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August 2016

## Civil-Military Relations and the African Standby Forces' Multidimensionism

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### Recommended Citation

Onditi, Francis and Okoth, Pontian G. (2016) "Civil-Military Relations and the African Standby Forces' Multidimensionism," *Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies*: Vol. 3: Iss. 1, .

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/2325-484X.3.1.1087>

Available at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/jacaps/vol3/iss1/3>

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## **CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCES' MULTIDIMENSIONISM**

### **Abstract**

*The feasibility of a multidimensional African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) is uncertain. This is despite the existence of a policy framework initiating the ASF and regional mechanisms (RMs). The policy was adopted and adapted to assume a multidimensional configuration, in May 2003 and in 2004 respectively. More than ten years after its establishment, there exist an unconcluded debate on whether the ASF and the regional mechanisms have achieved the multidimensional status-military, civilians and police components. It is in this sense that reference to civil-military relations (CMRs) has become almost a cliché of debates in the African Union's (AU) peacekeeping space. Indeed, the sour relationship between the military and civilians has been described as a 'hindrance' to the attainment of full operation capability by ASF structures earmarked for 2015. Whilst, the realities of conflict in most parts of Africa is that militants have changed tact, rendering pure military operation ineffective, the most effective response is for peace support operation (PSO) actors to develop balanced structures to respond to these multifaceted peace and security threats facing the continent. In this article, the significance of both structural and institutional constraints are considered. The conclusion points to the need to adapt the ASF structures to the African PSO realities, but more critically, improve its configuration and design in the light of the lessons learnt since its establishment more than a decade ago.*

**Key words:** *Civil-military Relations; ASF; Multidimensionalism*

## **Introduction**

Today, unlike yester-years, fighting is rarely carried out between uniformed soldiers from two or more national armies. With the decrease in inter-state warfare and the growth of internal conflicts and terrorist groups,<sup>1</sup> conflict dynamics have moved into what this paper calls ‘the informal sector.’ In the informality of warfare and asymmetric conflicts, combatants rarely have uniforms, even in circumstances where they wore uniform, camouflage is the order of the day.<sup>2</sup> Frequently, it is extremely difficult to identify who is fighting for whom. However, it is important to note that this confusion is strategic, as it allows individuals and combat units to operate more freely and with less risk of sanctions since the command structures are harder to identify and ‘prove’. Nevertheless, while there may be fewer military battle casualties, there are high human costs, including civilian casualties; they target hospitals and other humanitarian infrastructures. Hence, rendering the war, unlawful and less conformity with the ‘rules of engagement’ at least according to the International Humanitarian Law (IHL).<sup>3</sup>

Owing to this complex peace operation architecture on the continent, there is dire need to consolidate capacities and to build an integrated force with diverse skill sets among peacekeeper. This is more so in Africa because there is unrepresented growth of ideological extremism and radicalization of youth. Despite this state of affair, an African-owned intervention strategy is yet to be operationalised.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, efforts towards addressing this menace are underway, though dawdling. For example, the adoption of the African Union (AU) Constitutive Act in July 2000 and of the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council in July 2002, marked critical steps in building Africa’s capacity to address challenges of peace, security and stability on the continent. In particular, the Peace and Security Council Protocol set out the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), designed as a set of institutions and standards to facilitate conflict prevention, management and resolution.<sup>5</sup> As part of the operationalization process of the PSC protocol, the African Chiefs of Defense and Security (ACDS) gathered in Durban, South Africa, in May 2003 to adopt the policy framework for the establishment of the African Standby

Force (ASF).<sup>6</sup> In March 2005, a Road Map for the operationalization of the ASF was adopted at an AU experts meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The main objective of this arrangement<sup>7</sup> was to develop multidimensional capacities (military, police and civilian peacekeepers) for deployment in crisis situations.<sup>8</sup> The Road Map for operationalization was earmarked for 2010 as an Initial Operation Capability (IOC) and 2015 for Full Operation Capability (FOC).<sup>9</sup>

Several structural and systemic factors such as the inadequate political will, and the limited involvement of the local population in the planning and execution of peace processes have been attributed to sluggishness in realization of an integrated ASF.<sup>10</sup> The ratification of the *African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIR)* has raised more questions than solutions to the impasse.<sup>11</sup> Scholars have proffered institutional failure for the ASF's inoperative.<sup>12</sup> First, the traditional reluctance of African states to yield sovereignty to supranational arrangement considerably obstructs political cooperation and integration towards a Pan-African ASF. Without some transfer of decision-making and intervening power to the regional level, member states could pursue their own national interests with few institutional constraints, often at the cost of the broader integrated ASF agenda. Second, the hegemonic tendencies of some AU member states, often subvert good ideas into politico-ideological differences among bureaucrats in Addis Ababa. This often leads to failure to reach common position on further cooperation or integration. Third, the weak economic and infrastructural base of most African countries and the perceived unequal gains from the regional peace and security arrangements obstructs the evolution of ASF. Fourth, the overlapping memberships of many African states in multiple regional bodies often leads to conflicts of loyalty and usurps efforts that would otherwise drive the operationalization of ASF.

Since the 1960s, African states have embraced regional integration as the key to political cooperation and building functional institutions for tackling challenges facing the continent, including peace and security threats. Although several initiatives have been taken to realize such

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dreams, structural limitations pose challenges in equal measure. Some critiques of the AU institutions have observed that one of the key problems restraining Africa from achieving its development, peace and security goals is the way in which governance in Africa and institutions at various levels are constituted, structured and managed.<sup>13</sup> The consequences of these weaknesses are that they have an inhibitive effect on the ability of these structures to mobilize and deploy human capacities. Poor leadership and cynical relationships between sub-regions partly shape these structural and systemic problems, thus hindering meaningful generation of proportional capacities required to conduct peace operation. In view of this protracted structural and systemic failures, some scholars have observed that some African heads of state's support to collective efforts, be it economic or security, is merely driven by parochial-individual needs to enhance their image and stature through forays in foreign affairs.<sup>14</sup> Yet, it is only through genuine improvement in these factors that the operationalization of ASF can have increased chance of success. But as this article illustrates, compared with its policy requirements, insufficient enhancement in such conditions means ASF or even the recently instituted ACIRC will continue to remain a dream in the face of increased violent extremism and complex peacekeeping operations. It is a fact that donors and development partners are running out of patience in pumping resources in building regional mechanisms (RMs) that seem to lack an important parameter-timelines for operationalization.

In both academic and policy arena, seldom has any discussion really queried the necessity of these mechanisms vis-à-vis peace operation effectiveness. Thus, this article is a contribution to a dispassionate, empirically based understanding of the dynamics surrounding institutional evolution of the ASF. It challenges earlier accounts that ASF has attained multidimensional status by demonstrating its structural and systemic short-comings, at the same time suggesting a reconfiguration of these RMs so as to face the unprecedented asymmetric war fare and intra-conflicts that continues to pose threats to peace and security across Africa. Indeed, with increasing number of asymmetric warfare and intricacies of human security failure in most countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA),<sup>15</sup> the question has become more complicated as to whether the peacekeeping force of numbers and the possession of a combat-ready force—is the

panacea for peace operations success?<sup>16</sup> In this article we doubt that the concept of the ASF and ACIRC as they conceptualized and progressed can be lauded; and if the ASF and ACIRC are somewhat laudable, as an increasing number of policy analysts argue, then the time and effort put into these mechanisms should be ploughed into processes with more impact on success of PSOs.<sup>17</sup> For example rather than exorbitantly investing in ambivalent structures and defense sectors, AU in collaboration with RMs and regional economic communities (RECs) could strengthen liaison and coordination mechanisms for the already existing capacities (development, humanitarian, political etc) towards conflict preventive diplomacy initiatives.

### **Building Structures We Can't Use: The Fundamental Paradox?**

There are radical views that the AU is an elitist and statist framework whose roles and functions as an overarching institution need to be re-thought.<sup>18</sup> In regard to the need for institutional reforms, Vusi Gumede, one of the leading African development scholars has recommended that in order for rethinking to happen among African leaders, the continent need to build a culture of *thought leadership* in those bestowed with responsibilities of driving the African development agenda.<sup>19</sup> Similar thoughts have been projected, that with institutional reforms, Africa has the potential of reducing poverty to below 15% by 2030, and below 4% by 2045.<sup>20</sup>

In response to this criticisms and appreciation, Addis Ababa (AU HQ) has made strides in coordinating development of institutions and structures, particularly those aimed at supporting peace and security agenda. One such institution is the ASF embedded within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The ASF's mandate is drawn from Article 13 of AU Peace and Security Council (PSC). The ASF is expected to enhance multidimensional capacities through training, coordination and collaboration with other non-state actors and international agencies. The AU's Peace Support Operation Division (PSOD) oversees the RMs which are embedded in the five Regional Economic Communities: the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF); ECOWAS standby force (ESF); North Africa Regional Capability (NARC); SADC Standby Force (SSF); and the Central Africa Multinational Force (FOMAC). Among the five

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forces, EASF and ECOWAS standby forces have made significant strides in institutionalizing the three components i.e. civilians, police and military. There have also been efforts among these forces to increase participation of civilians and police in both planning and peacekeeping missions. The participation of civilians and police to the African-led International Peacekeeping Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are an illustration of how some of the ASF structures are making progress towards integration of capacities.<sup>21</sup> However, lessons learnt from previous civil-military interaction during the African-led operation in Sierra Leone and Liberia indicate unyielding tensions between civilian and the military in the peacekeeping missions. It is indeed, a common scene to witness the military referring to the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as ‘a world of fractured individuals full of weird and wonderful people.’ On the other hand, the non-uniformed peacekeepers do not hold ego, in many occasions, when referring to the relationship between the host community and the military, they often refer to them as ‘individuals marked by a variety of traditions and rigidity-sometimes creating a debilitating environment in mission areas.’<sup>22</sup>

In response to these sour civil-military relations, observers have cautioned that this type of behavior from both sides may lead to fragmentation of peace operation actors hence hindering the attainment of effective multidimensional capacities.<sup>23</sup> In order to address this policy dilemma, this article will ground the discussion on key concepts drawn from the civil-military relations theoretical framework. In order to address this policy dilemma, this article will ground the discussion on key concepts drawn from the civil-military relations theoretical framework<sup>24</sup>, followed by discussion on the normative and practical causes of civil-military discordance. Analysis of the difficulties encountered by other salient actors on peace and security, such as the Civil Society Organization (CSO) in engaging the AU will be done and, finally the article will conclude by highlighting policy options for PSO and peacekeeping actors on the continent and beyond.

### **Conceptual Issues and Civil-Military Relations Theory**

Multidimensional approach to peace operations became live in Africa after the reformation of African Union in 2002. This was occasioned by the intra-conflicts that surged after 1990s. Central to this campaign was the need to transition from military operation to an integrated force that combines the military, police and civilians in peace missions. It is worth noting that both the UN and AU peacekeeping operations doctrines define multidimensional peacekeeping operations as a mix of military, police and civilian components working together to lay the foundation for sustainable peace. The implication is that this approach is linked to the activities of PSO. Indeed, the AU PSO doctrine identifies PSO as “a multifunctional operation in which impartial activities of diplomatic, military and civilian, and police components normally in pursuit of the United Nations Charter purposes and principles, work to restore or maintain peace in a mandated area of operations.”<sup>25</sup> The UN peacekeeping operations highlight four features of a modern PSO: 1) It is aimed at establishing a liberal democracy-political systems and societies within states; 2) They combine robust military forces capable of limited peace enforcement tasks if a ceasefire breaks down, e.g. the case of Bosnia, Kosovo and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); 3) it has a strong civilian component that includes civil administration, humanitarian agencies, and police and justice officers, e.g. the case of Liberia and Cambodia; and 4) PSO activities attempt the impartial enforcement of a political settlement.<sup>26</sup>

However, the African PSO model presents geopolitical and operational challenges.<sup>27</sup> For instance, while the practice within the UN peacekeeping is that the United Nations can only engage where there is peace to keep more often translates into the United Nations abandonment of some of the most challenging crises in Africa. The failure of the UN to prevent the 1994 Rwandan genocide is a case in point. Moreover, partnership between UN and the AU in peace operations lacks coordination (the Hybrid operations in Darfur, Liberia, Somalia, and Mali), partly attributed to different levels of experience in organization of peace operations, and the notion that the UN can only engage in a crisis when there is peace to keep is unacceptable to Africa.<sup>28</sup> The expansion of the UN peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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(DRC) to respond to the March 23 Movement (Congolese Revolutionary Army) in 2014 and the review of the mission in South Sudan during the fragile peace agreement signed in April 2016 were both exceptional. The South Sudan crisis in 2016 presented the most complex situation in terms of peace operation as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) hit spate of dilemma on who should be treated as the ‘enemy’, when in fact, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) led by former First Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar, could neither be classified as belligerent group nor the opposition. The lesson for policy makers particularly, in the South Sudan case was that, a combination of operational factors, including the need to maintain fragile ceasefires, stabilizing proxy conflict, as well as the internecine and fratricidal nature of contemporary conflicts require flexibility and functional adaptation to the multidimensional nature of PSO capacities required. However, remaining consistent with UN/AU purpose and principles in a milieu of evolving realities of international systems as well as the changing tactics by belligerents, remains a daunting task, particularly for the African peacekeepers, where in the first place there is rarely peace to be kept due to either weak government forces vis-vis relatively powerful militarily armed opposition (MAO) groups like the case of South Sudan or the Somalia’s clan-based intractable proxy conflicts, sometimes fueled by those leading the peace process.

Multidimensional approach to peace operation is a product as well as a response to the ever-changing peace and security architecture. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing ceasefires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars, to incorporate a complex model of many elements i.e. the military, police and civilian. The civil-military cynic in this arrangement is whether the military and civilians can work together to foster sustainable peace.<sup>29</sup> These operations are intended to support peacemaking between states by creating the political space necessary for the belligerent states to negotiate a political settlement. While multidimensional United Nations peacekeeping operations comprise a mix of military, police and civilian components working together to lay the foundations of a sustainable peace, peace enforcement operations aim to impose the will of the United Nations Security Council Resolution upon the parties to a particular conflict in accordance with UN Charter Chapter VII. The African PSO continues to evolve as the continent witnesses among other

challenges, oppression resulting from the return of military coup, ethnic strife, economic distress, the collapse of political order as well as break down in democratic structures resulting from prolonged conflicts in some countries. Moreover, the asymmetric warfare mainly common among the religious extremists such as the Al-Shabaab (Horn of Africa) and Boko Haram (northern Nigeria) form one of the latest unprecedented changing tactics among militant groups. It is therefore, important to note that, ‘boots and gun fire’ alone cannot handle this nature threats. The point, however, is whether the interaction between the military and civilians (civil-military relations) supports the development of multidimensional capacities within ASF regional arrangement to respond to the emerging multifaceted threat or the ASF and RMs are simply statures of military forces. In view of the emerging threats to peace and security and the need for more effective coordination of actors, a possibility of a new theory of civil-military relations is suggested.<sup>30</sup>

In the recent years, the role of the military in the society and international politics can be traced in the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 as well as the onset of the Korean War in 1950. It should be noted, though, that theorization and application of the concept of civil-military relations has been done beyond these two Cold War events. For example, the works of intellectuals such as Samuel Huntington, Morris Janowitz, Charles Moskos, and Henry Kissinger brought to the limelight the culture of military professionalism.<sup>31</sup> And perhaps, what looks like the foundation of and institutionalization of the idea of civil-military relations can be obtained from Samuel Huntington’s thesis on the relationship between the state, society and the military. Samuel Huntington’s seminal presentation of the normative theory can be considered as a cornerstone of traditional civil-military relations theories.<sup>32</sup> In his institutional approach model, Samuel Huntington fronts objective civilian control. This approach suggests that civilian leaders should have absolute control over the defense and security policy. According to Samuel Huntington, the notion of civilian denotes the executive arm of the government led by the head of state.<sup>33</sup> Based on the American society, “*the soldier or military, is a professional man who exists only to respond to the rare emergency, and then disappears from*

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*sight until needed again.*” However, Huntington cautions against politicians interfering with the military, lest there be anarchy.<sup>34</sup> He further argues that with the achievement of objective civilian control, there would be a balancing distribution of political power between civilians and military spheres.<sup>35</sup> In our view, this presents the most auspicious contribution towards modern politics, peace, security and more recently, and the phenomenon of multidimensional approach to peace and security that has blossomed among nations including those in Africa.

Moreover, the other typology of civility is the general public as they relate with the uniformed personnel, either in the streets, barracks or in peace missions. Over time, states have regionalized their power, governance, security and politics. As a result of this regional integration, macro states have emerged. Some refer to them as regional blocs or communities. Within these communities of nations and specifically within the African regional integration rubric, security arrangements have emerged, simply referred to as regional mechanisms or standby forces. These structures form part of the AU’s institutional development. Formation of the ASF structures followed what Skocpol refers to as normative institutionalism.<sup>36</sup> As Frances Cleaver<sup>37</sup> puts it, the emergence of these institutions is as a result of combining structures (both physical and social), actions (such as PSO training) and processes (e.g. policy formulation). All these processes are mediated by norms and values of those driving the processes.

The functional interaction between civilians and the military is key to these processes. For example, the effectiveness of a PSO training conducted by Peacekeeping Training Centres is measured against its ability to support development of an integrated database and networking platforms that encourage exchange of information among peacekeepers. Therefore, within the context of AU PSO, it is important that structures established to develop peacekeeping and peace operation capacities (including, regional mechanisms, regional economic communities, regional organizations, Peacekeeping Training Centres of Excellence, the African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), Think Tanks and civil society organizations) and decision-making processes (AU) and governments) are inclusive of civilians, police and the military. In this way, the PSO environment will be able to: effectively develop access, mobilize and deploy integrated

capacities within the required time according to the six African PSO scenarios; enhance exchange of information; and increase capacity of peacekeepers to conduct integrated rapid deployment during emergencies. It is thus expected that for peace to be there, PSO actors do not necessarily require ‘boots’ on the ground. Instead, promotion of positive civil-military interaction that results in integrated human capacities is central to any intervention.

As we shall see, the outcome of the ASF evolution towards multidimensional status has not been linear. Instead, it is roughed by dynamics of power relations between the military, police and civilians. At the strategic level, the power relation game gets intensified with the oversight regional bodies sometimes engaging in ill competition for donors and duplication of efforts, ultimately leading to discordance.

### **Macro-level Issues and Multidimensionalism**

In the last two decades, the world has seen a proliferation of asymmetric warfare s from rebel armies to insurgency cells, government-linked paramilitaries to local defence groups.<sup>38</sup> Contemporary command structures tend to be loose, with frequent switches in allegiance. Where structures are formalised, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa armed groups often present themselves as alternative governments in order to extract money and favours from civilians, while hiding behind a facade of legitimacy and marginalisation. Examples of this phenomenon can be seen in the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Army/Movement and the National Congress for Defence of the People in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

The most devastating development in contemporary conflict is the deliberate targeting of civilians, due in part to the strategic blurring of the lines between combatants and civilians. The former often live or find shelter in villages and refugee camps, sometimes using civilians as human shields. The targeting of civilians most often involves killing, maiming and sexual violence, with claims that these acts are in reprisal for suspected support of the opposition or for attacks by opposing forces. In other instances, combatants force civilians to support their efforts. This support, whether voluntary or forced, places civilians at greater risk of attack by the opposing forces. Armed actors “seek to bring the battle more immediately, more systematically,

and more massively to the core of the civilian population”<sup>39</sup>. The increased use of children as combatants and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons are also part of the shocking development in contemporary conflict. In fragile states such as South Sudan, repeated resumption of ethno-political conflict has deteriorated the country into a humanitarian catastrophe.<sup>40</sup> The unconventional nature of these conflicts demands change in tactics and approach by various peace operation stakeholders. The thorny issues are: civil-military coordination; geopolitics of the regions; the culture of militarization; and training-deployment transition gap.<sup>41</sup>

First, it is critical to acknowledge the fact that the success of civil-military relationship has been attributed to structured civil-military coordination. However, lack of structured coordination among the ASF structures has been identified as the main challenge. For example, the 2012/2013 Annual Review of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) sharply identifies lack of effective coherent and coordinated measures by African-led missions in addressing conflicts in Central Africa Republic (CAR), South Sudan, Mali and Somalia.<sup>42</sup> Both United Nations<sup>43</sup> and African Union<sup>44</sup> mission assessments reveal that in some cases such as in Mali and Guinea-Bissau, inconsistent application of agreed norms at AU and REC levels has led to near failure of the mission. In other cases, lack of follow-up and inability to enforce agreed timelines as in the case of Madagascar undermined progress. This therefore calls for the need to rethink the apparently inadequate framework for coordinating various actors across the continent for timely decision-making and effective response to crises.

Second, the geopolitics of regions has been found to facilitate or hinder development of ASF structures. As regional forums, ECOWAS and the East African Community (EAC) Commissions are capable of facilitating a collective approach to issues of common concern. But the outcome of regional integration varies across regions. For example, whereas ECOWAS, through its comprehensive Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security Framework, has established direct links with the local community in West Africa; the

disconnect between the EAC and EASF has perpetuated the elitist approach to matters of peace and security. For example, when South Sudan relapsed back into crises following the disagreement between the incumbent President Silva Kiir and his former Deputy Dr. Riek Machar in July 2016, EAC and EASF could not settle on a deployment plan. Even though IGAD do not have peace enforcement mandate nor capability, its member states had to improvise bilateral arrangement to sustain political negotiations. The highly contested bilateral arrangement between President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda during the 2015 crises in this country revealed the incapability of the region to mobilize a regional force for timely response to conflict as earlier envisaged within the ASF policy framework. The ECOWAS Force has developed linkages with the local community that enables the Commission to tap from the local knowledge through forums and sporting activities using the bottom-up strategy in development of policies and dissemination of the same policies to the locals. In this case, matters of peacekeeping are well publicized among citizens for their contribution to the Commission. This is achieved through various platforms, including engagement of civil society organizations working for peace and stability in the region.<sup>45</sup>

On the contrary, the gap between the EAC, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the EASF has been attributed to the duplication of efforts among regional organizations and mechanisms in the region.<sup>46</sup> The dissonance among these regional structures plays a more regressive than progressive role. For instance, one of the objectives of IGAD is to foster peace and security, but there exist no solid coordination mechanism to ensure that both institutions are coherent towards addressing peace and security challenges in the sub-region. Building consensus on areas of cooperation is subject to both historical and structural challenges, as is the case with Tanzania (dual participation in SADC and EAC) presents both challenges and opportunities for further work on harmonization of the various peace and security regimes. Scholars have warned that the sub-region's fragile integration is responsible for the sluggishness in realization of common security pacts, owed to several factors, among them; perception of lack of political will, repeated mistakes of the past, lack of preparedness to implement the treaties in its entirety and distrust among the political leaders. For instance, Tanzania initially challenged admission of Rwanda and Burundi, citing that such a move would compromise members

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domestic industries, or relative stability, the same reasons were initially fronted against the admission of the recently joined South Sudan.<sup>47</sup>

These structural factors are sustained by issues of political economy of leadership in the region.<sup>48</sup> As such, EASF is largely controlled by the powerful structures with direct links to the regional Heads of States and Governments. Decisions at the EASF force are an exclusionary affair dominated by the Chiefs of Defense and the Defense Ministers who basically represent the narrow interests of those in power as opposed to the ordinary citizens. This implies that, despite the progress made at the EASF in regard to multidimensionality of the Force, the elitist approach to the development of PSO capacities throws the future of these sub-regional structures into policy lethargy. The avoidance approach to resolving cooperation tensions applied by Tanzania has been consistent across many of the integration pillars.<sup>49</sup> For instance, although, Tanzania cooperated with Kenya in reviving the East African Community and in denying membership to Rwanda and Burundi in 2000, until they had fulfilled the requirements of the protocol regarding ascension. Eventually, Tanzania ‘defected’, and did not support Kenya in ratifying the use of ID cards as a standard travel document for the East African Community, arguing that the non-biometric nature of the IDs rendered them susceptible to forging and manipulation. Tanzania did not support the common land ownership policy in any of the Partner States by any member of the EAC.

Third, despite the existence of a policy framework on multidimensionality of the ASF structures, Regional Mechanisms have evolved into a militarized culture. A recent study revealed that out of the 200 concepts, constructs and abbreviations developed and used since the establishment of ASF in 2004, majority 115 (57.5%) of them were military in nature.<sup>50</sup> The total number of ‘multidimensional’ concepts and constructs were 49 (24.5%), compared to those of civilian nature 32 (16%). The police score on this variable raised more concern when it recorded only 4 (2%). The result suggests that ASF structures not only frequently associate their programs and initiatives with military tradition, but also, prioritise military requirements in resource allocation. This has systematically excluded the police and civilian peacekeepers’ opportunities

to increase both in number and policy influence. Yet, experience globally attests that strengthening the peacekeeping policies and doctrines could help leverage military forces towards adopting multidimensional approach to PSO.<sup>51</sup>

One fundamental advantage of multidimensional approach the capacity to response to multifaceted nature of contemporary conflicts, protecting children and women, who often are predisposed to risks of conflict could be protected through such strategies.<sup>52</sup> One of the PSO trainees had this to say: “We hear that the EASF has trained civilian experts in areas such as protection of civilians, rule of law, corrections services, and child protection, my worry is, how we shall coordinate and mobilize the civilian personnel for deployment when the FOC is declared in 2014-2015. In the first place very few people understand how EASF operates. Information flow does not reach civilians except for those seconded at the force head quarter or those working with government sectors such as Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Interior.”<sup>53</sup>

The fourth issue is that key actors in African PSO have inadequately addressed the causes of training-deployment transition gap. Whilst ASF structures have made tremendous effort to prepare its force through training, the translation from training to field deployment remains low for police and civilians. Even in circumstances where civilians and police benefit from PSO training arrangements, it is evident that the gap between the military and civilian (including police) is wider. For example, and looking at the analysis of the training organized by the EASF during the regional Command Post Exercise (CPX) held in Adama city of Ethiopia, it was established that transition rate for the military maintains the lead at 103 (62%) compared to civilians’ 44 (30%). Military strategists recommend that modern military academies must embrace the concept of a ‘thinking’ soldier, in which case, peacekeepers must be willing to exercise resilience, flexibility and adapt to the operational environment.<sup>54</sup> On this particular initiative, the police recorded the least transition rate of 27 (21%). Moreover, the military was found to record the highest (60) number of untrained peacekeepers on the exercise while civilian and police components remain under-represented. This was partly attributed to lack of structures

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and systems for maintaining database and uncoordinated efforts among stakeholders involved in building capacities of peacekeepers.

It is evident that inability of any peacekeeping force to deploy a multidimensional force risks missing opportunities to make peace and protect civilians in hostile environments. Indeed, both humanitarian practitioners and military scientists have alluded to the fact that multidimensional peacekeeping forces have the ability to perform duties outside physical security,<sup>55</sup> especially in complex situations such as Somalia so as to handle shocks related to poverty,<sup>56</sup> clan division and environmental problems. The ASF structures are also influenced by national politics in the respective member states. For example, until 2012, Uganda and Burundi were the only bold countries contributing troops bilaterally to Somalia.<sup>57</sup> Only 1,700 troops had been operating in Somalia against the AU benchmark of 8,000 troops. Logistical challenges, lack of political commitment and absence of a coordination mechanism to mobilize civilian expertise has been blamed for lack of adequate capacities within AMISOM. Yet, the magnitude of the situation required a multi-dimensional peace mission with estimated strength of 35,000 personnel.<sup>58</sup>

Invariably, AMISOM suffered troop's interoperability. Inadequate arrangement for preparedness including training on crosscutting issues had ripple effect on the effectiveness of the troops to handle 'soft' issues of operation such as child protection and gender based violence (GBV). Although the 2011 expanded AMISOM in support of the Transition Federal Government (TFG) government and the addition of the Kenya Defense Force (KDF) realised greater pacification of mostly coastal south region of Kismayu, this period ironically recorded the highest cases of child abuse by peacekeeping personnel.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, the incorporation of the Kenya Defense Force (KDF) to the AMISOM in 2012 thus scaling up the troops to 18,000 multidimensional personnel, the AU forces, and UN facilities and workers in Mogadishu and other coastal towns continued to encounter erratic attacks. The Al Shabaab's public campaigns

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have indicated that one of the reasons they continue to make attacks is to revenge against the AMISOM's sexual harassment against their daughters and women.

The fifth and last issues ailing ASF structures are the lack of an ideological orientation and the inability of peacekeepers within the ASF structures to adopt new mindset. While we do not necessarily suggest that the military and police are not completely liberal, a recent study has uncovered several '*fault lines*' in the relationship between civilians and the military and that the principle of the '*melted pot*' anticipated among this generation of peacekeepers has not been realized and is not likely to be tenable in 2015 or even beyond.<sup>60</sup> This is in spite of the fact that since the advent of ASF in 2004, member states of EASF and ECOWAS have continuously participated in PSO trainings and education programs hosted by the designated Peacekeeping Training Centres (PKTCs). The question of political ideology and its role in civil-military relations has enlisted mixed results. In both EASF and ECOWAS regions, peacekeepers are found to be 'moderate' 63 (37.1%) compared to a mere 7 (4.1%) who belonged to the 'conservative' category. Another 59 (34.7%) believed that they were liberal in their approach to life and that this partly influenced their relationship with their civilian colleagues. Such evidence strengthens the understanding that the military personnel have maintained their '*straight jacket*' attitude towards the wider society. Studies from middle income economies show that military formations have evolved new political roles and devised survival tactics, particularly in closed democracies.<sup>61</sup> In Latin America, for example, Rut Diamint observes that the armed forces have returned to the center of the political sphere as allies of some Latin American governments.<sup>62</sup>

Sexual and gender based violence among peacekeepers is not unique to Africa. Urban Heidi has reported similar patterns of behavior among the military from developed nations.<sup>63</sup> For example, in applying similar methodology of survey across military barracks in the United States of America (USA), Heidi found out that majority (75%) of military personnel are generally conservative and affiliated to the ruling party.<sup>64</sup> This implies that, although military formations differ worldwide, the formation and development of a political ideology among a group of

military officers is likely to display similar patterns of behavior when deployed in peace missions. A widened *fault-line* between the military and civilians imply that such group of peacekeepers will have difficulties in forging productive partnership and therefore lose opportunities for synergy. Indeed, Stewart has faulted such mind set among peacekeepers who remain rigid and thus a hindrance to modern counterinsurgency (COIN) techniques. Amid these authoritarian tendencies among the military personnel, the greatest concern is that, there comes increased exposure of the society to all sorts of security risks, abuse, forceful recruitment, sexual abuse, detention and denied access to development opportunities. Most of these challenges could be addressed through multi-agency, democratic and multidimensional approaches.<sup>65</sup> In the next section, the article, interrogates the difficulties faced by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in engaging the AU. CSOs are here regarded as agents of change geared towards a multidimensional approach to PSO. This requires innovativeness on how to embed non-state actors in decision-making processes.<sup>66</sup>

### **Militarization of the Peace Operation Architecture: An Exclusive Club?**

There are several ways of increasing multidimensionality of ASF and its regional structures. Direct engagement of civil society organizations with AU is one of such approaches.<sup>67</sup> Over the years, CSOs have continued to engage AU organs and institutions to ensure that the voices of African people are heard and considered in the process of making decisions, which affect their lives. However, despite the progress made including the Livingstone formula, which requires close engagement of the Commission with CSOs, there remain challenges to this relationship.

First, although the African Union may have undergone transformation, the institution's culture has remained rigid and exclusive to CSOs. Apart from a few exceptions to be based on individual networks instead of official CSO-AU engagements, there is a need to develop institutional relations between CSOs and the AU. Lack of trust and clear mechanisms for engaging CSOs and other non-state actors work against possible synergies among stakeholders.

Over the years, CSOs have been able to engage with various AU institutions by establishing interpersonal relationships with various staff and office bearers. The flip side also means that access to or engagement with the institutions will depend on the continued presence of particular people and a need to constantly re-establish those relations. Even though AU cannot avoid establishing interpersonal relations with international agencies, it could work to broaden CSO space by making use of the few formal mechanisms specifically adopted to facilitate engagement between them. One such institution is the African Governance Architecture (AGA).<sup>68</sup> Although AGA's linkage with other AU organs such as the APSA is yet to be clarified, it presents opportunities for increasing participation of CSOs in decision-making.

Second, there is the perpetual problem of information failure. There is no culture of allowing access to information among the AU institutions making it challenging to engage without free flow of information. Currently, much of the information, which gets out is obtained through interpersonal relationships, and subsequently shared amongst CSOs. This presents the relationship unpredictable and that reliance on personal relationship to access information is not sustainable. This is partly because, the AU's decision making process is confined to member states. According to the AU Act, 'decisions' of the AU Assembly are divided into three categories: regulation, directives and recommendations, declarations, resolutions and opinions. Regulations and directives are binding on members and AU organs, while decisions in the third category are not binding on Member States. In practice, the Assembly mostly uses two terms, decisions and resolutions, to denote its binding and non-binding findings, respectively. All decision-making is characterized by consensus-seeking and the principle of equitable regional representation. If decisions are not reached by consensus, a two-thirds majority is required.<sup>69</sup> Similar challenges have been cited at country level. Jonathan Makuwira observes that, while the change from dictatorial regimes in Malawi to a multiparty political system has enhanced civil society participation in the country's social, economic and political issues, the CSO-government relationship is still fraught with suspicion and mistrust.<sup>70</sup>

Thirdly, the lack of enough resources remains a challenge to CSO-AU engagement. Engaging at the continental level is resource intensive, not only for attending meetings, obtaining

information and keeping track of what is happening, but also in establishing and maintaining the necessary interpersonal relationships. This combined with apathy towards the institution and limited access discourages many CSOs from engaging at the continental level. CSOs-AU is strategically placed to bridge this gap between national level action and action at the continental level, by virtue of its focus in tandem with its membership. It would however need to establish formal mechanisms to ensure complementary input at both the national and continental levels.

The final complication is the diverse ideological orientation. There are essentially two schools of thought within the AU on the process of integration. One school promotes immediate integration with the creation of appropriate structures and subsequently filling in of the institutional gaps, while the other promotes a gradual approach to integration with the building up of existing structures into an eventually unified continent. The positions are contested with policy makers who believe in progressive development of peace and security structures (immediatists) lamenting the continued rhetoric, which has been ongoing before the creation of the AU and the need for concrete action towards integration. On the other hand, the bureaucrats who do not subscribe to hastier realization of an ASF (gradualists) are adamant about the need to be realistic regarding the realities of the continent and the insufficient infrastructure and resources to bring it all into being. In 2006, AU commissioned a study into the implications of integration and has since held several ordinary and extraordinary sessions, made several decisions and instituted several mechanisms towards the realization of the integration agenda. Finally, lack of co-ordination between the AU institutions themselves and between the AU and RECs means that CSOs have to engage multiple times and structures, as there is no guarantee of a trickle effect. This means a heavier investment on the part of CSOs looking to bring their issues to the AU discussion table.

## **Conclusion**

This article has demonstrated that both structural and systemic factors have blighted the possibilities of developing an integrated African Standby Force. Yet, the emerging African Peace and Security Architecture is too dynamic to entrust peace and stability to military alone. The need for an integrated ASF is articulated within the African Union Charter. As such, the Charter points out, “ 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 shall be established. Such a Force shall be composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military origins and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice.” (PSC Protocol art. 13.1). With the new thinking in Addis Ababa on the best way to respond to crisis on the continent, such an ambition seems increasingly difficult to realize. There are also, as yet, no signs that neither AU nor RMs has managed to adapt either its policy-making structures or its policy to the emerging asymmetric conflicts. The structural reforms needed to bring AU policy into line with emerging PSO realities have instead developed a parallel structure—the *African Capability for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC)*. *ACIRC* is heavily military concept with lethal potential of *demultidimensionalising* ASF and the Regional Mechanisms (RMs). The continued focus on *ACIRC* by PSO actors implies that the previous efforts by RMs towards addressing multidimensional capacity gaps have been eroded. Nevertheless, adapting ASF to the ever-changing conflict realities and improving functional capabilities of RMs based on the lessons learnt since the establishment of these structures in 2004 will increase likelihood of attaining multidimensional capacities across Africa.

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