FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STRATEGIC THEORY

"The African Standby Force: Beyond 2015,

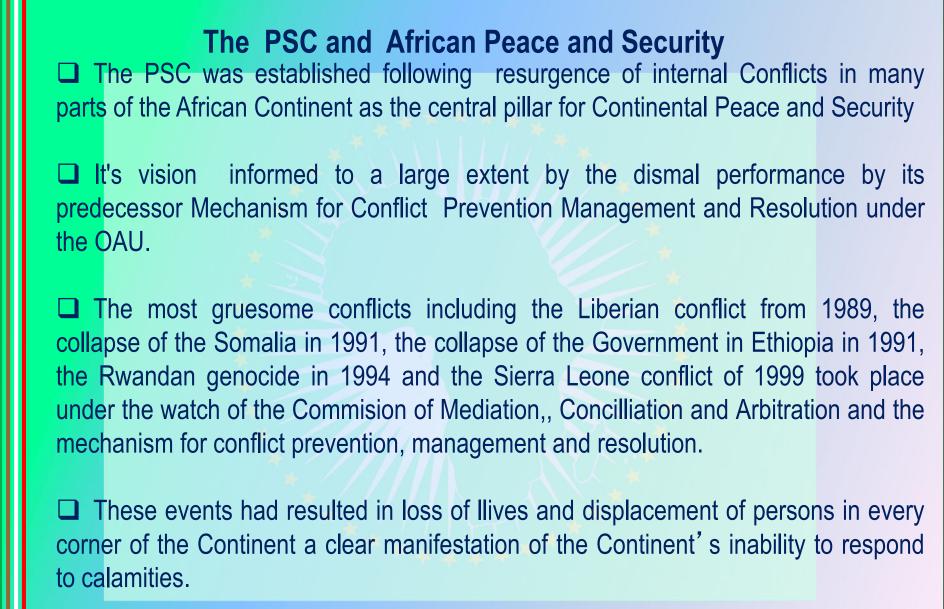
Stellenbosch, South Africa 16-18 Sep 15

The PSC of the African Union:

Declaratory Optimism and Operational decline?

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The PSC and African Peace and Security

The PSC unlike the CPMR is provided with soft and hard power tools to conduct its functions of prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

These tools include the Commission, the Military Staff Committee, the Continental Early Warning System, and the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force and the Peace Fund.

The operational effectiveness of the AU PSC demands that each of these tools deliver on their respective mandates

PSC Structural Dimensions and Operational Efficiency

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- The PSC was established as a collective security arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflicts and crisis situations.
- The PSC Protocol seeks to establish an operational structure for effective implementation of the decisions taken in the areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking peace support operations and intervention as well as peace building and post conflict reconstruction
- It is composed of <u>member states based</u> on the principle of "<u>equitable regional</u> representation and national rotation" and operates at the level of permanent representatives, council of ministers and the Assembly

PSC Structural Dimensions and Operational Efficiency

- Unlike the UNSC whose members are fully assigned, the AU PSC permanent representatives have dual responsibilities to the AU and respective embassies.
- Consequently due to multiplicity of crises in the continent, the PSC is compelled to meet more often, overstretching and an already burdened structure.
- The PSC is provided a Secretariat established under article 10 (4) of the PSC Protocol and whose mandate is to facilitate the functioning of the PSC.
- ☐ The Secretariat and the PSD as a whole faces serious staffing constraints



Decision – Making and Operational Effectiveness

The PSC's effectiveness in decision-making is also influenced by the political dynamics and interest of the fifteen member States

PSC relies heavenly on the support and leadership from the commission delegated to the Commissioner for Peace and Security

Decision – Making and Operational Effectiveness Cont'd...

AU peace support operations are predominantly military demanding critical input into PSC decision making cycle.

The Military Staff Committee established under Article 13 (8) was intended to provide this input.

Consequently decisions on employment of military forces in complex peace operations lack sufficient input impacting on operational effectiveness.

Decision – Making and Operational Effectiveness Cont'd...

- Mandate resuource mismatch
- Over reliance on external fsupport compromising the independence of decision-making constraining freedom of action
- To address the funding challenge, the AU Member States agreed to increase their annual contributions to the Peace Fund from 6% to 12 % of the AU regular budget.
- The Peace Fund contributions as currently structured will never be adequate to fund an AU Peace Mission.



Reluctance to authorize humanitarian intervention

The reasons of the reluctance to invoke Article 4 (h) is that there still remains residual power of the principle of non interference

The will by most African states to engage in high intensity operations associated with humanitarian intervention.

Decision – Making and Operational Effectiveness Cont'd...

The lack of focus on addressing conflict prevention and structural issues

Limited attention on the threat of terrorism, transnational crimes including piracy and drug trafficking, diseases and environmental degradation.

Improving Operational Coherence with Regional Security Mechanisms

- Operational effectiveness of the PSC is linked to the lack of operational coherence with regional security mechanisms
- In view of this, there has been tensions and at times competition between the institutions in regard to responses to crises and on the question of which institution should take the lead
- A significant development is the formation of the Joint Task Force on Strengthening the Relations between AU, RECs/RMs in the area of Peace and security.
- The creation of AU Liaison Offices in the RECs/RMs and of RECs/RMs Liaison Offices in the AU is a step in the right direction towards the creation of

Strengthening AU PSC Through UNSC

☐ The cooperation between the AU PSC and the UNSC on matters peace and security is critical not least because the UNSC has sole mandate of the maintenance of peace and security ☐ There have been differences in the past between the two institutions in relation to response to crises with AU PSC having divergent positions especially as regards Libya. ☐ The recent initiative to establish a Joint UN-AU Framework for enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security reflects significant shift towards a strategic partnership informed by comparative strengths of both organizations ☐ This Framework takes a holistic and practical approach ensuring there is collaboration throughout the conflict cycle from conflict analysis, early warning, conflict prevention, management and peace building and post conflict reconstruction.

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Sustainability of PSC Authorized Operations

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Over its ten years of existence the PSC has held over 300 meetings and issued as many communiqués targeted on conflicts and crisis in Africa.

In particular the PSC has pronounced itself on conflicts in Burundi Central Africa Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote de Ivoire', DRC, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo and Zimbabwe etc.

Sustainability of PSC Authorized Operations

The Council has also intervened by authorizing sanctions mainly related to unconstitutional changes in government.

- The successful interventions on the overall have been overshadowed by the magnitude and complexity of crises and conflicts
- These actions certainly do not indicate that the AU PSC as an institution is in operational decline, but it does highlight the willingness of the PSC to authorize robust action.

General Conclusions

The AU PSC depends on member states resources and its success or failure will always be dependent on the mobilization of adequate political capital of all member states to commit to proactive interventions in conflict situations.

☐ A case for re-evaluation of the PSC structures, decision-making processes and sustainability strategies

☐ The Strenghening of strategic partnership with the UN in the the sphere of conflict management.

