

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL | WORKING PAPERS

# REVISITING THE “PRIMACY OF POLITICS” IN CONTEMPORARY PEACEBUILDING ENTERPRISE IN AFRICA

RHUKS AKO

AFRICAN PEACEBUILDING NETWORK  
APN WORKING PAPERS: NO. 17

*This work carries a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 License. This license permits you to copy, distribute, and display this work as long as you mention and link back to the Social Science Research Council, attribute the work appropriately (including both author and title), and do not adapt the content or use it commercially. For details, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/>.*

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

*Launched in March 2012, the African Peacebuilding Network (APN) supports independent African research on conflict-affected countries and neighboring regions of the continent, as well as the integration of high-quality African research-based knowledge into global policy communities. In order to advance African debates on peacebuilding and promote African perspectives, the APN offers competitive research grants and fellowships, and it funds other forms of targeted support, including strategy meetings, seminars, grantee workshops, commissioned studies, and the publication and dissemination of research findings. In doing so, the APN also promotes the visibility of African peacebuilding knowledge among global and regional centers of scholarly analysis and practical action and makes it accessible to key policymakers at the United Nations and other multilateral, regional, and national policymaking institutions.*

## **ABOUT THE SERIES**

*“African solutions to African problems” is a favorite mantra of the African Union, but since the 2002 establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the continent has continued to face political, material, and knowledge-related challenges to building sustainable peace. Peacebuilding in Africa has sometimes been characterized by interventions by international actors who lack the local knowledge and lived experience needed to fully address complex conflict-related issues on the continent. And researchers living and working in Africa need additional resources and platforms to shape global debates on peacebuilding as well as influence regional and international policy and practitioner audiences. The APN Working Papers series seeks to address these knowledge gaps and needs by publishing independent research that provides critical overviews and reflections on the state of the field, stimulates new thinking on overlooked or emerging areas of African peacebuilding, and engages scholarly and policy communities with a vested interest in building peace on the continent.*

# REVISITING THE "PRIMACY OF POLITICS" IN CONTEMPORARY PEACEBUILDING ENTERPRISE IN AFRICA

**RHUKS AKO**

*AFE BABALOLA UNIVERSITY*

MARCH 2018

## I. INTRODUCTION

Peacebuilding is an evolving enterprise in Africa and its evolution is a reflection of the persistence of conflict on the continent. Although the world has seen a reduction in violent conflict since the end of the Cold War, Africa continues to experience over half of the world's conflicts.<sup>1</sup> Notably, most conflicts in Africa have been intra-state conflicts, which have proved to be enduring, yet at the same time constantly changing. For example, conflicts in South Sudan that began as independence and self-determination movements did not necessarily end when these goals were achieved. Instead, South Sudan has experienced civil wars and repeated violence even after it gained independence through a long war of secession with the Republic of Sudan.<sup>2</sup> In Nigeria, the violence in the Niger Delta has transformed from human rights struggles around natural resources to a criminal insurgency characterized by hostage taking, oil theft, and other forms of political violence.<sup>3</sup>

The dynamic nature of violent conflict is a reflection of the political dynamics of the conflict as embodied by the actors involved in them. In other words,

changing political dynamics and actors are at the heart of conflicts. Africa is replete with these conflicts, and the African Union (AU), the continental body, bears a huge responsibility for navigating these evolving conflicts and actors in a bid to promote and maintain peace among and within its Member States. The AU has, through different conflict resolution mechanisms, sought to address and resolve the plethora of violent conflicts in Africa, particularly those that pose threats to the unity and stability of its Member States.

The African Union's Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework (PCRDPF) is one of such mechanisms designed by the AU to intervene in Member States coming out of periods of violent conflict. The policy framework is a comprehensive document that adopts a holistic approach to engaging with countries emerging from conflict, to promote sustainable peace and development. However, plaudits for the document are limited to its contents until the AU is able to successfully implement it. The practical application of the PCRDPF takes place within a complex web of political considerations. This paper concentrates on those that have an impact on the timely intervention of the AU vis-à-vis the implementation of the PCRDPF. Particular attention is paid to the interaction between the departments tasked with the primary responsibilities of implementing the PCRDPF, and the timeliness of AU intervention to implement the policy.

This working paper takes on this challenge by examining the different political considerations that impact the articulation and implementation of the PCRDPF. Put differently, it analyzes the primacy of political considerations within the AU system that determine the timely, and thus effective intervention in Member States requiring post conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD). It is divided into five sections including this introduction. The second section highlights the conflict landscape in Africa and the peacebuilding activities of the AU. This section expands on the norms that govern AU-led peacebuilding in Africa and goes further to problematize the local politics in countries experiencing violent conflict. The third section discusses the PCRDPF, focusing on its history, its pillars, and its operationalization. The fourth section analyzes the factors that influence the practical implementation of the PCRDPF, with focus on the primacy of political considerations. It is divided into two parts for ease of discussion. The first part discusses some of the in-house (AU) political considerations that impact the implementation of the policy framework. The second part examines how the internal AU political considerations impact its interven-

tions, especially with regard to connecting with local stakeholders who are also working to promote PCRD. Thus far, the Central African Republic (CAR) is the only country where the PCRDPF has been expressly implemented; CAR will therefore be used as the case study for this discussion. The fifth section discusses the possibilities that exist for the African Union Commission (AUC) to adopt a new methodology that will promote effective service delivery by the Commission, particularly with respect to its PCRD mandate.

## **II. THE CONFLICT LANDSCAPE AND AU PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA**

Africa has historically been a theatre of violent conflict.<sup>4</sup> However, the current focus on conflicts in Africa is limited to violent conflicts that have occurred as a result of socio-political processes since the emergence of colonialism on the continent. During the colonial era, violent conflicts emanated from anti-colonial protests by indigenous ethnic groups in Africa as well as intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts.<sup>5</sup> Many of the conflicts during this period laid the foundation for some of the post-colonial violence in Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Although this history matters, what is particularly important in understanding contemporary conflicts is the dynamic nature of conflict itself.<sup>7</sup> These conflicts, which had roots in historical cleavages and the then prevailing political dynamics in countries that had recently emerged from colonialism, were fed by Cold War ideological divisions.<sup>8</sup> The influence of the Cold War on African conflicts was driven by the struggle by global powers to support warring groups in Africa aligned with their particular ideologies. For example, opposing powers in the Cold War supported key actors in the Angolan civil war.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the secessionists of Katanga in the newly independent Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) aligned themselves with the West in the manner in which they framed the ideological basis of their struggle. This ensured that the government that emerged in the DRC after the assassination of Patrice Lumumba received the support of Western Powers, and that the country remained a Western ally after its independence from Belgium.

The examples of Angola and Congo indicate the significant role the Cold War played in shaping conflict in Africa. A similar trend can be observed since the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11, 2001. Since then, the narrative surrounding global conflict has been largely influenced by the counter-terrorism efforts of the United States and the international community. Violent conflicts in Africa have increasingly featured terrorist involvement,

thus necessitating a response that is shaped by the global narratives of terrorism. Although these conflicts involve local actors, they are fundamentally shaped by the prevailing global order. In essence, even though these conflicts occur in Africa, they are also a manifestation of global challenges. This shows that there is an intersection between the “global” and the “local” in the theatre of conflict. The changing global order has impacted the nature of conflict in Africa.

It is noteworthy that the immediate end of the Cold War witnessed an escalation in conflict.<sup>10</sup> In Africa, local actors sought to violently re-assert their dominance in fragile countries even as international support from the Eastern and Western Cold War blocs had weakened. Despite the challenges the Cold War brought to the security landscape in Africa, it also gave rise to some opportunities vis-à-vis peacebuilding. Most importantly, the end of the Cold War reduced the ideological tensions that had shaped voting within the United Nations (UN) Security Council and enabled the UN to increase its intervention in conflict processes, thereby facilitating the development of the concept of peacebuilding.<sup>11</sup>

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the then-UN Secretary General, launched his “Agenda for Peace” in 1992, which has since influenced the understanding and practice of peacebuilding. Three notable changes occurred following the UN’s “Agenda for Peace” initiative, including the expansion of peacebuilding activities, a proliferation of institutions tasked with peacebuilding, and an increase in peacebuilding scholarship. The UN has engaged in other initiatives that further developed the theoretical and practical understanding of peacebuilding. These include the 2000 UN Brahimi Report on Peacebuilding Reform, the 2004 UN High Level Panel report titled “A More Secure World,” as well as the conceptualization of human security that “expanded the types and peacebuilding measures on the agenda of international institutions.”<sup>12</sup> Contemporary peacebuilding, often described as liberal peacebuilding, now refers to the simultaneous pursuit of conflict resolution, market sovereignty, and liberal democracy.<sup>13</sup> The understanding is that promoting activities and structures that reduce the likelihood of violent conflict will be conducive to building peace.<sup>14</sup>

As the theoretical underpinnings of peacebuilding developed, Africa provided a testing ground for their practical application, beginning with the UN’s involvement in the DRC between 1960 and 1964, which is thought to be the precursor to later efforts, such as Namibia from 1989-90. When the UN

Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005, all five countries on its agenda were African, and in 2011, seven of the sixteen UN peacekeeping efforts were in Africa. In essence, peacebuilding was a necessity that the continental body needed to face head on.

The attempt by continental actors to respond to violent conflict in Africa is captured and institutionalized in the African Union (AU), which is the continent's overarching multilateral institution. When the AU emerged from the ashes of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 2002, it made the resolution of violent conflict on the continent one of its primary objectives, and adjusted the organizing principles and norms of its predecessor to reflect this new purpose. While the OAU had focused on African integration and building pan-African unity, the AU intended to be a "firefighter" institution within Africa. One area where this is evident is that while the OAU insisted on respect for sovereignty of its Member States and non-interference in internal matters, the AU has recently promulgated the norm of non-indifference in the internal affairs of Member States.

To engage in peacebuilding, the AU has developed the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The APSA is made up of five pillars, which include the African Standby Force (ASF), African Peace Fund (APF), the Panel of the Wise, Continental Early Warning System, and the African Union Commission (AUC). The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU organizes these different components into a peace and security architecture. Scholars and policy analysts have increasingly focused on the different dimensions of the APSA and their effectiveness.<sup>15</sup> One of the important policy frameworks that guides the APSA in post-conflict situations is the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework (PCRDPF). In other words, the policy framework guides interventions to maintain peace and promote development after the other pillars of the APSA have been used to bring stability to post-conflict countries.

The PCRDPF was developed in 2006 by the AU as part of its effort to consolidate the institution's capacity to respond to conflicts and build peace. In analyzing the implementation of the PCRDPF, this working paper seeks to focus on some of the political considerations that occur "behind the scenes" along with those that play out at the locus of the intervention. While the former highlight some of the administrative exigencies at the AU, the latter refer to the considerations that influence the practical implementation of the PCRDPF in the beneficiary country, in this case the Central African Re-

public (CAR). The implementation of the PCRDPF is a milestone that will define and encapsulate the successes of the AU in the near future. As will be argued subsequently, the main function of the AU, if critically analyzed and conceptualized within the realities of the myriad of conflicts and post-conflict situations on the continent, rests on building and sustaining peace.

### **III. THE PCRDPF: HISTORY, PILLARS, and OPERATIONALIZATION**

Since its inception, the AU has developed policy instruments to address conflicts on the continent. Some of these instruments are shaped by practices of the international community, many of which are partners and donors to the AU. The UN on its part has sought to delegate responsibilities to African institutions in the implementation of peacebuilding policies and has recognized the AU as the continental institution responsible for a common platform for peacebuilding on the continent. Within Africa, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) look to the AU for partnership in resolving conflicts that occur within their jurisdictions. It is within the framework of these international partnerships, in conjunction with the AU's responsibility to promote development, peace, and security in Member States, that relevant policies, including the PCRDPF, have been created. This framework, along with the relevant policies and initiatives, provides the impetus for the AU to become the focus for peacebuilding on the continent.

As noted previously, the framing of peacebuilding at the global level since the end of the Cold War has contributed to the formulation and understanding of both the theoretical underpinning and practical application of the concept on the continent.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the history of the PCRDPF cannot be dissociated from occurrences at the international level. In the same vein, the AU's collaboration with other international actors in the field of peacebuilding has given an impetus to the evolution of the concept, both theoretically and practically, and has provided the AU with the necessary understanding to develop requisite frameworks to engage its Member States in dire need of resolving conflicts and building bridges of peace on the continent. Notably, the increased cooperation in the area of peace and security between the UN and the AU on one hand, and the AU and RECs (and RMs) on the other, has witnessed a growth in collaboration and shared obligations to peacebuilding in Africa, as well as progress in terms of the fulfilment of responsibilities by the AU to Member States.

The PCRDPF is a policy response of the AU Commission to the challenge of overseeing the full implementation of peace agreements and other policies to ensure sustainable peace in post-conflict societies. With the PCRDPF, which came into being in July 2006, the AU hopes to have created the basis for holistic interventions in post-conflict societies, to consolidate peace and security, and promote development. The robustness of the policy document lends itself to be considered as more of a set of policy initiatives rather than as a single policy framework. Indeed, the PCRDPF takes cognizance of the multiple policy initiatives and activities that need to be considered in the framing of post-conflict reconstruction. These activities align with those identified in the literature as essential to PCRDP interventions, including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants; security sector reform; and transitional justice, truth, and reconciliation commissions.<sup>17</sup> While a common pattern for sequencing the different activities that fall under these policies does not exist, they are all crucial to sustaining peace in societies emerging from conflict. It is noteworthy that the PCRDPF takes this into account in the institutionalization of its PCRDP mandate.<sup>18</sup>

The PCRDPF adopts six indicative elements. These elements, which are both independent and crosscutting, represent the pillars upon which all PCRDP efforts should be developed. These indicative elements include security; humanitarian and emergency assistance; political governance and transition; socio-economic reconstruction and development; human rights, justice, and reconciliation; and women and gender. The PCRDPF also intersects with other AU policy initiatives. For example, while the human security component of the PCRDPF adopts its scope from the Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP), the socio-economic development dimension of the PCRDPF adopts the AU vision encapsulated in the 2004–2007 AU Commission strategic framework, the NEPAD framework document, and the Millennium Declaration document.<sup>19</sup>

The PCRDPF also notes that its implementation is governed by five principles. These principles include African leadership; national and local ownership; inclusiveness, equity, and non-discrimination; cooperation and coherence; and capacity-building for sustainable development. The different principles governing the PCRDPF encapsulate some of the core concerns of this working paper, specifically, the role of politics and the importance of national ownership in PCRDP. In particular, while the principle on African leadership notes that “PCRDP is first and foremost a political rather than technical process,” the principle on national ownership considers “the rebuilding

of legitimate state authority and the enhancement of national ownership of the process, creating a new consensus in governance” of post-conflict states as a central concern of the PCRDPF.<sup>20</sup> These principles reflect the PCRDPF’s ambition to take into account the local dynamics of societies emerging from violent conflict as the AU seeks to build sustainable peace.

These pillars of the PCRDPF provide some details about the conceptualization of peacebuilding by the AU. For example, the security dimension of the PCRDPF envisages that the AU would facilitate security sector reform (SSR); disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants; repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration of refugees; engagement in demining land mines; and assistance to victims of mines. This component also envisages support for other threats to human security, such as the reduction of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and the protection of women and girls. The PCRDPF pillar on socio-economic development notes that the AU would “address threats to livelihoods and income generation, including unemployment and lack of access to credits” in post-conflict societies. The PCRDPF also notes that the AU would “promote the re-establishment of the market and trade at local, regional and international levels.”<sup>21</sup>

The political governance and transition pillar also draws attention to a topical issue in post-conflict societies. This is important because often, governance and discordant political views on transitions are at the heart of violent conflicts. The prioritization of political governance and transition as a crucial pillar of sustainable peacebuilding within the AU reflects a will to succeed. The policy framework provides that emphasis will be placed on establishing “consensus of governance through a consultative process.”<sup>22</sup> This consensus could be reached by facilitating a fair and inclusive process, which aims to integrate all levels of society and build a national identity that will be the basis for a legitimate government in the post-conflict society. Finally, this pillar suggests that institutionalizing the rule of law should be part of the PCRDPF mandate in societies emerging from violent conflicts.

From the discussion of the PCRDPF so far, it is evident, first, that it resonates with the liberal peacebuilding model, and second, that it seeks to build sustainable peace in ways that will include and impact on the local political processes of societies emerging from violent conflict. In other words, local politics are central to the implementation of the PCRDPF. However, as the following section notes, it is not just local politics that is important

to PCRDPF. There are political considerations within the AU and between the organization and other external actors engaged in PCRDPF initiatives that are just as important.

## IV. THE PCRDPF IN PRACTICE

This section discusses the implementation of the PCRDPF. The discussion is presented in two parts, with the first focused on political considerations that are implicit within the institutional framework of the AU. Specifically, it aims to highlight how these internal considerations influence the implementation of the PCRDPF. The second part deals with the issues that the AU has to contend with in the actual implementation of the PCRDPF in Member States. With the Central African Republic being the only country where the PCRDPF has been used, it is the example in the discussion that follows.

### **A) Political Considerations Hindering the AU's Implementation of the PCRDPF**

The implementation of the PCRDPF by the AU Commission requires the involvement, collaboration, and cooperation of all component departments. The six indicative elements of the PCRDPF—security; humanitarian/emergency assistance; political governance and transition; socio-economic reconstruction and development; human rights, justice, and reconciliation; and women and gender—clearly have implications for the operational departments of the AUC. While the Peace and Security Department (PSD) has the frontline role in security issues, it is the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) that addresses political governance and transition as well as humanitarian/emergency issues. Socio-economic reconstruction and development come under the aegis of the Departments of Trade and Industry, Infrastructure and Energy, Social Affairs, Rural Economy and Agriculture, and Economic Affairs. Human rights, justice, and reconciliation are primarily dealt with by the DPA in consultation with the Office of the Legal Counsel (OLC), while women and gender issues and youth issues will be primarily catered to by the Gender and Youth Divisions respectively.

For brevity, this section highlights some of the political considerations behind the working relationship between the DPA and PSD, two of the AUC's "frontline" departments.<sup>23</sup> These two departments, generally regarded as the core of the AUC, play fundamental roles in PCRDPF. The *primus inter pares* status assigned to both departments by insiders, partners, and observers

alike has serious implications for their initiatives and activities, particularly where they have to work together, as with the implementation of the PCRDPF. Briefly, the reasons for the “primacy” of the PSD and DPA in the scheme of AUC operations are considered to give a background to some of the political machinations that occur or are likely to occur when they work together.

First, the departments’ responsibilities include issues deemed to be at the core of the problems facing the continent, that is, governance and security. Security threats—ranging from various types of internal strife to transnational extremist terrorist threats and the attendant humanitarian situations, including contending with internally displaced persons and refugees—threaten several countries on the continent, including Burundi, Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan, to name just a few. Within the DPA, the focus on the entrenchment of democratic governance as a prerequisite for good governance has brought about the exponential growth in elections across the continent. In 2015 and 2016, for instance, there were about twenty-five elections on the continent, with the DPA actively involved in cycles of electoral observation, trainings, and other related logistics and initiatives. Secondly, and closely related to the previous point, is the relatively high number of international partners that are willing to collaborate, fund, and support the activities of both departments. These international partners, mainly from Europe, consider the entrenchment of democracy and security in Africa as fundamental to good governance and by extension, a means to stem the flow of illegal migration to from Africa to Europe. Furthermore, under the contemporary liberal peacebuilding model, concentration on these factors alongside conflict resolution is crucial for sustaining peace, and thus worth investing in.<sup>24</sup>

Given this brief background to the primacy of both departments, it is now important to highlight the working relationship between them, particularly as it relates to matters that fall within the implementation of the PCRDPF. As earlier noted, contemporary Africa has experienced a significant rise in politically motivated threats to peace with several violent conflicts caused by contestations for political power. For the AUC, the question that arises is which of the two departments should assume primary responsibility to engage in, or with, the affected Member State. The answer depends on which of them has the budget to fund the activity. With the PSD having better access to resources—in terms of staff and finances—it appears to have an advantage in taking up these sorts of responsibilities.

Two examples suffice. First, the PSD is taking the lead in setting up a mediation unit which would respond to situations in Member States to prevent disputes from degenerating into violent conflicts, as well as to provide space for post-conflict engagements in order to avoid relapses. Despite the fact that mediation is essentially a political process, which would suggest the DPA be at the forefront, the PSD has taken on this responsibility based on the rationale that there is a deep-rooted security element to conflict resolution and the sustaining of peace.<sup>25</sup> The DPA was instead described as an “endorsing” partner in this PSD-controlled process. The second example is the AUC’s intervention following Gabon’s 2016 presidential elections. After Mr. Ping, the flag-bearer of the coalition of opposition parties, filed a suit in the Constitutional Court, the AU-PSC recommended that the AUC dispatch a team of legal experts to assist the court.<sup>26</sup> Ideally, this responsibility should have fallen within the purview of the DPA, which has a Constitutional Law cluster with in-house expertise and knowledge of the then-evolving situation. However, the PSD was once again at the forefront of the intervention.

Incidentally, the struggle for primacy between the two departments has further eroded the sour relationship between their commissioners, which has hindered optimal cooperation between them. However, with a new DPA commission elected in January 2017, there is a fresh opportunity to improve the relationship between the departments. The new commissioner should be prepared to navigate the existing “bad” blood between the departments and work with the PSD commissioner, who is in office for a second term (and vice-versa). There is also a role in this regard for the new AUC hierarchy to push both commissioners and their technical staff to work more closely for the benefit of the commission and the continent. Arguably, the politics of the newly-elected commission may also have had a bearing on the effective implementation of the PCRDPF. With Nigeria occupying the seat of commissioner of the DPA and sponsoring a candidate for the commissioner’s seat in the PSD, the already problematic working relationship between the two departments may have been further compromised.

The above discussion is not to suggest that both departments do not occasionally collaborate effectively in carrying out the work of the Commission. Indeed, they do, as will be highlighted in the following discussion on their collaboration in the implementation of the PCRDPF.<sup>27</sup> The discussion highlights some of the political undertones within the AUC that impact the implementation of the PCRDPF. It is understood from the beginning that a fundamental objective of the AUC is to synergize the Africa Peace and Se-

curity Architecture (APSA)/Africa Governance Architecture (AGA). In practical terms, this suggests a closer working relationship between the DPA and PSD, realizing that both departments' responsibilities and activities are necessarily complementary if peacebuilding is to be realized and sustained on the continent.

There are two crucial interdepartmental task forces that aim to synergize the APSA and AGA at an operational level. These are the PCRDR Inter-Departmental Task Force and the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Conflict Prevention. However, there is a lack of consensus on the merits for the existence of both task forces. The disagreement emanates from the questions related to the efficacy of the Commission's having two task forces with membership drawn from practically the same departments, including the DPA and PSD, charged with responsibilities that may be discharged concurrently. The proponents of this position argue that the Commission is grossly understaffed and thus cannot realistically commit to effectively discharging the responsibilities of both committees. According to them, this will impact the delivery of their mandates, one of which is the implementation of the PCRDPF.<sup>28</sup>

The counter-argument is that both task forces have different mandates despite their memberships being drawn from the same departments. This position expresses the view that when conflict prevention succeeds, there is no need for post-conflict interventions; thus, it is not necessary to fuse the responsibilities. However, the conclusion drawn from the opinions expressed is that the preferred option is for a single task force to exist, even if it has two sub-committees, with each sub-committee focusing on each of the mandates. The main reason provided for this position is that the Commission is grossly understaffed, and committing staff to both task forces further stretches their capacity, thereby compromising their effectiveness.<sup>29</sup> For example, a department will not be represented, or inadequately so, if the focal person is unavailable, a frequently occurring situation.

Without enough bodies staffing the departments, it is often difficult to have the necessary backup to ensure the requisite standards of operation are maintained. The position with regard to staffing is even more ominous, when considering that most experts in the AUC are on short-term contracts and are paid using partner funds. There is a real risk that experts will leave the Commission's employ without achieving long-term goals, including some under the PCRDPF, or even the focus of the expert shifting due to chang-

es in the donor's priorities. The argument for having a single forum gains merit as its proponents posit that rather than have a representative from a department/unit in each task force, it is more expeditious to have at least two sitting in a single, even if enlarged, one. This would ensure robust ideas and views, and guarantee that departmental (or unit) participation and/or interests are continuous. Indeed, the politics surrounding the composition and mandates of the task forces has an impact on the actual delivery of their responsibilities.

Another issue is the politics surrounding the proper conceptualization of PCRDR. Thus far, even within the staff deployed on missions from the AU, there seems to be a lack of consensus on when they are acting within the PCRDRPF. While there is no contention on the validity of the CAR mission as being within the PCRDRPF because it is clearly stated as such; the situation is different for the intervention in South Sudan, for example. It has been alleged that despite the fact that the mission is not expressly classified as a PCRDR intervention, it should be classified as such because the conditions listed in the PCRDRPF are satisfied. These include the agreement of the parties to end the conflict, permit AU involvement in the negotiations that follow, and require rebuilding of institutions.

While this might not be an immediate problem, especially with CAR being the only contemporary case study where the PCRDRPF has been implemented, it might be an issue in the future if the conceptualization of PCRDR is not crystallized. Indeed, political considerations within the AU as well as between Member States may delimit the categorization of future PCRDR interventions. One of the issues that comes to mind is how election-related violence (ERV) will be categorized. Without a doubt, ERV is becoming one of the major threats to peace and peacebuilding efforts on the continent. Yet this is a subject that is likely to be clouded by political interests and dynamics to thwart external interventions into what the main local actors define as internal.

Although PCRDR is a long-term and sequential process, it begins when a conflict is deemed to have ended either by peace agreement or decisive military victory. One consequence of the AU's internal politics is that complications and contestations may delay PCRDR missions, leading to missed opportunities for important national peacebuilding efforts. The timely interventions of PCRDR missions and initiatives are critical to ensure that post-conflict societies do not relapse into conflict. Thus, it is essential that

the internal politics of the AU, especially when it comes to this important aspect of its mandate, do not delay the implementation of the PCRDPF with its admirable prospects.

### **B) Navigating Local Politics in Peacebuilding: The Case of the PCRDPF in the Central African Republic**

Taking into account the local politics of the post-conflict country is important in determining how to effectively implement the PCRDPF to suit the particular circumstances. Thus, it is important to consider the extent to which the AU is able to interact with the local politics in a timely and effective manner. Where the AU's engagement does not align with the local imperatives, it becomes difficult to implement the PCRDPF. A significant element of effective engagement is timeliness. Thus, the AU has to begin interaction with Member States early on to ensure it understands and integrates local political imperatives into the implementation strategy and activities. Undoubtedly, considerations of local political dynamics and the changing nature of violence in societies emerging out of violent conflicts are crucial to sustainable peacebuilding.

The dynamism of violent conflicts and the place of local realities in shaping them have been topical issues in peace and conflict research. Scholars such as Stathis Kalyvas for example, have noted that violent conflicts are complex, and often shaped by local and private cleavages.<sup>30</sup> This means that a single violent conflict could have multiple cleavages or drivers. These "cleavages" and "drivers" are embedded in local communities that may also interact with national dimensions of conflicts.<sup>31</sup> This attention to local communities is not only reflected in the understanding of violent conflicts, but has also surfaced in research on peacebuilding which indicates that focusing on local realities could enhance sustainable peacebuilding.<sup>32</sup> It is vital for peacebuilding efforts, particularly where they are initiatives of parties external to the conflict, to understand and be prepared to engage with local realities and peculiarities. Thus, engagement with key local stakeholders and their active participation in peacebuilding efforts, preferably from early on, is of utmost importance.

Before the role of the AU is discussed to determine the organization's political considerations in PCRDPF efforts, a background to the conflict in CAR is essential. Despite different framings of the narrative on the violence in CAR, it seems indisputable that the competition for political power has been

central to the conflict in that country. One narrative is that the conflict is religious, with the Anti-Balaka group identified as the Christian faction and the opposing Seleka as the Muslim group.<sup>33</sup> Countering this position, Emily Mellgard noted that the Anti-Balaka group also attracts membership from animist communities in CAR while Louisa Lombard and Sylvain Batian-ga-Kinzi argue that vengeance as an effective political tool has informed mobilization in CAR.<sup>34</sup> The constant factor in all these permutations is the element of competition for political power. Notably, conflicts over power, even when initially based on religious ideologies, tend to be influenced by other intersecting factors such as ethnic, social, and political identities, which further complicates the configuration of the conflict and its actors.

The roadmap to the AU's recent formal PCRDR intervention in CAR started with the AU Peace and Security Council's (PSC) 593rd meeting, held on April 26, 2016.<sup>35</sup> The PSC requested the AU to engage in a holistic PCRDR process in CAR, but it was not until July 26, 2016, following the PSC's 612th meeting, that an AU team of experts began its needs assessment on PCRDR in CAR. The assessment, carried out from August 7-17, 2016, focused on ascertaining the nature, extent, and scope of the support that the AU should provide to CAR in the area of PCRDR. It is important to highlight the timeliness of the AU intervention—particularly vis-à-vis other (national) efforts to resolve the conflict.

In this regard, it is noted that the AU's physical PCRDR engagement in CAR began three months after the Bangui National Forum (BNF) had concluded its PCRDR negotiations. The transitional government that emerged in CAR during the violent conflict, convened the BNF as a vehicle to promote PCRDR. The BNF negotiations, which involved about 700 leaders of different political, civil society, and traditional groups in CAR, focused on themes such as peace and security, justice and reconciliation, social and economic development, as well as governance.<sup>36</sup> In other words, the BNF was a local initiative that sought to take ownership and lead the peacebuilding process in CAR. The BNF-led negotiations that were concluded on May 11, 2015, led to an agreement for ten factions of the Séléka and Anti-Balaka to participate in a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program to reduce the circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and dissolve non-state armed groups, as well as to ensure that ex-fighters are reintegrated back into communities.

Other agreements negotiated on the BNF platform include the manage-

ment and rehabilitation of child soldiers; the extension of the mandate of the transitional government in CAR and a timeline for post-conflict elections; local mechanisms for justice and reconciliation; and economic development at the end of the conflict.<sup>37</sup> The critical issue at stake here, though, is why it took so long for the AU to make its physical presence felt in CAR with regard to implementing a PCRDR strategy borne out of an already existing policy framework. One potential reason for the AU's late response is that the organization was waiting to engage with the new government of CAR that came to power in March 2016.

Pending an unlikely official justification for the delayed engagement in CAR, one can also argue that several internal political dynamics of the AU, some of which have been highlighted previously, contributed to the relatively late response. Issues such as planning schedules (taking into consideration the inter-departmental nature of the task force), mission schedule (taking into account availability of relevant experts and officials), as well as budgetary and funding issues are some factors likely to have contributed to the delayed deployment of a field mission to CAR tasked with a broad PCRDR mandate. Considering the possible outcomes if the BNF had failed to achieve positive results from its negotiations, it is indeed better that the AU be available and able to respond in a timely and effective fashion, especially in dire conflict situations on the continent.

Given the mandate of the AU's Inter-Departmental Task Force on PCRDR, one may argue that plans for PCRDR intervention could only be made after the conflicting parties had made commitments to end violence and engage in constructive discussion. While this is plausible, it appears to highlight a flaw in the normative underpinning of engagement in conflict, and post-conflict zones. Where conflicts are raging, the AU has to be forward-thinking in seeking an end to them as the precursor to the delivery of PCRDR initiatives and activities. As advocated by some interviewees, it is imperative that the AUC bridge the gaps—normative and practical—between conflict prevention and post-conflict issues. Here, one sees merit in the argument that it may be better to fuse the mandate of the task forces on conflict prevention and PCRDR to prevent costly gaps in engagement with countries where conflict prevention has failed but elements for PCRDR have not been met.

For instance, had the AU been involved with CAR earlier and been part of the BNF negotiations, it would have recorded a significant political achievement by being integral to the peaceful resolution of the conflict, as well as the

initiation of PCRDPF efforts in the country. The AU would have been identified with the process of “national ownership” as envisaged in the PCRDPF document. As it stands, it is doubtful that the AU can claim to have made any significant contributions to the development of the PCRDPF initiatives in the country. Of course, the PCRDPF clearly states that the organization’s role is to facilitate initiatives and activities, leaving it to the individual country and the relevant RECs/RMs to be at the forefront. Nonetheless, it is evident that, other than ECOWAS, no other REC/RM on the continent has proven its capacity to effectively deal with conflict and post-conflict situations. Hence, the AU still has to play a frontline role in most parts of the continent that, like CAR, are experiencing or emerging from violent conflict. This should include early active engagement in peacebuilding processes, including negotiations to end violent conflict. More so, being exempt from the earlier process makes it more difficult to effectuate the PCRDPF, as previous negotiations may have decided on factors that are quite different from the anticipation of the PCRDPF.

## **V. (RE)CONCEPTUALIZING PCRDPF IN AFRICA: A FUTURE FOR THE AU’S OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE?**

As noted in previous discussions of the PCRDPF, the framework envisages the engagement, collaboration, and cooperation of all the departments within the AU Commission (AUC), the bureaucracy of the AU. The expectations from, and implementation of, the objectives of the PCRDPF arguably encapsulate the primary responsibility of the AU, given the current state of prevalent and potential conflicts on the continent. Arguably, the continent is one big site requiring PCRDPF interventions to ensure sustainable political stability and economic development. Indeed, most African countries have either recently emerged from debilitating conflicts such as civil wars or rebel incursions, or are enmeshed in violent manifestations of transnational terrorism, or are experiencing politically-induced violence with the potential to manifest in much bigger crises sooner rather than later.

With Africa’s security apparatus still relatively underdeveloped in its capacity to deal with transnational threats, the crises caused by religious extremism poses a real threat to the political stability of many African countries. Feeding into this incapacity are problems related to the new wave of politically-induced violence occasioned by the “race to democratize” on the continent. Unfortunately, many African leaders now consolidate their “legal entrenchment” by amending legal frameworks to extend their stay in office

and/or rigging elections. There are two repercussions of this with implications for conflicts and PCRDR in their countries in the future. First, such actions further isolate power contenders from the political space, leading some aggrieved parties to consider violent opposition to the state. Gabon is a recent example where the frustrations of the political contenders have resulted in the call for civil disobedience in the face of ethnic polarization. Secondly, as witnessed in Egypt, citizens over time vent their frustrations in self-organized opposition to State authority. These political divisions, often tainted by ethnic as well as religious considerations, are festering in many African countries, with the potential for future explosion.

Many AU Member States in need of PCRDR interventions fall into one of three categories. Some are currently engulfed in violent conflict, others are in a post-conflict period, while others face high risk of future violent conflict. The first category includes countries such as Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria, which are currently experiencing violent conflicts caused by religious extremists with links to transnational terrorist organizations. Nigeria has also recently experienced renewed attacks on oil installations by Niger Delta militants in the South, and a renewal of ethnic secessionism in the South-eastern region. While it may be argued that these are natural disputes that a nation-state faces in its political evolution, these threats are not new to Nigeria, and they are constantly evolving with unpredictable repercussions for the future. This is even more the case in view of the fact that the underlying sentiments behind these violent expressions include ethnic intolerance, issues of participation in the equitable distribution of natural resource benefits, as well as religious differences (a major factor in determining access to power in the country). These are all elements similar to those that have made CAR a PCRDR recipient.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, if the same elements that fed into Nigeria's 1966–1969 Civil War remain unresolved threats to the country's political unity and stability, the likelihood of future violent conflicts requiring PCRDR interventions remains a real possibility.

In the second category are countries that are just emerging from long-term violent conflicts (or close to it) such as Somalia, South Sudan, and CAR. While interventions in CAR are clearly classified as PCRDR, this is not the case with Somalia and Sudan, where consensus on the conceptualization of intervention is not unanimous, even among the AU intervention teams. What is indisputable is that such countries require PCRDR interventions to progress from their current state of instability to one of ethno-political and social cohesion, and economic development. The third group includes coun-

tries such as The Gambia, Gabon, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, where political events are such that may precipitate manifestations of conflict, or continue to fester with the potential to escalate to full-blown violence in the future. In essence, PCRDPF is a veritable framework within which the AU, and in particular the Commission, relates with and engages its Member States. In other words, the PCRDPF should not be conceptualized simply as a response to post-conflict situations to avoid further violence but rather as a more holistic process to combat the occurrence of conflicts, including prevention and recurrence. This also means that even though challenges exist at the moment, the PCRDPF remains a relevant policy instrument for peace and stability on the continent.

The discussion so far highlights the challenges of implementing PCRDPF in societies emerging from violent conflict. However, it is equally important to understand that these challenges are not only limited to societies emerging from violent conflict. Countries such as those in the second category highlighted above that are experiencing intractable conflicts often need some PCRDPF intervention. This need is based on the fact that there is no clear trajectory out of conflict for these countries. For example, it is common for some of these countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to implement a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program for factions of warring groups that agree to end fighting, while other rebel factions remain combative.<sup>39</sup> This shows that the notion of a “post-conflict” phase is not linear. This raises a critical paradox in the timing and sequencing of PCRDPF activities. It shows that there is a need to (re) conceptualize the current understanding of PCRDPF to reflect the realities of countries experiencing conflicts. In this case, PCRDPF needs to recognize that the end of conflict is not always the same in all contexts. PCRDPF activities may be required in situations where conflicts are “ongoing.”

Simply stated, the notion of PCRDPF occurring only after the complete cessation of hostilities in African countries has serious limitations. Considering the dire situation, the continent is in with the multitude of conflicts and the debilitating effects they have on continental peace, unity, and development, it is important to reconsider how the concept of PCRDPF should be understood and implemented in Africa. As noted previously, the spate of violent conflicts on the continent makes it one big site in need of various elements of PCRDPF intervention, and in some cases, the entire range. With the benefit of hindsight, the current structure to promote peace on the continent has ample room for improvements. The lack of proper coordination and continuity

creates a haphazard working pattern that has far-reaching negative effects on the ability to adequately respond to dire situations occasioned by violent conflicts. The situation is further complicated by the non-linear nature of conflicts on the continent which makes it more difficult to effectively determine, initiate, and sustain engagements over conflict cycles.

Based on the above, it is posited that the AU would benefit immensely from a solid consolidation of its efforts within a manageable conceptual and operational framework; one that is capable of delivering on its core mandates of security and development to its Member States. This paper argues strongly for the (re)conceptualization of the PCRDPF as the future embodiment of the AU's service delivery charter. In other words, the PCRDPF should be considered a holistic framework within which the realities of Africa's more significant problems may be addressed and, more importantly, as a rallying initiative to encourage the various organs of the AU—more specifically, the departments within the AUC, to synergize their work.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

This working paper set out to discuss the primacy of politics in contemporary peacebuilding in Africa, with specific focus on the African Union Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework (PCRDPF). In so doing, it has demonstrated the intersection between the “global” and the “local” in peacebuilding activities as they occur in Africa. While conceding that conflict in Africa is shaped by global events, it has argued that local politics and actors play critical roles in driving the evolution of conflicts. Hence, cognizance ought to be given to the local politics that shape conflicts, and this should be reflected in peacebuilding policies. If this is done, peacebuilding practitioners should be better equipped to respond to the real time and dynamic situations on the ground in conflict-affected countries, thus enabling them to proactively respond to issues that threaten peace processes and escalate conflicts.

This paper has analyzed the PCRDPF in the context of institutional politics within the AU Commission (AUC), and the ways it addresses political realities in countries where it is implemented. The Central African Republic (CAR), the only country where the PCRDPF has been expressly implemented, was used as a case study for the latter analysis. The study found that inter-departmental politics within the AUC impacts the implementation of PCRDPF. This is particularly evident in the process of consensus-building

within the AUC. The politicking within the AUC has contributed to delays in the AU's PCRDR engagement in countries emerging from violent conflict, as demonstrated by the CAR intervention.

While the delay in CAR was without serious consequences, this was due to the role of local initiatives, especially the Bangui National Forum (BNF), which began PCRDR conversations before the AU's intervention. Indeed, while the PCRDRPF expressly stipulates that local actors should play a primary role in PCRDR initiatives and activities, it certainly does not expect this to be done to the exclusion of the AU. The formative efforts of the BNF are critical to the future of PCRDR interventions in CAR. However, regardless of political considerations at the commission level and otherwise, the AU should have been actively involved in the earlier stages of PCRDR in CAR.

## NOTES

1. Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIC), Heidelberg Conflict Barometer, 2015. [http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer\\_2015.pdf](http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2015.pdf).
2. Alex De Waal, "When kleptocracy becomes insolvent: Brute causes of the civil war in South Sudan," *African Affairs* 113, no. 452 (2014): 347–369.
3. Jędrzej G. Frynas, "Corporate and state responses to anti-oil protests in the Niger Delta," *African Affairs* 100, no. 398 (2001): 27–54; Cyril Obi, "Oil extraction, dispossession, resistance, and conflict in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 30, no. 2 (2010): 219–236; Rhuks T. Ako and Patrick Okonmah, "Minority rights issues in Nigeria: A theoretical analysis of historical and contemporary conflicts in the oil-rich Niger Delta Region," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 16, no. 1 (2009): 53–65; Tarila M. Ebiede, "Beyond the rebellion: alternative narratives of violent conflicts and the implications for peacebuilding in the Niger Delta," African Peacebuilding Network (APN) Working Paper No. 5, 2016; Aderoju Oyefusi, "Oil and the probability of rebel participation among youths in the Niger Delta of Nigeria," *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 4 (2008): 539–555.
4. David Francis, "Introduction: understanding the context of peace and conflict in Africa," in *Peace and conflict in Africa*, ed. David Francis (3–15), London: Zed Books, 2008.
5. Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996; Oladipo Fashina, "Frantz Fanon and the ethical justification of anti-colonial violence," *Social Theory and Practice* 15, no. 2 (1989): 179–212; Toure Kazah-Toure, "Inter-ethnic relations, conflicts and nationalism in Zango Katab Area of Northern Nigeria: Historical origins and contemporary forms," Paper Presented at the Eighth General Assembly of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal, June 26–July 2, 1995.
6. Eghosa Osaghae and Rotimi Suberu, "A history of identities, violence and stability in Nigeria," Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, University of Oxford, 2005.
7. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and social transformation in Eastern DR Congo*, Ghent: Academia Press, 2004.
8. Isiaka Badmus, *The African Union's role in peacekeeping: building on lessons learned from security operations*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

9. Anstee, Margaret, *Orphan of the Cold War: The inside story of the collapse of the Angolan peace process, 1992-93*, London: Macmillan, 1996.
10. Chris Blattman and Edward Miguel, "Civil War," *Journal of Economic Literature* 2010, 48 no. 1 (2010): 3-57.
11. Marrack Goulding, "The United Nations and conflict in Africa since the cold war," *African Affairs* 98, no. 391 (1999): 155-166.
12. Devon Curtis, "The contested politics of peacebuilding in Africa," in *Peacebuilding, power and politics in Africa*, edited by Devon Curtis and Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012: 6.
13. Michael Pugh and Neil Cooper, with Jonathan Goodhand, *War economies in a regional context: The challenges of transformation*, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2004.
14. Devon Curtis, "The contested politics of peacebuilding in Africa," in *Peacebuilding, power and politics in Africa*, edited by Devon Curtis and Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012: 5.
15. Thomas Tiekou, Cyril Obi, and Lindsay Scorgie-Porter. "The African Peace and Security Architecture: Introduction to the Special Issue," *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 4, no. 2 (2014): 1-10; Alex Vines, "A decade of African peace and security architecture," *International Affairs* 89, no.1 (2013): 89-109; Ulf Engel and João G. Porto, "The African Union's new peace and security architecture: toward an evolving security regime?" *African Security* 2, no. 3 (2009): 82-96.
16. Tim Murithi, "African indigenous and endogenous approaches to peace and conflict resolution," in *Peace and conflict in Africa*, ed. David Francis (16-30), London: Zed Books, 2008.
17. Graham K. Brown and Arnim Langer (eds.), *Elgar handbook of civil war and fragile states*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2012.
18. Arnim Langer and Graham Brown (eds.), *Building sustainable peace: timing and sequencing of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
19. African Union. "Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)." Conflict Management Division, Peace and Security Department of the Commission of the African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2006.
20. African Union, 2006: 6-7.
21. African Union, 2006: 17.

22. African Union, 2006.
23. The information for this section was gleaned from interviews with AU staff, consultants, and partners.
24. Edward Newman, Roland Paris, and Oliver P. Richmond, "Introduction," in *New perspectives on liberal peacebuilding*, edited by Edward Newman, Roland Paris and Oliver P. Richmond (3–25), Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2009.
25. See <http://www.peaceau.org/en/page/107-au-mediation-support-unit>. (Last accessed on 8 May 2017).
26. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 624th Meeting, held on 13 September 2016. Available online: <http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/624th-psc-meeting-on-on-the-post-electoral-situation-in-gabon#sthash.uHLMnJOE.dpuf> (Last accessed on 7 May 2017).
27. Amnesty International, *Counting gains, filling gaps strengthening African Union's response to human rights violations committed in conflict situations*, London: Amnesty International, 2017.
28. David Mickler, Wafula Okumu, and Samuel M. Makinda, *The African Union: Addressing the Challenges of Peace, Security, and Governance*, Oxon: Routledge, 2016.
29. Chrysantus Ayangafac, and Jakkie Cilliers, "African solutions to African problems: assessing the capacity of African Peace and Security Architecture," in *Rewiring regional security in a fragmented world*, edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2011.
30. Stathis Kalyvas, "The ontology of "political violence: action and identity in civil wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (2003): 475–494.
31. Séverine Autesserre, "Local violence, national peace? Postwar 'settlement' in the Eastern DR Congo (2003–2006)," *African Studies Review* 49, no. 3 (2006): 1–29.
32. Séverine Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local violence and the failure of international Peacebuilding*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010; Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver P. Richmond, "The local turn in peace building: A critical agenda for peace," *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 5 (2013): 763–783; Da Costa, Diana F. da Costa and John Karlsrud, "Contextualising liberal peacebuilding for local circumstances: UNMISS and local peacebuilding in South Sudan," *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7, no. 2, (2012): 53–66.
33. Henry Kam Kah, "Anti-Balaka/Séléka, religionisation and separatism in the history of the Central African Republic," *Conflict Studies Quarterly* 9 (2014): 30–48; David

- Smith, "Unspeakable Horrors in a Country on the Verge of Genocide," *The Guardian*, November 22, 2013.
34. Emily Mellgard, "What is the Antibalaka?" Tony Blair Foundation, accessed on September 27, 2016. <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/religion-geopolitics/commentaries/backgrounder/what-antibalaka>; Louisa Lombard and Sylvain Batianga-Kinzi, "Violence, popular punishment, and war in the Central African Republic," *African Affairs* 114 no. 454 (2014): 52-71.
  35. Three previous needs assessments reports had been produced in April 2006, June 2012, and May 2014. The last two were more focused on security issues.
  36. Amadou Sy and Amy Copley, "Emerging from crisis: The role of economic recovery in creating a durable peace for the Central African Republic," Brookings Institute: Africa Growth Initiative, October 2015.
  37. Sy and Copley.
  38. Gustavo de Carvalho and Amanda Lucey, "Fractured peacebuilding in the Central African Republic," Institute for Security Studies Policy Brief no. 87, July 2016.
  39. Christopher Vogel and Josaphat Musamba, "Recycling Rebels? Demobilization in the Congo," Rift Valley Institute PSRP Briefing Paper 11, March 2016.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adesoji, Adimbola. "The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria." *Africa Spectrum* 45, no. 2 (2010): 95–108.

African Union. "Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)." Conflict Management Division, Peace and Security Department of the Commission of the African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2006.

Agbiboa, Daniel E. "Why Boko Haram exists: The relative deprivation perspective." *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 3 (2013): 144–157.

Ako, Rhuks T., and Patrick Okonmah. "Minority rights issues in Nigeria: A theoretical analysis of historical and contemporary conflicts in the oil-rich Niger Delta Region." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 16, no. 1 (2009): 53–65.

Amnesty International. *Counting gains, filling gaps strengthening African Union's response to human rights violations committed in conflict situations*. London: Amnesty International, 2017.

Anstee, Margaret. *Orphan of the Cold War: The inside story of the collapse of the Angolan peace process, 1992-93*. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Autesserre, Séverine. "Local violence, national peace? Postwar 'settlement' in the Eastern DR Congo (2003–2006)." *African Studies Review* 49, no. 3 (2006): 1–29.

———. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local violence and the failure of international Peacebuilding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Ayangafac, Chrysantus, and Jakkie Cilliers. "African solutions to African problems: assessing the capacity of African Peace and Security Architecture." In *Rewiring regional security in a fragmented world*, edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2011.

Badmus, Isiaka. *The African Union's role in peacekeeping: building on lessons*

- learned from security operations*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Blattman, Chris and Edward Miguel. "Civil War." *Journal of Economic Literature* 48 no. 1 (2010): 3–57.
- Brown, Graham K., and Arnim Langer (eds.). *Elgar handbook of civil war and fragile states*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2012.
- Curtis, Devon. "The contested politics of peacebuilding in Africa." In *Peacebuilding, power and politics in Africa*, edited by Devon Curtis and Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012.
- Carvalho, de Gustavo and Amanda Lucey. "Fractured peacebuilding in the Central African Republic." Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief no. 87, July 2016.
- Da Costa, Diana F., and John Karlsrud. "Contextualising liberal peacebuilding for local circumstances: UNMISS and local peacebuilding in South Sudan." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7, no. 2, (2012): 53–66.
- De Waal, Alex. "When kleptocracy becomes insolvent: Brute causes of the civil war in South Sudan." *African Affairs* 113, no. 452 (2014): 347–369.
- Ebiede, Tarila. "Beyond the rebellion: alternative narratives of violent conflicts and the implications for peacebuilding in the Niger Delta." African Peacebuilding Network (APN) Working Paper No. 5, 2016.
- Engel, Ulf, and João G. Porto. "The African Union's new peace and security architecture: toward an evolving security regime?" *African Security* 2, no. 3 (2009): 82–96.
- Fashina, Oladipo. "Frantz Fanon and the ethical justification of anti-colonial violence." *Social Theory and Practice* 15, no. 2 (1989): 179–212.
- Francis, David. (2008). "Introduction: understanding the context of peace and conflict in Africa." In *Peace and conflict in Africa*, ed. David Francis (3–15). London: Zed Books, 2008.
- Frynas, Jędrzej G. "Corporate and state responses to anti oil protests in the Niger Delta." *African Affairs* 100, no. 398 (2001): 27–54.

- Goulding, Marrack. "The United Nations and conflict in Africa since the cold war." *African Affairs* 98, no. 391 (1999): 155–166.
- Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIC). Heidelberg Conflict Barometer, 2015. [http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer\\_2015.pdf](http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2015.pdf).
- Kah, Henry Kam. "Anti-Balaka/Séléka, religionisation and separatism in the history of the Central African Republic." *Conflict Studies Quarterly* 9 (2014): 30–48.
- Kalyvas, Stathis. "The ontology of "political violence: action and identity in civil wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (2003): 475–494.
- Kazah-Toure, Toure. "Inter-ethnic relations, conflicts and nationalism in Zango Katab Area of Northern Nigeria: Historical origins and contemporary forms." Paper Presented at the Eighth General Assembly of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal, June 26–July 2, 1995.
- Langer, Arnim, and Graham Brown (eds.). *Building sustainable peace: timing and sequencing of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Lombard, Louisa, and Sylvain Batianga-Kinzi. "Violence, popular punishment, and war in the Central African Republic." *African Affairs* 114 no. 454 (2014): 52–71.
- Mac Ginty, Roger, and Oliver P. Richmond. "The local turn in peace building: A critical agenda for peace." *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 5 (2013): 763–783.
- Mickler, David, Wafula Okumu, and Samuel M. Makinda. *The African Union: Addressing the Challenges of Peace, Security, and Governance*. Oxon: Routledge, 2016.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

- Mellgard, Emily. "What is the Antibalaka?" Tony Blair Foundation, accessed on September 27, 2016. <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/religion-geopolitics/commentaries/backgrounder/what-antibalaka>.
- Murithi, Tim. "African indigenous and endogenous approaches to peace and conflict resolution," in *Peace and conflict in Africa*, ed. David Francis (16–30). London: Zed Books, 2008.
- Newman, Edward, Roland Paris and Oliver P. Richmond. "Introduction." In *New perspectives on liberal peacebuilding*, edited by Edward Newman, Roland Paris and Oliver P. Richmond (3–25). Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2009.
- Obi, Cyril. "Oil extraction, dispossession, resistance, and conflict in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 30, no. 2 (2010): 219–236.
- Osaghae, Eghosa, and Rotimi Suberu. "A history of identities, violence and stability in Nigeria." Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, University of Oxford, 2005.
- Oyefusi, Aderoju. "Oil and the probability of rebel participation among youths in the Niger Delta of Nigeria." *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 4 (2008): 539–555.
- Pugh, Michael, and Neil Cooper, with Jonathan Goodhand. *War economies in a regional context: The challenges of transformation*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2004.
- Reid, Richard. *War in Pre-Colonial Eastern Africa: The Patterns and Meanings of State-Level Conflict in the Nineteenth Century*. London: The British Institute in Eastern Africa, 2007.
- Smith, David. "Unspeakable Horrors in a Country on the Verge of Genocide." *The Guardian*, November 22, 2013.
- Straus, Scott. "Wars do end! Changing patterns of political violence in sub-Saharan Africa." *African Affairs* 111, no. 443 (2012): 179–201.
- Sy, Amadou and Amy Copley. "Emerging from crisis: The role of economic

recovery in creating a durable peace for the Central African Republic.”  
Brookings Institute: Africa Growth Initiative, October 2015.

Tieku, Thomas K., Cyril Obi, and Lindsay Scorgie-Porter. “The African Peace and Security Architecture: Introduction to the Special Issue.” *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 4, no. 2 (2014): 1–10.

Vines, Alex. “A decade of African peace and security architecture.” *International Affairs* 89, no.1 (2013): 89–109.

Vlassenroot, Koen, and Timothy Raeymaekers. *Conflict and social transformation in Eastern DR Congo*. Ghent: Academia Press, 2004.

Vogel, Christopher, and Josaphat Musamba. “Recycling Rebels? Demobilization in the Congo.” Rift Valley Institute PSRP Briefing Paper 11, March 2016.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Dr. Rhuks T. Ako is an independent researcher and senior research fellow at the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEES), focusing on Natural Resources, Energy, and Environment. He qualified as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 1999, and completed his MPhil and PhD in law from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, and the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK, respectively. He was on the Faculty of Law at Obafemi Awolowo University (2001-2008), and the University of Hull, UK (2009-2016). Thereafter, he has served in several consultancy capacities, including as a UK Department for International Development (DFID) and International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (I-IDEA) seconded consultant political analyst to the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.*

*Dr. Ako is a recipient of several awards including the prestigious Volkswagen 'Our Common Future' Fellowship in 2011, and the Limits to Growth Fellowship in 2012. He was part of a team of researchers that received an APN Collaborative Working Group research grant for the period 2014-2016. Dr. Ako has authored over fifty publications including a monograph; co-edited book; book chapters; journal articles; and consultancy reports on issues of environmental justice, natural resource governance, environmental human rights, corporate social responsibility, and Africa's governance, peace and security.*