, p. 4. <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-77>,

in the country.<sup>56</sup>

Expectedly, land and oil resources play key roles in fuelling and sustaining violent conflicts in South Sudan. The contestations over land parallel group and community identities that feed into broader political struggles. The importance of land and other natural resources (oil) was emphasized in the South Sudan Development Plan and the Comprehensive Agriculture Master Plan as key factors of production and national development. Still, South Sudan is plagued by a dysfunctional natural resource governance system characterized by land tenure insecurity; and the lack of a fair, transparent and accountable land administration system. The country also lacks a coherent legal and institutional framework for managing rapid urban expansion, return, resettlement and displacement of persons thereby leading to incessant disputes over boundaries delimitation, land grabbing, and access to grazing.

Other underlying causes of the major armed conflict include the lack of political will, and continued belligerency and commitment to military solutions by the major parties (SPLM and SPLM-IO) and their leaders (President Kiir and Riek Machar, respectively). Also, restrictions on the deployment and operations of the UNMISS and humanitarian agencies by the government and other armed groups have also hampered peace efforts.<sup>57</sup>

Political tensions and inter-ethnic acrimony escalated into full scale violence in July 2016 as SPLM government forces and SPLM-IO troops clashed in Juba. This triggered the exit of Riek Machar from Juba and the

56 Ecofinagency.2016. 'South Sudan to increase oil production despite fighting – Petroleum Minister', Oil and Gas, 19 December, <http://www.ecofinagency.com/production/1912-36135-south-sudan-to-increase-oil-production-despite-fighting-petroleum-minister>

57 United Nations Security Council Report. 2016. November 2016 Monthly Forecast for South Sudan, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/south\\_sudan\\_25.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/south_sudan_25.php)

resumption of large scale violence across the country.<sup>58</sup> The majority of violent clashes since July 2016 signpost the increasing ethnicization of violence – often constructed as Dinkas against other ethnic groups. This was fuelled by a series of events, namely the arming communities on the basis of ethnic affiliation by the SPLM and SPLM-IO; the heavy involvement of Dinka soldiers in the July clashes in Juba; perceived favouritism of Dinkas in government appointments; perceived ethnic (pro-Dinka) logic of the re-districting plan; rise in ethnic-based incitement and hate speech; and the rise and activities of ethnic associations, especially the Jieng Council (Dinka) and opposition to power sharing.<sup>59</sup>

The collapse of South Sudan's economy in 2016 increased social tensions and further dampened the prospects of peace. The drop in official revenue due to the collapse in oil prices, diversion of resources towards war effort (military spending estimated at 97% of government expenditure), and hyper-inflation (over 661%) led to the failure to pay salaries, collapse of limited social service delivery, and huge rises in the cost of living.<sup>60</sup>

The geography of fighting expanded to include the Equatoria regions, Upper Nile, Southern Liech (Unity State) and Western Bahr-el-Ghazal. The clashes involved a network of armed groups, militias and forces loosely affiliated to either the SPLM government or the SPLM-IO. The SPLM and SPLM-IO forces accounted for 58.2% of all political violence and over 70.5% of conflict-related fatalities in 2016. As previously noted,

civilians were systematically targeted by all parties, including reported cases of rape and sexual violence in places such as Wau, Juba, Bentiu, Leer, Malakal, Yambio and other locations across the Equatorias.<sup>61</sup> It was estimated that renewed fighting had displaced 1.6million persons internally and more than one million refugees scattered across neighbouring countries, and increased the number of people at the risk of food insecurity to over 4.8million.<sup>62</sup>

Other indicators of the stalled peace process are the lack of progress in the establishment of the hybrid court and the deployment of the regional protection force. The hybrid court was included in the 2015 peace agreement to try persons responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. In spite of the SPLM government's declared readiness to set up the hybrid court, little progress was recorded as the November 2016 deadline for the finalisation of the court's mandate and jurisdiction was missed.<sup>63</sup> The establishment of the hybrid court stalled due to ongoing violence, the exit of Riek Machar from the TGNU, and the inability to formally adopt the draft proposal for the implementation of the hybrid court.<sup>64</sup>

The deployment of a 4000 Regional Protection Force (RPF) to protect civilians and strengthen the UNMISS was mooted by IGAD leaders following the outbreak of violence in Juba in July 2016. The RPF was approved by the UN Security Council (under Resolution 2304, August 2016) and consented to by the government of South

58 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan Established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2206(2015).S/2016/793. 19 September 2016, p.4. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S\\_2016\\_793.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2016_793.pdf)

59 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, 2206(2015).S/2016/793. 19 September 2016, p.8. See also United Nations Security Council.2016. Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 1 April to 3 June 2016), S/2016/552. 20 June 2016, p.4. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2016\\_552.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2016_552.pdf).

60 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, S/2016/793. p.9

61 United Nations Security Council.2016. Special Report of the Secretary General on the review of the mandate of the United Nations mission in South Sudan. S/2016/951 10 November 2016, p.4. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2016\\_951.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2016_951.pdf).

62 United Nations Security Council Report. 2016. November 2016 Monthly Forecast for South Sudan.

63 Institute of Security Studies.2016.Peace and Security Council Report Issue No.86, November 2016.p.7, <https://issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-86>.

64 Institute of Security Studies.2016.Peace and Security Council Report, Issue No.85, October 2016. p.9, <https://issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-85>.

Sudan in September 2016.<sup>65</sup> In spite of pledges of troops from Rwanda, Ethiopia, Zambia, Rwanda and Egypt, the RPF was yet to be deployed at January 2017.<sup>66</sup> As at December 2016, the security situation remained extremely volatile with the risk of further deterioration in most regions.

Overall, the three case studies reaffirm the indispensable role of regional and transnational actors in sustaining or undermining peace processes. They also

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65 Institute of Security Studies. 2016. Peace and Security Council Report, Issue No.84, September 2016. p.14, <https://issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-84>.

66 Security Council Report. 2016. South Sudan: January 2017 Monthly Forecast. 28 December 2016, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/south\\_sudan\\_27.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/south_sudan_27.php)

## 5. The Spectre of Atomised Violence and Low Intensity Conflicts in 2016

Africa's peace and security landscape in 2016 was also dotted with array of what could be described as 'low intensity' or 'quasi-war' situations. This partly reflects the deadlock in some peace processes, and evolving structural changes to the nature of violence and conflict in Africa. While the phenomenon is not new, they appear to be increasing in number and spread, and intensity in 2016. Examples of this abound, including Mozambique, Burundi, Cameroon, Nigeria, DRC, Northern Mali, border regions across the Sahel, etc. These situations are characterized by lower media coverage, sometimes completely under the radar of mainstream media; low levels of armed violence but equally deadly internecine violent episodes; and they are rooted in unresolved or badly managed historical-political grievances. They are also extremely fluid situation with huge potentials for escalation, often responding to short term triggers such as policy changes, electoral disputes, and particular arrest or brutality and/ or killings by security officials. Alternatively, they may be sub-conflict within a larger conflict either as a form of

highlight the arduous and complex nature of peace processes in Africa, and the cross-cutting challenges of inadequate political will and limited trust, continued belligerency, and preference for military, rather than political solution among conflict parties. The case studies also pinpoint structural blind-spots in the nature of peace agreements and current approaches and priorities of mediation and conflict resolution activities in Africa, specifically the tendency to overlook subnational conflicts and small armed groups and militias. Perhaps this raises the need for strategies, tools and approaches to mediation and conflict resolution that are more inclusive (especially of smaller armed groups and militias) and deepen the prospect of peace across different levels of society.

proxy wars, or the atomization of violence or as part of the network of complex alliances among armed groups as is the case in South Sudan, Eastern DRC, Sudan-Darfur, and Northern Mali.

In other instances, low intensity conflicts straddle existing political, ethnic, religious and geographical fault-lines, and the episodic spikes are often triggered by opposition to government policies, competition for power (elections), and the control of natural resources (land, water and mineral resources). In a few cases, mass protests and violent riots would qualify as low intensity conflicts. These forms of conflict tend to involve armed gangs, and political and communal militias either mobilized and used by political elites in the struggle for local and national political relevance, or embedded within communities as the arrow heads for protecting and advancing communal causes. We can x-ray a few examples in slightly greater details.

In Mozambique, the range and scale of political-security challenges, including the possibility of renewed large scale armed

conflict between the ruling FRELIMO government and the opposition RENAMO, intensified in 2016. The conflict is historical and political; it is linked to past rivalries between the groups during the anti-colonial struggle. The current episode was triggered by disputed elections in 2014, and RENAMO's demand for the right to set up autonomous government in the provinces it won majority seats. In addition, the conflict is linked to the control of lucrative trade routes in and around RENAMO strongholds in the north. In spite of the declared commitment by the conflict parties to a negotiated settlement, the crisis has deteriorated over a series of violated ceasefires and deadlocked political talks. According to ACLED, political violence events increased both in intensity and geography – 92 events across 10 provinces were recorded in 2016 up from 19 such events across 6 provinces in 2015.<sup>67</sup> Crucially, the attacks linked to RENAMO in 2016 spread to provinces across the north and central regions, especially places where it had rarely or never carried out attacks since 2013, such as Nassa, Cabo Delgado, Zambezi, Manica, Sofala, Tete and Inhambane. There have reciprocal violence against RENAMO and people suspected of supporting the group, leading to accusations of extrajudicial killings, looting, destruction of property, rape and other human rights violations against the government.<sup>68</sup> Within this, violence against civilians increased by 700%, and civilian fatalities doubled over the past two decades.<sup>69</sup>

In Cameroon, spontaneous protests and clashes with security forces erupted in the last quarter of 2016 in English-speaking regions in the Northwest and Southwest

over the protection of Anglo-Saxon language and cultural heritage. The political foundations of the protest are linked to the perceived marginalization of minority Anglophone population (estimated at 3.2million population), and their demand for a federal system (autonomy), rather than a unitary structure.<sup>70</sup> The immediate triggers of the crisis were peaceful demonstration by lawyers and teachers protesting against the use of French courts and laws and the absence of certain elements of the legal code in English, and the presence of French-speaking teachers in English-speaking areas and schools, respectively.<sup>71</sup> The government also arrested leaders of and banned the Southern Cameroons National Council and the Cameroon Anglophone Civil Society Consortium, two prominent civil society groups in the region. The brutal repression of the protests inflamed political tensions and aroused demands for self-determination and independence across Southern Cameroon. Cities such as Bamenda and Buea have been epicentres of riots and anti-government protests. The crisis continued into 2017 with more protests and the repressive action by the government, including arrests and detention of civilians, and enforced communication blackout.

In South Sudan, beneath the main conflict between the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) forces and the government's Sudan People's Liberation Army Forces, there are several, more localised sub-conflicts involving multitude of militias and armed groups.<sup>72</sup> South Sudan mirrors a system of multiple conflicts in which local battles serve community needs as well as elements of broader, national

67 ACLED (2017) Conflict Trends No. 55, p. 7.

68 ACLED.2016. Real time Analysis of African Political Violence, October 2016. Conflict Trends No.52, p. 7, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf)

69 ACLED.2016. Real time Analysis of African Political Violence, October 2016. Conflict Trends No.52, p. 6, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.52-October-2016.pdf)

70 See International Business Times, 'English-speaking Cameroon close to 'guerrilla warfare' if crisis talks don't happen', 17 January 2017, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/anglophone-cameroon-close-guerrilla-warfare-if-crisis-talks-dont-happen-1601782>

71 See International Business Times, 'Tensions rise in Cameroon as teachers demand 'respect for Anglo-Saxon heritage'', 23 November 2016, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/tensions-rise-cameroon-teachers-demand-respect-anglo-saxon-heritage-1593018>

72 United Nations Security Council Report. 2016. November 2016 Monthly Forecast for South Sudan(online) [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/south\\_sudan\\_25.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/south_sudan_25.php)



conflict between the SPLA-IO and the SPLA government. Actually the main conflict parties involve loose coalitions of militias and armed groups with different layers of political objectives.

Apart from minority ethnic groups, there are sub-clans of the dominant Dinka and Nuer ethnic groups that oppose (fight) the main clan groups. From late 2015, and throughout 2016, new or breakaway armed groups emerged and/ or became more assertive, often as a consequence to national level dynamic, especially the initial rapprochement between the leaders of SPLA-IO and the SPLA government. Some armed gangs, such as the Murle militia, subsist and engage in inter-communal cattle raiding and revenge attacks within South Sudan (e.g. Jonglei) and across borders (into Ethiopia, Sudan, etc.). Others emerge as a consequence of the 'redistricting' plan by the SPLA government – communal militias emerged and violence erupted in Western and Central Equatoria, and Bahr-el-Ghazal as ethnic groups such as Mundi, Baka and Mondari saw the administrative change from 10 to 28 districts as veiled attempts by the Dinkas (SPLA) to annex their land. Other groups that emerged to protest the new district plans include the South Sudan Armed Forces (SSAF) from the Latuke ethnic group in Eastern Equatorial, the Tiger Faction New Forces (TFNF) from the Shilluk ethnic group in the Manyo County (Western Nile); Arrow Boys re-emerged in Mundri, Napele and Sar Sibo; etc.<sup>73</sup> The plethora of sub-conflicts shows the limits of current macro-level mediation and peace efforts; it is unlikely to resolve the complex local-level grievances and grievances across South Sudan. As such, a more holistic approach that simultaneously addresses the macro and micro conflicts in South Sudan is needed.

In Nigeria, multiple cases of atomized violence erupted or intensified in 2016. This includes violence by nomadic herdsmen (Fulani militias), communal militias in the

Central regions, and by armed groups in the Niger Delta. In both cases (and other instances of subnational violence in Nigeria), natural resource issues related to land and hydrocarbon resources, are major causes of violent conflicts. In the Middle Belt region, an estimated 30 attacks took place July-September 2016 between farmers and herders with over 222 deaths and several injuries recorded. The clashes have continued into 2017 with similar clashes spreading further south, fatalities rising above 300, displacement of several communities, and disruptions in harvest.<sup>74</sup>

The renewed hostilities in the Niger Delta exemplify the natural resource dimension of violent conflict in greater detail. The historical foundations of the conflict in the Delta are common knowledge, namely the demand for oil bearing communities to exercise greater control in the ownership and exploitation, and increased share of receipts. This is in addition to enforcing greater environmental standards and addressing decades of environmental abuse and degradation by multinational oil companies in the region.

In 2016, militancy and armed attacks against international oil companies and oil production infrastructures resumed after a six-year hiatus. The arrow head was a new group called the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) and its demands were not dissimilar from those of previous armed groups, namely, the implementation of the 2014 National Conference reports; reinstatement of the Maritime University; unconditional release of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) leader, and the reinstatement of the Presidential Amnesty Programme that was suspended at the inception of the Buhari government. They also demanded for restructuring the country and implementing a form of government that will allow states in the region to control their resources (with the possibility of

73 ACLED (July 2016) Conflict Trends No.50, pp. 5-8, [http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.50-July-2016\\_pdf\\_final.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.50-July-2016_pdf_final.pdf)

74 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. 23 June 2016 S/2016/566 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/566](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/566) p.4

secession implied).<sup>75</sup> The NDA and a host of other small armed gangs disrupted oil production (reduced daily output by 700,000 barrels), sabotaged pipelines supplying gas to Nigeria's power plants (further worsening the epileptic electricity supply in Nigeria), and reintroduced political tension and air of insecurity in the region. The new wave of attacks hit the government hardest as it coincided with the drop in oil prices (led to major shortfalls in public revenues that triggered scarcity of foreign exchange, inflation and economic recession).

The resumed hostilities underlines the failures of the 2010 Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), namely, the failure to address the root causes of the problem, failure to neutralise the network of conflict entrepreneurs in the region, exclusion of some armed groups from the PAP, limited progress in taming the excesses of armed groups and oil thieves, and futility of 'buying' peace through cash and oil contracts in the Delta.<sup>76</sup>

The government responded with a dual strategy of negotiating with the attackers while simultaneously enhancing security measures.<sup>77</sup> The government deployed soldiers (but halted offensive military operations), extended the amnesty program to December 2017, and commenced consultation and dialogue with community leaders and monarchs from the Niger Delta. Simultaneously the military "Operation Crocodile Smile, to crack down on what it called criminals responsible for attacking

pipelines.<sup>78</sup> This has secured temporary ceasefire and halt in the bombing of oil and gas infrastructures, however the risk of escalation remains very high. By the end of 2016, the NDA agreed to a ceasefire and declared support for the dialogue initiative with monarchs and declaration of readiness for negotiation (without the option of secession) by the president.<sup>79</sup> The future dynamic of peace and security in the region would depend on the extent to which the government could rebuild trust with communities from the region; restraint to resort to the severally 'tried and failed' military approaches; concrete outcomes and impact of the dialogue process, manifested in visible developmental tangibles; and the reform of the oil industry in ways that prioritize the needs of oil bearing communities.

Overall, cases of atomised violence and low intensity conflicts raise three major implications (and learning) for peace and security in Africa; first, they reveal the true scale and challenge of violence in Africa. It is a trend that is likely to be on the increase in the short to medium term, hence atomised violence and low intensity conflicts constitute one of the major challenges that the AU, RECs, African states and other stakeholders will be confronted with in years to come. It becomes necessary to explore the extent to which existing tools and mechanisms, including the APSA, could be adapted to respond to this variant of conflict and violence. Second, the geography of atomized violence and low intensity conflicts constitute invaluable sites for conflict prevention activities, especially to prevent escalation into large scale conflicts. Third, they expose the limitation of current peacebuilding approaches and instruments that focus on and prioritise macro-level conflict and violence. Conflict prevention approaches and conflict management tools,

75 David, Adetula.2016. Everything You Need To Understand The Niger Delta Avengers And Their Quest For Secession. August 23, <http://venturesafrica.com/everything-about-the-niger-delta-avengers-so-far-and-their-quest-for-secession/>

76 Ukeje, C. (2016) 'State Responses to the Relapse into Insurgent Violence in Nigeria's Oil Region', APN Briefing Note, No.8, December 2016, [https://s3.amazonaws.com/ssrc-cdn1/crmuploads/new\\_publication\\_3/%7BE8492705-40D4-E611-80C3-005056AB0BD9%7D.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/ssrc-cdn1/crmuploads/new_publication_3/%7BE8492705-40D4-E611-80C3-005056AB0BD9%7D.pdf)

77 United Nations Security Council.2016. Report of the Secretary General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West African and the Sahel.S/2016/1072, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1072,p..4](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1072,p..4)

78 Bello Muhammad.2017. Niger Delta: Nigeria's oil-rich powder keg. 14 January <http://www.dw.com/en/niger-delta-nigerias-oil-rich-powder-keg/a-37134909>

79 Nneka,Luke..2016. Nigeria's Avengers claim Niger Delta oil pipeline attacks. 8,July <http://www.dw.com/en/nigerias-avengers-claim-niger-delta-oil-pipeline-attacks/a-19389276>

including Afsol strategies would need to broaden focus and emphasis to reflect the

growing importance of atomised violence and low intensity conflicts.

## 6. Progress in African-centred Solutions in Peace and Security (AFSOL)

An important silver lining in Africa's Peace and Security landscape in 2016 was noticeable progress in the use of African-centred Solutions in Peace and Security (Afsol) in managing armed conflict and insecurity. Notwithstanding the scale of violence and fatalities, there was evidence of progress in finding and using African solutions to African problems in 2016. African states and institutions such as the AU and RECs were active in preventing, de-escalating and forging negotiated solutions (through political dialogue) to violence and conflict situations. In Gabon, Burundi, Gambia, Libya and Sudan, the prospect of open armed confrontation or surge in the scale and intensity of violent clashes was averted or modulated by AU/REC led mediation and political settlement initiatives. African states and institutions were able to develop and use strategies and approaches to preventing and managing conflict and security challenges that were consistent with the historical, social, political and institutional realities of African states. We explore the progress in developing and using African-centred Strategies and Solutions in Peace and Security in greater detail in the case of Gabon, Gambia and Burundi.

In Gabon, pre-election protests from July 2016 ratcheted into widespread following the announcement of the results of presidential polls at the end of August 2016. It involved protesters from opposition Union of Forces for Change against police; opposition groups rejected the results alleging electoral fraud and manipulation by the ruling party and President Ali Bongo. The protests led to arson attacks on the parliament and other public buildings, looting, three fatalities

and injuries to hundreds of people.<sup>80</sup> The AU and ECCAS had deployed a joint election observation missions whose post-election report identified several flaws in the electoral process: the restriction of civil liberties; the administration's sway over the electoral commission; a lack of balance in the coverage of certain candidates by public media; and the fact that 'the mission was not allowed into vote collation centres. The mission recommended changes, including 'the establishment of an independent electoral institution with the primary and sole responsibility of overseeing all phases of the electoral process.'<sup>81</sup> The AU PSC in its statement on 2 September underlined the need to address the situation in Gabon based on 'consensus among all concerned Gabonese stakeholders in conformity with the relevant AU instruments'.<sup>82</sup> It could be said that the engagement by the AU and ECCAS before, during and after the election contributed to de-escalating the crisis.

Similarly in Gambia, political tensions and protests erupted in the run up to the presidential election in December 2016.<sup>83</sup> Unexpectedly, the defeat of the incumbent Yahya Jammeh regime and the initial concession to the election result heralded optimism of a peaceful transfer of power. However the subsequent rejection of election result by President Jammeh following

80 Radina Gigova. 2016. Gabon Erupts in Post-election Violence. CNN, September 2, 2016. <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/01/africa/gabon-election-protests/>

81 Institute of Security Studies. 2016. Peace and Security Council Report. Issue No.84 September 2016, pp.12-13

82 Institute of Security Studies. 2016. Peace and Security Council Report. Issue No.84 September 2016, p.12

83 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. S/2016/566, p.3

some computation errors by the electoral commission (but which did not change the overall outcome) threatened to plunge the country into political chaos.<sup>84</sup>

The ECOWAS, with the support of the AU and the UN (UN Office for West Africa, UNOWA) initiated mediation talks led by the President of Nigeria (Muhammadu Buhari) and former President of Ghana (John Mahama). Together with the Chairperson of ECOWAS and President of Sierra Leone, the ECOWAS mediation team visited Gambia twice to broker a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The 50th Ordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority in Abuja (17 December 2016) authorised the body to use all necessary means to ensure the respect of the will of the people of The Gambia. Similarly, the AU-PSC at its 647 Meeting declared support for the ECOWAS position and mediation, urged Gambian security forces to exercise restraints and called on President Jammeh to respect the will of the people by peacefully relinquishing power by 19 January 2017 when his term expires.<sup>85</sup>

ECOWAS focused on a political negotiation to persuade President Jammeh to relinquish power, but also prepared for a backup option of deploying troops should mediation talks failed. Troops and military assets from Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana were placed on standby. The deployment of troops actually started as the 20 January 2017 deadline set for President Jammeh exit from power approached and it looked unlikely that power would be transferred peacefully.

However last minute shuttle diplomacy by President Alpha Condé (Guinea) and

Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz (Mauritania) in January 2017 persuaded President Jammeh to relinquish power and go on exile in Equatorial Guinea based on an agreement (guarantee) of safe passage and protection from harassment for him and his associates. According to Marcel de Souza (the President of the ECOWAS Commission), the coordinated approach and skilled use of mediation and implicit threat of force that resulted in a peaceful restoration of democracy and security was remarkable; "The operations [to resolve the Gambian crisis and restored democracy and security] took place without shedding of blood, without any casualty, and without any foreign intervention whatsoever. This is a clear indication that Africa can face her own challenges and find solutions to her problems."<sup>86</sup>

The origin of the Burundian crisis is common knowledge; it was sparked by the April 2015 decision by President Nkurunziza of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) – to run for a third term in office. This was deemed a clear violation of the terms of the 2000 Arusha Peace Accords and the 2005 Constitution. This set off a chain of political-security instability, including protests, a failed coup attempt, killings and assassinations, and displacement of civilians. It also raised the stakes and the threat of renewed armed conflict. The situation has remained volatile ever since with violent clashes between regime supporters and opposition groups and allied militias.<sup>87</sup> Civilians have been caught in street clashes, armed grenade attacks against police, militia violence

84 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. 19 December 2016 S/2016/1072, p.2 [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1072](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1072)

85 See "The 647th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council on the post-election situation in The Islamic Republic of The Gambia", 17 January 2017, <http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/the-647th-meeting-of-the-au-peace-and-security-council-on-the-post-election-situation-in-the-islamic-republic-of-the-gambia#sthash.QkrJV09c.dpuf>

86 See ECOWAS (2017) 'ECOWAS Commission President welcomes the Peaceful outcome of the post-electoral crisis in The Gambia', 24 January 2017, <http://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-commission-president-welcomes-the-peaceful-outcome-of-the-post-electoral-crisis-in-the-gambia/>

87 ACLED. 2016. Conflict Trends (No.48) Real time analysis of African Political Violence, May 2016, p. 7, [http://www.acledata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ACLED\\_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.48-May-2016.pdf](http://www.acledata.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ACLED_Conflict-Trends-Report-No.48-May-2016.pdf)

against internally displaced persons, raids and arrests by government forces.<sup>88</sup> In one particular incident in December 2016, coordinated attacks on military posts in Ngagara, Musga and Mujejuru recorded over 87 fatalities.<sup>89</sup> Civilians continued to be targeted in the form of enforced disappearances, extra judicial killings, human rights abuses and torture.<sup>90</sup>

In spite of the volatile political-security condition and worsening humanitarian situation, Burundi recorded a decrease in the overall level of violence in 2016; the number of conflict events declined from 847 in 2015 to 784 in 2016, and conflict-related fatalities also dropped by 56%.<sup>91</sup> It is not impossible that the emerging thaw in overall violent attacks could be linked to the progress, albeit minute and still feeble, in mediation and political negotiations by regional bodies. There were two tracks of political negotiation and mediation in the Burundian crises, namely the East African Community (EAC) mandated political dialogue process under the leadership of Former President Mkapa and the AU High Level Delegation.

In 2016 there was strong rapprochement between the Burundian government and the AU following the AU's change of approach – from pushing for strong international action, including the deployment of a 5,000 intervention force<sup>92</sup> without the consent of the Burundian government to mediation, political dialogue and engagement focused on a negotiated settlement of the crisis. The change of strategy was informed by political dynamic within the AU, specifically at the Summit level, regarding the sanctity of Burundian sovereignty versus the right and

powers of the AU to override sovereignty in grave circumstances as contained in the AU Constitutive Act (Article 4h). Moreover, the imposition of targeted sanctions against regime officials by the PSC had limited effect.<sup>93</sup>

The AU opted to push and support an inclusive political dialogue in Burundi through the Inter-Burundian Dialogue, and to dispatch a high level dialogue delegation, comprising of five Heads of State, to Burundi.<sup>94</sup> This was expected to complement and expand the deployment of AU human rights observers to Burundi.<sup>95</sup> The AU High Level Delegation<sup>96</sup> secured the consent of the Burundian government to increase the number of human rights observers from 100 to 200, as well as commitment to restart political dialogue with opposition groups. As at November there were only 45 human rights observers and nine military experts in the country due to financial and logistical constraints and security concerns. Also, a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding on human rights monitoring was yet to be signed.<sup>97</sup>

Admittedly, the Mkapa-led Inter Burundian Dialogue was yet to make substantial progress largely due to the government's refusal to include opposition groups that were yet to renounce violence, specifically the main opposition group – the Conseil

88 ACLED.2016. Conflict Trends(No.48) Real time analysis of African Political Violence, p.8

89 ACLED.2016. Conflict Trends(No.48) Real time analysis of African Political Violence, p.14

90 United Nations Security Council.2016. Resolution 2303(2016). S/RES/23013(2016) 29 July 2016, p. 1, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_res\\_2303.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2303.pdf)

91 ACLED (February 2017) Conflict Trends No 55, p. 4.

92 The African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU).

93 Institute for Security Studies.2016. Peace and Security Report No.76. December 2015/January 2016, p. 8, <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-76>,

94 Institute for Security Studies.2016. Peace and Security Report No.78. March 2016. Dakar/Pretoria/Nairobi/Addis: ISS, p.7, <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-78>

95 Institute for Security Studies.2016. Peace and Security Report No.78. March 2016. Dakar/Pretoria/Nairobi/Addis: ISS, p.8, <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-78>.

96 The delegation included the Heads of State and Government of South African, Mauritania, Senegal, Gabon, and Ethiopia.

97 Institute of Security Studies.2016.2016.Peace and Security Council Report, Issue No.87 Dec2016/Jan2017, p.8, <https://issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-87>.

National pour le respect de l'Accord d'Arusha pour la Paix et la Réconciliation au Burundi et de l'Etat de droit (CNARED).<sup>98</sup> Nonetheless, it has opened some form of communication between the government and elements within the opposition.

The AU's engagement could be said to constitute some form of progress, however tenuous, in securing the increase in number of human right observers and military experts, and pushing for the restarting of political dialogue. The AU and EAC engagement with parties to the crisis could become the foundation for a viable political settlement in the near future. This contrast sharply with the experience of the United Nations; the Burundian government consistently blocked the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2303 (July 2016) that called for the deployment of 228 UN Police officers to monitor the security situation and to support the human rights monitoring activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>99</sup>

Other cases of progress in conflict resolution efforts include Somalia: negotiations commenced among regions of greater Somalia, specifically Somaliland, Khatumo state, and Puntland over contested provinces such as Sool, Sanaag and Cayn Section. At the subnational level, a ceasefire agreement was concluded between the Hawadle clan and the Dir sub-clan Surre (Hiraan region); and a peace deal reached between the Habir Gedir clan and the Blymal clan (lower Shabelle state) on the withdrawal of militias from contested areas. In both examples, mediation efforts were led or supported by a combination of clan elders, government of Somalia and the AU-AMISOM.<sup>100</sup>

The governments of Sudan and South Sudan

98 Institute for Security Studies.2016. Peace and Security Report No.82. July 2016, p. 12, <https://www.issafrica.org/research/peace-and-security-council-report/peace-and-security-council-report-no-82>

99 Security Council Reports.2016.Burundi November 2016 Monthly Forecast. (Online) 28 October 2016. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/burundi\\_7.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-11/burundi_7.php)

100 HIIK 2017, Conflict Barometer 2017, p. 21.

also signed a new peace treaty focused on financial issues, security measures and border demarcation. This paved the way for the reduction in oil transmission fees, resumption of trade and transport, renewed commitments to halt support to armed groups, redeployment of joint military forces along the Demilitarized Border Zone, reopening of border posts and crossings, and the establishment of direct communication.<sup>101</sup>

In Sudan, a new peace deal (Roadmap Agreement) was signed in March-August 2016 between the government and various armed groups. The deal expressed a new commitment to negotiate a comprehensive peace deal on the future of Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan. In spite of leading to unilateral ceasefires, the Roadmap Agreement was weakened by the withdrawal (revocation of support) by the SPLM/A-North, one of the largest armed groups, over the government's questionable commitment to the peace deal. A sub-national peace deal was also concluded between the Sudanese pastoralist tribes (Rizeigat and Ma'aliya clan) over financial compensation following clashes in East Darfur in April 2016.

In the DRC, a peace deal was reached between the ruling party (government of President Kabila) and opposition groups over a new timeline for elections (in 2017), composition (power sharing) of a transitional cabinet and President Kabila's continued stay in power until elections. At the subnational level, a peace agreement concluded between the government and the Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (APCLS) and the Nyatura militias over disarmament and demobilization in exchange for official amnesty.<sup>102</sup>

Overall, the three main case studies (Gabon, Gambia and Burundi) are instances of election-related crises and they pinpoint to varying degrees the importance of normative frameworks and strong (or weak) political will to affirm their sanctity where

101 HIIK 2017, Conflict Barometer 2016, p. 58.

102 HIIK 2017, Conflict Barometer 2016, p. 21.

and when tested. They also underscore the imperative of proactive and timely engagement by the AU, RECs and other stakeholders in crisis situations. Third, they reconfirm the decisive role of African consensus and concerted international pressure in preventing and managing crisis situations. Importantly, the case studies may also indicate that Africa (AU and RECs) are

adapting strategies and getting better at managing election-related crisis. Perhaps this calls for greater reflections regarding the key principles (proactiveness, timeliness, consensus building, strong political will, and building international pressure) that appear to underlie the progress thus far, could be transposed to the management of other types of conflicts in Africa.

## 7. The Containment and Rollback of Violent Extremist Groups

The reality of violent extremist ideologies and groups constituting credible threats to peace and security in Africa predates 2016; in fact it predates the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States and the Global War on Terror that followed. However, data and trends in the activities of violent extremist groups in Africa in 2016 signpost a 'game changing' moment – that containment measures undertaken by African states, the African Union and RECs, and foreign partners were achieving strategic results in most cases. There is a global context to the containment and rollback of violent extremist groups as "a US-led coalition of more than 50 countries has stripped Daesh of large swaths of its territory...more than 50,000 Daesh fighters in Iraq and Syria, about 75%, have been killed as a result of the coalition war."<sup>103</sup>

In 2016, the threats posed by violent extremist groups were either neutralized or reduced. In short, signs emerged (with greater clarity) that violent extremist groups were being rolled back in greater numbers and frequency across Africa. In most cases, the majority of violent extremist groups active across Africa experienced one or more of the following: loss of territory and constricting spaces to operate, degraded capability to undertake 'audacious' and high-profile attacks, loss of fighters, collapsed or limited sources of support and infrastructures, etc. Most violent extremist groups are increasingly reduced to launching guerrilla attacks through

improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombings, or attacks against 'soft' civilian targets (especially hotels, schools, markets, etc.), crucially inside Mali, and in Niger and Burkina Faso close to the Malian border.

The evidence of strategic containment and roll back is visible, albeit in varying degrees, in most of the four corridors (covering more than twelve countries) where violent extremist groups are active in Africa. Boko Haram was routed and its fighting capabilities seriously degraded across Northeast Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin area covering border communities in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad. The group actually carried out the fewest attacks in 2016 compared with the previous five years, and much of its attacks in 2016 were limited to softer, minimalist targets like remote villages and refugee camps, and use of suicide bombers, mostly my radicalized young girls. The group sprung occasional attacks against military targets such as the April offensive against Nigeria's 113th battalion in northern Kareto<sup>104</sup> and June attack of Bosso, Niger, killing 28 soldiers and displacing 70,000 people.<sup>105</sup>

Much of the containment and roll

<sup>104</sup> The Guardian.2016. Boko Haram is losing ground – but will not be defeated by weapons alone 13 May <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/may/13/boko-haram-losing-ground-will-not-be-defeated-by-weapons-alone-lake-chad-basin-summit>

<sup>105</sup> Security Council Report.2016.Political and Humanitarian Briefing on the Lake Chad Basin. July 2016. (Online) <http://www.whatsinblue.org/2016/07/council-briefing-on-the-lake-chad-basin.php>

<sup>103</sup> Munich Security Report 2017, p. 50.

back was achieved by the coordinated counter-offensive by the armies of Chad, Cameroon, Benin and Nigeria under the MJTF Framework from late 2015. The coordinated counter-insurgency operations by the MJTF recaptured over 30 towns and villages, and on 24 December 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari declared victory over Boko Haram after the recapture of Sambisa forest, Boko Haram's erstwhile headquarters.<sup>106</sup> Still, Boko Haram remains a living threat as it still controls some areas around the Mandara Mountains on the eastern frontier with Cameroon; has roving fighters that continue to launch surprise attacks against remote villages; retains capability to launch suicide bombings; and its leaders are yet to be captured or killed.<sup>107</sup>

In the Horn of Africa corridor, Al-Shabaab and its affiliates have had their top leadership degraded with implications for their operational effectiveness. Several Al-Shabaab leaders were killed in different offensives by the KDF, USA, Somali National Army, and AMISOM; for example, Mohamud Dulyadeyn (mastermind of the Garissa University attack in April 2015), and Maalim Daud, head of Al-Shabaab's intelligence hit squads, were killed by the Somali National Army and coalition forces.<sup>108</sup> Similarly,

the group's deputy commander Mahad Mohammed Karate was killed by AMISOM.<sup>109</sup> It is estimated that by August 2016, the USA's drone strikes and coordinated operations with Somali Army Commando Forces operations killed more than six members of Al-Shabaab's top echelon.<sup>110</sup>

Admittedly, Al-Shabaab regained some territories such as El Ade, Badhadhe, Gedo, Marka, and Garad (Puntland), most of this was due to voluntary withdrawal by AMISOM, Kenyan Defence Force and Somali National Army, rather than Al-Shabaab combat successes or advances.<sup>111</sup> Al-Shabaab also launched series of bomb attacks such as in Galkayo, and Mogadishu and recorded casualties that included civilians, government minister, members of Parliament and soldiers at different times in 2016. All this was consistent with the group's guerilla tactics. The alliance between Al-Shabaab and IS in Puntland has yet to alter the strategic balance.<sup>112</sup> The successes recorded in degrading Al-Shabaab's leadership in 2016 was due to better intelligence gathering, and coordination between AMISOM, Somali National Army and affiliated militias, and foreign partners, especially the USA.

106 Security Council Report 2016. Discussion on the Lake Chad Basin Crisis. Jan 11 2017, <http://www.whatsinblue.org/2017/01/discussion-on-the-lake-chad-basin-crisis.php>

107 TheTelegraph.2016.Boko Haram loses grip on thousands of square miles of northern Nigeria<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/11492530/Boko-Haram-loses-grip-on-thousands-of-square-miles-of-northern-Nigeria.html>. See also, United Nations Security Council.2016. Report of the Secretary General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West African and the Sahel, S/2016/566, p.4, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/566](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/566)

108 Somaliaone.2016. Somali commando forces kill top al shabaab leaders in Saakow. 15 August. <http://somaliaone.net/2016/08/15/somali-commando-forces-kill-top-al-shabaab-leaders-in-saakow/>

109 AddisFortune.2016. Al Shabaab's Capability waning. July 19. <http://addisfortune.net/columns/al-shabaabs-capability-waning/>

110 See Stratfor (2016). In Somalia, al shabaab allegedly loses its leader. August 15 <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/somalia-al-shabaab-allegedly-loses-its-leader>

111 ReliefWeb.2016. The resurgence of al-Shabaab in Somalia and implications for the humanitarian sector. (Online) 23 March <http://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/resurgence-al-shabaab-somalia-and-implications-humanitarian-sector>

112 Security Council Report.2016. Somalia: January 2017 Monthly Forecast.28 December 2016. (Online) [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/somalia\\_27.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-01/somalia_27.php)



Table 3: Profile of Major Violent Extremist Groups in Africa

Name	Location	Objectives	Activities
Movement for unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO)	Sahel Mali 'South' Algeria	To Spread jihad in areas of operation	Criminal: Abduction of foreign workers, and drug trafficking. Insurgent: suicide bombings landmines
Harakat as-Shabab al-Mujahidin (Al-Shabab)	Southern and central Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti and Uganda	Seeking to create an Islamic state in Somalia	Insurgent: guerrilla warfare, bombings, suicide attacks and public executions/beatings
Ansar Dine (Defenders of Faith)	Northern Mali	Impose sharia law across the country	Imposition of sharia law, killings, and suicide bombings
Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad (Boko Haram)	Nigeria (north-east mainly), Niger and Cameroon	Overthrow government and establish strict Islamic Sharia law and regime.	Insurgency: Suicide bombings, and mass bombings of civilian areas. Criminal: civilian kidnapping (ransom) and robbery.
Al Qaeda in the lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)	Algeria, Mali, Libya, Tunisia	Key objective is to rid North Africa of Western influence	Criminal: kidnapping of foreigners for ransom. Guerrilla: ambush, IED, and bombings.
Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)	DRC, Central African Republic, Southern Sudan	Restore 'honour' to the Acholi ethnic group Install government based on leader's 'version of ten commandments'	Human trafficking, and civilian attacks

There was greater evidence of sustained containment and effective roll back of violent extremist groups in the North African corridor. In Tunisia, much of the threat posed by IS affiliated groups were neutralised in 2016 through new security measures introduced following attacks on police and military positions in Southern town of Ben Guerdane in March.<sup>113</sup> In Libya, Islamic State forces and affiliated militias were routed in Benghazi and Sirte in 2016; in Benghazi, General Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) forces loyal to the House of Representatives, with the support of USA air strikes, attacked and displaced IS and its affiliate Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (a coalition of Islamist armed groups that includes Ansar al-Sharia).<sup>114</sup> In Sirte, the

combination of USA airstrikes and forces loyal to the Presidential Council defeated IS forces in military battles, recaptured all IS territories (over 300 kilometre), and killed over 650 fighters and injured another 2000 injured.<sup>115</sup> Only smaller cells of violent extremist groups remain active but without at strategic advantage or territory in Libya.<sup>116</sup> In addition, the military interventions by France and UN-backed ECOWAS forces in the Sahel have resulted in temporary and tactical retreats of Al-Qaida affiliated fighters to Libya. Nonetheless, the threats posed by violent extremist in the corridor remain; IS affiliated groups, remnants of AQIM, and Ansar Al-Sharia (Tunisia) all cooperate and remain active in the border

113 Amnesty International. 2016. Tunisia: Severe restrictions on liberty and movement latest symptoms of repressive emergency law 17 March 2016. (Online) <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/03/tunisia-severe-restrictions-on-liberty-and-movement-latest-symptoms-of-repressive-emergency-law/>

114 Security Council Report. 2016. Libya September 2016 Monthly Forecast. 1 September 2016. <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2016-09/>

[libya\\_25.php](#)

115 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 5, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/1011)

116 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. 1 December 2016. S/2016/1011, p. 5.

regions, especially Southern Libyan Desert and Mount Chaambi that is located between Tunisia and Libya.<sup>117</sup>

The Sahel corridor appears to buck the trend or at best showed the least evidence of containment. The containment seems less evident in Northern Mali and border communities in Mauritania, Niger and Algeria; groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar-Dine, Al Mourabitoun and IS elements launched attacks within and around the region. On the one hand, there were instances of renewed operational cooperation and similarities among the groups, resulting in increased number of attacks. And on the other hand, violent extremist groups would appear to have expanded their operational perimeter into Central and Southern Mali, and across neighbouring countries such as Niger, Burkina Faso (Ouagadougou) and Cote d'Ivoire (Grand Bassam).<sup>118</sup> Within Mali, they have targeted MINUSMA, the Malian Defence and Security Forces, EUTM Mali and the French forces, and in neighbouring states they have targeted hotels, schools, markets and other civilian centres.<sup>119</sup> In the first quarter of 2016, MINUSMA recorded 20 attacks by violent extremist groups in which seven peacekeepers, one civilian staff member and two civilian contractors died.<sup>120</sup> This was in addition to several kidnappings and armed attacks and fatalities all through 2016.<sup>121</sup> Still, the violent extremist groups

have been contained in the (in)incapability to overrun the Malian state and/ or government as was the case in 2012.

It is important to restate that the containment and/ or rollback neither extinguishes the continued existence of violent groups nor diminishes the potential appeal of extremist narratives and ideologies, especially in the context of ongoing conflicts in the Muslim World, strong crime-terror nexus, Africa's 'youth bulge' and numerous structural weaknesses such as high unemployment, poverty, unresolved socio-political grievances, etc.<sup>122</sup> Also, foreign fighters of African origin "unless identified, deradicalized, and reintegrated back into society are likely to become the recruiting pool for tomorrow's violent nonstate actors."<sup>123</sup> Evidence from other parts of the world have shown that 'winning the minds' is even a greater challenge compared to 'winning the war' with violent extremist groups. Indeed, the threat of violent extremist groups and ideologies remain real and serious in Africa, but compared to 2015 (and previous years), it would appear that in 2016, African states, citizens/communities, AU/RECs and their strategic partners managed to arrest surge in threats posed by violent groups, even if it is in the short term.

What is responsible for the progress in containment and roll back of violent extremist groups? Is a model for containment and how could it be replicated and sustained? How could the battlefield gains be transferred to efforts to counteract the appeal of violent extremist ideologies among populations, especially youth across Africa? Are there lessons to be learnt for Africa, especially the AU and RECs? It would seem that these are questions and issues that should engage the relevant stakeholders and institutions within and outside of Africa. Perhaps, more detailed assessments would suffice.

117 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed to Libya and neighbouring countries, including off the coast of Libya, by foreign terrorist fighters recruited by or joining Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities 18 July 2016 S/2016/627, p.6, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/627](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/627).

118 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Mali. S/2016/281, pp. 5-6, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/281](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/281)

119 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Resolution 2295(2016) on Mali. S/RES/2295(2016), p. 2, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295\(2016\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2295(2016))

120 UN Security Council. 2016. Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Mali. S/2016/281, p. 6.

121 United Nations Security Council. 2016. Security Council Press Statement on Mali. SC/12542- AFR/3463

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12542.doc.htm>

122 Munich Security Report 2017, p. 50.

123 US National intelligence Council, Global Trends 2017, p. 223.

Overall, emerging learning from the Lake Chad Basin pinpoints the centrality of multinational effort to counteracting violent extremist groups, especially due to their transnational and trans-border modus operandi. Also, multiple levels of cooperation and coordination, including diplomatic, political, and operational exchanges are prerequisites. The cooperation and

support of foreign partners in the form of intelligence gathering and fusion, training and equipment, funding, and operational support (airlift, air support and other force enablers) are essential ingredients. It also be that size matters; the MJTF, is relatively small – just five troop contributing countries involved – could a recipe for better and more effective operational cooperation.

## 8. The Year of Protests and Riots

The standout observation in 2016 was surge in the number of riots and protests (increased of nearly 5% over 2015 levels) as evidenced by events in Tunisia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Mali, Gabon and Chad. In 2016, mass protests gained traction as they were 'Weaponised' and transformed into 'Street Power' – the preeminent strategy for effecting changes in socio-economic and/or political circumstances. In recent years protests have proved effective in bringing about far-reaching political changes. The fear of protests is now the beginning of wisdom for many governments in Africa. As such, both democratic and (semi-)authoritarian governments have developed a variety of strategies to cope with dissent, ranging from tolerance and accommodation – as during the recent wave of protest in Morocco – to outright repression – as in Cameroon, DRC, Ethiopia and Sudan.

Of course, the triggers, nature, demands and outcomes of the protests vary across and within countries, however they are reflect structural conditions and imbalances linked to inequality, economic hardships, inter-group dynamic, and limited civil liberties. In 2016, economic issues linked to tax rises, inflation, poor social service delivery, withdrawal of subsidies and rising cost of living triggered riots and protests in Sudan, South Sudan, Namibia, South Africa, Libya, Ethiopia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. Political issues such as corruption and poor governance, group-based inequalities, human rights violations, limited civil liberties, elections, and manipulation of

constitutional rules on term limits triggered protests in Cameroon, DRC, Gambia, Gabon, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. In a number of cases, protests erupted as a consequence of overlapping economic and political issues, or protests fuelled by economic issues have ended up having political consequences.

An overview of regions shows the multifaceted geography of riots and protests across the continent. South Africa and Tunisia recorded the highest number of protests in 2016 with 20% and 11.25% of total protest events in Africa, respectively. South Africa and Ethiopia make up approximately one third of total protest events, with this share increasing to 50% when including Tunisia and Nigeria.<sup>124</sup> In North Africa, all states witnessed high rates of protest activity in 2016, confirming the longer trend started in 2011. In Algeria and Tunisia, the number of protest events was higher than in 2011, raising concerns that local grievances may give rise again to wider collective actions. Despite a relative de-crease from the previous year, protest movements in Egypt, Morocco and Libya have also called attention to the multiple weaknesses of these states.

Beyond the transformation of protests into street power, other notable changes in 2016 are: first, increase in the number of events and countries affected, including spread across conflict-affected, fragile and seemingly stable countries. Protests took place in the midst of armed conflicts in Mali,

124 See ACLED 2017. *Conflict and Violence Overview: Report 58 Feb 2017*, p.4.

South Sudan, and Sudan. Relatively stable states such as South Africa, Ethiopia, Gabon and Cameroon also recorded protests. Second, West Africa was least affected, compared to Central, East, North, and Southern Africa. It is unclear if this is a mere coincidence or an indication of stronger structural resilience linked to embedded norms of democracy and good governance. Third, as a reflection of 'street power', most protests witnessed increased politicization, even when triggered by specific economic issues. Most protests increasing targeted political changes (regime change) as either core demands or unintended outcomes. In short, the solution to the issues at the heart of protests was increasingly viewed from the narrow, yet strategic prism of changing or rejecting incumbents of power. Finally, 2016 witnessed the increasing securitization of protests by governments through rise in cases of crackdown, arbitrary arrests and detentions, shutdown of communication systems, etc. Going forward, it appears the resort to riot and protest by citizens is likely to continue to rise in years to come; events in Southern Cameroon, DRC, and Nigeria in the first two months of 2017 are credible signposts.

What do protests and increases in 2016 indicate? It is appropriate to explore what Africa and policy actors in general should or could make of the spate of protests in 2016 and early 2017. The rise in the number and spread of protests is a sign of progress, as well as subsisting challenges. On the one hand, protests appear to have increased in the context of decreasing or flat-lining number of violent armed conflict. In this sense, protests could be rivalling or replacing violent conflict in the analysis and policy interventions on peace and security in Africa. Given that most recent protests are short-lived (lasting few days or weeks), and lead to fewer fatalities, relative to armed conflicts. Moreover, the AU and most RECs appear to be evolving and adapting elements of APSA, specifically the mediation instruments, to respond to certain types of protests (those linked to elections and constitutional term

limits). Admittedly, events in a few countries (e.g. Libya) show the risk and possibility of protests metamorphosing into violent armed conflict. All the same, this indicates that Africa is entering a new phase in the continued evolution of conflicts and peace and security broadly.

On the other hand, protests represent a democratic conundrum; they indicate the deepening of democracy (a new phase or wave in Africa's evolving democratization), as well as signposting the weakness of governance institutions (as avenues for airing grievances and effecting change) and the poor implementation of existing regional and continental normative frameworks on good governance and democracy. Protests are being used to renegotiate the social contract, check the excesses of incumbents of power, and hold governments accountable. Popular protests also indicate displeasures and attempts to redress socio-economic inequality and political (inter-generational) marginalization. Mass protests in Africa in 2016 could also reflect a broader global trend of rise in populist ideas and impulses, and ascent to a 'Post-Order' system.<sup>125</sup> Of concern is the fact that in certain situations and countries, protests could be manipulated or misused for narrow (inappropriate) objectives, or misdirected towards helpless victims as evidenced by continuous xenophobic violence against African migrants in South Africa.

Overall, political consciousness and demands for good governance are increasing across the continent due to the growth in internet penetrability, progress in school enrolment and literacy rate, higher rural-urban migration, rapid urbanization, surge in the role of diaspora groups in the politics of home countries, and greater use of social media among Africans. Protests parallel the broad Global Trend observed by the USA National Intelligence Council as the 'Paradox of Progress' that embodies the achievement of industrial and information age, delivering danger and richer opportunities. According

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125 Munich Security Report 2017, pp. 7-8.

to the American National Intelligence Council, “the next five years will see rising tensions within and between countries. Underlying this crisis in cooperation will be local, national, and international differences about the proper role of government across an array of issues ranging from the economy to the environment, religion, security, and the rights of individuals.”<sup>126</sup>

In most cases, mobile telephony and access to social media have become major enablers in the organization and outbreak of protests in Africa. Spontaneous social movements

<sup>126</sup> USA National Intelligence Council (2017) Global Trends: Paradox of Progress, p. ix.

and organized civil society groups have leveraged platforms such as Facebook, Tweeter, Instagram, Blogs, WhatsApp and other online chatrooms to transcend socio-cultural divides and mobilize citizens for protests. There is a sense that the transformation of protests into street power is shifting the epicentre of political power and the balance of sovereignty from regimes to citizens. Accordingly, protests may lead to breakdown in law and order in the short-term, but they could be important foundations for long-term peace and security in several African countries.

## 9. Summary of Continental-Level Trends of Peace and Security In 2016

The following are the key observations regarding continental-level trends in peace and security in Africa in 2016.

- Overall, the ‘meta data’ of conflict and violence in Africa in 2016 was largely unchanged from 2015; albeit the levels for both years are dangerously high. The continent recorded 17, 539 violent events in 2016, compared with 17, 537 recorded in 2015. The range of violent events includes battles, violence against civilians, remote violence, strategic events, riots and mass protests etc.
- The number of large scale wars and field battles are either stagnating or declining, but there is an increasing explosion of non-state conflict agents and the violence perpetrated by them; militias, vigilantes, violent extremist groups and spontaneous movements (rioters and protesters). Moreover, conventional battles with clear cut government versus opponents continue to decline while rioting, protesting, and violence against civilians remain high or increasing in some cases.
- Conflict-affected states like Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria

recorded the highest number of conflict events in 2016. These countries cumulatively accounted for a third (33%) of all violent conflict in Africa in 2016; a slight decrease from 35% in 2015, and 40% in 2014. In 2016, Somalia was by far the epicentre of violent event in Africa in 2016 with over 2200 recorded events, followed by Nigeria, South Sudan and Libya.

- Somalia displaced Nigeria as the topmost country for total fatalities (including civilians, soldiers, battle-related and other forms) from violent events in 2016 (See Figure 1 below). The number of reported fatalities increased in Somalia and Sudan in 2016, while Nigeria experienced a decline. According to ACLED, Somalia accounted for 20% of all reported fatalities, and Nigeria accounted for nearly 16% of total fatalities in 2016. Nigeria’s share declined considerable from almost 30% in 2015.
- Government security forces and political militias were the two most active categories of conflict actors in Africa in 2016. State security outfits accounted for 34% of conflict events in

2016, a two percent increase over 2015.

Government security forces were most active in conflict-affected states in the Horn of Africa, specifically Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan; for example, between 2015 and 2016, there was a geometric surge in government military activities in Sudan (from 332 to 460 events) and Ethiopia (from 155 to 448).

- The scale of human fatalities in 2016 was 30,000, a decrease over 2015 (36,000) levels. According to ACLED, both the estimated total fatalities and reported civilian fatalities from organized armed conflict events declined in 2016. However, civilians continued to be targeted or caught in crossfires; violence against civilians across Africa increased for the second year in a row to 45%, up by three percentage points from 2014 levels. It contrasts sharply with the overall decrease in reported civilian share of conflict-related fatalities; Africa recorded on 8,050 civilian fatalities (27%) in 2016. This is a significant decline (a 42.5% decrease) from the preceding year which stood at 37.5% of all conflict-related fatalities. In fact, this is lowest share of civilian fatalities since 2002.
- The topmost sources of risk and violence to civilians are political militias and state security forces; during the period 2011-2016, militias accounted for 58.2% of violence against civilians. In 2016, state security forces perpetrated a quarter (25%) of reported civilian fatalities. Communal militias (community-based armed groups) are equally deadly for civilians; in 2016, they were linked to 24.5% of reported civilian fatalities, compared with about 11% in 2015.
- The countries with most reported cases of rape and gender-based violence in 2016 were Sudan, South Sudan, CAR and DRC. Of note is the decline in reported cases of gender-based violence in the DRC. Most of the reported cases of gender-based violence in Sudan were perpetrated by armed groups such as pro-government militias, Janjaweed, the Rapid Support Forces, the military and other unidentifiable armed groups. In South Sudan, the complicit groups include the South Sudanese military and allied paramilitary groups, the SPLA/M-In Opposition, and several ethno-communal militias.
- Notwithstanding the unchanged overall levels of violence in 2016, there was a marked qualitative change in the character of armed conflict and violence in Africa; armed conflicts and violence became more diffused as evidenced by the noticeable increases in the number and spread of mass protests, and rise in militia activities. Political militias were involved in nearly a third (30%) of all organised armed conflict events in Africa 2016. The Imbon-erakure of Burundi was the most active in Africa as it was involved in 202 conflict events in 2016, nearly double its record of 138 events in 2015. New armed groups and militias that changed the conflict landscape emerged in Nigeria's Niger Delta region (Niger Delta Avengers, NDA); and in Eastern DRC (Kamwina Nsapu militia). Other splinter groups were recorded in Sudan, and South Sudan, while RENAMO's fighting capability (and attacks) became more evident in Mozambique in 2016.
- The changing character of violence and conflict also manifested in increased instances of 'low intensity' conflicts or 'quasi-war' situations. Examples of this in 2016 abound, including Mozambique, Burundi, Cameroon, Nigeria, DRC, Northern Mali, border regions across the Sahel, etc. These situations are characterized by lower media coverage; low levels of armed violence but equally deadly internecine violent episodes; and they are rooted in unresolved or badly managed historical-political grievances. They are also extremely fluid situation with huge potentials for escalation, often

responding to short term triggers such as policy changes, electoral disputes, and particular arrest or brutality and/or killings by security officials.

- Another evidence of the change in the character of violence and armed conflict across Africa in 2016 was the surge in the number of riots and protests (increased of nearly 5% over 2015 levels) as evidenced by events in Tunisia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Mali, Gabon and Chad. More countries experienced protests in 2016, the countries affected cut across conflict-affected and relatively stable ones; West Africa was least affected; and 2016 witnessed the increasing securitization of protests by governments through rise in cases of crackdown, arbitrary arrests and detentions, shutdown of communication systems, etc. In 2016, mass protests gained traction as they were 'Weaponised' and transformed into 'Street Power' to bring about far-reaching political changes. Going forward, it is logical to expect further instances of riots and protest by citizens in years to come; events in Southern Cameroon, DRC, South Africa, and Nigeria in the first two months of 2017 are pointers.
- Africa experienced a fair share of stalled peace agreements and processes in 2016 in places such as Libya, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan. Across these countries, the lack of progress or setbacks reveals a complex interplay of failed implementation, belligerency amongst factions, lack of requisite political will, emergence of new armed groups/factions, etc.
- Africa recorded progress in the use of

African-centred Solutions in Peace and Security (Afsol) in managing armed conflict and insecurity in 2016. Notwithstanding the scale of violence and fatalities, there was evidence of progress in finding and using African solutions (based on historical, socio-political and cultural orientations) to peace and security challenges in 2016. African states and institutions such as the AU and RECs, were active in preventing, de-escalating and forging negotiated solutions (through political dialogue) to violence and conflict situations. In Gabon, Burundi, Gambia, and Sudan, the prospect of open armed confrontation or surge in the scale and intensity of violent clashes was averted or modulated by AU/REC led mediation and political settlement initiatives.

- Data and trends in the activities of violent extremist groups in Africa in 2016 signpost a 'game changing' moment – that containment measures undertaken by African states, the African Union and RECs, and foreign partners were achieving strategic results in most cases. In 2016, the threats posed by violent extremist groups were either neutralized or reduced. The majority of violent extremist groups active across Africa experienced in varying degrees, one or more of the following: loss of territory and constricting spaces to operate, degraded capability to undertake 'audacious' and high-profile attacks, loss of fighters, collapsed or limited sources of support and infrastructures, etc. Most violent extremist groups are increasingly reduced to launching guerrilla attacks through improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombings, or attacks against 'soft' civilian targets (especially hotels, schools, markets, etc.), etc.

## 10. Recommendations

### 1. Build more inclusive peace accords that addresses national and subnational conflicts simultaneously

Evidence from 2016 reveals structural blind-spots in the nature of peace agreements and current approaches and priorities of mediation and conflict resolution activities in Africa, specifically the tendency to overlook subnational conflicts and small armed groups and militias. This raises the need for strategies, tools and approaches to mediation and conflict resolution that are more inclusive (especially of smaller armed groups and militias) and deepen the prospect of peace across different levels of society.

### 2. Adapt existing conflict management tools to address 'quasi-war' situations

The cases of atomised violence and low intensity conflicts reveal the true scale and challenge of violence in Africa. It is a trend that is likely to be on the increase in the short to medium term, hence the need to explore and adapt existing tools and mechanisms, including the APSA, to respond to this variant of conflict and violence.

### 3. Build on gains made in managing election-related and constitutional-term associated crises

The progress made in managing election-related and constitutional term associated crises in 2016 underline the importance of normative frameworks and strong political will to affirm their sanctity where and when tested. They also underscore the imperative of proactive and timely engagement by the AU, RECs and other stakeholders in crisis situations. This calls for greater reflections on how key principles (proactiveness, timeliness, consensus building, strong political will, and building international pressure) that underlie the progress thus far could be transposed to the management of other types of conflicts in Africa.

### 4. Time to consider ad-hoc coalitions and security arrangements as models for tackling violent extremist groups

Multinational cooperation anchored on adhoc security coalitions are central to counteracting the threats posed by violent extremist groups, especially due to their transnational and trans-border modus operandi. Also, multiple levels of cooperation and coordination, including diplomatic, political, and operational exchanges are prerequisites. The adhoc arrangements could indicate that size matters – small partnerships improves agility, coordination and effectiveness. They also indicate that the appropriate support from foreign partners in the form of intelligence gathering and fusion, training and equipment, funding, and operational support (airlift, air support and other force enablers) is essential. It is crucial to consider arrangements such as the MJTF as a model for better and more effective operational cooperation in peace and security.

### 5. The AU and RECs to clarify, harmonise and synergise conflict prevention tools in respect of structural causes of armed violence and conflicts

The unchanged overall levels of violence, explosion in the number and spread of mass protests, and rise in militia activities are important issues in preventing conflicts, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. The statistical overview of Africa peace and security landscape in 2016 reconfirm the enduring impact of structural weaknesses, and the need to urgently resource and capacitate the AU and RECs in respect of post-conflict reconstruction and development.











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E: [tanaforum@ipss-addis.org](mailto:tanaforum@ipss-addis.org)

W: [www.tanaforum.org](http://www.tanaforum.org)



**INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES  
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

TANA FORUM SECRETARIAT

P.O. Box 1176

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

E: [info@ipss-addis.org](mailto:info@ipss-addis.org)

W: [www.ipss-addis.org](http://www.ipss-addis.org)