



ASWAN FORUM



Concept Note
Expert Workshop
Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in Africa:
Towards a Coherent Approach to the Peace Continuum

12-13 November 2019

African Union Commission (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)

Context

Addressing the needs of countries and communities affected by or emerging from conflict is amongst the most complex challenges facing Africa. Restoring/building state authority, and its ability to perform its basic functions, building trust in a new political order and governance structures, repairing the social fabric torn by violent conflict and addressing the root causes of conflict, so as to prevent relapse, are complex and long-term processes that span peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development mandates and efforts. They require comprehensive, integrated and inclusive politics and policies, sustained funding and engagement, and coordination among a wide array of local, national, regional and international actors.

Mindful of the above, the peacebuilding paradigm in Africa (and elsewhere) has shifted dramatically. This was a response to the changing dynamics of conflict, the emergence of new threats and challenges, as well as lessons learned from previous and ongoing peacebuilding and state-building endeavors. As a result, Africa and the international community's toolbox of conflict management and resolution are undergoing a process of adaptation, transformation and reform. Such multifaceted process was made all the more urgent by dwindling resources and a crumbling commitment to multilateralism, its institutions, and instruments, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Key to achieving this transformation is ensuring the integration, coherence and complementarity of the entire peace continuum, including conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Peacekeeping, in particular, has been high on the agenda of reform, with several initiatives on both the international (e.g. the adoption by the SC of Presidential Statement S/PRST/27/2017, the A4P initiative and the subsequent Declaration of Shared Commitments) and regional levels (e.g. The Cairo Roadmap on Enhancing the Performance of Peacekeeping Operations: From Mandate to Exit). If these initiatives could garner the requisite political support, they could enhance the contribution of peacekeeping to the larger and comprehensive political strategy, guided by the primacy of politics.

With regards to peacebuilding, and with several milestones on the horizon, the international community is offered an opportunity to take stock of progress achieved and to identify challenges and implementation gaps. Internationally, 2020 will mark the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (UNPBA). This occasion will coincide with the third five-year periodic review of the architecture as mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council. On the Continental level, 2020 is expected to witness the revitalization of the AU Policy on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (AU PCRDR), and the operationalization of the AU Centre for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (AUC PCRDR), together with the conclusion of the APSA Roadmap 2016-2020, and a review of progress made towards meeting the objective of "Silencing the Guns" by 2020.

The Expert Workshop

Acting in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Aswan Forum, the **Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCPA)**, in partnership with the **African Union Commission, UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)**, and the **Egyptian Embassy in Addis Ababa**, is organizing an Expert Workshop on 12-13 November 2019, titled:

Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in Africa:
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The workshop will initiate the regional consultations in Africa in connection with the upcoming review of the UNPBA in 2020. As such, it will serve as a platform to take stock of progress achieved and challenges



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facing the operationalization of the new peace “continuum” paradigm in the continent, through the reinvigoration of the AU PCRD and the new AU Peace Support Operations (PSO) doctrine. It will also provide a platform to examine the opportunities for further enhancing the UN-AU partnership in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, with particular emphasis on ongoing regional efforts to align PCRD and PSOs with the global transformative agenda aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict and instability.

The workshop will draw on specific case studies to elaborate the complex, context-specific nature of the political and operational environment affecting efforts aimed at building and sustaining peace. Given the multiplicity of actors, frameworks and initiatives (e.g. UN and AU peace operations, RECs/RMs operations, ad-hoc regional coalitions, AU Liaison Offices and special envoys, the PBC country-specific and regional engagements), the workshop will address the opportunities and challenges for strengthening complementarity and coherence between all actors involved across the peace “continuum”.

Specifically, the workshop will aim at:

- Reaching a common understanding of the emerging multidimensional challenges and risks to peace, security and development in Africa, and how the new normative framework on sustaining peace is responding to this ever-evolving operational landscape;
- Identifying priorities and entry points for the revitalization of AU’s normative frameworks and policies, advancing ongoing reform efforts, and enhancing coherence and complementarity between the AU and REC/RMs;
- Identifying the progress made and challenges facing the UN’s work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the context of the Secretary-General’s reforms and prevention agenda;
- Taking stock of the developments in the nature and scope of the PBC’s advisory role, in particular to the SC during the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions mandates; in support of the regional dimensions of peacebuilding; and in enhancing practical partnerships with regional and sub-regional actors, in particular the African Union;
- Examining the extent to which the commitments stipulated in the A4P Shared Commitments concerning the impact of peacekeeping on sustaining peace can be further elaborated and operationalized (drawing on the Cairo Roadmap and the guidelines stipulated in S/PRST/27/2017, S/PRST/20/2018).
- Advancing the UN-AU partnership across the peace-development continuum on the operational level.

Participation

The workshop will bring together African government officials, experts from the African Union (AU) and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), the United Nations (UN), development/peace and security partners, financial institutions, and other key actors engaged in peacebuilding efforts in Africa. Leading African and international think tanks and research centers will also be invited to present their research and contribute to the discussion.

Outcome

A Chair’s Summary of discussion will be developed and submitted as a contribution to the ongoing discussions on revitalizing the AU PCRD policy, and the peacebuilding architecture review process. It will also feed into the Aswan Forum discussions, and the “Aswan Report for Sustainable Peace and Development.”

Strategic Partnerships

The Aswan Forum is an Egyptian initiative, owned by Africa and supported by the international community. This event was made possible by the generous contribution of the governments of Canada, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Japan, as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



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