Continental and Regional Responses to Hybrid Threats

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Continental Regional Responses to Hybrid Threats

<u>**Summary:**</u> Intra-state conflicts with **regional dimensions –**
    "spill over" and transboundary effect

•*Part 1: Conceptual Issues* – **Hybrid Threats and Regional Conflict Systems**
• **Limits of State Formation**
• **Three Pillars of Regional Responses –**
•Leader-to-Leader/government-to-government/people-to-people

• *Part 2: Illustrations - Multiple Dimensions of Africa's Threats*
• **Tigray crisis of Ethiopia – national and regional – Eritrea/Sudan; GBV; food;**
•**Great Lakes region -** *Eastern DRC* armed militia – Burundi crisis; Rwanda *genocide – **regionalized conflict**;*
• **Horn of Africa – Violent Extremism** Al Shabaab; Boko Haram; ISIS-affiliated
• **South Sudan** – *a regional crisis*; **Karamoja Cluster -** Northern Uganda Lord's Resistance Army; Sahel: Mali - Ansar Dine / AQIM;
• Forgotten regionalized conflicts – Cabinda; Caprivi; Casamance; Lake Chad Basin

Part 3: *Analysis and Normative Proposals*

- Framing the case for **continental and regional reSponses**

- Illustrations of Cross-border responses

- The AU's *Infrastructure for regional responses*

- Regional Responses as a precursor to *Regional Integration*

- The **constraints and limitations** on regional responses

- **Strategies for Implementing Regional Responses**

- ***Regionalisation of State-Armed Militia Conflict:*** violent conflict between government forces and armed militia groups

- taking on **Regional configurations** in terms of the sourcing and execution. For example, in Central African Republic (CAR); Cameroon; Tigray region, Ethiopia;

- ***Violent Extremist and Ideological Conflict:*** politicization of religious ideology to spread terror …
- Somalia; Cabo Del Gado region, Mozambique; Burkina Faso; Mali; Niger; Cameroon; Libya;

- ***Transnational and International Dimensions:*** Geo-strategic interests and pipelines for transnational crime – **cyber-warfare**, human trafficking, illicit trade; - undermining state actors to manage and resolve their internal tensions and conflicts on the continent;

- ***Contested Regime Transitions and Constitutional Tension****:*
- lack of respect for constitutional provisions continues to pose a **threat** to the peace and stability of countries. For example, in Tunisia;

- ***Inter-Communal Rivalry:*** The contestation for access to land and the resources to live is a key factor in fuelling inter-communal violence. For example, in South Sudan;

- ***Socio-Economic Unrest, Ethnic Tension and Xenophobia:*** The legacy of socio-economic deprivation - increase in social unrest, \
- ethnic and xenophobic dimensions - For example, in South Africa;
- **Infectious diseases:** such as **Covid-19** and Ebola which continue to ravage communities across the continent – *amplifies and multiplies threats*;

- **Cross-cutting continental and regional challenges**

- Gender discrimination; youth exclusion; inequality;

- Environmental destruction; forced migration and

- Human trafficking; illicit trade in narcotics and national resources; money laundering and illegal financial flows;

Regional Conflict Systems and Hybrid Threats

IR - regionalism "in terms of patterns and networks of interdependence" – illicit trade weapons, drugs, human trafficking;

• **half of violent conflicts in Africa** can be linked to conflicts in neighbouring states –

• Conflicts do not stop at the border, but in fact
   spill over – cascading and ripple effects

• Spill over effect of **Rwandan genocide** – an exacerbating
   factor to the conflicts in the eastern DRC

• Lords Resistance Army (LRA) - regionalized the conflict, spill
   Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan

• regional conflict systems are *notoriously difficult to stabilize*

• The challenge of **regional conflict systems** - how do we address cross-
   border violations and the need for redress?

• lack of precedents in of Africa – need for effective and sustainable continental and regional responses to hybrid threats;

Case Studies: Tigray Crisis in Ethiopia and Threat Multiplication

- **November 2020 –** Ethiopian government "policing action" Tigray
- *To suppress – secession attempts by Tigray regional government;*
- *Resurgence of Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) – former government;*
- *Spread to Afar, Amhara and Oromo regions …*
- **Eritrea dimension** – atrocities committed in Ethiopia;
- **Spill-over effects of refugees** into Sudan and border tensions;
- Food insecurity – *weaponization of food delivery ?*
- *Gender-based violence – mass atrocities;*

- Challenges in operationalising effective continental and regional interventions
- Stalled international and continental efforts;

Case Studies: The Great Lakes Region of Africa
Fledgling Regional Peace Initiatives – Securing

- **UN Force Intervention Brigade** (FIB) – South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi
- *UN-brokered Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC -* end **decades of conflict** Great Lakes

Flawed in looking at the DRC as the *'problem-child'*
- does not sufficiently acknowledge cross-border nature
of the violations – between the three countries

- Incomplete - **UN Independent investigation on Burundi (UNIIB**
'alarm about the potential threat to peace and security in the Gr
- Failure to re-think peace and security intervention leads to an incomplete framework for intervention
- leader-to-leader regional reconciliation framework
- **Paul Kagame, Evariste Ndayishimiye, Felix Tshisekedi, Yoweri Museveni and Samia Saluhu** - common political dialogue - a first step towards operationalizing a framework and process of regional reconciliation.

Case Studies: The Extremism Challenge in the Horn of Africa – Regional Dimensions of Somali Conflict

- **1991 -** fragmented Somalia's sovereign structure
- neighbouring countries intervened ostensibly to address their own *self-defined national interests*
- UN, AMISOM – Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, historically Ethiopia/Islamic Courts Union
- 21 September 2013 – Westgate Mall attack
- 2 April 2015 – Garissa, 147 massacred
- 15 January 2019 – Nairobi DusitD2 Attack

- A need **cross-border reconciliation** between Kenya and Somalia to contain the *Triumph of extremist ideology*
- promoting reconciliation in Somalia and **linking** this to reconciliation processes in Kenya
- Kenya has a sizeable Kenyan citizens of Somali heritage
- Ultimately a more effective/sustainable approach to reducing the war and strife generated by the Somali conflict system
- Leader-to-Leader and **people-to-people regional reconciliation**

Case Studies: The 2013 South Sudan Crisis: A Regional Conflict

• 2013, 2015 - plunged young country into a **debilitating and brutal conflict** with **regional dimensions**
• drew in **Museveni's Uganda**, which deployed troops into South Sudan to shore up the incumbent **Kirr's government**
• **Machar** in turn received diplomatic, political and military support from the government of **Hamdok's Sudan**
• **Ethiopia and Kenya** – with political and economic interests in South Sudan crisis – regional consequences
• ability of South Sudan government to implement Peace Agreement will be contingent on **leader-to-leader regional reconciliation processes**
• *regional political dialogues* between **Kirr, Machar, Museveni, Hamdok Abdallah, Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia and Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya**

Examples of People-to-People Regional Reconciliation

• Karamoja Cluster Project works across - Kenyan and Ugandan borders to promote people-to-people regional reconciliation and peacebuilding;
• establishment of people-to-people dialogue platforms; **former enemies can come together;**

Insights from Regional Security Initiatives
• Military and intelligence sectors are also struggling to introduce a *regional security and intelligence* approach to respond to threats;

• **African Standby Force (ASF)** – 2021 operationalization in Mozambique?

• *Regional coordination is a necessity not a luxury*
• **Adopting a** regional reconciliation requires **a more innovative approach;**

Contextualizing Regional Reconciliation

• *Key argument – addressing Africa's hybrid threats through* peace and security in Africa cannot be sustained *without* effective regional reconciliation processes – What is reconciliation?

• contested - multi-disciplinary and multi-level in nature

• reconciliation - *address deep divisions within societies violations - actors, communities, state, other states*

• United Nations (UN) definition of peacebuilding

• *The Principles of Reconciliation -* **truth** recovery; **justice** – retributive/restorative; **Reparation**/redress; restoration of **human dignity**; re-establishment of **human relationships**

• *The Processes of Reconciliation -* **future-oriented process** although remedying violations of the **past -** formation of equal, inclusive and fair societies

• multiple levels including the **interpersonal**, **communal**, and **national**

• *truth commissions; judicial/cultural institutions for redress; institutional reform; gender reconciliation –* **combination of these – transitional justice process**

Contextualizing Regional Reconciliation

- recognising *interdependence;* engage in genuine *dialogue;*
- embrace an *inclusive and democratic attitude;* address the legacies of *socio-economic exploitation and injustices*, including gender-based violence

Regional level reconciliation would include:

• war-affected states and communities in close proximity to each other - recognizing **regional interdependence**

•engaging in **genuine regional dialogue**

• embracing inclusive regional political dialogue

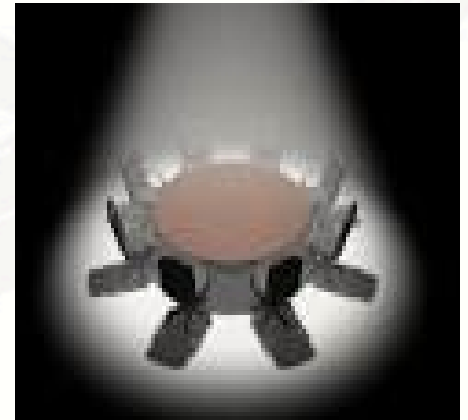• **redress** legacies of socio-economic exploitation – **regional economic development**

Regional Reconciliation as a precursor to Regional Integration and effective responses to hybrid threats
• *Durable and sustainable regional integration* cannot proceed without efforts to engage with the historical injustices
• particularly if violations were originated or perpetuated **across borders, with multiple origins and dimensions;**
• Regional integration has been framed as an economic and top-down political terms
• *Necessary to reverse this perception – grassroots and* **people-to-people** *regional reconciliation can have a* **cascading effect** *on promoting regional integration from the ground up.*

The Three Pillars of Regional Reconciliation
- Levels of engagement to be operationalised for cross-border redress deep divisions

- Regional reconciliation requires **three pillars** in order to become **functional and integrated between different levels**, namely:

- 1) **Leader-to-leade**r dialogue and problem-solving;

- 2) **Government-to-government** joint policy development and implementation;

- 3) **People-to-people** professional, academic, social, entrepreneurial exchange

Part 3: ***Analysis and Normative Proposals***
Framing the case for regional reconciliation
• Reality of **cross-border violations** and the need for **cross-border**
   redress
• applying a regional lens to reconciliation
• how can reconciliation also take place across borders

Gender and Regional Reconciliation

• gender dimension to the issue of cross-border redress
• perpetrators or gender-based violations cross the border
   to seek **sanctuary** in neighbouring countries and ungoverned spaces...

Trauma and Psycho-Social Support for Regional Reconciliation
Processes
• **victims** who may have **crossed borders** and lost family members in the
cause of a displacement would need trauma support
• trauma support groups across borders. *A challenge!*

Infrastructure for Regional Reconciliation

• Regional institutions are necessary to oversee regional or cross-border reconciliation processes

• **Formal Regional Reconciliation Processes and Mechanisms**
• **Informal Regional Reconciliation Processes and Mechanisms**

• Great Lakes Regional Reconciliation Commission
• Horn of Africa Regional Reconciliation Commission
• Southern Africa Regional Reconciliation Commission
AU, SADC, IGAD, ECOWAS, ICGLR, EAC, COMESA

• **African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC);**
• African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)
• **Panel of the Wise; CEWS; MSC**

Infrastructure for Regional Reconciliation

• Civil society organization's nevertheless pursue cross-border regional reconciliation initiatives to mitigate against effect of threats;

Functions of the Infrastructure for Regional Reconciliation

• monitoring and evaluating the impact of their interventions, governments, inter-governmental and civil so
• media and outreach

• *Capacitating Regional Reconciliation Mechanisms*

Constraints and Limitations on Regional Reconciliation
- Border restrictions and perpetrators evading justice by hiding in other countries – impunity to perpetuate threats;

- In terms of policy we should not fall into a trap of not seeing the bigger picture

- **It is necessary to pursue Pan-African policy coherence in terms of continental and regional responses to threats –** *which remains the elusive dimension of peace and security in Africa*

Strategies for Implementing Regional Reconciliation
- Implementing "reconciliation" across borders still remains **uncharted territory for states and inter-governmental organizations**
- an absence of shared thinking – which has to be promoted and inculcated

- **African governments** need to adopt people-to-people and government-to-government regional reconciliation pro... *strategic objective* of their **foreign policy**

- February 2019 **- African Union Transitional Justice Policy has officially adopted by Heads of State and Government -** *which provides a framework to pursue the implementation of continental and regional responses to hybrid threats*
- There are *real consequences* for a failure to effectively operationalize regional reconciliation as a framework for addressing hybrid threats - geo-political instability; political tension; armed militia formation **- END -**

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