AFRICA AND PEACE AND SECURITY DIPLOMACY IN A TIME OF THE NEW AGENDA FOR PEACE

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> 'the premise of UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali's 1992 *An Agenda for Peace* that 'the manifest desire of the membership [of the Security Council] to work together (as) a new source of strength in our common endeavor,' is severely lacking, if it has not totally collapsed... Owing to the fast-evolving technological advances made and changing conflict dynamics, the domains of conflict and the nature and the means of warfare have changed from what obtained when *An Agenda for Peace* was developed.'

I   INTRODUCTION

One of the policy briefs arising from the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's 2021 report 'Our Common Agenda'[1] that is expected to be released in the near future is the New Agenda for Peace. The framing of the New Agenda for Peace echoes the 1992 report of the then Secretary-General of the UN Boutros Boutros Ghali titled *An agenda for Peace,*[2] a report that sought to articulate the Secretary-General's view of how the UN should pursue preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping in the post-Cold War world. Understandably, *An Agenda for Peace* was premised on the new context of the then emerging character the world order was taking in the aftermath of the demise of the Cold War.[3]

Developments in recent years have increasingly highlighted that the world of the post-Cold War period is experiencing tectonic shifts. The proposal for the New Agenda for Peace is thus reflective of both these major shifts in the world order and the various environmental, health, economic and technological

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1   *Our Common Agenda – Report of the Secretary-General (2021) available on* https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda

2   *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping – Report of the Secretary-General (1992) available on* https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749?ln=en

3   *The organization of African Unity, predecessor to the AU, prior to an Agenda for Peace adopted a landmark declaration as well. The Declaration on the political and socio-economic situation in Africa and the fundamental changes taking place in the world, OAU Doc AHG/Decl.1 (XXVI) 1990.*

issues putting increasing strain on the multilateral system organized around and operating on the basis of post WWII and post-Cold War global power and peace and security dynamics. These fast-deepening changing global and peace and security dynamics directly affect both international peace and security and how multilateral institutions such as the UN and the AU respond to threats to international peace and security. The New Agenda for Peace thus presents an opportunity for articulating how best the UN can deliver on its mandate on the maintenance of international peace and security in the changing peace and security dynamics and the emerging multipolar global order arising from the end of the post-Cold War order.

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This policy brief seeks to provide thoughts on crisis management (peace and security) diplomacy in the changing global order through the prism of what this means for Africa and its role. By discussing what the current global shifts and developments mean for peace and security diplomacy, the policy brief aims to present insights from an African perspective on how the New Agenda for Peace can best meet the challenges of the current context.

II   CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE CURRENT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

It is possible to identify at least four categories of challenges to peace and security diplomacy, such as peacekeeping operations, in today's changing global world.

2.1. Multipolarity, contestation, fragmentation and major power confrontation

The first challenge relates to the political and international relations context in which crisis management is crafted and deployed. Today, we have a multilateral system that is in deep crisis. This is characterized first by the shifts in global power relations, which has been long in the making, involving the diffusion of power and the rise in the influence of new global powers in international relations. [4]

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Related to but separate from this shift is the charge of illegitimacy associated with the lack of sync between those holding the most power in the multilateral system and the current demographic, socio-economic and normative realities. There is increasing demand from countries of the global South for an end to their marginalization in and for seats at the table of multilateral decision-making platforms. In a speech to Djibouti's parliament on 11 June 2023, Kenya's President William Ruto pointed out that 'more than half of the world's population is not represented in the UN Security Council. It is neither democratic, it is not representative, it is not transparent and it is not accountable.' He went on to outline the implications of this noting that 'it is unable to effectively respond to the pressing peace and security needs of the parts of the world most affected by conflict and insecurity in our global south. Its attitude to conflicts is geographically determined. Its intervention is likewise biased. In 2023, it should not be possible for the foremost institution of global governance to remain exclusive and non-representative.'[5]

> Its attitude to conflicts is geographical-ly determined. Its intervention is like-wise biased. In 2023, it should not be possible for the foremost institution of global governance to remain exclusive and non-representative.

The rising assertivness of middle powers and most notably their increasing use of various instruments of meddling in as a means of influencing the trajectory of conflicts represents the other notable development of the contemporary peace and security landscape. Dubbed as middel power rising, this development has become a major feature of today's conflicts, as 'almost half of wars today involve significnat foreign forces, compared to only 4 % three decades ago.' [6]

Another feature of the crisis facing multilateralism is the intensification of the tension and rivalry between global powers. This has narrowed down the space for the minimum level of cooperation and consensus (on which as indicated below An Agenda for Peace was premised) that is required for the effective functioning of multilateral crisis management. Beyond the intensification of tension and rivalry, this crisis is characterized by weakening support for and increased contestation over the rules and the mechanisms for implementation of the multilateral order. In the process, the multilateral system is proving to be wanting to deliver in various conflict settings on its most basic role in crisis management.

Last year, following the failure of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to avert the outbreak of the war on Ukraine and to contain it after its eruption, the Ambassador of Kenya to the UN, Martin Kimani, memorably told the UNSC that multilateralism was on its deathbed.[7] While multilateralism has not collapsed but muddled through,[8] no one would disagree that the multilateral system organized on the basis of the post WWII power dispensation is experiencing its worst crisis.

4   Fareed Zekaria, The rise of the rest, available on https://fareedzakaria.com/columns/2008/05/12/the-rise-of-the-rest. In the field of crisis management, a good contemporary illustration of this development is the peace that China brokered between the two major rivals in the middle East, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

5   William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya address to the Djibouti Parliament on 11 June 2023.

6   See Comfort Ero and Richard Atwood, New - model proxy wars, Project Syndicate (12 June 2023) https://www.project-syndicate.org/magazine/sudan-civil-war-fits-global-pattern-by-comfort-ero-and-richard-atwood-2023-06

7   Statement By Martin Kimani during the Security Council urgent meeting on the situation in Ukraine (21 February 2022) https://www.un.int/kenya/sites/www.un.int/files/Kenya/kenya_statement_during_urgent_meeting_on_on_ukraine_21_february_2022_at_2100.pdf

8   Richard Gowan, The UN and multilateralism made it through 2022 in pretty good shape (1 December 2022) https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/un-and-multilateralism-made-it-through-2022-pretty-good-shape

> it is worth emphasizing that the war in Ukraine is but one, if major, example of how the promise of the multilateral system, as encapsulated in the UN Charter, to save succeeding genera-tions from the scourge of war is being observed by breach.

Of course,   it is worth emphasizing that the war in Ukraine is but one, if major, example of how the promise of the multilateral system, as encapsulated in the UN Charter, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war is being observed by breach.   One therefore agrees with the Prime Minister of Barbados who last September made the apt observation that a 'survey of the global security situation, notably in eastern Europe and the Middle East, but in many other places as well, reminds us daily of the tragic inability of the international system to deliver more peace and more security to the many vulnerable people of the world.'[9]

2.2.   More, increasingly complex and deadlier conflicts

The second challenge relates to the increase in the number, geographic spread and impact of conflicts. From late 1990s through early 2010s the world has experienced a decline in the number of conflicts. This was true in Africa as in other parts of the world. This positive development in the state of peace and security started to be reversed from early 2010s.

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Africa is one of the regions of the world that has experienced this reversal.[10] During the last decade, the continent has experienced an increase in the number of conflicts by twice more than what obtained in first couple of years of 2010s. As highlighted in Amani Africa's special research report on major peace and security issues in Africa published last year, 'there has been a rise in the number of conflicts on the

continent... and this trend continued into 2022'.[11] This trend has continued into 2023. This can be gathered from Sudan's recent descent from a contested peace process for transition to a fast-escalating and expanding deadly fighting pitting the national army against another state security formation, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces[12] or the deepening threat of expansion of conflicts involving terrorist groups in the Sahel into the littoral states of West Africa.[13]

While conflicts involving terrorist groups are the major reason for this spike in the number of conflicts in Africa, the new conflict that erupted in Sudan, the civil war in Ethiopia during 2020-2022 and the re-emergence of fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involving the M23 in 2022 show that this increase in conflicts also relates to outbreak of new civil wars.

Another feature of today's conflicts, but related to the above, involves what our study called the rise and rise of conflicts involving terrorist groups. Although in 2010, when the AU first issued a report on terrorism,[14] only a few pockets of territories in East Africa and North Africa were affected by terrorist violence, during the past several years the threat of terrorism expanded to cover almost all parts of the continent, affecting regions that have hitherto been immune, including Southern Africa.   The spread of conflicts involving terrorist groups along with the continuing year on year spike in incidents of attacks and number of fatalities from these conflicts in Africa has now made parts of the continent, particularly the Sahel, the epicenter of conflicts involving terrorist groups in the world. These situations are characterized by, among

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9   Mia Amor Mottley, Inaugural Kofi Annan lecture, (23 September 2022) https://www.kofiannanfoundation.org/vision-annan/kofi-annan-lecture-2022-mia-mottley/

10   Africa is not the only region. Middle East and South Asia also experienced surge in conflict during the past decade. See: https://ucdp.uu.se

11   The Major Peace and Security Issues in Africa as the AU Marks its 20th anniversary https://amaniafrica-et.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/The-major-peace-and-security-issues-in-Africa-in-the-year-the-AU-marks-its-20-years.pdf

12   Sudan's descent from peace process to armed fighting and its implications for the AU: The urgency for more and sustained action, Ideas Indaba, (20 April 2023) https://amaniafrica-et.org/sudans-descent-from-a-peace-process-to-armed-fighting-and-implications-for-the-au/

13   Amani Africa, The growing threat of terrorism in Africa: A product of misdiagnosis and faulty policy response?, Special Research Report (May 2022).
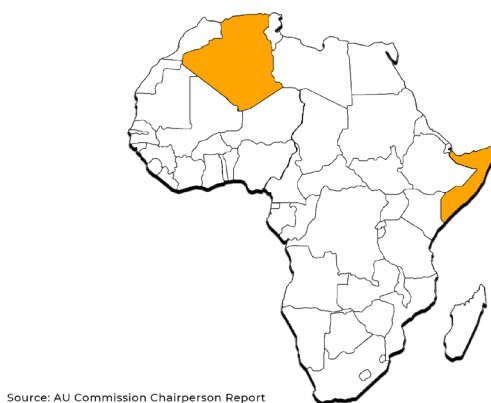
14   AU, Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on measures to strengthen cooperation in the prevention and combatting of terrorism, (22 November 2010) AU Doc PSC/PR/2(CCXLIX).

others, the use of asymmetric methods of warfare and being transnational and transregional.

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Source: Our World in Data, Global Terrorism Database
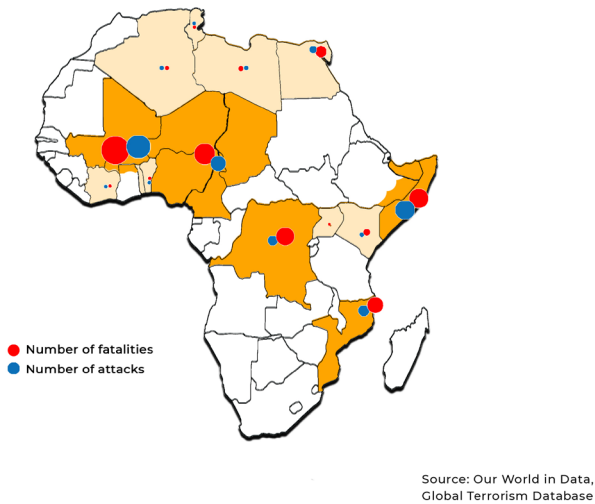
ATTACKS AND FATALITIES BY TERRORIST GROUPS, 2023

Source: AU Commission Chairperson Report

GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD OF TERRORISM IN 2010

We have also witnessed expansion in the geographic spread of conflicts. While the regions with the most conflict burdens, like the Horn of Africa, remain the sites of major hotspots, wider territories and more regions are affected by conflicts today than in late 2000s.

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Unlike in the 1990s, traditional rebel groups involving large-scale organization and mobilization for control

of state power are increasingly becoming rare. More and more, the actors active in many of the conflict situations are irregular and loosely organized groups, such as clan militias, guerrilla forces, criminal networks, religious or ethnic militias, and terrorist groups operating in peripheral areas taking advantage of the absence or weak presence of the state.

It is worth noting that in such contexts of highly fragmented and more dispersed and diverse conflict actors, it is easier for many to operate and thrive in war economies than in peaceful conditions and hence have little incentive for termination of conflict. As Jean-Marie Guehenno pointed out, such actors have 'no interest in full stabilization that would strengthen the state and threaten their dominant position in a criminal economy. They have developed a symbiotic relationship with conflict, in which conflict makes their criminal activities possible, and their criminal activities feed conflict.'[15]

Also of significance is that many of the conflicts today are not confined to one single country. They rather tend to be not only transnational but even transregional. Examples of regional conflict systems that illustrate these are the ones in the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin regions of Africa. These are conflicts that straddle between various geographic and geopolitical regions. The conflicts in the Sahel straddle between West Africa and North Africa and those in the Lake Chad Basin, between West Africa and Central Africa regions.

2.3. Growing prominence of new and emerging threats to peace and security

Apart from violent extremism and terrorism highlighted above, this is also an era witnessing the increase in the significance of other new and emerging threats to peace and security. One of these threats that is fast becoming a major accelerator of existing drivers and conditions of insecurity is climate change. Climate change is leading to greater food and water insecurity, the loss of livelihoods, depletion of natural resources, growing water scarcity, and more climate-linked human displacements.

15   *Jean-Marie Guehenno, International organizations down but not out, in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall (eds) Diplomacy and the future of world order (2021) 39.*

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As discussed in Amani Africa's various reports,[16] Africa is one of the regions of the world where the consequences of climate on security is already being felt. The Foreign Minister of Niger told the UNSC in September 2021 that 'climate change has intensified competition for land, fodder and water resources. That has led to the resurgence of community-level conflicts between herders and farmers, thereby hampering peacebuilding and development efforts in the Sahel region.'[17] Similarly, as the AU report put it, climate change is proving to be a growing source of instability and disaster and affected several member states in 2021. 'For example, some regions of South Sudan and Sudan were affected by flooding, hampering humanitarian activities, and resulting in security incidents... Madagascar continues to face a humanitarian crisis resulting from climate change and its impact on food security in the country.'[18]

The other new threat illustrated by COVID-19 relates to the implications of health pandemics. First, for countries in conflict including those on the agenda of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) or UNSC,[19] it would have the effect of worsening the security situation and the humanitarian impact of conflicts. Reduced state capacity and international support including humanitarian assistance due to the economic impact of COVID19 also aggravated

existing vulnerabilities. Second, as the consequences of COVID-19 showed, peace and security gets affected adversely due to the disruptive impact of pandemics on crisis management as competition for resources and diplomatic attention weakness national, regional and international efforts.

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The third most worrying human-made emerging threat is that which arises from new weapon technology including those artificial intelligence-based weapons technology and digital technology. There is increasing use in such new weapons technology as drones (which removes risk of pilots being taken prisoners and hence willingness to use it, and facilitates offensive covert operations[20]) in conflicts and most notably their availability for use by a wide range of actors including non-state armed groups as opposed to the few state actors as in the past, makes these weapons more dangerous. 'Emerging weapons technologies—including nuclear, cyber, biological, and biochemical methods, drones and autonomous weapons, nano-technology, additive manufacturing, wearable devices, and artificial intelligence—will make smaller adversaries and terrorist groups more formidable.'[21] It is also worth paying attention to the ways in which AI is fast transforming various areas of the social and political lives of societies and how its application in the digital sphere affects the knowledge and perception of various actors and their engagement in conflicts and peace processes.[22]

The other, which is a traditional strategic risk, but the likelihood of occurrence of which has increased in the face growing tension among major powers that started before 24 February 2022 but accelerated since then, is the threat of the use of nuclear weapon. The world is now '90 seconds to midnight,' warns the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists who recently moved the so-called Doomsday-Clock 10 seconds closer to global catastrophe due to the rise in the risk of the

16   See for example: The Major Peace and Security Issues in Africa as the AU Marks its 20th anniversary (Note 7 above) Section IX; Amani Africa Statement on the Climate and Security nexus in preparation for COP27 (November 2022) available on https://shorturl.at/epxZ1; Insight on 'Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change, Peace and Security Nexus: Building Resilience and Adaptation for Food Security in African Island States Towards COP27' (October 2022) available on https://shorturl.at/DIOY3

17   UNSC High-Level Meeting on climate and security (23 November 2021), https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv.8864.pdf

18   AU (February 2022), Report of the Commission on the Humanitarian Situation in Africa, AU Doc EX.CL/1314(XL)

19   These include Central African Republic, Libya, Mali and Sahel, Horn of Africa including Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan and countries in the Lake Chad Basin.

20   Guehenno, note 10 above, 41.

21   Hans Binnendijk, US Peace and conflict diplomacy in a state-centric world, in in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall (eds) Diplomacy and the future of world order (2021) 64.

22   UN, Information Integrity on digital platforms, Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 8 (June 2023).

use of nuclear weapon in the context of the war in Ukraine. As the UN Secretary General put it, '[t]his is the closest the clock has ever stood to humanity's darkest hour, and closer than even during the height of the Cold War.'[23] This comes against the background of already fragile and declining commitments to the international norms regulating nuclear weapons. As highlighted in the report on *Our Common Agenda*, 'longstanding agreements on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are increasingly fragile as trust among major powers continues to erode.'[24]

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These new intensifying security threats and the worsening of old strategic risks are presenting not only multiple and intersecting challenges but also largescale issues. For example, the war on (and increasingly in) Ukraine and the geopolitical confrontation that it triggered have further exacerbated the COVID-19 induced and climate change aggravated dire economic conditions, food insecurity and security fragilities by adding to the global food and energy crises. While the food and energy crises reverberate across most parts of the world, they have the most impact in parts of the world with already precarious economies, such as those in parts of Africa, leading to unprecedented levels of the cost-of-living crisis, rising debt crisis and heightening of existing humanitarian and security challenges.

2.4.   The increasing role of regional bodies in the absence of agreement on burden sharing for effectively networked multilateralism

One of the interesting developments of the post-cold war period has been the rise in the role and importance of regional organizations. This is most notable in Africa, where a reasonably ambitious and sophisticated peace and security regime has been established and come into operation within the

framework of the transition of the OAU to the AU.[25] As rightly acknowledged in *Our Common Agenda*, regional actors, like the AU 'are central to sustaining peace and preventing and responding to insecurity,' and 'fill a critical gap in our global peace and security architecture'. However, these critical frontline responses by regional bodies like the AU are facing enormous challenges to effectively respond to the increasingly grave threats to international peace and security, owing, among others to, lack of systematic global arrangement for ensuring their effective functioning as part of the global collective security system anchored on the UN Charter.

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One critical issue in this context is the challenge of financing of AU-led peace support operations authorized by the UNSC. This is currently visible in the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) with significant consequences to its ability to execute its mandate. In the context in which there is a need for regional organizations to assume more responsibility for crisis management including in deploying peacekeeping operations in pursuit of the global public good of maintenance of international peace and security, the lack of consensus on a framework for a more predictable and sustainable financing is undermining the contribution that regional organizations like the AU could play in supporting multilateralism.

While various endogenous and unfavorable exogenous factors facilitated the emergence of the African multilateral security system,[26] it cannot also be denied that the conditions in the post-Cold War era that made cooperation in the UNSC and a more functioning multilateral system possible did not

23   UN Secretary General António Guterres, *Address to the UN General Assembly 77th Session (February 2023)* available on *https://shorturl.at/ewIJ1*

24   Binnendijk, note 16 above, 59.

25   See Solomon A. Dersso, African peace and security diplomacy in uncertain times, in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall (eds) Diplomacy and the future of world order (2021) 124.

26   Solomon Ayele Dersso, The quest for Pax Africana: The case of AU's peace and security regime, African Journal of Conflict Resolution (November 2012) 1.

play a role either. In the absence of the favorable international environment that contributes to enhanced functioning of regional orders and in a context in which multilateralism in general is fraying and the prioritization of national interest is on the ascendance, regional organizations like the AU are also equally affected by these conditions.

The resultant   paralysis and   weak delivery of international and regional organizations have created in the African context at least two adverse developments. The first of this is the increase in the use of ad hoc, politically expedient, national interest driven, security heavy responses to conflicts and crisis. As we pointed out in our other work, 'the deployment of responses primarily dictated by sheer convenience and direct vested interest of participating states lead to inconsistent practices and   regression in compliance with common standards, impeding the consolidation of the APSA and the latter's close workings and coordination with the global collective security anchored   on   the UN Charter.' [27]   There is   thus increasing trend of resorting to security arrangements operating outside of the continental multilateral order, thereby undermining two decades of investment in the AU's peace and security order.

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Second, the increase in the need for a more robust security partnership is not only putting UN peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic (CAR), DRC and Mali under increasing pressure, including hostilities from host governments and communities but   also   opening a security vacuum.

This is a dangerous vacuum which forces desperate governments to seek security partnership and support from anyone willing to provide it, irrespective of its impact on collective security norms.

27   Amani Africa, The Peace and Security Council in 2022: The year in review, (February 2023) 29.

III   PEACE AND SECURITY DIPLOMACY IN THE POST POST-COLD WAR GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The foregoing overview of the global and regional post post-Cold War context raises the critical question of what these contemporary conditions mean for peace and security diplomacy. This section lists some ten consequences to peace and security diplomacy of the worsening and complexity of conflicts and the global context defined by the end of the post-Cold War as well as the rise of interventionist middle powers.

First, while some, if not most, of the challenges facing crisis management in today's world are not completely new, they have become more intense, more complex and increasingly intersecting. At the strategic level, the consequence of these features of today's challenges is that they have both exposed the deep flaws in the existing multilateral system and have stretched the multilateral crisis management system to its limits.

Second, today, the premise of UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali's 1992 An Agenda for Peace that 'the manifest desire of the membership [of the Security Council] to work together (as) a new source of strength in our common endeavor,' is severely lacking, if it has not totally collapsed. As a result, the political convergence and shared sense of purpose that is the foundation for the effective functioning of peace and security diplomacy, including   peacekeeping, is severely weakened. Owing to the fast-evolving technological advances made and changing conflict dynamics, the domains of conflict and the nature and the means of warfare have changed from what obtained when An Agenda for Peace was developed.

Third, the spike in the number of conflicts and their geographic spread as well as their dire consequences raise critical questions about the enormous gap between the promise of the various tools developed and the level of awareness about risks of conflict on the one hand and the effective activation of the

relevant responses for the prevention and resolution of conflicts on the other hand.

Fourth, a major strategic implication of the increase in the number and the expansion in the geographic spread of conflicts is that there is rise for the need both for more crisis management and for enhanced effectiveness of crisis management more today than previous times**.** Under these circumstances, no single crisis management actor by itself alone is able to deliver on and meet these increasing needs.

Fifth, today's conflicts are less amenable to the existing models of peace and security diplomacy. For example, the spread of conflicts involving terrorist groups along with the continuing year on year spike in incidents of attacks and number of fatalities from these conflicts in Africa has at least two strategic implications for crisis management. The first is the increasing demand for approaches that involve a mix of stabilization, peace enforcement and peacebuilding capacities. The other is the growing need for protection of civilians and the equally growing demand for crisis management involving strong component to expand and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Sixth, the fragmentation and proliferation of conflict actors that are less invested in political outcomes of conflicts than in exploiting the economic opportunities of war means that crisis management that is premised on the assumption that the parties are ultimately interested in the termination of conflict will not in such conflict dynamics work. According to Alex de Waal, conventional models of peacemaking are poorly suited to such kinds of conflict settings characterized not just by the political market place but also 'a more complex conflict involving multiple armed actors, diverse forms of violence, and a breakdown in central political authority.'[28]

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Seventh, crisis management responses or approaches that are premised on or confined to the boundaries of one state would also prove to be inadequate. This poses a challenge to UN peacekeeping operation that is dependent on and

tied through legal agreements signed with authorities of a host country. An example of this in Africa is the UN Mission in Mali, MINUSMA, which while territorially confined to Mali, is affected by the regional scope of the threats facing Mali and neighboring countries.

Eighth, the threat from new weapons technology continues to deepen the need for new international norms and regulatory mechanisms to make crisis management more fit for addressing the threat arising from these technological developments, whose adverse impacts can be particularly detrimental to countries in the global South, not least of all Africa.

Ninth, 'regional organizations are more engaged and empowered than they were in the Cold War and its aftermath. Supporting this development and taking advantage of their willingness to step up to the plate could be a central element of a reformulated peace and conflict diplomacy portfolio.'[29] This necessitates that consensus is achieved on burden sharing on the use of crisis management, particularly in cases where UN crisis management diplomacy tools such as peacekeeping are ill-suited and require a more agile and robust engagement that only regional bodies such as the AU are able to deliver. Indeed, as pointed out in Our Common Agenda, 'it is becoming urgent to secure predictable financing for peace support operations delivered under Chapter VIII of the Charter covering regional arrangements: these operations fill a critical gap in our global peace and security architecture and should not rely on ad hoc arrangements.'

Finally, where consensus could not be found for a more ambitious functioning of crisis management diplomacy instruments such as peacekeeping, it is imperative that efforts are mobilized for avoiding the failure of the multilateral system to deliver on its least minimum role, which, as aptly put by Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the UN, is 'to save humanity from hell'. This formulation echoes the words in the preamble of the UN Charter that the principal aim of the UN was to 'save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'.[30]

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28 Accord 'Violence and peacemaking in the political marketplace' by Alex de Waal (April 2014) available on https://shorturl.at/koGKM

29 Chester A. Crocker et al Grasping global problems by root or by branch, in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall (eds) Diplomacy and the future of world order (2021) 29.

30 Charter of the United Nations, Preamble (October 1945).

> In a world where impunity for mass killing runs rampant, in a world where violent wars are waged with no regard to the fundamental tenets of the UN Charter and where meddling outside powers too often obstruct diplomacy, there is nothing more imperative than a peace and security agenda that focuses on averting harm or minimizing the evil of violent conflicts.

In a world where impunity for mass killing runs rampant, in a world where violent wars are waged with no regard to the fundamental tenets of the UN Charter and where meddling outside powers too often obstruct diplomacy, there is nothing more imperative than a peace and security agenda that focuses on averting harm or minimizing the evil of violent conflicts. This is the minimum expected of the international multilateral order and the UN system and African solutions to African problems cannot and should not in any way detract from this fundamental premise more so where such solutions are lacking and the refrain is used simply for obstructing international action in the face of mass atrocities and the collapse of state institutions.

IV THOUGHTS ON MAKING PEACE AND SECURITY DIPLOMACY DELIVER IN CHALLENGING GLOBAL AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS

The nature of the challenges the world face demand nothing short of ambitious new Agenda for Peace around which the world should be rallied. It is not unfitting for the Agenda to aspire for more ambitious objectives including the identification of common grounds between rival powers, including through the instrumentality of regional organizations like the AU, as necessary condition for ensuring the functioning of the multilateral security system. This should include nurturing and sustaining collective action on threats that cannot be addressed by any individual country such as those around climate, new technologies etc.

Similarly, the New Agenda for Peace needs to provide guidance on how multilateralism can best accommodate plurality of global powers and deliver effectively in an increasingly multipolar global order. This, it may achieve, through articulating basic principles such as the recognition of both the reality of multipolarity and the accompanying diversity or plurality of values and systems or perspectives.

This is also a moment for consolidating old grounds on peace and security and respect for international law. It necessitates reaffirmation of the commitment of member states of the UN in the very fundamental principles of the UN including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states at all times in all parts of the world and total rejection of impunity for mass killings irrespective of the circumstances. Considering that trust in the multilateral system is eroded due to the persistence of double standards in both the application of international law and the censure of breaches of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter, perhaps of particula r significance is articulating modalities for the consistent application of the rules of international law. These are necessary conditions to mend the cracks in the foundation of the UN based multilateral order.

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- The nature of conflicts and the global context necessitate a multidisciplinary approach to both the prevention and resolution of conflicts. This means that rather than a narrow security focused approach, processes for the prevention and resolution of conflicts need to harness and complementarily deploy peacebuilding, socio-economic development and inclusive systems of governance and state strengthening tools. Accordingly, there is increasing need for tapping into and enhancing the role of international and regional financial institutions and development tools.

- In terms of prevention, it is also critical to rethink the security-oriented approach to early warning and prevention. This necessitates not only enhancing capacities for early detection of risks but also the primary use of national ownership enhancing and non-intrusive tools. Such approach should also place premium on

identifying opportunities for avoiding or mitigating risks of conflicts and hence sustaining peace by harnessing the leverage of non-security tools, which are critical for prevention, bolstering resilience, addressing root causes and sustaining peace.

- Both the nature and complexity as well as consequences of conflicts and the global context underscore the increasing importance of the role of reginal multilateral bodies that are engaged in crisis management more today than ever before. Additionally, the nature of today's challenges demands networked multilateralism that is able to harness the role of multiple multilateral actors and more effective partnership between these multilateral actors as well as the role of the wider international community including non-state actors. The New Agenda for Peace can achieve this by articulating ways of bringing regional multilateral organizations like the AU to the center of the global peace and security diplomacy in a systematic way rather than on an ad hoc basis.

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- The need for achieving a networked arrangement that draws on the comparative advantages of regional organizations necessitates the adoption of the framework resolution by the UNSC on the use of UN assessed contributions for AU led peace support operations authorized by the UNSC on a case-by-case basis.[31]

- In contexts where conflict actors are mostly motivated by opportunities arising from war economies, there is need for tools of peace and security diplomacy that delegitimize, punish and crackdown actors engaging in war economies while deploying interventions that both enhance socio-economic rehabilitation and livelihood support of local communities and enable the emergence of legitimate local governance structure for delivery of critical services.

- The transnational and transregional nature of conflicts also underscore the increasing importance of developing and investing in regional stabilization and peace and security frameworks that transcend national borders. One such example that can be replicated elsewhere is the Peace and Security Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. The lesson from this regional framework is that their efficacy depends on providing them with active, robust and sustained continental and international diplomatic support as well as injection of regional socio-economic investment.

- Peace and security diplomacy has to be much more cognizant of and responsive to the intensity of the implications of new sources of threats including most notably pandemics and climate change as well as the ways by which new weapon of technology are changing the nature and methods of warfare, with particularly dire conseqeunces when deployed or tested in parts of the world such as Africa.

- There is a need for an ambitious statement for multilateral crisis management in arms control and disarmament.[32] As far as traditional strategic risks associated with nuclear weapon is concerned, this requires the use of both UN's convening and norm shaping powers and the voice of regional frameworks like the Pelindaba treaty for a nuclear free zone under the AU at the very least to ensure the non-use of nuclear weapon and at most to revitalize and strengthen strategic arms control instruments and diplomacy.

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31   *Amani Africa, Seizing the new momentum for UNSC Resolution on the funding of AU peace operations, Special Research Report 15 (May 2023).*

32   *Richard Gowan, Priorities for the UN's New Agenda for Peace, (11 August 2022).*

- Considering the level of fragmentation and the state of flux of the multilateral system, while efforts towards a more ambitious peace and security diplomacy should be sustained, there is urgent need to enhance the focus on and investment in humanitarian diplomacy. This is critical if multilateral peace and security diplomacy is to maintain the most minimum of legitimacy by establishing the conditions for mitigating human suffering arising from conflicts. Here as with other areas of peace and security diplomacy, there is a need for deploying the women, peace and security and the youth, peace and security as well as the wider civilian protection lenses. For the New Agenda for Peace to garner legitimacy by meeting the demands of today, it needs to articulate how the multilateral system can best ensure the mitigation of the suffering of civilians caught in the cross fire of conflicts as it also seeks to position the system to the future of the new and emerging threats and changing dynamics.

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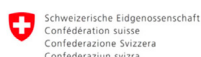
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Amani Africa is an independent African based policy research, training and consulting think tank with a specialization and primary focus on African multilateral policy processes, particularly those relating to the African Union.

We support the pan-African dream of peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa through research, training, strategic communications, technical advisory services, and convening and facilitation.

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