AD-HOC REGIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND APSA

A CASE STUDY OF ACL-GLR, MNJTF, AND G5 SAHEL FORCE

Olawale Ismail and Alagaw Ababu | July 2021

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Shifts in the security landscape and the absence of immediate alternative measures to pressing security concerns led African states to turn to Ad-hoc Regional Mechanisms (ARMs).

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ARMs fill a genuine gap in the African Peace and Security Agenda (APSA) process and are responses to fast-paced security threats.

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These mechanisms continue to be structural challenge for the AU to monitor and to ensure that they act under its doctrine.

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

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In cooperation with

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1
INTRODUCTION

The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) has commissioned this study on Ad-hoc arrangements and coalitions and their influence on the security cooperation setting of the African Union (AU). The study is against the backdrop of the AU African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) framework and its main pillars including the Africa Standby Force (ASF) – the rapid response mechanism and peacekeeping force under the direction of the AU. Despite progress recorded in operationalizing the ASF, ad-hoc security arrangements emerged as a modality of joint security operations and military deployment in the continent over the past decade. Ad-hoc coalitions have been formed by frontline states to stem the tide of violent extremism, transborder insurgencies, organised crime, and militias activities. These ad-hoc coalitions are not formal deployments of the ASF and are not enshrined within the APSA framework in a de rigueur sense. However, through time, such initiatives have become popular and drawn legitimacy from the AU and are authorized by the AUPSC as a variant of regional Mechanisms (RMs). Though such initiatives bestow choices and are flexible in character, they allow states to pursue national interest at the stake of "the ought to be" collective security goals and consensual actions. These setups are also heavily militarized and short-term, lacking institutionalized human resource capacity, civilian approaches of conflict response and self-sustainability. The functioning of ad-hoc coalitions and their impact on the collective security apparatus within the AU framework are yet to be fully appraised.

This report is guided by the central question: what are the influences and implications of ad-hoc regional security mechanisms on AU-APSA's processes?". It explores potential and actual implications of ad-hoc coalitions for mainstream collective security initiatives as encapsulated by the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This is done by looking at the mandates of the ad-hoc mechanisms, legitimacy and 'authorisation' given by the AU, communication and cooperation channels with the AU, command and control system, location within the APSA structure, and financial and administrative arrangement and support given by the AU. This study lays a foundation for future work in identifying main problems that need to be addressed within the existing security arrangement in the continent considering the proliferation of ad-hoc measures. The study also explores the relative strengths and challenges of institutional responses versus rapid ad-hoc measures and ad-hoc military responses versus long-term peace building measures.

2
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual foundation of this study is grounded in the AU's Constitutive Act, specifically the declaration of core objectives under article 3(f) and 3(i) that include the identification and promotion of peace, security and stability, and the coordination and harmonization of policies with and between RECs. The 2002 PSC Protocol provides more direct definition and elaboration of peace and security activities in relation to regional mechanisms. For instance, the PSC is empowered to authorize the mounting and deployment of peace support operations (article 7c); to lay down general guidelines for the conduct of such missions including the mandate thereof, and to undertake periodic reviews of these guidelines (article 7d); and to "ensure the implementation of the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and other relevant international, continental and regional conventions and instruments and harmonize and coordinate efforts at regional and continental levels to combat international terrorism" (article 7i). The PSC also promotes close harmonization, coordination, and cooperation between RMs and the AU with respect to peace and security.

Furthermore, the PSC Protocol under Article 16, identifies all Regional Mechanisms (RMs) to be part of the APSA system, and is charged with coordinating and harmonizing the activities of RMs, and building partnerships with RMs in line with the principles and objectives of the AU. The Protocol requires RMs and the PSC to practice reciprocal exchange of information on activities, periodic meetings, reciprocal inputs into debates and policy deliberations, to enhance coordination through liaison offices, and formalise interactions through a memorandum of understanding. This underlines the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity, and comparative advantage in the engagement between the AU-PSC and the AMRs. For instance, the PSC's Communiqué following its 477th meeting, held on 18 December 2014, notes the importance of building more collaboration and synergy between the PSC and RECs/RMs in promoting peace and

stability in Africa as envisaged in the PSC Protocol, including upholding the principles of subsidiarity and comparative advantages.[1]

In this sense, this study considers the activities of RMs, specifically three ad-hoc mechanisms in relation to peace and security, crisis response and conflict management. The ad-hoc mechanisms of interest are the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the G-5 Sahel Force, and the AU-led Task Force for the Elimination of the LRA. The three case studies represent the range of RMs in operation in Africa at this point and qualify as regional mechanisms as authorized peace support missions by the AU-PSC. They present annual report and have their mandates re-authorized annually by the AU-PSC, enjoy political and diplomatic support by the AU especially at the UN, and benefit from varying degrees of mission support through the AU.[2] The three ad-hoc regional mechanisms (ARMs) are termed ad-hoc in view of their evolution, operational structures, and mandates (response to specific challenges, linked to counterterrorism in most cases). The three ARMs are operationally outside of the African Standby Force (ASF) framework.[3] They do not belong to any of the extant RECs; represent a form of coordinating joint security operations by frontline states affected by particular security challenges (trans-border/regional terrorism), and represent a form of security regionalism or cooperation.

In undertaking this study, peace and security is operationalized in line with the 2002 PSC Protocol: articles 3 (objectives) and 6 (functions) outline the components of peace and security to include protection and preservation of life and property, creation of conditions conducive to sustainable

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1. African Union (2016), APSA Roadmap 2016-2020, p. 21. https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/2015-en-apsa-roadmap-final.pdf

2. Virtual interview with a Senior Policy Officer (Training), AU-PSOD Unit, 17 May 2021.

3. Though the MNJTF is more aligned to AU PSO Doctrine and Policies, including an official liaison arrangement with the AU. Virtual interview with MNJTF civil-military and compliance officer, 20 May 2021.

development, and anticipation and prevention of armed conflicts through good governance. It also covers peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction activities, combating transnational security challenges. terrorism, and preventing and managing humanitarian and disaster emergencies. We define conflict prevention in line with the AU's approach as a direct and operational focus of intervening before violence occurs as well as a systematic and strategic focus of addressing the root, proximate, and structural causes of conflict.[4] The AU's approach defines conflict resolution as a wide range of methods of addressing sources of conflict and of finding means of resolving or containing it in less destructive form.[5]

The underlying assumption is that the ARMs represent emergent forms of regional security, or security regionalism in Africa. This study operationalises a region to be geographical expressions criss-crossing the borders or two or more states, shared socio-political history, experiencing similar political-security challenges and working together cooperatively to address common challenges.[6] This incorporates Buzan's definition of regional security as 'a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another'.[7]

In line with the new regionalism thesis, a region is also identified as territories perceived or accepted by actors, including national governments and societies, as constituting a region based on historical and /or emergent attributes.[8]

In exploring the ARMs, this study used secondary and primary data. The range of secondary data include desktop review and analysis of extant datasets for each of the ad-hoc regional security mechanisms and their respective areas of operation. In addition, qualitative analysis contained in academic books and journals, research reports, official documents of AU-PSC, APSA reports, UN Security Reports, UNOWAS reports, resolutions of RECS (ECOWAS, EAC, IGAD, etc.), other national and regional institutions, media reports, report of think-tanks and civil society groups, and other open sources materials were used. Primary data were derived from semi-structured interviews with selected stakeholders including officials of AU-PSD, ad-hoc regional mechanism, national governments and regional bodies, academicians and researchers, civil society groups, media, etc. In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted through virtual means. The interviews allowed the researcher to deepen understanding about the activities and engagement between ad-hoc mechanisms and AU-PSC, the internal structures and command and control systems of ad-hoc mechanisms and gain additional insights into policy priorities and challenges.

4. This is in line with the AU APSA Roadmap 2016-2020. See African Union Commission, African Peace and Security Architecture: APSA Roadmap 2016-2020, December 2015, www.peaceau.org/uploads/2015-en-apsa-roadmap-final.pdf. See also, Carvalho, G. (2017), 'Conflict Prevention: What's in it for the AU', Policy Brief 103, ISS/TFP, p. 2. https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/ISS_Africa-policybrief103.pdf.

5. EAC (2012) 'East African Community Conflict Management Act 2012', p. 10. https://www.eala.org/uploads/EAC_Conflict_Management_Act_2012.pdf.

6. Börzel, Tanja (2011) Comparative Regionalism: A New Research Agenda, KFG Working Paper Series, No. 28, August, Freie Universität Berlin. https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/37475/ssoar-2011-borzel-Comparative_Regionalism_A_New_Research.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y&lnkname=ssoar-2011-borzel-Comparative_Regionalism_A_New_Research.pdf.

7. Buzan (1991), People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era, p.106.

3

ORIGIN OF AD-HOC MECHANISMS

Ad-hoc approaches and arrangements for addressing regional security crisis have been launched against a backdrop of changing landscape of conflict and insecurity in Africa and the perceived failure of existing architectures of peace and security to effectively respond to these challenges. Though the drivers of conflict and instability necessitating each of the Ad-hoc Mechanisms discussed in this report are slightly different, three common factors seem to underpin launching of these mechanisms. These are regionalization of insecurity manifested in cross-border operations and dimensions of insurgent/terrorist/criminal groups; the insurgents' pursuit of ideologically inspired goals that are not amenable to a negotiated settlement; and the insurgents' indiscriminate attacks against civilians and attendant humanitarian emergencies.[9]

In most cases, each Ad-hoc Mechanism had gained momentum with the active support and/or agreement of troop contributing countries, endorsement by relevant REC, and the support of bilateral supporters such as France before the authorization of the PSC was sort. In addition, the dynamics of AU authorization or endorsement was different for each Ad-Hoc mechanism. For instance, the RCI-LRA as an AU-led mission was straight forward, underscoring the AU's genuine interest in halting the LRA menace. However, the MNJTF and G5 Sahel force were formed and launched and the AU authorization or endorsement was secured. This does not preclude the informal briefings to the AU PSC member states as some of MNJTF and G5 Sahel states like Nigeria and Chad were on the AU-PSC. It is also possible

that the AU is unlikely to refuse authorization of the MNJTF and G5 Sahel in view of Africa's geopolitical realities and the logic of subsidiarity. Moreover, slow operationalization of the ASF, complex bureaucracy and political decision-making processes, pressing security concerns demanding rapid response and absence of an immediately available alternative made the AU-PSC to also embrace the ARMs. Consequently, a brief discussion of the timing and context within which each of the Ad-hoc mechanism was introduced and authorized would provide the pinpoint to the cross-cutting factors that inspired such approaches to emerge and develop.

3.1 THE CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF THE RCI-LRA AND THE AU REGIONAL TASK FORCE AGAINST LRA

The LRA is perhaps the longest surviving rebel movement in Africa, albeit with a significant degree of metamorphosis over the course of its three decades of existence. Scholars attribute the origin of the Lord's Resistance Army to the Ugandan state relations with its Acholi ethnic group who developed feeling of betrayal, marginalization, and exclusion by the central government in Kampala.[10] It is generally claimed that indiscriminate security measures by government forces in northern Uganda damaged state-society

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9. Virtual interview with Chris Ichite, Deputy Executive Secretary of APSTA, 15 May 2021.

10. Kevin. C Dunn, 2017, Uganda: the longevity of the Lord Resistance Armey. In Africa's Insurgents: Navigating an Evolving Landscape, edited by Morten Bøås, and Kevin C. Dunn, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kcl/detail.action?docID=4840247.

Authorization of the ARMs by the AU-PSC was a combination of pragmatism and 'real politik' as the political undercurrents surrounding each and all the ARMs made it difficult (if not impossible) for the PSC to decline authorization.

relations and inter-group social capital in Uganda. This led to the emergence of millennial movements that aspire to cleanse the social body using a combination of political agitation and spiritual purification.[11] The first of such movement to emerge from the Acholi region was the Holy Spirit Movement inspired by Alice Lakwena, a force that was defeated in its advancement towards Kampala. This was followed by the emergence of the LRA under the leadership of Joseph Koney. In its fight against the LRA, the government relocated most of the population of Northern Uganda to temporarily displaced camps with the aim of denying the rebel the means to undertake their insurgency. At this stage, the community accepted such a move which was interpreted by the LRA as a tacit support for the government and its counter-insurgency measures reversing the support they allegedly gave the LRA to wage war against the government. Ostensibly, angered by this, the hitherto peaceful relation between the LRA and the Acholi community was disrupted and the LRA began to attack the very community in whose name and interest it claimed to be waging the insurgency. The LRA's infamous attacks against civilians, especially the abduction of women and children, raised the profile of the insurgency and attracted international concern and attention. However, it was not deemed to warrant the deployment of a formal international peace support mission.

The regionalization of the LRA insurgency included LRA's cross-border attacks and operations and the reciprocal support for insurgent groups by governments in Sudan and Uganda. Although the two countries reached a rapprochement and normalized relations in the early 2000s, the regional dimension of the LRA conflict had taken a firm root and even expanded to the DRC and Central African Republic (CAR). A sequence of negotiated resolutions has been launched since the early 2000s including the initiative by Acholi religious leaders and later by a special mediator (Reich Machar) and the LRA failed to sign the agreement for fear of an impending ICC indictment. The LRA leadership feared that the peace treaty was incapable of providing the necessary safeguards against trial for crimes against war crimes.

Meanwhile, Uganda's military incursion deep into Sudan over the years forced the LRA to shift its presence and operations towards Garamba national park in Eastern DRC. These areas are beyond the reach of the Congolese government. However, the chequered relations between the governments of DRC and Uganda meant the LRA was out of reach for the Ugandan military. Consequently, the LRA operated in the Congolese territory while abducting, massacring, and displacing villagers.

The UN mission in Congo coordinated operations with the Ugandan government and drove out the LRA from the Garamba national Park. This pushed the insurgents into the Eastern part of CAR. The weaknesses of the government in Central Africa Republic enabled the LRA to operate in CAR without significant hinderances and cemented the character of the insurgency as a regional insurgency. Since then, the LRA operated in frontier areas along the border of Eastern DRC, CAR, and Sudan, and continued its notoriety for abducting and killing civilians. The regionalized attack on civilians and the difficulty of weakening the LRA without regional security cooperation has been the motivation behind the formation of the AU Regional Cooperation Initiatives against LRA (RCI-LRA) in 2011.

The AU initiated the RCI-LRA in 2009 following a General Assembly debate on options for eliminating the LRA. The idea of a regional task force was mooted in October 2009 at the inaugural of the AU Ministerial meeting on the LRA. The RCI-LRA was conceived on the back of the AU-UN regional strategy and force to coordinate anti-LRA efforts. The RCI and RTF were envisioned as part of a four component-plan that included a regional task Force, AU special envoy for the LRA, RTF headquarters, and a joint coordination mechanism (the RCI-LRA).[12] By November 2011, the AU authorised the regional task force as an AU-led ad-hoc mechanism tostrengthen the operational capabilities of countries affected by the atrocities of the LRA, create an environment conducive to stabilize the affected areas, free of LRA atrocities, and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected areas.[13] The UNSC authorization followed in June 2012 as part of a comprehensive UN Strategy to support the RCI-LRA and the RTF. In March 2012, the RCI-LRA and the RTF became operational with financial and logistical support from the UN and the USA.

3.2 THE CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF THE MNJTF

The origin of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram is very much connected with the transformation of Boko Haram from a quasi-Islamist social movement into an armed insurgency that operates at the regional level. Extant accounts indicate that a complex of factors underpinned this transformation. Among which are fundamentalist religious ideologies, poverty, environmental crisis, repressive security apparatus and an ineffective and possibly illegitimate state presence.[14] The group

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11. Ibid.

12. World Peace Foundation (not dated), 'AU Regional Task Force Against the Lord's Resistance Army Mission', https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/files/2017/07/Lords-Resistance-Army-Mission.pdf.

13. Ibid, p. 4.

14. For example, see Olabanji Akinola (2015) Boko Haram Insurgency

emerged sometimes in the early 2000s with its roots in North-eastern Nigeria, specifically Borno state, and its environs (Yobe and Adamawa states), areas with some of the worst performance in socio-economic indices (especially poverty) and overall human development indices. The northern part of the country has also been affected by an aggressive desertification and other effects of climate change (variability in temperature and rainfall), realities that negatively affected the livelihoods and resilience of rural populations. It also forced rural population to migrate to urban centres and the concentration of pools of unemployed and uneducated young people in Maiduguri from which Boko Haram eventually recruited its core.[15] The Nigerian government`s repressive measures also complicated and incentivised the emergence of Boko Haram. For instance, the practice of arbitrary arrests, detention and disappearance (sometimes killing) of citizens by the police created and gave evidence to claims of injustice and grievances, Thus, accentuated Boko Haram's narrative and increased its appeal among young people in north-eastern Nigeria. By 2008/9, Boko Haram had emerged as a social modality, a core driver of youth identity in most cities in north-eastern Nigeria. It had its own communities (enclaves) and leadership structures, and its narratives had resonated among most of the youth in north-eastern Nigeria.

A defining component of Boko Haram`s initial Islamist orientation was the discreditation of Western secular education and systems of legal and socio-political organization attributing the lack of social mobility and socio-economic opportunities for populations, especially young people, and corruption prevalent in the country to Western education. In short, Boko Haram advance the notion that Western education and civilization produce corruption and corrupt elites.[16] In spiritual terms, Boko Haram views Western education as a sacrilege and warned its followers to stop attending secular educational institutions. Boko Haram proclaims the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate perpetrating heinous violence against innocent civilians.

The milestone in the transformation of Boko Haram into a militant, insurgent group was the series of clashes and confrontations with security forces between 2009 and 2010 in which its founder/leader Mohammed Yusuf was killed in 2009 by the Nigerian Police while in detention. The subsequent hunt for members of Boko Haram forced remnants of the

group to go underground and resorted to the use of violence in the pursuit of the group's agenda. By the middle of 2010, Boko Haram metamorphosed into an insurgent group with a series of attacks against government facilities, schools, and other public and civilian facilities. Initially, in line with Boko Haram`s detest against corrupting Western education, the group destroyed secular schools without necessarily harming pupils by undertaking such operations at night.[17] Boko Haram killed teachers and abducted students. The most notorious of which was the abduction of 250 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok in 2014. According to Montclos between 2009 and 2015 Boko Haram killed 611 teachers; displaced 19,00 teachers and destroyed 512 primary schools, 38 secondary schools, and 2 tertiary ..[18] At the initial stage of the group`s commencement of violence, most of its activities were concentrated to the city of Maiduguri in Borno state, which in 2013 alone accounted for over 70% of the fatalities.[19] However, gradually, it began to expand outside Maiduguri and Borno while also diversifying its modalities of engagement.

In the subsequent phases, Boko Haram expanded along four axes: in the frequencies of its attack, the geography of its operation, the targets of its attack, and its modalities of engagement.[20] In terms of intensity, incidents associated with Boko Haram skyrocketed from 20 in 2009 to 115 in 2011 and further to 343 in 2012. After dropping to 281 in 2013 it rose again to 489 incidents in 2014.[21] Since then, according to ACLED data, there has been a constant decline in the number of incidents involving Boko Haram which coincides with the formation of the MNJTF. Boko Haram also expanded the geographical space of its operation within and outside Nigeria as part of its emergence as an insurgent force and a dedicated war stratagem (sign of its adaptability). There were several dimensions of this, including the relocation of remnants of the group to Upper Sahel (Northern Mali) after the 2009 clashes with the security forces in Nigeria. Another dimension was the reported movement of more than 100 Boko Haram fighters into Gao, Mali in 2012 following the victory of the Tuarage against the Malian government. The same year, Boko Haram attacked civilians along the Nigeria-Cameroon border killing dozens and forcing the Cameroonian government to strengthen its

in Nigeria: Between Islamic Fundamentalism, Politics, and Poverty, African Security, 8:1, 1-29, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2015.998539.

15. Ibid.

16. Inioluwa Adeoluwa Nehmah Dele-Adedeji, 2017, Nigeria: The Adaptability of the Boko Haram Rebellion In Africa's Insurgents: Navigating an Evolving Landscape, edited by Morten Bøås, and Kevin C. Dunn, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kcl/detail.action?docID=4840247.

17. Ibid.

18. Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos (2018) 'The only good jihadist is a dead jihadist': Boko Haram and de-radicalization around Lake Chad, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 29:5-6, 863-885, DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2018.1519297.

19. Suranjan Weeraratne (2017) Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria, Terrorism and Political Violence, 29:4, 610-634, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2015.1005742.

20. Ibid.

21. ACLED Data on Boko Haram, Available at Data Export Tool | ACLED (acleddata.com).

security along the border. In 2013, Boko Haram and its splintered faction, Ansaru, attacked and kidnapped foreigners from the Cameroonian territory. The group had consistently attacked civilians and military forces since then. For instance, Cameroon experienced 82 Boko Haram related incidents in 2014, a year where Boko Haram related incidents hit the highest ever.[22] Most of these incidents were fighting between the group and the Cameroon government. Likewise, a report indicated that in 2014, the group recruited members in Southern Niger, Diffa region, through an intermediary role of an insurgency operating in that area.[23]

In general, Omar Mahmoud's summary of the group's transition from a peaceful Islamic group focusing on Islamic posterization to a violent regional terrorist organization best summarized the evolution of the threat landscape Boko Haram has posed and therefore the rationale for the emergence of the Multi-National Joint Task Force against Boko Haram.[24] According to Mahmoud, in the first phase, from its formation until 2009, Boko Haram was primarily a peaceful local Islamist group that nevertheless drew its ideology from the international Islamist discourse. In the second phase, which extend up to the Nigerian government`s declaration of state of emergency in the North East in 2013, the group reverted to violent anti-state and anti-establishment activities carefully selecting its targets that included anti-Boko Haram clerics, traditional elders and government officials. The group used Improved Explosive Devices (IEDs) to attack markets, bars, banks, churches, anti-Boko Haram mosques, government buildings, schools, and media houses. During this period, its members were largely from urban areas and its support network was largely domestic. In the third phase, from 2013 onwards, the group exhibited significant adaptation (changes) of strategy within and outside Nigeria. Within Nigeria, following the operationalization

of the Nigerian Task Force, Boko Haram shifted to controlling rural areas from which it attacked urban centres. It also transformed its target of attack from a selected group of actors to indiscriminate attack against civilians due to its discontent against the civilians and local communities perceived to be collaborating with the Nigerian government.

Regionally, Boko Haram increased its recruitment and operation in neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Niger and, to a lesser extent, Chad, and adopted the same scorched-earth strategy of violent attack against civilians suspected of collaborating with their respective national government. During this period, the group, which hitherto was exclusively led by Nigerians, also incorporated nationals of neighbouring countries into its leadership. Also, another apparent trend has been the allegiance of the group to the Islamic state and, thus, its effort at getting embedded in the international jihadists network. The group split into two factions in 2016 over theological and operational differences; between a local force that expresses local grievances and agenda for change, and a province of a global jihadi network and agenda seeking to transform local dynamics according to a global Islamic blueprint.

The establishment of the MNJTF by member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin was a direct consequence of Boko Haram's regionalization of its operation and associated humanitarian emergencies. The MNJTF was originally created in 1994 to address cross-border control of criminal activities and its mandate was expanded to include cross-border insecurity in 1998.[25] The transborder and transregional dimension of Boko Haram's activities led to a regional response in the form of the MNJTF in April 2012whose mandate was expanded to include counter terrorism.[26] The MNJTF is tasked with

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22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Omar Mahmoud, 2018, Local, Global, or in Between? Boko Haram's Messaging, Strategy, Membership, and Support Networks. In Jacob Zenn (Ed.) Boko Haram Beyond the Headlines: Analyses of Africa's Enduring Insurgency.

25. Daniel E. Agbiboa (2017) Borders that continue to bother us: the politics of cross-border security cooperation in Africa's Lake Chad Basin, Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, 55:4, 403-425, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1312730.

26. Babatunde F. Obamamoye (2017) Counter-terrorism, Multinational Joint Task Force and the missing components, African Identities, 15:4, 428-440, DOI: 10.1080/14725843.2017.1319755.

The emergence of the MNJTF is a direct consequence of Boko Haram's regionalization of its operation and associated humanitarian emergencies. Though the drivers of insecurity in the Lake Chad regions are by no means restricted to the terror perpetrated by Boko Haram, the MNJTF was primarily a response to physical insecurity and therefore could not be expected to alleviate the manifold security challenges and their root causes in the region.

ensuring safe and secure environment in the areas affected by Boko Haram, reducing violent attacks against civilians, facilitating stabilization programs in the Lake Chad Basin region, and facilitating humanitarian operation and provision of assistance to affected population.[27] The MNJTF undertakes military operations, conducts patrols, prevents and disrupts cross-border movement of weapons, fighters and logistics to the group, searches and frees abductees, and disrupts terrorist infrastructure in the region.[28] The mandate of the MNJTF was formally authorized and approved by the AU Peace and Security Council in January 2015 and has been renewed on a yearly basis since then.[29] The force has had a mix record since then, recording successes and setbacks in its mission to degrade Boko Haram, recover territories previously controlled by Boko Haram, free civilians hostages, and advancing stabilization in the LCB regions.[30] Though the drivers of insecurity in Lake Chad regions are by no means restricted to the terror perpetrated by Boko Haram, the MNJTF was primarily a response to physical insecurity and, therefore, could not be expected to alleviate the manifold security challenges and their root causes in the region. Structural drivers of insecurity are related to lack of effective and legitimate governance, corruption, mismanagement of resources and the economy, exclusion along ethnic lines, livelihood issues, demographic pressures, and environmental factors. These are meant to be addressed through other regional schemes or by national governments.

3.3 THE CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF G5 SAHEL FORCE

The Sahel has been affected by structural drivers of conflict and insecurity related to environmental degradation, livelihood vulnerability, competition over resources mainly land, and weak, corrupt and, at times, non-existing formal governance.[31] Since

the 1970s, temperature in the region has increased by 1 degree centigrade; drought became recurrent; and rainfall became erratic; all pushing pastoralists Southward in search of water and pasture which increased competition over land and water.[32] This, in the context of ineffective and unproductive presence of state authorities in their periphery, has been a source of socio-political grievances and intercommunal tension and conflict. Moreover, societal divisions along status, clan and geography and perception of marginalization by state authorities have long been a source of societal tension and rebellion in the region. In Mali, for instance, the Tuarage rebelled against the central Malian government from 1963-1964, 1990-1996, 2006-2009, and 2012-2013.[33] While the challenges of governance, development, and environmental changes have been the major drivers of insecurity in the Sahel, the inspirations behind the formation of G5 Sahel force are the cross-border and interconnected dimensions of the challenges and their complex interaction with organized crime and transnational terrorism.

Mali has been the epicentre of this fusion and expansion. Long before the onset of the 2012 crisis in Mali, the Sahel has been an arena of smuggling and illegal trade in cigarette, petrol, drugs, and dates. Subsidized products from Algeria were consistently smuggled into Mali and Niger, whereas products like cigarettes were smuggled into Algeria and then to Europe. When cocaine began to be smuggled through the Sahel, it gave rise to an organized network of international criminal syndicates in the region. Such networks established contact with state authority thereby corrupting the state while also creating a constituency that directly or indirectly benefitted from the illegal trade.

The most ominous effect of the organized network of drug smuggling is its dual functions. It simultaneously serves as the operational and financial needs of terrorist networks. Al-Qaida in the Maghreb (AQIM) had been entrenching itself in Mali using a sophisticated tactic of gun, money, and prayer.[34]

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Brubacher Mathew, Damman Kimball, and Day Christopher, 2017, The AU task force: An African response to Transnational armed group. J. Modern African Studies, 55, 22, pp. 275-299.

30. Assanvo William, Abatan Jeannine Ella A and Sawadogo Wendyam Aristid, 2016, Assessing multi-national Joint Task Force Agaianst Boko Haram, ISS, Issue 19.

31. Morten Bøås, 2019, the Sahel crisis and the need for international support. The Nordic Africa Institute.

32. Olawale Ismail and Alagaw Ababu Kifle, 2018, New Collective Security Arrangements in the Sahel: a comparative study of the MNJTF and G-5 Sahel. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Peace and Security.

33. Ibid.

34. Morten Bøås, 2017, Mali: Islam, Arms, and Money. In Africa's Insurgents: Navigating an Evolving Landscape, edited by Morten Bøås, and Kevin C. Dunn, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kcl/detail.action?docID=4840247.

the immediate and transnational factors that gave imputes for the formation of the G5 Sahel force are largely associated with the fusion of terrorism and organized crimes.

The many sympathy inducing practices of AQIM and its successive networks over the past two decades included distributing money, medicines and health care, and mobile SIM cards. The financing for these activities was acquired through abduction, ransoms received from foreigners and providing protection for drug smugglers. AQIM also intermarry with the local population selecting those members of the local community that were viewed as of low status with the message that they are pious well-meaning Muslims that stand for the underprivileged and downtrodden.[35] The local religious preachers were also induced by the sheer status and power of benefits granted to them to propagate AQIM`s version of Islam. Thus, by the time the Malian crisis broke out, AQIM and its offshoots were already well-embedded in the local communities across the northern region and in communities along the border with Mauritania and Niger.

When the Malians of Tuarage origin returned from Libya with sophisticated arms and weapons following the overthrow of Gaddafi, they commenced their rebellion against the Malian state under the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). Though these secular nationalists were able to control territories and towns in northern Mali, they were quickly overtaken by the terrorists who were able to provide better protection and incentives for the local community. During this time, AQIM, for instance, distributed green lines so that the local community would report any violence by the MNLA or any other criminals in Timbuktu and environs.[36] Another splintered faction, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) that controlled Gao reportedly paid its members so well that individuals with little means for livelihood would accept it enthusiastically. According to Boas, it used to pay in the range of USD 100 to 700, which is the yearly average income of a Malian engaged in ordinary business.[37] Though the terrorists' threat was contained through the intervention of France and the deployment of a peace keeping mission in Mali and the facilitation of a peace agreement between the various secular Malian forces was expected to herald peace, the security situation in Mali has deteriorated over the years, and spread into Niger and Burkina Faso in recent years.

In recent years, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and the Al Qaeda-affiliated Jama'at Nusrat Al Islam Wal Muslimin (JNIM) emerged as key groups in the Sahel, based on cooperation amongst extremist groups in the region. This occasioned a shift in strategies and areas of operation. For instance,

ISGS and JNIM have shifted their activities away from the tri-state border region, Liptako-Gourma, to Tillaberi and Tahoua regions of Niger, eastern Burkina Faso, and central Mali. The two groups have inserted themselves into local conflicts as a strategy for enlarging their scope of action, reasserting their influence, and gaining resources to rebuild theirstrength.[38] In all, terrorist violence increased and quasi-terror organizations multiplied, and their operation expanded and created new epicentres. This is the context in which the G-5 Sahel force emerged.

It is this deterioration in the security situation of the region and the understanding that it cannot be contained by MINSUMA and the Malian army alone that lead to the emergence of the G5 Sahel force in February 2014 which was formally launched in 2017. The force was subsequently endorsed by the African Union in April 2017 and the United Nations Security Council in June 2017.[39] The G-5 Sahel was established as a platform for joint security-development strategies and activities by Chad, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania. The core objectives of the G-5 force are combating terrorism and transnational criminal networks; contributing to restoration of state authority and return of refugees and internally displaced persons; facilitating humanitarian operation; and contributing to developmental activities in the Sahel.[40] The force was an extension of an earlier regional arrangement called the G5 Sahel that was oriented towards realizing security and development in the Sahel region. Though the G5 Sahel was initially, to its most part, a development organization, the deterioration in the security situation led to the formation of the G5 Sahel force that would incorporate and address the security threats and thereby lay a conducive environment for development. Most of the activities implemented till date include the military-security component. This

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. ACLED (2021), 'Sahel 2021: Communal wars, broken ceasefires, and shifting frontlines', 17 June 2021, https://acleddata.com/2021/06/17/sahel-2021-communal-wars-broken-ceasefires-and-shifting-frontlines/.

39. The AU-PSC endorsed the G5 Sahel Force (via its CONOPS) in April 2017 at its 679th Meeting; it approved the draft Strategic CONOPS, including authorisation for the "deployment of the Joint Force of the G5 for an initial period of twelve (12) months renewable and a strength of up to 5,000 personnel, including military, civilian and police components, and others, with the following aspects to be taken into account." The UNSC welcomed the creation of the G5 Sahel via Resolution 2359 of 21 June 2017, which was sponsored by France. See AU-PSC, Communique of the 679th PSC Meeting on the draft Strategic Concept of Operations (CONOPs) of the Joint Force of the G5 Sahel, PSC/PR/COMM (DCLXXIX), https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/679th-com-g5sahel-13-04-2017.pdf. See also, France Diplomacy, 'G5 Sahel Joint Force and the Sahel Alliance', https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/security-disarmament-and-non-proliferation/crises-and-conflicts/g5-sahel-joint-force-and-the-sahel-alliance/.

40. PSC report, 7 July 2017, Challenges and opportunities of the G5 Sahel force. Available at https://issafrica.org/pscreport/situation-analysis/challenges-and-opportunities-for-the-g5-sahel-force.

entails the creation of a joint G5 Sahel force, the command-and-control headquarters and a military college in Mauritania and joint military patrols in the Lipatako Gourma area bordering Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali since October 2017.[41]

Accordingly, like the MNJTF, the G5 Sahel force was formed to address physical insecurity that posed considerable threats to the security of populations and the prevailing political order in the region, as opposed to addressing the structural sources of insecurity. As noted by ECA, these measures would tend to

bifurcate measures aimed at addressing drivers of insecurity in which major threats to states of the region and those outside the region are privileged over the insecurity of ordinary residents of the region.[42] Though the drivers of state insecurity are also, to a greater degree, drivers of human insecurity, the latter, which includes measures much more than addressing factors undermining state insecurity, cannot be effectively addressed by measures targeted at the former.

41. UN, 2017, Report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, S/2017/869.

42. United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa (2016). ECA Sahel study: conflict in the Sahel region and the developmental consequences. Addis Ababa.

4

STRUCTURES AND MANDATES OF AD-HOC MECHANISMS

4.1 THE RCI-LRA

The Regional Cooperation Initiatives against LRA (RCI-LRA) is the first in several respects. For the AU, for instance, it was the first Ad-hoc mechanism/force that AU authorized which is not fully under its control and yet not totally outside its preview. The RCI-LRA was also the first regional security cooperation force in the Great Lakes region. The initiative was authorized to boost its member states' effectiveness in fighting LRA, create conducive condition for the stabilization of the region, and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected areas.[43] To realize these goals the regional initiative was mandated to coordinate and, thus, promote political and military cohesion among affected states; support capacity building of affected countries; engage partners including the UN for timely delivery of support; encourage joint patrols at the border of affected countries; coordinate with the UN field mission; facilitate defection from the LRA; support DDR among ex-LRA members; support the rehabilitation of community affected by LRA and promote civil military cooperation.[44]

The RCI-LRA also laid down structures of engagement that are required to realize the above strategic goals of the mission. Accordingly, the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM) composed of the AU commissioner for peace and security and ministry of defence of the member states affected by LRA would be responsible for proving strategic and political direction for the mission. It did this by coordinating the AU and member states as well as international partners' effort and support. The JCM is also tasked with promoting political and military cohesion as well as coordinating capacity building support for operational entities. The JMC has a secretariat based in Bangui, CAR that had been coordinated by the AU special envoy for the LRA. The other component, the Regional Task Force (RTF), is composed of a 5000-strong military contingent of the affected countries with each country's contingent led by its own force commander. The RTF had a joint headquarter and three operational sectors with their respective command headquarters in Dungo in DRC, Nzara in South Sudan, and Obo in CAR. The joint headquarter of the RTF has 30 officers drawn from member states and mainly responsible for coordination and planning. Co-located with the RTF headquarter is a joint operation centre (JOC) that is responsible for the planning and monitoring of operations against the LRA.

43. Peace and security council 29th meeting, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 22 November 2011, Report of the Chairperson of the commission on the operationalization of the AU led regional cooperative initiative against the Lord Resistance Army.

44. Ibid.

The RCI-LRA is the only Ad-hoc mission that explicitly stated the financial and other mission support responsibility among partnering actors. Accordingly, while the AU mobilizes fund for the JCM, the RTF headquarter and the JOC and other financial and logistics support mobilize for the other component of the mission. All other needs of the mission are supposed to be covered by member states.[45] Without excluding bilateral supports, support from international partners is envisioned to be channelled through the AU. While the other missions are still active, the RTF is no longer operational since 2017 as Uganda withdrew from the task force and the US took out its military advisors, and MONUSCO closed the Joint Intelligence Operation Centre.[46] With the closure of its headquarter in South Sudan and termination of the European Union budgetary support, the African Union Commission indicated the only activity it has been undertaking is receiving updates from an NGO called Invisible Children.[47] TTo this extent, the RCI-LRA has been downgraded and operationally inactive, compared with the G5 Sahel force and the MNJTF.

4.2 THE MNJTF

The MNJTF was initially established by member states of Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Benin and later authorized and endorsed by both the AU and the UN Security Council. The MNJTF is mandated to eradicate Boko Haram and protect civilians, contribute to the restoration of civilian authority and the return of IDPs and refugees, and support the delivery of humanitarian assistance.[48] The MNJTF is also authorized to coordinate security operations among member states including joint patrols in the border areas, disrupt and destroy Boko Haram operations, search and free abductees, undertake DDR, promote civil-military coordination and support the effort to bring to justice those who committed grave crimes.[49] The mandate of the MNJTF involved a two-stage process. First, it entails eliminating Boko Haram through degrading its capacity to undertake military action through the four sectors operating

from the four LCB member states and occasional hot pursuit of up to 20 Km into the territories of member states.[50] During this phase a distinction was made between the task force's area of operation and its area of interest. The latter include areas where Boko Haram operates but not covered by the task force`s areas of operation. The second phase would be the undertaking of stabilization measures through restoration of state authorities and the return of displaced persons and refugees.[51]

The concept of operation designed to realize these measures and structures undertaken by different actors and institutions at different levels. It envisioned that coordination among various actors is to be ensured through the instrumentalities of the support and follow-up group which acts as a consultative body and the JCM, which is composed of relevant ministers of the LCB member states plus Benin. The JCM is mandated to harmonize the effort of AU, LCB member States plus Benin and other partners.[52] The command-and-control function, on the other hand, is to be undertaken through a political representative and commander of the MNJTF.

In terms of structure, the mission will have a political and strategic headquarter through the LCB secretariat that works in coordination with the AU commission, and an operational headquarter based in N'Djamena, Chad. A mission support team recruited from the LCB member states plus Benin was seconded to the MNTJF`s headquarter to provide the necessary supports whereas the AU commission and the LCB member states plus Benin established a strategic cell at the AU's Peace Support Operations Department, PSOD to coordinate any other support to the MNJTF.[53] The AU provided technical support to the MNJTF in crafting the concept of operations (CONOPS), regional stabilization strategy (RSS), and adaptation, training and implementation of AU's (APSA) policies and procedures for peace operations including conduct and discipline, protection of civilians, human rights, zero tolerance against sexual exploitation and rape, etc.[54] The MNTJF also envisioned to have a small civilian and police component that will work on liaising on and providing advisory service to the force commander. All operations against Boko Haram were envisioned to be undertaken with strict

45. Ibid.

46. Report of the Peace and Security Council on its activity and state of peace and security in Africa, 29thOrdinary session of Assembly of the Union 3-4 July 2017.

47. Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the 15th ordinary meeting of African Chiefs of Defense Staffs and heads of safety and security and 12th ordinary meeting of the specialized technical committee on Defense, Safety and Security, Cairo, Egypt, 15-19 December.

48. Experts Meeting on the elaboration of operational documents for the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) of the Member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin against the Boko Haram terrorist group -African Union - Peace and Security Department (peaceau.org).

49. Peace and Security Council 484th meeting at the level of heads of state and government, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 29 January 2015.

50. Olawale Ismail and Alagaw Ababu Kifle, 2018, New Collective Security Arrangements in the Sahel: a comparative study of the MNJTF and G-5 Sahel. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Peace and Security.

51. Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the implementation of COMMUNIQUÉ PSC/AHG/COMM.2(CDLXXXIV) on Boko Haram terrorist group and on other related international effort.

52. Peace and Security Council 489th meeting, 3 March, 2015, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, PSC/PR/COMM.CDLXXXIX) REV.1 COMMUNIQUÉ.

53. Ibid.

54. Virtual interview with a Senior Policy Officer, Training, AU-PSOD, 17 May 2021.

compliance to international humanitarian laws and international human rights laws. Given the limited capacity and experience of the LCB secretariat, full operationalization of the force would have needed strong support from the AU commission as duly acknowledged in the endorsement letter of the organization. To this effect, a memorandum of understanding was signed in 2016 and renewed annually. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the AU and the LCB secretariate with regard to operation of the MNJTF.[55]

The civilian component of the mission, which is presumed to monitor the force's adherence to international human rights law and international humanitarian laws, has limitations related to its operation and design. For instance, its capacity is severely limited whereas restriction of its reporting line to the force commander than the LCB secretariat limited the possibility that its recommendation would be duly considered.[56] This limited the extent to which adherence to appropriate standards of operation is monitored and corrective measure is taken. Allegation of rampant violation of human rights indeed point to this weakness. Even when the MNJTF was not operating according to these standards, the AU continual reiteration that only a comprehensive approach to security in the region will address the threat of Boko Haram has not yet been given adequate resources.[57] It is, indeed, the case that the insecurity generated by Boko Haram eroded social cohesions, undermined the economy, and crippled the flow of foreign direct investment. Therefore, addressing it by eradicating the terrorist would create the condition necessary for development intervention.[58] However, the very effort to eliminate Boko Haram will not succeed without concerned development interventions.

4.3 THE G5 SAHEL

As indicated in the AU-PSC communique authorizing the force, the G5 Sahel Joint Force was endorsed by the African Union to combat terrorism and organised crime, contribute to restoration of state authority and the return of displaced population, facilitate humanitarian operation, and support the implementation of development plans in the Sahelo-

Sahara region.[59] In issuing these mandates and the accompanying strategic concept of operation the council also underscored giving due attention to the civilian component and its role in ensuring respect for human rights and humanitarian laws and protection against civilians; specification of the interaction between the joint force, MINUSMA and other international forces; the need to situate the force within APSA and its relevant instruments and strategies; and the need to develop operational plan of the concept of operation that is embedded in the Nouakchott processes and other related measures. [60]

The AU authorized the force while also urging the UN Security Council to endorse the joint force, facilitate access to predictable and sustainable funding for the force, and help mobilize resource for this effect. The PSC also required the AU Commission to update it through a quarterly report to the Council about the implementation of the mandate noted above.[61] Though the UN Security Council authorized it through its presidential statement, the plea for authorization under chapter VII remained unfulfilled. The Council rather called for the international community to support the force while underscoring that the financial cost of the joint force will be the responsibility of the member states. ECOWAS also welcomed the formation of the joint force and expressed commitment to coordinate its conduct with the force.

The concept of operation needed to realize these mandates, though not sufficiently detailed, stipulated in a two-phase process.[62] In the first phase, the operational arena of the force will be restricted to three sectors along the border of the five-member states of the G5 Sahel. They are: Sector West (between Mauritania and Mali), Sector East (between Chad and Niger), and Sector Centre (in the border of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger). It is envisaged that the force will have an overall headquarter as well as command posts in each of the sectors, while in each of the sectors national contingents were supposed to operate on their side of the border, they were also allowed to move up to 50 km and later 100 km in hot pursuit.[63] This requirement was further modified when G5 Sahel heads of state decided that troops of one country can operate on the borders of another provided that the governments agreed to

55. Virtual interview with MNJTF civil-military and compliance officer, 19 May 2021.

56. ICG, 2017, Finding the Right Role for the G5 Sahel Joint Force; What Role for the Multinational Joint Task Force in Fighting Boko Haram? Africa Report N°291 | 7 July 2020.

57. Virtual interview with Director Training of Nigerian Army, 17 May 2021.

58. Ogah, Musa Ari, 2020, Multinational Joint task force and Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, International Journal of politics, Volume 6 Number 1.

59. Peace and Security Council 679th meeting, 13 April 2017, PSC/PR/COMM(DCLXXIX) COMMUNIQUÉ.

60. Ibid.

61. Virtual interview with Senior Policy Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 17 May 2021.

62. Report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel S/2017/869.

63. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2020/373.

that arrangement.[64] The force has a force commander responsible for operational coordination. That said, each force is primarily responsible to their respective national ministry of defence and hence coordination is supposed to be realized through chiefs of staffs of the respective states. At the political level, the force and its coordination are overseen by a conference of heads of states who meet annually. However, much is desired in specifying the reporting lines among the entities of the G5 Sahel including the conferences of heads of states, the council of minister, defence and security staff committee and the executive secretariate.[65]

In the second phase, the force will be integrated into one operating in the entire G5 Sahel member states region as deemed appropriate.[66] However, member states do not seem to have a common vision of what phase two entails, when it starts and what requirements need to be fulfilled to commence it. While some countries like Chad and Niger view it as a sequential process, others like Mali and Burkina Faso maintain that planning of the second phase can commence while phase one is ongoing.[67] Mauritania is of the view that the two can be undertaken concurrently, which could have been pursued had the UN mandated the force under Chapter VII.[68]

While there is progress in incorporating some of the concerns noted by the AU PSC, others have remained a continuing concern for both the AU and UN. The concept of operation for the police component was adopted in December 2018 by the G5 Sahel's defence and security committee under which will be a Provost Police Unit that will be part of the military component of the joint force and an investigative police unit incorporated under national specialized units working on terrorism and organized crime.[69] The former will be responsible for monitoring military units and making sure that operations are undertaken in accordance with, and respectful of, human rights and humanitarian laws while the latter is mainly responsible for collecting and analysing information and investigating crimes.[70] A further element is a police advisor to the commander of the police force that provides advisory service in relation to legal matters and provides a range of operational supports. Two years after its creation, the joint force was still developing the doctrine of the Provost Police and standards of investigation for the

investigative unit in 2019.[71] Though there has been some improvement in developing standards and monitoring mechanisms for human rights violation by the force largely driven by the need to expedite UN support, other measures needed to firmly embed the force within the APSA are still a work in progress.[72]

The process of operationalizing the G5 Sahel force has been sluggish for military, political, financial and territorial reasons. For instance, the armies of the G5 Sahel force countries like Chad, Niger and Mali continue to experience operational weaknesses linked to inadequate finances and budget deficits. Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad experienced political fragility and sanctions owing to military coups and contentious political transitions. Multiple ongoing operations and over-stretched forces were observed in Chad and Niger. Relative inexperience and inadequate equipment to undertake counter-terrorism and stabilization missions were observed in Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Niger. In addition, poor governance and limited economic and financial strengths of the G5 Sahel states and reliance on external funding, especially from the EU, remain limiting factors in the operations of the G5 Sahel force related to the MNJTF. However, Nigeria was able to finance the take-off of the initiative. Constant evolution and shifting epicenter of violent extremism and multiple extremist groups in the Sahel further complicates the operation and effectiveness of the G5-Sahel.[73]

4.4 COMPARISON OF THE STRUCTURE AND MANDATE OF THE THREE AD-HOC MECHANISMS

A glance at the above synopsis of the mandates and structures of the Ad-hoc Mechanism points to important similarities and differences. To begin with, all have an expansive mandate that goes well beyond just eliminating the threat so defined. The RCI-LRA promotes stabilization and undertakes DDR, and rehabilitation. The MNJTF seeks to stabilize the areas of operation of Boko Haram by establishing state authorities and return of displaced persons and the G5 Sahel force seeks to lay conditions necessary for development of its areas of operation. However, all run short of granting these missions the resources they need to develop the capacity to realize these expansive goals. None of the Ad-hoc mechanisms has predictable source of funding. Rather, they seem to

64. Ibid.

65. Report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel S/2017/869.

66. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General, 2020S/2020/1074.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2018/432.

70. Ibid.

71. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2019/868.

72. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 17 May 2021.

73. Camara, A. (2020), 'The G5 Sahel: Security Implementation and Challenges', Open Journal of Political Science, 2020, 10, 493-506.

be based on the good will of donors, though Nigeria provides much of the funding for the MNJTF. Hence, the mismatch that exists between mandate and resource is apparent, especially for the G5 Sahel force. Likewise, all of them seem to have a very light civilian footprint which does not match their expansive goals. They seem to be informed by a faulty assumption that the elimination of a particular violent actor will lead to the stabilization of the areas of operation.[74]

There are also some differences among them. They tend to differ in terms of the depth of involvement of the African Union. The AU`s role seems to be greater in RCI-LRA, while it is the least regarding the G5 Sahel Force. The MNJTF falls in between these two. Parallel to this, the RCI-LRA and the MNJTF have relatively developed civilian and oversight structure compared to the still evolving and fledgling structure of the G5 Sahel force. Similarly, while the AU channels partner support for RTF (RCI-LRA) and the MNJTF, such an arrangement is not yet available for the G5 Sahel force.[75] The G5 Sahel force is much influenced by non-African actors, specifically France, that even take the

responsibility of coordinating the resources partner countries provide. There is also difference in the nature of the threat they confront. The RCI-LRA and the MNJTF confront an identifiable group whereas the G5 Sahel force has to contend with a multitude of forces of instability as there are eight terrorist groups in the G5 Sahel areas of operation.[76] The multitude of the terrorist groups and their linkages with criminal smuggling networks (drugs, weapons and human trafficking) would complicate the effort of the G5 Sahel force since these groups could have peaceful intention in one side of the border whereas being hostile on the other.[77] In addition, the MNJTF and the G5 Sahel force confront islamists that have an extended network of support whereas the LRA has none of these features. Finally, while the RCI-LRA seems to be largely the outcome of pressure from the AU, the impetus for the formation of the MNJTF are the constituent member states.

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74. Virtual interview with Ms Keng, African peace and security expert, 15 May 2021.

75. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSD, 17 May 2021.

76. ISGS, Boko Haram, Ansaroul Islam, the Katibat of Gourma, JNIM, AQIM, Ansar Dine and the Katibat Macina NATO strategic Diretion-South, 2018, Challenges for the newly formed G5 Sahel force, Available at Challenges_for_the_Newly_Formed_G5_SAHEL_Force.pdf (thesouthernhub.org).

77. Ibid.

5
AD-HOC MECHANISMS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE AU

The three Ad-hoc Mechanisms have different modes of interaction with the AU. The RCL-LRA relies on the AU special envoy for the LRA that constantly update the PSC and the AU Commission on its activities and developments related to the LRA and counter-LRA measures. The RCI-LRA also seems to have an inbuilt structure for information sharing as the Chairperson of the AU Commission is also the member of the Joint Coordination Mechanism composed of the Ministers of Defense of the member states.[78]

In contrast to this, the AU is updated about the MNTJF and implementation of the mandates it authorized through the AU Commission. The Commission is

required to update the Peace and Security Council on monthly basis of events in the Lake Chad Basin and the activities of the MNJTF. The AU Commission relies on the bi-annual briefing for the force commander and the weekly situation reports (SITREPS) and operational briefings shared by the MNJTF with the AU-PSOD to compile the annual report by the AU chairperson to the PSC. Annual report is the basis for consideration of annual renewal of mandate by the PSC.[79] There are also engagement and coordination at the operation level between the AU-PSOD (mission support unit) and the MNJTF on training, logistics and equipment. For instance, the PSOD facilitates procurement of equipment including helicopter

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78. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC, 17 May 2021.

79. Virtual interview with Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 17 May 2021.

and other force enablers for MNJTF under the EU financial contributions to the African Peace Facility in 2018-19.[80]

There are also other briefings and meetings between the MNJTF and its troop contributing states (TCCs) and the AU, especially in and around the annual request to the PSC to renew the MNJTF mandate.[81] The PSC occasionally hears directly from representatives of the LCBC and the force commander of the MNTJF as well as from representatives of the Economic Community of Central Africa Region and the Economic Community of West Africa.[82] In the communique issued following the Council`s 738th session, for instance, it noted the report provided by the chairperson of the Commission and the briefing of the force commanders of the MNJTF. This confirms the continuation of regular interfacing between the PSC and relevant actors in the Lake Chad Basin. The PSC also undertook a fact-finding mission to the Lake Chad Basin region including TCCs, on 27-31 July 2017, and it is also contemplating a similar tour of G5 Sahel TCCs.[83]

AAs to the G5 Sahel force, the Peace and Security Council requested the AU Commission to provide it a quarterly report on the implementation of the communique through which the Council approved the concept of operation of the G5 Sahel force. Subsequent communiques noted presentations and

statements made by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, the Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel Secretariat, and the force commander of the G5 Sahel force.

The AU Commission was requested by the Council to support the LCB member states to operationalize the force, develop the concept of operation of the force and, thereafter, provide all other necessary supports.[84] Similarly, the G5 Sahel member states consulted with the AU in the planning process of establishing the force.

In addition to direct communication between the AU and relevant Ad-hoc Mechanisms, Peace and Security Council also holds annual consultative meeting with RECs/RMs with the view of harmonizing and strengthening relations.[85] There are also provisions for the AU special envoy to attend sessions of the Peace and Security Council on issues that are within their area of operation and the chairperson of the PSC also attends the AU Commission's retreat with special envoys. This is further complemented with monthly consultation between the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security and the chairperson of the Peace and Security Council. Though all these provisions do not directly relate with the Ad-hoc Mechanisms, they pinpoint additional means through which the PSC gains knowledge and develop greater awareness about the workings of the Ad-hoc mechanisms.

80. Virtual interview with AU-PSOD Senior Policy Officer (Training), 18 May 2021.

81. Virtual interview with MNJTF civil-military and compliance officer, 18 May 2021.

82. Peace and Security Council 738th meeting, December 7, 2017, Addis Ababa, PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCXXXVIII) COMMUNIQUE; Press Release AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Meets with Senior Military Leadership of MNJTF Calls for Urgent Humanitarian Assistance to Alleviate the Suffering of Civilians in the Lake Chad Basin.

83. Virtual interview with Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 18 May 2021.

84. Peace and Security Council, 469th meeting 25 November 2014, PSC/PR/COMM.(CDLXIX) COMMUNIQUÉ Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

85. This is in the aftermath of the May 2015 Namibia Retreat and the Abuja Declaration that followed on ways of enhancing cooperation and coordination between AU and RECs. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 18 May 2021.

The constant consultation and communication between Ad-hoc Mechanism and the AU seem to predate their authorization which is indicative of the fact that the Ad-hoc Mechanisms themselves were devised through prior consultation with the AU.

6

AU SUPPORT TO AD-HOC MECHANISMS

The AU has been providing a range of support for the three Ad-hoc mechanisms though it varies across the ARMs. In all cases, the AU has provided diplomatic support by authorizing and, thus, legitimizing the Ad-hoc mechanisms and urging the UN Security Council to endorse the authorization and to also provide technical and financial support that would offer predictable and sustainable support to the ARMs. The AU is also strong in calling partner countries and organizations to support or expedite their support for the Ad-hoc mechanisms. Nonetheless, the structure and modalities of AU support for the three Ad-hoc mechanisms are not reliant on a uniform arrangement. Hence, it is important to analyze the AU's support to each Ad-hoc mechanism.

6.1 THE AU SUPPORT FOR RCI-LRA

The financial and logistic support the AU would be providing for the RCI-LRA, as earlier noted, was articulated in the Concept of Operation of the initiative. The AU covers the financial cost and any other logistical requirement of the JMC, the RTF headquarter, and its special envoy whereas the troop contributing states would cover the cost of their operation including salary of their troops.[86] The AU mobilized the financial resources it needed to operationalize the initiative from the European Union`s purse under the African Peace Facility, in addition to the TCCs accessing support on a bilateral basis. The US, for instance, deployed military advisors to support the RTF operation and provided more than US$ 40 million.[87] The US was also the key provider of humanitarian assistance for the affected population. The other key provider of support was the UN that provided logistical support to the mission.

6.2 THE AU SUPPORT FOR THE MNJTF

The AU has been instrumental in providing a range of supports for the MNJTF. It convened a meeting of experts from 5 to 7 February 2016 to develop the concept of operation of the MNTJF; mobilize resources for the mission including through convening donor conference for MNTJF and collecting and managing financial assistance on behalf of the MNJTF.[88] The financial assistance including donations from the EU, UK and Turkey is used to procure force enablers such as helicopter, personnel carriers and other operational vehicles and night vision Goggles for the MNJTF.[89] The AU also supported the LBC secretariat in the areas of administrative and financial management, information technology and communication resources, logistics, health services and infrastructures.

Besides, the AU supported the MNJTF in its effort to monitor the conduct of the MNTJF troops by providing training for civilian members of the staff and officers on civilian protection. It also helped monitoring of the Mission's human rights compliance through a civilian team seconded to the headquarter to provide strategic advice. The AU mobilizes diplomatic support and helps to shape the policy agenda underpinning the MNJTF. For example, by urging the MNJTF member states to incorporate the structural dimensions (causes) of the insurgency the AU notes that the threat of Boko Haram requires a comprehensive approach that will address the root

86. Virtual interview with Dr Adesoji, expert on Africa peace and security, 05 May 2021.

87. Sylvester Bongani Maphosa, 2013, Preparing for peace: The AU Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA in Central Africa, Africa institute of South Africa, Briefing Number 85.

88. The African Union Commission holds donors` conference in support of the Multinational Joint Force Against Boko Haram, Addis Ababa,1 February 2016.

89. Virtual interview with MNJTF civil-military and compliance officer, 19 May 2021. See also, STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SMAIL CHERGUI AFRICAN UNION COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF DEFENCE OF THE LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION MEMBER COUNTRIES AND THE REPUBLIC BENIN, 24 FEBRUARY 2017 ABUJA, NIGERIA; Press Release, the African Union provided additional support to the Multinational Joint Force against Boko Haram terrorist group.

causes of the insurgency related to the absence of state authority, developmental failure, and human right violations.[90] To somehow attune the overly military focus of the MNJTF, the AU in conjunction with the LCBC and with technical support from the UNDP, introduced a regional stabilization strategy in 2018 that targeted services and livelihood issues.[91] It also supported the MNTJF to improve and standardize its handling of Boko haram members in detention.

Notwithstanding the AU readiness to support the MNJTF, its system of support has been bedeviled by problems. Though the EU agreed to support the MNJTF through the AU and initially contributed €50 million,[92] the latter`s procurement system delayed the delivery of the support for two years during which Nigeria covered the cost of the task force. Moreover, there seems to be vested interests and competing expectations that complicate the AU support for the MNTF.[93] Member states of the MNTJF initially approached external donors to provide them the necessary support for the task force and the external actors set a number of pre-requisites related to human rights and humanitarian standards.[94] This forced the members to revert to the AU so that it would serve as a liaison between the mission and external donors. However, once the AU began to be the channel of support to the MNJTF, disagreement over its spending and the procurement system to be used seemed to limit the efficiency and effectiveness of its use as evidenced, for example, by the cancelation by the LCBC of an earlier agreement to use the money for Command, Control and Communication Information System.[95]

The largest financial assistance for the MNJTF seems to be provided on a bilateral basis. The US, for instance, supported the MNJTF with US$ 363 million between 2015 and 2017 (disbursed directly to MNJTF states), while the EU`s €50 million was delayed by two years due to procurement problems.[96] Moreover, while the AU and bilateral partners are providing support, it does not seem to be sufficient since

the PSC reiterates critical shortfalls in the mission's operational capabilities. The shortfalls are especially manifested in relation to land mobility issues such as vehicles, air and navigation assets, communication and air surveillance equipment, mine action and specialized medical personnel.[97]

6.3 AU SUPPORT FOR THE G5 SAHEL FORCE

In comparison to the above two mechanisms, the AU provided limited support to the G5 Sahel force. The enhanced role of external actors, especially France and the EU, in the G-5 Sahel, reduced the scope of AU engagement and coordination. While the EU opted to route its support for the MNJTF through the AU, the opposite happened on the G-5 Sahel. The EU provided support to G-5 Sahel states directly. This might be explained by the leverage of France which has been a key backer of the force and the fact that the G5 states are all French speaking. The EU provided €147 million until 2019 through its Africa Peace Facility for the operationalization of the force and continued to support the force in the subsequent phases.[98] This was complemented with €18 million for operationalization of the police component within which the support is expected to contribute to the investigative unit and coordination at the secretariat level.[99]

The EU also established a coordination hub that pulls together international support to the force by matching international assistance and needs of the joint force.[100] The coordination hub is a liaison with stakeholders such as the Presidency of the G-5 Sahel, the Secretariate, the AU and its Common Defense and Security Policy for the Sahel. These are functions that could have been performed by AU.[101] The EU`s supports also include development of human rights and humanitarian standards compliance framework for the G5 Sahel force.

The UN also supports the force. It provided life support consumables for the joint force operating in Mali through MINSUMA which in due course was extended for all the forces of the Joint Force. The UN has been instrumental in setting normative frameworks and standards of operation of the

90. Virtual interview with the Head of the Regional Stabilisation Secretariat for the LCBC region, 17 May 2021.

91. Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the 15th ordinary meeting of African Chiefs of Defense Staffs and heads of safety and security and 12th ordinary meeting of the specialized technical committee on Defense, Safety and Security, Cairo, Egypt, 15-19 December.

92. Daniel E. Agbiboa (2017) Borders that continue to bother us: the politics of cross-border security cooperation in Africa's Lake Chad Basin, Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, 55:4, 403-425, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1312730.

93. Virtual interview with immediate past Force Commander for the ESF, 14 May 2021.

94. What Role for the Multinational Joint Task Force in Fighting Boko Haram? Africa Report N°291 | 7 July 2020.

95. Ibid.

96. Moda Dieng (2019) The Multi-National Joint Task Force and the G5 Sahel Joint Force: The limits of military capacity-building efforts, Contemporary Security Policy, 40:4, 481-501, DOI: 10.1080/13523260.2019.1602692

97. Peace and Security Council 733rd meeting 13 November 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCXXXIII) COMMUNIQUE.

98. The European Union`s partnership with G5 Sahel countries, July 2019, Available at factsheet_eu_g5_sahel_july-2019.pdf (europa. eu).

99. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General, 2020S/2020/1074.

100. The European Union partnership with G5 Sahel countries, 2019 available at factsheet_eu_g5_sahel_july-2019.pdf (europa.eu).

101. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 18 May 2021.

force through supporting development of the civilian causality tracing and analysis cell and its two elements of standard operating procedures for internal investigation and mechanisms for identifying, monitoring, and analyzing harm to civilians.[102]

International actors, mainly the EU and its member states, introduced various development initiatives to complement military measures through programs such as Alliance for the Sahel and New Partnership for Peace and Stability in the Sahel. Established by France, Germany and the EU, Alliance for the Sahel sought to implement 700 projects at the cost of €11 billion.[103] The G-5 Sahel, on the other hand, came up with its own Priority investment Projects that wanted to implement 105 projects at the cost of US$6 billion. The alliance agreed to cover €1.3 billion of the required €2.4 billion needed in the first phase (2019-2021).[104] This indicates that the two programs do not necessarily complement each other.

Prior to formation of the G5 Sahel, the AU was actively engaged in coordinating regional and international security efforts in the Sahel through its involvement and support for the 2013 Nouakchott Process and the evolution of the 2014 Sahel Strategy and the AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL) that was established to implement the strategy.[105] Since the formation of the G5 Sahel, the AU has played only a supporting role in the security and development interventions in the Sahelo-Sahara areas. When the G5 Sahel mission was to be established, member states indicated that they participated in the AU planning processes following which it deployed its

mission to assess what role it can play.[106] In 2019, the AU Peace and Security Council and member states of G5 Sahel signed a memorandum of understanding through which the former supports the latter including establishment of a strategic support cell.[107] However, based on publicly available sources, there has been little the support cell undertook. Other sub-regional organization of Africa, rather, provided some support for the member states of G5 Sahel. The West Africa Monetary and Economic Union, for instance, pledged an immediate support of US$ 100 million for Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, countries most affected by terrorism.[108] ECOWAS expressed its interest in coordinating counter-terrorism measures undertaken in the Sahel including the Joint Force.[109] Probably worried by these developments, the AU continued to call for coordination and harmonization of counter-terrorism efforts in the region through the Nouakchott Process and called for coordinated efforts to address the root causes of conflict in the region.[110] While the AU is considering establishing its own counter-terrorism force, there have been efforts under the coalition for the Sahel to coordinate the activities of existing forces mainly the MINSUMA, France-owned Operation Barkhane, and the G5 Sahel force.[111] Though there seems to be some effort of the AU to coordinate measures in the Sahel through its High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, this does not seem to have significant effect in practice.

102. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General, 2020S/2020/1074.

103. Rina Bassit, 2019, the G5 Sahel joint force: a marriage of security and development. Telavi University, Africa Research Programme, volume 4 number 13.

104. Ibid.

105. 3rd ministerial meeting on the enhancement of security cooperation on the operationalization of African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan region Niamey Niger, 14 February 2014.

106. Report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel S/2017/869.

107. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2018/432.

108. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2020/373.

109. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2019/868.

110. Peace and Security Council, 703rd meeting, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20 July 2017, PSC/PR/BR.(DCCIII), press statement. Peace and Security Council, 723rd meeting, Addis Ababa Ethiopia, 5 October 2017.; Peace and Security Council 838th meeting, 9th April 2019, PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXXXVIII) COMMUNIQUÉ.

111. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2020/373.

The Nouakchott Process was established as a comprehensive approach to addressing the security challenges of the Sahelo-Saharan region and its peculiarities of overlapping regional (Central, North and West Africa regions) arrangements and the gaps in extant regional security structures. on that transcends Central, North, and West Africa. The Nouakchott Process aspires to a shared vision and collective responsibility, enhanced political dialogue and consultation, and greater cooperation in intelligence sharing, training, and operational capacity building. However, the implementation of the Nouakchott Process and the AU Sahel Strategy stalled due to limited financial resources, regional dynamic (including inter tensions), the evolution of security challenges and increased extra-African involvement in the Sahel.

7

THE AD-HOC MECHANISMS AND THE AU-APSA PROCESS

The Ad-hoc mechanisms manifested in the form of the AU task force seem to be a yet another addition to the two principal mechanisms of peace operation and stabilization, the ASF and the ACIRC, envisioned in the APSA processes.[112] Peace operation interventions under the ASF`s six scenarios were to be executed through instrumentalities of the ASF and its Rapid Deployment Capacity. The ASF was to be based on the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Conflict Management and Resolution mechanisms. Forces that were drawn from one standby bridge would be deployed in operations outside their RECs. This was eventually modified so that forces of each bridge would be operating within its own regional environment.[113] The relation between the AU and the RECs/RM was couched in terms of the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity, and comparative advantage without prejudice to the primacy of the AU in promotion of peace, security, and stability in Africa.[114] What these principles concretely mean in a given situation requiring intervention remains vague or poorly defined. The Nouakchott Process in which both member states, regional organization and research centers all take part in a single forum is one such example where the principle of subsidiarity seems to be eschewed.[115]

112. The ACIRC was dissolved (directed to wind down operations by February 2021) by the AU Assembly in its 2020 14th extraordinary session on silencing the guns. Interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat, 18May 2021.

113. Jude Concodia, 2020, The African Union's ad hoc approach, the African Standby Force or the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Conflict?

114. Peace and Security Council, 780th meeting Addis Ababa, 20 August 2019 PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXLXX) COMMUNIQUÉ.

115. Katharina P. W. Döring (2018) The changing ASF geography: From the intervention experience in Mali to the African

The scenarios do not envision intense asymmetrical warfare and conflicts that transcend two or RECs/RMs areas, and the need for a violent stabilization intervention where forces of hostilities with significant power have to be confronted to lay down conditions for peaceful and political solutions to crisis.[116] Though the scenarios envisaged for the ASF are still relevant, however, the significant shifts in the insecurity landscape where threat to peace perpetrated by forces that are not necessarily amenable for a negotiated solution and the threats posed are regionalized or cross-regionalized, present new scenarios.[117]

This is further compounded by the fact that, at least in some situations, the ASF has to make a rapid intervention as was the case in Mali where terrorist groups advanced too fast and too deep into the Malian territory. The ECOWAS and its standby arrangement failed to intervene in a timely manner leading to the French intervention and question marks for the AU as it failed to proffer an 'African solution to an African problem' with the urgency and speed required. The delay, caused by disagreement from Algeria and Mauritania, adjacent states () that are not part of ECOWAS and yet have a stake in the way the situation in Mali is handled, points to limitation of the geography-based conception of region envisioned in the APSA framework.[118] In short, the static definition

Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises and the Nouakchott Process, African Security, 11:1, 32-58, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2017.1419632.

116. Virtual interview with Ms Keng, African peace and security expert, 15 May 2021.

117. Virtual interview with immediate past Force Commander for ESF, 14 May 2021.

118. Virtual interview with Dr Adesoji, African peace and security expert, 10 May 2021.

> *The ASF took more than a decade to be declared operational in 2016. Emergence of the ACIRC and the Ad-hoc mechanisms in the interregnum are directly linked to the decade-long struggle to get the ASF operational. Moreover, the dynamic of Africa's security landscape changed radically to the extent that the scenarios envisioned when ASF was launched neither reflect nor are sufficient for emerging crisis and challenges across the continent.*

of regions in the APSA framework makes it less flexible to respond timely and appropriately in contexts where emerging threats crisscross two or more regions or involve states that belong to different regional configurations and security arrangements.

These weaknesses lead to exploration of alternative arrangements and solutions on the part of the AU and member states directly affected by insecurity. The AU proposed establishment of an African capacity for immediate response to crisis as a flexible and adaptive force of 5000 troops that swiftly responds to crisis through its 1500 tactical combat units that will be spearheaded by a lead nation. The ACIRC had an added advantage of addressing gaps emerging from slow operationalization of the Rapid Deployment Capability that would have undertaken emergency intervention under the APSA framework. The ACIRC would engage in stabilization and peace enforcement interventions, neutralization of terrorists, organized criminal and rebellions and provision of emergency assistance for member states. While it existed, the AU sought to harmonize the ASF and ACIRC within the framework of APSA as contained in the Maputo Workplan, for instance.[119] Disbandment of ACIRC and declaration of the ASF as fully operational would suggest that the ASF is expected to take over the envisaged function of the ACIRC, especially with its rapid deployment capability. An observer stated, "It was in this context that the three Ad-hoc mechanisms were launched largely through the instrumentalities of the 'coalition of the willing' and in response to pressing security threats."[120] Potentially, the APSA process can accommodate the Ad-hoc mechanism arrangement so far as they share the normative order and principles envisioned for ushering peace in the continent.

Indeed, the PSC reiteration as well as the Maputo Work Plan point to the possibility that the ASF and the ARMs could be integrated.[121] The new draft ASF

doctrine, which was provisionally adopted by the Specialized Technical Committee on Safety, Security and Defense identified a number of principles guiding AU peace support operation including the primacy of political, African leadership, consent, legitimacy, credibility, standards of use of force and adherence to international law.[122] It also indicated that the AU PSO could deploy any combination of the APSA and African Governance Architecture (AGA) instruments and Protection of Civilian will be part of the mandate of all peace support operations. Though the document recognizes the AU authorized peace support operation as distinct from the AU PSOs, it is vague on whether the doctrine applies on these peace support operations or whether it is meant only to be applied on AU-PSO. Yet, the AU's support and coordination efforts for the anti-LRA taskforce and the MNJTF including input into their concept of operations, stabilization strategies, training and mission support, and adoption of AU PSO policies confirm the possibility of aligning authorized missions to AU PSO policies and standards. This raises the possibility that a peace support operation undertaken in accordance with the AU doctrine but outside the AU structure could be considered to fall within or part of APSA processes.[123]

The degree of integration of the ARMs into the APSA includes the scale and scope of AU/APSA input to mission planning and support, development of concept of operation, training and logistics support, and observance of AU PSO doctrine and policies.[124] This suggests that the anti-LRA taskforce and the MNJTF are operationally part of APSA, while the G5 Sahel is less integrated to APSA. Still, Ad-hoc mechanisms are a response to the deficiencies of the prevailing AU structure whether they are the most efficient and effective response to these deficiencies is open to debate. They, as discussed below, certainly have their own advantages and drawbacks viewed in relation to the APSA structure and processes.

119. The Maputo work plan on the enhancement of the African stand by force (ASF) (2016-2020). Available APSA Roadmap 2015-2020 (peaceau.org).

120. Virtual interview with Chris Ichite, Deputy Executive Secretary of APSTA, 15 May 2021.

121. Peace and Security Council 782nd, Nouakchott, Mauritania, 27 June 2018, PSC/MIN/COMM.1(DCCLXXXII) COMMUNIQUÉ.

122. Draft African Union Doctrine on peace Support Operation, 21 October 2019.

123. Virtual interview with Chris Ichite, Deputy Executive Secretary of APSTA, 15 May 2021.

124. Virtual interview with the Head of the Regional Stabilisation Secretariat for the LCBC, 17 May 2021.

The ARMs are part of APSA processes in a political sense insofar as a mission is authorized by APSA structures and processes including some reporting obligation and annual renewal of mandates by the AU-PSC. At the operation level, the ARMs occupy different position along the APSA operational spectrum and the degree to which a particular Ad-hoc mechanism is operationally part of the APSA is a function of certain variables.

8

CHALLENGES OF THE AD-HOC MODELS FOR AU APSA

The APSA, broadly understood as a complex of norms, rules, and institutions for resolving, managing, and preventing conflict in Africa, faces a number of questions (or challenges) by the activities of the Ad-hoc arrangements in a number of ways. To begin with, these Ad-hoc arrangements are outside of the ASF, element of APSA that deals with the use of forces for peace and security. The ARMs do not belong to the RECs/RMs that constitute the regional brigades of the ASF. Though the AU reiterates in authorizing these peace operations that they are authorized within the framework of the APSA, they tend to be outside in terms of the institutional processes through which the AU deploys forces and the normative standards and procedures that are presumed to guide such use of forces. The ASF is supposed to be multidimensional and multidisciplinary while these arrangements are primarily military. The ASF is supposed to privilege the political over the military options whereas these arrangements privilege the military over the political options. The ASF has permanent institutional structure, whereas these Ad-hoc arrangements are temporary though it becomes debatable since they have existed for years or more.[125] Also, the ASF is mostly an intervention in a member state, whereas these arrangements are regional in the scope of the response.

It is the case that the ASF itself is under revision including its doctrine and conceptual framework to make it fit with the evolving crisis on the continent. This points to the possibility of synchronizing the ASF and these Ad-hoc mechanisms. However, there are dynamics that pose a challenge to this prospect.

125. Virtual interview with Dr Adesoji, expert on peace and security in Africa, 10 May 2021.

The Ad-hoc mechanisms are targeted at a specific threat, the neutralization of which would be the end of their mandate as is the case with the RCI-LRA. Uganda withdrew from the RTF in 2017 and in its latest communique the AU`s specialized committee on defense, safety and security urged the Joint Coordination Commission to deliberate over the possible political direction the arrangement should take. Hence, these Ad-hoc arrangements would not be a permanent landscape on African security whereas the ASF is supposed to be an institutionalized response that combines political, military, and humanitarian dimension, with the possibility of involvement in post-conflict reconstruction.

Second, though the ASF is under revision, there are doctrinal and normative issues with widespread acceptance and, thus, would not be discarded even under the revised framework. Progressive norms related to compliance to human rights and humanitarian laws, protection of civilians and the need to privilege political over military options are pillars of ASF doctrine. In this regard, the Ad-hoc arrangements are less aligned to these normative standards, owing to the circumstances of their establishment and the way they are structured. Terrorist organizations are not amenable to negotiated settlement while their violence against civilians is a source of pressure for action both on the part of the government and the international community.

Third, compliance with human rights and humanitarian standards will continue to be an issue insofar as they are largely part of a national army that lacks professionalism. The contingents working under the Ad-hoc arrangement would not suddenly be professional just because the command and control

The ARMs are military operations with a significant part of their cost covered by the troop contributing countries, which combined with the nature of the threat they have to ward off, would create an incentive to privilege the military over the political.

is transferred from the national contingent. Though material and technical support would enhance such capacity and thus create the possibility for such an eventuality, the support does not seem to be sufficient to trigger such professionalization. There is fear that bilateral support, motivated largely by counteracting global jihadi networks, by partners creates opportunities or incentivizes for less professionalism; unprofessional forces might sustain the corrupt and patronage laden politics of these countries which would sustain the structural drivers of radicalization in the first place.[126] All these pinpoint that full integration of these Ad-hoc arrangements into APSA framework would be a challenge from a normative and institutional point of view, even when the ASF framework is revised to reflect the shifts in Africa's peace and security landscapes.

as a source of finance for terrorist organizations.[128] Inspired by such considerations, the AU has supported the Nouakchott Processes for the enhancement of security in the Sahelo-Saharan region, traversing countries that are members of different RECs. Initiation of the G5 Sahel Force outside of this process, without adequate means of integration or synergy with it, remained source of concern for both the AU and the UN.

Critically, it is most likely going to remain an enduring structural challenge for the AU to monitor and ensure that the Ad-hoc mechanisms act under its doctrines, guidance notes, standard operating procedures, and compliance framework, not least because the AU has limited control over the operation of these Ad-hoc mechanisms. In the case of RTF, though the force commander was supposed to have command

> *The G5 Sahel Force illustrates the limitations the AU APSA framework faces in integrating these Ad-hoc arrangements into its framework. Addressing the threat of terrorism in G5 Sahel countries require viewing it in relation to the problems in Libya and coordinating with countries such as Algeria, Cote d`Ivoire, Togo, and Benin.*

Fourth, integration of the Ad-hoc mechanisms into the APSA framework has other dimensions that make the mechanisms structurally problematic outside of APSA. These arrangements, mainly the MNJTF and the G5 Sahel Force, exclude countries that face similar problems associated with terrorism. Terrorist organizations are widening their network, whereas responses even with the Ad-hoc mechanisms are limited to the countries that established them. When the sources of the threat transcend the member states of the coalition, there will be problems in following a holistic approach to the threats. While Algeria has a stake in the way the Malian crisis is addressed, the crisis of the G5 Sahel is reportedly spilling over into the other three.[127] Report also indicates that illegal gold exploitation in Cote D'ivoire and lack of strong measures against drug trafficking could serve

and control over the force, the national level tactical and operational commander has a significant leeway in how they execute the mission. In the case of the MNJTF, the oversight is rather by the LCBC that lacks the capacity to ensure adherence to AU standards. A strategy for the protection of civilians was developed only after four years of the MNTJF establishment which points to the issues that are given urgency in the operation of the force.[129] All these pose problems for the APSA process though there are opportunities for a creative compromise that will help in addressing threat to security in the areas of operation of the Ad-hoc mechanisms.

126. Daniel E. Agbiboa (2017) Borders that continue to bother us: the politics of cross-border security cooperation in Africa's Lake Chad Basin, Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, 55:4, 403-425, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1312730.

127. Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel Report of the Secretary-General S/2019/371.

128. 8th meeting of the heads of intelligence and security services of the countries of the Sehalo-Saharan region, Grand Bassam, Cote D` Ivoire, 14-15 November.

129. Moda Dieng (2019) The Multi-National Joint Task Force and the G5 Sahel Joint Force: The limits of military capacity-building efforts, Contemporary Security Policy, 40:4, 481-501, DOI: 10.1080/13523260.2019.1602692.

> *It is the case that the AU is key in terms of giving legitimacy and logistic support, however it is unable to neither have sufficient oversight and control over the conduct of these forces nor properly integrate the ARMs into the ASF structure and roadmap.*

9

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE AD-HOC MECHANISM FOR THE AU-APSA

In spite of the above challenges of integrating and harmonizing the Ad-hoc mechanisms with the APSA framework, there are also advantages and lessons to be gained from the existence of ARMs. First, they manifest the principles of subsidiarity and comparative advantage as a timely experiment responding to fast-paced security threats. The ARMs constitute a new modality of responding to new generation security threats. Especially, to those that pop up at the intersection of two or more REC regions with

> *The ARMs pinpoint ways of bypassing long-winded bureaucracies and decision-making processes in responding to transnational security threats in Africa.*

competing regional security arrangements or affecting states that belong to different REC configurations.

Second, the Ad-hoc mechanisms incubate important insights and learning on fast-paced force mobilization and deployment and how to leverage historical connections and shared security concerns in composition of peace operations. One respondent noted, "At the AU, a lot of time is wasted due to bureaucracy and politics, but where you have regional mechanism to immediately respond, it is good to prevent loss of lives."[130] The Ad-hoc mechanisms could signpost the future of peace operations in Africa, relative to the changing security landscape and emergent threats. This could have implications for the mandate, training, command and control, and capabilities for AU mandated missions, especially in terms of adapting AU doctrine with the reality of force projection and peace enforcement.

130. Virtual interview with a Senior Political Officer, AU-PSC Secretariat 17 May 2021.

Third, the ARMs pinpoint additional, decentralized strategies for fundraising, mobilizing support, and sustaining peace operations in Africa, especially those undertaken by RECs. The mechanisms enabled states to undertake stabilization tasks covering their own cost; Nigeria covered the cost of the MNJTF for two years. G5 Sahel states contributed US$ 10 million each for the G5 Sahel force and the Ugandan contingent covered the cost of its operation under the regional task force. These arrangements also have other advantages in terms of logistics since most of the troops are deployed either in their own territory or in an area not far from it, avoiding the cost of moving troops with their operational necessities.

Fourth, the Ad-hoc mechanisms highlight the need to reflect on the scope of leverage the AU has over authorized missions beyond political endorsement, especially when partner funding and material support are made bilaterally. Reduced operational integration of the G5 Sahel with APSA is poignant.

Fifth, the Ad-hoc mechanisms showcase a strategic gap in the APSA process – the absence of an institutionalized platform for bringing together all ARMs and wider PSOs in Africa to share experiences, undertake joint analysis and appraisal, coordinate strategies, and identify cross-cutting needs (training and capability issues).

Sixth, the Ad-hoc mechanisms signpost the redefinition of a 'security region' or the emergence of flexible understanding of what constitutes a region

> *Nonetheless, there are risks that the emergence and proliferation of ad-hoc mechanisms could drain the enthusiasm and even undermine fundraising and support for the ASF.*

and how it could be defined in the quest to promote peace and security in Africa. By establishing Ad-hoc mechanisms of security intervention by states hard pressed by some kind of threats, member states are giving practical experience to the ongoing redefinition of the ASF doctrines and concepts. The APSA framework might need to give a room for an understanding of a 'region' that is based on actual security interconnection than simply geographic closeness.

Finally, legitimization of these arrangements by the AU unlocks a range of benefits. For instance, their authorization by the AU and their regional character

triggered the need to develop new procedures and processes to enhance accountability, transparency, and normative standards. All this increased the willingness of partners to fund them.[131] AU authorization also enables the Ad-hoc mechanisms to access support through the AU system. While the AU funded the operationalization and the sustenance of the headquarter of the RTF, it also mobilized resource for the MNTJF. Other important milestones from the AU authorization include enhanced commitment to regional security cooperation and providing a space for addressing inter-state tensions and suspicions as was the case between DRC and Uganda over the LRA.

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131. Matthew Brubacher, 2017, The AU Task Forces: an African response to transnational armed groups. J. of Modern African Studies, 55, 2, pp. 275-299.

> *The ASF approach seems to be based on a rigid understanding of a region determined solely by a static and institutional (REC) geographic consideration while in reality regions in Africa are fluid, more of a product of societal practices. A security region could be a geographic area within which the security of states and society is deeply interconnected.*

10
CONCLUSION

Overall, emergence of the Ad-hoc mechanisms constitutes a gain for Africa (states and populations) and the AU and APSA, notwithstanding the highlighted challenges. The Ad-hoc mechanism are unlikely to disappear; they will become a feature of Africa's security landscape for decades to come. In addition to the afore-stated emerging lessons from the ARMs, they also incubate important advantages, opportunities and learning for the APSA in respect of its core mandate of preventing conflicts and protecting lives and properties. The Ad-hoc mechanisms represent the 'art' of the possible; they are a pragmatic and 'compromise' option for TCCs, RECs, AU, and other stakeholders. The ARMs fill a genuine gap in APSA's process including slow operationalization of the ASF, major changes in

Africa's security landscape, and emergence of fast paced security threats requiring rapid responses. They represent a compromise for states that would have objected peace enforcement interventions under the ASF/ACIRC framework appear to be willing under these arrangements. To the extent that such Ad-hoc mechanisms are better than no initiative, they could be viewed as a pragmatic way of doing what is politically possible. The Ad-hoc mechanisms could be an invaluable addition to the repertoire of resources and capabilities available to the AU.

The evolution of Ad-hoc mechanisms in relation to the APSA also signpost at least three areas for further research: First is a comparative analysis of AU mandated and authorized peace operations in terms of the mandates, command and control,

benchmarks and effectiveness, deployment and mission support, funding, and policy compliance. This could also include assessment of systems for aligning and sequencing military, political, development and humanitarian components. This is to identify best practices in peace operations in Africa as part of the 'African Solutions to African Problems' initiative. Second is exploration of entry and exit strategies for the Ad-hoc mechanisms to understand the prospect of permanent institutionalization, and the influence of extant sub-regional bodies. Third is mapping of

new security regions in Africa based on emergent security challenges and ways of adapting the ASF plans to respond to this, or adaptation of the ASF deployment to leverage the logic of Ad-hoc mechanisms. In fact, this could include exploration of joint Ad-hoc taskforce by two or more orthodox RECs and other mechanisms for inter-REC security activities in response to the security challenges that crisscross their boundaries.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACIRC	African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis
AoI	Area of Interest
AoO	Area of Operation
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture.
AQIM	Al-Qaida in the Maghreb (AQIM)
ARM	Ad-Hoc Regional Mechanism
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
JCM	Joint Coordination Mechanism
JOC	Joint Operation Centre
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
MISAHEL	African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel
MNJTF	Multi-National Joint Task Force.
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSAS	Mission Sustenance Allowance
MUJAO	Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSO	Peace Support Operation
PSOD	Peace Support Operations Department
RCI-LRA	Regional Cooperation Initiatives against LRA
REC	Regional Economic Community
RM	Regional Mechanism
RSS	Regional Stabilization Strategy
RTF	Regional Task Force
SITREPS	Situation Reports
TCC	Troop Contributing Country
UN	United Nations
UNOWAS	UN Office for West Africa and Sahel

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AD-HOC REGIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND APSA

CONCLUSIONS OF A CASE STUDY OF ACL-GLR, MNJTF, AND G5 SAHEL FORCE

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The significant shift of the regionalized insecurity landscape and asymmetrical warfare in Africa, complex bureaucracy and slow political decision-making processes led African states to turn their attention to Ad-hoc Regional Mechanisms (ARMs).

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ARMs constitutes a gain for Africa. They fill a genuine gap in the African Peace and Security Architecture process and are responses to fast-paced security threats.

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ARMs will continue to be a structural challenge for the AU to monitor. For the AU it is crucial that they act under its doctrines, guidance notes, standard operating procedures, and compliance framework. However, the AU enjoys only limited control over the operation of these Ad-hoc mechanisms at this moment.

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