

Competing Regionalisms in Africa and the Continent's Emerging Security Architecture

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Abstract: While the relationship between the United Nations and Africa's various regional and sub-regional organisations has already been the subject of much debate, hardly any attention has been paid to the relationships these African organisations maintain with each other and the way they impact on the continent's emerging security architecture. Consequently, this article aims to shed some light on both the evolution of competing regionalisms in Africa as well as their impact on the prospects and chances of today's security institutions. It thereby argues that the ongoing proliferation of intergovernmental organisations and the resultant competition for national and international resources, political influence and institutional relevance threatens the viability of a continental approach to peace and security by duplicating efforts and fragmenting support. It further contends that the often uneasy coexistence of these organisations is symptomatic of the deep divisions, nationalist tendencies and regional imbalances underlying the multiple processes of regionalisation in Africa. More optimistically, however, the article concludes that, even though some of these divisive factors seem here to stay, the African Union has taken a number of noteworthy steps to harmonise the continent's numerous security initiatives. Both, the creation of regionally based multinational brigades as part of an African Standby Force as well as the decision to limit official cooperation to seven organisations are meant to prevent needless duplication of effort and to ensure that the continent's limited resources are applied to areas of real need. By basing its security architecture on regional pillars and incorporating existing initiatives as building blocs and implementation agencies into its continental policy, the AU has made important steps towards establishing a common front and reversing what Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah had so fearfully termed the "balkanisation of Africa".

Introduction

The inflationary increase in African undertakings to establish peace and security raises a number of important questions about the interrelationships between the various organisations, their place in and contribution to Africa's security architecture, as well as their comparative institutional chances and prospects. Foremost among these questions is whether, and if so how, the continent's current plethora of intergovernmental organisations and institutions can evade the self-destructive rivalries which have characterised Africa's institutional landscape for so long and which have hindered effective sub-regional and regional cooperation ever since the

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beginning of decolonisation. In order to answer these questions, this article is structured into four parts. The first part traces the historical evolution of Africa's competing regionalisms, that is, the occurrences of competition between intergovernmental institutions with virtually the same official *raison d'être* but different underlying motives and/or conceptions of cooperation, from decolonisation to the establishment of the African Union in 2002. This retrospective journey is followed by an attempt to distil the commonalities of that period into a theoretical framework and identify the root causes of Africa's proneness for inter-institutional competition. Drawing occasionally on theories such as Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) as formulated by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, the third part then discusses the status quo in light of the identified root causes. The remaining part of this article assesses the prospects for further rationalisation and harmonisation of Africa's various peace and security initiatives and briefly elaborates on the challenges ahead. The article concludes by arguing that even though many of the identified root causes have lost relevance in the continent's emerging institutional landscape, not all of the structural, political, and cultural tensions underlying inter-institutional cooperation in Africa have yet been convincingly resolved. Africa's leaders must thus continue to promote and institutionalise deeper coordination and collaboration among themselves, the continent's sub-regional and regional organisations, as well as civil society actors. They must strive to consolidate past gains whilst not losing momentum in continuing to rationalise the multitude of existing organisations and to establish a clear division of labour among them. If they fail, so may their dream of African unity.

The History of Competing Regionalisms in Africa

Africa has experienced at least two great waves of regionalisation.¹ While the first one is associated with colonisation, de-colonisation, and Pan-Africanism, the second was released in the late 1980s with the loosening of the shackles which the Cold War had imposed on the continent. The phenomenon of competing regionalisms is certainly not confined to the later wave. On the contrary, it has been a defining feature of Africa's regionalisations ever since the decolonisation process started and the newly independent states made their first attempts at regional, cooperation and integration. As today, the interactions of the resultant groupings, whether on a local, sub-regional or continental level, were soon to be characterised by thinly veiled competition for the benefits of political prominence and institutional relevance. The following section aims to trace the evolution and effects of this competition through the various waves of regionalisation and subsequently distil the commonalities into a theoretical framework. In doing so, it hopes to set the stage for a fruitful discussion of the current *status quo* and the prospects for effective continental security cooperation.

During the decolonisation period, Africa experienced the establishment of a whole range of regional schemes for political and economic cooperation. This wave of regionalisation occurred for several reasons, some practical, others ideological. Firstly, independence and the concomitant break-up of the colonial federations such as the *Afrique Occidentale Française* (AOF), the *Afrique Equatoriale Française* (AEF), and the Central African Federation had suddenly highlighted the negative consequences of the extreme segmentation and the intrinsically problematic viability of the political divisions and economic circuits inherited from the colonial period.² Without the binding structures of the colonial administrations, Africa's newly

independent states were quickly confronted by economic and political disunity as the colonial powers had concentrated on forging vertical links between their metropolises and their dependencies rather than horizontal links among the colonies.³ In fact, they had not only consistently discouraged the latter (unless it served an imperial purpose), but also amplified the resultant difficulties through what Nkrumah called “by far the greatest wrong which the departing colonialists had ever inflicted on Africa, namely, to leave us divided into economically unviable states which bear no possibility of real development.”⁴ Quite naturally, the desire to mitigate this wrong, to combat the ongoing exploitation of the continent’s resources and to achieve some sort of economic and political viability was one of the main motivations for the African states to begin regional cooperation.

Secondly, any such practical considerations were deeply embedded in the ideological framework of Pan-Africanism which, ever since the first Pan-African Congress in 1900, advocated African integration and unity as the only means of bringing about true self-rule and self-determination on the continent.⁵ With the “long, long night of colonial rule” finally coming to an end in the late 1950s, this framework thus held the promise of mutual support and assistance in the face of obvious vulnerability and the fear of (neo)colonial interference.⁶ Although not all governments (and resistance movements) of the continent necessarily subscribed to the underlying idea of African oneness, the ideologically charged rhetoric of Pan-Africanism served well to carry the anti-colonial message and finally create a feeling of self-assertion and thus the political basis for inter-African cooperation.

Given the aforementioned incentives for such cooperation, it is hardly surprising that Africa’s decolonisation was accompanied by a proliferation of intergovernmental organisations, federations, unions, and communities some of which were virtually moribund from the beginning while others quickly gained membership and political influence. In fact, regional initiatives sprung up in such numbers that this article will have to concentrate on a select few in order to demonstrate that the competing regionalisms of the present found their beginning in the way the organisations, states, and leaders of the past came to interact with one another. For the period before 1963, the conflict and competition between the so-called Monrovia and Casablanca groups of states, as well as Nkrumah’s controversial Union of African States (UAS), can serve as illuminating examples. The uneasy relationship between the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the continent’s sub-regional organisations, as well as the ongoing rivalry between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its various francophone shadows such as the *Communauté Economique de l’Afrique de l’Ouest* (CEAO) or the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UEMOA), are equally instructive for the period thereafter.

The road to the Organisation of African Unity (1958 to 1963)

Undoubtedly the most visible aspect of regionalisation after decolonisation was the attempt to create an African supra-national institution which was officially launched by the First Conference of Independent African States (CIAS) in 1958.⁷ As more African states achieved independence, further interpretations of Pan-Africanism emerged, including the Pan-African Freedom Movement of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (1958), the *Conseil de l’Entente*

(1959), the Union of African States (1960), the African States of the Casablanca Charter (1961), the African and Malagasy Union (1961), and the Organization of Inter-African and Malagasy States (1962).

Although unity may have been their aim, these various institutional constructs soon began to clash as Africa's new states tried to exalt national independence *and* continental unity at the same time. The most fundamental point of disagreement concerned the questions of why unity should be sought in the first place, which objectives and interests inter-African-cooperation should serve, and how it should be institutionalised.⁸ Moreover, the type of relationship Africa should maintain with its former colonial masters divided the continent's states and movements. Some wanted to retain collaborative structures and thus the flow of assistance, others strove passionately for total independence and African autarky. Given the already thick walls between the Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone, and Arabic blocs of states, these differences in political outlook did not exactly help the continent on its march to unity.⁹ On the contrary, as the first crisis in inter-African relations erupted in form of the Congolese civil war in 1960, the underlying rifts threatened to pull Africa apart.

What burst upon Africa and the world as the "Congo crisis" did so for many reasons, among them the attempted secessions of various break-away regions (Katanga and Luba-Kasai), an army mutiny seeking the Africanisation of the officer cadre, and a political power clash between Prime Minister Lumumba and President Kasavubu. The ensuing conflict, along with the continuing Algerian war of independence, was to reveal and intensify the fissures beneath the apparent solidarity of Africa's independent states. As the latter's divergent positions on the Congo's legitimate government, the deployment of a UN mission (ONUC) to the crisis zone, as well as the level of support that should be accorded to Algeria's rebel *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN), clashed, deeper differences in perspective and objective became painfully obvious and eventually led to a crystallisation of Africa's states into several opposing groups.

While the so-called Casablanca group (the "revolutionaries") consisted of countries who proposed the immediate creation of a political union for Africa in which economic, cultural, and military activities would be coordinated centrally, the states in the rival Brazzaville group (the "moderates") considered themselves more conservative and gradualist.¹⁰ Far from condemning regionalism as a distraction from, or even an obstacle to, African unity, these initially exclusively Francophone states saw themselves as a counterweight to Nkrumah's aggressive Pan-Africanism and its omnipresent advocacy of immediate and absolute integration. Instead of a close organic identification within a constitutionally unified Africa, the moderates thus argued for a unity that was not "political integration of sovereign states, but unity of aspirations and of action considered from the point of view of African social solidarity and political identity."¹¹

Contrary to the Casablanca group, which was never really able to institutionalise its cooperation, the Brazzaville group, which by May 1961 had merged into the larger Monrovia group of states, went on to create various institutions and adopt a charter in order to assert its claim to speak for the continent.¹² It founded the *Organisation Africaine et Malgache de Coopération Economique* (OAMCE), the *Union Africaine et Malgache* (UAM), as well as a defence organisation, the *Union Africaine et Malgache de Defense* (UAMD). The two latter were eventually amalgamated into the *Union Africaine et Malgache de Cooperation Economique* (UAMCE).

As the conflict in and for Congo raged on, the rift between the two opposing groups and their leaders continued to grow. In fact, each group, by considering the establishment of an institutionalised continental cooperation to be a zero-sum game and itself to be the only legitimate beginning thereof, did its part to turn the initially stable coexistence into a state of competition and rivalry.¹³ A characterisation of the latter was the constant struggle of the two groups to increase their individual memberships, preferably by converting members of the opposing group. This led to situations where the UAM would appeal to all states to cooperate with it “*sur la base des principes définis à Brazzaville,*” while, at the same time, the Casablanca powers, emphasising their “responsibilities towards the African Continent,” would be asking all countries to associate themselves with their common action instead.¹⁴

Naturally, such competition neither enhanced the continent’s perception of security nor lessened the chaos on the organisational scene which had prevailed since the eve of independence. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that Africa’s states formed even more sub-regional bodies in response. One such body that was created in the heat and rivalry of those days was Nkrumah’s Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, later to be named the Union of African States (UAS). Although it claimed to be a nucleus for broader unity, it was in practice as parochial as any and hardly a worthy implementation of Nkrumah’s vision of a United States of Africa. Based on the union Ghana and Guinea had announced on 1 May 1959 (with a common national flag and anthem, common citizenship and an open invitation to other African states to join), the UAS failed to draw its members together or have any practical activities besides the issuing of several declarations and charters. As Jon Woronoff so rightly observed, its main purpose, so it would seem, was as a battering ram against the neighbouring members of the Brazzaville/Monrovia groups first, and then also against the Pan-African Freedom Movement of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMESCA) which it saw as yet another rival in the quest for continental unity.¹⁵ Considering itself a “higher and healthier conception of African unity,” the UAS condemned other attempts at regional association (or as it is sometimes called functional cooperation) as “just another form of balkanisation” and encouraged all African states to follow its example instead.¹⁶

Originally meant as a means to undermine and destroy regionalism in order to attain continental unity, the creation of the UAS and its subsequent conduct in inter-African politics had exactly the opposite effect. By heightening tensions and thereby seemingly convincing the less radical states that they themselves would need similar bodies for their protection, the Casablanca group, and within it the UAS, contributed to the further fragmentation of Africa’s institutional sphere rather than to its consolidation.

While many other instances of rivalling regionalisms existed in the period between 1958 and 1963, the open clash between the statist Monrovia and unionist Casablanca groups, as well as the competition for institutional primacy as materialised in the UAS, are certainly instructive examples. Offering a valuable glimpse of inter-African relations in their formative stages, they serve well to demonstrate how by 1963 the initial euphoria about independence had in many cases turned into thinly veiled rivalry across four levels: institutional, international, intranational, and personal. Organisations such as the UAM or the African States of the Casablanca Charter contended for recognition and political influence across the continent. States such as Ghana or Nigeria competed for hegemony within these organisations or regions.

Within these and other states, parties and trade unions competed for attention to their particular conceptions of regional cooperation and African unity. Side by side with the squabbles among these various organisations, states, and groupings went personal disputes between the leaders of these entities. As the following sections, beginning with a short discussion of the inter-relationships of the continent's many organisations with the OAU, will attempt to show, these mutually reinforcing levels of competition were to remain characteristic of Africa's processes of regionalisation over the following decades.

From the OAU to the African Union (1963-2002)

The increasing realisation among members of the Casablanca group (especially Guinea) that African countries were unlikely to move as far or as rapidly towards complete political integration as their leaders had hoped soon led to attempts to compromise. These resulted in a general *rapprochement* which in May 1963 culminated in the establishment of the OAU. Though based on the lowest common denominator of unity acceptable to the more than thirty heads of states who participated in the Addis Ababa meeting, the OAU nonetheless represented an unprecedented chance for continental cooperation. For Casablanca heads of state like Sékou Touré, the new organisation held the eventual promise of much wider inter-African cooperation than would have been possible through their own politically isolated projects such as the UAS.¹⁷ The Monrovia bloc, on the other hand, not only saw its gradual approach to political integration enshrined in the OAU's charter, but also the national sovereignty of all African states clearly safeguarded from further interference by the likes of Nkrumah and Touré (of the seven principles of the OAU charter, five were in defense of the sovereign rights of member states). Thus, the Monrovia-Casablanca split seemed finally subsumed in the OAU which, in the words of Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie, was now ready "to rouse the slumbering giant of Africa, not to the nationalism of Europe of the nineteenth century, not to regional consciousness, but to the vision of a single brotherhood bending its united efforts towards the achievement of a greater and nobler goal."¹⁸

Although established as the one All-African organisation, the OAU never was to be the only such organisation on the continent. Given the vast geographical extent of Africa there was always bound to be any number of smaller, more compact groupings which would make it necessary to define the relationship between the fledgling organisation and such groupings in order to prevent duplication or even rivalry. It was generally thought that since one of the driving motives for creating the OAU had been to end the political divisions that split the continent into feuding blocs, the OAU should be the supreme political authority with the power to coordinate the continent's many cooperative activities and ensure their compatibility and unity of effort. However, in the end the OAU charter did not contain any specific provision clarifying the continental hierarchy of institutions and organisations, nor did the first Council of Ministers of the OAU meeting in Dakar determine the actual relationship between the OAU and the sub-regional groupings. Moreover, since some member states' feared possible infringements on their hard-won sovereignty, the OAU was given no supervisory power nor were other organisations required to consult with it or even inform it of their decisions.¹⁹

Quite naturally, the resultant lack of coordination and oversight soon led to increasing tensions between the OAU and the remaining web of sub-regional organisations. For while many of the continent's political organisations (such as the UAS) had been dissolved with the conception of the OAU in order to "promote the unity and solidarity of the African States," the OAU's first decade actually witnessed a renewed growth of rivalling regionalism rather than its desired (and predicted) disappearance.²⁰ Existent institutions expanded and new ones sprung up in all parts of the continent and in the most varied specialisations. According to Jon Woronoff, there were at least three principle reasons for this revival of regionalism.²¹

Firstly, Africa's sheer immensity and the nature of its countries' political, economic, and social relations seemed to favour regional over continental cooperation as ties did generally not extend much beyond neighbouring states. Consequently, the cohesion needed to ensure effective and meaningful cooperation was more likely to be found on a regional level and most initiatives promised greater chances of success if undertaken in smaller groupings.²²

Secondly, far from being a clean sheet or an inchoate mass on which a simple organisational structure could be imposed, Africa is one of the most varied regions in the world in which layers of strong and underlying unity cross or intertwine with other layers of diversity and disunity.²³ As these differing lines of force are known to constantly pull the continent in several directions at the same time, it should have come as no surprise that, once the phase of *rapprochement* had ended and contentious issues had reappeared on the political scene, blocs should form again and that some of the blocs might again become sub-regional organisations. Renewed differences in opinion about the ongoing Congolese affair, for example, led to the creation of the *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache* (OCAM) in February 1965.

The third reason for the growth of regionalism was the failure of the OAU to provide a true continental framework for cooperative ventures. Although Article XX of the 1963 OAU Charter had established several Specialised Commissions (Economic and Social; Educational and Cultural; Health, Sanitation, and Nutrition; Defence; as well as Scientific, Technical and Research), these never really materialised.²⁴ Instead, the OAU's merely lukewarm attitude to its commitment "to coordinate and intensify [member states'] cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the people of Africa" left a sizeable vacuum in the continent's perceived potential which the states themselves ventured to fill.²⁵ They did so by expanding and intensifying sub-regional cooperation.

The resulting disorderly growth of formations not only significantly reduced the momentum of the continental integration aspect of Pan-Africanism throughout the second half of the 1960s, but also further complicated the relations between the OAU and the supposedly tamed world of sub-regionalism.²⁶ Instead of a clear hierarchy with an established division of labour, the OAU faced increasing competition for political influence and resources, as well as occasional challenges to its institutional primacy from organisations like the aforementioned OCAM which was open to all African states and thus also potentially continental. As a result, relations between the OAU and many of the continent's other organisations and groupings like the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) soured to such an extent that often only formal agreements could overcome the substantial unease between them.²⁷ Rather than seeing a disappearance of institutional competition, the post-Casablanca/Monrovia period was thus characterised by the resurgence of rivalling regionalism(s) which flourished on the expense of

the OAU and the effective conduct of Pan-African cooperative affairs, or in the words of Jon Woronoff:

It would be nice to think of the continent as a solar system in which the Organisation of African Unity was the sun and the others dutifully revolved around it. But this is not the case, and the sub-regional bodies follow no fixed path as compared with the OAU; there have been many collisions and eclipses, and the force of gravity is frequently defied.²⁸

Such collisions and eclipses, however, have not merely been confined to the OAU's relations with sub-regional bodies, but have also been a close trait of these bodies' associations with each other. In fact, given the aforementioned increase in organisations, the intensification of the Cold War's divisive grip on Africa, as well as the destructive logics of nationalism and neo-colonialism, it was almost to be expected that some of these organisations would end up as rivals. Nonetheless, the extent to which they actually did compete with each other for everything from money to members deserves attention, not only because it will be helpful in formulating some parameters of competing subsystems in Africa, but also in order to understand many of the concerns harboured against today's regional security initiatives.

The example of West Africa's competing regionalisms and Anglo-French rivalry

While every African region has had its fair share of institutional competition, the example of the Western sub-region is especially instructive.²⁹ The area comprising 16 states has been a particularly fertile ground for regional (mostly economic) cooperation experiments since the early 1960s. Besides the aforementioned Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the *Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (CEAO) and the *Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UMOA), nearly 30 other intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) with the same basic objectives had sprung up by 1979.³⁰ By June 1990, this number had risen to more than 40 IGOs.³¹ As it is neither possible nor appropriate in an article of this scope to wend a way through every instance of competition resulting from this multiplicity, the relationship between ECOWAS and its Francophone rivals must suffice as a telling example.

ECOWAS was originally chartered as a regional integration and cooperation grouping in May 1975 in order to unite all West African states into a collective political and economic bargaining bloc. Going back to an initiative President William Tubman of Liberia started in 1964, the creation of ECOWAS was also supposed to heal the rift between the region's Anglo- and Francophone countries by crossing the language barrier and incorporating previous initiatives such as UMOA and CEAO into one overarching organisation. However, far from having such a unifying effect, the emergence of ECOWAS soon began to complicate the course of West Africa's integration process. Although all Francophone states had signed the Treaty of Lagos which established ECOWAS, their (perceived) shared frame of mind, including their common fear and suspicion of Nigeria's hegemonic potential and the historically ambitious Ghana, as well as strong pressure from France, quickly curbed any enthusiasm for the project. As an unmistakable reaction and barrier to the ECOWAS idea of loosening colonial ties, the Francophone states increasingly concentrated their cooperative efforts in more exclusive and smaller groupings such as the UMOA or CEAO.³² By nonetheless remaining members of ECOWAS (and in fact commanding 63 percent of the organisation's total membership), they not

only effectively check-mated the Anglophone members in a pernicious chess game, but also dimmed all hopes that the artificial divisions in the region might finally be overcome.³³

The role of external actors in furthering this division and reinforcing the rivalry between the non-Francophone and the Francophone ECOWAS members must not be underestimated. Whereas ECOWAS was inspired mainly by African political leaders and was created and administered by African technocrats and bureaucrats, the reverse is true of the CEAO and UMOA.³⁴ Not only was their creation instigated by France (and later supported by the European Economic Community), but their functioning would have been impossible without the continuing backing from the former colonial master. As the latter retained an obvious economic interest in West Africa and could not afford to lose its influence, it hardly surprises that many saw the CEAO and UMOA as France's "Trojan horses" within ECOWAS.³⁵

These Trojan horses were to ensure that Francophone Africa maintained strong relations with Paris and would not begin to cooperate with its neighbours against, for example, French exploitation of the region's strategic raw materials. Naturally, the resultant division of West Africa into competing alliances formed along the lines of common colonial heritage rather than economic or political rationale made it virtually impossible to achieve the unifying ideals enshrined in the Treaty of Lagos. Nonetheless, ECOWAS survived. It thus fared substantially better than many other sub-regional organisations which did not withstand the pressures of constant institutional rivalry. The Maghreb Permanent Consultative Council formed in November 1965, the *Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale* (UDEAC) set up in January 1966, the *Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (UDEAO) established in June 1966, or the *Organisation des États Riverains du Sénégal* (OERS), for example, all failed soon after their conception. Yet another case in point is the East African Community (EAC) which died in 1977 before it could even celebrate its tenth birthday.³⁶

However, even though ECOWAS endured, its troubled history confirms Adebayo Adedeji's sentiment that a "study of integration efforts in West Africa is inevitably a study in frustration."³⁷ This frustration has remained until the present day, for even though all leading West African politicians seem to have recognised the need to rationalise the sub-region's profusion of competing intergovernmental organisations, very little progress has been achieved in this area. If anything, the situation has become worse.

Both the 1991 treaty establishing the African Economic Community (the Abuja Treaty) and the adoption of the 1993 revision of the original ECOWAS treaty (the Cotonou Treaty) had initially raised the hopes that the region's divisions could finally be overcome. The former stipulated that "member states undertake, through their respective regional economic communities, to coordinate and harmonise their sub-regional organisations, with a view to rationalising the integration process at the level of each region."³⁸ The latter was prepared by the ECOWAS Eminent Person Committee and aimed at making ECOWAS the only intergovernmental economic body in West Africa, thus absorbing the CEAO and the Mano River Union. Merely fifteen months after these treaties had been signed, however, the rivalry between Anglo- and Francophone ventures returned to the forefront of West African politics when the Francophone states used the occasion of the bankruptcy of CEAO to establish yet another organisation, the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UEMOA) in order to paralyse ECOWAS. According to Adedeji,

So successfully has UEMOA check-mated and undermined ECOWAS that all that the latter now spends a great deal of its time doing is to harmonise its programmes with those of the former, hold joint ministerial meetings, seek the convergence of the economic and financial policies and the harmonisation of the legal framework, accounting procedure and statistics of both ECOWAS and UEMOA. In any case, such convergence will for long remain a pipedream since UEMOA countries constitute a majority of ECOWAS member countries and as such can play both judge and jury. In spite of the apparent unity that exists, ECOWAS is a house divided against itself.³⁹

While this instance of institutional rivalry may seem particularly severe, it certainly is not the only case of such consequential competition in Africa today.⁴⁰ In Central Africa, for example, a similar quarrel between the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the *Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale* (CEMAC) continues to complicate the region's process of integration. To a lesser extent, competition also still takes place between the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the re-born East African Community (EAC) as well as amongst several of the other 130 remaining regional groupings established to promote cooperation and unity. The year-long parallel existence of the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) with all its friction and duplication of effort, moreover, clearly showed that the continental level is equally prone to the troubles described in this section.⁴¹ With this having been meant as an introduction to the web of competition and rivalry in Africa's organisational and institutional landscape, the following section attempts to distil the commonalities of nearly four decades of competing sub-systems into a theoretical framework. This framework will then underlie the discussion of the prospects of today's regional and continental security initiatives in Africa in the third section of this article.

THE ROOT CAUSES OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COMPETITION IN AFRICA

First of all, it is important to understand that the mixture of competing regionalisms and resulting inter-institutional rivalry described above is not restricted to Africa. Europe, for instance, has had its own share of this phenomenon.⁴² Divided into unionists and statistes (akin to the division between the Monrovia and Casablanca groups), social integrationists and liberal expansionists as well as several other tiers of enthusiasts and sceptics, the members of the European Union have long had to deal with contending regional agendas. As recently as 2003, the fierce debate between *old* and *new* Europe over the war in Iraq showed that the divisions of Europe, created by the big powers after 1945, are still not overcome. Nonetheless, Europe's multiplicity of regional and institutional rivalries is contained within a stable democratic framework and channelled through an elaborative organisational construct such as the Committee of the Regions, which gives hundreds of regional organisations a voice in the running of the EU. Africa, on the contrary, is still lacking such a framework and organisational construct. Regional rivalries are thus more likely to be pronounced and have serious political and economic repercussions. It is for this difference in possible impact that a discussion of

potential root causes is so essential to a meaningful assessment of the challenges to and chances of its emerging security architecture.

If what the previous section has argued is an accurate representation of the history of inter-institutional competition up to the creation of the AU, the basic factors responsible for the emergence of conflict, rifts, and cleavages are not specific to one span of time, but common to the nature of regional cooperation in Africa. In fact, as the considerable body of literature on today's regional groupings shows, such groups are beset by problems similar to those encountered by the various organisations covered in this article thus far, namely intra-institutional rivalries and inter-institutional competition. It seems that the root causes to these problems as well as the key to the overarching issue of competing regionalisms can be found in five mutually reinforcing determinants of regional cooperation in Africa: (1) the politico-ideological rifts permeating the continent; (2) the prevalence of external dependence and influence; (3) the lure of nationalism; (4) institutional weakness resulting from the absence of political will and regional identities; and (5) personal power policies.

Politico-ideological rifts

Naturally among the prime reasons complicating effective regional cooperation in Africa are the deep divisions that permeate the continent. These divisions can be grouped into (1) traditional divisions preceding the colonial conquest such as historical allegiance and culture; (2) divisions arising from different colonial heritages like language, mode of administration, or level of external support; and (3) divisions resulting from Cold War ideology and politics. Decisions to engage in regional cooperation (and competition) are often made on the basis of these divisions, as the creation of southern African organisations like the Front Line States (FLS) as regional bulwarks against apartheid South Africa attest to. Correspondingly, decisions to disengage from regional cooperation are frequently based on the feeling that politico-ideological rifts between the parties have increased either because previously existing splits have resurfaced or new divisions have appeared. Here the obvious example is the failure of the first version of the East African Community (EAC) in 1977, which is commonly ascribed to the fact that Tanzania opted for a socialist ideology while Kenya decided to follow the capitalist pattern.

The prevalence of external dependence and influence

One look at the past four decades suffices to see that political decolonisation and formal independence in Africa have not meant the end to external forces shaping the continent's affairs. Instead, as the Nigerian writer Chinweizu has so rightly pointed out, they have only meant a change in the guise of these forces as former colonial powers for a number of reasons, ranging from the wish to preserve a high international profile and secure access to strategic resources to the desired continuation of the highly favourable economic relationships, decided to remain deeply engaged in Africa's affairs.⁴³ Foremost among these neo-colonialists was Gaullist France, which by the early 1960s had perfected a system of organised exertion of influence over its former African colonies. Through this so-called *coopération* France was able to continue playing a leading role in large parts of the African continent which it had long ago come to regard as its "private backyard" (*arrière-cours*) and "exclusive hunting ground" (*chasse-*

gardée).⁴⁴ Paris' ability to influence its former West African empire thereby rested on three steadfast pillars, namely (1) its monetary control over the emerging economies via its leadership role in the Franc Zone; (2) its financial leverage through the selective and conditional provision of development aid; and (3) its military power stationed inside and outside the region.⁴⁵

Given such powerful means of leverage, and France's proven willingness to use them, it is hardly surprising that a "special relationship" developed between Paris and its former colonies. Up to the present day, this relationship is fostered through close personal contacts between the elites (current French president Jacques Chirac, for example, is the godfather to a daughter of former Senegalese president Abdou Diouf) and ensures that many African states continue to accommodate French demands.⁴⁶ Naturally, this has also had an effect on the strategic choices African countries have made regarding regional cooperation. While the aforementioned "Trojan horses" are the most obvious examples of French intrusion in that respect, many other cases of direct interference speak to the extent to which the prevalence of external dependence and influence have hampered effective regional cooperation in West Africa.

Although France is surely the most extreme case, other non-African countries have also greatly influenced the continent's cooperative and institutional affairs, most notably former colonial powers Britain and Portugal as well as the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The latter and the concomitant break-up of large parts of the continent into spheres of superpower influence were often as obstructive to the consolidation of regional cooperation in the East of Africa (especially the greater Horn of Africa) as France's *la coopération* had been in the West. Combined with the occasional meddling of the EU and other international bodies, it thus seems safe to say that Africa's various processes of regionalisation and the resultant regionalisms were characterised by considerable external interference which was shaped by the colonial experience, but reinforced during the post-colonial period.⁴⁷

Nationalism

As argued at the beginning of this article, the idea of regional cooperation on a continental or sub-regional scale easily took root in the fertile soil of pan-Africanism and soon became a notable feature of inter-African relations. Confronted with the overwhelming power of their colonial masters, many African nationalists drew great comfort from it and used it to establish contact with each other and gain mutual political and economic support. The majority of African states thus became independent in an era of regionalist euphoria. However, once independence was achieved, the meaning and objectives of pan-Africanism were generally domesticated as national integration and development took precedence over the concern for inter-African cooperation. Understandably, the newly-independent leaders quickly became preoccupied with more immediate problems such as the unification of ethnic and religious groups, the consolidation of their own parties and power over the masses, the fight against poverty and disease as well as the defence of their nations against internal *coups d'état*.⁴⁸

The promotion of nationalism, according to Jeffrey Herbst, presented one particularly attractive option for solving these problems. It not only offered an enormous potential for the development of political bonds of loyalty, but also another way for the state to extend and consolidate its power over distance, not, as with for example taxes, through the agencies of

coercion but through the norm of legitimacy.⁴⁹ The success of this option, however, was naturally based on the leader's ability to instil and foster a feeling among the populace that the nation and the state were somehow bound together and rightly so. While the iconic symbols of nationalism such as a common flag and anthem were seen as necessary to the formation of such a national identity, the frequent attempts at the creation of supranational entities and even regional or continental political unions were considered by many African leaders a grave danger to their domestic nation-building efforts.⁵⁰ Their resultant reluctance to engage in ever deeper cooperation and integration must therefore be seen not as a decision against the principle of inter-African cooperation per se, but as a result of clear political prioritisation: consolidation of the state before consolidation of the region or continent. This top-down prioritising was compounded by the general sentiment among many Africans that they had fought too hard and too long for independence and national sovereignty to give these up again at the first sight of a cooperative opportunity, especially when the regional organisations originally established as the logical institutional response to the inadequacies of colonial rule were seemingly not up to the high expectations put into them.

While this prioritising and the popular support for it may partly explain why so many of Africa's early attempts at supranational arrangements such as the Mali Federation, the East African Federation, the aborted Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union or "Senegambia" either did not get off the ground or rather quickly crashed, it is for an assessment of the later attempts at inter-African cooperation that the lenses of nationalism are most instructive.⁵¹ One reason why regional organisations were often not able to deliver tangible national benefits to African states was due to a decreasing willingness on part of these states to subordinate national to regional interests. While it seems perfectly normal that regional and national interests do not always coincide and that states only enter into economic or defence agreements when these often integrative objectives are not in conflict with considerations of national security, prestige, or economic advantage, African states displayed particularly little willingness to sacrifice perceived national interests on the regional altar. One reason for this was that the bitter fruits of nationalism had slowly led to defensive state positionalism, an over-sensitivity concerning national sovereignty as well as the constant fear of falling victim to a maldistribution of costs and benefits.⁵² All of the latter have quite naturally generated severe restraints on effective inter-African cooperation and thus impaired the working of Africa's many supranational institutions and integrationist ventures.

Institutional weakness

Another factor hampering such institutions is their inherent weakness. Foremost among the reasons for this weakness are: (1) the member states' frequent lack of political will; (2) the intergovernmental structure of most institutions; (3) the absence of regional identities; and (4) the low level of development among the African states.

The absence of political will, and even more importantly, united political will, is directly related to the aforementioned tendency of many states to prioritise nationalism over regionalism in order to prevent their populaces' fragmentation along ethnic or other lines. These states believed that they had more to lose than to gain from increasing integration and

consequently did not put in any more effort than was absolutely necessary in order to maintain influence and credibility on the African stage. Although the influence of Pan-Africanist sentiment is such that no African leader wants to leave him- or herself open to the charge of balkanisation, supranational regionalism has thus been supported only insofar as it posed no threat to the existing state system.⁵³

The detrimental effect of this lack of political will was further compounded by the intergovernmental structure of most institutions. Contrary to the European model which provided from the outset for the creation of institutions capable of representing the community as a whole (mostly through specific institutional formulas that guaranteed the existence of guardians of the common interest such as the Commission of the European Communities or decision-making by qualified majority vote within the Council of Ministers, as opposed to rule by consensus), African institutions are characterised by the way in which national interests hold sway over all decision-making bodies. Most obvious is the pre-eminence of the authority of Heads of State and Government in decision-making, the national representation in the councils and the technical committees, and also the limited resources and responsibilities of the various secretariats. The intergovernmental approach, and with it the inevitable clash between national and regional interests, seems to permeate Africa's entire institutional landscape.

The third reason for the weakness of Africa's institutions is the notable absence of regional identities on the African continent. The building of an effective community requires the sense of solidarity and trust among the people concerned.⁵⁴ Given the strong nationalist tendencies of the continent's states, however, regional identities including a sense of belonging are still cruelly lacking. This absence of regional identities has been accentuated by the heterogeneity existing between the different members of the various sub-regional organisations, by the effect of overlapping and exclusionary memberships in other competing groups, and by the large number of actors in most regional organisations.

Lastly, any attempt at institution-building is inevitably complicated by the low level of economic and political development within many African states. Given the desolate state of Africa's public finances and governmental structures, its organisational deficits and inexperienced leaders as well as wide-spread corruption and clientelism, it is hardly surprising that its institutions did not develop as clearly, strongly or professionally as they did elsewhere.⁵⁵

Personal power policies

This low level of development is also at the root of another problem for effective regional cooperation, namely, the fact that regionalism in Africa is driven largely by personalised governments, and is often held hostage to the political will of African leaders. The continent's low level of economic development and a lack of societal pluralism have abetted the personalisation of power to an extent hardly seen anywhere else in the world. Since the early 1970s most African states have, at one time or another, been dominated by so-called "Big Men" like Zaire's Mobutu Sésé Seko, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Idi Amin of Uganda, Liberia's Charles Taylor or Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya who have built their power on the politics of patronage and kleptocratic self-aggrandisement. As former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali liked to point out, this syndrome of an "Africa of Heads of States" has found its

institutionalisation in the telling difference between the opening sentences of the UN and OAU Charters. While the former begins with “We, the Peoples of the United Nations” the latter starts with “We the Heads of African and Malagasy States and Governments.”

The centralisation of power in a few individuals has hampered effective regional cooperation in at least two ways. First, having tasted and grown accustomed to the sweet benefits of power, Africa’s autocratic leaders have only seldomly relinquished any of their direct power to supranational organisations and even when they have done so it is seemingly only to hijack these organisations as vehicles for their personal ambitions. Consequently, Africa is littered with the carcasses of planned unions and organisations most of which failed, because the hopeful architects could not offer leaders significant enough incentives to abdicate even small bits of power. As Sylvanus Olympio, Togo’s first leader, noted in a moment of bitter insight, “political unification is only desired by those political leaders who believe they could come out on top in such unions.”⁵⁶

Second, the personal character of and emotional decision-making in regional negotiations inevitably resulting from the omnipresence of the Big Men have removed political bargaining from the realms of rationality and both national as well as regional needs. Instead, personal enmities, for example between Idi Amin and Julius Nyerere or Yoweri Museveni and Laurent Kabila, have repeatedly paralysed regional organisations. Any positive decisions regarding regional cooperation are more likely to reflect the amalgamated personal opinions or friendship of a few leaders than popularly established and supported national choices.⁵⁷

The personalisation of power, however, is not only at the root of many of the difficulties faced by regional cooperation in Africa, but together with the points made thus far can also serve as an explanation for the proliferation of organisations and their proneness to competition. Given the aforementioned amount of external interference, it is hardly surprising that African strongmen soon became divided horizontally into pro-East and pro-West blocs and vertically into revolutionaries, progressives, reactionaries, capitalists, socialists, traditionalists, and middle-of-the-roaders.⁵⁸ Mindful of the indisputable benefits of cooperation, these leaders soon looked for like-minded allies as they scrambled for influence in their respective regions, the inevitable result being the establishment of as many organisations as there were competing ideologies and polarisations. In this respect, it is important to understand that the phenomenon of competing regionalisms is not necessarily constrained to inter-regional competition, but equally often arises from differing conceptions of cooperation or politics within the same region, the best example again being the inter-institutional competition in West Africa.

On the basis of the above five root causes of inter-institutional competition, one could pursue two lines of thought: rejecting the whole idea of effective regional cooperation as irrelevant to the African continent or trying to identify whether the last few years have seen changes to the above parameters which may allow Africa’s regional and continental organisations to move forward with increasing cooperation and integration. The penultimate part of this paper will pursue the second line of thought and assess the recent efforts of the African Union to integrate the continent’s various regional security initiatives into a common framework.

REGIONALISM AND AFRICA'S CURRENT SECURITY INITIATIVES

It is impossible to miss that Africa's regional organisations have made substantial strides over the past decade in assuming primary responsibility for promoting peace and security.⁵⁹ Acting on the rationale that the increasingly regional nature of conflict in Africa necessitates an increasingly regional response, many of the continent's regional organisations have added security and conflict management initiatives to their original (mostly economic) purpose. The best-known and probably best-developed are those of ECOWAS and SADC, but IGAD, ECCAS, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), COMESA, the Arab-Maghreb Union (AMU), and the East African Community (EAC) have also begun to establish peace and security structures. Given the history of competing regionalisms discussed in the first section of this paper as well as the subsequent elaboration on their root causes, the question arises whether, and if so how, today's Africa can overcome the problems associated with this proliferation of initiatives and the resultant competition for foreign support, political influence, and institutional relevance. Is there any chance that the African Union can coordinate and harmonise the various regional undertakings in such a way that they will serve as building rather than stumbling blocs to continent-wide cooperation and integration? The following section will argue that the African continent is on the best way to overcoming the underlying dynamic of competing regionalisms by having formulated a common purpose, having accepted the leadership role of the AU as a credible clearinghouse and framework for all initiatives, and most importantly, having realised that cooperation offers tangible benefits to all participating actors.

The renaissance of Pan-Africanism and a changing conception of security

Among the most significant reasons for this optimism regarding inter-African security cooperation is a twofold change in the continental self-conception. First, following what Uganda's President Museveni had called a "decade of awakening" in the face of an increasingly-felt impact of globalisation on Africa's desolate economies, waning superpower interest, and the prevalence of horrific humanitarian catastrophes on the continent, Africa has recently been experiencing a new wave of Pan-Africanism.⁶⁰ Beginning with the 1991 landmark all-African conference on "Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation" in Kampala, the continent has appeared increasingly willing to overcome many of the aforementioned hindrances to effective regional and continental cooperation. This new-found willingness had sprung from the realisation that if Africa wanted to break the cycle of violence, poverty, and underdevelopment that has caused so much suffering and kept it persistently at the bottom of all international indicators, it finally had to take charge of its own destiny.

Second, the resultant wave of Pan-Africanism differed markedly from the preceding ones. Previous attempts at continental cooperation were dominated by the Westphalian notion of sovereignty so entrenched in the OAU's Charter since Africa's Heads of State had pledged non-interference in each other's internal affairs at the organisation's founding conference in 1963. The current wave, however, has been pitting the values of unity and solidarity against those of democracy, accountability, democratic governance, and transparent politics all of which are considered vital correlates to continental security.⁶¹ As a result, Africa now seems ready to make

some qualifications to the principle of the sovereign rights of nations. This readiness culminated in the formulation of the AU's Constitutive Act, which by defining sovereignty in the conditional terms of a state's capacity and willingness to protect its citizens had shifted the focus from regime security to human security and which even goes so far as to recognise the AU's right to militarily intervene in its member states' affairs.⁶² Together with the aforementioned heightened political will to act and further institutional innovations such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), this changed conception of sovereignty and security has led many to agree with South Africa's Thabo Mbeki on the coming of an "African Renaissance." Although the latter still has to prove its worth, the first signs are encouraging.

Most relevantly, the past few years have seen important changes to the five inhibiting factors identified in the previous section. Regarding the divisions permeating the continent, for example, it must be noted that (besides the obvious end to the divisive powers of apartheid) the increasing sense of urgency arising from the developmental failures and humanitarian catastrophes of the recent past seems to have had a muting effect on many of the traditional intra-regional rivalries such as the long-running Anglo-French stand-off in West Africa. This sense of urgency is also increasingly felt by outside actors and has led to a more constructive approach by many donor countries and international institutions such as the European Union or the G8. The aforementioned wave of Pan-Africanism and its idealistic undercurrent compound this new spirit and have led to the emergence of a new generation of politically responsible leaders who are one by one replacing the venal despots and Big Men of the continent. As a result, more than two-thirds of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have had multi-party elections in the past five years – some admittedly freer and fairer than others – and there have been a number of peaceful democratic changes of government. All these developments have substantially increased the chances for effective inter-African cooperation.

The African Union, the regional organisations and an emergent division of labour

The ambitious dream of a continental security architecture is taking shape at a remarkable pace. Ever since the Kampala conference, the world has seen Africans not only develop a genuine desire to take on greater responsibility for their continent's troubles, but also foster the institutional clout to match this desire. Building on the OAU's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution as well as on the continental integration agenda enshrined in the 1991 Abuja Treaty, the African Union has created an impressively dynamic peace and security architecture. Today, this architecture rests on a Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP) adopted in 2004 and is coordinated by the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC). The latter is supported by the Commission of the AU modelled after the European archetype, a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, the Military Staff Committee, a Special Fund, and the emerging African Standby Force.⁶³

One truly new development that clearly distinguishes the AU's architecture from that of its feeble predecessor is the intensive cooperation between the African Union and regional organisations. Whereas the OAU's security efforts were plagued by its often uneasy coexistence with the continent's various Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the AU does not see the RECs as competitors in a zero-sum game, but as essential building blocks and implementation

agencies for its many programs.⁶⁴ By basing its security architecture on regional pillars and incorporating existing initiatives into its continental policy, the AU does not only profit from the regions' comparative advantage in military and security matters, their experience with peace operations and – in the case of western, eastern and southern Africa – their established frameworks and mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, but also grants them a significant stake and a central role in all processes.⁶⁵ Under this approach, the primary responsibility for peace and security remains squarely with the RECs, while the AU serves as authoritative clearinghouse and framework for all initiatives. In this way, the AU conceptually fills the institutional gap between the UN with its higher moral authority for ensuring international peace and security on the one hand, and the regional organisations with their perceived greater political will and executive power on the other hand.

The experiences of the last five years have already revealed a functioning division of labour between the regional organisations and the AU that roughly corresponds to this pyramidal conflict management structure based on the RECs' regional specificity, the AU's continental comprehensiveness, and the UN's global capacities.⁶⁶ In a way it was the latter's overstretch following the proliferation of devastating internal conflicts that had led to the idea of a layered approach whereby the initial response to a crisis would come from local and national organisations, followed by responses at the regional and continental levels, and finally by those of the UN and the broader international community. It was thought that this would lessen the burden at the UN level and enable more rapid and appropriate responses at much lower levels of the international security framework. As a consequence, regional organisations such as ECOWAS, IGAD, and SADC became deeply involved in dealing with Africa's conflicts reaching from IGAD's successful mediation efforts in Sudan and Somalia to the ECOWAS interventions in Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Occasionally, the AU has, with the active support of the RECs, also conducted its own peace operations such as the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) and the still ongoing African Mission in Sudan (AMIS).

Despite the obvious functionality and success of this relationship between the AU and regional and sub-regional conflict management actors, the AU has learned from the mistakes of its institutional predecessor and recognised the dangers that can arise from an unchecked proliferation of organisations and initiatives. Consequently, the AU's decision to limit its official collaboration to seven RECs (ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, AMU, ECCAS, COMESA, and EAC) and to dedicate last year's summit in Banjul mainly to the rationalisation of RECs must also be seen in light of the continental organisation's desire to lessen the likelihood of competing rather than complementary security efforts. This desire for rationalisation, harmonisation, and integration is enshrined in every major AU document, be it the Constitutive Act, the Protocol on the Establishment of the PSC, or the Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the African Union and the RECs. The appointment of an AU delegate to interface with the RECs, the establishment of an AU liaison office at the headquarters of ECOWAS in Abuja as well as the institutionalisation of regular meetings and exchange of notes between the AU and the RECs are only some of the steps that have been taken to ensure the various organisations' effective partnership.⁶⁷ Another such step, namely the creation of regionally-based multinational brigades as building blocs for the envisioned African Standby Force deserves

closer attention.

The African Standby Force as an example of the AU's continental integration effort

In line with President Mbeki's call for "Africans to do everything [they] can to rely on their own capacities to secure their continent's renaissance," African leaders have placed the establishment of an African Stand-by Force at the heart of the AU's peace and security agenda.⁶⁸ According to the *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council*, adopted in July 2002, the ASF is to enable the PSC to fulfil its objective of promoting peace, security, and stability in Africa.⁶⁹ The conceptual ASF will consist of five regionally based brigades of about 3,000-5,000 troops providing the AU with a combined standby capacity of about 15,000-25,000 troops trained in peace operations, ranging from low intensity observer missions to full-blown military interventions. As currently foreseen, the ASF will be operationalised in two incremental phases, both of which are to be completed by 2010. So far, the progress has been encouraging. For example, AU officials have recently announced that all Planning Elements (PLANELM) have been established, that the RECs' ASF harmonisation and coordination workshops have yielded tangible and very promising results. Both the SADC Standby Brigade and the East African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) have already completed the first phase of their operationalisation.⁷⁰

Besides its obvious benefit of strengthening African capacity for regional peace operations in the long-run, the creation of the ASF also aids the consolidation of inter-African security cooperation in two important ways. First, it epitomises a much needed common objective which may finally channel the multiplicity of resources, initiatives, and ambitions devoted to African capacity-building into one direction, or as Cedric de Coning put it:

The development of an African standby system is a significant achievement because it provides Africa with a common policy framework for [...] capacity building. This means that the various [...] capacity building initiatives underway, and any new programmes, can be directed to support this common objective, regardless of whether such initiatives are taking place at the regional, sub-regional or national level.⁷¹

Second, the regional character of the ASF ensures that the RECs feel ownership in the process of establishing a continental security architecture, but at the same time continue to strengthen their institutional links with the AU. The ASF allows the latter to incorporate the RECs into a common framework under its coordination without infringing on their regional authority or responsibilities. This mutually beneficial symbiosis not only reduces the risk of competition between the continental and regional levels of inter-African cooperation, but also increases the stakes all actors have in the process and thereby reduces the chances of failure.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Despite the above reasons for optimism, several specific challenges and obstacles to effective inter-African security cooperation can be identified. These fall broadly into four inter-related categories: (1) the continuing existence of a "cacophony" of regional groupings and the resultant problems of coordination and competition; (2) the overlapping memberships within these groupings; (3) the internal problems of the AU impacting on continental cooperation such

as possible implementation crises and the issue of funding; and (4) the problems arising from regionalism as formalism, regionalism without common values, and asymmetrical regionalisation. Overcoming these challenges will be the key to a successful African security regime and a huge step towards ending the continent's history of competing regionalisms.

Bloated institutional landscapes, continuing competition, and duplication of effort

Despite the AU's aforementioned rationalisation efforts, the African continent is still overcrowded with organisations and initiatives which share the same purpose but operate independently of each other. Encouraged by the post-Cold War policy preferences of Western powers – most notably the US, Britain and, to some extent, France – for “African solutions to African problems,” a multiplicity of these players have also established peace and security structures.⁷² The absence of clear lines of communications or a hierarchical structure amongst the latter not only complicates the increasing willingness of sub-regional, regional, and continental organisations to take a more proactive role in protecting human security, but also breeds the danger of confusion, duplication of effort, and a dissipation of energies and resources.

Consequently, it is essential that the AU continues to strengthen its role as authoritative clearinghouse for all cooperative initiatives and clarifies its relations with these initiatives in order to avoid the impression that the various levels of cooperation (sub-regional, regional, and continental) are competing for pre-eminence in promoting peace and stability in Africa. For if such perceptions of inter-organisational competition were to arise it might not only undermine all initiatives, but could also lead to a division of Africa's institutional landscape into separate regional blocs as seen in the 1960s.

There are currently at least 42 organisations and institutions on the continent that would need to be integrated into the AU's structure. This task is compounded by the fact that despite the similarities, there exist distinct differences in institutional structures, financial patrons as well as ideologies and strategies between these organisations and the AU from which only the former benefit.⁷³ Fearing a substantial reduction in independence and direct support, these organisations have proven difficult to integrate into the continental framework. While events like the merger of the Accord on Non-Aggression and Defence (ANAD) with ECOWAS raise the hopes for a lasting harmonisation of Africa's many confusing and duplicating mechanisms, there thus remains much need for further rationalisation and integration of the continent's plethora of peace and security initiatives.

Overlapping memberships

The institutional chaos is further complicated by the fact that many African states simultaneously belong to more than one intergovernmental body that aspires to a role in security maintenance and conflict management. While this problem of overlapping memberships is, of course, not unique to Africa, its extent and effects may prove particularly detrimental to the continent's infant security architecture.⁷⁴

Of the 53 African countries, 26 are members of two regional organisations, and 19 are members of three. Two countries (DRC and Swaziland) even belong to four. Only 6 countries

maintain membership in just one regional community.⁷⁵ Even though the AU has limited its official collaboration to five RECs, there are at least 14 economic communities within the geographical space of Africa which have established some sort of peace and security mechanism. In West Africa, ECOWAS cohabits with UEMOA, MRU, and the Community of Sahel and Saharan States (CENSAD). In Central Africa, ECCAS covers the CEMAC and Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) spaces. In Southern Africa, SADC, the South African Customs Union (SACU), and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) share the essential part of their integration spaces among themselves and with COMESA which, in turn, extends over the whole of Eastern Africa, some states of Northern Africa, and Central Africa.⁷⁶

This overlap among Africa's organisations not only leads to wasteful duplications of effort and counterproductive competition among countries and institutions, but also tends to dissipate collective efforts towards the common goals of the African Union and muddy the goal of integration. It also adds to the burdens of member states as a country belonging to two or more organisations not only faces multiple financial obligations, but must cope with different meetings, policy decisions, instruments, procedures, and schedules.⁷⁷

Given these negative aspects, the AU must strengthen its efforts to disentangle Africa's confusing web of institutional overlaps.⁷⁸ However, this may not prove easy as countries often benefit politically from multiple memberships which are seen to justify the extra expenses by increasing a country's regional influence and donor attractiveness. Nonetheless, the AU should, at the very least, clarify the many procedural questions arising from the resultant overlaps. For example, there needs to be a better understanding of priorities and procedures when troops, pre-identified for use by both a sub-regional and regional body, are simultaneously needed in two places at once. Without a well-defined understanding of which organization or crisis area has primacy in these situations, problems with force projection and force generation will continue to be a major hurdle.⁷⁹

Challenges facing the African Union

As argued earlier in this paper, the functionality of Africa's emerging peace and security architecture is heavily dependent on an efficient and credible African Union as an embodiment of a renewed Pan-Africanism and a catalyst for continental integration. However, as an organisation with a huge and diverse membership representing a poor and conflict-ridden continent, the AU is bound to face a number of challenges to its unifying efforts such as managing the impending "implementation crisis" from within or fulfilling the world's high expectations despite its meagre funding.

The legacy of the OAU is one of repeated implementation crises, in which the high-reaching goals of the organisation's initiatives regularly failed to attain sufficient commitment from the continent's leaders and the international community. Many fear that a similar fate may await the AU's current security initiatives, a concern based significantly on recent events such as the financial bankruptcy and operational failures of AMIS, the recurrence of conflict in Somalia, the organisation's lenient attitude towards Mugabe's regime as well as the near success of Sudan's dictator Omar Bashir in his quest for the AU's leadership, all of which were widely seen as signs of the AU's dysfunction. With these failures adding up to the trenchant memories

of past misdeeds and antagonistic interactions, it is hardly surprising that the level of trust African countries currently put in the AU is insufficient for building a durable and truly collaborative security architecture.

The effect of this lack of trust is compounded by the AU's inability to restore confidence in its leadership role through financial means. Despite the fact that almost half of the AU's 2005 budget was spent on peace and security initiatives (\$62 million out of a total of \$158 million), member states felt very little direct impact.⁸⁰ Instead, there is a growing feeling among regional lead states that the meagre benefits of membership do not justify an increasing submission to the AU's authority in the delicate field of security. While the calls for the AU to finally earn the right to be the senior authoritative structure on the continent are thus growing louder, the AU is simply lacking the resources to fulfil this demand. Despite substantial outside support through, for example, the EU's African Peace Facility (worth €250 million) or the G8's Africa Action Plan, the AU is suffering from an enormous resource and capacity constraint which has impacted and will continue to impact on the extent to which the organisation is able to commit meaningfully to continental security through both the support of regional and sub-regional efforts as well as its own initiatives. Without increasing commitment by its member states and the international community, the African Union's peace and security architecture may thus soon meet the same fate as the organisation's erstwhile flagship operation in Darfur.

Regionalism without common values / as formalism and asymmetrical regionalisation

While the challenges to continental cooperation arising from Africa's institutional chaos and overlap as well as the AU's fading authority and financial resources are relatively straightforward, the difficulties arising from regionalism without common values, regionalism as formalism, and asymmetrical regionalisation are less well known though equally serious.

The challenge of regionalism without common values is based on the trend among many African states to forge regional ties without any serious attempts to create building blocs for a shared regional or sub-regional identity. Instead, it has become increasingly clear that only in very few cases are a state's development at a regional level, and the ideas it espouses at that level, shared by all the countries in its respective region or sub-region. In essence, what this means is that most regions and sub-regions will have a rather skewed way of evolving their common security architecture because the individual states do not share common values or an overarching identity, which, quite obviously, would make it easier to engage in meaningful cooperation. Senzo Ngubane and Hussein Solomon have listed several examples of such regionalisms without common values reaching from the SADC region where it would appear that individual member countries are pulling in different directions (absolute monarchy in Swaziland or dictatorship in Zimbabwe on the one side, movements of democratisation in other countries on the other side) to the situation in West Africa where rogue states exist side by side with functioning democracies.⁸¹

Regionalism as formalism denotes the related problem that Africa seems to have slithered into, a situation whereby the process of regional development is measured by the number of institutions created and protocols passed without necessarily paying any particular attention to the political will or capacity that exists to make sure that these institutions function or that the

protocols are implemented.⁸² This dichotomy between appearance and capacity has already undercut many a cooperative venture and will continue to do so until the AU's ongoing rationalisation effort and the concomitant separation of the continent's organisations into viable partners and mere Potemkin villages finally bears fruit.

Another challenge to forging a Pan-African security architecture arises from the continent's asymmetrical regionalisations, that is, the uneven development of regional and sub-regional organisations and initiatives due to their differing colonial heritages, political and security agendas, incompatible visions, uneven political and economic development of member states, and widely varying levels of outside support. While there is hardly anyone to blame for these differences, they inevitably hamper the AU's integrationist efforts and undermine the consensus required to pursue a collective security mandate and execute effective responses to conflict through regional and continental initiatives.⁸³ The resultant tensions are potentially further aggravated by donor-driven peace and security capacity-building initiatives, which are not always well coordinated and tend to favour some regions and member states over others. Consequently, one of the priorities for African regionalism must be to create a synergy between the existing institutions, enabling them to complement and support one another.

These are just some of the thorny issues that Africa will have to face on its way to overcoming its history of inter-institutional competition and finally unite all actors in a common continental framework to their mutual benefit. There are countless other difficulties such as the inherent weakness of many African states, the still insufficient involvement of civil society, and the prevalence of divisive conflict and rivalry on every corner of the continent. Nonetheless, a notable first step has been taken.

Conclusion

This article's purpose was to shed some light on the concept of inter-institutional competition and its effect on Africa's emerging security architecture. It did so by first tracing its evolution through the four decades preceding the birth of the African Union and then distilling the commonalities into five root causes that so far have impeded effective sub-regional, regional, and continental security cooperation. It went on to assess the AU's efforts at establishing a continental peace and security architecture in light of these root causes and deduced that several changes that have taken place over the last decade have significantly increased the institutional prospects and chances of this new construct. Lastly, the paper presented some of the remaining challenges and suggested ways to overcome them. The article's conclusions are thereby consistent with the widely-applied theories of regional security complexes and security communities. While these theories deal with the formation of cooperative security ventures across the globe, this article expanded on one of the reasons why such ventures have only just begun to evolve effectively on the African continent.

Although the many tensions and rivalries that have characterised Africa's institutional landscape thus far have cast a penumbra of cynicism and doubt over the ability of the continent to deal with the numerous problems that persist for inter-African security cooperation, the last decade has seen several important developments. The parameters have clearly shifted in the direction of greater visibility and a heightened political will to act and the various organisations

have slowly forged ahead with the process of establishing a viable continental peace and security architecture. A new wave of Pan-Africanism promoting unity, solidarity, cohesion, and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and their states has swept across the continent and has helped the AU to create a “common vision of a united and strong Africa.”⁸⁴

This vision has arisen out of the realisation that the continent cannot afford another half-century of constant strife and bloodshed and has provided many cooperative ventures with a new *raison d'être* based on what Garth Le Pere called “a different kind of Lockean social contract” in which African states secure their own interests by maximising the continent’s peace and security.⁸⁵ The AU has successfully facilitated this new will for cooperation by incorporating existing initiatives into a robust continental system and establishing itself as a more credible institutional clearinghouse than its predecessor organisation. Having taken charge of Africa’s institutional chaos, the AU has begun to accelerate the so desperately needed process of rationalising, harmonising, coordinating, and integrating Africa’s plethora of organisations and initiatives into one coherent approach.

Fortunately, Africa will pursue this process at a time when similar projects have already been undertaken in other regions of the world. The EU, OSCE, NATO as well as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), for example, can provide some useful ideas for overcoming of institutional competition and the subsequent development of a comprehensive security framework in Africa. The answer to whether Africa will decide to learn from its history of inter-institutional competition, however, may still be some time away.

“United we stand, divided we fall”

(Kwame Nkrumah)

Notes:

1. Boas, Morten, *Regions and regionalisation: a heretic’s view in Regionalism and regional integration in Africa – A debate of current aspects and issues* (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 2001), 29.
2. Bach, Daniel, *Regionalism & globalisation in Sub-Saharan Africa– Revisiting a paradigm* in Bach, Daniel (ed.), *Regionalisation in Africa– integration and disintegration* (James Currey, Oxford, 1999), 3.
3. Adedeji, Adebayo, *The economic evolution of developing Africa* in Crowder, Michael (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Africa– Vol. 8* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984), 231.
4. Nkrumah, Kwame, *Revolutionary Path* (Panaf Books, London, 1973), 282-4.
5. For an excellent overview on Pan-Africanism see Esedebe 1994. For anglophone perspectives on Pan-Africanism see works by Kwame Nkrumah. For francophone perspectives on Pan-Africanism see the works of Aimé Césaire or Modibo Keita.
6. Nkrumah, Kwame, *Declaration to the Colonial Peoples of the World*, Manchester, 15-21 October 1945.

7. Walraven, Klaas van, *Dreams of Power – The Role of the Organisation of African Unity in the Politics of Africa 1963-1993* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 1999), 95.
8. Walraven, Klaas van 1999: 112.
9. Woronoff, Jon, *Organising African Unity* (Scarecrow Press, New Jersey, 1970), 587-8.
10. The Casablancagroup consisted of Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Ghana, Guinea and Mali. The Brazzavillegroup comprised Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire, Dahomey (Benin), Gabon, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, the Central African Republic, Senegal and Chad. Eventually, the Brazzavillegroup merged into the Monroviagroup resulting in an increased membership of 24 (including Nigeria, Liberia and Togo).
11. Chimelu, Chime, *Integration and Politics among African States* (Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1977), 164.
12. For a discussion of the Casablancagroup's failure to organise itself see Gallagher, Charles, *The Death of a Group* (American Universities Field Staff Reports, North Africa Series, IX, 4, 1963), 5-8.
13. Walraven, Klaas van 1999: 111.
14. Déclaration de Politique Générale, Yaoundé, 25-28 March 1961.
15. Woronoff, Jon, *The OAU and Sub-Saharan Regional Bodies* in El-Ayouty, Yassin (ed.), *The OAU after Ten Years – Comparative Perspectives* (Praeger, New York, 1975), 66.
16. Walraven, Klaas van 1999: 98-99.
17. Duffield, Ian, *Pan-Africanism since 1940* in Crowder, Michael (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Africa – Vol. 8* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984), 118.
18. Emperor Haile Selassie, *Welcome Address*, Addis Ababa Summit, 1963. A full text of the Emperor's address can be found in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, No. 1 (September 1963), 281-91.
19. Woronoff, Jon 1975: 68-70.
20. OAU 1963. *Charter of the OAU*, Article II, 1a.
21. Woronoff, Jon 1975: 62-75.
22. Buzan, Barry and Waever, Ole, *Regions and Powers* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003).
23. Woronoff, Jon 1975: 63.
24. OAU 1963. *Charter of the OAU*, Article XX, 1-5.
25. OAU 1963. *Charter of the OAU*, Article II, 1b.
26. Assante, S., *Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration* in Mazrui, Ali (ed.), *General History of Africa – Africa since 1935*, Volume VIII (Heinemann, California, 1993), 728.
27. Gruhn, Isebill, *The ECA/OAU: Conflict and Collaboration* in Onwuka, R. and Sesay, A. (eds), *The Future of Regionalism in Africa* (Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1985), 27; See also Cervenka, Zdenek, *The Unfinished Quest for Unity: Africa and the OAU* (Africana Press, New York, 1977).
28. Woronoff, Jon 1975: 62.
29. For information on competition in other regions see, for example, Sidaway, James and Gibb, Richard, *SADC, COMESA, SACU: Contradictory Formats for Regional Integration in Southern Africa?* in Simon, David (ed.), *South Africa in Southern Africa: Reconfiguring the*

- Region* (James Currey, Oxford, 1998) or Takirambudde, Peter (1999), *The Rival Strategies of SADC & PTA/COMESA in Southern Africa* in Bach, Daniel (ed.), *Regionalisation in Africa – Integration & Disintegration* (James Currey, Oxford, 1999).
30. Asante, S., *ECOWAS/CEAO: Conflict and Cooperation in West Africa* in Onwuka, R. and Sesay, A. (eds.), *The Future of Regionalism in Africa* (Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1985), 74.
 31. Esedebe, Olisanwuche, *Pan-Africanism – The Idea and the Movement, 1776-1991*, 2nd edition (Howard University Press, Washington DC, 1994), 217.
 32. One of the best sources for developments involving international cooperation among Francophone states is *Marchés Tropicaux*. See also Sophie Bessis, “CEAO: Ils Rechignent, mais Ils Payent”, *Jeune Afrique* No. 1086 (October 28, 1981), 36-37.
 33. Adedeji, Adebayo, *ECOWAS: A Retrospective Journey* in Adebajo, Adekeye and Rashid, Ismail (eds), *West Africa’s Security Challenges* (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 2004), 40-1; Esedebe, Olisanwuche 1994: 220-221.
 34. Adedeji, Adebayo, 2004: 58-59.
 35. Adebajo, Adekeye, *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau* (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 2004), 31.
 36. Hazlewood, Arthur, *The End of the East African Community: What are the lessons for regional integration schemes?* in Onwuka, R. and Sesay, A. (eds), *The Future of Regionalism in Africa* (Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1985), 172-189.
 37. Adedeji, Adebayo, *Problems and Prospects of Regional Cooperation in West Africa* in African Association for Public Administration and Management, *Problems and Prospects of Regional Cooperation in Africa* (English Press, Nairobi, 1969), 67.
 38. OAU, *Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community*, Abuja, 3 June 1991, 52.
 39. Adedeji, Adebayo, *The role of the private sector in the economic integration of the West Africa Sub-region*, Keynote Address at the 40th anniversary of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, 16 August 2000 as quoted in Adedeji, Adebayo, 2004: 45.
 40. See Assante, S., *The Travails of Integration* in Adebajo, Adekeye and Rashid, Ismail (eds), *West Africa’s Security Challenges – Building Peace in a Troubled Region* (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 2004).
 41. See Vdombana, N., *A Harmony or a Cacophony? The Music of Integration in the African Union Treaty and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development*, *Indiana International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2002), 185-236.
 42. See, for example, Newhouse, John, *Europe’s Rising Regionalism*, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (1997).
 43. Chinweizu, *Africa and the Capitalist Countries* in Mazrui, Ali (ed.), *The General History of Africa – Vol. VIII Africa since 1935* (James Currey, Oxford, 1999), 769.
 44. Renou, Xavier, *A New French Policy for Africa*, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2002), 6.
 45. Composed of 13 former French colonies and Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, the zone is a financial system established in 1947 in which a common currency, the Franc CFA (*Communauté Financière Africaine*) is tied to the French Franc and guaranteed by the

French treasury. This enabled France to control francophone countries' money supply, their monetary and financial regulations, their banking activities, their credit allocation and ultimately their budgetary and economic policies (see Renou, Xavier 2002: 11). Through the existence of French military bases in the region and the *Force d'Intervention* on standby in mainland France as well as the provision of military equipment and training assistance through various defence agreements, Paris maintained a strong military leverage over its former colonies. African leaders and governments were well aware of both France's ability and willingness to intervene on their behalf or possibly that of their opponents (there were at least 34 French military interventions in Africa during the period 1963-1997, the two most notable being "Operation Barracuda" which overthrew the self-declared Emperor Bokassa I from his Central African throne in 1979 and "Operation Manta" which involved the dispatching of over 3000 French troops to Chad to support the crumbling regime in its fight against Libyan-backed rebels). Naturally, this awareness helped to ensure compliance with France's occasional political demands.

46. Renou, Xavier 2002: 9.
47. Nkiwane, Tandeka, *Contested Regionalism: Southern and Central Africa in the post-Apartheid era*, African Journal of Political Science, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1999), 126.
48. Assante, S., 1993: 728.
49. Herbst, Jeffrey, *States and Power in Africa— Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2000), 126-7.
50. For instance, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Belewa, the first Nigerian prime minister said, during the 1959 debate over the motion to ask for independence, that "I am confident that when we have our citizenship, our own national flag, our own national anthem, we shall find the flame of national unity will burn bright and strong"; See Belewa, Alhaji Tafawa, *Mr. Prime Minister* (Nigerian National Press, Apapa, 1964), 37.
51. Welch, Claude, *Dream of Unity: Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1966), 356.
52. Many of Africa's cooperative schemes almost inevitably had a differential impact on their members, which worked to the advantage of the largest, most developed and most centrally placed among them. The Central African Federation established under British colonial rule, for example, favoured Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) over the present Zambia and Malawi; See Hazlewood, A., *The Economics of Federation and Dissolution in Central Africa* in Hazlewood, Arthur, 1967. The East African Community favoured Kenya over Uganda and Tanzania.
53. Carter, G., *National Unity and Regionalism in Eight African States* (Cornell University Press, New York, 1966), 553.
54. See for example Adler, Emanuel and Barnett, Michael (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998) or Cronin, Bruce, *Community under Anarchy: Transnational Identity and the Evolution of Cooperation* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1999).
55. Buzan, Barry and Waever, Ole 2003: 222-223.

56. Olympio, Sylvanus, *Reflections on Togolese and African Problems* in Duffy, James and Manners, Robert (eds), *Africa Speaks* (D. Van Nostrand, Princeton, 1961), 75.
57. For example, since engineering the miraculous revival of the developmentalist state in Uganda in the early 1990s, President Yoweri Museveni had set his eyes on rejuvenating the defunct East African Community to serve “Uganda’s economic interests”. From all indications Museveni was well on his way to realising this dream, but ran into seemingly insurmountable obstacle in Congo’s Laurent Kabila who in 1998 took his country into the SADC regional trade bloc, a much stronger rival to the EAC. The effect of Kabila’s decision was to make Congo rather than Uganda “the object of South African capital” and, for that reason, Kabila had committed an “unforgivable sin” against Museveni. See Clark, John, *Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations*, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 39, no. 2 (2001), 261-187.
58. Assante, S. 1993: 726.
59. Berman, Eric and Sams, Katie, *Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities* (United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Geneva, 2000), 380.
60. Museveni, Yoweri, *Address to the South African Parliament*, Cape Town, 27 May 1997.
61. Landsberg, Christopher, *The Fifth Wave of Pan-Africanism* in Adebajo, Adekeye and Rashid, Ismail (eds), *West Africa’s Security Challenges – Building Peace in a Troubled Region* (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 2004), 117.
62. Powell, Kristiana, *The African Union’s emerging peace and security regime – opportunities and challenges for delivering on the responsibility to protect*, ISS Monograph Series, No. 119 (2005), 1.
63. African Union 2002. *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*. Addis Ababa, Article 2, Paragraph 2.
64. Article 16 of the PSC Protocol and the CADSP stress that the regional mechanisms will form the ‘building blocks’ of the AU’s peace and security architecture; Also see African Union 2001. *The Constitutive Act*. Addis Ababa, Article 3c, j and k; African Union 2003. *Amendment to the Constitutive Act*. Addis Ababa, Article 3p. For a detailed discussion of this multilayered approach to collective security see Franke, Benedikt, *Enabling a Continent to Help Itself: US Military Capacity Building and Africa’s Emerging Security Architecture*, *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2007).
65. See Franke, Benedikt, *In Defence of Regional Peace Operations in Africa*, *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, Article 185 (2006); Powell, Kristiana, 2005: 55.
66. For a discussion of pyramidal conflict management structures see Malan, Mark, *The OAU and African Sub-regional Organisations – A Closer Look at the Peace Pyramid*, Occasional Paper No. 36 (Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 1999).
67. Olonisakin, Funmi, *African Peacekeeping at the Crossroads: An Assessment of the Continent’s Evolving Peace and Security Architecture* (United Nations Peacekeeping Best Practices, New York, 2004), 8.
68. Mbeki, Thabo as quoted in Neethling, Theo, *Realising the African Standby Force as a Pan-African Deal: Progress, Prospects and Challenges*, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 8, Issue 1 (2005), 10-11. For more information on the conceptual evolution of the ASF see Franke, Benedikt, *A Pan-African Army: The Evolution of an Idea and Its Eventual*

- Realisation in the African Standby Force*, African Security Review, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2006), 2-16.
69. African Union 2002. *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*. Addis Ababa, Article 3.
 70. See AU Technical Workshop Reports.
 71. De Coning, Cedric, *Towards a Common Southern African Peacekeeping System*, Electronic Briefing Paper No. 16 (Center for International Political Studies, University of Pretoria, 2004), 4.
 72. Berdal, Mats (1998), *Peacekeeping in Africa, 1990-1996: The Role of the United States, France and Britain* in Furley, Oliver and May, Roy (eds.), *Peacekeeping in Africa*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 50.
 73. For example, Francis Cupri only recently argued in the US Army War College Quarterly (Parameters) that the United States should support sub-regional organisations such as ECOWAS rather than the AU as they offer “a greater return on US investment”. See Cupri, Francis, *Why the United States Should Robustly Support Pan-African Organisations*, Parameters, Winter 2005, 106-23.
 74. Europe also has a highly complex regional security architecture that includes the UN, the EU and its various institutions, the 55-member Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the 26-member NATO and the 28-member West European Union (WEU). Contrary to Africa, these arrangements can draw on the support of wealthy industrialised states which adds to the viability of such arrangements, even though it may not relieve the confusion.
 75. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa* (UNECA, Addis Ababa, 2004), 39-40.
 76. African Union Commission/Economic Commission for Africa, *Report on Meeting of Experts on the Rationalisation of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)*, EX.CC/220(VIII), 2005, 3.
 77. UNECA 2004: 41.
 78. For ongoing efforts to rationalise these overlaps see African Union 2006. *Report of the Consultative Meeting on the Rationalization of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for Eastern and Southern Africa*. Addis Ababa, 5-6.
 79. Taft, Patricia with Ladnier, Jason, *Realising “Never Again” – Regional Capacities to Protect Civilians in Violent Conflicts* (The Fund for Peace, Washington DC, 2006), 6.
 80. See, for example, Aboagye, Festus, *The ECOWAS Security Regime and Its Utility for Africa* in Field, Shannon (ed.), *Peace in Africa – Towards a Collaborative Security Regime* (Institute for Global Dialogue, Johannesburg, 2004), 175.
 81. Ngubane, Senzo and Solomon, Hussein, *Projects gone too far: Sub-regional Security Efforts in Africa* (Centre for International Political Studies, Pretoria, 2001), 5.
 82. Ngubane and Solomon 2001: 6.
 83. Powell, Kristina 2005: 21.
 84. African Union 2002. *Constitutive Act*. Addis Ababa: 1.
 85. Le Pere, Garth, *Foreword* to Field, Shannon (ed.), *Peace in Africa – Towards a Collaborative Security Regime* (Institute for Global Dialogue, Johannesburg, 2004), 17.

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Competing Regionalisms in Africa and the Continent's Emerging Security Architecture. March 2007. Benedikt F Franke. By basing its security architecture on regional pillars and incorporating existing initiatives as building blocs and implementation agencies into its continental policy, the AU has made important steps towards establishing a common front and reversing what Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah had so fearfully termed the "balkanisation of Africa". The continent is regarded as an ideal arena because its airspace is not congested, and because poor roads mean that demand for cheap air cargo is immense. Experiments such as this underscore a remarkable change taking place in Africa. A continent that has long accepted technological hand-me-downs from the West is increasingly innovating for itself. To be sure, much of this is made possible by technological advances elsewhere. It aims to match investors with companies in emerging markets, predominantly in Africa. One of the first firms to raise money on it is Bozza, a market for African music and film producers who would otherwise struggle sell their work. "The problems Africa faces are not necessarily American or European problems," says Emma Kaye, its founder.