

# The African Standby Force A Solution to African Conflicts?



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“In order to enable the Peace and Security Council perform its responsibilities with respect to the deployment of peace support missions and intervention pursuant to article 4 (h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act, an African Standby Force shall be established. Such Force shall be composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components in their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment at appropriate notice.” (PSC protocol art13.1)

“For that purpose, the Member States shall take steps to establish standby contingents for participation in peace support missions decided on by the Peace and Security Council or intervention authorized by the Assembly. The strength and types of such contingents, their degree of readiness and general location shall be determined in accordance with established African Union Peace Support Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and shall be subject to periodic reviews depending on prevailing crisis and conflict situations.” (PSC protocol art13.2)

## **INTRODUCTION**

- **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this module paper is to examine the African Standby Force (ASF), a military force that was created in order to be deployed in times of crisis in Africa. The continuation of conflicts in Africa requires a new concept of intervention, one that is fast, reliable and effective. In the mist of UN and international failure to prevent conflicts in Africa, Africans and the African continent through African Union have started to take actions towards solving their conflicts. Many efforts have been made but the African Standby Force (ASF), if successful, might not only be the solution to African conflicts but a model to the UN system as a whole in dealing with maintaining peace in the world. From the broader topic of African peace and conflicts, this paper will look only into the institutional framework of the ASF, its significance in the region and the challenges it faces.

The analysis of the emergence of the ASF is important as it is the only standby force in world. Given the fact that African conflicts are mainly caused by Africans themselves, ASF brings a new perspective to conflict prevention and conflict resolution in Africa.

This study is significant because it contributes to the security studies as a whole because there are few academic work done on the issue of the role of AU in preventing conflicts in Africa. Most people regard the UN as the only institution that is responsible for maintaining peace thus missing out on the efforts that the AU is making in Africa. Although conflicts in Africa have intensified in the last decade, the AU is putting various mechanisms in place in order to deal with them. The ASF is one example of those mechanisms and it deserves a particular attention which this paper will attempt to give.

- **Research question**

This paper will try to answer the following main question from which sub-questions will emerge to help give an accurate presentation of the ASF.

- **Main question**

Is ASF the answer to the African conflicts?

- **Sub-question**

What is the role and purpose of ASF?

What are the challenges faced by ASF?

## **THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF ASF**

In May 2003 the African Chiefs of Defence and Security (ACDS) adopted a document entitled 'The policy framework document on the establishment of the African Standby Force (ASF) and of the Military Staff Committee (MSC)'. Shortly after, African ministers of foreign affairs recommended regular consultations to consolidate the proposals contained in the framework document. Their recommendation was endorsed by AU heads of state and government two months later. The result of the ACDS meetings in May 2003 and January 2004 was the adoption of an amended framework document in July 2004.

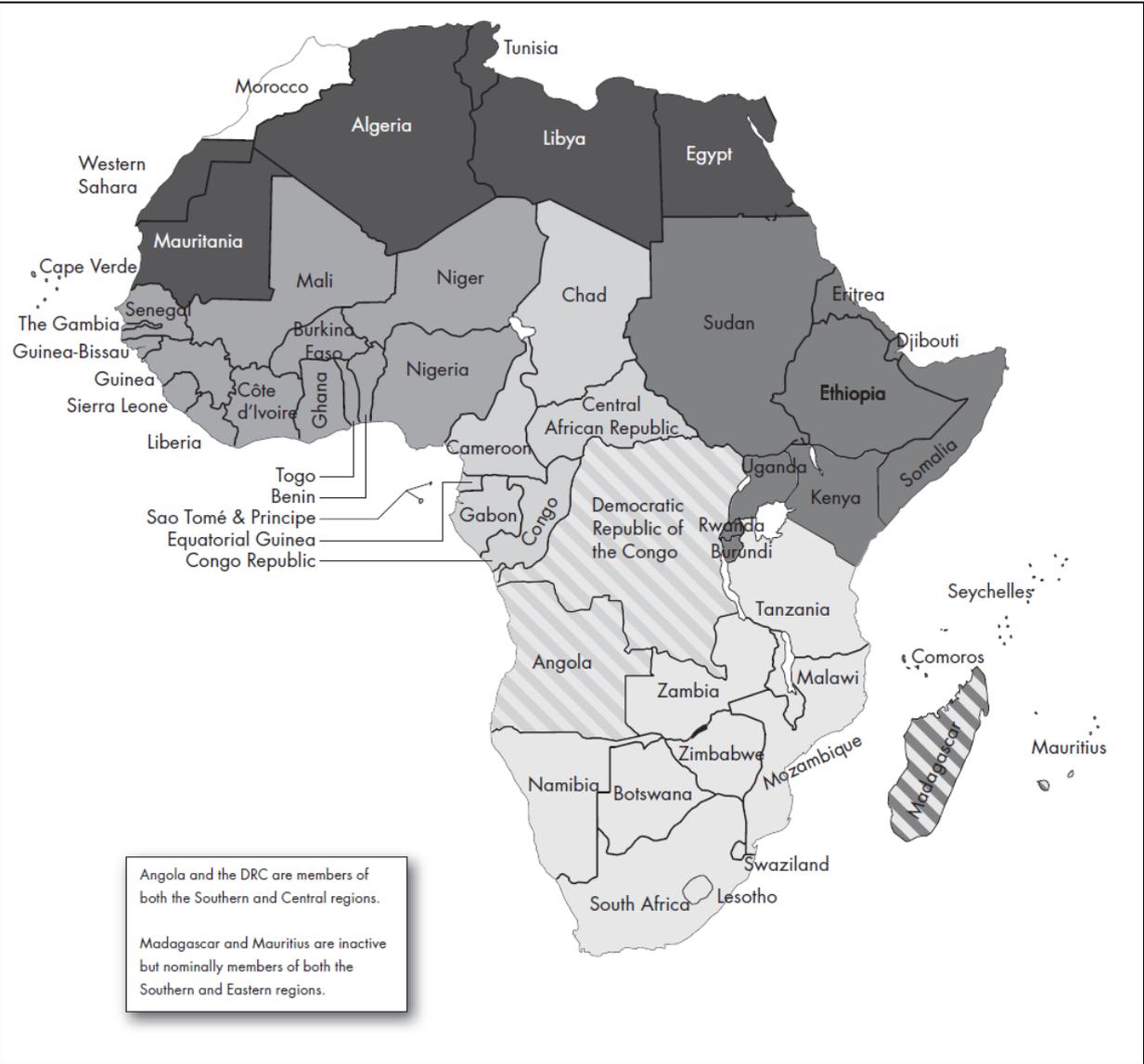
The protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the associated ASF entered into force in December 2003, only 17 months after being signed. This was a clear demonstration of a seriousness of commitment on behalf of African politicians to the conflict prevention and management initiatives of the AU. The final concept for the ASF adopted by heads of state provided for five standby brigade level forces, one in each of Africa's five regions: North Africa Regional Standby Brigade (NASBRIG); East Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG); Force Multinationale de l'Afrique Centrale (FOMAC); Southern Africa Standby Brigade (SADCBRIG); ECOWAS Standby Brigade (ECOBRI) supported by civilian police (CivPol) and other capacities.

On its full establishment, the ASF will consist of standby Multi-disciplinary contingents, with civilian and military components based in their respective countries of and ready for fast deployment in conflict zones anywhere in Africa, and possibly even outside the continent. However, effective command and control of the ASF require the installation of an appropriate Africa-wide, integrated and interoperable command, control, communication and information system (C3IS) infrastructure, that would link deployed units with mission headquarters, as well as the AU, planning elements (PLANELMs) and regions. Much of this was set out in the March 2005 document entitled Roadmap

for the Operationalization of the African Standby Force that was adopted at an AU experts meeting in Addis Ababa.

The Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) developed an internal follow-on roadmap document in November 2006, although this document has no formal status. One of the significant developments has been the conceptualization of an ASF rapid deployment capability. The ASF peace support missions within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations are mandated by the PSC which is the strategic level decision-making body. Once the missions have been given a mandate, they are placed under the command and control of a Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC), who is responsible for appointing a force commander, commissioner of police and head of the civilian components. The PSC is the mandates approving body. Once deployed, ASF forces are placed under AU command and control.

**Figure 1 ASF regions**



The primary role of the five regional brigades is to generate and prepare forces, the provision of planning, logistic and other support during ASF deployment.

The military brigade is the largest component and requires most resources of each of the five regional standby forces. The following illustration demonstrates the composition of key resources within one of the regional brigades showing the ASF structure and its associated deployment timelines as informed by six missions and scenarios:

**Scenario 1:** AU/regional military advisor to a political mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

**Scenario 2:** AU/regional observer mission co-deployed with UN mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

**Scenario 3:** Stand-alone AU/regional observer mission. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

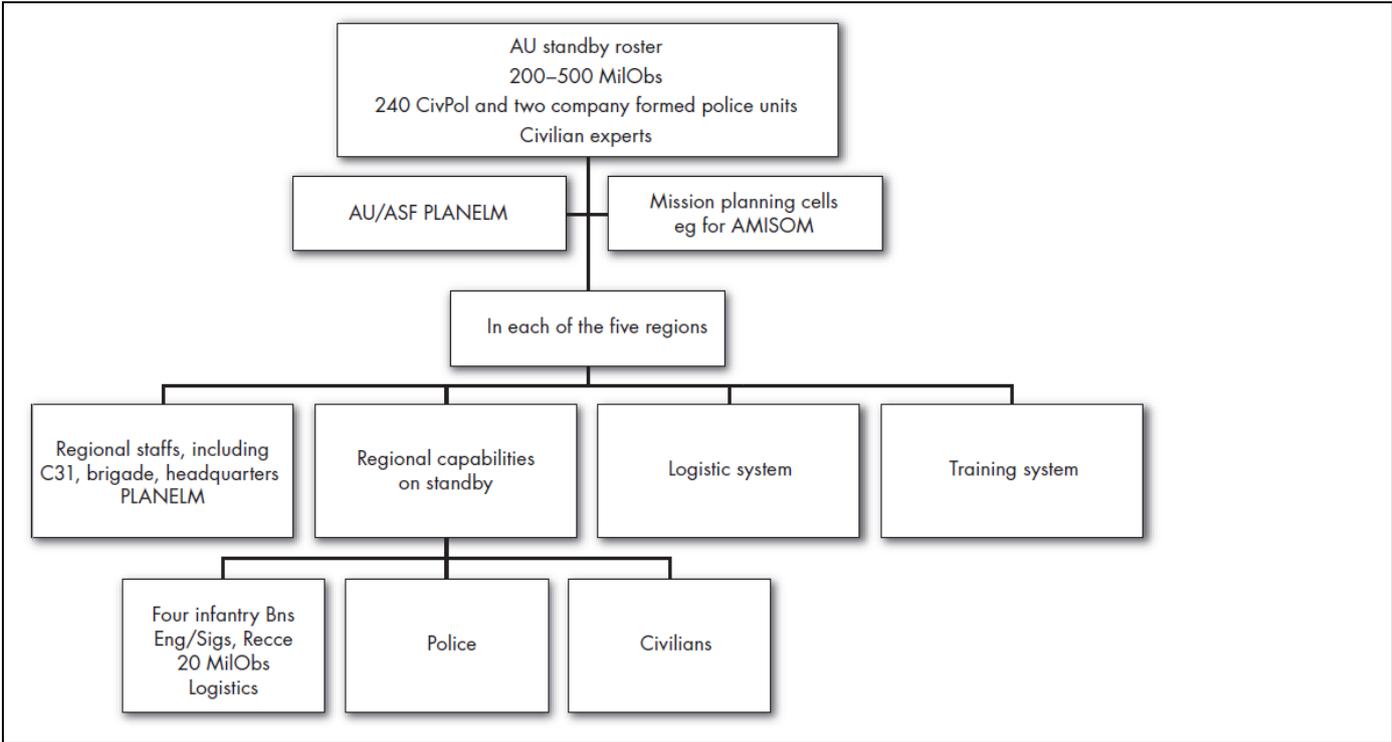
**Scenario 4:** AU regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

**Scenario 5:** AU peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional peacekeeping mission – low-level spoilers. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

**Scenario 6:** AU intervention in cases of grave circumstances. Deployment required within 30 days of an AU mandate provided by the PSC.

(Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee Chapter 1 para. 1.6)

**Figure 2 ASF approved order of battle**



## **ASF AS APSA COMPONENT**

Article 2 of the PSC Protocol defines the components of the APSA that support the works of the PSC: The AU Commission, a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an African Standby Force (ASF), and a Special Fund. All different components of the APSA play significant roles in the process for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Initially, information is collected and analyzed at the level of the CEWS which leads to the application of the APSA. Once the information has been received, the chairperson then considers it and carries out an analysis to plan appropriate courses of action that the situation demands through the Commission for Peace and Security. The chairperson uses the information to 1) timeously advise the PSC on potential conflicts and threats to the peace and security in Africa and recommend the best course of action and 2) initiate efforts for preventing potential conflicts or for making peace. The Panel of the Wise comes in play when the situation reaches the stage where efforts for conflict prevention and peacemaking are deployed. The Panel has a peacemaking and advisory role and is also mandated ‘to support the efforts of the Peace and Security Council and those of the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly in the area of conflict prevention’. (Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC of the AU Art 11.1)

Specifically, the Panel has the mandate to ‘advise the Peace and Security Council and the Chairperson of the AU Commission on all issues pertaining to the promotion, and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa.’ (Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC of the AU Art 11.3) In addition, ‘at its own initiative, the Panel of the Wise shall undertake such action deemed appropriate to support the efforts of the Peace and Security Council and those of the Chairperson of the Commission for the prevention of conflict.’ (Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC of the AU Art 11.4)

Within the framework of the APSA, the ASF comes into action in cases where violent conflicts are about to erupt or have already erupted and/or to intervene in respect of grave circumstances. Under normal circumstances it therefore acts at the end of the chain of the APSA components and processes. However, depending on the conflict situation, it can be deployed alongside other components of the APSA who are assigned peacemaking roles. The system thus has the flexibility to deploy the ASF at any stage of a conflict, including for preventive deployment.

The role or mandate of the ASF is closely linked to the PSC’s tasks in the areas of conflict management and resolution. Article 13 of the PSC Protocol states: in order to enable the Peace and Security Council perform its responsibilities with respect to the deployment of peace support missions and intervention pursuant to Articles 4(h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act, an African Standby Force shall be established. (PSC Protocol Art 13.1) In this respect, it is clear that the ASF is one of the most critical elements of the APSA. It will enable the AU to deliver on its promise of intervention to protect people in grave circumstances and to provide a prompt and robust response to manage and resolve

African crises. It enables the PSC first to prevent and manage conflicts, among others by containing their spread or escalation, second to support its peace processes as a peace support mission, and third to enforce its decisions in cases of grave circumstances or to intervene.

As envisaged in the PSC Protocol, the ASF is to be prepared for rapid deployment for a range of peacekeeping operations, including:

- Observation and monitoring missions
- Other types of peace support missions
- Intervention in accordance with Articles 4(h) and (j) of the Constitutive Act
- Preventive deployment in order to prevent a conflict from escalating, or an ongoing conflict from spreading to neighboring areas or states, or the resurgence of violence after peace agreements are achieved
- Peace-building, including post-conflict disarmament and demobilization
- Humanitarian assistance in situations of conflict and major natural disasters

The ASF was thus conceived from the outset as a mechanism that will undertake a whole range of modern peacekeeping and peace-building activities.

Indeed, it is envisaged that the ASF should be able to respond to a range of conflict scenarios. The Policy Framework for the Establishment of the ASF and the Military Staff Committee identifies six possible conflict and mission scenarios that the ASF is likely to face and will need to respond to. (PSC Protocol Art 13.3)

## **USF OPERATIONIZATION**

According to the report of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the African Chiefs of Defense Staff and Heads of States of Security and Safety Services, there have been progresses since the the 2003 Policy framework (AU Draft Document, 2005) until the Road map II in policies and training. A Road map III is envisaged to between 2011 and 2015. (AU 4<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting 2010)

For the ASF to serve as the mechanism that in its responses match the nature of conflicts in Africa both qualitatively and in timely manner, it is necessary that the AU be equipped with an appropriate legal authority. In other words, to ensure legitimate deployment of the ASF in any conflict or crisis situation the AU needs to have a legally established mandating authority. Article 13 of the PSC Protocol it is envisaged that the ASF can be deployed in two types of situations: the peace support missions and the intervention under Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act. The legal distinctions between the two are that, whereas peace support missions are deployed in respect to conflicts of various levels of gravity, as envisaged by ASF mission Scenarios 1 to 5, intervention applies only with regard to specifically defined circumstances such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity as covered by ASF mission Scenario 6. In general, peace support missions are deployed with

the support and consent of the authorities in the host country, whereas intervention deployment is forcible.

While the purpose of peace support missions as stated in the UN Charter is ‘the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security’ the grounds for intervention by the ASF under mission Scenario 6 are what the Constitutive Act called grave circumstances namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The aim of such intervention is also specifically preventing or stopping perpetration of such gross international crimes as distinct from the general maintenance of international peace and security as understood within the framework of the UN Charter.’ (Solomon A Dersso 2009) The AU needs mandating authority for deployment of both peace support missions and intervention.

## **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Technical requirements are necessary for the ASF do succeed including the development of and clarity on various policy instruments and technical concepts, such as PSO doctrine, standard operating procedures, the institution of corresponding structures and systems at AU and REC/ RM levels, training and the building of the necessary infrastructural capacity, as well as operational capability such as funding.

## **POLICY**

Since the establishment of the ASF in 2003, the AU has made a lot of with regard to the elaboration of various documents and concepts. During Phase I of the operationalization of the ASF (Roadmap I for the operationalisation of the ASF) five major policy documents were drawn up. These cover doctrine, training and evaluation, logistics, command, control, communications and information systems and standard operating procedures. These policy documents were adopted by the African Chiefs of Defence and Security (ACDS) and the African Ministers of Defence and Security (AMDS) at their meeting in March 2008. These documents define the policy frameworks that provide the technical and conceptual basis and the regulatory setup for the operation of the ASF.

## **THE USE COMMAND AND CONTROL**

In terms of the structure and systems for the ASF the elaboration of an effective command and control system is an essential requirement. The AU did elaborate an ASF command and control system as part of Phase I priorities in the operationalization of the ASF. Clearly, however, the institution of an effective command and control system requires more than mere development of the document or the concept. The AU should recruit people with the necessary expertise and experience as part of the continental headquarters capability in Addis Ababa. It is not clear if the existing recruitment measures are suitable for attracting and retaining such people.

The AU's peacekeeping management capability is still being developed, and in the short term its existing structure will allow it to control and command only small missions. It may need to resort to ad hoc strategic management capability, as it has done for AMIS and currently for the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), for big missions. The number of staff of the AU PSOD is very small if one considers the tasks they are expected to undertake for the operationalization of the ASF and the planning, management and support of existing and new missions.

Their multiple responsibilities militate against the AU's ability to exercise effective command and control over missions.

➤ **Command and control challenges**

*This will obviously require additional funding for the various responsibilities and programmes. One issue that emerged from some of the missions conducted by the AU are problems relating to strategic and operational command and control, as was clear from for example the experience of AMIS. (Ekengrad 2009, 40.) This concerns not only problems of a clear command and control structure but also the provision of the requisite military specialties and technical capabilities.*

✓ **Command and control recommendations**

*It is therefore suggested that the AU employs a larger number of specialists and experts, along with more general staff, who will be able to provide better internal coordination and allow for a clearer division of responsibilities. There is also a need for a clear definition of the different levels of command and control at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.*

*The AU and RECs/RMs also need to put in place the infrastructure that will enable the different actors to exercise and enforce command and control on deployed ASF missions. Furthermore, a decision should be taken on the official language for missions at the regional and continental levels as this will go a long way towards facilitating effective command and control of missions at all levels.*

## **POLITICAL WILL**

Finally, there is also the issue of political will or commitment. One of the requirements for successful peace support operations is the degree of political support and commitment that it receives or commands from the mandating authority, AU member states and the broader international community. In elaborating the norms and establishing the institutions for effectively responding to conflicts on the continent and more particularly in deciding to establish the ASF, African states have expressed their shared political and legal commitment to take the lead in responding to conflicts, among others by deployment of the ASF. Over and above this general commitment, however, the AU will have to mobilize and continuously sustain the commitment of member states to ensure that a credible ASF mission is deployed timeously whenever a situation that warrants the deployment of peace support

missions arises. This commitment has to be obtained in terms of not only political support for ASF deployment (legitimacy) but also of funding and logistics support (material support). Without this, the ASF will have to contend with serious difficulties when it is deployed even if the ASF were equipped with the necessary technical and infrastructural capabilities.

➤ **Political challenge1**

*Judged in terms of the track record of the PSC on its bold engagement with many situations on the continent, there is reason to believe that the AU is committed to addressing conflicts on the continent. However, this does not necessarily translate into actual commitment by member states of the AU with regard to personnel, material and financial support to enable the PSC to deploy an ASF mission, as the experience of the missions that AU has deployed so far attests. In none of its larger missions have authorized or required troop levels been reached. (E. Svensson 2008)*

➤ **Political challenge2**

*Given the economic situation of many African countries as well as their military and personnel capabilities, it would seem likely that the ASF concept will be unable to overcome many of these problems. Although the ASF has the potential to contribute substantially to addressing problems of force generation (ASF forces are pledged before the decision for deployment), it cannot entirely overcome the issue of capability given that the overall force strength of the ASF is itself limited.*

## **TRAINING**

Adequate training is an important technical requirement and a prerequisite for the operational readiness of the ASF capabilities. Given that ASF brigades are constituted of multidimensional contingents based in their countries of origin, there is a need for continuous training at different levels. Personnel that states contribute towards an ASF capability should acquire the necessary foundation training if they are to be able to contribute to ASF peace support operations. They should also receive joint training by means of exercises at both REC/RM and continental level.

➤ **Training challenge1**

*This is not an easy thing to accomplish. It requires a number of well-equipped, well-resourced and wellstaffed training centres that can provide regional and continental support. Although there are training centres in the different parts of the continent, not all of them have the necessary capacity to meet the ASF training needs. All of them also need to improve their existing infrastructure and personnel capabilities. Their training curricula must also be revised in line with ASF requirements. The availability of such training institutions differs from region to region and regions lacking the necessary centres should be identified so that such institutions can be established where required.*

The regions have conducted various training activities and joint exercises. The ECCAS Brigade conducted two map exercises in 2008 and by 2010 it was preparing for its command post and field training exercises. EASBRIG has conducted its map and command post exercises and has been in the process of conducting its field training exercise. ECOBRIG has conducted various training activities and command post exercises and conducted its field training exercise during June/July 2009. The SADC Brigade has also conducted various exercises and planning conferences and has been preparing its command post exercise. NARC is the newest brigade and has not yet planned or organized training exercises.

The PSC Protocol adopted within the framework of the Act establishes the mandating authority of the AU PSC in more straightforward terms in Article 7(1), which stipulates that the PSC, in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Commission, 'shall ... (c) authorize the mounting and deployment of peace support missions; (d) lay down general guidelines for the conduct of such missions, including the mandate thereof, and undertake periodic reviews of these guidelines'. (PSC Protocol) Since the PSC Protocol as a protocol to the Constitutive Act constitutes an elaboration or extension of the Act, its designation of the PSC, in conjunction with the Chairperson, as the sole authority for mandating, revising and terminating peace support operations, indicates that the AU PSC is the authority that takes decisions on the use and deployment of the ASF for Scenario 1–5 missions.

➤ **Training challenge2**

*One issue that arises in this context is the question of whether or not the AU should seek authorization of the United Nations Security Council when deciding to deploy an ASF mission. From relevant documents, and particularly the PSC Protocol, it seems as if the AU recognizes the UNSC as the authority with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Although it is not established as a legal requirement for the AU, at the policy level the Framework Policy provides that 'the AU will seek UN Security Council authorization for its enforcements action'. (ISS 2010)*

The PSC decisions are generally based on the principle of consensus. However, in case of failure to reach a consensus, decisions on procedural matters are by a simple majority and substantive matters by a two-thirds majority of members eligible to vote. (PSC Protocol, Article 8(13) The provisional agenda of the Peace and Security Council is determined by the chairperson of the council on the basis of proposals submitted by the chairperson of the commission and member states. The inclusion of any item in the provisional agenda may not be opposed by a member state. (PSC Protocol, Article 8(7)

To the extent that the PSC, like the UNSC, is a political body composed of member states that pursue their respective national interests, whether and the speed with which the PSC decides on deployment of an ASF mission depends among others on the interests of and political dynamics among members of the PSC and the strength and diplomatic skills of the Chairperson of the PSC at the time that the issue arises. The higher the degree of agreement among members of the PSC on deployment of an ASF mission, the better the chance that the PSC will come to a speedy decision and the greater the legitimacy of such a decision and hence the mission will be. Similarly, the nature of the mandate of the ASF is a result of political will and compromises. Although the decision-making process meets the requirement for a clearly established decision-making process, it has not been tested in practice. One fact that does emerge is that particular attention should be paid to proper planning. The experience of AMIS has shown that this was one of the major factors that limited its success.(Catherine Guicherd 2007)

➤ **Training challenge3**

*However, this is counterbalanced by the question of whether the amount of work and time involved in the decision-making (planning) process will allow the timely deployment of the ASF to take place. This is a crucial factor for early resolution or containment of conflicts on the continent. Clearly there needs to be a balance between proper planning and timely deployment of an ASF mission.*

## **INFRASTRUCTURE CAPABILITY**

The deployment and maintenance of an effective peace support operation also depends on availability of the necessary infrastructure both for its deployment and for an effective and successful execution of its mandate. It is also of great importance that the ASF has at its disposal all the necessary equipment as well as air and sea lift capabilities, ground transportation, information systems, etc. (J Peter Pham 2009)The lack of such infrastructure will not only prevent a mission from effectively implementing its mandate but will also undermine its ability to respond to crisis situations.

This was aptly illustrated in the experience of the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur, as detailed by former force commander, General Martin Luther Agwai, during an interview: The minimum, not the ideal but the minimum ... is 18 utility helicopters, and about 12 to 18 combat helicopters that can go to do reconnaissance and other things. As of today, there is no country in the world that has volunteered to give us that capability – zero. You must have heard about the attack we had on our camp in Haskanita when we lost 10 of our peacekeepers. After the attack we wanted to go to the area to move the injured. It took us about eight hours because the civil pilots could not take the risks if we had military helicopters, we would have been able to arrive very much, much earlier, and we may have been able to save may be one or two lives. (J Peter Pham 2009)

These have been common problems in all peacekeeping operations undertaken by the AU and sub-regional organizations such as ECOWAS. To date, the AU and its RECs have mounted peacekeeping operations in Burundi, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Somalia. While these missions have shown the value of a quick response for containing violence and contributing to the resolution of conflicts, 'the ability to implement their respective mandates has often been constrained by a lack of military capabilities, insufficient resources and inadequate institutional capacity to plan, manage, deploy and liquidate operations'. (UN SC 2009)

➤ **Infrastructure challenges**

*The AU has developed a logistics concept paper in which it proposes the erection of one continental logistics base and five regional logistics depots. The continental logistics base will provide logistics support for establishing and equipping a mission headquarters, sector headquarters and Troop Contributing Countries/Police Contributing Countries in the case of critical shortfalls, and for the provision of non-military equipment and material for Military Observers (MILOBS)/police and international and local civilian staff. However, this concept paper has not yet become a reality and no logistics depots have yet been established. Although certain sites have been identified as potential locations for the continental logistics base, AU member states could not agree on a particular location for political rather than technical reasons. Accordingly, the African Chiefs of Defence Staff decided at a meeting in May 2009 that priority should be given to development of the five regional logistics depots and that the decision on the continental logistics depot should be postponed. (Declaration at the sixth meeting of African Chiefs of Defense Staff and Heads of Safety and Security, 2009)*

With respect to the development of sea and air lift capabilities, the AU has taken certain initiatives. A Maritime Strategic Lift Concept was developed during a technical meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, held in March 2009. The concept will be presented to the RECs/ RMs later during the year for their inputs and concurrence and was to have been completed by 30 November 2009.

## **OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- **Funding**

The nature of peacekeeping operations has undergone substantial change over the course of the past two decades and the financial requirements have correspondingly skyrocketed. The UN experience in Africa has shown that peacekeeping is a very expensive enterprise. For example, between July 2009 and June 2010, an estimated US\$5,70 billion is to be spent on the seven UN missions in Africa. (UN Background Note, 2009,)

This means that the organization will spend about US\$814 million on each of the missions and an estimated US\$475 million per month on peacekeeping operations in Africa. Clearly, if the ASF was going to be operationally ready by 2010, it will not succeed without the necessary funds for its operations. As the AU's limited experience with AMIS and AMISOM amply demonstrated, one of the challenges for an AU mission is acquiring the necessary funds for the deployment and sustainment of the mission. This was highlighted in the recent report of the UN Secretary-General, as follows:

The absence of predictable and sustainable funding has been linked to a number of critical operational limitations, including:

- (a) The inability to reach mandated troop levels;
- (b) Limited operational effectiveness owing to a short term focus on the availability of funding, as opposed to a longer term strategic focus on achieving the mandate;
- (c) In the case of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), a difficult transition from an under-resourced African Union operation to a hybrid peacekeeping operation (the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID));
- (d) An unsustainable administrative, coordination and financial management burden placed on a limited African Union capacity by multiple donors' reporting and oversight mechanisms. (UN SC, 2009)

- **Administrative**

The AU faces as many, if not more, problems with regard to financial administration as with availability of funds for its operations. In the first place, the AU does not have the necessary absorption capacity and the capacity to shoulder the administrative burden that comes with donor funding. As one report of the UN Secretary-General put it, 'even if funding existed the AU does not have the capacity to turn dollar figures into resources'. (UN SC Repot, 2008)

The experience of AMIS showed that the AU does not have an effective and transparent financial administration system. This has led to speculations and rumors, among others that a large sum of money that was meant for financing AMIS cannot be accounted for. Obviously such rumors undermine the ability of the AU and ASF to attract the necessary funding. (Ekengrad, 2009)

The challenge for the AU is not just one of mobilizing the required funding for its future ASF missions but also of developing the necessary financial administrative and regulatory framework to ensure the efficient and transparent management of funds. Much work needs to be done on the modalities of channeling and administering funding for ASF missions to ensure reliable and timely funding for

operations and to ensure that funds are channeled and administered effectively. Finally, this should be achieved without encumbering the AU with demanding financial administration responsibilities. The best approach would be that the AU develops an effective but simple model for channeling and administering funds which is acceptable to its partners.

Other issues that affect effective administrative capacity include the overall organizational infrastructure of the AU, its internal working methods, rules and procedures, and decision-making mechanisms. As very little progress has been made to improve these aspects, which are known to be inefficient, it is to be expected that ASF missions will in the short to the medium term be affected by these administrative woes of the AU Commission.

### **OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The mandating authority process of the AU is very relevant. If the ASF is to serve as an effective means for the management and resolution of conflicts, the AU needs to put in place an efficient decision-making process for the deployment of the ASF. This must of course be reconciled with the need for the timely deployment of an ASF mission to ensure that such a mission is effective in responding to conflicts in Africa.

Further, consistent with the types of conflict experienced in Africa, the PSC protocol provides for a timely and prompt response to conflicts and crisis situations. If the ASF is to meet this requirement, there is a need for not merely a decision-making process, but one which is efficient.

Furthermore, there is also a need for a mechanism for developing lessons learned and ensuring that such lessons are integrated into the planning of future missions and management of existing ones. No provision has been made in existing AU ASF documents for such a mechanism. This should be rectified during Exercise AMANI, if not earlier. At both AU and REC/RM levels, the proposed rostering system for maintaining a database on available civilian and police capability from which the AU could recruit individual civilians and police officers for various ASF missions needs to be instituted and start functioning. The contribution and role of existing nongovernmental rostering systems should also be used and their modalities properly defined.

Finally, 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.

### **CONCLUSION**

The ASF is not the solution to African conflicts but it is a fundamental element towards finding a solution. Its success is challenged by, among others, the fact that capability of the RECs/RMs is very uneven and there is no clarity about mandating authority. Furthermore, given that the ASF is organized along the lines of five regional brigades, its capabilities are raised and developed by the RECs/RMs that form part of the building block of the APSA. This gives rise to political and

organizational challenges. Notwithstanding the memorandum of understanding signed between AU and RECs on their general relationship, there is nothing that specifically regulates their respective roles and powers with respect to the use and authorization of ASF capabilities. As a result, there is lack of clarity about whether the AU needs to negotiate with RECs/RMs on the use of the brigades that they have raise and maintain. If that is going to be the case, there is no doubt that it will complicate matters. Finally, some of the RECs have a rich experience and an advanced level of capability but others do not, and it is not clear whether the AU is able to provide the necessary guidance to bring all brigades up to standard.

## **SOURCES**

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