

STRENGTHENING THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP ON PEACE AND SECURITY

HOW TO ENGAGE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

IAI RESEARCH PAPERS

Edited by
Nicoletta Pirozzi

in cooperation with:



with the support of the European Parliament



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IAI Research Papers

Strengthening the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security:

How to Engage African Regional Organizations
and Civil Society

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FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
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List of Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (countries)
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APF	African Peace Facility
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
APSTA	African Peace Support Trainers' Association
ASF	African Stand-by Force
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUPG	African Union Partners Group
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CIDO	African Citizens and Diaspora Directorate
CIS	Inter-Service Consultations
CMD	Conflict Management Division
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COPS	Political and Security Committee (European Union)
CPN	Conflict Prevention Network
CPP	Conflict Prevention Partnership
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General Development Cooperation - EuropeAid
DPCs	District Peace Committees
EAC	East African Community
EASF	East African Stand-by Force
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council (African Union)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EP	European Parliament
EPLO	European Peacebuilding Liaison Office
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IfP	Initiative for Peacebuilding
IfS	Instrument for Stability
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IPSS	Institute for Peace and Security Studies
IT	Implementation Team
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
JCC	Joint Coordination Committee
JEGs	Joint Expert Groups
LAs	Local Authorities
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NARC	North African Regional Capability
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSAs	Non-State Actors
NSC	National Steering Committee
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PbP	Peacebuilding Partnership
PoW	Panel of the Wise
PSC	Peace and Security Council (African Union)
PSD	Peace and Security Department
PSOs	Peace Support Operations
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIPs	Regional Indicative Programmes
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SWP	Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik
UN	United Nations

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WACSO	West Africa Civil Society Forum
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

Introduction

The Joint Africa-European Union Strategy (JAES), adopted at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007, can be considered the capstone doctrine of relations between the European Union (EU) and Africa, consolidated in about fifty years of trade and development cooperation and substantially revisited in the last decade. The EU is still the largest trading partner for African countries and the largest donor to the African continent. However, new aspects of the relationship have assumed an increasingly important role, ranging from crisis management and governance to regional integration, from energy to climate change, and from migration to science and technology.

The Joint Strategy and its first Action Plan (2008-2010) took stock of this development and identified eight priorities for cooperation or partnerships, the first of which concerns peace and security.

Security has become a central issue for both Africa and the EU: the events of the last decade have confirmed the need for a change of priorities in relations between the two continents, making security the core subject. Besides, recent developments in Northern Africa and the persistence of growing instability in the Horn of Africa, Mali and Nigeria, to mention just some of the most challenging situations, have raised new doubts about the consistency of the efforts made by the EU and the African Union (AU) to renew their relationship in peace and security.

During its first phase, the implementation of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security was undermined by a number of problems that jeopardized European efforts to promote stability on the African continent. An in-depth analysis of these shortfalls and a reflection on possible improvements are the basis for evaluating the current implementation of the second Action Plan (2011-2013), adopted in Tri-

poli in November 2010, and for advancing policy recommendations for further improvements.

Previous assessments of the operationalization of the Africa-EU Partnership have shown a tendency to institutionalize dialogue and to crystallize practices of cooperation along the well-established Brussels-Addis Ababa axis, while efforts to engage with other crucial actors remain to some extent limited. This has resulted in sub-optimal consideration and involvement of two pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the Africa-EU dialogue on peace and security respectively, namely:

- African regional organizations – Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) – and
- African and European civil society actors – including, among others, non-governmental organizations, academia and think tanks, community and religious organizations, women’s groups, political parties and foundations.

The aim of this study is twofold:

- to identify the strengths and weaknesses of African REC/RMs’ contribution to the operationalization of APSA, and to propose new ways of engagement with both the AU and the EU in the framework of the Partnership on Peace and Security;
- to investigate both the current and the potential role of civil society actors in the Africa-EU political dialogue on peace and security and its related implementation activities, with particular regard to their involvement in conflict analysis and early warning, capacity building and mediation.

As to the first aim, our starting point has been to assess the involvement of REC/RMs in crisis management initiatives, which still remains limited due to several factors. Among other things, REC/RMs suffer from a gap in communication, coordination and harmonization with AU structures and organs, notwithstanding their participation in some important components of APSA, such as the Peace and Security Council (PSC) or the African Stand-by Force (ASF). In this study we measure these shortfalls with reference to three main aspects: the involvement of REC/RMs in the political dialogue within the JAES Partnership with regards to

both the AU and the EU; the rationalization of the triangular consultation among the three actors; and the coherence and consistency of the EU's approach to the regional and continental levels.

The analysis shows an excessive proliferation of mechanisms and procedures which were supposed to answer a growing need for coordination among the three levels, but which on the contrary have increased the degree of bureaucratization and the lack of transparency. This has had a negative impact on the effectiveness and credibility of the whole Partnership, and shows the need for the EU and the AU to develop good practices on how to engage more and better with REC/RMs.

Even more complex is the issue of the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs). It represents an old and still unresolved *problématique*, which Europeans have experienced in different crisis theatres in the post-Cold War period: the difficulty of combining the efforts of official institutions, national or international, with the presence in the same field of non-governmental organizations willing to help local people to restore confidence and stability. As we know, CSOs may make a significant contribution in terms of dialogue, early warning, capacity building and mediation. Nevertheless, their actions may sometimes conflict with parallel initiatives undertaken by institutions, particularly the military.

In the case of Africa, this issue is even more complex and difficult due to differences in culture, perception and structure between African and international CSOs, and to the lack of transparency in the relationships among the EU/AU, REC/RMs and CSOs. In this case, too, the lack of direct channels of communication, the absence of a well-structured political dialogue and the "unfriendly" procedures for access to EU funds are all obstacles to a better use of CSOs' proximity to the real needs of suffering populations.

As the study indicates in its conclusions, much can be done to improve the presently unsatisfactory situation. Much unexpected progress has been achieved since the adoption of the JAES, but there is still urgent need for improvement. It is in the interests of Europe and Africa to address this issue in a more consistent and effective way. Our study represents a small contribution to this process, and we would like to raise awareness of the need to further develop Euro-African relations in the peace and security sector.

It benefits from a combination of conceptual elaboration, policy analysis and field research. To this end, different primary and secondary sources have been exploited, i.e. EU and AU institutions' official declarations and reports, AU and RECs needs assessment, etc. Field research relied on structured and semi-structured interviews of relevant stakeholders in the AU and EU institutions, REC/RMs liaison officers to the AU, and representatives of European and African civil society organizations, in both Addis Ababa and Brussels.

The analysis combines vertical and horizontal approaches. As far as REC/RMs are concerned, vertical coordination and cooperation with the AU institutions as well as horizontal coordination between REC/RMs themselves are assessed. In the same vein, civil society's contribution to the Africa-EU dialogue and related implementing activities in the field of peace and security is examined through the degree of coordination with and impact on both European and African institutional actors, as well as the extent of CSOs' horizontal networking.

The preliminary findings of the study were presented at the "Call to Europe" conference held in Brussels on 21-22 June 2012, which gathered officials from institutions, civil society representatives, African and European policy-makers and experts from both sides of the JAES. This final version of the study results from the fruitful discussions held at the workshop, and includes its outcome.

The study originated from a number of activities that the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) of Rome has carried out over recent years on this subject.

In 2009-2011, IAI led a research project entitled "Ensuring Peace and Security in Africa: Implementing the new Africa-EU Partnership", conducted by a consortium of European and African institutions with longstanding experience in security issues. The project was carried out in cooperation with the Paris-based EU Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS) and Chatham House in London. African partners included researchers and practitioners from various African centres, such as the Centre de Recherche et Formation sur l'Etat en Afrique (CREA) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; the Africa Governance Institute (AGI) in Dakar, Senegal; and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), in

Accra, Ghana. The merging of expertise from European and African institutes was aimed at balancing the project by addressing both European and African security concerns and by offering a two-sided approach to the research.

In the context of this project, IAI published two studies in 2010:

- *Ensuring Peace and Security in Africa: Implementing the New Africa-EU Partnership* (http://www.iai.it/pdf/Quaderni/Quaderni_E_17_selection.pdf); and
- *Consolidating African and EU assessments in view of the implementation of the partnership on peace and security* (<http://www.iai.it/pdf/Consolidating-African-and-EU-assessments.pdf>).

Three international conferences were organized in Rome (October 2009), London (October 2010) and Brussels (October 2011). These events brought together participants from Europe and Africa, notably officials from the EU, the AU and the United Nations (UN), government officials and diplomats from Africa and Europe, research institutions and civil society organizations.

Since 2011, IAI has been a member of the Observatoire de l'Afrique (<http://www.obsafrique.eu/>), a network of European and African institutes and experts on peace and security issues in Africa.

This new study is the result of research carried out by a IAI team in 2012, under the lead of Nicoletta Pirozzi, senior fellow at IAI and editor of this volume, and of myself, with the participation of two external experts, Valérie Vicky Miranda and Kai Schaefer. The whole exercise has enjoyed the support of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) of Brussels.

Gianni Bonvicini
Rome, September 2012

Executive summary

The study is comprised of two main chapters. On the basis of the provisions contained in official AU, REC/RMs and EU documents, the first chapter by Kai Schaefer investigates the contribution of REC/RMs to African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), identifying strengths and weaknesses.

As far as REC/RMs are concerned, a number of reports maintain that the most significant gaps lie in communication, coordination and harmonization with the African Union organs, which has only been partially improved by the appointment of REC/RMs liaison offices to the AU. In the same vein, mainly due to the slow pace of the regional integration process and the well-known overlapping memberships of African regional organizations, REC/RMs themselves face a number of challenges, which negatively impact on coordination between them in terms of mandates, visions and policy priorities. This is particularly relevant for the composition and functioning of some components of APSA: in the case of the African Stand-by Force, the division of labour between RECs and the newly created RMs, such as the East African Stand-by Force (EASF), remains unclear. In addition, it must be recalled that the AU recognizes eight REC/RMs with a mandate in peace and security, while other regional groupings remain outside this framework.

The first chapter assesses the various interactions (vertical interactions between the AU and regions and horizontal interactions among regions) with reference to the APSA components – the Peace and Security Council, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the Panel of the Wise (PoW), and the African Stand-by Force – in which the REC/ RMs are involved. Particular attention is devoted to achievements and challenges in the implementation of the second JAES Action Plan. To this

end, two relevant case studies have been chosen: the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which well epitomize the variance among REC/RMs' mandates, visions and policy priorities, and include also a linguistic element.

The second chapter by Valérie Vicky Miranda is focused on the involvement of civil society in the Africa-EU dialogue and implementation activities in the field of peace and security.

With regard to civil society, the JAES was conceived as a people-centred strategy, at least on paper. However, despite formal commitments, it has not yet lived up to expectations. Firstly, civil society actors are not able to find adequate room to express themselves and to have an actual impact on institutional stakeholders and the decision-making process. Second, significant differences exist between the two sides of the strategy, with African civil society organizations lagging behind European ones, in terms of human and economic resources and organizational and networking abilities. The difficulties experienced by African and European CSOs in advancing dialogue and undertaking joint initiatives are a consequence of this. European and African CSOs are also hampered by a lack of adequate funding, which they increasingly acknowledge as one of the main obstacles to their actual and effective involvement in the Joint Strategy. Similar remarks apply to the Partnership on Peace and Security, where, according to CSO representatives, the contribution of civil society has not been adequately accommodated. And yet, this is a sector where civil society could provide added value, for example in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, situation analysis, training, etc. Some examples are already evident (for example the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the African Peace Support Trainers' Association (APSTA)), but the potential of civil society has yet to be fully exploited.

Starting from the so-called "entry points" of civil society into the JAES (including mechanisms for closer cooperation with the parliamentary organs of both the EU and the AU; mapping of existing European and African civil society networks; and participation in the JAES Ministerial Troika meetings and Joint Expert Groups), the chapter investigates their actual implementation in order to assess how and to what extent civil

society actors contribute to the Partnership, and what gaps should instead be filled. Not only does the chapter consider CSOs' direct contribution to, and connection with, institutional actors, but it also looks at the potential support they can provide in activities such as mediation, early warning and conflict analysis, thus contributing to the achievement of the Strategy's objectives.

Against this backdrop, the study finally identifies some selected policy recommendations to EU policy-makers, with the final aim of putting forward possible ways of engagement of regional and civil society actors and further improvements to the existing strategic framework of EU-Africa relations.

1.

The Africa-EU Peace and Security Partnership and African Regional Organizations

Kai Schaefer

The changes in the nature of violent conflicts in Africa over the last decades require adaptation and increased capacity on the part of conflict management actors to provide security and political stability to States and their citizens. This chapter deals with the role of African regional organizations in conflict prevention, management and resolution within the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, a topic that still remains an under-researched subject,¹ while regional organizations “are playing an ever more important role in securing peace and security”² on the African continent.

The African Union officially recognizes eight Regional Economic Communities and two Regional Mechanisms with a mandate in peace and security,³ while other regional groupings remain outside this framework.⁴ Due to the changing nature of violent conflicts, particularly

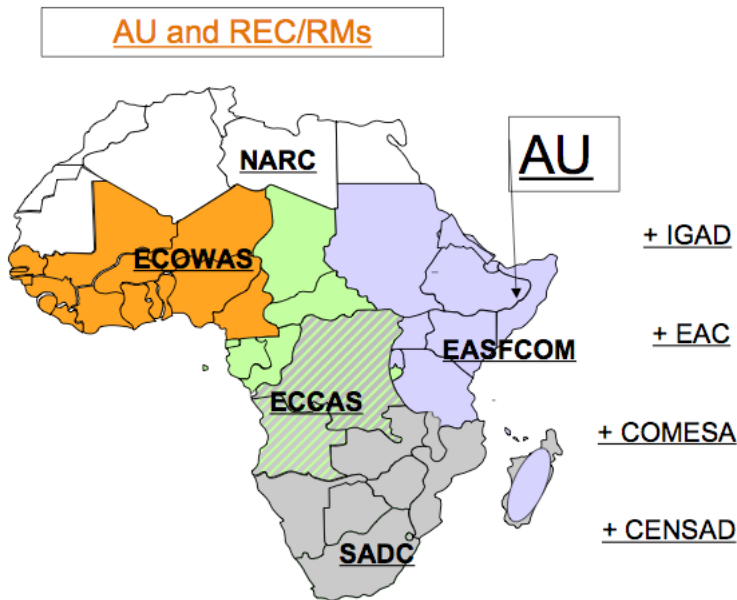
¹ Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, “Problematizing Regional Organizations in African Security”, in Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Organizations in African Security*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, p. 4.

² Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), *Overstretched and Overrated? Prospects of Regional Security Policy in Africa and its European Support*, Berlin, FES, 2011, p. 3.

³ These are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), as well as the East African Stand-by Force (EASF) and the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC).

⁴ Such as the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the International Conference on

in Africa, that can only be understood and dealt with in a regional context,⁵ many of the REC/RMs have progressively added peace and security initiatives to their original (mostly economic) purpose.⁶ Nevertheless, fundamental differences of outlook and style among the REC/RMs resulting from different perceptions of security threats, historical legacy and cultural background can be seen to play a part in the formulation of strategies for conflict prevention, management and resolution.⁷



Source: EU.

Figure 1. A geographical representation of REC/RMs.

Often, REC/RMs are considered to have large comparative advantages in this regard in terms of cultural understanding, geographical closeness

the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). For the time being the latter is invited to the meetings between AU and REC/RMs.

⁵ Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, "Problematizing Regional Organizations in African Security", in *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁶ Benedikt Franke, "Competing Regionalisms in Africa and the Continent's Emerging Security Architecture", in *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Spring 2007, p. 46.

⁷ Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, "Problematizing Regional Organizations in African Security", in *op. cit.*, p. 3.

and personal links. In addition, as the regional dimension of many violent conflicts has a direct impact on neighbouring countries, REC/RMs have a legitimate and vital interest to be at the forefront of peace and security initiatives.⁸ It is also timely to focus on the role of REC/RMs in peace and security aspects on the African continent, as 2012 is the year of shared values for the AU. Hence, the AU agenda is focused on constitutionalism, governance and transparency, specifically with regard to REC/RMs and civil society organizations.⁹

This chapter is structured to provide 1) an overview of relations between REC/RMs and the African Union concerning peace and security; 2) an analysis of the REC/RMs' contributions to the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, with a particular focus on the objectives of the partnership, namely political dialogue and operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture; 3) an assessment of the European Union's financial support to REC/RMs; and 4) a presentation of two case studies on COMESA and SADC as illustrations of the distinct workings of two of the REC/RMs within the Partnership. The chapter argues for a rationalization and prioritization of relations between the EU and REC/RMs to make the Partnership more effective and meaningful.

1. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AFRICAN UNION AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF PEACE AND SECURITY

The African Union is increasingly active in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management. An important tenet of its peace and security approach is embedded in Article 4 of the AU Constitutive Act, which recognizes, together with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State "in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹ Jakkie Cilliers ... [et al.], *African Futures 2050*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 2011, p. 64.

crimes against humanity". This shift from "non interference" to "non indifference" is at the basis also of the development of an African architecture to address peace and security challenges in the continent.¹⁰

In the interactions between the AU and the REC/RMs, the continental level is expected to take a leadership role in providing orientations on policy directions and the implementation of programmes that concern both the continental and regional levels. Although the existence of many RECs predates the constitution of the AU in 2002, such a hierarchical division is now generally accepted, albeit sometimes with reluctance. The question is when to act, who goes first and who takes what role. Here the AU and REC/RMs do not necessarily speak with one voice, as illustrated by the African responses to the coup in Mali at the beginning of 2012. While the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) swiftly condemned the coup and suspended the countries' membership in the organization in March 2012, it took the AU one more month to come to the same conclusion.

The Peace and Security Council Protocol, in force since December 2003, outlines in its Article 16 the relationship between the AU Commission and REC/RMs,¹¹ recognizing the imperative role of REC/RMs in conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding on the continent, without however describing the operational modalities of this type of relation.¹²

This relation is regulated by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) governing the relationship between AU and REC/RMs that was concluded in January 2008.¹³ All REC/RMs have signed the MoU, with the North

¹⁰ Nicoletta Pirozzi, *EU support to African security architecture: funding and training components*, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS) Occasional Paper No. 76, February 2009, p. 10, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/op76.pdf>.

¹¹ African Union, *The Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, Addis Ababa, African Union, 2002, Art. 16.

¹² Joaquim Chissano, "African Problems and their African Solutions – Is the African Peace and Security Architecture Suited to Address Current Security Threats in Africa?", in FES, *Overstretched and Overrated? Prospects of Regional Security Policy in Africa and its European Support*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹³ Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, "The African Union's New Peace and Security Architecture: Toward an Evolving Security Regime?", in Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Organizations in African Security*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

African Regional Capability (NARC) being the last to do so in September 2011. In the framework of this MoU, the AU and REC/RMs hold regular meetings, joint missions and consultations that take place at the level of senior officials twice a year and at chief executive level once a year on a rotating basis in the regions.

Especially over recent years, the information flow between the AU and REC/RMs has increased in terms of the exchange of experience and joint needs assessments in the regions. Concerning day-to-day working relations, it is the task of the REC/RMs liaison offices to the AU to ensure the exchange of information between the AU and REC/RMs.

However, despite the progress achieved so far, we can still note a number of weaknesses concerning the role of REC/RMs when it comes to conflict prevention, management and resolution, as follows:

- On the political level, there is not sufficient will on the part of Member States to empower the REC/RMs to carry out the tasks, which they have been mandated to fulfil. Then there is the problem that Member States do not necessarily have the same priorities, with national interests taking a prominent role on certain peace and security issues. These major issues are only solvable if the leaders of the Member States see the REC/RMs achieving positive results.
- Financially speaking, it appears that Member States do not give sufficient emphasis to the regional level in peace and security issues and therefore do not provide the necessary funds. Therefore, a greater investment by Member States, together with better institutional machinery at REC/RMs level when it comes to absorbing external funding, is required.
- There is still a certain degree of overlap between the different REC/RMs, not only in terms of membership, but also with regard to mandates, most notably in Eastern Africa. Overlapping membership can be explained in political and strategic terms as a way to maximize the benefits of integration by being a member of more than one regional grouping.¹⁴ The question is who does what? When this ques-

¹⁴ Atieno Ndomo, *Regional Economic Communities in Africa: A Progress Overview*, Nairobi, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2009, p. 12.

tion is clarified in terms of a division of labour, there could also be a greater involvement of the REC/RMs in the Partnership.

- Some REC/RMs are at present not able to fulfil their mandate on account of regional crises. This is especially the case for the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and the North African Regional Capability (NARC) in North Africa.
- In addition, varying degrees in the pace and set-up of regional integration can be noted. For instance, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with its twenty-year experience in conflict prevention, management and resolution, is more advanced than for example the Economic Community of Central African States (EC-CAS), which was considered relatively weak by some of our interlocutors.

2. AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY

The JAES leitmotiv of “treating Africa as one” is difficult to translate in the field of peace and security, because it necessitates different regional interpretations, despite its continental approach and the central role of the AU. This has made the involvement of the REC/RMs in the Partnership difficult, and should be one of the central themes for future support. So far, the EU and other partners have concentrated on the AU. At the last consultative meeting between the AU, the EU and REC/RMs, which was held in November 2011 in Zanzibar, “it was agreed to foster the involvement of the RECs in the JAES and deepen interactions between the regional and continental levels”.¹⁵ It is worth noting that the Partnership is still not necessarily perceived as a relationship between equals by all African partners. Hence, it remains difficult to persuade the REC/RMs to fully participate in a partnership that appears to be dominated on the

¹⁵ African Union and European Union, *Africa EU Joint Task Force Meeting*, Brussels, March 2012, <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/news/14th-africa-eu-joint-task-force-meeting-8-9-march-2012-brussels>.

continental level by the AU and the EU. One way to solve this problem is through APSA, which allows the EU to bring the REC/RMs closer to it.

The REC/RMs have a crucial role to play in the formulation of the policies of the Partnership and the implementation of the second Action Plan (2011-2013). The Partnership also helps REC/RMs in the implementation of the respective programmes, as it offers them a chance to cooperate on a large scale, facilitated by EU funding. The importance of this cooperation in the framework of the Partnership is recognized by all stakeholders, but all sides should go further and look at the development of the REC/RMs in terms of the objectives to be achieved over the next decade. Therefore, if the EU expects some leverage out of the Partnership, it is necessary to pay more attention to the regional level, as the REC/RMs are the operational key for its success.

The following sections of this chapter provide an assessment of the interactions between the AU, the EU and REC/RMs within the Partnership, focussing on: 1) political dialogue; and 2) the operationalization of APSA and its components.

2.1. Political dialogue

The political dialogue between the EU and RECs in the Cotonou context¹⁶ is not sufficient, as it does not provide for a link to peace and security, and does not involve Regional Mechanisms. The Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security offers this route, but its political dialogue needs to be reactivated and improved to be meaningful. During the past two years, the Africa-EU dialogue has been negatively affected by the EU's fatigue in setting up a fully-functioning European External Action Service (EEAS), and related activities have been reduced, particularly since the Africa-EU Tripoli Summit of November 2010, following which very few meetings have been organized in the framework of the second Action Plan.

Looking at the implementation of the first and second Action Plans, a number of challenges for the Africa-EU political dialogue can be identi-

¹⁶ The Cotonou Agreement regulates the EU's relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) on economic, social and cultural development cooperation. It was signed on 23 June 2000 for a period of 20 years and may be revised every five years.

fied. First of all, there is the issue of mutual understanding. On the side of the AU and REC/RMs, there is not sufficient clarity as to how Brussels functions in terms of its inter-institutional arrangements. On the other side, EU Member States do not show a common knowledge of the Partnership's hierarchy and of how to deal with the AU and REC/RMs, while the EU seems to focus much more on funding rather than investing in the promotion of dialogue. Moreover, this dialogue suffers from the complexity of the decision-making process on the European side, as all topics first need to be agreed among Member States so that often pre-cooked answers are presented to the African counterparts on which it is difficult to negotiate. Furthermore, African stakeholders criticize the fact that some EU Member States often come with prefabricated mind-sets due to special bilateral relations with certain African countries. Both European and African stakeholders also highlight the importance of factors linked to the attitude of the actors involved in the dialogue. While the Europeans consider the African side to be emotional and over-reactive, for example during meetings related to the Libyan crisis, the Europeans are blamed by their African counterparts for being too pushy and not taking enough time to listen, reflect and discuss.¹⁷ Despite all the regular interactions, the Libyan crisis was a telling event for the assessment of the Partnership, as the two sides failed to agree on a common approach and the African actors felt isolated. It exposed the differences in opinions between the partners and proved that it is still difficult to define the shared values of the two continents, despite the fact that they are enshrined in the JAES. This was a missed opportunity for both the EU and the AU.

In the traditional EU narrative of the Partnership, political dialogue is where progress is made with the AU, but not necessarily with the REC/RMs (some would even go so far as to state that with regard to political processes, the REC/RMs are absent in the Partnership, which seems dominated by Addis Ababa and Brussels-based diplomats). At this stage, experience of the Partnership has demonstrated the limits of the continental level, and brought about the realization that the

¹⁷ Interview with REC/RM Liaison Officer, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

REC/RMs have a political role in peace and security. One issue of concern is for instance a clash of interests between the AU and REC/RMs over questions of seniority between organizations. The REC/RMs have difficulties in entering into a political dialogue, as the relevant questions concerning their own agendas might vary from the agenda of the AU, as demonstrated by the example of maritime security in the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Guinea. While in both cases the issue at stake is piracy, this phenomenon has different causes and requires different responses in the two regions concerned, which underlines the fact that there cannot be a continental blueprint to deal with this issue. Hence, on this policy issue the AU might be best served by developing a regional policy jointly with the relevant region. Ideally, “[t]he relationship between the AU and the RECs is supposed to be hierarchical but mutually reinforcing: the AU harmonizes and coordinates the activities of the RECs in the peace and security realm”.¹⁸ One of the biggest coordination challenges is to determine what takes priority, especially when national interests trump regional interests, which in turn raises questions about political will. In addition, at both regional and continental level the same themes are developed, in relation to such issues as for example security sector reforms. In theory, regional and continental strategies should enhance each other, but this is not always the case. For the Partnership to function correctly, instruments for dialogue need therefore to be adapted.

With a view to favouring dialogue, efforts are underway to rationalize the JAES priorities following the last Africa-EU Summit, but the process centres very much on discussions in Brussels and less on a debate with the AU and REC/RMs on how this would work best. As a consequence, such a prioritization exercise has not led to concrete results, as shown by the broad array of issues included in the second Action Plan. These questions were already jointly examined in April 2012 at ministerial level, and the proposals were very clear: “channel efforts and resources into areas and initiatives which are working and/or attracting a critical mass of actors, resources and joint Euro-African resolve; allocate

¹⁸ Paul Williams, *The African Union's Conflict Management Capabilities*, New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 2011, p. 6.

the political, human and financial resources needed on both sides of the partnership to new initiatives if they are promising and of mutual interest. Focus on levels of cooperation and questions, which have a continental/regional and global scope and added value. Speak progressively with one voice on a larger number of issues in international forums".¹⁹ For the time being, however, the JAES seems to be a process owned mostly by Europe. In addition, there is a perception that the EU tends to focus on European expertise in the implementation of peace and security programmes, and there are pitfalls to such an approach. The EU Security Sector Reform (SSR) mission in Guinea Bissau, aimed at providing advice and assistance to the local authorities, is an example of this, as the lead European experts were totally disconnected from the implementation process and lacked familiarity with the socio-economic context.²⁰ This also creates issues concerning the concept of "African ownership". In the particular case of Guinea Bissau, the increased involvement of ECOWAS should have been ensured so as to bring about a successful outcome. One question we often heard was, "What are the EU's priorities in APSA?" The EU has never carried out such an internal reflection, which would maybe also lead the AU and REC/RMs to reprioritize their objectives, so that there could be political dialogue as an entry point for support.

Rationalization is also needed as far as the institutional set-up is concerned. At present, the various instruments for dialogue either do not have peace and security issues at their centre, such as the Commission-to-Commission meetings between the AU and the EU, or leave out the REC/RMs from the deliberations, as is the case for the meetings between the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the EU Political and Security Committee (COPS in its French acronym). Further, these meetings only take place once or twice a year.²¹

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁰ Interview with EU official, Brussels, 27 April 2012.

²¹ Admore Kambudzi, "Efforts within, complementary processes and problems of collaboration in addressing security challenges in 21st century Africa: Case of the AU and the EU", in Casa Africa, *European and African Response to Security Problems in Africa*, Madrid, Casa Africa, 2010, p. 81.

With regard to PSC-COPS meetings, there are a number of technical difficulties, such as the issue of changing interlocutors (the membership of the PSC is rotating, whereas all EU Member States are always part of COPS), as well as the different approaches of the respective Presidencies. The Partnership, with its machinery of meetings, is quite formalized, a fact which has not significantly changed since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, but it is difficult to move forward in a particular process if there is no continuity in the people involved due to staff turnover. Some of our interlocutors also pointed out that the agendas of these meetings are too long and very ambitious, and as a consequence meetings are rushed, as they only last one day. Due to this, there can be no in-depth discussion nor common analysis, but only diplomatic tourism. Moreover, this is exacerbated due to political sensitivities on certain issues.

The main forum of interaction of the Partnership is the so-called Joint Expert Groups (JEGs), where representatives from the AU, the EU and Member States come together twice a year to take stock of the Partnership. According to the actors involved, the JEGs are not well structured, and the role of the participants is unclear. In addition, usually very few attendees speak out.²² What is the value of such a format? Ideally, the JEG should be used not only to share information but also to form a discourse. However, they have failed to achieve this last objective. Moreover, it seems that no checking or tracking of activities is conducted. Therefore, other structures should be considered by means of internal brainstorming in order to reshape the JAES architecture.

Similar issues have been identified in the work of the Peace and Security Implementation Team in Brussels, which brings together EU Member States, the European Commission and the European External Action Service, which chairs the Team in an effort to steer the European side of the partnership and exchange information on the various programmes, including those conducted by bilateral partners.

Coordination at EU Delegation level is also very important, in particular in terms of information exchange and ensuring a common assessment with African counterparts. On a positive note, it must be recog-

²² Interview with EU official, Brussels, 27 April 2012.

nized that, since the EU has increased its representation in Addis Ababa, individual countries and other organizations have also opened dedicated representations to the AU. In this regard the EU was a trend-setter, as it was also with its support for the opening of REC/RMs liaison offices in Addis Ababa, which were created to improve day-to-day working relations between the AU and REC/RMs.

The EU also chairs the AU Partners Group (AUPG) in Addis Ababa, which includes all the main donors to the AU. The AUPG, to which the REC/RMs liaison offices are invited, plays a central role, as it makes information available, holds specific meetings, for instance on peace support operations, and allows for the alignment of work plans and budgets. The AUPG is not as effective as it could be, as it does not have authority over its members and some partners do not always want to be coordinated, especially when it comes to funding issues. Furthermore, the Member States' representatives present are not really working with the AU but are accredited to the host country Ethiopia, with the exception of some, and rather extract information than share it.

All REC/RMs liaison offices to the AU in Addis Ababa, funded under the African Peace Facility (APF),²³ are now in place, with the exception of CEN-SAD, which is currently on minimal operational capacity. The REC/RMs liaison offices are one of the success stories of the Partnership, but their role depends largely on the efficiency of the relevant officer, especially in terms of information exchange. Overall, they ensure closer links between the AU and RECs, and contribute to the coordination of activities. Once the new building for the AU Peace and Security Department (PSD) is finished, it is expected that the liaison offices will be collocated there with AU staff. The last AU-REC/RMs Memorandum of Understanding meeting also agreed on an extended mandate for the liaison offices besides their original focus on peace and security. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa have already sent additional staff to cover this extended mandate, in order to avoid peace and security issues being side-lined in future. As those liaison offices are completely

²³ African Union and REC/RMs, *Memorandum of Understanding*, Algiers, African Union, 2008.

funded by the APF, the question of their sustainability must be raised. The establishment of AU liaison offices at the RECs is also under preparation, and staff positions have been advertised. The RMs and CEN-SAD have been left out so far, mainly due to austerity measures and the crisis in North Africa.

In short, a void exists between all the already-existing meetings which could be filled by enhancing the regional dimension of the Partnership while including the AU, as was demonstrated by the positive outcome of the joint sessions with the EU in the context of the implementation meetings of the AU-REC/RMs MoU. These joint sessions led to the so-called Akosombo process (named after the first meeting place in Ghana), which since November 2010 has brought together the AU, the EU and REC/RMs on peace and security issues at the level of senior officials and chief executives. The Akosombo process has improved working relations among the partners, especially in terms of coherence of programme support. The senior officials' meetings are a good opportunity for cooperation in terms of horizontal and vertical coordination. In addition, the Akosombo process has allowed some light to be shed on the respective roles of the national, regional and continental levels in peace and security. The Akosombo process thus provides a useful reference for the better integration of political dialogue into the Partnership, which is a route that needs to be further explored. Such improved political dialogue will not come by itself. In particular, it should be made more operational and effective, and more high-level contacts with the REC/RMs, besides the current technical exchanges, should be promoted.

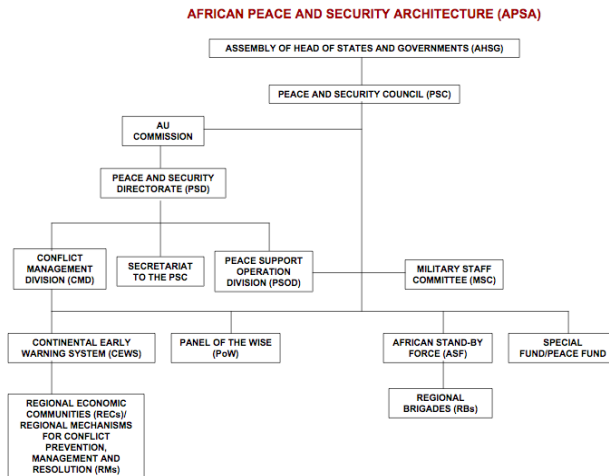
2.2. Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)

The REC/RMs are also embedded in the APSA. "The creation of APSA in 2002 is perhaps the most important development in the security field during the past decade.²⁴ "The APSA aims to give the AU and REC/RMs the necessary instruments to fulfil the tasks of prevention, management

²⁴ Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, "Problematizing Regional Organizations in African Security", in *op. cit.*, p. 3.

and resolution of conflict in Africa, as set out in the AU Constitutive Act and the PSC Protocol”.²⁵ With a relatively higher degree of integration compared to the continental level, while “developing at highly differing paces and depths”,²⁶ there is not only a strong justification for the existence of the REC/RMs, but they are also needed by default to provide the necessary resources and expertise to APSA, in which they have an uncontested role to play.²⁷ In fact, APSA is conceived in such a way that, with regard to most of its components, the REC/RMs can be seen as the pillars of the architecture.

A description of APSA is outside the scope of this study,²⁸ but an illustration of its structure is presented here for reference:



Source: Nicoletta Pirozzi, *EU support to African security architecture: funding and training components*, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS) Occasional Paper No. 76, February 2009, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/op76.pdf>.

Figure 2. A map of APSA.

²⁵ European Commission, *APSA Support Programme Description of the Action*, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

²⁶ Julian Junk, “Overstretched and Overrated? Prospects of Regional Security Policy in Africa and its European Support”, in FES, *Overstretched and Overrated? Prospects of Regional Security Policy in Africa and its European Support*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁸ See for instance Nicoletta Pirozzi, *EU support to African security architecture: funding and training components*, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS) Occasional Paper No. 76, February 2009, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/op76.pdf>.

The challenges in involving the REC/RMs are manifold. Some parts of APSA are functional, but the APSA components are progressing slowly. In this context, the elaboration of an AU-REC/RMs APSA Roadmap, as a result of the triangular consultations carried out during the Akosombo process, has been an important development. The APSA Roadmap was adopted by the AU and REC/RMs in January 2012. It has helped the REC/RMs in improving their coordination and working methods with the AU, and has been proven the right road to choose in that it has established a joint document and doctrine that provides the REC/RMs with the political clout and coverage of the AU. The APSA Roadmap is to guide all future support by partners, with the EU already mobilizing its complete engagement and support accordingly, but it still lacks prioritization and benchmarks. It actually overburdens the partners with a wide range of subjects, with the AU and the REC/RMs having difficulties in responding to all the demands coming from international partners. It is suggested that, instead of focussing on all APSA aspects, the Roadmap should focus on three or four key areas per REC/RM, as some tools might not be needed everywhere (experience shows that those REC/RMs with a clear focus on activities generally seem to perform better – for instance the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) or the East African Stand-by Force (EASF)). A prioritization of the APSA Roadmap is therefore absolutely necessary, especially if the AU and REC/RMs are expected to align their strategic plans to it.

In this study, we focus on the following APSA aspects: 1) early warning; 2) peace and security governance; 3) mediation; and 4) crisis management.

a. Early warning

RECs form an integral part of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). The PSC Protocol states that “CEWS shall consist of the observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms to be linked directly through appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room, which shall collect and process data and transmit the same to the Situation Room”.²⁹ The relationship established under the AU-REC/RMs

²⁹ African Union, *The Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, *op. cit.*, Art. 12.

Memorandum of Understanding also governs early warning, in particular the provisions on information exchange, staff exchanges and joint programmes.

Several RECs already have established their early warning systems to varying degrees:³⁰ ECOWAS, IGAD, ECCAS, SADC, COMESA. The latter two have made the most progress in recent years. While in particular ECOWAS and IGAD are quite advanced, ECCAS is lagging behind. Especially SADC, COMESA and the East African Community (EAC) engage in information sharing with the AU. COMESA has the most progressive approach to the involvement of civil society organizations in early warning, as there exist accreditation rules, including with the private sector. Thus civil society organizations have an inside track in the COMESA early warning system. The existing overlap in terms of structures and posts among some regional early warning systems, especially in East Africa, is mainly due to overlapping membership of some RECs.

On the continental level, the early warning meetings, attended by all early warning specialists in the AU and the REC/RMs and which took place formerly on a quarterly basis, now take place twice a year, in an effort to rationalize meetings, but also due to the AU austerity measures put in place. These meetings have served as an implementation and coordination mechanism for three years. They are also used to discuss best practices and share experience, and for joint trainings.

There is an effort underway to harmonize methodologies and to coordinate the different elements of the early warning system, despite the varying mandates and legal constraints of the RECs, and different perceptions of conflict prevention. A CEWS portal for information exchange between RECs and the AU has been set up, and the RECs and the AU post relevant information in a true two-way exchange. The AU is developing tools for the integration of data from the RECs through the CEWS Portal.³¹

However, it must be recalled that CEWS indicators are set by Member States, and include red flags not to be crossed in terms of early warning

³⁰ See for instance IGAD www.cewarn.org and ECOWAS www.ecowarn.org.

³¹ Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, "The African Union's New Peace and Security Architecture: Toward an Evolving Security Regime?", in Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Organizations in African Security*, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

signals. Understandably, no country wants to be on a watch list. Therefore, each REC is developing its early warning system with varying methodologies, and interconnectivity is yet to be realized, operationally but also technically.³² Assessment missions to all RECs, starting with ECOWAS and EAC, are planned for the coming months to address this crucial issue. These missions are also supported by the EU. “For CEWS to set meaningful and useful standards however, it will require interoperability and a division of labour among the RECs”.³³

Early warning has to be strengthened, as the challenge has always been the analysis of data and how to feed it to decision-makers on the regional and continental levels so that early warning can become early action. Due to a lack of analysts, it has been difficult so far to engage decision-makers. However, a strategic conflict assessment methodology has been developed to better enable the AU to monitor and analyse data related to violent conflicts on the continent in the form of stand-alone reports once a crisis has erupted. For the time being, there are five analysts at the AU Situation Room in Addis Ababa covering the whole continent, and more high-quality capacity and capabilities are required to provide adequate analysis of open sources and intelligence for peace support operations. Here further support is needed at all levels.

b. Peace and security governance

The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) is at the heart of APSA and peace and security governance in Africa. Its membership is based on a principle of regional representation and rotation of all regions on the African continent. Within the PSC, these regional groupings play an important role when it comes to the coordination of issue stances within a region, or when regional clusters take the lead in formulating policies on specific issues.³⁴ “In addition to inviting the concerned RECs to contribute to its meetings on specific conflicts, the PSC may lead discussions on

³² Paul Williams, *The African Union's Conflict Management Capabilities*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³³ El-Ghassim Wane ... [et al.], “The Continental Early Warning System: Methodology and Approach”, in Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, *Africa's New Peace and Security Architecture*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2010, p. 109.

³⁴ Paul Williams, *The African Union's Conflict Management Capabilities*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

the basis of recommendations made by RECs”.³⁵ At PSC meetings on a specific country or region, the REC and the Member State representing the chair of that REC are invited. If a specific conflict is addressed in the PSC, the chair ambassador of the REC concerned would brief, while the REC liaison office can attend as an observer.

With regard to the relations between PSC and its regional counterparts, implementation of the provisions in the PSC protocol is lagging behind, as no meetings between the PSC and equivalent bodies in the RECs have taken place so far. For the time being, ECOWAS and SADC are the only RECs with similar PSC bodies at the regional level. Therefore, the PSC engages with RECs, but not with the appropriate regional organ. Questions that need to be resolved in this regard are how to engage the other RECs in a political process specific to each region, and what format this engagement should take, for example in the form of bilateral or joint continent-wide meetings. There is also a need for greater coherence in approaches between the different bodies in the AU and the RECs, as demonstrated by the case of Niger, where ECOWAS made a strong pronouncement following the *coup d'état* in February 2010, while the AU's reaction was more timid.

c. Mediation

Mediation issues in the framework of APSA are mainly referred to the Panel of the Wise (PoW). “There has been a significant delay between the adoption of the PSC Protocol and the establishment and operationalization of the Panel, especially if one compares it with the advanced stages of operationalization of the other structures”.³⁶ The PoW was set up in 2008, and the PSC Protocol provision related to it (Article 11) does not specify mediation as part of its mandate, but speaks instead of conflict prevention and diplomacy. While some would argue that the spirit is the same, others claim that the PoW is not carrying out its mandate in accordance with the PSC Protocol.

³⁵ Kathryn Sturman and Aissatou Hayatou, “The Peace and Security Council of the African Union: From Design to Reality”, in Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, *Africa's New Peace and Security Architecture*, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

³⁶ Jamila El Abdellaoui, *The Panel of the Wise*, Addis Ababa, ISS, 2009, p. 2.

At the same time, some consider the PoW to be the most successful part of APSA, due to both its membership, with each region designating an eminent person, and its activities, with a strong emphasis on working on alleviating election-related violence, as shown recently by the PoW's activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, the PoW has established mediation guidelines for the AU and RECs, and there will be a review of the continental conflict prevention framework during the second half of 2012. Every mediation process is documented in terms of lessons learned, interaction with partners and integration of specific themes into the work of the PoW, such as gender issues.

Recently, the PoW has been trying to integrate early warning specialists more into its work, as it has a need for analytical reports. These reports also legitimize the PoW's action, and the aim is to have an early warning analyst in charge of each PoW mission, as was the case when the PoW was deployed for the elections in Tunisia in October 2011 and Senegal in February 2012. In fact, despite the moral weight epitomized by the eminent personalities it contains, the PoW also needs dedicated staff with sufficient physical capabilities in order to be operational.

With regard to mediation however, there is still limited use of the APSA framework,³⁷ as the AU relies instead on ad-hoc initiatives, such as the High Level Panel on Sudan.³⁸ To what extent the decision-making process is informed through APSA structures is another matter. In terms of vertical APSA coordination, the PoW works mostly with the Continental Early Warning System, but there is a political gap between the Peace and Security Council and the PoW. There is a need for clear deliberation on what the PoW and the ad-hoc High-Level Panels created by the AU or its Member States should and can do. The former consists of members of a certain age, who are able to support long-term mediation processes, while the latter should work more on an ad-hoc basis by identifying stock-taking opportunities or taking an advisory role, as for instance in the Somali peace process or in Sudan.

³⁷ Manfred Öhm ... [et al.], *Entfremdung zwischen Europa und Afrikanischer Union?*, Berlin, FES, 2011, p. 3.

³⁸ Mehari Maru, "The First Ten Years of AU and Its Performance in Peace and Security", in *ISPI Policy Brief*, No. 218, Milano, Institute for International Policy Studies (ISPI), 2012, p. 5.

The EU wants a more pronounced role in mediation, but it is best-placed to support in the background, as exemplified by its support to both the PoW and its regional counterparts, as well as to the ad-hoc High Level Panels of the AU.

For quite some time, the only regional body similar to the PoW existed within ECOWAS. The ECOWAS Council of the Wise, created in 1999, “is not a standing structure, but takes the form of a list of eminent personalities, who, on behalf of ECOWAS, can use their good offices and experience to play a role of mediators, conciliators and facilitators”.³⁹ Interestingly, “the establishment of the Panel [of the Wise] drew inspiration from ECOWAS”.⁴⁰ SADC established its group in 2011, which is also similar to the PoW. The same holds true for COMESA. For the time being, cooperation between these various bodies occurs on an ad-hoc basis, governed by the AU-REC/RMs MoU, but it is envisaged that a dedicated arrangement will be finalized in the coming months. As these groups do not have the same level of experience, the AU encourages them to work together. RECs systematically participate in PoW meetings, where experience and lessons are shared. RECs also participate in PoW missions, as was the case of the good offices deployment of the PoW to Tunisia and Egypt prior to the elections in both countries in 2011 and 2012 respectively. COMESA participated in the latter, and the report and recommendations to the AU Peace and Security Council were prepared jointly. The deployment for the DRC electoral process at the end of 2011 included five RECs, which gave more strength and credibility to the output of the mission. Most recently, at the beginning of June 2012, a retreat took place in Burkina Faso, regrouping the PoW and its regional counterparts, where electoral-related violence and mediation prospects were discussed. In general terms, the issue around mediation is one of sequencing and the allocation of responsibility between RECs and the AU. Who should take the lead? This question has been raised as a result of

³⁹ ECOWAS, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, Abuja, ECOWAS, 1999, Article 20, http://www.iss.co.za/af/regorg/unity_to_union/pdfs/ecowas/ConflictMecha.pdf.

⁴⁰ Tim Murithi and Charles Mwaura, “The Panel of the Wise”, in Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, *Africa’s New Peace and Security Architecture*, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

the difficulties encountered by RECs in dealing with the protracted political crises in Madagascar (2009-2012) and Côte d'Ivoire (up to the end of 2011), when SADC and ECOWAS activities were taken over by the AU.

d. Crisis management

The African Stand-by Force (ASF) has not yet reached full operating capability, and will most likely not do so before 2015. While progress has been made in several areas, for instance in common policy development and training cooperation, the AU lacks the Member State buy-in and the staff needed to make the ASF concept a reality.⁴¹ Additionally, complex conflicts in some regions have made it difficult to bring the ASF into being. Critics of the ASF could argue that it only exists on paper, and that it lacks soldiers, equipment and communication, as there are no national capabilities to stand by, while AU Member States contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations at the same time.

Notwithstanding the Memorandum of Understanding signed between AU and REC/RMs on their general relationship, there is nothing that specifically regulates their respective roles and powers with respect to the use and authorisation of ASF capabilities. The AU should provide guidance to RECs/RMs to ensure that the different brigades adhere to the same standards and achieve the same level of readiness.⁴²

The leadership role of the AU will thus be crucial for the success of the ASF. Cooperation on the operational level among the different REC/RMs and the AU is on-going, and culminated in the adoption of ASF Roadmap 3, which prioritizes the challenges confronting the establishment of the ASF: political process, legal framework, training, logistics and communication. The question of interoperability is particularly pronounced in the communications sector, where it is not clear whose system is to be used.

⁴¹ African Union, *African Stand-by Force Roadmap III*, Addis Ababa, African Union, 2011, p. 1.

⁴² Solomon Dersso, *The role and place of the African Stand-by Force within the African Peace and Security Architecture*, Addis Ababa, ISS, 2010, p. 16.

Trainings need to be standardized, also in terms of curricula. The ASF logistics base also remains an unresolved question.

The geographical configuration of the ASF follows the Abuja Treaty of 1991 that divided Africa into five regions. However, this set-up only partially follows the system of the eight recognized RECs with a mandate in peace and security. Hence, the Eastern region, composed of three RECs (EAC, COMESA and IGAD), established a regional coordinating mechanism, the East African Stand-by Force (EASF), to manage this “creative chaos”.⁴³ Thus especially with regard to the ASF, “harmonizing overlapping memberships and regional decision-making structures presents a challenge”.⁴⁴ Similarly to other APSA components, the readiness of the five stand-by brigades varies greatly.

Probably the most advanced is the EASF, for which only the civilian component and the stand-by roster have yet to be established. Other elements are in place, such as framework documents including a Memorandum of Understanding with the three RECs of the Eastern region, a stand-by force planning element and a brigade headquarters. Further, training institutions have been identified and EASF Member States have pledged units for the regional brigade.⁴⁵ The EASF sent its first deployment of eight staff officers to the AU peace support operation in Somalia in 2011. This demonstrates that the ASF cannot be understood as a big bang change, but as an evolving process in which elements are used once they become operational. In addition, the EASF was the first case in which a REC/RM, on behalf of the AU, piloted the coordination of standard operating procedures for the deployment of peace support operations. This is an example of how delegating certain actions to REC/RMs could alleviate some tensions between the regional and continental levels.

⁴³ Antoni van Nieuwkerk, “The regional roots of the African peace and security architecture: exploring centre-periphery relations”, in *South African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2, August 2011, p. 185.

⁴⁴ Paul Williams, *The African Union's Conflict Management Capabilities*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁴⁵ Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto, “The African Union's New Peace and Security Architecture: Toward an Evolving Security Regime?”, in Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Organizations in African Security*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

As for the other regions, “the regional brigades for West Africa and Southern Africa are works in progress. In contrast, the ECCAS Brigade exists only in a rudimentary way and NARC is embryonic at best”.⁴⁶ The recent conflict in Mali illustrates that there is the political will to deploy ECOWAS forces,⁴⁷ but the initiative is lacking everything from soldiers to equipment. Furthermore, ECCAS is leading a regional peacekeeping operation in the Central African Republic. Hence, the ASF is slowly advancing to an African rhythm, and an assessment of the regions will take place this year, starting with SADC.

3. THE EUROPEAN UNION’S FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The most intense dialogue between the EU and RECs takes place under the Cotonou Agreement, which is a strong framework due to its links between dialogue, financial instruments and a sanctions regime. “The EU remains the most important development partner of Africa’s regional integration”,⁴⁸ and there is a great deal of interaction between the EU and REC/RMs that goes beyond peace and security within the Cotonou framework, as the African continent’s strategic and geopolitical importance for Europe as a neighbour is paramount.⁴⁹

For the EU, the AU has been the foremost interlocutor with regard to peace and security issues on the African continent over the last decade, and the EU is the biggest donor to AU peace and security activities.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴⁷ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, *Ecovas schickt Truppen nach Mali*, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt, 28 April 2012, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Julian Kitipov, “African Local Integration and Multilateralism: The Regional Economic Communities and Their Relationship with the European Union”, in *MERCURY E-paper*, No. 16, November 2011, p. 13, http://www.mercury-fp7.net/fileadmin/user_upload/E-paper_no16_r2011.pdf.

⁴⁹ Gerrit Olivier, “From Colonialism to Partnership in Africa-Europe Relations?”, in *The International Spectator*, Vol. 46, No. 1, March 2011, p. 53.

⁵⁰ Kai Schaefer, “L’Unione Africana dopo Gheddafi”, in *Affari Internazionali*, January 2012, available at <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=1952>.

However, the EU has also invested heavily in a wide range of REC/RMs. Overall, EU financial support in the area of peace and security on the African continent totals EUR 1 billion for the period 2008-2013.⁵¹

The main challenge in the relationship between the EU and RECs is often expressed in terms of absorption capacity, that is an organization's ability to use all the funds provided by a donor in a given period for the implementation of its programmes, but the question could also be asked if the entry points identified by the EU are the right ones. There are many types of funding instruments, which are confusing and cumbersome for staff of REC/RMs, which in turn makes access to the funds more difficult. For these reasons, the level of endorsement for EU support on the part of REC/RMs is blurred due to the complex programme design of EU assistance. The REC/RMs do not necessarily understand the EU system and how the EU programming cycle works, mainly due to the lack of a coherent picture across the EU between Headquarters, the Delegation to the AU and the regional Delegations. This is further complicated by the fact that EU Headquarters has to clear all programmes with Member States, the latter also often having their own programmes in the African regions. Harmonizing and standardizing various national and European programmes is a central issue of coordination, in which the EU so far internally has not excelled.

In the past, the main donors have worked in competition rather than in collaboration with one another, aided by a tendency on the part of the AU to accept all proposals and modes of support, as Member States were pursuing bilateral programmes, largely determined by the demands of their domestic constituencies.⁵²

For the EU it has become more and more difficult to give a coherent and consistent message, especially in the regions.

⁵¹ Philippe Darmuzey, "La stratégie conjointe Afrique-UE", in *Europafrika e-bulletin*, July 2010, p. 2, <http://europafrika.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/p-darmuzey-europafrique-interview-francais-final.pdf>.

⁵² Joao Gomes Cravinho, "Regional Organizations in African Security: A Practitioner's View", in Fredrik Söderbaum and Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Organizations in African Security*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

The generic EU financing instrument for cooperation with the RECs is the Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs) that are managed by the EU Delegations. With regard to peace and security, each RIP includes a component on political regional integration that varies from REC to REC. For instance, the ECOWAS RIP allocates EUR 120 million for political integration, including peace and security activities. At the regional level, it seems that the EU has almost asked too much of the REC/RMs by offering all this support, as the capacity to absorb this assistance was not there. Hence, the political regional integration components of the RIPs, including conflict prevention, need to be structurally improved, including in terms of implementation, which some stakeholders at present would qualify as catastrophic. This is also due to the fact that, on the European side, the number of staff in the regional Delegations with dedicated peace and security expertise is limited. Furthermore, RIPs are prepared in silos and therefore the question of how they interlink and are linked up to support at the continental level is rarely addressed (the ECCAS peace and security component of its RIP being a notable exception to this rule). In addition, the implementation of funds is divided from the political discussions, which represents an institutional hitch between EU institutions – most notably the European Commission and the European External Action Service – and Member States. At present not enough attention is paid to these issues, and the EU still lacks a systematic approach as to how the continental level is taken into consideration in the preparation of RIPs, while respecting the capacities of the partners to implement the programmes.

The APF is the main financial instrument for the APSA.⁵³ Without EU assistance through the APF, APSA and its potentially very important ca-

⁵³ Resources to implement APSA continue to be drawn from external donors, especially the EU. There clearly is a discrepancy between the ownership rhetoric and the continuing dependence on external support. For the time being, the AU Peace and Security Department is funded to about 80% by external sources. Overall, the dependency on international aid is increasing with regard to APSA. At present the AU Peace Fund represents 7% of the AU budget, but even at the envisaged level of 12% it would not be able to cover any of the AU peace support operations. In addition, contributions to the Peace Fund by African countries have decreased due to the crisis in North Africa. Although a committee on alternative sources of funding has been set up, chaired by former Nigerian

pabilities would probably not have seen the light of day.⁵⁴ Since 2004, the APF has supported the operationalization of APSA at the continental and regional levels to a total amount of EUR 100 million.⁵⁵ According to a lessons-learned exercise between the AU, the EU and REC/RMs, “the programmes had been very helpful for enhancing staff levels and building capacities in key areas such as mediation, early warning, training, information sharing, exchange visits and support to relevant structures. A positive aspect of the programme design was the AU leadership role and that there had been an increase in mutual trust and understanding between the AU, EU and REC/RMs, but it was observed that the AU leadership role needs to be further strengthened”.⁵⁶ The interaction between the EU and REC/RMs is improving thanks to the role of the APF as the main financing instrument of the Partnership and its important programmes that are channelled through the AU. “With continued EU funding being made available for the operationalization of APSA, strengthening of coherence and complementarity as well as development of synergies becomes increasingly important. EU support should be delivered through one comprehensive framework mirroring AU and REC/RMs strategic objectives and priorities, adapted to different stages of progress, filling gaps and enabling all actors to fulfil their tasks and responsibilities”.⁵⁷ Such a consolidated process is now spelled out in the AU-REC/RMs APSA Roadmap, that serves as a reference document for all future partner support to APSA, and against which EU support is to be checked. This process has to be driven by the AU in its continental lead-

President Obasanjo, not much movement on this issue is notable within AU. The AU is also working on a strategy for funding from the private sector (e.g. the Confederation of African Football, airline companies) and non-traditional partners such as China and Turkey. A kind of APF funded by China is being considered for the future, but a possible triangular dialogue between the AU, the EU and China on this issue has not been pursued.

⁵⁴ Jakkie Cilliers ... [et al.], *African Futures 2050*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ European Commission, *The African Peace Facility Annual Report 2011*, Brussels, Directorate-General Development Cooperation (DG DEVCO), 2012, p. 15.

⁵⁶ European Commission, *APSA Support Programme Description of the Action*, Brussels, Directorate-General Development Cooperation (DG DEVCO), 2012, p. 2.

⁵⁷ European Commission, *The African Peace Facility Annual Report 2011*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

ership role *vis-à-vis* the REC/RMs. Previously, there was less interaction among the REC/RMs themselves, despite a general willingness to interact and to coordinate, but the APF brought the three organizational levels (EU-AU-REC/RMs) together through its programmes as well as APF-related meetings and consultations.

The European External Action Service is trying to bring some coherence by working hand-in-hand with the European Commission, especially on how the APF is used, and by providing a political reading of the various financial instruments to better shape EU support. Still, competencies on the EU side are in the process of being established and defined more clearly. The issue of consistency between support at the regional and the continental levels is one of the areas into which the EU needs to put more effort in order to coordinate its several strategies and instruments, such as the APF and the RIPs. For example, the APF team of the European Commission is rarely consulted on this issue during inter-service consultations (CIS), that is the process by which quality control by all relevant services within the European Commission is ensured in the preparation of future programmes. For the time being, coherence between the APF and RIPs works only on an ad-hoc basis through personal contacts. The Pan-African Unit in the EEAS should coordinate on this issue, but this has not happened so far due to the slow establishment of the new institution. For the future financial framework this issue should be remedied and coherence between RIPs and the APF ensured, possibly through the deployment of APF experts in the preparation of RIPs.

4. THE CASES OF COMESA AND SADC

4.1. *The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)*

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa started off in the 1980s as a preferential trade area, working on trade liberalization and tariff reduction. From a free trade area it moved towards a customs union with the objective of a common market. For COMESA, the 1990s

were marked by the violent conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which have been called “Africa’s first world war”. As a consequence, COMESA realized that it could not move further in negotiations if peace and security were not dealt with. In 1999, COMESA undertook a study on the root causes of conflict, which came to the conclusion that conflict was caused in the main by bad governance, linked to economic issues such as the allocation of resources and poverty. According to this study, the misallocation of resources and the absence of governance spread conflict, even affecting neighbouring countries through the illegal exploitation of resources by neighbouring forces and the poor performance of public goods management, corruption and corridors of free movement of armed groups. Consequently, the need for a legal framework for formal trade relationships was recognized, and the concept of “trading for peace” was developed. This was the beginning of COMESA’s peace and security activities, which were managed by the Department of Legal Affairs. A Foreign Ministers Council and a Peace and Security Committee, composed of the Permanent Secretaries of the Foreign Ministries, were created, which currently meet twice a year. In 2004, COMESA also called on members of parliament from its region to be involved in peace and security activities, as they have an oversight over those matters in their countries, at least on paper. This led to consultations on a peace and security programme in 2006, with a focus on prevention and security sector reform.

With regard to APSA, COMESA is part of the second group of REC/RMs to establish its early warning system, which is based on a structural vulnerability long-term (10 years) analysis, with about 80 indicators, such as economic marginalisation and resource allocation. It was closely developed in cooperation with the AU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD, and invites all REC/RMs to get involved. The early warning concept and indicators have been adopted, and currently the modalities of how to feed the data and analysis into the decision-making process are being developed. It is the view in COMESA that early warning should serve prevention and mediation purposes. Therefore, according to that view, early warning and mediation structures should be closely linked so that the latter can benefit from timely and relevant information. COMESA is one of the few REC/RMs beside ECOWAS that already has

mediation structures. Its regional equivalent of the Panel of the Wise is its Committee of Elders (three out of the nine members are women). Their task is to analyse and map needs for mediation, with the objective of deployment should a crisis arise. The Committee of Elders has already been involved by the AU in consultations and joint electoral observation missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Egypt. The joint character in particular of these initiatives has been much appreciated by COMESA.

There are several consultations and fora across the AU and the EU to which COMESA is not privy. However, the APF in particular has helped to create a link between COMESA and the EU in the APSA context, albeit not at a policy-making level. COMESA has relied on the capacity of the AU to coordinate interaction on APSA with the EU. Most importantly, the consultations in the framework of the Akosombo process have proven crucial in enhancing relations with the EU, including in terms of a better understanding of the comprehensive EU support offered through the APF and RIPs.

4.2. The Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The peace and security challenges facing the southern African region are largely political, social and economic in nature.⁵⁸ Following the regime change in South Africa, the region established the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1992. With growing membership and changing objectives (from socio-economic cooperation to integration),⁵⁹ SADC included bodies dealing with peace and security cooperation in its structure and activities. Based on the SADC Treaty and the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation as the key policy frameworks guiding decision-making, those bodies are the SADC Summit and the Or-

⁵⁸ Antoni van Nieuwkerk, "The regional roots of the African peace and security architecture: exploring centre-periphery relations", in *South African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2, August 2011, p. 180.

⁵⁹ Julian Junk, "Overstretched and Overrated? Prospects of Regional Security Policy in Africa and its European Support", *op. cit.*, p. 29.

gan on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.⁶⁰ With the Organ having a relatively small administrative structure and capacity, it depends to a large extent on Member States' political instructions. Put differently, the Organ is essentially an implementation body.⁶¹ The crucial question is how to cascade the Peace and Security Partnership into the regional plans, such as the SADC Security and Defence Policy with its regional peace and security strategy. To address this issue, SADC has started to make references to AU policy documents at the regional level, such as its strategic plan for the Organ, in order to increase consistency with AU policy and to avoid dissonance within APSA at the continental and regional levels.

For SADC, APSA is an alternative route for things that otherwise could not be done. The APSA understanding in SADC is that it is a top-down structure, which should be demand-driven. One of the most difficult issues for SADC within APSA is the area of early warning. APSA foresees a continental early warning system based on open-source instruments, but the SADC early warning system is a closed intelligence-based network, and therefore cooperation with its continental and other regional early warning counterparts can only be limited. As regards mediation structures, APSA follows the African practice of respecting the elders, and therefore the SADC mediation panel is called the Panel of the Elders. Nevertheless, recent experiences in the SADC region in this area represent bad lessons for the coordination of mediation support between the continental and regional levels, as exemplified by the mediation efforts in Madagascar in 2011, where the mediation was delayed due to quarrels over which organization should take the lead. In terms of crisis management, SADC had peacekeeping stand-by arrangements well before APSA. Therefore, the African Stand-by Force is a highly sensitive issue within SADC, as its brigade has to integrate policies, exercises and training developed by the AU in order to fit into the continental context.

⁶⁰ Antoni van Nieuwkerk, "The regional roots of the African peace and security architecture: exploring centre-periphery relations", in *op. cit.*, p. 181.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

There are challenges in the interaction between the EU and SADC, but fortunately APSA provides a framework for dialogue to overcome these challenges. The good news is that the Partnership has built a marked confidence between the two regions. There is a frank political dialogue, and annual meetings take place between the European Commission and SADC, including in the area of peace and security, which also serve as an interface with Member States. However, policy makers are largely absent from this process. Further, as regards the political dimension, the EU uses parallel processes, such as activities related to Cotonou and the JAES. As regards the technical aspect, the EU is not homogenous in the support it provides through the RIP and the APF, where project preparation, design and accountability issues are not aligned. In addition, the challenge of harmonizing EU and Member State support persists, as SADC also entertains bilateral relations with EU Member States that might offer less stringent political and technical conditions than the EU. One crucial issue that will have to be tackled is that of putting the Partnership on a truly equal footing. One SADC proposal is to deploy EU experts to assist the African side to understand how the EU system works.

2.

The Africa-EU Peace and Security Partnership and the Role of Civil Society

Valérie Vicky Miranda

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy was meant to be a people-centred partnership.¹ Five years after its adoption, however, it seems that despite good intentions it has not lived up to expectations. It is common opinion that in terms of objectives achieved the Peace and Security Partnership is the most successful of the eight Partnerships identified in the JAES. But to what extent is civil society actually involved in the implementation of the Partnership? What added value could civil society organizations (CSOs) bring to peace and security activities in the relations between the EU and Africa? How could the JAES take advantage of them?

These are some of the questions on which this chapter aims to shed light. To do so, it will first provide a brief overview of the concept of civil society as well as of the EU's approach towards it. It will then look more closely at the JAES, investigating civil society's participation mechanisms and actual contribution to the implementation of the Partnership on both the European and the African sides. By taking into account four broad areas of engagement on peace and security issues, namely dialogue on peace and security, early warning, training and capacity building and mediation, it will show what civil society's added value in the implementation of the Peace and Security Partnership could be. On these grounds, existing challenges will be identified and will provide a basis for policy recommendations, which are put forward in the final chapter.

¹ Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership - A Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, (16344/07), Lisbon, 9 December 2007, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/97496.pdf.

Finding updated information on civil society's involvement in the JAES is not an easy task. Open source material and literature are very limited on this topic. Interviews with relevant institutional and non-state stakeholders, conducted in Addis Ababa and Brussels, made up for this absence and proved crucial in getting as objective an overview as possible.

1. WHAT IS CIVIL SOCIETY?

Civil society is a fluid and changing concept which covers different realities, depending on the period and the geographical areas considered. Despite evolution in its composition over time, civil society has always been a force opposing the excessive concentration and abuse of power by public authorities.

Giving a unique and clear-cut definition of civil society would be too simplistic. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify with certainty what civil society is *not*. Civil society is neither the State nor the public authorities, nor the market as, differently from the latter, it is not steered by profit. Generally speaking, it might be conceived of as a plurality of organized not-for-profit actors (including citizens themselves in a wider meaning) which pursue the public good and social economy-related values. However, boundaries between these three categories (the State, the market and civil society) are blurred and continuously evolving. One could for instance think of private foundations, universities or research centres, that might lie between the public and private sectors and civil society.

It is also worth noting that in its development legislation, the European Union promotes the use of the concept of Non-State Actors (NSAs). This concept was introduced for the first time by the Cotonou Agreement (2000), referring to all social structures other than the government. It is built around three components: the private sector, social and economic partners (unions and employers) and civil society organizations. In any case, only those NSAs that operate in a not-for-profit manner are eligible for EU financing.

Alongside the Cotonou Agreement, the new legal basis for development cooperation laid down in 2007 better specifies the EU concept of

Non-State Actors, which include various organized actors such as Northern and Southern Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); trade unions and employer organizations; cooperatives; grass-root communities; consumers, youth and women’s organizations; universities and research centres; public and private foundations; cultural and sports associations and the media; networks of associations, platforms and confederations; and religious associations.² Inclusion in one category or another is susceptible to change according to the specific economic and political context.



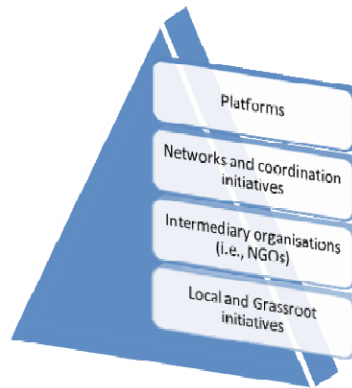
Source: EU.

Figure 3. The multiple components of civil society

Depending on the extent of their institutionalisation, CSOs have different levels of organization. We can distinguish: 1) local and grass-root initiatives, i.e. informal groups of people that decide to gather to propose cre-

² The CIVICUS Civil Society Index project adopts a similar wide approach, understanding by the term civil society “the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organizations and institutions to advance shared interests”. See CIVICUS, *Civil Society 2011*, Johannesburg, April 2012.

ative solutions to local problems (health, education, etc.); 2) more structured and intermediary organizations working for the benefit of the population, such as foundations, NGOs or other organizations advocating human rights' protection; 3) coalitions of organizations, e.g., coordinating bodies, networks and federations that decide to come together and cooperate systematically on a thematic and/or geographical basis; 4) platforms, that is associations of representative networks in various sectors, working as true forums for dialogue and confronting the public authorities. In practice, horizontal and vertical exchanges and connections between the four levels often occur, thus rendering these distinctions not so clear-cut.



Source: IAI elaboration from EU data.

Figure 4. The organization of civil society

Despite their differences, CSOs have a common feature which represents one of their main added values, i.e. an extensive knowledge of local communities and networks which allows them to easily reach them.

For the purposes of the present work, we understood civil society in its broadest meaning including, as described above, a wide range of actors such as non-governmental organizations, private foundations, women's associations, trade unions, etc. However, particular attention is paid to the work of NGOs and related networks, whose contribution to the peace and security sector has been confirmed as extremely valuable by the relevant strategic and policy documents and by the stakeholders interviewed.

2. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The historical and political development of the European Union's approach towards, and engagement with, CSOs has progressed through a set of key milestones.³

The first formal partnership between the European Commission and European NGOs was established in 1976 with the creation of an NGO Co-financing budget line (2.5 million ECUs) to support innovative projects, such as the struggle against apartheid in South-Africa or the promotion of fair trade. At that time, however, the participation of civil society was still limited, as the prevailing model of development attributed a leading role to the State. Furthermore, attention was paid almost exclusively to European organizations.

In 1999, the launch of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) marked an important step, as the EU's focus broadened to include the development of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This entailed a first widening of the beneficiaries of EU financing to include groups and individuals within CSOs fighting for democracy and freedom.

The true turning point in the EU's approach to civil society was however the signature of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000.⁴ With the objectives of promoting and accelerating economic, social and cultural development in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, contributing to peace and security and promoting a stable and democratic environment, the Cotonou Agreement was the first legally-binding document to recognize Non-State Actors, and laid down the basis for the so-called participatory approach as a "fundamental prin-

³ European Commission, *Background Document - Overview of the process and overall context*, Structured Dialogue for an efficient partnership in Development, Brussels, March 2010.

⁴ EuropeAid, *Consolidated Version of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, revised in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005 and revised in Ouagadougou on 22 June 2010*, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/documents/cotonou-consolidated-fin-ap-2012_en.pdf.

ciple” of ACP cooperation. The Agreement indeed recognized development cooperation as a participatory process, where governments are just one of the actors involved. In this regard, Article 2 of the Agreement explicitly states that NSAs’ actions complement those of the State, and that they should no longer be seen as mere service providers but as fully-fledged actors in all stages of the development process, from the consultation phase to monitoring and evaluation.⁵ The participatory approach was later formalized in 2002 in the European Commission’s Communication on the Participation of non-state actors in the European Community development policy.⁶

This shift in paradigm was confirmed in all key documents and tools of development delivery endorsed by the EU in the second half of the 2000s. The 2006 European Consensus on Development for instance recognized the important role of civil society actors (understood in their broadest meaning), and committed the EU to building their capacities to allow them to fully participate in the development process.

In the same vein, the new financial architecture which replaced existing instruments from 2007 onwards contained specific provisions dealing with the role of NSAs in development. Amongst them, the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) included a new thematic programme for non-state actors and local authorities in development, re-

⁵ The principle of “participatory development” was reaffirmed in the 2001 White Paper on European Governance as well as in other policy documents (see European Commission, *European Governance, A white paper*, [COM(2001)428], Brussels, 25 July 2001, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2001/com2001_0428en01.pdf). The White Paper underlines the need to strengthen dialogue with non-governmental actors in third countries when developing policy proposals with an international dimension. See also European Commission, *Background Document - Overview of the process and overall context*, *op. cit.*

⁶ European Commission, *Communication on the Participation of Non State Actors (NSA) in EC Development Policy*, [COM (2002) 598], Brussels, 7 November 2002, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2002/com2002_0598en01.pdf. In 2004, the Commission issued a document entitled “Guidelines on Principles and Good Practices for the Participation of Non-State Actors in the development dialogues and consultations”. For internal use, the document provides concrete operational guidance for EU Delegations on how to engage with CSOs.

placing the previous NGO Co-financing and decentralized cooperation budget lines.⁷

Building on past debates and reflections, in March 2010 the European Commission launched the Structured Dialogue, conceived of as a consensus-building mechanism for inclusive discussion together with the European Parliament, EU Member States and CSOs (plus Local Authorities - LAs) of how to improve the latter's involvement in the development process.⁸

Starting from the commitments made in the Structured Dialogue, the Agenda for Change, proposed by the European Commission in October 2011 as the new framework for EU development policy, while paying greater attention to human rights, democracy and governance-related issues, acknowledged, once again, the need for the EU to "strengthen the links with CSOs, social partners and local authorities through regular dialogue and the use of best practices"⁹, as well as to support the emergence of an organized civil society able to act as a watchdog.

At the time of writing, as a further step in its engagement with civil society, the European Commission is working on a communication entitled "Civil Society Organizations in Development Cooperation". In light

⁷ The Commission has recently adopted the 2012 Annual Action Programme for this thematic programme. See European Commission, *Implementing Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2012 for the thematic programme "Non State Actors and Local Authorities in Development" to be financed under the general budget of the European Union*, [C(2012)1986], 29 March 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2012/aap_2012_dci-nsa_en.pdf.

⁸ See European Commission, *Preparing the Communication on Civil Society Organizations in Development*, presentation at workshop in Brussels, April 2012, and European Commission, *Structured Dialogue first follow-up meeting*, Brussels, 9-10 November 2011. In a nutshell, the main conclusions of the final conference (Budapest, May 2011) and of the first follow-up meeting (Brussels, November 2011) were a commitment on the part of the EU to promote an enabling environment in partner countries by way of the strategic involvement of CSOs/LAs; an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue; better coordination at the local level; an improved partnership between European and Southern CSOs; and better networking, including by means of the EU Delegations on the ground.

⁹ European Commission, *Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change*, [COM(2011)637], Brussels, 13 October 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF>, p. 6.

of recent international events, such as the Arab Spring, which provide new areas for reflection, the communication is meant to offer a new political and strategic framework for the Commission's partnership with CSOs, as well as to propose financial tools in the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 for its operationalization (namely overall support to CSOs through geographic funds and a new thematic programme on CSOs and LAs). More particularly, the communication would promote strategic engagement with CSOs, placing particular emphasis on local CSOs and governance-related roles.

What has been said so far refers to the general principles underlying the EU's approach towards civil society organizations, regardless of the particular domain and geographical area of engagement.

As far as the security sector is concerned, however, relevant EU strategic documents make reference to civil society's possible contribution to activities in this domain. Although no explicit mention of CSOs is contained in the 2003 European Security Strategy, the 2008 Report on its implementation acknowledges the "vital role civil society and NGOs might play as actors and partners" in building a more effective and capable Europe, especially in conflict-affected or fragile countries.¹⁰ In a similar vein, the EU Internal Security Strategy refers to CSOs as important actors in running public awareness campaigns, in this way contributing to the prevention and anticipation of threats.¹¹ The added value NGOs and CSOs can bring in the field as source of information for early warning purposes or to better know the context of operations or as actors in mediation processes has been widely recognized by institutional stakeholders in crisis management.¹²

¹⁰ Council of the European Union, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy - Providing Security in a Changing World*, (S407/08), Brussels, 11 December 2008, http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/documents/en/081211_EU%20Security%20Strategy.pdf, p. 9.

¹¹ Council of the European Union, *Draft Internal Security Strategy for the European Union: "Towards a European Security Model"*, (5842/2/10), Brussels, 23 February 2010, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st05/st05842-re02.en10.pdf>, p. 12.

¹² Council of the European Union, *Draft Review of Recommendations for enhancing cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention*, (10114/08), Brussels, 29 May 2008.

In this regard, the EU has long and wide-ranging experience of cooperation with NGOs and CSOs through operational work and established partnerships in the area of crisis management and conflict prevention.¹³ Beyond the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, the dialogue between the EU institutions, namely the European Commission, and non-state actors on peacebuilding and conflict prevention issues dates back to the late 1990s.

In those years, the first Conflict Prevention Network (CPN) of European institutes and non-governmental organizations was launched on the initiative of the then DG RELEX, and hosted by a German political foundation, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), to establish a pool of expertise able to provide analysis-based policy advice in the field of conflict prevention. After the conclusion of the CPN in 2001/2002, some follow-up initiatives were launched. Between September 2005 and September 2006, the European Peacebuilding Liaison office (EPLO)¹⁴, the International Crisis Group (lead partner), International Alert and the European Policy Centre established the Conflict Prevention Partnership (CPP) to improve the EU's capacity for conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding through the publication of studies on conflict-related issues, which included policy recommendations to decision-makers.¹⁵ In 2007, the Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP),¹⁶ a consortium led by International Alert, was launched with the same rationale. Concluded in December 2010, it was followed by the Initiative for Peacebuilding - Early Warning.¹⁷

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴ The EPLO is a platform gathering European NGOs, networks of NGOs and think-tanks active in the field of peacebuilding and interested in promoting sustainable peacebuilding policies among EU decision-makers, www.eplo.org. Within the JAES framework, EPLO is the current contact point for EU CSOs in the JAES Peace and Security Partnership.

¹⁵ See EPLO, *Conflict Prevention Partnership*, 2005-2006, <http://www.eplo.org/conflict-prevention-partnership>.

¹⁶ See <http://www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu>.

¹⁷ Sarah Bayne and Patrick Trolliet, *Stocktaking and scoping of the Peacebuilding Partnership*, Study for the European Commission DG RELEX A 2, August 2009, pp. 18-19. See also <http://www.ifp-ew.eu>.

Currently, the main framework for dialogue on peace and security-related matters between the EU institutions and European CSOs is the Peacebuilding Partnership (PbP), established by the EU in 2007 under Article 4.3 of the Instrument for Stability (IfS), crisis preparedness component. The PbP aims to

provide support for long-term measures aimed at building and strengthening the capacity of international, regional and sub-regional organizations, state and non-state actors in relation to their efforts in: promoting early warning, confidence-building, mediation and reconciliation, and addressing emerging inter-community tensions; and improving post-conflict and post-disaster.

As originally envisaged in the 2007 IfS Strategy Paper and recently confirmed in the 2012-2013 IfS Strategy Paper, the PbP is a key tool for the implementation of one of the three overall objectives of IfS long-term actions, namely

the strengthening of the international capacity and the regional capacity to anticipate, analyse, prevent and respond to the threat to stability and human development posed by violent conflict and natural disasters, as well as to improve post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.¹⁸

Among the projects recently funded under the PbP is the Civil Society Dialogue Network, established in 2010 and managed by the EPLO in association with other non-governmental organizations. The Civil Society Dialogue Network, to be funded also in 2012-2013, aims to establish a forum for debate in order to foster a robust dialogue mechanism on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU institutions.¹⁹

¹⁸ European Commission, *Commission Implementing Decision adopting the Thematic Strategy Paper 2012-2013 for assistance in the context of stable conditions for cooperation under the Instrument for Stability*, [C(2012)1649], 19 March 2012, p. 20, http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/ifs_2012_13_strategy__annex_en.pdf.

¹⁹ EPLO, *Civil Society Dialogue Network*, 2010, <http://www.eplo.org/civil-society-dialogue-network.html>.

3. THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

In a speech delivered in October 2011, Nicholas Westcott, Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service, outlined the new framework for EU relations with Africa following the establishment of the EEAS. The central message of his speech was that “the EU must put the African people at the heart of its policy in Africa”.²⁰ In his words, this principle should be put in practice in three ways: by promoting peace and security throughout Africa, by supporting its economic growth and by strengthening the EU’s partnership with the continent.

The overarching long-term framework for relations between the EU and Africa is provided by the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). Based on equality and shared interests and values, the JAES encompasses all areas in which the two continents are building their partnership and provides common goals for action.

The fourth and final objective of the JAES is “to facilitate and promote a broad-based and wide-ranging people-centred partnership”.²¹ In this vein, acknowledging that “the Joint Strategy should be co-owned by European and African non-institutional actors”, and willing to make it a “permanent platform for information, participation and mobilisation of a broad spectrum of civil society actors”,²² Africa and the EU committed to the following:

- [...] promoting the development of a vibrant and independent civil society and of a systematic dialogue between it and public authorities at all levels;

²⁰ Nicholas Westcott, *A new Framework for European relations with Africa*, speech delivered to the EU ISS – IAI – Chatham House conference on EU-Africa foreign policy after Lisbon, 18 October 2011, available at http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2011/181011_en.htm.

²¹ European Union and African Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, A Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, Lisbon, 9 December 2007, <http://europafira.files.wordpress.com/2006/10/africa-eu-strategic-partnership.pdf>, p. 3.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

- making effective communication with non-institutional actors a priority [...] and encouraging [their] active involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the Joint Strategy and its Action Plans;
- [...] promoting and expanding twinning arrangements in relevant sectors;
- [ensuring that] Members of Parliament, civil society organizations and European and African research institutes and think tanks participate in dialogue mechanisms and initiatives and play a key role in monitoring the implementation of African, European joint policies and commitments.²³

Following the renovated inclusiveness of the EU's approach to development, the JAES pledges to create the conditions to allow civil society to play a more active role in the formulation and implementation of EU policies. Compared to the 2000 Cairo Declaration that only recognized CSOs as important actors in the development process, the Strategy goes a step further by laying down the basis for their integration into formal and informal dialogue, which is due to take place mainly through the presence of experts in the Implementation Team (IT) meetings and the Joint Expert Groups (JEGs). For each of the eight Partnerships, the former bring together representatives from the European Commission, the European External Action Service and the Member States, as well as the civil society's contact point, and monitor, as their name suggests, the implementation of the Joint Strategy. The latter are informal and open-ended groups that, again for all the eight JAES thematic partnerships, gather those African, European and international actors, CSOs included, which have expertise on the issues they address and are willing to work on the priority action concerned. In any case, they are not allowed to take formal decisions or undertake policy initiatives. They provide instead a space where experts can discuss the implementation and financ-

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 22. Please note that, as stated in the JAES, the term "non-state actors" is understood as comprising: 1) the private sector; 2) economic and social partners, including trade union organizations; and 3) civil society in all its forms in accordance with national characteristics.

ing of the particular priority actions concerned.²⁴ It is interesting to note that as a result of CSOs' participation in the JEGs, their representatives are no longer seen just as "watch-dogs" but as experts that can offer a real added value.

Generally speaking, with regards to the Strategy's implementation, civil society plays a key role in three broad areas:

1. Dialogue and policy formulation, by bringing to the fore the input of the grassroots;
2. Monitoring, by acting as a watchdog and demanding more transparency in the implementation of the JAES;
3. Awareness-raising, by conducting advocacy initiatives at the level of international and local communities thanks to its long-established presence on the ground.

Taking into account the institutional architecture and implementation modalities for the JAES, six entry points for CSOs have been then identified, as follows:²⁵

1. Establishing mechanisms for closer cooperation and dialogue between the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the European Parliament (EP), as well as between the AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and local authorities;
2. Establishing a mapping of existing European and African civil society networks;
3. Establishing a platform for European and African research institutes and think tanks to provide independent policy advice;
4. Creating a web portal to facilitate consultations with civil society organizations ahead of key policy decisions;
5. Inviting representatives from European and African civil society to express themselves ahead of Ministerial Troika meetings;

²⁴Africa-EU Ministerial Troika, *The Implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership - Guidelines for Joint Experts Groups*, 20-21 November 2008.

²⁵ European Commission, *Entry Points for civil-society organizations intervention in the implementation and monitoring of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, 2008.

6. Establishing informal joint expert groups on all priority actions identified in the Action Plan in which CSOs can participate.²⁶

3.1. Civil society's participation in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy

In order to assess the extent and impact of civil society's participation in the JAES, it is worth briefly outlining how this has been structured on both the EU and African sides. As we will see, the approaches adopted by the two partners are rather different.

In the case of the European Union, civil society's participation in the JAES does not take place via formal EU bodies, such as for instance the European Economic Social Committee.²⁷ It is instead structured around an EU CSO Steering Group, which gathers members from a broad array of non-state sectors and networks interested or active in the implementation of the Strategy. It is a self-selected group that was established in an informal way following a request by the EU institutions.²⁸ EU CSOs then identified one contact point per thematic partnership and submitted detailed proposals for their participation in the EU Implementation Teams and the Joint Experts Groups. Relying essentially on its members' will, such an informal system has the advantage, according to some experts, of avoiding bureaucratic and lengthy procedures. Nevertheless, it has serious difficulties in providing continuity due to turn-over in its members and a lack of resources. Moreover, as it relies substantially on its members' will to be actively engaged, it risks being somewhat dysfunctional and ineffective, without clear and organized guidance.²⁹

²⁶ African Union-European Union, *First Action Plan (2008-2010) for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, Lisbon, 9 December 2007.

²⁷ Differently from what happens in the AU, the European Economic Social Committee has no formal role within the JAES. Moreover, although it is based on principles similar to those of the AU ECOSOC, it is composed mainly of social and economic interest-related groups.

²⁸ Carmen Silvestre, *EU-AU relations: What role for civil society?*, Open Society Institute, Brussels, 9 April 2009.

²⁹ Interview with policy officer, EPLO, Brussels, 1 March 2012.

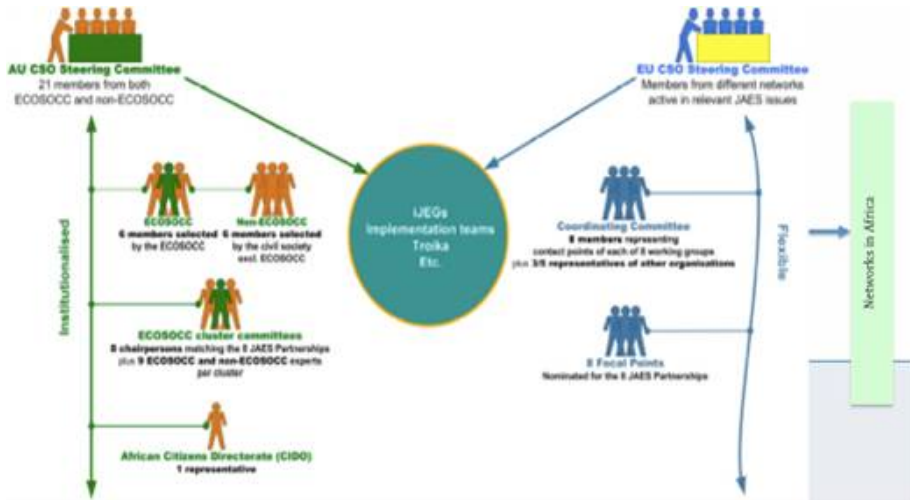
Contrariwise, CSOs' participation on the African side is much more structured. First and foremost, the involvement of African civil society in the JAES draws on the formal commitment enshrined in the African Union's Constitutive Act to base the Union on a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society.³⁰ To this end, in 2008 the AU established the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) as an official advisory body. As provided for in its Statute (Art. 3), the ECOSOCC includes (but is not limited to) social groups such as those representing women, children, the youth, the elderly and people with disabilities; professional groups (i.e. associations of different groups of workers, business organizations, private sector interest groups, etc.); non-governmental organizations; community-based and cultural organizations; and social and professional groups in the African diaspora organizations.³¹ More specifically, the ECOSOCC's General Assembly is composed of 150 representatives from CSOs, divided as follows (Art. 4 of the Statute): two from each Member State of the African Union; ten operating at regional level and eight at continental level; 20 from the African Diaspora; and six nominated by the Commission, in consultation with Member States, based on special considerations. In addition, the ECOSOCC is organized around eight Sectoral Cluster Committees, aligned to the Departments of the African Union Commission (AUC) to make cooperation easier. These committees were established as operational mechanisms and meant to provide the AU with ad hoc input and opinions on specific issues (Art. 11 of the Statute).

At the time of the JAES' inception, the AU decided that the ECOSOCC, through the African Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) of the AUC, acting as its secretariat, would be the only channel for the involvement of African civil society in the Strategy. In this vein, the ECOSOCC chairs an AU Civil Society Steering Committee, composed of six CSO representatives selected by the ECOSOCC, six others chosen by CSOs outside the ECOSOCC framework, and the eight chairpersons of the

³⁰ African Union, *The Constitutive Act*, Lomé, 11 July 2000, Art. 4, http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/aboutau/constitutive_act_en.htm.

³¹ African Union, *Statutes of the Economic, Social And Cultural Council of The African Union*, <http://www.africa-union.org/ECOSOC/STATUTES-En.pdf>.

ECOSOCC Cluster Committees (working in tandem with the corresponding thematic areas of the Partnership), plus a representative of CIDO. Within this framework, consultations between the AU and CSOs should take place once a year, but the last consultations for which information and reports are publicly available took place in Nairobi in March 2009 (following the first, held in Mali in 2008).



Source: ECDPM, Presentation by the facilitators on the JAES, Africa--EU Civil Society Intercontinental Forum on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, 8-10 November 2010, Cairo, Egypt.

Figure 5. The organization of the CSO Steering Groups

As observed by an African expert, the creation of ECOSOCC might represent in principle a significant achievement for the involvement of civil society in AU policy processes and the implementation of a real participatory and people-centred approach. However, in practice, the extent to which it has actually succeeded in involving CSOs, and the impact of that involvement, are still to be assessed.³² Controversial opinions have been expressed in this regard. Many European and African CSOs have indeed expressed concern at such a degree of formalization, which, in their opinion, jeopardizes the transparent participation of local CSOs as well

³² Interview with senior expert, Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

as continent-to-continent dialogue.³³ From their perspective, this equally limits the AU-CSOs dialogue, which in the last year has substantially been non-existent due to the cumbersome election process for the ECOSOCC General Assembly, which started in November 2011.³⁴ In any case, reality still lags behind commitments on paper. CIDO itself acknowledges that ECOSOCC is still facing a number of challenges which prevent it from playing an effective role and ensuring active CSOs participation in AU policy processes and beyond.³⁵ For instance, cooperation with other AU organs, such as the African Human and People Rights Commission or the Pan-African Parliament, has so far consisted only in exchanges of reports. Similarly, cooperation between the ECOSOCC Peace and Security Cluster Committee and the APSA components is still limited. With regards to the engagement of civil society, a lack of funding has caused delays in the mapping of African CSOs, although this is crucial for the effectiveness of the JAES as well as for the work of the AU institutions. Besides, CIDO acknowledges quite openly the limited visibility of its initiatives, which prevents it from properly reaching CSOs and dialoguing effectively with international partners. In this vein, there is a strong perception that a better outreach strategy is required.³⁶

3.2. Civil society and the Peace and Security Partnership

Although a slow pace of the implementation process has so far characterized all eight Partnerships of the JAES, experts maintain that the

³³ Criticisms concern in particular the ECOSOCC membership procedure, whereby each candidate must show that at least 50% of the resources of the organization derive from contributions of its members (de facto limiting ECOSOCC membership to those organizations whose members are financially dependent to less than 50% on external donations). See on this Marta Martinelli, *EU-AU relations: the partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, Open Society briefing paper, 2010, p. 11.

³⁴ Interview with senior officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Addis Ababa, 20 February, and with policy officers, FES, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

³⁵ Interview with senior officer, Citizens and Diaspora Organizations Directorate (CIDO), Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

³⁶ Interview with senior officer, CIDO, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

Partnership on Peace and Security has been the most successful, mainly thanks to the stronger commitment of institutional actors and the greater availability of funds. It is therefore interesting to assess whether such initial success has also characterised civil society's inclusion in the Partnership, and to what extent.

The three priority objectives of the Peace and Security Partnership are as follows: 1) to enhance dialogue on peace and security challenges; 2) to achieve the full operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture; and 3) to ensure predictable funding for Africa-led Peace Support Operations. The Peace and Security Action Plan explicitly mentions research centres, training centres, think tanks and relevant civil society organizations amongst the implementing actors for the first and second objectives.

Table 1. Civil society's contribution to the Peace and Security Partnership.

CSOs' main tasks	Objectives of the JAES Action Plan on P&S						
	Dialogue on P&S	Operationalization of the APSA					
		RECs	PSC	CEWS	ASF	PoW	Peace Fund
Policy Formulation	X	X	X				
Dialogue/networking	X	X	X			X	
Conflict analysis	X	X	X	X		X	
Raising Awareness	X	X	X	X			
Capacity building/training		X			X	X	
Mediation/conflict resolution	X		X			X	
Monitoring				X			
Outreach				X			

Source: IAI elaboration.

As shown in table 1, where we matched CSOs' main traditional functions to specific tasks pertaining to the peace and security domain and the Partnership's objectives, we found that CSOs could contribute to the implementation of the JAES Peace and Security Partnership in a

number of ways, from conflict prevention³⁷ to conflict transformation³⁸ and resolution³⁹.

If we consider the characteristics of civil society organizations, it becomes clear where the systematic involvement of civil society actors could provide added value.⁴⁰ In relation to Priority 1, this is the case for agreed activities concerning for instance the holding of systematic and regular dialogue on all issues related to peace and security, including the security-development nexus, and the enhancement of the sharing of analyses and reports on crises and conflict situations. This is connected to another activity agreed under Priority 2, namely empowering continent-to-continent networks capable of supporting peace and security activities. Here, the EU and the AU could certainly take advantage of the presence on the ground of local CSOs, think tanks and research institutes and their expertise in analysing and assessing the root causes and drivers of conflict. This would ultimately benefit early warning activities and directly feed into one of the pillars of the APSA, namely the establishment of continental and regional early warning systems.

Another way in which CSOs could support the operationalization of the APSA is by contributing to capacity building and the training of the African Stand-by Force, regional brigades included. Civil society's involvement could concern specific sectors already identified by Priority 1 of the Partnership, i.e. Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Explosive Remnants of War and Antipersonnel Landmines, or the fight against illicit trafficking, and could be useful in complementing the predominantly military training with an equally important civilian dimension. Training could also cover other areas, such as mediation and conflict resolution, and could as such address another pillar of the APSA, the Panel of the Wise.

³⁷ See on this *Africa-EU Civil Society Intercontinental Forum on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, 8-10 November 2010, Cairo, Egypt, p. 5.

³⁸ See on this also the European Economic and Social Committee, *Opinion on the role of the European Union in Peacebuilding in external relations: best practice and perspectives*, (REX/326 - CESE 156/2012), Brussels, 19 January 2012.

³⁹ Interview with CSOs representatives, Addis Ababa, Brussels, February and March 2012.

⁴⁰ African Union-European Union, *First Action Plan (2008-2010) for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, *op cit*.

What has been said so far does not cover all the facets of CSOs' engagement in the peace and security domain, which, due to space constraints, cannot be referred to and exhaustively examined here. Nevertheless, with reference to four broad areas, i.e. dialogue, early warning, capacity building and mediation, we found it useful to select a number of relevant cases that epitomise how civil society on both the African and European sides is involved in peace and security activities and might thus contribute to the implementation of the Partnership. This helped us identify existing challenges and put forward policy recommendations to the EU institutions.

3.2.1. Dialogue on peace and security issues

As far as dialogue on peace and security issues between institutional stakeholders and civil society organizations is concerned, including beyond the JAES framework, the African Union is, at least in principle, at the avant-garde. Indeed, Article 20 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council provides that “the PSC shall encourage non-governmental organizations to participate actively in the efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa”.⁴¹ To this end, from 4 to 5 December 2008, the Peace and Security Council held a retreat in Livingstone, Zambia, to consider the appropriate mechanisms for interaction with CSOs. As a result, it endorsed the so-called Livingstone Formula. According to this formula, civil society organizations, if called upon by the PSC, may organize and undertake activities in the areas of conflict prevention (early warning, reporting and situation analysis), peacemaking and mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian support and post conflict reconstruction, provision of technical support, training, monitoring and impact assessment of peace agreements, etc.⁴² The results of such activities are supposed to feed infor-

⁴¹ African Union, *Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, 9 July 2002, http://www.africa-union.org/rule_prot/PROTOCOL-%20PEACE%20AND%20SECURITY%20COUNCIL%20OF%20THE%20AFRICAN%20UNION.pdf.

⁴² “Civil Society Organizations may provide technical support to the African Union by undertaking early warning reporting, and situation analysis which feeds information

mation into the decision-making process of the PSC. In any case, the latter remains the master of its procedures, and the ECOSOCC, as the consultative organ responsible for coordinating the participation of civil society in the work of the AU, in this case via its Peace and Security Cluster, is the focal point, and plays a consultative role in the interaction between CSOs and the PSC. It is worth noting that only CSOs complying with ECOSOCC's eligibility criteria are allowed to interact with the PSC.⁴³ According to some civil society representatives, only a very limited number of CSOs would satisfy this test, thus reducing in practice the number that would have access to the PSC. This said, there is still a gap between commitments on paper and reality. Indeed, the Livingstone Formula has yet to be implemented on a regular basis. The same applies to the annual meetings between the AU and CSOs that should take place within its framework. So far, most interactions between the AU institutions (the PSC, the AU Commission) and CSOs have occurred on an ad hoc basis, taking advantage of "bilateral" connections, in the form for instance of Memorandum of Understandings or Framework Agreements, between the AU bodies and the largest and best-connected CSOs. The PSC invites CSOs to its meetings to provide their opinion only occasionally and on specific issues, such as women, arms and trafficking in children in 2010, or the upheaval in North Africa and its impact on the APSA in 2011.⁴⁴ According to institutional actors and experts, the main limits on the implementation of the Livingstone Formula have been a lack of economic resources, the slowdown in ECOSOCC activities due to the recent election of CSOs representatives,⁴⁵ and an unclear division of labour between the AU institutions as to who should take the lead in the im-

into the decision-making process of the PSC". See African Union, *Conclusions on mechanisms for the interaction between the Peace and Security Council and Civil Society Organizations in the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa*, [PSC/ PR/(CLX)], Conclusions of a Retreat of the PSC on a mechanism of interaction between the Council and CSOs, 4-5 December 2008, <http://europafrica.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/retreat-of-the-peace-and-security-council-of-the-au.pdf>.

⁴³ See further on this footnote 93.

⁴⁴ This was limited to the ISS.

⁴⁵ Interview with senior officer, CIDO, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

plementation of the Formula.⁴⁶ It seems however that the first initiatives designed to implement the Formula should be undertaken this year, focussing on how to boost networking by African CSOs.⁴⁷

On the EU side, beyond the JAES framework and as outlined earlier, the Peacebuilding Partnership has been working as a channel of dialogue between EU bodies dealing with security issues and civil society. In a way similar to that foreseen by the AU Livingstone Formula, although in a less regular and structured framework, the EU Political and Security Committee invites to its meetings experts from CSOs in order to have opinions from the ground on specific countries and regions on an ad-hoc basis.

In line with previous commitments, the 2012 Annual Action Plan for actions in the framework of the PbP, recently adopted by the European Union with a total budget of EUR 22 million, identified as main strands of action the following: improving the capacity of non-state actors; promoting early warning capabilities; climate change, natural resources and international security; and re-enforced co-operation on building pre- and post-crisis capacity with EU Member States (i.e. the training of civilian experts for crisis management and stabilization missions). The PbP has always been considered by CSOs to be an important opportunity for dialogue with institutional stakeholders, allowing greater democratic accountability of the EU decision-making process and the improvement of EU policies and programming. Nevertheless, taking stock of the initiatives funded so far, CSOs feel that there is still room for improvement. Generally speaking, it should be ensured that the PbP is not considered to be a mere factory for service contracts, but rather a tool to fund grants with clear commitments and objectives. This would be crucial in order to add value to other existing initiatives by enhancing synergies and producing a catalytic effect. To this end, first, dialogue between CSOs and institutions should become more structured and systematic, and involve consultation from the early stages on both strategic documents and policy or geographical issues. Second, dialogue should

⁴⁶ Interview with senior expert, ISS, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

⁴⁷ Interview with senior officer, CIDO, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

be broadened to include other key actors both inside the EU, first and foremost the EU Delegations, and outside, i.e. international partner organisations.⁴⁸ Enlarging the network of interlocutors would also increase awareness of what the PbP actually does and how it does it, which is often misunderstood. If, on the one hand, it is not always easy to assess the impact and success of PbP-funded initiatives, on the other, awareness should be raised, especially among Member States, whose opinions are critical as they have the final say over IfS funding. On these grounds, in light of the on-going elaboration of the new IfS Regulation for the next multiannual financial framework (2014-2020), the EPLO has recently expressed concern at the continued absence of an explicit reference to the PbP from the Commission's proposal. Besides, it has asked for an increase in the proportion of the financial envelope allocated to measures falling under this component of the IfS, which is currently limited to 5% of total IfS funding.⁴⁹

Within the JAES framework, dialogue between CSOs and institutional stakeholders takes place mainly within the Implementation Teams and the JEGs, which are supposed to help civil society address their policy suggestions and requirements up to ministerial level. However, as we will see below in section 4, civil society representatives express many concerns about the real effectiveness of such dialogue, which they perceive as limited and hampered by a number of factors on both sides of the Partnership.

3.2.2. *Early warning*

Early warning is crucial in any attempt to prevent crises or violent conflicts from erupting.

Since its inception, one of the pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture has been the establishment of a Continental Early Warning

⁴⁸ Sarah Bayne and Patrick Trolliet, *Stocktaking and scoping of the Peacebuilding Partnership*, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-36.

⁴⁹ European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), *EU funding for peacebuilding: EPLO's recommendations for reforming the EU's external co-operation programmes*, April 2012, http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Working%20Groups/FfP/EPLO_Statement_EU%20funding_for_peacebuilding.pdf.

System based on early warning mechanisms set up at REC level (see also Chapter 2.2 para a of this study).

As acknowledged by both parties to the JAES, civil society could provide a real added value in this domain by taking advantage of its long-established presence on the ground as well as expertise in understanding the root causes and drivers of conflicts. With reference to the latter, think tanks, universities and research centres could really play an important role.⁵⁰

A few centres of excellence are active in the field of conflict analysis and peace and security in general. In order for them to provide a concrete contribution to AU early warning activities at both the continental and the regional levels, a regular and formalized dialogue and information exchange with institutional actors and decision-makers, along with the political will to use the findings of CSOs, are urgently required. It is common opinion⁵¹ that a significant example in this sense, as well as in terms of civil society networking, is provided by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP).⁵²

Founded in 1998 as a response to the civil wars that devastated West Africa in the 1990s, WANEP now gathers over 500 member organizations across West Africa relying on national networks established in every Member State of ECOWAS. At the continental level, WANEP is a member of ECOSOCC's Peace and Security Cluster representing West Africa. WANEP implements its programmes at both the national and the regional levels across a vast range of sectors, from early warning, capacity building and training, to civil society networking, research, monitoring and evaluation, and on different issues related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Amongst them, the most relevant for our purposes are the Civil Society Coordination and Democratic Governance programme and Early Warning and Early Response Program (WARN). The former provides an integrated platform for engagement with different stakeholders to closely monitor and possibly mitigate election-related conflicts and therefore promote peaceful democratic transition, conflict-

⁵⁰ Interview with policy officers, GIZ, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

⁵¹ Interview with senior expert, International Alert, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

⁵² See WANEP, <http://www.wanep.org/wanep/about-us-our-story/about-us.html>.

resolving governance, etc.⁵³ The latter is extremely relevant in the JAES Peace and Security Partnership and the APSA framework.⁵⁴ In 2002 WANEP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ECOWAS⁵⁵ for the implementation of a regional early warning and response system (ECOWARN) as an observation and monitoring tool for conflict prevention and decision-making.⁵⁶ WANEP started this implementation in 2003 in order to provide up-dated reporting, analysis and communication to regional interveners in order to plan, prevent or mitigate the impact of violent conflicts in the region. The system is now operational and will go beyond the ECOWAS level to be linked to the AU Continental Early Warning System.

As demonstrated by ECOWAS, RECs could really act as an entry point for CSOs in the early warning domain. Whereas civil society's strongest engagement appears to be in West Africa, on the other side of the continent as well, under IGAD's coverage, organizations on the ground are used to provide timely information, and also foster different forms of debate in the media/civil society.⁵⁷ In addition, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community

⁵³ See WANEP, <http://www.wanep.org/wanep/programs-our-programs/cspap.html>.

⁵⁴ Another interesting example of a network of NGOs working on peace and security-related issues in West Africa is provided by WACSOF, the West Africa Civil Society Forum. This is a network of civil society organizations from throughout the 15 Member States of ECOWAS. The Forum members meet annually, with an executive committee meeting on an interim basis more frequently, to deliberate on issues of peace and human security and to interact with the ECOWAS secretariat with the goal of strengthening human security mechanisms in West Africa.

⁵⁵ Among the African sub-regional organizations, ECOWAS has achieved remarkable results in involving CSOs in its core activities, including them in an institutionalized way, as exemplified by ECOWARN.

⁵⁶ ECOWAS, Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, December 1999, http://www.iss.co.za/af/regorg/unity_to_union/pdfs/ecowas/ConflictMecha.pdf.

⁵⁷ See on this Kenya's example of the District Peace Committees and the 2010 UWIANO initiative as mechanisms providing the national authorities and IGAD with timely information in the event of crisis (for instance during elections), using a bottom-up approach. See Sébastien Babaud and James Ndung'u, *Early Warning and Conflict prevention by the EU: Learning lessons from the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya*, IfP-EW Cluster: Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning, March 2012.

(EAC) provide good examples of procedures regulating CSOs and of private sector participation, with particular reference to the eligibility criteria and the related process that do not allow any interference by Member States.

In practice, the effective involvement of civil society is limited, both in Africa and Europe, by the obstacles the institutional actors face in mapping those CSOs dealing with security-related issues and therefore in identifying reliable interlocutors and partners. This might make it difficult to establish a climate of good cooperation and to know each other well. As a consequence, a feeling of mutual mistrust might tend to prevail.⁵⁸

On the EU side, CSOs' potential contribution to early warning activities is similar to that on the African side. Information and analysis collected through civil society actors can for instance feed into EU open-source intelligence platforms, such as Tariqa 3.⁵⁹ In addition, Europe-based CSOs can also provide more specific or up-dated information by taking advantage of their large in-country networks. A leading role in this field is for instance played by the International Crisis Group, an international NGO founded in 1995. Committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflicts, and relying on a worldwide network of local offices, it works as source of analysis and provides regular advice to governments and international organizations, like the United Nations and the European Union.⁶⁰ Last but not least, thanks to other networking initiatives such as the above-mentioned Civil Society Dialogue Network, CSOs can facilitate communication and information exchange between EU institutional actors and local non-governmental information sources, with the ultimate aim of supporting early warning activities.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Interview with officer, CEWS, African Union, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

⁵⁹ Originally developed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for External Relations, Tariqa is now managed by the EEAS. Tariqa is an open source intelligence platform supported by a multimedia content database with the ultimate aim of providing real-time support for early warning and response. See for further information <http://joinup.ec.europa.eu/software/tariqa/description>.

⁶⁰ See International Crisis Group, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/about.aspx>.

⁶¹ Terry Beswick, *EU early warning and early response capacity for conflict prevention in the post-Lisbon era*, IFP-EW Cluster: Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning, January 2012.

3.2.3. *Training and capacity building*

Education and training are commonly perceived as crucial for the achievement of organizational transformation, development and peace. Here, civil society could certainly have an added value, and indeed many European and African CSOs are engaged, jointly or autonomously, in this field.

Education programmes might be co-owned by a research institute and African Union institutions, as is the case of the African Peace and Support Program, launched in 2010 as a joint initiative of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), Addis Ababa University, and the African Union Commission, Peace and Security Department.⁶² In other cases, CSOs provide training courses on specific peace and security-related issues, which they address to the representatives of African governmental (AU institutions, RECs) and non-governmental organizations. A recent case in point is the international training programme on peace and security run by Accord (an African non-governmental organization) and co-managed with a European university and a consultancy.⁶³

By means of training, CSOs can also directly participate in the implementation of one of the priorities of the JAES Peace and Security Partnership, namely the operationalization of the African Stand-by Force, as happens for instance through the African Peace Support Trainers' Association (APSTA). This was launched in 2002 as the African "pillar" of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres and gathers research centres and NGOs as well as governmental and non-governmental training centres from all the African regions. It was conceived of as a platform to ensure the regular exchange of best practices and information or research among its members. Its objectives also include facilitating efforts to harmonize the doctrine, training, curricula and so on of its members; to serve as a depository offering advisory services to the African Union (the Commission and the Peace and Security Council) on

⁶² See Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), <http://apspaddis.wordpress.com/ipss/>.

⁶³ See ACCORD, <http://www.accord.org.za/news/91-training/964-accord-hosts-4th-phase-of-international-training-programme-on-peace-and-security>. See section 3.2.4 as regards specific training on mediation.

peace support operations issues; and to act as a sounding board for the AU Commission on peace support operations concerning relations with donors. Its ultimate purpose is therefore to support the development and operationalization of the African Stand-by Force and the work of the AU and RECs/RMs in the area of training for Peace Support Operations (PSOs) personnel, as well as the development of doctrine and lessons learned. Over time, however, APSTA has lost its initial impetus, mainly due to funding problems and misperceptions among partners. Experts believe that, taking into account its useful role as a means of standardization of training curricula and in providing a structured engagement at the continental level, it should perhaps be revitalized.⁶⁴

In addition to the training provided by EU centres to civilians to be deployed on international missions, including those led by the AU, through activities such as Europe's New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management (ENTRI)⁶⁵, the European Commission recently decided to commit EUR 11,4 million (from the APF 2011-2013) for the period February 2012 to January 2014 to further strengthen the training of police, civilian and military personnel to be deployed in African PSOs in the framework of the ASF.⁶⁶ To this end, 17 training centres have been identified which will provide specific standardized and harmonized training as requested by African RECs. They will be coordinated by the African Union Commission. No mention was made of the APSTA in the Press Memo. It is therefore not clear whether it will be involved in any way. However, it seems more likely that the training centres will participate on an autonomous basis.

3.2.4. *Mediation*

Alongside early warning and crisis management, mediation is an integral part of conflict prevention and resolution.

⁶⁴ Interview with senior expert, ISS, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

⁶⁵ See Europe's New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management: <http://www.entriforccm.eu/>.

⁶⁶ European Commission, *Commission Decision on an action to be financed under the African Peace Facility from the 10th European Development Fund – Support to the African Training Centres in Peace and Security*, [C(2012)1479], Brussels, 12 March 2012.

As provided for in the 2002 Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the AU has a formal mandate to engage in mediation as a form of peace-making (see also Chapter 2.2 para c of this study). The Protocol indeed refers to mediation as one of the specific functions of the African Peace and Security Architecture (Art. 6.3). Nevertheless, specific processes and mechanisms of mediation have yet to be consolidated. The main limit that has been identified in this regard is a lack of human capacity, financial resources and adequate tools within the AU. This has often meant that mediation processes have tended to follow an ad hoc or reactive approach, rather than an institutionalized one.⁶⁷

Similarly to what happens in the areas assessed above, civil society can also play a key role in mediation by both supporting the improvement of the AU's mediation capacities and participating in the mediation process itself.

As for the first aspect, a good case in point is the African Union Mediation Support Capacity project, jointly implemented by the AU's Conflict Management Division (CMD), Accord, and a European NGO, Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) (funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Accord has overall responsibility for the capacity-building and training component of the project, aiming to develop training curricula (including an AU mediation handbook) and training courses to be addressed to various categories of staff identified for AU mediation interventions.⁶⁸ CMI provides support on specific thematic issues of relevance to mediation on the African continent. The two organizations also contribute to the development of the mediation component of the AU CMD Peace and Security Roster, which should ultimately help the AU to quickly identify experts available to support its mediation interventions.⁶⁹ In the same vein, CMI is also working to create an African net-

⁶⁷ Kruschen Govender, *Towards Enhancing the Capacity of the African Union in Mediation*, report based on a seminar organised by the African Union (AU) Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15-16 October 2009, ACCORD, 2009.

⁶⁸ See ACCORD, <http://www.accord.org.za/our-work/peacemaking/au-mediation-support-project>.

⁶⁹ See Crisis Management Initiative, <http://www.cmi.fi/africa/au-mediation-support-capacity-project.html>.

work of mediation practitioners that can link African organizations with the African Union and RECs.

In addition to national states and regional organizations, civil society can also have an important role in conflict resolution,⁷⁰ as is the case for instance of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique, or a number of women's associations in the Mano River Basin.⁷¹

Non-State Actors have engaged and triggered a number of peace processes on the African continent. Their role and practice at both the Track I and Track II⁷² levels have proved crucial to providing a voice to marginalized groups, such as women, in official peace processes. At the same time, they can contribute to filling gaps in conflict resolution when state actors are not able to decisively engage the parties in conflict resolution.

The UN Secretary General's report entitled "Enhancing mediation and its support activities" identifies many advantages that NGOs possess in the field of mediation. For example, they can mobilize resources and act quickly, they may be perceived as less threatening to the conflict parties, they can help facilitate informal processes that can feed into official mediation efforts, and they may possess expertise on thematic issues which can be used to assist the mediators or the conflicting parties.⁷³

Among the AU organs, the Panel of the Wise, established to support the PSC and the Commission in conflict prevention, makes efforts to involve civil society actors in its activities. Again, regular dialogue takes place with Accord and CMI and, generally speaking, every PoW meeting

⁷⁰ Interview with senior expert, ISS, and with FES, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

⁷¹ For a complete overview of the several CSOs involved, see International Peace Academy (IPA), *Civil society perspectives from the Mano River Union*, Civil Society Dialogue Report, New York, 2002, <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~courses/PoliticalScience/474A1/documents/IPACivilSocietyPerspectivesManoRiverUnion.pdf>.

⁷² Track I diplomacy refers to official initiatives led by institutional and governmental actors. Contrariwise, Track II diplomacy is conducted by non-governmental actors (including for instance academics, NGOs and public figures), with the aim of confidence-building and providing support to conflict resolution.

⁷³ United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities*, (S/2009/189), 8 April 2009, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/278/78/PDF/N0927878.pdf?OpenElement>.

tends to be extended to CSOs in order to discuss peace and security-related issues and their involvement in those activities in the regions concerned.⁷⁴ In order to identify the best interlocutors for institutional stakeholders, the CMI's efforts to map the African CSOs with relevant expertise in the mediation domain are commendable, and have proved crucial in linking the work of those CSOs with that of the AU bodies and in creating positive synergies.

Beyond taking part in formal mediation processes under the AU's aegis, CSOs can also prove key actors in local conflicts. This is for instance the case of the so-called Infrastructure for Peace, which African leaders committed to support as of 2002. An Infrastructure for Peace engages all the main stakeholders in a given country (from civil society to government level) to participate in a co-operative, problem-solving approach to conflict based on negotiation and non-violence. National, District and Local Peace Councils are part of such an infrastructure. A practical example is provided by the District Peace Committees (DPCs) established in Kenya in the 1990s as a widely accepted mechanism for both mediation and early warning, under the authority of the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management, an interagency committee sitting in the Office of the President, and with the active involvement of CSOs. Originally established as a means of solving tensions, conflicts and violence among pastoralist communities, the DPCs' coverage was then extended to all districts of Kenya in the aftermath of the 2007 post-election violence. While there is diversity in performance between one DPC and another, in some cases DPCs have proven to be valuable interface structures between the Government, community leaders, and CSOs when responding to conflict and security situations.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Interview with senior officer, Panel of the Wise, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

⁷⁵ Sébastien Babaud and James Ndung'u, *Early Warning and Conflict prevention by the EU: Learning lessons from the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya*, op. cit, p. 22.

4. CHALLENGES TO CIVIL SOCIETY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE JOINT STRATEGY AND THE PEACE AND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

As described above, the 2007 Lisbon Summit Declaration put emphasis on the real participation of civil society actors in the JAES, beyond their mere association with its initiatives. This means that CSOs' engagement in the AU-EU dialogue has to be vertical and horizontal both within and across continents.⁷⁶

Taking stock of such a shift in paradigm and of the attention paid to the people-to-people dimension of the Africa-EU relations, civil society organizations welcomed the Strategy.⁷⁷ However, five years after its endorsement, a feeling of disappointment as to the extent to which CSOs are actually involved in its implementation is common among civil society representatives.

It seems that so far the JAES has not lived up to its promises. Even if this could appear quite understandable in the first phase of its implementation, when a new institutional framework had to be set up and mechanisms for civil society's engagement had to be thought of and put into place, limited achievements have been attained also in the second phase.

Opinions collected throughout the course of this study revealed that most of the remarks made on the JAES first Action Plan (2008-2010) still apply today, as no major shift has occurred in the second Action Plan (2011-2013). The Strategy's overarching framework is felt to be too bureaucratic⁷⁸, and both African and European CSOs feel that they have barely left a fingerprint on, or had any influence over, the institutions' agenda. A common remark from CSOs is that, although they acknowledge being consulted (especially on the European side), they

⁷⁶ African Union, *Second AU-CSOs consultation on the implementation of the Africa-Europe Partnership*, 3-5 March 2009, Nairobi, Kenya, p. 6.

⁷⁷ *Africa-EU Civil Society Intercontinental Forum on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁷⁸ Interview with policy officer, EPLD, Brussels, 1 March 2012.

feel that this happens just to allow officials to tick the CSOs box. They maintain that consultations are not systematic and are held only on ad hoc basis without actually taking into account CSOs' opinions in shaping policy.⁷⁹ In this regard, it is fair to underline that different perceptions exist between CSOs and institutional stakeholders. On their side, EU institutional actors indeed observe that CSOs tend to intervene and to actively participate in dialogue only when certain issues, i.e. funding, are at stake.⁸⁰

Either way, civil society's hope for a stronger role in Africa-EU relations following the adoption of the JAES first Action Plan has now almost disappeared, and has been replaced by a general feeling of disappointment towards the Strategy and by attempts to revitalize it. Civil society organizations, even those that most contributed to the formulation of the Strategy a few years ago, are now more and more frustrated – also as a consequence of the perceived hesitancy on the part of institutional actors – and are turning their attention to other activities where they feel they can have a greater impact.⁸¹

Against this backdrop, and limiting the analysis to the involvement of European and African CSOs in the JAES and the implementation of its Peace and Security Partnership, the main causes of such a failing can be allocated to three main categories: i) CSOs' capacity; ii) mechanisms of participation; and iii) funding.

4.1. CSOs' capacity

As far as the first point is concerned, effective dialogue and joint initiatives are hampered primarily by the uneven degree of engagement of civil society in the JAES, with African actors still lagging behind. Even though the degree of involvement of European CSOs varies somewhat, it relies on long-established structures and dialogue with EU institutions. This is not the case for the African side. Controversial opinions

⁷⁹ *Joint Africa-EU Strategy, Joint CSO Steering Group Meeting*, ITUC, Brussels, 10 May 2011, pp. 1-3.

⁸⁰ Interview with senior officer, European Commission, Brussels, 25 April 2012.

⁸¹ Interview with policy officer, Saferworld, Brussels, 12 April 2012.

exist as to the extent to which local organizations lack or otherwise the capacity to contribute to the JAES. Whereas in a number of cases local NGOs and associations have proved essential in preventing conflicts or resolving disputes, it would be fair to recognize that it is often difficult for them to enter formal institutional frameworks, to establish regular dialogue with institutional actors and to actively participate in formal continent-to-continent activities, such as those foreseen by the JAES. This mainly stems from two different factors: the different procedures for the engagement of African CSOs, and African CSOs' young age, with most of them still in the process of organizing themselves in permanent networks.⁸²

As for the first factor, we have seen that ECOSOCC is the only channel through which African CSOs can be involved in the JAES. In this regard, African CSOs and their European counterparts complain about the excessive bureaucratization and length of procedures, which force African CSOs to always check with their constituencies before attending meetings, as well as about a lack of transparency in the selection of local organizations to participate in the General Assembly, with the result that smaller and more independent CSOs are often underrepresented.⁸³ However, different perceptions exist, again, between CSOs and institutional actors. According to CIDO, difficulties in the engagement of civil society mainly derive from poor cooperation among local CSOs, which hampers direct dialogue with them.⁸⁴ With regards to joint Africa-EU initiatives, CIDO observes that it is exactly the different formal set up, namely the limited institutionalization of European CSOs, which prevents the two partners from "speaking the same language" and from fully understanding and recognizing each other.

Beyond formal procedures, the organization of joint initiatives is more and more difficult also due to a substantial disparity between the

⁸² See section 4.2 for examples of networks in the Peace and Security field.

⁸³ Interview with policy officers, FES, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012, and with policy officer, EPLO, Brussels, 1 March 2012.

⁸⁴ CSOs observe that full consistency is impossible to achieve, as civil society is itself the place for debate, confrontation and discussion (interview with policy officers, FES, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012).

two sides in terms of available and accessible capacity. This means that in most cases, direct engagement is limited to “multinational” NGOs to the detriment of local ones. What is more, the high turnover of personnel in CSOs, common to both sides, makes it difficult to keep the momentum up, to maintain the flow of knowledge and the expertise already acquired and to ensure continuity and coherence in joint activities, including those on peace and security, and in engagement with institutional stakeholders.⁸⁵ A “victim” of such a disparity – and of other factors such as the lack of funding – was for instance the Africa-EU Civil Society Intercontinental Dialogue Forum. Originally planned to take place annually, according to the available information, it has so far been held only once (end of 2010). The next Forum is planned for 2013, to coincide with the EU – AU Summit. Within the JAES, the two Steering Groups are instead supposed to meet more regularly, in principle three times a year. This idea however was always unrealistic, due to the lack of financial resources and capacity. The last meeting took place in Brussels in July 2011. There have been discussions about a meeting in 2012, but no date has as yet been set.⁸⁶

4.2. *Mechanisms of participation*

Mechanisms of participation represent another challenge to the impact of civil society on the JAES. In principle, the two main channels allowing CSOs to actively participate in the Strategy and make their voice heard are the Implementation Teams (ITs) and the Joint Expert Groups (JEGs). Both however have proven somewhat ineffective. EU IT meetings within the Peace and Security Partnership have been described as “soul searching” meetings, with a structure that has remained unchanged over the last two years, and work more as a – vague – information-sharing platform which does not set common objectives for action.⁸⁷ For their part,

⁸⁵ Interview with senior expert, ISS, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012, and Marta Martinelli, *EU-AU relations: the partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁸⁶ Email exchange with policy officer, EPLD, May 2012.

⁸⁷ Interview with policy officer, EPLD, Brussels, 1 March 2012.

JEGs, despite their name, do not in most cases gather technical experts, and remain therefore on a more political level.⁸⁸ In most cases they are composed of political officers from national embassies in Brussels and Addis Ababa who may not necessarily be experts in the specific partnership area for which they are members.⁸⁹ Such imbalances apply to representatives from both sides, but are particularly true of the African side due, either to limited local expertise or to difficulties in swiftly identifying existing expertise. Moreover, civil society representatives are not invited to JEGs or to other meetings, such as the Joint Task Forces, on a regular basis, and delays in informing and involving CSOs are quite frequent.⁹⁰ This applies also to the Peace and Security Partnership, where, according to CSOs, dialogue with institutional stakeholders has slowed on account, *inter alia*, of the internal reorganization on the European side after the establishment of the European External Action Service. Now the EEAS chairs the JAES Peace and Security Partnership on behalf of the EU, while the European Commission – DG Development Cooperation (DEVCO) – is in charge of the implementation and management of its main financial tool, the African Peace Facility (APF).⁹¹ As for civil society's participation in the Peace and Security Partnership, there is not a dedicated contact point, as the reference point in the EEAS covers civil society's engagement across all the eight JAES Partnerships. In this re-

⁸⁸ Interview with policy officers, GIZ, Addis Ababa, 23 February 2012.

⁸⁹ African Union, *Second AU-CSOs consultation on the implementation of the Africa-Europe Partnership*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ It is relevant to note that the right of initiative to ask for EU funding under the African Peace Facility pertains to the AU and African regional organizations with a mandate in peace and security. The scope of the APF beneficiaries has been recently broadened to include training centres and other CSOs. Nonetheless, the latter can only receive funding indirectly, i.e. if the AU or a REC asks the APF to fund a project whose implementation can involve CSOs. As for the near future, it would be difficult for civil society to become a direct beneficiary of APF funding, as it would require adequate capacity to deal with the cumbersome financial and management procedures of large scale projects such as those funded under the APF. See on this EPLO, *The African Peace Facility*, EPLO Briefing Paper 03/2012, Brussels, p. 8, http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/4.%20Members%20Area/FfP/EPLO_Briefing_Paper_3-2012_African_Peace_Facility.pdf.

gard, civil society feels that there is still room for improvement and to make institutional engagement more active.⁹² In any case, difficulties in dialoguing with external stakeholders can be considered as part of a wider problem the EU faces with outreach activities, underlined by CSO representatives and also acknowledged by EU actors.⁹³ Although the situation has improved with the establishment of an EU Delegation to the African Union, the JAES is still unknown to the majority of civil society organizations, including at country level.⁹⁴

4.3. Funding

Last but not least, funding has been a major issue since the inception of the JAES⁹⁵. As of 2009, after the endorsement of the first Action Plan, CSOs asked that adequate resources be addressed to their participation in the Strategy. Whereas an EU budget line exists for non-state actors and local authorities under other EU financial instruments, until recently the JAES has not been provided with a similar financial envelope. Ahead of complaints about the scarcity of resources available under the JAES, which from the perspective of CSOs negatively impacts also on the organization of meetings and on the effectiveness of the JEGs, the EU institutions, in agreement with the African institutions, started discussions on a CSOs funding mechanism for the JAES, the so-called Support Programme. Either way, the issue at stake does not concern only the availability of funds, but also the capacity of CSOs, namely African CSOs, to have access to them.⁹⁶ This is particularly true for the smaller organizations that are not familiar with EU mechanisms and do not have ade-

⁹² Email exchange with EPLO, May 2012.

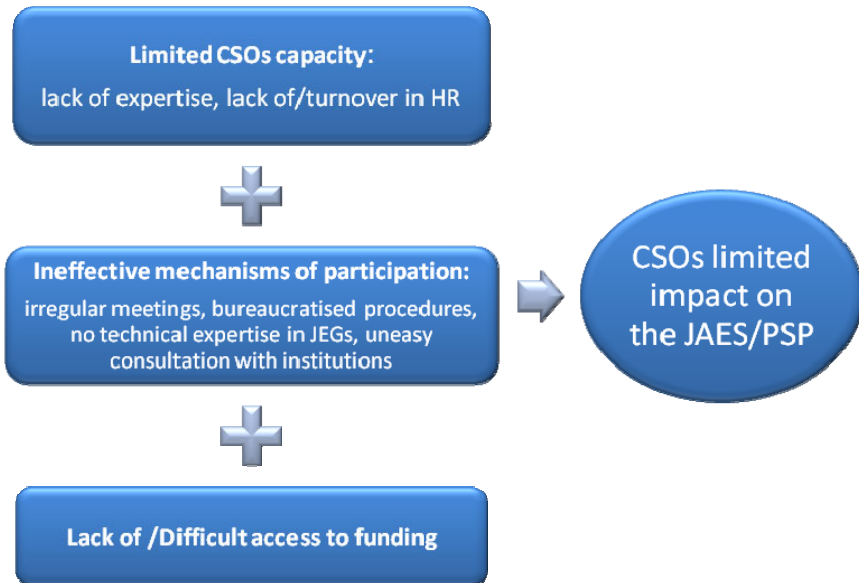
⁹³ Interview with senior officer, EU Delegation to the African Union, Addis Ababa, 21 February 2012.

⁹⁴ *Africa-EU Civil Society Intercontinental Forum on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, op. cit.*, p. 3.

⁹⁵ In this regard, it is worth making a distinction between funding available under the EU Non-State Actors programme and other headings strictly related to the JAES.

⁹⁶ Interviews with senior officer, UNECA, Addis Ababa, 21 February 2012, with policy officer, EPLO, Brussels, 1 March 2012, and with policy officer, Saferworld, Brussels, 12 April 2012.

quate human resources to deal with what have been defined as “civil society unfriendly” procedures.⁹⁷



Source: IAI elaboration.

Figure 6. Limits to the impact of CSOs on the JAES/PSP.

⁹⁷ Interview with senior expert, International Alert, Addis Ababa, 22 February 2012.

Policy Recommendations

Valérie Vicky Miranda, Nicoletta Pirozzi and Kai Schaefer

Against this backdrop and with reference to the major challenges identified by the study for the effective involvement of African regional organizations and civil society actors in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, particularly in its Peace and Security Partnership, we can identify three main areas requiring improvement, as follows: 1) dialogue, coordination and outreach; 2) capacity building; and 3) funding. On this basis, we can put forward some policy recommendations aimed at an improved implementation of the Strategy.

1. DIALOGUE, COORDINATION AND OUTREACH

While there seem to be almost too many coordination mechanisms in the framework of the Joint Strategy, both REC/RMs and civil society actors have yet to be properly involved in the Peace and Security Partnership, and still have limited impact on the elaboration of policies and the implementation of actions. In this regard, in our view both parties have the following precise “duties”.

Promoting dialogue:

- Both the African Union and the European Union should *develop good practices on how to engage more with REC/RMs*. If an inclusive partnership is really a priority, then political leaders have to provide the instruments to engage the REC/RMs, in particular with regard to programming. Things have to start at the strategic level, or otherwise

- operationalization will remain a “lettre morte”. It is worth highlighting that the AU intends to undertake more missions to REC/RMs. It is also suggested that the joint assessment missions by the AU and the EU in post-conflict countries include the participation of concerned REC/RMs on a regular basis, as they are closer to the particular conflict and could offer a better understanding of the relevant dynamics.
- *Linking up different Partnerships of the JAES*, particularly Peace and Security with Human Rights and Governance, is not only appropriate in order to enable the Partnership to face today’s challenges, but might also give CSOs an increased role. On both the African and the European sides, this would require a change in working culture. In the same vein, AU and EU institutions must improve their outreach and promote more occasions where civil society can comment on, and feed into, official policies. Opportunities already exist outside the JAES framework. One might think, for example, of the Peacebuilding Partnership on the European side or of the direct access guaranteed to some African NGOs to the African Commission and the African Court on Human and People’s Rights. It would therefore be useful, also for the sake of consistency among EU policies, to establish formal links and synergies between on-going initiatives so that they benefit from each other.
 - At the same time, a *more proactive role for both civil society and REC/RMs* is crucial. They must continue to approach AU and EU institutions in order to express their interest in the Strategy and the Peace and Security Partnership, inquiring about progress made and informing the institutions of the activities they carry out in relation to the implementation of the Action Plans. CSOs should also regularly present to policy-makers solid recommendations in their area of expertise, either by means of direct submissions to officials, or by means of public statements or advocacy campaigns as side events to official meetings. The recommendations provided by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office for the second Action Plan of the Peace and Security Partnership are a good example of this process. As shown by West Africa, as well as by constant improvements in other regions, the role of RECs is crucial in order to involve CSOs more substantially and to connect the continental and the local levels. Either

way, a fundamental step would be to set a joint agenda with clear objectives and benchmarks for the civil society sector, for instance on the priorities and related activities formulated in the JAES second Action Plan.

Ensuring institutional coordination:

- The links between institutional representatives in the EU and the AU on the one side and stakeholders in REC/RMs and civil society on the other could be further strengthened, as they remain high-level and selective in nature. *Interaction at expert level should be encouraged*, and there should be more context- or theme-specific interactions. This would help avoid the “talk shop effect” that is common in high-level political meetings, and would improve the outcome of existing gatherings, such as the Joint Expert Groups in Europe and Africa, or the African Union Partners Group in Addis Ababa.
- As an alternative, a *Peace and Security Joint Coordination Committee (JCC)* could be created to replace all existing technical meetings. This would allow such a JCC to have a visible role, would ensure more regular participation by REC/RMs, and would clean up some of the other meetings, as there is limited activity and engagement in them. *Seminars with politicians, experts and civil society representatives in the context of meetings between the Peace and Security Council of the AU and the Political and Security Committee of the EU* could also be planned. For instance, a one-day seminar or a one-day formal meeting for more in-depth discussion of issues of crucial importance to both sides could be organised. In addition, different gathering formats “*à géométrie variable*” could be promoted, such as *regional meetings between the AU, the EU and REC/RMs or meetings with a geographical or thematic focus involving all interested actors*, including the relevant REC/RMs and local civil society organizations.

Enhancing outreach:

- One of the weaknesses of the Partnership is outreach. Not enough information is communicated about the results achieved. Specifically, the EU could do more to publicize what it does in the framework of the JAES, and could be more ambitious in the field of communication,

with a key role to be assigned to the European Commission and the European External Action Service. The JAES cannot be confined to Brussels and Addis Ababa, but needs to be owned by all the key interlocutors, including REC/RMs, AU and EU Member States, and African and European civil society actors: in short, *the Partnership needs a communication plan*. It is to be hoped that the JAES Support Mechanism could do more in this regard. This should also help to tackle the current gaps in information between Brussels, Addis Ababa and the EU Delegations in the African continent. *EU Delegations should be more engaged in the Partnership*, for which they need peace and security capacity and expertise to deliver effective follow-up. In addition, communication between the EU Delegations, the EEAS and the European Commission needs to be improved.

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

Another major issue preventing the active participation of REC/RMs and CSOs is uneven and sometimes limited local capacity, or difficulties in accessing formal and structured frameworks of cooperation. This remains a serious concern, especially on the African side.

The EU is the biggest donor to the African Peace and Security Architecture and the biggest support to capacity building. On the one hand, *coordinated efforts between institutional actors* are strongly recommended. In Africa, a key partner for the EU could be the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), especially its Governance and Public Administration Division, which is extremely active in this field, and benefits from a well-rooted presence on the ground. On the other, the AU and REC/RMs might have a different model to propose, and the EU should take into greater account the *competitive advantage of the offer from the African side*, with a crucial role to be played by regional organizations.

Capacity building needs a long-term political commitment to achieve its goals, with, for instance, a 15-year perspective, instead of the current 3-year programmes established in the Action Plans. During this period, there is a need for political and financial backing and for staying the

course. When cooperating with the AU and REC/RMs, the EU should direct capacity building to some selected areas, instead of covering the full list of the Partnership. *The EU should also work more closely with some REC/RMs* – not necessarily all of them – to engage in-depth in some specific sectors that might not be uniform everywhere. This engagement should be deepened beyond the peacekeeping and financial aspects.

As far as civil society is concerned, capacity building is an area where joint European-African initiatives are more valuable than ever, and this is a path that many European CSOs have begun to take, including in the peace and security sector. Many programmes exist in the field of mediation or conflict resolution and transformation in which CSOs could be engaged more actively. The main challenge is to make them sustainable in the long run. In this regard, *ownership and training are keywords*.

A constructive approach would be to *involve CSOs on real issues closer to the fields they are working in*, including by looking at success stories and local examples of engagement that could serve as inspiration or be adapted, with some changes, to other contexts. One might think, for instance, of the Kenya's District Peace Committees and the role they played in the aftermath of the 2007 post-election violence.

Stronger participation of CSOs entails better and more structured organization in most cases. Networks could prove useful to this end, with the bigger and longer-established organizations being the driving force behind the others. The networking process among CSOs is still at an early stage in Africa, but some relevant examples already exist – in West Africa for instance – with a focus on early warning and mediation issues. Networks are also a valuable means of accessing REC/RMs in an easier, but formal, way. The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) or the West Africa Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) and their structured cooperation with ECOWAS are cases in point.

3. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

The African Peace Facility, as the main financing instrument of the Peace and Security Partnership, and the political integration components of the Regional Indicative Programmes ensure the *significant availability*

of funding for strengthening REC/RMs' involvement in the Partnership. While well-known challenges on the African side persist in terms of human resources, communication, IT equipment and infrastructure, and on the European side in terms of internal coordination and the slow pace of the disbursement of funds, it is unlikely that procedures will become any easier, more flexible, faster or better. The EU, therefore, has to think through what its relationship with the REC/RMs should be, not only in terms of dialogue but also with regard to alternative entry points for its support. The EU should therefore review its overall Africa strategy on the basis of what has been done regarding the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and apply the lessons learnt from those strategies to the JAES and its instruments, i.e. the African Peace Facility, the Regional Indicative Programmes and the Instrument for Stability, where stronger synergies should be created. Through a *rationalization of the JAES with clearer objectives*, the EU should try to focus its engagement with the AU and the REC/RMs, which in turn would help the African side to prioritize its objectives. This kind of reflection on the *prudent application of limited resources* should take place in both the EEAS and DG DEVCO at the European Commission.

Local CSOs need to be supported in order to acquire expertise on how to obtain access to funding, which is perceived as one of the main obstacles to their effective participation in the JAES. *The recently-created Support Mechanism could be used to enhance CSOs' participation and engagement in the Strategy.* At first sight and in accordance with what has already been committed to on paper, the Support Mechanism could facilitate the organization of joint meetings and initiatives, as well as the provision of real technical expertise in JEGs or other venues, making up for the lack of funds that has been identified as one of the main causes of the failure of the people-centred approach and the successful implementation of civil society's entry points into the JAES. As far as dialogue with the AU is concerned, the *Livingstone Formula is a valuable tool that, so far, has not received the attention it deserves.* Aware of its implications, the AU institutions attribute its limited or scant implementation to a lack of funds. This may indeed be an important obstacle, but it is also crucial to see beyond the financial issue and to avoid using it as an excuse for an absence of political will. Work is therefore needed in both directions.

Annex: List of Interviews

Organization	Department	Date of Interview
European Union Delegation to the African Union	Political and Policy Section	21-23 February 2012
	Peace and Security Section	20 February 2012
African Union Headquarters	AU Commission	21-22 February 2012
	ASF	22 February 2012
	CEWS	
	Peace and Security Council	
	Panel of the Wise	
	CIDO	
RECs – Liaison officers	COMESA	22 February 2012
	SADC	
	NARC	
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	Civil Society and Post-Conflict Section of Governance and Public Administration Division	20 February 2012
United Nations Liaison Office with the African Union (UNLO-AU)		20 February 2012
Institute for Security Studies APSTA Secretariat		23 February 2012
Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)		23 February 2012
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)		23 February 2012
International Alert		21 February 2012
European Commission	DG DEVCO (E4 - A5)	25-27 April 2012
European External Action Service	Pan-African Affairs	27 April 2012
European Parliament	Directorate-General for External Policies - Policy Department	26 April 2012
European Peacebuilding Liaison Office		1 March 2012
Saferworld		12 April 2012

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The Joint Africa-European Union Strategy (JAES), adopted at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007, was conceived to overcome the unequal partnership between the African and European continents by establishing a framework of cooperation based on shared values and common objectives. In particular, it was designed as an inclusive and people-centred partnership, aimed at involving both institutional and non-institutional actors beyond the Brussels-Addis Ababa axis. However, already during the first implementation phase (2008-2010), it became clear that these conditions were far from being fully realized and needed a longer timeframe to display their potential. The Tripoli Summit in November 2010 and the second Action Plan (2011-2013) have tried to address some of these problems, but full implementation of the Joint Strategy is still a work in progress.

This study analyses the sub-optimal involvement of two main stakeholders, namely African regional organizations – Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) – and civil society actors, especially non-governmental organizations. It addresses current engagement in and the potential of civil society's contribution to Africa-EU relations in the field of peace and security, by looking at their interaction with institutions on the continent and their added value in sectors such as early warning, crisis management, mediation and training. Finally, it offers some policy recommendations for the future implementation of the Joint Strategy, in particular on the issues of dialogue, capacity-building and funding.

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