IPSS & Amani Africa Virtual Briefing Session
How would COVID19 affect peace and security in Africa?
Thursday 21 May 2020

Background

Apart from the public health and the economic impacts of the novel coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic, an issue that has become a major area of concern is the peace and security consequences. How far COVID19 would go in worsening already difficult conflict situations, unraveling peace and transitional processes and pushing fragile systems into the brink has become an increasing concern on our continent.

COVID19 has posed grave threat to the health and life of people around the world. This has necessitated the adoption of various measures deemed necessary for shielding people from COVID19 both globally and here on the African continent. COVID19 has upended the social, economic and institutional systems of the entire world in dramatic ways.

The necessary but crippling public health measures that countries around the world adopted have led to the disruption of the world economy, the global supply chain and indeed the lives of people and the national economies of all countries affected by the virus. The predictions and analysis, such as the one announced by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, about the fate of Africa and the economies of the countries of the continent is dire.

The combination of the public health measures that many countries across the continent adopted and significantly the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic is feared to have very negative consequences to peace and security in Africa. Secretary-General of the UN has rung the alarm bell warning the world about the serious consequences of COVID19 to international peace and security. The Peace and Security Council of the AU held a VTC session on the peace and security impact of COVID19 at its 918 meeting, and affirmed that ‘COVID-19 constitutes an existential serious threat to international peace and security’. In an op ed published on the website of the AU Peace and Security Department, Commissioner for Peace and Security Ambassador Smail Chergui also highlighted that COVID19 ‘poses multitudes of challenges to our peace and security landscape’.

Institute for Peace and Security Studies and Amani Africa are pleased to organize a webinar that aims to discuss not only the gravity of the peace and security consequences of COVID19 but also the various ways it impacts on existing conflicts, post-conflict processes, political transitions.

Beyond and above identifying the various ways COVID19 affects peace and security, our webinar seeks to go further and address the following questions:

● How would different country and regional situations be affected by COVID19?
● Which conflict situations and which countries should be monitored closely and why?
• What is the impact of COVID19 the African Peace and Security Architecture? How should APSA should respond? How would COVID19 affect the AU reform process?
• How should we prepare and respond to the peace and security challenges arising from COVID19?
• What are the sources of resilience in a time of COVID19 that have the best chance of enabling societies cope with and wither the insecurity that COVID19 triggers? How should AU, RECs/RMS & other peace and security actors including the UN tap into and support such sources of resilience?