

Institutional capabilities of African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) Framework

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ABSTRACT

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is a policy and institutional framework that the African Union (AU) established in 2002. It was intended to be an operational structure for the effective implementation of the decisions taken by the African Peace and Security Council (PSC), in the areas of conflict prevention, conflict management and post conflict reconstruction in the African continent. Besides, Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), Panel of the Wise (PoW), African Standby Force (ASF) and Africa Peace Fund (APF), have played a preponderant role in complimenting APSA's mandate. However, over a decade since it came into existence, the continent is still mired in violent conflicts. In this regard, APSA performance has been subject of considerable research but the factors that stymie its performance have not been adequately documented. This study sought to fill this research gap. The objective of the study was to establish the extent to which the APSA framework as currently constituted has the institutional capacity to deliver on its mandate. The research findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge while also benefiting policy makers dealing with peace and security in Africa. The research established that APSA has largely successfully achieved its mandate and implemented the PSC decisions despite the numerous challenges it continues to face. It was also established that there is need to invest more in APSA in order to enhance its performance.

KEY WORDS: African Peace and Security Architecture, institutional framework, Security Council

I.Introduction

According to Sharp (2010), the global society has witnessed the growth and spread of various forms of breakdown in law and order popularly christened as world wars, civil wars and ethnic conflicts. World history is replete with accounts of various wars and their attendant destruction but it was the first and second world wars that pushed countries to come together and establish an organization to take the lead in the prevention and management of violent conflicts. Following the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 that ended the First World War, the League of Nations (LoN) was established with the mandate to prevent war and guide pacific settlement of disputes (Williams, 2011).

Despite this effort, the world witnessed another war, the Second World War running from 1939 to 1945. The failure of the LoN to stop this war despite the warning signs led to its replacement with a more empowered organization, the United Nations (UN) in 1945 whose major mandate was to ensure international peace and security. According to the charter of the United Nations, the UN is organized with six key organs namely, the Security Council, the Secretariat, the International Court of Justice, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and the General Assembly. These organs are designed to complement each other through various established agencies in delivering the organizations mandate of ensuring international peace and security.

According to Ayissi (2004), the UN did not make much headway in ensuring an enabling environment of peace to anchor development in the world. Many countries continued to face protracted violent conflicts that claimed hundreds of thousands of civilian lives as well as immense destruction of property. This was more pronounced during the cold war era between the two superpowers of Soviet Union and the United States of America. This led countries in various regions to come together and form collective security architectures to enable them collectively address security threats in their regions (Gideon, 2016).

In 1947, the US and her allies from Western Europe formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to provide collective defence to their members in line with article 51 of the UN Charter (Stenn, 2012). Article five of the NATO founding treaty commits

allies to protect each other when any of them is subject to an armed attack. The guiding principle is that an attack on one is an attack on all. This was put to effect after the 9/11 terrorists attack in the US, when NATO troops were deployed in Afghanistan under International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). This has set a spirit of solidarity within the alliance and the region (Stenn, 2012).

According to Hitoshi (2006), the formation of NATO motivated the Soviet Union and its affiliated communist nations to establish a rival alliance, the Warsaw Pact in 1955. In 1967 the Association of the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was also formed as a regional security architecture to provide the ten member states of South East Asia with a mechanism to resolve security threats in the region. It fosters protection and stability among the member states through promotion of intergovernmental cooperation, shared values and adherence to norms of international law.

Towards this end, Africa was also not left behind in an effort to search for a collective security mechanism. In Africa, all the present states were under colonialism save for Ethiopia and Liberia. By the early 1960s, states that had achieved their independence came together and formed the Organization of African Union (OAU), which became operational in 1963. The aim of OAU was to rid the continent of colonialism and foster unity for development on the continent. It was replaced by the African Union (AU) in 2002, which had a more expanded mandate (AU Constitutive Act, 2002).

II. Theoretical framework

This study was underpinned by securitization theory. This theory has ushered a paradigmatic shift in security thinking and practice where security is no longer limited to military and political power considerations. The theory is attributed to the Copenhagen school of thought pioneered by Barry Buzan in the early 1990s. This theory argues that security is a social construction of threats which are debated by politicians and presented to the general public which must authorize extra ordinary measures to neutralize the threats. The manner of articulation of the threats to the public depicts panic politics (Buzan, 1998).

The Copenhagen school of thought presents the security sector as one that requires multiple actors working harmoniously to neutralize threats before they can cause any damage. The envisaged actors are both state and non-state. This approach serves to cement the view that the state is a critical actor in security matters but not the only actor. The theory further introduces into the security debate the concept of regional security complexes whose major argument is that geographical regions tend to jointly experience or be affected by security threats emanating from within them (Buzan, 1991). To overcome such threats, the security actors within that region must forge a cooperative arrangement of actors who appreciate the nature of the threats and who must act together to thwart the threats. In this vein, APSA can more traction in peace-building and conflict management in Africa and conflict-ridden states.

Despite the merit of the securitization theory in expanding the scope of security threats and actors, the theory risks expanding the security space too much to render it meaningless or even impossible in terms of academic analysis. This is especially so because of the ability of politicians to frame any issue and rally support for it to be considered a security threat.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design. A research design is a plan or a blue print that guides and informs how the study was conducted (Kothari, 2004). It provides control over those factors that could influence the outcome of the study. The research design underpins a study or a project that a researcher pursues (Kamau, 2014). This research design was the most suitable in this study because it highlighted developmental disparities of pillars of APSA and association of various aspects that render APSA functionally weak. It also entails choosing subjects who participate in the study, techniques and approaches for collecting data from the subjects and the procedure for collecting information on various aspects relevant to the functioning of APSA components. The study also was guided by the desirable population. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), defines population as an entire group of individuals' events or objects having common observable characteristics. The target population for this study comprised personnel drawn from institutions, organizations and agencies involved in peace and security activities in Somalia and which work with the African Union. They included the AU Commission Secretariat, APSA office, Peace and Security Division, partners, civil society organizations, sub-

regional mechanisms, African training centres, AU Missions and the media. Besides, a sample size denotes a section of a part that represents the larger population (Kothari, 2004). This is because study population may be too big to be investigated in its entirety, or may be costly or impossible to be studied because of various reasons. When this becomes the case, a smaller subset of the entire research population is selected to be studied in the place of the study population. The selected subset of the study population is called a sample (Kamau, 2014). In this study, several institutions and/or organizations dealing with peace and security in Africa were factored in. Each of the organizations/institution served as a stratum from which the actual number of participants in the study was drawn. Given that the total population of the Africa Union and allied peace and security actors is unknown, the following formula was used to get the sample size for unknown population:

$$n=(Z^2 pq)/d^2$$

Where:

n=required sample size

Z=Z score corresponding to 95% confidence level

p=Standard Deviation taken at 50% to ensure large enough sample

q= 1-p

d=margin of error at 5%

Applying the formula;

$$= (([1.96] ^2)(0.5)(1-0.5))/ [0.05] ^2$$

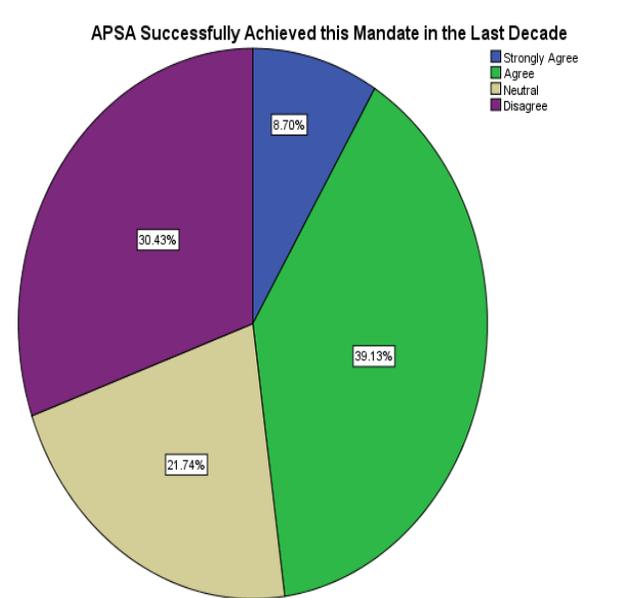
$$= (3.8416*0.25)/0.0025$$

$$=384.16 \text{ Approximately } 384$$

IV.FINDINGS

A. Institutional capabilities of the APSA framework

According to Shyaka (2012), Africa is today engulfed in a vicious cycle of conflicts as it were over half a century ago, the only difference being the type and nature of conflicts. In the 1960s stretching up to the 1990s, African countries were fighting for their political independence from European colonial powers. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to ascertain the institutional capabilities of APSA framework and its mandate.

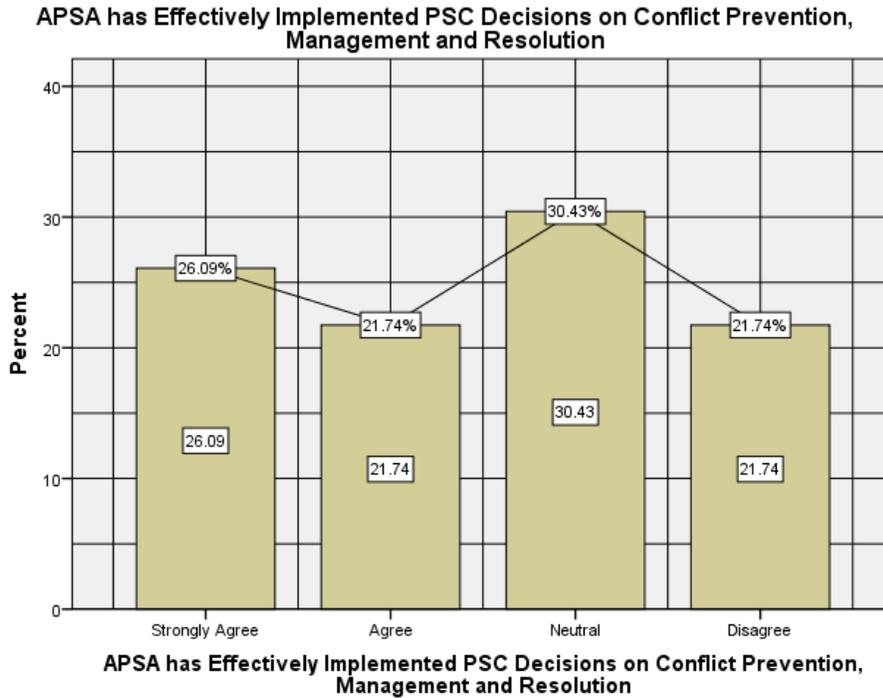


Source: Field data, 2017

Figure 4.1: Respondents' opinion on success of APSA in the last decade

As illustrated in figure 2.1, majority of the respondents, 39.13% agree that APSA has successfully achieved its mandate in the last ten years. This was followed by those respondents who disagree that APSA has successfully achieved its mandate in the last decade as represented by 30.43% of the respondents. 21.74% of the respondents are indifferent about the success of APSA in the last ten years while 8.70% strongly agree that the agency has successfully achieved its mandate in the last decade. No respondent strongly disagreed that APSA has successfully achieved its mandate in the last decade.

B.APSA effective implementation on PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa



Source: Field data, 2017

Figure 4.2: Respondents’ opinion on APSA effective implementation on PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Somalia.

Drawing from the above bar graph, 30.43% of the respondents are not sure whether or not APSA has effectively implemented PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. On the same question, 26.09% of the respondents strongly agree that APSA has effectively implemented PSC decisions regarding conflict, prevention, management and resolution in the continent of Africa. 21.74% of the respondents agree that APSA has effectively implemented PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution while an equal number of respondents disagree with the statement. No respondents strongly agreed with the statement.

❖ Association between effective implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management, and resolution in Africa and successful achievement of its mandate.

H₀: There is no relationship between effective implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management, and resolution in Africa and successful achievement of APSA’s mandate.

Level of Significance: 0.05 (α level)

Confidence Level: 95%

Table 1.1: Correlation between effective implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management, and resolution in Somalia and successful achievement of APSA’s mandate

Correlations

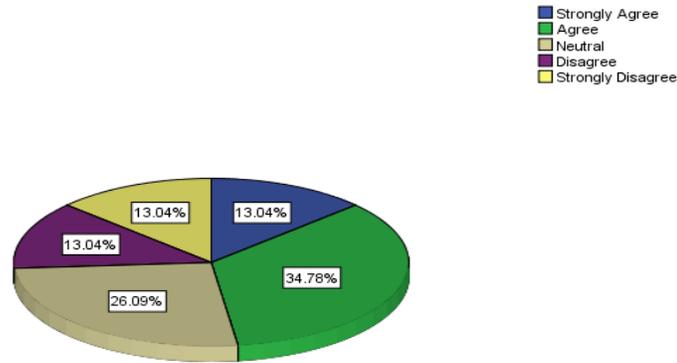
		APSA Successfully Achieved this Mandate in the Last Decade	APSA has Effectively Implemented PSC Decisions on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
APSA Successfully Achieved this Mandate in the Last Decade	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 360	.935 .021 360
APSA has Effectively Implemented PSC Decisions on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.935 .021 360	1 360

Source: Field data, 2017

A Pearson correlation test was also conducted to determine the relationship between effective implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management, and resolution in Africa and successful achievement of APSA’s mandate. The results of this test indicated that there was a strong positive association (Pearson $r = 0.935$, $p = 0.021$) between the two variables.

- ❖ **Adequacy of capacity of key components of APSA of the PSC, CEWS, PoW, ASF and APF to support the APSA’s mandate**

Key Components of APSA of the PSC, CEWS, PoW, ASF and APF have Adequate Capacity to Support the Mandate of APSA



Source: Field data, 2017

Figure 1.3: Respondents' opinion on adequacy of capacity of key components of APSA of the PSC, CEWS, PoW, ASF and APF to support the APSA's mandate

When asked their opinion on adequacy of capacity of key components of APSA of the PSC, CEWS, PoW, ASF and APF to support the mandate of APSA, 34% of the respondents strongly agreed that the components have adequate capacity to support the mandate of APSA. Another 13.04% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and an equal percentage of respondents disagreed. Equally, 13.04% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the key components of APSA including PSC, CEWS, PoW, ASF and APF have adequate capacity to support APSA's mandate.

❖ Analysis of Institutional capabilities of the APSA framework

The results of the data analysis indicate that capabilities of APSA as an institution is very critical for it to achieve its mandate and in the mission. Consequently, there is need for all relevant stakeholders to work and put a lot of effort in ensuring that APSA is able and adequately capable of delivering on its objectives which are mainly promoting peace and security in Africa. It is important to first of all point out that APSA has largely been largely able to successfully achieve its mandate since its establishment a decade ago.

This is indicated by the results of the questionnaire and interview analyses which indicate that more than 45% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that APSA has successfully achieved its mandate in the last ten years.

In addition to the successful attainment of its mandate, APSA has also largely done well in effectively implementing PCS decisions in conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. This is indicated by a combined total of 47% of the respondents who either strongly agreed or agreed to the statement that APSA has effectively implemented PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. A significant number of respondents, slightly over 30% were indifferent to this question statement. This implies that they were not sure whether APSA has effectively implemented PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. A considerable percentage of the respondents disagreed with this question statement. Drawing from the results of the questionnaires and interviews, respondents who were indifferent or who disagreed with this question statement gave a number of reasons as to why they were of the opinion that APSA had not effectively implemented the PSC decisions. For instance, some respondents were of the opinion that the leadership of APSA was not doing enough to implement the PSC decisions on the three mentioned areas. Some interview respondents cited inadequate external support for APSA and fuzzy standard operating procedures from AU was affecting the implementation of the decisions.

The researcher argues that the need to establish whether positions held by individuals in APSA could have effect or potentially shape opinion on the institutional capacity of APSA is key. The results of the Pearson correlation test which indicated that there is a strong relationship between effective implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management, and resolution in Africa and successful achievement of APSA's mandate suggested that individuals holding different positions in the organization held contradicting opinions on implementation of PSC decisions on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa.

V.RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that governments of African states should provide adequate financial and material support to APSA. Besides, individuals and institutions entrusted with the responsibility of managing and overseeing the activities of APSA need to continuously work towards reducing the institutional challenges facing APSA in order to make it more effective .

VI. CONCLUSION

APSA plays a critical role in ensuring that peace prevails in Africa and that Africa remains peaceful. It also plays a significant role in ensuring that the Africa provides solutions to its own conflict problems without overreliance in other parties external to Africa. In order for APSA to be more effective in attaining its mandate, there is need for all parties and stakeholders to support its mission and helping in addressing the numerous challenges facing the institution.

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