

Research Report

Security Council



The issue of evaluation and recommitment regarding cooperation between the United Nations, regional and sub-regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security — Silencing the guns in Africa by 2020

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Introduction

An agreement based upon international peace and security can be made when a majority of the countries is in favour. However, the fact that a country agreed, for instance, five years ago, does not mean that the delegation is still in favour in the present moment. Other factors might have changed too, making the agreement seem irrelevant, or incomplete. Therefore, it is important that countries evaluate and recommit to the cooperation and agreements made between the United Nations, regional or sub-regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security.

In particular, the silencing of the guns in Africa by 2020 will be taken into consideration. Pretending that this campaign does not exist already, what would the countries think about the silencing of the guns in Africa, and how would the delegations make this happen?

The Committee

You will be a delegate in the Security Council, the most important body of the United Nations. In this committee the most important issues of the modern age are discussed. Because the Security Council is so important, you will be debating in pairs, so every country is represented by two delegates. Furthermore, the five most important countries (the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Russia, France and China) have VETO rights, which they can use to prevent an amendment or resolution from passing. Also, the Security Council is the only committee where member states can declare war on each other. If this happens staff members have to inform all the other MUNA committees of the conflict.

The Security Council is an ad-hoc committee, which means that you do not have to write your resolution beforehand. You will write a resolution from scratch with your fellow delegates by sending in amendments.

Keywords

AU = African Union, a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent

APSA = Africa Peace and Security Architecture

Assembly = a group of people, especially one that meets regularly for a particular purpose, such as government, or, more generally, the process of coming together, or the state of being together

Evaluation = the process of judging or calculating the quality, importance, amount, or value of something

Gun = a weapon that bullets or shells (= explosive containers) are fired from

Recommitment = a renewal of a commitment, or an act of recommitting (Commitment = a promise or firm decision to do something)

Overview

Between 2011 and 2013, 22 of the 54 African countries celebrated their 50th anniversaries of independence from colonial rule. In 2013, the African Union celebrated its 50th anniversary as the pre-eminent African intergovernmental organisation. Commemorations AU's golden jubilee saw the adoption, by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration on 25 May. This pronouncement articulated African leaders' "determination to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa, to make peace a reality for all our people and to rid the continent of wars, civil conflicts, human rights violations, humanitarian disasters and violent conflicts, and to prevent genocide" (African Union 2013).

In global relations, the stigma of a 'continent at war with itself' had long been attached to Africa (Francis 2006). Admittedly, the continent has hosted, and continues to be home to, a number of deadly conflicts that endangered human, national and international security and defy efforts to resolve them. This quagmire, as well as other concerns, prompted the AU Assembly to take steps to stop the persistent fights and address cases of relapse into violence in some parts of Africa. Thus, in the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, African leaders resolved "not to bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans and undertake to end all wars in Africa by 2020" (African Union 2013).

In adopting the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, African heads of state and government agreed on the tenets of a strategic framework of socio-economic transformation for Africa over the next 50 years. This outline, referred to as Agenda 2063, builds on and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing national, regional and continental initiatives to ensure growth and sustainable development. At the heart of Agenda 2063 is the aspiration for a peaceful and secure Africa. To this end, the framework specifically targets the year 2020 as the deadline by which all guns will be silent in Africa. It also envisages that there will be functional mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicts at all levels to nurture a culture of peace and tolerance among the peoples of Africa. Vision 2020 is, therefore, part of a broader framework postulated by the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the African Union.

From 21 to 23 October 2014, the African Union (AU), in collaboration with the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, hosted the Fifth High-Level Retreat on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa. Held in Arusha, Tanzania, and supported by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and Institute for Security Studies (ISS), the retreat brought together a range of senior representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC), including the commissioner for peace and security and special envoys, special representatives and distinguished mediators. Also in attendance were members of the African Union Panel of the Wise (AU PW) and Friends of the Panel of the Wise, senior representatives of the continent's regional economic communities (RECs) and regional mechanisms (RMs), as well as eminent officials from the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), League of Arab States, and civil society organisations.

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Convened under the theme 'Silencing the guns – owning the future', the objective of the retreat was to provide a platform for delegates to take stock of the paradox that Africa is in terms of unprecedented levels of economic growth on one hand, and rising instability and insecurity in a number of particularly concerning regions and member states on the other. Recognising this, and building on references to Agenda 2063 and the AU's 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration (2013) vision of ending all wars in Africa by 2020 and 'silencing the guns' (also known as Vision 2020), the retreat further sought to provide a platform for collective multi-stakeholder deliberations on existing and emerging peace and security threats to the continent, and the responses required to address these and achieve a war-free continent by 2020.

Arguments

There have been some recommendations regarding the Silencing of the Guns by 2020 campaign. These could be used to come up with some arguments regarding the campaign:

The political front: African nations should restrain leaders who wish to change constitutions to extend or abolish term limits. A concerted effort should also be created to make national electoral bodies completely independent and inclusive to ensure credible elections; and to abolish laws that limit participation, including those that limit the work of civil society organizations. In general, systems of accountability are required to ensure that resources are subject to public scrutiny, and used effectively and efficiently. Considering that the AU has declared 2018 "the African Anti-Corruption Year," member states should move beyond rhetoric and act decisively to root out corruption.

The economic front: Africa must take concrete steps to realize economic integration, which can be attained by promoting the free movement of goods, services, and people. Also, given that the population of Africa is set to grow substantially over the next few decades, a revolution in agriculture is needed to grow more food, more efficiently.

The policy front: although ending all violent conflict by 2020 might not be within reach, African countries should make every effort to implement the initiatives and practical steps outlined in the AU Master Roadmap. The AU should put in place a monitoring and tracking mechanism for compliance, and introduce harsh sanctions against defaulters. The tracking mechanism should include a rating of countries according to their level of compliance.

When the guns would be silenced, the issue of poverty and inequality must be taken into account as well, just as the problem of corruption, since both of these are a key factor of eradicating violence in Africa.

Timeline of Events

1963, 25 May – African Union was established in the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

2013, 25 May – “APSA Roadmap 2016-2020” (=a strategic document, which builds on the achievements and challenges resulting from the implementation of the previous APSA Roadmap (2011-2013))

2017 – The Assembly of the African Union adopted a strategic document known as the “AU Master Roadmap (AUMR) of Practical Steps to Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020”

2017, 4 September – The surrender and collection of all illegally owned weapons/arms by the Peace and Security Council

2019, 27 February – Resolution 2457 was adopted by the Security Council of the United Nations, which endorses Africa Union’s initiative to end violent conflicts in Africa and reaffirms the importance of addressing the causes of the conflicts.

2020, September – The United Nations stands ready to support the AU Commission on its initiative.

Resolution

Because the Security Council is an ad-hoc committee, you will not need to write a resolution beforehand. Instead, we will be writing a resolution together as a product of the debate. Therefore, you will have to come up with solutions on the spot. These solutions are expressed in the form of amendments.

Because of the complex nature of this issue, it is very hard to come up with one single solution for this problem. Therefore, it should be solved in little steps.

These steps could be anything as major as Saudi Arabia and Iran changing their laws regarding the Shia and Sunni Muslims so that they are considered equal, or something as simple as creating an annual meeting between Saudi and Iranian officials for peace negotiations.

It is important to remember that when writing amendments, you should always keep in mind your country’s stance.

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Links and Sources

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