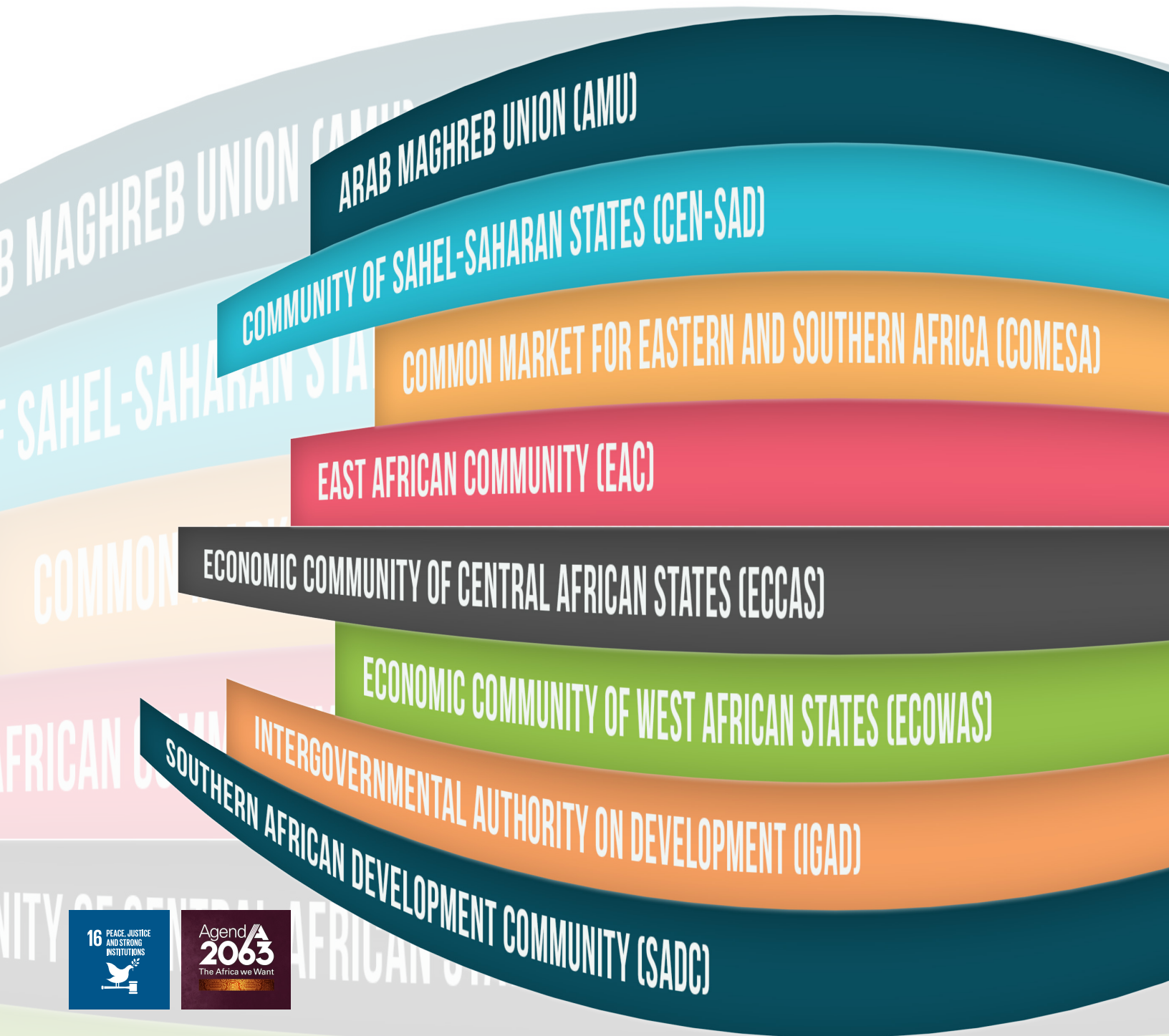


# Mapping Study of the Conflict Prevention Capabilities of African Regional Economic Communities





# **Mapping Study of the Conflict Prevention Capabilities of African Regional Economic Communities**



Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA)  
United Nations Secretariat  
November 2018

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## FOREWORD

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The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) advocates for the promotion of international support for Africa's priorities, across the peace, security and development nexus. As part of this effort, OSAA has been working collaboratively with the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in undertaking global advocacy to mobilize international support for their collective peace and security, development and regional integration agenda.

In 2010, OSAA began to engage with the RECs more systematically in undertaking this advocacy, in the context of an annual event at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, tagged the "RECs' Briefings to United Nations Member States". This event was organized jointly with the Permanent Observation Mission of the African Union to the United Nations in New York and featured the participation of the RECs at the highest levels, amongst other stakeholders.

While the RECs have over the years outlined key priority areas for international support and partnerships both during these briefings and in other forums, their priorities were not systematically documented in a way that could be easily utilized and leveraged to facilitate mobilization of concrete support and partnerships. This publication addresses this gap and represents an attempt to systematically and comprehensively map and document the priority issues the RECs have themselves identified as areas where they require support with respect to conflict prevention, covering both the operational and structural dimensions.

The publication is based on a study that was undertaken by OSAA in 2018 and it documents the state of play of the capacities of the RECs on conflict prevention. Its scope is limited to documenting what exists in terms of mandates, policies, strategies, tools, resources, partnerships and forms of support to Member States. It also highlighted some of the lessons learned and good practices of the RECs on conflict prevention, as well as outlines specific areas for support in the immediate to short and long-term.

Of note, the study and this publication does not assess effectiveness or result in any of these areas.

Seven of the eight RECs recognized by the African Union participated in the study namely: Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). The study is by no means exhaustive; however, it does provide comprehensive insights and information on the scope of work being undertaken by the RECs on conflict prevention. While the goal is to provide a baseline to inform targeted advocacy for the RECs, the information and insights contained in this publication will also serve to generate targeted support for the RECs, as well as provide a basis for enhanced peer exchange and learning among the RECs. It also serves as a useful tool for a variety of other actors, including the United Nations System entities and civil society organizations, who are working collaboratively with the RECs on conflict prevention. As such the publication complements other studies and reports on the RECs that have addressed other thematic areas, such as regional integration.

**Office of the Special Adviser on Africa  
United Nations Secretariat, New York**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### OSAA STUDY/REPORT TEAM

**Project director:** David Mehdi Hamam

**Project manager:** Raul de Melo Cabral

**Study consultant:** Ejeviome Eloho Otobo

**Project coordinator/focal point:** Ecoma Alaga

**Section authors:** Ejeviome Eloho Otobo (2, 3, 4, 8 and 10), Ecoma Alaga (1, 5 and 6), Bitsat Yohannes-Kassahun (7), Ejeviome Eloho Otobo and Ecoma Alaga (9)

**Substantive editors:** Juliet Wasswa-Mugambwa, Ecoma Alaga

**Project support:** Bitsat Yohannes-Kassahun, Maria Teresa Aranas, Sunny Meng Shi, UNOCA Team

### EXPERT ADVISORY AND FACILITATION GROUP

**Abdel-Fatau Musah**, Director, United Nations Department of Political Affairs and Africa II Division Central Africa Team.

**Cheryl Hendricks**, Executive Director, Africa Institute of South Africa, Human Science Research Council.

**Emmanuel Bombande**, Senior Mediation Adviser, Standby Team of Mediation Advisers, United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

**Fonteh Akum**, Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies

## Regional Economic Communities

### ARAB MAGHREB UNION (AMU):

**Taieb Baccouche**, Secretary-General; **Basma Soudani Ep. Belhadj**, Director of Political Affairs and Information; **Sami Hafnaoui**, Political Affairs and Information Directorate; **Brahim Essafi**, Political Affairs and Information Directorate; **Abdi Sidi Mohamed**, Political Affairs and Information Directorate.

### COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA):

**Elizabeth Mutunga**, Head of Governance, Peace and Security; **Oita Etyang**, Conflict & Early Warning Data Analyst; **Tapera Chinemhute**, Conflict & Early Warning Data Analyst; **Raymond Kitevu**, Conflict & Early Warning Expert; **Richard Atwaru**, Conflict & Early Warning Expert; **Mclay Kanyangarara**, Climate Change Advisor; **Deogratias Kamweya**, Chief Resource Mobilization and International Cooperation; **Dalitso Bonongwe**, MASE Coordinator; **Beatrice Hamusonde**, Director of Gender and Social Affairs; **Mekia Redi**, Senior Gender Mainstreaming Officer.

### EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC):

**Charles Njoroge**, Deputy Secretary-General; **Benoit Bihamiriza**, Head of Conflict Management & Crisis Response; **David M. Owen**, Principal Political Affairs Officer; **Emmanuel Niyonizigiye**, Police Liaison Officer; **Monica Mihigo**, Principal Internal Trade Officer; **Maurice Danje**, Planning Expert; **Ladislau K. Leonidas**, Principal, Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Officer; **Generose Minani**, Principal, Gender & Community Development Officer; **David Wafula**, Agricultural Programme Support Specialist; **Leonard Onyonyi**, Peace & Security Expert; **Didacus Kaguta**, Senior Peace & Security Officer; **Yufnalis Okubo**, Registrar, East African Court of Justice; **Owora Othieno**, Head, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs.

### ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES (ECCAS):

**Guy Pierre Garcia**, Deputy Secretary General in charge of Human Integration, Peace, Security and Stability; **Baudoiun Hamuli Kabarhuza**, Director, Political Affairs & MARAC; **Missak Kasongo**, Expert on Security Sector Reforms; **Djorwe Koskreo**, Deputy Chief of Maritime Component of FOMAC; **Florent Kabongo**, Regional Representative, Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA); **Remy Mukongo Shabanti**, Natural Resources & Environment; **Honore Tabuna**, Expert on promotion of biodiversity.

## ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS):

**Constant Gnacadja**, Programme Officer, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) Secretariat; **Sa'adata Shuaibu**, Programme Officer ECPF Secretariat; **Abigail Ogah**, Programme Officer ECPF Secretariat; **Serigne Mamadou**, Programme Officer, Democracy & Good Governance; **Brown Odijie**, Programme Officer, Mediation & Facilitation Directorate; **Ebenezer Asiedu**, Head, Mediation & Facilitation Division; **Francis Oke**, Head, Electoral Assistance Division; **Emmanuel Eyesan Okorodudu**, Head, Democracy & Good Governance; **Kebba Touray**, Principal Programme Officer/Head, Early Warning Directorate of Political Affairs; **Esther Daramola**, Programme Officer/Analyst Early Warning Directorate; **Vincent O'Keefe**, Team Leader & Institutional Development Specialist; **Alain Pale**, Head of Peace Support Operations; **Ernest R. Aubee**, Principal Programme Officer/Head of Division, Dept of Environment; **Abayoni Adeomi**, Programme Officer, Small Arms Division.

## SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC):

**Michael Mukokomani**, Chief of Staff, Standby Force; **Habib G. Kambanga**, Head, Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC); **Wilbert A. Ibuge**, Head Defense Affairs; **Kondwani Chirambo**, Coordinator, Regional Political Cooperation Programme; **Fernando Joao Cumbe**, Head of SADC Police/SARPCCO; **Mojakisane Mathaha**, APSA Programme Coordinator; **Kealaboga Moruti**, Head, Public Security; **Gabriel Malebang**, Senior Officer, Politics & Diplomacy.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD):

**Mahboub Maalim**, Executive Secretary; **Mohammed Ali Guyo**, IGAD Special Envoy for Somalia; **Legawork Assefa**, Senior Programme Coordinator, Peace & Security Division; **Mohamed Moussa**, Director, Agriculture & Environment Division; **Debalkev Berhe**, Programme Manager, Environment Protection Division; **Fred Mwango**, Regional Water Expert; **Daher Eline Hussein**, Programme Manager, Natural Resource Management; **Gebre Ezeabher Alemseged**, Senior Peace & Security Adviser; **Camlus Omoyo**, Director CEWARN; **Moussa Ali Meiyague**, Director, Institute of Diplomatic Studies; **Ahmed Hersi**, Regional Coordinator, Maritime Security Programme; **Hadera Tesfay**, Gender Programme Officer; **Nuriye Ayan**, Project Officer, Post-Conflict Reconstruction & Development Unit.

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**Copyeditor:** Kingsley Ighobor

**Design:** Paddy Ilos



## ACRONYMS

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<b>ACCORD</b>	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>AMU</b>	Arab Maghreb Union
<b>APCOF</b>	African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum
<b>APRM</b>	African Peer Review Mechanism
<b>APSA</b>	African Peace and Security Architecture
<b>ASF</b>	African Standby Force
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>AUPSC</b>	African Union Peace and Security Council
<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CCOE</b>	COMESA Council of Elders
<b>DIPEM</b>	Commission for Defence and Security
<b>CAADP</b>	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
<b>CEMAC</b>	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
<b>CENSAD</b>	Community of Sahelo-Saharan States
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officers
<b>CEPGL</b>	Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
<b>CEWARN</b>	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
<b>CEWS</b>	Continental Early Warning System
<b>COMESA</b>	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>COMWARN</b>	COMESA Early Warning System
<b>COPAX</b>	Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa
<b>CPPI</b>	COMESA Peace and Prosperity Index
<b>CRESMAC</b>	Regional Coordination Center for Maritime Security in Central Africa
<b>CRF</b>	Continental Results Framework
<b>CSCPF</b>	Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community
<b>EACWARN</b>	East African Community Early Warning Mechanism
<b>EADB</b>	East African Development Bank
<b>EALA</b>	East African Legislative Assembly
<b>ECCAS</b>	Economic Community of Central African States
<b>ECOMOG</b>	Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire and Monitoring Group
<b>ECONEC</b>	ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>ECOWARN</b>	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
<b>ECPF</b>	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework





<b>EDF</b>	European Development Fund
<b>EGM</b>	Expert Group Meeting
<b>EISA</b>	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
<b>EMR</b>	Etat-Major Regional
<b>EOM</b>	Elections Observation Mission
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization
<b>FIU</b>	Financial Intelligence Unit
<b>FOMAC</b>	Multinational Force of Central Africa
<b>GIZ</b>	German Cooperation Agency
<b>ICGLR</b>	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
<b>ICPAC</b>	IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre
<b>ICPALD</b>	IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>IDB</b>	Islamic Development Bank
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IDDRSI</b>	IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative
<b>IFF</b>	Illicit Financial Flows
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>IOC</b>	Indian Ocean Commission
<b>LTEOM</b>	Long-Term Elections Observation Mission
<b>MARAC</b>	Early Warning Mechanism of Central Africa
<b>MASE</b>	Regional Maritime Security Programme
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MSCC</b>	Maritime Security Coordination Committee
<b>MSU</b>	Mediation Support Unit
<b>NCCRM</b>	National Centre for the Coordination of the Response Mechanism
<b>NCSOHRM</b>	Network of Civil Society Organizations Human Rights Monitors
<b>NEPAD</b>	New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>NEWC</b>	National Early Warning Centre
<b>NEWS</b>	National Early Warning System
<b>NEWRM</b>	National Early Warning Response Mechanism
<b>OSAA</b>	Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
<b>PAPS</b>	Peace and Security Programme
<b>PoW</b>	Panel of the Wise
<b>RAP</b>	Regional Action Plan
<b>REC/s</b>	Regional Economic Community/Communities
<b>REPAC</b>	Network of Parliamentarians of ECCAS
<b>REWC</b>	Regional Early Warning Centre
<b>REWS</b>	Regional Early Warning System



<b>RIP</b>	Regional Indicative Programme
<b>RMs</b>	Regional Mechanisms
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SARPCCO</b>	Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Coordination Organization
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SEAC</b>	SADC Elections Advisory Council
<b>SIPO</b>	Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>SVA</b>	Structural Vulnerability Assessment
<b>TfP</b>	Training for Peace
<b>TIDs</b>	Trade Information Desks
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Teams
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDPA</b>	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
<b>UNECA</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>UNGA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNOCA</b>	United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa
<b>UNOWAS</b>	United Nations Regional Office for West Africa and the Sahel
<b>UNSAC</b>	United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WACSO</b>	West Africa Civil Society Forum
<b>WANEP</b>	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

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# Executive Summary

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**Africa's Regional Economic Communities recognize crises and conflict prevention as essential in the pursuit of stability, sustainable peace and development and regional integration and are taking concrete actions ...**

Armed conflict and violence are among the leading causes of deaths in Africa and have a negative impact on development: livelihoods, health, education, infrastructure, economy and demographics. Existing data reveal that conflict-related deaths - resulting from terrorism, extremism, insurgency, xenophobic violence, intercommunal violence and secessionist struggles among others - has increased significantly across the continent, especially in the last decade. The destabilizing effects of this on the quest for regional political and economic integration and realization of the continental vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, has indeed been particularly problematic. Consequently, except for one, all the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have established institutional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution through which they proactively aim to prevent and manage both operational and structural components of conflict.

The RECs have made remarkable progress in developing, operationalizing and strengthening their respective institutional mechanisms for operational and structural prevention, as to better support and complement, as appropriate, the primary responsibility of their Member States for preventing conflicts. Nevertheless, the gains that have been attained and progress made have been uneven and varied. Besides, all the RECs have their individual and shared challenges as well as needs priority for which additional efforts and support is required.

Drawing on the findings of a study that was undertaken on the RECs, this Report comprehensively maps their conflict prevention capabilities, covering existing mandates, structures, key policy and strategy documents, tools, resources, partnerships and the forms of support they current provide to Member States. The study was undertaken against the backdrop of the renewed emphasis both the African Union and the United Nations have placed on conflict prevention; and which is crucial for achieving the African Union's

Agenda 2063 initiative of Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 and Goal 16 of the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions".

**All the Regional Economic Communities currently have or are working towards an explicit mandate on conflict prevention ...**

Currently, all the RECs, except for the AMU, have an explicit mandate for conflict prevention. At the time of the signing of the original treaties establishing these regional bodies, all the RECs, except for COMESA, did not have an explicit mandate in the area of peace and security. The incorporation of the peace and security dimension in their work evolved much later in response to the reality of the challenges each region confronted; borne out of the recognition that their agenda for economic transformation and regional integration cannot be attained without sustainable peace. Deriving from this, all the RECs have further developed a full range of policies and strategies for preventing and addressing the gamut of triggering, proximate and root causes of conflict, including in areas of early warning and response, preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, combatting small arms proliferation, non-violent elections, peace education, gender and women's participation, disarmament, security sector reform and natural resource management. Added to this some of the RECs are also mainstreaming conflict prevention into their economic development and regional integration strategies.

**Beyond policies and strategies, a myriad of tangible tools has been developed to operationalize and advance the conflict prevention agenda of the RECs ...**

Various tools have been developed to operationalize and advance the conflict prevention agenda of the RECs, especially with respect to operational prevention. The most notable of these include, early warning and response mechanisms; good offices, preventive diplomacy, mediation support arrangements; electoral assistance and elections observation missions; and financing mechanisms such as peace funds. All the RECs, excepting AMU and CEN-SAD, have a functional early warning mechanism in place, namely: the COMESA Early

Warning System (COMWARN), the East African Community Early Warning System (EACWARN), the Early Warning Mechanism for Central Africa (MARAC) in ECCAS, the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN), the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in IGAD, and the Regional Early Warning System (REWS) in SADC. These mechanisms routinely collect, analyse and disseminate data and early warning alerts; and in some cases, have a response capability.

Several RECs have established mediation support arrangements, which vary in complexity and composition. COMESA has a Committee of Elders established to assist the Secretary-General in undertaking “preventive-making assignments”. EAC has both a Panel of Eminent Personalities and Special Representatives and Envoys who are deployed for mediation. ECCAS has institutional structures for mediation, including a Mediation Support Unit and the good offices function of its Secretary-General; however, the former is defunct. ECOWAS has the Council of the Wise that is constituted by the President of ECOWAS to support his/her good offices functions. Additionally, ECOWAS governance structure comprise of a Mediation and Security Council. IGAD’s mediation and preventive diplomacy arrangement, includes the good offices of the Executive Secretary and its network of liaison offices in its region. SADC has a Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventive Diplomacy structure which consists of three tiers, namely: the Panel of the Elders (comprising mostly former Heads of State and Government), the Mediation Reference Group (comprised mainly of experts) and the Mediation Support Unit (a Secretariat entity that supports the other tiers of the structure). Some of the RECs, notably EAC, ECOWAS, ECCAS and SADC mostly draw on the services of either current or former Heads of State and Government to support their mediation and preventive diplomatic work. More effort is required to mainstream gender and promote the participation of women in these structures and mediations processes across all RECs.

An awareness of the elections-conflict nexus has resulted in the growing integrated approach to preventing conflict and non-violent elections through the deployment of election observation as an operational tool. The aim being to build public confidence in electoral processes; help prevent fraud, voter intimidation and violence; and overall strengthen democratic institutions. Most of the RECs are increasingly involved in election observations in their Member States on either long- or short-term

basis. For example, ECOWAS has both the short-term and long-term observer missions. SADC has an Electoral Advisory Council, composed of mostly retired judges and distinguished diplomats and academics who serve in their personal capacities to advice SADC on elections-related matters. SADC also deploys long-term observer missions. COMESA deploys Election Observer Teams on short-term missions that are usually led by Members of its Committee of Elders. EAC, IGAD and ECCAS all deploy short-term election observer missions.

Three RECs, namely: EAC, ECCAS and ECOWAS have established Peace Funds that support the implementation their conflict prevention programmes and initiatives. These funding mechanisms largely rely on financial support from development partners. IGAD has a Rapid Response Fund, which is donor-funded and linked to its CEWARN, as well as a donor-supported Mediation Fund.

**Primary responsibility for conflict prevention lies with Member States; as such, the RECs should only play an important facilitative role in support of their Member States ...**

Member States have primary responsibility for the prevention of conflict; and in this respect, RECs can only play a facilitative and coordinating role in assisting the efforts of their Member States. In recognizing this reality, the RECs are indeed supporting a range of initiatives aimed at enhancing national capacities for conflict prevention. Currently the support RECs are providing to Member States can be broadly categorized into five areas.

First, RECs are assisting their Member States in articulating and implementing regional policies, strategies and action plans in such areas as conflict prevention and early warning, prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism; small arms and light weapons; natural resources management; women, peace and security; and combating piracy and promoting maritime security. Related to this is the support being provided to develop guidelines or codes on election observation and mediation. Second, the RECs have supported the establishment and functioning of regional networks or forums for national electoral management bodies, national human rights commissions, mediators and ombudsmen, regional police centres of excellence, and regional networks of women peacebuilders and mediators, among others. Third, most of the RECs are decentralizing

their early warning system and in so doing are supporting Member States in establishing their national early warning and response mechanisms. This specific support has further been enhanced in the context of implementation the African Union's Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework, in which instance the African Union and RECs are supporting and strengthening the capacities of Member States to conduct structural vulnerability and resilience assessments and further develop country structural vulnerability mitigation strategies that are nationally validated. Fourth, relates to technical capacity building support on a range of issues, such as training for officials of Member States in policing and criminal investigation, negotiation, mediation, elections observation, early warning, combating terrorism, financial intelligence, gender mainstreaming and human rights. Fifth, the RECs are also instrumental for forging cross-national collaboration among their Member States on conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding as evidenced in the case of COMESA that established the Trading for Peace Programmes in the countries neighboring the Democratic Republic of Congo, in ECOWAS with the agricultural revitalization programmes in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

**Inter-REC cooperation as well as tripartite collaboration between the Regional Economic Communities, the African Union and the United Nations is vital for the conflict prevention and sustaining peace agenda in Africa ...**

An important feature of the work of the RECs borders on joint efforts as well as collaboration and partnership with the African Union and the United Nations on a range of operational and structural prevention areas. Inter-REC cooperation has taken various forms, ranging from cross-learning visits on operationalizing early warning systems; cooperation on maritime security and combating piracy in the Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean (EAC, IGAD and COMESA) and the Gulf of Guinea (ECOWAS and ECCAS); fielding joint mediation mission (for instance COMESA and EAC to Burundi in 2015), pre-elections and elections observation missions (for instance COMESA, IGAD and EAC to Uganda and Kenya in 2011 and 2017 respectively; and COMESA and CEN-SAD to Egypt in 2018).

Collaboration between the African Union and the RECs covers financial and technical support and joint policy initiatives and actions. The African Union has provided capacity building training to officials of the RECs on a variety of areas, notably

on early warning – including in establishing situation rooms. Furthermore, the African Union undertakes joint field operations with the RECs. For example, the African Union Panel of the Wise and the COMESA Committee of the Elders jointly undertook pre-election missions to Egypt in 2011 and Kenya in 2013. The African Union and ECCAS are co-guarantors of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and co-chair the Panel of Facilitators for Peace and Reconciliation. The proposed coordination meeting between the African Union and the RECs which is part of the ongoing reform process at the African Union will be critical for reinforcing the partnership and collaboration between the African Union, RECs and Regional Mechanisms.

The tripartite collaboration between the RECs, the African Union and the United Nations has been most evident in West Africa where several joint missions have been undertaken and statements released by ECOWAS, the African Union and United Nations through the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, including on Gambia and Guinea Bissau. Ongoing implementation of the two UN-AU joint frameworks for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, and for Implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provides key entry points for scaling and reinforcing this partnership with all RECs.

**A whole-of-society approach that promotes engagement of and partnership with civil society and the private sector is essential for sustainable conflict prevention ...**

The RECs recognize the importance of engaging civil society and the private sector in efforts to prevent conflicts and sustain peace but have different standpoints on the scope of engagement with these non-state actors. The AMU for instance is yet to initiate any concrete work with civil society or the private sector on conflict prevention. COMESA created a Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector Desk in its Secretariat and convened annual forums with civil society and the private sector. The latter has however become dormant. In Central Africa, the participation of civil society in ECCAS' conflict prevention work has been limited to a few persons that support the MARAC data collection process as decentralized correspondence. The reasons for this are attributed to the lack of financial resources. Notwithstanding, ECCAS, with the support of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, is working to revive its engagement with civil

society as well as create a robust civil society network to complement and support its work on conflict prevention.

IGAD also has an established civil society organization forum, which was designed as a platform to standardize engagements of civil society organizations in the region, identify needed capacities, provide space for experience sharing and jointly facilitate fundraising for civil society initiatives on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and reconciliation. IGAD's collaboration with the private sector on conflict prevention is still at a nascent stage. SADC has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Non-Governmental Organizations with which it periodically engages on a range of political, security, economic and social issues. To broaden its outreach to a plurality of non-state actors, the SADC Secretariat is developing a policy paper to establish a mechanism for engagement of non-state actors that are involved in its work. In EAC, the preeminent forums for engaging both civil society organizations and the private sector is the Secretary-General's Forum, which is convened annually, and the Peace and Security Conference. On its part, ECOWAS convenes a stakeholders' consultations on conflict prevention with civil society, including youth. Since 2004, ECOWAS formalized the relations of cooperation between its ECOWARN and the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) through a Memorandum of Understanding that allows WANEP to make contributions to its early warning system. ECOWAS also has a wider forum for civil society, called the West Africa Civil Society Forum. Since 2017, ECOWAS has been exploring key opportunities for engaging the private sector and in this respect convened a conference on leveraging the power of the private sector in conflict prevention in West Africa.

#### **... as well as partnerships with development partners**

Most of the RECs are heavily reliant on development partners for funding of their conflict prevention programmes. Indeed, several RECs have discontinued or terminated aspects of their conflict prevention programmes as a result of donor fatigue or a change in funding priorities. This particularly undermines the ability of the RECs to implement long-term structural prevention interventions. Issues relating to the weakness or lack of coordination between external donors was also identified as a challenge.

## **Shared challenges and gaps ...**

The RECs face several challenges and gaps in implementing their conflict prevention programmes, including:

- **Lack of political will:** While there was a general acknowledgement of the importance that Member States attach to preventing conflict and sustaining peace as a pre-condition for accelerated development and enhanced regional integration, a frequently encountered complaint is that Member States have not sufficiently demonstrated the political will to act in a timely or early manner on some major regional political challenges.
- **Lack of adequate financing:** Nowhere is the lack of political will more evident than in the rather limited financial allocation Member States provide for the conflict prevention programmes of their REC; resulting in a high dependence on development partners.
- **Staffing shortfalls:** A corollary to the lack of adequate financial support is the significant shortages in staffing for such key units as early warning, mediation, electoral assistance and women, peace and security.
- **Incipient efforts on structural prevention:** Much of the conflict prevention intervention of the RECs is on the operational dimension. Some of the RECs are making strides to focus on structural prevention; however, overall the scale and scope of these efforts remain limited, especially in preventing environmental threats, demographic pressures and natural resources-based conflicts.
- **Fractured internal coordination on conflict prevention:** The multi-dimensional nature of conflict prevention requires systematic coordination and collaboration among a swathe of departments or units within the RECs. While this is acknowledged, internal mechanisms for fostering such system-wide collaboration and coordination remains underdeveloped in many cases.
- **Weak outreach and engagement of civil society and the private sector:** All the RECs recognize the importance of collaborating with the civil society - especially with women and youth - and the private sector in implementing their conflict prevention programmes. Yet, efforts to deepen



the inclusion of and partnership with these non-state actors is often hampered either by internal procedures or financial constraints.

- Inadequate focus on creating national and local infrastructures for peace: Although national and local infrastructures for peace play a critical role in preventing conflicts and sustaining peace, many of the RECs have not placed adequate attention on supporting the creation of such structure, which are required to deepen and sustain national ownership of conflict prevention effort.
- Monitoring and evaluating impact of conflict prevention - a weak link: A major challenge for conflict prevention is how to monitor and assess progress and impact. This is compounded by the fact that when a conflict is prevented, it is difficult to ascertain or assert what would have happened without the prevention action (the counterfactual scenario) and to whom the preemption should be attributed (the attribution problem).

### Key recommendations ...

The following recommendations are targeted at the RECs, the African Union, the United Nations, development partners, civil society and the private sector.

#### a. Regional Economic Communities:

- Financing conflict prevention: Member States should endeavor to allocate adequate resources, inclusive of financial resources and political will - to RECs for implementation of their conflict prevention programmes. This is vital for strengthening regional ownership, ensuring predictability in funding; and allowing for the hiring adequate staffing.
- Enhance focus on structural prevention: The RECs should increase efforts to address the root causes of conflict by better assisting Member States tackle structural challenges at the national and community level.
- Strengthen existing conflict prevention tools: While the RECs confirmed their current mandates on conflict prevention are adequate, their existing tools enhanced or recalibrated in order to effectively function optimally and address new and emerging threats.

- Re-orient the work approach of the Regional Economic Communities: Increasingly, the RECs need to perceive their role and engage as facilitators rather than substitute themselves as implementors of conflict prevention at the national level. As such, they should refocus and reinforce support to Member States, including in strengthening national and local capacities for peace, promoting regional norms to guide and regulate a wide range of transnational issues, facilitating broad cooperation on the management of cross-border issues; and devoting more efforts to tackling threats to peace and security at regional level.
- Enhance outreach to non-state actors: The RECs need to amplify efforts to include and ensure the active participation of civil society, especially women and youth, as well as the private sector in their structures and processes for conflict prevention.

#### b. The African Union:

Three issues in the relationship between the African Union and the RECs need to be addressed to advance their shared efforts to prevent conflicts, namely: (i) working to better define and apply the principles of subsidiarity, comparative advantage, and complementarity; (ii) developing common understanding of the dynamics of conflicts and speaking with a common voice on all conflict or crisis situations; and (iii) identifying opportunities for collaboration in the implementation of the joint UN-AU frameworks for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, and Implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### c. The United Nations:

Added to the ongoing collaboration between the RECs and the United Nations Special Political Missions, focus should also be placed on: (i) strengthening the collaboration with other United Nations field or regional offices on structural prevention; (ii) supporting demand-driven institutional capacity development of the RECs on a range of areas, based on requests; (iii) assisting efforts of the RECs to mobilize international support, including financial and technical resources for their conflict prevention work; and (iv) monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the impact of their conflict prevention activities, including the context of reviewing implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

#### **d. Civil society organizations:**

Civil society organizations, especially think-tanks and the academia can enhance support to the RECs in (i) undertaking research and collecting data on persisting, new and emerging conflict trends; (ii) training officials and other regional stakeholders in identifying drivers of conflict; and (iii) disseminating and amplifying the work of the RECs towards entrenching a regional culture of prevention and peace.

#### **e. Development partners:**

The study showed that development partners have played and continue to play an important role in supporting the conflict prevention work of the RECs. While it is acknowledged that African countries should assume greater responsibility for financing their conflict prevention programmes,

funding from development partners will remain critical in the short to medium term. As such, funding for conflict prevention remains an essential contribution development partners will continue to make in overcoming fragility, supporting transitions from war to peace, and sustaining international peace and security in Africa. Improved donor coordination and long-term support for structural prevention are also vital.

#### **f. Private sector:**

Only a few RECs currently engage the private sector in their conflict prevention work. However, as a stakeholder group, the private sector has huge potential to partner with the RECs in all stages of conflict prevention. As such they should be systematically engaged at the strategic level, as well as in dialogues, consultations, resource mobilization efforts and throughout the implementation phases.







# 1

## Introduction

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## Background

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) undertakes global advocacy in support of Africa's priorities across the peace, security and development nexus. An important component of this work is aimed at mobilizing international support and partnerships to advance implementation of the key aspirations, goals, targets and flagship initiatives of the African Union (AU), which are contained in its framework documents on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Agenda 2063. These frameworks, which serve as the fulcrum for OSAA's work, are both strongly aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As such, a core component of OSAA's advocacy also aims to promote coherence and synergy in implementation of these continental and global frameworks.

As the pillars and building blocks of the AU, OSAA's advocacy support extends to the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The collaboration with and support to the RECs was reinforced in 2010 when OSAA launched and convened the first annual briefing by the RECs to the Member States and entities of the United Nations in New York, tagged "RECs' Briefing to Member States". The annual briefings provided a unique and shared opportunity for the RECs to showcase their work, exchange on key priorities as well as potential areas for joint actions and mobilize support and strategic partnerships to advance implementation of their respective, but interconnected peace, security, integration and development objectives.

A recurring issue, which has consistently been raised at these briefings, is the need to strengthen the institutional capacities of the RECs to enable them better assist their Member States to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts; tackle shared transregional threats; address underlying root causes of conflict; and create conditions that are conducive for inclusive people-centred development. In relation to this, these briefings reiteratively underscored the importance of further enhancing the tripartite partnership between the RECs, the AU and the United Nations at especially operational levels, based on comparative advantages and in keeping with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. With the adoption of Agenda 2063 and its First

Ten-Year Implementation Plan in January and June 2015 respectively, the RECs stressed the urgency for more concrete, structured and meaningful international support to reinforce their capacities to assist their Member States in realizing the goal of "Silencing the Guns by 2020" and achieving a conflict-free Africa.

Deriving from this call for a more targeted support, it became even more imperative for OSAA to refocus its advocacy on specific issue areas and priorities identified directly by the RECs. Based on this, OSAA embarked on an intensive study to map the conflict prevention capabilities of the RECs, with the aim of collecting information on actual gaps and priority needs identified by the RECs to inform its advocacy work. The study, which was conducted in 2018, was also informed by a number of continental and global developments and instruments that demonstrated a renewed focus on conflict prevention. At the continental level, this included the accelerated efforts by the AU to implement its initiative on "Silencing the Guns", including the development of the Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020 and the appointment, in 2017, of an African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa. At the global level, key developments included the adoption of the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on sustaining peace, A/RES/70/262 and S/2282(2016), which called for "close strategic and operational partnerships between the United Nations, national Governments and other key stakeholders, including subregional organizations", in preventing the "outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, and in addressing root causes in line with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter". This call for a stronger partnership with subregional organizations is re-emphasized in the Vision of the United Nations Secretary-General on Prevention.

Other developments, which provided an impetus for the study, included the ongoing institutional reforms, which are not only taking place within the United Nations and the AU, but also at the level of the RECs. Currently, all the eight RECs are undertaking various

levels of institutional changes, with major reforms ongoing in the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). This provides important opportunities and entry points for collective and concerted actions, at all levels, to support the RECs' own efforts to enhance their capacities to prevent conflict, sustain peace and promote sustainable development.

With respect to instruments, the study built upon a number of AU and United Nations frameworks, including: (i) the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Roadmap 2016-2020, (ii) the 2015 AU Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF), (iii) the joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security that was signed by the United Nations Secretary-General and the AU Commission Chairperson in 2017, (iv) the 2018 joint United Nations-World Bank study on *"Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict"*, and (v) the joint AU-UN Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, which was signed in 2018 by the United Nations Secretary-General and the AU Commission Chairperson.

This report presents the findings of the mapping study that overall aims to contribute to realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions", and to Aspirations 3 and 4 of the African Union's Agenda 2063 on "good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law" and "a peaceful and secure Africa" respectively.

## Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to map the landscape of conflict prevention in the RECs with an aim to identifying existing institutional capacities, including gaps and needs, to inform evidence-based advocacy to support reinforcement of their conflict prevention capacities. Specifically, the study identified:

- I. Geopolitical contexts, mandates and policy frameworks, structures, strategy documents, tools, resources and partnerships for conflict prevention in the RECs, including the forms of assistance provided to their Member States.
- II. Challenges, capacity gaps and lessons learned in the area of conflict prevention.
- III. Key priority areas for which support is required to further bolster institutional capacities for conflict prevention in the RECs.

## Study Methodology

The methodology for the study was undertaken in three carefully sequenced phases. The first phase comprised of field visits by the consultant to the headquarters of the RECs to collect first-hand information, mostly qualitative data, through interviews and focus group discussions with senior management and professional staff. Desk reviews, including of key documents obtained by the consultant during the field visits, were undertaken simultaneously. The schedule of the field visits is presented in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1: Schedule of the Consultant's Field Visits to the RECs**

REC	STUDY LOCATION	DATES
ECCAS	Libreville, Gabon	21-23 May 2018
ECOWAS	Abuja, Nigeria	25-30 May 2018
IGAD	Djibouti, Djibouti	4-6 June 2018
SADC	Gaborone, Botswana	8-13 June 2018
AMU	Rabat, Morocco	20-24 July 2018
COMESA <sup>1*</sup>	Harare, Zimbabwe	27-29 July 2018
COMESA	Lusaka, Zambia	30-31 July 2018
EAC	Arusha, Tanzania	6 – 8 August 2018

The second phase consisted of a RECs' review of the draft study report of the consultant. Feedback received from the RECs were further integrated into the draft document. The third phase was the validation phase, which took place in the context of an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) that was jointly convened by OSAA, ECCAS and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), with support of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDP) Central Africa Team and Mediation Support Unit (MSU). The EGM, which took place on 7 - 9 November 2018, in Libreville, Gabon, validated the findings of the study, albeit with additional suggestions, which were later incorporated into the report by the RECs. Besides validating the report, the EGM also allowed for information exchange and cross-learning, as well as the identification of specific priority areas where the RECs require support in the immediate to short and medium term.

Except for the South African Development Community (SADC), all the other seven RECs participated in the EGM and validated the study report. Representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Secretariat, the African Development Bank (AfDB), entities of the United Nations system as well as representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), academia, the private sector, and bilateral and multilateral partner institutions, also participated in the meeting.

### Scope and Limitation of the Study

Except for the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), all the other seven RECs fully and actively participated in the study. Additionally, the study visits were concentrated on only the headquarter locations of the RECs and therefore staff in field locations and other stakeholders such as national authorities were not engaged in the study. The involvement of CSOs and international partners was also limited to the EGM.

In terms of its substantive scope, the study was solely focused on mapping the existing capacities for conflict prevention within the RECs. In this respect, it did not focus in anyway whatsoever on assessing levels of effectiveness, results, outcomes or impact of existing mandates, programmes or initiatives pertaining to conflict prevention.

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1 \*The consultant travelled to Harare to consult with COMESA staff responsible for peace and security, who were in Harare to prepare for and observe the July 2018 elections.

Furthermore, though the study was also focused on identifying existing capacities for mainstreaming gender perspectives and integrating women and youth concerns and priorities into conflict prevention, information obtained in this respect was mostly limited to the work of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and SADC. Future studies on the RECs could potentially focus on these two areas to assess the effectiveness and impact of the conflict prevention interventions undertaken by the RECs; and to map existing capacities within the RECs to mainstream gender and integrate women and youth in the conflict prevention.

### Structure of the Report

This publication consists of ten parts. The introduction (Part 1); eight sections (parts 2-8) dedicated to the RECs (providing information on the seven areas outlined below) a comparative section (Part 9) that explores commonalities and shared challenges across RECs, and the conclusion (Part 10).

- I. Basic facts about the REC,
- II. Geopolitical context that has necessitated the REC to expand its economic and regional integration mandate to include a focus on conflict prevention (or peace and security more broadly),
- III. Organizational structure, comprising of the governance and secretariat or commission structure, where such information is available,
- IV. The institutional framework for conflict prevention, including existing mandates, key policies, strategy documents, tools, resources and partnerships,
- V. Support provided by the REC to its Member States in the area of conflict prevention,
- VI. Lessons learned in institutionalizing conflict prevention, and
- VII. Recommended areas for strengthening the REC's conflict prevention capacity.

Part 2 on the AMU shows that though the REC does not have a mandate on conflict prevention, it recognizes the importance of leveraging its ongoing reforms processes to establish mechanisms and procedures for advancing its nascent work on

peace and security, particularly on early warning and counter-terrorism. In Part 3 on COMESA, the study highlights that the REC's prevention work and capacity is driven by its recognition of the deleterious effect of the conflicts that erupted in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa regions on its regional trade and integration agenda. Consequently, COMESA adopted a structural prevention approach, which is anchored on a model that combines a Structural Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) methodology with the COMESA Peace and Prosperity Index (CPPI), focusing on four variables: peace, wealth, health and trade openness.

The East African Community (EAC), discussed in Part 4, adopts a more facilitative approach that is aimed at strengthening capacities within its Partner States (or Member States) to prevent and manage conflicts. In this respect, EAC has undertaken several capacity-building initiatives for its Partner States, including on election management, law enforcement and maritime security. It has also invested in fostering engagement with civil society and the private sector, including through initiatives such as its Secretary-General Annual Forums and its Peace and Security Conferences. Part 5 on ECCAS, *inter alia*, presents efforts that are underway to enhance its capacities for conflict prevention, including in the context of its ongoing institutional reforms and renewed partnerships with both UNOCA and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

In Part 6, the study shows how ECOWAS' capacity for conflict prevention has evolved over the past decade of implementation of its ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). A current priority for ECOWAS is to decentralize operationalization of the ECPF in order to enhance the capacities of Governments and other stakeholders to undertake early response actions at national levels to prevent violent conflicts. ECOWAS' decentralization approach *inter alia* promotes the use of communication and inter-community dialogues as well as strengthens capacities of traditional conflict prevention mechanisms.

In Part 7, the reports show that IGAD's conflict prevention agenda and capacity, like COMESA's, significantly focuses on structural prevention, owing to the nature of insecurity and conflicts in its region, particularly pastoralist disputes and natural resource conflicts. IGAD's conflict prevention work further demonstrates the importance of strategic partnerships at all levels: national, regional, continental and global, in preventing and addressing

root causes of conflicts. Part 8, which focuses on SADC, highlights the importance of regional and national ownership and leadership by Member States in fulfilling their primary obligations to mitigate crises and prevent violent conflicts. In Part 9, the report discusses commonalities and shared challenges in the findings across the RECs. This is including with respect to fairly comparable regional dynamics vis-à-vis the political, economic, social, environmental and technological trends; shared political commitment to pursuing collective regional, continental and international peace and security; similarities and variances in investment made towards achieving this objective; and existing organizational mechanisms to actually deliver in preventing conflicts, including shared challenges, lessons learned and existing or potential areas for joint actions. The concluding Part 10, outlines several recommendations for further action by the RECs and other actors, including the AU and the United Nations system.

## Reference Documents

- African Union (2015): *Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework*
- African Union (2016): *African Peace and Security Architecture Road Map 2016-2020*
- United Nations (2016): Twin Resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on Sustaining Peace, A/RES/70/262 - S/2282 (2016)
- African Union (2017): *Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020*
- United Nations-African Union (2017): *Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security*
- United Nations-African Union (2017): *Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*
- United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (2017): *Role of Early Warning in Silencing the Guns -- Enhancing the United Nations Support for the Peace and Development Dimensions of Agenda 2063 (Report of an Expert Group Meeting)*
- United Nations-World Bank (2018): *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*





# 2

## **Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)**



## 2. ARAB MAGHREB UNION (AMU)

### 1. Basic Facts

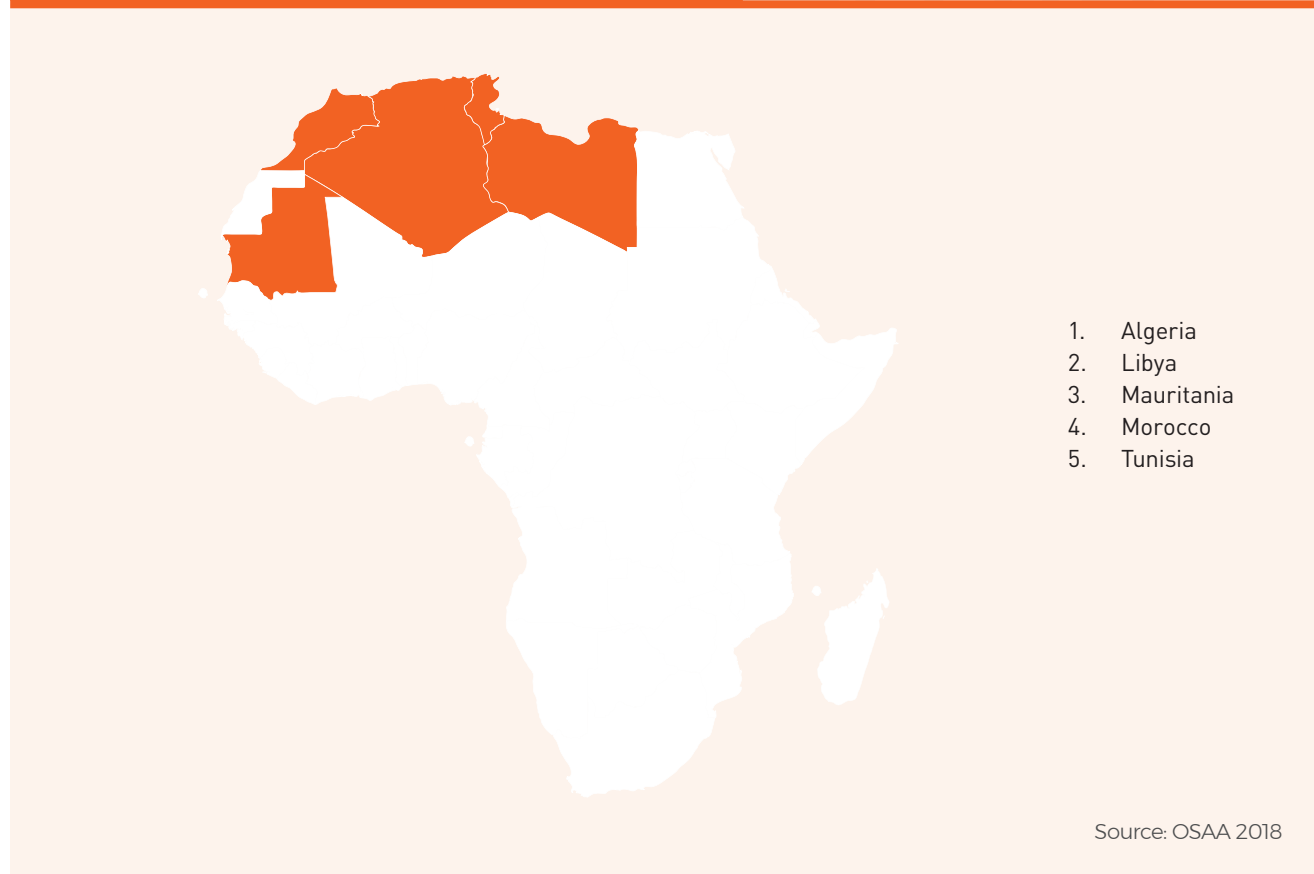
The AMU was established by the Treaty of Marrakech, signed 17 February 1989. The Treaty aims at “strengthening the ties of brotherhood which link Member States and their people to one another; achieving progress and prosperity of their societies and defending their rights; pursuing a common policy in different domains; contributing to the preservation of peace based on justice and equity; and working gradually towards free movement of persons and transfer of services, goods and capital among them”<sup>2</sup>. AMU Member States are namely: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

As shown in the Table 2, two AMU Member States, Libya and Tunisia, also belong to COMESA.

violent extremism and terrorism in the region, which is feeding off key structural deficits such as political marginalization, rising socio-economic inequalities, particularly high unemployment in the region that has exacerbated the vulnerability of youth to recruitment by extremist and terrorist groups. The heinous activities of terrorist groups in the region, most of which are affiliated to international terrorist networks, have exerted a heavy humanitarian toll on the population, increasingly strained national security forces and undermined economic activities, including in the tourism sector.

Third is the high rate of migration and the use of countries in the AMU region as transit routes for

**FIGURE 1:** Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) Member States



<sup>2</sup> Article 2 of the Treaty of Marrakech, Morocco 17 February 1989.

**TABLE 2: AMU Member States Representation in other Regional Economic Communities**

COUNTRY	CEN-SAD	COMESA
Algeria		
Libya	●	●
Mauritania	●	
Morocco	●	
Tunisia	●	●

human trafficking and illegal migration from other African countries into Europe. Countries of the region are both a source and conduit for migrants and refugees; and this situation is fuelled by a confluence of political instability and weak economic performance in the AMU and wider Sahel region.

Fourth, is the stalemate over the Western Sahara, which continues to undermine progress towards deepening regional integration. The combination of these factors has provided new impetus for renewed cooperation among the countries of the AMU region on issues of peace and security.

### 3. AMU: Organizational Structure

The 1989 Treaty establishing AMU has a provision for “contributing to preservation of peace based on justice and equity.” However, at present, this provision has not been fully translated into practice or operationalized. The lack of progress in this area has been attributed to the impasse between two of its Member States over the situation in Western Sahara. Nevertheless, a confluence of factors, explained in the preceding section, appears to be rekindling the interest of the AMU Member States towards establishing and operationalizing a peace and security architecture for the region. This is in addition to Morocco re-joining the AU in January 2017.

A number of incipient efforts demonstrates AMU’s interest to more systematically engage in peace and security. One of these notable efforts was the creation of a Department of Political Affairs, Information and Cabinet in 2014. The functions of this department include preparing the summits of the AMU, serving as a secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, servicing the Reform Committee of the Maghreb Union that focuses on legal and political issues relating to the functioning

and effectiveness of the AMU Secretariat, serving as a secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Interior, and supporting the four High-Level Experts Groups established by the Council of Ministers in 2012. Of note, the last AMU summit was held in 1994 and efforts are now underway to convene the 7th Summit to coincide with its 30th anniversary in 2019.

A second was the establishment of the four High-Level Expert Groups on Counterterrorism, Drug Trafficking, Migration and Civil Protection to address the new security threats facing the region. The High-Level Experts Groups meet once or twice a year to examine threats and challenges in their respective areas of competence, share information and national experiences in addressing the challenges, and offer recommendations, as appropriate. The groups are convened by Tunisia for Counterterrorism, Algeria for Drug Trafficking, Morocco for Migration and Mauritania for Child Protection.

A third factor relates to ongoing efforts to establish a conflict early warning and response situation room in the AMU Secretariat to monitor conflict and peace trends in the region. Related to this is a fourth initiative by the AMU Secretary-General to explore possibilities for creating a Council of the Wise in AMU to support conflict mediation efforts in the region.

### 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention in AMU

As earlier observed, AMU does not have an institutional framework for conflict prevention per se. However, this section outlines related mechanisms that currently guides its work in this area.

#### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

Besides the provision in its Treaty document, AMU does not currently have any specific policy

frameworks on peace and security. However, as part of its ongoing institutional reforms, which is supported by the AfDB, there are plans to initiate work towards creating a peace and security architecture.

### ■ Key Strategy Documents

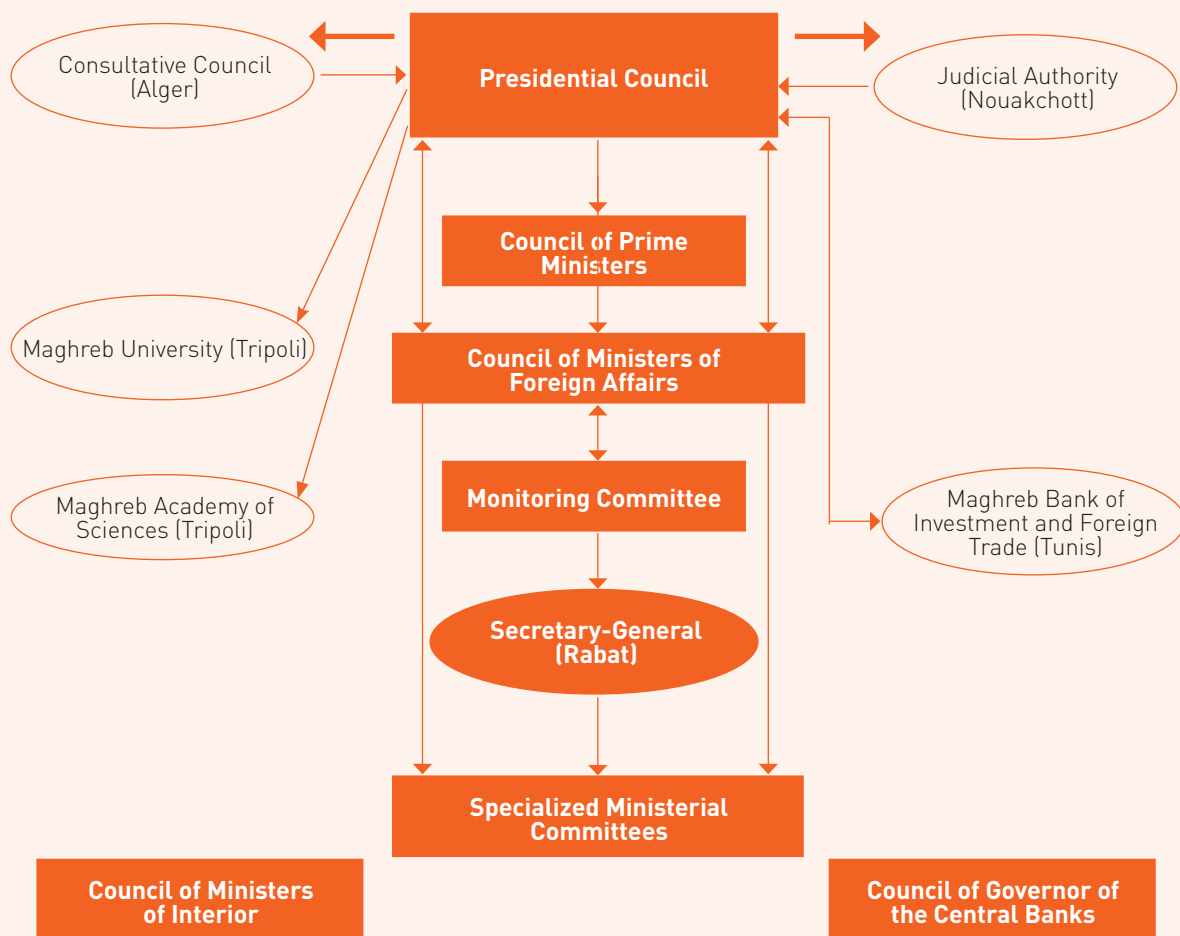
AMU's nascent work on developing a peace and security mechanism, has so far been focused on identifying structural causes of conflict in its region and adopting some measures to address these. In this respect, its Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted a Global Strategy for Security in the Maghreb, in 2012, which as previously stated resulted in the creation of the four High-Level Experts Groups on counterterrorism, drug trafficking, migration and

child protection. In addition, there is ongoing work to develop a youth strategy based on a Study of Youth in the Maghreb Region that was undertaken with the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Regional Office in 2012. The study concluded that youth unemployment in the Maghreb Union poses a major security threat in the region.

### ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

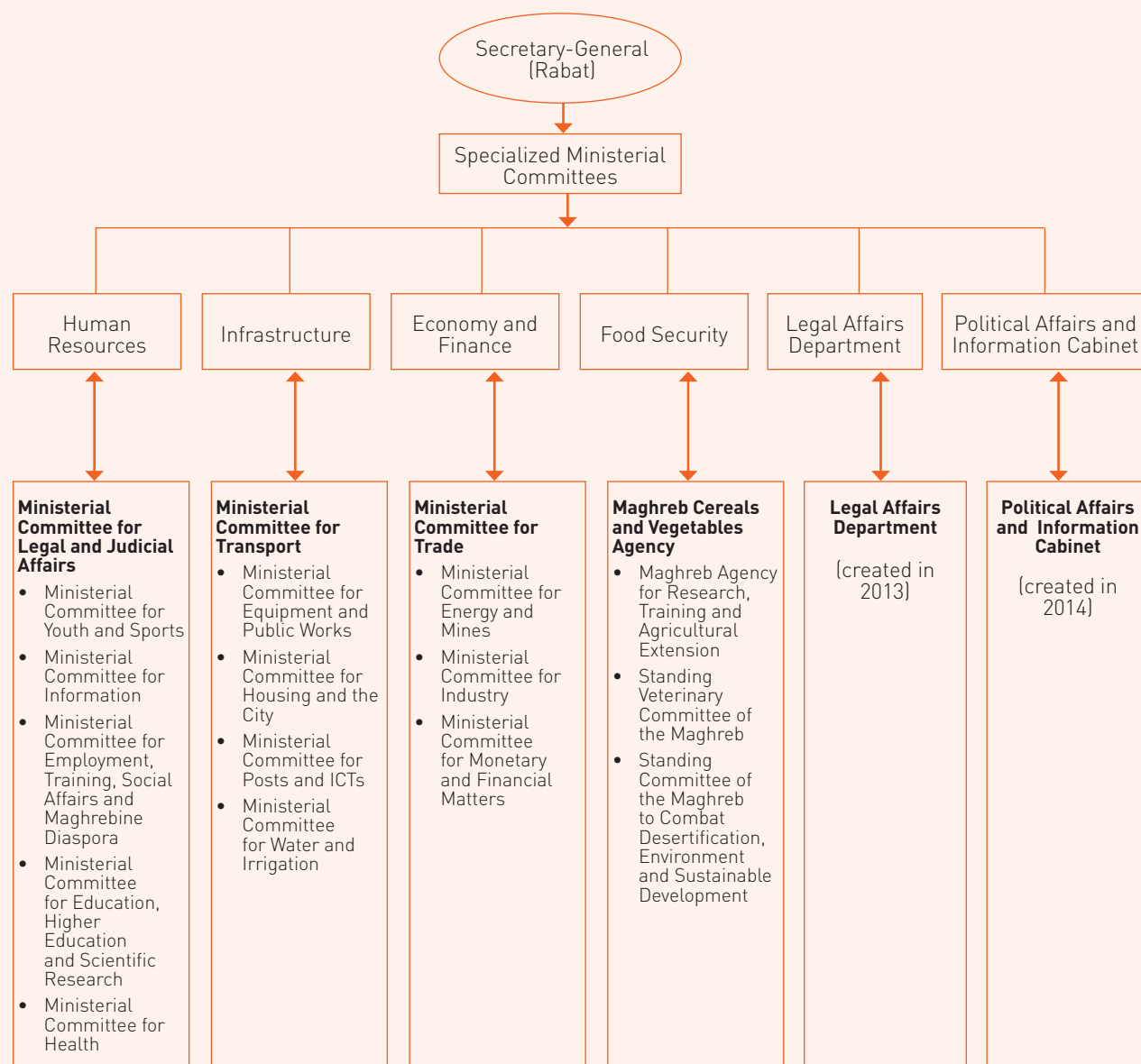
AMU is yet to develop specific and concrete tools for conflict prevention. Nevertheless, it has applied some innovative measures in utilizing existing programmes and institutions to advance its work. For instance, AMU is working with Ministries of Religious Affairs across its Member States to engage religious leaders,

**FIGURE 2: AMU Governance Structure**



Source: AMU Secretariat

**FIGURE 3:** Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) Secretariat Structure



Source: AMU Secretariat

most notably Imams, in popularizing messages of peace and tolerance as an approach to preventing and combating violent extremism.

In 2015, with the support of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), AMU developed a programme on the promotion of decent agricultural work for rural youth and is implementing this across its Member States. The programme is aimed at strengthening the capacities of relevant national institutions to better integrate decent jobs for youth living in

rural areas into national employment policies and programmes on agriculture. In addition, in the last few years, AMU has organized three forums on youth issues: (i) on relevance of education, training and professionalism in Algiers in 2013; (ii) on Integration of Maghreb Youths in the World of Work in Marrakech in 2016; and (iii) on Employment for Young People in Meknes, Morocco, in 2017. These forums not only raised awareness amongst youth on their role in the economy and society, but also in preventing radicalization and violent extremism.

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

The resources for AMU's nascent efforts at developing its conflict prevention activities comprises of mostly technical and financial assistance from the AfDB, the AUC, the IDB and UNECA. As the organization moves towards creating structures and institutional mechanisms and processes for peace and security, it will require more robust support from a broader range of partners.

AMU has already identified three areas where resources are required: first, is for the establishment of a Situation Room, for which two senior analysts at the P4 level will be required to support the creation of a database, development of a computer-based data storage and retrieval system, collection and analyses of data, and production and dissemination of periodic reports. AMU also noted that it will require three situation room officers to assist in managing operations as well as in monitoring and collecting data and producing initial assessments reports.

Second, AMU indicated that it will require approximately US\$200,000 for initial training of staff, including exchange visits to other RECs. Given its working languages and the requirement to issue all reports in both Arabic and French, funding would also be required for translation of documents and early warning reports. The estimated amount for translation is about US\$50,000.

Third, AMU proposes to recruit two staff at the P4 level to support Member States in drafting and harmonizing counterterrorism legislation in the region. AMU Member States had called for enhanced inter-state cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism, which resulted in each country developing their respective national legislation. This now needs to be harmonized to promote a common regional approach.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

As applicable, this section highlights AMU's emerging partnerships and collaboration on conflict prevention.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

AMU does not currently have any existing mechanism for internal coordination and collaboration on conflict prevention within its Secretariat.

## ■ Collaboration with other RECs

AMU's collaboration with other RECs on conflict prevention is quite limited. In June 2018, AMU undertook a visit to ECCAS to understudy the operations of the Central African Early Warning Mechanism (MARAC), in anticipation of its own emergent early warning system.

### ■ Cooperation with the African Union Commission

In the context of the AU's implementation of its 2008 MoU on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security between the AU and its Regional Economic Communities/ Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, which the AMU signed onto following Morocco's re-entry into the AU, the organization is currently learning from the AUC's experience of operationalizing the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). The AMU signed this on 27 January 2018, exactly ten years after the original Protocol was signed by other RECs. The signing of the Protocol was a pre-condition for AMU to collaborate and receive support from the AU CEWS and engage on the African Standby Force (ASF). Following this, the AUC made a commitment to train AMU staff in early warning and further support the establishment of an AMU Situation Room. In this regard, the AUC deployed an expert to the AMU headquarters to undertake a needs assessment on developing an AMU situation room and is offering advice on how to operate and manage the system, when this is eventually established.

AMU has also begun participating in the AU/RECs/RMs meetings on Peace and Security<sup>3</sup>, the Steering Committee of the APSA-European Union (EU) Support Programme, and in the meetings of the AU CEWS. The aim is to enhance its capacity to assist its Member States in domesticating and implementing these continental instruments.

3 AMU participated in the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of AU/RECs on Peace and Security in Cotonou, Benin on 13-14 November 2017 and the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of AU/RECs on Peace and Security in Nairobi, Kenya, from 31 July-1 August 2018.

## ■ Partnerships with the United Nations System

As earlier indicated, in 2012, AMU partnered with UNECA and the IDB Regional Office in Rabat to undertake a study on “Youth in the Maghreb Region”. AMU has also requested UNECA’s support in conducting two additional studies on: (i) impact of the membership of AMU countries in multiple RECs, and (ii) harmonization of AMU strategy and decisions with Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The AMU Secretariat further noted that the United Nations system provides direct support to its Member States on conflict prevention, mostly through the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and not within the auspices of the AMU.

## ■ Partnerships with other International Organizations

No information or feedback was obtained or provided on this.

## ■ Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflicts

AMU engages civil society on a range of advocacy campaigns, including on the rights of women, sports, youth, human rights, and preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism. AMU has a Youth Advisory Council that was created by its Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Overall, however, AMU’s engagement and collaboration with CSOs is ad hoc and not institutionalized; and mostly entails participation in meetings organized by both parties, receiving information from civil society, and mobilizing civil society to support its advocacy activities. It was emphasized that official AMU documents and information are usually not shared with civil society.

Regarding the private sector, AMU indicated it currently has no form of collaboration with the private sector on conflict prevention.

## 5. AMU’s support to Member States on Conflict Prevention

The AMU Secretariat observed that there is strong interest among its Member States to collaborate on peace and security, as well as on infrastructure development and disaster risk reduction. On the latter

issue, in recognizing the climate change and conflicts nexus, AMU undertook a learning visit to the Regional Climatological Centre for Prediction and Disaster Reduction in Nairobi and is further working with its Member States to bolster capacities on the subject, across the region.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

A fundamental lesson identified by the AMU is the importance of developing a policy framework to legitimize and inform its work on conflict prevention. Related to this is a recognition of the imperative to consult and collaborate with other RECs in order to facilitate and foster cross-learning and the exchange of good practices in operationalizing an institutional conflict prevention framework. Given current conflict trends in the region, there is a strong awareness of the need to adopt comprehensive approaches to conflict prevention that straddles the peace-security-development nexus, taking into consideration its already established activities, including on youth employment and preventing radicalization, violent extremism, terrorism and forced migration. In addition, there is a recognition of the importance of engaging and collaborating with civil society in the prevention of conflicts.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening AMU’s Conflict Prevention Capacity

Deriving from the above, the following recommendations were identified as key areas for boosting the AMU’s capacity on conflict prevention:

- **Legislative Mandate on Peace and Security:** As part of the effort to develop its work on peace and security, the AMU Secretariat would need to seek a legislative mandate from its Member States to develop a framework for guiding its work on conflict prevention, among other peace and security priorities. It can draw lessons from any of the existing models in other RECs.
- **Articulation of a Protocol or Strategy on Peace and Security:** Adoption of a legislative mandate should be followed by the articulation of a detailed Protocol or Strategy on Peace and Security, which will among others define the broad parameters of its work on conflict prevention.
- **Designing and operationalizing an institutional structure for peace and security:** The design



and operationalization of an institutional arrangements for peace and security would represent the third component of this effort to fully incorporate peace and security into the AMU's work.

- **Support for the establishment of a Situation Room:** AMU has initiated some actions to establish a Situation Room. However, it is necessary to sequence this, by first putting in place the requisite policy framework and overarching institutional structure for anchoring its proposed early warning and early response system.
- **Financial support for staff training on early warning and conflict prevention:** Since the Situation Room would form the initial structure for AMU work on conflict prevention, the organization attaches immense importance on training of the first batch of staff for the envisaged Situation Room. As noted above, significant financial support would be required in due course, to hire and train appropriate staff.

- **Support for harmonization of counterterrorism legislation in the region:** This is an urgent priority identified by the AMU Member States in the context of the High-Level Expert's Group on counterterrorism. This requires immediate support, given the significant threats posed by terrorism in the AMU region.

## Reference Documents

- AMU (1989): Treaty Establishing the Arab Maghreb Union
- AMU and COMESA (2016): Memorandum of Understanding between COMESA and AMU
- AMU (2012): Global Strategy for Security in the Maghreb region
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Islamic Development Bank (2012): Study of Youth in the Maghreb Region

# 3

## **Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)**

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### 3. COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA)

#### 1. Basic Facts

The Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa, which treaty was signed in Lusaka on 21 December 1981, was the precursor of COMESA. The treaty establishing COMESA was signed on 5 November 1993 in Kampala, Uganda and ratified a year later in Lilongwe, Malawi on 8 December 1994. Its twenty-one Member States<sup>4</sup> are: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Libya, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

With respect to its institutions, the COMESA Secretariat is in Lusaka, Zambia. COMESA has two Liaison Offices to the African Union in Addis Ababa and the European Union in Belgium. Its other key institutions include the: Trade and Development Bank in Burundi, Clearing House in Zimbabwe, Africa Leather Institute in Ethiopia, Reinsurance Company in Kenya, COMESA Investment Agency in Egypt, COMESA Competition Commission in Malawi, Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Malawi, Court of Justice in Sudan, Africa Trade Insurance Agency in Kenya, COMESA

FIGURE 4: COMESA Member States



<sup>4</sup> Tunisia and Somalia joined in 2018

Monetary Institute in Kenya, COMESA Business Council in Zambia, and the Regional Association of Energy Regulators for Eastern and Southern Africa in Zambia.

Given its large membership, COMESA Member States collectively belong to six other RECs, as shown in the Table 3.

of the EAC, SADC and COMESA. The impetus to deepen COMESA's work in peace and security preceded these regional integration milestones and was inspired by realities of the deleterious impact of conflicts that erupted in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa regions in 1998. This led to the adoption of several important decisions on peace and security by both the Heads of State and

**TABLE 3: COMESA Member States Representation in other RECs**

COUNTRY	AMU	CEN-SAD	ECCAS	EAC	IGAD	SADC
Burundi			●	●		
Comoros		●				●
Congo, D R			●			●
Djibouti					●	
Egypt		●				
Eritrea		●			●	
Ethiopia					●	
Eswatini						●
Kenya				●	●	
Libya	●	●				
Madagascar						●
Malawi						●
Mauritius						●
Rwanda			●	●		
Seychelles						●
Somalia		●			●	
Sudan		●			●	
Tunisia	●	●				
Uganda				●	●	
Zambia						●
Zimbabwe						●

Source: OSAA 2018

## 2. Geopolitical Context

COMESA has achieved some important milestones in its effort to deepen regional integration. The two most significant are the establishment of a Free Trade Area in October 2000, which covers approximately half of the AU Member States and the launch in June 2015 of the Tripartite Free Trade Area that brings together the Member States

Government and the Council of Ministers over a period, beginning in 1999. The spread of COMESA's membership across six other RECs, implies that its geo-political context is a microcosm of the overall continental situation.

The causal factors of violent conflicts in the COMESA region are varied and include insurgencies, armed rebellion, successionist movements,

unconstitutional changes of government, interethnic and intercommunal violence, weak state authority, election-related disputes, illicit exploitation of natural resources, terrorism and the prevalence of small arms and light weapons. In the past few years however, the region has witnessed a marked improvement in the overall peace and security situation, due to a combination of intensified efforts on regional mediation, national reconciliation and a crop of new political leadership that are determined to chart a new course for their respective countries. The positive changes experienced, especially in the Horn of Africa region, holds much promise for achieving deeper regional integration among the COMESA Member States.

### 3. COMESA: Organizational Structure

The 1994 Treaty establishing COMESA outlined six aims and objectives for the common market, one of which as set out in Article 3(d) is “to cooperate in the promotion of peace, security and stability among member states to enhance the economic development in the region”<sup>5</sup>.

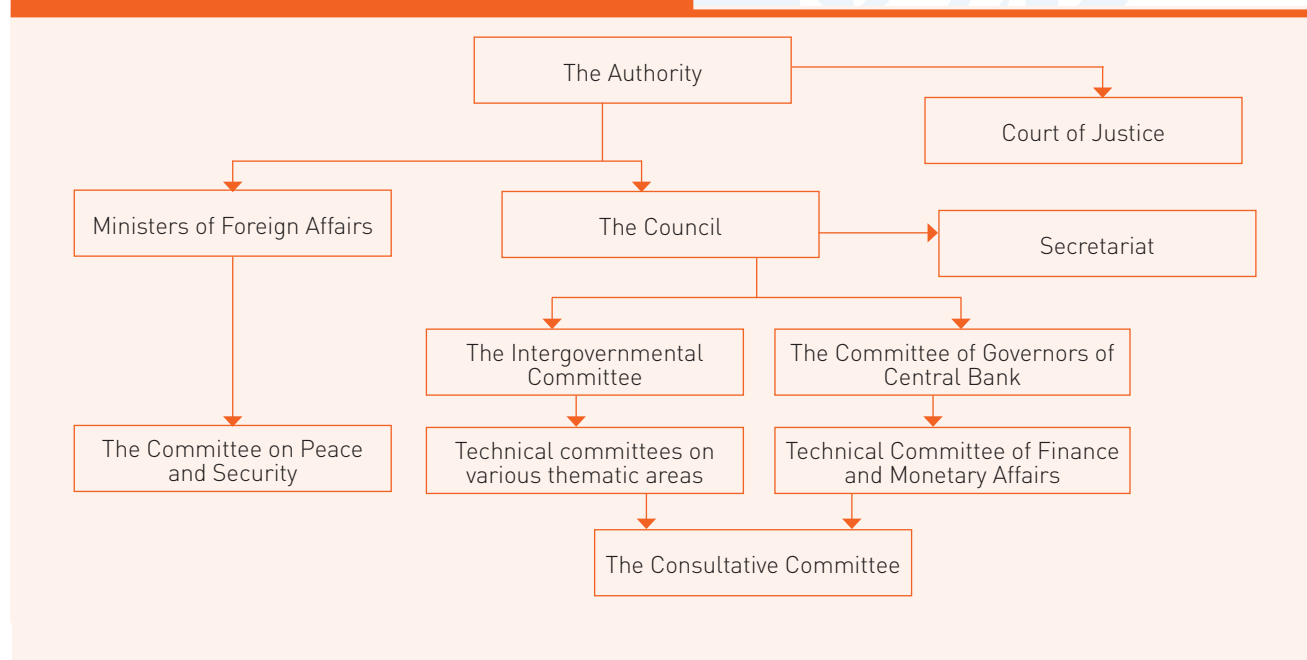
The 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of COMESA Heads of State and Government that held in Nairobi in 1999 adopted

several statutory decisions on the formal structures and modalities for COMESA’s engagement in peace and security. These included a three-tier structure consisting of the Authority, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Peace and Security. The first Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs defined several structural areas of engagement for the COMESA Peace and Security Programme including a directive to work within the framework of the AU to ensure its work complements that of other RECs based on the scope of its shared membership<sup>6</sup>. In 2005, the Council of Ministers further directed COMESA Secretariat to establish the COMESA Early Warning System (COMWARN).

The functions of the main organs and structures for conflict prevention in COMESA are as follows:

- a. **The Authority:** which consists of the Heads of State and Government of COMESA, is the supreme Policy Organ of the Common Market and is responsible for the general policy and direction and control of the performance of the executive functions of the Common Market and the achievement of its aims and objectives and has such other powers as are vested in it under this Treaty.

**FIGURE 5: COMESA Governance Structure**



<sup>5</sup> See article 3(d) of the Treaty Establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, 1994, page 18.

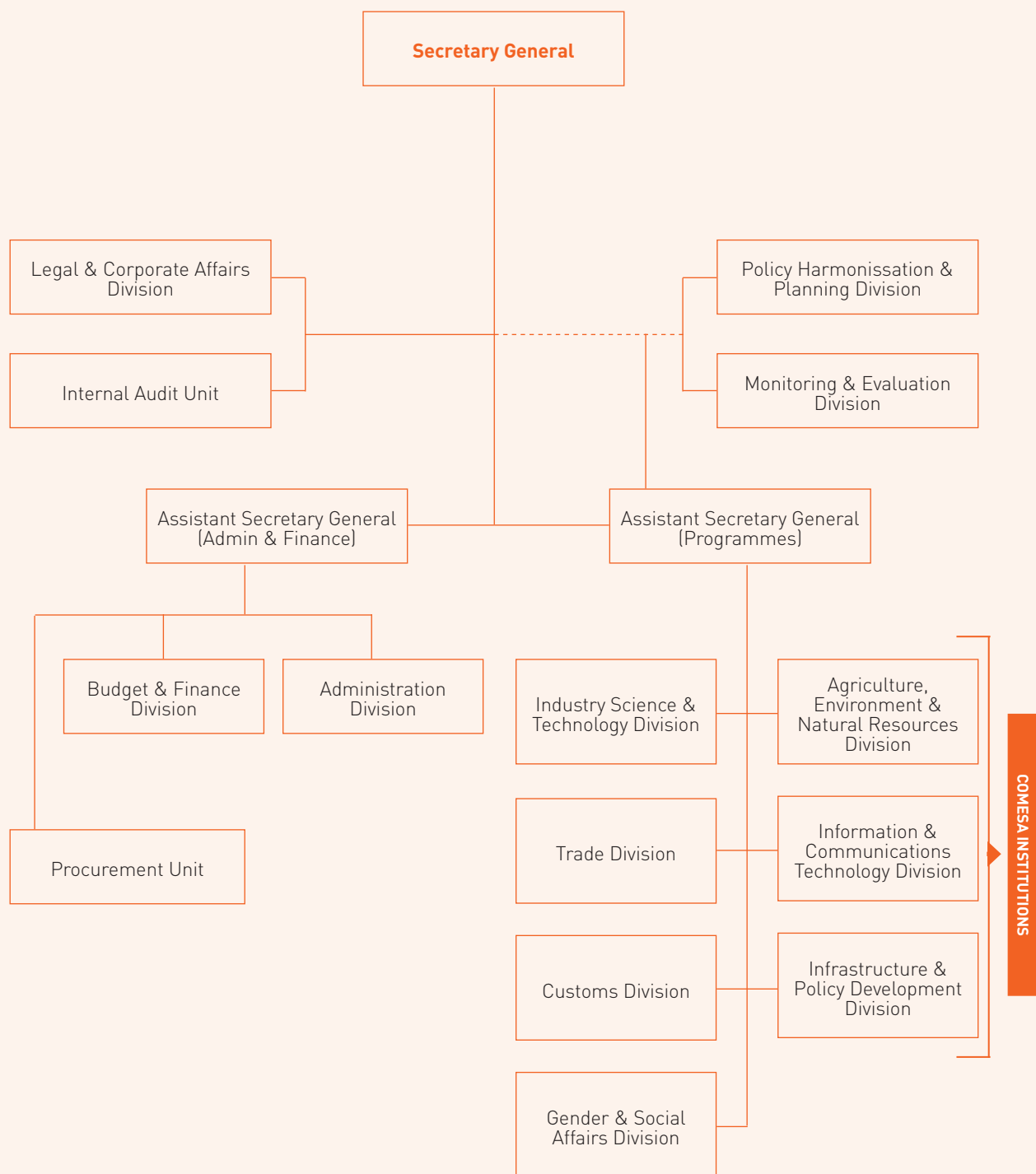
<sup>6</sup> See Strategic Plan for Governance, Peace and Security 2015-2018, Page 4.

- b. **The Council of Ministers:** consist of Ministers as designated by Member States to serve as the focal ministry for COMESA and presently comprises of mostly Ministries for Trade and a few Ministries of Foreign Affairs. The Council is entrusted with responsibilities for monitoring and ensuring the proper functioning and development of the Common Market in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty; making recommendations to the Authority on matters of policy aimed at the efficient and harmonious functioning and development of the Common Market; giving directions to all other subordinate organs of the Common Market other than the Court of Justice in the exercise of its jurisdiction; making regulations, issuing directives, taking decisions, making recommendations and giving opinions in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty; requesting advisory opinions from the Court; and considering and approving the budget of the Secretariat and the Court. The Council is the highest decision-making organ with respect to the programmes of COMESA, except for programmes pertaining to peace and security, which are considered by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. In other words, decisions on peace and security are considered by the Committee of Peace and Security, which reports to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs that in turn reports directly to the Authority. Thus, it is a short three tier structure unlike other programmes in COMESA that is channelled through consultative committees, technical committees and the Inter-Governmental Committee through to the Council for submission to the Authority.
- c. **The Committee on Peace and Security:** consists of Permanent Secretaries from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, who are entrusted to make policy decisions and recommendations for submission to Ministers of Foreign Affairs, based on analyses provided by the COMESA Secretariat.
- d. **The Court of Justice:** has jurisdiction to adjudicate upon all matters which may be referred to it pursuant to the Treaty. The Court has both a First Instance Division and an Appellate Division. The former has jurisdiction to hear and determine at first instance, subject to a right of appeal to the Appellate Division, any matter brought before it in accordance with the Treaty. The Appellate Division has jurisdiction over matters on points of law, grounds of lack of jurisdiction and procedural irregularity.

- e. **The Secretariat and Secretary-General:** as defined in the Treaty, the role of the Secretariat in relation to the responsibilities assigned to the Secretary-General in article 17 (8), include servicing and assisting the organs of the Common Market in performing their functions, submitting reports on the activities of the Common Market to the Council and the Authority in consultation with the Intergovernmental Committee, submitting proposed budgets of the Common Market to the Intergovernmental Committee, acting as Secretary to the Authority and the Council, ensuring the objectives set out in the Treaty are attained, keeping the functioning of the Common Market under continuous examination, and promoting the adoption of joint positions by the Member States in multilateral negotiations with third countries or international organizations.

The Secretary-General is assisted by two Assistant Secretaries-General appointed by the Authority. The 17<sup>th</sup> Summit of the COMESA Authority in 2014, adopted an organizational structure for the Secretariat, which among other things, established the Governance, Peace and Security Unit directly under the Office of the Secretary General. Previously, the unit was managed by the Secretary-General through the Legal and Institutional Affairs Division.

**FIGURE 6: COMESA Secretariat Structure**



Source COMESA<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> **Note:** Peace and Security was within the Legal and Corporate Affairs Division until 2013 when it became a separate unit within the Office of the Secretary General.



## 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention in COMESA

COMESA's institutional framework for conflict prevention, including its mandates and policy frameworks, strategy documents, main tools, resources and partnerships are outlined below.

### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

COMESA's conflict prevention mandate is derived from the following policy instruments:

- I. **The 1994 Treaty Establishing COMESA:** as earlier observed, Article 3(d) of the Treaty sets out an explicit objective "to cooperate in the promotion of peace, security and stability among member states to enhance the economic development in the region". This is further buttressed by Article 163 of the Treaty. As a result, COMESA Member States have agreed to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to peace, security, socio-economic development and regional integration, including by cooperating on preventing, managing and resolving inter-state or intra-state conflicts. The Treaty also obligates Member States to undertake to promote and maintain good neighbourliness as a basis for promoting regional peace and security within the Common Market.
- II. **The 1999 Summit Decision on Peace and Security Programme:** which defines the formal structures and modalities for COMESA's engagement in peace and security, including the three-tier structure consisting of the Authority, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Peace and Security; a working relationship between COMESA and the AUC; and a Framework within COMESA that compliments other RECs on the basis of the shared membership in COMESA and other RECs.
- III. **The 2007 Council of Ministers Decision focusing on Economic Dimensions of Conflict:** At their 8th meeting that held in Nairobi in May 2007 the COMESA Council of Ministers recommended an expanded strategic vision for implementing its conflict prevention mandate, focusing on the organization's comparative advantages on trade and investments. Specific attention was placed on addressing economic dimensions

of conflicts such as trade flows in natural resources and extractive industry, developing good corporate governance and corporate social responsibility; and mainstreaming conflict prevention into all its trade and investment programmes to foster economic integration and catalyse peace and security as well as development of a culture of tolerance in the region.

### ■ Key Strategy Documents

COMESA's conflict prevention interventions are informed by two main strategic plans, namely:

- a. **The COMESA Medium Term Strategic Plan (2016-2020):** that inter alia reiterates the 1994 Treaty provisions on the rule of law, the promotion and sustenance of a democratic system of governance in Member States, the maintenance of regional peace and stability through promotion and strengthening of good neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes among Member States, the active cooperation between neighbouring countries and promotion of a peaceful environment as pre-requisites for their economic development.
- b. **The Strategic Plan for Governance Peace and Security (2015-2018):** seeks to enhance COMESA's capacity for governance, conflict prevention, conflict management, security and peacebuilding. It articulates strategic objectives around three core and interconnected pillars of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction, which will guide interventions at specific stages of the conflict cycle".

### ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

- a. **COMESA Early Warning System (COMWARN):** designed primarily to monitor and analyse structural sources of vulnerability in Member States. It is distinct in that: (i) it has no Situation Room, (ii) its assessments are based mostly on quantitative data rather than qualitative data, and (iii) it relies on time-series data that span at least 10 years rather than field data on dynamic incidents. COMWARN uses a model that combines both an SVA methodology with the CPPI across four variables: peace, wealth, health and trade openness. Data on each variable is gathered

from highly reputable sources, such as the Heidelberg University in Germany for the variable on Peace, and the World Bank for the three other variables. To strengthen the explanatory value of the model, a list of 77 indicators - reduced from an initial list of 81 - is utilized as independent variables, interfacing with the four variables as dependent variables.

COMWARN produces the following products: Daily News Highlights, Weekly Reports, Monthly Reports, Quarterly Reports, Situation Reports (country-specific or thematic), and an annual Status of Peace and Security Report in the COMESA region. The Daily News Highlights is the only COMWARN product offered for public consumption and distributed to the member states, embassies, non-governmental organizations and think-tanks. All the other reports are strictly for internal distributions, mainly to the Secretary-General and to relevant Policy Organs of COMESA, including the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Peace and Security.

Several COMESA countries have committed to establishing national response mechanisms for tackling structural vulnerability drivers identified by COMWARN. At least four have commenced the process by requesting support from the AUC. The establishment of these national mechanisms would not only enable a given Member State to identify its structural vulnerability, but to also develop mitigation strategies in partnership with COMESA and any other REC(s) to which it has membership.

**b. Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation:**

COMESA's "preventive-making assignments" is mostly undertaken by its Committee of Elders (CCOE), which was established in 2006 by the 7th meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs that held in Djibouti. The main role of the CCOE is to assist the Office of the Secretary-General in preventive diplomatic missions. The CCOE is made up of eminent persons who are nominated by their respective Member States and then elected by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, based on their extensive knowledge on development, peace and security; and highly distinguished careers both within the region and beyond.

The first set of five CCOE was elected in 2009 at the 14th Summit of the COMESA Heads of State and Government to serve a maximum of four years. The second set of four was elected in 2010 at the 15th Summit. The CCOE comprises of a total of nine eminent persons with 30% representation of women.

- c. **Elections Observation:** Given that elections have been both a trigger and proximate causal factor of conflicts in the region, COMESA's elections observation is seen as a preventative tool. COMESA election observation missions to its Member States, including pre-election assessment missions, are typically led by Members of the CCOE and are often conducted in conjunction with the AU and other RECs, as applicable. COMESA also strives to work with Member States to implement recommendations contained in the reports of its various election observation missions as a preventive measure. However, its efforts to implement recommendations emanating from these missions is hampered by financial constraints.
- d. **The Inter-Parliamentary Forum:** This Forum was established in 2006 as an independent advisory body within COMESA. Its responsibilities include providing oversight on the implementation of international instruments and peace agreements and serving as a link between COMESA and existing national structures to promote the domestication of COMESA's policies on the ground. The Forum is currently dormant because of the lack of financial resources for its activities.

■ **Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention**

The principal constraint COMESA faces are the lack of financial resources, making the organization largely dependent on donor funding for implementation of its peace and security programmes. This lack of financial resources has led to the termination of many conflict prevention-related programmes, including the Conflict Prevention War Economies programme; the Regional Political Integration and Human Security programme under which COMESA developed the Guidelines for Elections Observation, established the Electoral Management Bodies Forum and conducted the study on Electoral Processes; and the programme on construction of border markets

as a tool for peacebuilding. There is a risk the anti-money laundering component of its Regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE) would also be terminated, as its funding ended in May 2018 and the programme is currently operating on a “no-cost extension” basis till May 2020.

Besides the lack of financial resources for its programmes, COMESA also has a significant shortage of human resources. For example, the post of a Post-Conflict Reconstruction Coordinator for the Trading for Peace Programme was lost in 2017, due to an end in funding cycle by the KfW of Germany. The post of Democratization Officer, responsible for elections observation, pre-election assessment and coordination of support to the Electoral Management Bodies, was also lost and has resulted in the drafting of staff from COMWARN to support implementation of elections-related tasks. This in turn detracts from their normal early warning functions and has a potential to impact on productivity and delivery of quality outputs. The problem is compounded by the fact that there are only three Early Warning Analysts covering the 21 countries in the region.

At present, the organization lacks adequate staff capacity to cover several key portfolios, including a Mediation Support Officer to assist the CCOE and a CSO and Private Sector Desk Officer to coordinate both the accreditation of CSOs and the Inter-Parliamentary Forum. There is looming threat of more staff losses as the APSA, which funds four posts in COMESA’s peace and security programme, has indicated it will withdraw financial assistance for those posts by mid-2019. The four posts cover one Early Warning Expert, two Early Warning Data Analysts, and the COMESA Liaison Officer at the AUC.

Overall, COMESA will require the following human resource capacity: a Coordinator for the Trading for Peace programme at P4 level; a Post-Conflict Reconstruction Officer at P2 level to manage and coordinate implementation of its post-conflict and cross-border peacebuilding programmes; two additional early warning analysts to strengthen its early warning capacity and support work on the SVA, development of the CPPI and preparation of the national consultations on the CPPI; a Democratization Officer at P3 level; a Mediation Support Officer and a Mediation Expert, both at P3 level; and a CSO and Private Sector Officer at P3 level. An amount of about US\$500,000 will also be needed for staff trainings, early warning and elections observation.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

COMESA’s main conflict prevention partnerships are outlined in the following section.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

The COMESA Governance, Peace and Security Unit, under which its conflict prevention programmes are anchored, indicated there is strong coordination and collaboration with various COMESA departments on conflict prevention. For instance, the Unit works closely with the Statistics Department in convening meetings of the National Bureau of Statistics of Member States on the methodology and data for the CPPI and SVA. The Unit has also collaborated with the Trade Division of COMESA in implementing the “Trading for Peace” initiative in cross-border areas. Additionally, there is an ongoing collaboration between the Unit and the COMESA Gender and Social Affairs Division in incorporating and mainstreaming gender dimensions into COMWARN and other aspects of the peace and security programme.

### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

COMESA collaborates extensively with other RECs. For instance, COMESA is working in close partnership with EAC, IGAD and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) to implement the MASE Programme, which was developed in the early 2000s to promote Maritime Security in the Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Region. The MASE Programme has five main components and COMESA coordinates the component on anti- money laundering that aims to develop regional capacity to break the financial networks of pirates and their sponsors and to decrease the structural and sustainable economic impact of piracy.

COMESA also collaborates with other RECs on the prevention of electoral related violence. COMESA, EAC and IGAD fielded a joint elections observation mission in Uganda in 2011; COMESA and EAC fielded a joint Mediation mission to Burundi in 2015; COMESA, IGAD and EAC also fielded a pre-elections mission to Kenya in 2017; and in 2018, COMESA and CEN-SAD jointly undertook elections observation in Egypt.

To strengthen this collaboration with other RECs, COMESA noted the AUC should play an enhanced role in convening more periodic meetings among RECs, at least one a year, to exchange and explore areas of collaboration on conflict prevention; noting the current meetings of senior officials of the AU and RECs/RMs do not seem to be addressing this need.

#### ■ **Cooperation with the African Union**

COMESA received support from the AU for the establishment of COMWARN. The AU Panel of the Wise (PoW) and the CCOE have also undertaken joint pre-election missions to Egypt in 2011 and Kenya in 2013. Together with the EAC, COMESA and the AU have conducted joint country-specific situational analyses in preparation for the 2017 elections in Kenya, Burundi and the DRC; as well as in preparation for the 2018 elections in Zimbabwe.

#### ■ **Partnerships with the United Nations System**

COMESA asserts that it currently has no collaboration with the United Nations system on peace and security.

#### ■ **Partnerships with other International Organizations**

COMESA's engagement and partnerships with other international organizations is currently mostly limited to the financial support it receives, including from USAID, GIZ, TradeMark South Africa, DFID and KfW Bank for its Trading for Peace programme. Partners such as DFID also provide technical support. The EU is currently COMESA's largest funding partner and provides funding for the MASE, Trading for Peace and other programmes.

#### ■ **Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflicts**

Following a 2001 decision of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which bequeathed civil society and private sector organizations a consultative role on peace and security, the COMESA Secretariat created a CSOs and Private Sector Desk. The Desk supports the accreditation of civil society and private sector organizations that collaborate

with COMESA on peace and security. It also convenes COMESA's two annual forums with these stakeholder groups. However, as earlier observed, these annual forums have become dormant, due to a lack of financial resources. The last of these forums was held in 2012. Besides the forum, the COMESA CSO and Private Sector Desk is likely to equally become defunct owing to inadequate resources.

## **5. COMESA's support to Member States on Conflict Prevention**

COMESA has launched several initiatives to support the work of its Member States on conflict prevention. Notable among these include the initiatives on Trading for Peace, electoral assistance, regional maritime security, early warning, gender mainstreaming and youth inclusion.

### **Trading for Peace Programme**

As an important initiative developed by COMESA to support post-conflict peacebuilding in its member countries emerging from conflict, the Trading for Peace (TfP) programme employs trade as the mechanism for peace-building and targets small scale cross-border traders. The programme, which was initially launched in the Great Lakes Region, has three components, namely: research on trade flows in border areas, development of information networks, and post-conflict reconstruction and development with focus on infrastructure development at the border areas to facilitate easy flow of trade and enhance peace.

The programme was implemented in three phases: phase one focused on research, phase two on trade-related capacity building and phase three which on strengthening crossborder technical capacity through the creation of Trade Information Desks (TIDs)<sup>8</sup>. Sixteen TIDs have been established along various cross-border areas between the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia. The TIDs act as conflict prevention mechanism, collecting information about trade disputes among small cross-border traders and mediating such disputes. Given their involvement in small cross-border trade, a significant number of women traders have been engaged in the dispute resolution processes of the TIDs.

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<sup>8</sup> See Strategic Plan for Governance Peace and Security for 2015-2018, Page 15.



As a part of the programme implementation, COMESA has organized trainings on conflict prevention for government officials working on border areas, including for the customs and immigration services of Member States. COMESA has also assisted Member States to simplify rules and regulations that can hinder trading among cross-border small scale traders, thereby reducing tensions that arise from complexity of cross-border trade transactions.

## **Electoral Assistance**

Support for democratic consolidation in its Member States is another important aspect of COMESA's work. In this respect, COMESA has conducted baseline studies on electoral processes and electoral management bodies in its Member States; engaged electoral management bodies in identifying best practices in the region; and facilitated the establishment of a COMESA Electoral Management Bodies Forum and development of Guidelines on the Conduct of Election Observer Missions. COMESA has also trained an average of 15-25 persons in elections observation in the DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, Eswatini, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

## **Regional Maritime Security Programme**

As the coordinator of the anti-money laundering component of the MASE programme, COMESA supports development of the capacities of Member States to identify the sources of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs), disrupt such transactions, penalize culprits and minimize the overall impact of illicit flows on the economy and society. This has entailed building and strengthening the capacities of Member States across many governmental departments in financial intelligence, updating relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, and promoting rigorous law enforcement.

The MASE programme has supported Member States in building the capacities of their Financial Intelligence Units (FIU) through secondments. For example, COMESA has arranged for officials from the FIU in Eritrea to go on secondment to Seychelles; and for officials from the FIU in Comoros to go on benchmarking visits to learn from the experience of Madagascar. It has also supported Madagascar and Eritrea in reviewing their anti-money laundering laws; and assisted Djibouti in translating the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating of Financing of Terrorism Laws into Arabic.

## **Early Warning**

COMESA has provided trainings to representatives of its Member States on early warning and early response; and aided the establishment of national structures for early warning and response. For example, at the country's request, COMESA is working with the AUC and IGAD to establish a National Early Warning System (NEWS) in Uganda. COMESA has received a similar request from Zimbabwe to establish a NEWS in the country. Furthermore, as part of its SVA methodology, COMESA convenes national consultations on the CPPI for individual countries, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, including government institutions, the private sector, CSOs, and research and academic institutions to deliberate on findings and explore potential preventative actions, as may be necessary.

## **Gender Mainstreaming and Youth Inclusion**

The Gender and Social Affairs Division provides training on gender to Member States and support their efforts to incorporate gender dimensions into the work of various government ministries and departments. Given that trade is the core mandate of COMESA, special emphasis has been placed on mainstreaming gender in trade and in ensuring the protection of rights of women in cross-border trading transactions. Additionally, COMESA has developed a youth participation and civic engagement programme to promote active youth participation in peacebuilding, climate change mitigation and adaptation, the regional integration process, and national development.

Coincidentally, at the time of this study, the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their 16th meeting held in July 2018, in Lusaka, assessed key achievements the organization has made in the last decade, 2008-2018, in implementing its peace and security programmes and initiatives. The summary of their assessments is highlighted in the table below:

## **6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention**

For COMESA, the following three lessons are pertinent for institutionalizing conflict prevention:

- Regional ownership is crucial and should not be compromised even when donors' priorities change. It should not be limited to only ownership by governments or the organs of

COMESA, but also inclusive of all stakeholders, in order to ensure relevance and sustainability.

- Continuous capacity building is essential for both staff of the REC and officials of Member States to remain abreast of emerging trends and practices pertaining to conflict prevention. In this respect, continuous learning or training in monitoring and evaluation should be a vital component of conflict prevention programmes.
- Overlapping membership of the countries of the region in other RECs could have profound impact and be advantageous. This should therefore be leveraged in fostering collaboration with other RECs to which its Member States also belongs.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening COMESA's Conflict Prevention Capacity

Considering the apparent lack of predictable and sustained financial support for COMESA's work on peace and security, the institution: (i) has terminated some historically useful programmes, (ii) is confronted with serious implementation gaps, and (iii) potentially risk of ending a number of other ongoing programmes. Consequently, COMESA outlined the following as priority areas for strengthening its capacity and work on conflict prevention:

- **Restoration of Relevant Terminated Programmes:** including the War Economies

**TABLE 4: Summary of COMESA's Key Achievements 2008 – 2018**

<b>War Economies Programme</b>	Strengthened the legal frameworks around war economies by drafting a regional policy for artisanal and small-scale miners, a law on the suppression of illegal mineral exploration and a code of conduct for Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility. The programme linked the miners with investors from South Korea and Sweden who were interested in joint ventures with the small-scale miners.
<b>Post-conflict reconstruction and development programme, with focus on Trading for Peace</b>	The programme established 16 Trade Information Desks at the border posts of DRC and its eastern neighbours, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Zambia. The related TIDs were equipped with IT infrastructure including computers, printers, scanners and fitted with solar panels. The programme has resulted in increased cross-border trade as well as in a marked improvement in relations between border communities.
<b>Democracy and Governance</b>	The programme enhanced capacity for elections observation in the region and developed important tools, such as the Guidelines on the Conduct of COMESA Elections Observer Mission. Another milestone of this programme is the COMESA Electoral Management Bodies Forum.
<b>Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management, in the context of the APSA framework</b>	<p>Among other things, COMESA through APSA has:</p> <p>Established a robust theory-informed and data-driven early warning system that combines the SVA and CPPI.</p> <p>Put in place a CCOE to support the peace-making objectives of the Office of the Secretary-General. The CCOE has among others been effective in deploying several pre-elections, fact-finding and preventive diplomacy missions in situations of conflict or crisis.</p>
<b>Regional Maritime Security Programme</b>	The programme has contributed to strengthening capacities to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

programme, the Regional Political Integration and Human Security programme, and the programme on construction of border markets as a tool for peacebuilding.

- **Sustaining Programmes at Risk of Termination:** Funding for the MASE has ended and the programme is currently being implemented on a no-cost basis until 2020. Sustaining this programme beyond this date will be essential to advance progress in combatting money laundering and illicit financial flows in the region. This becomes even more important as the Policy Organs of COMESA have directed the Secretariat to extend the programme to other countries.
- **Strengthening work on Post-Conflict Reconstruction:** Support for countries emerging from conflict is a vital component of COMESA's work on peace and security. However, the Organization's work in this area is currently constrained due to the lack of staff capacity for both its TFP programme and broader Post-Conflict Reconstruction programme. The TFP programme is a useful mechanism for peacebuilding, which has made a lot of gains in the Great Lakes Region. It is therefore important to sustain the work in the Great Lakes region as well as move to other borders such as the Eritrea-Ethiopia border and the border between Sudan and South Sudan. For this, staffing support will be needed.
- **Enhancing Work on Democracy and Governance:** Staffing support is needed to advance work on democracy and governance. Programmatic funding is also required to revive the activities of COMESA's Electoral Management Bodies Forum and to support the implementation of the recommendations from COMESA elections observation mission in the respective countries.
- **Strengthening Capacity for Early Warning:** the APSA, which has provided funding for four posts in COMESA peace and security programme, has indicated it will withdraw financial assistance for those posts by mid-2019. Support is therefore required to secure these posts, recruit and train additional staff for early warning to sufficiently cover the 21 countries and convene national consultations on the CPPI.

- **Reviving the Inter-Parliamentary Forum:** as an important vehicle for promoting dialogues with national parliaments in the COMESA region.
- **Developing a Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security:** COMESA has made significant strides in mainstreaming gender and promoting the participation of women in all aspects of its work. Quotas for women's representation in the CCOE has been instituted at 30% representation. In spite of the gains, COMESA is yet to develop a Policy or Strategic Framework on Women, Peace and Security; and seeks to undertake work in this respect.

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# 4

## **East African Community (EAC)**

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## 4. EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC)

### 1. Basic Facts

The EAC was originally created in 1967, dissolved in 1977 and revived in 1999, following the signing of its Treaty on 30 November 1999. The Treaty entered into force on 7 July 2000. Its members, referred to as “Partner States”, are Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The EAC Partner States collectively also belong to four other RECs as shown in the table 5. With respect to location, the EAC Secretariat is in Tanzania. Its other statutory bodies, namely the: East African

Legislative Assembly (EALA) and East African Court of Justice are equally in Tanzania. EAC also has several semi-autonomous institutions including the: Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency, East African Development Bank, East African Health Research Commission, East African Kiswahili Commission, East African Science and Technology Commission, Inter-University Council for East Africa, Lake Victoria Basin Commission, and Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization.

**FIGURE 7: EAC Partner States**



Source: OSAA 2018

**TABLE 5: Membership of EAC Partner States in other RECs**

COUNTRY	COMESA	IGAD	ECCAS	SADC
Burundi	●		●	
Kenya	●	●		
Rwanda	●		●	
South Sudan	●	●		
Tanzania				●
Uganda	●	●		

Source: OSAA 2018

## 2. Geopolitical Context

Since the entry into force of its Treaty in 2000, the EAC region has made considerable progress in attaining key milestones towards enhanced regional integration. For example, the Partner States have signed agreements establishing the Customs Union (2005), the Common Market (2010) and a protocol establishing the Monetary Union (2013). There is also a recognition that further progress in integration and economic development in the region critically depends on overcoming several governance, economic and security challenges, both within and between its Partner States.

The governance challenges include fundamental questions on upholding the rule of law, promoting human rights and enabling democratic participation. Concerning economic challenges, the difficulties in promoting economic opportunities in the region where four out of its six countries are landlocked is highlighted by the rankings of its countries in both the 2016 UNDP Human Development Report and the 2018 World Bank Ease of Doing Business. The UNDP Report showed that only one of the six countries are placed in the medium development category, with the remaining five are in the low human development category. Given the importance of reducing unemployment, especially among youth in the region, the low rankings in these indices further point to the difficulties of both attracting private investment to the region and having the skilled workforce to participate in the labour market. With regard to security, the region has been affected by terrorism and violent extremism, natural resource-based conflicts and transnational organized crime, as well as by the crisis in its Partner State, South Sudan.

## 3. EAC: Organizational Structure

The Treaty establishing EAC states that “the objectives of the community shall be to develop policies and programmes aimed at widening and deepening cooperation among the Partner States in the political, economic, social and cultural fields, research and technology, defence, security, and legal and judicial affairs, for their mutual benefit”.<sup>9</sup> The Treaty also envisaged cooperation in regional peace and security noting that “peace and security are pre-requisites for economic and social development within the community and vital to the achievement of the objectives of the community. In this regard, the Partner States agree to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to peace and security through cooperation and consultations on issues pertaining to peace and security of Partner States, with a view to prevention, better management and resolution of disputes and conflicts between them”<sup>10</sup>.

As outlined in its Treaty document, the responsibilities of the principal organs of the EAC on peace and security include the following:

- a. **The Summit:** The Summit of the Heads of State and Government gives general directives and impetus to the development and achievement of the objectives of the community. The Summit also reviews the state of peace, security and good governance in the region and the progress made towards the achievement of the Political Federation of Partner States. It is in the exercise

<sup>9</sup> Article 5 of the Treaty establishing the EAC as amended 14 December 2006 and 20 August 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Article 124 of the Treaty

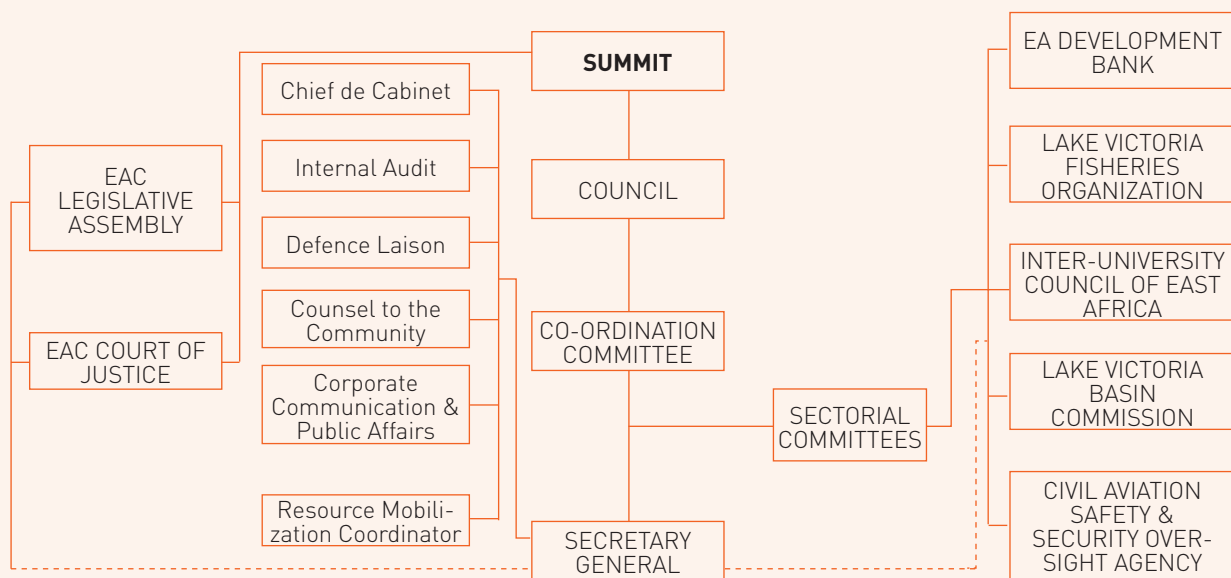
of this functions that the Summit considers, reviews and decides on any issue of peace and security which may be brought to its attention by other organs of the community. The Summit is required to meet at least once a year and hold extraordinary sessions at the request of any of the Partner States.

- b. **The Council:** The Council consists of the Ministers for East African Community Affairs in the Partner States and is entrusted to promote, monitor and constantly review the implementation of programmes of the Community and ensure the proper functioning and development of the Community in accordance with the Treaty. The Council also has authority to establish from among its members, Sectoral Councils to deal with such matters that arise under the Treaty as the Council may delegate or assign to them, and the decisions of such Sectoral Councils shall be deemed to be decisions of the Council. The Council is required to meet twice each year. Extraordinary meetings of the Council can be held at the request of a Partner State.
- c. **The Coordination Committee:** consists of Permanent Secretaries responsible for the East African Community Affairs in the Partner States and has responsibility for submitting reports and

recommendations to the Council either on its own initiative or upon the request of the Council, on the implementation of the Treaty. The Committee implements decisions of the Council, receives and considers reports of the Sectoral Committees and co-ordinates their activities, and requests a Sectoral Committee to investigate any particular matter. The Committee is required to meet at least twice each year and may convene extraordinary meetings at the request of the Chairperson of the Coordination Committee.

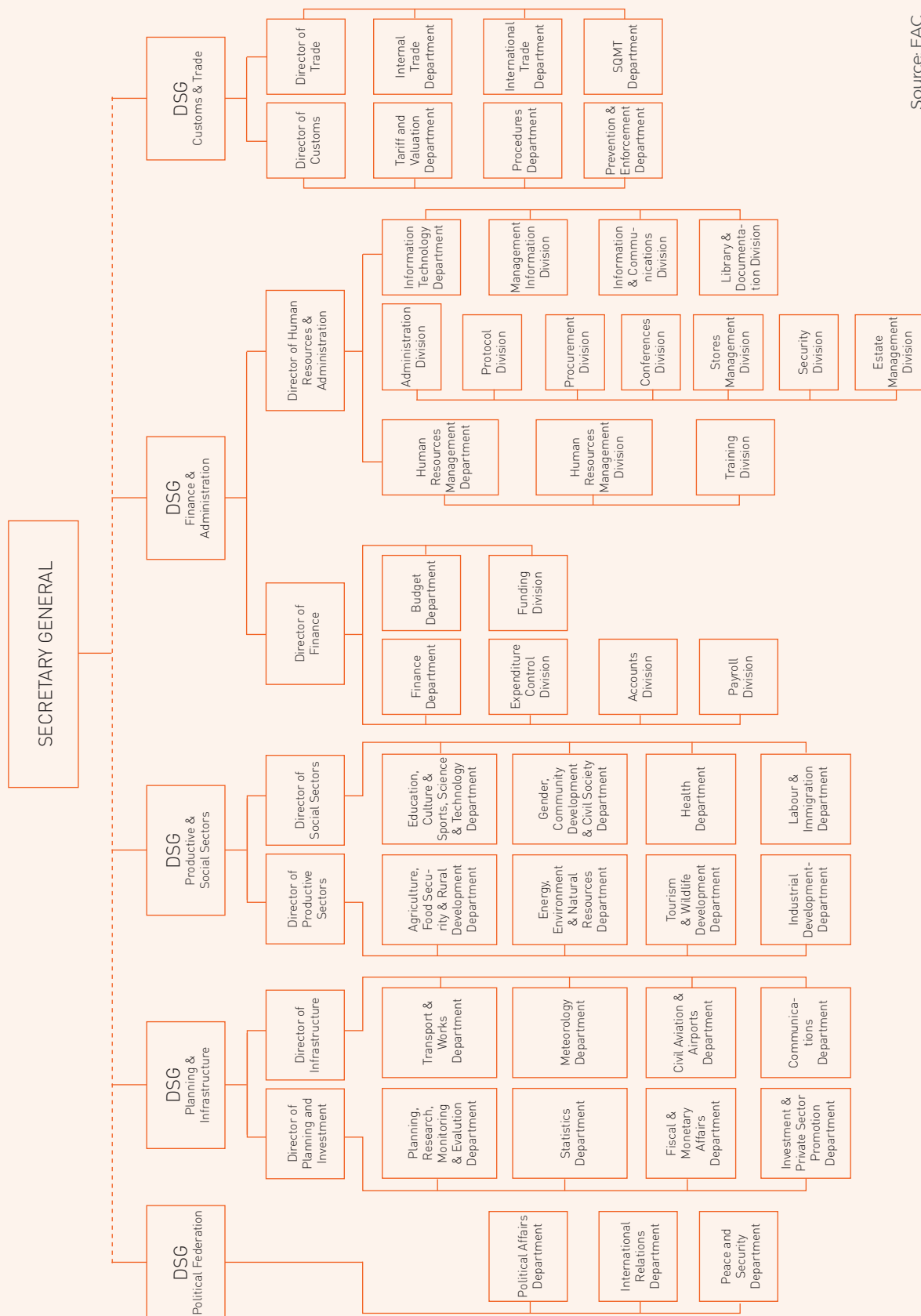
- d. **The Sectoral Committees:** are responsible for preparing comprehensive implementation programmes and defining priorities with respect to its sector, monitoring and keeping under constant review the implementation of the programmes of the Community with respect to its sectors, and submitting reports and recommendations to the Coordination Committee. There are Sectoral Committees on Inter-State Security (composed of Ministers of Home Affairs and Public Security), Defence (composed of Ministers of Defence), Foreign Policy Coordination (composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs) and the Joint Sectoral Council on Inter-State, Defence and Foreign Affairs. Key decisions on peace and security go through these committees.

**FIGURE 8: EAC Governance Structure**



Source: EAC

**Figure 9: EAC Secretariat Structure**



Source: EAC

- e. **The East African Court of Justice:** is the principal judicial organ of the Community. The Court has two divisions: an Appellate Division and a First Instance Division. Its First instance Division can adjudicate cases brought by residents of the Community (both natural and legal persons) on areas pertaining to the rule of law, governance, democracy, social justice or on any violations of the Treaty.
- f. **The East African Legislative Assembly:** EALA is the Legislative Organ of the Community that advances the EAC's objectives, through its representative, oversight and legislative functions, including debating and approving the budget of the Community. In 2012, EALA passed a legislation titled the "Conflict Management Act", with focus on conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding.
- g. **The Secretariat:** is headed by the Secretary-General who was initially assisted by four deputy secretaries-general, hitherto responsible for Planning and Infrastructure, Productive and Social Sectors, Finance and Administration, Political Federation. These posts have now been reduced to two following a decision of the 19<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Summit that held in Kampala on 23 February 2018. The Deputy Secretary-General for Political Federation has responsibility for the Political Affairs Department, the International Relations Department and the Peace and Security Department; and plays a pivotal role in the East African Community Early Warning Mechanism (EACWARN).
- h. **The Panel of Eminent Personalities:** is a provision of the EAC Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism (2012) and the Modality for the Establishment and Functioning of the EAC Panel of Eminent Persons and for the Appointment and Deployment of Special Envoys and Representatives (2014). Members of the Panel are proposed by the Secretary-General for appointment by the Summit.
- i. **Special Representatives and Envoys:** is also a provision of the 2012 EAC Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management Mechanism and 2014 Modality for the Establishment and Functioning of the EAC Panel of Eminent Persons and for the Appointment and Deployment of Special Envoys and Representatives. The Secretary-General is entrusted the responsibility

for selecting, in consultation with the Partner States, persons to serve as special representatives or envoys.

#### 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention in EAC

The EAC's existing institutional framework for conflict prevention, including mandates, policies, key strategies, tools, resources and partnerships are outlined in the following sections.

##### ■ Mandates and Policy Framework

The EAC's work on conflict prevention is based on the following instruments:

- i. **The EAC Treaty:** as earlier noted Articles 5 and 124 of the Treaty underscores that "peace and security are pre-requisites for economic and social development within the community and vital to the achievement of the objectives of the community. In this regard, the Partner States agree to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to peace and security through cooperation and consultations on issues pertaining to peace and security of Partner States, with a view to prevention, better management and resolution of disputes and conflicts between them".
- ii. **The 2006 Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance:** aims to promote good governance and democratic practices in the region and is linked to questions of the rule of law, ethics and anti-corruption, freedom of expression, participation and inclusiveness, and social cohesion and protection. The Protocol has created a platform for national institutions to exchange information, share experiences and dialogue on policies, strategies, laws and programs, with a view to developing regional standards.
- iii. **The 2010 Protocol on Foreign Policy Coordination:** inter alia aims to consolidate democracy; promote the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; preserve peace and strengthen security among the Partner States and other countries; promote the participation of the peoples of the Partner States in the diaspora in the development of the Community; and enhance cooperation in the fight against international



crimes. This Protocol has been adopted and is undergoing ratification.

- iv. **The 2012 Protocol on Preventing and Combating Corruption:** aims to develop and strengthen mechanisms to prevent and combat corruption; promote cooperation among the Partner States in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of measures for preventing and combating combat corruption; and harmonize laws, policies and strategies for preventing and combating corruption. The Protocol is in the final stages of review for adoption.
- v. **The 2012 Protocol on Cooperation in Defence Affairs:** aims to deepen and widen cooperation by promoting peace, security and stability and good neighborliness among Partner States; preventing conflicts and reestablishing peace where conflict has occurred, preventing and Combating international terrorism; and enhancing cooperation in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. In operationalizing this Protocol, Partner States also cooperate on military training, joint operations, technical cooperation visits, and exchange information on defense policies and programmes.
- vi. **The 2013 East African Community Protocol on Peace and Security:** commits Partner States to cooperate in peace and security matters and develop common measures, strategies and programmes encompassing a wide range of issues including conflict prevention, management and resolution; prevention of genocide; combating of terrorism; combating and suppressing piracy; peace support operations; disaster risk reduction and management and crisis response; management of refugees; control of proliferation of small arms and light weapons; combating transnational and cross border crimes; and addressing and combating cattle rustling.

## ■ Key Strategy Documents

In addition to the policy frameworks outlined above, EAC has developed a number of key strategy documents for its conflict prevention work, including:

- a. **The 2011 Roadmap for the implementation of the EAC Early Warning Mechanism (EACWARN):** provides that EACWARN will be modeled along an adapted and customized version of the early warning methodology of the AU CEWS. Its purpose is “to facilitate the anticipation, preparedness and early responses to prevent, contain and manage situations that are likely to affect peace and security in the region. The prime objective of EACWARN is to make a crucial contribution to the stable, democratic and peaceful social, political and economic order in the EAC Partner States”<sup>11</sup>.
- b. **The EAC 5<sup>th</sup> Development Strategy (2016/17 - 2020/21):** sets out the broad strategic objectives for “transforming the EAC into a competitive lower-middle income region by 2021” towards “accelerating a people-centered and market-driven integration”. The seven key priorities of the strategy are: (1) consolidation of the single custom territory, (2) development of regional infrastructure, (3) enhancement of free movement of all factors of production envisaged under the common market and monetary union Protocols, (4) enhancement of regional industrial development, (5) improvement of agricultural productivity, (6) promotion of regional peace, security and good governance, and (7) institutional transformation at regional and Partner State levels.<sup>12</sup>
- c. **The 2014 East African Community Revitalized Strategy on Regional Peace and Security:** sets out the vision of “a secure and peaceful environment for development” and a mission to “provide security within the region through enhanced cooperation”, based on twenty-three goals. Two of which, Goals 14 and 15, respectively calls for the operationalization of the EAC Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism; and EACWARN.
- d. **The 2014 EAC Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy:** Cooperation in combating terrorism was one of the areas identified in both the Protocol on Peace and Security and the Regional Strategy on Peace and Security. Adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> EAC Extraordinary

11 EAC (2011): Roadmap for the Implementation of the EAC Early Warning Mechanism [EACWARN]

12 EAC (2016): EAC Development Strategy for 2016/17-2020/21 - Accelerating a People-Centred and Market-Driven Integration

Summit that was held in Arusha on 30 April 2014. The Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy seeks to promote regional cooperation in tackling challenges posed by terrorism, with a particular focus on capacity-building of law enforcement agencies, exchange of information, and sharing of national experiences and efforts in combating terrorism.

- e. **EAC Gender Policy:** aims to promote “an inclusive community which guarantees equal rights and opportunities for women and men, boys and girls”. Its objectives are to promote development, coordination, harmonization and reporting on gender equality commitments by the Community; strengthen the mainstreaming of gender concerns in all sectors of the planning and budgetary processes of the EAC Organs and Institutions and Partner States; promote women’s participation in political and decision-making at all levels; promote equal access to and control of productive resources and participation in regional trade; strengthen measures that prevent and respond to gender-based violence and other harmful cultural practices; and enhance processes that include women in peace and security at all levels of prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery.
- f. **EAC CSO Action Plan:** is organized around six goals, namely: (1) enhance participation in the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism by civil society, youth, women and media; (2) enhance women, CSOs, youth and media participation in the early warning; (3) inform and influence policy formulation and implementation on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism; (4) undertake response to conflict situations; (5) support resource mobilization efforts; and (6) create awareness about the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism.

## ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

- a. **The EAC Early Warning Mechanism (EACWARN):** This is one of EAC’s main tools for conflict prevention, management and resolution. EACWARN is based on data collection from open sources and their monitoring, conflict and cooperation

analysis, and development of response or policy options. EACWARN produces several reports, notably: daily highlights, briefs, early warning reports and thematic reports. An annual report on the State of Peace and Security in the EAC Region is also envisaged. The daily highlights, briefs and early warning reports are usually submitted to the Deputy Secretary-General for Federation who decides on how and to whom (including the relevant policy organs) the reports should be shared for consideration and appropriate action.

- b. **Preventive Diplomacy:** The Secretary-General deploys a Panel of Eminent Persons to undertake preventive diplomacy functions. For example, a team of Eminent Persons headed by Former Tanzanian Prime Minister, Joseph S. Warioba, was deployed in Burundi before the 2015 elections. As a follow-up to the report by the Panel, the Summit agreed to name a Mediator and Facilitator for the situation in Burundi.
- c. **Mediation and Facilitation:** a key tool for the EAC’s conflict prevention work is mediation and facilitation; and this is currently being utilized in support of Burundi. At its 2016 Summit, the Heads of State and Government appointed President Museveni of Uganda as Mediator and Former President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania as Facilitator for the situation in Burundi.
- d. **Electoral Assistance and Observation:** EAC deploys observer missions to Partner States, in a bid to support the conduct of free, fair and credible elections. As part of this process, the organization developed the EAC Principles for Election Observation and Evaluation, the Guidelines for EAC Observation Missions, and a Code of Conduct for Election Observers<sup>13</sup>. EAC Observer Missions are typically headed by a former Head of State and consist of three EAC staff, experts from research institutions and the academia, members of parliament, and women and youth groups.

13 These principles and guidelines are published in a document titled: EAC Principles for Election Observation and Evaluation; Guidelines for EAC Observation Missions; and Code of Conduct for Election Observers, November 2012.

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

EAC has a Peace Facility, which was created as part of the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism. An initial sum of US\$ 0.5million was provided for the Facility in the EAC 2015 regular budget, with an expectation for a yearly increase. The management structure of the Facility is being developed. Proposals for mobilizing additional financial resources beyond the current regular budget allocations are being considered. In addition, a significant share of funding for EAC's conflict prevention programmes, currently estimated at about 96%, is provided by its international partners.

Regarding its human resources capacity, EAC also has staffing constraints. For example, a 2006 Decision of the Council of Ministers provided for one police liaison officer and a Directorate for crime management with four officers (director for crime management, a counter-terrorism officer at P2 level, a transnational and cross-border crimes officer at P3 level, and a small arms and light weapons and cattle rustling officer at P2 level). Presently however, only one police liaison officer handles the portfolio of work meant for these four officers. The EAC also depends on the AU to fund its drug and human trafficking programme, and on the EU for its capacity building in counter-terrorism and Regional Forensic Centre in Kampala.

The EACWARN Situation Room, which requires a minimum of six analysts, one per Partner State, currently has only two staff. In addition, EACWARN proposes to develop its capacity to undertake SVAs in its Partner States, based on the AU CSCPF and SVA tool. It estimates about US\$300,000 will be required for this purpose, with an additional amount of US\$300,000 to conduct national consultations on the SVA in the six Partner States.

Its proposed Mediation Support Unit, which is not yet established, is presently facilitated by one professional staff and requires at least one additional mediation expert at P2 level to advance the work on mediation support, as well as an amount of about US\$250,000 to implement some of the key recommendations from the recent retreat on "Reflections on Experiences, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Mediation, Negotiation and Dialogue Processes: that held in Mombasa, Kenya in June 2018. The retreat<sup>14</sup> which brought together

experienced mediators, special envoys, researchers, academics, youths as well as members of the EAC Inter-Religious Council called on the EAC to: (i) establish a professional and well-financed Mediation Support Unit to effectively support its mediation activities, including through research, conflict analysis, documentation of best practices and knowledge management; and (ii) sustain capacity building on mediation, negotiation and dialogue as well as support for inclusive mediation, negotiation and dialogue processes involving stakeholders such as civil society (including women and youth), religious leaders, traditional leaders and the business sector. With respect to the latter, EAC was further encouraged to fully implement key normative frameworks of inclusivity, including UNSC resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; UNSC resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security; and the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. The creation of a repository of knowledge and insights for bridging gaps between mediation norms and practices was also recommended.

The Nyerere Centre for Peace, which is an integral part of the Political Affairs Department, equally has staffing constraints. Two staff positions, a Coordinator at P2 level and a Research Officer at P1 level, are required to support policy research on peace and security and provide managerial leadership for the Centre. Likewise, the EAC Gender, Community Development and Social Mobilization Department requires at least, two additional professional staff at P2 level to support its ongoing efforts to develop and implement action plans on eight priority areas: women in socio-economic development and business, gender, youth, children, persons with disabilities, social protection, community development and CSOs. At present, the activities of the Gender Department are funded from the regular budget, however in spite of its huge portfolio, the department has only one professional staff.

EAC's plan to convene annual regional fora or platforms for dialogue of political parties, human rights commissions, national assemblies, anti-corruption agencies, electoral management bodies, and chief justices has equally been hampered by the lack of resources. Consequently, only four of these forums-anti-corruption agencies, electoral management bodies, political parties and chief justices - have been convened regularly. Staffing support, at least one professional staff at P1 level, is required to coordinate the work of the four active forums in order to promote their effective functioning. The required staffing support

14 EAC (2018). East Africa Community High Level Retreat: Reflections on Experiences, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Mediation, Negotiation and Dialogue Processes, Mombasa, Kenya 12-15 June 2018.

will include preparing documentation for the meetings of these forums, monitoring and follow-up to the decisions taken at the forums, facilitating interactions between the respective forums and relevant national and regional stakeholders, and preparing reports of the forums for dissemination relevant stakeholders.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

The following section highlights EAC's main conflict prevention partnerships.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

The institutional arrangement in the EAC Secretariat enables and fosters effective collaboration and coordination between various units or departments on peace and security. For instance, the Peace and Security Department collaborated with the Directorate of Social Affairs, Immigration and Refugees to develop a policy framework on the impact of immigration on security. The Peace and Security Department works closely with the Gender, Community Development and Social Mobilization Department on issues of women, peace and security.

As a strategy to promote youth development and participation for the prevention of conflicts, the Agriculture Department and the Gender, Community Development and Social Mobilization Department are implementing a project on "Promoting Youth Employment in Agriculture". The pilot phase of the project, covering the period 2016-2018, engaged outstanding youths working on agri-business, three each from the six Partner States, in a training programme that took place in Cotonou, Republic of Benin. Upon graduation, the best performing youth from each Partner State is awarded a start-up grant of US\$5,000. Building on this, EAC proposes to establish a Regional Network of Youth in Agriculture, comprising of youth trainees from the Cotonou programme.

There is also interdepartmental collaboration on elections observation, as the teams deployed from the EAC Secretariat are typically composed of staff from the departments of information technology, political affairs, legal affairs and media affairs.

### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

EAC has several collaborative arrangements with other RECs on a range of peace and security issues. On the MASE programme, which is jointly implemented with COMESA, IGAD and the IOC, EAC has responsibility for developing and strengthening national and regional capacities in legal matters, legislation and infrastructure for arrest, transfer, detention and prosecution of pirates.

EAC and ECOWAS are collaborating on early warning. In May 2018, EACWARN led a team of officials from the EAC Partner States on a benchmarking visit to the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja and also to Cote d'Ivoire to observe the operations of the latter's National Early Warning and Response Mechanism (NEWRM), which is part of the National Centre for the Coordination of Response Mechanism (NCCRM) that ECOWAS is establishing in its Member States. The visit afforded the officials from EAC Partner States an opportunity to learn firsthand from ECOWAS' experience in institutionalizing a functional regional early warning and response mechanism, with focus on how the system interfaces at both headquarters and national levels. Furthermore, through their respective EACWARN, COMWARN and the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), EAC, COMESA and IGAD are coordinating their early warning efforts by convening quarterly technical meetings and undertaking other joint activities.

There is ongoing collaboration between the EAC and ECOWAS courts. The East African Court of Justice, together with the African Court of Justice and the ECOWAS Court of Justice conduct joint staff trainings and have undertaken a joint visit to the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg.

### ■ Cooperation with the African Union Commission

The EAC and the AU signed an agreement in September 2011 for the implementation of the APSA in the EAC region; and in this context, EAC received assistance from the APSA Support Program to develop its Protocol on Peace and Security and its Strategy on



Regional Peace and Security. The EAC, in collaboration with AU-CEWS and COMESA has also conducted a joint pre-election analysis in preparations for the 2017 elections in Kenya. EAC and the AU have co-organized visits for officials from Partner States to the AUC to learn about the functioning of the CEWS. There has also been some collaboration between EAC and the AU on harmonizing their anti-poaching strategies.

#### ■ **Partnerships with the United Nations System**

There is existing cooperation between the EAC and several United Nations entities. For example, FAO provides both technical and financial support for EAC's project on "Promoting Youth Employment in Agriculture". UNODC also provides technical assistance to the EAC in the context of the MASE programme, to ensure that the trial of pirates who are arrested is conducted in accordance with international best practices.

#### ■ **Partnerships with other International Organizations**

The EAC collaborates with several international organizations, including with INTERPOL and the EU. Except for South Sudan, INTERPOL has trained 240 officials from EAC's other five Partner States on general forensic and criminal investigations linked to piracy. The EU and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) provide financial and technical to support capacity building for electoral management bodies.

#### ■ **Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflict**

Articles 5 and 127 of the EAC Treaty provides for the enhancement and strengthening of partnerships with the private sector and civil society to achieve sustainable socio-economic and political development. In pursuance of this, EAC has taken steps to engage civil society and private sector organizations in its conflict prevention work. The preeminent EAC forums for engaging both the CSOs and the private sector are the Secretary-General's Annual Forum and the Peace and Security Conference. The former is organized around topical thematic issues; the 6th of which, was held in Nairobi in July 2018 on the theme,

"Strategizing for Impact: People-centered and Market-driven Integration". Key outcomes of the Annual Forums are submitted to the Sectoral Committee on Planning of the Council of Ministers of EAC Affairs. Financial support for these forums is provided by the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ).

The last Peace and Security Conference held in 2013 in Bujumbura on the theme "Promoting a Culture of Tolerance and Peaceful Co-Existence". Following this, the EAC convened a conference with religious leaders in Kigali in 2014 to discuss the involvement of religious leaders in the EAC peace and security work. The Kigali conference adopted a "Declaration on the establishment of the EAC Inter-Religious Council", with a primary objective to facilitate the active involvement and contributions of religious leaders into the EAC's work on peace, security, justice and stability.

EAC's "Youth Ambassadors" programme engages six students - one from each Partner State, who are selected through an essay competition, in an annual debate whose winners emerge as EAC's "Youth Ambassador" and "Deputy Ambassador" and are engaged to promote peace and dialogue. In 2018, the essay competition addressed the theme, "Cross-Border Security Management".

EAC is working with other RECs on a "50 Million Africa Women Speak Network Platform" that is targeted at women in businesses and the private sector. Key objectives of this platform are to promote financial inclusion of women and their access to business information. The platform is ICT-based and collects as well as disseminates information and data on market opportunities to benefit women. The project is funded by the AfDB and in each Partner State has a four-person team that is comprised of a coordinator, content manager, procurement officer and an accountant.

## **5. EAC's support to Partner States on Conflict Prevention**

An important aspect of the EAC's regional peace and security strategy is its assistance to its Partner States to strengthen national capacities for conflict prevention. In this respect, the EAC Secretariat

facilitates cross-learning and the exchange of experiences for officials from its Partner States and other RECs, especially COMESA, IGAD and ECOWAS, on operationalization of early warning and response mechanisms at the regional and national levels. EAC also provides capacity building training to officials from its Partner States on mediation, negotiation and dialogue.

Capacity building trainings on elections management have also been organized for Partner States, including through exchange visits for relevant officials from its Partner States to other regions. In addition, support has been provided to electoral management bodies in developing tools for data collection and analyzes, as well as in training the media on fair and balanced reporting on elections.

EAC has established a Regional Police Centre in each of its Partner States, except for South Sudan. The centre in each Partner State focus on different specialized areas, notably on General Criminal Intelligence, Counterterrorism, Criminal Investigations and Police Aviation (Kenya); Traffic Management, Intermediate and Senior Command Courses, Gender Based Violence and Child Protection, Police Institutions of Higher Learning and Peace Support Operations and Logistics (Rwanda); Forensic Services, Community Policing and Social Media (Uganda); Public Order Management, General NCO Courses, Inspectorates Training, Maritime Policing and Piracy (Tanzania); and Disaster Management, and Disarmament (Burundi). In partnership with the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF) EAC has incorporated human rights into the police procedures of its Partner States. A Human Rights Training Manual for Police in its Partner States was adopted, and standard operating procedures are being developed to monitor and evaluate various aspects of policing in the EAC countries, including on stop and search; arrest, detention and legal use of force; child, domestic and gender-based violence; human trafficking and migrant smuggling; and cybercrimes.

As a component of the MASE Programme, the EAC has supported capacity building efforts of its Partner States on investigations, initiated action to develop ballistic-testing of firearms and ammunition used in criminal activities and assisted in developing a TRACING instrument for identifying sources of small arms and light weapons. The MASE Integrated Ballistic Identification System is hosted in the Regional Forensic Centre in Kampala, Uganda. EAC Partner States can take firearms seized from

criminals to the Centre in Kampala for testing and work is ongoing to develop an MoU on Forensic Services. In furtherance of its responsibilities for arrest, detention and prosecution of pirates, under the MASE Programme, the EAC provides trainings to correction officers in its Partner States and facilitates exchange and learning visits among its membership.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

According to officials engaged in the EAC Secretariat, several important lessons have been learnt on various aspects of its conflict prevention work, namely:

- That denialism about the gravity of emerging political problems or disputes discourages proactive engagement by regional actors or institutions in addressing such disputes. In order to avoid political tensions from morphing into major political crisis or conflicts, it is important for countries to acknowledge very early the existence of political problems, whenever they occur, and for such countries to be open to regional preventive actions or mediation efforts.
- The application of the principle of subsidiarity is useful as regional stakeholders tend to have a better appreciation of the local dynamics at play. Yet, some of the countries in a particular region may have vested interests, precluding such regional stakeholders from acting with sufficient impartiality. In such instances, a smart conflict prevention approach that combines regional initiatives with continental or international support, from the AU and the United Nations respectively, as appropriate, becomes critical to effectively address the emerging crisis.
- Effective mediation efforts do not only depend on the experience and stature of the mediator(s) but also on the technical backstopping that regional institutions provide for such efforts. Thus, it is important to recruit qualified professional staff for mediation units, as well as ensure adequate and sustained technical and financial support for mediation processes, over the long-term, as may be required.
- Cross-learning and exchange of experiences with other RECs, as well as with the AU and other non-African regional organizations, such as the EU, have been useful for improving knowledge and enhancing capacities of EAC Secretariat

staff on a range of issues, from early warning and response, electoral assistance, to judicial and penal reforms. Such exchange visits should also be replicated at national levels, among Partner States, as a means of building and strengthening local capacities to prevent conflict and address the root causes.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening EAC's Conflict Prevention Capacity

The following areas and recommendations were made for strengthening EAC's conflict prevention capability:

- **EAC Early Warning Mechanism:** should be strengthened with adequate staffing support to enhance its performance and outputs. The launch of the SVAs by EACWARN, along with the convening of the proposed national consultations, will be important for advancing its EACWARN's work on structural prevention.
- **EAC Peace Facility:** The management structure for the Peace Facility should be fully operationalized and the resources allocated to it significantly increased, to enable it to fulfill the objectives set out in Article 4.2 of the Modality for its Establishment. This will require mobilizing additional resources outside the regular contributions by Partner States.
- **Mediation support:** EAC should fast-track the establishment of a professional and well-resourced mediation support unit, which can effectively support mediation efforts, engage in research, conflict analysis, documentation of best practices and knowledge management. This will entail scaling up the staffing capacity, as well as supporting inclusive mediation, negotiation and dialogue processes by engaging all key stakeholders such as civil society (including women and youth), religious leaders, traditional leaders, business sector and other interest groups.
- **Strengthening relationships with key institutions of governance in Partner States:** by reviving the EAC annual fora of chief justices, national assemblies, anti-corruption bodies, electoral management bodies, political parties and human rights commissions, as well as the Governance Forum that brings together the six fora. As previously noted, only four fora are currently active and being convened on an annual basis, due to financial constraints.

- **Integrating gender in conflict prevention:** EAC has developed several instruments on gender and is supporting the mainstreaming of gender and women's rights into the political, economic and social aspects of its work. However, its Gender Equality and Development bill is still pending and awaiting approval by the Summit. The adoption of this bill will further strengthen EAC's efforts to support integration of gender perspectives into various programmes at especially the national level.
- **Enhancing internal coordination and collaboration:** currently internal coordination on peace and security in the EAC Secretariat is anchored by the Deputy Secretary-General for Federation. While the political leadership of the Deputy-Secretary-General is useful for catalyzing internal cooperation and engagement, there is a need for a more holistic or secretariat-wide approach or mechanism to reinforce and deepen the collaboration.
- **Establishing a Regional Network of Youth in Agriculture:** as earlier noted, EAC proposes to establish a regional network of youth in agriculture. This represents an innovative response to both the challenge of youth unemployment and violent extremism and radicalization, which should be supported by both its Partner States and other partner organizations.

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# 5

## **Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)**

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## 5. ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES (ECCAS)

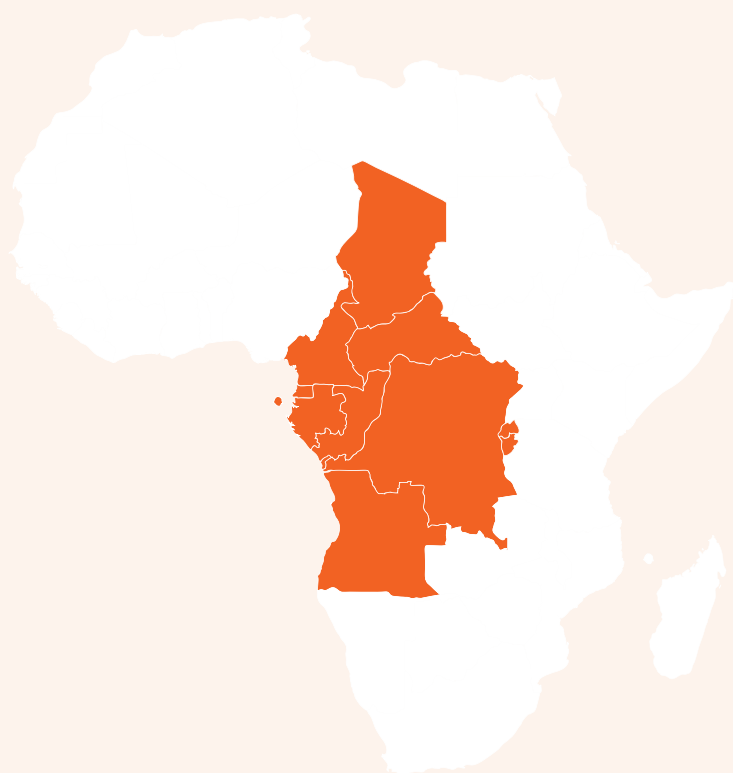
### 1. Basic Facts

ECCAS was established in 1983. Its members are Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tomé and Príncipe.

Collectively, the Member States of ECCAS also belong to four other RECs, as shown in the table 6.

The headquarters of the ECCAS General Secretariat is in Gabon. ECCAS currently has three field offices: (i) a Liaison Office to the AU in Addis Ababa, (ii) an office in the CAR, which is primarily supporting the stabilization and reconciliation process in the country, and (iii) a Liaison Office, which was recently opened in 2018 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

**FIGURE 10: ECCAS Member States**



1. Angola
2. Burundi
3. Cameroon
4. The Central African Republic
5. Chad
6. Republic of Congo
7. DRC
8. Equatorial Guinea
9. Gabon
10. Rwanda
11. Sao Tomé and Príncipe



Source: OSAA 2018

**TABLE 6:** Representation of ECCAS Member States in other RECs

COUNTRY	CEN-SAD	COMESA	EAC	SADC
Angola				●
Burundi		●	●	
Central African Republic	●			
Cameroon				
Chad	●			
Congo, Brazzaville				
Congo, Democratic Republic		●		●
Equatorial Guinea				
Gabon				
Rwanda			●	
Sao Tome & Principe				

Source: OSAA 2018

## 2. Geopolitical Context

The Central Africa region has immense potential to serve as the engine or hub for continental integration, given its geographic location connecting East, West, North and Southern Africa. The region has an abundance of mineral and other natural resource wealth; however, it has also experienced many political crises, violent conflicts and insecurity, setbacks to its integration agenda, and socio-economic challenges, ranking at the bottom of global development indices. According to the UNDP 2016 Human Development Report, Central Africa has the highest number of people living below the poverty line, on the continent; with seven and four of its countries having low and medium human development, respectively. Women are most affected, as the region also currently has the highest maternal mortality rates in Africa.

The World Bank 2018 Doing Business Report ranks 10 countries of the region among the lowest globally, with ease of doing business and creating jobs. This not only has a negative impact on the ability of the countries of the region to reduce poverty and create opportunities for inclusive economic growth, but also has a direct link to the growing vulnerability of youths in the region to political violence, extremism and radicalization. Youth unemployment, economic and political exclusion remains high across the region; as does gender inequality, except for Rwanda. The AfDB Report on Central Africa Economic Outlook 2018, indicates that economic growth in the region

was “sluggish from 2016 to 2017, with the estimated average growth for the region in 2017 being 0.9 percent – far below the estimated African average of 3.6 percent; and estimated inflation rising from 2.6 percent in 2016 to 10.1 percent in 2017, with an upward trend to 10.4 percent in 2018, before slightly dipping to 9.1 percent in 2019”.

According to the Freedom House’s 2018 annual report, “Freedom in the World”<sup>15</sup>, on political and civil liberties, most of the countries of the region overall score poorly on many indicators: safety and security, border control, state capacity, economic reforms and management, human rights and the rule of law, civil society participation and engagement, press freedom, civil-military relations, and accountable and effective public institutions. Social exclusion of women, youth, and other marginalized and opposition groups reflects a deficit in governance at national levels, which is widespread across the region, heightening debates in some countries on decentralization, federalism, combating corruption and illicit enrichment, and security sector reform.

Overall security situation in the region remains a challenge due to fragility and persisting insecurity in the CAR, continued threat of the Boko Haram terrorist group in the Lake Chad Basin region and growing socio-political demands and violence in Cameroon’s North-West and South-West

15 Freedom House, Democracy in Crisis, “Freedom in the World” 2018, <http://bit.ly/3a5bWtG>

Anglophone regions. Transnational organized crime, including small arms and light weapons trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal exploitation of natural resources (notably poaching), maritime insecurity and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, generates enormous resources that sustains the activities of armed groups, mercenaries and terrorists in the region. The region also remains susceptible to recurrent tensions and violent clashes arising from transhumance, climate change and other forced migration patterns, with increased numbers of refugees and internal displaced persons. The security and humanitarian situation, in some countries of the region, is exacerbated by the lack of humanitarian access and attacks on humanitarian organizations and actors. Risk of electoral violence is also a major concern in the region, especially given the history of political leadership, characterized in having the longest-serving heads of state and trends in constitutional changes to prolong term limits.

Progress on regional integration has been quite slow in terms of intra-regional trade and infrastructure development, which is crucial for addressing the economic and social needs of its Member States that are landlocked or semi-landlocked. Advancement on regional integration has also been problematic because of the multiple and overlapping membership of the countries of the region in different subregional organizations with competing mandates. On a more positive note, Angola, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe have made progress in terms of stability and democratic development; while Equatorial Guinea and Gabon rate among the highest in terms of GDP per capita in Africa.

Efforts are currently underway to rationalize the three main subregional organizations in Central Africa, namely ECCAS, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL). This rationalization process is being led by Cameroon. ECCAS is also undergoing institutional reforms, which includes a focus on transforming its Secretariat into a commission and strengthening its capacities for peace and security, as prerequisite for promoting regional integration and achieving sustainable development.

### 3. ECCAS: Organizational Structure

The founding treaty of ECCAS states that its principal objective is to foster regional economic cooperation and integration in Central Africa, by “achieving collective self-reliance, raising the standard of

living of its populations and maintaining economic stability through harmonious cooperation”.

The treaty outlined the main institutions or decision-making bodies of ECCAS to include the Conference of Heads of State and Government, a Council of Ministers, a Court of Justice (which is yet to be operational), a Consultative Commission, Technical Committees and the General Secretariat (which engages with the other bodies through the Secretary-General).

A 1999 decision of the Heads of State and Government broadened this mandate to include the “development of capacities to maintain peace, security and stability as an essential condition for economic and social development”. This decision also created the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) as the institution for the, “prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in Central Africa”<sup>16</sup>. In 2000, the Heads of State and Government signed the Mutual Assistance Pact and the Protocol relating to the establishment of COPAX. The COPAX Protocol outlines its structures to include the Conference of Heads of State and Government on COPAX, a Council of Ministers, and three technical organs: (i) the Commission for Defence and Security (CDS), (ii) the Central African Early Warning System (MARAC), and (iii) the Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC)<sup>17</sup>. FOMAC is administered by a Regional Staff Headquarters (Etat-Major Regional – EMR), which operates out of the ECCAS General Secretariat. The ECCAS General Secretariat engages with COPAX mostly through the Deputy Secretary-General in-charge of the Department of Human Integration, Peace, Security and Stability (DIHPSS). COPAX currently operates as an independent mechanism, outside the regular ECCAS structure (described above). However, it is worth noting that this structure will likely change upon completion of the ongoing ECCAS institutional reform process in December 2019.

The responsibilities of ECCAS peace and security organs are as follows:

16 Decision Number 001/Y/ fev/ of Heads of State and Governments of the Central African region Creating the Mechanism for the Promotion, Maintenance and Consolidation of Peace and Security in the sub-region, which will be called “Council on Peace and Security in Central Africa [COPAX].

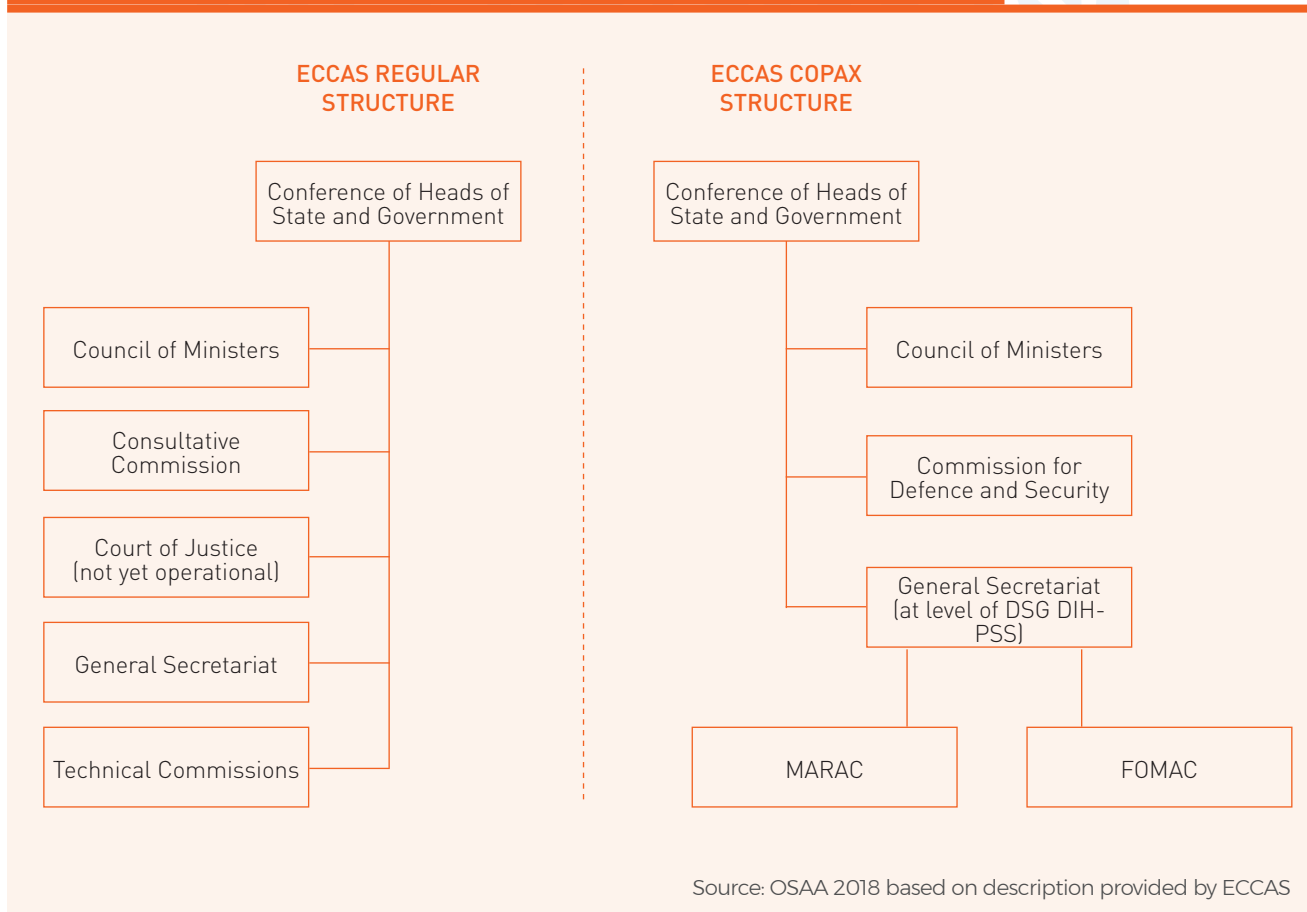
17 The EMR also managed the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic [Mission de consolidation de la paix en Centrafrique, MICOPAX]

- a. **The Conference of Heads of State and Government:** is the supreme organ or decision-making authority of ECCAS. The Conference defines and formulates the major policies of the organization, as well as monitors the implementation of its decisions and regulations by its membership. The Conference meets separately in the context of its regular structure and under COPAX. Regarding the regular structure, the Conference is supposed to hold its ordinary sessions once each year; however, this has been irregular, as its meetings are frequently postponed. At present, its last ordinary session held in 2015, though there are plans to hold the next summit before the end of 2019. Similarly, the Conference is expected to hold annual summits on COPAX. In either case, the Conference convenes extraordinary summits, when necessary.

Within COPAX, the Conference is the supreme authority for mandating actions in response to early warning alerts, constituting and deploying civil and military observer and verification missions or operations, as appropriate. The COPAX Conference of Heads of State and Government also decides on collective actions in relation to shared problems such as transnational crime, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, refugees and internally displaced persons, which its subsidiary bodies then implement.

- b. **The Council of Ministers:** currently, the ECCAS Council of Ministers equally convenes separately, in the context of its regular structure and under COPAX. In the case of COPAX, the Council is composed of ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defence and internal affairs.

**FIGURE 11: ECCAS Governance Structure<sup>18</sup>**



<sup>18</sup> This organizational structure is expected to change as part of the ECCAS reform process. A new organogram will be adopted to reflect the new structure. Furthermore, in addition to the FOMAC and MARAC, it is important to note that a "Direction of Human Security" was equally created, although this is yet to be reflected in the legal instruments and organogram.

Within the regular structure, the Council is comprised of mostly ministers responsible for economic development. In either case, the Council acts on behalf of the Conference of Heads of State and Government, ensures the functioning of the Community and guides implementation of the activities of the other ECCAS structures, institutions or specialized committees. The Council also advises and makes recommendations to the Conference of Heads of State and Government; and in the case of COPAX provides advice on defence and security matters. The Council is supposed to meet biannually in the context of the regular structure and COPAX. This current arrangement of convening under both the regular structure and COPAX is envisaged to also end upon finalization and adoption of the outcomes of the ECCAS institutional reforms.

- c. **The Commission for Defence and Security (CDS):** is the specialized technical committee of COPAX that is composed of Chiefs of the Military, Police and Gendarmerie. It also comprises of civilians and technical experts from ministries of foreign affairs, defence and internal affairs (as well as other relevant sectors on the invitation of the Commission). The Commission advises the COPAX Council of Ministers on a range of peace and security issues and undertakes administrative, technical and logistics functions in relation to the military or peace operations undertaken by ECCAS. The Committee meets twice a year. Of note, within the ECCAS regular structure, there are provisions for a Consultative Commission and other specialized technical committees, for example on trade, regional integration and infrastructure.
- d. **The Court of Justice:** is mandated by the ECCAS 1983 Treaty to ensure respect for the Community's legal documents and provide advice on legal questions and interpretation of the law. The Court is however yet to be established and operational.
- e. **The Consultative Commission:** is an organ within the ECCAS regular structure, which advises the Council of Ministers as well as reviews programmes and projects submitted by the General Secretariat and other ECCAS institutions. The Commission comprises of experts appointed by the Member States. The Commission is also responsible for creating specialized technical committees, on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. The Consultative

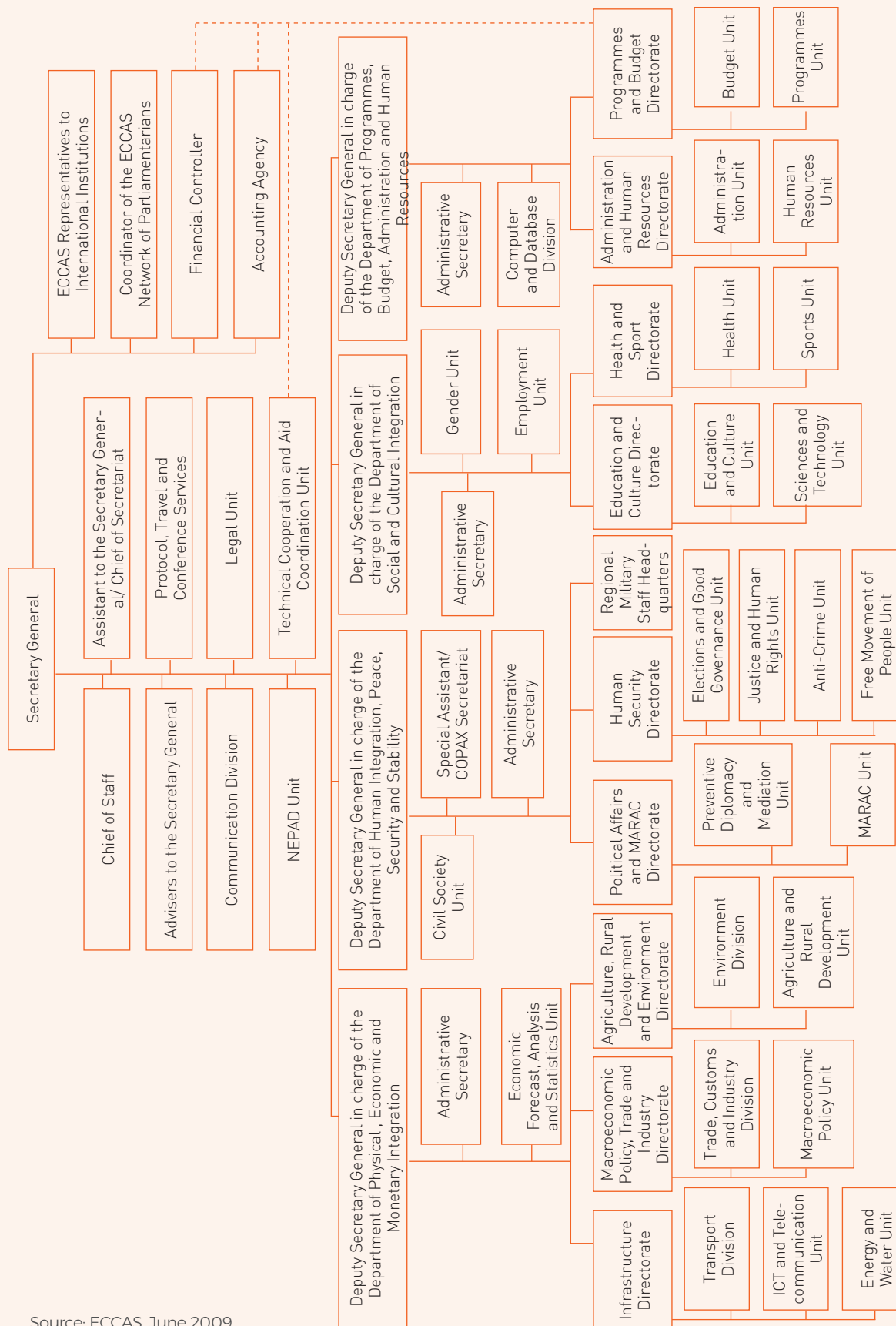
Commission deals with all aspects of the work of ECCAS outside COPAX, notably infrastructure, industrialization, economic and monetary integration, agriculture, rural development and environment, human development (including gender and youth), culture and education.

- f. **Specialized Technical Committees:** are part of the ECCAS regular structure and are created by the Consultative Commission to support its work. In recent times, some technical or specialized committees such as those on trade and regional integration have sought to include a peace and security focus in their programmes and project, as a means of preventing and addressing underlying security threats, arising for instance from xenophobia and other cross-border issues.
  - g. **The General Secretariat:** is the central administrative organ of ECCAS and is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the decisions and policies adopted by the Conference of Heads of State and Government (within both the regular structure and COPAX). It is headed by a Secretary-General, who is assisted by four Deputy Secretary-Generals in-charge of: (i) DIHPSS, (ii) the Department of Physical, Economic and Monetary Integration, (iii) the Department of Social and Cultural Integration, and (iv) the Department for Programs, Budget, Administration and Human Resources.
- DIHPSS anchors the secretariat of COPAX and is comprised of the EMR, the Directorate for Political Affairs and MARAC, and the Directorate for Human Security. The Directorate for Political Affairs and MARAC consists of two units: the Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Unit and the MARAC Unit. In principle, the Directorate for Human Security on its part consists of four units: Election and Good Governance, Justice and Human Rights, Free Movement of Persons, and Crime Control.
- h. **The Central Early Warning System:** As a technical organ of COPAX, MARAC is the principal mechanism for the observation, monitoring and prevention of crises and conflicts in the ECCAS region<sup>19</sup>; and is part of the AU CEWS. Consistent with its Standing Orders, MARAC is to operate a central and decentralized structure, the former based in the ECCAS

<sup>19</sup> The functions of the various institutional structures presented here are detailed in Protocol establishing the Council on Peace and Security (COPAX) in Central Africa, Malabo, 24 February 2000.



FIGURE 12: ECCAS Secretariat Structure



Source: ECCAS, June 2009

General Secretariat and the latter composed of national bureaus in each of the 11 Member States. Its Standing Orders further stipulates that the MARAC central structure is to comprise of three sub-units responsible for: (i) monitoring and collection of information, (ii) analyses and evaluation of information, and (iii) a central database to store, file, keep and disseminate information. The national bureaus are to comprise of representatives of government, civil society and non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions and international organizations, who are called “decentralized correspondents or reporters”.

- i. **The Multinational Force of Central Africa:** As another technical organ of COPAX, FOMAC is responsible for observation and monitoring of ceasefire arrangements, preventive deployment, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, enforcement of sanctions, humanitarian interventions, disarmament and demobilization, combating of organized crime and policing. FOMAC consists of police, gendarmerie, military and civilian contingents, and is a component of the African Standby Force (ASF). Its activities are administered and managed by the EMR, which keeps an inventory of forces approved by the COPAX Council of Ministers, as FOMAC contingents are required to remain in their home countries until called upon for trainings or deployment.
- j. **Network of Parliamentarians of ECCAS (REPAC):** In 2002, the ECCAS Heads of State and Government adopted a Protocol Establishing REPAC, which mandated its creation as the Representative Assembly of the Community. The Protocol further stipulated that the Network shall comprise of 55 seats, five from each of the 11 ECCAS countries, with its headquarters in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Its responsibility is to “examine and put forward opinions” on a range of issues, including on “human rights, social integration, environment, women’s emancipation, rights of minorities, youth and sport, health, education and free and effective movement of people and goods”. This Network is however not operational.

To reiterate, the ongoing ECCAS institutional reforms process, which is led by Gabon, *inter alia* aims to harmonize its regular and COPAX structures and transform the General Secretariat into a Commission. The outcomes of this process are expected to

be adopted by the ECCAS Heads of State and Government before the end of 2019.

## 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention

The current ECCAS mandates, policies, strategy documents, tools, resources and partnerships on conflict prevention are outlined in the following sections.

### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

ECCAS’ work on conflict prevention is based on the following instruments:

- i. **The 1983 Treaty Establishing the Economic Community of Central African States:** Though the Treaty does not refer to conflict prevention or peace and security per se, it addresses a range of structural factors and calls for the promotion and strengthening of “harmonious cooperation and balanced and self-sustained development in all fields of economic and social activity, particularly in the fields of industry, transport and communications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, trade, customs, monetary and financial matters, human resources, tourism, education, further training, culture, science and technology and the movement of persons, in order to achieve collective self-reliance, raise the standard of living of its peoples, increase and maintain economic stability, foster close and peaceful relations between Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent”. Its Article 43 further calls for cooperation in “raising the standard of living of rural populations, including by creating job opportunities and promoting the capacity of the populations to carry out their own development”. Additionally, in its Article 59 and 60 the Treaty calls for cooperation in the “development of human resources to meet the basic requirement of their economic and social development as well as improve the economic, social and cultural status of women”.
- ii. **The 1996 Non-Aggression Pact:** mandates ECCAS Member States “to refrain from committing, encouraging or supporting acts of hostility or aggression against the territorial integrity or independence of other Member

States; and to resort to peaceful means to settle any differences that may arise among them by having recourse to the various relevant mechanisms for resolving conflicts within ECCAS, the OAU and the UN”.

- iii. **The 1998 Bata Declaration for the Promotion of Democracy, Peace and Sustainable Development in Central Africa:** mandates ECCAS to “tackle political crises, build confidence and strengthen cooperation among countries of the region on peace, security and political stability”.
- iv. **The 2000 Protocol on COPAX:** the main normative framework for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Central Africa, expressly calls on Member States to “undertake all and any necessary action that can deal effectively with political conflicts and lead to the promotion, preservation and consolidation of peace and security in the sub-region”.
- v. **The 2010 Kinshasa Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and all Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly,** which entered into force on 8 March 2017.
- vi. **The 2013 Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of Central and West African States on Maritime Safety and Security in their Common Maritime Domain:** supports collaboration between ECCAS and ECOWAS in tackling transnational organized crime, including trafficking in arms and drugs, human trafficking, piracy and armed robbery at sea, which pose serious threats to international shipping, peace and security, and socio-economic development of coastal countries.
- vii. **The 2015 Declaration of Yaoundé by Member States of COPAX on the Fight Against the Terrorist Group Boko Haram:** calls for development of “a plan for political-diplomatic actions, logistical support, communication and humanitarian actions, with follow-up on progress in implementation on the evolution of the security situation in the Lake Chad Basin”.

In addition to the above-listed, ECCAS’ work on conflict prevention is informed by relevant AU instruments, including the APSA; the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; and the APRM. In relation to MARAC, ECCAS is also guided by Article 12 of the AU Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, on the establishment of the CEWS. In addition, the AU CSCP informed the development of the ECCAS Structural Indicators Framework in 2018, consisting of five components: governance, security, external relations, economy and social, with 48 indicators. ECCAS proposes to utilize the Structural Indicators Framework as a tool for undertaking deeper analyses of structural sources of conflict in the region.

### ■ Key Strategy Documents

ECCAS strategy documents relating to conflict prevention include:

- a. **The 2009 Strategy to Secure ECCAS States’ Vital Interest at Sea,** which was adopted under COPAX and inter alia seeks to promote synergy with the Gulf of Guinea Commission, ECOWAS and the friends of the Gulf of Guinea in preventing and addressing maritime insecurity.
- b. **The 2009 Security Sector Reform Work Plan,** which was adopted by the Heads of State and Government, and inter alia include plans to train parliamentarians and civil society on their role in security sector reform.
- c. **The 2009 ECCAS Border Program,** which was developed as part of the AU Border Programme, and adopted by the ECCAS Council of Ministers, to build capacity of border control authorities and develop a regional border management policy for Central Africa.
- d. **The ECCAS Medium Strategic Plan (2016-2020),** which comprise of four pillars or priority areas:
  - Pillar 1: conflict prevention, crises management, support to peace efforts, post conflict interventions and peace consolidation.
  - Pillar 2: common market and diversification of regional economy, with priority on trade and exchange development, and support to production capacities.

- Pillar 3: human capital development and durable management of natural resources and environment.
- Pillar 4: enhancing capacities for efficient implementation of ECCAS mandate, with focus on strengthening management capacities within the ECCAS General Secretariat, institutional reforms, improving statistics and data collection, and information and communication.

## ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

### a. MARAC Early Warning Analyses and Reports:

This is currently the main element of the ECCAS conflict prevention toolkit that is most functional. MARAC produces a number of reports covering “political, social, military, economic, health and climatic situations, which may have direct or indirect impact on the stability of the region”<sup>20</sup>, namely the: (i) Monitoring Quotidien, a daily report highlighting key developments and incidents in its Member States<sup>21</sup>, (ii) Country Situation Reports, a quarterly report analyzing trends and development in the Member States, (iii) Special Notes on Political and Security Situation that is produced on a case-by-case basis to analyze specific evolving situations in a particular country, and (iv) Geopolitical Review, which is produced on a biannual basis to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC) and to the CDS.

- ### b. Mediation and Mediation Support:
- ECCAS Heads of State and Government engage in mediation activities, on behalf of the Community. For instance, the President of Congo was the Chair of the ECCAS Group of High Mediators in CAR. Currently, the President of Gabon is engaged in the process in the DRC, in the lead up to the December 2018 elections.

Mediation support is provided by the ECCAS General Secretariat, through its Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Unit, for instance it is supporting the ongoing African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR

<sup>20</sup> MARAC Standing Orders

<sup>21</sup> This has however been irregular, as it is sometimes produced weekly or fortnightly rather than daily.

and serves as deputy chair of the AU Panel of Facilitators for Peace and Reconciliation. ECCAS also provides capacity building support to the Association of National Mediators and Ombudspersons in the ECCAS region, which was established in 2016, and assists in convening its Steering Committee meetings<sup>22</sup>.

### c. Good Offices of the Secretary-General:

The ECCAS Secretary-General has a good offices function, however this is yet to be fully deployed as currently the Secretary-General has appointed only two representatives to CAR and the DRC.

### d. Electoral Assistance and Elections

**Observation:** ECCAS deploys short-term observation missions as a preventive tool to monitor elections and engage national stakeholders on the need for peaceful elections. From 2014 to 2016, ECCAS organized annual trainings for staff of electoral management bodies on standards, principles and orientation in free and fair elections. ECCAS also developed draft principles for free and fair elections in Central Africa, which is being validated and will be submitted to the Conference of Heads of State and Government for endorsement<sup>23</sup>. There are plans to establish a network of electoral commissions in the region and create a regional training school for electoral officers.

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

Resources for implementation of ECCAS peace and security programmes is derived from three main sources: (i) the ECCAS Community Integration Contribution agreement, which commits its Member States to contribute 0.4% levy on imports from outside the ECCAS region<sup>24</sup>, (ii) other voluntary contributions from its Member States, and (iii) international partners/donors support. With respect

<sup>22</sup> ECCAS works closely with UNOCA in supporting the Association

<sup>23</sup> The draft Principles were developed with the support of the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA).

<sup>24</sup> The Community Integration Contribution is earmarked to cover the: (i) operating budget of the ECCAS General Secretariat, (ii) COPAX budget, (iii) annual budget of the Compensation Fund, (iv) allocations to the Community Cooperation and Development Fund, and (v) other areas or activities decided by the Conference of Heads of State and Government.

to its main international partners, besides the EU, France and United States, ECCAS also receives financial and technical support from the United Nations, the World Bank and the AfDB.

At the time of this study, information on the financial resources, including the operating budget, of ECCAS was unavailable. However, it was observed that Member States contributions of the 0.4% levy has been irregular and inconsistent, resulting in significant funding gaps for programme implementation and a huge dependence on partners for both its programmatic and core funding. Article 80 of the ECCAS Treaty does provide for sanctions for non-payment of contributions, but this is generally not enforced.

The resources for ECCAS' conflict prevention work is largely from the EU and the United Nations. The EU's support to ECCAS is made through two main funding mechanisms: (i) the African Peace Facility, through the AU, and (ii) directly to the ECCAS Peace and Security Programmes (PAPS), under the European Development Fund (EDF) Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for Central Africa. The EDF-RIP support provided so far include: €4.8 million Euros for PAPS I (from 2007-2010) under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF-RIP, €14.2 million Euros for PAPS II (2011-2013) under the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF-RIP, and €30 million Euros, under the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF-RIP, covering three principal areas for 2014-2020<sup>25</sup>. There have however been delays in implementation of the 2014-2020 programme.

In general, partners' financial support to ECCAS is dwindling due to a variety of reasons, including internal financial management and reporting challenges within the ECCAS General Secretariat. For example, ECCAS has developed a five-year program of action, estimated at US\$2.5 million, to implement the Kinshasa Convention for the control of small arms and light weapons; however, it is yet to secure the funding for this. In this regard, the need to develop better tools for financial management and reporting was underscored as critical to promote

transparency and accountability and enhance partners' confidence in ECCAS' project and financial management capacity.

ECCAS also receives technical support from different partners. For instance, UNOCA provides sustained technical support to ECCAS on a range of conflict prevention and peace consolidation activities, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, such as UNDP, UN-Women, UNESCO and FAO. France provides support to FOMAC, through the French Forces in Gabon, which also has a logistics base in Douala, Cameroon.

With respect to human resources, ECCAS has a shortage of staff (at both headquarters and field levels), largely due to its lack of predictable core funding and huge dependence on donors/partners for salaries of staff, which further results in high staff turnover. The severe deficits in its human resource capacity, places excessive demands on its staff, affecting their productivity overall as well as the organization's absorptive capacity. For instance, in relation to its core conflict prevention work, the Directorate for Political Affairs and MARAC, currently comprises of the Director and three MARAC staff: a division head, an early warning analyst and an ICT expert. Furthermore, due to the limited staff capacity within the organization in general, MARAC staff are assigned to other functions, causing them to spend less time on their main tasks of monitoring, analyzing and providing timely early warning.

As a result, MARAC requires an additional two analysts, two data collection experts and one ICT expert. Staff are also required at the level of the MARAC national bureaux in the Member States, including to coordinate the activities of its decentralized correspondents, as well as monitor and collect data for early warning on the ground and feed same into the MARAC Central Structure at the ECCAS headquarters. This is key as currently the decentralized correspondents ECCAS works with at national levels, are only engaged on a part-time basis, with minimal stipend. This impacts on their ability to prioritize and consistently deliver support for ECCAS' early warning activities.

The Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Unit currently has no staff at the level of the General Secretariat, except for the Director of Political Affairs and MARAC who leads on this area. At the barest minimum, ECCAS requires two staff at the General Secretariat in its Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Unit: a Chief of Mediation at P4 level and

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25 The 11<sup>th</sup> EDF-RIP covers three areas: (i) sector policy dialogues aimed at supporting ECCAS' institutional reforms, in particular in the context of COPAX, (ii) reinforcement of the capacity of MARAC in early warning monitoring, reporting and analyses (including establishment of about four MARAC national bureaux in four ECCAS Member States) and FOMAC (including ensuring alignment and harmonization with the AU's doctrine of operations for the African Standby Force, and (iii) a joint project of support with UNODC in Central Africa, focusing on illegal trafficking of wildlife, poaching and maritime security.



one expert at P3 level. At the field level, ECCAS has only one staff each working on preventive diplomacy and mediation in the CAR and DRC. ECCAS has explored opportunities for receiving technical support from the UNDP/PA MSU, through UNOCA, and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) to revitalize the Unit. UNOCA and MSU have jointly organized capacity building trainings on mediation support for ECCAS staff. In July 2018, ACCORD organized a meeting with ECCAS aimed at setting up a Council of the Wise for Central Africa to support the latter's mediation and preventive diplomacy efforts. Additional assistance is required to strengthen the organization's overall work on mediation, including involving civil society.

In the Directorate for Human Security, there is currently one staff in the Election and Good Governance Unit, namely the Head of the Unit, who was appointed in October 2018 (following the retirement of the former head). Due to its staffing needs, staff are drafted from other units and departments to support ECCAS' electoral assistance work in the various countries where elections are scheduled to take place. Of note, the Unit receives some technical support from the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) through the integration of a staff in ECCAS. Similarly, the Crime Control Unit has only one staff who is responsible for small arms and light weapons. The Gender Unit has only one staff, who is also responsible for youth issues; and the ECCAS Liaison Office to the AU in Addis Ababa, has only one staff who covers both political and economic issues.

In terms of facility, at the time of this study, the ECCAS headquarters building was fully paid for in 2003; and in addition, the Government of Gabon provided ECCAS two buildings that housed its Directorate of Political Affairs and MARAC, including the MARAC situation room, and its FOMAC Planning Element (Regional Staff Headquarters). The MARAC situation room however currently lacks some of the requisite equipment and software for its early warning monitoring and analyses.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

Some of ECCAS' conflict prevention partnership arrangements are highlighted below.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

ECCAS does not have an internal mechanism for coordination on conflict prevention,

such as an interdepartmental taskforce, committee or working group. However, the Secretary-General does convene periodic meetings of the principal officers in the General Secretariat, where discussions are held on range of proximate and structural issues in the region, especially in the context of preparations for meetings of its major intergovernmental organs. These meetings offer an opportunity for collective reflection on possible preventive or remedial actions that are then submitted to the decision-making organs. Collaboration within ECCAS on specifically conflict prevention is inchoate; so far entailing the participation of MARAC staff in meetings on regional integration, which are organized by the Department of Physical, Economic and Monetary Integration to explore the security implications of intra-regional trade. MARAC has also engaged the Head of the Gender Unit, as well as representatives of gender and woman affairs ministries in the region, in a workshop that was jointly organized with UNOCA and UN-Women to review and mainstream gender perspectives in the MARAC indicators for early warning.

### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

ECCAS has an existing cooperation with ECOWAS and COMESA. Its cooperation with ECOWAS is at two levels. First is at the level of Heads of State and Government, through the convening of periodic joint Summits (in 2013 and 2018, with an agreement to meet every two years). At their 2018 joint Summit, which held on 30 July in Lomé, Togo, ECCAS and ECOWAS Heads of State and Government committed to enhancing effective cooperation between the two regional communities to better and collectively address and respond to security challenges. They committed inter alia to cooperating on "conflict prevention and promotion of peace and stability in the two regions, particularly through the establishment and strengthening of early warning and rapid response to crises mechanisms at national and regional levels, which involve civil society opinion leaders, women, young people and state actors"<sup>26</sup>. The

26 Final Communiqué: Joint Summit of ECOWAS and ECCAS Heads of State and Government on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight Against Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Lomé, Togo, 30 July 2018.

### Box 1: Minkebe Park: A Case Study of Internal Collaboration and Coordination on Conflict Prevention

Consistent with the AU CSCPF, in 2018 ECCAS completed the review of its early warning indicators, which it renamed the 'Structural Indicators Framework', consisting of 48 indicators covering five thematic areas: governance, security, external relations, economy and society. This was based on a structural conflict analysis report, which was jointly prepared by MARAC and FOMAC on the security situation in the Minkebe Park - an area that borders three countries: Cameroon, Congo and Gabon - following a meeting of the CDS, which had highlighted a disturbing confluence of economic, environmental and territorial security threats in the Park. The structural conflict analysis report was submitted to the 5th session of COPAX Council of Ministers that held in March 2018, outlining the security situation in the park, vis-à-vis smuggling of timber resources and illegal exploitation of mineral resources, poaching of ivory from endangered elephants, and the risk of criminal networks gaining territorial control of the area. The COPAX Council of Ministers decided that the situation needed to be quickly contained as to prevent the Minkebe Park being used as a zone for launching rebellion in any of the adjoining countries. Following the decision, a Multidimensional Task Team consisting of representatives of the three affected countries and ECCAS was established to develop an action plan, to be submitted to the COPAX Council of Ministers. Meanwhile, €6 million has been secured from the EU to fund a project aimed at reinforcing the national capacity of affected countries to protect forest resources, including the endangered animal species, improve border management, monitor movements of traffickers and interdict the flows of their illicit products.

two organizations are also working together in the contexts of the Multinational Joint Task Force, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the G5 Sahel.

Second, at the level of the ECCAS General Secretariat and the ECOWAS Commission, the Secretary-General and the President respectively, along with their senior officials, meet annually on the margins of AU Summits in January, to exchange on issues of mutual interests to both organizations and further strategies for strengthening their cooperation. Some of the principal areas of cooperation include maritime security and operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre, economic and trans-border cooperation. In addition to the meetings of principals, collaboration between the two organizations also takes place at the technical or working level. For instance, in September 2017, with the support of UNOCA, ECCAS undertook a working visit to the ECOWAS Commission to exchange and learn first-hand from ECOWAS on its work and experience in the areas of mediation, early warning and conflict prevention, regional integration, institutional reforms and resource mobilization. With support from UNOCA, the two organizations jointly organized two workshops in 2017 on mainstreaming gender

in early warning and engaging civil society in early warning and conflict prevention. ECCAS also benefitted from the ECOWAS experience in reformulating its early warning indicators or Strategic Indicators Framework and meets regularly with ECOWAS on early warning issues. To deepen the partnership between the two RECs, the President of ECOWAS and the Secretary General of ECCAS signed a Declaration in Addis Ababa on 28 January 2017 committing them to develop an MoU covering collaboration on three issues: maritime security, organization of a donor's conference to combat Boko Haram, and strengthening cooperation on economic and security issues.

With COMESA, ECCAS partnered to develop a joint project to support the political process in the DRC in advance of the 2018 elections. The specific areas of cooperation include deploying pre-elections technical teams, monitoring the electoral process, analyzing and updating policymakers and political leaders in ECCAS and COMESA of political development in the DRC, and establishing a Committee of Elders to support consensus building efforts on the electoral process.



## ■ Cooperation with the African Union Commission

ECCAS and the AU have cooperated extensively in developing capacity for early warning and conflict prevention in ECCAS, as part of the CEWS. ECCAS staff have received a variety of trainings, organized by the AU, on use of early warning and conflict prevention tools. Furthermore, in the context of the ongoing African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR, the AU and ECCAS are working together, under the auspices of the AU Panel of Facilitators for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR, to support the political dialogue and mediation facilitation process between the 14 rebel groups in the country. The two organizations have also collaborated on preventive deployment and peace support operations. For instance, in 2009, ECCAS deployed a stabilization force in the CAR, which transitioned in 2013 into the Africa-led International Support Mission in CAR that was rebranded or transitioned in 2014 as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). ECCAS emphasized its plans to contextualize and operationalize existing AU policies, strategies or frameworks, and tools for conflict prevention, including the CSCPF; albeit noting that this would be dependent on two critical factors: availability of funding and adequate staffing within ECCAS.

## ■ Partnerships with the United Nations System

ECCAS has had longstanding and sustained partnership with the United Nations,

especially with UNOCA – including in the context of UNSAC. The organization has also partnered with other United Nations entities on conflict prevention related actions, such as with UNESCO and FAO. With respect to UNSAC, which was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1991, at the request of Central African Member States, ECCAS and UNOCA jointly organize the expert and ministerial meetings of UNSAC, as well as collaborate in supporting follow-up activities or initiatives of the UNSAC bureau. The meetings and activities of UNSAC is funded by the UNSAC Trust Fund, which is administered by the United Nations.

Besides UNSAC, ECCAS and UNOCA signed a Cooperation Framework, in which they agreed to work collaboratively on a range of conflict prevention and peace consolidation actions. In the implementation of this Framework, ECCAS and UNOCA are guided by a joint Plan of Action, which includes regular meetings and retreats at both principal and technical or working levels. The current joint Plan of Action (2018-2019) includes several joint activities such as preventive diplomacy missions by the Heads of UNOCA and ECCAS, support for the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention, UNSAC, workshops (on conflict indicators and reporting tools, democratic elections in Central Africa and adoption of the Regional Action Plan on UNSC resolution 1325), a mission to the CAR and an assessment of maritime security in the region. Both organizations also collaborated to create a 'Network of Women in the Media working for Peace and Security'.

### Box 2: Collaboration between ECCAS and the AU in the Central African Republic (CAR)

In the context of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR, an African Union Panel of Facilitators for Peace and Reconciliation in CAR was established in September 2017 to foster dialogue between the 14 major rebel groups on the one hand, and between the national authorities and the rebel groups on the other. The Panel is chaired by the AU and deputized by ECCAS' Director of Political Affairs and MARAC who serves as its deputy Chair.

The Panel undertook two visits to the CAR, in December 2017 and March 2018, to meet the 14 major rebel groups, with a view to understanding their grievances. The rebel groups have submitted their list of grievances, which will be considered at a forthcoming stakeholders' consultation in Bangui later in 2018, building on the Bangui Forum of 2015.

ECCAS also worked closely with UNOCA and UNESCO in developing a three-year programme on enhancing the role of youth in early warning in all eleven ECCAS countries that is estimated at US\$36 million dollars. The programme's three main objectives are to: engage youth in the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, involve youth in processes of establishing and managing early warning systems, and train leaders of national youth councils on early warning systems<sup>27</sup>. No funding has yet been secured for this programme, although discussions on this have been initiated with the AfDB.

#### ■ **Partnerships with other International Organizations**

ECCAS receives substantial financial and programmatic support from the EU for its peace and security programmes, as highlighted above. In addition to this, the European Union Delegation in Libreville provides technical and advisory support to ECCAS; and in the past coordinated the Group of Friends of ECCAS. The European Union Delegation in Libreville has underscored the importance of reviving the Group of Friends of ECCAS, as a means of improving information exchange between partners, avoiding duplication in their assistance to ECCAS, and mobilizing greater support for ECCAS.

#### ■ **Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflicts**

ECCAS has several policy documents that explicitly mandates the organization to engage CSOs on conflict prevention, including its Standing Orders on MARAC, Standing Orders on FOMAC and Standing Orders on the CDS. Additionally, the ECCAS Treaty and the Protocol Establishing the Network of Parliamentarians of ECCAS provides potential entry points for engaging with civil society.

In practice however, the involvement and role of civil society in ECCAS' conflict prevention

work has been limited to workshops jointly organized with partners such as UNOCA and the EU, and its engagement of civil society actors as decentralized correspondents at the level of the MARAC National Bureaus. In the latter case, the role of civil society is dwindling as the National Bureaus are not fully existent or operational in all the ECCAS Member States.

Though the limited participation and engagement of civil society in ECCAS' conflict prevention work is mainly attributed to the lack of financial resources, ECCAS also proposes to develop a strategy document for an "enhanced ECCAS-civil society collaboration in peace and security in Central Africa". The proposed strategy document is intended to cover the following key areas of collaboration with civil society: "MARAC, elections, small arms and light weapons, peace support operations, security governance, human rights, mediation and women, peace and security".

Following the workshop that was jointly convened with UNOCA in 2017 on engaging civil society in early warning and conflict prevention in Central Africa, ECCAS has further partnered with the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), to facilitate the creation of a similar regional network of CSOs in the Central Africa region it will collaborate with on early warning and conflict prevention. The ECCAS-WANEP collaboration is envisaged to initially focus on: (i) developing a strategy or framework on enhanced ECCAS-Civil Society engagement in early warning and conflict prevention, (ii) developing a concrete and budgeted action plan on the implementation of the strategy, and (iii) facilitating a visit of potential civil society organizations from Central Africa to West Africa to gain first-hand insights on the ECOWAS-WANEP early warning and conflict prevention collaboration.

Regarding collaboration with the private sector, ECCAS does not currently engage the private sector in its conflict prevention work.

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27 See ECCAS (2017) Project Document on "Strengthening the Capacities of Youth and Management of Youth Associations and the creation of Early Warning System for Youth in Peace and Security in Central Africa region"  
9 October 2017.

## 5. ECCAS' support to Member States on Conflict Prevention

ECCAS' work on conflict prevention takes place at two levels. First is at the regional level, where collective and direct action is taken to prevent and address shared transnational and cross-border threats and challenges. Second, is at the national level, where focus is placed on building national and local capacities for prevention, bearing in mind that ultimately the responsibility for conflict prevention is that of Member States and that ECCAS can only play a facilitative role in supporting Member States.

Concrete examples of ECCAS' support to its Member States includes its ongoing work to develop regional principles of free and fair elections in Central Africa and its aspiration to create a regional network of elections management bodies. The principles being developed will cover key aspects of an electoral process, including registration of voters, campaign, voting, ballot counting, procedures for appealing to tribunals in cases of disputes, and declaration of final results.

ECCAS and UNOCA jointly support the operations of the Association of National Mediators and Ombudspersons in the ECCAS region, including the activities of its Steering Committee, as a means of building collective capacity to mediate political, economic and social tensions at both regional and national levels<sup>28</sup>. ECCAS' support to the Association is aimed at promoting good governance, respect for human rights and the impartiality and independence of mediators in the region.

The establishment of the Regional Coordination Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa (CRESMAC) in Pointe-Noire in the Congo is another example of its support to Member States in the Gulf of Guinea. Consistent with ECCAS' 2009 Strategy to Secure ECCAS States' Vital Interest at Sea, the activities of CRESMAC, when the centre is fully operationalized, will address six key pillars: community surveillance of the ECCAS space in the Gulf of Guinea, exchange and community information management, harmonization of the actions of State parties at sea, institutionalization of a community tax, acquisition and maintenance of major equipment of States put at its disposal

28 See Final Communiqué of Mediators in Central Africa titled "Towards Durable Peace in Central Africa: What Role for Mediators?" adopted in Libreville on 27 July 2016.

to ensure its operational capability, and the institutionalization of an ECCAS maritime conference.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

Some of the key lessons learned by ECCAS in its efforts to institutionalize conflict prevention in the region include:

- Political will and commitment on the parts of both its Heads of State and Government and the leadership of the ECCAS General Secretariat is crucial for advancing the success of its conflict prevention work. Often Member States emphasize the issue of sovereignty and are unwilling to share early warning information that they deem critical to their national security. This limits the ability of the ECCAS Secretariat to effectively undertake its early warning. The ability of the General Secretariat to undertake early action, is also constrained by the fact that it requires an express authorization from the Heads of State and Government to undertake such actions. Greater delegation of authority to the General Secretariat is therefore important. It is envisaged that the ongoing reforms would address this challenge.
- The role of civil society is particularly important for adopting a more people-centred or a human security approach to peace, security and sustainable development, consistent with the AU's Agenda 2063 and the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this respect, there is a need to revitalize the engagement of civil society in its conflict prevention activities, particularly in addressing a range of political, governance, economic, social and environmental challenges that are root causes of conflicts in the region. This process should include the development and adoption of a civil society engagement strategy document as well as capacity development of CSOs in the region as proposed.
- Peer and cross-regional exchanges provide useful opportunities for learning and should be enhanced, both with other RECs and with regional civil society networks such as WANEP.
- Consultations and coordination of external partners' support should be enhanced, in order to promote coherence, alignment with ECCAS' own

priorities and strategies such as its Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2016-2020) and circumvent duplication.

- Core resources, especially financial and human resources, are highly critical for ensuring effective implementation. It is therefore urgent to further develop the necessary financial management capacity required to boost partner confidence in the organization. Likewise, the organization needs to enhance its organizational and management capacity, as well as its absorptive capacity to implement and effectively report on its programmes, in order to attract external funding from partners. Such efforts should include the development of institutional monitoring and evaluation capacities within the ECCAS General Secretariat, as well as at the country level (especially in relation to the MARAC National Bureaus).

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening ECCAS Conflict Prevention Capacity

The following recommendations were made to enhance ECCAS' conflict prevention capacity:

- **Prioritizing the strengthening of its peace and security capacity in the ongoing institutional reform process:** both the ongoing rationalization and institutional reform processes provide entry points for actions to strengthen its institutional capacity to deliver on conflict prevention. In this regard, adjustments that require the approval of its Heads of State and Government, for instance on harmonizing the ECCAS regular and COPAX structures, revitalizing the mediation unit, adopting a strategy for engagement with civil society and operationalizing its structural indicators framework, should be addressed and submitted to the Heads of State and Government for the endorsement.
- **Implement stop-gap measures for addressing critical human resources or staffing needs:** including by exploring opportunities for possible secondment of staff from Member States and partner organizations to the MARAC, mediation and elections units. This should be accompanied by other measures to address the staffing challenges in the long-term.
- **Resource mobilization for programme implementation:** there is an urgent need to prioritize resource mobilization for implementation

of key programmes, including on youth and early warning; women, peace and security; elections and good governance, and the programme of action for implementation of the Kinshasa Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The revitalization of the Group of Friends of ECCAS could be a useful entry point in this regard.

- **Enhancing secretariat-wide consultation and coordination on conflict prevention:** including through the establishment of an interdepartmental working group or coordination mechanism on implementation of ECCAS' Structural Indicators Framework.
- **Strengthening early warning and response capacity:** including by revitalizing and establishing the MARAC National Bureaus and the Decentralized Correspondents system across the 11 ECCAS Member States, as well by enhancing the use of the ECCAS Secretary-General's good offices function. The creation of a functional Council of the Wise for Central Africa would contribute to enhancing ECCAS' early response capacity.
- **Revitalizing the Elections and Good Governance Unit:** including through the creation of the envisaged regional network of elections management bodies and the regional training school for electoral officers.

## Reference Documents

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# 6

## **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

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# 6. ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)

## 1. Basic Facts

ECOWAS was established in 1975 by the Treaty of Lagos, with a mandate to promote economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting countries. ECOWAS envisions the creation of a borderless region where the population has access to its abundant resources and can exploit same through the creation of opportunities under a sustainable environment. In this respect, ECOWAS is working towards realizing its vision of an ECOWAS of people by 2020. Its 15-Member States are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, the Republic of Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

In terms of representation in other RECs, all ECOWAS Member States, except for Cape Verde and Guinea, also belong to the CEN-SAD, as shown in the table 7.

The ECOWAS Commission is in Nigeria. In addition, ECOWAS has national offices in all its 15 Member States; four "Zonal Bureaux for Early Warning" located

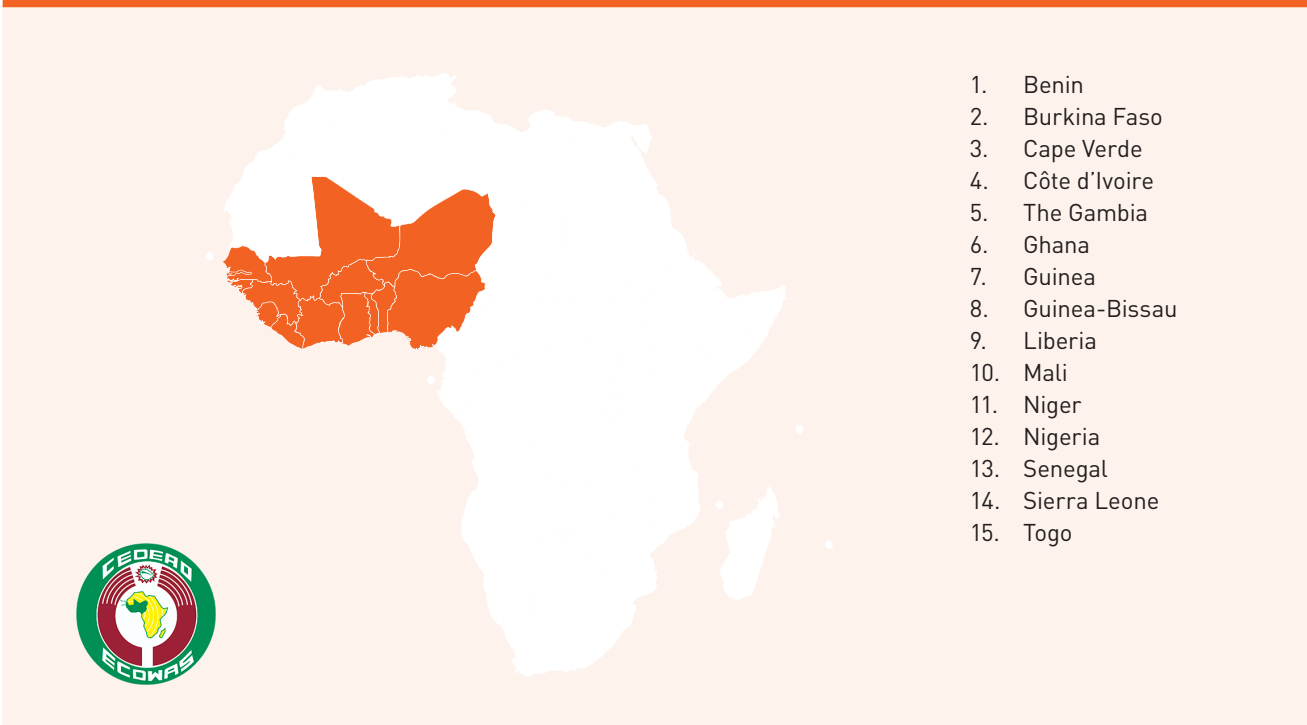
in The Gambia, Benin, Burkina Faso and Liberia; and a Liaison Office to the African Union in Addis Ababa.

ECOWAS has several institutions and specialized agencies, including the Community Parliament and the Community Court of Justice, which are also located in Nigeria; and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development in Togo. Its other specialized agencies include the West African Health Organization, the ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre and the ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Centre in Burkina Faso; the West African Monetary Agency in Sierra Leone; and the Inter-governmental Action Group against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in West Africa and the ECOWAS Gender and Development Centre both in Senegal.

## 2. Geopolitical Context

The ECOWAS region is comprised of Member States that are different in terms of territorial size, colonial

**FIGURE 13: ECOWAS Member States**





**TABLE 7: Representation of ECOWAS Member States in other RECs**

COUNTRY	CEN-SAD
Benin	●
Burkina Faso	●
Cape Verde	
Cote D'Ivoire	●
Gambia	●
Ghana	●
Guinea	
Guinea-Bissau	●
Liberia	●
Mali	●
Niger	●
Nigeria	●
Senegal	●
Sierra Leone	●
Togo	●

history, economic strength, internal cohesion, external linkages and linguistic orientation<sup>29</sup>. As Odobo et al (2017) further noted, the region has been prone to “corruption, poverty, underdevelopment, political instability, electoral violence, arms proliferation, military incursion in governance, drug trafficking, territorial disputes, resurgence of ethno-religious conflict, secessionist tendencies and civil wars; all of which have stifled ECOWAS’ ability to pursue its economic development mandate”.

Over the last two decades, the region has made tremendous efforts to uphold security and stability, build and sustain peace, promote good governance and democratic consolidation as prerequisites for advancing economic development and regional integration. Significant progress has been made, even as the regions has been confronted with some new challenges such as piracy, narco-trafficking, farmers-herders’ and intercommunity conflicts, violent extremism, terrorism and health pandemics like Ebola.

**While the region has made tremendous strides in improving inclusivity by opening and promoting spaces for civil society and private sector engagement**

29 Odobo, et al, 2017, “Analysis of ECOWAS Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention”, in Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, Vol 8 No 6, November 2017

in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and governance, gaps remain with respect to promoting greater inclusion of youth and women in these processes. In an era of new technological innovations and social media, the need for greater youth inclusion is more urgent than ever to sustain the peace gains that have been made. This is critical as mobile adoption has grown rapidly in West Africa, with the expansion of mobile networks to underserved communities and the increasing affordability of services and device costs. According to GSMA Intelligence, “by the end of 2017, there were 176 million unique subscribers across the West Africa sub-region. Overall subscriber penetration reached 47% in 2017, up from 28% at the start of this decade”<sup>30</sup>.

Economic growth in the region has been increasing. According to the World Bank, West Africa ranks among the fastest-growing sub-regions in Sub-Saharan Africa, having grown 6.7 percent in 2013 and 7.4 percent in 2014<sup>31</sup>. Of the top 10 fastest

30 GSMA Intelligence, “The Mobile Economy West Africa 2018

31 Marc, Alexandre; Verjee, Neelam; Mogaka, Stephen.

2015. The Challenge of Stability and Security in West Africa. Africa Development Forum; Washington, DC: World Bank; and

Agence Française de Développement. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22033> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.”

growing economies in 2018 globally, three are in West Africa: Ghana (8.3%), Cote d'Ivoire (7.2%) and Senegal (6.9%)<sup>32</sup>. The region is a strategic market and has free trade negotiations with the EU and China. Paradoxically however, widening inequalities caused by non-inclusive economic growth, has also been a source of tension and conflicts. The lack of economic opportunities is for instance resulting in increasing migration flows from the region, including intra-African migration within the Burkina Faso to Cote d'Ivoire migration corridor, which UNCTAD noted in its Economic Development Report "had the largest stock of migrants at 1.3 million in 2017". To effectively manage this, ECOWAS has developed a Regional Migration Policy and has instituted the Migration Dialogue for West Africa, in collaboration with the EU, International Organization for Migration, International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the International Labour Organization.

Overall, as embodied in its Vision 2020, the ECOWAS region affirms the importance of inclusive people-centred development for managing and preventing violent conflicts as well as promoting stability and peace. This necessitates comprehensive and targeted interventions in diverse areas, including in creating decent jobs and investing in youth development, improving service delivery and local governance especially in peripheral regions, addressing inequalities, tackling corruption, improving natural resource management and climate change adaptation, strengthening institutions and infrastructure, improving migration management, and addressing emergent security threats.

### 3. ECOWAS: Organizational Structure

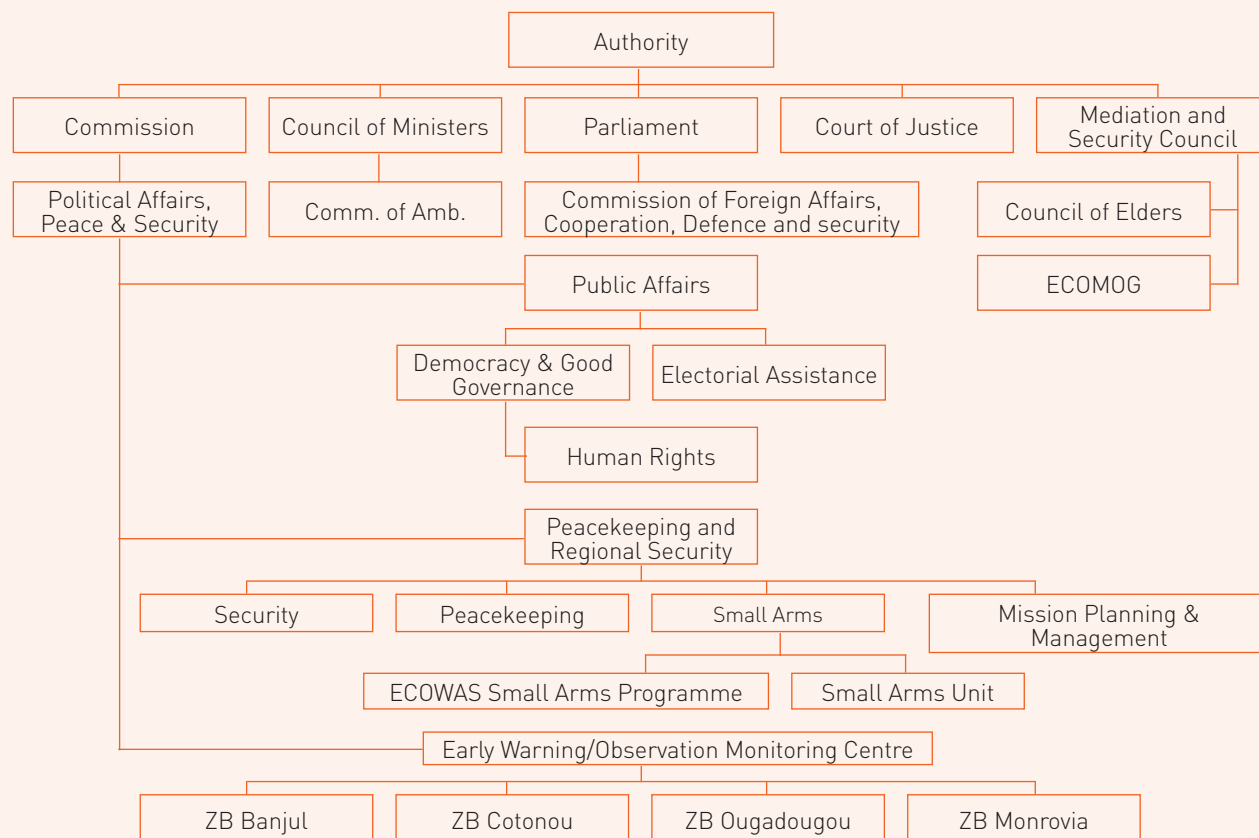
The ECOWAS 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security created its institutional structures for conflict prevention to include: the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Mediation and Security Council, the Executive Secretariat (which has since been transformed into the Commission), the Council of the Wise (formerly the Council of Elders), the Defense and Security Commission, the ECOWAS Ceasefire and Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and the Early Warning Observation and Monitoring System (referred to as the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network - ECOWARN).

<sup>32</sup> Yinka Adegoke, "Africa's economic outlook is promising for 2018, but there are clouds on the horizon", in Quartz Africa, January 15, 2018

The roles and responsibilities of these organs are as follows:

- a. **The Authority of Heads of State and Government:** is the highest decision-making body of the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention and has powers to act on all matters relating to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, as well as on peacekeeping, security, humanitarian support, peacebuilding, control of cross-border crimes and proliferation of small arms. Article 7 of the Protocol establishing the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Mechanism however permits the Authority to entrust to the Mediation and Security Council the powers to act on its behalf.
- b. **The Mediation and Security Council:** is entrusted with the responsibility of deliberating on all matters pertaining to peace and security, including on the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, on behalf of the Authority. The Council comprises of nine members, drawn from nine Member States. Seven of whom are elected by the Authority; and the remaining two are the current and the immediate past Chairpersons of the Authority. Of note, the Council can convene at three levels: (i) Heads of State and Government, (ii) Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Affairs and Security, or (iii) Committee of Ambassadors. The Committee of Ambassadors meets monthly, the Committee of Ministers at least quarterly and the Heads of State and Government at least twice a year. The Council oversees the activities of the lower organs of the Mechanism and has the authority to authorize the activities of ECOMOG, in consultation with the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the UNSC.
- c. **The Defense and Security Commission:** comprises the Chiefs of Defense Staff of all ECOWAS Member States and is responsible for assessing all technical issues and logistical requirements relating to peacekeeping. In this respect, the Commission assists the Mediation and Security Council on matters pertaining to the organization and deployment of peacekeeping missions in the region. The Commission also reviews early warning reports and advises as well as makes recommendations on possible actions to the Mediation and Security Council. It also meets at least quarterly.

**FIGURE 14: ECOWAS Organogram**



Source: Bjørn Møller (2009) Africa's Subregional Organizations<sup>33</sup>.

- d. **The ECOWAS Commission:** Transformed from the Executive Secretariat in 2007, the ECOWAS Commission is headed by a President who is a Chief Executive Officer with responsibility for the day-to-day administration and management of the organization. The President of the Commission is appointed by the Authority of Heads of State and Government and assisted by a Vice-President and thirteen (13) Commissioners.

The Commission is currently comprised of fourteen departments, including the Departments of Political Affairs, Peace and Security; and Social Affairs and Gender. In particular, the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security is comprised of three directorates, namely the Directorate for Political Affairs (comprising of Democracy and Good

Governance, Electoral Assistance, Mediation and International Cooperation, and Conflict Prevention); the Directorate of Early Warning; and the Directorate for Peacekeeping and Regional Security (comprising of ECOWAS Standby Force, Regional Security, Small Arms and Peace Support Operations. On its part, the Directorate of Early Warning, which supports ECOWARN, comprises of a System Management and Planning Unit, and an Analysis Unit (covering crimes, criminality and security; governance; health; agriculture and environment).

- e. **The Council of the Wise:** is constituted by the President of the ECOWAS Commission to support his/her good offices and preventive diplomacy functions. Formerly known as the Council of Elders, it was renamed the Council of the Wise to align with the AU PoW. The Council of the Wise consists of prominent and eminent individuals, including former heads of state and government, renowned diplomats, and traditional and religious leaders who are called upon to utilize

33 Møller, Bjørn (2009) Africa's sub-regional organisations: seamless web or patchwork? Crisis States Research Centre working papers series 2 [56]. Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.

their good offices as mediators, conciliators or facilitators, to intervene proactively to prevent and resolve political tensions and conflicts between or within Member States. The Council is also deployed to monitor elections, as a strategy for early conflict prevention.

f. **The Early Warning Observation and Monitoring**

**System:** ECOWARN is a core component of ECOWAS' conflict prevention mechanism. It comprises of the Observation and Monitoring Centre, which is central to the ECOWARN and located at the ECOWAS Commission, and four Observation and Monitoring Zones, which are based in Banjul (Gambia), Cotonou (Benin), Monrovia (Liberia) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). The function of ECOWARN is to monitor, collect and analyse data for early warning as well as advise and make recommendations to the decision-making structures. ECOWARN systematically collaborates and partners with CSOs, notably WANEP, in its early warning monitoring, data collection and analysis, at all levels: regional, zonal and national levels. CSOs however do not have a presence in its decision-making structures.

g. **The ECOWAS Ceasefire and Monitoring Group:**

ECOMOG, which was established in 1990, predated the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Mechanism but has since been incorporated into it. ECOMOG is an ad-hoc military force, consisting of land, air and sea components, which was established to respond to security threats and challenges in ECOWAS Member States. ECOMOG has been transformed into the ECOWAS Standby Force, which is a pillar of the ASF. Its responsibilities include peacekeeping and restoration of peace, observation and monitoring, peacebuilding, disarmament and demobilization, and enforcement of sanctions.

In addition to the above-listed organs of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Mechanism, other ECOWAS organs such as the Court of Justice and the Community Parliament also have key functions that contribute to preventing conflicts. The ECOWAS Court of Justice or Community Court of Justice, which was created pursuant to Articles 6 and 15 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 1991, has responsibility for ensuring the observance of the law and principles of equity in the interpretation and application of the provisions of the Revised Treaty and all other subsidiary legal instruments. Its jurisdiction includes examining

and deciding on cases of violation of human rights that occur in any Member States. Besides its Member States, individuals and corporate bodies are equally entitled to access the court for any act of the Community that violates their rights or for acts of human rights violations occurring in any Member State. The Court is composed of seven independent judges from ECOWAS Member States who are appointed by the Authority of Heads of State and Government for a four-year term, upon recommendation of the Community Judicial Council.

- h. **The ECOWAS Parliament:** also called the Community Parliament is an advisory body and a forum for dialogue, consultation and consensus for representatives of the people of the ECOWAS region, with the aim of promoting integration. It is empowered to deliberate on issues relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms of citizens, citizenship and social integration, physical integration through infrastructure interconnectivity between its Member States (including in relation to energy and communication links), public health policies, common educational policy, youth and sports, scientific and technological research, and the environment. The Parliament has two components: the political wing and the administrative wing. The Political Wing comprises of: (i) the Plenary, which is the apex body of the Parliament, (ii) the Bureau, which is the governing organ of the Parliament, and (iii) the Conference of Bureaux, which inter alia works collaboratively with National and other Regional Parliaments. The Parliament comprises of 115 seats, with a minimum of five guaranteed seats for each of the 15 Member States. The remaining seats are shared based on population size. Consequently, Nigeria has 35 seats, Ghana 8 seats, Cote d'Ivoire 7 seats, while Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal have 6 seats each. The others - Benin, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo - have 5 seats each.

#### 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention

An overview of ECOWAS mandate, policies, strategy documents, tools, resources and partnerships on conflict prevention is outlined in this section.

##### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

ECOWAS' conflict prevention work was necessitated

by the experiences of intractable conflicts and violent political transitions (especially military coup d'états) in a number of its Member States, following the end of the Cold War in the 1990s. These conflicts undermined ECOWAS ability to effectively advance its primary mandate of economic development and integration; consequently, it developed an elaborate conflict prevention, management and resolution framework for ensuring security, stability and peace in its region. Its mandate for conflict prevention derives from the following key frameworks:

- i. **The 1975 ECOWAS Treaty:** committed Member States to a set of security arrangements that would govern their relations with regards to collective security, defense and non-aggression.
- ii. **The 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression:** called for “refrain from the threat or use of force or aggression against the territorial integrity and political independence of Member States; and stipulated that “any dispute which cannot be settled peacefully among Member States shall be referred to a Committee of the Authority”.
- iii. **The 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence:** Outlines the collective security arrangements to guide Member States in situations of conflict and stipulates that any armed threat or aggression directed against any Member State shall constitute a threat or aggression against the entire community.
- iv. **The 1991 Declaration of Political Principles:** Outlines the commitment of ECOWAS Member States to principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms, peaceful settlement of disputes and non-aggression, and the promotion of democracy.
- v. **The 1993 Revised ECOWAS Treaty:** created an early warning mechanism and provided for the establishment of a regional peace and security observation mechanism as well as for peacekeeping. The Revised Treaty calls for “recognition, promotion and protection of human rights” in the ECOWAS region in line with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights; as well as for the “promotion and consolidation of a democratic system of governance in each Member States” as envisaged in the ECOWAS 1991 Declaration of Political Principles.

- vi. **The 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security:** institutionalized ECOWAS interventions in the areas of early warning, preventive diplomacy initiatives, fact-finding missions, quiet diplomacy, diplomatic pressures and mediation. The Protocol addressed all aspects of the conflict cycle, from prevention, resolution, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and regional security – including cross-border crimes, international terrorism and the proliferation of small arms and anti-personnel mines.

- vii. **The 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance:** Complements the 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security by robustly addressing issues of democracy and good governance. It established the linkages between governance and peace and security, and explicitly prescribes what the standards of democratic governance should be vis-à-vis promoting economic and social development. It draws attention to issues of human rights, the rule of law, good governance, free, fair and credible elections, importance of election monitoring, role of the armed forces and other security formations, separation of powers, unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government, and the elimination of all forms of discriminatory practices towards women, youth and children.

- viii. **The 2006 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related materials:** entered into force in 2009 and is a legally binding instrument for Member States.

The 2008 ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF): specifically guides the organization’s work on conflict prevention. It adopts a comprehensive human security approach and has 15 components on: early warning; preventive diplomacy; democracy and political governance; human rights and rule of law; media; natural resource governance; cross-border initiatives; security governance; practical disarmament; women, peace and security; youth empowerment; ECOWAS Stand-By Force; humanitarian assistance; and peace education and culture of peace.



## ■ Key Strategy Documents

ECOWAS has developed several strategy documents and action plans to guide its work, including:

- a. **The Community Strategic Framework 2016-2020:** to “fast-track regional integration and to consolidate peace, security and stability throughout the region”.
- b. **The ECPF Plans of Action 2018-2020:** that is organized around the 15 components of the ECPF and outlines logical frameworks for the implementation of each component.
- c. **The 2018 ECOWAS Mediation Guidelines:** that was published in partnership with the Crisis Management Initiative to guide the ECOWAS Commission in its efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts taking into consideration the lesson learnt from past efforts as well as from best practices from successful mediation processes. It serves as a guide to ECOWAS-appointed mediators, special envoys and members of the Council of the Wise and contributes to the professionalization of mediation practice in the region. In addition to the Mediation Guidelines, ECOWAS has a Dialogue and Mediation Curriculum, which is mainly used for training of relevant actors on the art and diplomacy of mediation.
- d. **ECOWAS Youth Plan and Strategic Action Plan 2010.** which includes the ECOWAS Volunteer Programme, the ECOWAS Humanitarian programme, and the ECOWAS Programme for capacity building for displaced youth.
- e. **Regional Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security (2010):** to aims to improve women’s participation in the prevention of conflicts in ECOWAS countries; protect women and girls in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations; and ensure equal participation of men and women in peace, security and reconstruction processes in post-conflict situations.<sup>34</sup>

34 The Dakar Declaration and ECOWAS Plan of Action for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in West Africa, September 2010.

- f. **ECOWAS Gender and Election Strategic Framework:** aims “to improve the integration of gender equality perspectives in political parties’ governance processes and systems; enhance the role of national electoral stakeholders; and support gender dimension in the activities in the electoral process”<sup>35</sup>. It is accompanied by an Action Plan for the period 2017-2020.

## ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

- a. **ECOWARN:** The regional Peace and Security Observation System is an early warning tool for monitoring and reporting on conflicts in West Africa. Its core tasks include collecting and analyzing data and making assessment on threats to security, broadly defined to include issues of political stability and human security in the region and issuing warnings or alerts about them. Its revised list of 66 indicators are categorized along five thematic areas, namely security, crime and criminality, governance and human rights, environment, and health (in particular pandemics). The early warnings issued in each of these areas are presented to the relevant sectoral ministries in Member States. Gender is mainstreamed into all five thematic sectors. ECOWARN relies on both open sources, including the Africa Media Monitor, and a system of field monitors in each country. ECOWARN now has 77 field monitors in the 15 Member States, consisting of five (5) each in fourteen countries and seven (7) in Nigeria. One of the monitors in each country is a representative of civil society, from WANEP. ECOWARN field monitors no longer include representatives of Member States, instead it hires independent experts drawn mainly from the academia and research institutions.

ECOWARN produces six reports, namely (1) Daily Highlights; (2) Weekly Situation Reports; (3) Monthly Situation Reports; (4) Early Warning Alerts; (5) Thematic Reports; (6) Policy Briefs. ECOWARN convenes a meeting of its analysts in its Situation Room every morning to discuss the Daily highlights and explore their policy implications. Its reports are shared with various categories of stakeholders. The Daily Highlights are distributed to the general public. The Weekly

35 ECOWAS Gender and Election Strategic Framework, 2017.

Situation Reports is restricted to a targeted audience of relevant stakeholders. The Monthly Situation Reports, Early Warning Alerts and Thematic Reports may be shared with officials of relevant ministries or departments in Member States, while the Policy Briefs are intended mainly for the President of the Commission who may decide to share with them with senior government officials of relevant member states.

- b. **Mediation and Facilitation:** ECOWAS has established a mechanism for preventive diplomacy and mediation, which includes the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Mediation and Security Council, the Council of the Wise, Special Representatives of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Member States and various special envoys and facilitators.

These mediation organs and structures are all backstopped by the Division in the ECOWAS Commission called the Mediation Facilitation Division. The Division also provides technical support to the various mediators, conciliators and special envoys; supports development of mediation knowledge management system and resources for ECOWAS such as the handbook on mediation guidelines earlier mentioned as well as an ECOWAS mediation roster and standard operating procedures. The Division also supports capacity building and has held training courses on mediation and negotiation for senior staff of the ECOWAS Commission, special envoys and permanent representatives of the President of the Commission, members of the Council of the Wise and staff of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs from some of its Member States.

- c. **The ECPF Secretariat:** In recognition of the need to create awareness and sensitize Member States on the ECPF, an ECPF Secretariat was established in the Political Affairs Directorate and entrusted with the task of follow-up on the implementation of the ECPF.
- d. **Elections Monitoring and Observation:** ECOWAS Long-Term Observer Missions (L-TOM) is usually composed of experts from various fields including conflict prevention, gender, legal affairs, media and security. The team is deployed for 45 days, covering the period before, during and after the

elections. The main functions of the L-TOM are to prepare the analysis of each national electoral situation, highlight the progress and challenges on the national electoral preparations for the Head of the Electoral Mission, and support preparations for the work of the Short-Term Observer Mission. ECOWAS deployed its first L-TOM to Guinea-Bissau in 2014, Nigeria in 2015, Liberia in 2017, and Sierra Leone in 2018. Given the build-up of tensions in most of these countries in the lead to the elections, the deployment of the L-TOM in these countries was generally viewed as an important contributory factor to reducing pre and post elections violence in the countries concerned. ECOWAS has also deployed L-TOM for elections in Guinea and Mali. To sustain this process, ECOWAS supported the establishment of the West African Electoral Commission Network (ECONEC) with the assistance of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA).

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

The political will and commitment of its Member States remains a vital resource for preventing conflicts; and consequently, remains a key resource required for ensuring in early action to prevent conflicts in the ECOWAS region. Related to this is the need for better coordination between actors. For instance, it was observed that there is a significant overlap between the Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessment conducted in ECOWAS Member States and the AU Country Structural Vulnerability Assessment and Country Structural Vulnerability and Mitigation Strategy, as these identical processes tend to increase the administrative and technical burden on Member States. There is therefore a need to harmonize these processes by either having a unified or consolidated framework for the two assessments or by undertaking both assessments during the same period, as to minimize the technical and administrative costs on Member States.

Regarding financial resources, ECOWAS remains relatively highly dependent on donors to fund many components of its conflict prevention work. This is partly because the community levy of 0.5 percent import charges agreed by Member States to fund the work of the Commission has not been paid regularly by most of its countries; and the 0.5 percent of the community levy that was also decided to be allocated to The Peace Fund has not been realized.



A recent mapping of donor support for its peace and security programme revealed the state of ECOWAS dependence on financial assistance from external sources such as the EU. For instance, as part of its fourth phase of the Danish Africa Programme for Peace, Denmark allocated US\$6 million to ECOWAS for the period 2018-2021, to support implementation of its ECPF, mediation and facilitation, and maritime security programmes. The work of the ECPF Secretariat and the Mediation Facilitation Division have also been supported through a grant from DANIDA since 2014. Germany's €71 million support for the police programme in Africa includes support to ECOWAS on strengthening capacities to prevent terrorism, fight smuggling and trafficking in Mali and Niger. Germany also seconded a military adviser to the ECOWAS Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department. The EU allocated €250 million for peace, security and regional stability in Africa as part of its regional indicative Programme for 2014-2020 and ECOWAS is one of the beneficiaries (though information on the exact allocation to ECOWAS was unavailable). In addition, France provided €221,000 for deployment of a French military adviser to the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, as well as for military and language training to ECOWAS staff. Switzerland provided US\$ 200,000 per year from 2010-2016, encompassing technical and financial support, for the civilian component of the ECOWAS Standby Force. Sweden has provided financial support in the amount of US\$15.35 million for ECOWAS peace and security work<sup>36</sup>.

USA has allocated US\$ 70 million for the period 2015-2019 to support ECOWAS' Early Warning Directorate in the implementation of its Early Warning and Response Partnership Programme. This support is for the establishment of the National Centre for the Coordination of the Response Mechanisms (NCCRM) in five pilot countries: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Mali.

On staffing and human resource capacity, ECOWAS has some constraints. While DANIDA pays for the three and four staff respectively in the ECPF Secretariat and the Mediation and Facilitation Division, both are still considered understaffed. ECOWARN has only five analysts to cover the 15 Member States and requires a staff strength that is at least double this number to effectively cover the region. Two out of the five analysts and the two Situation Room officers are on donor contracts

which have expired. ECOWARN would need financial support for two analysts at P3/P4 level, and for the two Situation Room officers at P2/P3 level. In addition, though ECOWAS is currently developing a database of the experts it has trained in Mediation and Facilitation, the organization does not have a Roster of Experts in Mediation and Facilitation. To develop and maintain a roster of experts in mediation and facilitation, ECOWAS needs at least one officer at P3 level.

National human rights institutions are not submitting reports on timely basis to the ECOWAS Commission and their capacity remain sketchy relative to the magnitude of tasks entrusted to them. To advance its work on human rights and governance, the Commission needs to engage a Human Rights Officer at P3 level to collate and evaluate reports submitted by the national human rights institutions; a Business and Human Rights officer at P5 level to work on the intersecting issues of private sector, human rights and corporate social responsibility; a Decentralization of Governance Process officer at P5; and an Evaluation Officer at the P3 level to monitor and evaluate governance trends; and an Anti-Corruption Officer at P2 level to monitor and report on anti-corruption efforts by Member States.

The Electoral Assistance Division has a single professional staff; and requires at least three additional staff, to be assigned as follows: one staff dedicated to monitoring elections at P3 level, a second staff to support capacity building work of national electoral management bodies at P3 level, and a third staff for documentation and policy at P2 level. The Small Arms and Light Weapons Division also needs three additional staff: one legal officer at P4 level, one Information and Technology Specialist at P3 level, and One Specialist at P3 level to strengthen its work. Currently, the staffing strength includes the Head of Division, one advocacy and communications officer (who will retire in April 2019), one physical stockpile management officer (whose donor-funded contract expires in October 2019), and two specialists.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

Some of ECOWAS' partnership arrangements on conflict prevention are outlined below.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

ECOWAS currently has internal consultative and collaborative arrangements for its

36 ECOWAS Peace and Security: Donor Landscape, 17 April 2018

work, though this is somewhat ad hoc. The three directorates in the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, namely: ECOWARN, Political Affairs and Regional Security and Peacekeeping meet on a weekly basis to review trends and developments that might impact on peace and security. The three directorates also undertake periodic joint analysis on particular country or thematic issues, including preparation of joint thematic papers and undertaking joint missions. For example, the ECOWARN Directorate and the Humanitarian Affairs Directorate (in the Department of Social Affairs) prepared a joint thematic paper on floods in Sierra Leone and undertook a joint mission to the country to assess the situation.

#### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

ECOWAS collaborates extensively with several RECs on a variety of programmes, including on experiential learning exchange. For example, EAC staff have undertaken a “benchmarking” visit to ECOWAS to compare the activities of the two RECs and learn from ECOWAS early warning and conflict prevention experience. Staff from the Regional Mechanism for East African Standby Force (EASF) also visited ECOWAS to learn about ECOWARN. ECOWAS and ECCAS are in the process of signing an MoU and are also working on a regional risk and vulnerability assessment in the Lake Chad region. In

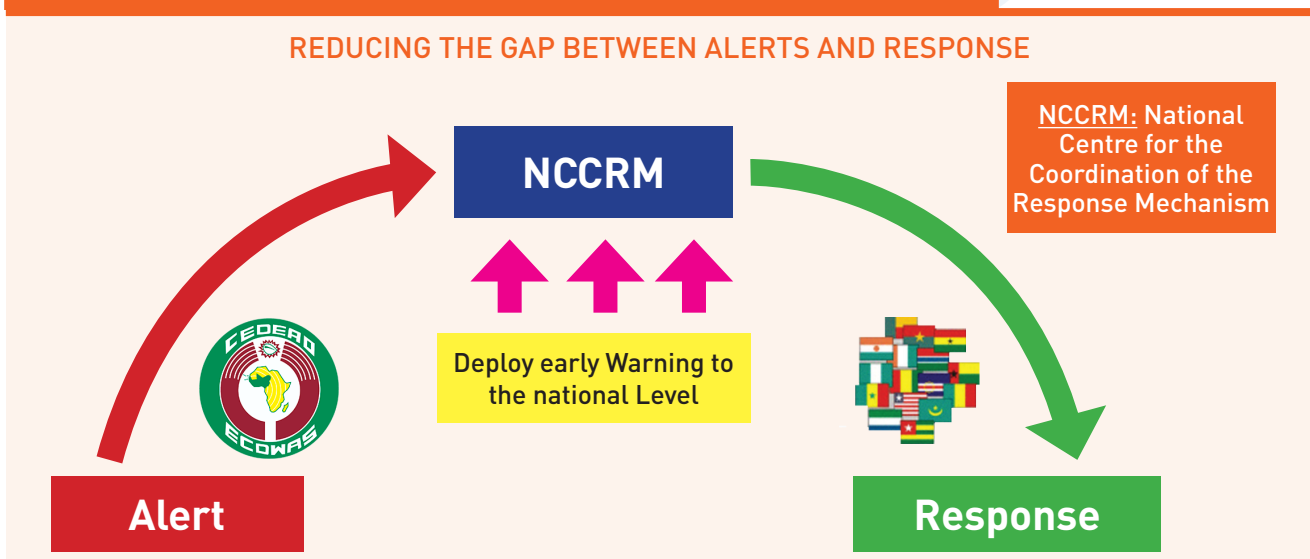
pursuance of this, a retreat was held in Dakar in September 2017 with representatives of the AU, ECOWAS, ECCAS and partners like USAID, UNOWAS and UNOCA to review and decide on actions for the regional risk and vulnerability assessment in the Lake Chad region. ECOWAS, UNOWAS and the Mano River Union worked together on the 2017 and 2018 elections in Liberia and Sierra Leone respectively, to undertake both pre-elections and elections observation missions.

ECOWAS highlighted two main areas for strengthening the collaboration between RECs. One is that the RECs should reinforce their existing cooperation taking place under the auspices of AU, in areas ranging from early warning to the conduct of vulnerability assessments. Two, is for RECs to explore opportunities for enhance dialogue on common challenges and jointly devise measures for overcoming these. In this respect, ECOWAS seeks to continue to increase experiential learning and cross-fertilization with the other RECs.

#### ■ Cooperation with the African Union Commission

ECOWAS and the AUC have undertaken a number of joint interventions, including supporting various political processes in the region. At a trilateral level, ECOWAS, the AUC and UNOWAS have adopted harmonized

**FIGURE 15: Rationale for the ECOWAS NCCRMs**



positions on several political developments in the West Africa region, issuing joint statements on a number of these.

On mediation, staff of the ECOWAS Mediation Facilitation Division have undertaken working and exchange visits to the AUC to share experiences and deepen collaboration on joint mediation initiatives between the ECOWAS Commission and the AUC. This has improved coherence and minimized duplication of efforts in certain country situations

#### ■ **Partnerships with the United Nations System**

ECOWAS has an elaborate partnership with the United Nations, notably through UNOWAS. The two institutions have a cooperation agreement and joint plan of action. ECOWAS also engages other United Nations entities, including UNESCO and UNICEF in organizing the Human Rights Day. The Network of National Human Rights Institutions (NNHRI) in the ECOWAS region was established with the support of the West Africa Office of OHCHR. Furthermore, ECOWAS has existing MoUs with both the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office and United Nations Development Programme. The latter was signed on 11 July 2017.

#### ■ **Partnerships with other International Organizations**

As already outlined above, ECOWAS receives significant financial and technical support from several bilateral and multilateral partners to operationalize the different components of its conflict prevention framework.

#### ■ **Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflicts**

ECOWAS has established institutional arrangements for engaging CSOs on conflict prevention. It convenes a stakeholders' consultations on conflict prevention with civil society and youth; and has since 2004 formalized the relations of cooperation between its ECOWARN and WANEP through an MoU that allows WANEP make contributions to its early warning system. ECOWAS has other established platforms for engaging the media and traditional and religious leaders. In 2016, it convened a sensitization awareness workshop on the ECPF in Abuja with journalists,

themed "Strengthening Media Awareness on Conflict Prevention in West Africa". A key recommendation from the workshop was to create a network of journalists to raise awareness on conflict prevention and undertake appropriate follow-up and tracking of success stories on peacebuilding in Member States.

In the context of the preparations for the March 2018 elections in Sierra Leone, ECOWAS and the EU organized an "Interactive Engagement on Dialogue and Mediation for Faith-Based, Traditional and Community Peace Actors in Sierra Leone", from 28 February to 3 March 2018. The meeting underscored the important role these actors can play to "foster confidence building and contribute to the establishment of networks between the community and faith-based peace actors and some of the duty bearers within national institutions to facilitate easy communication in times of challenges"<sup>37</sup>.

With respect to the private sector, ECOWAS convened a conference on leveraging the power of the private sector in conflict prevention in West Africa in September 2017 in Abuja, Nigeria. The conference examined the ecosystem for conflict prevention in West Africa, made a business case for private sector involvement, discussed the private sector and corporate social responsibility, and proposed a framework for private sector contribution to conflict prevention in West Africa and opportunities for sustaining a thriving business environment. A major conclusion of the conference was that business enterprises can make difference in especially post-conflict settings by supporting infrastructure development and providing the necessary technical and financial support to jump start the economy.

## **5. ECOWAS' support to Member States on Conflict Prevention**

ECOWAS is currently assisting its Member States in decentralizing the early warning system at national levels, through the establishment of the NEWRMs and NCCRMs. The NCCRM aim to develop

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<sup>37</sup> Report of the Interactive Engagement on Dialogue and Mediation for Faith-Based, Traditional and Community Peace Actors in Sierra Leone 28th February – 3rd March 2018, page 3.

Member States capacities to examine reports from ECOWARN and advise on appropriate policy responses, help bridge the gaps between early warning and response, and assist to formulate indicators to highlight emerging threats to peace and security in each country. Each NCCRM will have a board, chaired by either the Vice President or Prime Minister of the country. A watch-dog Group consisting of CSOs will be established to help review and validate the reports to be issued by NCCRM.

Consistent with Article 35 of its Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance of 21 December 2001, ECOWAS has developed human rights indicators to guide Member States in the preparation of their national reports, established the NNHRI and facilitated the creation of a Network of Civil Society Organizations Human Rights Monitors (NCSOHRM). The NCSOHRM assists in validating national reports prepared by the national human rights commissions. A report on the state of human rights in the region, as submitted by the various national human rights bodies is collated by ECOWAS and shared with various organs of ECOWAS including the Mediation and Security Council, and the ECOWAS Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Child Protection. There is however no interface on human rights questions between the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Court of Justice.

ECOWAS also work with Member States to curb the flow of small arms and light weapons in the region. Its support in this area is aligned with the broader objectives of both the Arms Trade Treaty and the AU initiative on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020. Consistent with the provisions of these various instruments, the focus of ECOWAS work is in helping Member States regulate arms transfers, strengthen border control to curb illicit arms flow, support stockpile management, and create a database and register of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

ECOWAS underscored the following:

- The criticality of predictable and sustained funding for conflict prevention, including for implementation of the ECPF Plan of Actions.
- The importance of early deployment of mediators to potential crises hotspots, backed with full technical support to ensure the success.
- Need to further strengthen inter-departmental coordination on conflict prevention, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and maximise scarce resources.
- Need to strengthen the 'early response' component of early warning, which was identified as a major weakness of its early warning system.<sup>38</sup> This provided the impetus for the 2015 decision of the Heads of State and Government to establish the NEWRMs, which will be supported by the NCCRMs.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Capacity

For ECOWAS, the following areas are crucial for strengthening its conflict prevention work:

- **Enhance national early warning and conflict prevention capacities:** including through coherent and sustained efforts to create awareness on the ECPF and review progress on its implementation in Member States. Consistent with the components of the ECPF, greater focus should be placed on interventions that adopt a human security approach and aim to address governance deficits and other structural causes of in the subregion.
- **Identification and training of peace actors to support the NCCRMs:** the creation of the NCCRMs provides a vehicle for strengthening the national early warning and early response capacities in Member States, as well as allows for greater involvement of CSOs and other actors. To support this process, ECOWARN, in collaboration with WACSOF, propose to undertake a mapping of the CSOs and peace actors at national and community levels and provide this information with the NCCRMs to enhance early warning response coordination at the national level. To ensure effectiveness it is equally necessary to facilitate and enhance capacity building, as appropriate, for the different CSOs and peace actors engaged in this process.

38 Report on Early Warning System and Response Mechanism Review- Final Report (Early Warning Directorate in Collaboration with Directorate of Political Affairs, Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, 30 November 2012.



- **Improve data generation and analysis for planning medium and long-term structural prevention**, including with respect to implementation of the various ECPF Plan of Actions.
- **Enhancing the role of women and youth in early warning and early response**, consistent with its human security centred approach to conflict prevention.

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# 7

## **Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)**

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## 7. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD)

### 1. Basic Facts

IGAD was established in 1996 succeeding the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) founded in 1986. Its members are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

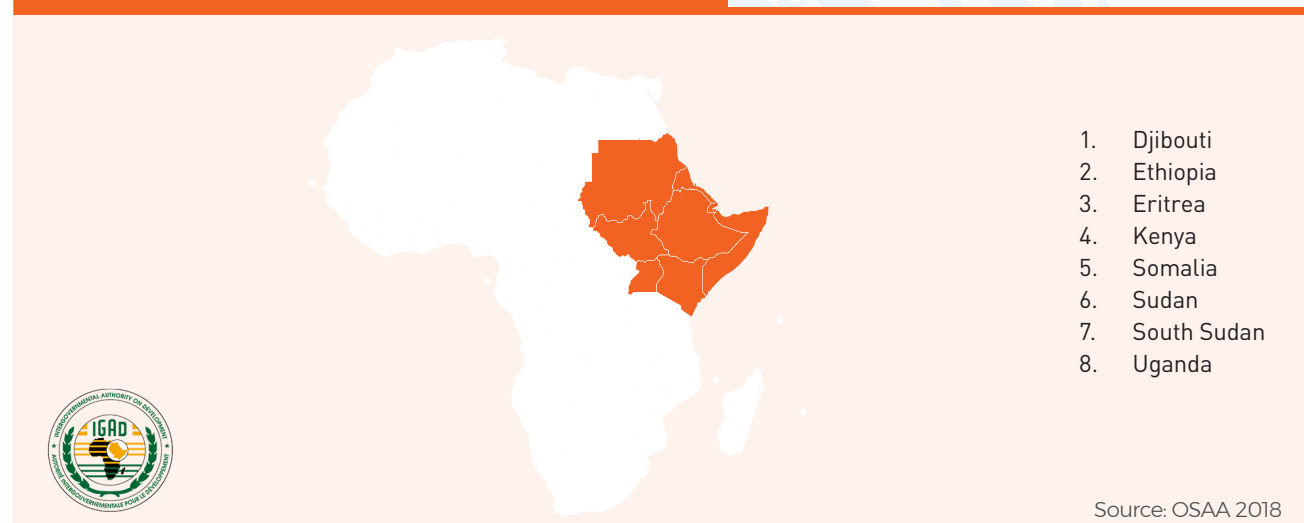
Member States of IGAD are in a very strategic location between the Horn of Africa, Central and Eastern Africa; and as such collectively belong to three other RECs as listed in the table below. The IGAD Secretariat is in Djibouti. Its field

offices include: the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre and the IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development both in Kenya; the IGAD office in South Sudan; and the IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in Ethiopia.

### 2. Geopolitical Context

The IGAD region has had its share of security challenges, which have stifled several potential

**FIGURE 16: IGAD Member States**



**TABLE 8: Representation of IGAD Member States in other RECs**

COUNTRY	CEN-SAD	COMESA	EAC
Djibouti	●	●	
Eritrea	●	●	
Ethiopia		●	
Kenya		●	●
Somalia		●	
Sudan		●	
South Sudan	●		●
Uganda		●	●

avenues of cooperation for several years. Similarly, conflicts on the border between South Sudan and the Sudan, in addition to political conflicts within each, as well as violent extremism and terrorism arising from the activities of groups like Al-Shabab have posed significant challenges for peace and security in the region. IGAD countries also have and continue to experience shared challenges of population displacement and movement whether in search of economic opportunities or as a result of forceful displacement due to conflict, natural disasters and droughts. In addition to its related security challenges linked to the movement of small arms and light weapons, it also places a burden on the coping mechanisms of receiving communities in terms of natural resources such as water and pasture lands and potentially leads to localized conflicts. Migration, piracy, smuggling and trafficking also remain challenges for the region. On a positive note however, the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea has brought a glimmer of hope to the entire region.

According to the AfDB Economic 2018 Outlook for East Africa, some of IGAD's Member States continue to enjoy robust overall economic growth as with recent years, due to "strong domestic private consumption, public investment in infrastructure, growth in light manufacturing, and growth in agriculture, particularly during periods of good rainfall." However, the report also notes that some of the region's "commodity-dependent economies, notably South Sudan, have suffered from weak commodity prices coupled with fragility and insecurity". According to the World Bank 2018 Doing Business Report, IGAD Member States have undertaken reforms to enable entrepreneurship and improve the business environment. Some of the measures taken include merging procedures to ease cross border trade (Uganda), facilitating access to electricity and credit (Kenya) and simplifying tax payment systems (Ethiopia). On the other hand, the report mentions that there are still procedural hurdles including bribery and increased business registration fees.

Agriculture and pastoralism are the economic mainstays of the region, constituting the basis for export and food supply and employing over 80% of the region's population. Recurrent droughts make the region one of the most vulnerable regions on the continent to climatic variations and desertification. "Land and environmental degradation are the most serious threats to the region as both affect its agricultural production and economic growth.

Such degradation does not only contribute to food insecurity, famine and poverty, but may equally fuel social, economic and political tensions that can cause conflicts, wider poverty and misery" (IGAD, 2018).

IGAD Member States are among the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs). According to the UNDP 2016 Human Development Report, other than Kenya, the rest of the IGAD Member States have low human development indices, including lower mean years of schooling, high maternal mortality rates and gender inequalities. Youth unemployment rates and economic exclusion in the region are both high, increasing the vulnerability of especially youth to recruitment by terrorists and extremists. According to the World Bank's data on mobile phone subscriptions, as of 2016-2017 access to mobile technology was highest in Kenya with 86 people out of 100 having access. Access was lowest in Eritrea and South Sudan where 10.2 and 12.0 out of 100 respectively had mobile subscriptions. The UNDP 2016 Human Development Report also indicated that widespread distribution of mobile phone technology in some parts of the region accelerated financial inclusion with mobile bank accounts. Kenya leads the way at 58% access, followed by Somalia and Uganda at 35%. Access to technology has also enabled mobilization on social media to hold governments accountable and expose localized injustices.

There has been progress on regional integration, particularly on physical infrastructure development and integration in terms of electricity distribution and rail and road connectivity, which is a crucial issue its land-locked economies of Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda. According to IGAD's 2016 "State of the Region" report, there are more than thirteen transport corridors in the region, in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somaliland, South Sudan and Sudan. Significant progress has also been in the implementation of the IGAD Free Trade Area, which aims to reduce travel restrictions and facilitate movement, the right of establishment of business and employment, residence, the acquisition of work permits, and pastoral mobility. Notable of which was the announcement by Ethiopia to offer visas on arrival to African citizens.

### 3. IGAD: Organizational Structure

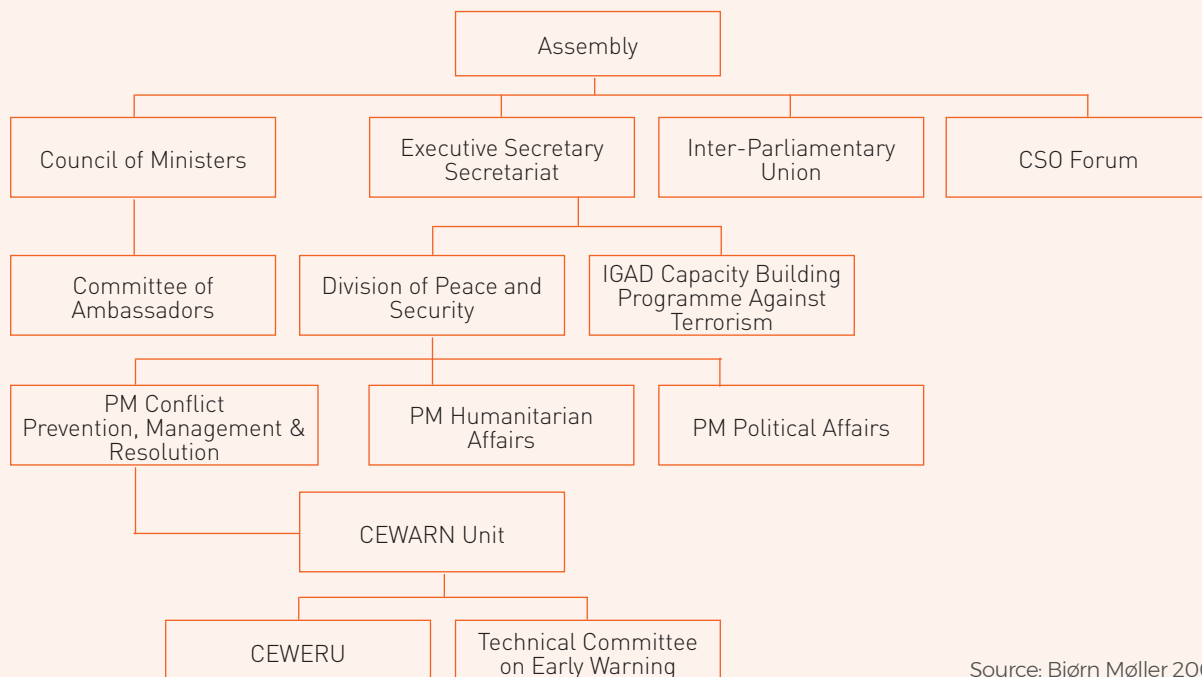
IGAD's governance structures, as established by the Agreement of its Heads of State and Government of 21 March 1996, that transformed IGADD into

IGAD include: the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Committee of Ambassadors and the Secretariat.

The responsibilities of the IGAD organs are as follows:

- a. **Assembly of Heads of State and Government:** is the supreme policy making organ of IGAD. It determines the objectives, guidelines and programmes for IGAD and meets at least once regularly each year in ordinary sessions. The Assembly can also meet unlimited times extraordinarily when there are matters of general interests to be discussed or to facilitate a process that requires the Heads of State and Government to remain seized of the matter. A Chairman is elected from the Member States on a rotational basis.
- b. **The Council of Ministers:** is composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and one other Focal Minister designated by each Member State. The Council formulates policy, serves as the regulatory body of IGAD, approves the work programme and annual budget of the Secretariat and is tasked to meet at least
- c. **The Committee of Ambassadors:** is comprised of Ambassadors or Plenipotentiaries of IGAD Member States accredited to the country of IGAD Headquarters. It convenes as often as is needed and to assist the Council of Ministers in discharging its duties and supervising the work of the Secretariat.
- d. **The IGAD Secretariat:** is headed by an Executive Secretary appointed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, for a term of four years, renewable once. The Executive Secretary is assisted by four Directors responsible for: Agriculture and Environment; Economic Cooperation and Social Development; Peace and Security; and Administration and Finance. The Secretariat assists Member States in formulating regional projects in priority areas, facilitates the coordination and harmonization

**FIGURE 17: IGAD Organogram**



Source: Bjørn Møller 2009<sup>39</sup>

39. Møller, Bjørn [2009] Africa's sub-regional organisations: seamless web or patchwork? Crisis States Research Centre working papers series 2 (56). Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.

of development policies, mobilizes resources to implement regional projects and programmes approved by the Council and reinforces national infrastructures necessary for implementing regional projects and policies. In addition to its administrative and policy functions, the Secretariat is tasked “to assist the policy organs in their work relating to political and humanitarian affairs”.

#### 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention in IGAD

IGAD’s institutional mechanism for conflict prevention, including its mandates and policy frameworks, strategy documents, tools, resources and partnerships are outlined in the following sections.

##### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

IGAD derives its mandate for conflict prevention from the following key policy instruments:

- a. **The 1986 Agreement establishing IGADD:**  
The original mandate of “IGADD” was to mitigate the effects of the recurrent droughts and other natural disasters that afflicted the region with famine, ecological degradation and widespread social and economic hardships. Of note, drought and ecological degradation are among the most pressing and persistent structural challenges confronting the region.
- b. **Letter of Instrument to Amend the IGADD Charter/Agreement:** With new emerging political and socio-economic challenges in the region, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, meeting in Addis Ababa in April 1995, resolved to revitalize IGADD and expand the areas of cooperation among between Member States under IGAD in three priority areas: (a) food security and environmental protection; (b) economic cooperation, regional integration and social development; and (c) peace, security and humanitarian affairs. With this expanded mandate IGAD had an objective to “promote peace and stability in the sub-region and create a mechanism within the sub-region for prevention, management and resolution of inter-and intra-State conflicts through dialogue”. Specifically, the 1996 Agreement’s article 18A on Conflict Resolution committed

Member States to “act collectively to preserve peace, security and stability which are essential prerequisites for economic development and social progress”.

- c. **The 2002 Protocol on the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism:** Heads of State and Government at the 8<sup>th</sup> IGAD Summit in Khartoum that held on 23 November 2000 adopted the Khartoum Declaration calling for the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) for IGAD Member States. Subsequently, the Council of Ministers adopted the Protocol on the Establishment of CEWARN for IGAD Member States in Khartoum on 9 January 2002.
- d. **The 2009 IGAD Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and the IGAD Convention on Extradition:** provide IGAD Member States a legal framework for cooperation in combating cross-border and transnational organized crimes.

Additionally, IGAD’s work on conflict prevention is also informed by relevant policy instruments of the AU, including on the APSA and CEWS.

##### ■ Key Strategy Documents

IGAD’s work also derives from the following strategy documents:

- a. **The Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution programme:** which addresses political and security issues, including follow up of peace initiatives, counterterrorism, small arms and light weapons, the East African Standby Brigade, conflict early warning and response, civil society and the inter-parliamentary union.
- b. **Regional Action Plan for Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008):** comprising strategic actions aimed at achieving the inclusion of women in decision-making related to prevention, management and resolution of conflict; and preventing and eradicating sexual violence in situations of armed conflict.
- c. **IGAD’s Gender Policy Framework for 2012-2020:** which identified eight priority

areas for action: Gender and Agriculture; Gender and the Environment/Climate Change; Gender and Regional Integration; Gender and Health; Gender and Social Development; Gender, Peace and Security; Gender and Humanitarian Affairs; and Gender Responsive Institutional Innovations.

- d. **The 2015 IGAD Regional Water Resources Policy:** “commits Member States to cooperate within the framework of a regional water resources policy with a view to promote agreements and institutional arrangements for the equitable and reasonable utilization, protection and conservation and sustainable management of transboundary/shared water resources in the IGAD region”.
- e. **The IGAD Strategic Framework for 2016-2020:** includes commitments to pursue youth inclusion and advancement in social development, and peace and security. The Framework acknowledges that the “region is going through rapid and tough new challenges and obstacles including climate change, resource scarcity, economic shocks from global economic crises, security threats, fragility and conflicts among others”; and identifies the following six priority areas: agriculture, livestock, fisheries and food security; natural resources and environment protection; regional economic cooperation and integration; social development; peace and security; and gender affairs.
- f. **The IGAD Peace and Security Strategy for 2016-2020: sets out five strategic objectives for the period, namely:** conflict prevention, management and resolution; trans-national security threats; governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights; post-conflict reconstruction and development; humanitarian affairs; and gender in peace and security.
- g. **The IGAD Informal Cross Border Trade – Cross Border Security Governance Policy Framework:** that aims to promote informal cross-trade and cross-border security governance, while tackling transnational organized crimes.

## ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

- a. **Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN):** is mandated to receive and share information concerning potentially violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD region; undertake and share analyses of that information; develop case scenarios and formulate options for response; share and communicate information analyses and response options; carry out studies on specific types and areas of conflict in the IGAD region. CEWARN comprises of several operational methods and tools including the CEWARN Reporter - a custom-made software that enables CEWARN track, categorize and analyse large volumes of conflict early warning data from IGAD's Member States. Of note, the CEWARN reporter tool has been adopted by the AU CEWS and other RECs.

CEWARN relies on both open sources and a system of field monitors to collect its information and data, which are clustered around five thematic areas: security, governance, environment, economy and socio-cultural issues, with gender as a cross-cutting issue. CEWARN engages CSOs as data collectors; and these CSO-based field monitors are part of the CEWARN Information Collection Network and the CEWERUs Local Peace Committees. The CEWERUs are in located in relevant government ministries or departments of IGAD Member States and consist of a steering committee that includes representatives of central and provincial governments, members of parliament, police, military, academia, think tanks, women, faith-based organizations and CSOs, as well as of local peace committee that consists mainly of local community representatives and reflects the composition of the National CEWERUs.

CEWARN produces incident reports, which is password-accessible online to authorized persons; situation reports, which is country-focused and issued by the CEWERUs; and policy briefs produced for policy makers. CEWARN also works with specialized national research institutes to produce these reports.

- b. **Conflict Sensitivity and Prevention Toolkit:** was jointly developed by CEWARN and



IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development to support conflict sensitivity mainstreaming into its projects. IGAD staff have received training on the use of the toolkit, which includes a component on monitoring and evaluation.

- c. **Mediation and Preventive Diplomacy:** IGAD established its MSU in 2012 and has been involved in several high-level mediation efforts in the region, including in South Sudan. The responsibilities of the MSU are outlined in the resolution of the Committee of Ambassadors of September 2012 establishing the MSU. This includes to establish: (a) a roster of IGAD mediators, which is comprised of (21) members, (3) nominees from each Member State of which at least one-third must be women; (b) a roster of technical experts to serve as standby team to support the mediators; and (c) develop IGAD's blue print documents such as the Strategic Guidelines on Mediation, Mediation Protocol and Mediation Principles.
- d. **Good Offices of the Executive Secretary:** IGAD's Executive Secretary has good offices function for preventive diplomacy that is drawn from the roster of IGAD mediators, the standby team of experts or any prominent personality from the Member States, as deemed suitable. Related to this, IGAD established an Offices of Special Envoys for South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia to head and facilitate mediation processes in these countries. The Office in Somalia assisted the Somali Government in the restoration of the Somali state, capacity building and in facilitating dialogue between communities and the Somalia Government. The Office in South Sudan was established by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Extra-Ordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2013, to support the IGAD-led mediation process in the country. The summit appointed three Special Envoys: Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin of Ethiopia, General Lazaro Sumbeiywo of Kenya and General Mohammed Ahmed Moustafa El Dabi of Sudan to lead the mediation process.

These Special Envoys are assisted by a team of political and technical advisors based in the IGAD Secretariat. The IGAD-led mediation process in South Sudan receives political,

technical and financial support from IGAD Member States, the IGAD Secretariat, the AU, the United Nations and other development partners. The Office in Sudan was established to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which was brokered by IGAD between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan's People's Liberation Movement. The Special Envoy for Sudan also represents IGAD in the mediation process led by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan, which was later renamed the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan.

- e. **Electoral Assistance and Elections**  
**Observation:** IGAD deploys short-term elections observation missions to Member States. IGAD Elections Observer Missions are meant to facilitate the gradual development of a democratic election culture in the region. It deploys observers that have been properly trained and always consists of members of its MSU in order to identify likely conflicts and recommend timely interventions.
- f. **The IGAD Women Peace Forum:** This forum consists of three women representatives each from IGAD Member States. They represent the executive, legislature and civil society and are tasked to advocate for the promotion of women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes as stipulated in the UNSC resolution 1325.
- g. **The IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism** was established as a tool to promote regional sharing of good practices and lessons learnt in preventing and countering violent extremism initiatives with the aim to bring together actors from across the region who are involved in preventing and countering violent extremism in the region to ensure an inclusive and holistic approach, as well as strengthen the capacity of communities at risk of radicalization.

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

Resources for IGAD's peace and security programmes and interventions are derived from four main sources: budgetary allocations by the Member States, the EU Trust Fund on Peace and Security, the Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA) where several



other partners contribute, and from other partners such as USAID and GIZ who are part of the Joint Programming Arrangement (JPA). Currently, the EU Trust Fund on Peace and Security, created in 2018, has a commitment of €40 million; and covers activities relating to the MSU, good offices and preventive diplomacy, CEWARN and the Gender Affairs Programme.

The JFA was established in 2012 by a consortium of donors including Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. It has two financing facilities: one for peace and security and another for institutional capacity development, with an annual contribution of US\$8 million and US\$4 million respectively. Due to the establishment of the larger EU Trust Fund in 2018, interest has waned in the JFA and it might be discontinued. The JPA on its part is supported by partners such as USAID and GIZ who are not part of the JFA.

Furthermore, IGAD has a Rapid Response Fund and a Mediation Fund. The former, created by CEWARN to support its early response actions, is mainly financed by donors. This Fund has three windows of support, namely: emergence response, regular response and capacity building. The fund is deployed once the relevant national institution assesses that, based on early warning information and analyses, early response action is required. The Mediation Fund is financed by the EU and the Austrian Development Agency, as part of the cooperation agreement signed with IGAD in March 2018. In addition, 10% of the annual contributions of its Member States is to be earmarked for the Mediation Fund. The fund covers costs associated with deploying mediators, and the good offices of the Executive Secretary.

In terms of staffing and funding for specific programs, there were several capacity needs identified. The Gender Affairs Programme, which reports directly to Office of the Executive Secretary, has since 2010 been unable to convene the ministerial meeting on women's affairs owing to lack of resources. The Gender Affairs Programme currently has two staff: a programme manager and a programme officer (serving on a consultancy basis). The Agriculture and Environment Division, that works to prevent and respond to conflicts and disputes arising from water resource management issues to drought, environmental protection and food insecurity, is also plagued by significant lack of resources both for programme activities and staffing. IGAD needs significant financial assistance and additional staff to support the process of developing

and facilitating the evolving Regional Water Protocol and for convening both the relevant ministerial and expert meetings on water resources.

The functioning of the CEWARN as well as of IGAD's preventive diplomacy, good offices and mediation interventions and support is equally constrained by the lack of predictable resources. While the Mediation Fund was established as a remedial measure, the implementation of the directives of Cooperative Agreement regarding contributions to the Mediation Fund in the annual budget of Member States remains a challenge.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

The following section highlights IGAD's key partnerships and collaborative arrangements on conflict prevention.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

IGAD has several mechanisms for coordination and collaboration on peace and security. One of which is the Committee of Directors chaired by the Executive Secretary that meets regularly to review overall trends and developments in the region. This provides an opportunity to identify and reflect on potential security threats and propose measures to proactively address them in order to prevent an eruption of conflict. Additionally, IGAD convenes an annual secretariat-wide strategy development session, usually in the period from September-December, to prepare its work plans for the following year. While participation in the Committee of Directors is restricted to Directors, the strategy development sessions include other professional staff and provides an opportunity for collective reflection and strategy building, including on a range of actions to address structural factors and causes of conflict.

There are several interdepartmental consultations and collaboration taking place within IGAD. One example is CEWARN's work with the Department of Economic Cooperation on a Policy Framework on Informal Cross-Border Trade and Cross-Border Security Governance. Another is on climate change, conflict prevention and mitigation and food security, which involves different IGAD programmes such as IGAD's Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC),

### Box 3: Karamoja Communities: A Case Study of Internal Collaboration and Coordination on Conflict Prevention

The Agriculture and Environment Division and CEWARN conducted a joint study titled “Resource Use: A Source of Conflict - The Case of Karamoja Communities of Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda”. The study led to the development of a project on “Regional Integrated and Comprehensive Development Planning for the Karamoja Cluster”. The overall objective of the project is “to improve the livelihoods of pastoralist communities by promoting peace, justice, security and sustainable management of natural resources”. The project is targeted at “reducing the impact of drought on pastoralist communities over the use of natural resources leading to degraded pastures, tree cutting for charcoal production and violent conflict”. The measures taken in the project are aimed at addressing structural sources of conflicts in this region thereby averting potential outbreak of conflict.

IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD), and CEWARN.

#### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

In the context of the MASE programme, IGAD is responsible for the overall coordination as well as for supporting alternative livelihoods through vocational development initiatives and advocacy against piracy and maritime insecurity. It collaborates with FAO on the Alternative Livelihoods component, as well as with EAC, COMESA and the IOC on other aspects of the programme.

#### ■ Cooperation with African Union Commission

Overall the AUC-IGAD relationship is guided by the MoU signed between the AU and the RECs/RMs in 2008. The AUC and IGAD have collaborated on issues concerning consolidation of peace in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia, spanning a very long period. These collaborative efforts are at the intersection of crisis management and structural conflict prevention. AUC and

IGAD collaboration in South Sudan stretch back to the articulation and adoption of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement which paved the way for independence of the country in 2011. The engagement of the AUC and IGAD was aimed mainly at encouraging both key political stakeholders in South Sudan to converge on a united platform for independence. In 2013, following renewed conflict between factions aligned to the President and his Vice-President, IGAD launched a peace process with the active support and encouragement of the AU that was aimed at revitalizing the peace process. This collaboration is still ongoing. On conflict early warning, AU CEWS collaborates with CEWARN in the areas of technical support, joint analysis and information exchange.

#### ■ Partnerships with the United Nations System

IGAD has a long-standing cooperation with the United Nations system. For example, IGAD and UNDP collaborated in articulating the Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. The strategy

### Box 4: Collaboration between IGAD and the African Union in South Sudan's Mediation

IGAD and AU cooperation in the peace process in South Sudan has been exemplary, as IGAD remained the lead in the mediation process despite the challenges it faced. In collaboration with the AU, IGAD developed the IGAD Plus model, where the process continued to be led by IGAD with support of members from the 5 regions of Africa namely (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa). The participation of IGAD Plus not only advanced the mediation process but also enhanced policy decisions on the way to design the High-Level Revitalization Forum, which resulted in a new agreement signed on September 2018.

### Box 5: Collaboration between IGAD and the African Union in Somalia

In Somalia, both the AU and IGAD supported the peace process that led to the formation of the Transitional Federal Government, which paved the path to the current government. In addition to having a Special Envoy for Somalia, who works closely with the AU, AMISOM and UNSOM as well as the Federal Government of Somalia, IGAD with the support of its Member States, has assisted the Somali Federal Government in developing five important documents in the past seven years. These included the Provisional Federal Constitution of Somalia, ratified by 825 Somali elders in August 2012; the December 2012 Addis Ababa agreement, which promotes Somalia's involvement in the international community and guides IGAD's involvement in Somalia; the 6 Pillar Priority Programme for Somalia, which outlines the Somali Government's main priority areas for development; the IGAD Regional Grand Stabilization Plan, which has subsumed the six pillar plan; and the Somali Government's 2016 Vision, which outlines the process for creating a Somali federal system, removing al-Shabaab, and holding elections in 2016.

acknowledges that “the threat of violent extremism has grown in Eastern Africa, undermining security and development in regional states and the mandate of IGAD <sup>40</sup>... and that extremists are exploiting widespread grievances linked to such structural factors as underdevelopment, poverty, lack of access to education, unemployment, corruption, real or perceived social exclusion, ethnic, national and religious discrimination to radicalize and recruit to violence”. This Strategy, which covers the period 2018-2023, targets groups and drivers of violent extremism and focuses on helping to build the capacity of Member States to develop and implement strategies to counter violent extremism, both by enhancing the capacity of National Counter-Terrorism Units; adopting legislation to address terrorism and extremism; and engaging CSOs, the private sector and youth in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

IGAD and the United Nations also work collaboratively on monitoring and reporting on sanctions regime (arms embargo) that was imposed on Somalia since the collapse of the central government in 1991 and contained in various UNSC resolutions beginning with resolution 733 of 23 January 1992 to resolution 2253 of 17 December 2015. Similarly, IGAD collaborates with the United Nations in monitoring and reporting on the arms embargo imposed on Eritrea. Consequently, IGAD makes twice yearly reporting to the Security Council: an Interim Finding

submitted usually in April, and a Final Report, usually in the period October-December. In addition to submitting these reports, senior officials of IGAD have occasionally been invited to brief the UNSC on the sanction regime, which is a useful tool for deterring and preventing conflict.

In 2015, IGAD and UNDP entered into a framework agreement to collaborate in areas such as joint analysis, information exchange, early warning, mediation, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis management. IGAD and UNDP also have a partnership on building national capacities for conflict prevention, governance and democratization in IGAD Member States.

#### ■ Partnerships with other International Organizations

IGAD receives substantial financial and programmatic support from the EU for its peace and security programmes, especially CEWARN. In 2017, IGAD signed tripartite grant agreements of US\$34.8 million and US\$43.8 million with the AfDB, the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Republic of South Sudan under the Bank's 'Say No To Famine – Short Term Regional Emergency Response Project'. IGAD manages the funds for the both Governments, which is earmarked for the establishment of structures, systems and facilities to respond to drought and mitigate conflicts.

#### ■ Working with Civil society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflicts

40 IGAD (2018): Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, Page 2

IGAD works extensively with CSOs on various components of its peace and security programmes. For instance, its MSU works with ACCORD and the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) to build peacebuilding competences within Member States. Support is also provided to CSOs at national levels in building their capacity for conflict prevention and resolution. In this respect, IGAD implements a Civil Society Drylands Facility (named IGAD CSO Facility) that facility was funded by DANIDA from 2014-2016 to support the work of CSOs on natural resource governance in the drylands with a view to fostering cooperative strategies and avoiding conflict over natural resources. The project focused on enhancing resilience of pastoralist communities to drought and addressing dry land issues at the grassroots level. It reflected the recognition “that non- state actors are also key stakeholders that need to be taken into consideration in tackling emerging challenges affecting the region, such as: irregular migration and forcibly displaced people, biodiversity conservation, conflict prevention and resolution, and preventing violent extremism”. In addition, IGAD has continued to work with CSOs on data collection and analysis in operationalizing the CEWARN Protocol that calls for engagement with CSOs in conflict early warning and response.

Furthermore, IGAD has an established CSOs Forum, which is designed as a platform to standardize engagements of CSOs across the region, identify needed capacities, provide spaces for experience sharing among CSOs and jointly facilitate fundraising for conflict prevention, peace building and reconciliation activities. The status and effective operationalization of the CSOs Forum is however hampered by funding challenges due to donor fatigue and shortfalls of funding from Member States.

At present, IGAD’s collaboration with the private sector in its conflict prevention work is still at initial stages and includes its livestock programs and Global Peace Leadership Conference through which CEWARN has collaborated with the private sector on several joint activities. This includes the National Youth summit held in February 2013 in Nairobi; the Global Peace Leadership Conference held in 2015 in Zanzibar; and the

Global Peace Leadership Conference held in August 2018 in Kampala. In addition, IGAD established an IGAD Business Forum in 2002 to enhance engagement with private sector on policy initiatives in trade and regional integration. So far, the Forum has held five meetings, of which the fifth was held in July 2017 in Mombasa.

As a prospective area of engagement, the IGAD MSU is currently exploring opportunities for collaboration with businesses to enhance investments, through financial commitments, to conflict prevention, including in strengthening and peacebuilding institutions.

## **5. IGAD’s support to Member States on Conflict Prevention**

IGAD’s CEWARN has provided capacity development support to its Member States in many areas. For example, it has supported Member States in establishing their Early Warning Systems; trained staff of the National Early Warning and Response Mechanisms (CEWERUs); provided computers and servers to the Early Warning and Response Mechanisms; and assisted in operationalizing the Situation Rooms. The IGAD Security Sector Programme and the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism have collaborated not only in training relevant officials of its Member States to ensure compliance with international human rights instruments but also engaged various community leaders in activities to promote the rule of law in Member States.

Building on the notion that conflict prevention is the responsibility of Member States, IGAD’s MSU supports relevant national institutions in building and strengthening both institutional and programming capacities on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and reconciliation. MSU provides support for the development of their national infrastructure for peace, formulation and harmonization of normative policies and frameworks, and conduct of assessments to inform the design of appropriate interventions.

The Agriculture and Environment Division, the oldest of all IGAD Divisions, has provided a range of assistance to IGAD Member States, notably in managing the twin challenges of food insecurity and drought. The boldest and current effort to help Member States in addressing these challenges is reflected in the “IGAD Drought Disaster



Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)". Implementation of IDDRSI is undertaken at the country level, but the IGAD Secretariat plays a regional coordinating role.

In the context of implementation of the MASE programme, IGAD has supported the establishment and operationalization of Maritime Security Coordination Committees (MSCC) in Somalia. The functions of the MSCC are monitoring security of Somali maritime resources and development of capacities of access; supporting reforms in maritime security, law enforcement agencies, safety at sea, response and recovery, search and rescue; establishing and monitoring progress of maritime governance structures, development of essential maritime infrastructure, to include ports, customs and immigration; and reporting in six-monthly basis to the Working Group under the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia.

The Peace and Security Division offers regular capacity building support through trainings, such as on peacebuilding to women's groups in Somalia and South Sudan that aims to orient them to adapt to post-conflict situations and support economic recovery activities. The Division has also organized a workshop for media practitioners on the "Role of Media in Elections" in response to the elections-related violence in Kenya in 2007. This raised awareness among media practitioners on their contributions to dousing post-elections tension and crisis in Kenya.

Management of shared water resources is an important issue in the IGAD region. In this respect, IGAD has begun work on articulating a Regional Water Protocol, which will set out principles for management of shared water resources in the region. The measures taken so far have included facilitating study tours for Member States and initiating action on developing a regional water policy. The adoption of the proposed Regional Water Protocol would represent a major milestone in efforts to strengthen the IGAD toolkit for conflict prevention.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

IGAD officials interviewed during this study highlighted the following as some of the key lessons learned in their efforts to institutionalize conflict prevention in the IGAD region:

- **Institutionalization of mediation capacities in the region:** IGAD has a long track record of supporting mediation processes in its Member States. This long history consists of several mediation processes in Somalia, Sudan and recently in South Sudan. Some of the key lessons learned in this respect include the importance of institutionalizing mediation efforts through building mediation structures such as the establishment of IGAD Roster of Mediators and Standby team of experts as well as the development of blueprint documents or guides.
- **Improving collaboration and coordination at different levels:** the IGAD Secretariat stressed that enhanced cooperation and coordination, including on transboundary issues, as well as the willingness and commitment of Member States to proactively respond to early warning information is crucial for effective conflict prevention. There is also recognition of the need for more concerted actions and enhanced interdepartmental collaboration and coordination within IGAD to effectively address cross-cutting challenges across different sectors. The necessity to work collaboratively and systematically with CSOs, as well as with international partners was also identified as an important lesson for advancing IGAD's conflict prevention programmes.
- **Fostering collaboration and partnerships between RECs as well as with the AU and United Nations:** through significant cross-REC collaboration in tackling cross-border and transregional challenges, as well as enhanced cooperation between RECs, the AU and the United Nations in the context of implementation of various frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Agenda 2063 and the UN-AU Joint Frameworks for enhanced partnerships in peace and security, and implementation of Agendas 2030 and 2063.
- **Enhance focus on regional approach to structural prevention:** Given that the nature of conflicts in the IGAD region range from pastoral and territorial disputes, to political and water resources-related tensions, there is need to develop or apply regional cooperation frameworks that have significant structural conflict prevention components. Related to this is a growing awareness that shared vulnerabilities to a range of political, economic, environmental and security threats can offer opportunities

for enhanced cooperation to combat them. For example, a recognition of shared natural resources management challenges, relating to insufficient coordination, transparency and accountability in the implementation and domestication of regionally harmonized policies, offered an opportunity to improve coherence between national policies and the IGAD regional compact, IDDRSI.

- **The redirection of CEWARN's initial focus from pastoral disputes to other sources of conflict in the region:** represents a crucial step in the right direction and a vote of confidence by the Member States in the work of CEWARN. The experience of CEWARN also shows that the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders improve commitment to and ownership of conflict prevention initiatives, making implementation much easier.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening IGAD's Conflict Prevention Capacity

The following were identified as key areas for bolstering IGAD's conflict prevention capacity:

- **Support for infrastructures for peace:** support is required for building and strengthening infrastructures for peace in IGAD Member States. In this context, there is also a need to support long-term investments in peace education through curricula developments as well as awareness creation on conflict prevention, dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes.
- **Funding for IGAD Gender Affairs programme:** funding is needed for implementation of IGAD's gender mainstreaming programmes and projects, including in addressing social exclusion, gender-based violence, practice of harmful traditional norms, unequal access for productive inputs, trafficking and marginalization. Financial and technical support is required for the convening of regular ministerial meetings to review progress in implementation of national plans of actions. The most significant limitation on the work of the Gender Affairs Programme is lack of staff and funding for consultations and programs. The program currently has only two staff members. In addition to need to secure funding for these two existing staff positions, the Programme needs five more professional experts at P4 level to handle issues of gender and climate, gender and agriculture, gender and

economic empowerment, gender and social policy, gender and governance and peace and security.

- **Full operationalization of IGAD's Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction work:** IGAD's Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction programme currently has no staff. At least three professional staff: a programme coordinator (P4 level), a project officer (P3 level) and a project assistant (P2 level) are required to support implementation of the programme. In addition, about US\$500,000 is required annually for programme activities.
- **Full operationalization of the IGAD Security Sector Programme Pillars:** The IGAD Security Sector Programme has four pillars: Counterterrorism and De-radicalization, Maritime Safety and Security, Transnational Organized Crime, and Security Institutions Capacity Building (which includes SSR and DDR). Of the four pillars, only the Counterterrorism and De-radicalization Pillar has two professional staff. The other three pillars require two professional staff each at P3 level.
- **Strengthening conflict prevention capabilities:** The full functioning of CEWARN is hindered by inadequate financial resources, at a time when the scope and scale of its work is expanding. Among other things, CEWARN requires technological tools, including GIS and Statistical Software, to facilitate its analysis of conflict trends. It also needs staffing support for the CEWERUs in each of its Member States. Additionally, at the level of the regional secretariat, CEWARN needs one Policy Advisor at P4 level to strengthen its policy development and engagement, one Conflict Assessment Analyst at P3 level, and a Response Analyst at P3 level to enhance analysis of responses to conflict.
- **Adopting a Regional Water Protocol:** IGAD needs resources to support the process of developing the proposed Regional Water Protocol, in particular for convening relevant Ministerial and expert meetings on water resources. The financial resources for these two activities is estimated at about US\$500,000. In addition, the Division needs to engage a Project Officer at P5 level and Professional expert on water diplomacy at P3 level.
- **Strengthening the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI):**



IGAD also needs a Programme Coordinator at P4 level and a Food and Security Expert at P3 level, both to support the monitoring of the implementation of the AU-NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, in the context of its IDDRSI. To buttress its work in areas of sharing of experience and analysis in food and agricultural production in the region, IGAD needs two database experts at P3 level and two experts on Geographic Information System at P4 level.

- **Strengthening mechanisms for engagement with CSOs on conflict prevention:** IGAD needs to strengthen its collaboration with CSOs including by revitalizing its CSOs' Forum.

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# 8

## **Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)**

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## 8. SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)

### 1. Basic Facts

The creation of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in 1992 was preceded by two momentous events: the formation of the Frontline States in the 1970s which facilitated the liberation struggle and the campaign against the apartheid regime in South Africa; and its eventual transformation into the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980, a forum that was conceived to foster cooperation amongst, and preserve the

independence of, the original nine Member States. Today, SADC's membership is comprised of sixteen Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, DRC, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The SADC Secretariat is in Gaborone, Botswana. In terms of membership in other RECs, SADC countries collectively belong to COMESA, CENSAD, EAC and

**FIGURE 18: SADC Member States**



Table 9: Membership of SADC Countries in other RECs

COUNTRY	COMESA	CEN-SAD	EAC	ECCAS
Angola				●
Botswana				
Comoros	●	●		
Congo, DRC	●			●
Eswatini	●			
Lesotho				
Madagascar	●			
Malawi	●			
Mauritius	●			
Mozambique				
Namibia				
Seychelles				
South Africa				
Tanzania	●		●	
Zambia	●			
Zimbabwe	●			

ECCAS, as highlighted in the table above:

## 2. Geopolitical Context

SADC set for itself several milestones for deepening regional integration among its Member States. These include establishing a free trade area, customs union, common market, and monetary union. It achieved the formation of a free trade area in 2008. SADC is stable and one of the best governed regions in Africa. The latter feature is reflected in the fact that five of the top ten countries with the highest rankings in the 2017 Ibrahim Index of African Governance are in Southern Africa. It is also noteworthy that Southern Africa was the first region on the continent to embrace 'the Third Wave of Democratisation' in the Post-Cold War Era, defined by the manifestation of competitive multiparty democracies. Yet, "Southern Africa is a region of great contrasts ... with income inequality in the Southern African states among the highest in the world"<sup>41</sup>.

SADC countries perform poorly on the UNDP Human Development Index. The 2016 edition of the Human Development Report showed that only two out of the sixteen countries were ranked among the top 70 of the 188 countries surveyed. The region is also confronted with a number of governance-related challenges, reflected among others in disputed electoral outcomes and political crises arising from unconstitutional changes of government. These governance challenges have constituted impediments to the overall objectives of enhancing regional integration and development in the region. In addition, the region faces deficits in human security that is linked to rising transnational organized crimes and gender-based violence.

## 3. SADC: Organizational Structure

The 1992 Treaty establishing the SADC created the following organs, namely: Summit of Heads of State and Government, Council of Ministers, Standing Committees of Senior Officials, a Secretariat and a Tribunal. Following the review of the institutional structures of SADC and the subsequent amendment of the Treaty at the Windhoek Extraordinary Summit in 2001, under the provisions of article 9 of the Treaty Amendment, the following institutions

41 Adriana Lins de Albuquerque and Cecilia Hull Wiklund [2015: "Challenges to Peace and Security in Southern Africa: The Role of SADC" — FOI Studies in African Studies, Swedish Defence Research Agency, December 2015, Page 1.

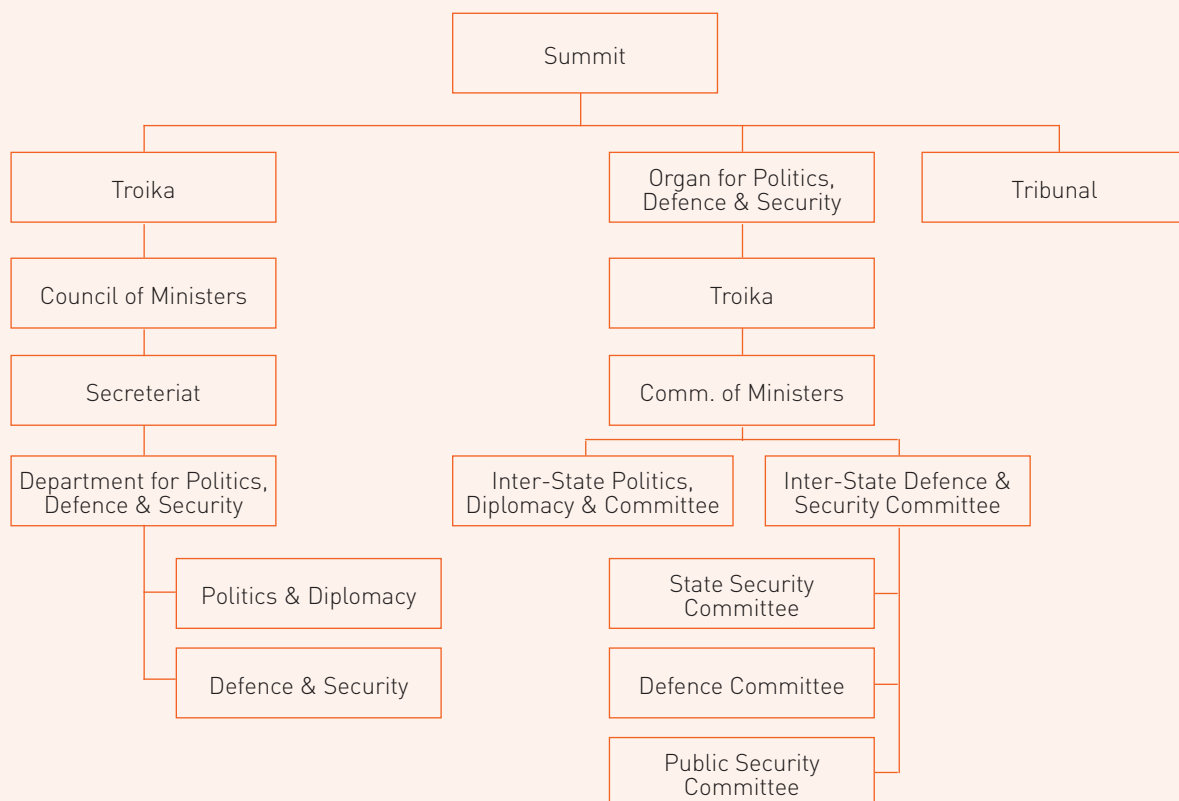
were established: Summit of Heads of State and Government; Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation; Council of Ministers; Sectoral and Cluster Ministerial meetings; Standing Committee of Senior Officials; Secretariat; the Tribunal and SADC National Committees. In the same year, the Heads of State and Government also signed the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, which sets out the institutional arrangements for the coordination of policies and actions in these areas.

The main institutional structures created in the Protocol are the Chairperson of the Organ, the Troika, Ministerial Committee of the Organ, Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee, and Inter-State Defence and Security Committee. A Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) was first prepared in 2003 which articulated the guidelines for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

The responsibilities of the organs and institutions in relation to conflict prevention are as follows:

- a. **Summit of Heads of State and Governments:** is responsible for the overall policy direction and control of functions of the Community. The Summit consists of all SADC Heads of State and Government and is managed on a Troika system that comprises of the current SADC Summit Chairperson, the incoming Chairperson, and the immediate previous Chairperson.
- b. **The Council of Ministers:** consists mostly of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from each Member State and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policies of SADC and proper execution of its programmes; advising the Summit on matters of overall policy and efficient and harmonious functioning and development of SADC; approving policies, strategies and work

Figure 19: SADC Organogram



Source: Bjørn Møller 2009<sup>42</sup>

42 Møller, Bjørn (2009) Africa's sub-regional organisations: seamless web or patchwork? Crisis States Research Centre working papers series 2 (56). Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.

programmes of SADC; and directing, coordinating and supervising the institutions of SADC.

- c. **The Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation:** is among others responsible for managing and resolving inter and intra-state conflicts by peaceful means and for ensuring that State Parties adhere to and enforce all sanctions and arms embargoes imposed on any party by the UNSC.
- d. **The Troika:** functions as the standing bureau of the Organ. There is also the Double Troika which brings together the Troika of the SADC Summit and the Troika of the Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation.
- e. **The Ministerial Committee of the Organ:** comprising of Ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defence, public security, state security and police of member states, is responsible for coordinating the work of the Organ and its structures. The Chairperson may when necessary convene other meetings of the Ministerial Committee at the request of the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee or the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee.
- f. **The Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee:** comprising of ministers responsible for foreign affairs, performs all functions necessary to achieve the objectives of the Organ relating to politics and diplomacy.
- g. **The Inter-State Defence and Security Committee:** comprising of ministers responsible for defence, ministers responsible for public security, and ministers responsible for state security from the State parties, performs such functions as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of the Organ relating to defence and security.
- h. **SADC Tribunal:** is responsible for ensuring adherence to, and proper interpretation of the provisions of, the SADC Treaty and subsidiary instruments, and adjudicates upon disputes referred to it. The Tribunal was suspended at the 2010 SADC Summit. At their Summit in Maputo in 2012 SADC Heads of State and Government addressed the issue of the suspended Tribunal and resolved that a new Tribunal should be negotiated and that its mandate should be confined to interpretation of the SADC Treaty

and Protocols relating to disputes between Member States.

- i. **Standing Committee of Senior Officials:** serves as a technical advisory committee to the Council of Ministers. It consists of one Permanent/ Principal Secretary, or an official of equivalent rank from each Member State, preferably from a ministry responsible for economic planning or finance. The Committee is tasked with processing the documentation from the Sectoral and Cluster Ministerial Committees for the Council of Ministers. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Standing Committee are appointed from the Member States holding the Chairpersonship and Vice-Chairpersonship, of the Council.
- j. **SADC Secretariat:** is the main institution of SADC responsible for execution, strategic planning, coordination and management of SADC programmes. It is also responsible for the implementation of decisions of SADC policy and institutions such as the Summit, the Troika, and Council of Ministers. It is headed by an Executive Secretary, who is assisted by two Deputy Executive Secretaries, respectively responsible for Regional Integration, and Finance and Administration. In addition to providing overall leadership for the Secretariat, the Executive Secretary also oversees the work related to the Organ of Peace, Security and Defence; Internal Audit; Public Relations; Gender; and Macroeconomic Surveillance. The Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration is responsible for Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment; Infrastructure and Services; Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources; Social and Human Development and Special Programmes; and Policy Planning and Resource Mobilization. The Deputy Executive Secretary for Finance and Administration is responsible for Budget and Finance; Human Resources and Administration; Conference Services; Procurement; Legal Affairs; and Information and Communication Technology.
- k. **SADC National Committees:** The Treaty establishing SADC obliges all Member States to create National Committees consisting of key stakeholders defined as including government, private sector, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and workers and employers' organizations. The responsibilities of the National Committees include providing inputs at the national level in the formulation of SADC policies, strategies and programmes of actions;



coordinating and overseeing, at the national level, implementation of SADC programmes of actions; and initiating projects and issuing papers as inputs to the preparation of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plans in accordance with priorities set out in SADC Common Agenda.

#### 4. Institutional Framework for Conflict Prevention in SADC

This section provides an overview of SADC's key mandate and policy frameworks, as well as tools, resources and partnerships for conflict prevention.

##### ■ Mandates and Policy Frameworks

SADC's mandate documents and policy frameworks on conflict prevention includes the following:

- i. **The 2015 Consolidated Treaty Establishing the Southern African Development Community:** brings together the following texts: the 1992 SADC Treaty, the Agreement Amending the Treaty 2001, Agreement Amending Article 22 of the Treaty 2007, Agreement Amending the Treaty 2008, Agreement Amending Article 10A of the Treaty 2009, and Agreement Amending Articles 10 and 14 of the Treaty 2009. Article 21.3(h) of the Treaty identifies "politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security" as one of the main areas of cooperation among Member States. The revised treaty also provides for the Organ on Politics, Defence and a Security Cooperation and related institutional arrangements for its functioning and effectiveness.
- ii. **1996 Protocol Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking:** The three major objectives of this Protocol are to reduce and eventually eliminate drug trafficking, money laundering, and the illicit use and abuse of drugs through cooperation among enforcement agencies and coordinated regional programmes to eliminate the production of illicit drugs; and to protect the region from being used as a conduit for drugs destined for other markets. The Protocol outlines measures to be taken by Member States in areas of domestic legislation, mutual legal assistance, drug demand reduction and anti-corruption.
- iii. **2001 Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation:** states that the general objective of the Organ shall be to promote peace and security in the region. It further spells out the specific objectives as including promoting political cooperation among State Parties and the evolution of common political values and institutions; developing common foreign approaches on issues of mutual concern and advancing such policy collectively in international fora; promoting regional coordination and cooperation on matters related to security and defense and establishing appropriate mechanisms to this end; preventing, containing and resolving inter and intra-state conflicts by peaceful means; considering enforcement action in accordance with international law and as a matter of last resort where peaceful means have failed; developing close cooperation between the police and state security services of State Parties in order to address cross border crime, and promoting a community-based approach to domestic security; and developing peacekeeping capacity of national defence forces and coordinating the participation of State Parties in international and regional peacekeeping operations.
- iv. **2001 Protocol on the Control of Fire Arms, Ammunition and other Materials:** The main objectives of the Protocol include preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit manufacture of firearms, ammunition and other related materials, and their excessive and destabilizing accumulation, possession and use in the region; promoting and facilitating cooperation and exchange of information and experience in the region to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing, excessive and destabilizing use, accumulation, trafficking and possession and use of firearms, ammunition and related materials; and cooperating at the regional and international levels to effectively prevent and combat illicit manufacturing of firearms.
- v. **2002 Protocol on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters:** sets out the scope of application and obligation of Member States to provide mutual legal assistance, the procedures for such requests, and content of requests and grounds for refusal of requests.

- vi. **2002 Protocol on Extradition:** defines the obligation of Member States to extradition, extraditable offences, the mandatory grounds for refusal of extradition, optional grounds for refusal, channels for communication and required documents, and authentication of extradition documents.
- vii. **2003 SADC Mutual Defence Pact:** The main objective of this Pact is to operationalize the Organ for mutual cooperation in defence and security cooperation. It commits State Parties to settle any international disputes that they may be involved in by peaceful means in such a manner that regional and international peace, security and justice might be enhanced, and to refrain from the use of force in settling disputes. It further provides that an armed attack on any State Party shall be considered as a threat to regional peace and security and such attack shall be met by immediate collective action. Collective action shall be mandated by the Summit on the recommendation of the Organ.
- viii. **2016 Revised Protocol on Gender and Development:** The key objectives of the revised Protocol include “providing for the empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and to achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects; harmonizing the implementation of the various instruments to which SADC Member States have subscribed to at the regional, continental and international levels on gender equality; addressing emerging gender issues and concerns; setting realistic, measurable targets, time frames and indicators for achieving gender equality and equity; and strengthening monitoring and evaluation of the progress made by Member States towards reaching the targets and goals set out in this strategy”. The Protocol calls on State Parties to enshrine gender equality and equity in their Constitutions and ensure that these rights are not compromised by any provisions, laws or practices and to develop and strengthen specific laws, policies and programmes to achieve gender equality and equity.

## ■ Key Strategy Documents

SADC’s key strategy documents on conflict prevention includes the following:

- a. **Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020:** is a 15 year (2005-2020) regional development framework of which the current iteration is a five-year plan (2015-2020) that sets out priorities, policies and strategies for achieving long-term development goals of SADC. The ultimate objective is to deepen the integration agenda of SADC with a view to accelerating poverty eradication and the attainment of other economic and non-economic development goals. It identifies the following priorities for action: trade and economic liberalization, regional infrastructure and services for regional integration, sustainable food security, social and human development, and cross-cutting issues such as gender and development, science and technology, environment and sustainable development, private sector and statistics. The Plan is designed to guide Member States, key regional institutions and development partners in their development and integration efforts. It identifies peace, security, democracy and political governance as key enablers of integration, consistent with Article 5 of the Treaty which commits Member States “to promote common political values, systems and shared values, which are transmitted through institutions which are democratic, legitimate and effective and consolidate, defend and maintain democracy, peace, security and stability”.
- b. **The Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ 2010:** was first articulated in 2003. The Plan is reviewed periodically, on a five-year basis, and “the review process involves the review of objectives, strategies and activities undertaken by various sectors”<sup>43</sup> and sets out the main policy actions to be implemented during the period. The five main sectors are: the political sector, the defence sector, the state security sector, the public security sector, and the police Sector.

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43 SADC [2010] Revised Edition of Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, page 20.

- c. **SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections 2015:** The first set of SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Elections were adopted in 2004. The revised edition of 2015 incorporates significant institutional mechanisms that have been created such as the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC). The revised Principles and Guidelines also fundamentally changed how SADC observes elections, facilitating, among others, the development of a strategic relationship between the SADC mechanisms dealing with elections on the one hand, with those assigned to conflict prevention and resolution on the other. Firstly, the revised instrument introduced Long Term Election Observation as the means for assessing the electoral cycle, which also formed a substantive basis for strengthening the regional early warning systems. Secondly, it strengthened the role of SEAC, enabling it to play a critical pre-election and post-election evaluative role, which have resulted in evidence-based advisories to the Ministerial Committee of the Organ in respect to deployment of the mediation, conflict prevention and preventative diplomacy functions.

The Principles and Guidelines overall mandates SADC “to promote the holding of regular free and fair, transparent, credible and peaceful democratic elections to institutionalize legitimate authority of representative government; enhance electoral integrity by providing basis for comprehensive, accurate and impartial observation of national elections; promote electoral justice and best practices in the management of elections and mitigation of election-related conflict; encourage gender balance and equality, and ethnic and religious diversity in governance and development; and promote the development of inclusive political institutions and enhancement of civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights for the purposes of advancing democracy, peace, stability and security in the region”.

- d. **Regional Strategy for Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022:** serves as a guide for mainstreaming gender into the regional peace and security systems and processes in SADC Member States. The strategy is

anchored on the various UNSC resolutions on Women, Peace and Security and existing continental frameworks on gender and human and people’s rights. It seeks to address challenges experienced by women and children and ensure their full participation in peace and security activities, programmes and projects in the region. The Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan urges Member States to develop national action plans and mobilize resources to implement proposed activities at national levels.

## ■ Main Tools for Conflict Prevention

- a. **Regional Early Warning System:** This is one of SADC’s main tool for conflict prevention. Established in 2010 in accordance with the provision of SIPO, it consists of the Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC) at the SADC Secretariat and the National Early Warning Centres (NEWC) in Member States. The REWC is located within the State Security cluster of the Organ and operates two desks. Desk one focuses on political and security threats; and Desk two on social and economic threats. The REWC obtains its information and data from two sources: open sources and the NEWC, which it then distributes to all Member States. The analysis undertaken by REWS is based on Insecurity and Conflict Indicators (ICI) which have been revised from a list of 28 to 17 indicators. The major focus of the REWS is monitoring and reporting on security threats that have significant spill over effects in the countries in the region. The REWS is a closed-source and closed-user system: it is a closed-sourced system because it collects its information and data mainly from state security services without the involvement of CSOs and independent consultants or academics.

The REWC produces several reports, which is shared with the Executive Secretary and Member States. It produces two daily products: the News Alert and the News Flash; and a Weekly Report that is distributed to the Executive Secretary, Member States and the Mediation Reference Group. Components of the report relating to criminality are extracted and shared with the police authorities in Member States. The third major product is the Annual Regional Security Assessment, which is discussed and approved by the Security

sub-committee of the Organ, composed of directors-general of the intelligence services of Member States. Thereafter, the report as well as the conclusion and recommendations from the sub-Committee are submitted to the Ministerial Committee of the Organ for response action. The report of the sub-committee is also shared with the AU CEWS and the Continental Intelligence Security Services of Africa.

- b. **Mediation and Facilitation:** SADC has a Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy structure which consists of three tiers, namely: the Panel of the Elders (comprising mostly former Heads of State and Government), the Mediation Reference Group (comprised mainly of experts) and the Mediation Support Unit (a Secretariat entity that supports the other tiers of the structure).
- c. **Electoral Assistance:** The SEAC made up of mostly retired judges, retired distinguished diplomats and academics who serve in their personal capacities and advise SADC on elections related matters. As stated earlier, SEAC proffers recommendations on mediation strategies to the Ministerial Committee of the Organ, based on findings of its pre-election and post-election observation missions. With respect to elections-related violence, SEAC's interventions are informed by the SEAC Strategy for the Prevention of Electoral Related Conflict adopted by the Ministerial Committee of the Organ in 2017. SEAC also performs early warning functions, calling attention of relevant authorities to factors that could impact on the conduct of elections and their outcomes.
- d. **Preventive Deployment and Peace Support Operations:** on the recommendations of its Ministerial Committee of the Organ, SADC deploys preventive missions to its Member States, as was the case in Lesotho in November 2017 with the deployment of the SADC Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL). This deployment contributed to preventing the escalation of conflict and to security sector reforms in the country.

## ■ Existing Resources for Conflict Prevention

Three key features distinguish the work of SADC in conflict prevention. First is the commitment of Member States to appoint facilitators to support the resolution of conflicts in its Member States. Second is the determination to insulate the state security cluster of the Organ as much as possible from foreign, mostly bilateral financial, assistance. Third is the decision to assume the financial responsibility for electoral observations in its Member States. To this extent, SADC largely bears responsibility for funding its own activities, thus lessening its dependence on foreign donors.

Nonetheless, SADC experiences several technical constraints in the implementation of its conflict prevention programme. In relation to the REWS, for instance, given the sole reliance on state intelligence sources for data collection, SADC is depriving itself of alternative sources and views that are equally important for dealing with potential conflict situations in the region. This also marginalizes the participation of civil society actors and women's groups from engaging in the conflict prevention and early warning programmes of SADC. Furthermore, since the inception of the REWS in 2010, only 8 out of the 16 countries have created secured lines of communications with the REWC at the SADC headquarters in Gaborone. There is also lack of regularity in the flow of reports from some of the NEWC to the REWC, thus severely constraining the ability of the latter to have a comprehensive picture of emerging and evolving threats to peace and security in the region, leading to delays in response. Besides, some SADC Member States continue to face considerable difficulties in domesticating a range of regional and international instruments, especially in the areas of combating criminal activities.

With respect to financial resources, support from the AU APSA programme to SADC's relevant units is spasmodic and there is a mismatch between the budget cycles of SADC and AU. This complicates coordination of the implementation of SADC programmes that benefit from the APSA financial support. Also, although SADC Member States have decided to fund election observation missions in their countries, donor funding for other aspects of the electoral assistance work of SADC is generally on the decline. In this respect, there are considerations to explore the possibility of creating an Electoral Assistance Fund to support the non-elections observation components of SADC's electoral assistance activities.



The SADC Secretariat also has some staffing constraints. The SADC REWC Situation Room is not able to operate on a 24-hour basis because of lack of adequate staff and requires an additional five Analysts/Situation Room officers at P7 level to operate optimally<sup>44</sup>. To strengthen its work on SSR and DDR, SADC needs a minimum of two additional experts each in these two areas at P4/P5 level. In the area of mediation, SADC needs three additional staff at P4/P5 level to support the Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy structure and two additional programme officers at P4/P5 level in the Elections Unit. Of note however, the new SADC Secretariat Structure approved in March 2016 address most of these challenges, in particular with respect to the staffing needs for the REWC, Elections and Mediation support. At the time of this study, recruitments were underway to fill the new staff positions in the Directorate of the Organ.

## ■ Partnerships for Conflict Prevention

The following section highlights some of SADC's partnerships on conflict prevention.

### ■ Internal Collaboration and Coordination

The unique institutional arrangement in the SADC Secretariat in which the five clusters in the 2001 Protocol - politics, defense, state security, public security, and police - are grouped under the Directorate of Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs has contributed to enhancing the internalization of coordination and collaboration on conflict prevention within the Directorate. This arrangement, taken together with the regular flow of policy directives from the institutional structures of the Organ to the Directorate, is generally viewed as promoting a high level of coherence in the SADC Secretariat's work. At the same time, there is a recognition that as the Secretariat deepens its work on the economic and social threats to peace and security, there will be a corresponding need to increase collaboration with other units or directorates that are responsible for economic and social affairs.

44 In SADC, unlike some other RECs, it makes no distinction between Analysts and Situation Room Officers working in Early Warning. Moreover, the professional grading system in SADC is the reverse of the United Nations. At SADC P7 is the lowest professional grade, while P1 is the highest professional grade.

### ■ Collaboration with other RECs

SADC has undertaken visits to ECOWAS to learn from the latter's experience in establishing a functional early warning system, ECOWARN, and on working effectively with Member States on early warning and response. SADC has also exchanged experiences with ECOWAS and EAC on issues of both force deployment and establishment of Peace Funds<sup>45</sup>. SADC collaborates with other RECs, as applicable, in undertaking election observation missions to its countries with multiple membership in other RECs. SADC indicates that its collaboration with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region has been highly instrumental in the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region signed in February 2013.

### ■ Cooperation with the African Union

SADC's collaboration and coordination with the AU ranges across various issues. One of the most significant areas of collaboration has been on the articulation and adoption of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. The Framework among others sets out the principles of engagement for the national, regional and international stakeholders on SSR, decentralization and consolidation of state authority, state sovereignty, regional cooperation and the administration of justice, including the prosecution of war crimes.

In the context of the Framework's Regional Oversight Mechanism, SADC collaborates with the AU in undertaking a periodic review of progress made in the implementation of commitments<sup>46</sup>. SADC believes that the Framework and its oversight mechanism has not only provided a strong basis for collaboration and coordination with the AU and the United Nations but has also laid a foundation for addressing many of the structural causes of conflict in the region.

45 ECOWAS, EAC and ECCAS are three RECs that have formally established Peace Fund.

46 See Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, 24 February 2013 signed in Addis Ababa.

SADC and the AUC are also working collaboratively on issues of small arms and light weapons, in particular as it relates to monitoring their flows and curbing their use, consistent with relevant AU and United Nations treaties or conventions. Additionally, the Elections Observer Missions fielded by SADC and the AU to Member States have coordinated the issuance of their statements on outcomes of the elections in concerned countries. In 2018, the AUPSC backed the deployment of a SADC military intervention in Lesotho and requested the AUC to provide technical support for this deployment. In Madagascar, SADC and the AU through their respective special envoys jointly engaged in consultations with relevant stakeholders that paved the way for the presidential elections that held on 7 November 2018.

#### ■ **Partnerships with the United Nations System**

SADC highlighted its work with the United Nations in the articulation and implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and in supporting the facilitation and mediation processes in Madagascar as excellent examples of collaboration and coordination with the United Nations. The SADC facilitator in Madagascar coordinated with and benefited from the support of the United Nations. Also, the United Nations is supporting the implementation of a reforms Road map in Lesotho which is the key recommendation of the SADC efforts to stabilize the country through a PBF funded project.

On gender issues, UNWomen has been very supportive of SADC work and has provided financial support for the articulation of the Regional Strategy for Women, Peace and Security. The UNDP also provided technical support for this process through the Liaison team in Gaborone. As a next step, UNWomen has further indicated its willingness to support efforts of SADC Member States to develop their respective national action plan on women, peace and security.

#### ■ **Partnerships with other International Organizations**

No information was provided.

#### ■ **Working with Civil Society and the Private Sector to Prevent Conflict**

SADC has an MoU with the Council of Non-Governmental Organizations, an umbrella group for national NGOs in the region, with which it periodically engages on a range of political, security, economic and social issues. To broaden its outreach to a plurality of non-state actors, the SADC Secretariat is developing a policy paper to establish a mechanism for engagement of non-state actors in SADC's work. The proposed paper would be submitted for consideration of the relevant institutional structures of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

No information was provided on SADC's work with the private sector on conflict prevention.

### **5. SADC's support to Member States on Conflict Prevention**

SADC has provided support to its Member States in a number of areas. For example, the SADC Defence and Police Clusters of the Organ are assisting in security sector reforms in Lesotho with a focus on re-training the armed forces and police; inculcating the values of democratic control of armed forces; and psychological training for preparedness in situations of operations. SADC's REWC has assisted Member States in establishing their NEWC and has trained the staff of these Centres, including on intelligence gathering. For example, REWC offered an Analysis and Forecasting Training in Botswana in August 2018 and plans to organize a Financial and Economic Intelligence Training in Zimbabwe in October 2018.

SADC's Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy structure has provided trainings for nearly 500 mediators in Member States. Beneficiaries of the mediation trainings have included representatives of CSOs, including traditional rulers and religious leaders. SADC has also trained over 1,000 election observers in its Member States who are composed of both state and non-state actors including academics, experts from electoral management bodies and CSOs for deployment on short and long-term elections observation missions.

The Police Cluster conducts both regular training and operational support training for police institutions in SADC Member States. Each year, it



conducts two regular training in two countries and operational support trainings in five Member States. The operational support trainings are focused on small arms and light weapons, drug trafficking and human trafficking. Training in the last two areas are undertaken jointly with the public security cluster - which has responsibility for correction services, anti-corruption, immigration, illegal trafficking of persons, and illegal exploitation of natural resources. The SADC Gender Unit is currently assisting Member States, as applicable, to develop their national action plans on women, peace and security. It has already provided support to thirteen countries to develop their national action plans to combat and prevent gender-based violence.

## 6. Lessons Learned in Institutionalizing Conflict Prevention

SADC officials engaged in the study, pointed to the following as some of the critical lessons learned from their efforts to prevent conflicts:

- The institutional arrangement of the Troika promotes a coherent and concerted approach to tackling issues of peace and security.
- In spite of its relative stability, the SADC region, faces a number of threats with potential impact for security and consolidation of democratic development. Weak political participation, high levels of inequality and exclusion, poorly managed electoral processes that tend to increase tensions with propensity for violence, and rising transnational organized crimes linked to illicit natural resource exploitation, all underscore the imperative to strengthen regional and national capacity for cooperation and joint action to mitigate and prevent conflicts. In this regard, SADC acknowledges the importance of enhancing infrastructures for peace and public security throughout the region, as an essential element for promoting socio-economic development.
- Related to the above, SADC also recognizes the need for enhanced focus on actions to strengthen its democratic institutions, increase the involvement of civil society (including women and other disadvantaged groups) in early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, and electoral assistance and elections observation.
- SADC also recognizes the need to further strengthen the capacity of its Member States to uphold and enhance cross-border safety and

security, through enhanced cooperation and coordination of its law enforcement and border management agencies to combat transnational organized crimes as well as address sexual and gender-based violence.

## 7. Recommendations for Strengthening SADC's Conflict Prevention Capacity

The following are identified areas for strengthening SADC's work on conflict prevention:

- **Enhancing connectivity between the REWC at the SADC headquarters in Gaborone and Member States:** Given that the SADC REWS is organized around strong interface between the REWC in Gaborone and the NEWC, it is important that the remaining eight countries establish secured lines of communications with the REWC. Related to this is the need to improve information flow between the REWC and the various NEWCs in order to have a comprehensive picture of emerging and evolving threats to peace and security in the region. There is also a need to expand the sources of information and data collection beyond state actors, by engaging non-state sources.
- **Ensuring adequate support for electoral assistance in Member States:** Two actions are required to achieve the objective of improved electoral assistance in Member States. First, there is need for a sustainable and predictable funding mechanism to support the non-elections observation components of SADC's electoral assistance processes. Second, is the imperative for Member States to incorporate into their domestic legislations commitments they have made on a range of regional and international instruments in areas of democracy and governance. In particular, the Member States need to domesticate the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. The development and promotion of a SADC model law on elections, based on these Election Guidelines, is key to this process. The 'domestication project' is currently spearheaded by the SADC Parliamentary Forum with support of the SEAC and key cross-sectoral stakeholders and experts from the region, including from the AU and the United Nations agencies.
- **Deepening the involvement of civil society and women's groups in SADC Conflict Prevention Work:** consistent with its the Regional Strategy

for Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022, women should be more actively involved in SADC's early warning, elections observation and electoral assistance, and mediation work.

- **Strengthening SADC's engagement on security sector reforms and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration:** SSR and DDR feature prominently in SADC's work, especially in the countries where it has military deployment. To scale up SADC's work in these areas there is need to increase the staff capacity in the Secretariat.
- **Reinforcing mediation support capacity:** Given the high importance that SADC attaches to mediation in its conflict prevention work and the frequency with which current and former Heads of State are invited to serve as Mediators or Facilitators, the need to strengthen SADC's capacity in this area cannot be overemphasized. The Mediators and Facilitators need substantive technical support through rigorous and comprehensive analysis of issues in the countries that they are requested to engage. In this regard, there is a need to increase staffing capacity in the Secretariat to backstop mediation efforts.

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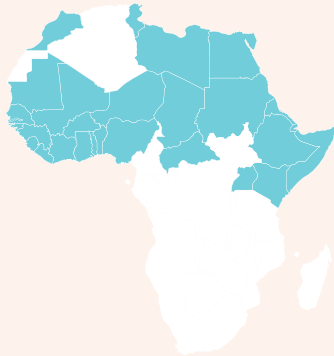
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**FIGURE 20: At a glance: Country Membership of the RECs**

**CEN-SAD**

Community of Sahel-Saharan States

28 member countries



**COMESA**

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

19 member countries



**EAC**

East African Community

5 member countries



**ECCAS**

Economic Community of Central African States

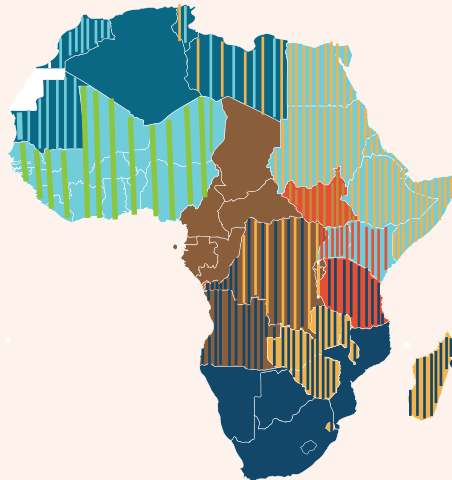
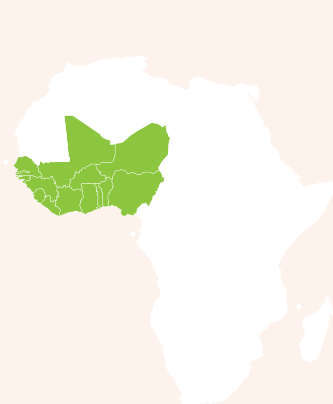
11 member countries



**ECOWAS**

Economic Community of West African States

15 member countries



**IGAD**

Intergovernmental Authority on Development

8 member countries



**AMU**

Arab Maghreb Union

5 member countries



**SADC**

Southern African Development Community

15 member countries



# 9

## **Overview of Commonalities and Shared Challenges across the Regional Economic Communities**

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## 9: OVERVIEW OF COMMONALITIES AND SHARED CHALLENGES ACROSS THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

As is clearly illustrated in the preceding sections, there are commonalities and shared challenges in the landscape of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the various RECs. Evidently, their main objectives of advancing regional multilateralism and integration by deepening cooperation among their respective Member States in the economic, political and social spheres has evolved in response to conflict, violence and crisis situations that have emerged in their regions in the post-Cold War era. In this connection, almost all the RECs, except for AMU, have since established, institutionalized or consolidating their respective regional mechanism or architecture for conflict prevention, management and resolution to deal with the challenges confronting their respective region. While the RECs have all made significant progress in implementing and operationalizing their respective conflict prevention framework or architecture, the gains made have been uneven and varied from one REC to the other. In addition, several challenges remain, even as the landscape of conflict continues to evolve due to persisting, new, emerging and complex threats, root causes and actors.

This section highlights some of the commonalities and shared challenges in the conflict prevention landscape of the RECs in four areas. One, it outlines similarities in the nature of conflicts across the RECs, covering aspects of the political, economic, social, technological and environmental factors addressed in the geopolitical context analysis sub-sections above. Two, it briefly recaps the shared political commitments of the RECs to pursuing collective peace and security, which is well exemplified by the various mandate, policy and strategy documents that have been adopted and organs or structures and partnerships that have been established to advance work in this area. These are equally illustrated in the sub-sections on organizational structure and institutional frameworks for conflict prevention. Three, it discusses common areas where the RECs' have made investments in empirically based situational analysis to comprehensively assess the full range of current and future threats and challenges, in order to effectively identify priority areas for further interventions. Lastly, the section provides an overview of common measures with respect to existing capacity, to effectively prevent conflicts and address the root causes, as well as shared challenges.

### 1. Commonalities in Trends of Conflicts in the different RECs

The landscape of conflict in the different RECs show several common trends and are associated with high levels of disregard for the rule of law, violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and violence and discrimination against women. Seven of these are highlighted below.

#### ■ Shifts from Inter-State to Intra-State and Subnational Conflicts

All the RECs have in their respective regions experienced shifts from inter-state conflicts (in the Cold War era), arising from contestations over undemarcated borders, liberation wars and resource distribution questions, to intra-state conflicts and crises (in the immediate Post-Cold War era), and subnational conflicts characterized by civil wars, genocide, violent interethnic confrontations and armed conflicts involving a range of non-state actors, including warlords, clans, tribes, militia and rebel groups and successionist movements fighting against exclusion or for control over territory. These intra-state and subnational conflicts have also been characterized by deliberate and targeted campaigns of violence against civilians, including organized sexual violence; an exponential rise in use of unconventional methods of warfare such as suicide bombings; and are facilitated and exacerbated by a number of factors, including the lack of state control over all of their territory in the peripheries, environmental stresses and resultant loss of livelihoods, marginalization and influx of arms. These conflicts are also associated with high levels of violations of both human rights and humanitarian law, and mostly counter-militarized responses by both state and international actors.

#### ■ Power Contestations and Democratic Governance Deficits

All the regions have experienced some form of democratic and political governance deficits in their respective region, ranging from zero-sum or winner-takes-all approach to power, popular protests, deteriorating levels of civil liberties and political rights, and contested political transitions, often due to the manipulation of constitutional

and electoral laws to rig elections, circumvent term limits and disenfranchise sections of the population. Other forms of bad governance such as corruption, upsurge in political violence (including in use of political vigilantes) and election-related violence, poor human capital development, political and social exclusion (including of women and youth), weak institutions and disregard for the rule of law remains major threats to stability and democratic consolidation across the different regions. Challenges with security forces of Member States, the weakening of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and political will have also been evident in all the regions. Consequently, all the RECs have adopted normative instruments for promoting democracy and good governance as well as made the provision of electoral support and prevention of election-related violence a mainstay of their conflict prevention programmes. Additionally, their Member States have largely acceded to the APRM voluntary self-monitoring review process with an aim to promoting good governance.

Efforts to effectively and positively harness the youth bulge remains a critical factor for all the regions in their efforts to promote democratic and inclusive political governance, as well as prevent election-related violence. According to the United Nations Population Facts, in 2015, 226 million youth aged between 15-24 lived in Africa. By 2030, Africa's youth population is projected to have increased by 42% and double by 2055. This demographic growth is already placing greater demands on the ability of governments to deliver inclusive political governance and socio-economic development.

### ■ Rising Intercommunal Conflict and Violence

All the regions have experienced increasing intercommunal conflicts and violence, especially in the West, Central and East Africa epicenters like the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin and Horn of Africa regions. These result from inter-clan, chieftaincy and religious disputes, xenophobic violence, disputes over the scramble for land and water resources (exemplified by the conflicts between herders and farmers), poor management and illegal exploitation of other shared natural resources. These conflicts are exacerbated by the effects of climate change (such as drought, floods and poor harvest), and the activities of organized criminal, terrorist and extremist groups. These conflicts have exerted huge tolls on communities and the regions, causing severe humanitarian and human rights challenges, including deaths, violence against civilians, disruption

of access to basic services such as education and healthcare, massive forced displacement, and violence against women. The transregional nature of these conflicts has necessitated even greater levels of cooperation between the RECs, for instance between ECCAS and ECOWAS, in finding and implementing durable solutions.

### ■ Terrorism and Violent Extremism

The threat of terrorism and violent extremism is acutely felt in many countries in the various RECs. Currently, East, North and West Africa have in particular a rapidly growing trend of terrorist and extremist activities, not only demonstrated by the number of terrorist attacks, but also by the number of countries affected by them. The activities of terrorist groups in Africa, including Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and Lord's Resistance Army, together with their allies across and outside Africa, has wreaked havoc in many countries and communities, with negative consequences for regional stability, integration, peace and sustainable development. It has caused massive numbers of deaths, loss of property and livelihoods, huge displacement of civilian populations, undermined social cohesion, increased risks of segregation and prejudice, and has adverse effects on the environment. Their methods of engagement include the use of organized violence against civilians (including attacks on schools, markets and places of worship), which causes massive displacement as is evident in the Lake Chad region; use of technology and the internet – especially social media platforms – as a tool for recruitment of especially youth, communication, coordination and resource mobilization and financing.

Various actors – international, continental, regional, subregional, national and community-based, are involved in efforts to counter and prevent terrorism and violent extremism. Their responses have largely been highly militarized, as exemplified in the work of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram and national and external military forces, such as those of the United States in the Horn of Africa and France in West and Central Africa. There is however greater acknowledgement of the importance of adopting more robust human-security based approaches to promote comprehensive solutions that address the scourge in the immediate, short and long-term, including tackling the root causes. Related to this is the question of addressing the vulnerability of citizens, including high youth unemployment and political exclusion in all the RECs. The cross-regional nature of



the threat of terrorism and extremism has served to reinforce cooperation and collaboration both within and between the RECs.

### ■ Cross-border Criminality

Cross-border criminality and criminal groups remain highly connected across all five regions of the continent: Central, East, North, Southern and West; and are actively engaged in a number of illicit activities within and beyond Africa, including trafficking in drugs, arms, humans and artefacts; illegal exploitation of natural resources, including logging, fishing, mineral and energy; wildlife crime; piracy; and smuggling of fake medicines. As observed in studies undertaken by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, under the auspices of Project ENACT, a three-year project (2017-2019) aiming to mitigate the impact of transnational organized crime on development, governance, security and the rule of law in Africa, transnational criminal groups are increasingly connected with terrorist and extremist groups, “through illicit trafficking routes and networks, are moving people and products, creating fault lines from one region to the next across Africa”<sup>47</sup>. Transnational organized crime and illegal migration are equally interconnected, as evident in North Africa; and exacerbates high levels of violence, including sexual and labour exploitation and abuse, and exposure of children to recruitment and use as child soldiers in armed conflicts and trans-national crime syndicates.

Technological development has further enabled the activities of organized criminal groups, with the proliferation of cybercrime and illicit internet activities. As further observed by Project ENACT, “criminal networks are exploiting the continent’s weak IT infrastructure, with threats including ransomware, new malware and social media scams. Online identity theft is also a concern, with the threat of terrorists purchasing forged documents as part of packages sold online to enter other countries”<sup>48</sup>.

Transnational or cross-border criminal activities in Africa is also enabled by porous borders, weak border control and management institutions, poor rule of law, growing inequalities and continued lack of inclusive economic growth, poor governance and insecurity. As such, effective border control and

management, strong security and law enforcement institutions as well as interregional or cross-border cooperation between these institutions, inclusive and human-security centred development is vital for addressing this phenomenon in a sustainable manner. The RECs have established several interregional and joint collaborative measures, such as the MASE, for combating and preventing this problem.

### ■ Technology: Harnessing its Power as a Tool for Good

Technological changes and advancement as highlighted above is negatively impacting on security, the economy, politics and governance, as it is enabling mobilization and self-organizing by terrorist, extremist and criminal groups on the continent. However, as seen across the continent, technology is also being effectively utilized as a tool for positive social organizing and improved transparency and accountability in governance. It is being used as a tool for data collection to improve public services delivery, facilitating banking, and improving connectivity. Therefore, the key is to harness the power of technology as a tool for good in advancing political, economic, governance, environmental and sociocultural development. In the context of their regional integration programmes and interventions, the RECs are striving to facilitate and strengthen appropriate capacity development, at regional and national levels, to boost technology infrastructure, both Information Technology and traditional infrastructure, in support of their policy and programmes on health, education, agriculture, environment and climate change, urbanization, energy, transportation, peace and security, political governance and participation, telecommunications and regional integration.

### ■ Threat of Relapse of Post-Conflict Societies into Violence

In all the regions, there has been reversals in peace and democratic gains, particularly in some of the post-conflict countries. Pervasive poverty, growing inequality, poor governance characterized by continued political and socio-economic marginalization, remains a concern and risk reversing gains that have been made. According to the World Bank, more than half of the extreme poor -- those living on less than US\$1.90 a day -- reside in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2015, the number of the extreme poor in Africa was 413 million more than other regions combined. The Bank further

47 INTERPOL and ENACT [October 2018] Overview of Serious and Organized Crime in Africa, <http://bit.ly/30cwl66>

48 INTERPOL and ENACT [October 2018] Overview of Serious and Organized Crime in Africa, <http://bit.ly/30cwl66>

projects that if the current trend continues, 9 out of 10 extreme poor will live Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030<sup>49</sup>. The highest levels of extreme poverty are also increasingly concentrated on a few countries, most of which have emerged from conflicts or are still experiencing armed conflicts. According to the World Poverty Clock<sup>50</sup>, as at June 2018, these included: Nigeria (86.9million), Democratic Republic of Congo (60.9 million), Ethiopia (25.9 million), Tanzania (19.9 million), Mozambique (17.8 million), Kenya (14.7 million), Uganda (14.2 million), South Africa (13.8 million), South Sudan (11.4 million), and Zambia (9.5 million).

It is therefore imperative for the RECs to adopt a more proactive rather than reactive approach, as well as a long-term rather than largely short-term view in their efforts to prevent conflicts, address the root causes, sustain peace and promote sustainable development. Their facilitative role in building strong regional and national capacities for conflict prevention, both on the operational and structural dimensions is key; as is the need for the RECs to fully demonstrate political will in translating norms into practice in order to achieve meaningful and transformative results.

## **2. Shared Political Commitments to Pursuing Collective Peace and Security**

The RECs clearly have a shared political commitment to pursuing collective peace and security in their respective regions, as well as continentally and globally, as evident in their engagements with the AU, the United Nations and other multilateral groupings. As noted in the preceding sections, the contextual realities in all the regions that straddles peace, security, governance, human rights and sustainable development, has compelled all the RECs to evolve their respective and distinctive architecture, mechanism and programmes on conflict prevention. Even the AMU that does not yet have a dedicated framework for its work on conflict prevention is actually implementing a range of programmes that are tailored to prevent conflict and violence, as well as sustain peace.

The mechanisms and programmes that are collectively undertaken by the RECs include a focus on both operational and structural prevention. As the scope of issues covered in the previous

sections show, these encompasses peace and security (conflict prevention, management and resolution, and combating terrorism, security institutions), political affairs (human rights, democracy, good governance, electoral institutions, CSOs, humanitarian affairs, refugees and IDPs), infrastructure and energy (energy, transport, communications, infrastructure and tourism), social affairs (health, education, children, drug control, gender, population, migration, labor and employment, sports and culture), human resources, science and technology (education, ICT, youth, women, human resources, science and technology), trade and industry (trade, industry, customs and immigration), rural economy and agriculture (rural economy, agriculture and food security, livestock, environment, water and natural resources and desertification), economic affairs (economic integration, monetary affairs, private sector development, investment and resource mobilization). In each of these areas, the RECs currently play a role in the planning, coordination, and monitoring of the integration or regionalization process. Given that the ultimate responsibility for preventing conflicts and sustainably addressing the root causes is that of Member States, it is crucial for the RECs to enhance their facilitative rather than implementation role, as well as focus on building and enhancing national and local ownership and capacity, rather than substitute national capacity.

The establishment of Peace Funds – as in the cases of EAC, ECCAS and ECOWAS - that are financed from their own resources among others is another illustration of their shared commitment to promoting peace and security. IGAD equally has a Rapid Response Fund, albeit donor-funded, which is linked to CEWARN; and a Mediation Fund that is equally funded by partners to support its mediation efforts. It is however imperative for the RECs to continue to evolve measures that aim to enhance their financial self-sustenance going forward as not to jeopardize or reverse the significant gains that have been made, due to lack of resources for programme implementation. In addition, political will to act in a timely and appropriate manner to avert and mitigate conflict and crisis situations is highly critical for translating these commitments into meaningful results on the ground.

## **3. Common Methodological Approaches to Situational Analyses**

All the RECs have adopted similar methodological approaches to their work on conflict prevention

49 World Bank (2018) "Understanding Poverty", 24 September 2018 available on [www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview)

50 See World Poverty Clock available on <http://WorldPoverty.io>

that is anchored on structured and thorough situational or contextual analyses of issues, causes, actors, and dynamics, in order to gain a better understanding of what actions are required to address the issues and assess their potential role and capacity to act in this respect. These analyses take place at different but interlinked levels: community, national, subregional, regional and continental as to enable the RECs gauge internal and external factors and systematically link appropriate levels of intervention. While there are no one-size-fits-all solutions, the methodological approaches that are applied by the RECs are comparable, comprising of both quantitative and qualitative analyses of conflict risks assessment and early warning based on indicators that cut across strategic political, economic, socio-cultural, environmental, technological and legal indicators that help to identify conflict drivers and potential options for conflict mitigation strategies. In addition to this, most of the RECs are also increasingly assisting their Member States to undertake structural vulnerability and resilience assessments, with corresponding structural vulnerability mitigation strategies at the country level, in line with the AU's CSCPF. COMESA, for instance, has evolved from assessing only conflict drivers to also analyzing the causes or drivers of peace, based on a time-series data collection and analytical approach that examines issues over at least a 10-year frame. Besides conflict risks assessments, early warning and the systematic analyses of peace drivers, the RECs also apply a variety of other analytical methods in analyzing and understanding the conflict landscape, including horizon scanning, fact-finding missions and electoral assessment missions. The APRM national reviews is another analytical tool that is being supported by the RECs in their Member States.

Irrespective of the methodological approach and tools employed, it is critical for any situational analysis of conflict dynamics to be thorough, inclusive and participatory. It should delve into the root, intermediate and proximate causes of the conflict or crises, as well as the triggers and project its evolution. The process should identify the actors - both internal and external, champions of change, perpetrators, victims, spoilers, opportunists and centres of influence, as well as the motivational and discouraging factors propelling them. There is a need to assess real and potential inflammatory and deescalating factors underpinning the conflict or crisis, including local, national, regional and international dynamics, and the possible policy response options - both military and non-military.

In the context of implementation of the strategic and joint partnership frameworks between the United Nations and the AU on cooperation in peace and security, and implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, emphasis is being placed on joint horizon scanning to forge a shared understanding of conflict dynamics in Africa with a view to developing common response policies to potential and ongoing crisis and conflict situations. It is highly important to extend this initiative, in operational and practical terms, to incorporate the RECs/RMs and national infrastructures for peace. That way, the oft-misinterpreted notion and tension-filled application of the principle of subsidiarity would be replaced by shared analyses and responses to crises and conflicts within a coordinated framework of shared responsibilities and complementarity, based on the principle of comparative advantage. Additionally, joint analyses have the potential to ratchet up pressure within each organization to respond to the issues identified, including on abuses of state resources, human rights violations and attempts by incumbents to cling onto power.

#### 4. Similarities in Institutional Tools/ Measures for Implementation and Shared Challenges

There are identifiable similarities in the tool and measures adopted by the RECs in implementing their conflict prevention programmes. At present, these are mostly in the areas of early warning, mediation support and facilitation, electoral assistance and elections observation, counterterrorism post-conflict peacebuilding and gender, women peace and security.

On **early warning**, all the RECs, except for AMU, have institutionalised functional early warning mechanisms at the regional level; notably COMWARN in COMESA, EACWARN in EAC, MARAC in ECCAS, ECOWARN in ECOWAS, CEWARN in IGAD and the REWC in SADC. These mechanisms systematically facilitate the process of gathering information, monitoring and analyses, dissemination of information and development of policy response options. There are ongoing efforts to decentralize these mechanisms through support for the establishment of national early warning and response mechanisms, including in collaboration with the AU. ECOWAS for instance has supported the creation of five national early warning mechanisms with support from USAID. Other examples include IGAD with its national CEWERUs and SADC's National Early Warning Centres that are linked to its REWC.

Regarding **mediation support and facilitation**, there is strong recognition by all the RECs of the need to enhance their institutional capacity on mediation support. In terms of actual capacities however, progress has been varied and uneven, with ECOWAS being quite advanced in this area, in comparison to other RECs. The range of shared mechanisms that exists within the RECs include Committee of Elders of COMESA, Council of the Wise of ECOWAS, Mediation Contact Group in IGAD, and Mediation Reference Group and the Panel of Elders in SADC, as well as a pool of Special Representatives and Envoys of the CEOs of RECs who undertake good offices functions, including mediation and preventive diplomacy. The AMU, EAC and ECCAS do not yet have similar intergovernmental mediation mechanisms. In addition, most of the RECs have set up and institutionalized mediation support and facilitation entities, named divisions or units,

IGAD has established a Mediation Fund. In the case of ECOWAS, its Peace Fund also cover mediation. Furthermore, majority of the RECs have developed a roster of mediation experts, manuals, guide and handbooks to support their work in this area.

**Electoral assistance and elections observations** has evolved to be an integral component of the core mandate of the RECs for promoting democracy, good governance and conflict prevention in their Member States. Consequently, all the RECs, except for the AMU, provide at least one form of electoral support to their Member States and deploy Elections Observation Missions (EOMs) on either a short or long-term basis or both. These EOMs also differ in scope, length or duration and focus, both within a given REC and between the RECs. Additionally, some RECs such as EAC and ECOWAS currently have post-elections reviews. A majority of the RECs

#### Box 6: Institutionalized Regional Early Warning Systems in Africa

<b>African Union</b>	Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)
<b>COMESA</b>	COMESA Early Warning System (COMWARN)
<b>EAC</b>	East African Early Warning System (EACWARN)
<b>ECCAS</b>	Central Early Warning System (MARAC)
<b>ECOWAS</b>	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN)
<b>IGAD</b>	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN)
<b>SADC</b>	Regional Early Warning Centres (REWC) and National Early Warning Centres (NEWCs)

in their headquarters to provide support over the long-term and serve as an institutional bank for addressing some of the systemic and operational support gaps in peace processes. The EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC all have MSUs, though these vary significantly in their form, structure, composition, capacity and resources, from one REC to the other. At present, the AMU and COMESA do not have MSUs, though in the case of the later there are nascent plans towards creating one to support the work of its Committee of Elders. Added to this,

are facilitating and supporting the establishment of regional networks of elections management bodies and development of regional norms, codes of conduct, SOPs, principles, guidelines and handbooks to support their work in this area.

In relation to EOMs, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC have all deployed EOMs frequently to their Member States. However, the form and methodology vary. For instance, ECOWAS deploys both Short-Term EOMs and Long-Term EOMs,



### Box 7: Intergovernmental Conflict Mediation Entities in Africa

<b>African Union</b>	Panel of the Wise
<b>COMESA</b>	Committee of Elders
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Council of the Wise
<b>IGAD</b>	Mediation Contact Group
<b>SADC</b>	Mediation Reference Group

while ECCAS and IGAD deploy Short-Term EOMs. In COMESA, EOMs are usually led by Members of the Committee of Elders, who also lead several high-level pre-elections assessment missions. EAC, ECOWAS and SADC equally deploy pre-elections assessment missions. Overall, the purpose of the EOMs is to make independent, objective and impartial assessments of the electoral process in order to enhance its credibility, consolidate democratic practices and prevent elections-related conflict and violence.

The RECs, except for AMU and ECCAS, have supported the creation and operationalization of regional networks of electoral bodies. This includes the COMESA Electoral Management Bodies Forum, the EAC Forum of National Electoral Commissions, the ECONEC in West Africa, the IGAD National Election Management Bodies Forum, and the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries. SADC also has an Electoral Advisory Council. Of note however, as previously observed, some of these networks are not functioning optimally due to funding constraints.

To support their work in this area, most of the RECs have established and institutionalized electoral support divisions or units within their headquarters to backstop their electoral support programmes and EOMs. These

include, the Elections and Good Governance Unit in ECCAS, the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) in ECOWAS, and the Election Support Unit in SADC.

On **counterterrorism and prevention of violent extremism**, all the RECs, except for AMU and COMESA have developed and adopted regional strategies for countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism, and in some instances addressing its root causes. In East Africa, EAC's work is guided by its 2006 Regional Peace and Security Strategy and its Regional Counterterrorism Strategy that was adopted in 2014 to protect the citizens of the region through the prevention and combat of terrorist acts, insurgency and transnational crimes. ECCAS has a Regional Strategy and Plan of Action on Counterterrorism and the Non-Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central Africa. ECOWAS' work is informed by its Political Declaration and Common Position Against Terrorism that was adopted in February 2013, as well as by its Counterterrorism Strategy Implementation Plan. Additionally, ECOWAS utilizes a Counterterrorism Portal and Tracker that serves as an operational tool for providing raw facts and figures about terrorism in the ECOWAS region to inform its counterterrorism actions and promote a common regional approach

### Box 8: Regional Election Management Bodies and Networks in Africa

<b>African Union</b>	Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA)
<b>COMESA</b>	COMESA Electoral Management Bodies Forum
<b>EAC</b>	EAC Forum of National Electoral Commissions
<b>ECOWAS</b>	ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC)
<b>IGAD</b>	IGAD National Election Management Bodies Forum
<b>SADC</b>	Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries (ECF-SADC) and the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC)

in preventing and countering terrorism. ECCAS and ECOWAS also convened a joint summit in July 2018, at the level of Heads of State and Government, on peace, security, stability and the fight against terrorism and violent extremism that adopted a joint communique for strengthening their cooperation in this area. On its part, in April 2018 IGAD inaugurated its Center for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and launched its Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the Horn and Eastern Africa Region. In Southern Africa, SADC adopted a Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2015. It is worth noting that though the AMU does not yet have a strategy document, it created a high-level expert group on Counterterrorism that examines challenges posed by terrorism, facilitates information and experience sharing among its members on national best practices and offers recommendations, as appropriate.

On **gender, women, peace and security**, consistent with the UNSC resolution 1325 and related resolutions, four of the seven RECs covered have developed or are developing Regional Action Plans (RAPs) for implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. These include the EAC Regional Framework on UNSCR 1325 (2015-2019) that was developed by CSOs, the Dakar Declaration and ECOWAS Plan of Action for the Implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in West Africa that was adopted in September 2010. In IGAD, the Regional Action Plan for Implementation of the UNSC Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) was adopted in 2013. The SADC Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security for the period 2018-2020 was adopted in May 2018, while the

ECCAS Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) for the period 2020-2024 is pending adoption. In addition, all the RECs, except for AMU, have dedicated gender structures that facilitate and coordinate regional efforts to mainstream gender in conflict prevention and implement the RAPs. Though COMESA does not have RAP, its Gender and Social Affairs Division works closely with the Governance, Peace and Security Unit to ensure and promote the mainstreaming of gender issues in COMESA's peace and security programmes. Going forward, the RECs will need to enhance their collaboration with the AUC in reporting on progress made in the implementation of their respective RAPs, in the broader context of the AU's Continental Results Framework (CRF) for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018-2028).

About 50% of the RECs have existing programmes on **post-conflict peacebuilding**. These span issues such as Trading for Peace Programmes in COMESA, agricultural revitalization programmes in ECOWAS, peacebuilding trainings for women in IGAD, and interventions on security sector reforms and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration SADC. To effectively prevent relapse or the occurrence of new conflicts, it is important for the RECs to systematically ensure that these programmes are linked to their early warning systems through improved and more robust conflict-sensitive programming. This is crucial because an exclusive emphasis on the post-conflict stage often ends up postponing rather than resolving conflicts and is more costly and resource intensive.

#### Box 9: Regional Strategies for Countering and Preventing Terrorism and Violent Extremism in the RECs

<b>EAC</b>	2006 Regional Peace and Security Strategy and 2014 Regional Counterterrorism Strategy
<b>ECCAS</b>	Regional Strategy and Plan of Action on Counterterrorism and the Non-Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central Africa
<b>ECOWAS</b>	2013 Political Declaration and Common Position Against Terrorism and Counterterrorism Strategy Implementation Plan
<b>IGAD</b>	2018 Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the Horn and Eastern Africa Region
<b>SADC</b>	2015 Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy



## Shared Challenges

The RECs all face challenges relating to the weak links between early warning and response, the lack of or inadequate resources (financial, human and material) to sustain implementation of core programmes, the challenge of balancing between immediate operational and long-term structural prevention, improving coordination and inclusivity, dearth of data for monitoring and evaluating impact of interventions, and enhancing national capacity and ownership through capacity building and transfer rather than capacity substitution.

Concerning the weak links between early warning and response, while the RECs have all made considerable investments and progress in integrating early warning into their policies, developing key institutional mechanisms and strengthening their capacity to analyse and proffer policy options on possible response, this has not always translated into actual early action to prevent the eruption or escalation of conflicts. The lack of political will including over issues of sovereignty is often cited as the militating factor against effective preventive action. Nonetheless, there is a need for enhanced investment in the early warning mechanisms of the RECs with focus on strengthening the warning-response link as well as coordination between the myriad of actors who are involved in the process to overcome inherent political challenges within the RECs that hamper preventive actions.

Improving coordination will also necessitate strengthening synergies between the different early warning mechanisms of the RECs on the one hand, and between the different regional mechanisms and the AU CEWS on the other. Platforms such as the meetings of the CEWs and the early warning systems of the RECs, has been highly significant for facilitating the exchange of information and enhanced coordination and collaboration among the REC and between the RECs and the AU. In addition, proposed platforms such as the Joint Consultative Meetings of the AUPSC and the RECs/RMs that is scheduled to be held in the 2019 would further contribute to building synergies and enhancing coordination on a range of issues relating to peace, security and governance. Good practices and lessons learned, as such those involving staff rotation, creating platforms for cross-fertilization and structured exchanges between the RECs, which are undertaken in the context of implementation of the 2008 MoU signed between the AU and RECs, remain useful for promoting synergies between the continental and regional early warning systems.

While a few RECs have internal coordination mechanisms on conflict prevention, this is limited. Effective conflict prevention requires both internal and external collaboration and coordination. In this respect, there is also a need to institutionalize a whole-of-system approach within each REC to promote the practice of regular assessments of system-wide responses to preventing and tackling conflicts. To be meaningful, this will require a focus

### Box 10: Regional Frameworks on Women, Peace and Security in Africa

<b>African Union</b>	Continental Results Framework (CRF) for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018-2028)
<b>EAC</b>	EAC Regional Framework on UNSCR 1325 (2015-2019)
<b>ECCAS</b>	Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000)
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Dakar Declaration and ECOWAS Plan of Action for the Implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in West Africa
<b>ICGLR</b>	Great Lakes Region of Africa: Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000), 2018-2023
<b>IGAD</b>	2013 Regional Action Plan for Implementation of the UNSC Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008)
<b>SADC</b>	2018 SADC Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security for the period 2018-2020

**Figure 21: Comparative Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats of the RECs**

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving force for regional integration</li> <li>• Track record of setting strong normative, legal and regulatory frameworks</li> <li>• High-level convening power, with influential facilitative and coordinating roles</li> <li>• Proximity to the ground with strong region/context-specific knowledge and deep/nuanced understanding of terrain</li> <li>• Regional ownership and leadership</li> <li>• Ability to effectively leverage collective will and bargaining power</li> <li>• Region-specific technical expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor early action or response track record</li> <li>• Financial dependence and lack of sustainability for long-term programme implementation (also linked to dearth of human resources)</li> <li>• Overlapping membership, which constrains ability to meet national contributions and obligations to various RECs</li> <li>• Limited ability to enforce policy implementation vis-à-vis issue of sovereignty (disparity between norms and practice)</li> <li>• Dearth of national and local ownership</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining large scale armed conflicts on the continent</li> <li>• Agenda 2063 objective to silence the guns and achieve a conflict-free Africa, with set timelines</li> <li>• Agenda 2030 with set timelines, including on SDG 16</li> <li>• Renewed global and continental focus on conflict prevention and sustaining peace</li> <li>• Adoption of the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework, with focus on addressing root causes and structural vulnerability</li> <li>• Sustained commitment to a stronger partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations on conflict prevention, sustaining peace and sustainable development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competing interests and players (national versus regional)</li> <li>• Effect of disengagement of external partners on programme implementation</li> <li>• Changing conflict landscape</li> <li>• Rise in intercommunal conflict and violence</li> </ul>

on both operational and structural prevention, as the value the different departments, divisions or units would bring to this process is dependent on their responsibilities. Key to this is the need to establish an internal platform that will facilitate information sharing within the organization on potential structural causes of conflict. COMESA's methodological model on addressing peace drivers over a 10-year time period could serve as a good example as the RECs increasingly assist their Member States to undertake SVAs and develop corresponding Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies in the context of the CSCPF.

There is also a need to strengthen the institutional capacities of the RECs, with respect to financial,

human, technological and other material resources. As outlined in the preceding sections of this report, all the RECs are constrained by inadequate resources. This has resulted in the termination of many important programmes, especially programmes with a long-term focus on addressing the root causes, and in attrition of staffing capacity. Investments will include adequate and predictable core funding for programme implementation, including for capacity building, for recruiting and expanding human resource or staffing capacity, accessing technology and other material resources, and covering operating costs. Related to this, it would be useful for partners to pool their resource support in order to provide longer-term funding and streamline the burden of reporting. Likewise,

Member States should fulfil their financial obligations by paying their annual contributions timely. Some RECs further suggested that part of the funds generated from the 0.2% levy on imports to African countries for contributions to the AU Peace Fund should be allotted to the RECs to support their institutional capacity development.

While the RECs all acknowledge the importance of strengthening national ownership through the building of national capacities, as well as engagement of civil society and the private sector, only a few of them are systematically engaged on this. National ownership and capacity and inclusion of civil society, especially of women and youth, helps to improve comprehensiveness and quality of data collected, as these actors bring certain expertise and local knowledge to the process. Civil society also serve as a pressure group to galvanize political leaders to take early action to prevent conflict and crisis, as well as to address the root causes. In this respect, it is crucial to enhance investments in creating and reinforcing insider capacity, including through mechanisms as national infrastructures for peace. The RECs will need to broaden their work beyond Track I to also include a focus on Track II and III.

At present, the RECs are not systematically monitoring and evaluating the impact of their conflict prevention programmes and intervention. While some have developed theories of change to show the type of changes that are envisaged and identify patterns that work, including lessons learned and good practices, their work in this area is still lagging. Related to this is the relevance of both quantitative and qualitative data for testing the underlying theory of change. The CRF for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa provides a useful reference for monitoring, assessing impact and reporting on peace and security relates issues.

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# 10

## Conclusion and Recommendations

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## 10: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For nearly three decades, since the end of the Cold War, Africa has witnessed a significant increase in the active involvement of its RECs in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, across all its five regions: north, east, west, central and southern. Initially envisioned as pillars for the achieving the economic cooperation and development and regional integration objectives of the African Union, the RECs have since evolved to play regional lead roles in peace and security broadly, and conflict prevention. Their engagement reaffirms the inextricable linkages between peace and security and development, demonstrating that one cannot be realized without the other.

As explicitly illustrated in this report, the RECs have made tremendous and commendable progress in developing norms and institutionalizing processes for conflict prevention, notably in the areas of early warning, mediation, facilitation, preventive diplomacy, electoral assistance and elections observations, women, peace and security, and post-conflict peacebuilding. However, challenges remain, including in relation to their capacity to sustain ongoing programmes, match early warning with timely proactive response, as well as combat and prevent new and emerging threats, including terrorism and violent extremism, climate induced insecurity, forced migration, rising criminality, cybercrimes and intercommunal violence.

To this end, this report mapped existing conflict prevention capacities within seven RECs: AMU, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC and identified specific gaps in capacity and priority areas for supporting their institutional capacity development for both operational and structural prevention. The report contributes to ongoing global and continental efforts to renew focus and reinforce collective action to prevent conflict and sustain peace, in order to realize the aspirations, goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, as well as support implementation of the joint United Nations-African Union frameworks for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.

The recommendations outlined below are not exhaustive, but rather represents priority areas that the RECs themselves have identified as areas for addressing their immediate needs and

bolstering their institutional capacities. To reiterate, the recommendations are derived from both the findings of the study and the feedback and additional inputs received from the RECs during the EGM that was held in Libreville, in November 2018, where the RECs validated this report.

The recommendations are listed according to RECs and categorized into immediate to short-term and medium-term capacity needs, except for SADC and CEN-SAD. Generic recommendations that apply to all the RECs are equally outlined.

### 1. Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

#### Immediate/Short-Term Capacity Needs

- Support for implementation of its recently developed Strategy on Security in the AMU region. AMU is already working with COMESA and the Government of Germany on this issue. The implementation of this strategy could serve as a useful entry point for advancing the work of the AMU on conflict prevention.
- Support in reintegrating returnee migrants, including women and children associated with foreign terrorist fighters in Syria and Iraq. AMU has designed a programme to tackle this and requires financial assistance for its implementation.
- Support for harmonization of counterterrorism legislation in the region: This has been identified by AMU Member States as an urgent priority, in the context of the High-Level Expert's Group on Counterterrorism, given the significant threats posed by terrorism in the AMU region.

#### Medium-Term Capacity Needs

- Legislative Mandate on Peace and Security: As part of the effort to develop its work on peace and security, the AMU Secretariat would need to seek a legislative mandate from its Member States to develop a framework for guiding its work on conflict prevention and more broadly on peace and security. It intends to draw on good practices and lessons from the existing models in other RECs.



- Articulation of a Protocol or Strategy for Conflict Prevention in the AMU region: AMU also intends to articulate and develop a regional protocol or strategy on conflict prevention.
- Designing and operationalizing an institutional structure for peace and security: To establish functional structures, mechanisms or institutional arrangements for peace and security.
- Support for the establishment of a Situation Room: AMU has initiated some actions to establish a Situation Room but requires support. However, it is necessary to sequence this, by first putting in place the requisite policy framework and overarching institutional structure for anchoring its proposed early warning and early response system.
- Financial support for staff training on early warning and conflict prevention: As a key priority, AMU intends to provide specialized trainings on early warning and conflict prevention to its first batch of staff for the Situation Room; and would require support to hire and train appropriate staff in due course.

## Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

### Immediate/Short Term Capacity Needs

- Develop a Policy Framework on Women, Peace and Security to inter alia support the participation of women in conflict prevention. Specifically, COMESA proposes to develop a Policy or Strategic Framework for implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, consistent with the UNSC resolution 1325 and other related resolutions. In relation to this, promote the involvement of youth in COMESA's peace and security programmes, building on an existing MoU between COMESA and UN-WOMEN.
- Enhance work on democracy and governance in the COMESA region: This will necessitate restoring the post of Democratization Officer and increasing the staffing strength to support implementation of its high impact programmes and forums, notably the COMESA Electoral Management Bodies Forum, reengagement on post-elections missions to ensure implementation of recommendations and alignment with COMESA's best practices guide.

- Revive the post-conflict reconstruction and development programme. Specifically, funding is needed to replicate the Trading for Peace programme in the Ethiopia-Eritrea border and on the Sudan and South Sudan border.

### Medium-Term Capacity Needs

- Reinstate other terminated programmes: including the Conflict Prevention War Economies programme, Regional Political Integration and Human Security programme, and the border markets programme as a tool of peacebuilding. The latter is aligned with the African Union Border Programme.
- Generate funding to sustain implementation of programmes at risk of termination: such as the Regional Maritime Security (MASE) programme for which COMESA is responsible for the anti-money laundering component. As observed, this is currently supported by the EU but risk being terminated in 2020 when funding expires. The programme is currently operating on a "no-cost extension" basis till May 2020 and its sustenance will be essential for building on the progress made in combating money laundering and illicit financial flows in the region. As a matter of fact, COMESA's Policy Organs have directed the Secretariat to extend this programme to all its countries.
- Generate resources to strengthen early warning capacity: the continued effectiveness of COMESA's early warning and conflict prevention programmes is constrained as a result of inadequate resources at three levels. First, is the proposed withdrawal of financial assistance by the APSA for four posts to COMESA's peace and security programme by mid-2019. Second, is the current deficits in staffing capacity to undertake early warning across the 21 countries in the region. Third, is the need for financial support to prepare and convene national consultations on the CPPI, which includes a set of indicators for its early warning monitoring and analysis.
- Mediation support: specifically, to provide analytical and other technical support to the COMESA Committee of Elders.
- Strengthen outreach to and engagement with non-state actors: The arrangement by which CSOs and the Private Sector are given a consultative status with COMESA represents



part of its effort to strengthen relationships with these non-state actors, in recognition of the vital roles they respectively play in society and the economy. However, the annual forums are presently dormant due to lack of funding. To this end, COMESA seeks to relaunch and reactivate the forums, including with regard to reinstating its CSOs and Private Sector Desk in the secretariat.

- Restore the Inter-Parliamentary Forum: which has equally been dormant due to the lack of funding. This forum has served as an important vehicle for promoting dialogue with national parliaments in the COMESA region.

## East African Community (EAC)

### Immediate/Short term Capacity Needs

- Establish and adequately staff a Mediation Support Unit: to support the mediation efforts of the organization, including engaging in research, conflict analysis, documentation of best practices and knowledge management. At the moment there is just one staff handling this portfolio. Additionally, EAC seeks to further enhance inclusivity in its mediation, negotiation and dialogue processes by engaging all key stakeholders, including CSOs, religious and traditional leaders, business sector, women, youths and other interest groups.
- Support, as applicable, efforts of Member States to undertake their structural vulnerability assessments and corresponding country vulnerability mitigation strategies in line with the AU CSCPF.

### Medium-Term Capacity Needs

- Increase staffing capacity of the EACWARN: to manage and support optimal performance of the situation room, conduct structural vulnerability assessments and convene national consultations to review its findings.
- Fully operationalize the EAC Peace Facility: created to support the conflict prevention programmes of EAC, its management structure needs to be operationalized and its resource allocation significantly increased to enable the facility to meet the objectives set out in Article 4.2 of the Modality for the Establishment of the Peace Facility.

- Establish key policy and decision-making organs on mediation and conflict prevention: such as a mediation and security council, to enhance decision making, drawing on existing good practices from other RECs.
- Strengthen the Nyerere Centre for Peace: to undertake and support policy-oriented peace research.
- Support ongoing efforts to develop SOPs on emergency for training of police officers, emergency response and preparedness, and anti-narcotic drugs management procedures.
- Relaunch and strengthen the regional annual forums of Political Parties, National Human Rights Commissions and the combined Governance that were terminated due to financial constraints. Likewise ensure availability of funds for the convening of the annual forums of Chief Justices, National Assemblies, Anti-Corruption bodies and Electoral Management Bodies. These forums are all instrumental for harmonizing and coordinating efforts among the Partner States.
- Establish a Regional Network of Youth in Agriculture: A proposal is under consideration to establish this network. Upon its establishment, the project would represent an innovative response for tackling structural challenges relating to youth unemployment that contributes to extremist's recruitment.

## Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

### Immediate/Short Term Capacity Needs

- Finalize the institutional reform process, which seeks to transform the Secretariat into a commission and enhance work on peace and security. This will provide a new impetus for advancing work on conflict prevention. The process is to be finalized by December 2019.
- Develop an ECCAS framework for conflict prevention, similar to the ECOWAS ECPF, to provide a comprehensive basis and facilitate a system-wide approach in preventing conflict and addressing the root causes.

- Fast-track efforts to mobilize resources for implementation of the regional programmes on youth and early warning, mediation, electoral assistance, maritime security, and women, peace and security. The revitalization of the ECCAS partners' coordination meeting as well as the Group of Friends of ECCAS could serve as useful entry points in this regard.
- Finalize the development of a regional action plan for implementation of UNSC resolution 1325 that will support action to promote women's participation and mainstream gender perspectives in conflict prevention, mediation and peace processes in the Central Africa region.

### Medium-Term Capacity Needs

- Implement stop-gap measures for addressing critical human resources or staffing needs: including by exploring opportunities for possible secondment of staff from Member States and partners to support activities on early warning (in the context of MARAC), as well as on mediation and elections. This should be accompanied by other measures to address staffing needs in the longer-term by recruiting qualified professional staff at both the General Secretariat and field levels, especially for the MARAC central structure and national bureaus, the Mediation and Preventive Diplomacy Unit, the Elections and Good Governance Unit, and the Gender and Youth Unit.
- Accelerate the process of domesticating and implementing the Kinshasa Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, including in the context of broader continental efforts on the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative.
- Enhance Secretariat-wide consultation and coordination on conflict prevention: including through the establishment of a working group or coordination mechanism to help advance the operationalization of the ECCAS Structural Indicators Framework.
- Strengthen institutional early warning and response capacity: including by revitalizing and establishing the MARAC National Bureaus and the Decentralized Correspondents system across all 11 Member States and enhancing use of the ECCAS Secretary-General's good offices function. The creation of the proposed Council of the Wise

for Central Africa would further contribute to enhancing ECCAS' early response capacity.

- Revitalize the Elections and Good Governance Unit in the ECCAS Secretariat: including through the creation of the envisaged regional network of elections management bodies and regional training school for electoral officers.

## Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

### Immediate/Short Term Capacity Needs

- Enhance national early warning and response capacity, including through coherent and sustained efforts to domesticate and support national implementation of the ECPF in all 15 Member States.
- Enhance role and effective participation of women and youth in early warning and conflict prevention programmes in a more systematic manner.

### Medium Term Capacity Needs

- Mobilize predictable resources for conflict prevention: ECOWAS requires predictable resources for full implementation of the ECPF, especially as it seeks to establish NCCRM across its Member States. Its good track record of rigorous financial reporting and auditing should inspire confidence of partners.
- Expand creation of the NCCRM as a vehicle for strengthening national early warning and response capacity as well as promote greater involvement of national CSOs, including women and youth, in these mechanisms. In this respect, the collaborative work between ECOWARN and WACSOF on mapping CSOs and peace actors at the community levels and their capacity needs would be invaluable for ensuring inclusivity of the NCCRM.
- Improve data generation and analysis for planning medium to long-term structural prevention, in order to effectively address the root causes and promote human security.

## Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

### Immediate/Short Term capacity needs

- Strengthen relations with CSOs, think-tanks, academia and Private Sector on conflict prevention, including undertaking a mapping of existing engagements with these multi-stakeholders.
- Enhance work of mediators on “lower level conflict issues” and develop a roster of local and high-level mediators.
- Develop tools for measuring progress, impact and outcomes of conflict prevention programmes.

### Medium-Term Capacity Needs

- Support for Infrastructures for Peace: IGAD’s Mediation Support Unit, in collaboration with representatives from its Member States have identified gaps in the infrastructure for peace requiring medium to long-term investments in areas such as peace education, conflict prevention, dialogue and peace resolution of disputes.
- Support for the Gender Affairs programme: there is a need to prioritize funding allocation for implementation of key programmes and projects on mainstreaming gender, including as it pertains to addressing issues such as social exclusion, gender based violence, harmful traditional practices, unequal access to productive inputs, trafficking and marginalization. In addition, resources are needed for convening regular ministerial meetings to review progress in implementation of national plans of actions and sharing lessons; and for adequately staffing the Gender Affairs Programme, especially with professional staff at the P4 level to handle issues of climate, agriculture, economic empowerment, social policy, governance and peace and security.
- Staffing support for IGAD’s Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction programme, with at least three professional staff: a Programme Coordinator (P4 level), a Project Officer (P3 level), and a Project Assistant (P2 level), as well as resources of about US\$500,000 annually for programmatic activities.

- Full operationalization of the IGAD Security Sector Programme Pillars: which has four pillars: Counter Terrorism and Radicalization, Maritime Safety and Security, Transnational Organized Crime, and Security Institution Capacity Building (including SSR and DDR). Of the four pillars, only the Counter Terrorism and Radicalization Pillar has two professional staff. The other three pillars require two professional staff each at the P3 level to follow-up and support capacity building and reporting on the Security Sector Programme Pillars at country level.
- Strengthen early warning and conflict prevention capacities: optimal functioning of the CEWARN is hindered by inadequate financial resources. Among other things, CEWARN needs resources for equipping and sustaining itself with the requisite technological tools, including Geographic Information System (GIS) and Statistical Software, to facilitate its analysis of conflict trends. It also requires staff to support the CEWARNs in its Member States. Specifically, CEWARN needs one Policy Advisor at P4 level to strengthen its policy development and engagement, one Conflict Assessment Analyst at P3 level, and a Response Analyst at P3 level to enhance analysis of early responses to conflict.
- Development and implementation of region-wide cooperation frameworks on pastoral and territorial disputes and water resources-related tensions. With respect to the latter, IGAD plans to adopt a Regional Water Protocol as well as convene relevant ministerial and expert meetings on water resources. The financial resources of about US\$500,000 is required to support these processes. In addition, the Division needs to hire a Project Officer at P5 level and a professional expert on water diplomacy at P3 level.
- Strengthen implementation of the IDDRSI: including through recruitment of a Programme Coordinator at P4 level and a Food and Security Expert at P3 level, to support monitoring of the implementation of the AUDA-NEPAD CAADP. Two database experts at P3 level and two experts on GIS at P4 level are also required to support analysis on food and agricultural production in the IGAD region.

## Southern African Development Community (SADC)

- Strengthen the connectivity between the REWC at the SADC headquarters and the NEWCs in Member States: Given that the effectiveness of SADC REWS is based on a strong interface with the NEWCs, it is important to establish secure lines of communications with between the REWC and all the NEWCs. This will also contribute to improving the flow of information and reports between the REWC and NEWCs, in order to have a comprehensive picture of emerging and evolving threats to peace and security in the region.
- Enhance elections observation and management capacities: including by ensuring adequate and predictable resources for non-elections observation interventions; to support the development and promotion of a SADC model law on elections, based on SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. As part of efforts to increase the level of support to Member States in elections observation, it is desirable to continue training and building capacities both within the SADC secretariat and across Member States that can be deployed for elections observation.
- Promote involvement of civil society and women's groups in SADC Conflict Prevention programme, including in the areas of elections and mediation, to further implementation of the Regional Strategy for Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022.
- Strengthen mediation support capabilities with the SADC secretariat to backstop the work of its high-level mediators and facilitators.

## The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)<sup>51</sup>

- Establish a National Infrastructure for Peace in Libya consistent with the decision of the Heads of State and Government of the region.
- Develop and support implementation of a Strategy on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Extremism in the CEN-SAD region.

51 Though CEN-SAD was not covered in the study, a senior official from CEN-SAD participated in the EGM and identified these as immediate priorities.

## General and crosscutting recommendations

- Improve human resources and staffing capacity in all the RECs to support work on conflict prevention, especially with respect to key areas, such as early warning, mediation support, electoral assistance, CSO engagement, post-conflict development and women, peace and security, where there are currently significant staffing gaps across the RECs. External partner support, including through secondment and provision of financial support for staff engagement, is useful but clearly unsustainable for addressing the situation over the long-term.
- Enhance inter-REC institutional cooperation, collaboration and coordination especially in tackling shared transregional or cross-border threats on the one hand, as well as operational relations between the RECs and the AU on the other. In addition to other existing forums, such as meetings of the CEWS and regional early warning systems, the annual coordination meetings of the AU-RECs, which has been established in the context of the AU reforms may potentially strengthen these relationships.
- Create and strengthen interdepartmental coordination and collaboration within the various RECs on conflict prevention, especially given the renewed focus on structural prevention espoused in the AU CSCPF, which the RECs are increasingly striving to implement. This will help increase shared understanding of the scope of issues, facilitate joint planning and improve coherence and synergies in implementing programmes that comprehensively address the triggers, proximate and root causes of conflict. This is particularly crucial when supporting countries to undertake SVAs and develop corresponding mitigation strategies. Other existing mechanisms such as the APRM could also be leveraged in countries that have not signed up for the SVA.
- Systematically invest in data collection and generation to strengthen lessons learned as well as support reporting, monitoring and impact assessment. The RECs could also explore synergies with the APRM other international monitoring and evaluation mechanisms such as the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism.
- Develop a communications strategy to support efforts to popularize and further raise awareness on regional conflict prevention programmes, as



a way of also engaging the population. This is consistent with the people-centred and human security approach that is espoused by both the AU and the RECs. It also resonates with the United Nations approach of leaving no one behind.

- Explore modalities for supporting the work of the RECs, including through the AU Peace Fund, as well as reinforce efforts to mobilize resources for the various funding mechanisms that have been established by the RECs to support their conflict prevention interventions. This is fundamental for addressing the perennial problem of insufficient and unpredictable funding and will contribute to ensuring continuity and sustaining gains made.
- Strengthen collaboration with international partners, including the United Nations, to foster coherence and improve coordination in international support to African countries. For example, specific attention should be placed on promoting stronger engagements of the RECs in the operationalization of the UN-AU joint frameworks for Enhanced Partnership on Peace and Security, and for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa's Agenda 2063. Related to this is the need to equally enhance the participation of the RECs in the annual conference that is convened by the United Nations Secretary-General and AUC Chairperson to review and take stock of progress made in the implementation of these joint frameworks. Given the role of the EU in supporting the RECs, it is also important to leverage existing joint cooperation mechanisms, such as the AU-EU-UN tripartite meetings, to strengthen collective exchange and coordination with the RECs.
- Reinforce support for national infrastructures for peace, as well as systematically increase engagement with non-state actors, including civil society, women and youth groups, at both regional and national levels. In relation to this, further promote and effectively coordinate efforts to mainstream both gender and youth perspectives into all components of conflict prevention work of the RECs. Furthermore, the ECOWAS experience offers a good model of REC-CSOs structured engagement in conflict prevention. Overall, this implies paying particular attention not only to Track I level engagements, but also to Track II and III.

- Leverage existing continental programmes and initiatives to reinforce strategic-operational collaboration between the AU and the RECs on both operational and structural prevention. For instance, with respect to implementation of the Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 initiative and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement. This can help link early warning approaches to longer-term peace and development priorities.
- Bridge existing gaps between early warning and early response, which undermines timely actions to prevent conflicts and crises, including by addressing the continuing problems of the lack of political will, vis-a-vis questions of sovereignty and national interests versus commitments to the principles of non-difference and the responsibility to protect.

## Reference Documents

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