

DEPARTMENT OF  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS,  
PEACE AND SECURITY

African  
Union



MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT  
MARCH 2021-MARCH 2023

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**COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS  
TOWARDS PEACE, SECURITY  
AND STABILITY IN AFRICA**

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## FOREWORD

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On 15 March 2021, I took the oath of office and became Commissioner of the newly established Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) in the African Union (AU) Commission. The Department, one of the creations of the AU's institutional reforms, is a merger of units of the former Departments of Political Affairs with Peace and Security.

The rationale for the new Department is to enhance the Commission's efficiency in delivering on its mandate to promote peace, security and stability on the continent, based on integrating political governance in all peace and security initiatives of the AU. By this merger, the Department is expected to leverage the strengths of the two Directorates through enhanced synergy and coordination of efforts and maximise resources to deliver as one.

Realising the goal of the merger requires meaningful integration that goes beyond co-location to include institutional and behavioural changes, a shift from the old

business model, an openness to innovation and a willingness to transform. Even though the most critical element of the merger is a willingness to do things differently, change can be viewed as threatening. In the case of the PAPS Department, the effort to create a leaner and smarter Commission also implies rationalisation of human resources and systems. This has created an additional layer of challenges, particularly concerning the integration of tasks and operational synergies.

In addition to the related organisational issues, the merger commenced amid the global uncertainty and unpredictability occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to prevent and contain the pandemic's spread led to mobility restrictions. With global lockdowns in place, Commission staff had to work away from their offices, which significantly affected the Department's integration efforts at that stage.

*We are progressively building trust and confidence, and our collective efforts have begun to yield some positive results*

Despite the huge challenges, the Department is working to build an integrated and cohesive team that is strategically aligned and able to leverage its capabilities to promote complementarity and engender innovation for operational efficiency. We are developing structures that foster an appreciation of what needs to change and how things must change. The initial resistance brought about by the fear of the unknown is gradually giving way as staff realise that measures being put in place are meant to enable and enhance their work. We are progressively building trust and confidence, and our collective efforts have begun to yield some positive results.

In two years, we have recorded some modest successes in implementing the Department's mandate. We have supported some Member States in navigating complex crises and put in place measures to transform the drivers of conflict towards peaceful co-existence. We successfully shepherded the transition of the AU's flagship peace operation, AMISOM, to a support mission, ATMIS, to assist the host state (Somalia) in taking control of its security and reconstruction. We have evidence to show that our efforts at stabilisation are yielding results.

*We continue to work on fostering inclusion and meaningful participation, ensuring no population group is left behind in electoral processes*

On political governance, we have initiated platforms to facilitate insightful conversations on eliciting compliance for our legal and normative provisions and strengthening national institutions for promoting democracy. We continue to work on fostering inclusion and meaningful participation, ensuring no population group is left behind in electoral processes to consolidate democracy via integrated approaches to election observation. We are developing structures to promote our institution's strategic partnerships with national, regional, continental and global actors, including the United Nations, and, in particular, provide strategic guidance on one of the most critical issues in the partnership: financing of peace operations.

Member States, RECs and RMs have continued to be central to the delivery of the mandate of the PAPS Department. We

salute their continued singular and collective actions in promoting robust responses to the security challenges of the continent, while providing leadership towards the deepening of democracy and assuring collective security. We are extremely grateful to them.

Even so, we are confronted with several critical challenges. Democratic governance is facing an unprecedented assault, and we are grappling with the spread of terrorism and violent extremism on the continent. We have a considerable population of discontented young people, with some choosing perilous journeys in search of greener pastures. Even though the array of challenges we are called upon to address is growing, our resources are dwindling. Our human resources are being stretched thin. Funding for our activities is limited, and disbursements should be timeous. Simply put, the resources available do not match the tasks the PAPS Department has to execute.

Development Partners have been invaluable in our two-year journey. They have provided surge human resource capacity to address the Department's human resource challenges, offered catalytic and sustained funding to kick-start critical processes, and supported our endeavours. Through technical support, Partners have assisted us in developing strategic guidance for our processes. The list is long, and I would like to use this opportunity to express the appreciation of the Department for the immeasurable support we have received so far. I hope we can continue to count on your support in the years ahead.

This Mid-Term Report of the Department of PAPS reflects the progress made in the past two years to identify what is working well, what challenges persist and what we can do to improve. The foundations we are laying now will likely result in the structural and process transformation required to enhance the Department's ability to deliver on its mandate efficiently.

**Bankole Adeoye**

*Commissioner, Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>FOREWORD</b>	III
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	VI
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	1
<b>REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY</b>	3
<b>IMPLEMENTING THE MANDATE OF THE PAPS DEPARTMENT</b>	5
<b>STRATEGIC PILLAR ONE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAPS STRUCTURE FOR BETTER COORDINATION AND IMPACT</b>	8
1.1 Building an adaptable team for impact	8
1.2 Resourcing for change	9
<b>STRATEGIC PILLAR TWO: RE-ENERGISING AU EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION</b>	11
2.1 Strengthening the linkages between early warning and early response/action to reduce the high rate of vulnerabilities in Africa	11
2.2 Preventive diplomacy and mediation	12
2.3 Improved cross-regional learning to enhance resilience	13
2.4 Promote information gathering and effective intelligence sharing to enhance early warning	14
<b>STRATEGIC PILLAR THREE: INTEGRATED CAPACITY FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, ESPECIALLY COUNTER-TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM</b>	15
3.1 Concrete capacity support for ongoing counter-terrorism and violent extremism and peace initiatives through AU-led ad hoc and multilateral coalitions	16
3.2 Mobilising intensified support for peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction	17
3.3 Instant operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF)	18
3.4 Scale up global support towards financing of peace operations	19
<b>STRATEGIC PILLAR FOUR: STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>	20
4.1 Stronger home-centred advocacy for human rights and fundamental freedoms	20
4.2 Institutionalise the nexus between AGA and APSA	21
<b>STRATEGIC PILLAR FIVE: INCLUSIVE AND SMART PARTNERSHIPS FOR HUMAN SECURITY</b>	22
5.1 Interconnectivity with all stakeholders and Partners to promote good governance, peace and security	22
5.2 Smart partnership and cooperation to enhance global governance, peace and security organisations	23
<b>BEYOND THE FIRST TWO YEARS: SIGNPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE</b>	24
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	25

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>ACSRT/CAERT</b>	African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism
<b>AFRIPOL</b>	African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation
<b>AMISOM</b>	African Union Mission in Somalia
<b>AGA</b>	African Governance Architecture
<b>APSA</b>	African Peace and Security Architecture
<b>ASF</b>	African Standby Force
<b>ATMIS</b>	African Union Transition Mission in Somalia
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CAPs</b>	Common African Position
<b>CEWS</b>	Continental Early Warning System
<b>CISSA</b>	Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa
<b>CSVA</b>	Country Structural Vulnerability Assessment
<b>CSVMS</b>	Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>I-RECKE</b>	Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange
<b>LOs</b>	Liaison Offices
<b>NeTT4Peace</b>	AU Network of Think Tanks for Peace
<b>PAPS</b>	Political Affairs, Peace and Security
<b>PCRD</b>	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
<b>PSC</b>	Peace and Security Council
<b>RECs/RMs</b>	Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms
<b>STCDSS</b>	Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security
<b>StG</b>	Silencing the Guns
<b>TCCs</b>	Troop-contributing countries
<b>TNA</b>	Training Needs Assessment



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Despite some modest success stories, Africa faces a myriad of untold and persistent security threats, particularly from ineffective governance, political exclusion of minorities, women and the youth and a resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government. The continent is also confronted with the devastating effects of climate change; rapidly expanding terrorism and violent extremism, insurrection, armed conflict, and complex and endless political transitions exacerbated by dire socio-economic consequences, including poverty, high rates of unemployment and global geopolitical turmoil. Many civilians, especially women and children, are fleeing their communities and countries, seeking refuge far from home, but many never reach their destinations.

African countries require the support of a robust, unified and streamlined continental body to help them tackle the many challenges they face. To this end, the African Union (AU), as part of its ongoing institutional reform two years ago, created the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) in the AU Commission. The new Department is a merger of functions of the former Departments of Political Affairs and Peace and Security.

The merger aims to enhance the integration, coherence and efficacy of the Commission's delivery on its mandate to promote peace, security and stability in Africa by supporting the AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms. It combines the strengths of mainstreaming political governance in the peace and stabilization process in Africa at all levels while maximizing the resources and coordination of efforts to deliver with more impact as a single organizational structure.

To enhance efficient delivery through coherence and collaboration, the Department

developed five strategic pillars to guide the implementation of its mandate. These are :

1. Implementation of the PAPS structure for better coordination and impact.
2. Re-energizing the AU early warning systems, conflict prevention and mediation.
3. Building Integrated capacity for conflict management, especially counter-terrorism and violent extremism.
4. Strengthening democracy and good governance.
5. Inclusive and smart partnership for human security.

While visible progress has occurred in the formation of the new Department, the road has sometimes been challenging. Creating a more streamlined Commission meant making changes to systems and staff. The merger's start coincided with a pandemic that placed employees in lockdown, making integration and movement complex. However, staff members have worked together to make the new systems work, and the benefits of consolidation are showing.

Since the merger, the Department has made some headway in delivering on its mandate. It has provided technical backstopping to Member States to deal with various political crises, including elections, and put in place measures towards stability. It is developing structures to promote the AU's strategic partnerships nationally, regionally, and internationally and is providing strategic guidance on the ongoing issue of peace operation funding.

Central to the delivery of the Department's mandate are the AU's Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and Regional Mechanisms, which continue to respond to Africa's security challenges, and have found a greater voice in the peace agenda under the auspices of the AU Inter-

Regional Economic Communities Knowledge Exchange (IRECKE) on Early Warning Conflict Prevention while providing leadership support for consolidating constitutional democracy. The AU also continues to rely on the input of its development partners, who have offered invaluable human resources, financial, technical and other support based on core priorities identified in the AU Agenda 2063 predicated on Silencing the Guns.

Women's political empowerment and youth inclusion are taking pride of place in the Organisation's areas of competence. More awareness is being created in promoting post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) as the Africa Platform for Children Affected by Armed Conflict is the advocacy arrowhead for the AU Child Protection Architecture being built. Recognizing the multi-dimensional nature and scope of security challenges, the Department is actively engaged in the imperative of a multi-stakeholder approach to finding durable solutions. Wit has embraced the Nexus approach between Peace, Security, Governance and Sustainable Development while tapping into the existing wealth of knowledge base in African think tanks through the newly launched Network of Think Tanks for Peace in Africa (NeTT4Peace).

This Mid-Term Report outlines the progress made by the Department of PAPS over the past two years. It helps identify what is working, and what can be improved, to foster better security, stability and peace for the people of Africa.

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# REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY

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The state of peace and security in Africa in the past two years presents a mixed bag of successes and challenges. Even though there has been some socio-economic development on the continent, several studies show declines in governance, peace and security.

During the period under review, the continent has had to grapple with some relatively new challenges while addressing new dynamics associated with old issues. The period also witnessed two unprecedented challenges in contemporary times. One was the COVID-19 health pandemic, the effects of which the world is still trying to address; and the second is the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, which has had severe consequences on the continent's socio-economic development and human security.

Furthermore, the past two years have seen a rise in violent extremism and terrorism, particularly an expansion of terrorist activities from the Sahel, Eastern and Northern African countries into Southern Africa and the coastal countries in West Africa. In the same period, we have seen increased disruptions to governance processes in some of our Member States, with four successful coups d'état in 2021 and one in 2022. There were also some unsuccessful attempts.

The Africa Governance Report summarises the reasons for the poor governance performance as weak and under-resourced national institutions, limited or no oversight mechanisms, and inadequate implementation of human rights instruments. While the data presented by the various indexes on governance, peace and security do not provide a causal relationship between ineffective governance and peace and security, a correlation is noticeable. Countries

with significant challenges in the areas of peace and security also have critical governance challenges. This means that when we fix the governance deficits, we will likely address some peace and security challenges confronting our continent.

*The state of peace and security in Africa in the past two years presents a mixed bag of successes and challenges*

Although the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on health and economies has been the focus of attention, it has also had significant consequences on our countries' governance, peace and security landscape. The approaches employed by some governments in their efforts to contain and manage the spread of the virus undermined the rule of law and governance processes, leading to a breakdown in trust between citizens and the state.

Climatic changes are taking a significant toll on the continent's agricultural systems and food security. Extreme weather events, including flooding and droughts, are affecting agricultural output on the continent, and in extreme cases have resulted in displacements. The agricultural space is shrinking, and since the agricultural sector employs approximately 53 per cent of the entire workforce on our continent, the

consequences of climate change and climate variability on peace and security are worrisome. There is an increase in intra-communal conflicts over land and water resources.

The effects of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine on Africa have also revealed the continent's vulnerabilities. Rising energy costs, high inflation, and high living costs due to the conflict, particularly as countries are recovering from the effects of COVID-19, could have repercussions on the national security of our Member States.

The above issues paint a bleak picture of the state of peace and security on the continent. However, there are some glimmers of hope. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) has enhanced its responsiveness to challenges in Member States by reviewing its working methods to address bottlenecks that have affected its ability to respond timeously to challenges. The new business model adopted as part of reforms emphasises the need for the Commission to pragmatically enable Member States to address structural challenges to peace and security in their countries.

Increased inter-departmental challenges are enabling the Department to leverage linkages that directly or indirectly

*The past two years have seen  
a rise in violent extremism and  
terrorism*

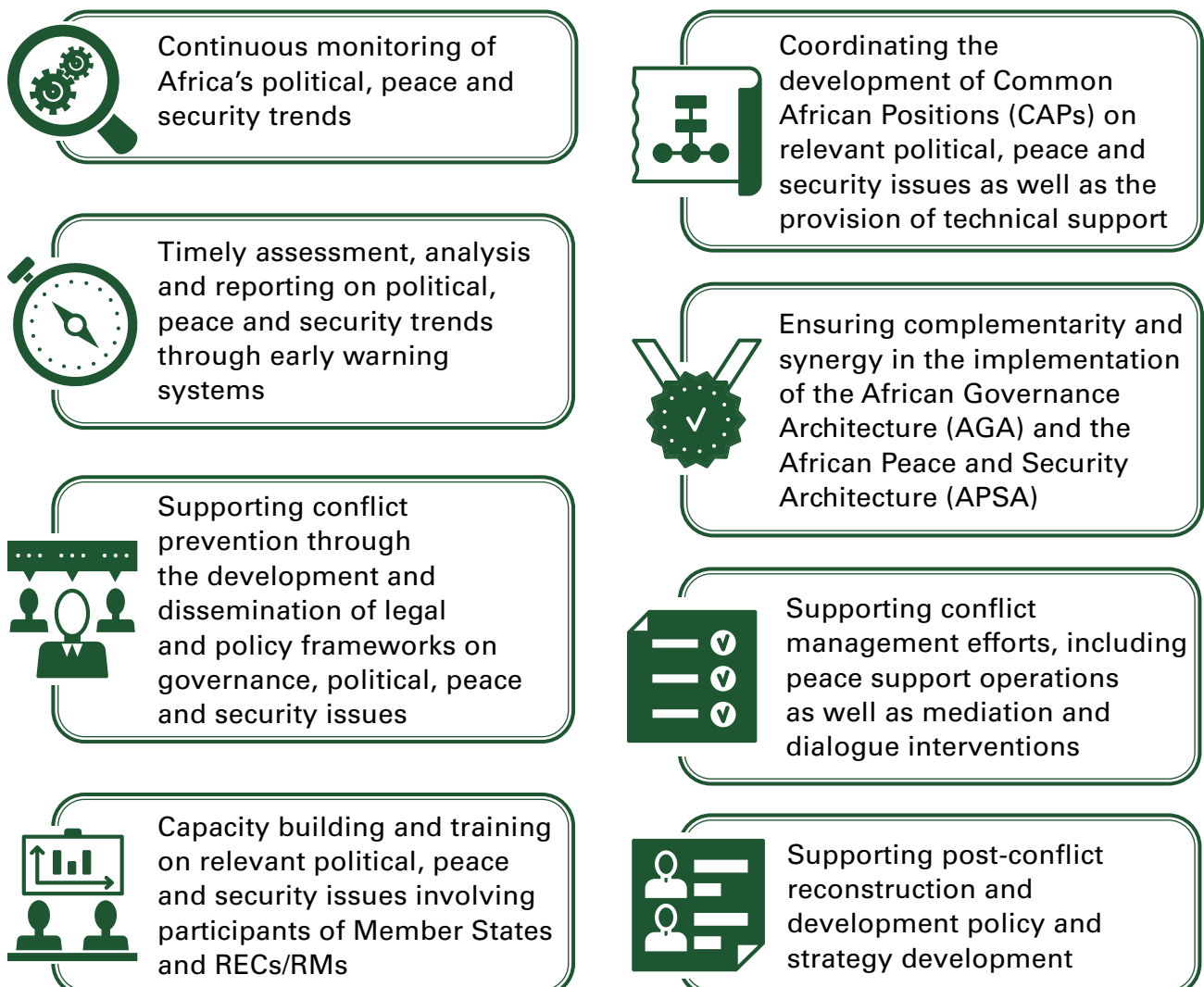
impact governance, peace and security in Africa. Our most significant source of optimism, however, is that notwithstanding the myriad issues confronting the continent, our people have made clear their preference for democratic governance above other forms of government. Throughout the continent, there are demands for accountability, transparency, the rule of law and meaningful participation, among others. Our people are our strength, and we can harness that strength to turn the tide of insecurity in Africa.

# IMPLEMENTING THE MANDATE OF THE PAPS DEPARTMENT

The mandate of the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) is drawn from Aspirations 3 and 4 of Agenda 2063 – “an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law” and “a peaceful and secure Africa” respectively. The Department’s mandate is thus to contribute to the Commission’s efforts to support Member States and Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) towards the prevention, resolution and management of conflict and disruptive crises.

Therefore, the Department is the Commission’s implementing arm for the realisation of the principles of the Constitutive Act towards the promotion of peace, stability, good governance, democracy and human rights as the basis for inclusion, security and development. At the heart of the Department’s work is the security of Africa’s people and the stability of African states.

The Department is tasked with eight core functions:



To promote integrated delivery towards the efficient implementation of its mandate, the Department distilled the eight core tasks into five main strategic pillars:

1. Implementation of the PAPS structure for better coordination and impact
2. Re-energising the AU early warning systems, conflict prevention and mediation
3. Integrated capacity for conflict management, especially counter-terrorism and violent extremism
4. Strengthening democracy and good governance
5. Inclusive and smart partnership for human security

The strategic pillars have promoted the creation of synergies, encouraged coordination and facilitated collaboration with other departments of the Commission, RECs/RMs and African civil society organisations.

## PRIORITY ACTION PLAN:



### **Strategic Pillars: ONE** **Implementation of the new PAPS structure (DPA-PSD merger) for better coordination and impact.**

- a. Strategic new orientation, motivation, team leadership building and staff engagement.
- b. AU institutional reform- related follow-up issues and the recruitment for the new PAPS structure with transparency and accountability.
- c. PAPS early preparation and input for 2022 AU annual budget.
- d. Rebranding the PAPS corporate image and publicity within the AU system
- e. Reinvigoration of the work planning approach in PAPS and enhanced reporting methods.



### **Strategic Pillars: TWO** **Re-energize AU early warning system, conflict prevention and mediation.**

- a. Overhaul AU statutory operations on conflict preventive mechanisms towards mainstreaming governance into conflict prevention.
- b. AU Member States-led &-driven concerted actions with REC/RMs and AUC technical backstopping.
- c. Strengthen the linkages between early warning and early response/ action to reduce the high rate of vulnerabilities in Africa.
- d. Improved cross-regional learning on best practices and resilience building against the triggers of conflicts i.e. election dispute, climate change, human rights violations, border dispute reliability.
- e. Promote information gathering and effective intelligence sharing in close collaboration with CISSA.



## **Strategic Pillars: THREE**

### **Integrated capacity for conflict management, especially countering terrorism/violent extremism.**

- a. Instant operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) to resuscitate the AU Common African Defence & Security Policy.
- b. Facilitate AU concrete capacity support for ongoing CT/VE and peace initiatives through AU-led ad hoc & multilateral coalitions.
- c. Scale up the promotion of global support towards the sustainable financing of AU PSOs for capacity enhancement.
- d. Conclusion of the M&E Framework for the AU Master Roadmap on Silencing the Guns for the new 2030 target date.
- e. Renewed implementation of the African Charter on the Rights & Welfare of the Child from the perspective of CAAC.
- f. Quarterly compilation & review of the Report on the State of Peace and Security in Africa and Activities of the PSC based on regional horizon scanning.
- g. Mobilizing intensified support for Peace-building and PCRD in the AU system as top priority.



## **Strategic Pillars: FOUR**

### **Strengthening democracy and good governance.**

- a. Institutionalise the nexus between APSA and AGA.
- b. Stronger home-centred advocacy for Human Rights and fundamental freedoms in AU Member States.
- c. Rejig AU Election Observation and Monitoring processes in for greater impact in consolidating democracy and good governance in Africa.
- d. PAPS adequate planning for coordinating statutory role on the African candidatures in the international system.



## **Strategic Pillars: FIVE**

### **Inclusive and smart partnerships for human security.**

- a. Interconnectivity with all stakeholders and partners to promote good governance, peace and security including during the COVID-19 pandemic as an existential threat to public health security, safety in Africa.
- b. Transformed partnership with Women & Youth in Governance, Peace and Security.
- c. Smart partnership and cooperation with global governance, peace and security organizations/bodies.

*Compiled by: African Union Commission*



## STRATEGIC PILLAR ONE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAPS STRUCTURE FOR BETTER COORDINATION AND IMPACT

Creating the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security was part of the recommendation of the Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union for effectiveness and efficiency. Composed of the Governance and Conflict Prevention and the Conflict Management Directorates, the Department was developed in line with the decision to, among others, recentre the AU to focus on key priorities with a continental scope and realign the Union's institutions to deliver, guided by the identified priorities.

Regarding the decision for a leaner commission, the new structure has comparatively fewer staff. Several functions have been combined, while others were completely removed from the structure.

The decision to eliminate some positions from the new structure has created gaps in the Department's operations. To address this challenge and ensure that some of the enabling portfolios such as partnership coordination receive the required attention, interim functions have been created to serve as a bridge for cross-cutting issues to foster complementarity and avoid duplication.

*The decision to eliminate some positions from the new structure has created gaps in the Department's operations*

In addition, two new functions – knowledge management and training and capacity development – have also been created. These two functions will provide department-wide support for systematic knowledge management to aid in policy development, review and implementation, as well as training and capacity development to address performance-related needs. Since these functions are not in the new structure, staff with existing portfolios have been given additional responsibilities to perform these.

It is pertinent to note that the Kagame Report, while calling for an overall leaner Commission, also recommended that the "Commission's structures should be re-evaluated to ensure that they have the right size and capabilities to deliver on the agreed priority areas". The review of the structure must therefore assess these functions and make adequate provisions for them to enable the Department to deliver on its mandate efficiently.

### 1.1 Building an adaptable team for impact

The interlinkages between the various divisions of the Department of PAPS necessitate close collaboration and an interlocking structure that enables coordination and synergy among the different units to deliver efficiently and impactfully on its mandate.

The volatility of the environment within which the Department must implement its mandate makes it imperative for staff to have the requisite knowledge, skills, tools, resources and attitudes to enable it to develop strategic responses. It requires flexibility, adaptability and innovation. As a first step to cultivating the knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as developing the tools and resources needed,



the Department has commenced a change management process.

In that respect, a change management needs assessment identified critical change interventions required for operationalising the structure of the Department. In addition to this needs assessment, a Department-wide training needs assessment (TNA) was also commissioned. The report of the TNA identifies the capacities available in the Department and the critical gaps that must be addressed to enhance the competencies of personnel for optimal performance. Efforts are under way to ensure systematic implementation of the TNA's recommendations.

Furthermore, intra-departmental coordination mechanisms have also been created to enhance information sharing, joint priority setting and action at the strategic levels. This has been crucial in promoting information sharing, thereby minimising duplication and improving the sequencing of efforts that have helped us to maximise limited resources.

Since the Department is still in the early stages of operationalisation, a two-tier coordination process has been established. The first is the Senior Management Team meeting between the directors of the two Directorates and the Office of the Commissioner for information sharing and strategic decision-making.

*Intra-departmental coordination mechanisms have also been created to enhance information sharing, joint priority setting and action at the strategic levels*

The second, an expanded process, is the Senior Management Team Plus. This comprises the Office of the Commissioner as well as the Department's senior managers, namely the directors of the two directorates and of the specialised agencies – the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT/CAERT) and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA); the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AfriPol), and their mid-level managers; and the focal persons on the cross-cutting functions who meet regularly to share information among themselves.

Subsequent to the change management scoping needs, the Department organised a retreat for Senior Management and selected focal persons. The retreat's goal was to facilitate a dialogue on how to develop a system that allows collaborative engagement to optimise the limited resources to deliver on the mandate of the Department efficiently.

Participants at the retreat unpacked the new structure, identified associated challenges, interrogated operational management issues and discussed practical ways to enhance the operationalisation of the Department. The retreat also facilitated the institution of a change management team responsible for implementing the Department's change agenda. Change is often a slow process, but the foundational measures will equip all stakeholders to become change agents.

## 1.2 Resourcing for change

A critical component of change management is resources. Efficient implementation of the Department's mandate depends on the availability of requisite enablers, including an enabling organisational culture, the right complement of human resources, realistic institutional processes and predictable sources of financing.

Even though the peace and security needs of the continent have increased exponentially, we are severely resource-constrained.

Our human resource capacity is below what is needed. While modest progress has been made in recruiting to fill the senior management and mid-level positions in the Department, there are significant challenges. The recruitment processes for some critical positions are still outstanding, and the significant human resource gaps have led to an overstretch of existing capacities. Expedited ongoing recruitment efforts would therefore be helpful to ensure that the full staff complement is brought on board.

*Even though the peace and security needs of the continent have increased exponentially, we are severely resource-constrained*

Responsiveness is critical to the Department's ability to implement its mandate. The challenges to which the Department must respond require flexible, agile and predictable sources of funding. Unfortunately, we are severely constrained. In the face of mounting challenges, the Department has to do more with significantly limited resources. Some of the critical funding gaps have been addressed with the support of strategic Partners.

This is, however, unsustainable for several reasons. With adequate funding accompanied by practical processes for access, the Department will be able to implement its mandate optimally.



## **STRATEGIC PILLAR TWO: RE-ENERGISING AU EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION**

### **2.1 Strengthening the linkages between early warning and early response/action to reduce the high rate of vulnerabilities in Africa**

In the past two years, the Department has supported Member States in efforts to end violent conflicts, de-escalate tensions, and facilitate dialogue towards negotiating divergences. Using the early warning analysis ecosystem provided by conflict and regional analysts, specialist technical institutions, and Liaison Offices (LOs), the Department enables the PSC to implement its mandate of maintaining peace and security on the continent.

The Department has provided strategic and operational support to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflict, and to support and promote democracy and good governance in Africa either through its initiative or by supporting the implementation of the PSC's directives.

As part of efforts to ensure that the PSC's decisions towards Silencing the Guns (StG) are efficiently implemented, the Department coordinated the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of the Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030. The PSC's adoption of the framework is a strong indication of its determination to work closer with the Department in addressing the continent's peace and security challenges.

Notably, as part of enhancing engagement with decision makers, the Department has reinstated the monthly early warning meetings between the Commissioner and the PSC Ambassadors. Such interaction is needed for the Department to provide strategic analysis promptly to relevant stakeholders to

inform decisions for early responses towards the de-escalation of conflict situations and conflict prevention.

Through the PSC Secretariat, capacity enhancement support is being provided to the PSC's Committee of Experts to enable the efficient implementation of the Council's mandate. In collaboration with Partners, the Department, through the PSC Secretariat, has sought to enhance the capacity of the members of the Committee of Experts to operationalise the Sanctions Committee in line with the Decision of the May 2022 16th Extra-ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

As part of our efforts to improve information exchange across PSC members, we created a digital repository that serves as an online hub for decisions of policy organs. The repository has been quite valuable in facilitating intra-departmental access to documents. Furthermore, the digital repository allows the PSC Secretariat to disseminate essential information in real time with PSC members and other stakeholders. The repository now includes PSC decisions. However, we plan to broaden its scope to also cover decisions made by all policy organs, and use it as a common platform for information sharing.

Close, consistent interaction and responsiveness are critical elements of preventive diplomacy. Through the LOs deployed in countries emerging from challenging situations, the AU provides an on-the-ground presence that assists countries implementing peace agreements by reaching out in real time to address conflicts and provide relevant situational analysis and response options. LOs provide on-the-ground technical backstopping to processes involving the AU and its strategic Partners in the affected countries.

*Close, consistent interaction and responsiveness are critical elements of preventive diplomacy*

In South Sudan, the LO has been instrumental in the 2018 Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. In March 2022, the AULO provided technical and administrative support to a trilateral team established at the PSC's request to evaluate South Sudan's electoral and constitution-making needs, and to submit a report of the evaluation to the Council. The trilateral team comprised the Office of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Commission.

Unfortunately, our LOs are severely under-capacitated. Since its establishment, the Department has made modest efforts to enhance the LOs' capacities. Through frequent interactions, it has addressed some of the LOs' pressing needs. However, the Offices' significant technical capacity and funding challenges are made worse by the Department's own capacity problems.

If the Department had adequate capacity, it could provide backstopping capacity to the LOs on a need-to basis. However, in the current state, the Directorates have to rely on external expertise to provide the requisite support. This creates significant challenges, particularly concerning the cost-effectiveness of our approach and sustainability. Our ability to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by our LOs to prevent conflicts and meaningfully assist Member States depends on their being fully capacitated to deliver on their mandate.

One way to enhance LOs' capacity in the interim is to request that our Partners provide needs-driven, time-bound backstopping support in relevant areas to the Offices while we develop medium- to long-term solutions.

## **2.2 Preventive diplomacy and mediation**

Africa's decision-making bodies have reiterated the need for the AU to develop capacities to prevent conflicts in order to promote peace, security and stability. To this end, the AU has invested heavily in tools and mechanisms for dialogue to prevent and de-escalate conflicts.

These include a robust system for early warning, the Panel of the Wise, the use of the good offices of the Commission Chairperson, the appointment of Special Envoys and High Representatives, and other emissaries. A dedicated division for supporting the efforts of these mechanisms and facilitating dialogue and mediation has been created within the Department of PAPS.

At the launch of the new Department, Ethiopia, the AU host country, was embroiled in violent conflict in Northern Tigray. Building on earlier efforts by the Commission, the Department developed a strategy of engagement to support a politically negotiated settlement of the conflict. Drawing on in-house expertise and leveraging the opportunities provided through our strategic partnerships, the Department provided substantive and technical backstopping support to the High Representative of the Horn and the facilitator of the talks who led the mediation efforts on behalf of the AU.

Through the concerted efforts of all stakeholders, the parties to the conflict in the Northern Tigray region signed a peace agreement in record time almost two years after the conflict began. The fast-tracked signing of the peace agreement came as a very welcome relief to Ethiopians and the rest of Africa and her friends. It is to be recalled that the Chairperson of the Commission

received an award from the Ethiopian Government for the effective AU mediation/facilitation role.

*Signing a peace agreement is just the start of a peace process*

However, signing a peace agreement is just the start of a peace process. The Department has therefore put together a framework of consistent and sustained support to accompany the peace agreement implementation. Through synergised efforts, the Department will provide the necessary technical expertise to support the national authorities to transform the drivers of conflict, address the wounds of the past, and foster peaceful co-existence as well as mobilise much-needed post-conflict reconstruction resources.

In Comoros, engagement by the Department contributed significantly to de-escalating the political contestations between the government and opposition political parties, which had lingered since 2019. The Report of the Technical Assessment Mission, which the PAPS Commissioner led, provided the basis for the PSC decision for the Commission to offer the Department's needs-driven technical support to Comoros on behalf of the Commission.

Consistent efforts have been made to support the strengthening of our Organisation's facilitation, dialogue and mediation mechanisms to enable the effective delivery of their mandates. The Panel of the Wise (PanWise), the pre-eminent consultative body of the Union for conflict prevention, management and resolution, has been revitalised. As part of our early response measures, members of

the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation – FemWise – have been incorporated into election-related deployments to accompany the dialogue and mediation efforts of the Commission to prevent and de-escalate election-related disputes.

As part of implementing the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace and Security, the Department facilitated the establishment of WiseYouth, a platform developed to promote the inclusion and participation of young people in national, regional and continental peacebuilding processes.

A lot is required to support the effective functioning of these initiatives. Capacity development, innovation, dedicated backup that enables medium- to long-term engagements needed to support long-term peacemaking efforts, and a willingness by member states to harness the potential of these mechanisms are critical to attaining success.

### **2.3 Improved cross-regional learning to enhance resilience**

Empirically generated knowledge is essential to early warning and prevention efforts. Africa's think tanks and academic institutions generate valuable knowledge and analysis. However, few avenues exist for the knowledge generated to influence continental and regional policymaking and practice. As part of the Department's new business model, platforms for enhancing structured and systematic knowledge sharing between Africa's think tanks and academic institutions and the RECs have been instituted.

Africa's think tanks are convened through the AU Network of Think Tanks for Peace (NeTT4Peace), a strategic partnership between Africa's research communities and the Department. This partnership provides a structured feedback loop that enables the Department to use evidence-based knowledge generated by the research community for strategic inputs

into policymaking and implementation. The Department in turn can provide structured feedback on knowledge products developed.

Invaluable knowledge and experience have been gained by the RECs and RMs which have addressed various types of crises ranging from traditional conflicts and humanitarian challenges to violent extremism. These experiences have shaped policy development and practice in some instances, even at the continental level.

*Invaluable knowledge and experience have been gained by the RECs and RMs which have addressed various types of crises*

There is however no structured platform for meaningful knowledge exchange and learning. Except for instances where one REC may decide to undertake a benchmarking exercise in another, there needs to be more cross-learning among RECs. To facilitate cross-learning and innovation among the RECs/RMs and the Department, the Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange (I-RECKE) was established. The I-RECKE, launched at last year's mid-year Summit in Lusaka, Zambia, is expected to foster cross-lessons-learning between the RECs/RMs to encourage the replication of best practices.

NeTT4Peace and I-RECKE offer convening platforms for knowledge exchange among and between peace and security practitioners on the continent to learn and innovate how best to enhance peace and security efforts. At the same time, they offer the Department communities of practice that provide valuable insights and feedback on the Department's peace and security actions.

## **2.4 Promote information gathering and effective intelligence sharing to enhance early warning**

Early warning information provided to the Department is generally obtained from open sources. This means that some valuable information that may be outside the public domain may be delayed in coming to the fore, thereby limiting the information that feeds analysis. The Department's specialised technical institutions, such as CISSA, ACSRT and AfriPol, have the capacities to generate intelligence-based data to augment information generated from open sources to sharpen the lenses of analysis and response.

In addition to the confidential briefs shared with the Commission, the Department, through its newly created knowledge management function, has initiated a Policy Paper series that offers the space for the specialised institutions to present some of their critical findings to a larger audience. The goal is to provide the PSC, Member States, Partners and staff of the Department with information on developments on the ground that may be limited in the public domain.

In the year under review, the ACSRT produced three such Policy Papers: *Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Sahel-Sahara Region of Africa: Recommendations for stemming a long-lasting threat*; *Coups d'état and Political Instability in the Western Sahel: Implications for the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism*; and *When Foreign Forces and Mercenaries Leave Libya: New Hope, Caution for the Continent*.

The change management process has identified innovative ways to strengthen the generation of corroborated alerts to enhance the Commission's evidence-based decision making. This will be critical to informing our responses and process design for engagement.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR THREE: INTEGRATED CAPACITY FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, ESPECIALLY COUNTER-TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Contemporary security challenges and crises are complex and fast-changing, necessitating synergised cohesive responses that promote durable solutions. The past two years have been particularly challenging for our continent as we battle the increase both in the number of actors and the scale and intensity of violent extremism and terrorism in the traditional epicentres. These are the Sahel region, Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin region and North Africa.

*A significant challenge with the design of the PAPS Directorate is removing the Continental Early Warning System*

There has also been an expansion of violent extremism and terrorism in non-traditional theatres, with a forceful drive into the littoral states of West Africa and in Southern Africa, including Mozambique's Carbo Delgado. Of particular concern are the recent attempts by those altering constitutional processes to justify their actions as efforts to address violent extremism and terrorism.

A significant challenge with the design of the PAPS Directorate is removing the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). This unit was primarily responsible for generating and collating early warning information to assist with producing alerts and response options. To address the gap created by this reform and ensure that the Department enhances its efficiency to deliver as one, we created integrated teams in the form of regional desks. The regional desks comprise region-

specific desk officers and conflict analysts who collaborate with liaison officers to provide relevant conflict analysis for action.

It is recognised that a key first step to addressing the complex phenomenon of violent extremism is to have a better understanding of its drivers and dynamics, and the surge in unconstitutional government changes that are being touted as part of the response measures by some. The Department thus organised a Reflection Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government. The Accra Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, the output of the Reflections Forum, provided valuable insights and pragmatic ways to address the phenomenon.

*The first step to addressing the complex phenomenon of violent extremism is to have a better understanding of its drivers and dynamics*

In addition, through ACSRT expertise, the link between the rise in political instability including unconstitutional changes in government was explored in the Policy Paper *Coups d'état and Political Instability in the Western Sahel: Implications for the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism*. This was prepared and availed to Member States and other stakeholders before last year's Extraordinary Summit on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa held in Malabo.

The Department played its expected critical role in the effective organisation of this Summit, which built on the Accra Reflections Forum organised by the Department with the support of the PSC to listen and obtain insights on the rise in unconstitutional changes in government, particularly in West Africa. The resultant Declaration on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa provides strategic guidance on the two issues for the Department and the PSC to take forward.

As a first step, efforts are under way to convene the Ministerial Committee on Counter-Terrorism as directed by the heads of state. The Ministerial Committee will provide a roadmap towards fully implementing the Declaration's Directives.

### **3.1 Concrete capacity support for ongoing counter-terrorism and violent extremism and peace initiatives through AU-led ad hoc and multilateral coalitions**

The Commission has gained considerable experience in addressing asymmetric conflicts. Fifteen years of consistent engagement in Somalia has provided invaluable experience and lessons in supporting Member States caught up in insecurity involving armed non-state actors. Through AMISOM, we have developed capacities not only with mandating and employing a mission but also in partnership peacekeeping involving multiple Partners.

We have helped create workable processes for overcoming some of the legal issues that hinder the ability of the UN to respond to certain contemporary challenges on the continent. Last year, we successfully led the process of transformation from being fully responsible for security in Somalia (through AMISOM) to a transition mission (the AU Transition Mission in Somalia, ATMIS), responsible for supporting the government and people of Somalia in taking full responsibility for their security. This is no mean achievement for the AU and its troop-

contributing countries (TCCs) as well as supporting Partners.

As part of our knowledge anchoring approach, we intend to capture all the relevant lessons identified over the 15 years of AMISOM to enhance the Department's efforts at providing practical assistance to our Member States. We are therefore planning a lessons-learned forum on AMISOM. The outcome of this exercise will be shared with relevant decision makers and stakeholders to facilitate candid conversations on future support.

*The realities of contemporary security challenges reinforce the need for coordinated multiple response efforts*

The realities of contemporary security challenges reinforce the need for coordinated multiple response efforts. Ad hoc security initiatives, the coming together of a coalition of the willing to address existential threats, have gained currency in the constellation of tools for addressing security challenges. The Multinational Joint Task Force operating in the Lake Chad Basin area is the flagship ad hoc security initiative from which the Department is curating lessons. One of the lessons from AMISOM, reinforced by the experiences from the Lake Chad Basin context, is the fluidity between peacekeeping, stabilisation, post-conflict reconstruction and development and peacekeeping.

Cognisant of the need for multiple interventions to prevent, counter and manage the long-term effects of violent extremism and terrorism, the Department employs three main methods in its support efforts. The first is a multi-dimensional approach that supports the use of force to create an enabling environment for socio-political and diplomatic



engagement. The second is support for the (re)establishment of governance in affected territories. And third, support for efforts towards socio-economic development.

The Lake Chad Basin region has been our learning theatre for assisting in stabilisation efforts, and from there, the Department's strengths and areas in need of enhancement have come to the fore. We have identified that in situations such as in the Lake Chad Basin, where the AU provides strategic support, our comparative advantage is at least three-fold: the political legitimacy brought to the process; our ability to leverage the work done by various divisions of the Department to upscale impact; and advocacy for resource mobilisation.

Through the AU Support Cell to the Multinational Joint Task Force, the Commission provides strategic support, including mobilising logistical resources to the Force. The AU-supported Regional Stabilization Strategy remains the blueprint for support to the efforts by all stakeholders towards laying the foundations for socio-political and economic development in the affected countries. The Regional Stabilization Cell at its headquarters coordinates the Department's socio-political and governance interventions to affected countries. The Department continues to provide the Secretariat of the Lake Chad Basin Commission with political support and to accompany the efforts of affected countries with technical support and strategic coordination.

As part of our determination to enhance synergies between our governance and military efforts at countering and preventing violent extremism, we have identified some valuable lessons regarding the implementation of the Regional Stabilization Strategy in the Lake Chad Basin region.

We recognise that although won at a high price, military victories are only a small part of the efforts at defeating terrorism. This is why the Department is invested in providing technical support to enhance governance

*Although won at a high price, military victories are only a small part of the efforts at defeating terrorism*

in the affected territories of the Lake Chad Basin countries. In addition to coordinating intra-departmental efforts, the Department also works with Partners to provide technical support to the affected territories.

One of the lessons identified has been the need for the proper sequencing of efforts within the various dimensions of support. The need for effective coordination for scaling impact has also been identified as one of the Department's comparative advantages. The changed nature of contemporary insecurities means that the clear lines of delineation between violent conflict and post-conflict situations are significantly blurred. We have therefore also had to change our way of doing things.

Lessons from Somalia and the Lake Chad Basin area point to the need for critical interventions, even in the heat of conflict, to enable the success of military operations. We have acquired useful knowledge on identifying the needed support, the actors to deliver the support and benchmarks for transitioning to support for post-conflict reconstruction and development. Using the lessons identified, a stabilisation policy is being developed to guide our efforts within the space between active conflict and post conflict.

### **3.2 Mobilising intensified support for peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction**

The AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) provides strategic guidance for post-conflict efforts. PCRD interventions have positively responded

to Member States' requests for support through our LOs. In line with its context specificity and local ownership principles, the Department usually deploys technical assessment missions to countries needing assistance to identify, prioritise, and sequence needs jointly to ensure they receive tailored support.

Even though the Policy and its subsequent auxiliary support frameworks have been pivotal in reinforcing countries emerging from challenging transitions, it had not been reviewed since its adoption in 2016. To enhance the Policy's relevance, particularly in the context of the evolving dynamics in the governance, peace and security domain, the Department, following relevant decisions by the PSC, including to mainstream peacebuilding, organised a review of the Policy.

Against the backdrop of the many issues the Policy has to address, the review recommended, among others, the adoption of two new pillars – Youth and Environmental Security. These are important for ensuring inclusion and enabling relevant mechanisms and tools to address one of the most challenging contemporary issues – environmental security.

*While externally sourced funds have proved invaluable to our actions, there are also limitations*

In recognition of the catalytic role of PCRDR, the 2022 Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference held in Malabo directed that PCRDR should be availed to returnees on the continent. Support to enabling a return to normalcy is already part of the Department's PCRDR portfolio. Through Quick Impact Projects and Peace Strengthening Projects, our PCRDR efforts have always focused on

improving access to essential services as part of engendering trust and confidence and promoting peaceful co-existence. Therefore, the assignment by the Humanitarian Summit requires us to be innovative in the design of our support so that our interventions contribute to assisting with the resettlement and reinsertion of returnees in a dignified manner.

We will no doubt need predictable funds to undertake meaningful PCRDR. While externally sourced funds have proved invaluable to our actions, there are also limitations. Our persistent efforts to generate funding internally have yielded some positive returns with the PSC, which has agreed to allocate some of the resources under Window 2 of the Peace Fund to PCRDR. This will be vital in enabling the implementation of the directive.

The Department also undertook relevant action to operationalise the PCRDR Centre in Cairo and expects that it will provide a much-needed re-centring of our PCRDR and provide some signposts on ways to enhance medium- to long-term support to our Member States transitioning from challenging situations.

### **3.3 Instant operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF)**

Declared operationally ready in 2015, the African Standby Force (ASF) is yet to be deployed. Even so, the processes for the full operationalisation of the ASF have provided a framework for enhancing Member States' capacities for standardised planning, deployment and management of peace support operations. Yet the past eight years have seen significant changes in the peace and security landscape. Within the period, Member States and RECs have devised innovative ways to address the existential security threats confronting them. Valuable lessons have been identified towards enhancing the ASF's operationalisation.

In 2021, our Policy Organs approved and adopted the AU Peace Support Operations (PSO) Doctrine, which offers guidance on efficient deployments for addressing

contemporary security challenges. The AU PSO Doctrine guides the standardisation of PSOs' preparation, employment, management and liquidation. It offers clear signposts on the requirements for AU-mandated, -authorised and -endorsed missions. Since the AU PSO Doctrine is the umbrella strategic guidance on all AU PSOs, the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS) directed that the ASF concept be reviewed for alignment with the Doctrine.

Furthermore, the first lessons-learned conference on AU PSOs was organised in 2022 to curate the experiences from the AU's various PSOs. The conference provided a wealth of considerations that can inform a revised ASF. Following an expert workshop on the reconceptualisation of the ASF, which undertook a holistic review against the backdrop of contemporary security realities and the outcome of the lessons-learned conference, a proposal on the trajectory for the reconceptualisation of the ASF will be submitted to the STCDSS for political guidance on the process.

### **3.4 Scale up global support towards financing of peace operations**

A fundamental challenge to the success of peace operations has been predictable and sustained funding. Despite consensus on the need for partnership peacekeeping, a pathway of sustainable financing has yet to gain traction.

*A fundamental challenge to the success of peace operations has been predictable and sustained funding*

Two main issues hampered progress: a lack of clarity on the continent's position on financing; and the lack of a single architecture for guaranteeing human rights due diligence. The Department has addressed both.

First, a Consensus Paper on Predictable, Adequate, and Sustainable Financing for AU Peace and Security Activities that details the AU's position and contribution to the financing of AU peace operations has been developed by the Department and endorsed by the relevant policy organs. Second, drawing from the practice of eliciting compliance over the years in the various theatres of war where the AU has deployed, a Strategic Framework on Compliance and Accountability has been developed and is undergoing the processes of endorsement by the relevant decision makers. We are also working with the UN towards developing a Joint Planning Guideline, which should clarify the roles and responsibilities of each Partner in the partnership towards maintaining peace and security in Africa.

In addition to the efforts to obtain funding, particularly from UN-assessed contributions, Member States need to critically consider other resource mobilisation models to complement whatever is availed by the UN.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR FOUR: STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Democracy and good governance are conflict-prevention tools. However, the past two years have witnessed heightened challenges in the governance landscape on the continent. A rise in nationalism and the resort to sovereignty as a shield can sometimes undermine democracy and governance. In the past two years, the Department has engaged Member States to appreciate and accept governance as sovereignty-enhancing and a conflict-prevention tool. To ensure that all Member States at least subscribe to the Union's normative frameworks and values on governance and democracy, we have embarked on a robust advocacy drive to encourage the ratification and domestication of the continent's governance frameworks.

### 4.1 Stronger home-centred advocacy for human rights and fundamental freedoms

The ability to promote good governance and uphold the tenets of democracy depend on the quality of national institutions, the knowledge and confidence of citizens and the political will of duty-bearers. We have therefore intensified our efforts at partnering with national institutions, including civil society organisations, and women and youth-led organisations. This should help popularise the continental normative frameworks on governance and help develop the needed capacities to promote the rule of law, meaningful participation and accountability at national and sub-national levels.

As part of efforts at enhancing the knowledge of African citizens on Africa's governance norms and frameworks, the Constitutionalism and Rule of Law Unit is working with experts and national institutions towards mainstreaming the African Charter on Democracy and Elections into school

curricula. The Human Rights and Transitional Justice Unit supports institutions in building and strengthening national human rights architectures to promote and protect human rights in Member States. The Democracy and Elections Unit supports member state election management bodies, political parties and civil society organisations in developing relevant capacities for enhancing the integrity of polls throughout the full spectrum of the electoral cycle.

*We have intensified our efforts at partnering with national institutions, including civil society organisations, and women and youth-led organisations*

Through the systematic implementation of the 10-year strategy on Youth, Peace and Security, the Youth for Peace programme and the AGA Secretariat work towards enhancing our young people's capacities to participate in governance and democracy meaningfully. In the past two years, the AGA Secretariat designed the Youth Innovation Challenge on Democracy and Governance in Africa and Silencing the Guns to encourage young people to make meaningful contributions to promoting democracy in their countries. Five winners received grants, training and coaching to implement various programmes aimed at tackling hate speech, addressing corruption, preventing conflict-related sexual violence, promoting civil-military relations

and citizen engagement in public service provision.

#### **4.2 Institutionalise the nexus between AGA and APSA**

Enhancing synergies between the APSA and AGA offers immeasurable opportunities to mainstream governance into conflict prevention and peacemaking. As part of our efforts to de-escalate election-related tensions and reduce violence, mediation and dialogue functions have been incorporated into the Department's elections management system. This has already proven to work well. It allows for the provision of a standby team of experts from the Mediation and Dialogue Unit to be readily available to help with conflict analysis, develop scenarios for de-escalation of rising challenges and mobilise resources for dialogue and mediation to timeously address rising tensions.

*Our best efforts at strengthening democracy and good governance remain constrained by political imperatives*

Incremental progress is being made to create systematic and structured processes for synergy between the APSA and AGA. Progress has been slow as both architectures have functioned independently over the years. Notwithstanding, the measures put in place for joint analysis and agenda-setting will encourage joint responses.

Team building, creating avenues for intra-directorate knowledge exchange, and providing strategic opportunities for interaction between the various divisions in the two departments are all critical to identifying pragmatic ways to foster synergy between the two architectures.

Our best efforts at strengthening democracy and good governance, however, remain constrained by political imperatives. While robust institutions are needed to promote and protect good governance and democracy, institutions' ability to deliver on their mandates depends on an enabling environment that allows institutions to discharge their mandates without fear or favour.

But the political space is increasingly shrinking in several countries. In these cases, the opposition is being prised out of politics by manipulating legal loopholes, leaving citizens with limited or no choice. The decline of governance in several Member States is an early warning indicator that should not be ignored. We must pool all technical, financial and political resources to address its structural causes to safeguard the progress made and minimise the possible consequences.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR FIVE: INCLUSIVE AND SMART PARTNERSHIPS FOR HUMAN SECURITY

No one institution is capable of meeting all the continent's governance, peace and security needs. The progress made so far has been possible through joint efforts between the Commission, the RECs and RMs, Member States, multilateral and bilateral Partners and international, continental and national civil society organisations.

Our ability to effectively and efficiently deliver on our mandate is dependent on deepening our strategic partnerships, understanding the strengths and limitations of each Partner and maximising the opportunities each presents.

*No one institution is capable of meeting all the continent's governance, peace and security needs*

### 5.1 Interconnectivity with all stakeholders and Partners to promote good governance, peace and security

Several actors are in the governance, peace and security landscape, with specific mandates to contribute to Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063: a peaceful and secure Africa. Therefore, to avoid duplications and enhance the complementarity of efforts, we have deepened existing partnerships, created new networks and reaffirmed the role of the RECs/RMs as the building blocks of the continental body in our efforts to promote good governance, peace and security.

As part of our efforts to support Member States in addressing the structural causes of conflict and enhance resilience, and in order

to address the slow pace of implementation, we have initiated a collaboration with the Secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the RECs/RMs to develop strategies for a faster implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Country Structural Vulnerability Assessment (CSVA) and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategy (CSVMS).

Harnessing diversity, promoting inclusion, negotiating co-existence and guaranteeing transparency and accountability – elements of good governance that foster peace and security – can be inherently conflictual. This therefore necessitates closer collaboration between mechanisms for governance promotion, conflict prevention and peacemaking. The Department is working with the Secretariat of the APRM to implement the PSC directive to develop processes for closer coordination with the peacemaking structures of the Commission, such as the Panel of the Wise.

*Our efforts at promoting governance, peace and security will not succeed if they exclude young people and do not promote gender*

Our efforts at promoting governance, peace and security will not succeed if they exclude young people and do not promote gender. While we recognise the need for stand-alone processes to develop the capacities of young people and promote gender, we are also mindful of the risk of creating silos. As

a result, deliberate efforts have been made to mainstream these two key issues in all the Department's programmes and activities. Not only are we mindful of the need for integration, but we are also aware of the challenges posed by intersectionality and work with relevant stakeholders to promote actual participation by all.

To address the challenges associated with children in armed conflict situations, the Department, through the AU Coordination Group on Children in Situations of Conflict, has facilitated a platform for coordinating the protection of children caught up in conflict situations. Through the support of the Training for Peace programme, the Group coordinated the development of two child protection policies: Mainstreaming Child Protection in the African Peace and Security Architecture and Child Protection in Peace Support Operations. The two policies, adopted by our institution's relevant decision-making bodies, provide frameworks for engagement.

In addition, the Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts, established in 2021 to facilitate member states' collaboration with Save the Children for strategic advocacy for children in situations of conflict, has been operationalised and has made significant inroads in encouraging member states to sign up to the Safe Schools Declaration.

## **5.2 Smart partnership and cooperation to enhance global governance, peace and security organisations**

In our new business model, co-creation is the hallmark of our partnerships. At the multilateral level, technocrats in the Department are working with their counterparts in other organisations, particularly the UN, in setting up joint task teams on critical elements in governance, peace and security. These joint task teams allow for collaborative analysis, horizon scanning and scenario development to guide decision makers in their organisations.

To harness the opportunities provided by the continental free trade regime to promote peace, security and stability, we collaborated with the Department of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade, Industry and Mining, and other multilateral organisations, to organise a continental policy conference on Promoting the Peace, Security, and Development Nexus: The Promise of Regional Integration. The outcome of the policy conference offers concrete recommendations for promoting inclusive growth and development to minimise inequalities that could be mobilised to foment insecurity and proactively use the opportunities of Africa's free trade regime to promote peace and security.

*In our new business model, co-creation is the hallmark of our partnerships*

As part of our determination to use evidence-based knowledge for policy development and implementation, we have instituted formal structures of engagement with African civil society organisations. The idea is to provide a platform to strategically interact and use civil society expertise to generate evidence-based policy-oriented research to guide the Department's work, thereby ensuring use of the various studies being conducted.

# BEYOND THE FIRST TWO YEARS: SIGNPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE

Looking back at the past two years, it is a fair assessment to conclude that considerable progress has been achieved in the face of significant challenges. The foundations for implementing the new structure have been laid. The strengths and limitations of the new structure have been identified. Where possible, creative interim measures have been created. The Department is well placed to engage the reform unit on the planned review to enable the Department to deliver on its mandate optimally.

Building on the foundations laid, the Department has set eight strategic objectives for the next two years. These strategic objectives have been derived from an analysis of what is needed to consolidate the gains made in the first two years and further enhance the efficient implementation of the Department's mandate.



Sustained consistent support for the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement to bring lasting peace to Northern Ethiopia



Improving interaction with the AU PSC in conflict prevention and early response to early warning



The full operationalisation of the ASF



Completion of the review of the 1977 OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa and the Proposed Guidelines of the Amendments to Constitutions in Member States



Total operationalisation of the AU PCRDC Centre in Cairo, Egypt



Launch of the Continental Maritime Exercise, code-named AMANI AFRICA III



Promotion of a greater role for the RECs/RMs and African research institutes/think tanks and do-tanks in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes



Effective promotion of the role of African women and youth in politics, peace and security matters through the reconceptualisation of FemWise and WiseYouth



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# CONCLUSION

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The progress recounted in this Report results from a whole-of-Department effort. The success of our interventions is owed to the leadership of the two directors whose relentless efforts are contributing to help implement the new model of doing business. The professionalism of the staff has been critical in allowing us to push towards implementing the mandate of the new structure with limited resources.

*The flexibility and adaptability of our strategic Partners have been invaluable to making progress in charting these new waters*

The responsiveness of the PSC has been phenomenal. Being a multilateral organisation, we are under no illusions regarding the limitations of the Department. Having the political backing of the PSC has affirmed our efforts and demonstrated political commitment to the new business model of the Commission.

Finally, the flexibility and adaptability of our strategic Partners have been invaluable to making progress in charting these new waters. We commend everyone whose efforts enabled us to make progress.

We look forward to the next two years and remain optimistic that, collectively, we will be able to translate the vision of Agenda 2063 into reality.







**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS,  
PEACE AND SECURITY**



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