



APSA's Strategic Partnerships for Peace beyond Funding

Thursday, 16 February 2023

Hybrid: In-person Venue: (Hyatt Regency), Virtual: Zoom

Concept Note

Introduction

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) and the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) will convene a seminar on Thursday 16 February 2023 at the sideline of the African Union (AU) Assembly. The theme of the seminar is "APSA's Strategic Partnerships for Peace Beyond Funding". The workshop will bring together representatives from the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms (RMs), the United Nations (UN), and International partners for peace.

Context

In recent years, Covid-19 stressors and food crises, along with democratic subversions and poor social cohesion have complicated security contexts across the globe including Africa. This is evident in the rise in popular protests resulting in unconstitutional changes in government, secessionist movements, violent extremism, and natural resource conflicts. Nevertheless, shifting global power positioning highlights Africa's strategic role in shaping and coordinating both global and regional peace discourse.

Over the last two decades, the African Union (AU) and sub-regional organizations have managed complex international relations to bolster African agency, especially in peace and security. African agency in the context of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has led to a significant rise in external partnerships to deepen African-led responses. Beyond funding, however, there is a limited discourse on the role of external partners in deepening and complementing African responses to conflicts.

This seminar provides a platform for expert discussion on how to further enhance and streamline partnerships between external actors and APSA institutions toward promoting sustainable peace on the continent. The seminar will explore key themes such as mediation and leverage in peace-making initiatives; the future of peace operation landscape; and programmatic goals for enhanced partnership for peace in Africa. The seminar provides a platform to further streamline regional and international initiatives for peace in Africa while exploring ways to navigate the conflicting and competing approaches.

The seminar aims to explore pathways to strengthen APSA partnership for peace beyond financing. The key themes of the seminar include the following:

- **Parallel and joint mediation and peacemaking:**
 - How have parallel peacemaking and diplomacy contributed to ending conflicts in Africa?
 - What are the key lessons for joint mediation by APSA institutions, and external partners in crisis contexts in Africa i.g Sudan, and Ethiopia?
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- **Maximizing Regional and International Leverage in peace-making**
 - How can APSA institutions and external actors leverage socio-political and economic leverage to prevent conflicts and foster peace?
 - What forms of leverage can regional and international actors leverage to get conflicting parties to the negotiation table?
 - What are the opportunities for coordinated leverage for effective peacemaking and peacebuilding?
- **Future of peace operation landscape in Africa:**
 - **What is the evolving role of** APSA institutions, the United Nations and international partners in peace operations on the continent?
 - How best can APSA institutions work with external actors to improve peace operations and its dividend on the ground?
 - What are the best practices for external support to African peace support operations?
- **Key Programmatic and Operational Goals to Strengthen APSA and AGA Implementation**
 - What programmatic partnerships are needed to enhance African response to crises?
 - What AGA programs and interventions must be strengthened for effective regional response to challenging governance and political transitions?

Event Format

- The virtual workshop will be a half-day (02:00 hours) seminar on Thursday, 16 February 2023 from 10.00 a.m.-12.00 p.m.