

APSA at the Crossroad of Legality and Legitimacy

Amandine Gnanguênon¹ and Angela Meyer²

¹IRSEM, Paris, France

²Organisation for International Dialogue and Conflict Management (IDC), Vienna, Austria

angela.meyer@idialog.eu

Legitimacy is a key issue to understand the evolution of intervention in Africa and mainly the African organisations' growing role in peace and security. Until the 1990s, the existence of a legal framework (e.g. UN mandate) was considered as sufficient backing of interventions on the continent. With the recurrence of internal political conflicts and the controversy over external interventions, the issue of legality has been relegated to a second level, while the question of legitimacy has become ever more important. In this regard, the fact that neighbouring States are generally the first to be affected by the regional spread of political instability (base for rebellions, displacement of people, arms trafficking) gives them *de facto* a greater legitimacy to intervene. However, the resulting mix of interests involved is challenging and creates bridges between institutional political arenas (UN, AU and EU) and conflict theatres.

Several examples (e.g. Sudan, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast) show that local actors can have a negative impact on peacekeeping operations. The paper therefore investigates how, through an African perspective, interventions can serve to legitimize local strategies. It seems that now the building of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is at the crossroad of legality (Chapter VIII of the UN Charter) and legitimacy (Africanisation of security). This leads to the questions how APSA's *legitimacy* depends on its member States' capacity to use force and what is the impact of its legal framework.