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## *The African Standby Force of the African Union*

Ambitious Plans, Wide Regional Disparities:  
An Intermediate Appraisal

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“There are many tasks which United Nations peace-keeping forces should not be asked to undertake, and many places they should not go. But when the United Nations does send its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the lingering forces of war and violence with the ability and determination to defeat them.”

**Lakhdar Brahimi, Report of the Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations, 2000 (Brahimi Report)**

**The *African Standby Force* of the African Union  
Ambitious Plans, Wide Regional Disparities:  
An Intermediate Appraisal**

By adopting the joint EU-Africa Strategy on 15 December 2005, the European Union set course for a comprehensive partnership with the African continent. The year 2015 is given as a time horizon. Peace and security are defined as the primary goals of this strategy: the EU intends to cooperate with the African Union (AU), the sub-regional organizations and individual countries to anticipate conflicts, to prevent them and to act as a mediator in the case of conflict. Establishment and maintenance of security in Africa also counts among the goals of German foreign and security policy. The Bundeswehr can perform tasks in Africa either in the context of multinational operations or in cooperation with armed forces from other European countries or as a contributing force to UN missions.

However, the question also arises to what extent the African countries themselves can contribute to crisis and conflict containment, i.e. which services they are able to provide within the scope of peace missions. The foundation of the African Union in 2002 and the establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) in March 2004 meant that an adequate security platform had been created for the African countries. Consequently, though taking shape only very slowly, a Common African Defense and Security Policy has been in existence since 2002. A two-phase time schedule was set up envisaging the build-up of an *African Standby Force* (ASF) suited for peacekeeping operations by 2010. In each of the five regions (North, East, South, West and Central) one brigade each comprising approximately 3,000 to 5,000 soldiers is to be established for peace operations.

What does the present AU security architecture look like, and what progress has been made in the individual regions with regard to implementing the set time schedule? Which shortfalls have been identified and where are the key capabilities for peace operations on the African continent? What are the chances for the international community, and with that also for Germany, to contribute to the improvement of the crisis management capabilities?

In summary, it can be stated that the build-up of a fully operational African Standby Force will be delayed

beyond the target date of 2010. The reasons for this are manifold: The time schedule has been highly ambitious and when it comes to funding the ASF, the African states continue to be dependent on external donors. This general scarcity of resources is directly connected with material deficiencies in the fields of reconnaissance and situation picture preparation, mobility, communications, and command and control capabilities. Attainment of an efficient crisis management capability calls for the helicopter component envisaged in the concept to be implemented much more rapidly. There is a general lack of well trained personnel. And there are also organizational problems which are even aggravated because there is a lack in political determination to achieve the objectives anchored in the AU Charter.

As a result, the employment options of the African peacekeeping forces will be limited beyond the year 2010. Originally, there had been hopes that the number of UN troops in Africa could soon be reduced significantly by replacing them with continental units. However, these hopes cannot be fulfilled. Even the EU Battle Groups specifically designed for deployment in Africa cannot be dispensed with in the foreseeable future. If the share of UN or EU forces is to be reduced at least in the medium term, the international community, including Germany, must unconditionally support the development of a security architecture in Africa. Even Europe and the Mediterranean will benefit from more stability and security on the neighboring continent. In addition, this support may help curb the cost of UN missions in Africa, which have reached a new all-time high.

The hybrid operation in Darfur has woven close ties between the African Union and the United Nations. However, this also means that the success or failure of this mission will be attributed mainly to these two organizations, whether justified or not. And therefore it is mandatory to strengthen the African capabilities for crisis management.

This study will present different approaches to how the international donor community, including Germany, can support the development of the African Union into an efficient crisis management instrument:

1. The helicopter component of the African Standby Force is in urgent need of optimization, because it is the key element of peace missions. In this context the NATO procedure tried and tested during AWACS operations could serve as a role model for implementing a successful joint structure.

2. A maritime component, especially in the sealift area, should be added to the concept of the African Standby Force. This could improve the mobility and sustainment capability of deployed forces and at the same time increase the general capability to take action.
3. The task of preparing situation pictures (with a focus on crisis regions) should be made a global task of the UN. This would mean to relieve the nations involved from being accused of spying and at the same time counter the objection that they simply wanted to enforce national interests. The African Union's Continental Early Warning System could become an important component of this global early warning system that would be available to all peace support operations at a constantly high quality level, irrespective of the resources available in the region concerned.

# The Phased Security Architecture of the African Union

The African continent has turned into a focal area for United Nations peacekeeping missions. An analysis of the relevant facts and figures reveals, in particular, the following three aspects:

1. The significant rise in the total number of policemen and soldiers employed in the context of UN missions. In October 2006, the figure of 80,000 uniformed personnel on deployment was exceeded for the first time in the history of the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> Since then, the figure has increased even further.
2. Africa as an area of operations tying up by far the largest number of forces. At present, well over two thirds of all policemen and soldiers involved in UN missions are deployed on the African continent: On 31 March 2008,<sup>2</sup> the total number world-wide amounted to 88,862 personnel, 61,098 thereof in Africa (68.7%).
3. The cost aspect. With the fully developed hybrid operation<sup>3</sup> UNAMID the total number of uniformed personnel deployed will exceed the mark of 90,000 in 2008. This results in the cost detailed in the Table.

A total sum of almost 5 billion USD clearly qualifies the amount of 300 million Euro provided by the EU for three years within the scope of the African Peace Facility.<sup>4</sup>

The African countries provide 26,668 policemen and soldiers in the context of UN missions.<sup>5</sup> Although

this is a respectable figure on its own, the balance<sup>6</sup> clearly remains in the negative at the expense of the African countries. This is not to curtail what the African force providers have achieved, quite the contrary. It becomes clear nonetheless, how important it is for the AU to develop its own security profile as well as own conflict containment capabilities on the African continent.

**Table**  
**Cost of UN Missions in Africa (in million USD)**

UNAMID	1,500
African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur	
UNMIS	890
United Nations Mission in the Sudan	
UNOCI	500
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire	
UNMIL	720
United Nations Mission in Liberia	
MONUC	1,200
Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo)	
UNMEE	120
United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea	
MINURSO	47
Mission des Nations Unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara occidental	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,977</b>

By founding the African Union<sup>7</sup> in July 2002 and establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) in March 2004, the African countries created an adequate security platform. The African Union is modeled on the European Union, involving also a

<sup>6</sup> 26,668 policemen and soldiers are from African countries, 61,098 are currently deployed in Africa.

<sup>7</sup> Founded on 9 July 2002 as the successor organization of the OAU (Organization of African Unity).

<sup>1</sup> [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/year\\_review06/facts\\_figures.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/year_review06/facts_figures.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/mar08\\_1.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/mar08_1.pdf) (accessed on 13 May 2008).

<sup>3</sup> This operation is marked by joint operations of AU and UN forces.

<sup>4</sup> Conversion as of 5 December 2007: 4.977 billion USD correspond to 3.387 billion Euros. Projected for five years, this is just under 17 billion Euros, which is more than fifty-six times the amount of the EU for the African Peace Facility.

<sup>5</sup> Of a total of 88,862. This amounts to almost 30%. [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/mar08\\_1.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/mar08_1.pdf) (accessed on 13 May 2008). The African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have been left out of consideration here, as they do not count among UN missions.

security council (PSC) similar to the United Nations. A Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP) came into existence in 2002 which, however, is beginning to take shape only very slowly. An African Standby Force (ASF) suited for performing peacekeeping operations is to be established by the year 2010. This standby force is to be capable of operating inside Africa in the context of either a mandate of the UN or a mandate of the AU. The African Union advocates the principle of "African ownership," meaning that in the future it will contain crises and resolve conflicts in Africa by its own efforts. During the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm in June 2007, the Federal Government declared that it was ready to provide the African security initiative with new incentives.<sup>8</sup>

For a number of reasons, Europe in general and Germany in particular have an interest in the African Union and specifically in the African Standby Force. The AU has been modeled on the EU, which automatically also results in functional commonalities. When the European Council<sup>9</sup> adopted the EU-Africa strategy it was clear at the latest that the AU had been chosen the strategic partner of the EU. By concluding the AU-EU partnership in December 2007, both organizations placed their cooperation on a formal basis at eye level. As it is the neighboring continent and also borders on the Mediterranean, Africa is directly connected with the EU area of stability bringing it more to the focus of public attention not least because of the French concept of a Mediterranean Union. This leads to common interests and overlapping fields of action.

Founded in 1963 and predecessor of the AU, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was a rather incoherent association of different countries.<sup>10</sup> One of its premises was the inviolability of national sovereignty and, consequently, the precept of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. However, this was not enough to meet the security requirements in Africa. The African Union's security agenda is based on a different approach: primacy is no longer on the absolute sovereignty of individual states, but on "good political governance."<sup>11</sup> which the AU has identified as

a prerequisite for sustained development, security and the fight against poverty. The central operating principles of the African Union are laid down in Article 4 of the AU Charter.<sup>12</sup> Analogous to the OAU dictates of non-interference, Article 4 (g) of the AU Charter also contains a ban on interference in each other's internal affairs,<sup>13</sup> but unlike the OAU dictates the AU ban can be suspended, provided that certain conditions are met:

Article 4 (h)<sup>14</sup> authorizes the African Union to intervene (with military means) in a Member State in grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Article 4 (j)<sup>15</sup> gives Member States the right to request intervention from the Union to restore peace and security. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda obviously provides the background for this commitment of the African Union to intervene with military means in an African country where a genocide situation is evolving. The new legal competences, the AU has given itself in its charter open up an opportunity for a radical change of the way in which the African nations deal with each other.

Finally, Article 4 (m)<sup>16</sup> includes a commitment to the value system the Charter is based on. The values the Member States declare obligatory in this paragraph are by and large western values: they demand respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance.

The AU Charter constitutes the basis on which the African security architecture was built. The latter, in turn, is based on two pillars<sup>17</sup>: firstly, on the Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP) agreed upon in 2002 and, secondly, on the Peace and Security Council (PSC) established in 2004, with all its subordinate bodies. These include the Continental Early

Architektur: Status quo – Hoffnungen – Probleme," in: *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift*, 44 (2006) 2, pp. 175–180.

<sup>12</sup> African Union, *The Constitutive Act*, [www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Constitutive\\_Act\\_en.html](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Constitutive_Act_en.html) (accessed on 7 June 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Article 4 (g): "non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another."

<sup>14</sup> Article 4 (h): "the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity".

<sup>15</sup> Article 4 (j): "the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security."

<sup>16</sup> Article 4 (m): "respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance."

<sup>17</sup> Spielbüchler, "Die Afrikanische Sicherheits-Architektur" [see footnote 11].

<sup>8</sup> Cf. "Schwerpunkte der deutschen G8-Präsidentschaft," [www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/DE/G8Gipfel/Agenda/agenda.html](http://www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/DE/G8Gipfel/Agenda/agenda.html).

<sup>9</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Die EU und Afrika: Auf dem Weg zu einer strategischen Partnerschaft*, Brussels, 19 December 2005 (15961/05 [Press 367]).

<sup>10</sup> Simone Kopfmüller, "Politische Ideen der Unabhängigkeitsbewegung," in: *Informationen zur politischen Bildung. Afrika I*, (2001) 264, pp. 35–37.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Spielbüchler, "Die Afrikanische Sicherheits-



Warning System (CEWS), the Panel of the Wise (POW), the Military Staff Committee (MSC) and the African Standby Force (ASF).

## Common African Defense and Security Policy

Article 4 (d) of the AU Charter contains the mission to develop a Common African Defense and Security Policy. The decisive outcome of the cooperation efforts in this field of politics is the “Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defense and Security Policy,”<sup>18</sup> adopted in Sirte, Libya, on 28 February 2004. It is the policy document of the African security architecture. Which are the cornerstones of this security architecture? The Declaration starts with the definitions of three basic concepts: *defense*, *security* and *common security threats*.<sup>19</sup> Use is made of an extended security concept, and the security of each individual African state is directly linked with the security of the other African states and that of the African continent as a whole. This principle of interdependence is also reflected in the “principles and values” of the CADSP<sup>20</sup>: there it says that each threat or aggression against an African country was perceived as a threat or aggression against all others and, therefore, required a meeting of the AU or the PSC. In this context no distinction is made as to whether the threat or aggression originates from within or outside the continent.

The “objectives and goals” of the CADSP<sup>21</sup> are mainly to enhance trust and credibility and reduce rivalries and mistrust among the African countries. Trust and a sense of responsibility are to be boosted by multiple ways of military cooperation, by an exchange of information and by manifold crisis management activities.

The Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the AU Member States is the supreme body of the CADSP; however, as far as security matters are concerned, the PSC must be considered the most important body of the African Union. It is to respond efficiently and as early as possible to conflicts and crisis situations. In addition, the Peace and Security Council

is to oversee the regional organizations and to cooperate closely with the African Commission on Human Rights. Outwardly, the PSC is to act as the central point of contact for the United Nations and other international organizations. This makes the Peace and Security Council the linchpin of all matters relating to security policy on the African continent.

The Protocol fixing the decision to establish the PSC entered into force on 26 December 2003 with the 27th Member State depositing its instrument of ratification. The Peace and Security Council took up work in March 2004. It is composed of representatives from 15 states, nominated by the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government. Five members are elected to three-year terms and ten members to two-year terms. The members with a three-year term, one each from the five African regions (North, East, Southern, West and Central Africa) currently include (until March 2010) Algeria, Ethiopia, Gabon, Nigeria and Angola. The other ten PSC representatives currently include (since March 2008 for a two-year term of office<sup>22</sup>) Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, Uganda, Tunisia, Swaziland, Zambia, Benin, Burkina Faso and Mali.<sup>23</sup> All members can be re-elected which in practice has repeatedly been the case and gives some states more or less a permanent representation on the Council.<sup>24</sup> The chair rotates on a monthly basis and in alphabetical order of the participating states.

Irrespective of the size of their country or the number of inhabitants, all PSC members have only one vote. And even though votes are generally aimed to reach a consensus, no state has a power of veto. In cases of doubt the principle of majority rule will apply. The Council constitutes a quorum, if two thirds of its members are present. In case a Member State is involved in a conflict which is the subject of Council deliberations, this right to vote is cancelled. The Peace and Security Council has relatively extensive powers. It authorizes and mandates peacekeeping operations (PKO) and recommends to the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government, if appropriate, the military

<sup>18</sup> African Union, *Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy*, Sirte, 28 February 2004, [www.africa-union.org/News\\_Events/2ND%20EX%20ASSEMBLY/Declaration%20on%20a%20Comm.Af%-20Def%20Sec.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/News_Events/2ND%20EX%20ASSEMBLY/Declaration%20on%20a%20Comm.Af%-20Def%20Sec.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Section I: “Definitions and Scope.”

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Section II: “Principles and Values.”

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Section III: “Objectives and Goals.”

<sup>22</sup> African Union, Executive Council, 12th Ordinary Council, 25–29 January 2008, EX.CL/Dec.409 (XII), [www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2008/january/summit/docs/decisions/Executive\\_Decisions\\_378-414.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2008/january/summit/docs/decisions/Executive_Decisions_378-414.pdf) (accessed on 18 June 2008).

<sup>23</sup> The distribution key is as follows: North Africa 1 member, East, Southern and Central Africa 2 members each and West Africa 3 members.

<sup>24</sup> Except for Angola taking South Africa’s place, the members are identical with those of the first three-year term.

intervention in a Member State in accordance with Article 4 (h) or 4 (j) of the AU Charter. In its capacity as ultimate authority, the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government will finally decide about a possible operation. In this case the country in question will have no vote, but may be invited to present its position.

As the PSC is basically staffed by civilians only, the Military Staff Committee (MSC) renders support by providing military expertise. In this way, the armed forces are placed under political control, because the MSC has no authority of its own. The MSC is composed of advisers from the PSC member states. Should a state be unable to provide competent advisers, it may entrust a country not represented in the PSC with this task.

Three instruments have been placed at the PSC's disposal to fulfill its task: the Panel of the Wise (POW), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and a military readiness force, the African Standby Force.

#### **Panel of the Wise (POW)**

The Panel of the Wise consists of five highly respected African personalities who are to represent the five regions of the African continent and who must have distinguished themselves by outstanding contributions to Africa in the areas of peace, security and development. In January 2007, the following members were appointed for a period of three years:

1. Salim Ahmed Salim, former Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), representing the East African region;
2. Brigalia Bam, Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, representing the Southern Africa region;
3. Ahmed Ben Bella, former President of Algeria, representing the North Africa region;
4. Elisabeth Pognon, President of the Constitutional Court of Benin, representing West Africa, and
5. Miguel Trovoada, former President of Sao Tomé and Príncipe, representing Central Africa.

It had been planned that on 9 August 2007 the POW would determine guidelines and procedures for its work. However, it did not come to that, because the pertinent discussion was postponed. A central weak point of the POW is that it has no independent staff of its own who could provide its five members in due time with significant analyses and background information. It is, therefore, uncertain how the Panel is to

accomplish its task in practice. The individual networks alone hardly suffice. So far the Panel is therefore not operational yet.

#### **Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)**

The sooner the intervention in an emerging or already existing conflict, the greater the chances to contain it and the lower the effort required. This is why the AU has decided to establish an early warning system (Continental Early Warning System, CEWS) which, commensurate with the five regions in Africa, is to be based on five regional early warning systems. In East Africa, a regional early warning system (Conflict Early Warning and Response System, CEWARN) has already been developed under the custodianship of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). It started operations in June 2003 and maintains field offices (Conflict Early Warning Units, CEWERU) in various countries. Meanwhile there is a regional early warning system in West Africa, too, although ECOWARN is currently still operating at situation center level.

All in all, the development of a continental early warning system is, thus, in the beginnings at best. The principles of analysis triggering an early warning that might justify an ASF intervention are politically highly controversial already in the preparatory phase. In particular countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and Rwanda or Libya and Egypt tend to be counted among the blocking countries. Moreover, the cooperation of the regional early warning systems has not yet been formalized nor have any structural links been established so far.

#### **African Standby Force (ASF)**

After the failure at the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, a growing need could be felt among the African countries for a capability to intervene in similar emergencies in case the United Nations should respond too slowly or not at all. The PSC is responsible for assessing a situation like that and to grant a mandate for intervention, if appropriate. To have an instrument for implementing such a decision, the African Union member states agreed to establish an African Standby Force (ASF) which, however, must not be seen as a genuine crisis response force on permanent standby. This purely African military force is to be trained and

equipped for the conduct of peace operations on the continent. To this end, each region is to establish its own response forces brigade for peace operations. Providing the necessary UN standard basic training and basic equipment will be a national responsibility of the sending nations. Besides, ASF control is to be exercised in close cooperation with the UN system, up to and including recourse to the latter's resources. In addition, training centers such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC) or the Nigerian War College are to be established in all regions.

Ideally, the AU security architecture should be based on five regional organizations in North, East, West, Central and Southern Africa. These organizations coordinate themselves largely independently and in accordance with prevailing regional needs. Upon completion of the build-up phase, the regional brigades are to be capable of covering the full spectrum of tasks. As a reference value, between 3,000 and 5,000 uniformed personnel are to be available per region in the end. In accordance with individual plans, the regional force composition<sup>25</sup> should be as follows:

- ▶ Brigade (Mission Level) HQ and Support Unit of up to 65 personnel and 16 vehicles.
- ▶ HQ Company and Support Unit of up to 120 personnel.
- ▶ Four Light Infantry Battalions, each composed of up to 750 personnel and 70 vehicles.
- ▶ Engineer Unit of up to 505 personnel.
- ▶ Light Signals Unit of up to 135 personnel.
- ▶ Reconnaissance Company (Wheeled) of up to 150 personnel.
- ▶ Helicopter Unit of up to 80 personnel, 10 vehicles and 4 helicopters.
- ▶ Military Police Unit of up to 48 personnel and 17 vehicles.
- ▶ Light Multi-Role Logistical Unit of up to 190 personnel and 40 vehicles.
- ▶ Level 2 Medical Unit of up to 35 personnel and 10 vehicles.
- ▶ Military Observer Group of up to 120 Officers.
- ▶ Civilian Support Group consisting of logistical, administrative and budget components.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. African Union, *Roadmap for the Operationalization of the African Standby Force*, Annex A-3, Experts' Meeting on the Relationship between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Addis Ababa, 22-23 March 2005, [www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/Documents.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/Documents.htm).

In addition, the AU intends to provide a list containing up to 500 military observers and 240 civilian police officers in order to be able to meet any conflict scenario conceivable.

For potential ASF operations several conflict scenarios have been designed, from which are derived different force contingents as well as differing ready-to-move and mission times of the ASF:

- ▶ **Scenario 1.** AU/Regional military advice to a political mission.
- ▶ **Scenario 2.** AU/Regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN Mission.
- ▶ **Scenario 3.** Stand-alone AU/Regional observer mission.
- ▶ **Scenario 4.** AU/Regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (and peace-building).
- ▶ **Scenario 5.** AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping missions, including those involving low-level spoilers.
- ▶ **Scenario 6.** AU intervention, e.g., in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly.

The build-up of the ASF is to take place in two phases:<sup>26</sup>

In Phase 1 (until 30 June 2006<sup>27</sup>), the African Union was to develop the capabilities needed to conduct peace support operations in accordance with scenarios 1 to 3. This included the establishment of a mission headquarters and provision of a communications system adequate to control peace operations and to coordinate activities between the regions and the AU. The regions were to form their standby brigades within the scope of existing capacities and to develop the response forces to a level enabling them to conduct an independent peace operation (scenario 4). This included the establishment of a deployable mission headquarters. Additionally, a logistics center was to be established in each region that was capable of supplying a brigade for a period of 180 days. And there were also plans to set up a brigade-level training facility.

<sup>26</sup> African Union, *Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee*, Part I, Document Adopted by the Third Meeting of African Chiefs of Defense Staff, Addis Ababa, 15-16 May 2003, pp. 16-23, [www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/Documents.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/Documents.htm).

<sup>27</sup> 30 June 2005 had been the original date. However, since this date could not be kept, the term was extended by one year.

Moreover, those states were to be identified that potentially could perform as lead nations in scenario 6 operations. As the prerequisite to be met, these states had to provide the capacities necessary in the field of air transportability.

In Phase 2 (until 30 June 2010), the African Union is also to be enabled to lead multinational and multi-dimensional peace support operations in accordance with scenario 5. The regions are to complete the formation of their operational brigades and to improve the latter's degree of mobility.

The date for the deployment of peace enforcement troops as required in scenario 6 will not be set for the time being. When taking a look at the standby times listed below, it can easily be seen that scenario 6 makes extreme demands on the peacekeeping capabilities of an African response force not only because of the delicate mission.

Depending on the scenario, the following standby times have been determined, starting with the AU mandate being granted by the PSC:

- ▶ **scenario 1 thru 4:** operational within 30 days;
- ▶ **scenario 5:** operational within 90 days, the military component must be operational within 30 days;
- ▶ **scenario 6:** a robust military force must be operational within 14 days.

However, the concept is already based on the assumption that these short lead times can only be kept, if appropriate measures were initiated prior to granting the mandate.<sup>28</sup> The deployment forces for scenario 1 thru 3 are to be sustainable for 30 days without external support, and a period of 90 days is envisaged for scenario 4 thru 6. Here as well the demands are extremely high. Under scenario 6, a robust military response force – against the will of the parties involved (at least without the approval of all parties involved) – is to be operational on site within 14 days and to sustain the mission unaidedly for a period of three months. Without the support of locally available logistic services (host nation support), this is an extremely difficult task.

Individual elements of the brigades already exist in the different regions. Depending on the region, however, the establishment of the standby forces is in different stages of progress.

<sup>28</sup> African Union, *Policy Framework* [see footnote 26], Part I, p. 6.

## Regional Implementation

For its security architecture, the African Union heavily relies on the division of the African continent into five regions. This structure is meant to contribute to the stringent implementation of the Common African Defense and Security Policy. Reality, however, draws a different picture: dual memberships split already scarce financial resources and impede internal cooperation, as they give rise to sources of friction with other regions. The coordination effort increases, approaches making sense are blocked and the regional organizations do not receive the full support of the states represented in several regions, because they guard themselves by their membership in the other regional organization(s). This dual obligation, which serves the purpose of drawing the maximum national dividend, reduces the financial power of the organizations in question. And what is even more important, it is detrimental to mutual trust and also has negative effects on other fields of politics such as trade policy. West Africa is the only region not affected by this problem. The situation turns particularly complicated, if several organizations compete in one region and there are dual memberships in others. The Figure on page 15 illustrates this situation.

The order, in which the individual regions are subsequently examined, may be taken as an indicator for the progress they have made so far in implementing the roadmap: from those having made the greatest progress to those lagging behind the furthest.

### West Africa

All fifteen states<sup>29</sup> in West Africa are members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Not only is Nigeria the largest country in West Africa in terms of area and number of inhabitants, but due to its economic power, it is also the largest payer and force provider of the Community and, thus, its driving force. Although the region seems to be highly homogeneous at first glance, because it is

<sup>29</sup> Namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.

represented by only one regional organization, there are numerous areas of conflict, nonetheless. The different cultural orientation of the Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone<sup>30</sup> countries makes integration much more difficult. The deep gap between Francophone and Anglophone states, in particular, can be noticed beyond frictional losses in terms of language and different political traditions.<sup>31</sup> In addition, France on several occasions has taken action in the past against Nigeria's regional lead role. The language problem is of relevance in all regions of Africa, but especially in West Africa, even though it becomes apparent there only at second glance. Approximately 400 languages are spoken in Nigeria, whereas in Gambia (with only one million inhabitants) as much as fifteen languages are spoken.<sup>32</sup> These figures already indicate how small a range these languages have and how difficult it is for the population to grow together in cultural terms.

Inside the region itself, there is considerable potential for national conflicts, for example in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. Even the hegemonial state of Nigeria is experiencing a great variety of domestic crises that are not only limited to problems in the Niger Delta (ethnic groups, religion, raw materials).

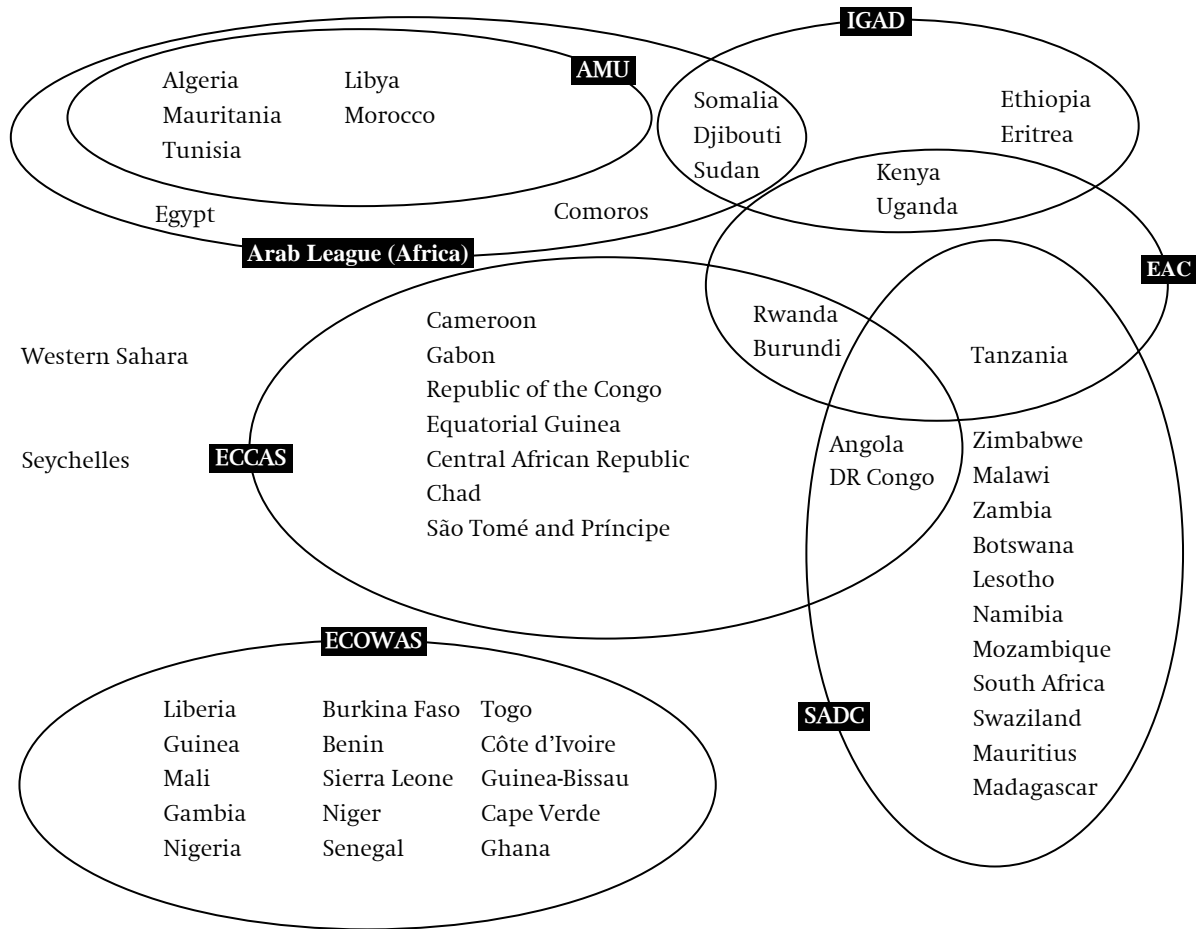
The ECOWAS Standby Brigade (ECOBRI) is West Africa's contribution to the African Standby Force. Current planning aims at an overall strength of 6,500 soldiers, ready for deployment to an area of operations within 90 days and able to operate independently for the same period of time. This includes a smaller task force involving 2,770 soldiers who must be operational much more rapidly (within 30 days) and able to operate independently for the same period of time (90 days). Nigeria acts as the "lead nation" of this rapid

<sup>30</sup> These include Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe and Cape Verde as well as Angola and Mozambique outside West Africa.

<sup>31</sup> Stefan Mair, *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2001 (SWP-Studie 15/01), pp. 8ff.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Erwin Ebermann, "Gedanken zum Zusammenhang zwischen Demographie und Entwicklungsdynamik in Afrika," [www.afrika-wien.at/pub/demo\\_entw.pdf](http://www.afrika-wien.at/pub/demo_entw.pdf) (accessed on 29 February 2008).

**Figure**  
**Memberships of African States in Regional Organizations**



reaction force. Funded to a considerable extent by Germany and activated a few years ago, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center in Accra (Ghana) is the operational-level training facility for peace operations. The tactical-level training center is located in Bamako (Mali), and the training center for the strategic level is accommodated at the National War College in Abuja (Nigeria).<sup>33</sup>

The formation of ECOBRIG is evolving and, measured against the roadmap and compared with the other regional organizations in Africa, has developed the furthest. The policy documents have been prepared for the most part and the schedule is being kept. As planned, the headquarters (Task Force Headquarters) has been operational since June 2006 – although with restrictions. The deployable headquarters is still

heavily understaffed<sup>34</sup>, and its equipment and infrastructure can be described as provisional at best. Hastings Airfield near Freetown (Sierra Leone) is to be used as logistics center. Some of the units envisaged for ECOBRIG have already gained peacekeeping experience in the context of various UN missions. On 29 February 2008<sup>35</sup>, for example, a total of 14,664 police officers, military observers and soldiers from ECOWAS states were involved in UN missions.

As the ECOWAS Secretariat had to struggle with blatant inefficiency and partial work overload in the past, it was converted into the ECOWAS Commission comprising nine offices.<sup>36</sup> Following this reorganiza-

<sup>33</sup> Heinrich Bergstresser and Denis Tull, *Nigeria als regionale Ordnungsmacht in Westafrika*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2008 (SWP-Studie 2/08).

<sup>34</sup> As of today the staff only comprises seven officers.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/feb08\\_3.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/feb08_3.pdf) (accessed on 3 April 2008)

<sup>36</sup> 1. President, 2. Vice President, 3. Administration and Finance, 4. Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, 5. Human Development and Gender, 6. Infrastructure,

tion effort, initial progress can be seen meanwhile. The most important office from a security point of view is the Office of the Commissioner Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS). At present several western military advisers and a civilian logistic adviser are assigned to help with the setup of the Commissioner's Office. The PAPS is subdivided into the Political Affairs Department, the Early Warning/Observation Monitoring Center (ECOWARN) and the Peace Keeping and Security Department. It is one of the most important tasks of the PAPS to organize and host the meetings of the Committee for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (CPAPS) to which the Member States delegate their representatives. Consequently, that personnel is not part of the ECOWAS Commission.

The CPAPS relies on the work of three sub-committees:

- ▶ the Committee of Experts in Charge of Political Affairs comprising the Political Directors;
- ▶ the Committee of Experts on Peace, the meeting platform of the Chiefs of Staff, and
- ▶ the Committee of Experts on Security which has the Chiefs of National and/or Local Police Forces and/or National Guard Commanders as members.

Although this meant a redefinition of structure and competencies, initial corrections were already being made in practice. In the old structure, the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces made up the Commission for Defense and Security, the most important advisory body for the Heads of State and Government in security matters which had also been vested with various decision-making powers. Hence its conversion into the Committee of Experts on Peace meant a complete loss of powers. To restore their old sphere of influence, the Chiefs of Staff have meanwhile renamed this sub-committee again as Commission for Defense and Security.<sup>37</sup> The Political Directors and the Chiefs of Police Forces are thus no longer represented as advisers. It is unclear, whether CPAPS and the Chiefs of Staff have made any arrangements with regard to the assignment of competencies. It remains to be seen what effects this upgrading will have on both the other committees and the distribution of power. And in this context it will certainly be true to say that a reorganization does not automatically go along with an in-

crease in the efficiency and robustness of an organization.

On 7 April 2005, a draft document for the development of the ECOWAS Standby Brigade was published, prepared by a team of authors from the USA, the United Kingdom, France and Canada in the ECOWAS Secretariat. In this document it says that at the time the Member States had given their approval to 6,200 of the advised 6,500 soldiers. In July 2007, it was agreed to increase the strength of the contained Task Force from 1,500 to 2,773 soldiers without making a change in the overall strength. At the same time the agenda item scheduled for 2008, namely certification of national units, was suspended and priority given instead to the reinforcement of the logistic component. The background for this is probably the still inadequate functionality of the national units. Adding to this are equipment shortfalls, especially a lack of means of communications and IT equipment, even at the echelon of command. Currently, efforts are being made to redress this grievance mainly with international assistance. It must, however, be doubted whether the Task Force will still become operational and take up exercise activities in 2008. And this may also result in a delay in the overall schedule for the establishment of the brigade (originally by 2010).

Although the ECOWARN early warning system is not fully operational yet, four regional headquarters have already been established and the gathering of data has been initiated. Meanwhile, the system generates useful daily situation reports from the region. Networking with the crisis and conflict management system has not yet been formalized, there are still no regular routine briefings for the heads of state and government of the ECOWAS countries. Since ECOWARN cannot rely on secure communications, it must make use of commercial systems providing only limited capabilities and holding the risk of frequent failures. The only secure line of communications available is the line linking the ministries of defense, which is an indicator for the strong influence of the military in the region.

In order to better identify and make up the deficiencies still existing within ECOWAS, the Commissioner Political Affairs, Peacekeeping and Security in 2006 ordered an external analysis to be made. Having been presented in the meantime, the initial working

7. Macro-economic Policy, 8. Political Affairs, Peace and Security, 9. Trade, Customs and Free Movement.

<sup>37</sup> Having been renamed once again, the Committee today is designated Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff (CCDS).

result<sup>38</sup> draws attention to the following deficiencies: nonexistent long-term planning, inadequate communication and information, lack of means of communications, insufficient staffing and poor information technology equipment.

Meanwhile ECOWAS has decided to have other areas also analyzed externally, a fact that must be supported by all means. In this way it should also be possible for the international donor community to find areas to commit themselves efficiently by providing personnel, materiel or financial support. However, this will require a good deal of tact and sensitivity – not only in the ECOWAS region: never must there be an impression the donor countries would take control of the respective organization and its decision processes.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, in view of the partly wretched condition of the equipment and the extremely sluggish progress, the donor countries rather feel compelled to intervene to an increased extent to produce some success at all. However, African Ownership is the highest precept both sides should observe open-mindedly and in partnership.

In imitation of the AU's Panel of the Wise, the Economic Community of West African States has established its own Council of the Wise. Though it has no instruments of its own, the Council seems to be effective in practice nonetheless. By personal intervention, for example, individual members succeeded in containing antidemocratic activities of the Gambian president in the run-up to the elections.

As far as its military capabilities in the context of the African Standby Force are concerned, ECOWAS is the regional organization in Africa that has developed the furthest. That does not necessarily make it easier for the African Union: The fact that its headquarters is located in Ethiopia, hence at the Horn of Africa, sometimes goes along with focusing too one-sidedly on the numerous East African problem areas. In the case of crises in West Africa, the AU does not always act like an umbrella organization, but waits and sees which position ECOWAS will take. Another factor of uncertainty is Nigeria's dominant role within ECOWAS. On a case-by-case basis, it is not clear whether the activities of the regional organization are either

ECOWAS or Nigerian policy. The main force providers are usually Nigeria, Senegal and Ghana, with the other West African countries lagging far behind.

Like no other regional organization, ECOWAS intervened militarily on a large scale and with great determination in member states where violent conflicts were escalating and responded forcefully and unambiguously to military coups in Niger, Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. Even though the ECOMOG<sup>40</sup> missions were institutionally not linked to ECOWAS, at least not in the beginning, the shortcomings<sup>41</sup> revealed in the process contributed to the development of a permanent and transparent conflict settlement mechanism which is to concentrate on conflict prevention and peaceful conflict management.

## Southern Africa

The Southern African Development Community (SADC)<sup>42</sup> is a successor organization of the so-called frontier states that under the name of Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) had formed to fight South Africa's Apartheid regime and its economic power. Against the background of these changed political parameters the SADC was founded in 1992 and South Africa joined in 1994. The former adversary had thus become a partner,<sup>43</sup> but traces of this former confrontation can still be seen today. In this regional organization as well, the efforts to establish peace forces meet with numerous difficulties. The Regional Peacekeeping Training Center (RPTC), for example, the official SADC training center, is located in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare. Due to the fact, however, that the regime in Zimbabwe is internationally ostracized and there is a lack of

<sup>38</sup> Dieudonné Nikiema, *Organizational Diagnosis and Ways to Build the Capacities of the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the ECOWAS Commission*, Interim Report, n. p., June 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Jakkie Cilliers, *The African Standby Force: An Update on Progress*, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies (ISS), March 2008 (ISS Paper 160), p. 18, [www.iss.co.za/index.php?link\\_id=3&slink\\_id=5907&link\\_type=12&slink\\_type=12&tmpl\\_id=3](http://www.iss.co.za/index.php?link_id=3&slink_id=5907&link_type=12&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3).

<sup>40</sup> ECOMOG = ECOWAS Monitoring Group. Name of ECOWAS armed forces employed during military operations in Liberia (1990–1999), Sierra Leone (1997–1999) and Guinea-Bissau (1999).

<sup>41</sup> Robert Schütte, *Menschliche Sicherheit und fragile Staatlichkeit*. Bericht zum zweiten Human Security Symposium, Marburg, 17 November 2006, p. 13, [www.humansecurity.de/files/ag-humsec-symposium-ii-bericht.pdf](http://www.humansecurity.de/files/ag-humsec-symposium-ii-bericht.pdf) (accessed on 4 March 2008).

<sup>42</sup> SADC Member States include Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>43</sup> Christian Peters-Berries, *Southern Africa (sic!) Development Community (SADC)*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2001 (SWP-Studie 16/2001), pp. 13ff.



international donors, the RPTC is not operational. With regard to the conflict in Zimbabwe, the other SADC Member States and South Africa, in particular, prefer an approach of quiet diplomacy in order to not provoke the regime in Zimbabwe. As a result, the South African War College (in South Africa) fills this gap only provisionally and only in some areas.

In the context of the Mutual Defence Pact (MDP), negotiated in August 2003, the SADC Member States agreed to establish joint armed forces as part of the African Standby Force. In this Pact, the Member States agreed on rendering mutual assistance in the case of external aggression. Special emphasis is placed on the precept of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Although this principle is also included in the AU Charter, it is restricted there by the possibility of intervention. In this respect, the MDP keeps to be rooted in old OAU thinking. However, a pact of non-aggression like that contributes to making the region safer.

The highest-ranking SADC security instrument, the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS), has hardly made itself felt so far, although it has powers that are similarly extensive to those of the AU Peace and Security Council. In addition, it is currently attending only inadequately to its duties, i.e. coordination of activities in the fields of politics, defense and security aimed at preventive diplomacy. Not only was it unclear in the beginning, how the OPDS was to be embedded organizationally in the SADC, but both institutions were actually competing with each other. Anyway, the integration of the OPDS into the SADC meant that at least formally this internal conflict could be resolved. However, when measuring the success of the OPDS against its own requirements – protection of human rights, defense and promotion of democracy and the rule of law – it must be stated that there are still serious deficiencies.

Headquartered in Gaborone (Botswana), the SADC Secretariat has to struggle with problems similar to those of the ECOWAS Commission. Here, too, there are complaints about staff shortage and poor equipment and here, too, there has been a restructuring effort, in this case away from sectoral cooperation in national responsibilities toward a multidisciplinary approach in five main areas. Attached to the Secretariat and meanwhile also operational<sup>44</sup> is the

SADCBRIG PLANELM<sup>45</sup> and likewise the brigade headquarters. However, a logistics depot is still to be established.

Supported by France, initial joint exercises could be held as early as in June 2005, although with only ten of the fourteen SADC Member States participating. The civilian police component of the regional organization is still in the process of being developed. Thanks to the substantial contribution of South Africa, the SADC Standby Force has one of the greatest military potentials in Africa. The force even has helicopters and transport aircraft, which is something of a rarity in Africa.

Although the civil war in Angola has meanwhile ended, the one real trouble spot remaining in the region is Zimbabwe. The further development of the southern brigade for the ASF is slowed down not only by the loss of the Regional Peacekeeping Training Center (RPTC) in Harare. Even the goals set with regard to good political governance, respect for human rights and progress in regional crisis management have not been reached. This affects the credibility of the SADC which, in turn, constitutes a significant restriction on international support.

These unfavorable prerequisites made the establishment of the ASF recede into the background. Despite highly promising planning and commitment in the beginnings, further progress has pretty much come to a standstill. Only the decision of the Heads of State and Government to establish a peacekeeping task force, taken at the SADC Summit in Lusaka in 2007, seems to have put back some life into the process. At this summit – and more recently also in the wake of the elections in Zimbabwe – it became plainly evident that the SADC Heads of State and Government continue to support the Zimbabwean president Mugabe. And as long as this is the case, it will be extremely difficult to implement the peacekeeping forces. The original schedule with the target date of 2010 cannot possibly be kept. It remains to be seen how the situation in Zimbabwe will develop: The longer the crisis there will take, or the more it will aggravate, the longer the establishment of the ASF will be delayed. Moreover, the outrages in South Africa

<sup>45</sup> The acronym stands for SADC Standby Force Brigade Planning Element. It is a permanent task force, acting so to speak as the nucleus of a brigade headquarters capable of building up to full strength in case of need. It is responsible for doctrines, standing operating procedures, training and verification mechanisms as well as for the establishment of the command and control capability and logistics.

<sup>44</sup> Cilliers, *The African Standby Force* [see footnote 39], p. 14.

mainly against refugees from Zimbabwe illustrate how domestic problems may also spread into the region.

In 1998, the SADC intervened in Lesotho. However, the employment of troops from South Africa and Botswana following the call for help of the democratic government was a regular disaster. The intervention was perceived among the population not as a mission of the SADC, but as an invasion by South Africa. Mandate, authorization, multinational character and purpose of the mission had not been made clear to the population, so there was resistance up to and including widespread rioting. This negative experience may be one of the reasons for the unsatisfactory restraint of the SADC Member States, and of South Africa in particular, in the case of Zimbabwe and for the weak position of the OPDS. Mainly South Africa is stuck between a rock and a hard place: its military strength and economic power rather prove to be a hindrance in this context, as they stir up the distrust of some former frontier states. As a result, South African ambitions to push both the SADC and the regional ASF are limited.

And, finally, the fact that Southern Africa has by far the highest AIDS rate of the world constitutes a grave problem for the security forces. The situation is most serious in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. In these countries' armies, the rates of infection might be even higher than the corresponding national average. Even though especially in Botswana and South Africa considerable efforts are being made and initial success in the fight against the HIV virus is becoming visible, education and prevention continue to be largely insufficient. There is still limited awareness of the problem that the large number of deployments to other regions has increased the risk of infection with and spreading of the disease in both the area of operations and the sending nation.

In contrast, progress on a smaller scale can be seen in other areas. The free trade zone<sup>46</sup> established in January 2008 is aimed to cut down on customs and to boost trade and economic development. Irrespective of existing reservations about the relatively large economic power of South Africa, this step may push the economic revival of the region and, thus, also exert a positive influence on security cooperation.

<sup>46</sup> With the exception of Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, all SADC Member States have joined this free trade zone.

## Horn of Africa and East Africa

In East Africa, a regional organization uniting all the countries of the region under the same roof does not exist. Moreover, to an even greater degree than in West Africa, internal conflicts are inhibiting the regional security architecture from being expanded. This includes the trouble spots in Sudan and Somalia, the ongoing internal crisis in Ethiopia following the 2006 elections, and the still smoldering conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea after the last war (1998–2000). The three big EAC<sup>47</sup> Member States, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, are linked with each other by their common history as colonies of the British Empire, by the language (Kiswahili) and their neighborhood on the banks of Lake Victoria.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, however, Kenya and Uganda are also Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)<sup>49</sup> which is the organization the African Union has chosen as being responsible for providing the regional armed forces of the ASF. In the beginning, the EAC was instructed to coordinate its security activities with IGAD. However, dissension and rivalry among the IGAD Member States resulted in the further development of the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) beginning to falter. Only seven<sup>50</sup> of originally thirteen countries intending to participate provided personnel for PLANELM, the planning element.

In January 2007, the Heads of State and Government of the East African countries during their first summit agreed to establish an Independent Coordination Secretariat and with that to create a new politico-strategic command board: the EASBRICOM. It is headquartered in Karen, near Nairobi, i.e. in the direct vicinity to PLANELM.<sup>51</sup> As the principal advocate of the EAC, Kenya thus prevailed, and IGAD was *de facto*

<sup>47</sup> East African Community. On 18 July 2007, Rwanda and Burundi joined the Community, which strengthened the latter's position vis-à-vis the IGAD, although both countries did not add any noteworthy economic potential.

<sup>48</sup> Stefan Mair, *East African Co-operation (EAC)*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2001 (SWP-Studie 14/2001), pp. 9ff.

<sup>49</sup> IGAD Member States include Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. In protest against the border disputes with Ethiopia, Eritrea had in between announced its withdrawal from the IGAD organization, but not executed it to date.

<sup>50</sup> Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

<sup>51</sup> Cilliers, *The African Standby Force* [see footnote 39], pp. 14f.

released from its lead role. The main advantage of the new command board is that all East African countries involved in EASBRICOM could agree on a joint strategy, irrespective of IGAD or EAC membership. As a result, the transfer of responsibility has been decided on, but has not yet been completed. This process goes along with a restructuring effort under the Eastern Africa Peace and Security Mechanism (EAPSM). A secretariat is to coordinate the different substructures comprising headquarters, PLANELM, logistic system, civilian and military readiness personnel and conflict prevention.

Tanzania's double membership in EAC and SADC considerably complicates the cooperation of the individual regional organizations. The existing economic ties and the political and cultural closeness to the other members speak for Tanzania's membership in EAC, whereas the hope to be swept along by the economic engine South Africa speaks for its involvement in the SADC.<sup>52</sup> Even though comprehensible from the country's point of view, this position rather weakens the EAC. Aside from the double membership, the rivalry with IGAD and the resulting causes of friction are also inhibiting factors. A comparison with the two (ASF-wise) more successful regional organizations ECOWAS and SADC also suggests that East Africa really could do with a strong country as a motor for integration.

The region has already installed the Conflict Early Warning and Response (CEWARN) mechanism, a crisis early warning system already functioning in part, but operated under the umbrella of IGAD which, as seen, has not been tasked with establishing the Eastern African Brigade. In principle, however, a regional early warning system will be needed to complement the overall situation picture provided by the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) of the African Union. It remains to be seen how the security architecture will develop in the future under the coordination of EASBRICOM. Crisis prevention could be an initial field of activity for the new strategic command board. In contrast, it would not be advisable at all to establish an additional crisis early warning structure under EASBRICOM – not only in view of limited resources.

All in all, EASBRIG is to comprise approximately 5,500 civilian and military personnel. Both the brigade headquarters and the logistic element will continue to be located in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and, as mentioned above, PLANELM is headquartered in Karen,

15 kilometers to the west of Nairobi. Although the most important posts have been filled in the meantime, most of the recruited personnel are either still undergoing training or in the preparation phase, a fact appreciably limiting operations at present. However, there is adequate international support. The start-up phase still takes some time.

Generally speaking, the training is to be supported by the Peace Support Training Center (PSTC), headquartered also in Karen and established also with the help of the German Association for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). However, the Kenyan armed forces currently understand this training center to be rather a national than a regional training center. Other international support is mainly provided by the United Kingdom, Canada and France. Cooperation at the military level of the EAC is improving all the time. Even though the schedule until 2010 cannot be kept, at least the improved networking among the armed forces today contributes to easing potential conflicts. And this alone could be seen as a success.

However, Ethiopia's non-mandated intervention in Somalia at the end of 2006 hardly contributed to an intensification of security cooperation in the region. Among other things in protest against this course of action of Ethiopia, Eritrea announced that it would withdraw from IGAD. We can only hope that the rivalry between the two main actors EAC and IGAD will not result in a mutual blockade but that, having agreed upon EASBRICOM as a joint command board, now a functioning African Standby Force will be established. It remains to be seen whether this will suffice to overcome the temporary standstill. Moreover, the conditions close to civil war prevailing in Kenya after the elections early in 2008 illustrate how quickly new conflicts can erupt that have an inherent potential to thwart the development of the regional ASF brigade in a part of Africa marked by violent clashes anyway.

## North Africa

In the northern part of Africa initial signs of a contribution to the ASF can be observed at best. From the point of view of the European countries sharing the Mediterranean area of stability with the countries of Northern Africa this is an unsatisfactory result. The backlog in the development is all the more deplorable, as the North African countries have exceptionally strong armed forces and could, therefore, make a substantial contribution to the ASF. However, a number

<sup>52</sup> Mair, *East African Co-operation (EAC)* [see footnote 48], p. 58.

of regional conflicts can be given as reasons for the backlog.

Due to the dispute on Western Sahara, Morocco is the only African country that is not a member of the African Union. And unless this dispute is settled the situation will remain unchanged. The negotiations have not made any headway for years, and all attempts at mediation<sup>53</sup> made so far have come to nothing because of Morocco's resistance. Not only does this issue<sup>54</sup> constitute a burden in particular for the relations with Algeria, since 1975 giving shelter to Polisario, the independence movement of Western Sahara, but it also gives rise to tensions with other North African countries.

It is, however, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that in Arab countries overshadows almost any other interregional efforts. Even though the effects are diminishing towards the west (Mauritania), internal differences between the Arab countries are great enough to have so far blocked any significant common action. This is the reason why, irrespective of extended negotiations, the free trade zone of the Maghreb countries has not become effective to date. Although there is a Northern African regional organization in the form of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU),<sup>55</sup> Egypt, the political heavyweight and also headquarters of the League of Arab States, is not a member of this organization.

Egypt has declared itself willing nonetheless, to provide infantry battalions, logistic forces and the headquarters for the Northern African element of the ASF, the Northern Africa Standby Brigade (NASBRIG). Egypt's simultaneously phrased claim to leadership, in turn, annoyed Libya, as it was about to push the NASBRIG. In February 2004, Libyan revolutionary leader Muammar al-Gaddafi had suggested to build a "United Army for the African Union." This approach was based on the idea to disband all national armed

forces and establish a central army under the command of the African Union.

Now, doing without sovereign national armed forces in favor of a joint continental army is a goal definitely worth the effort not only in Africa, but it is a goal that most certainly cannot be reached in the short or medium term. Consequently, there was no discussion at all about Gaddafi's proposal and subsequent Libyan efforts to establish the NASBRIG visibly lost momentum.

Then Algeria took the initiative and offered to set up a logistics base in competition with Egypt. In addition, it rendered support to the AU by providing airlift capacities for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). However, even today the Algerian armed forces continue to be heavily involved in combating terrorism internally. The resources tied up in this way prevent Algeria from making a more generous contribution to NASBRIG. And, finally, Mauritania's membership in the AU had temporarily been suspended (until April 2007) because of a military putsch, a fact that was also not beneficial to pooling Northern African interests. So up to now, the AMU is practically unable to work. All initial efforts to establish a Northern African brigade have come to a standstill.

Led by Libya and Egypt, the Northern African countries have meanwhile made another attempt and agreed on the project of a North Africa Regional Capability (NARC), which is to focus on the military component. The brigade headquarters and PLANELM are to be located in Libya and Egypt respectively.<sup>56</sup> So far only Egypt has offered its national peacekeeping facility in Cairo for use as a training center.

All in all, it must be stated that the establishment of a Northern African ASF brigade does not fail because of the military capacities of the Northern African countries, which are more than adequate. Hindrances rather include existing rivalries, bureaucratic obstacles and a lack of trust among the neighboring countries. However, as long as the latter are not seriously willing to cooperate, it will be impossible in this region to keep the roadmap up to the year 2010.

<sup>53</sup> The UN envoy for Western Sahara and former US Secretary of State, James Baker, had submitted different proposals for solution (Baker plans), but resigned from office in June 2004, although the UN Security Council had endorsed his plan in Resolution 1541.

<sup>54</sup> Morocco took possession of Western Sahara in 1975 by way of the "Green March." Although in an advisory opinion of 16 October 1975 the International Court of Justice stated the existence of pre-colonial ties between individual tribes of Western Sahara and the sultans of Morocco, it denied Morocco territorial sovereignty over Western Sahara.

<sup>55</sup> AMU Member States include Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

<sup>56</sup> Cilliers, *The African Standby Force* [see footnote 39], p. 16.

## Central Africa

Up to now, the Central African countries have not taken an active role in the security architecture. In theory, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, owing to its size and its abundance of natural resources, could take a dominant part in the region, similar to Nigeria in West Africa. In reality, however, quite the contrary has been the case to date. Not only did the ongoing crisis in Congo prevent the country from establishing itself as a leading power, but it rather destabilized the entire region. Most recently, some positive developments can be made out all the same which, however, are still in their infancy.

In October 2003, the Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC)<sup>57</sup> decided to establish a regional brigade, the Force Multinationale d'Afrique Centrale (FOMUC) consisting of approximately 2,200 men and to hold joint exercises. In 2008, this brigade is to be complemented by a standby brigade with a similar strength of 2,177 men.<sup>58</sup> The ECCAS PLANELM<sup>59</sup> has been established in the Gabonese capital of Libreville, where also the headquarters, a medical training facility and a logistics base (the other one in Doula, Cameroon) are to be located.

Both supported by France, Cours Supérieur Interarmées de Défense in Yaoundé (Cameroon) has been proposed as a training facility for the strategic level and École d'État-Major de Libreville in Gabon as a facility for operational training. A school for tactical-level training is to be created in Luanda (Angola),<sup>60</sup> while a regional police force training center is to be established in Cameroon.

Chronic underfunding from the start and the substantial conflicts in the region have so far prevented the efforts to establish a regional brigade from coming any further than being announced. Traditionally, France is one of the most important donor countries

in this region, but French support alone will not suffice to achieve any significant progress.

Similar to the other regions, the Central African countries as well are wasting their time and energy on double memberships in several multinational organizations. This is a phenomenon particularly serious for Central Africa, as here the internal coherence is extremely low anyway, and with Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, both also being members in the SADC, two countries important for the region are weakening cohesion by double memberships.

### The Schedule until 2010

It takes no wonder that the regional planning and implementation status of the individual standby brigades is varying greatly. After all, when it comes to forces strength and military capabilities there are significant differences among the national armed forces of the African countries.<sup>61</sup> The current force level alone is not a meaningful variable anyway. The equipment requirements of the standby brigades with regard to transportation capacities, helicopters, motor vehicles, means of communication and maintenance are significant for each of the regional organizations and in some cases even unrealizable at the moment.

It is foreseeable that both the regional organizations and the AU will not reach their goals set in the roadmap until 2010. West Africa will be the region most likely to satisfy the requirements set, whereas Southern Africa and East Africa are already lagging far behind. Should the EASBRICOM really manage to overcome the temporary standstill, this would be an important success for the further development of the East African ASF brigade.

In Southern Africa, the situation in Zimbabwe has, for the time being, a crippling effect on any significant progress in the establishment of an operational standby brigade. Only when a fundamental, but currently not foreseeable change will occur in this context, the establishment process may continue.

For Central Africa and North Africa it would already be a great success if they could manage the step from verbal statements to practical, verifiable results. To

<sup>57</sup> English: ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States). Members: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe.

<sup>58</sup> Cilliers, *The African Standby Force* [see footnote 39], p. 16.

<sup>59</sup> The current strength is 13 staff members: six from the region and seven from Gabon.

<sup>60</sup> African Union, *A Vision for the African Standby Force? A Draft Document for Discussion*, Addis Ababa, 23 September 2005, [www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/doc/ASF%20vision-Second%20Draft%20Vision.doc](http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/doc/ASF%20vision-Second%20Draft%20Vision.doc) (accessed on 17 December 2007).

<sup>61</sup> Arno Meinken, *Militärliche Kapazitäten und Fähigkeiten afrikanischer Staaten. Ursachen und Wirkungen militärischer Ineffektivität in Subsahara-Afrika*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2005 (SWP-Studie 4/05).

date, there is not a single sign of readiness or willingness to get involved with the roadmap for the establishment of the ASF. While in Central Africa this is still comprehensible in view of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and consequently also in almost all neighboring countries, the deficiencies in North Africa give cause for serious concern. Although in comparison with most countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the North African countries are fitted with military capabilities that are above the average, it has not been possible so far to integrate these capabilities into an ASF context. Considering the closeness of North Africa to Europe, and considering the close economic links of this region with European countries, this is all the more regrettable.

Had it been intended to achieve the logistic capabilities envisaged for 2010, equipment for immediately deployable headquarters, including vehicles, means of communication and command and control assets would have to be provided speedily.<sup>62</sup> This equipment would have to be readily transportable via strategic sea- or airlift, and there would have to be sufficient equipment to allow advance and sustainment training of deployed forces. However, all these plans proved to be utopian. In the region of West Africa at the most, the training facilities mentioned could still become operational at all three levels in due time, whereas in the other regions this will hardly be possible, considering the current tempo. Even under this aspect, it remains to be seen whether the crisis in East Africa can be overcome and how the situation in Zimbabwe will develop.

Neither the regions nor the AU will be able to close existing gaps in connection with key capabilities until 2010. There are deficiencies even beyond the existing concept, for example, in the field of sea transport. It must, however, be added that the concept is already highly ambitious and the timelines set most certainly cannot be kept. As a consequence, any additional deficiencies do not have direct negative effects, but they may become important in the future. The African Union is currently making considerable efforts to close the yawning gap in the field of well-trained and experienced personnel. These efforts as well will presumably take longer than the year 2010. This build-up cannot possibly be accelerated at random.

Whether or not a communication structure networked with both regional organizations and peace missions can be set up according to plans also remains

to be seen. In this context the international donor community would be called upon to provide active support at short notice.

<sup>62</sup> Cilliers, *The African Standby Force* [see footnote 39], pp. 6f.

## Conclusion

The regions of West Africa, Southern Africa and East Africa as well as the African Union have developed capabilities to conduct peace support operations up to and including scenario 4 (stand-alone peace mission in accordance with Chapter VI of the UN Charter). There are still deficiencies in the areas of reconnaissance, command and control assets, logistics and deployability. In the regions of North and Central Africa on the other hand these capabilities, which in an ASF context had to be achieved by the middle of 2006 in the course of Phase I, have not been attained yet.

In case the development process should not accelerate distinctly, the capabilities to be achieved during Phase II, projected to the middle of the year 2010, will hardly be attainable even by the most advanced regional organizations, with ECOBRIG coming closest to this goal.

Due to the great demands involved, a mission under scenario 6 will be successful in the medium or long run at best.

Neither on short notice nor in the medium term will the ASF be able to replace the EU Battle Groups and UN peace forces. However, both battle groups and peace forces can be employed in a complementary mode, as outlined below under "Recommendations."

What are the reasons for the hesitant progress?

### Funding

The problem of underfunding is going to be explained below using the often criticized AMIS commitment of the AU as an example:

Analyzing the reasons for the failure of many UN peace missions, UN diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi in his report (Brahimi Report<sup>63</sup>) gave a general recommendation with respect to UN peace missions which must apply without restrictions also to corresponding missions of the AU: Accordingly, one of the most important prerequisites for peace support operations is a

well-adjusted balance between mission challenge, available assets and the will to also make use of the latter. In the case of AMIS there was no such balance. It had been designed as a pure observer mission and, therefore, been equipped rather moderately in terms of personnel, material and logistics. It makes sense that under these circumstances the forces were unable to conduct a complex multidimensional operation within the scope of a peacekeeping mission. They had to operate under conditions that for UN personnel or European mission forces like those deployed to the Congo would have been unacceptable. The costs incurred were only a fraction of those of a normal UN mission. But for all that, the international donors were unable to provide on a continuous basis the decent resources that would have ensured funding in excess of the current month. Not even the monthly pay for the deployed military personnel could be paid on a regular basis.<sup>64</sup>

Consequently, not only the inadequate political decisions need to be criticized, but also the lacking financial support. Making allowances for the principle of African Ownership, the AU would need adequate startup financing assured at least in the medium term. This will be indispensable to develop structures, procure material and train personnel. All by themselves, the African countries are currently unable to accomplish any of these goals. The relative contributions of the member states to the AU budget are inadequate to fund the necessary operations. Besides, 24 of the 53 AU member states are behind on their payment of contributions,<sup>65</sup> which is also the reason why sanctions have been imposed on seven of these countries.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Sebastian Wadle, *Auf dem Weg zum EU-Afrika-Gipfel. Elemente einer strategischen Partnerschaft zwischen EU und AU*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, October 2007 (SWP-Studie 28/07), p. 18.

<sup>65</sup> African Union, Executive Council, 12th Ordinary Council, 25–29 January 2008, EX.CL/Dec.379 (XII), [www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2008/january/summit/docs/decisions/Executive\\_Decisions\\_378-414.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2008/january/summit/docs/decisions/Executive_Decisions_378-414.pdf) (accessed on 18 June 2008).

<sup>66</sup> Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, cf. African Union, Executive Coun-

<sup>63</sup> United Nations General Assembly/Security Council, *Report of the Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305, S/2000/809, [www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations), (accessed on 18 June 2008).

Hence the African Union will have to rely for a relatively long period on the support of international donors such as the European Union. The establishment of the African Peace Facility, which was to finance peacekeeping operations in Africa, meant creating a mutually accepted instrument to combine African Ownership and international funding. Between 2004 and 2006, the EU in this context provided a total of EUR 242 million for AMIS alone. In addition, a total of some EUR 160 million in the form of bilateral support was provided for the mission so that by 2006 a total amount of around EUR 400 million had been available for AMIS.<sup>67</sup> The mission in Sudan within the scope of AMIS had placed too great demands on the funding capabilities of the AU. The annual budget of the AU for 2007<sup>68</sup> had been fixed at just under USD 133 million. Already difficult to get together under “normal” conditions, this sum of money will hardly do in view of the ambitious tasks.

An additional sum of EUR 300 million has been earmarked for the African Peace Facility for the period 2008–2010. Aside from the European Union, numerous other countries and organizations support the expansion of the African security architecture by making financial contributions. This includes, for example, Germany’s involvement in the establishment of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC) in Accra (Ghana) or the support of IGAD’s CEWARN system in Addis Ababa.

It must, however, be stated that in proportion to the overall contribution of the EU, its contributions in the field of Peace and Security must be described as being rather modest – even though it must be acknowledged that the efforts devoted to development and security must be made in parallel. EUR 300 million for the African Peace Facility and EUR 55 million for the further development of the AU are up against EUR 3 billion the EU is investing within the scope of the Governance Initiative<sup>69</sup> in the ACP coun-

cil, 12th Ordinary Council, 25–29 January 2008, EX.CL/Dec.379 (XII) [see footnote 65].

<sup>67</sup> European Union, *EU Support to the African Union Mission in Darfur – AMIS*, May 2007, [www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/070507-factsheet6-AMIS\\_II.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/070507-factsheet6-AMIS_II.pdf) (accessed on 17 December 2007).

<sup>68</sup> Assembly of the African Union, Eighth Ordinary Session, Addis Ababa, 30 January 2007, Decision 154, [www.african-union.org/root/au/index/archivejanuary\\_2007.htm](http://www.african-union.org/root/au/index/archivejanuary_2007.htm) (accessed on 18 June 2008).

<sup>69</sup> The concept of the Governance Initiative envisages African states to be assessed on the basis of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) criteria. The term ‘governance’ is

tries<sup>70</sup> and EUR 5.6 billion provided for the EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure (July 2006, for a period of five years). Within the scope of the tenth European Development Fund (EDF), the EU provides more than EUR 12 billion for the period 2008–2013 for funding programs in Africa.<sup>71</sup> In view of the crises in Africa one might consider whether it would not be wiser to lay more stress on the security activities of the EU. The Africa Strategy<sup>72</sup> of the EU, adopted by the Council of the European Union in December 2005<sup>73</sup> and deepened in December 2007 by the EU-AU Partnership<sup>74</sup> is an important step in this direction.

In addition, some thought should be given to the current position to build up as much as pressure as possible to make the AU commit already at an early stage to crises and conflicts. In this way, the AU is forced into conflicts it is yet unable to manage. Particularly in the development phase of an organization it is delicate to pursue such a policy. The probable failure of a commitment means above all grist to the mills of both internal and external critics. And maybe this is also a reason why the Sudanese government continues to speculate on a delay of the conflict, because it will only be able to survive if that conflict continues to exist. This is why the African Union is prevented from implementing its goals especially with regard to good political governance, as it is precisely in this field, where it can become a danger to the Sudanese government.

After all, what it boils down to is that at present the AU is worn out, significantly underfunded, and an actor in crisis and conflict situations it will be able to manage after the year 2010 at best.

used in a broad sense. The attention is not only focused on political, economic, institutional, social, financial, tax-related and legal aspects, but also on issues such as management of natural resources and control of migratory movements.

<sup>70</sup> The term ‘ACP countries’ refers to those African (nearly all), Caribbean and Pacific countries that have concluded a special agreement with the EU on development cooperation (currently a total of 78 countries).

<sup>71</sup> Cf. [www.bfai.de/nsc\\_true/DE/Content/\\_SharedDocs/Anlagen/PDF/EU-Drittlandprogramme/eeef-10-ziele-und-foerderprioritaeten.property=publicationFile.pdf](http://www.bfai.de/nsc_true/DE/Content/_SharedDocs/Anlagen/PDF/EU-Drittlandprogramme/eeef-10-ziele-und-foerderprioritaeten.property=publicationFile.pdf) (accessed on 7 March 2008).

<sup>72</sup> The strategy is focused on the essential prerequisites for sustained development, i.e. peace and security, responsible and efficient governance, trade, interconnectivity, social cohesion and ecological sustainability.

<sup>73</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Die EU und Afrika* [see footnote 9].

<sup>74</sup> Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, Lisbon, 9 December 2007, 16344/07 (Press 291).



## Conceptual and Equipment Deficiencies

No unambiguous and detailed arrangements have been made as yet to regulate the responsibilities between the AU and the different regions with respect to the ASF. At present, a draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being drafted yet again which contains the following key principles: The AU would have the lead function, but the regional organizations would play an important role in matters relating to conflict settlement and conflict resolution. Emerging problems should therefore be tackled first by the region concerned; however, this would not rule out operations outside the own region. The required mandate would be granted by the PSC. The ASF was to be understood as a joint armed force that was distributed over the whole continent. Respect for human rights, good political governance, prevention or at least effective control of weapon proliferation and recognition of borders would be the guiding principles of this MoU. Furthermore, cooperation with the UN would have to be improved, and this not only in hybrid missions as currently conducted in Sudan, but also with regard to different entry and exit conditions during peace support operations. Only when the African countries have reached an agreement on these key capabilities can the AU take also the lead function which would be urgently required.

The standby times envisaged for the ASF in the case of a genocide situation are highly ambitious. Plans are to have a powerful, self-sufficient force in place and fully operational within 15 (mein Fehler!!) days over great distances and against the resistance of local players. This would be an extremely challenging task even for an organization like NATO. It is therefore no wonder that the ASF will be unable to meet these requirements in the medium term.

And so far the prerequisites for strategic airlift of assets are still missing. Responsibilities in this area should be met with the help of international donors anyway, for the development of own capacities cannot be funded in the medium term and should, therefore, not be tackled at all. However, existing deficiencies could be compensated for in part by strategic sealift. Then it would be up to South Africa, Nigeria and some other Northern African countries to provide at least part of these capacities.

Tactical and operational airlift is an indispensable prerequisite for flexible and effective intervention in combat operations, especially if the area of operations is very large, the number of forces available too small

and existing infrastructure does not permit the employment of ground mobile forces. These three conditions apply in particular to operations in Africa. Moreover, in past UN missions in Africa commanders frequently complained about the absence of helicopters, which they considered to be the most important operational element. This is why the ASF concept includes a separate helicopter component. Although the implementation of this component in each of the five regions will be a quite ambitious undertaking, it will hardly suffice for practical operations.

In view of the more complicated operational environment in Africa, efficient crisis management requires a comprehensive assessment of the situation using reconnaissance assets, a coordinated communication structure and an option for rapid response by air deployable forces. These key capabilities decide already in advance about the success or failure of any action taken. Only if the local military commander knows in due time where incidents will occur, he will be able to respond adequately and efficiently and employ rapid reaction forces exactly where they are needed. In no case will he be able to evenly cover the entire area, because he will never have enough forces at his disposal. Marauding and looting militiamen on horseback in Darfur can only be fought effectively by helicopter after having been included in the situation picture. This will require a reconnaissance component and an area-wide means of observation and communication. This, too, is relatively difficult to provide, involves a great effort in terms of equipment and requires well-trained personnel. Without these aids, however, complex AU peace missions in Africa will follow the current pattern even after 2010 and, consequently, be unsuccessful.

It is still completely up in the air how the regional organizations are to settle conflicts in the own region also with military means. The armed forces are often part of a conflict themselves and therefore hardly in a position to act as a neutral player beside the parties in dispute. An excellent example in this regard, the deployment of South African armed forces to Lesotho, has already been described briefly. These adversities can only be countered by the deployed forces proceeding with extreme caution and by intensive efforts in the field of joint training. However, this does not mean infantry or weapons training, but rather training in areas previously not always in the focus of the armed forces, i.e. respect for and protection of human rights and rule of law, conception of democracy, leadership, peacekeeping doctrine and so forth.

Moreover, in view of the many different national tongues spoken among the members of the regional response force, it would be urgently required to find a common language basis. For operations outside the own region at the latest as well as in cooperation with other sections of the ASF it will be necessary to establish a communications basis through adequate language training. Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) need to be developed for and also trained in the whole ASF area. It is also absolutely necessary to standardize equipment and communications media in particular.

## Political Will

The current crises in Africa highlight another dilemma: the attitude of non-interference originating from the times of the OAU has not yet been overcome completely. Irrespective of the fact that both the AU Charter and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council give clear courses of action, the political will to follow these courses has not been put on a broad basis yet. "The current situation in Zimbabwe is detrimental to the image of the new Africa,"<sup>75</sup> Federal Chancellor Merkel stated recently. However, the aforesaid insufficiency cannot only be observed in Zimbabwe, but also in Sudan and elsewhere. Anyhow, it should be pointed out once again that the African Union is a very young organization that must yet find its way and that must be given all the time needed to do so.

The problem of double memberships has been outlined above. The international community can exert its influence in this matter only to a very limited extent. Here the individual regions are called upon to do a lot of convincing themselves, and the AU must more frequently assume its leading role as an umbrella organization.

All in all, following an initial euphoria the build-up of the African security architecture is stuck in a crisis. "The Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union" was adopted on 10 July 2002 and entered into force on 26

December 2006. Meanwhile fifty nations<sup>76</sup> have signed the document which is a respectable quota. Another interesting aspect from a security point of view is "The African Union Non-Aggression and Common Defense Pact," adopted on 31 January 2005. This treaty could enter into force as soon as the 15th member state deposited its instrument of ratification. However, to this day this figure has not been reached by far.<sup>77</sup> This makes it clear that there are not only problems with the implementation of documents and treaties. In many cases, individual countries within the African Union are still lacking the political will to actively support or even consent to existing concepts.

<sup>75</sup> Opening speech delivered by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel on the occasion of the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon on 8 December 2007, [www.eu2007.pt/NR/rdonlyres/7DD5EDD3-E109-47EF-A5C8-69572208F21B/0/2007120aAlemanhaEU-AfrikaGipfel.pdf](http://www.eu2007.pt/NR/rdonlyres/7DD5EDD3-E109-47EF-A5C8-69572208F21B/0/2007120aAlemanhaEU-AfrikaGipfel.pdf) (accessed on 25 June 2008).

<sup>76</sup> [www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Peace%20and%20Security%20Protocol.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Peace%20and%20Security%20Protocol.pdf) (accessed on 16 January 2008).

<sup>77</sup> As many as thirty-three nations have signed the treaty, but only nine nations have ratified it and then deposited their instrument of ratification. As a result, the treaty has not entered into force yet, [www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Non-aggression%20Pact.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Non-aggression%20Pact.pdf) (accessed on 3 April 2008).

## Recommendations

Viewed objectively, there is no question whether the AU is able now or will be able in the foreseeable future to contain or even settle conflicts in Africa by deploying ASF forces and whether such action deserves the support of the international donor community. There is no viable alternative to the AU and its security structure. And, therefore, the only option to consider is how the AU can be enabled to attain the goals it has set for itself.

As long as the ASF has no rapidly deployable forces at its disposal, ideally, the following deployment pattern of ASF, EU battle groups and UN peace forces is conceivable in a phased operational scenario:

The highly mobile EU battle groups could be employed for hazard prevention. Then the ASF would take over in the context of a peacekeeping operation involving the deployment of larger contingents “boots on the ground,” i.e. light infantry forces. The latter would be supported by mobile, air-deployable EU forces. Subsequently, the UN would take over by deploying a medium-term sustainable stabilization force to safeguard the further peace process. In this way different international players would be involved in accordance with their specific capabilities and there would be a system of close interrelationships between these players, as it has been called for time and time again. However, for the EU battle groups this could very well end up in having to carry out operations which would be in accordance with their concept, but which most certainly would also lead to discussions in the public of the sending states concerned.

The stronger involvement of African soldiers in UN standard peacekeeping operations would enhance the integration into the security structure and significantly reduce the still inherent crisis potential.

In parallel, the capabilities of the ASF for highly mobile, air-deployable forces should be strengthened: As already listed in the requirements catalogue of the regional brigades, a helicopter squadron would form the central element. And this squadron would not consist of combat helicopters, but rather of medium transport helicopters, maybe lightly armed for self-protection. Only these rotary-wing aircraft will enable the ASF to carry out independent peacekeeping oper-

ations. External assistance could also be rendered in the form of training and equipment programs, with the German contribution, for example, comprising a corresponding support program for the South African armed forces. With that kind of support it would be possible to establish both a shipboard helicopter component for the MEKO frigates and a special helicopter component for the SADCBRIG. In West Africa, Nigeria would be the country first to receive that kind of support services. In the other regions, it would be advisable to wait and see how things develop.

However, even with the countries mentioned there are reasonable doubts whether a further militarization should be encouraged at all, since these weapon systems could also be abused at any time for other purposes. But as their necessity in peace missions is undisputed, another option would have to be taken into consideration, namely that of establishing a multinational central helicopter component under the auspices of the AU. This component would be available only for peacekeeping operations mandated by the PSC and could involve military personnel from most different African countries. The management of this helicopter squadron and other transport aircraft squadrons could be modeled on the basis of NATO's AWACS surveillance missions<sup>78</sup> that are also carried out with international crews. This model should prevent equipment from being abused for national solo efforts, while at the same time it would facilitate international funding. Operational and organizational details can surely be provided by competent NATO representatives. Additionally, soldiers from different member states working together could be a significant step towards more intensive cooperation between nations and promote mutual confidence building. Moreover, this could press ahead with training – including language training – and improve equipment compatibility. For the African Union this would mean a small step towards an African army.

The current situation in North and Central Africa is absolutely desperate. At present, there can actually be

<sup>78</sup> In Geilenkirchen, near Aachen, NATO has stationed 17 aircraft Boeing 707 with mixed crews from different member states.

no question of establishing a regional organization (and, consequently, also a regional ASF brigade). Although they must be counted rather among the heavyweights in Africa from a military point of view, the Mediterranean countries in particular, i.e. our immediate neighbors bordering the Mediterranean to the south, seem to have no interest whatsoever in the ASF. As long as these countries are at odds with each other among other things because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the dispute on Western Sahara, there will be no functional North African ASF brigade. The existing Mediterranean dialogues<sup>79</sup> have so far failed to bring about any substantial improvement in the field of cooperation. Perhaps French President Sarkozy may contribute to overcoming stagnation with the help of the Mediterranean Union, founded in March 2008, in combination with the French EU Council Presidency in the second half of 2008, although there is still a great deal of unclarity about what this new momentum is to bring about. Existing close bilateral ties, like those between Germany and Tunisia, could serve as a starting point in this context. From a German point of view, Tunisia is considered a guarantor of stability in North Africa. But then Tunisia only ratified the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council at the end of 2006, three years after it entered into force.<sup>80</sup>

Joint coastal surveillance together with the EU countries bordering the Mediterranean to the north would enhance cooperation in the field of soft security. In 2004, Tunisia purchased six fast patrol boats in Germany and by detailing these boats for this task, Tunisia could make a significant contribution.

A possible design fault of the ASF is that no plans have been made for a maritime component. However, such a component is not only needed for the surveillance of a maritime space like the Mediterranean Sea. It could also be used for meeting a considerable share of transport requirements by sealift. The European Union, too, did not take the maritime component into consideration when it began with the development of its battle group concept, but has made up for it in the meantime.

Ships are capable of operating self-sufficiently over great distances and for relatively long periods of time. They do not need infrastructure (which in Africa is

often rudimentary anyway), they are relatively easy to protect, and they do not need any diplomatic permissions in international waters. At the same time, they have little escalating effect or none at all, because off the coast they are hardly visible to the population. On the other hand a considerable part of the African population lives in coastal regions and can thus be reached relatively easy by ship. As a result, in the context discussed in this paper, ships are predestined for a number of tasks, be it for humanitarian missions, as logistics base, as communications and command center, for evacuation operations or as medical center. Compared to strategic airlift, the support services provided by ships are distinctly less expensive, less vulnerable and more sustainable. The North African countries and South Africa definitely have efficient naval forces which could be optimized for the tasks relevant in this context. At the same time, however, such naval forces are hardly suited to pose an offensive threat to other countries like air forces and especially land forces could do. Including a maritime component would, therefore, not mean to run the risk of fueling the still widespread mistrust between the African countries; on the contrary, the cooperation supporting it would have the potential to build transnational trust. In addition, the multinational naval forces could be tasked with containment of piracy, traffic in human beings, arms trade and drug trafficking – all objectives that can only be reached in a joint effort.

The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) could serve as an example for other continents or for UN missions in general. As mentioned before, a reliable and up-to-date situation picture is an indispensable prerequisite for planning and conducting a peace support operation. This information requirement could be met by a global early warning system (with a focus on crisis regions) in conjunction with a reconnaissance component. If it was possible to formally integrate the system into the UN, it would also be possible to remove the suspicion of carrying out espionage currently harbored against individual countries. And this would also ensure long-term funding which is a problem not only for the African countries. Besides, the UN would anyway need the information to be gained with an early warning system.

In many conflicts, poorly trained or poorly led military personnel, who are actually to contribute to conflict settlement, are part of the problem themselves. Replacing UN troops by AU forces on the African continent will work in the long run at the

<sup>79</sup> NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue and the EU's Barcelona Process.

<sup>80</sup> [www.afric-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Peace %20and%20Security%20Protocol.pdf](http://www.afric-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/Peace%20and%20Security%20Protocol.pdf) (accessed on 19 December 2007).

most. An adequate training level, regular pay, loyalty to the employer, personal integrity or respect for and support of human rights are important assets and qualities that must become a matter of course over generations first. Training in accordance with UN standards, support by international instructors, joint exercises and operations will enhance the professionalism of the armed forces as a whole. Integrating them into a security architecture that also does justice to that name will contribute to success as well.

In the final communiqué of the May 2007 EU-Africa Ministerial Meeting<sup>81</sup> it says that in the years to come the Africa Peace Facility remains by far the most important source of funding for African-led peace support operations. Ministers also welcomed the ongoing discussions on the EU concept for strengthening African capabilities for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Existing military capabilities need to be adapted to the mission requirements of peace support operations without ending up in a militarization of Africa.

The German support for the establishment of an operations center in Addis Ababa for the command of peace support operations, including a situation center,<sup>82</sup> will constitute an improvement of one of the key capabilities. Numerous other capabilities still have considerable potential for development, as this study has shown.

**81** *8th EU-Africa Ministerial Troika Meeting. Final Communiqué*, Brussels, 15 May 2007, [www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article\\_7032\\_en.htm](http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_7032_en.htm) (accessed on 18 June 2008).

**82** Press report of the Federal Foreign Office of 28 April 2008, [www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Infoservice/Presse/Meldungen/2008/080428-Afrika.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Infoservice/Presse/Meldungen/2008/080428-Afrika.html).

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States	SADCC	Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference
AMIS	African Union Mission in the Sudan	SADCBRIG	SADC Standby Force Brigade
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union	UN	United Nations
APF	African Peace Facility	UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
ASF	African Standby Force	UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
AU	African Union	UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
AWACS	Airborne Early Warning and Control System	UNMIS	United Nations Mission in the Sudan
CADSP	Common African Defense and Security Policy	UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire
CCDS	Committee of Chiefs of Defense Staff		
CEEAC	Communaute Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (see ECCAS)		
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response		
CEWERU	Conflict Early Warning Units		
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System		
CPAPS	Committee for Political Affairs, Peace and Security		
EAC	East African Community		
EAPSM	Eastern Africa Peace and Security Mechanism		
EASBRICOM	Eastern Africa Standby Brigade Coordination Mechanism		
EASBRIG	Eastern Africa Standby Brigade		
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States (see CEEAC)		
ECOBRIg	ECOWAS Standby Brigade		
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group		
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States		
EDF	European Development Fund		
FOMUC	Force Multinational d'Afrique Centrale		
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH		
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development		
KA IPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center		
MDP	Mutual Defense Pact		
MEKO	German acronym for 'general purpose combination'		
MINURSO	Mission des Nations Unies pour l'organisation d'un referendum au Sahara occidental/United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara		
MONUC	Mission de l'organisation des Nations Unies en Republique Democratique du Congo/United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo		
MSC	Military Staff Committee		
NARC	North Africa Regional Capability		
NASBRIG	Northern Africa Standby Brigade		
OAU	Organization of African Unity		
OPDS	Organ on Politics, Defense and Security		
PAPS	Political Affairs, Peace and Security		
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations		
PLANELM	Planning Element		
POW	Panel of the Wise		
PSC	Peace and Security Council		
PSTC	Peace Support Training Center		
RPTC	Regional Peacekeeping Training Center		
SADC	Southern African Development Community		