

# REGIONAL DIMENSIONS OF PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: A CASE STUDY OF THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE CONCEPT



BY  
Abubakar Aliyu

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL COMPLETION OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
The Certificate-of-Training in United Nations Peace Support Operations



Peace Operations Training Institute®

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**A Thesis**

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**Captain Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu**

**Nigerian Army**



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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my Grand Mother, Hajiya Fatimah “Lucy” Muktar and to the Memory of my Friend, Captain Ismail Auwalu Yadudu who passed away on 19 March 2008 (From God we all came and to God we shall return) and who introduced me to the United Nations Institute of Training and Research.

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Finally is a big kudos to the Management and Staff of the United Nations Institute of Training and Research for their tireless work and effort in making this project a reality.

## **ABSTRACT**

The African Union (AU) adoption of 'African solutions to African problems' has pushed its Member States to enhance their roles in the maintenance of peace and security. In doing so, the AU established the Peace and Security Council (PSC). The PCS is charged with monitoring and intervening in conflicts on the Continent. It also mandates and oversees an African force capable of rapid deployment to keep, or enforce the peace, conducted in a manner consistent with both the UN and the OAU Charters and the Cairo Declaration of 1993. This paper seeks to illuminate plans and progresses made so far with a view to pointing out limitations which are likely to hinder the realisation of such a capability of the AU peace and security agenda.

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## ACRONYMS

ACDS	– African Chiefs of Defence Staff
AMIB	– African Union Mission in Burundi
AMIS	– African Union Mission in the Sudan
AMISOM	– African Union Mission in Somalia
AMLD	– African Union Military Logistics Depot
AMU	– Arab Maghreb Union
ANAD	– Treaty of Non Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence
ASF	– African Standby Force
AU	– African Union
C <sup>3</sup> IS	– Command, Control, Communication and Information System
CEWARN	– Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
COMESA	– Common Market for East and Southern Africa
CAAU	– Constitutive Act of the African Union
COPAX	– Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa
COS	– Chief of Staff
CPX	– Command Post Exercise
CSSDA	– Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa
DDR	– Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DPKO	– Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	– Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	– East Africa Community
EACDS	– East Africa Chiefs of Defence Staff
EASBRIG	– East Africa Standby Brigade
ECCAS	– Economic Community of Central African States
ECOMICI	– ECOWAS Mission in Cote d’Ivoire
ECOMIL	– ECOWAS Mission in Liberia
ECOMOG	– ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	– Economic Community of West African States
EPM	– Ecole de la Maintien de la Paix
ESF	– ECOWAS Standby Force
EU	– European Union
HQ	– Headquarters
IGAD	– Inter Governmental Authority on Development
ISDSC	– Inter State Defence and Security Committee
KA IPTC	– Kofi Anna International Peacekeeping Training Centre
KPSTC	– Kenyan Peace Support Training Centre
MNF	– Multinational Force



MONUC	– United Nations Mission in Congo
MPMC	– Mission Planning and Management Cell
NATO	– North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OAU	– Organisation of Africa Unity
OLMEE	– OAU Liaison Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia
ONUB	– United Nations Mission in Burundi
PKF	– Peacekeeping Force
PLANELM	– Planning Element
PSC	– Peace and Security Council
SADC	– Southern Africa Development Community
SADCBRIG	– SADC Standby Force
SHIRBRIG	– Standby High Readiness Brigade
SOP	– Standing Operational Procedures
SRES	– Special Representative of the Executive Secretary
SRO	– Sub Regional Organisation
TCC	– Troop Contributing Country
TOE	– Tables of Organisation and Equipment
UN	– United Nations
UNAMID	– United Nations – African Union Mission in Darfur
UNMIL	– United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIS	– United Nations Mission in the Sudan
UNSAS	– United Nations Standby Arrangement
VMT	– Verification and Monitoring Team

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The security of African Nations remains subject to a variety of military and non-military risks that is multi-dimensional and often difficult to predict. Whilst the potential for inter-state disputes has not diminished, the last ten years have seen the appearance of complex new risks to peace and stability, including oppression, ethnic conflict, economic distress, the collapse of political order, the proliferation of small arms and organised international crime<sup>1</sup>. When crises arise they increasingly involve many factions and contain conflict elements which may be inter and intra and/or trans national in nature and involve the cross border movement of refugees, internally displaced people, migrants and wide spread human rights abuses. Such intra state conflicts and transnational activities are generally perpetrated by sub state actors or ‘war lords’, non-state actors, militias, criminal elements and armed civilians and not exclusively by elements of the regular armies. As a result social cohesion and state institutions collapse, law and order breaks down, banditry and chaos prevail and the civilian population flees the conflict region or the country.

To this end, an emphasis and direction was laid in an address by Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, the then Secretary General of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) in his opening address to the Second Meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of Member States of the OAU Central Organ in Harare, where he stressed that, "*... OAU Member States can no longer afford to stand aloof and expect the International Community to care more for our problems than we do, or indeed to find solutions to those problems which in many instances, have been of our own making. The simple truth that we must confront today is that the world does not owe us a living and we must remain in the forefront of efforts to act and act speedily, to prevent conflicts from getting out of control.*"<sup>2</sup> Similarly as a follow up to that and after the creation of the African Union, the then Chairman of the Union, South African President Thabo Mbeki, urged member states to give special priority to establishing an African Standby Force (ASF) to allow the continent to solve its conflicts, saying "*Recent*

*international events have confirmed the need for us Africans to do everything we can to rely on our own capacities to secure our continent's renaissance”<sup>3</sup>.*

Therefore, pursuant to Article 5(2) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (CAAU), the Protocol on the Peace and Security Council (PSC) that would act as the decision-making institution and the sole authority for deploying, managing and terminating AU-led peace operations was established, as a collective security and early warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa. While the AU Constitutive Act defines conditions under which a collective response is required, the decision to intervene will require a common perspective on what a threat to the peace entails. To address this, the AU proposed the development of a common defence policy that would enable Africa to avoid over reliance on the international community to solve its problems. The African Chiefs of Defence Staff (ACDS) in 2003 laid the groundwork for a continent-wide force that, by 2010, would be able to respond to requests for AU, UN or regional monitoring, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement missions and within the framework of Article 13 of the PSC Protocol and thus establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF)<sup>4</sup>.

## **1.1 Purpose and Relevance**

The aim of this study is to examine the role of the African Union in undertaking its responsibility as a regional organisation in enhancing its role in the maintenance of peace and security on the African continent, highlighting a number of barriers and enablers. Africa has been marred by several conflicts which have impacted negatively on the AU as an Institution. Thus the study is important as it seeks to take an in depth look toward appreciating the needs and efforts of the AU in hacking down common security threats, which undermine the maintenance and promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent. This study will also be of significance not only to the AU but to other organisations such as the UN in that the AU posses some comparative advantages over these organisations.

This could be deduced from the fact that many African countries participate in UN operations and would be in somewhat better positions to be a transitional force to a UN peacekeeping. Additionally, a quicker response capability of the ASF to contain crisis situation as was the case in Burundi, Darfur and presently in Somalia. Inadvertently, if operationalised the cost of insertion/deployment of the ASF would be minimal as opposed to that of a much larger UN Force. Also, the recent demand of the Government of Sudan for an all African Force to make up the hybrid UN/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) could have been addressed earlier.

## 1.2 **Thesis Statement**

The AU has changed its approach to Peace Support Operations since its inception; due to unique African challenges therefore the ASF represents the continent's best opportunity to resolve a wide spectrum of problems ranging from disaster relief to conflict intervention.

## 1.3 **Research Methodology and Literature Review**

The methodology for this research work is essentially secondary as materials were obtained from available literary works which include books, papers, articles, internet sources and personal contact. The research developed upon the available literature on the African Standby Force. For each of the sources used, relevant and unbiased references were made to ensure the dependability of this research.

Many hopefuls on the emergence, commencement, implementation and sustenance of the African Union's concept of the African Standby Force have studied, criticised and in some cases proffered likely solutions to imminent problems. Vanessa Kent and Mark Malan have pointed out that "time is one of the most crucial factors in preventing an emerging crisis from erupting into a major war"<sup>5</sup>. The crises in Rwanda, Bosnia and more recently, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, highlight the need for a readily deployable peacekeeping force. It should also be self-sustainable for the initial stages of the operation. A rapid

reaction capacity also requires elements such as early warning, an effective decision-making process, strong command and control structures, the ability to transport equipment and personnel, adequate logistics support and finances, and well trained personnel<sup>6</sup>.

AU and ASF functionaries must establish rosters of mission leaders and military, police, and civilian experts; be able to plan and develop missions quickly; and establish unity of command and staff capacities for new missions. Multidimensional security requires peacekeeping forces to train on issues related to HIV/AIDS, gender, children's rights, civil-military coordination, human rights, international humanitarian law, and peace enforcement and intervention. The AU can intervene in a member state's affairs pursuant to a decision of the assembly of heads of state or government during grave circumstances, such as when war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity occur<sup>7</sup>.

On budgetary implications, the issue of financing remains one of the most critical aspects of the ASF that remains to be resolved and as the African Chiefs of Defence Staff have noted, "[the] lack of central funding and reimbursement for peacekeeping costs have severely inhibited the full participation of less endowed Member States. This situation has undermined multinational efforts of the Region and engendered sub-regional polarisation"<sup>8</sup>. Theo Neethling also stressed this point by indicating that the AU must address the high costs of these Missions if the ASF is to play any significant peacekeeping role in Africa. Quick disbursement of funds and procurement of essential goods will be an important component of any effective rapid deployment capacity<sup>9</sup>.

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## End Notes

1. African Union (AU), “Draft Framework for a Common African Defence and Security Policy,” adopted by the African Ministers of Defence and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-21 January 2004.
2. Address by HE Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary General of the OAU at the Second Meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of Member States of the OAU Central Organ, Harare, 25 October 1997.
3. Agence France-Presse (AFP), “Mbeki Wants Standby Force Prioritised,” Business Day, 23 May 2003.
4. Vanessa Kent and Mark Malan (2003) The African Standby Force: Progress and Prospects. p72
5. Ibid p74
6. Theo Neethings (2005) Shaping the African Standby Force: Developments, Challenges and Prospects. p68 - 69
7. Ibid p70
8. African Union (AU), “Draft Framework for a Common African Defence and Security Policy,” adopted by the African Ministers of Defence and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-21 January 2004.
9. Theo Neethings (2005) Shaping the African Standby Force: Developments, Challenges and Prospects. p71

## **2. ORGANISATION OF AFRICA UNITY: BACKGROUND**

In order to strengthen the continent of Africa and to make it less vulnerable to outside influence, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana strongly believed that the continent should be united. Thus, in the late 1950s, Dr Kwame Nkrumah started a movement, which stressed the immediate unity of the African continent. Some countries including Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, Egypt, the Transitional Government of Algeria, and Morocco formed the Casablanca Group which believed in the immediate unity of Africa. On the other hand, the twenty four (24) member Monrovia Group, otherwise known as the Conservatives, which included Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Cameroon, Togo, and many others believed in a much more gradual approach to the question of African Unity. Yet, in May 1963, these two opposing groups were able to come together to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) with thirty two (32) Member States and Headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia<sup>1</sup>. The numerous objectives of the OAU amongst others include the promotion of the unity and solidarity of the African States, co-ordination and intensification of cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa, to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence by eradicating all forms of colonialism from Africa and to promote international cooperation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These were hinged on the principles of sovereign equality, non interference in internal affairs and absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent. These were to be achieved through decolonisation, fight against apartheid (as in then Rhodesia and South Africa) and defence of Member States' sovereignty (Egypt, Nigeria).

The membership of the OAU kept on increasing as many more African countries gained independence. The number rose to fifty three (53) until during the 1984 20<sup>th</sup> Summit were Morocco withdrew its

membership when a seat was offered to the disputed Western Sahara territory in recognition of the Sharawi Arab Democratic Republic by the OAU<sup>2</sup>.

## **2.1 Criticism of the OAU**

The OAU was established to promote the unity and solidarity of African states, coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts towards better life for its people, among other reasons. This ought to be viewed against the background that the vast majority of African countries were at that time still under Colonial rule, suffering from all forms of depression, deprivation, exploitation and exclusiveness. Following the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, many intra state conflicts notably in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of the Congo (then Zaire) and Angola erupted and the OAU under its original Charter of non intervention was unable to stand up to these challenges. Sub-Regional Organisations (SROs) within the continent, particularly Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) therefore increasingly stepped up and initiated efforts towards sub-regional intervention. This situation of intervention compelled the OAU to re-examine its first generation Peace and Security Architecture, which centred mainly on the activities of the Commission for Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, though its activities in support of African Liberation Movements assisted in securing independence for most African Countries<sup>4</sup>.

However, for numerous reasons many individuals, organisations, groups and some Member States criticised the viability and credibility of the Institution as under its mandate, the OAU crippled by its principle of non intervention could not intervene in the internal affairs of its member States and could not intervene in the internal affairs of its member States and had been blamed for doing little to stop the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In the sphere of conflict resolution and management, the organisation was also blamed for dragging its feet in finding solutions to conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone,



Somalia and the Sudan. Inter-state and intra-state conflicts, in the African context, demonstrate a tendency of changing patterns and even geographical distribution. The underlying reality is the fact that the socio-economic crisis afflicting Africa has rendered already weak States more vulnerable and fragile. One manifestation of this weakness or fragility of the African state has been the circumstance of State collapse. Additionally, the concept of non-interference in internal disputes enshrined in the OAU constitution meant that dictators such as Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko never faced serious pressure from their neighbours to safeguard the human rights of their citizens.

Another failure of the OAU in terms of conflict resolution was its impotence in the face of the widespread violation of basic civil and political liberties, the corollary failure of the regional economic communities to deepen economic integration and ultimately the socio-economic crises that Africa encountered during the 1980s, led to the realisation that the earlier approaches to develop cooperation and integration had failed. Consequently the OAU has also been criticised for doing little or nothing to improve living standards within its member States, but like any international institution, it can only be as strong as its member states allow it to be. Therefore, the OAU could only play a very limited role in quelling Africa's many political conflicts, or even in helping to integrate African economies.

## **2.2 The Creation of the African Union**

The African Union (AU) is a pan-African, supranational organization. An idea that was originally conceived by the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, who proposed a "United States of Africa" with a structure loosely modelled on that of the European Union, whose goal is to propel a united continent towards peace and prosperity<sup>5</sup>. As a result, on 9 September 1999, the Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity issued a Declaration in Sirte, Libya calling for the establishment of an African Union, with a view, *inter alia*, *to accelerating the process of integration in the continent to enable it play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing*

*multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalisation.* The Declaration followed by the Summit in at Lomé, Togo where the Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted and in 2001 the plan for the implementation of the African Union was adopted in Lusaka, Zambia. Finally, on 9 July 2002 the AU succeeded the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)<sup>6</sup>.

a. **Composition and Objectives of the African Union**

The Heads of States and Governments of the African Union established and ratified the following key objectives for the AU:

- (i) To achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
- (ii) To defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
- (iii) To accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- (iv) To promote peace, security, and stability on the continent<sup>8</sup>.

b. **The Organs of AU**

The AU consists of the following principal organs:

- (i) **The Assembly**. Composed of Heads of State and Government or their duly accredited representatives. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government is the supreme organ of the Union<sup>9</sup>.
- (ii) **The Commission**. Composed of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, eight Commissioners and Staff

members; Each Commissioner shall be responsible for a portfolio. The Commission is the key organ playing a central role in the day-to-day management of the African Union<sup>11</sup>.

(v) **Peace and Security Council (PSC)**. This is a standing decision making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict<sup>12</sup>.

### 2.3 **The African Union Peace and Security Council**

African Heads of States and Governments, in an effort to enhance their capacity to address the scourge of conflicts on the Continent and to ensure that Africa, through the African Union, plays a central role in bringing about peace, security and stability on the Continent, acknowledged the contribution of African regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution in the maintenance and promotion of peace, security and stability on the Continent and the need to develop formal coordination and cooperation arrangements between these regional mechanisms and the African Union. Furthermore, the impact of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons threatens peace and security in Africa and undermines efforts to improve the living standards of African peoples. Also, the AU in reaffirming their commitments during the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) noted that armed conflicts in Africa have forced millions of people, including women and children, into a drifting life as refugees and internally displaced persons, deprived of their means of livelihood and human dignity. This informed the establishment of an operational structure for the effective implementation of the decisions taken in the areas of conflict prevention, peace-making, peace support operations and intervention, as well as peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. This is in accordance with the authority conferred to that regard by Article 5(2) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Thus, the Peace and Security Council was established to monitor and intervene in conflicts with an African force, conducted in a manner consistent with both the UN and the OAU Charters and the Cairo Declaration of 1993<sup>13</sup>.

a. **Composition of the Peace and Security Council.**

The Peace and Security Council is composed of fifteen Members elected on the basis of equitable regional representation and rotation, with a commitment to uphold the principles of the Union, contribution to the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa – in this respect, experience in peace support operations would be an added advantage. In addition, is the capacity and commitment to shoulder the responsibilities entailed in membership, participation in conflict resolution, peace-making and peace building at regional and continental levels and willingness and ability to take up responsibility for regional and continental conflict resolution initiatives among others<sup>14</sup>.

b. **Objectives of the Peace and Security Council**

The objectives for which the Peace and Security Council was established were to promote peace, security and stability in Africa. This is in order to guarantee the protection and preservation of life and property, the well-being of the African people and their environment, as well as the creation of conditions conducive to sustainable development. Additionally, it is to anticipate and prevent conflicts. In circumstances where conflicts have occurred, the Peace and Security Council shall have the responsibility to undertake peace-making and peace-building functions for the resolution of these conflicts<sup>15</sup>.

c. **Peace and Security Council Guiding Principles**

The Peace and Security Council is guided by the principles enshrined in the Constitutive Act, the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is guided by principles of peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts, early responses to contain crisis situations so as to prevent them from developing into full-blown conflicts and respect

for the rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedoms, the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law<sup>16</sup>.

The PSC in an effort to pursuing peace, security and stability on the continent, prior to the full establishment of the Peace and Security Architecture has attempted to manage conflicts to a certain extent. Some examples are sighted in Darfur, Sudan with the establishment of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) since 2004. Another attempt was the support of elections in the Comoros deployed to the islands in 2006 which successfully provided security and other forms of support for the Comorian elections. Additionally is the latest deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) since March 2007.

#### **2.4 The Creation of an African Standby Force**

In accordance to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC and in order to enable the Peace and Security Council perform its responsibilities with respect to the deployment of peace support missions and intervention pursuant to article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act, an African Standby Force was established. The Force is to be composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice. For that purpose, the Member States under the provisions has to take steps to establish standby contingents for participation in peace support missions decided on by the Peace and Security Council or intervention authorised by the General Assembly. The strength and types of such contingents, their degree of readiness and general location shall be determined in accordance with established African Union Peace Support Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which are to be subject to periodic reviews depending on prevailing crisis and conflict situations<sup>17</sup>.

The detailed tasks of the African Standby Force and its modus operandi for each authorised mission shall be considered and approved by the Peace and Security Council upon recommendation of the Commission. As an approach, the development of the concept of the

ASF must be informed by the dynamics of relevant conflict and mission scenarios, the instructive experiences of the existing Mechanism, as well as by the experience of the UN System in peace operations, and by other models evolved outside of Africa. As far as possible, the ASF will use UN doctrine, guidelines, training and standards. The concept will also need to be validated against pragmatic conflict scenarios.

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## End Notes

1. Makonnen Ketema (1965) Creation of the OAU p2.
2. Ibid p2.
3. <http://www.itcilo.it/actrav/actrav-english/telearn/global/ilo/law/oau.htm>
4. Ibid
5. African Union – Wikipedia Free Encyclopaedia.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Article III Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU).
9. [http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/assembly\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/assembly_en.htm)
10. [http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/Executive\\_Council\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/Executive_Council_en.htm)
11. [http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/The\\_Commission\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/The_Commission_en.htm)
12. [http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/The\\_Peace\\_%20and\\_Security\\_Council\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/organs/The_Peace_%20and_Security_Council_en.htm)
13. Vanessa Kent and Mark Malan (2003) The African Standby Force: Progress and Prospects. p72
14. Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union p6.
15. Ibid p6.
16. Ibid p6.
17. Ibid Article 13 p18.

### **3. THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE CONCEPT**

The advent of the AU amongst others is aimed at the elimination of conflicts in Africa. This function was to be undertaken by the newly created PSC, which was charged with the responsibility of monitoring and intervening in African conflicts. The ASF is intended to support peace processes by providing intervention, pending the deployment of UN Security Council mandated peacekeeping forces. This somehow creates the notion of military objectives for the AU. Technically speaking however, the question of whether objectives of intervention forces in conflict situations can be referred to as military objectives or not, is a matter of debate. This is particularly so because interventions of this nature are integrated and multidimensional. It is in view of this reality that the concept paper for the formation of the ASF dictates that the ASF should consist of the military, police and civilian components<sup>1</sup>.

African Member States and Regions have increasingly attempted to address peace and security on the Continent, and developed the capacity to participate in peace operations at the continental and regional level. Thus in order to consolidate and augment these efforts, the ASF provides for five sub-regional standby arrangements, each up to Brigade size. About 300 and 500 military observers are expected to deploy within 14 days notice. A police standby capacity of at least 240 individual officers and two company strength police units, which should enable the AU to staff two complex peace operations, each with a police component. There is also a centrally managed roster of civilian specialists in mission administration, human rights, humanitarian, governance, and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR)<sup>2</sup>.

#### **3.1 Operational Scenarios**

While the somewhat ambitious target dates for operationalisation of the ASF could not be met in 2007, policy formulation at the AU strategic level progressed remarkably. This included the ASF concept of rapid deployment which training plan is to be completed by 2010.



Following a pattern of the current conflicts experienced in Africa, a number of typical conflict scenarios as outlined below were used to develop/refine the proposals for the ASF operations:

- a. **Scenario 1**. This scenario is reflective of the early warning stage of a conflict where AU/Regional Military give advice, weigh the pros and cons, strengths and weakness to a Political Mission. At this stage proffered solutions are also recommended to avert the likely deployment of the Force.
- b. **Scenario 2**. In this case, the conflict has already reached a peak and where a ceasefire agreement or otherwise has been reached/brokered. AU/Regional Observer Mission are deployed or co-deployed with UN Mission (like the OAU Liaison Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia [OLMEE], UN Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia [UNMEE] and the recent United Nations – African Union Mission in Darfur [UNAMID]).
- c. **Scenario 3**. Similar to Scenario 2, however, a stand alone AU/Regional Observer Mission (like previous AU Missions in Burundi [AMIB], Darfur, [AMIS] and presently AMISOM in Somalia).
- d. **Scenario 4**. This scenario involves an AU/Regional Peacekeeping Force (PKF) for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions. It depicts a case where relative peace exists and where there is a need to sustain it prior to return to stable governance and instruments of government. An example was the ECOMOG intervening force in Liberia in the early 90s.
- e. **Scenario 5**. Where there is an AU PKF for complex multidimensional PK mission-low level spoilers (a feature of many current conflicts). Although similar to that of scenario 4 and still drawing the example of ECOWAS in Liberia, this scenario will require a more robust Mandate, troops, equipment, funds and logistics.

- f. **Scenario 6.** AU intervention – e.g. genocide situations where international community does not act promptly<sup>4</sup>.

The ASF recommended a two-phased implementation process with the first phase aimed at developing the capacity to manage scenarios 1 to 3 by mid-2005, while the second phase is aimed at developing the capability to manage the remaining scenarios by 2010. The first phase has seen a remarkable implementation as in Darfur and Somalia while constraints such as operational capability and financial suggest that the AU and sub regional organisations are unlikely to undertake multi-year traditional or complex peace operations as expected in scenarios 4 and 5. The point being that the AU has neither the resources nor the mandate to undertake humanitarian assistance or post-conflict reconstruction programmes, and therefore presently do not have the capacity to undertake complex multidimensional peace operations on their own<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, assistance and support would be solicited for from the UN or through Partner Support in numerous ways such as capacity building, movement and logistics.

### **3.2 African Standby Force Components of Peace Operations Capability**

The generic components of a valid multidimensional peace support operations capability for the ASF comprise of a Mandating Authority; legitimate political capacity to mandate a mission under the UN Charter, in this case the AU PSC. This is consistent with the endorsed recommendations of the Second African Chiefs of Defence Staff (of the Central Organ) Meeting, Harare 1997. Next is a Multidimensional Strategic Level Management Capability; as for the UN provisions on enforcement action by Regional Arrangements, it is to be expected that while the AU will seek UN Security Council authorisation of its enforcements actions, African Regions similarly will seek AU authorisation of their interventions. Furthermore, based on UN advice, instructive experiences of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention

Management and Resolution, a series of strategic level HQ structures for the AU is necessary to manage operations for each of the Scenarios. The need for Mission Headquarters Level Multidimensional Management Capability is necessary to pursue a chance for the involvement and support of the UN in the conduct of missions in Africa. To enable a smooth and easier transition to the UN, similar UN based structures used in UN Missions are likely to be used<sup>6</sup>. In this regard any mission HQ level structure should be able to be handed over to, or incorporated into, a UN PSO with relative ease based on the nature of the conflict or Mission. If not being the case arrangements are effected prior to deployments as was the case between the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the hybrid Mission; United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

For the Mission components, a Brigade level is to be used as the basis for a viable peace operations capability. The Brigade is the first level of military command where multiple arms and services are grouped under one HQ. It is also the first level that is genuinely self-contained and capable of sustained independent operations. In addition, the number of manoeuvre Units can be easily adjusted depending on the situation. It is a sound building block for the military component of Scenarios 4 and 5 (traditional and complex AU/Regional peacekeeping forces [PKFs]). A reduced version of a brigade HQ can also provide the HQ for Scenarios 2 and 3 (co-deployed and standalone observer missions)<sup>7</sup>. As part of the ASF, other structures, if properly supported could include Police, DDR, human right, gender, child protection, humanitarian among others. This is to give the multidimensional purpose for which it is intended in the execution of duties as would be Mandated the AU PSC.

### **3.3 Operational Capabilities of Sub Regional Organisations**

In general, African Member States have increasingly participated in UN peace operations and other Multinational Force (MNF) operations authorised by the UN. In practice, it is fair to say that such participation has provided exposure and helped to build practical peacekeeping experience and expertise in national defence forces. However, such

national experience has not necessarily provided Member States with the capability to undertake or participate in peacekeeping missions as single states or as sub-regional organisations, in spite of a clear political will on the part of Member States to do so. The rather unsatisfactory record of previous *ad hoc* mechanisms for intervention called for a reappraisal of the then OAU's first generation peace and security agenda, especially following the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s, accompanied by global economic changes. These developments had the potential to marginalise the Continent, while the process of democratisation that was compelled by the new realities led to fratricidal intrastate conflicts, in which the UN showed less interest, responsibility and commitment towards their resolution. Against this background, SROs, particularly ECOWAS and SADC, increasingly adopted a tendency towards sub regional intervention<sup>8</sup>.

3.3.1 **African Sub Regional Capabilities**. African Sub Regional Organisations (SRO) have undertaken operations and/or established security mechanisms to various degrees. The major ones are:

a. **ECOWAS**. ECOWAS has been more frequently involved in peace operations than any other regional organisation in Africa, having authorised six missions since 1990; in Liberia (1991 - 1998), Sierra Leone (1995-2000), Guinea Bissau (1998 - 1999) and currently in Côte d'Ivoire (2002 - 2006); however, an authorised deployment to the Guinea - Liberia border (2000) failed to operationalise. Further to its Protocols on Non Aggression (1978) and Mutual Assistance in Defence Matters (1981), ECOWAS has a firm desire to design, build, and maintain its own peace support operations capability and therefore revised its Treaty in 1993. The ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, adopted in 1999, provides the foundation and legal basis for this capability. It established a formal Protocol on its conflict Mechanism, which is currently in various stages of implementation. The members of

ECOWAS have also been very active UN peacekeepers (Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal have each participated in at least 25 UN missions). On the other hand, the UN has become increasingly supportive of ECOWAS, while there has been a sharp increase in the demand for both UN and regional peacekeepers in Africa. As of February 2005, seven UN missions were deployed in Africa, with a total authorised strength of 51,163,14 representing 76% of the global authorised total of UN peacekeepers. A total of 7,136 West African police, military observers and military personnel were committed to the three UN missions in West Africa, a further 1,192 were committed to DRC, and 1,156 more to other UN missions. While West Africa provides nearly 15% of the world's peacekeepers, the three West African missions require 40% of the global total of UN peacekeepers<sup>9</sup>.

b. **ANAD**. The Treaty of Non Aggression, Assistance and Mutual Defence have undertaken 2 operations in Burkina Faso and Mali; ANAD was integrated with ECOWAS in 2001.

c. **SADC**. Like ECOWAS, SADC has an integrated economic and security structure. The consolidation of these developments, however, is quite recent. Although SADC Heads of State agreed to the establishment of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation on 28 June 1996. Coalitions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States have undertaken 2 operations in Lesotho and the DRC in 1998. SADC currently hosts the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) with South Africa as the largest UN troop contributor from this region with Military and Police staff deployed along with Namibia Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Madagascar.

d. **Other SROs**. Other SROs with no previous peacekeeping experience are in various stages of developing security structures:

(1) **ECCAS**. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established its Council for Peace and

Security in Central Africa (COPAX) in 1999. Further to this, on 17 June 2002, at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Organisation adopted the Rules of Procedure of the Commission on Defence and Security of the Early Warning Mechanism of the region and of the Central African Multinational Force 2000.

(2) **EAC**. The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organisations of Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda signed its MOU on Cooperation on Defence in 2001.

(3) **IGAD**. The Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) adopted the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in 2002. In addition, the Organisation has created a Verification and Monitoring Team (VMT) purposely for the Sudan peace process, while the Somalia Monitoring Committee, established since October 2002, is to be expanded to include joint operations with the AU. East Africa contributes to UN peacekeeping on a much smaller but the region currently hosts three ongoing and expanding missions: the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the UN/AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In contrast with West Africa, East Africa has a plethora of overlapping regional organisations including the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community.

### 3.3.2 **Deployment Timelines**

The speed with which forces will be required to deploy has particular implications for standby force structures and arrangements. Linked to this is the type of conflict into which they will deploy. Given the fluid and uncertain nature of conflict, particularly in Africa,

coherence on deployment will be critical. This will avert to a great extent a disastrous effect as was seen in recent years like in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Liberia. This demands that Units and HQ staff will have trained together prior to deployment. Significant implications of varying readiness levels are desirable according to the ASF:

- a. At 14 days readiness collective training involving field exercises with all Units is essential prior to activation. At this level of readiness there is also a clear requirement for a standing fully staffed Brigade HQ and HQ support. There is also a requirement for an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire Brigade.
- b. At 30 days readiness collective training at least involving HQ command post exercises must occur prior to activation. At this level of readiness there is also a clear requirement for at least a standing nucleus of a Brigade HQ with its attendant HQ support as well as an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire brigade. Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) provides a good example of the HQ structure. In its system, contingents deploy fully self-sustained for 60 days. This is not normally the case with African contingents. In the African context ASF owned logistics bases will be required.
- c. At 90 days readiness there may be time available to conduct collective training to develop a level of coherence prior to deployment. There is also time to establish a HQ and logistics stocks. A requirement does exist, however, for a small full time staff to manage the standby system, and to standardise procedures and doctrine.

Bearing the aforementioned in mind, the following are long term deployment targets for the ASF (all timings are from an AU mandate resolution):

- a. Scenario 1 - 4 should be able to deploy in 30 days (possible only if pre - mandate actions have been taken).
- b. Scenario 5 should complete deployment in 90 days, with the military component being able to deploy in 30 days (possible only if pre-mandate actions have been undertaken; and
- c. Due to the nature of situations demanding intervention operations (Scenario 6), it will be important the AU can deploy a robust military force in 14 days.

The AU possesses a limited capability of deploying in Scenarios 1 and 2 while the UN would normally be able to deploy in Scenarios 3 and 4. Scenario 6 requires a capable nation that is prepared to assume leadership, as in the case of Nigeria in the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia. Given this, development of the ASF would concentrate on Scenario 5, in particular the military component of this Scenario. The building block of this capability is robust coherence at Brigade group level<sup>13</sup>.

### Illustration of ASF Deployment Timelines

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Deployment Timeline (from Mandate/Resolution)</b>
<b>(a)</b>	<b>(b)</b>	<b>(c)</b>
1	AU/Regional Military advice to political Mission	30 days
2	AU/Regional Observer Mission (co – deployed with UN)	30 days
3	Stand alone AU/Regional Observer Mission	30 days
4	AU/Regional Peacekeeping Force for preventive deployment	30 days
5	AU Peacekeeping Force for complex multidimensional Mission	90 days with Military component deployment within 30 days
6	AU intervention	14 days



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## End Notes

1. Lt Col Charles Debrah (2007), Presentation on the Role of the African Union with Special Emphasis on Sudan and Somalia, Paper Presented to Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College.
2. Cedric de Coning (2004), Redefining the African Standby Force Concept, pg21
3. Policy Framework for the Establishment of an African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part I), 12 – 14 May 2003, Addis Ababa,
4. Ibid. pg2
5. Cedric de Coning (2004), Redefining the African Standby Force Concept, pg21
6. Policy Framework for the Establishment of an African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part II), 15 – 16 May 2003, Addis Ababa
7. Ibid. pg B - 2
8. Policy Framework for the Establishment of an African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part 1), 12 – 14 May 2003, Addis Ababa, Pg2
9. Ibid
10. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), Progress with the African Standby Force.
12. Ibid. pg2
13. Policy Framework for the Establishment of an African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee (Part II), 15 – 16 May 2003, Addis Ababa, pg7

#### **4. PLANNING ELEMENTS AND OPERATIONALISATION**

To provide for multidimensional strategic level management capability, the ASF policy framework requires the establishment of a 15 person Planning Elements (PLANELM) at the level of the Commission of the African Union and an initial nucleus of five officers within the PLANELM at each of the regional headquarters to be responsible for pre-deployment management of the ASF and its regional standby brigades during Phase 1 (developing the capacity to manage scenarios 1 to 3 by mid-2005). The core functions of the PLANELMs are planning, preparation and training, including the verification of brigade headquarters and standby elements. This is considered a full time requirement, implying that the PLANELMS should be staffed on a permanent basis, while the brigade headquarters could be staffed on a part time basis – although the planners recognised that readiness levels of 30 days and less will require full time brigade headquarters. Where possible, the regional PLANELMs should be co-located with the regional brigade headquarters for ease of command, control and communications. This is not the case everywhere, as we will note with the Eastern African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), and inevitably depends on the nature of the standby brigade headquarters. To establish the AU headquarters PLANELM, the AU Commission has requested the secondment of five experienced officers from African member states for an initial period of one year from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 and constituted the AU PLANELM for Phase 1 under the PLANELM Chief of Staff<sup>1</sup>.

The AU PLANELM was able to during the given period convene a series of workshops with participation by the regions and major donor partners, to provide a costed continental logistic system, continental Command, Control, Communication and Information System (C<sup>3</sup>IS) and continental training concept and the initiation of key recommendations in this regard, develop standard tables of organisation and equipment (TOE), in conjunction with regions, develop and implement a continental standby system, and link it to the

United Nations Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS), initiate and coordinate the drafting of memoranda of understanding and letters of exchange, draft standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the ASF, drafted doctrine for the ASF and develop standardised training modules, as well as Command Post Exercises (CPX)<sup>2</sup>.

#### 4.1 **Logistics**

The ASF policy framework provides that missions deployed for Scenarios 1 – 3 should be self-sustainable for up to 30 days, while Scenarios 4 – 6 missions and operations should deploy with up to 90 days self-sustainability. Thereafter the AU or UN must take responsibility for sustaining the missions or, if lacking that capacity, the readiness and ability of the AU to start reimbursing TCCs so that these countries can continue to sustain their contingents. The deployment timelines outlined by the AU are ambitious by any standard, and this has far-reaching implications. For example, in 2004 the Chiefs of Defence Staff noted that readiness to deploy within 14 days will require regular joint field exercises with all units, a standing fully staffed Brigade HQ. It will also require an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire brigade. Such timelines could probably only be met by AU member states with relatively well endowed military establishments. At 30 days readiness, collective training will at least have to involve regular command post exercises. At this level of readiness there is a clear requirement for at least a standing nucleus of a Brigade HQ with its attendant support as well as an established and fully stocked logistics system capable of sustaining the entire brigade. In a system such as that of SHIRBRIG system, contingents deploy fully self sustained for 60 days. This might not be the case with African contingents where the preference is for ASF owned logistics bases in view of the lack of national capacities. Finally at 90 days readiness, there may be time to conduct preparatory training to develop a level of coherence before deployment.

There is also time to form Headquarters and logistics stocks. This does require a small full time staff to manage the standby system, and

to standardise procedures and doctrine. To be able to deploy within the timelines for the various conflict scenarios, the ASF will need mission ready units and headquarters, with equipment, including vehicles and communications, ideally held in centralised regional logistical bases or provided by donors under clear terms of commitment. To launch the ASF elements into mission areas, these pre-deployment arrangements would have to be backed up by standing arrangements for strategic sea- and airlift. The policy framework also proposed a system of AU military logistical depots (AMLD), consisting of the AU Military Logistical Depot in Addis Ababa and regional logistical bases, aiming at rapid deployment and mission sustainability<sup>3</sup>.

#### 4.2 **Training and Doctrine**

A multifunctional/dimensional and integrated peace operations capability for the ASF, capable of dealing with increasingly complex challenges requiring an increased focus on non-military response mechanisms. For the UN to operate alongside and with the UN, it would require standardised doctrine and a clear concept of operations that is consistent and interoperable with that of the UN (and/or other partners as appropriate) from the outset of an operation. The UN provides valuable guidelines and insights into the requirements of modern peacekeeping. The principles and guidelines should serve as a basis for further development of the ASF and be complemented by documented African experiences and lessons learned, comparing UN experiences to those of the ASF in guiding further action. The UN's establishment of a dedicated capacity in Addis Ababa to assist in strengthening the collaboration between the UN and the AU, both at the strategic and operational level, has been an important step forward.

Further agreement has been reached that the AU will organise a number of workshops in the time ahead to develop a set of standardised SOPs based on its draft generic SOPs, as well as those existing within the regions, informed by lessons learned from the UN and other actors operating on the continent. Additionally, the AU will further develop tools to promote doctrinal coherence and dissemination

of lessons learnt (best practices). The AU and regional planning elements (charged with the planning and operational implementation of doctrines and guidelines) PLANELMs will look into ways of harmonising ASF training cycles with UN and other external initiatives bilaterally among States and among partners, as well as feed into and collaborate with these initiatives, to enhance and synergise ASF capacities while noting the importance of the AU, as a dedicated regional capacity, has to develop and adopt a training policy suitable to the current needs, and more important, capacities and realities of national, regional and AU actors and institutions. This should be coordinated with major external initiatives. While ASF training is to be consistent with UN doctrine with a view to standardising doctrine, based on the UNs development of a new training system geared towards operating in complex and integrated peace operations, ASF training beyond would be regionally coordinated and enhanced through regional peacekeeping centres of excellence.

Nonetheless, regions should identify ways to streamline the establishment of training systems and centres of excellence/use of existing national training institutions within the various regions to better support strategic and operational coherence and interoperability. Optimise their regional profile and further develop and use regional training hubs as the Ecole de la Maintien de la Paix (EPM) at the tactical level, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana for operational level, and the National Defence University in Nigeria for strategic level. The PLANELMs should be deployed to develop all aspects of the ASF training policy, including the development of ASF SOPs, tables of equipment and other manuals. The AU should also seek appropriate advice for the production of an AU doctrine for robust intervention missions and draw on experiences and insights of all relevant UN bodies, including those of the UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Field Support, but also those of the development and humanitarian arms of the UN, where humanitarian imperatives calls for a different and more levelled military response. The ongoing collaboration between the AU and the UN in assisting with training-

the-trainer and pre-deployment training for ASF brigades and units<sup>4</sup> should continue and be strengthened.

#### 4.3 **Funding, Collaboration and Coordination**

Funding is important for the success of any mission, therefore the AU agreed that the AU/regions will among other things assess the detailed cost of the structures of the ASF, including pre deployment activities such as training, and the activities of the PLANELMs and regional brigade groups, assess the cost of the types of ASF mission, based on the relevant levels of forces, including mandate, with an average mission timeframe of between one and two years, a period which is long enough for the follow-on deployment of a UN mission or operation, and more limited operations in support of peace processes of between six months and one year only. It also encourages AU member states to contribute to the endowment of the AU Peace Fund and sustain negotiations with external partners (donors) for assistance. Additionally, external partnerships with the UN, European Union (EU) and among Member States will be developed further to provide assistance towards the establishment, stocking, maintenance, and strategic airlift of equipment and vehicles for ASF pre-deployment training and missions<sup>5</sup>.

The ASF will require that the AU's traditional collaboration with its bilateral and multilateral partners be maintained and deepened as is the case with AMISOM in Somalia where the USA provided airlift support to the Ugandan contingent and with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) with AMIS. For the AU, the collaboration with the international community will aim at the following broad priority areas such as establishment of the pre-deployment structures of the ASF, namely PLANELMs and regional brigade headquarters, including the relevant activities and running costs of these structures. It will also collaborate in the establishment of African military logistics depots, including the AU and regional military logistics depots and, in default, mechanisms for the committal of donor held equipment to ASF missions, including strategic air and sealifts. Another priority area is the ASF training of regional brigade groups, including support to

regional centres of excellence for training, planning and conduct of command post exercises as well as allocation of vacancies to ASF staff for external training and endowment of the Peace Fund/accessible financial support to support short term ASF deployments and sustainment contingencies, as and when necessary, pending deployment of a UN force. The establishment of the PLANELMs by the AU and the regions is fundamental to the realisation of all the remaining priorities and the execution of the key steps towards the operationalisation of the ASF. The AU, in collaboration with the regions, will carry out timely periodic review of the implementation of the ASF Roadmap; the base document upon which much of the preceding sections is based<sup>6</sup>.

#### **4.4 Regional Standby Brigades**

The ASF concept requires the establishment of a mission headquarter-level management capability in the form of a brigade headquarters within each region. During Phase 1 it was agreed that a nucleus of three to five officers augmented by non-permanent brigade headquarters staff on standby should be formed in the regions. The AU noted that some regions may decide to combine their PLANELMs with this nucleus as it is the case in IGAD, while others may wish to base the standby Brigade HQ on an existing Brigade HQ in a member state. Other regions may decide in favour of a skeleton brigade headquarters based on an existing brigade in a member state. Against this background, it was agreed that each region would confirm the location, concept and staffing of the brigade headquarters and its relation to the regional PLANELMs by 1 July 2005, and communicate its decisions to the AU. The regions will constitute a nucleus Brigade HQ capacity under a Chief of Staff (COS) of the rank of Brigadier General by 31 December 2005 and provide appropriate office space and associated facilities. The nucleus of the brigade headquarters will verify and report on the operational readiness of the brigade for Phase 1 requirements, in conjunction with the regional PLANELMs, to the AU PLANELM before 30 June 2006 and finally the AU and regions will negotiate with

donors for support to cover the costs of the establishment of brigade headquarters and regional PLANELMs.

In the case of the Military and Police capabilities required for Phase 1, each category of ASF Mission component is to consist of observers, individuals and formed units, on standby in their countries of origin ready to be deployed, using a system of on call lists. However, numerous constraints that will be discussed have hampered these expectations following expiration of timelines given. The routine selection, preparation and training of the ASF components would be a national responsibility. The AU, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC have made significant progress towards establishing a viable regional peace support capability. However, the gap between aspiration and implementation remains extremely wide. Protocols and framework documents are in place, and institutional structures are being built, but operational capacity, knowledge and political will remains limited in the face of rising demands and expectations. Ultimately, Africa and its regions have to be realistic about what can be achieved in the short term by relatively lacking institutional expertise and capacity and comprise some of the world's poorest and least developed countries. Building effective peacekeeping operations capacity in Africa will take time, and it does not offer a quick exit strategy from engagement in Africa for the international community<sup>7</sup>.

#### **4.4.1 ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF)**

When working outside the UN framework, the ECOWAS approach to peacekeeping operations has been essentially military, and few civilians have been involved in mission planning and implementation. In Article 28 of the Protocol on the Mechanism, ECOWAS member states agreed to make available to ECOWAS all Military, Police and civilian resources for the accomplishment of multifunctional peace missions. The protocol also clearly defines the role of the Special Representative of the Executive Secretary (SRES) as head of all ECOWAS missions. Despite this acknowledgement of the primacy of civilian political leadership, the post protocol missions



in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire were essentially military operations. By April 2004, both ECOWAS Missions in Liberia (ECOMIL) and Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI) had transitioned to UN operations and ECOWAS military planners were able to concentrate on developing a standby capability for peacekeeping operations. Guidance was provided by the Defence Staff Commission in the form of an ECOWAS military strategy, which states that The ECOWAS military component (ESF) will comprise pre determined regional standby formations that are highly trained, equipped and prepared to deploy as directed in response to a crisis or threat to peace and security, the ECOWAS Task Force will comprise 1,500 soldiers within pre determined units and upon order be prepared to deploy within 30 days and be self sustaining for 90 days and the ECOWAS Main Brigade will comprise 5,000 soldiers within pre-determined units and upon order be prepared to deploy within 90 days and be fully self sustaining for 90 days. In total, the ESF is to consist of 6,500 troops, pledged by contributing nations, and coordinated through the Mission Planning and Management Cell (MPMC). The idea is for the Task Force to have the capacity to deploy rapidly to meet initial contingency requirements. If the military effort requires an expanded force, the main brigade will be deployed<sup>8</sup>.

It is expected that all forces committed to the ESF will meet the criteria and standards set out in an ECOWAS memorandum of understanding. A further planning assumption is that the ESF Task Force will have the capability to deploy for up to 90 days; after which one of the following options will be implemented:

- a. The Task Force elements will return to the TCCs.
- b. The Task Force will remain deployed as an element of the ESF Main Brigade.
- c. The Task Force will become an element of an AU or UN mission.
- d. The Task Force will hand over to a UN or AU Force.<sup>9</sup>

An operational framework for the ESF was developed by the ECOWAS Secretariat (specifically the Mission Planning and Management Cell, in conjunction with military advisors from donor nations, in late January/early February 2005. The operational framework aims to specify all the activity strands and benchmarks for the establishment of the ESF. The purpose of the document is to assist ECOWAS in the sequencing and coordination of activities, while providing a coordination tool for donors to identify and target assistance to support the early and efficient establishment of the ESF. The operational framework document focuses almost exclusively on the military component of the ESF but, according to the drafters, this “should not detract from the multi functional nature of any PSO”. Moreover, the document “is designed to evolve and be updated, so that its usefulness is sustained”<sup>10</sup>. In terms of force generation, it is envisaged that ECOWAS will define and certify the entry level of capability for nations who pledge forces. The training, equipping and provision of logistic support up to the entry level of baseline capability will be a national responsibility. Designated forces will receive an additional level of training, equipment and logistic support to enter a higher readiness pool. This pool will need to be broad enough to have flexibility in terms of nation, language and capability. The resources for training, equipping and sustaining will be provided by a mix of member nation and ECOWAS support, the nature of which will depend on the level of donor contributions. Member states have so far pledged 6,200 troops for the ESF. These will be organised by ECOWAS planners to form a battle group or battalion group and a logistics Unit for the Task Force. While member states have pledged certain capabilities (such as an Infantry Company and/or an Engineering Squadron), specific Units have not been named, so the pool of potential units that may one day deploy as part of the ESF is large. To focus limited resources for training, equipping and sustaining the ESF, the next step is for nations and the Secretariat to identify and name specific units to be placed ‘in role’ and raised to high readiness. After an expected visit by the secretariat to nations to identify these units, the respective Chiefs of Defence Staff will need to have an assessment made of their pledged units’ operational readiness, their

training and resource requirements. These units will then be allocated roles and must be able to meet the operational tasks within their given notice to move<sup>11</sup>.

#### **4.4.2 SADC Standby Force Brigade (SADCBRIG)**

Southern Africa has prioritised the establishment of a regional early warning system, the SADC Standby Force Brigade (SADCBRIG) and support to the peace process in the DRC for 2004/5. Following the various decisions by the AU on the establishment of the ASF, the SADC Inter State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) met in Maseru, Lesotho, in 2004 to consider the establishment of SADCBRIG. Consequently, a Ministerial Defence Sub Committee was mandated by the ISDSC to set up a technical team to plan the establishment. Recent meetings of the technical team, composed of military planners, took place in April and May 2005, including the establishment of an interim PLANELM at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone. Although the outcomes of these and subsequent meetings are being treated with a high degree of confidentiality, the region is known to be finalising the memorandum of understanding between member states that will regulate the establishment and maintenance of SADCBRIG. Member state troop contributions have been pledged, and a proposed management and PLANELM structure completed, as well as a structure for SADCBRIG. Preparations for the establishment of a peacekeeping brigade in SADC pre date the current initiative towards the ASF by several years, as does the development of a regional peacekeeping training centre of excellence. The original momentum for a regional peacekeeping Brigade came after the Second Meeting of African Chiefs of Defence Staff that was held in Harare in October 1997. That meeting built on a similar meeting in Addis Ababa the previous year, and in 2004 the Third Meeting of African Chiefs of Defence and Security took place, which kick started current developments around the ASF. The Harare meeting made a host of substantive recommendations towards the establishment of an African peacekeeping capacity. Shortly afterwards, in May 1998, a SADC military delegation visited Denmark (the Danish Military and SHIRBRIG Headquarters) and Bosnia. Eventually, on 15 March 1999

the ISDSC, consisting of Ministers of Defence and Security, approved a proposal on the way ahead for the establishment of a multinational SADC standby peacekeeping brigade. Oriented towards Chapter VI missions, the then SADC Brigade was conceived as consisting of a mobile Headquarters, three Infantry Battalions, one Reconnaissance Company, an Engineer Squadron, a logistical support Company, a Military Police Company, a civilian police component, and an air and naval component. The Brigade was to have been established over a period of five years. Unlike current thinking, which envisages a multinational standby brigade headquarters, the earlier concept called for a standing Multinational Brigade Headquarters that could be established on a non rotational or rotational basis<sup>12</sup>.

SADCBRIG will be a true multinational standby force, with contingents assigned for up to six months for any in country assignment. Even the standby Brigade Headquarters will have a multinational structure and the Commander and Deputy/Chief of Staff may not necessarily be from the same country. The downside of such an arrangement is that the region will not be able to base the brigade on a reserve or active brigade structure in countries such as South Africa, Angola or Zimbabwe. SADCBRIG guidelines stipulate that the force or member states should support/sustain the force for the first three to six months and that the force should be able to negotiate and conclude host nation support agreements and contracts with civilian authorities and commercial companies for its initial requirements. The region has apparently not yet concluded its discussions on the location and composition of a Military logistic depot. Earmarked units will remain in their countries of origin on an on call system and the region has adopted the response times defined by the AU, although smaller contingents of multinational rapid reaction/early entry forces should be available on a much higher 14 days state of readiness. The SADC standby system is based on the concept of a pool arrangement whereby total troops earmarked in the various potential TCCs for peacekeeping will provide sufficient capacity to ensure the full availability of a brigade at any time. The SADCBRIG commander will then compose his/her force during mission planning from the standby pool. In this manner a deployment

will not be held hostage by the decision by one or more TCCs not to contribute to a particular mission or inability to do so<sup>13</sup>.

All SADC member states have pledged contributions to the SADC BRIG standby pool, with Angola also earmarking contributions to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) standby brigade, given its dual membership of SADC and ECCAS<sup>14</sup>.

#### **4.4.3 East Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG)**

Although the AU defines East Africa as a region composed of some 13 countries, it does not have an overarching and integrated conflict prevention, management and mitigation framework similar to West or Southern Africa. As a result, the AU mandated the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), on an interim basis, to coordinate the efforts of the region towards the establishment of an East African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG). In the absence of a legal framework for conflict management, EASBRIG is to operate on the basis of a memorandum of understanding that provides for an Assembly of Heads of State and Government for EASBRIG, a Council of Ministers of Defence and Security, a Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff, a standby brigade headquarters, a planning element and logistic base. The assembly serves as the ‘supreme authority’ for EASBRIG and authorises deployment for missions mandated by the PSC. Unlike the ECOWAS military component (ESF), EASBRIG, in terms of its memorandum of understanding, can only deploy with a mandate from the AU<sup>15</sup>. On deployment, the brigade will come under the operational control of the AU or the UN, as applicable. The Council of Ministers of Defence and Security is to manage all aspects relating to EASBRIG, and only appoint the commander of EASBRIG upon recommendation of the Committee of East African Chiefs of Defence Staff (EACDS) for stand alone missions within the East Africa region.<sup>15</sup> Where the AU mandates a deployment, the PSC will appoint the brigade commander.<sup>16</sup>

EASBRIG has decided to separate the locations of the PLANELM and the Brigade Headquarters, with the latter in Addis Ababa and the

former in Nairobi. The decision to locate the logistic base in Ethiopia has the benefit of potentially co - locating with the AU logistic depot, but is possibly not an optimal choice in terms of the regional transport infrastructure or of benefiting from the region's extended coastline<sup>17</sup>.

The EASBRIG HQ in Addis Ababa will serve as a command HQ for force preparation and operational command. It is also responsible for the provision of secretarial services to the Committee of EACDS and is to be composed of seconded officers from all EASBRIG member states. In terms of capabilities, EASBRIG aims to optimise its structure towards participation in traditional peacekeeping tasks (that is, in accordance with Scenario 4 of the AU documents and Chapter VI of the UN Charter), although the planning framework provides for sealift capabilities and additional fire support capacity in Scenarios 5 and 6. The head of the PLANELM also serves as the Chief of Staff of EASBRIG and is located in Kenya. The PLANELM will be composed of a regional military and civilian staff on secondment from all EASBRIG member states, and is being equipped at its location at Karen, outside Nairobi, close to the existing Kenyan Peace Support Training Centre (KPSTC). The function of the PLANELM is to serve as multinational full time planning headquarters for EASBRIG and it is empowered to enter into agreements with national and other training institutions. On the other hand, the function of the logistics base, which is located in Ethiopia (with proposed outposts in member states as and when required), is to serve as the central regional base for maintenance, storage and management of the logistical infrastructure of EASBRIG. It also coordinates all activities involving logistics, including but not limited to performing functions mandated by the African Union and/or the United Nations managing external assistance<sup>18</sup>.

Through the EASBRIG fund, IGAD is able to collect contributions from all member states assessed in accordance with the AU mode of contributions, and grants, donations and contributions from member states and other sources. Funds may also be used for general conflict prevention and conflict management apart from their use for peacekeeping.<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.4.4 **Other Regions**

Little is known of the situation in the North African region and the plans for the creation of a Standby Force even amongst officials within the AU itself. The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) should arguably be taking the lead, but the organisation overlaps with the Community of Sahelian - Saharan states and thus has diverted attention especially with the border dispute between Morocco and Western Sahara. Meanwhile some progress has been made towards the establishment of the Central Africa Regional Standby Brigade; this has understandably been much slower than in West Africa, the East and Southern Africa. From July 2003 to December 2004, ECCAS held six meetings at the levels of experts, Chiefs of Defence Staff and Ministers of the Peace and Security Council of ECCAS. At these meetings the structure of regional headquarters of ECCAS PLANELM, the structure and tables of equipment for ECCAS standby brigade (including strength of the brigade of 2,177) and an action plan for the establishment of the ECCAS PLANELM and ECCAS standby brigade were adopted as a positive move to the establishment of the Central African Standby Brigade<sup>20</sup>.

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## End Notes

1. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), A Paper on Progress with the African Standby Force.
2. African Union (AU), “Draft Framework for a Common African Defence and Security Policy,” adopted by the African Ministers of Defence and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-21 January 2004.
3. Ibid.
4. African Union (AU), “Draft Framework for a Common African Defence and Security Policy,” adopted by the African Ministers of Defence and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-21 January 2004.
5. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), A Paper on Progress with the African Standby Force.
6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Ibid
9. [www.ecowas.int](http://www.ecowas.int)
10. ECOWAS Secretariat, ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) Operational Framework, Draft Document, 10 April 2005, par. 12 f. Hereafter ESF Framework.
11. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), A Paper on Progress with the African Standby Force.
12. Ibid
13. African Union (AU), “Draft Framework for a Common African Defence and Security Policy,” adopted by the African Ministers of Defence and Security, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-21 January 2004.
14. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), A Paper on Progress with the African Standby Force.



15. Ibid.
16. EASBRIG Policy Framework, Para 8g.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Jackie Cilliers and Mark Mallan (2005), A Paper on Progress with the African Standby Force.

## 5. CHALLENGES

In the midst of contentious domestic politics in many African countries, African States have been organising to strengthen their collective Military capacity to respond to insurgencies threatening political stability within or between countries. This initiative followed the formation of the AU and amongst other mechanisms the ASF which centred on strengthening African collective international capacity to guarantee democracy. Building an effective and credible peace operations capacity building is not cheap and requires serious investment at all levels, including political commitment, and none of the envisaged capabilities are really affordable for Africa. Therefore the single biggest impediment to peacekeeping in Africa by Africans is funding. African peacekeeping is not limited by political will or the availability of troops but, rather, by insufficient funding. Even relatively small and less logistically demanding unarmed military observer missions are costly. The AU and its predecessor, the OAU, were unable to provide finances from their own budgets. The AU must be able to address and meet the financial realities of the high cost of peacekeeping operations. Clearly, the cost of deploying large, and perhaps simultaneous, missions will require additional funding<sup>1</sup>. Currently, the ASF is funded primarily by the AU Peace Fund, which is under funded with barely enough capital to sustain current AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). ASF funding has been a longstanding issue, given the lack of financial support from AU Member States.

A further complicating issue is that the ASF architecture dictates that it will be entirely dependent on the regions for force generation and operational capability. The member states of these regions are already committed to providing troops and police to AMIS, as well as ongoing UN operations, and may also be contributing to their own regional operations when called upon to mobilise for future ASF operations. Moreover the regions are developing their standby capacities at different rates and with different levels of linkage to the continental framework and standards. Furthermore, a delay by the need for emergency

responses to ongoing armed conflicts has delayed implementation of various projects as was seen where the Government of the Sudan refused the deployment of non African troops in Darfur. Another example is the implementation of the ECOWAS Mechanism which has been hampered by deployment in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Extant West African capacities to mount and sustain peace operations pale in comparison to this scale of deployment, and the capacities of some Member States to provide more troops and police are severely stretched. Ghana alone (with armed forces totalling under 10,000) needs to rotate around 7,000 troops annually for its existing commitments to UN operations<sup>2</sup>.

Another aspect where the ASF faces challenges is that of logistics. Whereas SHIRBRIG provides a good example of the Standby structure; in its system, contingents deploy fully self-sustained for 60 days. This might not be the case with African contingents where the preference is for ASF owned logistics bases in view of the lack of national capacities. To be able to deploy within the timelines for the various conflict scenarios, the ASF will need mission ready units and headquarters, with equipment, including vehicles and communications, ideally held in centralised regional logistical bases or provided by donors under clear terms of commitment. To launch the ASF elements into mission areas, these pre deployment arrangements would have to be backed up by standing arrangements for strategic sea and airlift. The Report of the Panel on UN Operations (the Brahimi Report) highlights that “The first six to 12 weeks following a ceasefire or peace accord is often the most critical period for establishing both a stable peace and the credibility of the peacekeepers. Credibility and political momentum lost during this period can often be difficult to regain.”<sup>3</sup> Using this as a point of reference for deployment timelines, it is clear that the current operational capabilities of the AU are not suitable for situations that require a rapid and credible force on the ground. The ability to plan, command, direct and support a multidimensional and national peacekeeping force has been identified by the Defence Chiefs as a key element of rapid deployment. However, in order to meet these timeframes, the AU must also have the capacity to react quickly on three interdependent aspects of rapid deployment: personnel, materiel readiness and funding.<sup>4</sup>

## 5.1 **Conclusion**

The ASF is a major step toward forming a multinational military force for intervening militarily in serious conflicts around the troubled continent of Africa. Taking into account that the ASF is likely to operate as a bridging force for UN deployments rather than a replacement, universal standards therefore need to be developed as a matter of urgency. In other words, the exit strategy for the AU remains a UN operation since only the UN can provide a response to the types of complex emergency that characterise conflict in Africa. This was true of Burundi and ECOWAS experiences where the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB) was taken over by the United Nations Mission in Burundi (ONUB) and ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) transited to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

While the somewhat ambitious target dates for operationalisation of the ASF are still dwindling policy formulation at the AU strategic level has progressed remarkably. This has been undertaken in close collaboration with regional economic communities and has thus produced a unique African doctrine, established a set of SOPs, created a logistical procedure, training and evaluation procedures and command, control, communication and information systems (C<sup>3</sup>IS). Further policy development was pursued in formulating the ASF concept for rapid deployment, a continental ASF training plan to be completed in 2010. A feasibility study is concluded on the development of ASF continental and regional logistics depots, which will support ASF future deployments. Verification of the operational readiness of pledged troops from the various sub regions have commenced but at a slow pace relative to the 2010 deadline. Finally efforts to establish an initial planning capacity for the ASF at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa has registered modest progress as several staff officers have so far been recruited with support from and working in tandem with AU partners. If plans come to fruition, by the end of this decade Africa should have a six Brigade, UN style force ready to contain conflicts. The ASF's formation, which is of great significance, embodies Africa's long desired dream of policing its own trouble spots. Political support is not lacking for the

ASF, but valid concerns persist about the financial implications of developing it. Significant costs related to its establishment have led African leaders have continued to seek support from the international community. Realising that financial and technical assistance will be pivotal to successful ASF development, a joint Africa/G8 Action Plan aims to enhance African capabilities to undertake peace support operations so that by 2010, Africa and its partners will be able to prevent and resolve violent conflict on the continent<sup>5</sup>. On the primary basis of financial constraints, the institutional and operational limitations of regional organisations to undertake complex peace-building operations and the emerging division of labour between the UN and regional organisations, it is unlikely that the AU or regional organisations will often undertake a long term peace operations in the foreseeable future. Instead, more often than not, the AU is likely to undertake military observer type operations like it did with AMIB, AMIS and AMISOM and regional organisations like ECOWAS are likely to undertake short term stabilisation missions as was the case with ECOMIL<sup>6</sup>.

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## End Notes

1. Vanessa Kent and Mark Malan (2003) The African Standby Force: Progress and Prospects. p78
2. Ibid, p72.
3. The Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, paragraph 89, [www.http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations/](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/) (07 July 2003).
4. Report of the Government of Canada, Towards a Rapid Reaction Capability for the United Nations, September 1995, p 7. For additional information, go to: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacekeeping/menu-en.asp> (4 July 2003).
5. Theo Neethings (2005) Shaping the African Standby Force: Developments, Challenges and Prospects. p71
6. Cedric De Coning: Refining the African Standby Force Concept. p25