Supporting African Peace Operations

The Nordic Africa Institute, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Norwegian Institute for International Affairs hosted a seminar in Uppsala, Sweden, on 15 and 16 December 2011, that brought together AU, EU and UN officials closely involved in peace operations in Africa. The seminar’s purpose was to allow participants to compare their experiences of the different support models that have been used to date in Sudan and Somalia. International support for African peace operations provides opportunities but also poses challenges.

This report examines four of these challenges in some detail: the AU Commission’s limited capacity to plan and manage peace operations; insufficient political engagement by African member states with AU peace operations; the short-termism and self-interest of some of the AU’s partners; and the need for UN Security Council permanent members to value and ensure a shared AU-UN strategic vision. The report also includes policy recommendations for resolving these challenges.

'I welcome this succinct and highly interesting report which provides a necessary discussion of the dynamics around the international support for African peace operations. I warmly recommend the report to anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the issues and challenges involved in contemporary AU-UN support arrangements. Indeed, as I have noted at the Summit of the AU, July 15, 2012 “I am confident that if we come together, the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations will be stronger and more effective.”

Jan Eliasson, UN Deputy Secretary-General

‘A significant valuable contribution to the emerging body of knowledge on African peace operations, and specifically on the important issue of finding appropriate means to effectively support African peace operations, particularly those undertaken under a UN Security Council mandate.’

Dr. Monica Juma, Ambassador of Kenya to the African Union

POLICY DIALOGUE NO. 8
THE NORDIC AFRICA INSTITUTE

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ISBN 978-91-7106-723-4

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