

The future of EU support to peace and security in Africa: What implications for the African Peace Facility beyond 2020?

Policy seminar report

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This report summarises a policy seminar on the future of EU support to peace and security in Africa held in Brussels on 24 June 2016. It builds on a briefing paper written by ECDPM (Anna Knoll and Volker Hauck) and distributed to participants prior to the seminar. The current report, in addition, incorporates information from background interviews conducted with representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission and EU member states.

Key messages

- **Rebalancing short-term and long-term support:** EU actors support a rebalancing of support, away from PSO stipends and towards longer-term APSA and PSO capacity-building. However, some African and European stakeholders note that the EU's discussions on burden-sharing have neglected PSOs' human toll, which is carried largely by African countries. Moreover, PSO stipends may contribute to build capacity in the long run. The tension between short-term and long-term support will have to be addressed in talks on a future strategy for EU support to peace and security in Africa.
- **Need for PSO support will continue in the medium term:** Despite the desire to reduce PSO support, the need for flexible EU funding for African-led PSOs will continue in the medium term, until more sustainable alternatives are designed and being implemented at the AU level.
- **Enhancing responsiveness:** The EU could explore innovative ways to increase the responsiveness of its decision-making, for example, by introducing standing financing decisions.
- **Conflict prevention and human security:** The APF should focus more on building capacities for conflict prevention and mediation, including both rapid response and longer-term engagement. According to some, APF funding should emphasise human security and civilian protection, as well as political and governance dimensions, rather than the military aspects of security.
- **The APF within the wider set of EU instruments:** If the APF is to increase its focus on conflict prevention and capacity-building, it will need to consider how it can complement existing EU tools. Moreover, while the APF is the only EU instrument that can fund PSOs, there are doubts about the appropriateness of using EDF funds for peace and security activities. At the same time, the EDF's developmental character could strengthen the case for provision of longer-term capacity-building support through the APF. These different views on the EDF need to be reconciled.
- **Monitoring, evaluation and accountability:** The European Commission is exploring ways to improve its tools for monitoring and evaluating APF support. But measuring impacts on peace and security remains challenging. Civil society has a specific role to play in monitoring PSOs and should contribute more broadly to accountability and inclusiveness.
- **Towards a strategic Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security:** To strengthen the strategic foundation of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security, a stronger political dialogue is needed, working towards a common understanding of joint strategic objectives shared by the EU, the AU and their respective member states.

Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (Group of States)
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
AMISOM	African Union Mission to Somalia
APF	African Peace Facility
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (EU)
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECOMIB	ECOWAS Security Mission in Guinea Bissau
ECOMIL	ECOWAS Monitoring Group in Liberia
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
ERM	Early Response Mechanism
EU	European Union
HRVP	High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
MISCA	African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic
ODA	Official development assistance
PSC	Peace and Security Council (AU)
PSC	Political and Security Committee (EU)
PSO	Peace support operation
REC	Regional economic community
RM	Regional mechanism
TEU	Treaty of the European Union

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Contents

Abbreviations	3
Contents	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. APF support to peace and security in Africa: Current challenges	6
3. Strategic orientation of future EU support	10
4. Improving mechanisms and arrangements for informed, strategic and coherent support.....	12
4.1. Strengthening transregional cooperation.....	12
4.2. Improving the knowledge base.....	13
4.3. Towards a coherent EU approach.....	13
5. The future of the EU-Africa security partnership	16
6. Moving the chess pieces: Concluding remarks	19
Annex 1: Background issues affecting the organisation of future EU support to peace and security in Africa.....	20
Annex 2: Policy seminar programme	22
References	23

1. Introduction

The European Union (EU) has become a key supporter of peace and security on the African continent over the last decade. The security landscape has changed during this period. In particular, an increased interdependence has grown between Europe and Africa concerning peace and security. This has stimulated discussions on how EU support to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)¹ can be more strategically shaped over the long term, including reflections on the future orientation of the African Peace Facility (APF) in the wider context of EU support to peace and security in Africa.

Firmly anchored in the security-development nexus, and funded by the European Development Fund (EDF), the APF has been the EU's principal instrument for addressing peace and security issues in Africa. For example, the EU has used APF funding to strengthen the APSA. In this light, an important question for the future is whether the principle of African ownership which underlies the EU's support to the APF could be enhanced if combined with a more forward-looking political vision on Africa-EU external relations regarding peace and security.

This report summarises a policy seminar on the future of EU support to peace and security in Africa held in Brussels on 24 June 2016 and organised by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) in cooperation with the Netherlands' EU Presidency 2016.² The seminar provided an opportunity to discuss longer-term strategic aspects and priorities for EU support to peace and security in Africa, outside the regular framework of the EU Council Working Groups and together with external experts from Europe and Africa. Some 40 participants gathered for the seminar. Attendants included officials from the European Commission, representatives of several EU member states, officials from the African Union Commission (AUC) and experts from European and African civil society organisations and think tanks. Participants identified a number of key issues and areas for the APF to address. These are outlined in this report.

¹ The APSA comprises a set of institutions and bodies with different mandates, objectives and composition. These include the AU Peace and Security Council, the AUC (in particular the Chairperson and the Commissioner for Peace and Security), the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force, the African Peace Fund and the regional economic communities (RECs). See Desmidt (2016).

² See Annex 2 for the seminar programme.

2. APF support to peace and security in Africa: Current challenges

The APF was set up in 2004 in the context of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security and following the 2003 EU-Africa Summit in Maputo. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement provides its legal foundation.³ The APF has been highly commended. A 2013 evaluation described the Facility as a ‘game changer’ due to its direct and positive impact in strengthening peace and security efforts in Africa.⁴ Seminar participants also described the APF along these lines, for example, as a ‘key enabler’ that has allowed the continent to build essential capacity in peace and security. The APF was also said to have been instrumental in shaping the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security.

Main results of APF support

Since its establishment in 2004, more than €1.9 billion has been channeled through the APF, centred on three pillars: (1) financing the AU-led peace support operations (PSOs); (2) capacity-building support to the African Union (AU) and the APSA; and (3) building the Early Response Mechanism (ERM) to support conflict prevention and mediation efforts of the AU. During the seminar, participants summed up several important results of this support.

First, over the last 12 years, African security institutions have deployed more than 100,000 African troops to pursue peace and stability objectives, often at considerable human cost to African nations.⁵ One speaker underlined the APF’s instrumental role in deployment of African-led PSOs, saying these operations would have been impossible without the Facility (thus contributing to the principle of ‘African solutions to African problems’). For example, the APF has made possible missions such as AMISOM to conduct coercive operations against Al-Shabab in Somalia, MISCA in the Central African Republic, AFISMA in Mali (all under AU frameworks), ECOMIL in Liberia and ECOMIB in Guinea Bissau (both led by ECOWAS).

Second, APF funding has greatly contributed to institutionally and operationally strengthen the APSA, to which a total of €120 million has been allocated. This has allowed the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) to establish itself as a formal platform for policymaking and debate and helped to validate the African Standby Force. Funding has also been used to support initiatives such as peacekeeping training centres and command and control systems for the AUC, to name but two. In effect, the APF has allowed the APSA to evolve into a complex tool for addressing conflict, covering the full spectrum from prevention to post-conflict reconstruction.

Third, the APF has supported 31 initiatives through its ERM. This is an emergency mechanism that can make funds available within 10 days to provide immediate support to mediation, confidence-building and other conflict prevention activities in situations of emerging conflict. A recent example is the quick support mobilised in late 2015 amidst rising political tensions to allow the AU to deploy human rights observers and security officers in Burundi and to facilitate the Inter-Burundian dialogue mediated by Uganda.⁶

³ Desmidt (2016).

⁴ ADE (2013).

⁵ Tardy (2016).

⁶ European Commission (2016).

To date, the vast majority of APF funding (90%) has been spent on PSOs. Most of this amount has gone to provide troop stipends for the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). In 2015, however, the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) requested a better balancing of funds allocation, with increased support for APSA structures, capacity-building and early warning and mediation activities, in line with the APF's mandate. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission are therefore gradually reducing the share of APF funding for PSOs to 65%. AMISOM funding has already been cut to 80% of its original level.⁷ This reallocation was also undertaken with a view to incentivising greater African financial ownership of African-led PSOs. This is in line with the AU's own 2015 commitment to progressively increase its contribution to PSOs. The AU target is to cover 25% of PSO costs by 2020.

The EU's move to reduce its PSO funding has not gone uncriticised. Participants from both Europe and Africa noted that African troops account for 58% of the peacekeeping personnel deployed in the nine UN-led peacekeeping operations in Africa. These operations have exacted a great human toll. Unofficial figures estimate fatalities exceeding 1,000 in AMISOM alone.⁸ Several participants pointed out that the EU's burden-sharing equation has neglected this high cost in human lives, as discussions have focused mainly on the financial side.

With EU funding substantially reduced, the AU will need to fill in the gaps that remain, both by stepping up its own funding and by looking for other donors to contribute. To this end, the AUC Chairperson appointed former African Development Bank President Donald Kaberuka as AU High Representative for the Peace Fund earlier this year. Kaberuka's mandate includes formulating a roadmap for mobilising additional resources to fund AU peace and security activities. A number of seminar participants applauded the appointment, and encouraged the EU to support Kaberuka's work.

At the 27th AU Summit, held July 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda, AU member states unanimously approved the plan presented by High Representative Kaberuka for the operationalisation of the AU Peace Fund. The plan contains measures to fully fund the AU's operating budget and provide for 75% of the AU's programme budget by 2017. This would be done, among other means, by introducing a 0.2% levy on imports to African countries.⁹ (Details on how this levy would work had not yet been defined.) Implementation would enable the AU to cover 25% of the PSO budget from its own resources, while assessed contributions to the UN would provide the remaining 75% of the PSO budget, according to the plan.

The EEAS publicly expressed support for the plan, calling it 'an important step towards a system of African Union "own resources"'.¹⁰ The interviews, too, indicated wider support for the plan. Some considered this scenario, which has now received backing from African leaders, a viable alternative or addition to EU payments for PSOs. Others, however, expressed concern that it could provide disincentives for African countries to commit to greater financial ownership. A number of experts pointed out potential obstacles, such as the administrative burden of managing the 0.2% levy, the difficulty of ensuring transparency and compliance, and the short timeframe identified for the plan's implementation.¹¹

⁷ Allowances support has been reduced from US \$1,000 to \$800 per soldier per month.

⁸ Tardy (2016).

⁹ Miyandazi (2016).

¹⁰ EEAS (2016).

¹¹ Louw-Vaudran (2016).

Seminar participants further noted that, despite the institutional progress made within the AUC's Peace and Security Department, weaknesses remain to be addressed in relation to APSA management and operationalisation and the funding absorption capacities of the AU and regional economic communities (RECs). According to one speaker, the PSO Division of the AUC is especially understaffed and underfinanced, while the African Standby Force – one of the main pillars of the APSA – is still not operational. Beyond such shortcomings, one attendee noted a lack of political will among AU member states to strengthen AUC capacities. Seminar participants identified the recent agreement between the EU and AUC to work on financial management and accountability mechanisms as a positive step. Other areas noted by participants where the EU could provide support are better procurement systems for peace and security activities, greater clarity of responsibilities for financial control and improved command and control structures for AU-led operations.

Seminar discussions also stressed the continued need for rapid intervention in emerging crises. One speaker suggested that the EU explore ways to quicken decision-making and implementation under the APF. For instance, standing financing decisions could increase the APF's responsiveness, as separate financing decisions would no longer be required for every single action, which is currently the case. While standing financing decisions may seem an attractive solution, one attendee cautioned that they could be hampered by legal barriers related to EU financial regulation.¹²

Finally, seminar participants raised questions regarding the sustainability of PSO results, particularly in the current context, in which the EU is seeking to reduce its financial involvement. This led to a discussion on exit strategies. Reducing or terminating financial support to PSOs cannot be done improvidently, but rather should follow considered strategies for building up local capacities to acceptable standards.

¹² The EU Instrument for Stability, which ran from 2007 to 2013, had at its disposal a Policy Advice and Mediation Facility (PAMF). Based on an ex ante financing decision, it enabled more rapid procedures for financing smaller actions with funding up to €2 million each. It was discontinued under the new Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), due to the lack of a legal basis within the Instrument regulation.

Key takeaways from the policy seminar

- EU actors generally support a rebalancing of support, with a larger share of funds allocated to longer-term APSA and PSO capacity-building and a reduced share going to PSO stipends.
- At the same time, some African and European stakeholders are critical of the EU decision to reduce PSO funding, noting that the EU's view on burden-sharing neglects the human cost borne by African countries. They also note that PSO stipends may help build capacity. This tension will have to be addressed in discussions on a future strategy for EU support to peace and security in Africa.
- Participants encouraged the EU to support the work of the High Representative for the Peace Fund.
- The AUC's management capacities are overstretched, and AU member states have demonstrated limited political will to strengthen them. The EU could consider stepping up institutional capacity support, for example, in relation to better procurement systems or improved command and control arrangements for AU-led PSOs.
- The EU could explore innovative ways to increase the responsiveness of its decision-making, for example, by introducing standing financing decisions.
- In the context of reduced EU funding, proper exit strategies should be formulated to ensure that local capacities are in place to allow for more sustainable results.

3. Strategic orientation of future EU support

A major question regarding the future strategic orientation of EU support to the APF is how to advance beyond crisis-driven financing of African PSOs towards longer-term and more sustainable capacity-building for African conflict prevention and crisis management. A large majority of officials within the EU institutions and EU member states appear to support a shift from PSO funding to longer-term operational and structural capacity-building of the AU and RECs – aimed ultimately at increasing the AU's ability to provide rapid peace and security interventions when needed.¹³

One of the priorities identified at the joint retreat of the AU Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) and the EU PSC, held in September 2015, was enhancing cooperation on and coordination of conflict prevention and mediation efforts.¹⁴ Seminar participants similarly identified conflict prevention and mediation as a priority area for continued APF capacity-building, beyond the activities in these areas that already benefited from support through the Early Response Mechanism (ERM). One participant observed that some kinds of crises are foreseeable (e.g., related to third-termism¹⁵), allowing for early responses through mediation, dialogue and trust-building. In these domains, however, the AUC has been perceived as lacking in the necessary skills and expertise. Greater support for the ERM would strengthen early-stage responses to emerging conflict, though some stakeholders underscored the role of longer-term prevention in many contexts, noting also that this is not yet part of the EU's comprehensive approach.

Several seminar participants registered concern about what they considered an overemphasis on the military aspects of peace and security in Africa, at the expense of peacebuilding activities. One speaker noted that promoting human security and protecting civilians are among the objectives formulated by the EU and Africa in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy,¹⁶ yet maintained that these goals are undervalued within the APF. This speaker argued for greater attention to political and governance dimensions, for example, in association with contested transitions and third-termism.

Another question raised was how the AU could strengthen its capacities and mechanisms for following up on policy implementation in its member states. The APSA Roadmap 2016–2020, for instance, highlights a need for enhanced resources for the AUC's Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework. This Framework's purpose is to assist member states in identifying and addressing structural vulnerabilities, but it remains at an incipient stage.¹⁷ EU officials interviewed emphasised the need to promote the democratic functioning of security sectors and build capacities for civilian oversight, while also strengthening the inclusiveness of PSOs at the local level. Some interviewees pointed out that the APF could focus more on gender equality and human rights. Others, however, noted that the EU has little added value in this area, particularly compared to the UN, which may be considered a more legitimate actor for capacity-building on such issues in African contexts.

¹³ Interview with EU member state official, May 2016.

¹⁴ Co-chair conclusions, first joint retreat of the AU PSC and the EU PSC, 15 October 2015, in Debre Zeit Ethiopia. This corresponds with the intention of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly to place a stronger focus on conflict prevention and mediation capacities. See ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Declaration, September 2015.

¹⁵ The notion of 'third-termism' refers to the trend of presidents seeking to change constitutions to allow themselves to stand for a third term, or to remove the term limit altogether.

¹⁶ African Union and European Union (2007).

¹⁷ APSA Roadmap 2016–2020.

Another subject discussed was how to find the right balance between more operationally-oriented capacity support and institutional capacity-building, with the latter including, for example, institutional mechanisms and harmonised policies that can ‘think long-term’. The push for short-term responses to stabilise crisis situations often conflicts with interests of longer-term capacity-building. This tension is expected to continue, however, complicating EU actors’ efforts to reallocate support away from PSO financing. Indeed, despite several calls during the seminar for a shift towards more institutional capacity support, one participant stated that the EU would also need to continue orienting substantial support to operational capacity aspects, such as planning, mission-specific training and equipment, and to finance transport and logistics for the African Standby Force. These are all areas in which shortfalls have been experienced, and they were also identified as priorities in the APSA Roadmap 2016–2020.

Several attendants made a case for the EU to view the funding of troop allowances as more than just a short-term measure. Troop allowances provide resources for equipment, among other things, which they said promote African operational capacity-building in the longer-term as well. One speaker pointed out that by financing operations, the EU was also contributing to ‘learning by doing’, with similarly longer-term positive effects.

In any case, the AU is expected to grapple with a gap in resources for the foreseeable future, while in the EU, political pressure to provide short-term responses to crises will remain.¹⁸ For these reasons, as one speaker concluded, there will remain a need in the medium term for practical EU support to crisis-driven African-led PSOs through a flexible instrument, such as the APF, though other, more sustainable alternatives may eventually materialise.¹⁹ This recognition will likely moderate the shift away from PSOs and towards increased institutional capacity support. One participant brought up the European Commission’s decision to use decommitted funds to finance the APF up to 2020, noting that questions remain on how to allocate these moneys effectively.

Key takeaways from the policy seminar

- The APF should place greater emphasis on building capacities for conflict prevention and mediation, focusing on both rapid responses and longer-term engagement.
- A shift of APF funding towards long-term institutional capacity-building is widely supported, though disagreements remain on the right balance between institutional and operational support aspects, such as planning, transport, training and equipment.
- There is concern about an overemphasis on the military aspects of peace and security, with some arguing that APF funding should focus more on human security and civilian protection, as well as political and governance dimensions.
- It can be argued that troop allowance contributions have longer-term impacts, for example, in terms of equipment acquisition and learning effects.
- Despite the desire to reduce PSO support, the need for flexible EU funding to support African-led PSOs will likely remain in the medium term, though more sustainable alternatives may eventually materialise.

¹⁸ Interview with EU member state official, May 2016.

¹⁹ Interviews with EU institution and EU member state officials.

4. Improving mechanisms and arrangements for informed, strategic and coherent support

Beyond discussions on where strategic priorities should lie, a key task for the future is strengthening mechanisms and procedures for arriving at better informed, more strategic decisions and coherent approaches. In this regard, three aspects emerged from the interviews and seminar: (1) strengthening transregional cooperation among RECs and between the AU and RECs; (2) improving the knowledge base through robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E); and (3) ensuring coherent use of the complete EU toolbox in the peace and security domain.

4.1. Strengthening transregional cooperation

A first item to emerge from the interviews and seminar was the need for more extensive and regular consultation with African stakeholders (the AU, RECs and individual troop-contributing countries) on their needs and priorities, and to improve information-sharing and coordination among them. The seminar participants pointed to the current proliferation of RECs and other regional actors as a hindrance to structured policymaking processes that encompass the AU and regional actors. Indeed, regional actors often have overlapping memberships, leading to ambiguity as to which should take the lead in responding to a crisis. Moreover, the AU and RECs sometimes disagree on the desirability or even legality of having foreign troops deployed in a given region (the ECOWAS objections to deployment of Chadian troops in Mali are a case in point).

Participants suggested that transregional cooperation could be boosted through greater coordination and information exchange, both between the AUC and RECs and among the various RECs.²⁰ This is in line with priorities set in the APSA Roadmap 2016–2020. Seminar participants welcomed the creation of liaison offices between the AUC and different RECs as a promising step towards better linkages. Another good practice mentioned was the participation of the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security at ECOWAS meetings. However, as one attendee mentioned, there is scope for a more systematic engagement, for example, between the AU PSC and the different regional groupings.²¹

Finally, a participant noted that peace and security initiatives are increasingly being taken by an individual country or group of states outside an AU or REC framework. The APF's current legal framework allows it to only support interventions under an AU or regional mandate. This leaves a gap in capacity support to national security forces, especially in terms of training and equipment. Currently, the EU prepares decisions on how capacity-building in support of security and development (CBSD) can be provided to national military actors.²²

²⁰ Cooperation between the AU and the RECs and regional mechanisms (RMs) is currently cemented in a memorandum of understanding between the AU and the RECs and RMs.

²¹ One issue is that RECs do not have access to the PSC (except as an observer in some cases) and sometimes do not get reports from their own member states on PSC discussions, making REC-AU engagement more difficult.

²² On 5 July 2016, the European Commission released a legislative proposal for an amendment of Regulation (EU) 230/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace. It aims at extending Union's assistance under the IcSP under exceptional circumstances to be used to build the capacity of military actors in partner countries to contribute to sustainable development and the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies. This proposal follows on an earlier joint European Commission/HRVP Communication on Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (JOIN(2015)17 final), published in April 2016.

4.2. Improving the knowledge base

The interviews brought out the need for a better evidence base on peace and security in Africa, for example by maintaining an overview of where and how EU support to the APSA has made a longer-term and sustainable contribution. This raised the question of how evidence of successful interventions could be connected to strategic policy discussions. When programming support, partners in the EU and Africa have sought to build on lessons learned. However, knowledge on the impact of capacity-building, training and early response is not always readily available. Moreover, many EU stakeholders doubt that sufficient understanding of programmes and operations on the ground is available to make informed choices on priorities. This underlines a need for increased civilian and military expertise and improved means for assessing APF-funded activities.

The APSA Roadmap 2016–2020, published in December 2015, similarly identifies improved M&E as an important issue across a number of strategic objectives. Better M&E could provide a basis for building on success factors. This would concern, for instance, results of mediation missions, the impact of training of troops, and designs of capacity-building programmes in support of the APSA. One expert interviewed suggested that conducting short-term and cost-efficient evaluations of a number of ERM-related projects would provide information that could help strengthen mechanisms and structures in the future.

The APSA Roadmap represents an opportunity for international actors and the AUC to engage in joint monitoring, thereby increasing transparency and providing lessons about the use of APF funding in support of the APSA and wider peace and security in Africa. Seminar participants noted that the European Commission is currently seeking ways to improve its own tools to engage in M&E of APF funding. However, they added that measuring impact in the field of peace and security remains fraught with challenges. Many exogenous factors are involved, and insecurity may prevent experts from being sent into the field.

One participant brought up the role of civil society in M&E, arguing that monitoring processes should be more inclusive. Civil society organisations, for example, could conduct independent monitoring of PSOs and present their results to decision-makers. In this regard, a call for proposals was mentioned, launched under the EU Pan-African Programme, for capacity-building initiatives in civilian monitoring of PSOs. Involving civil society more broadly in multi-stakeholder projects under the APF would also help to build in accountability mechanisms.

4.3. Towards a coherent EU approach

Seminar participants pointed out numerous times that it makes little sense to view the APF in isolation when discussing the EU's impact on peace and security. Though the APF plays a vital role in supporting peace and security in Africa, it remains part of a wider landscape. Other EU interventions addressing peace and security are projects funded under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), civilian missions and military operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), EU election observation missions, assistance under EU development cooperation instruments, and political and security dialogue. Participants agreed that these must not be compartmentalised, but rather used holistically to bring about sustainable solutions, taking into account the specific niches and added values of each. If the APF is increasingly to become a conflict prevention and capacity-building instrument, consideration will have to be given to how it can complement other EU tools.

Over the past years, the European Commission has worked to improve the complementarity between EU instruments, for example, by harmonising regional programming under the EDF with support provided through the APF, and by fostering cooperation between the APF-funded (but AU-led) International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) and EUFOR RCA (the EU peacekeeping mission in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic). Still, several seminar attendees saw scope for better integration of peacebuilding and conflict prevention within PSOs to ensure their sustainability. The expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020 was highlighted as an important opportunity to trigger a broader rethink of the entire EU toolbox.

A related point that emerged during the interviews, but was not discussed at the seminar, is the lack of coherence and coordination between EU support and EU member state activities in support of peace and security. These could be better matched, for example, in the area of training provision. Nonetheless, interviewees also acknowledged that the EU delegations face capacity challenges in responding to the increasing demands for coordination.

Reflections on how to achieve a more coherent EU approach raised questions regarding the APF's specific added value and how it fits into the larger picture of EU support to peace and security in Africa. Being funded under the EDF, the APF is currently the only EU instrument that can provide resources for PSOs, for several reasons. First, the EDF is not constrained by legally binding ODA eligibility requirements that restrict the use of funds for activities in the security domain. Second, legal restrictions could apply to the EU budget, limiting its use for activities with a military dimension – depending on one's interpretation of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU).²³ As the EDF is not part of the EU budget, it is not bound by such legal constraints. Finally, the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, from which the EDF derives, specifically acknowledges the security-development nexus, providing a basis for the EDF to extend into the peace and security domain.

Nevertheless, several seminar participants questioned the appropriateness of using development funding to support activities that are essentially peace- and security-related. One attendee argued that the EDF's developmental nature strengthens the case for an increased focus on longer-term capacity development contributions when designing APF measures. This is especially relevant in the current context, in which some donors are already reducing long-term development funds in favour of short-term security measures. One participant noted that the APF was initially conceived as a temporary measure and is not optimally suited for its current tasks, which are not part of the core business of development funds (although it could be argued that peace and security are part of broader development efforts).

Others asserted that the APF has to be judged by the value it adds, including the key role it has played in shaping the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security. The APF derives its flexibility for financing military support partly from its use of funds outside the EU budget. This pragmatic and flexible nature was said to be a feature that EU member states particularly valued. Yet, as one speaker said, this implies that there can be no discussion on the future of funding instruments in isolation of the debate on the potential budgetisation of the EDF. If the EDF were included under the EU budget, a crucial question would be how to ensure that military and defence activities could be eligible for financing.

²³ As outlined in Annex 1, Article 41(2) TEU restricts financing for CFSP activities and excludes 'operations having military and defence implications'. There is as yet no definitive legal consensus over whether this rule would also extend to other activities and policies funded under the EU's budget, including those under the development cooperation policy.

One seminar participant argued for a fundamental rethink of EU priorities and the kinds of instruments needed. This would include consideration of whether a new, non-ODA instrument needs to be created for peace and security, and if so, whether such an instrument should be Africa-specific or have a more global reach. Interviews indicated different views on that latter question.

Main takeaways from the policy seminar

- Transregional cooperation could be improved by strengthening coordination and information exchange, both between the AUC and RECs and among the various regional actors, for example, through a more systematic engagement between the AU PSC and the different RECs.
- The European Commission is looking for ways to improve its tools for monitoring and evaluating APF funding, but measuring impacts on peace and security is very difficult.
- Civil society could play a role in monitoring PSOs and contribute more broadly to accountability and inclusiveness.
- If the APF is increasingly to become a conflict prevention and capacity-building instrument, it needs to consider how it can complement existing EU tools.
- Peacebuilding and conflict prevention objectives should be better integrated within PSOs to ensure their sustainability.
- While the APF is the only EU instrument that can fund PSOs, there are doubts about the appropriateness of using EDF funds to support peace and security activities. At the same time, the EDF's developmental character could strengthen the case for provision of longer-term capacity-building support through the APF.
- Concerns about the use of EDF funds for peace and security activities makes a case for a more fundamental rethink of EU priorities and financing instruments. This could include creation of a non-ODA instrument dedicated to peace and security, though member states have not reached agreement on this.

5. The future of the EU-Africa security partnership

The nature and future of the Africa-EU partnership was discussed at length at the seminar. Participants agreed that the peace and security challenges on the continent require a joint approach. A genuine strategic partnership, based on a shared perception of threats to peace and security, will be crucial to address the challenges ahead. In this light, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy expresses the ambition of taking the partnership between the two continents to a new strategic level, moving beyond the donor-recipient relationship towards a more equitable partnership.²⁴

The APF, as one participant noted, is itself a manifestation of this emerging strategic partnership, which has seen an increasing degree of institutionalisation. Attendees saw evidence of this in the regular dialogues held between the European Commission and AUC colleagues, and in the political dialogues now convened between the respective PSCs. Yet, doubts were also voiced about whether one can really speak of a strategic-level partnership, as interactions between the two institutions remain ad hoc, they lack long-term commitment and are not based on a shared vision on peace and security. Moreover, as one speaker highlighted, a strong asymmetry remains between the European Commission and AUC, with the AUC's political and institutional weakness often undermining the reciprocity of the relationship. The same speaker noted too the EU's limited strategic vision, as Europe remains very state-centric regarding peace and security, driven by EU member states' individual interests, with little scope for institution-to-institution dialogue.

Several seminar participants recognised the current lack of a mature, strategic Africa-EU relationship in the domain of peace and security. This was attributed partly to mutual distrust and the fact that not all EU member states consider Africa politically or strategically important.

To strengthen the strategic basis of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security, participants agreed that more systematic consultation was needed, along with more intense political engagement involving the EU, the AU, the RECs and the member states of both Unions. An idea suggested was revival of the Joint Cooperation Council through which member states could be engaged in long-term discussions.²⁵ Another suggestion was to strengthen dialogue between the respective rotating presidencies of the AU and the Council of the EU to shed a political light on sensitive dossiers. Furthermore, a participant noted that the EU could engage more politically with APSA bodies, such as the AU PSC or the Panel of the Wise, going beyond capacity-building to seek better coordination and dialogue, aimed at focusing support more on needs identified on the African side.²⁶

The discussion on the future of the APF is fundamentally linked to how the EU envisages its role in supporting peace and security in Africa in the long term, and how it defines the APF's core objectives. Some analysts have described the current model as 'outsourcing' security by confining EU support to logistic, financial and training support.²⁷ This raises the question of whether the APF is more accurately seen as an instrument to help the EU fight its own enemies in Africa, than as a tool to empower the AU in the peace and security domain. How the EU defines its future role in peace and security on the African continent will determine the types of tools and assistance it needs to make

²⁴ Tardy (2016).

²⁵ Interview subjects expressed concern over the setup of the Joint Cooperation Council, which was found to be too formal to be conducive to real strategic discussions. A more open, informal and frank dialogue would need to be achieved within the Joint Cooperation Council if it were to be revived.

²⁶ At the same time, there may be no a great appetite on the African side for letting the EU into their own strategic discussions. Arguably, the EU cannot expect to always sit at the table in African peace and security planning, even if it is the biggest donor. Political engagement would therefore probably be confined to better listening to needs and building trust in the partnership.

²⁷ Gowan & Witney (2014).

available. As one seminar participant put it, the EU needs, at minimum, a shared consensus on what it wants the APF to be, reflected in a strategic document, in order to position itself more strategically.

Another participant pointed out the need for the APF to be recognised, not only as a financial instrument, but also as a tool for political influence. This is especially relevant in light of recent cases of APF funding going to PSOs that are not necessarily conducted in accordance with EU and international humanitarian principles.²⁸ Such instances raise questions about the kinds of political engagement the EU wants, and particularly, how to balance the principle of African ownership with exertion of EU leverage and maintenance of a degree of control over EU funding. One participant said that the EU should use its political leverage through the APF to ensure that PSOs focus on civilian protection.

The 2017 EU-Africa Summit was identified as a key opportunity to provide further strategic guidance to the APF and the Africa-EU partnership in the peace and security domain, while also linking with the 2030 Agenda. However, this will be a challenging task, one speaker noted, as Africa-EU relations continue to be preoccupied with the migration question. Moreover, participants maintained that the future of the APF cannot be considered in isolation of debates on the future of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the EDF. One participant saw the current two-track approach, with the Africa-EU partnership for political questions and the ACP-EU framework for development cooperation, as a hindrance to a more strategic approach to peace and security on the African continent. The post-Cotonou discussions were therefore welcomed as an opportunity to reflect on new ways of cooperating after 2020.

Finally, attendees pointed out that discussions on the Africa-EU partnership need to look at complementarities and added values vis-à-vis existing UN-AU cooperation. A report on UN-AU financing is due to be published later in 2016. This could serve as a starting point for a fundamental re-examination of the APF, and the EU's added value in terms of funding the security-development nexus in Africa.

²⁸ For example, Human Rights Watch has reported alleged sexual exploitation and abuse by AMISOM troops.

Main takeaways from the policy seminar

- To strengthen the strategic foundation of the Africa-EU Partnership in Peace and Security, a stronger political dialogue will be needed, working towards a better understanding of joint strategic objectives shared by the EU, the AU and their respective member states.
- The EU needs, at minimum, a shared consensus on what it wants the APF to be, reflected in a strategy document, in order to position itself more strongly.
- The APF should be seen not only as a financial instrument, but also as a political tool. However, this raises questions on how to balance the principle of African ownership with the exertion of EU leverage.
- The current two-track approach, with the Africa-EU partnership for political questions and the ACP-EU framework for development cooperation, is considered a hindrance to a more strategic approach to peace and security on the African continent. The post-Cotonou discussions provide an opportunity to reflect on new ways of cooperating.
- Discussions on the Africa-EU partnership should also look at complementarities and added values vis-à-vis existing UN-AU cooperation.
- The 2017 EU-Africa Summit will be a key opportunity to provide further strategic guidance to the APF and to the Africa-EU partnership in the peace and security domain, while also linking with the 2030 Agenda.

6. Moving the chess pieces: Concluding remarks

The policy seminar provided an opportunity to discuss the long-term strategic priorities of the APF, to identify opportunities and challenges to be addressed in defining the APF's future agenda and to formulate suggestions on the way forward. Overall, a shift was endorsed, away from short-term financing of PSOs towards longer-term capacity-building of the APSA, particularly with regard to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation. Yet, how to balance institutional and operational capacity support remained a point of contention. Short-term operational needs were expected to persist in the absence of sustainable financing alternatives to the APF.

In terms of overall decision-making and design, the seminar identified a need for better informed, more strategic and coherent EU support to peace and security in Africa. This could be achieved through stronger transregional cooperation, improved M&E and lesson learning, and more coherent application of the EU's various instruments and mechanisms in the peace and security and development domains. Suggestions were also made for more systematic engagement between the AU PSC and RECs, a more prominent monitoring role for civil society, and better integration of peacebuilding and conflict prevention within PSOs.

One of the most crucial points raised was that any re-examination of EU instruments and mechanisms must determine whether funding for peace and security activities from the development-oriented EDF can be upheld in the future. Another option would be to establish a dedicated, non-ODA instrument for peace and security, though support for this idea was far from unanimous.

There was strong support for intensified political dialogue between the EU and the AUC on peace and security issues. This, however, would need to be preceded on the European side by steps towards a shared strategic vision on the future of the APF. Moreover, thought will need to be given to ways to ensure a more inclusive process in monitoring APSA implementation.

On a number of the issues raised at the seminar, no conclusive answers can be formulated as yet. Thoughts on the future of the APF remain intertwined with other policy discussions under way in the EU, for example, regarding the post-Cotonou partnership after 2020 and the potential integration of the EDF into the EU budget, the funding gap for capacity-building in support of security and development, the use of ODA for military operations and the wider strategic vision for the EU's foreign and security policy, as recently laid out in the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy.²⁹ While these debates are often technical, they nonetheless have strong political ramifications. Annex 1 provides an abbreviated synopsis of some of the issues at play in the background of discussions on the future of the APF. Any decisions taken on the strategic orientation of the APF will depend on the movements of these chess pieces too.

The seminar did demonstrate that the coming years will be key in further shaping the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security. The 2017 EU-Africa Summit, in particular, was considered an opportunity for creating forward momentum. But it will need to be preceded in the EU by a thorough reflection on how the EU sees itself as a security actor in Africa and how the Africa-EU cooperation on peace and security can progress towards a real, mature partnership.

²⁹ European Union (2016).

Annex 1: Background issues affecting the organisation of future EU support to peace and security in Africa

<p><i>Finding a sustainable funding base for EU support to peace and security and the APSA</i></p>	<p>The EU has not yet realised its vision of establishing long-term financial sustainability for the APF outside EDF funding. The APF has been under increasing financial pressure in the past, which <i>'has made the allocation of funds to peace operations and the APF capacity to respond to new crises challenging'</i>.³⁰ Shortfalls have led to difficult discussions within the EU Council on the financing of the APF. Moreover, the use of development funds for PSOs has met with criticism from a number of stakeholders.</p> <p>Nonetheless, there is no clarity or agreement on alternatives for providing longer-term funding for the African military PSOs, which are currently supported by the EDF. This issue is particularly relevant in view of the potential 'budgetisation' of the EDF and has also been raised in the context of finding appropriate financing mechanisms for activities in the capacity building for security and development (CBSD) domain. The EDF (and through it the APF) falls outside the EU budget. This allows flexibility in its funding of military support. This pragmatic and flexible nature of the APF was valued by interviewees, who noted that some member states would like to retain this feature in the future. If the EDF and the APF were included in the EU budget, the crucial question would be how could military and defence activities remain eligible for financing.</p> <p>Within the EU budget, external action can be funded either under the Union's development and cooperation policies (art. 209 & 212 TFEU), notably for activities that have a clear development rationale (with the current political agreement that 90% of EU external action financing should be ODA),³¹ or under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) chapter for activities related predominantly to security. The CBSD discussion has revealed disagreements among stakeholders about the types of military and defence support that can be financed from the EU budget. In principle, activities under the development chapter can fund military support, provided the objectives are primarily developmental.³² Yet, Article 41(2) TEU restricts financing for CFSP activities and excludes <i>'operations having military and defence implications'</i>. There is as yet no definitive legal consensus over whether this rule would also extend to other activities and policies funded under the EU budget, including those under the development cooperation policy. Interpretations also diverge on whether the restrictions apply narrowly to CSDP missions (in which case, support to third parties' military activities may be possible) or to all activities within the CFSP chapter. How these diverging interpretations are resolved to finance CBSD activities may in the future have implications for the possibilities for financing the military and defence activities currently funded by the APF from within the EU budget.</p>
<p><i>Implications for decision-making</i></p>	<p>Discussions on setting up sustainable financing for EU support to peace and security in Africa – including the desire for flexible yet sustainable instruments to fund future CBSD and APF activities – raise questions about decision-making structures and the extent to which EU member states are willing to hand over more responsibility to EU institutions in military and defence support activities. Funding under the Union's development and cooperation policies (art. 209 & 212 TFEU) follows the 'community method'. That means the Commission has the right of initiative and decides on implementing measures after seeking the opinion – on a qualified majority basis – of the member states. In contrast, decisions under the CFSP require member states' unanimity. This rule also applies to the formal prior approval by the PSC of APF financing decisions. If future financing for military peace and security activities in Africa were to come from within the EU budget, a decision on what Treaty article(s) such support was based on could be influenced by the extent to which EU member states were willing to give up a number of prerogatives (the right of</p>

³⁰ Three year action plan for APF, 2014–2016

³¹ This currently leaves 10% to fund non-ODA expenses, and a number of instruments such as the IcSP under Heading 4 are not tied to ODA criteria.

³² This does not necessarily mean that it needs to be ODA-eligible.

	<p>initiative, decision-making authority and veto power) on external action concerning military and defence.</p>
<p><i>A specific instrument for Africa?</i></p>	<p>A related aspect, linked to post-Cotonou discussions, is the importance of keeping an instrument that pays specific attention to Africa and the APSA. The alternative would be for funding for peace and security activities in Africa to come from a more globally focused instrument in the future. A number of member states strongly endorsed keeping a specific focus on peace and security in Africa through a dedicated instrument, while others were open to a more global peace and security instrument. A draft European Parliament report on PSOs views the APF's focus on Africa alone as distinct advantage, considering it a lever that can be used as entry point for a stronger partnership between the continents.³³</p> <p>Some member states have not yet voiced a clear position on their preferred outcome of the different discussions relevant to future support for peace and security in Africa. Regarding the CBSD domain, a number of EU member states have expressed a preference for a dedicated instrument within the EU budget, though without raising member state contributions. Advancing the EU discussions on strategic, long-term support for peace and security in Africa may resemble a chess game, as it will require transversal thinking across a number of policy processes. In order to arrive at strategic and effective EU support for peace and security in Africa, the EU's internal arrangements and opinions will need to be reconciled and matched with African plans and views about the best way for the EU to support the peace and security agenda. On the EU side, five major issues will need to be addressed: (1) the divergent opinions around the use of development cooperation funds and 'ODA eligibility of activities, (2) the hesitation of EU member states to delegate more decision-making power to EU institutions, (3) diverging legal interpretations, (4) the desire for continued sustainability of finances and preservation of flexibility; and (5) objections by some EU member states to increasing EU contributions to provide the needed funding.</p>

³³ EP Committee on Foreign Affairs (2016).

Annex 2: Policy seminar programme

Policy Seminar on the future of EU support to peace and security in Africa – What Implications for the African Peace Facility beyond 2020? 24 June 2016	
Seminar Program	
9:00 - 9:30	Registration, Coffee
9:30 - 10:30	Session I: Lessons learned and Current debates Opening remarks by PSC Ambassador Carola van Rijnsoever (NL) Input Ms. Kristin De Peyron (EEAS, HoD Pan-African Affairs) Input Ms. Françoise Moreau (DG DEVCO, HoU Africa-EU Partnership, African Peace Facility) ¹ Input by Mr. Amadou Diongue (AU Commission, Peace & Security Department) Brief Q&A
Moderator ECDPM (Volker Hauck)	9.30 - 9.40 9.40 - 9.50 9.50 - 10.00 10.00 - 10.10 10.10 - 10.30
10:30 - 10:45	Coffee break
10:45 - 12.30	Session II: What strategic vision for EU support to peace and security in Africa and the APF beyond 2020? (Panel format) Presentation Dr. Thierry Tardy (EUISS): A changing EU-Africa Security Partnership? Important aspects for strategic engagement in the long-term future Panel Discussion: Inputs from Panel Members and moderated discussion among panelists <i>Moderator Volker Hauck (ECDPM, Head of Programme Conflict, Security & Resilience)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Solomon Dersso (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Commissioner) • Ms Elissa Jobson (ICG, Adviser African Union Relations) • Dr. Thierry Tardy (EUISS, Senior Analyst) • Anna Penfrat (EPLO, Senior Policy Officer) Floor open for reactions from EU MS and discussion with audience
12.30 - 12.40	11.30 - 12.30
12:40	Closing Remarks (NL) Lunch

¹ Ms. Françoise Moreau was unable to attend the seminar. Ms. Kristin De Peyron conveyed her messages on her behalf.

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About ECDPM

ECDPM was established in 1986 as an independent foundation to improve European cooperation with the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). Its main goal today is to broker effective partnerships between the European Union and the developing world, especially Africa. ECDPM promotes inclusive forms of development and cooperates with public and private sector organisations to better manage international relations. It also supports the reform of policies and institutions in both Europe and the developing world. One of ECDPM's key strengths is its extensive network of relations in developing countries, including emerging economies. Among its partners are multilateral institutions, international centres of excellence and a broad range of state and non-state organisations.

Thematic priorities

ECDPM organises its work around four themes:

- Reconciling values and interests in the external action of the EU and other international players.
- Promoting economic governance and trade for inclusive and sustainable growth.
- Supporting societal dynamics of change related to democracy and governance in developing countries, particularly Africa.
- Addressing food security as a global public good through information and support to regional integration, markets and agriculture.

Approach

ECDPM is a “think and do tank”. It links policies and practice using a mix of roles and methods. ECDPM organises and facilitates policy dialogues, provides tailor-made analysis and advice, participates in South-North networks and does policy-oriented research with partners from the South. ECDPM also assists with the implementation of policies and has a strong track record in evaluating policy impact. ECDPM's activities are largely designed to support institutions in the developing world to define their own agendas. ECDPM brings a frank and independent perspective to its activities, entering partnerships with an open mind and a clear focus on results.

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