IPSS Virtual Briefing Session
CSOs in Peace and Security Agenda of Africa
26 February 2021
Concept Note

Introduction

IPSS has organized a briefing session on the theme *CSOs in Peace and Security Agenda of Africa* with the support of GIZ. This concept note is developed to guide this briefing session.

Background

Ever since the late 1980s, CSOs have emerged as key players in the effort to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflicts in Africa. The pressure from the public witnessed on the continent occurring along with and partly in response to changes happening in other parts of the world subsequent to the end of Cold War leading to a significant opening up of the political space in many parts of the continent played a major role in this aspect. The AU's foundational documents, especially the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2001), the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (2002) and the Statutes of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), provide ample space for the meaningful participation by African civil society organizations in promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. For instance, the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council and the associated rules of procedure of the PSC envisage a greater role of African civil society in supplementing its capacity in the field of conflict prevention. The Constitutive Act of the African Union (2001) argues for the participation of the African peoples in the activities of the Union and stresses on the importance of building a partnership between governments and all sectors of civil society and cultivate the culture of participation of the African peoples in the activities of the Union. The Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (2002) under article 20 also states that the Peace and Security Council should encourage all sectors of civil society organizations especially women's organizations, to take active roles in initiatives that are directed towards promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. It further states that such organizations may also be invited to address the Peace and Security Council when required.

With this background the virtual briefing session will avail platform to address the following objectives:

- unfold the journey of CSOs in structural prevention, conflict resolution and maintenance of peace processes in Africa;

-acknowledge achievements and recognise challenges faced by CSOs in conflict prevention, management and post conflict reconstruction processes in Africa,

-Practical and operable recommendations to overcome the challenges and facilitate ways CSOs can carry out their role.