

## **Africa at a Crossroads: Pan-Africanism, the breakdown of global order, and the Future of Collective Security**

Pre-AU Summit High-level Dialogue (February 2026), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### **Background**

Africa stands at a historic crossroads. Endogenously and as examined in Amani Africa's upcoming signature publication that accompanies the AU summit, Africa is faced with a combination of persisting and new challenges. These involve rising and intersecting conflict dynamics and new forms of insecurity, deepening and expansion of electoral authoritarianism and accelerating socio-economic pressures.

Of particular concern is also the extensive erosion of Pan-Africanism and the continental leadership and agency that it shapes. As a result, the continent risks not only reversals of the gains it has achieved in previous decades but also the entrenchment of some of the crises, endangering societal breakdown in some of the crisis hotspots, both at the state and regional levels.

Externally, the global order on which the multilateral system, both on the continent and the world at large depend is in disarray. Unilateral action and protectionism are gaining momentum. Major power rivalry and geopolitical tension are on the rise. International law, already undermined by deep pre-existing design and operational flaws, has been hollowed out of any semblance of its relevance in governing international relations and the conduct of states.

The United Nations (UN) faces an existential crisis. It does so both geopolitically and financially, necessitating recalibration of how the African Union and Africa engages in global governance.

All of these are of direct and immediate concern for Africa with profound ramifications for its present and future. Among others, these developments have put serious strain on Africa's multilateral order both at the continental and regional levels. With the assumptions and the modus operandi on the basis of which the African Union (AU) and the global multilateral system washed away under the combined pressure of these endogenous and exogenous forces, the very future of collective security has become uncertain.

These conditions present formidable challenges but are not insurmountable. With political will and collective action, Africa can at the very least mitigate and manage these situations and at best chart out a common path forward for overcoming them and ensuring the progress of the continent. The most recent time when it faced such a similar crossroads after the end of the Cold War, Africa rose to the occasion. It leveraged Pan-Africanism to assume greater

responsibility for the affairs of the continent and to pull the efforts of African states for enhanced collective action. This process culminated in the transition of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the AU.

The convening of the 39<sup>th</sup> ordinary summit of the AU provides an opportunity for the continental body and its member states to have dedicated reflections for articulating ways of repositioning the continent and the AU in the face of these challenges and changing realities of the continent and the world. It is within this framework, and to explore how this summit can be leveraged at the very least for setting the agenda and at best for charting a new course, that Amani Africa organises its annual pre-summit special policy dialogue.

### **Objective:**

To provide a clear global and African definition of the crisis confronting Africa's multilateral institutions to reclaim Pan-Africanism as Africa's political identity, and set a strategic agenda ahead of the AU Summit.

### **Date and time:**

10 February 2026

Time: 1:30 - 4:30 pm East African Time

### **Venue:**

Hyatt Regency Hotel

### **Agenda:**

#### **Welcoming**

- **Welcoming Remarks**, Ambassador William Carew, Head of ECOSOCC Secretariat

#### **Session I: Opening Address and Strategic Framing**

- **Opening Strategic Address**, Mohamed El-Amine Souef, Chief of Staff of the Chairperson of the AU Commission
- ***Africa in 2026: Permanent War, Fractured Order, and the Imperative for building a pan-Africanist multilateralism***, Abdul Mohamed, Amani Africa Senior Strategic Advisor and Former Senior UN and AU Official

## **Session II: Re-imagining African Solutions to African Problems for a New Era of Instability**

- ***How to recalibrate AU's role to the pressing peace and security issues and the changing geopolitics in Africa***, Murithi Mutiga, Crisis Group Africa Program Director
- ***The AU Summit, chairing the AU Assembly and charting a common position on repositioning the AU and Africa***, Ambassador Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the AU and incoming Chairperson of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the AU

## **Session III: How to navigate the global disorder for advancing Africa's position on the world stage**

- ***Repositioning Africa and the African Union to the fundamental changes in the world: Insights from the 1990 OAU Declaration on Fundamental Changes in the World***, El-Ghassim Wane, Former AU Chief of Staff. Peace and security Director, UN Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping Affairs and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Mali, and Head of MINUSMA
- ***The role of the A3+: Insights from Sierra Leone's UN Security Council Membership***, Ambassador Michael Imran Kanu, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the UN in New York
- ***Perspectives from a member of the AU Peace and Security Council***, Ambassador Ambassador Hirut Zemene, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the AU

## **Session IV: Open discussion**

- Interventions from the floor

## **Session V: Take aways and Closing**