

SILENCING THE GUNS, OWNING THE FUTURE:

Realising a conflict-free Africa



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A report on the proceedings of the Fifth African Union High-Level Retreat
on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa held from
21 to 23 October 2014 in Arusha, Tanzania.



ACCORD

The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) is a non-governmental organisation working throughout Africa to bring creative solutions to the challenges posed by conflict on the continent. ACCORD's primary aim is to influence political developments by bringing conflict resolution, dialogue and institutional development to the forefront as alternatives to armed violence and protracted conflict.

Acknowledgements

ACCORD expresses its profound gratitude to the African Union (AU) for its efforts to organise the Fifth African Union High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa, as well as to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland for the generous support that made the production of this report possible.

Appreciation is also extended to ACCORD members of staff Natacha Kunama, John Ahere, Daniel Forti, Charles Nyuykonge and Priyal Singh for acting as rapporteurs and their contributions to the development of this report

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Printer: Process Litho, Durban, South Africa

Table of contents

Acronyms and abbreviations	4
Executive summary	6
Background and context	7
Key considerations in the quest to achieve Vision 2020	8
Intractability of conflicts	8
Waves of instability in the Central African Republic	9
Actors, allies and roles	10
Preventing versus resolving conflicts	11
Commitment and support of AU member states	13
Paving the way to silencing the guns	13
Tackling the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons	14
Promoting reconciliation and social cohesion	16
Preventing illicit resource outflows from Africa	17
The fifth AU high-level retreat: Silencing the guns – owning the future	19
Conflict in Africa: Recent trends	21
Civilian protest: The Arab Spring	21
Terrorism	23
Current conflict trends and efforts to consolidate the continent’s responses	24
Natural resources	25
Climate change	26
Election-related conflicts	31
Responsibility to protect and international humanitarian law	33
Centrality of good governance and functional democracy in preventing and managing conflicts	34
Organised crime, radicalism and governance conundrum	37
Conclusion: Status of implementation of AU peace and security instruments and reflections on how to address the challenges that remain	39
References	41

Acronyms and abbreviations

ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ACIRC	African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGA	African Governance Architecture
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
ANC	African National Congress
APSA	Africa Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU PW	African Union Panel of the Wise
CAHOSCC	Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change
CAR	Central African Republic
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CPMR	Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NP	National Party
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency

OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
Pan-Wise	Pan-African Network of the Wise
PSC	Peace and Security Council
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Executive summary

From 21 to 23 October 2014, the African Union (AU), in collaboration with the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, hosted the Fifth High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa. Held in Arusha, Tanzania, and supported by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and Institute for Security Studies (ISS), the retreat brought together a range of senior representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC), including the commissioner for peace and security and special envoys, special representatives and distinguished mediators. Also in attendance were members of the African Union Panel of the Wise (AU PW) and Friends of the Panel of the Wise, senior representatives of the continent's regional economic communities (RECs) and regional mechanisms (RMs), as well as eminent officials from the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), League of Arab States, and civil society organisations.

Convened under the theme 'Silencing the guns – owning the future', the objective of the retreat was to provide a platform for delegates to take stock of the paradox that is Africa in terms of unprecedented levels of economic growth on one hand, and rising instability and insecurity in a number of particularly concerning regions and member states on the other. Recognising this, and building on references to Agenda 2063 and the AU's 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration (2013) vision of ending all wars in Africa by 2020 and 'silencing the guns' (also known as Vision 2020), the retreat further sought to provide a platform for collective multi-stakeholder deliberations on existing and emerging peace and security threats to the continent, and the responses required to address these and achieve a war-free continent by 2020.

This report summarises the deliberations held during the high-level meeting, and its outcomes. Efforts are made to contextualise the discussions that occurred by providing information on overarching processes and developments that informed the gathering's agenda, and to share an overview of key considerations in the AU's quest to achieve its Vision 2020. These key contemplations are highlighted to better situate the content of discussions from the retreat, and highlight critical factors underlying the development of concrete plans that are implementable, realistic and time-bound – in relation to the achievement of Vision 2020. To this end, this document considers issues ranging from the intractability of certain conflicts in Africa, to the roles that ought to be played by relevant peace and security actors and stakeholders. It highlights particular strategies thus far employed, honing in on those especially useful ones that should be supported to galvanise efforts and operationalise what has thus far been committed to on paper – towards silencing the guns in Africa by 2020. These strategies are then discussed, with focus on tackling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, promoting reconciliation and social cohesion, curbing illicit resource outflows from countries on the continent, and strengthening security and defence institutions.

The report then delves into the content of presentations made during the retreat and the discussions they stimulated, all the while complementing this information with excerpts and research relevant to each respective session. Thematic issues relating to, *inter alia*, recent trends in serious conflict in Africa, current efforts to support and consolidate responses to war, and the central role of good governance in preventing and managing conflict, also featured in discussions.

This report draws attention to the considerable work of the AU, particularly that done through its special envoys and mediators, in working toward the prevention and resolution of conflict, and effective management of the continent's peace and security challenges, in line with Vision 2020. It also highlights the many key considerations and strategies in place to move the continent toward a better future that is more secure and stable for all.

Background and context

Between 2011 and 2013, 22 of the 54 African countries celebrated their 50th anniversaries of independence from colonial rule. In 2013, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)/AU¹ celebrated its 50th anniversary as the pre-eminent African inter-governmental organisation. Commemorations of the OAU/AU's golden jubilee saw the adoption, by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration on 25 May. This pronouncement articulated African leaders' 'determination to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa, to make peace a reality for all our people and to rid the continent of wars, civil conflicts, human rights violations, humanitarian disasters and violent conflicts, and to prevent genocide' (African Union 2013).

In global relations, the stigma of a 'continent at war with itself' had long been attached to Africa (Francis 2006). Admittedly, the continent has hosted, and continues to be home to, a number of deadly conflicts that jeopardise human, national and international security and defy efforts to resolve them. This quagmire, as well as other concerns, prompted the AU Assembly to take steps to stem the persistent fights and address cases of relapse into violence in some parts of Africa. Thus, in the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, African leaders resolved 'not to bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans and undertake to end all wars in Africa by 2020 (African Union 2013).

In adopting the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, African heads of state and government agreed on the tenets of a strategic framework of socio-economic transformation for Africa over the next 50 years. This outline, referred to as Agenda

1 The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) established in 1963, was re-launched as the African Union in 2002.

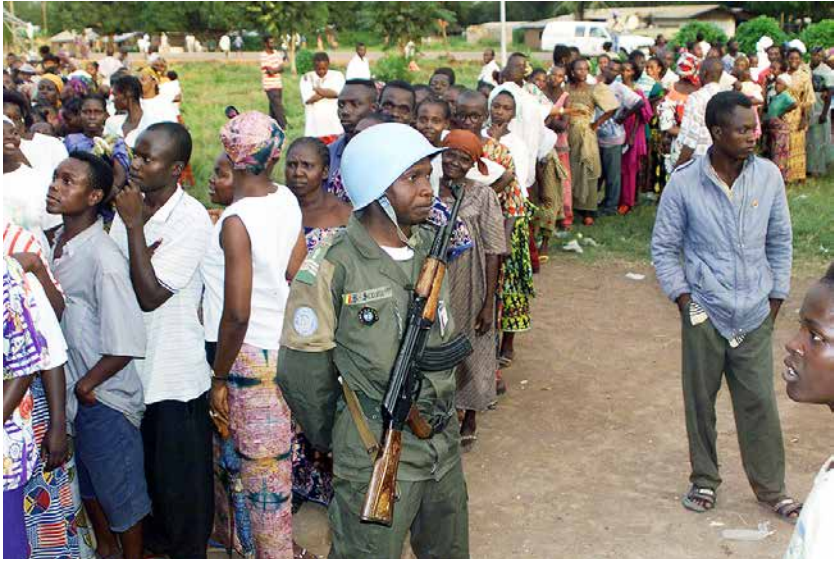
2063, builds on and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing national, regional and continental initiatives to ensure growth and sustainable development. At the heart of Agenda 2063 is the aspiration for a peaceful and secure Africa. To this end, the framework specifically targets the year 2020 as the deadline by which all guns will be silent in Africa. It also envisages that there will be functional mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicts at all levels to nurture a culture of peace and tolerance among the peoples of Africa. Vision 2020 is, therefore, part of a broader framework postulated by the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the African Union.

Key considerations in the quest to achieve Vision 2020

Practitioners and policymakers are well aware that Vision 2020 is immensely ambitious. They also realise that achieving the aspirations set out in this document needs to be accompanied by concrete plans which are implementable, realistic and time-bound. This raises pertinent issues that conflict management experts and stakeholders have, and will continue to contend with, even as plans continue to be concretised. Some of these considerations are outlined in the sections below.

Intractability of conflicts

A major challenge in Africa's peace and security field is how to secure lasting resolutions to conflicts. Several regions in Africa have experienced armed wars caused by the resurgence of old problems previously deemed to have been resolved, or those that were managed to the point of dialogue. About half of all post-conflict countries relapse into conflict within a decade (Opongo 2013). Furthermore, situations of latent conflict have been known to threaten to erupt into violence. It is worth noting that many conflicts in Africa are intrastate in nature, and come in the form of civil wars or armed struggles within the boundaries of the state. They have several unique characteristics, deriving from religious, cultural or ethnic communal identities, coupled with a dependence satisfying needs of security, communal recognition and distributive justice (Steyn-Kotze and Swart 2011). Despite intrastate origins, however, internal conflicts have been known to metastasise into regional crises as warring factions carry out their operations within and outside the state. This dynamic adds to the complexity and intractability of conflicts in Africa, as a myriad of actors become involved and interests expand beyond their original scope. In developing and implementing plans aimed at realising Vision 2020, it is thus important to acknowledge the complexity of the security landscape necessitating intervention, and consider comprehensive approaches to dealing with challenges.



A UN peacekeeper maintains order at a polling station during legislative elections in Bangui, Central African Republic.

Waves of instability in the Central African Republic

Since gaining independence from France in 1960, the Central African Republic (CAR) has been ruled by six authoritarian leaders and experienced the continuous presence of foreign troops within its borders. Following a series of coups, civil wars, and foreign interventions, CAR held its first multiparty elections in 1993 (Enough! 2015). However, the country continued on its path of instability, culminating in army General François Bozizé leading a rebellion and seizing power in 2003. Although Bozizé brought relative stability to the country which lasted for several years and was formally elected as President in 2011, many Central Africans grew to consider him an autocratic leader. Several rebel groups were already active in the north and northeast of the country, including formations formerly loyal to Bozizé. As discontentment increased, in 2012 these clusters formed a loose alliance known as *Séléka*, predominantly comprising civilians from northern CAR. In March 2013, *Séléka* overthrew Bozizé. The group's leader, Michel Djotodia, became the first Muslim president of the mainly Christian country (Enough! 2015).

Over the months that followed, *Séléka* mounted attacks against civilians. Under the mandate of a UN resolution, France deployed an initial force of 1 200 troops to CAR in December 2013 to stabilise the capital, Bangui. However, violence intensified beyond Bangui when Djotodia resigned in early January 2014 due to pressure from governments in the region, paving the way for a transitional government to take over.

During this time, thousands of Muslims fled the country out of fear of retaliation attacks by self-defence militias known as *Anti-Balaka*. The *Anti-Balaka*, who are mostly Christian, sought revenge for the acts of *Séléka* in 2013/14 and perceived Muslims as *Séléka* collaborators. While the violence that resulted appeared to be religious in nature, it is important to note that religious-based violence is an outcome, not a cause of conflict, while it is commonly accepted that economic and political incentives are important in motivating internal and external parties to a conflict (Enough! 2015).

Actors, allies and roles

In the contemporary global system, there are not many national dynamics and challenges that are not influenced by external actors and events. Thus, although there are violent conflicts that occur in Africa, interested parties and stakeholders in these wars, more often than not, originate from beyond the continent. It is concerning that non-African actors can be found exerting self-serving influence in states in conflict. Marah (1998) links the OAU's challenges in attempting to foster pan-Africanism to elements in the international system which prefer to see a struggling Africa due to ideological, economical or politically strategic reasons (Marah 1998). It is against this backdrop that some practitioners and scholars have taken positions for or against the now common mantra of 'African solutions to African problems', largely justified by concerns to do with foreign meddling in the internal affairs of African countries (Ferim 2013). Proponents of the aforementioned motto contend that the continent needs its own solutions, which will take into consideration factors that suit the particular conditions of the region (e.g. ethnic groups, ancestral and cultural heritage and religious ties, etc.) (Ngomba-Roth 2008). Undoubtedly, the AU and its member states have been adept at developing ideas on how to resolve the continent's peace and security challenges with African statesmen, with negotiators taking centre stage in efforts to resolve various conflicts on the continent. According to many analysts, however, significant challenges still remain, ranging from insufficient technical capacity and expertise, as well as lack of political will to oversee and ensure the implementation of genuine solutions. In addition, the role of non-African actors remains largely inadvertent in the interdependent global system, which is understandable when contemplating gaps in Africa's capacity to address its challenges. In other words, Africa's problems are also linked to those of the world (the opposite applies too) and it wise not to completely lock out ideas from external actors just because they are non-African. The ideas should instead be considered on their own merit before being applied or declined.

In the context of this debate, it is important to make plans based on the results of candid inclusive discussions on Africa's capacity and preparedness to pursue sustainable solutions to the internal and external factors that drive and sustain violent conflicts on the continent.

The case of Libya

The aftermath of the Libyan civil war, following the Arab Spring of 2011, resulted in a nation characterised by chaos. In the wake of the uprising, the AU was not silent. Indeed, despite the fact that events unfolded quickly, the continental body responded dynamically through its development of an AU roadmap to peace, which sought to bring all stakeholders to the conflict together for purposes of working out modalities of implementing a five-point plan (Tumkezee Kedze 2015). The roadmap's objectives were:

- i. to provide protection to civilians and achieve the cessation of hostilities
- ii. ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations
- iii. initiate political dialogue amongst Libyan parties towards reaching agreement on the implementation of modalities to end the crisis
- iv. the establishment and management of an inclusive transitional period
- v. the adoption and implementation of political reforms necessary to meet the aspirations of the Libyan people (Tumkezee Kedze 2015).

The AUC met with Libyan authorities, who accepted the roadmap. However, these development were side-lined during deliberations with the international community, which leaned towards military intervention.

Preventing versus resolving conflicts

Unlike conflict resolution, which addresses existing or current fights, the aim of conflict prevention is to forestall the violence from breaking out or occurring in the first place. Conflict prevention involves pre-emptive measures that guard against potential and possible escalations happening. Strategies to manage or reduce conflict differ from those used to avoid it. For a long time, the management of conflicts in Africa has been largely reactive. In most situations, it is only when they have reached severe crisis levels that interventions are mooted to resolve them. Experts contend that while the initiatives of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) are laudable, the focus on reactive responses from the absence of a culture of proactive crisis prevention within the AU system and its member states (Murithi 2012). Some narratives insist that most regional organisations, in Africa and beyond, lack the required resources and political will to become effective instruments for conflict prevention, which requires greater sophistication in diagnosing conflict-prone situations and launching early prevention actions (Schnabel and Carment 2004).



Libyan refugees at a transit camp in Tunisia, near the Libyan-Tunisian border. They were among thousands who fled Libya during the Arab Spring.

The continental body's initiatives in the last decade, however, reveal a paradigm shift at AU level – from reactive to preventive strategies. This has manifested in the steady operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and, more specifically, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) as well as the AU PW and its expansion into the Pan-African Network of the Wise (Pan-Wise).²

The CEWS has been instrumental in collating and analysing emerging security threats that provide opportunities for the AU to carry out fact-finding missions where there is danger of conflicts breaking out or escalating. In this regard, the AU's insistence on adhering to democratic principles and its uncompromising position against unconstitutional changes of government, in line with Article 4(p) of the Constitutive Act of the AU (2000) theoretically remains a potentially effective avenue of guarding against measures that incite grievances and violence. In response to security threats, the AU has commendably emphasised the primacy of political and negotiated results over coercive solutions through the proactive role of the AU PW and Pan-Wise. These two structures, together with the high-level panels and special envoys of the AU, have effectively addressed the critical need to prevent, manage and mediate an end to conflicts on the continent. To ensure that mediation experts' responses are timely and proactive, the AUC recently launched a roster of envoys and technical mediation specialists as part of the African Standby Force (ASF) civilian roster.

2 For further information see the report of the inaugural High-Level Retreat of the African Union Panel of the Wise on Strengthening Relations with Similar Regional Mechanisms, available from: <<http://www.accord.org.za/images/downloads/reports/Report-2012-High-Level-Retreat-of-the-AU-Panel-of-the-Wise.pdf>>

However, it is still necessary to strengthen these initiatives to develop a functional early response mechanism. Moreover, given that AU mediators are usually deployed to deal with highly complex and volatile situations, training and support for mediators is crucial for the regional body's efficacy. In light of growing calls for African solutions to Africa's challenges, it is also increasingly important that strategies are developed within the already-existing frameworks to conceive proactive approaches that could contribute to preventing and ensuring lasting solutions to conflict challenges on the continent.

Commitment and support of AU member states

The effectiveness of a supranational institution is highly dependent on the political will and commitment of its member states. For the AU to achieve success in spearheading the realisation of Vision 2020, it is imperative that it receives support from its member states. The member states must be willing to sign, ratify and domesticate existing normative frameworks on peace, security and governance. Experts posit that sustaining a credible framework and system of legal rights and obligations requires strong monitoring and surveillance mechanisms (Ross-Larson 2004). Simply put, the AU cannot expect to succeed if it depends solely on unenforceable protocols whose implementation depends on the best intentions of member states. Political will, where present, needs to be reinforced with financial commitments since, as it stands, many concerned countries are in arrears as far as AU membership contributions are concerned (Ajayi and Oshewolo 2013). It is undeniable that the success of the AU is largely dependent on its ability to self-fund the implementation of its programmes. To ensure and protect the financial sustainability of the organisation, member states ought to incorporate financial subscriptions to the AU into their national budgets. The AU should also explore means of generating funds from the continent, but outside member states' contributions. This could involve, for example, forming or making use of existing continental financial institutions like the African Development Bank (AfDB) to invest in high-return global financial investments.

Paving the way to silencing the guns

The AUC is at the forefront of operationalising Vision 2020 commitments and, as part of its plans, it convened a High-Level Retreat on the theme 'Silencing guns in Africa: Building a roadmap to a conflict-free continent' (hereafter referred to as the Durban Retreat). Held in Durban, South Africa, on 28 and 29 April 2014, the retreat provided a forum for the Chairperson of the AUC, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, to lead other eminent African personalities in debate on how to develop and concretise a roadmap towards realising an Africa without war. The aforementioned event was preceded by an open session on the AU PSC themed 'Silencing the guns: Pre-requisites for realising a conflict-free Africa by the year 2020', held at AUC headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 24 April 2014. This event laid the foundation for the formulation of a

framework to guide the implementation of activities necessary to achieve the noble goal of bringing conflicts to an end in Africa. In this forum, ideas were exchanged on how to effectively address all the root causes of conflicts in Africa in their widest dimensions.

During the Durban Retreat, some probable strategies for achieving Vision 2020 were proposed and debated. Whilst these tactics were not comprehensive then, they provided the basis from which to build on and implement specific actions going forward. These ideas are discussed in the sections that follow.

Tackling the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons

The illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) destabilises communities, negatively impacts security and compromises development in Africa. It is interesting to note that SALW are the main instruments used in armed conflicts in Africa, and that the persistence and increasing number of wars on the continent can partially be attributed to the illegal proliferation of small arms (Enuka 2012). Small arms include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns. Light weapons include heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns and anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems and mortars of calibres less than 100 millimetres (Organisation of African Unity and Institute for Security Studies 1998). Only a very small percentage of these weapons are produced on the continent; the majority are introduced via illegal channels (Institute for Security Studies n.d.).

© UN Photo/Basile Zoma



A representative of the National Commission of Small Arms and Light Weapons of Côte d'Ivoire, sets alight a pyre to destroy SALW in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in April 2013.

Statistics on the terrible impacts of the proliferation of SALW in Africa identify the phenomenon posing one of the biggest hurdles to development on the continent. Over the last 50 years, Africa has suffered no less than five million fatalities, attributed to SALW (Ahere and Ouko 2012). These deaths have been caused by the estimated 30 million firearms on the continent (Stohl and Tuttle 2009). SALW have serious impacts on the trajectory of socio-political and economic development in Africa, contributing to weakening affected governments' abilities to function effectively. During civil strife, their widespread use triggers humanitarian disasters, which impede sustainable peace. They also threaten civil aviation growth, which is an important catalyst of development in a globalising world. The spread of SALW also contributes to long-term societal re-engineering that encourages and glorifies gun culture, while increasing propensity to use force to resolve conflicts within specific social groupings, particularly where violence, massive organised crime or political brinkmanship have been part of a community for a long period of time.

A number of continental protocols are in place; conceived to deal with the menace of SALW in Africa. Key ones include the:

- i. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa, which was adopted and signed in Abuja, Nigeria, on 31 October 1998 by ECOWAS heads of state and government
- ii. October 1999 OAU Decision on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons taken by heads of state and government of the OAU at its 35th session held in Algiers, Algeria
- iii. Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council Decision on the Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes which was taken in Maputo, Mozambique on 17 and 18 August 1999
- iv. March 2000 Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, passed by representatives of governments based in the affected regions. Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, made in December 2000 by member states of the OAU at a meeting in Bamako, Mali.

In intensifying efforts to silence the guns by 2020, it will be important for stakeholders to reflect on the aforementioned initiatives, gauge their successes and evaluate their challenges and, based on these assessments, implement realistic actions.

Promoting reconciliation and social cohesion

Given the link between armed conflicts and social, political and economic grievances, it is important that efforts to silence the guns address the root causes of conflicts, with a view to enhancing reconciliation, social cohesion and harmony at the grassroots, as well as at national and regional levels. While promoting reconciliation and social cohesion, policymakers in Africa need to note the contributions that transitional justice initiatives have made to traditional reconciliation mechanisms. It is noteworthy that this recognition affirms that programmes rooted in community and national contexts are more likely to secure sustainable justice for the future, in accordance with international standards, domestic legal traditions and national aspirations, than new models (Villa-Vicencio 2009). A society's quest to achieve reconciliation has the tendency to bring up sensitive issues, particularly in settings recovering from serious violence. Experts note that reconciliation is so easily invoked, so commonly promoted and so immediately appealing that few policymakers stop to consider the serious questions that programmes raise (Daly and Sarkin 2009). Scant attention is paid to the specifics of advancing reconciliation, or to the complex ways in which reconciliation affects other challenges of transitional arrangements, for example the possibility of achieving justice following the redistribution of wealth, the creation of civil society, and the relevance of the past, present and the future, etc. (Daly and Sarkin 2011). As much as reconciliation is complex, given different societies' interpretations, it must be handled with expertise and acute sensitivity to local concerns and ownership if Africa is to achieve its goal of silencing the guns by 2020.

Traditional justice mechanisms: Rwanda's *Gacaca* courts

The *Gacaca* courts of Rwanda are a good example of traditional judicial transformation in Africa. Established in 2001, they represent a unique experiment in collaborative justice (Khaleeli 2010). Based on the traditional system for settling local disputes, judges are selected as representatives of the community. Trials often take place under the shade of a tree, and emphasise opportunities for survivors and witnesses to participate in proceedings by raising their hands if they want to interject at any point.

The establishment of these courts was the solution to the overflow of prisoners and backed-up courts as the weight of Rwanda's 1994 genocide-related cases proved overwhelming. With the caseload it was confronted with, the Government of Rwanda had predicted that it would take more than 200 years to hear each case (Khaleeli 2010). For many Rwandans, the *Gacaca* courts are a source of pride, as they not only focus on justice, but also reconciliation. Defendants are given shorter sentences in exchange for confessing and are encouraged to seek forgiveness from victims' families. Despite their informality, *Gacaca* courts were used to try all but the organisers of the campaign of violence, which saw 800 000 people killed in 100 days (from 7 April to 15 July 1994) (Khaleeli 2010).

Preventing illicit resource outflows from Africa

There is a symbiotic link between positive peace and sustainable development. Development is unsustainable without peace and peace is not durable without development. Ultimately, positive peace cannot prevail where the economic and social conditions are not stable (Henriques and Zwitter 2008).

Negative and positive peace

Negative peace, according to Johan Galtung, refers to the absence of violence. When, for example, a ceasefire is enacted, negative peace will ensue. It is negative because something undesirable stopped happening, but in the absence of other criteria. Positive peace is accompanied by desirable aspects such as restoration of relationships, creation of social systems that serve the needs of entire populations and the constructive resolution of conflict (Dijkema 2007)

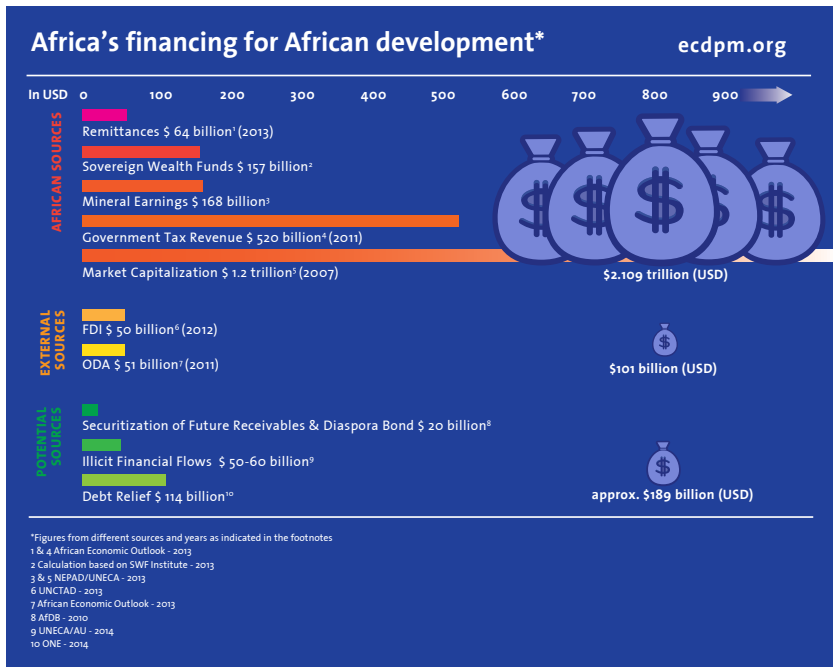


Table 1. The table presents an analysis of how Africa can independently finance its expenditure.

Among the major factors preventing the normalisation of economic and social conditions in Africa are illicit financial flows off the continent, which are of major concern because of the scale and negative impact of such streams on Africa’s development and governance agenda. By some estimates, illegal movements of money from Africa could be as much as US\$50 billion per annum (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows 2014). This tide needs to be stemmed

if efforts to ensure Africa's self-reliance are to be achieved, for the benefit of the continent's ability to realise its Vision 2020. A recent study by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) highlighted that Africa has the capacity to finance its own development (NEPAD NPCA and UNECA 2013). The continent not only generates more than US\$520 billion annually, but also earns more than US\$168 billion per annum from minerals and mineral fuels. In addition, Africa's market capitalisation rose from US\$300 billion in 1996 to US\$1.2 trillion in 2007, against the backdrop of more than 15 countries establishing sovereign wealth funds with a value of at least US\$157 billion (Ecdpm.org 2015). In fact, analysis of how Africa can independently finance its expenditure reveals that the illicit financial flows from its shores outweigh the Official Development Assistance (ODA) it receives, as illustrated in Table 1.³

Strengthening security and defence institutions

Despite significant gains as a result of the AU and RECs'/RMs' conflict prevention, management and resolution efforts, in the context of APSA and the African Governance Architecture (AGA), Africa continues to struggle with peace and governance issues linked to challenges of operationalising an efficient security and defence system on the continent. Member states of the AU are faced with diverse security threats as a result of, among others, transnational crime, terrorism, and the proliferation of SALW. This is partly due to weak governance in the security sector. As much as a great deal of attention has been paid to these issues on the continent, debates on the same have been led by external actors who continue to have significant influence over security and governance in much of Africa because they provide development assistance in line with their economic and political interests (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015). The diverse range of security sectors in Africa calls for suitable context-specific reforms that are in line with respective African people's understanding of and need for security. These considerations should include interrogation of the dichotomous natures of security providers: statutory or formal *vis-à-vis* non-statutory or informal security agencies (Møller 2009). In the quest to reform and/or strengthen the security sector in Africa, it is important to appreciate that a number of official and non-official agencies are involved in providing security, on behalf of the state or for local and broader communities. Complexity arises when providers of security themselves become security threats. It is, therefore, important to define and regulate the relationship between formal and informal security providers to enhance security at national level.

3 For more information see: <http://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/African-Financing-for-African-development_LINKS.pdf>

The fifth AU high-level retreat: Silencing the guns – owning the future

Situated within the discourse on Vision 2020, the theme ‘Silencing the guns – owning the future’ was selected by the AUC to guide discussions at the Fifth AU High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa (hereafter Arusha Retreat). A key aim of the Arusha Retreat was to unpack the key trends emerging from the outcomes of the Durban Retreat and to consolidate the debate towards achieving Vision 2020. As alluded to earlier, the Durban Retreat itself was informed by the AU’s 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration. It thus intended to explore concrete options toward a roadmap for a conflict-free Africa by 2020 and in doing so, support the AU’s steadfast commitment to the peace and enhanced security of the continent.

Throughout the proceedings of the Arusha Retreat, presenters and delegates alike highlighted that while ambitious in nature, the goal of silencing the guns by 2020 was indeed chosen for a good reason. The primary consideration informing this decision was the acknowledgement that sustainable development, as envisaged in Agenda 2063, could not occur in a context of rampant conflict, and thus required a firm, clear and coherent strategy, as well as a coordinated plan of implementation across multiple continental stakeholders.

Moreover, based on the growing recognition of the relationship between sustainable development and conflict, issues surrounding good governance and accountability were highlighted as additional key considerations in furthering the agenda to silence the guns. Specifically, it was noted that building and strengthening responsible and responsive governance institutions was central to supporting peace and increasing opportunities for prosperity for all Africans. This argument was further explained by the need to strike a balance between creating strong state institutions and encouraging the growth and spread of a democratic culture across countries on the continent.

Importantly, Arusha Retreat delegates were reminded of the urgency of the task at hand and the need for sharpened resolve, especially amongst those stakeholders in key leadership positions. This was based on the fact that the pledge to silence the guns, as it relates to the AU’s 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, was made specifically by the continent’s leaders, with particular consideration for the aspirations, hopes and well-being of the next generation of Africans.

Further, underscoring the importance of urgently addressing these matters, the Arusha Retreat shed light on the increasing number of ongoing conflicts across the continent, and the major issues that currently bolster heightened insecurity and instability in and across many AU member states. It was noted that these conflicts must be seen through the lenses of the historical legacies of these states, despite progress being made on many

fronts. Encouragingly, however, Africa has effectively shown its commitment and now ardently shoulders the responsibility of protecting its own peace and security, based on the recognition that conflict prevention and resolution is not possible without the continent taking the lead in its own affairs.

With respect to the AU's 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, and other notable decisions, declarations and resolutions concerning peace and security in Africa, participants were reminded that the AU has established itself as an international actor that is renowned for its staunch commitment to ending conflict across the continent. Specifically, the continental body's increased agency in taking ownership of its own peace and security concerns was referred to, with particular regard to the numerous mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding interventions it has led or been involved in since 2001 – in cases as diverse and varied as Burundi, Darfur and Mali, to name a few. With this context, the organisation's annual retreats of special envoys and mediators were noted as having become particularly significant in its yearly calendar for providing space for reflection and developing recommendations on the advancement of the AU's peace and security agenda.

Based on developments from previous retreats, it was made clear during discussions, however, that the implementation of recommendations and reflections remained a critical challenge, and that this was indeed a priority that the AU sought to address moving forward. To this effect, organisation's resource constraints – and the subsequent implementation deficit – were given considerable attention, with particular regard to the concerning (high) level of dependency on foreign donors.

Participants were reminded of the gravity of the task at hand, and encouraged to deliberate on the draft roadmap for silencing the guns while remaining cognisant of ongoing efforts to build and operationalise a comprehensive institutional peace and security architecture, as well as the AU's focus on the principle of complementarity. Delegates were further asked to remain mindful of the need for stronger, more plentiful partnerships with civil society and academia, as well as the need to enhance the role of women in conflict prevention and mediation in Africa.

Moreover, deeper reflection and debate on the many emerging and contemporary challenges to peace and security across Africa were highlighted as key considerations in moving the 'silencing the guns' agenda forward, with particular regard to the proliferation, spread and influence of radical and violent non-state actors. The need for a multi-dimensional approach to addressing such problems was further underscored, with participants noting that significant portions of the continent's territory are not effectively under any meaningful state control, with radical groups often disrespecting sovereign borders and coordinating their operations in what are essentially governance vacuums. Participants were thus urged to propose and consider new and innovative

approaches to respond to these threats, and deliberate on avenues for greater cooperation and collaboration with the UN, particularly in terms of defining more integrated and effective frameworks around peacekeeping and conflict resolution.

Conflict in Africa: Recent trends

As a backdrop to the Arusha Retreat panel discussions, recent conflict trends across the continent were contextualised. Unsurprisingly, terrorism, religious fundamentalism and violent extremism featured most prominently, given the undeniable proliferation of violent non-state actors in recent years, and their potential to undermine efforts to silence the guns by 2020 and realise Vision 2063.

Civilian protest: The Arab Spring



Protesters in Cairo's Tahrir Square denounce military trials of civilians in a gathering on 30 September 2011.

The Arab Spring served as a point of departure for discussion. Delegates discussed that certain actors had speculated, prior to the uprisings, that the questionable state of governance (in terms of safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development)⁴ across the continent could lead to a wave of instability, which ultimately happened in North Africa.

4 For an in-depth breakdown of governance indicators across African countries, refer to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) available from: <<http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag/>>.

The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across North Africa and the Middle East in early 2011. Beginning in Tunisia, the civil unrest moved to Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Yemen, among other states. The flux of 2011 was at its core an expression of deep-seated resentment at ageing Arab dictatorships; anger at the brutality of the security apparatus, high levels of unemployment and rising prices; and agitation against corruption that followed the privatisation of state assets in some countries (Manfreda 2011). The movement called for a political change towards freedom, equality and democracy in the region. However, it left certain countries in a state of civil unrest and instability that persisted long after the uprisings had ended (Manfreda 2011).

The case of Libya was highlighted for the lessons it provided on the need for Africans to insist that their views and analyses of peace and security developments on the continent be given more considerable weight by international actors. This argument was informed by evidence of the manner in which African positions were sidelined immediately prior to the international response on Libya, actions which considerably weakened the country and spurred further instability and insecurity. This was noted as especially concerning, given the regional dimensions of the instability and the fact that the continent now has to deal with, and account for, the detrimental decisions of foreign actors who decided against acknowledging and implementing the roadmap presented by the AU, which stemmed from a lengthy consultative process that sought a non-violent process and positive outcome for the country (Kedze 2015).

Intervention in Libya

The 2011 military intervention in Libya occurred in response to the 41-year-long rule of the late former leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. The revolt spread rapidly throughout the state, as civilian insurgents called for regime change (Tumkezee Kedze 2015). Gaddafi, however, declared his determination to retain power and waged a war against the rebels, resulting in a nation-wide civil war. In response to increased human rights violations and threats to national security, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 1970, and later Resolution 1973, implementing a no-fly zone above Libyan airspace and an arms embargo on trade with the country. Under Chapter VII powers, the UNSC demanded an immediate ceasefire, calling for all violence and attacks on civilians to end, and took all measures necessary to prevent further civilian casualties (Tumkezee Kedze 2015). Implementation of the resolution was problematic as it resulted in a number of deaths, including that of Colonel Gaddafi himself. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) launched airstrikes, resulting in further chaos as a result of lack of follow-up (Tumkezee Kedze 2015).



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Refugees in Ras Djir, Tunisia in February 2011. They were among hundreds fleeing violence across the border in Libya.

Worryingly, the misapplication of the ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P) principle as invoked in Libya was noted as the conceptual basis of actions that added to high levels of distrust between African states and external actors. It was further noted that this suspicion would not subside anytime soon, given the unintended consequences of the intervention and the heightened levels of insecurity across North Africa and the Middle East.

Terrorism

The Arusha Retreat further reiterated that stakeholders on the continent – governments, sub-regional organisations and the AU itself – need to lead in ensuring that tenuous links are not drawn between Islam and terrorism, especially if this leads to the alienation of certain groups in efforts to win the hearts and minds of all Africans. This could be an effective means of addressing the scourge of violent extremism. These discussions occurred in the context of the fact that now more than ever, developments to do with terrorism, violent extremism and transnational organised crime could bring even relatively stable and prosperous states to the brink of collapse, as happened in Mali.

This is especially relevant in Africa, given that many nations are generally characterised by weak institutional environments, and already stretched capacities to ensure effective governance and rule of law in all occupied territories. It was highlighted that illicit non-state actors operate across many national borders, and purposely exploit the abundant institutional and governance-related weaknesses of the environments in which they function. This was especially worrying, given that many such groups have grown in stature and influence, to the extent where they are able to challenge legitimate state

actors in these areas. They have also created effective safe havens for other radical rings to coalesce around common interests, plan, and coordinate their operations. These trends further reinforce the growth of a range of associated illicit activities and exacerbate existing networks of transnational organised crime – with particular reference to human trafficking, illicit trade in and flow of arms, as well as the production and transportation of narcotics.

Drug trafficking and terrorism in Mali

International counter-narcotics efforts in Mali have tended to focus on the involvement of terrorist and extremist networks in the country's drug trafficking activities (Gberie 2015). With most West African traffickers tending to prefer maritime transportation of drugs, landlocked Mali serves more as an additional route via which drugs pass – rather than a primary transit hub – coordinated by sophisticated networks of traffickers. Drugs are moved into the country by road from countries like Guinea, and then transported via small convoys through the desert to destinations further north toward Europe. It should be noted though that Mali experienced challenges with drug trafficking and use long before the emergence of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Hezbollah within its borders (Gberie 2015).

Discussions around this topic also brought to light the many significant and commendable international, continental and regional anti-terrorist initiatives that were ongoing or under development. It was suggested that these initiatives be supported and better understood in order to derive lessons for interior incorporation and application in specific AU member states. In this regard, the general observation was that existing national security agencies and services could be augmented with more sophisticated anti-terrorism capacities, as has already been done in a number of affected states.

Current conflict trends and efforts to consolidate the continent's responses

The Arusha Retreat directed attention to the many challenges of concern to the continent in terms of development, governance, inequality and the propensity for violent conflict across Africa. In the same vein, delegates emphasised the many efforts currently underway to consolidate and more effectively respond to these issues.

Certain key reasons and markers for continued optimism were provided, and spirited discussion on the successes and progress achieved in a number of particularly outstanding cases, among them Burundi, Ethiopia and South Africa, took up much time. Moreover, the development and ongoing operationalisation and contributions of the APSA were alluded to as particularly helpful in improving the peace and security environment across the continent. In this regard, the more recent African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) was discussed in relation to

the operationalisation of APSA, and was commended for the political will mobilised and directed to establish such a mechanism in a relatively short period of time. The following sections outline progress made, as well as the difficulties of implementing African solutions to African challenges.

African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises

The ACIRC is an African-owned initiative for military intervention launched as and when the need arises. It comprises volunteering nations, whose purpose is to rapidly respond to crisis situations on the African continent (IRIN 2013). ACIRC was first founded by the AU in 2013 as an interim measure to counter continued delays in establishing an ASF, which includes a quick reaction force and Rapid Deployment Capability. The ACIR strongly resembles the Force Intervention Brigade, deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to defuse armed groups as part of a UN mandate to restore stability in the country's resource-rich east regions. South Africa contributed its best troops and an array of military hardware, state of the art communications and aerial surveillance equipment, and operated in concert with Malawian and Tanzanian troops (IRIN 2013).

Natural resources

The continent's abundant natural resources, and recent exploitable discoveries of such commodities, were further highlighted as a reason to remain optimistic about Africa's economic potential. It was explained that these factors provide reasons for continued, albeit cautious, optimism for sustainable development in Africa and the enhanced capacity of continental organisation to spearhead peace, security and development initiatives. From this perspective, African states are enjoined to make concerted efforts for the growth of their economies and, thus, support the capacity of the AU to achieve Africa's development goals and aspirations.

Funding the AU's operations

In tandem with the aspiration of ensuring that the AU becomes financially autonomous, during the Twenty-Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held on 30 and 31 January 2015, the continental body urged all member states to honour their contributions and clear their arrears to it. It was also decided that the AU would pursue alternative sources of financing from its member states through a range of options, including initiating the payment of a US\$10 levy on aeroplane tickets for commercial flights originating in Africa, a US\$2 hospitality levy, and an SMS levy. With these initiatives, it is envisioned that member states will: fund the operational budget of the AU at 100 per cent, fund the programme budget of the AU at 75 per cent, fund the peace support operations budget of the AU at 25 per cent (African Union 2015).

Climate change

Importantly, the issue of climate change in relation to current efforts to address conflict and crises in Africa was thoroughly debated in light of the fact that there is now universal agreement that there are credible threats to the globe, with particular reference to recent developments concerning the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Despite this recognition, however, the consensus was that it was very disconcerting to see that many states were not yet acting on this knowledge. This issue was discussed with reference to its potential to exacerbate and multiply many existing conflicts across the continent; in the context of greater incidences of natural disasters and the associated socio-economic and political implications of this in terms of greater migration flows and worsening pockets of insecurity and underdevelopment (Fjelde and von Uexkull 2012).

It was, however, particularly encouraging to hear that Africa had developed a common position on climate change to assist in efforts to approach threats in a coordinated and directed manner, and to present its interests as a united front in international fora (United Nations Environment Programme 2013). A key emerging issue for consideration was related to challenges of inadequate scientific capacity and approach of the continent to determine for itself the real meaning and impact of such dangers as climate change in relation to long-term peace, security and stability. This argument was informed by the general dissatisfaction of relying on foreign reports and analyses of how and why Africa is the most vulnerable global region, based on the forecasted impacts of climate change.

African Common Position on Climate Change

African environment ministers agreed on an African position at the Conference of Parties (COP) to the 19th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations held in Warsaw, Poland. Over 96 per cent of African agriculture is dependent on rainfall and it is estimated that 50 per cent of fisheries-related jobs would have been lost by 2050 as a result of climate change, with unimaginable consequence for the livelihoods of Africans. In response to these grave concerns, African leaders agreed on a common position on climate change, calling for a new climate regime that is legally binding and addresses the continent's needs once the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2015.

Some of the main recommendations for implementation post-2015 include:

- increasing the capabilities of Africa, least developed countries and small island developing states to address adaptation to climate change more effectively, through supporting national climate change adaptation programmes and similar country-driven initiatives
- mobilising and providing additional financial resources to Africa for climate-friendly technologies to address both the urgent adaptation and mitigation needs of African nations and other developing countries

- enhancing Africa's participation in the market to address climate change through demonstration of market-based project activities, supporting institutional capacity needs and building a critical mass of experts within Africa in the areas of carbon trade and international climate change negotiation skills
- providing technical and financial support for Africa to increase the availability of energy, particularly in rural areas and improve energy diversification to ensure energy security for investment promotion in climate change-friendly development areas
- ensuring the equal treatment of Africa in addressing climate change by providing financial support and incentives for mitigating carbon dioxide emissions through minimised deforestation and for acting as a global sink of carbon dioxide
- supporting countries to address their vulnerabilities to climate change through supporting early warning systems, conducting adaptation needs assessments and implementing adaptation activities (NEPAD 2015).

In addition, strong governance and improving institutions on the continent were highlighted as two of the primary means to better address the threat of climate change, in addition to enhanced scientific capability to advise and guide policies and common approaches on climate change and conflict. These views were expressed in light of the fact that climate change could likely have a multiplier effect and impact on existing conflicts, such as those in Darfur, and even South Sudan, which have regularly experienced droughts and famine, as well as armed conflict. Moreover, certain opinions shared indicated that while the evidence surrounding climate change was largely conclusive, the specific link between this phenomenon and conflict has not been established. It was therefore suggested that greater efforts should be made to examine the complexities surrounding climate change in relation to peace and security in Africa, with particular attention to long-term trends and the authenticity of available data on climate change.

Africa's vulnerability to climate change

Africa is arguably the most vulnerable region in the world to the impacts of climate change. The majority of both bottom-up and top-down studies suggest that damages from climate change, relative to population and GDP, will be higher in Africa than in any other region in the world. Over the next 10 to 20 years, the AfDB Group has estimated that climate change adaptation costs in Africa will likely be in the region of US\$20 to US\$30 billion per annum (African Development Bank Group 2012). There is, however, considerable uncertainty around these figures. The full range of estimates can be anywhere between US\$2 billion and US\$60 billion per annum, although the figures at the lower end of the range are still incomplete and do not account for Africa's adaptation deficit (African Development Bank Group 2012).

Additionally, it was noted that, with regard to intergovernmental cooperation *vis-à-vis* recent conflict trends and dynamics, information-sharing and early warning mechanisms would be critical to addressing these threats moving forward, with the context that many of these illegitimate non-state actors already have well-established and maintained information networks of their own – between numerous states and even across continents.

In terms of greater regional coordination, it was further suggested that the AU should play a key role in enhancing the capacity of RECs, and supporting regional counter-terrorism strategies and operations; rather than the continental body intervening directly itself. Given that the RECs effectively constitute the regional building blocks of APSA, it was noted that this was the most logical approach and that this should enjoy greater political support amongst all member states. Moreover, participants argued that such coordination efforts, particularly the information-sharing and early-warning aspects, should be extended to include key partners from the Arab world, in as much as the AU coordinates its actions with the UN and other key peace and security partners from the North. The retreat also contextualised the continent's current climate change concerns by providing a historical overview of the high priority that had always been afforded to this issue since the late 1960s. Contradicting the view that the continent has been slow in responding to this threat, participants were at pains to explain that historically, Africa's prioritisation of the environment could be understood as a precursor to the more recent debates surrounding climate change (Edwards 2013). In this regard, some experts traced the historical prioritisation of this issue from the 1968 Algiers Conference (which led to the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) through to the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa (1980–2000) and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) where a common African position was put forward.

A history: Africa's position on climate change

As African countries gained independence, there was need for a new treaty to address the nature and conservation issues expressed in the Arusha Manifesto of 1961. The steps below were taken towards this end:

- in 1963, the African Charter for the Protection and Conservation of Nature was adopted
- in 1964, the UN established UNECA, requesting a revision of the London Convention, which the OAU then used to ask the World Conservation Union, together with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, to prepare draft text for
- in 1968, after a number of meetings with OAU member states, the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Algiers convention) was adopted at the OAU's fifth summit in Algiers, Algeria, after being endorsed through the signatures of 38 member states

- the Algiers convention moved away from the concept of natural resource conservation solely centred on utilitarian purposes, introducing innovative approaches to the conservation of nature. However, due to rapid processes and changes in scientific knowledge in the field, and the subsequent evolution of laws, the Algiers convention had to be reviewed
- the governments of Cameroon and Nigeria appealed to the OAU to revise the convention, resulting in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) submitting a proposed revision of the document in 1981
- meetings and consultations took place in 1986. It was, however, not possible to complete the revision process during this period
- in 1991, the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community encouraged the adoption of a protocol of natural resources and a protocol on the environment, which both called for the Algiers convention to adopt new scientific, legal and institutional knowledge
- in 1996, the government of Burkina Faso appealed to the OAU to resume the review process
- in 1999, the OAU requested IUCN, the United Nations Environment Programme and UNECA to assist with preparing new text that would take into account the state of international economic laws, scientific policies and approaches
- the interagency process of drafting the document began in 2000 and was successfully completed in 2001
- a meeting of African government experts from the ministries of foreign affairs and environment convened in 2002 in Nairobi, Kenya. By the end of the event, a revised version of the convention was available
- the draft was transmitted by the OAU to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and discussed during the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. However, the process was not completed
- in 2003, the AMCEN adopted the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Maputo convention), at the second African Union Summit in Maputo, Mozambique, which was attended by heads of state and government. The Maputo convention has yet to be reviewed successfully (World Conservation Union 2004).

It was further noted that the consistent recognition of the relationship between the environment, development and conflict brought international attention to specific issues such as water resources and grazing land – and ultimately contributed to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (1994) – with particular focus on biodiversity. It was made clear that prioritising these issues has never been a major

challenge for Africa because the political will, commitment and commonality of approach has been present for many years – arguably more so than many other international actors, for a considerably longer period of time. The major challenge, however, had always been the significant implementation deficit and, more recently, the lack of scientific expertise to authenticate data and appropriately guide and influence policy.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification was adopted in 1994 by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, with particular focus on Africa. The convention outlines in Article 3(c) that all parties should develop, in a spirit of partnership, cooperation among all levels of government, communities, non-governmental organisations and landholders to establish a better understanding of the nature and value of land and scarce water resources in affected areas and to work towards their sustainable use.

©UNPhoto/Frank Leather



The December 1997 Climate Change Conference hosted in Kyoto, Japan, culminated in the signing of the Kyoto Protocol. The protocol is an international treaty, which extends the 1992 UNFCCC that commits state parties to reduce greenhouse gases emissions, based on the premise that (a) global warming exists and (b) man-made carbon dioxide CO₂ emissions have caused it.

Additionally, it was noted that if the threat of climate change is not addressed, Africa could most likely face significant challenges with particular regard to food security, greater incidences of natural disasters (in terms of floods and droughts), and exacerbated refugee and IDP-related challenges (Tadesse 2010). Thus, collective environmental security is an issue that requires much greater attention if responses to crises and conflict are to be effective.

Election-related conflicts

Participants made it clear that there is a distinct difference between elections that follow in the aftermath of conflict, and balloting processes that occur in a predictable manner during times of peace. There is, therefore, need to reconsider the general trend of employing polls as a viable means of returning a post-conflict country to normalcy, and to seriously consider the fact that elections themselves may be seen as a trigger and facilitator of violence in different contexts (United Nations System Staff College 2011). South Africa's transition to democracy, for instance, was referred to in support of this argument, where it was noted that a lengthy – four-year – process of dialogue and negotiation took place prior to the country's first democratic elections in 1994. It was noted that this progression critically contributed to the sustainability of the country's post-1994 political dispensation and security environment, and that if elections had been hastily approached following the late Nelson Mandela's release from prison, the country could very well be in a different position than it is today.

South Africa and the advent of democracy

The final stage of the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa happened so quickly that it took South Africans and the world by surprise. The February 1990 release of Nelson Mandela, and the lifting of the ban on the African National Congress (ANC) party and other liberation movements, led to a protracted series of negotiations through a complex process. An important issue for all sides to the negotiation was the process envisaged for achieving a constitution to govern the post-apartheid democratic state. Formal negotiations began at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). CODESA 1 was preceded by three key meetings between the South African government and the ANC to prepare the way: the Groote Schuur Minute, the Pretoria Minute and the National Peace Accord.

CODESA 1 hosted the first plenary session of the formal negotiations. The forum was convened on 20 December 1991 at the World Trade Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa, and attracted participants from nineteen groups, including the: Government of South Africa's National Party (NP), ANC; *Inkatha* Freedom Party; Democratic Party and South African Communist Party, to name a few. The right-wing white Conservative Party and the left-wing Pan-Africanist Congress boycotted CODESA.

Due to the success of CODESA 1, a follow-up meeting, known as CODESA 2, was held, once again at the World Trade Centre. Although CODESA 1 was a huge success, CODESA 2 was not very effective as all represented political organisations failed to reach consensus over the question of whether to adopt a majority or power-sharing form of rule in the new government. Political parties such as the ANC sought majority rule, whereas the NP wanted a power-sharing arrangement. These discussions were further challenged by the on-going violence in South Africa's townships, as illustrated by events such as

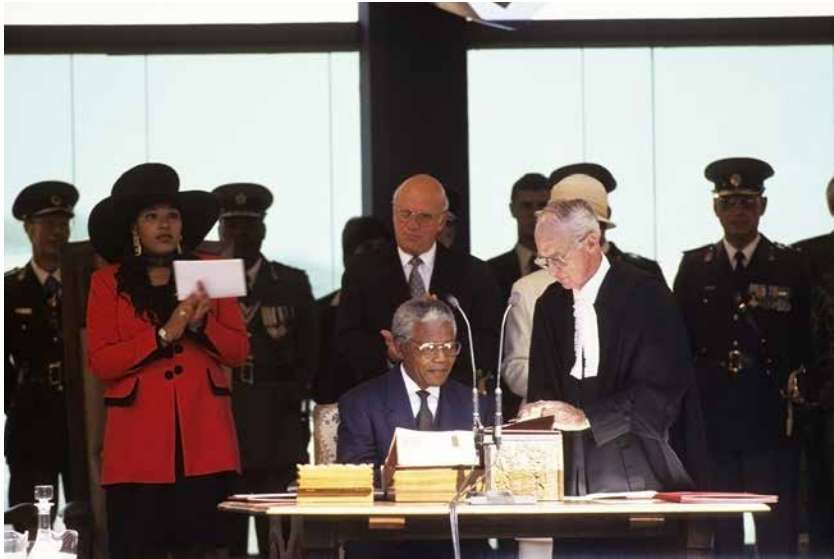
the Boipatong and Bisho massacres. On 26 September 1996, the Record of Understanding Between ANC and Government was subsequently drafted and signed as an agreement between Roelf Meyer (for the NP) and Cyril Ramaphosa (for the ANC) that the negotiations had to continue, in spite of all the violence occurring in the country.

Government representatives belonging to the NP and ANC officials finally agreed on a five-year term for government and the proportional representation of all political parties that won more than five per cent of votes in elections.

On 25 June 1993 members of the right-wing *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (AWB)/Afrikaner Resistance Movement political party demonstrated outside the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park during a negotiation and later drove vehicles through the doors to the building. This was all part of the group's attempts to disrupt the negotiation process.

On 27 April 1994, South Africa eventually held its first democratic election where all citizens could vote. Over 19 million South Africans participated in the election, giving the ANC a resounding win and endorsing Nelson Mandela as the first democratic president of South Africa (South African History Online n.d.).

© UN Photo/Chris Sattlberger



South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994 culminated in the endorsement of the late Nelson Mandela (seated) as president. He signed the oath of office on 10 May 1994 after his party, the ANC, garnered the majority of votes.

Delegates proposed that greater attention should be paid to seeking out alternative models of post-conflict stabilisation, as opposed to simply reverting to hasty election processes that might significantly undermine fragile states' security and lead to relapses

into conflict. The establishment or installation of a transitional government, or government of national unity, was alluded to in this regard, as some form of executive authority that could ensure that peace and stability prevailed prior to any democratic processes being initiated.

Responsibility to protect and international humanitarian law

The need to reconsider the dominant principle underpinning international responses and intervention into peace and security issues related to R2P ideals was discussed and debated, with focus on certain conceptual flaws, misunderstandings and misapplications. Participants were urged to reconsider their understanding of this principle as simply meaning the right to undertake a humanitarian intervention by questioning exactly who has the means to intervene in certain situations of conflict and crises. It was noted that, generally, those with the resources and capacity get involved, and that R2P has often been used as a pretext by developed nations to selectively interfere where their particular interests could be advanced (Bellamy 2008). Subsequently, there was a call for a paradigm shift, from foregrounding the right of others to intervene on one's behalf to emphasising the right of the abused to be protected – which could be championed by the AU, as well as other international actors from the South.

More broadly, the current status and level of development of international humanitarian law was also referred to as a potential trigger and facilitator of instability, given various inconsistencies, weaknesses and contradictions in its interpretation, application and enforcement (Ayoob 2001). Specifically, questions arose about how certain countries are not condemned for not being signatories to broad international legal instruments and mechanisms, the United States of America for instance, in relation to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Attention was also drawn to the perturbing number of bilateral agreements between certain states – that effectively fly in the face of a universal standard of international justice.

Despite these current challenges, however, significant positive structural changes in Africa over the last ten years were noted and commended, with particular regard to the AU's comprehensive normative frameworks that cover the majority of issues across the conflict spectrum. The continued implementation of APSA alongside the AGA and NEPAD was regarded as particularly laudable, as was ongoing operational progress and effectiveness in the development of peace initiatives across the continent. It was noted, however, that these must be balanced by greater reflection on the level of implementation and progress – particularly at national level – of existing initiatives and decisions taken by the AU Assembly's various sittings in relation to peace and security. In this regard, the time may also be ripe to explore the possibility of establishing an independent body to focus solely on the validation and auditing of such progress at different levels, to better guide the efforts of the AU as a whole.

Centrality of good governance and functional democracy in preventing and managing conflicts

In the context of existing efforts to consolidate the continent's ability to effectively respond to conflict and crises, the dual issues of good governance and functional democracy were recurring themes throughout Arusha Retreat deliberations. These matters became especially pronounced when participants sought to understand the broad, overarching and macro-level challenges that will increasingly come to confront the continent moving forward, specifically in terms of the pace and nature of globalisation, as well as relevant demographic trends. The present state of governance in Africa, and the need for greater, strengthened and more robust institutions, frameworks and mechanisms that can effectively address and account for such forecasted challenges was discussed, to allow for better understanding of these specific issues *vis-à-vis* 'silencing the guns' and efforts to ensure the realisation of Vision 2063.

Good governance

Good governance focuses on the processes involved in making and implementing decisions and applying the best possible methods for making those decisions. It follows key positive characteristics of participation, consensus orientation, accountability and transparency. It is responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific n.d.).

Democracy

Democracy is described variously as the rule of the people, for the people and by the people. The people constitute the foundation of the democratic space. In other words, democracy has to run according to the wishes, directions and decisions of the people. The three essential requisites of democracy are:

- a well-informed citizenry
- freedom of participation in decision-making processes and
- accountability to the citizens by those who, on their behalf, exercise power.

Any governing environment that encourages and enables the above can be described as a functional democracy (Opuamie-Ngoa 2011).

In this regard, the pressures on political structures and organisations were singled out as being particularly worrying, as was the need for more robust opposition with the capacity to work together with relevant institutions, and the government, to more effectively implement and execute a development agenda. Discussions further centred

on the manner in which global trends in inequality are mirrored within Africa, and that social unrest would in all likelihood increase unless deep and far-reaching structural and systemic-level reforms and compromises can be reached.

Inequality and human development in Africa

The high levels of inequality in Africa significantly affect human development. The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) for sub-Saharan Africa reveals a 33.6 per cent loss in values once adjustments are made for inequality in distribution of income, health and education outcomes. In Africa, the underlying driver of inequality in IHDI values is significant disparities in access to health and education (African Development Bank et al. 2015). This contrasts strongly with high human development countries, where inequality is related more closely to income.

Gender inequality continues to remain a challenge. On average, the level of female human development is 13 per cent lower than that of males. Women in Africa face higher levels of discrimination that have an impact on their socio-economic rights (African Development Bank et al. 2015). This is most apparent in relation to restrictions on access and ownership of productive resources and assets, abuses aimed at their physical integrity, and discriminatory practices within households and families. Violence against women continues to be of major concern.

Poverty has heightened inequality across the continent, with projections indicating that the majority of Africa's population is likely to remain in rural areas until the mid-2030s. By 2050, sub-Saharan Africa's rural population is expected to increase by two-thirds, i.e. 400 million more people (African Development Bank et al. 2015).

These discussions were complemented by detailed overviews of the recent trends and characteristics of inter- and intrastate conflicts across Africa, which took into account quantitative data and statistical models that could project the likelihood of conflict occurring moving forward. This subsequently presented a number of scenarios of where the continent could likely find itself in the future. In particular, a presentation entitled 'Alternative African futures – where are we headed and where could we go?', drew on data gathered by Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, which mapped broad trends across all global regions in relation to conflict and instability. Worryingly, it was found that relative to other regions, Africa – along with the Middle East – had the most frequent incidents of conflict and instability, which could be understood by applying a range of different statistical indicators.

Global instability and conflict statistics

According to the 2015 Global Peace Index, the following statistics of global instability and conflict were reported:

- since 2014, 81 countries have become more peaceful, while the situations in 78 countries have deteriorated
- many countries in Europe, the world's most peaceful region, have achieved historically high levels of peace, with 15 of the 20 most peaceful countries being situated on this continent
- due to an increase in civil unrest and terrorist activity, the Middle East and North Africa are now the world's least peaceful regions for the first time since the index was launched
- globally the intensity of internal armed conflict has increased dramatically, with the number of people killed in conflicts rising over 3.5 times from 49 000 in 2010 to 180 000 in 2014
- the economic impact of violence was calculated at US\$14.3 trillion or 13.4 per cent of global GDP last year (Institute of Economics and Peace 2015).

It was further explained that current incidents of violent conflict in Africa typically unfold along the peripheries of sovereign borders, and subsequently maintain strong transnational characteristics. Three potential future scenarios for the continent in relation to security and instability were outlined:

- 'politics of the belly' (the worst possible scenario that narrowly refers to the scramble for survival)
- the base case (or the middle possible scenario)
- the 'African Renaissance' (which finds expression in the realisation of the AU's Vision 2063) (Bayart 2009).

With a heightened sense of urgency within national governance circles to realise Vision 2063, discussions shifted to the ideas contained in Ali Mazrui's notion of Pax-Africana, which stresses the need for Africa to lead in and guide its own destiny (Mazrui 1967). Participants highlighted that the continent's institutions and leadership are not living up to the standards and hopes of Africans. They further noted that one of the most serious hurdles blocking the realisation of Mazrui's idea is the way in which corruption has eaten into the body politic of the continent, as evidenced by, among others, capital flight and massive infrastructure shortfalls.

To address mass grievances that incite conflicts, the importance of governance was underscored, with particular focus on issues surrounding accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness and effectiveness to better manage the dynamism associated with a growing democratic culture. The emphasis on governance also pointed to the necessity

of instituting far-reaching political reforms and renewed commitments that accounted for the changing peace and security environments faced by African states. Additionally, the need for greater reflection on the types of democratic models best suited to different African countries was discussed, and led to views expressed that greater effort on the part of the AU to expand on this area of inquiry should be pursued. This was based on the acknowledgement that different democratic models should in some way reflect the various levels of development among the AU's member states.

Organised crime, radicalism and governance conundrum

The growing concern in terms of effective governance and the functioning of African democracies is the rise of violent extremism and fundamentalism. Because these activities are supported by the illicit trade and flow of arms, as well as other forms of organised crime, the picture becomes extremely perturbing and requires a range of new and innovative measures to strengthen institutions and governance capacity, to address such trends as they arise. With particular regard to transnational organised crime, the influence of illicit actors upon the politics of certain countries in which they operate is particularly worrying in relation to rising levels of corruption – which erodes the trust that African citizens have in their respective governments and politicians. Greater transparency and accountability was called for, whilst noting that the AGA deserves far more attention and investment, especially as it relates to the APSA – given the considerable potential positive influence of good governance, in relation to peace and security in Africa. The harmonisation of frameworks and plans of action implemented by the AU and each of the RECs, specifically in terms of combatting transnational organised crime, was also highlighted as important.

Attention was then shifted to the worrying rise of radicalism, extremism and terrorism, and the significant challenges in addressing these issues. Delegates noted that Africa needs to be realistic and acknowledge that terrorism and all its accompanying scourges, among them transnational organised crime, would likely obstruct the realisation of peace on the continent for a long time, unless significant coordinated actions are implemented. It was argued that terrorism, radicalism and extremism went hand-in-hand and were particularly worrying, especially because they are complex phenomena that should be understood as more than criminal acts – as they are informed by ideological considerations that extend beyond immediate personal gain. It was further observed that terrorist acts generally occur at the confluence between existing group grievances, ideological narratives and some margin of operational capability. Since the Arab Spring, it was argued that extremist cells have dramatically proliferated across Africa – and that it is evident that these groups are communicating with each other on a variety of platforms about how to advance their common interests.

To better address these threats, some delegates suggested that African governments prioritise building trust and confidence in all their respective domestic constituencies to better secure a legitimate social contract – especially amongst disenfranchised and disillusioned groups who may easily be drawn to participate in the operations

of illegitimate non-state actors. It would be imperative to win the hearts and minds of marginalised sectors that have for too long resided on the peripheries of effective state governance. To do this, administrations across the continent need to turn the tide against corruption, prioritise institutional development and promote good and effective governance practices for the implementation deficit to be tackled head-on.

Collective options to better address these threats are evident in the development of mutually reinforcing anti-terrorism forces that could better coordinate and harmonise their actions across national and regional boundaries, as well as by prioritising a closer working relationship between the AU and UN over such matters. It was also noted that achievement in the Horn of Africa in combatting violent extremism is one of the great untold stories of Africa from which many lessons could be learnt from the way in which the region came together, under the auspices of IGAD, to collectively address its shared security challenges.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development's contribution to stability in the Horn of Africa

There are a number of specific areas in which IGAD plays an important role in contributing to stability in the Horn of Africa. Capabilities range from mediation to conflict prevention and capacity-building between member states. A significant ability of IGAD is its work in conflict prevention management and resolution (CPMR) through the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), an IGAD institution dedicated to securing peace and stability in the region by influencing policy through a CPMR approach, and producing and providing information to influence policy. This is different from IGAD's mediation role, as the CEWARN's CPMR mechanism investigates peace and security at a lower level in member states, as opposed to higher-level multi-country negotiations (Maalim 2013).

Military intervention, when needed, is arranged by IGAD through consensus and is deployed internally in the region, with the aim of reducing reliance on foreign actors. IGAD forces intervened during the 2006 Islamic Courts insurgency in Somalia and the IGAD Peace and Support Mission in Somalia was the precursor to the African Union Mission in Somalia. Member states of IGAD are the chief contributors to the body's security forces (Maalim 2013).

Delegates emphasised, however, that greater coordinated and inter-governmental and regional anti-terrorist responses need to be developed and implemented – taking into account the considerable transnational nature of these new threats. It was further argued that civil society – and especially the private sector – has a significant role to play in mitigating these threats and supporting governments toward implementing long-term sustainable approaches and practices that seek to root out the scourge of violent extremism at the source. The AU is to take a much more critical look at some

of its most significant shortcomings in stemming the threat of violent extremism, with particular regard to the relative slow pace at which these issues were recognised at policy level, and decisions and responses implemented to address threats to peace and security.

Concerted efforts to combat the threat posed by Boko Haram in West Africa

The *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad*/People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad, commonly referred to as Boko Haram, is a Nigerian Islamist movement that is widely known for its violent attacks against state and civilian targets. Increasingly, its assaults have extended to the neighbouring states of Cameroon and Chad. Its acclaimed links to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State tells of its growing sophistication and threat to world peace and security. In response to Boko Haram's excesses, the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Benin adopted a common strategy to combat the group in the region through a Multinational Joint Task Force.

During the Twenty-Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 30 and 31 January 2015, the AU approved the engagement of LCBC member states and Benin for a common and coordinated response to the security challenges posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and neighbouring states. The AU enjoined all member states and international players, including the UN, to support the efforts of the LCBC and Benin to coordinate and carry out military operations against the group. The regional force – comprising Benin and members of the LCBC: Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria – intensified its counterterrorist attack against the sect ahead of the 2015 election in Nigeria, which was postponed in view of Boko Haram's threats. The election was subsequently held on 28 March 2015.

Conclusion: Status of implementation of AU peace and security instruments and reflections on how to address the challenges that remain

The status of implementation of AU peace and security instruments and decisions concerning remaining challenges featured prominently throughout deliberations at the retreat, as growing dissatisfaction over the continent's implementation capacity was noted – especially in seeking to silence the guns by 2020. Certain views expressed indicated that, given extensive prior research and analysis on the triggers of conflict, experts are now fully aware of what these drivers are, as well as what needs to be done to address them. To this effect, it was noted that attending to implementation shortfalls should be the focus of future discussions concerning peace and security on the continent.

In seeking answers the legacy of colonialism, *vis-à-vis* current instability across the continent, was raised. It was noted that issues surrounding state formation are the continent's greatest legacy – but that Africa, with certain notable exceptions, has now had over 50 years of state consolidation. It was therefore argued that the continent is now well aware of what is required to build functioning states, and that any lingering questions and doubts should rather be directed at how African states could better move toward implementation. Similarly, questions surrounding the value of the democratic dividend, with regard to stability – and in opposition to autocratic regimes – were dismissed in equal measure. It was made clear that the inherent value of democracy was unquestionable, and that debates that pitted this issues against the assumed values of autocracies with regard to stability were outdated and unnecessary.

It was suggested, however, that much greater attention should rather be paid to understanding issues surrounding institution-building, in order to strengthen and support a growing democratic culture across the continent, whilst simultaneously seeking to mitigate against incidences of election-based violence. In this regard, observations were that African politics tended to favour weak democracies over strong autocracies, and that this required greater reflection on. Additionally, participants noted that prioritising inclusive growth strategies and policies was critically important for ensuring and sustaining stability and security across the continent, given that democracies come under significant strain when economic growth is not enjoyed by all in a just and equitable manner.

With regard to the impact of violence and conflict at regional level, it was observed that states in generally volatile regions either responded reactively to conflict in acute ways – through direct military involvement and hard-line politics or by understanding their immediate environment proactively. They also tend to shoulder greater responsibility for the stability of their respective regions. To this effect, there was consensus that greater efforts are needed, on the part of regional actors, to foster more proactive responses from their member states, through greater burden-sharing initiatives and processes surrounding peace and security. Lastly, the resource abundance debate was questioned, with delegates shifting the focus from capital – as the primary unit of analysis – to institutions, and their weaknesses in fully exploiting the mineral wealth of the continent in equitable and just ways.

Further debate on issues surrounding implementation on the continent highlighted the need for a new model, one that is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but rather more nuanced and attuned to the specific needs and demands of Africa and its people. It was proposed that this new paradigm should particularly take into consideration the complexity and convergence of issues surrounding peace, security and sustainable development and could, therefore, be aptly referred to as Afro-realism (Center for Strategic and International Studies 1995). This new, or arguably renewed, paradigm was discussed insofar as the continent's security and development warranted critical appraisals of the challenges that lay ahead, and the responses and agency of Africans themselves in tackling and overcoming them.

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From 21 to 23 October 2014, the African Union, in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania, hosted the Fifth High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa in Arusha, Tanzania. Convened with the theme ‘Silencing the guns – owning the future’, the retreat provided a platform for delegates to take stock of the paradox that is Africa in terms of unprecedented levels of economic growth on one hand, and rising instability and insecurity in a number of particularly concerning regions and member states on the other.

Recognising this, and building on references to Agenda 2063 and the AU’s Vision 2020, which aims to end all wars in Africa by 2020 and ‘silence the guns’, the event provided a platform for collective multi-stakeholder deliberations on existing and emerging peace and security threats to the continent, and the responses required to address these and achieve a war-free continent by the year 2020.

This report presents information from deliberations held during the meeting and their outcomes. It highlights the considerable efforts of the African Union, particularly through its special envoys and mediators, in working toward the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the effective management of the continent’s peace and security challenges, in line with Vision 2020 aspirations. Attention is paid to highlighting the many key considerations and strategies in place to move Africa towards a better future that is more secure and stable for all its inhabitants.