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WOMEN AND THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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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.

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INTRODUCTION

The African Union (AU) has adopted the issues of peace and security and gender equality as part of its social transformation agenda on the continent. Specifically, the organization aims to promote peace, security, and stability on the continent; protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments; and promote sustainable development as well as the integration of African economies.[1]

The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of how women's rights in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict contexts have been mainstreamed into various mechanisms, structures, and instruments of the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). As part of this exercise, this study conducts a critical examination of the links between APSA's goal of promoting peace and security and the AU's Gender Equality Architecture's (GEA) goal of promoting and protecting the rights of women on the continent.

This paper argues that while the AU has shown its commitment to the issues of peace and security and gender equality through the creation of various structures and the adoption of legal instruments to push through its agenda, the lack of a well-coordinated organizational strategy integrating these two sectors has resulted in limited success in achieving its goals and actualizing its vision. Furthermore, although the AU's peace and security and gender equality agendas are closely linked to the global women, peace, and security (WPS) discourse, there is very little synergy in the institution's engagement with and articulation of the global framework. As a result, the expected transformation in the lives of African women in conflict and post-conflict settings has not been realized. Women are still subjected to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and other human rights violations and marginalized in peace negotiations and post-war reconstruction processes; simultaneously, impunity for SGBV and other crimes is still rife in these societies. To move the institution's gender equality agenda forward, a comprehensive gender-responsive organizational strategy and culture are needed to strengthen inter-departmental cooperation at all levels. This will encourage programs and policies that are in sync with the institution's broad vision of a continent where women and men have equal access to opportunities, rights, and resources.

This paper outlines the significant progress made at the country level as well as the gaps regarding women's safety and security during and after armed conflict, including their participation in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. It provides an assessment of the achievements and limitations of the gender mainstreaming process,[2] particularly in relation to practical measures for promoting gender equality in the APSA, alongside those for implementing policies for the promotion of peace and security within the framework of the Gender Equality Architecture (GEA). It concludes with a set of recommendations for AU policymakers and civil society practitioners.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA IN AFRICA

The adoption of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in October 2000 has been heralded as a landmark achievement, as it brought gender issues to the forefront of the international peace and security discourse. The resolution's transformative agenda on gender equality (an end to SGBV and impunity, and the inclusion

of women in public spaces) challenges patriarchal norms, traditions, and belief systems that govern gender relations in most societies. However, the resolution does not take into account the structural barriers that impede women's access to power and their location within the wider society to determine how its agenda will be applied. This notwithstanding, the resolution's norm-setting agenda has resulted in legislative reforms that have created opportunities for women to advocate for transformative change in social relations during transitions from war to peace.

Given the foregoing, the AU adopted a suite of instruments and policy frameworks promoting the international WPS agenda. At a broad level, UNSC Resolution 1325 and its sister resolutions seek to protect women's rights in post-conflict societies as well as to promote women's participation in recovery and reconstruction.[3] The mandate of the WPS resolutions includes the participation of women in peace processes and all public decisionmaking processes linked to making and building peace; the prevention of conflict through incorporating women's perspectives into early-warning systems; public education about and prosecution of violators of women's rights; the protection of women during and after conflict by communal, national, and international security personnel; and peacebuilding that engages women and addresses their needs in relief and recovery, including redress for injustices and investment in their economic and social security.[4]

Consequently, three sub-regional organizations—the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)—have adopted sub-regional action plans based on UNSC Resolution 1325. Thirteen countries have also adopted national action plans for the implementation of the resolution.[5]

However, through the efforts of women's civil society organizations (CSOs), considerable progress has been made in the implementation of WPS commitments across many conflict-affected societies in Africa. A variety of institutional structures, mechanisms, and policies to promote gender-sensitive governance have been established. Among these are Ministries of Women, Gender and Family Affairs and/or national machineries whose primary tasks include but are not limited to: the formulation of gender equality policies and implementation plans; the mainstreaming of gender in national policies, plans, and programs; and policy advocacy at national, sub-regional, and international levels, to monitor the state's adherence to

the ratification and/or domestication of protocols promoting women's rights and gender equality. In addition, constitutional reviews and legal reforms have been instituted to strengthen constitutional guarantees of women's rights. Finally, truth and reconciliation commissions and special courts have been established for victims of war crimes, including SGBV, to seek justice and end impunity.

As part of this process, nationality codes have been amended to allow women to pass on citizenship rights to their spouses and children; inheritance rights have been extended to women married under customary law; and country reports on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), outlining governments' policies and programs on Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR), have been submitted. In this regard, Côte d'Ivoire developed a roadmap for implementing CEDAW in 2012; ratified the Optional Protocol on CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol in 2012; and ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2013. The country's marriage law was revised in 2012, granting both spouses equal rights; and the Nationality Code was enacted in 2013, giving women the right to pass on citizenship to their children and spouses.[6]

Regarding the issue of participation, countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda have exceeded the minimum 30 percent representation advocated for women in politics and public decisionmaking spaces through affirmative action policies. In the case of Liberia, where the government was unable to pass a gender quota bill into law, the president used her executive powers to ensure the makeup of her cabinet and other high-level public sector positions included over 30 percent women.

On the issue of violence against women, laws criminalizing domestic violence and sexual offenses have been adopted with stiff penalties for violators. For instance, in Rwanda, Law No. 27/2001 of April 28, 2001, stipulates stiff penalties for rape. If the victim is between fourteen and eighteen years of age, the perpetrator will be sentenced to a maximum of twenty-five years in prison; if the victim is younger than fourteen, the sentence will be life imprisonment. If the rapist murders the victim or infects her or him with an incurable disease, the perpetrator will be sentenced to death. Furthermore, if the court decides that the rape was an act of genocide, the violator is sentenced to either life imprisonment or death. In addition, a law on the prevention, protection, and elimination of all forms of gender-based

violence has been promulgated and the penal code has been revised. The code stipulates a sentence of ten to fifteen years for the rape of an adult; in the case of the death or physical impairment of the victim, the rapist will be sentenced to death. In 2001, Sierra Leone's federal government established Family Support Units (FSUs) in police stations across the country to respond specifically to rising domestic violence. The FSUs work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; and the Lawyers Commission for Legal Assistance provides free legal aid services to victims. Despite these efforts, the conviction rate for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence in the country is low to nil.[7]

There has also been a flurry of activities in the security sector, primarily to train the army, police, intelligence services, and paramilitary organizations to mainstream gender in their institutions by providing gender-sensitive training to their personnel and encouraging the recruitment and promotion of women to decisionmaking positions. Gender training has been provided to over two thousand military officers of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) and a Gender Coordinating Desk has been established within the RDF with focal points at the brigade and battalion levels. The Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa) provided training on integrating gender into the security sector and enhancing the capacities of female personnel in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Due to WIPSEN-Africa's activities, both police forces now organize their own in-house gender training. In Liberia, the government has instituted a minimum 20 percent gender recruitment quota to increase and encourage female participation in the security sector. The Sierra Leone Police Force has adopted two gender policies, one on gender mainstreaming and one on sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment; the Republic of Sierra Leone's Armed Forces also has a gender equality policy.[8]

While these initiatives are worth celebrating, several roadblocks threaten their implementation. Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) issues are often treated rhetorically and portrayed as women's concerns and priorities, not as critical issues for national advancement and development. Moreover, the institutional mechanisms and policy frameworks for gender equality are the least resourced and capacitated among governmental structures.[9] Finally, some country's constitutions, which should be the basis for women's empowerment, still contain discriminatory provisions.[10] However, Liberia is taking the lead in ensuring that all discriminatory provisions within its constitution are repealed. A Law Commission was established in 2009 with the mandate to review Liberia's existing laws and

initiate the removal of any that are discriminatory or contradictory to the fundamental freedoms protected by their constitution. A Constitutional Reform Taskforce has also been established to ensure that the review conforms to all regional and international protocols and conventions that the government has signed and/or ratified.

THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

The idea of a peace and security framework for Africa to confront the challenges posed by the outbreak of civil wars on the continent occurred in 1993. According to Kwesi Aning:

> Therefore, 1993 became the decisive year in which the shift to the recognition of the need for structured security started to occur.... In 2002, the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (the PSC Protocol) of the AU was promulgated and eventually ratified by a sufficient number of member states to make it operational. At its launch in May 2004, the PSC was characterized as "marking a historic watershed in Africa's progress towards resolving its conflicts and building a durable peace and security order."[11]

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) refers to the collective pillars that constitute the AU's peace and security framework outlined in its 2000 Constitutive Act and the 2002 Peace and Security Protocol. These include the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Panel of the Wise (PoW), the African Standby Force (ASF), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), and the AU Peace Fund. The APSA is at the center of the AU's peace and conflict agenda, which includes conflict prevention, early warning and preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacebuilding, the encouragement and promotion of democratic practices and intervention, and humanitarian action and disaster management.[12]

The APSA emerged from the desire of African leaders to establish an operational structure to execute decisions based on the authority conferred by Article 5 (2) of the AU's Constitutive Act.[13] The effective operationalization of the APSA requires the setting up of functional systems at the sub-regional level through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs). As a follow-up, a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the RECs/RMs was signed in January 2008, and the

RECs/RMs now have official representation through the AU to facilitate coordination and collaboration.[14] As a result, it can be argued that the APSA provides the AU and the RECs/RMs with the necessary support to undertake their roles of prevention, management, and resolution of conflict on the continent.

In general, the adoption of a continental peace and security architecture has been viewed positively in terms of preventive diplomacy, mediation, and peace support operations.[15] However, an AU-commissioned assessment report on the APSA has called for greater flexibility for the incorporation of methods to address emerging political and security issues such as election-related violence, piracy, and terrorism, as well as the incorporation of security sector reforms and transitional justice, within its pillars.[16] Furthermore, the report has noted the lack of gender mainstreaming across all of the pillars of the APSA and has recommended that "the gap should be tackled as a matter of urgency."[17]

THE AFRICAN UNION'S PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC), the most important pillar within the APSA, was created in 2002 at the first AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AHSG) as the main decisionmaking organ for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts.[18] Among its objectives are the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the continent, in order to guarantee the protection and preservation of life and property.[19] With support from the other APSA pillars, it acts as a collective security and early-warning instrument for the timely and efficient response to both existing and emerging crises and conflicts on the continent.[20]

The PSC comprises fifteen members: four from Western Africa; three each from Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa; and two from Northern Africa. Ten members are elected for a two-year period, and the remaining five—spread across the continent's sub-regions—are elected for three years. The main criteria for electing members to the PSC are their willingness to participate in the resolution of conflicts and their ability to provide military, political, financial, and diplomatic support. Unfortunately, the latter criterion has not always been met, as some members cannot meet the requirement. For example, some PSC members do not have defense attachés to accompany them to the AU; as a result, civilian officials are sent to attend meetings of the Military Council, a central advisory body of

the PSC.[21] The PSC's meetings occur at several levels of authority: that of permanent representatives, ministers, or heads of state and government. The Chairperson of the AU Commission (AUC) chairs both the PSC and its committees.

Article 20 of the PSC's Protocol extends its activities to include engagement with civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly women's groups, in the peace and security sector. These groups can be called on to address the PSC on current security issues relating to women. In response to this provision, the Livingstone Formula was adopted in 2008 as a mechanism for interaction between CSOs and the PSC in the promotion of peace, security, and stability in Africa. It was formally launched in March 2010 in Addis Ababa with an Open Session on Women and Children. It was agreed at the conclusion of the meeting that the PSC will organize yearly open sessions on "Women and Children and Other Vulnerable Groups in Armed Conflicts." Seven open sessions have been organized since the inaugural meeting.

THE CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) consists of an observation and monitoring center (the "Situation Room"), which collects and analyzes information on possible threats to peace and security in the region. Since the adoption of the Framework for the Operationalization of the CEWS in December 2006, the system has provided reliable and up-to-date information on potential, active, and post-conflict situations.[22] The data comes from both open and privileged sources, such as independent media, AU Liaison Offices and field missions in conflict-affected countries, and sub-regional organizations.[23] The news monitoring output is further strengthened with information from the *Africa News Brief* and *Daily News Highlights*, as well as the AU's home page.[24] This information is passed on to the AU's decisionmaking organs and operational arms, such as the Panel of the Wise and Special Envoys.[25] The AU Commission (AUC) Chairperson uses the information from the CEWS to advise the Peace and Security Council (PSC) on potential conflicts and threats to peace, and to recommend the best course of action. Also, member states are expected to facilitate early action based on information from either the PSC or the AUC Chairperson. While it has been acknowledged that the CEWS is one of the most advanced structures of the APSA, it is constrained by human resource shortcomings, data management and transmission services issues, and a lack of connectivity and standardization between the CEWS and the Regional

Economic Communities' systems.[26] Finally, most of its reports have been gender blind.[27]

THE AFRICAN STANDBY FORCE

The African Standby Force (ASF) comprises five multidisciplinary sub-regional forces with military, police, and civilian components. These sub-regional forces are expected to deliver peacekeeping personnel at pre-set levels of readiness based on six envisaged scenarios at the request of the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), or a given region.[28] The Peace and Security Council (PSC) is entrusted with the general supervision and policy guidance of the ASF brigades. Thus, the ASF is expected to respond to either an AU or UN mandate to bridge the gap between the eruption of violence or outbreak of conflict and the deployment of UN forces.[29]

Overall, the operationalization of the ASF has achieved some successes, even though progress has been uneven. The military and police components are in place in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs). However, there are still significant gaps, especially within the civilian component, which involves the appointment of gender focal point (GFP) personnel.[30] The ASF structures in Eastern, Southern, and Western Africa are more advanced than those in Central and Northern Africa. Furthermore, the ASF has been criticized for its inability to deliver relevant capabilities to African peace missions, which are being managed on an ad hoc basis. An exception to this is the Eastern African Standby Force, which is deployed in Somalia with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).[31]

THE PANEL OF THE WISE

Like the other pillars of the APSA, the criteria for the appointment of a member to the AU's Panel of the Wise (PoW) and its functions are clearly outlined in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The PoW is composed of five highly respected African individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the causes of peace, security, and development on the continent. Members of the panel are expected not to hold active political office in their countries. They are appointed based on sub-regional representation to serve a three-year term that may be extended to a second tenure. Even though the AU's Constitutive Act includes the principle of gender equality, it was not part of

the criteria for membership on the panel. However, the appointment of PoW members has been gender sensitive thus far. For instance, two out of five members (40 percent) were women on the first panel that served between 2007 and 2010. In 2010, when the tenure of the first set of members expired, the PoW's composition was enlarged to ten members to include the "Friends of the Panel of the Wise." In that cycle, the number of female appointees rose to four out ten, maintaining the 40 percent women composition. The current PoW for the 2014–2017 cycle includes six women members (60 percent), as well as the first woman chair.

The mandate of the PoW as outlined in the Protocol is to advise the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the AU Commission (AUC) Chairperson on all issues pertaining to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security, and stability in Africa; to undertake all such actions deemed appropriate to support the efforts of the PSC and AUC Chairperson; and to make pronouncements on issues relating to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security, and stability in Africa.[32] While the PoW operates within the ambit of the APSA, it can take action "at the request of the Council or the Chairperson or at its own initiative."[33] This independence gives the panel leeway to act on issues it deems significant to the enhancement of human security on the continent.[34] Although the panel does not have a mediation role, it can assist and advise mediation teams engaged in formal negotiations.

According to the PoW's first program adopted in 2008, the activities to be undertaken to achieve its objectives include the following: deliberations among members, including formal and informal consultations; engagement in countries and regions affected by conflict; considerations of key thematic issues related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Africa; and collaboration and consultation with relevant organs of the AU, including the PSC and AUC Chairperson.[35] The second and third of these activities—engagement in places affected by conflict and considerations of key thematic issues—are of direct relevance to this study. With regard to the former, the PoW undertook confidence-building missions to the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Africa prior to the latter's 2009 election. The PoW has also focused on instability in Western and Southern Africa, as well as the Horn of Africa, and issued a statement on the situations in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Somalia, Sudan (Darfur), and Zimbabwe.[36] With regard to the latter activity, the PoW has chosen to focus on a different theme each year to promote debate and raise awareness about a topical issue it feels has not received adequate attention from relevant decisionmakers. These themes

are highlighted through commissioned reports, workshops, and seminars.[37] Between 2008 and 2010, workshops were held on the following themes: the prevention of election-related violence; impunity, reconciliation, and healing; and women and children in armed conflict—in Nairobi, Kenya (2008); Monrovia, Liberia (2009); and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (2010), respectively.

The PoW undertook confidence-building missions to Egypt and Tunisia in the aftermath of the political turmoil that engulfed Northern Africa as a result of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. The PSC tasked the PoW with the development of a report with recommendations on how to address issues of democratization and governance for conflict prevention.[38] One of the PoW's major activities in 2016 was the development of modalities for the establishment of the African Network of Women in Conflict Prevention and Peace Mediation (FemWise). This achievement earned the PoW an invitation from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to the March 2017 Arria Formula Meeting.[39]

These achievements notwithstanding, it has been observed that most of the PoW's work has responded to crises, rather than preempting the eruption of looming crises. This shortcoming has been attributed to the PoW's design. It was noted that:

> The panel is not a standing body and as such is not readily available to mediate or undertake peacemaking missions when conflicts break out. The second factor is the composition of the panel. Its members, while respected, have been either frail due to age or busy with other responsibilities, and thus could not engage in intensive mediation or peacemaking work.... This modus operandi makes it ill suited to the demands of mediation and peacemaking.[40]

It has been recommended going forward that for the PoW to achieve its mandate, it should be "institutionally tied and operationally integrated into the various components of the APSA, the PSC, the Continental Early Warning System and the AU Commission."[41] On another note, in its 665th meeting, the PSC emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of the PoW Secretariat through additional human, financial, and material resources to ensure that the panel is able to discharge its mandate more effectively.[42]

THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE FUND

The AU Peace Fund was established to provide financial resources for peace support missions and other operational activities related to the AU's peace and security mandate.[43] The fund is envisaged as a standing reserve that the AU and RECs/RMs can access in case of emergency or unforeseen priorities. According to the African Peace and Security Architecture's (APSA) 2015 Assessment, "the Peace Fund remains small and precarious. On average, only 6 percent of the regular budget is allocated to the Peace Fund.... The reimbursement within six months of States contributing contingents to peace support operations, as provided for in the Protocol, has not always been honored."[44] It was therefore not surprising that the African Heads of State and Government (AHSGs) agreed in 2009 to a gradual incremental budget increase of 12 percent by 2012. However, this target has yet to be met, and the level by 2013 was only 8 percent.[45] This low budgetary allocation affects all peace missions in general, but its impact on programs to support women and gender equality is particularly adverse because of their low prioritization within the AU.[46]

THE CHALLENGES OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE AFRICAN PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

The PSC Protocol—the normative framework on which the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is based—is guided by the AU's Constitutive Act (2000), the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy (2004), and the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy (2006). In their excellent gender review of these legal and policy instruments and the APSA pillars, Ecoma Alaga, Emma Birikorang, and Thomas Jaye have observed that while they are gender-sensitive and pro-women, certain weaknesses must be strengthened going forward.[47] In this regard, they noted the need for specific initiatives to increase women's representation in the composition of the PSC and its structures, the creation of technical committees on gender in the PSC and the Constitutive Act to increase women's participation and representation in peace and security, and the implementation of women-specific and gender-sensitive programming in the organs and mechanisms to enhance the protection of women's rights and their active participation in the implementation of the Solemn Declaration.[48] The review has called for the inclusion of provisions to address sexual violence in the Protocol and the Solemn Declaration, in order to better protect women and their rights in conflict and post-conflict situations.[49]

In relation to the APSA pillars, the reviewers have recommended that the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and its counterparts within the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) be strengthened to ensure that all information and analyses capture women's experiences; that the civilian component of the African Standby Force (ASF) be strengthened through human, financial, and technical expertise, including the employment of more women, as well as the provision of training to both military and civilian personnel on women's rights issues; and that more women be nominated to the Panel of the Wise to bring a more gendered perspective to its work.[50] As noted earlier, this final recommendation has been fulfilled for the time being.

Despite the AU's strong normative framework on peace and security, the institution lacks an all-encompassing organizational gender strategy to guide its work in conflict and post-conflict situations.[51] This gap notwithstanding, the AU has introduced initiatives aimed at developing a Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda for the continent. For instance, two action plans on gender mainstreaming in peace and security were adopted in 2010 and 2013.[52] These action plans called for, among other things, the full implementation of all relevant instruments for the protection of women and children in armed conflict, and the continued mainstreaming of gender considerations into the APSA. They also emphasized the responsibility of states to ensure the protection of women and children in situations where they are threatened or affected by violence. In addition, the action plan called for a change in the implementation of the gender policy from its current centralized form to a diffused model across the institution's organizational structure; the appointment of a Special Representative on Violence against Women and Children; and the inclusion of specific actions, achievements, and challenges in the implementation of the WPS agenda in the Commission's 2014–2017 Strategic Plan.[53] To ensure the implementation of these decisions, the Peace and Security Department (PSD) appointed a gender advisor in 2011.[54]

Accordingly, the AU's Peace Support Operations (PSOs) now include various aspects of UNSC resolutions on WPS by recognizing the vulnerability of woman and girls to sexual violence in conflict settings. Furthermore, the United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), an AU–UN hybrid operation, trained a Rwandan battalion of peacekeepers, all of whom were women, in gender mainstreaming to ensure the successful implementation of their mission objective of securing protection and security for vulnerable women.

UNAMID's Gender Advisory Unit applies a gender perspective in its early recovery and implementation mechanisms to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, enhancing women's safety, security, and empowerment.[55] The AU's first gender advisor to a PSO was deployed to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2012. The Gender Advisory Unit aims to build a gender-sensitive organization and to facilitate and increase the focus on gender mainstreaming and Resolution 1325 in Somalia.[56] In relation to the former objective, the unit has organized gender training for troops and developed a gender mainstreaming strategy.[57] Regarding the latter, it has supported the Somali government in drafting its first gender policy, which promotes the use of a quota to increase women's political participation and representation.[58]

While the Peace and Security Department (PSD) is "talking the talk" on gender mainstreaming in the AU's peace and security agenda with the aim of having a comprehensive WPS framework for the continent, its prescriptions for the actualization of its agenda are fraught with inconsistencies. For example, while none of the decisions in the 2010 action plan had been implemented by 2013, a new plan was adopted without any mention of the existing one. Additionally, the gender advisor position—established in 2011 to steer the implementation of the 2010 action plan—was abolished in 2012. Then in 2013, the PSD once again started strategizing about how to mainstream gender into its peace and security agenda.[59] Furthermore, the PSD's decision that the implementation of a gender policy should be diffused across the AU Commission's structure rather than be centralized will weaken the process, as there will be no focal point to guide it or take responsibility for inaction. It has been observed at the programmatic level that the two action plans on mainstreaming gender into the AU's peace and security work lacked focus, as the action plans included too many issues that sometimes contradict one another.[60]

The January 2014 appointment of a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security by the Chairperson of the AU Commission has resulted in the PSD's development of a more focused and coherent strategy to advance gender issues within the realms of peace and security. The special envoy's mandate is to "ensure that the voices of women and vulnerable are heard much more in peacebuilding and in conflict resolution."[61] In particular, the current special envoy, Bineta Diop, intends to focus on: increasing women's participation in peace and security; ensuring that protective measures on conflict-related sexual violence are put in place at all levels; promoting

women's roles in preventing conflict and peacebuilding; building capacity beyond the AU with local women's groups; and establishing solidarity with African women's organizations to identify and amplify complementary efforts at communal, national, sub-regional, and continental levels.[62] In addition, the special envoy will support other departments of the AU to mainstream gender into the APSA and the African Governance Architecture.[63]

Based on the special envoy's mandate, the PSD launched a five-year work plan (2015–2020) on gender, peace, and security in November 2015. The program's overall goal is to accelerate the implementation of a WPS agenda in Africa, especially within the APSA. The specific objectives include the following: to develop a continental WPS agenda; to advocate for the implementation of a continental framework at national and sub-regional levels; to monitor, evaluate, and report on the implementation of the WPS agenda; to promote women's leadership and initiatives and showcase best practices for their replication; to strengthen the effort of the AU on WPS issues for greater impact; and to build partnerships with various stakeholders, including developmental agencies and peace and security partners.[64] Furthermore, the PSD developed the African Peace and Security Architecture Roadmap 2015–2020. The roadmap prioritized gender mainstreaming and the use of gender-sensitive indicators to monitor performance and delivery on gender, peace, and security outcomes.[65] To this end, the program has established and supported Gender Focal Points (GFPs) at the AU Commission and within Liaison Offices, PSOs, and RECs.[66] In relation to the AU's post-conflict reconstruction agenda, support has been provided to post-war societies to develop gender-sensitive economic strategies. In addition, support has been given to facilitate women's participation in various dialogue processes, including as part of peacebuilding and mediation efforts by the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).[67] The Special Envoy on WPS has also been given the responsibility of developing a Continental Results Framework. The framework will serve as a tool for monitoring the implementation of the various instruments and commitments of the WPS agenda in Africa by member states and other relevant stakeholders.[68] In her first report on the implementation of the WPS agenda, the special envoy noted that nineteen countries have developed and adopted 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs).[69] Sudan has developed, but not yet adopted, a NAP. While Namibia does not have a NAP, its National Gender Policy and Action Plan has a chapter on WPS.[70] At the level of the RECs and RMs, two RECs—ECOWAS and ICGLR—have adopted NAPs.[71]

THE AFRICAN UNION'S GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE

The AU's Gender Equality Architecture (GEA) was borne out of the struggles of African women's groups, who seized the opportunities created by the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the AU as an entry point to lobby for greater inclusion of women and an increased focus on gender issues in the emerging structure. Their efforts resulted first in the establishment of a legal and institutional framework for mainstreaming gender into the AU. Thus, gender equality is enshrined in Article 4 (L) of the Constitutive Act of the AU. As a follow-up, the Gender Parity Principle was adopted in 2002 regarding the appointment of AU commissioners; then, the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) was created within the Office of the Chairperson to implement the AU's Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) agenda. The WGDD's overall mandate is to ensure that capacity is built across all AU organs, RECs, and member states in the development of skills necessary for achieving gender mainstreaming targets and practices in all policy and program processes and actions by 2015. The WGDD is also tasked with closing existing gender gaps and delivering the promise of equality for all African men, women, boys, and girls.[72] In addition, the WGDD was established to ensure gender equality in the recruitment of senior administrative, professional, and technical staff. To further its objective of promoting gender equality at the continental level, the WGDD has engaged in capacity development, advocacy, research, and the translation of policy agreements and instruments into measurable women's empowerment programs and projects in sectoral and/or cross-cutting areas. It has also monitored and evaluated the development and harmonization of policymaking processes within the AU, RECs, and member states.[73]

In 2003, the Executive Council of the AU transformed the then-African Women's Committee on Peace and Development into the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC), to advise the AU Chairperson on gender and development issues.[74] To this end, the AUWC monitors progress towards achieving gender equality on the continent, working with governments and civil society within the framework of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the African Women's Protocol.[75] The existence of these legal and institutional mechanisms paved the way for the establishment of the AU's GEA, which is made up of five pillars, namely: the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in

Africa, the African Union Gender Policy, the African Women's Decade, and the African Fund for Women.

THE PROTOCOL TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) was adopted in 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique. It is a legally binding supplement to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Maputo Protocol entered into force in 2005 after the deposit of the requisite instrument of ratification by the fifteenth member state. It outlines a comprehensive range of human rights to which women are entitled and the state's obligation to uphold, promote, and protect them.[76] Articles 10 and 11 focus on the protection of women in armed conflict and women's rights to peace, respectively. In this regard, the protocol demands increased participation of women in conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation processes. In relation to Article 11, the protocol calls not only for the protection of women from all forms of violence, but also demands that such acts be considered crimes against humanity and that perpetrators be brought to justice before a competent criminal court. In addition, according to Article 26, implementation is the responsibility of member states; they are legally obligated to domesticate the instrument and integrate its provisions into their national laws. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) monitors the implementation process through member states' submission of periodic reports under the African Charter. In the same vein, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights is tasked with interpreting matters arising from the application or implementation of the protocol.

While the AU's target of full enforcement and ratification by 2015 and domestication by 2020 is unlikely, it must be noted that forty-nine out of fifty-four member states have signed the protocol, thirty-seven have successfully ratified it, while five—Botswana, Egypt, Eritrea, Morocco, and Tunisia—have done neither. States that have ratified the protocol are expected to send biennial reports on the legislative, judicial, administrative, and other measures that have been implemented towards the realization of women's rights.[77] Due to the non-inclusion of progress reports by member states, the AUC Chairperson urged countries to honor their obligations to the protocol in her 2014 Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in

Africa (SDGEA) report. Subsequently, eight countries—namely, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and South Africa[78]—have submitted reports in their periodic submission to the ACHPR. Through Article 9 of the SDGEA, forty-one countries have reported progress on the ratification and sensitization of the continent's premier women's rights instrument. The near absence of references to the protocol in the periodic reports of member states is due to a lack of sanctions to force compliance, but perhaps a "naming and shaming" campaign by women's groups would force compliance.[79]

Many gains have been achieved in relation to Articles 10 and 11 on WPS, as conflict-affected and post-conflict countries have enacted laws and formulated policies to promote and protect women's rights. For its part, the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) developed a gender training manual to mainstream gender in peacekeeping operations, organized training sessions on its use for countries contributing troops to the African Standby Force (ASF), and embarked on a recruitment exercise of gender experts for AU Liaison Offices and PSOs in 2010. The WGDD also supported women candidates in Somalia's 2012 elections and worked with the elected team and AMISOM in developing a national gender policy. However, there have been reservations by some member states regarding Article 14 (2) (c) on sexual and reproductive health rights and Article 21 on land inheritance. In terms of domestication, Rwanda is the only country to have done so across almost all sectors of society.[80] While there are still challenges getting countries to meet international human rights standards, various legal reforms have been instituted to promote and protect the rights of women and girls in various countries, due to the efforts of forty-four non-governmental organizations campaigning across the continent to get governments to ratify and implement the protocol.[81] For instance, all post-war countries have reformed their laws to address gender discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence, and to protect women's rights; twenty of the twenty-nine countries that had practiced female gentile mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) now have laws forbidding the practice. As a result of this, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 67/146 in 2012 banning FGM/C. Furthermore, women's political participation and representation have increased considerably due to the enactment of gender quotas. Other achievements include a decline in maternal and infant mortality rates, and an increase in girls' enrollment in and completion of schooling.[82]

In May 1999, the ACHPR appointed a Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa. The mandate of the special rapporteur is to serve as a focal point for the promotion and protection of the rights of women, to assist governments in the development and implementation of policies that promote and protect the rights of women, to undertake promotional work to disseminate the human rights policies of the AU, and to carry out fact-finding missions to investigate violations of women's rights in these countries. In addition, the special rapporteur ensures the implementation of the protocol by state parties by preparing reports on women's rights and proposing recommendations for the protocol's adoption by the AU Commission. Furthermore, the rapporteur undertakes comparative studies of the situations in various countries; defines guidelines for state reporting; and collaborates with relevant parties responsible for the promotion of women's rights at national, sub-regional, continental, and international levels.[83]

THE SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER IN AFRICA

The Solemn Declaration on Gender in Africa (SDGEA) was adopted in July 2004 at the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The SDGEA reaffirms the commitment of the heads of state and government to the principle of gender equality in Article 4 (L) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals, and actions set out in the various international, regional, and sub-regional instruments and initiatives on human and women's rights. In adopting the SDGEA, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AHSG) agreed to monitor themselves on gender equality and mainstreaming in their respective countries by submitting annual reports to the AHSG. However, at the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa in January 2011, it was agreed that member states should submit their country reports every four years. The Chairperson of the AU is also expected to submit an annual report on the progress of the implementation of the SDGEA.

Four of the SDGEA's nine provisions focus on peace and security issues—namely, the inclusion of women in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction, the prohibition of the recruitment of child soldiers, the promotion and protection of women's human rights, and the prohibition of the abuse of women as wives and sex slaves. The SDGEA also requires member states to provide updates on activities undertaken to sign, ratify,

and/or enact the protocol. Fifty of fifty-four member states have so far submitted their county reports on the SDGEA. The non-reporting countries are Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, and Somalia. Like the protocol, the SDGEA has no enforcement mechanism to ensure submission of country reports.

THE GENDER POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

The Gender Equality Architecture (GEA) was strengthened with the adoption of the Gender Policy and Action Plan in 2009. The policy's goal is to adopt a rights-based approach to development through evidence-based decisionmaking and the use of gender disaggregated data and performance indicators for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa. It seeks to promote a gender responsive environment and practices, and to undertake commitments linked to the realization of Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) in member states at the national, sub-regional, continental, and international levels. The framework will enhance the implementation of the AU's gender equality commitments and principles in all of its organs, as well as in RECs and member states. The Gender Policy and Action Plan targets eight areas, including peace and security, specifically to "promote effective participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and security including post-conflict reconciliation and development."[84] This objective will be achieved by integrating gender in policies, programs, and activities on conflict and peace; by using UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820; by including women in mediation processes; and by creating and managing truth and reconciliation structures to expose violations against women and girls during conflicts to find lasting solutions to the problem. It is within this framework that the Women, Gender and Development Directorate set out to employ gender advisors for PSOs and AU Liaison Offices.

THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECADE

In 2008, the AU Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs made the decision to declare 2010–2020 the African Women's Decade (AWD). The idea was approved at the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The aim of the AWD is to advance gender equality by accelerating the implementation of the Dakar, Beijing, and AU Assembly decisions on Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) through a dual top-down and bottom-up approach that is inclusive of grassroots participation.[85] The AWD is based on ten themes, including peace and

security, and violence against women. The goals will be realized through close collaboration with the AU's Peace and Security Department, Peace and Security Council, and Panel of the Wise through the application of the UN's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) architecture, with a special focus on violence against women, peacebuilding, and reconstruction.

To achieve the objectives of the AWD, the AU Commission established criteria for working groups at the national, sub-regional, and continental levels. At the national level, each member state is expected to establish a national committee, made up of individuals from different sectors of society, that will propose one good practice project for each theme per year. One project per theme will be supported each year in each country, bringing the total number supported annually to fifty-four. Over the totality of the period, 540 projects will be supported.[86] At the sub-regional level, a ten-person ministerial committee will work closely with the RECs; each sub-region will choose a core UN agency with which to partner. Finally, at the continental or AU level, a thirty-person working group will be selected.[87]

THE FUND FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

The Fund for African Women was launched in January 2010 and became operational in 2011. It was established to ensure policy implementation as well as effective mainstreaming of gender in policies, institutions, and programs at local, national, and sub-regional levels.[88] Its objectives are to mobilize financial resources to support development programs and projects for women; to support women's initiatives to fight poverty; to close the gender gap and halt women's marginalization; to share experiences and best practices for the economic, political, and social empowerment of women; to facilitate the dissemination of information on the activities of African women; and to strengthen the capacities of African women in leadership, management, and entrepreneurship.[89] The fund is supported primarily by member states, which have been requested to devote 1 percent of their assessed contribution.[90] Two hundred five projects were funded between 2011 and 2014.[91] The fund has not been as successful as envisaged by the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) due to the absence of a structure for the management of its technical and practical details to ensure it functions effectively. This has resulted in fluctuation of the calls for proposals, delayed approval and disbursement of project funds, and a lack of effective monitoring of approved projects. In addition, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has noted

that the "projects are disconnected from one another and that the financial support of $15,000–$25,000 per project is insignificant to make an impact at the national level or produce any comparative advantage over any other project."[92]

As part of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU in 2013, the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AHSG) agreed to generate a long-term development strategy to chart the future course of the continent. Thus, Agenda 2063, with its eight priority areas, was conceived as the way to move forward "an integrated people-centered, prosperous Africa at peace with itself." As part of efforts to ensure that Agenda 2063 is people-driven, the AU Commission's Chairperson stated that "our women must be empowered as a critical ingredient to the continent's development."[93] In relation to peace and security, it was noted that the:

> AU has demonstrated a strong gendered commitment to this vision by highlighting the need to transform the status of women from being mere victims of conflict and to advance their agency and their participation in peace processes. Women need to be involved in consultations in regards to their security, their needs and challenges and be engaged in the design and the implementation of rights protocols and protection strategies.[94]

Following this pronouncement, the AU AHSG designated 2015 as the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063" at the Twenty-Third Ordinary Session in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. To reinforce this declaration, Agenda 2063's flagship project, entitled "Silencing the Guns and Achieving a Conflict-Free Africa by 2020," strongly commits to empowering women, removing all obstacles to women's full participation, and promoting gender equality.[95] The choice of 2015 was strategic, as it brought together several important milestones in the journey for Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) globally. It marked the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the 15th anniversary of the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000), the halfway point of the AWD (2010–2020), and the finalization of a post-2015 Development Framework. While all the speakers at the official summit expressed their commitments to GEWR, African women and youth at a pre-summit gathering demanded the inclusion of women's human rights issues in Agenda 2063 before its adoption on January 30, 2015. Among their demands were the acceleration of the implementation of all

existing women's rights obligations, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Maputo Protocol, and the Solemn Declaration on Gender in Africa (SDGEA); increased financing for women entrepreneurs and development initiatives for women; and a strengthened and coordinated African position on the post-2015 Development Framework.[96]

It must be noted that the AU's GEWR policy instruments are grounded in global women's rights declarations. These include the 1948 UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1985 Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action from the World Conference on Human Rights, the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (especially goal three, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment), and UNSC Resolution 1325, among others.

THE GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE AND WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

As with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the AU's Gender Equality Architecture (GEA) is detailed and well-established, covering the entire gamut of women's rights issues. Before assessing the performance and progress of the GEA regarding peace and security, this paper will evaluate the Women, Gender and Development Directorate's (WGDD) performance in relation to its core mandate of mainstreaming gender within the AU, RECs, and member states. Although the WGDD has undertaken some gender mainstreaming exercises among AU organs, a few of these departments—such as the Peace and Security Department (PSD), the Department of Political Affairs, and the Department of Social Affairs—have initiated their own independent gender mainstreaming activities. At the level of the RECs and member states, the AU's GEA has been translated into sub-regional and national policies and legislation to promote and protect women's rights. In general, while both RECs and member states have limited core funds for gender mainstreaming and special women's rights activities, member states face the additional challenge of weak gender or women's rights machineries.[97] This lack of political will to adequately fund Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR) programs exposes the hollowness of the rhetoric of African leaders' commitment to the issue. Poor funding for GEWR programs is not limited to the RECs and member states; the WGDD

is also saddled with the same problem: "The Directorate faces financial challenges.... The WGDD presents funding projections to the Assembly every year, nevertheless, funds are not always enough."[98] The WGDD's funding shortfall may also be due to its own internal "insufficiencies of human resources, difficulties in accessing funding despite donor funding and underspending and a general weak planning capacity."[99]

In the area of peace and security, the AU has ensured that all instruments within the GEA have provisions covering the issue and has put in place mechanisms for monitoring their implementation. These mechanisms include: reports, fact-finding missions, and recommendations for implementation; they were strengthened through capacity-building workshops and the production of dummy reports for countries that had not yet reported on the Protocol to the African Charter and the Solemn Declaration on Gender in Africa (SDGEA).[100] Also, the WGDD's building of alliances with continental movements and organizations, such as the Femmes Africa Solidarité-led Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) and Solidarity for African Women's Rights, has encouraged more than two-thirds of member states to ratify the protocol and report on the implementation of the SDGEA. These successes notwithstanding, the implementation of the protocol has been abysmal, as only one country (Rwanda) has fulfilled that obligation.

At the institutional level, many challenges were observed regarding the relationship between the WGDD and the PSD. For example, there is weak interdepartmental communication and engagement between these two units, and very little effort is being made for them to work together and strengthen the AU's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Furthermore, there is no joint work plan to ensure collaboration with their external partners to shift the discourse on violence against women. At present, the discourse focuses on violence during conflict without incorporating the post-conflict and peacebuilding phase, an important period in which women's safety and security must be guaranteed. Finally, the lack of an overarching WPS strategy has resulted in the ad hoc and disjointed implementation of WPS activities within both departments.

CONCLUSION: THE WAY FORWARD

While the AU has established well-defined peace and security and gender equality architectures, the lack of an operational gender strategy, interdepartmental linkages, and a harmonized work plan are all hindering the mainstreaming of both architectures. As a result, the implementation and effective monitoring of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments across the continent are weak. In addition, the inadequate human and technical expertise within the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD), the lead directorate for gender mainstreaming on the continent, brings into question the AU's commitment to the issue. This is because—unlike the peace and security issue, which African leaders gave political recognition as early as 1993—women's organizations had to lobby for their issues to be recognized by the AU's legal framework. However, the appointment of the Special Envoy on WPS in 2014 strengthened coordination and collaboration of the AU's peace agenda with that of the UN, RECs, and RMs on one hand, and the AU's Peace and Security Department (PSD) and WGDD on the other.

To move the gender mainstreaming agenda forward at all levels on the continent, the AU Commission (AUC) must strengthen its commitment to Gender Equality and Women's Rights. This is critical for the AUC, as it will enable the WGDD to move beyond declarations and commitments, to engage effectively with national governments and RECs to transform rhetoric into actionable programs and plans for women's protection and participation in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The African Union should:

- Apply its principle of gender equality to all of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) pillars, to ensure that women's concerns and realities are adequately reflected in the AU Commission's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda;
- Develop an institution-wide gender strategy;
- Review its Constitutive Act to include WPS commitments and the creation of gender technical committees across all departments;
- Harmonize the objectives of the Peace and Security Department (PSD) and the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) for the effective implementation and monitoring of WPS commitments at national and sub-regional levels;
- Strengthen and increase financial, human, and material resources for the WGDD, to enable it carry out its mandate effectively, especially pertaining to the ratification and domestication of the Maputo Protocol;
- Work closely with member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to develop action plans on the implementation of relevant UNSC Resolutions;
- Encourage member states to allocate the required resources to the African Peace Fund; and,
- Engage with women's civil society organizations (CSOs) to close the gaps and address the challenges in its gender mainstreaming and WPS agendas.

NOTES

1. African Union, The Constitutive Act of the African Union (Lomé, Togo: African Union, 2000).

2. Gender mainstreaming is an internationally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. It ensures that both women's and men's concerns and experiences are incorporated in all program activities such that inequality between the sexes does not continue.

3. See UNSC Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), and 2122 (2013).

4. Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, "Women, Peace and Security in Somalia: A Study of AMISOM," NUPI Policy Brief 16 (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2013), 2.

5. The countries that have adopted sub-regional action plans based on UNSC Resolution 1325 are Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Uganda.

6. Government of Côte d'Ivoire, *Country Report on the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, Submitted to African Union's Women Gender and Development Directorate* (Addis Ababa: Government of Côte d'Ivoire, 2013).

7. "Sierra Leone: Civil Society Report on the Implementation of the ICCPR (Replies to the List of Issues CCPR/C/SLE/Q/1)," http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/SLE/INT_CCPR_CSS_SLE_16561_E.pdf, 17.

8. Aisha Fofana-Ibrahim, "The Integration of a Gender Perspective in the Sierra Leone Police" (Geneva: DCAF, 2012); and Ministry of Defence and Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, Sexual Harassment Policy (2014), http://www.mod.gov.sl/docs/RSLAF%20Policy%2031%20-%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Policy.pdf.

9. Hussaina J. Abdullah and Aisha Fofana-Ibrahim, "The Meaning and Practice of Women's Empowerment in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone," *Development* 53, no. 2 (2010): 259-266; and African Union, "Towards a Continental Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security: Concept Note for the 59th Commission on the Status of Women," March 10, 2015, http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/news/stories/2015/osaa%20concept%20note%20%20%20csw%2059%20%20%20wps%2010%20march%20%20final.pdf.

10. See Section 27 (e) of the Sierra Leonean constitution and Articles 88 and 126 of the Burundian constitution.

11. Kwesi Aning, "Understanding the Institutional Dynamics and Decision-Making Processes of the PSC," in *The African Union Peace and Security Council: A Five-Year Appraisal*, ed. Tim Murithi and Hallelujah Lulie (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2011), 23–24. Quoting AU doc. PSC/AGH/ST(X), para. 1, May 25, 2005.

12. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA): Study Assessment* (Addis Ababa: Peace and Security Department, 2010), 18.

13. Ibid., 19.

14. Alemayehu Behabtu, "The PSC and the Continental Early Warning System," in *The African Union Peace and Security Council: A Five-Year Appraisal*, ed. Tim Murithi and Hallelujah Lulie (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2011), 46.

15. Julian Brett, *The Inter-Relationship between the African Peace and Security Architecture, the Global Peace and Security Architecture and Regional Initiatives* (Addis Ababa: Danish Embassy, 2013), 4.

16. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture*, 71.

17. Ibid., 72.

18. Ibid., 22.

19. Ibid., 22.

20. Ibid., 22.

21. Ibid., 22.

22. African Union, Constitutive Act, 32.

23. Brett, *Inter-Relationship between African Peace and Security Architecture*, 9.

24. The AU's home page is http://www.peaceau.org/.

25. Brett, *Inter-Relationship between African Peace and Security Architecture*, 9.

26. Ibid., 9–10.

27. Gender blindness, according to the UN, "is the failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are given to them in specific social, cultural, economic and political contexts and backgrounds." Projects, programs, policies, and attitudes that are gender blind do not account for these different roles and diverse needs, maintain the status quo, and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations. United Nations, *Gender Statistics Manual: Integrating a Gender Perspective into Statistics*, https://unstats.un.org/unsd/genderstatmanual/Glossary.ashx.

28. The scenarios include the following: 1) attachment of an AU/regional military advisor to a political mission; 2) an AU/regional observer mission deployed during a UN mission; 3) a standalone AU regional observer mission; 4) deployment of a regional peacekeeping force under the auspices of a UN Chapter VI mandate within a timeframe of thirty days or less; 5) a multidimensional AU peacekeeping force deployed within ninety days with a military component deployed within thirty days; and, 6) a robust AU intervention force in response to "grave circumstances," such as genocide, deployed within fourteen days (only the AHSGs can authorize this level of intervention).

29. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture*, 37.

30. Ibid., 51.

31. Brett, *Inter-Relationship between African Peace and Security Architecture*, 10.

32. African Union, Constitutive Act, 53.

33. Ibid.

34. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture*, 53.

35. Jamila El Abdellaoui, "The PSC and the Panel of the Wise," in *The African Union Peace and Security Council: A Five-Year Appraisal*, ed. Tim Murithi and Hallelujah Lulie (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2011), 62.

36. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture*, 56.

37. El Abdellaoui, "PSC and Panel of the Wise," 65.

38. Institute of Security Studies, "New Panel of the Wise Has a Lot on Its Plate," October 1, 2014, https://issafrica.org/pscreport/addis-insights/new-panel-of-the-wise-has-a-lot-on-its-plate.

39. African Union Commission, *Final Communique of the Peace and Security Council 665th Meeting* (Addis Ababa: African Union, 2017), http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/final-communique-665-psc-meeting-panel-of-the-wise-13-3-2017-eng.pdf.

40. Institute of Security Studies, "New Panel of the Wise."

41. Ibid.

42. African Union Commission, *Final Communique of the Peace and Security Council*.

43. African Union, *African Peace and Security Architecture*, 59.

44. Ibid.

45. Brett, *Inter-Relationship between African Peace and Security Architecture*, 13.

46. Yvonne Kasumba and Walter Lotze, "Mainstreaming Gender into African Union Peace Support Operations: Why We Are Getting It Wrong," *Conflict Trends* no. 2 (2013): 24.

47. Ecoma Alaga, Emma Birikorang, and Thomas Jaye, "An Assessment of the Gendered Dimensions of the Peace and Security Council Protocol," in *The African Union Peace and Security Council: A Five-Year Appraisal*, ed. Tim Murithi and Hallelujah Lulie (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2011), 105.

48. These organs and mechanisms include the AU Assembly, Commission, and Peace and Security Council, as well as Regional Economic Communities. Ibid., 105–108.

49. Ibid.

50. Alaga, Birikorang, and Jaye, "Assessment of Gendered Dimensions," 112–114.

51. Kasumba and Lotze, "Mainstreaming Gender," 24.

52. The provisions of both action plans are contained in the AU's Peace and Security Department's Roadmap for Gender Mainstreaming 2011–2013.

53. Kasumba and Lotze, "Mainstreaming Gender," 26.

54. The AU's Peace and Security Department (PSD) is the department responsible for the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the decisions of the Peace and Security Council (PSC).

55. African Union and UN Women, "Walking the Talk: Gender Equality in the African Union," no. 3, April 2011, http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Walking_the_Talk_April_2011%5B1%5D.pdf.

56. Gjelsvik, "Women, Peace and Security," 2.

57. Course content includes 1) Introduction to conflict and peace support operations; 2) Legal and institutional frameworks for peace support operations; 3) Mission structures and mandate implementation; 4) AU/UN police-specific pre-deployment training standards; and, 5) Cross-cutting issues (respect for diversity, gender issues in PSOs, conduct and discipline, protection of civilians, child protection, the rule of law and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration). African Union Commission, Revised Harmonized Standards for Civilian Peacekeepers Foundation & Policy Pre-Deployment Training, http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/revised-harmonised-training-standards-for-au-peace-support-operations.

58. Gjelsvik, "Women, Peace and Security," 2.

59. Kasumba and Lotze, "Mainstreaming Gender," 27.

60. Ibid., 26.

61. African Union, "Background: Program on Women, Peace and Security," January 28, 2014, http://www.peaceau.org/fr/article/background-program-on-women-peace-and-security.

62. Ibid.

63. Dudziro Nhengu, "Face to Face with the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security Mme. Bineta Diop," *World Pulse*, December 14, 2014, https://www.worldpulse.com/en/community/users/chibairo/posts/35364.

64. African Union, "Statement of the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security," December 16, 2014, http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/statement-of-the-special-envoy-of-the-chairperson-of-the-african-union-commission-on-women-peace-and-security-16-dec-2014-au-peace-security-council-open-session-on-women-peace-and-security-debate-on-sources-of-instability-in-africa-root-causes-and-respo.

65. African Union, "Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa" (Addis Ababa: Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, 2016), http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/pubs/2016womenpeacesecurity-auc.pdf, 7.

66. Ibid., 36.

67. Ibid.

68. African Union, "Towards a Continental Results Framework."

69. The nineteen countries that have developed and adopted 1325 National Action Plans are Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Togo, and Uganda. African Union, "Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda," 13.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. African Union, *African Union Gender Policy* (Addis Ababa: AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate, 2009), 5.

73. African Union and UN Women, "Walking the Talk."

74. The African Women's Committee on Peace and Development was established in 1998 to advise the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Secretary-General of the OAU on women, peace, and security issues.

75. Olga Martin, *The African Union's Mechanisms to Foster Gender Mainstreaming and Ensure Women's Political Participation and Representation* (Stockholm: IDEA, 2013), 17.

76. Mary Wandia, "Tracing SOAR's Birth and Advocacy for Ratification and Implementation of the Protocol," in *Journey to Equality: 10 Years of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa*, ed. Brenda Kombo, Rainatou Sow, and Faiza Jama Mohamed (Nairobi: Equality Now, 2013), 35.

77. Ibid., 38.

78. Personal communication with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), April 25, 2017.

79. The ACHPR provided guidelines on the inclusion of the protocol in the periodic reports of member states and training on how to use the guidelines.

80. Rwanda entered a reservation on Article 14 (2) (c) of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol), regarding sexual and reproductive rights.

81. These NGOs operate under the auspices of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition (SOAWR).

82. Faiza J. Mohamed, "Eleven Years of the Maputo Protocol: Women's Progress and Challenges," Association for Women's Rights in Development, July 22, 2014, http://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/11-years-maputo-protocol-womens-progress-and-challenges.

83. ACHPR, "About: Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa" (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, May 1999), http://www.achpr.org/mechanisms/rights-of-women/about/.

84. African Union, *African Union Gender Policy*, 20.

85. African Union, *Concept Note: African Women's Decade* (Addis Ababa: Women, Gender and Development Directorate, 2010).

86. Ibid.

87. Members of the working group will be selected from member states, the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), civil society organizations (CSOs), the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO), and the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC) Concept Note.

88. Martin, *African Union's Mechanisms*, 16.

89. African Union, "Fund for African Women" (African Union, 2010), http://wgd.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Fund%20for%20African%20Women.pdf.

90. Martin, *African Union's Mechanisms*, 16.

91. In 2011, fifty-four projects relating to women's health, maternal mortality, and HIV/AIDS were approved for funding. In 2012, sixty-two projects relating to agriculture and food security were funded. In 2013, twenty-seven projects relating to fighting poverty, promoting the economic empowerment of women, and entrepreneurship were funded. In 2014, sixty-two projects relating to the environment and climate change were funded. No projects were funded under the 2015 theme of education, science, and technology. Calls for proposals for the 2016 and 2017 "Finance and Gender Budgets" and "Mentoring Youth (Women and Men) to be Champions of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," respectively, were released in March 2017.

92. USAID, *African Union Democracy and Governance Stocktaking Assessment* (Burlington: Tetra Tech ARD, 2013), 21.

93. African Union, "Background: Program on Women, Peace and Security."

94. Ibid.

95. African Union, "Towards a Continental Results Framework."

96. GIMAC, "25th GIMAC Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender in the African Union and Member States," January 21, 2015, http://www.genderismyagenda.com/activities/activities/25%20pre%20summit/Final%20Docs/20150126%20-%20GIMAC%20STATEMENT%20FINAL%20.pdf.

97. Administrative frameworks to promote Gender Equality and Women's Rights (GEWR), such as women's or gender equality ministries, commissions, and bureaus.

98. Martin, *African Union's Mechanisms*, 17.

99. The Women, Gender and Development Directorate's (WGDD) professional staff strength has improved marginally from the five recommended in 2003 to seven in 2015. The WGDD's staff composition includes a director, two deputy directors, and two senior and two junior program officers. While the WGDD did not indicate the number of professional personnel it would need to enable it carry out its mandate effectively, a case was made for more technical expertise. USAID, *African Union Democracy and Governance*, 22.

100. Martin, *African Union's Mechanisms*, 16.

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ANNEX

List of Acronyms

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AHSG	Assembly of the Heads of State and Government
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUWC	African Union Women's Committee
AWD	African Women's Decade
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FSUs	Family Support Units
GEA	United Nations Development Program
GEWR	United Nations General Assembly
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
NAP	National Action Plan
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSD	Peace and Security Department
PSOs	Peace Support Operations
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
UNSC	United Nation Security Council
WIPSEN	Women Peace and Security Network
WGDD	Women, Gender and Development Directorate
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hussaina J. Abdullah works as an independent researcher and consultant. She has worked on various projects funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the African Development Bank, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. She has also synthesized country reports on the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Equality in Africa for the annual Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government meeting from 2006-2014. Dr. Abdullah is a sociologist and an independent scholar with extensive research and consultancy experience in West Africa. This working paper was commissioned by the African Peacebuilding Network.