The African Union (AU) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Partnership in Peace and Security: Achievements and Challenges

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Abstract

The last two decades have seen Africa adopted a new security approach through the activities of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union’s African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Being one of the major building blocks recognized by the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is striving for sustaining peace and security throughout its turbulent and conflict-raging operational area. The IGAD in collaboration with the AU has played a pivotal role in peace mediation and conflict resolution of Sudan, Somalia, and South Sudan. However, research works that have so far been done in the AU-IGAD cooperation lack inclusiveness, specifically, in terms of what constitute the achievements and challenges. In view of that, this article aimed at exploring the achievements and challenges of the AU-IGAD partnership in the area of peace and security. The writer argues that despite progress in conflict prevention and promotion of peace and security through the AU-IGAD collaboration, challenges do remain. The analysis of the data obtained from the literature, confirms that the challenges that the AU-IGAD collaboration grappled with ranged from financial, legal, political to structural. Thus, for peace and security initiatives undertaken by the AU-IGAD to be effective: adopting a comprehensive legal regime, promoting the principle of self-reliance, addressing the problem of membership overlapping across different RECs, providing considerable autonomous decision making power to the AU and IGAD, establishing a common governance management structure, and promoting and encouraging the involvement and participation of civil societies are essential.

Key Words: APSA, AU, IGAD, AU-IGAD Partnership, RECs

1. Introduction

The Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are regional groupings of African states. They have developed individually and have different roles and structures. Generally, the purpose of the RECs

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is to facilitate regional economic integration between members of the individual regions and through the wider African Economic Community (AEC), which was established under the Abuja Treaty in 1991. The RECs are increasingly involved in coordinating African Union (AU) Member States’ interests in wider areas such as peace and security, development and governance. The RECs are closely integrated with the AU’s work and the AU recognized them as its building blocks. Specifically, in the last two decades, Africa has seen a progress by adopting a new security approach that recognized the RECs as part of the African Union’s African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The RECs in Africa are part of the APSA and playing a pivotal role in promoting peace, security and economic sustainability throughout the continent. Being one of the major building blocks recognized by the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is striving for sustaining peace and security throughout its turbulent and conflict raging operational area. The AU and IGAD in collaboration have made tremendous achievements in solving and mitigating political instability and insecurity problems of the region. However, this does not mean that the collaboration is exempted from shortcomings and challenges. Therefore, this paper aimed at exploring the achievements and challenges of the AU-IGAD relationship in the area of peace and security.

The author employed a qualitative document analysis approach. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic material (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, the writer reviewed the AU and IGAD normative and institutional frameworks, reports and other sources related to the area under investigation.

This manuscript is structured in six parts. The first two parts comprise the introduction and overview of the APSA, specifically, focuses on the place of RECs/IGAD in the APSA framework. The third part, the main part, deals with the AU-IGAD partnership in the area of peace and security; conceptualizing the partnership, achievements and challenges. And then, the last two parts provide conclusion and the way forward in the AU-IGAD relationship.

2. The Place of IGAD in the African Peace and Security Architecture

The African continent continues to face many complex security challenges ranging from issues of poor governance, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, drug trafficking, illegal financial flow, trafficking in human beings, growing terror attacks from extremist groups, high level corruption, intra or inter-state armed conflicts to unconstitutional changes of governments (Abu, 2013; Botei, 2015). In 2017, Africa hosts “23 peacekeeping and security missions, 10 of
which are provided by the European Union (EU), 8 by the United Nations (UN) and 5 by the AU” (Bassou, 2017, p. 2). Given this context, Africa’s own insecurity is serving as a source of concern for not only the global community but also for African leaders. This growing concern is one of the contributing factors to the phrase ‘African solutions to African problems’. Under the auspice of this phrase, Africans transform the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into AU and came up with the idea of APSA.

On 9 September 1999 in Sirte, Libya, African Heads of State and Government took the momentous decision to transform the OAU, which was founded in 1963, into the AU (Engel & Porto, 2009). With the full transition of OAU into AU in 2002, not only was a set of new institutions created, but the new continental body also embraced a set of new norms (Engel & Porto, 2014). The AU brings a fundamental shift away from the constraints imposed on actions under the OAU Charter, which privileged state sovereignty and the non-interference in the affairs of other countries (Lobakeng, 2017). AU’s power to intervene in the internal affairs of other states in grave circumstances is a significant departure from the principle of non-intervention practiced by its predecessor (Botei, 2015).

The AU has the right to intervene in a member state when requested to do so by the member state or order by the decision of the AU Assembly in grave circumstances such as war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. This principle was stipulated in Article 4 (h and j) of the Constitutive Act of the AU, which was adopted on 11 July 2000 at the OAU’s 36th Summit held in Lome, Togo. The principle of intervention/indifference was intended to prevent the recurrence of tragedies such as the Rwandan genocide – where the international community failed to intervene to stop the bloodshed – by creating an African diplomatic and military capability to intervene in such situations (Albuquerque, 2016).

To further its security objectives, the AU in 2002 developed the APSA for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts in the African region. The APSA is “an operational structure for the effective implementation of the decisions taken in the areas of conflict prevention, peace-making, peace support operations and intervention, as well as peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction” embodies and constitutes an institutional reflection of the shift to human security which is widely accepted at the continental level (Sarjho Bah, Choge-Nyangoro, Dersso, Mofya and Murithi, 2014, p. 21). The APSA is envisioned as a means by which Africa can take a greater role in managing peace and security on the continent, with the objective of offering ‘African solutions to African problems’. The Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and
Security Council of the African Union (PSC Protocol) outlines the various components of the APSA and their respective responsibilities.

APSA can be viewed as consisting of two interconnected layers. First, it comprises key institutions within the AU, namely the Peace and Security Council (PSC) - decision-making structure; the Panel of the Wise (PoW) - a capacity for preventative diplomacy and advice; the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) - an early warning mechanism; the African Standby Force (ASF) - an integrated response capacity comprising military, police and civilian elements; the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), and the Peace Fund - a mechanism for making available adequate financing for peace initiatives (PSC Protocol, Art. 2(2)).

Second, the APSA includes AU-recognized eight RECs in charge of Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution and two Regional Mechanisms (RMs) in charge of administering and managing the North African and Eastern African standby forces. The RECs are the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN–SAD), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the RMs are the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) and the North African Regional Capability (AU, 2006). Although primarily set up to promote economic integration, Africa’s RECs have increasingly taken up a prominent role in conflict resolution and peace support operations, as evident in the recent peace processes in Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Cote d’Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan, among others (Adetula, Bereketeab and Jaiyebo, 2016). There is increasingly a drive, including by the AU, to enhance their role in peace and security efforts (Lucey & Mesfin, 2016). Generally, as Franke (2007) rightly said, the AU has made important steps towards establishing a common front by basing its security architecture on regional pillars and incorporating existing initiatives as building blocks and implementation agencies, into its continental policy.

The IGAD is one of Africa’s youngest sub-regional organizations, recognized by the AU as its building blocks. It was founded in 1996 to supersede the Inter-Governmental Authority against Drought and Desertification (IGADD), which was created in 1986 by the then drought-affected eastern African countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda
The State of Eritrea\textsuperscript{2} and South Sudan joined later, respectively, in 1993 and 2011, as the seventh and eighth member states. IGADD was created as a response mechanism to address regional environmental issues such as desertification and drought (Lucey & Mesfin, 2016; Byiers, 2017). In 1996, IGADD evolved into IGAD, which produced a much broader mandate and ambitious objectives that embraces cooperation in almost all socio-economic, political and environmental fields.

With the inauguration of IGAD, great emphasis was given to the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts, the maintenance of regional peace, stability and security, and the protection of human and peoples’ rights as a means for achieving sustainable development. IGAD member states agreed: a) to take effective collective measures to eliminate threats to regional cooperation, peace, and stability; b) to establish effective mechanisms of consultation and cooperation for the peaceful settlement of differences and disputes; and c) to deal with disputes between member states within this sub-regional mechanism before they are referred to other regional or international organizations (IGAD, 1996).

To fulfill the new mandate, the IGAD legal and institutional frameworks were also streamlined. The IGAD’s peace and security framework is based on the Security Council of the UN and the Peace and Security Council of the AU as well as IGAD-specific agreements and mechanisms such as the Protocol on the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN, 2002), the policy framework for the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG, 2005) and IGAD Capacity Building Against Terrorism (ICPAT). In October 2005 in Khartoum, Sudan, IGAD launched a strategic planning process on peace and security that produced a 2011–2015 strategy document (De Sousa, 2013). IGAD also adopted its Peace and Security Strategy 2016–2020 in 2014, which builds on its 2011–2015 strategy and enlarges it. The IGAD adopted a Post-conflict reconstruction and development framework (PCRD) in 2014 (Lucey & Mesfin, 2016). The IGAD is also in the process of adopting a new treaty as an institution, which includes a protocol on peace and security.

The IGAD secretariat was also restructured to fulfill the new mandate and in due course, it established a division responsible for peace and security. The IGAD Political Affairs Program (PAP), under its Peace and Security Division (PSD), is tasked to contribute to peace and security

\textsuperscript{2} In 2007, Eritrea withdrew its membership, citing its border dispute and war with Ethiopia in 1998 and Ethiopia’s military intervention in Somalia in 2006. It remains absent from IGAD to this day. However, currently the Ethiopian Prime Minister and the Eritrean President started a momentous peace process if this succeeds; hopefully, Eritrea will return soon to the IGAD.
in the IGAD region through preventive diplomacy focused on democracy, governance, elections, and human rights, thereby paving the way for the gradual political integration of the region. Besides, the IGAD maintains specialized institutions and programs of peace and security; the CEWARN, and the IGAD Security Sector Program. The IGAD has also opened a temporary Liaison Offices which facilitate the peace and national reconciliation process of Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan (Maru & Fassi, 2015). Generally, the IGAD operates its mandate on the prevention, management, and resolution of inter- and intra-state conflicts, fundamentally through the means of political dialogue, a CEWARN, and in cooperation with the AU (Adetula et al., 2016).

3. The Partnership between the AU and IGAD

3.1. Conceptual and Theoretical Foundations

As regard the collaboration between the AU and RECs in maintaining peace and security, there have been divergent views. Some argue that RECs are in a better position to keep the security of their respective region and the AU has to play a subsidiary role (Healy 2011; Lucey, 2016). Others argue that, RECs have problems of impartiality, bias, logistics difficulties, vulnerability to domestic politics and lack of financial, technical and coercive resources; so, the AU has to play a primary role (De Sousa, 2013). For the purpose of this study, however, theories of hegemonic, neo-realism, neo-liberalism, constructivism, and the principle of subsidiarity have been discussed pertaining to the role of international, regional and sub-regional organizations and their cooperation in maintaining peace and security.

According to hegemonic theory, the stability of the international relations system and the relevance of their institutions is possible if a hegemonic state is able to enforce institutional norms and rules (De Sousa, 2013). A hegemon is a (politically, militarily and economically) powerful state that provides public goods that are in its interest and within its capacity to supply (Møller, 2009). So, according to this theory, to maintain the peace and security of the African Continent and the IGAD region in particular, the existence of a hegemonic state is crucial. Unfortunately, the AU as well as the IGAD has not distinguishable hegemonic state (Møller, 2009; De Sousa, 2013).

As neo-realists or structural realists argue, organizations are the product of state interests, thus, they cannot independently function, rather, it is state interests, which determine the decision whether states cooperate or compete (Byers and Sinclair, 2006; Meierhenrich, 2012). According to this theory the UN, AU, IAGD are international, regional and sub-regional organizations
through which states safeguard their interests. Arguing that they are formed on the basis of self-interest calculation, neo-realists reject the importance of these organizations in serving to achieve peace and security (Meierhenrich, 2012; Nathan, 2012). Further, neo-realists are pessimistic about the possibility of cooperation between the international, regional and sub-regional organizations as they believe that states highly care for their relative position.

Neo-liberals argue in favor of the significance of international, regional, and sub-regional organizations in promoting cooperation and stability. Neo-liberals assert these organizations are very crucial in regulating the behavior of state (Boehmer, Gartzke and Nordstrom, 2004; Burchill, 2005). This is vital for promoting cooperation among states and maintaining mutual benefit. Liberal institutionalists, though recognize the systemic anarchy, the importance of military power and the preeminence of states’ interests, argue that organizations or regimes are a framework for cooperation, which can help to address the risk of security competition between states and promote peace and stability (Reus-Smit, 2005; Byers and Sinclair, 2006). In supporting the neoliberals’ assumption of the positive role of international regional and sub-regional organizations, Nathan (2012) came up with concrete evidence. Taking into account the progress of regional organizations in the peace and security area, most importantly, through preventive diplomacy, post-conflict peace-building, arms control, and disarmament, Nathan argues that it will be irrational to argue that international organizations cannot bring peace. He substantiates his argument by explaining, inter alia, the role of AU in Kenyan civil violence and the mediation effort of IGAD in Sudan.

Constructivists argue in favour of international, regional and sub-regional organizations. They argue that these organizations have the role of not only regulating state behaviour but also modifying the identity and interest of states, which, in turn, directs states action (Mitchell, 2006). Above all, these organizations have the role of, inter alia, promoting democratization of member states and encouraging member states to pursue peaceful conflict management strategies (Mitchell, 2006). Constructivism is characterized by an emphasis on the importance of normative as well as material structures, on the role of identity in shaping political action and on the mutually constitutive relationship between agents and structures (Reus-Smit, 2005).

The principle of subsidiarity is founded on the idea that sustainable peace is possible if conflict resolution mechanisms are led by actors who are culturally, geopolitically and/or strategically close to the crisis in question (Follesdal, 2013). This principle stipulates that “regional and sub-regional organisations should be the first resort for problems transcending national borders, leaving the international community and global organisations like the UN to deal only with those problems
that cannot be solved at lower levels” (Møller, 2005, p. 4). The principle, favorers lower levels of political organization and decision making and requires that external actors take only supportive roles (Staden, 2016).

The principle of subsidiarity is considered to govern the AU-IGAD relation. Accordingly, the IGAD has to play a primary role in maintaining the peace and security of its region, and the AU has to deal with problems that cannot be solved at the IGAD level. The principle of subsidiarity is clearly recognized in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Area of Peace and Security signed by the AU, RECs and the RMs. Pursuant to Article 16 of the PSC Protocol of the AU, a MoU on cooperation in the area of peace and security was signed between the AU, RECs including IGAD and the two RMs in Algiers in June 2008 (Engel and Porto, 2014). The MoU purports to be a binding legal instrument, whose objectives include contributing to the full operationalization and effective functioning of APSA and fostering closer partnership and coordination in the maintenance of peace, security, and stability. It sets out a number of principles that include recognition of, and respect for, the primary responsibility of the AU in the maintenance of peace, security and stability; acknowledgement of the role and responsibilities of the RECs in their respective areas of jurisdiction; and adherence to the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage (MoU, 2008, Art.3 and Art.4(4)).

3.2. Achievements of the AU-IGAD Partnership

Since 1996, the IGAD together with the OAU and later the AU has successfully mediated numerous conflicts. It was involved in peace mediation and peace-building processes in Sudan, Somalia, and South Sudan.

After many years of protracted civil wars, Sudan and South Sudan came into agreement in January 2005. There have been two prolonged civil wars in Sudan since its independence in 1956 (LeRiche and Arnold, 2013). The first civil war, 1955-1972, was triggered by the long-standing economic exploitation and political marginalization of the southern people by the northerners, and the introduction of Arabisation and Islamisation policy towards the south (Omeje and Minde, 2015). The first civil war was concluded by the Addis Ababa Agreement signed in 1972 between the Southern Sudan Liberation (Anyanya) Movement and the government of Sudan, and a significant regional autonomy was granted to Southern Sudan (Mutanda, 2015). By abrogating the Addis Ababa peace agreement, the Sudan government imposed Islamic law over the whole country in 1983. This entangled Sudan in another brutal civil war that lasted for 22 years, 1983 to 2005.
Southerners, under the leadership of John Garang, sought self-determination under the direction of the party’s political and military wings called Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) (Mutanda, 2015). The IGAD has played a key role in facilitating the peace talks (2002-2005) between the Sudan-National Congress Party (NCP) and the SPLM/A. Finally, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed on 9 January 2005, in Nairobi, between the SPLM/A and Sudan’s NCP-led government (Omeje and Minde, 2015). The CPA provided for, among other things, the establishment of a national unity government with the head of the SPLM/A as a First Vice-President, the sharing of the oil wealth between the Khartoum Government and the SPLM on a 50-50 basis, the restriction of Sharia law to the north, a review of the boundary between the north and south, and holding a national election and a self-determination referendum for the south six years after the agreement (LeRiche and Arnold, 2013; Omeje and Minde, 2015). As agreed in the CPA, in 2011, Southern Sudanese voted in a referendum on the independence of their region and “98.8%” of voters opted for secession (Johnson, 2016, p. 15). IGAD played a decisive role in the peace process, “first in framing the problem as a North-South issue and second in maintaining a semblance of continuity for the peace process as a whole” (Healy, 2011, p. 111). Healy (2011) boldly recognized the role of IGAD in the peace process by stating “without IGAD's sustained involvement these would most likely have been lost” (p. 111).

Though South Sudan became an independent country, it has entangled in a brutal civil war since December 2013. Since the outbreak of the conflict, IGAD in collaboration with the AU and UN is playing a significant role to end the conflict. IGAD also deserves credit for ensuring a timely and quick diplomatic intervention to mediate the conflict.

The IGAD also played an active role in reconciliation efforts and in the formation of transitional government in Somalia. When Siad Barre was overthrown in 1991, fighting erupted and degenerated into conflict among multiple clan-based factions (Healy, 2011). After many years of peace talks among these factions in 2004, a Transitional Federal Government was established in Somalia. From an IGAD perspective, the end of the negotiation and the creation of a government of Somalia under a new transitional charter appeared to be another successful venture in mediation. Further, in 2006, IGAD proposed a peace-support mission to Somalia (IGASOM), to be charged with the tasks of protecting the Somali Transnational Federal Institutions and creating conducive environment for the political process (Williams & Hashi, 2016). The proposal was endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council and authorized by the UN Security Council. The UN Security Council authorized IGAD and member states of the AU to establish a protection and training mission in Somalia without an enforcement mandate for six months (Adetula et al., 2016).
However, the IGASOM was unable to deploy successfully mainly due to “lack of funding and challenges with the neutrality of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) given that most of the potential TCCs were Somalia’s immediate neighbors” (Nduwimana, 2013, p. 11). When the deployment of the IGASOM became unsuccessful, the IGAD requested an African Peacekeeping Mission for Somalia (De Sousa, 2013). In January 2007, the AU Peace and Security Council decided to set up the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), approved by the UN in February 2007 and deployed to Mogadishu in March 2007 (Healy, 2009).

Moreover, the IGAD with the collaboration of the AU, COMESA, and EAC observed the 2007 Kenyan elections with a view to ensure a violence-free election (Maru & Fassi, 2015). IGAD’s Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism have also maintained a pioneering and close working relationship with the AU’s Continental Early Warning System. Quarterly meetings are held to examine methodologies of early warning.

IGAD’s active role in peace and security processes in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Kenya has cemented relatively stronger relations between IGAD and the AU compared to some of the other RECs. The physical proximity of IGAD to the African Union Commission (AUC) and in particular “jointly collaborate on AMISOM and United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)” provides unique opportunities for increased high-level engagement and strengthened relations with the AU (Byiers, 2017, p. 9). According to most, IGAD has a very close and complementary relationship to the AU, and no other REC has easier access to the AU than IGAD (Maru & Fassi, 2015; Byiers, 2017). To facilitate the cooperation and collaboration between the AU and IGAD, the IGAD has established a liaison office at the AU, and the AU vice versa established a liaison office at the IGAD.

Generally speaking, the swift establishment of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AU-HIP), the rapid deployment of the AMISOM and the Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the sanctions on Eritrea, postponement of the release of the report of the AUC of inquiry on South Sudan – all these came about as a result of the close cooperation between IGAD and AU organs (Maru and Fassi, 2015). The ongoing IGAD-led mediation on South Sudan with seamless collaboration with the AU is also an excellent example of the application of the principle of subsidiarity and effective AU-RECs collaboration.
3.3. Challenges for the AU-IGAD Partnership

Though the AU-IGAD cooperation has the abovementioned success stories, it has faced several challenges. The main challenges include among others: financial and logistical hurdles, lack of comprehensive legal regime, overlapping of membership across different RECs, challenges related to coordination and cooperation, and political and structural barriers (Arthur, 2017; Byiers, 2017; Desmidt & Hauck, 2017).

3.3.1. Lack of Adequate Finance

The first challenge to realizing the AU-IGAD cooperation in the area of peace and security is lack of adequate finance and logistics, rendering them unable to address some of the region protracted civil conflicts like that in South Sudan and Somalia. Finding reliable sources of funding is an issue that dominates and continues to bedevil efforts by the AU and IGAD to realize their security goals and objectives. The AU and IGAD’s capacities for generating their own resources are generally weak. Since its establishment, the AU and IGAD relied on external funding for their peace and security activities (Byiers, 2017; Desmidt & Hauck, 2017). The European Union (EU) is one of the APSA’s main external funders and the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF) - the United States, United Kingdom, EU, Turkey, and United Arab Emirates are IGAD’s main external funders (Adetula et al., 2016; Desmidt & Hauck, 2017). For instances, “between 2008 and 2011, African states provided only 2% of the AU’s Peace Fund to cover various activities in the field of peace and security while the remaining 98% was contributed by international donors” (Vorrath, 2012, as cited in Arthur, 2017, p. 11). The overall dependency on international partners for the provision of funding raises basic questions about the sustainability, predictability, and flexibility of the systems being put in place and ultimately undermines the AU’s and IGAD’s legitimacy and leadership in their respective affairs. For instances, to address the problem of violent extremism, al-Shabaab, and to respond to a request from Abdullahi Yusuf, the president of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, in January 2005 the IGAD proposed the deployment of 10,500 strong Peace Support Mission in Somalia known as IGASOM (Williams & Hashi, 2016). However, the IGASOM proposal did not gain sufficient human, financial and logistical support either from the AU or IGAD member states. As a consequence, IGASOM did not deploy (Williams & Hashi, 2016). Furthermore, the AMISOM the successor to IGAD’s failed attempt to deploy IGASOM has faced several financial and logistical constraints.
In sum, with the IGAD’s and AU’s budget very much dependent on the support of their partners, not only does it weaken the reason d’être defeat of African solutions to African problems but also it means that the security priorities are hardly realized. Without reliable alternative sources of funding, Arthu (2017) argues that the neutrality and ability to maintain their operational capacity is severely weakened. This makes difficult for the AU or IGAD in their present form to be able to solve Africa’s security challenges in a profound manner.

3.3.2. Lack of Comprehensive Legal Regime

Though the AU-IGAD partnership governed by the Constitutive Act of the AU, the PSC Protocol, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Area of Peace and Security between the AU, RECs and the RMs, they are neither clear nor comprehensive (Maru & Fassi, 2015; Desmidt & Hauck, 2017). The PSC Protocol stresses the primary responsibility of the AU in promoting peace, security, and stability in Africa. The MoU on the other side stresses the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage in the AU-RECs relationships. However, the MoU does not define what is meant by either principle (Albuquerque, 2016). In addition, it should be noted that the RECs are not organs of the AU, but rather legally and financially autonomous and independent entities with their own treaties, and separate policymaking, operational, and implementation bodies and processes. For instances, the IGAD is an independent organ of the AU, its member states conclude and ratify treaties independently. Neither the AU nor its organs have direct peremptory authority or jurisdiction over the IGAD. This makes the relationship between the AU and IGAD to remain poorly conceptualized, fraught with tensions and on both sides prone to regressing to divisive blame games. The RECs fault the AU for treating them as subordinates, obliged to implement AU decisions without being proactively engaged (Maru & Fassi, 2015). Specifically, the IGAD has expressed frustration at the lack of open engagement, and even doubts about the value of investing its capacity in enhancing relations with the AU (Maru & Fassi, 2015). The AU, in turn, has criticized the RECs including the IGAD as disinterested, uncooperative, passive, and incapable of collaboration (Maru & Fassi, 2015). Moreover, the relationship between the AU and RECs/IGAD also raises critical questions regarding the division of labor for addressing violent conflicts remain unsolved; who does what, when, and how.

Maru and Fassi (2015) described the AU-RECs relationship as mono-directional with the AU inviting and the RECs attending. The RECs are invited to attend the meetings organized by the AU PSC; however, they are not allowed to take part in the deliberations and decision-making
process. The “AU seems to see itself as a decision-making and policymaking organ and the RECs as its implementers” (Maru and Fassi, 2015, p. 30).

3.3.3. Membership Overlap and Challenges Related to Coordination

The IGAD region is one of the most affected by overlapping constituencies of countries to regional organizations. For political, economic and strategic reasons many member states of IGAD belong to more than one REC. As provided in the figure below all member states of IGAD except Somalia and South Sudan are member states of COMESA and two member states of IGAD, Kenya and Uganda, are also member states of East African Community (EAC)\(^3\) (Byiers, 2017, p. 17). Further, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan are also member states of Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). Djibouti, Sudan, and Somalia are also members of the Arab League with Eritrea an observer, while Sudan, South-Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya are also members of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (Byiers, 2017).

Figure 1. The Spaghetti bowl of overlapping memberships in African RECs.

Source: Densua Mumford & Joel Ng (April 2017)

\(^3\) South Sudan and Somalia have applied to join the EAC.
The multiplicity of RECs and the concomitant multiple state memberships have created a complex patchwork that complicates decision making for states, for the IGAD, and for the Union. Moreover, the overlapping membership of competing groups and arrangements within the same sub-region not only increase administrative costs but also make it very difficult for member states to implement provisions that they sign on to and hinder greater integration (Arthur, 2017).

In sum, overlap membership counteracts the efficiency and effectiveness of the RECs/AU, creating overlapping jurisdictions among RECs, causing reluctance to fully engage in one regional process, and challenges the effectiveness of coordination and cooperation in the promotion of regional security (Brett, 2013; Desmidt & Hauck, 2017).

3.3.4. Political and Structural Barrier

The issue of national interest and state sovereignty is another challenge for the AU-IGAD relationship in the area of peace and security. In several occasions, member states attempted to direct IGAD activity in pursuit of their own interests, which in turn compromises the organization's capacity to maintain the neutrality, required of a regional mediation body (Healy, 2011). Healy (2009) concludes that member states may seek to use IGAD’s authority to legitimize their own policies. Adetula et al. (2016) also argue that “the IGAD peace and security framework is not only state-centric but also its processes are driven by the interests of Ethiopia, its largest contributor, and most influential member” (p. 34).

The IGAD is only strong and effective on issues that the leadership and governments of the member states allow it to be. Brett (2013) noted that the IGAD faced hurdles in operationalizing its peace and security mandates due to heavily centralized political decision-making structures and generally weak secretariat with limited freedom of action. Many have come to regard IGAD as a club of Heads of State and Government. This top-bottom approach has remained pervasive in IGAD, and it endows the Assembly absolute power over the citizens whose interests and needs should determine the course and direction of IGAD operations. Within this setting, there are limited opportunities for citizens’ participation in the various aspects of regional integration, including the promotion of peace and regional security.

The IGAD region also lacks a clearly distinguishable lead country capable, by virtue of its superior size and strength, to play the role of an unchallenged hegemon, as South Africa and Nigeria can in their respective regions (Healy, 2011). According to De Sousa (2013), “Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan are in competition for such hegemonic role” (p. 67). Further, the IGAD member states had
been extensively involved in each other's internal wars (Dersso, 2014; Sørbø, 2014). The “advancement of foreign policy through proxy forces in neighboring countries is part of the ‘normal’ pattern of state relations” in the IGAD region (Healy, 2011, p. 107). The states of the region took advantage of every local tension or conflict to support rebel movements in neighboring states. They sponsor subversive activities to destabilize and endanger the security of another state, in what some observers called the time-honored principle of ‘my enemy’s enemy is my friend’ extending throughout the IGAD region. This aggravated inter-state rivalries, mutual suspicion and the development of an eye-for-an-eye mentality (Weber, 2008 as cited in Brouk, 2011). All this made a grotesque image of the region. Generally, the issue of national interest, the existence of weak secretariat with limited freedom of action, and the rivalry nature of IGAD region member states has affected IGAD’s peace and security activities.

4. Conclusion

The path that led to the establishment of APSA is rooted in the origin of the AU. The failure of OAU to solve these escalating internal armed conflicts due to its principles of non-intervention and respect for sovereignty of states resulted in the establishment of the AU. As a result, the Constitutive Act gave the AU the right to intervene in a member state in grave circumstances. Following this, the AU has launched various organs intended to ensure enforcement and oversight of AU decisions. The most important decision in this regard was the establishment of the APSA frameworks, which focused on conflict prevention, resolution, management and post-conflict reconstruction. The APSA is anchored upon a number of building blocks which include: its five pillars (PSC, PoW, CEWS, ASF and Peace Fund), the eight RECs and the two RMs.

IGAD is one of the RECs recognized by the AU as its building blocks. The IGAD in collaboration with the AU has played a crucial role in solving and mediating the political and security problems of Sudan, Somalia and South Sudan. However, the collaboration of the AU and IGAD in the area of peace and security continues to take place in a complex institutional environment. The collaboration is inhibited by lack of adequate financial resources, contested and unclear normative frameworks, the proliferation of RECs and problems associated with overlapping membership across different RECs, recurring instability of the region, lack of civil society participation, and the self-interest of member states together with the absence of greater harmonization. These all are making harder for the peace and security architecture of the AU and IGAD to achieve its goals and objectives.
5. The Way Forward

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, the AU-IGAD relationship in the area of peace and security efforts to be more effective, it should consider the following issues:

- The AU and the IGAD have to promote the principle of self-reliance. They have to seriously consider and adopted different financing packages to wean themselves from external financing by rising from within the continent and the sub-region to finance their peace and security projects and operations. The AU member states should provide the financial means to run the APSA by paying their annual contributions based on the logic that “investment in the maintenance of peace and security in the continent amounts to buying security for their efforts on development and better life for their citizens” (Getachew, 2008, as cited in Beza, 2015, p. 456). Further, the AU has to implement the 0.2% levy imposed on selected imports to finance its activities. The IGAD has to take a lesson from the ECOWAS that put in place its own resource mobilization strategy, Community Levy, from its Members.

- The legal regimes that govern the AU-RECs/IGAD relationships specifically the principles of subsidiary, complementarity and comparative advantage have to be appropriately defined. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities among the AU member states, between the AU and the RECs/IGAD have to be absolutely clear. This will at least minimize tension, competition and sometimes division and sectional conspiracy (Momodu, 2016). An immediate step should be the adoption of a single AU legal text, which will clearly state the division of roles and responsibilities among the AU member states, between the AU and RECs and will cover all aspects of the regional and continental relationship in the area of peace and security. The new framework should recognize RECs as part of AU decision-making structures. Besides to this, the IGAD has to put in place its own robust peace and security architecture.

- The AU, in particular the IGAD member states have to surrender some degree of their sovereignty to the continental or regional organization either by agreeing to be bound by regional rules and decisions or by giving an institutional secretariat some independent authority. The AU and IGAD are considered as the club of Heads of State and Government, therefore, they have to transform from intergovernmental bodies into supranational organizations with an autonomy decision making power. Specifically, the IGAD has to be reformed to make it a body which can promote trust among its member states so that its
intervention to resolve conflicts in the region is not seen as an initiative disguised to serve the interest of some actors at the expense of others.

The AU and the RECs including the IGAD have to work to reduce the problem of membership overlapping. The number of RECs in the East and Horn of Africa should be reduced, rationalized and harmonized, because currently there is overlap and duplication amongst RECs, and resulting in a waste of resources and dispersed impact.

Beyond opening liaison offices, the AU and IGAD have to establish a common governance management structure, such as AU-IGAD board or council. This would be perhaps the most radical and potentially the most pragmatic and effective way to fast-track the AU-IGAD relationship in the area of peace and security. Furthermore, the AU and IGAD have to harmonize and streamline statutory meetings at expert, ministerial, and heads of state levels. This opens a room for cross-participation and engagement of the AU and IGAD in each other’s policy and decision-making processes and promoting joint funding and ownership of the regional and continental peace and security agendas.

Lastly, to avoid excessive dependence on political authorities and to make the AU and IGAD peoples’ organizations, they have to promote and encourage the involvement and participation of civil societies and citizens in their respective peace and security initiatives and activities.

References


