

TOWARDS STRONGER GLOBAL-REGIONAL PEACE & SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS

26-27 October 2023, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

This year's Challenges Annual Forum will gather partners and key stakeholders to explore ways to strengthen global-regional peace and security partnerships, with a focus on Africa. The in-person event, co-hosted by the Training for Peace (TfP) programme, will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 26-27 October 2023.

In a changing global context, regional and sub-regional bodies are becoming increasingly important in maintaining peace and security. To prevent and respond to fast-evolving and multilayered peace and security risks, the world's toolbox requires reform, including closer cooperation with regional bodies such as the African Union (AU)¹.

Increasingly, the AU and the UN strive for strategic coherence, building on respective comparative advantages and strengths. Over the past decades, the strategic partnership between the AU and UN has become central to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts on the African continent but key challenges remain, including around strategic coherence, predictable financing and capabilities.

The UN, based on its Charter and the mandate of the Security Council, has a unique global legitimacy and role in restoring and maintaining international peace and security. This has resulted in over seven decades of unique peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding experiences, as well as specialized programmatic and thematic capacities of the entire UN system. The AU, based on its Constitutive Act and other legal and normative frameworks and the mandate of the Peace and Security Council, has unique regional legitimacy to maintaining peace and security on the African continent. The African Union Commission has also developed significant capacities for African-led peace initiatives, with support from the UN and other organisations.

The African continent helps in showcasing the achievements, promises and limitations of the state of global-regional peace and security partnerships. Of the 55 active conflicts recorded in 2022² roughly half are located on the African continent. The conflict landscape in Africa is driven by a complex mix of endogenous and exogenous factors at various local, national and regional levels. Terrorism and violent extremism are spreading across Africa at

¹ See: <https://challengesforum.org/paper/annual-forum-report-2022/>

² Fifty-five active conflicts were recorded in 2022. See: Obermeier & Rustad - Conflict Trends A Global Overview, 1946-2022, PRIO Paper 2023.

an alarming rate and the AU has repeatedly called for greater support in the fight against this evolving threat, as well as enhanced cooperation with the UN and African subregional organizations. Because UN peace operations are considered not fit for counterterrorism³ or other more offensive peace enforcement operations, the UN Security Council increasingly turns to regional bodies like the AU or sub-regional organisations for this type of actions. In this regard, the July 2023 New Agenda for Peace (NAP) Policy Brief⁴ calls for UN support to regional and sub-regional organisations in their peace enforcement, counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts.

Through the lens of the NAP and the UN Secretary-General's Report on financing of AU peace support operations mandated by the Security Council (1 May 2023), and grounded in short background papers, the CAF23 will discuss three thematic issues, using concrete examples and lessons from recent African-led peace support operations, and generate recommendations on how the UN can better support African-led peace operations that are mandated by the UN Security Council:

1. **Strategic coherence of global, regional and sub-regional peace operations**, with lessons from Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM)
2. **Predictable financing of African-led peace support operations**, with lessons from African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)
3. **Addressing capability gaps more systematically**, with lessons from the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in Lake Chad Basin region.

During the Challenges Annual Forum 2023, participants will be provided an opportunity to take stock and explore the key features of the AU-UN partnership, including their strategic coherence, and the various support and funding models currently being considered, as part of the future of peace operations. Participants will also exchange lessons learned on how other regional and subregional bodies have navigated peace and security partnerships with the UN.

In view of the Summit of the Future next year, the Challenges Annual Forum 2023 #CAF23Addis provides a unique and timely opportunity to reflect how the UN can support a new generation of peace operations, led by African partners.

The CAF23 will be guided by the following questions:

Political and strategic coherence:

- How can global, regional and sub-regional decision making and mandating of peace operations be further aligned, based on a sharing of responsibilities and the respective strengths of each organization, in a manner that prioritises political solutions and maximises the impact of both uniformed and civilian personnel?
- Recognising the primacy of the UN Security Council, what doctrinal and command and control implications does this have for regional and sub-regional peace support operations?

Financing of African-led peace support operations:

- How can UN financing of African-led peace support operations, authorised by the UN Security Council, be made more systematic and predictable?
- What oversight mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law and accountability on the transparent use of UN assessed contributions?

³ The Brahimi Report (2000), Capstone Doctrine (2008) and the HIPPO Report (2015) all emphasized that UN peacekeeping operations are not fit for peace enforcement and counter-terrorism operations.

⁴ <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-new-agenda-for-peace-en.pdf>

Technical support and building capabilities:

- How can the UN support the AU's and sub-regional ability to plan, deploy, manage and sustain peace support operations and how can the AU-UN partnership help in addressing capability gaps (training, logistical and administrative arrangements, equipment) of African-led peace support operations more systematically?

The discussions and key takeaways from the Challenges Annual Forum will result in a brief CAF report, which constitutes one of the main collective outcomes of the partnership.

Co-hosting partners:

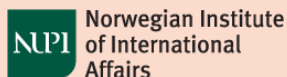
The Training for Peace (TfP) programme is the Royal Norwegian MFA's flagship capacity-support programme to the African Union Commission (AUC). It contributes towards capacity building within the broader ambit of peace operations in Africa. It is a three-tier partnership between:



The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) is a South Africa-based civil society organisation working throughout Africa to bring creative African solutions to the challenges posed by conflict on the continent.



The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) is a leading African policy research and training organisation advancing human security in Africa through evidence-based policy advice, technical support and capacity building.



The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) is Norway's leading independent centre for research and information on international political and economic issues, and on areas of central relevance to Norwegian foreign policy.



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Challenges Forum International Secretariat is hosted by FBA – the Swedish Agency for Peace, Security and Development – on behalf of the Challenges Forum Partnership.