3
The African Peace and Security Architecture

Introduction

In the preceding chapters, I examined the contexts underlying the evolution of the APSA, namely: the nature of African security environment and the inability of the OAU to satisfactorily institutionalise a security mechanism to solve Africa's manifold security problems and guarantee basic security for African citizens. These appalling situations have, for many years, forced the continent to look for and rely on the broader international community, especially the UN, to solve its conflicts and deal with security. These efforts have not always been successful, as epitomised by the 1994 Rwandan genocide.[1] Since the transformation of the unwieldy OAU into an ambitious security regime, the AU, there have been significant developments on the continent with the clear demonstration of Africa's willingness through its pro-activeness in terms of its leaders' readiness to tackle the continent's security quagmires (Aning 2008: 9). Africa's new zeal for security management has led to first, the establishment of a formal institutional framework for conflict management, the APSA, through the AU's adoption, in 2002, of the PSC Protocol, which represents a fundamental paradigm shift in Africa's approach to conflict management, and second, increasing collaborations between the UN and the AU in peace and security matters.[2] Thus, the APSA becomes Africa's first continent-wide regional peace and security system; it represents African efforts to manage African security, for it provides an opportunity for the continent to break away from the age-old practice of overreliance on the international community to solve African conflicts (Kasumba and Debrah 2010: 12).

The PSC Protocol states the rationale for, and delineates the interlocking components of, the APSA, in which the PSC is the principal decision-making organ for conflict prevention, management and resolution. The PSC is supported by a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), a Panel of the Wise (PoW), a Peace Fund (the Fund), an African Standby Force (ASF) including a Military Staff Committee (MSC), and the AU Commission

(through the Chairperson of the AU Commission, the Commissioner for Peace and Security and his/her Peace and Security Directorate [PSD]). All of these components aim to provide an all-encompassing set of instruments to address African security needs by the African actors (Tavares 2010; Vines 2013).[3]

In this chapter, I examine the AU's burgeoning peacebuilding and security agenda. The main themes of discussions are the APSA's institutional structures and their continuing implementation. I employ descriptive and analytical approaches to examine these structures, focussing attention on their compositions, functions, powers and operational activities, and also on the AU Commission's capacity building and what this implies for the AU peace operations. The chapter gives an account of APSA and provides the information that serves as the necessary parameters to assess its (APSA) (in) effectiveness in providing a collective responsibility for common security in a fluid African security environment by looking at AMIB, AMISOM, and UNAMID in subsequent chapters. Therefore, this chapter provides the basis to understand how the AU matches rhetoric with reality: that is, how the AU's goals match up with its present capacity for peace operations and what the chasms are that this grandiose security mechanism creates. The APSA's evaluation is to identify its strengths and weaknesses and the challenges to its full operationalisation. An understanding of these gaps will make it possible to better channel synergies of efforts among the AU, RECs, UN and partner countries.

The African peace and security architecture: overview and institutional structures

Although the APSA has evolved over a period of four decades right from the period of the OAU's formation, the 4th Extraordinary Summit of the OAU in September 1999, where African leaders agreed to transform the OAU could be described as the proximate background context to the establishment of Africa's new security infrastructure. The approval of the AU Constitutive Act in July 2000 represents a significant change in the vision, goals, and responsibilities entrusted to the AU. Although the AU still upheld the principles that directed its feeble predecessor, which placed a premium on sovereignty, *uti possidetis*, "African solutions to African problems," non-interference in member states' internal affairs, and non-use of force and peaceful settlement of African disputes (see Chapter 2), the Act brought in enormous normative changes especially in the areas of peace and security, human rights and democracy, respect for the sanctity of human life, condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional governments and intervention. In fact, with the Act, peace and security become the primary issues on the AU agenda. These new normative principles form the basis on which the PSC Protocol and the Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP) were to be

enacted.[4] Indeed, as Engel and Gomes (2009) argued, both the PSC Protocol and CADSP could be seen as the APSA's legal foundation.

As I mentioned earlier, one remarkable aspect of the Act that represents a clear departure from the OAU is the new principle of the AU's right of intervention. According to Article 4 (h) of the Act, the AU has the right to intervene in a member state in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Furthermore, the Article was amended in 2003 by the Protocol on Amendments to the Act, to cover other "serious threats to legitimate order" and Article 4 (j) provides for "the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security." With the provisions of the various sections of Article 4 of the Act, Africa has moved away from unqualified respect for state sovereignty to an approach where the duty to protect populations and the right to intervention shapes Africa's security management agenda. The importance of the Article (especially Article 4h) for post-Cold War African security needs is that it does not merely commit to the promotion of African security: it shows Africa's determination to avoid a repetition of Rwanda's experience. While the Article creates the legal foundation and justification for armed interventions, it also imposes an obligation on Africa's foremost institution to intervene in order to prevent the occurrence or stop the perpetration of atrocious international crimes in Africa (Dersso 2010a).

For the AU to be able to respond to threats and breaches of peace on the African continent, its Act's new norms need to be supported by institutional structures that will enforce and make these norms a reality. One of the major flaws of the AU Constitutive framework is that it fails to give proper direction in the area of institutionalisation of the conflict management structures for the AU, as it only states that the AU Assembly shall give directives to the Executive Council on the management of African peace and security.[5] This lacuna and lack of direction was rectified through two channels. The first was the decision adopted by the 37th Ordinary Session of the OAU's AHG held in Lusaka in July 2001. During this summit, African leaders approved the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism as one of the AU organs in line with Article 5 (2) of the Act.[6] The second was through the adoption of the PSC Protocol in July 2002.[7] The PSC Protocol gives Africa a comprehensive security mechanism that is constructed around the PSC through its preeminent position as the APSA's most pivotal body and highest authority responsible for Africa's peace and security matters and is supported by other components. While the AU plays a leading role in African security, the RECs are the pillars of the APSA, for the development of the AU security mechanism is a function of the commitment of the RECs. The APSA's roles are interlocking and operate in a sequence to ensure that peace and stability reign on African soil. The information gathered and analysed through the multilayered African early warning system are set to launch the APSA into operation. The CEWS informs the relevant bodies
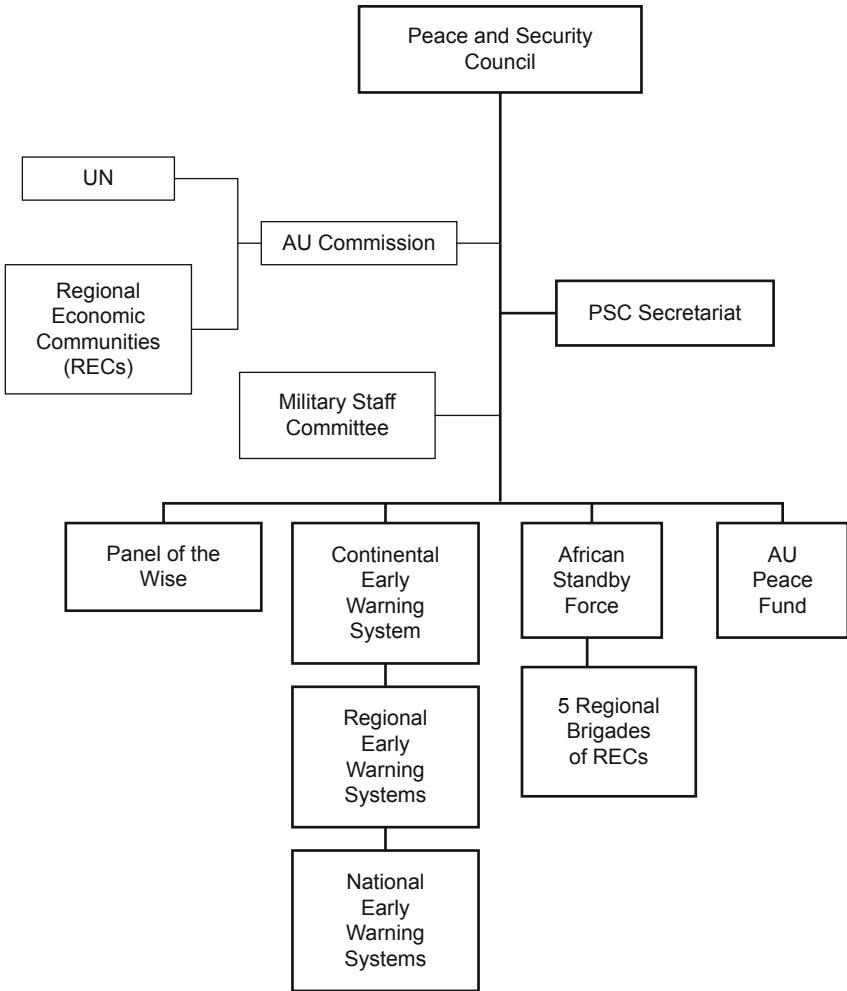
Figure 3.1 The African peace and security architecture.

on the developments in Africa that have the propensity to disrupt peace based on data collected. Then the AU Commission Chairperson, through the Commissioner for Peace and Security, using the CEWS's information, plans appropriate courses of action that the situation demands and simultaneously advises the PSC on the potential threat(s) to African security. Then the PoW comes into play through preventive deployment of the AU presence, hopefully before the breakdown of law and order. It is when the PoW's advisory and conflict prevention efforts fail that the ASF is deployed (see Figure 3.1 for pictorial representation of the APSA Framework).

The Peace and Security Council

At the heart of the APSA lies the PSC. The PSC is a standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The council defines and directs the AU conflict management agenda (Vines 2013). It is equally responsible for the overall implementation of the CADSP purposely to protect the sanctity of human life and to lay out the conditions for sustainable development in Africa.[8] The PSC Protocol acknowledges that the PSC is to function in accordance with, and within the framework of, the UN's major role as the principal custodian of international security, and also the UN's acknowledgment of the obligations of regional organisations (Preamble; African Union 2002). According to Article 7 of the PSC Protocol, the PSC is tasked, in consultation with the AU Commission Chairperson, to promote African peace, stability and security, anticipate and prevent conflict, promote and implement peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction activities, and promote democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, among other things (see Badmus 2014).

The PSC has enormous powers to make decisions on its own on a wide range of security related issues in Africa, ranging from preventive diplomacy to post-conflict peacebuilding. But, in serious crisis situations, such as the ones specified under Article 4 (h) of the Act, or when action is needed in a non-consenting member state, the AU Assembly jointly makes the decisions upon the PSC's recommendations (Bogland, Egnell and Lagerström 2008; Powell and Tieku 2005). The council is also responsible for facilitating close collaboration with the RECs, regional mechanisms (RMs), and the UN.

The PSC was inaugurated on 25 May 2004[9] after the AU Executive Council had elected 15 member states to the council.[10] The council functions at three levels: heads of state, ministers and permanent representatives. The council meets at least twice a month – but as often as required – at the permanent representatives' level. The ministers and heads of state each meet at least once a year, while the chairmanship of the PSC rotates monthly among its members in the alphabetical order of their names. Since its inauguration, the PSC's permanent representatives have met frequently to discuss African security challenges and how to deal with them. In terms of composition, fifteen countries sit on the council, of which five – one country each per geographical region (Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa) – are elected to serve for a three-year term, while the remaining ten serve for two years (Article 5 (1), PSC Protocol, African Union 2002; Sturman and Hayatou 2010). This is to ensure continuity, and despite the fact that the PSC is patterned after the UN Security Council arrangement, no state that sits on the council is a permanent member or has veto powers. This arrangement is to ensure greater flexibility for the AU to make prompt decisions. The PSC pronouncements, which are binding on all member states, are made by consensus, and failing that, decisions on procedural matters require a

simple majority while those on all other matters need a two-thirds majority vote of its voting members.[11] The council excludes member countries that are party to a conflict from participating in its deliberations, especially when the agenda concerns them.[12] Also, it is important to emphasise that despite the fact that the PSC is modelled after the UN Security Council, in the African Peace and Security Council, the agenda is set by the AU Commission, and the AU Commission staff drafts the communiqués. This situation is different in the UN Security Council, where all resolutions are sponsored and drafted by member states. Furthermore, the AU Executive Council, when electing the PSC members, applies the principles of equitable regional representation and rotation. Election of states to the PSC is also a function of their financial, military and political commitments to the AU and their respect for constitutional rule, human rights, full accreditation at the AU headquarters, and the UN.[13] Member states are eligible for immediate reelection at the expiration of their term. Although this arrangement, as MØller observes (2009: 13), may look more democratic than that of the UN, it does not give potential hegemonic states an influence matching their capacities. This scenario may have negative consequences for the AU in the future. If relatively economically powerful African countries like Nigeria and South Africa are not elected members of the PSC, it is possible that they could keep their generous contributions to AU peacekeeping efforts to the prescribed minimum – for example, as retaliation – with negative consequences for such missions and African security as whole, as the AU depends heavily on the excess contributions of these countries for its activities.

Conceptually, the structure of the PSC looks impressive, and its operational procedures are innovative, especially in its regional/geographical representation, despite the fact that it mimics that of its predecessor, the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism. The problems associated with the rotation principle under the OAU Mechanism, which automatically allowed countries in each subregion to succeed one another in alphabetical order, are avoided. The principle gave some countries that were inappropriate and not capable of shouldering the responsibilities that membership placed upon them the opportunity to become participating and contributing members (Golaszinski 2004). Through this principle, Zimbabwe became a member of the Central Organ in 2003 despite the poor human rights record of Robert Mugabe's government. Clearly, there is an improvement under the AU security regime, for the prospective candidates for the PSC will now be elected based on a two-thirds majority vote cast in a secret ballot. The implication of this is that any state aspiring to be a member of the PSC will still need the support of countries beyond its subregion. The PSC Protocol also requires each REC to submit a list of five candidate countries for its three places on the council. This, together with the criteria mentioned earlier that candidate countries need to meet, seem to be very rigorous election procedures and processes.

But does the AU actually adhere strictly to these criteria when electing members of the PSC? The answer is emphatically No. Since its inauguration in 2004, the AU's PSC has been constantly featuring a number of authoritarian states, a worrying situation that bears negative consequences on the domestic legitimacy of and international confidence in the PSC. Golaszinski (2004: 3), when analysing the composition of the inaugural PSC in relation to the requirements of democracy and good governance, argues that it is very likely that only South Africa, out of the five AU member states elected to serve for a three-year term on the PSC, would qualify in respect of human rights, and major African countries like Algeria, Ethiopia and Nigeria are likely to fail the test.[14] The situation has gone from bad to worse, judging by the increasing number of less democratic states that sit on the council, especially Ethiopia and Zimbabwe (Vines 2013). Truly, this is an enormous concern because most of the PSC members do not hold tenaciously to the AU's "new identity" and they do not adequately meet important criteria to be members.[15] The frightening situation raises two fundamental questions. First, since the PSC could be described as "Autocrats United"[16] rather than the "African Union," how will the council work towards realising the idea of a democratic, peaceful and conflict-free Africa? Second, how will the APSA's goals be realised when the council is beset with these internal squabbles and contradictions? I answer these questions by looking at the PSC's operational activities.

Since its inauguration, the council has had mixed results – shortcomings and achievements – in its crucial political decisions in response to peace and security challenges in Africa. Most of these responses have concerned condemnation and the use of political and economic sanctions against unconstitutional changes of government, particularly against the Central African Republic (2003), Guinea Bissau (2003; 2012), São Tomé e Príncipe (2003), Togo (2005), Mauritania (2005 and 2008), Guinea (2008), Madagascar (2009) and Niger (2010) (Badmus 2014; Eriksson 2010; Moolakkattu 2010; Okumu 2009; Sturman 2009; Vines 2013; Williams 2008, 2009a). Such actions have also been taken against Côte d'Ivoire (during the post-election crisis of 2010–2011), Mali (2012), Egypt (2013), and Libya. The objective of these sanctions is to stigmatise the governments that seized power through undemocratic means. The AU seeks the support of such other multilateral institutions as the RECs, the UN, and the EU when sanctioning undemocratic governments and states (Vines 2013). Peace operations have also been authorised and deployed in Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, the Comoros, the CAR and Mali. In 2013 alone, the council held a total of 61 meetings and issued 70 statements and communiqués. While these efforts are commendable, the PSC has been subjected to an avalanche of criticisms about its unequal application of the AU norms and sanctions.

The cases of Togo, Somalia and Sudan illustrate this dilemma, which could also be explained, in part, by the negative consequences of the undemocratic

composition/character of the council. Togo, an elected member of the PSC, was suspended due to the palace coup it experienced following the death of the president in February 2005. The AU's chorus of disapproval and its efforts, combined with the ECOWAS's, brought about a reversal of the coup and returned the country to constitutional rule. Such countries as Mauritania, Guinea, Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali also have had their AU memberships suspended until democratic order was restored. This is a great achievement for the PSC, but it has been overshadowed by the PSC's responses to the situations in Somalia and Sudan (Darfur), which present strong tests for the council in the implementation of its operational procedures. At the invitation of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Ethiopian military forces intervened in Somalia and forced the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) out of Mogadishu in December 2006 and early 2007 (see Chapter 5 for details). Despite Ethiopia's justifications of self-defence and helping the TFG in establishing its control and legitimacy, Addis Ababa's action, coupled with the fact that it lacked the PSC authorisation, contravened the AU's norms (Wakengela 2011; Yihdego 2007). Being a member of the PSC and a party to the conflict, Ethiopia ought to have been suspended, but to the contrary, the country continued to maintain its seat on the council. Thus, Ethiopia's presence and its participation in the council's deliberations on the situation in Somalia was, by any yardstick, a breach of Article 8 (9) of the PSC Protocol, as Addis Ababa became its own judge in a conflict in which it was a party. Obviously, this is disgusting and an eyesore to the international community. Also, Sudan, through its PSC membership, thwarted the council's efforts to discuss the war in Darfur. Khartoum frustrated the PSC in holding such deliberations, especially when Sudan chaired the council. These scenarios are worrisome for two reasons. First, the presence of anti-democratic states on the council reduces the moral weight of the PSC's decisions against countries that contravene the AU norms. Second, the undemocratic make up of the PSC allows the council to violate its own legal document, the PSC Protocol, in the conduct of its business. These inconsistencies in the enforcement of norms need to be critically addressed if the PSC is truly to serve the purposes for which it was established.

The African Standby Force

The African Chiefs of Defence Staff (ACDS) 2nd Meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1997 envisioned and recommended that the OAU be endowed with the early response capability to respond to African security crises in advance of the UN intervention. The meeting laid the conceptual and technical foundations of the ASF when it recommended that the proposed African early response capacity should be based on a standby arrangement with each of the identified five African sub-regional groupings contributing a brigade-sized contingent. The requirements of the proposed African force – headquarters

capacity, standard operating procedures (SOPs), logistics, training, force generation capacity and funding – were also identified by the African military chiefs (African Union 2003a; Bachmann 2011: 24). The ACDS's recommendations were given a political boost when the 1st Ordinary Session of the AU adopted the PSC Protocol. As a political document, the protocol only gave a skeletal structure of the ASF without going into detail about how the African force would be developed and operationalised. Nevertheless, Article 13 (1) of the PSC Protocol states that for the PSC to deploy peace missions and intervention forces, there is the need for the establishment of an ASF. The proposed African force would be made up of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components that would be based in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice. This Article laid the basis for the civilian and military experts to work on the establishment, development and modalities of the ASF. The experts finally drafted the "Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Military Staff Committee (MSC)" (The Policy Framework – PF) as an important document in the conceptual development of the ASF (Kent and Malan 2003: 73).

Pursuant to Article 13 (1) of the PSC Protocol, the ACDS in their 3rd Meeting at the AU headquarters in May 2003 adopted the PF (African Union 2003a; de Coning 2004: 21).[17] Also, the Roadmap for the Operationalisation of the ASF (Roadmap I), which specified the time schedule for the development of the various ASF's components, was adopted in 2005 (African Union 2005a). The formation of the ASF, which is regarded as the implementing arm of the PSC's decisions, is extraordinary, as it symbolises Africa's continuing effort to police its own conflicts (Neethling 2005a: 71). As one of the most pivotal and ambitious APSA's components, the ASF is envisioned to empower the AU to conduct prompt and robust peace missions in response to complex emergencies that may occur in Africa that require quick military deployments (Vines 2013). Article 13 (3) of the PSC Protocol mandated the ASF to perform a wide range of functions, including:

- Observation and monitoring missions
- Other types of peace support missions
- Intervention in a member state in line with Article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act
- Preventive deployment to prevent (i) a dispute or a conflict from escalating, (ii) an ongoing violent conflict from spreading to neighbouring areas or states, and (iii) the resurgence of violence after peace agreements are achieved
- Peacebuilding, including post-conflict disarmament and demobilisation
- Humanitarian assistance in situations of conflict and major natural disasters
- Any further functions as may be mandated by the PSC or the Assembly of Heads of States

Therefore, the ASF contingents are intended to carry out peace operations across the entire range of missions from classical peacekeeping operations to complex multidimensional peacebuilding missions.

The PF stipulated that the ASF is to be made up of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components, in each of the five African subregions – North, Southern, East, West and Central Africa – corresponding to the North African Regional Capability (NARC) Brigade, also known as the North African Standby Brigade (NASBRIG), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Brigade (SADCBRIG), the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Brigade (ECOBRIG), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Brigade (ECCASBRIG) or Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC). Each REC contingent should be up to a brigade-size (around 5,000 troops), while the sixth brigade will be based at the AU headquarters. This arrangement will provide the AU with combined force strength of 25,000 to 30,000 soldiers ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice. The PF identified six possible conflict and mission scenarios that the ASF is likely to face and under which it could be deployed (Neethling 2005a&b):

- Scenario 1: AU/regional military advice to a political mission – deployed within 30 days from the issues of an AU mandate.
- Scenario 2: AU/regional observer mission co-deployed with a UN mission – deployed within 30 days of an AU resolution.
- Scenario 3: Stand-alone AU/regional observer mission – deployed within 30 days of an AU resolution.
- Scenario 4: AU regional peacekeeping for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions (peacebuilding) – deployed within 30 days of an AU resolution.
- Scenario 5: AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping mission, including those involving low-level spoilers – deployed within 90 days, with the military component being able to deploy in 30 days.
- Scenario 6: AU intervention, example in genocide situations, where the international community does not act promptly – deployed within 14 days, with robust military force. (African Union 2003a: para 1.6, 2005a)

Conceptually, the ASF is not a standing armed force but rather a standby army constituted through a standby arrangement that is made possible through the pledges of the AU member states to earmark specific contingents (military, police and civilian personnel) for the RECs/RMs (de Coning 2004: 24). Then each REC forms its standby brigade and develops its registers. The RECs ensure that they acquaint the AU with their efforts in terms of capabilities they are able to build, including their updated rosters (Dersso

2010a). There is no question, the regional brigade forms part of the ASF, but they are based in their countries of origin in readiness for deployment at appropriate notice (de Coning 2004; Marshall 2009). This means that the ASF are called up and jointly deploy to a theatre of operation only when the decision about such deployment is made. While the African force is based in their countries of origin, they do participate in pre-deployment activities that are arranged by each REC (Dersso 2010a: 7). These activities are to ensure their readiness for deployment at short notice. The Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) at the AU Commission is its coordinating mechanism and is envisioned to command a continental-wide integrated communication and information system linking the brigades to the AU Commission as well as the RECs/RMs headquarters.

In line with the possible conflict and mission scenarios above, the AU proposed very complex schedules for addressing these scenarios. For Scenarios 1 to 4, it was recommended that the deployment of peace operations should be completed within 30 days. For Scenario 5, peace operations should be deployed in 90 days, with the military component being able to completely deploy in 30 days. For Scenario 6, the AU is expected to deploy a strong military intervention force in 14 days, due to the gravity of the situations envisaged under this scenario (African Union 2003a, 2005a).

The PF and Roadmap I designed the development and operationalisation of the ASF in two phases because of the enormity of its activities and the efforts required. Phase I was to be implemented by 30 June 2005, but was extended to 2008 due to a delay in its take off. During this phase, the AU was to establish strategic-level management capability (i.e., a planning element – PLANELM) at the AU Commission to manage the deployment of Scenarios 1 and 2, and a standby reinforcement system to manage Scenario 3. By the end of this phase, the regions should have had strategic and brigade-level headquarters and reinforcement capacity to manage a Scenario 4 mission (African Union 2003a; Bachmann 2011). According to the PF, the PLANELM of the Peace and Security Department (PSD) at the AU Commission should be composed of a full-time, 15-person staff and be supported by a start up five-person capability in the RECs'/RMs' PLANELMs (Kent and Malan 2003). The AU PLANELM was tasked with managing the ASF pre-deployment procedures and processes. The AU was to establish the ASF foundational policy documents, especially those dealing with doctrine, command, control, communications and information systems (C^3IS), SOPs, logistics, training and evaluation. Additionally, by 30 June 2005, the AU should establish and centrally manage standby rosters of 300–500 military observers (MILOBs) and about 240 individual police officers. The AU also intends to establish a standby system with at least two company-level formed police units as well as a civilian roster composed of experts in administration, human rights, humanitarian affairs, governance, and DDR (African

Union 2003a; Bachmann 2011; Dersso 2010a; Holt and Shanahan 2005; Kent and Malan 2003).

During Phase II, which was originally scheduled to be completed by 30 June 2010, the AU was to build its capacity to deal with Scenarios 4 to 6: that is, conducting and managing multidimensional peacekeeping operations, whilst the RECs/RMs were expected to continue developing their capacities to deploy a mission headquarters for Scenario 4 missions, thereby giving the AU additional assistance in deploying and managing complex peace operations (African Union 2003a, 2005a: para. 3; Kasumba and Debrah 2010). According to the PF, the RECs are the first ports of call in case of any conflict in Africa, while the AU is to provide an African perspective, working closely with the UN. Copying the UN structure for leadership of peace operations, under the ASF concept, the appointment of a special representative and a Force Commander for peace operations becomes the responsibility of the AU Commission Chairperson, while the MSC advises the PSC and the ASF on all matters relating to military and security requirements.

One important observation in the early development of the ASF is that it exclusively focuses on the military aspect of peace operations, while the civilian dimension did not receive the desired attention. As de Coning (2010: 8) argued, one of the major remaining challenges confronting the ASF is the urgent need to develop its civilian and police components so that the multidimensional nature of the AU peace operations can be realised. Although de Coning's comments were made in 2010, efforts have been geared towards rectifying this inadequacy as far back as 2006 when the AU developed the "Policy Framework on the ASF Civilian Dimension" (CP framework), a document that later became an important policy guide developed for the civilian component of the African Standby Force (African Union 2006). While the CP framework situates the civilian dimension policy in the framework of other high-level AU policy guidance, the ASF foundation documents, especially the document on the force Doctrine, help to focus attention on the multidimensional nature of the African Standby Force (de Coning 2007, 2010).

Following these developments, the 2nd Meeting of the African Ministers of Defence and Security (AMDS) in March 2008 promised to ensure that the civilian and police/*gendarmerie* dimensions of the ASF would receive adequate attention (African Union 2008a). Within this context, Roadmap II was adopted at the Consultative Meeting among the AU Commission, the RECs/RMs and the PLANELMs of the ASF Regional Brigade in Addis Ababa in July 2008. Roadmap II specified the areas that need further development (headquarters capacity, logistic depots, strategic lift, the rapid deployment capacity and others) during the remaining short period (July 2008–June 2010) left for the full operationalisation of the ASF (African Union 2008b).

Many efforts have been expended towards the development of the African Standby Force, notably in the areas of recruitment of staff for the PLANELMs at the AU Commission and the RECs to bolster the AU capacity

in planning successful peace operations. Also the ASF foundation documents were produced, adopted, and subsequently approved in March 2008 to continue guiding the operationalisation of the ASF.[18] A detailed memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the AU Commission and the RECs during the AU Summit in Addis Ababa in January 2008 to facilitate and increase collaborations and coordination between Addis Ababa and the various RMs in the area of peace and security and also to expedite the moves towards the full development of the African Standby Force. The signing of the MoU was in response to the African leaders' call for greater cooperation and regular consultations between the AU and the RECs during their November 2007 Summit in Accra. Among the areas covered by the MoU are information sharing, regular meetings, as well as the provision of liaison officers to serve as bridges between the AU and the RECs. Since the signing of the MoU, regular meetings have been held between the AU and the RECs/RMs on the ASF development. In addition, under the famous AMANI Africa Cycle, efforts have been made to assess the operational readiness of the standby force by undertaking a chain of Level I, II and III decision-making exercises.[19] The AMANI Africa Cycle, officially launched on 21 November 2008 at the AU-EU Ministerial Troika in Addis Ababa, is the EU's European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) instrument, using EURORECAMP[20] as a tool, to help the AU in the ASF operationalisation through training and by evaluating AU decision-making processes and competencies. In practical terms, it involves bolstering the AU political and strategic capabilities by setting up the procedures, processes and permanent mission structures, including political decision-making, commitment of force and guaranteeing predictable funding. The AMANI Africa Cycle culminated in October 2010 with the conducting of the continental Level II decision-making exercise known as the AMANI Africa Command Post Exercise (CPX). According to the AU Commission Chairperson, this exercise assessed progress made to date. The exercise also provided the opportunity to identify areas that need to be addressed in the development of the ASF.[21] Under the AMANI Africa II Support Programme, which covers the period between 8 May 2012 and 31 April 2015, the EU is expected to contribute €5.2 million to cover expenses relating to training and planning activities, of headquarters during the field training exercise, post-exercise activities and human resources (African Peace Facilities 2012).

In spite of these efforts, the development of the ASF was challenged by a number of problems that hampered realising its initial full operationalisation in 2010. Problems ranging from regional differences to questions about mandating modus operandi and coordination, institutional capacity building, funding, logistics and training slowed the pace of progress towards the full development of the African Standby Force. These problems were identified and will be critically addressed in the phase of the ASF implementation that covers the period between 2011 and 2015. Also the AU planned

an Africa-wide rapid deployment for testing by December 2014 (Vines 2013). There are clear disproportions in the readiness of the RECs/RMs in terms of their capabilities for peace operations. While ECOWAS and SADC are making progress in this endeavour, other regions are lagging behind. I will return to these challenges later.

The African Union Commission

Within the AU Commission, the Peace and Security Department (PSD) shoulders gargantuan peace and security responsibilities. According to the PSC Protocol, the AU Commission, through its Chairperson, the Commissioner for Peace and Security and his PSD, supports the PSC in the latter's efforts to promote peace and security in Africa. The department carries out the decisions of the PSC and ensures compliance. The PSD manages the AU's goals and implements the CADSP, the AU's Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) that seeks to achieve long-term sustainable development beyond stabilisation, among other things.[22] The department strategically and operationally directs the AU's peace and security activities. While responding to crisis situations in Africa, it keeps the PSC abreast of the developments in peace operations; it serves as a bridge between the PSC and the RECs and between the RECs and the UN as well as other relevant international organisations and AU partners. The PSD comprises four divisions, all of which work towards the AU's goal of promoting stability in Africa: the Conflict Management Division (CMD), the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD), the Peace and Security Council Secretariat, and the Defence and Security Division (DSD). The CMD is responsible for the operationalisation of certain aspects of the APSA, especially those dealing with the CEWS, the PoW, and the MoU between the AU and the RECs/RMs. The CMD, which is described as the operational policy arm of the PSC (Bogland, Egnell and Lagerström 2008: 24), is comprised of an early warning unit and a conflict management, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction unit. These units are structured to develop policy options, support and coordinate activities dealing with the prevention and management of African conflicts, and implement post-conflict reconstruction and development. The PSOD is comprised of two units – the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee and the Operations and Support Unit. The PSOD is responsible for the operationalisation of the ASF and the MSC. These tasks include the elaboration of relevant policy documents and coordination with appropriate African structures and the AU's partners.[23] The division is responsible for AU peacekeeping as it plans, mounts, manages and supports AU peace operations.[24] The PSOD's tasks are akin to that of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). While this is true, the parallel between the division and DPKO should not be stretched too far because the staff strength of the PSOD is just a fraction of that of the DPKO (Bogland, Egnell and Lagerström 2008: 24). The Peace

and Security Council Secretariat gives the needed operational and administrative support to the Peace and Security Council to facilitate its work. The Secretariat acts, according to the AU, as the custodian of the institutional memory on the council's activities. The PSC Secretariat also facilitates the council's relations and dealings with other institutions on matters relating to African peace and security.[25]

The continental early warning system

The PSC Protocol calls for the establishment of a continent-wide early warning system as part of the APSA, to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts[26] through gathering and analysis of information that will help the AU to prevent conflicts in a timely manner. The CEWS operates as the early warning component of the APSA, building on the RECs'/RMs' early warning mechanisms. Its idea is to boost the AU capacity to prevent conflict by providing the Chairperson of the AU Commission with information and enabling him/her to use the valuable data gathered, through the CEWS, to advise the PSC on potential conflicts and threats to African peace and security and also to recommend the best course of action (Wane et al. 2010).[27]

Structurally, the CEWS consists of the Observation and Monitoring Centre (OMC) known as the "Situation Room" housed at the CMD at the AU Commission, and the Observation and Monitoring Units (OMUs) of the RMs. According to Article 12 (2b) of the PSC Protocol, the Situation Room is to be linked directly to the RMs' OMUs through appropriate means of communication. The OMUs are to continuously collect and process data at their respective levels and transmit them to the Situation Room. The AU takes prompt actions in response to the data collected through the multi-levelled African early warning system about a threat of violent conflict that has the propensity to disturb African security.

The AU has made giant strides towards the operationalisation of the CEWS since 2003 and has been working with states, the RECs/RMs, academic institutions, research centres, the UN, and its agencies as well as civil society groups. The AU has worked on the institutional development of the CEWS to the extent that it has implemented an important aspect of the data and information-gathering infrastructure. Furthermore, in line with its coordinating role, the CEWS is working on the harmonisation of the practices of the various RMs' early warning mechanism activities (African Union 2008c).

The Panel of the Wise

The Panel of the Wise was officially inaugurated on 18 December 2007 to support the PSC's efforts and those of the AU Commission Chairperson, particularly in the area of conflict prevention.[28] It functions as an advisory body to the PSC and supports it through the use of good offices and research, among other things, to promote peace and stability in Africa. The panel echoes the AU's commitment to an "African solutions" agenda (Jegede

2009: 418) and takes an innovative African approach that reflects established African traditions of conflict resolution that put primacy on wisdom, goodwill and the abilities of elders (African Union 2010; Murithi and Nwaura 2010: 79–80). In addition to its advisory roles, Article 11 (4) of the PSC Protocol states that the PoW shall, at its own initiative, pronounce itself on issues dealing with maintenance of peace and security in Africa. Hence, in the performance of its duties, the PoW may act either at the request of the PSC or the AU Commission Chairperson, or at its own volition. This gives the PoW a degree of latitude to operate even though its functions are within the APSA's framework. In terms of its membership, Article 11 (2) of the PSC Protocol states:

> The Panel of the Wise shall be composed of five highly respected African personalities from various segments of society who have made (an) outstanding contribution to the cause of peace, security and development on the continent. They shall be selected by the chairperson of the Commission after consultation with the Member States concerned, on the basis of regional representation, and appointed by the Assembly to serve for a period of three years.

In line with the PSC Protocol, in January 2007, the AU Commission Chairperson selected the following five people to serve on the panel for a three-year period and recommended to the assembly:

- Salim Ahmed Salim, former Secretary General of the OAU (East Africa),
- Miguel Trovoada, former president of São Tomé e Príncipe (Central Africa),
- Ahmed Ben Bella, former president of Algeria (North Africa),
- Elisabeth K. Pognon, president of the Constitutional Court of Benin (West Africa),
- Brigalia Bam, Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (Southern Africa).[29]

The assembly approved the AU Commission Chairperson's recommendations at its 8th Ordinary Session in January 2007,[30] while the PSC, at its 100th meeting on 12 November 2007, adopted a detailed set of modalities for the functioning of the panel (the Modalities),[31] and called for the document to be reviewed after the operationalisation of the panel and, on a regular basis afterwards, and amended when necessary (African Union 2007a). While the PoW does not have a mediation role, as it can only assist and advise teams engaged in official negotiations, Section II (1) of the Modalities states that the PoW may undertake various activities in coordination with the PSC and the AU Commission Chairperson. The PoW supports and complements the PSC's effort, also through the special envoys and other emissaries. The

inaugural meeting of the panel was held on 20 February 2008 (El Abdellaoui 2009).[32]

The PoW has met on several occasions to deliberate and act on the situations in the CAR, Somalia, Mauritania, Zimbabwe, the DRC, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar and Sudan, and it has equally undertaken confidence building missions to a number of African countries such as the CAR and South Africa. The PoW should be credited for its proactive role in conflict prevention in Africa, considering the relatively short period that it has been in existence as compared to other APSA's components, such as the ASF, that have received enormous AU attention and resources. However, the PoW's role is subject to conceptual ambiguities for, according to a report commissioned by the AU's PSD:

> While the Panel is envisaged to be involved in conflict prevention, it is not clear at what stage of the prevention process it intervenes. In other words, does prevention mean preventing conflict from happening or managing conflicts from escalating? If prevention is understood as the former, then the Panel's role would be somewhat of the advocacy type, and if it is the latter, the Panel might be drawn into a direct mediation contrary to the role envisaged for it in the Modalities document. (African Union 2010: 56)

While lack of conceptual clarity of the PoW's role is a challenge, not appearing in the AU Commission structure limits the panel's activities. Such non-appearance means that its activities are financed through funds provided by external donors rather than from the AU's regular budget. This situation presents the PoW with the twin problems of sustainability and ownership, for donors' funds are not predictable and are attached with too much conditionality. This tends to compromise the African ownership of the PoW.

The Peace Fund

The Peace Fund is the principal source of finance for the APSA. The fund is envisioned as a standing pool on which both the AU and the RECs/RMs can call upon in emergency situations and to meet unexpected priorities.[33] It is financed directly through the requisitions from the AU's regular budget, including arrears of contributions and voluntary contributions from states and private sources within and outside the African continent.[34] The fund has been an established practice since 1993, and under the OAU Mechanism, 6 per cent of the OAU regular budget was allocated to it. Due to poverty of African economies, a number of AU member states find it difficult to honour their financial obligations to the organisation, thereby limiting the AU in its peace and security activities. Between 2004 and 2007, the AU member states' contributions to the fund amounted to an average of 1.9 per cent of the

total resources mobilised, while the remaining amounts were from external partners (African Union 2010; Pirozzi 2009: 16).[35] Also, between 2008 and 2011, African countries' contributions to the Peace Fund totalled only 2 per cent of the resources mobilised (Vorrath 2012). This situation bears negative consequences for AU peace and security activities. The 2007 "High-leveled Panel Audit of the African Union" suggests that there is:

> cause for concern regarding the funding of peace operations in Africa. The Peace Fund remains small and precarious. On average, only 6 per cent of the regular budget is allocated to the Peace Fund. This is a paltry sum viewed against the needs of peacekeeping activities on the continent. The assessed contributions to finance peacekeeping have not been done and the reimbursement within six months of states contributing contingents to peace support operations, as provided for in the Protocol, has not always been honoured. (African Union 2007b)

As a consequence, in August 2009, African leaders decided at the AU summit in Tripoli to gradually increase the statutory transfer from the AU regular budget to the Peace Fund from 6 per cent to a total of 12 per cent by 2012 to avoid crippling the AU in its peace and security functions (African Union 2009: 3).[36] Earlier, African leaders had adopted a resolution during the AU summit in Maputo, Mozambique, in July 2003, calling on the EU to establish a Peace Support Operation Facility (PSOF) from funds allocated to African countries under the existing cooperation agreements with the European institution (African Peace Facility 2012; African Union 2003b; Aning and Danso 2010; European Union Commission 2010). Consequently, the EU African Peace Facility (APF) was established in March 2004, with the initial sum of €250 million, under the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) budget (2000–2007) to support the APSA and Africa's vision of transition from protracted conflicts to sustainable peace.[37] The APF is one of the main sources of finance for the APSA project, which puts the EU at the forefront of international support for the APSA, especially African peace operations and capacity building activities at the levels of both the AU and RECs (African Peace Facility 2012). Due to the AU's wide range of peace and security activities, especially their peace operations in the field, the money was insufficient and was increased four times, to a total of €440 million by 2007.[38] During the first phase, 90 per cent of the APF was directed towards assisting the AU-led peace operations in Somalia, Darfur, the Comoros and the FOMUC mission to the CAR. The remaining 10 per cent was devoted to capacity building for the AU Peace and Security Department. For the 2008–2010 period, the EU decided to replenish the APF in February 2009 by allocating an additional €300 million under the Intra-ACP Initiative Programme of the 10th European Development Fund (2007–2013).

Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the African security mechanism

The establishment of APSA epitomises the African leaders' resolution to prevent, manage and resolve, and therefore take greater ownership of, the continent's security challenges. This focus is based on their conviction that sustainable peace and security is a precondition for African development. The APSA makes a clear departure from the ad hoc responses to specific African security problems as practised under the OAU, as it creates a unifying framework to address these kinds of problems. Within the short period that the APSA has been in existence and, despite the fact that it is still being developed, the AU has been able to respond to and take several initiatives in Africa's trouble spots. This is a positive development that makes the APSA a promising mechanism for solving African security problems. Within the APSA framework, the AU has applied its new norms and standards to condemn the unconstitutional changes of government in some African states as well as having suspended these countries' memberships in the organisation until constitutional order has been restored (Aning 2008: 16; Mlambo 2006: 48–50). It also took decisive steps ranging from peacemaking to the supervision of elections in a number of African countries. As part of the APSA's implementation, the AU deployed peace missions in Burundi, the Comoros, Somalia, Darfur, Mali and the CAR with varying degrees of success. Although some of the AU peace operations have been taken over by the UN through a process of re-hatting AU peacekeepers into the multidimensional UN peace missions, the AU's proactive stance of deploying peace missions to stabilise the security situations in both Burundi and Darfur, and filling in the gaps created as a result of the UN's reluctance to get involved before comprehensive peace agreements were put in place, is a credit to the organisation. These peace and security efforts are clear indications of the AU's pivotal roles in managing African security, which, by extension, signal the appropriateness of the APSA tackling African security challenges. Clearly, all the aforementioned PSC's efforts would not have been possible if not for the way the APSA and its legal foundations, the PSC Protocol and CADSP, were conceived; these legal documents empowered the AU to move away from an unqualified respect for state sovereignty to non-indifference when it comes to violent conflicts on the continent.[39] The AU can now address issues that would have been regarded as purely internal affairs of the affected countries under the OAU regime, such as the coup d'états in Togo and Mauritania. The APSA's broad approach to African security is promising. The APSA is, based on the way it is conceptualised and structured, an appropriate instrument to guarantee African security. The APSA takes full account of the continent's multifaceted security challenges and has devised the required response instruments to tackle these challenges. The APSA's appropriateness can be linked to its structures, since they are not only in

place to deal with peacekeeping but also for conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding.[40] Despite the fact that the APSA is a promising security framework for guaranteeing African security, its operationalisation still remains the biggest challenge for Africa (Vines 2013).

The AU's recognition of the principle of subsidiarity by cooperating with and building the APSA on the RECs' structures empowers the pan-African institution to gain from the comparative advantages, which the sub-regional organisations have over the larger, continental institution, in relation to the resolutions of conflict. By cooperating and collaborating with the RECs, the AU is able to benefit from the sub-regional agencies' geographical closeness to conflict areas, their local knowledge about the actors, roots of the conflicts, and possible solutions. Also their geographical proximity to conflicts allows the RECs to deploy troops more rapidly (Gelot, Gelot and de Coning 2012), and they are better placed to curb the number of potential spoilers to a peace agreement. Because of the contagion effects of a conflict, sub-regional organisations are more willing to resolve conflicts that erupt in their backyards (Aning 2008; Aning and Atuobi 2009; Francis 2006a). The AU has taken the right step by incorporating the principle of subsidiarity in the APSA's framework, because RECs are indispensable if the AU truly wants to operationalise the APSA based on the comparative advantages that the RECs have. It is obvious that the RECs are – drawing on experiences from West Africa – better positioned to deal with conflicts within their regions, based on the advantages of proximity, and to rely on local knowledge of regional conflicts, among others, than a more distant AU. Additionally, since members of RECs are small in number when compared to the AU, it is easier for RECs to reach decisions on peacekeeping intervention in a timely manner.[41] These comparative advantages offered by the RECs strengthen the APSA as a mechanism that is striving towards realising the African solutions agenda, and the AU's collaboration with the RECs' structures is a precondition for building a network of an African peacekeeping capacity. Despite the fact that strong AU/RECs security collaboration is indispensable for guaranteeing African security, the APSA's recognition of the principle of subsidiarity does not preclude the AU from having strong relations with the wider international community.[42]

Despite the AU's success in establishing this comprehensive security architecture, the major challenge for the APSA is a fundamental chasm between its aspirations and their implementation. This gap poses serious challenges to the APSA's reliance and effectiveness in addressing African security quagmires. First, the AU inherited some of the OAU's norms but also departs from its predecessor with its recognition of democracy, transparency and accountability, respect for human rights, peace and security as well as the right to intervene in a nation's internal conflict situations of the magnitude defined in Article 4 (h) of the Constitutive Act. Therefore, the AU seems to be a pro-interventionist institution to guarantee human security in Africa.

At the conceptual and theoretical levels, the provision of Article 4 (h) of the Act may look simple, but the problem lies in its application. The reality is that the application will lead to serious tensions within the AU and even put African leaders' political will and the pan-African organisation's intervention capacity to the test, based on the differing national interests and political agendas of the AU member states. According to the PSC Protocol, the activation of this Article requires a statutory two-thirds majority vote of the African Union Assembly, which entails broad consensus among the organisation member countries. Attaining this is a huge task because member states, more often than not, have hidden agendas that contradict the AU's objectives. Lack of consensus among member states of the African Union and African leaders' pursuit of national/personal, rather than continental, agendas are challenges to the pan-African organisation. If there is no broad consensus, and African leaders are not speaking with one voice, there will be serious problems.

Fuelling this area of tension, the AU's new norms, especially its current non-indifference culture, seem to starkly contradict the OAU normative frameworks supporting state sovereignty and non-interference, which nonetheless also feature in the AU Act. This contradiction influences the AU member states' behaviour backed up by their different political agendas. The concept of human security that the AU is professing is even waning within the organisation. Bogland, Egnell and Lagerström (2008: 35), relying on the authority of Tieku (2007), sounds a note of caution:

> There is the risk of a return to the OAU's system of norms based on the sovereignty of the state and non-intervention. The risk is an anti colonial view of human security as a neo-colonialist attempt to impute Western values to African states. Advocates of the principle of human security are not as powerful today as they were at the time of the creation of the AU and the anti-Western rhetoric of their opponents is enticing. This is made clear when comparing the original draft of the AU's joint defence and security policy, produced in the early years of the AU and the recently produced *Non-Aggression and Defence Pact* in which human security is not expressed as an important factor.

Nowhere was this contradiction more evident than the AU's responses to the security challenges in Zimbabwe, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire and Libya. In spite of the worldwide condemnation of the crimes committed against the civilian populations in Darfur by Khartoum, which amounted to many human rights violations and required invocation of the Responsibility to Protect principle (Aning and Atuobi 2009; Bergholm 2008: 26), the AU collectively opposed the indictment of President Omar El Bashir of Sudan by the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Moolakkattu 2010: 161). The AU's official justification is that the indictment has the propensity to derail the peace

process in that country. In Zimbabwe, the AU took a shocking stance by not condemning President Mugabe's autocratic regime and his dubious election victory in March 2008 (African Union 2008d). Furthermore, African leaders failed to respond in a unified manner over the Libyan crisis in 2011. The AU's tepid response to the conflict as a pan-African interlocutor created a vacuum that was filled later by the League of Arab States through its support of NATO military intervention in the country. The consequence was that the mediation effort of the AU to find political settlement was relegated to the background (Koko and Bakwesegha-Osula 2012; Vorrath 2012). These are examples of the poor conduct of African states contravening African institutions' norms that are even visible at the sub-regional level. The post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire (2010–2011) reveals the tension between the concepts of state security and human security, which obstruct the activation of the institution's norms. The ECOWAS's decision to use legitimate force to remove recalcitrant President Laurent Gbagbo (when he lost the presidential election and refused to leave) was not well supported by all its member states, due to their vested interests. Thus, Ghana declined to contribute troops to the proposed ECOWAS force to be deployed in Côte d'Ivoire to enforce the sub-regional institution's decision.[43] One important trend that is visible in the AU's application of sanction is that it is largely limited to small and medium-sized African countries, Côte d'Ivoire being an exception. Writing on the AU's double standards in its application of sanction, Vines (2013: 91–93) stated:

> AU sanctions may have been applied in response to recent coups, but have never been used to penalize extension of presidential term limits or against governments in place that initially seized power through uncon-stitutional means…Although the AU has responded to coups, in only a few cases has it acted against governments that have chosen to prolong their stay in power. Nor, up to 2011, had it taken action against countries with significant democratic challenges, such as Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. It has also been minimal in its response to elections with signifi-cant deficiencies, such as those held in Equatorial Guinea or Cameroon since 2002.

The cases of Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Zimbabwe and Sudan unveil the ques-tionable character of African leaders in intra-African international relations and obviously negate the APSA objectives. The double standards of African states undermine the legitimacy and credibility of the AU as a security and peacebuilding regime that can effectively tackle African security prob-lems. Moreover, the application of APSA principles is discriminatory and incoherent.

A second major challenge emerges where the AU principles place emphasis on the "African solutions" agenda, which calls on the AU to assume greater

responsibility for providing peace and security to the continent, even above that of the UN (Moolakkattu 2010: 159). The former AU Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping, made this ambition clear when, on 29 October 2010, he reminded the audience during the AMANI Africa CPX in Addis Ababa that the transformation from the OAU into the AU is an expression of African leaders' commitment to play a bigger role in the management of African peace and security. While recognising the importance of partnership with the international community, the former AU Commission Chairperson stated clearly that partnership with the international community is not always a reliable means through which to address African security problems, referring to the painful lessons of Somalia and Rwanda.[44] This is Africa's position on greater ownership of African conflicts, which creates controversy in the relationship between the AU PSC and the UN Security Council in peace and security matters, as it calls into question the legality of the AU-mandated peace missions without the UN Security Council's authorisation when the UN is either unwilling or unable to take appropriate action in a timely manner. The problem arises due to contradictory positions in the relevant AU documents (The Act and the PSC Protocol) and the ambitious tone of the Act.

Article 16 (1) of the PSC Protocol attributes this responsibility to Africa, when it states that the AU has the primary responsibility for promoting peace and security in Africa, while Article 7 (1c & d) of the same protocol establishes the mandating authority of the PSC to act in conjunction with the AU Commission Chairperson, authorise the mounting and deployment of peace operations and lay down general guidelines for the conduct of such missions, including the mandates thereof (Article 7 (1c & d) PSC Protocol, African Union 2002). This provision is contradicted by Article 17 (1) of the PSC Protocol, which recognised the UN Security Council as the chief custodian of international peace and security. Within the framework of the UN Charter, Chapter VIII recognises cooperation between the UN and regional agencies/arrangements and the use of the regional arrangements for enforcement actions under the authority of the UN Security Council. This contradictory position creates a high degree of uncertainty as to which body – the PSC or the UN Security Council – should be primarily responsible for African security.

There is no provision in the relevant AU documents, which fuels this ambiguity and overtly obliges the AU to request prior approval from the UN Security Council. However, Article 17 (2) of the PSC Protocol states that, "where necessary, recourse will be made to the United Nations to provide the necessary financial, logistical, and military support for the African Union's activities in the promotion and maintenance of peace and stability in Africa, in keeping with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter" (African Union 2002).

It is glaringly obvious in the AU documents that Africa recognised the UN's primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security,

but the proactive stance of the AU has also meant that the African institution reserved an interventionist role for itself. The implication of this is that the AU calls upon the world body only when it considers it necessary. It is true that the regional organisation can seek post facto approval for its action, but the danger here is whether the UN will support such action by taking cognisance of Article 53 of its Charter. No norms in the AU Act or the PSC Protocol explain what will happen in the case of the failure of the UN's authorisation of the AU intervention. In March 2005, the AU appeared to agree with the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change when, in the "Ezulwini Consensus" document, it agreed that regional peace operations and armed interventions should be conducted with the UN Security Council's authorisation. The document stipulated further that in emergency situations demanding urgent action, the UN Security Council's authorisation could be granted "after the fact" (African Union 2005b). Obviously, the UN and the AU's close cooperation is germane to achieving security in Africa. Thus, the prevailing wisdom and expectation that Africa's institutions have to decide independently on how and when to deploy peace operations and later seek for UN's endorsement and funding the African peace missions is unreasonable. This problem needs to be critically addressed for the proper functioning of the APSA. Therefore, it is important for the two institutions to clarify when the UN's role could be regarded as being delegated to regional agencies/arrangements.

There is also a wide gap between the AU's ambitions and its institutional capacities to fully achieve the APSA's objectives, at least in the short- and medium-term. The weak institutional capacities of the AU are due to lack of resources, both financial and human. Most of the institutional structures of the APSA are weak, fragmented, and yet to be fully operationalised. Although a good amount of work has been done in the operationalisation of the APSA, the key areas are not yet fully covered. There are structural deficiencies within the AU Commission itself, and they call for a reorganised and strengthened AU Commission for effective implementation of the APSA and providing successful AU peace operations in the future. The AU Commission is deficient in many ways, which was partly revealed by the organisation's poor planning capabilities in relation to AMISOM, as both the UN and EU teams provided technical guidance to the AU Commission with respect to this operation[45] (see Chapter 5 for details). The PSD that is responsible for peace and security works at the AU Commission is severely constrained by weak capacities conditioned by poor funding, which also has severe consequences for the human resource capacity at the AU Commission. In this regard, take staff recruitment procedures as an example, which are not effective with many short-term contract appointments and a low salary scale. The problem of staffing of the AU is even more aggravated by the Maputo Structure, which puts a ceiling on the number of recruitments through the regular budget of the AU. The AU's

funding problem has made the institution rely on external support for its programmes – even those that concern staff recruitment. For instance, most staff in the PSC Secretariat, including the liaison officers, were recruited on short-term contracts through support from various partners external to the continent (African Union 2010: 65). Low staffing levels hinder the AU. In 2012, for example, it employed only 669 people; this number is insignificant when compare to the EU's 33,000 (Vines 2013). These problems create administrative bottlenecks that hinder the AU Commission in the APSA's implementation.

The AU capacity weaknesses extend beyond the institutional building as its peace missions contend with multilayered hurdles due to poor funding and shortage of logistics requirements. No doubt, the AU has taken a bold step in the deployment of a peacekeeping force, but its peacekeepers need resources to work with. These logistics requirements are, at present, lacking in the African Union-led peace missions. AU officials themselves acknowledge the logistics problems for the organisation missions when they write that the availability of troops for peace operations is important, but the pan-African institution needs the capacity to maintain and sustain those troops deployed for peacekeeping operations (Kasumba and Debrah 2010: 18). At present, the AU depends, to a large extent, on external partners for logistics and general service support or management capabilities. The problem with this situation is that it can create complications insofar as the success of an AU peace mission is concerned.[46] The AMISOM and AMIS operations reveal the gravity of the challenges confronting AU peace missions, which seriously limit their abilities to fully implement these missions' mandates. I examine the AU peacekeeping operations in the subsequent chapters.

The lack of economic resources from African states and Africa's overreliance on external partners for the operationalisation of the APSA are frightening and these issues also pose a serious challenge to the AU and its role in keeping Africa free from war. I analyse this challenge from two perspectives: sustainability and African ownership. It is unquestionable that the operationalisation of the APSA has received significant amounts of support from donors that are channelled through various multilateral and bilateral programmes such as the EU African Peace Facility and the UN's 10-year Capacity Building Programme. Africa's overreliance on external support puts the sustainability of the security mechanism in doubt. It is highly unclear to what extent these partners will be willing to continue funding the APSA. Sometimes donors' contributions are highly unpredictable due, in part, to the economic crises that some of them are going through as a consequence of the current global economic crisis (Gelot, Gelot and de Coning 2012). The unpredictability of external donors makes their long-term support to the APSA highly uncertain. Inasmuch as African states fail to secure an independent source of funding for the security architecture, the

APSA's objectives will be difficult to realise. Furthermore, external donors' resources come with many conditions, which might, in many cases at least, not be in the best interests of Africa.[47]

This leads us to the second aspect of the problem, which centres on the question of ownership. Since the AU depends on external resources for its peace and security activities, the extent to which the AU will be able to main legitimacy and credibility in Africa is not certain. The absence of autonomous and adequate African financing of the security architecture creates the problem of ownership for the AU, which is a blow to its "African solutions" motto. The AU or Africa can only claim ownership if all members contribute as promised, and the AU becomes financially independent. If the AU's existence depends on outsiders' funds, then this dependency means no ownership. Moreover, this situation could be interpreted as just being slaves to new masters, who are probably paying for a safe environment in which to extract resources – that is, without the hindrance of war – and most of these profits flee Africa.[48] Besides, donors will interfere with the AU's decision-making process because they are providing the funding. With respect to the funded programmes, mentoring and advice should be favoured instead, as well as an understanding that the AU's activities will fall under UN guidelines for engagement in armed interventions. This is the only way to safeguard the AU's African solutions to African problems agenda.

Other areas where the APSA is weakened concern the disparities in the development and readiness of the regional mechanisms. The internal dynamics within regions and regional incoherencies are obstacles to the full operationalisation of APSA. There is no doubt Regional Economic Communities are the mainstay of APSA and the nature of RECs relationship with the AU is central to APSA's success. Presently the relationship between them and the AU is fraught with difficulties. The exact makeup of RECs is unclear, as the five Regional Economic Communities for APSA's purpose fail to correspond to the existing eight RECs.[49] In East Africa, for example, EASBRIG is being coordinated by IGAD. EASBRIG is composed of troops from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Seychelles and Uganda. The problem is that Rwanda, Seychelles and Madagascar are not IGAD members (Vines 2013). The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) have no security arms, but these institutions who now think they have a security role to play have since forced themselves into the PSC. Furthermore, Angola, a member of SADC and a signatory to a memorandum establishing SADCBRIG, is a major player in FOMAC (Central Africa) (Williams 2011a). Vines (2013) argues:

> These regional incoherencies need not mean that peace and security architecture cannot be established, but they make it harder. Moves to

rationalise the regional organisations have been discussed, but there seems little political will to do so. It well suited Angola, for example, to sit in two regions and be able to chose what initiatives to support on an *ad hoc* basis in accordance with its own interests.

The internal political dynamics within RECs and regional incoherencies need to be properly addressed for APSA to succeed. For instance, many West African countries see Nigeria as a regional hegemon. This is evidenced by Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso's oppositions to the Nigerian-led ECOMOG operation in Liberia in the 1990s, despite Abuja's claim of stabilising the subregion. The rivalry between Kenya and Ethiopia over regional leadership is not a positive development for the East African regional security cooperation. The consequence of the competition is that EASBRIG headquarters is located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and its planning element is situated in Nairobi, Kenya. This situation is not helpful, as it makes the regional mechanism less efficient than having all elements of EASBRIG in one place. Also the competition for regional leadership between Cairo and Tripoli delays the takeoff of NASBRIG (Vines 2013).

Conclusion

I have analysed the Africa's new security system and its operationalisation. More specifically, I have examined the APSA's institutional structures in order to question whether the APSA is an appropriate and effective security instrument to overcome post-Cold War African security problems. It appears that although the AU has been able to present Africa with a comprehensive security architecture, much more remains to be done to achieve its full operationalisation due to a plethora of challenges confronting the security framework. By evaluating the APSA's strengths and weaknesses, analysis reveals that the APSA offers a hypothetical solution to African security problems, but its reliance and effectiveness is a function of the level of commitments and seriousness of African leaders, defined in terms of political will, resources, and above all, funds committed to the grand vision of realising African solutions to African problems.

   As the analysis shows, the idea of a security mechanism is rooted in Africa's growing yearning to police its armed conflicts and threats of war by relying on its own capabilities to prevent and/or manage armed conflict. This is partly due to the perceived lack of interests of the international community in African wars or armed conflicts. Now that the AU has presented itself as a security, peacekeeping and peacebuilding actor, two key questions can be posed. The first is, how effective have the AU peace operations been so far, and what lessons can be learned? The second

and more realistic question that looms is, how can the AU continue to pay for their peacekeeping operations without being overly dependent on the international community? The subsequent chapters answer the first question by examining the AMIB, AMISOM and UNAMID operations. The second question has been discussed here, and ultimately, it remains a major challenge for African peacekeeping.