Programme

Peacebuilding in Africa: evolving challenges, responses and new African thinking

Monday 23 – Wednesday 25 February 2015 | WP1358

In recent decades, the peacebuilding landscape in Africa has shifted dramatically both in response to the changing dynamics of conflict as well as the emergence of new conflict actors on the continent. In many cases, the changing landscape of conflict has thrown up challenges that exceed the initial scope of provisions of existing peacebuilding norms and frameworks. These changes have exacerbated the peacebuilding dilemma in a context where post-war peace tends to unravel within the first decade of the signing of a peace agreement/cessation of hostilities and conflict. It also raises questions about the challenges that emerging shifts in conflict dynamics and the international context pose for the idea and practice of peacebuilding in Africa.

This meeting, focusing on African perspectives on peacebuilding, will bring together leading African researchers, policy analysts and other peacebuilding actors with counterparts from other parts of the world. It aims:

- To assess the current threat landscape in Africa and the challenges to building stable peace.
- To analyse the dynamics of peacebuilding and Africa-Global engagements since the end of the Cold War and its implications.
- To explore and discuss current and emerging thinking and analysis on peacebuilding in Africa from African perspectives.
- To discuss alternative and/or complementary peacebuilding approaches, which are potentially relevant to the transformation of the conflict and security landscape in Africa.

Monday 23 February

1300-1430 Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

1500 Welcome and introduction

Isobelle Jaques
Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

In association with:  

With support from:
With introductory remarks from:

**Cyril Obi**  
Programme Director, African Peacebuilding Network, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), New York

**Godwin Murunga**  
Director, African Leadership Centre and Senior Research Fellow Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi

1520-1645

1. **Evolving conflict and security terrain in Africa: what are the challenges and opportunities?**

With the rise of people-led popular uprisings and emergence of highly mobile insurgent groups, traditional responses to unconstitutional changes of government (UCG) are fast becoming outdated. Furthermore, with the trend towards asymmetrical conflicts pitting non-state actors against states and civilians, such as Al Shabaab and Boko Haram for instance, unconventional warfare and terror attacks are complicating the conflict and security landscape. What challenges to establishing sustainable peace? How to approach the evolving conflict terrain in Africa and ensure that peace settlements do not collapse?

**Funmi Olonisakin**  
Founding Director, African Leadership Centre; Director, Security Leadership and Society, King’s College, London; Member, UN Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture

1645-1730

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1730-1900

2. **Extant knowledge: is traditional thinking keeping up?**

As the changing landscape outpaces thinking on responses to UCG, where is the African effort in re-thinking the research and policy agenda in the evolving peacebuilding terrain? Whose thinking is shaping the peacebuilding agenda in Africa? What gaps in knowledge on peacebuilding? What are the conceptual, methodological and paradigmatic issues in the face of complex conflict, peace and security challenges?

**Chair: Mats Berdal**, Security and Development, Department of War Studies, Kings College, London

**Abdel-Fatau Musah**  
Deputy Head of Office and Director of Political Affairs, United Nations Office African Union (UNOAU), Addis Ababa

**Devon Curtis**  
Senior Lecturer; Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), University of Cambridge

1930

Reception followed by dinner

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**Tuesday 24 February**

0800-0845  
Breakfast

0900-1030  
3. **Innovations in African peacebuilding**

New peacebuilding initiatives are emerging in Africa: are there tensions between innovative frameworks and traditionally influential approaches and structures designed by international actors? Are African efforts contributing to new knowledge and practice in African peacebuilding? What, if anything, is new and/or transformational in these efforts? How to ensure that new initiatives achieve the traction and scale needed for them to
decisively impact the African peacebuilding terrain?

**Chair:** Torbjorn Pettersson, Assistant Director General, Head of Africa Department, Swedish International Development Authority, (SIDA), Stockholm

**Maria Schoeman**
Professor and Head of Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria

**Boubacar N’Diaye**
Professor Africana Studies/Political Science, The College of Wooster, Ohio

**Abubakar Zein**
Member of Parliament, East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), Arusha

1030-1100

1100-1230

**4. What alternative perspectives are evident in peacebuilding in interventions in Africa: parallel working groups**

New initiatives need to be unpacked and analysed both to raise pertinent questions and set about reshaping the peacebuilding agenda within the continent. What alternative perspectives are seen and how to learn from them? How to best engage with broader global discourses and practices?

Following on from the plenary discussion on innovations in African peacebuilding, the four parallel working groups will enable more in-depth discussion on new thinking and innovative initiatives in peacebuilding, looking at:

- What are the challenges?
- What are the opportunities?
- What is the experience gained, or lessons learned to date?
- What recommendations can be made to build on and implement lessons learned?
- What has to be done, by whom and what are the resource implications?

**Working group I**
Chair: Maria Schoeman, Professor and Head of Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria

Commentator: Awino Okech, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, African Leadership Centre

**Working group II**
Chair: Abubakar Zein, Member of Parliament, East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), Arusha

Commentator: Comfort Ero, Africa Programme Director, International Crisis Group, Nairobi

**Working Group III**
Chair: Vusi Gumede, Professor and Head, Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute, Pretoria

Commentator: Godwin Murunga, Director, African Leadership Centre and Senior Research Fellow Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi

**Working Group IV:**
Chair: Boubacar N’Diaye, Professor Africana Studies/Political Science, The College of Wooster, Ohio

Commentator: Gilbert Khadiagala, Professor of International Relations and Head of Department, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
1300-1430 Lunch

1500-1630

5. Peacebuilding policy spaces: evolving issues and actors

What are the relationships between African efforts and international engagements on peacebuilding? Who is doing what in peacebuilding, and is there competition rather than complementarity? How does the UN, or the European Union, approach peacebuilding in Africa? Do African local and regional actors have the capacity to effectively execute peacebuilding efforts?

Chair: Alex Vines, Director, Area Studies and International Law; Head, Africa Programme, Chatham House

João Gomes-Porto
Visiting Professor, Addis Ababa University

Jide Okeke

*Ejeviome Eloho Otobo
Non-resident Senior Expert in Peacebuilding and Global Economic Policy, Global Governance Institute Brussels and Former Director and Deputy Head, United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, UN Headquarters, New York

*His paper was presented by,

Cyril Obi, Programme Director, African Peacebuilding Network, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), New York

1630-1700 Tea/coffee

1700-1830

6. Parallel working groups: what works, where and why?

Four parallel small group sessions to focus on country case studies, focusing on:

- What are the challenges?
- What are the opportunities?
- What is the experience gained, or lessons learned to date?
- What recommendations can be made to build on and implement lessons learned? What has to be done, by whom and what are the resource implications?

Working group I: South Sudan
Chair: Caty Clément, Senior Programme Adviser and Senior Fellow, Geneva Center for Security Policy, Geneva

Commentator: Kenneth Omeje, Senior Visiting Research Fellow, John and Elnora Ferguson Centre for African Studies (JEFAS), University of Bradford

Working group II: Mali/Central African Republic/Nigeria
Chair: Abdel-Fatau Musah, Deputy Head of Office and Director of Political Affairs, United Nations, Office to the African Union (UNOAU)

Commentators: Abiodun Alao, Senior Lecturer in African Studies at the African Leadership Centre and James Kewir Kevin, Senior Lecturer and Researcher of Conflict Prevention and Regional Integration at the Centre for Research in Political and Strategic Studies in the University of Yaoundé II Soa and the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in the University of Buea, Cameroon

Working group III: Somalia/Somaliland
Chair: Ron Kassimir, Executive Programme Director, Social Science Research
Wednesday 25 February

0800-0845  Breakfast and checkout

0900-1015  7. Working group discussions: each group has designated chair and rapporteur feedback

- Report back from the eight parallel working groups, focussing on the policy options discussed, and how they could be implemented, followed by round table discussion.

1015-1030  eQuestionnaire completion
            http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WP1358

1030-1100  Tea/coffee

1100-1230  8. Conclusions and next steps: carrying the messages forward at the local, national and global levels

- Lessons going forward: What specific points of action arising from the discussions should be prioritised? What should be done to enable African leadership in peacebuilding thinking and practice? How to ensure the development of a knowledge base on African peacebuilding for the next generation of scholars and policy analysts?

Distilling the conclusions
Kayode Fayemi
Former Governor of Ekiti State, Nigeria

Respondent
Cyril Obi
Programme Director, African Peacebuilding Network, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), New York

1300  Lunch

1400  Participants depart