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**Panel 42: Behind Africa's Engagement for Peace and Security: Actors,
Mechanisms and Outcomes**

THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN ECCAS SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

By

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Acronyms and Abbreviations:

ACP Africa, Caribbean and Pacific

APF	African Peace Facility
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CDS	Defense and Security Commission
CENTBRIG	Central African Brigade
CEWS	Continental Warning System
CivPol	Civilian Police
COPAX	Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DIHPSS	Department of Human Integration, Peace, Security and stability
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
EU	European Union
EDF	European Development Fund
EUFOR DRC	European Union Force in the Democratic Rep. of Congo
EUPOL DR CONGO	European Union Police Mission to the DRC
FOMAC	Multilateral Force of Central Africa
MARAC	Central African Early Warning System
MICOPAX	Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic
Milob	Military Observer
MSC	Military Staff Committee

NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Indicative Programme
POW	Panel of the Wise
PAPS	Programme d'Appui Paix et Sécurité
PAPS-CEEAC	ECCAS Support Programme for Peace and Security in Central Africa
PF-CEEAC	ECCAS Border Programme
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSO	Peace Support Operation
RECAMP	Reinforcing of African Peacekeeping Capacities
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme (<i>Programme Indicative Régionale</i>)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations

Key words: Capacity Building, Central Africa, Continental Integration, Cooperation, ECCAS, Partnership, Peace and Security, Regional Economic Community, Regional Integration

Abstract

ECCAS countries which constitute part of the Gulf of Guinea are richly endowed with cultural and natural resources. The abundance of petroleum, timber and other mineral resources in the sub-region has increased its economic and geopolitical importance in world economy. Despite the abundance of natural resources, ECCAS countries still face major development and security challenges. Some continue to be the playground of persistent insecurity and instability: The DR Congo has been in conflict since 1996, the Angolan civil war lasted well over 25 years, recurrent civil wars in the Republic of Congo, the Central Africa Republic and Chad, the Rwandan genocide and the bloody civil war in Burundi have been proof of the regions vulnerability to insecurity and instability. The numerous conflicts in many ECCAS countries have had far reaching repercussions on the region's economy and led to massive human rights abuses, poor governance and the non-respect of democratic values. Based on these challenges, ECCAS countries multiplied their collective efforts over the last decade towards deeper integration and have come up with common mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. This was not without the expressed stewardship of development partners. In 1994, some Central African countries signed a non-aggression pact during the UN Consultative Council. The Council for Peace and security in Central Africa (COPAX) was created in 1999 to promote, maintain and consolidate peace and security in Central Africa. In 2003, an agreement was reached to create a peacekeeping brigade (CENTBRIG) which will contribute one of the 5 brigades of the African Standby Force (ASF). However, national interests of member states and other technical problems have greatly hindered the effective operation of the ECCAS security architecture. The EU made a firm commitment and enhanced political consultations with the region in order to create a stable and peaceful Central African region within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The aim of this paper is to elucidate and critically analyse the EU's support to ECCAS security architecture with particular emphasis on military advice, training and funding. The paper addresses the question of why despite such widespread support so little has been achieved in improving security in ECCAS

Introduction

The Central African region which constitutes part of the Gulf of Guinea is one of the richest regions on the African continent. It is one of the world's biggest reservoirs of

gas, petroleum, iron ore, diamond and other natural resources. More so, the region is home to the equatorial rainforest which is the second largest tropical rainforest in the world after the Amazon (Treydte, 2011:1). Paradoxically, the region has the highest number of states with very low human development indices. The region is confronted with recurrent conflicts, deep-rooted governance crisis, fragile security sectors, illicit proliferation of small arms, mass movement of refugees and weak regional institutions. The period from 1992 – 1997 marked the peak of instability in the region as seven out eleven ECCAS member states at the time were persistent playgrounds of violent conflicts. The DR Congo has been in conflict since 1996, the Angolan civil war lasted well over 25 years, recurrent civil wars in the Republic of Congo, the Central Africa Republic and Chad, the Rwandan¹ genocide and the bloody civil war in Burundi have been proof of the regions vulnerability to insecurity and instability. The numerous armed conflicts in many ECCAS countries have had far reaching repercussions on the region's economy and led to massive human rights abuses, poor governance and the non-respect of democratic values. The recurrence of wars and widespread insecurity in many countries of the region in the last decade can best be tackled through a regional approach. This is because the countries of Central Africa do not have the necessary capacity and means to individually tackle the challenges to which they are confronted. Based on these challenges, ECCAS countries intensified their collective efforts over the last decade towards deeper integration and have come up with common mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. This was not without the expressed stewardship of development partners and other multilateral donors. The EU as main cooperation partner of ECCAS made a firm commitment and enhanced political consultations with the region in order to create a stable and peaceful Central African region within the framework of the Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). EU support has mainly been driven by humanitarianism which was inspired by the Rwandan genocide and reinforced by the crisis in Sudan as expressed in the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty report *Responsibility to Protect*. The aim of this paper is to elucidate and critically analyse the EU's support to ECCAS security architecture with particular emphasis on funding. This paper looks at the EU from an institutional perspective and draws a clear line of demarcation between the

¹ Rwanda which was a founding member of ECCAS withdrew its membership from the organisation 2007 to free itself from overlap.

EU and its individual member states. Particular attention is paid to financing geared towards capacity building and operations. It argues that the national interests of member states and other internal problems have greatly hindered the effective operation of the ECCAS security architecture.

This paper is divided into five sections. After this introductory note, section one reviews ECCAS security architecture and how it relates to the continental structure. It briefly analyses ECCAS security organs. Section two makes an appraisal of the policy framework which guides the cooperation between the EU and ECCAS. The third section exposes EU support to ECCAS with emphasis on financial assistance, capacity building, arms control, military operations. It equally reviews bilateral cooperation between ECCAs and France mainly in the area of capacity training and makes an analysis of the impact of EU support to ECCAS. In section four, an in-depth analysis is made of the factors that hinder the operationalisation of ECCAS security architecture and section five looks at various options that will make easy the path to regional peace and security in ECCAS. It advocates for a genuine political commitment from both ECCAS and the EU, improved communication between the AU and ECCAS, involvement of non-state actors in ECCAS security architecture and above all more training for FOMAC to better prepare them for long-term challenges

1. Operationalising APSA

ECCAS which was created in 1981 is considered as an integral part of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which is a continental structure based on the provisions of the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU).² The pursuit for a continental security mechanism is driven by three main elements which include the desire to unite, the *Responsibility to Protect* and the concept of African solutions to African Problems.³ An African security mechanism is necessary to enable the continent tackle the complex phenomenon such as wars, civil conflicts, terrorism, diseases and poverty.⁴ The Constitutive Act of

² See Article 16 of the protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union <http://www.africaunion.org/root/au/AUC/Departments/PSC/Asf/doc/PSC%20protocol.pdf>

³ Pirozzi, Nicoletta (2009) EU Support to African Security Architecture: Funding and Training Components. In *European Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) Occasional Paper 76*, Paris, Feb. 2009 pp.4

⁴ Francis, David J. (2006) *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems*, Aldershot, Ashgate

the African Union places great emphasis on the promotion of peace, security and stability as one of the major objectives of the union.⁵

Another key element of the continental security architecture is the “Responsibility to Protect”, which was first adopted by the UN High Panel Report in 2004 based on the report of an International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). This idea was inspired by the Rwandan genocide and reinforced by the Darfur crisis. The notion gained more strength with the founding of the AU in 2002 and the increasing determination of African states to find solutions to their own problems. In 1992, the then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali vigorously advocated for humanitarian intervention and this was later promoted by Koffi Annan who succeeded him as UN Secretary General.⁶ Responsibility to Protect was further strengthened by the United Nations World Summit Declaration of 2005 in which the international community committed itself to help protect populations from war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.⁷ This holds that the international community has a responsibility to intervene, if a government is unwilling or unable to protect their citizens (Adekeye Adebayo, 2006:4). In 2005, the United States in collaboration with some western countries initiated the creation of a United Nations Human Rights Council because of increasing concerns over the credibility and effectiveness of the Human Rights Commission. In Article 4 of the Constitutive Act, the AU adopted an extremely proactive and interventionist ethos to security challenges. It allows the AU to intervene in the internal affairs of member states in case of egregious violations of human rights, genocide, and war crimes.⁸

The third element of the African security architecture is the notion of “African Solutions to African Problems”, which advocates the use of the continent’s human and natural resources for its renewal. This concept provides the real identity dimension of African security issues (Makinda and Wafula, 2008). Former South African president Thabo Mbeki was one of the most vocal advocates of “African Solutions to African problems” as part of his “African Renaissance” dream in the 21st Century. The need for Africans to take on the responsibility to build, keep and

⁵ The African Union (2000) *The Constitutive Act of the African Union*, Togo,

⁶ Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992) *An Agenda for Peace*, New York, United Nations

⁷ see items 138 – 140 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome pp. 30

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan021752.pdf>

⁸ See Constitutive Act of the AU

consolidate peace on their continent was first articulated by Ali Mazrui (1967) in what he called the *Pax Africana*.

The APSA structure comprises five main elements which provide necessary tools to address the continent's security concerns by local actors. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) coordinates and legitimises the actions of all other elements of the security architecture. It is headed by a commissioner for peace and security and split up into a Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) and a Conflict Management Division (CMD). It constitutes the African version of "a collective security and early warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa".⁹

The African Standby Force (ASF) is being established as a continental rapid reaction force capable of deploying anywhere in Africa. It is divided into five regions (North, South, Central, East and West) and it can make use of both military and civilian resources of all the regions. It is equally supported by CivPol and other capacities.

¹⁰The ASF is envisaged to deploy in complex multidimensional peacekeeping operations, military advice on political mission, AU interventions, chapter VI peacekeeping and preventive deployment, observer mission with the UN and in "stand alone" observer missions. The Military Staff Committee (MSC) which is made up senior military officers advises and assists the PSC on all military and security issues. Personnel deficiencies, irregularities of its meetings and other factors have prevented it from carrying out its activities,

The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) whose role is to anticipate and prevent conflicts through information gathering and risks analysis, consist of a central observation and monitoring centre commonly referred to as the Situation Room which is established at the CMD.

The Panel of the Wise (POW) is made of highly respected Africans and it is the advisory and external mediation body. It provides advisory opinion to the PSC on relating to peace and security. It can mediate between warring factions or in conflict situations.

⁹ AU (2004) *Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy*, Sirte, 28 February 2004

¹⁰ Cilliers, Jakkie (2008) *The African Standby Force: An update on progress. In ISS Paper 160*, March 2008 pp.1

The Peace Fund is responsible for financing PSO. It is funded through the AU regular budget, voluntary contributions from member states and through special fundraising events.

2. ECCAS Security Architecture

ECCAS has been designated by the AU as one of the pillars in the effective functioning of the continental security architecture. In 1994, some Central African countries signed a non-aggression pact during the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC) session. The ECCAS peace and security revolves around the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) created in 1999. The provisions of the Protocol establishing the PSC were specified in the Memorandum between the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and harmonized in the legal instrument of the AU.¹¹

COPAX whose Protocol entered into force in 2004 is the organ responsible for political and security cooperation among amongst member states. Its primary task is the maintenance, consolidation and promotion of peace and security in the region. It is also charged with the responsibility of preparing decisions of the Conference of Heads of State on all matters relating to conflict prevention, management and resolution. It deals with both inter-state and internal conflicts. The COPAX is as well empowered to build and deploy civilian and military observation missions in order to prevent conflict or maintain peace in case of a humanitarian crisis in one member state.

The main organs of COPAX include the Central African Early-Warning System (MARAC) which collects and analyses data for early detection and prevention of conflicts, the Defense and Security Commission (CDS) which is made up of representatives from member states is an advisory body that plans, organises and advices on military operations, and the Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC) which is a non-permanent force to accomplish peace missions, humanitarian relief and security in crises situations. The Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX) was created in 2008 under the aegis of ECCAS to contribute to lasting peace and security in the CAR. It is made up of 525 soldiers, 31 Milobs and 146 police officers drawn from ECCAS member states and its

¹¹ Ibis Art. 16(9)

mandate integrates the safeguard of internal security in order to create an atmosphere of peace and stability. It is equally charged with promoting human rights, assisting in the political process and supporting the delivery of humanitarian aid. MICOPAX replaced the FOMUC operation which was set up in 2002 by CEMAC.¹² MICOPAX equally provides security for the DDR programme run by UNDP. A key achievement of the operation is the stabilization and improved security in areas that have been frequently under rebel attack.

3. Policy Framework

The EU adopted its Africa strategy in 2005 which aimed at supporting the continent to achieve the MDGs and make its partnership with Africa more effective. This strategy commits the EU to support APSA because of the very important role peace and security play in attaining development goals (Vines and Middleton, 2008:11). The APF has a capacity building and a PSO component. The overall aim of EU support to Central Africa is the promotion of peace, security and growth with the prime goal of alleviating poverty and enabling the region achieve its MDGs. A major priority of this support to ECCAS is to strengthen regional institutions. The rationale behind this is to enhance cooperation for peace and security, improve on regional governance and fortify the institutional capacities of individual member states to implement commonly agreed regional policies. EU support to ECCAS security architecture is guided by the principle of African ownership as laid down in the Cotonou Agreement of 2000 between the EU and the ACP countries.¹³ The main goal of EU support includes financial assistance, technical assistance and political dialogue. Financial assistance is mainly provided under the 9th and 10th EDF which is a formal mechanism controlled by the European Commission and channeled mostly through the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP).

The African Peace Facility (APF) was established in 2004 at the request of African governments in order to provide funds for African led PSOs and capacity building exercises. It is the main support instrument of the Africa-EU partnership on peace and security issues. The APF is financed by the EDF under the Cotonou Agreement and is limited to covering military expenditures such as peacekeeping deployment

¹² Ibis pp.10

¹³ According to this principle the EU respects choices and decisions made by ECCAS member states on how best to achieve their peace and security agenda.

costs including medical necessities, troop allowances, fuel, transport, communications equipment, per diems and rations. The purchase of ammunition, certain military equipment, training and salaries for soldiers cannot be financed through the APF. Funds for equipment and other support excluded from the APF can be obtained from bilateral sources.

France has been very active in supporting the ECCAS security architecture especially in building troops capacity and providing equipment support because of the existing scope for bilateral cooperation. It complements EU support by providing assistance in areas that cannot be financed with APF funds. Stability in the region is of prime importance to the French because of their huge economic and political interests in the region which dates back to the colonial period. Five out of ten ECCAS member states are former French colonies and have tight economic and political relations with France. More so, all six CEMAC states share the Franc CFA as common currency which is backed by the French treasury. It should also be noted that France is one of the members of the EU with a great influence on EU policy making. French support enjoys full recognition from the EU and there are moves for example to “Europeanise” the French RECAMP programme while maintaining the structures initiated by the French and by attracting the EU to support specific training centres.¹⁴

4. EU Support

EU support to ECCAS with regards to peace and security is inspired by the institutional action of the European Commission (EC), which prioritises cooperation with other regional organisations around the world rather than with individual countries. It is also driven by the implication of some key members of the EU especially France which has traditional interests in the region.

4.1 Funding

The EU is the most important financiers of the ECCAS security architecture. EU finances to support ECCAS operations are provided through the APF under the 9th and 10th EDF. The EC provides funds to ECCAS to strengthen the organisation’s ability to take responsibility of the regional peace and security challenges. Such

¹⁴ Bachmann, Olaf (2011) The African Standby Force: External Support to an “African Solution to African Problems”? In *IDS Research Report*, Vol.2011, No. 67 pp.15

funds are only provided on request from the regional organization. In January 2009, the EU signed a convention for a subvention of 9.6 milliard Francs CFA (about €14.6 million), which was meant to finance peacekeeping operations in the ECCAS region. This aid was principally intended to finance the extension of the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX) for a period of one year. The cooperative context of the EU with ECCAS in the domain of peace and security, which is part of the political support of the EU to build the peace and security architecture in Africa is being set up under aegis of the African Union (AU). The EU provided 48.6% of the estimated budget of 20.3 Milliard francs CFA, whereas France provided 30.9% and ECCAS 29.5%. Since 2004, the European Commission has provided 61 million Euros to the MICOPAX operation in the CAR within the framework of the APF.¹⁵ It has equally made a commitment of €0.6 million for the construction of a camp for peacekeepers of MICOPAX at N'dele in CAR.

Table1. EU Funding to ECCAS under the APF (9th EDF) in Million Euros

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Contracted commitments	€3.4(Nov) PSO FOMUC I	€8(July) PSO FOMUC II	€7.5 (July) PSO FOMUC III	€4.5 (July) PSO FOMUC III bis	€10.2(Feb) PSO FOMUC IV €5(Oct) PSO MICOPAX €14.6(Dec) MICOPAX 1A		
Commitments Paid	€2.8(Dec) PSO FOMUC I	€7.5 (Aug) PSO FOMUC II	€7.1(july) PSO FOMUC III	€4.1 (Aug) PSO FOMUC III bis	€7.9 (March) FOMUC IV €4 (Dec) PSO MICOPAX 1	€11 (March) PSO MICOPAX 1A 2.8 (Pipeline) PSO MICOPAX 1A	

Source: The African Peace Facility Annual Report 2010

¹⁵ European Commission (2010) *Annual Report. The African Peace Facility 2010*, Luxembourg, EC Publications Pp.10

Table2: EU Funding to ECCAS under the APF (10th EDF) in Million Euros

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Commitments Contracted		€0.6 (Nov) MICOPAX 1a N'dele	€14.7 (Apr) MICOPAX		
Commitments Paid		0.6 (Dec) MICOPAX 1a N'dele	@13.9 (Apr-Oct) MICOPX 1B		

Source: The African Peace Facility Annual Report 2010

The two statistical tables above show clearly that the EU has committed a total of €68.5 million under the 9th and 10th EDF between 2004 and 2010 to support the FOMUC and MICOPAX Peace Support Operations (PSO) in the CAR. And about 89.7% (€61 million) was actually paid by EU to support the ECCAS security architecture between 2004 and 2010.

3.2 Capacity Support

The EC is making a significant contribution in strengthening the institutional capacity of ECCAS to enable it effectively assume its role in promoting peace, security and stability in the Central African region. In 2007, the EC initiated the ECCAS Support Programme for peace and Security in Central Arica (PAPS-CEEAC) and deployed experts to Libreville who have been actively strengthening the capacity of the DIHPSS to play its role in conflict prevention and management through its assistance in the elaboration of the new organizational plan of the department, identification of the needs, drafting of the terms of reference of vacant positions and staff recruitment.

The EC initiated a support programme for peace and security known by its French acronym PAPS (*Programme d'Appui Paix et Sécurité*) to help develop the capacity of ECCAS in the domain of peace and security. The PAPS I project which covers the period from 2007 – 2011 received €4.8 million to enable ECCAS find lasting solutions to conflicts in the region. PAPS II which (financed under the 10th EDF) runs from 2011 – 2014 is financed with €14.2 million and it shares the same goals with PAPS I. The project's main focus is to facilitate the effective operation of the regional early warning system (MARAC) in a view to strengthen its institutional capacity to observe and analyse long-term security risks in the region. As part of the effort to put in place a continental early warning system, the EC provides training for personnel, equipments, supports recruitment procedure and the general concept of MARAC. To this end, the EC provided communications equipments (Satellite communications,

internet, and intranet), realised a development plan of MARAC and provided tools, provided tools for the collection and analyses of information. It equally provided communications equipments for MARAC correspondents and assumed their communication costs.

Under the PAPS project, the EC is assisting ECCAS in enacting structural policies of conflict prevention. From 2007 – 2010, the project provided €1million to support political and diplomatic capacity-building for conflict prevention in the region. In 2008, it organized training sessions for ECCAS observer teams for the Angolan legislative elections and sponsored a seminar on the role of the media in electoral processes in the CAR. In 2010, it organized a joint forum for electoral administrations and commissions in Central Africa..

The EU continues to intensify funding in favour of peace and security in Central Africa within the framework of the 10th EDF, either through the new peace facility or the Regional Indicative Programme (*Programme Indicatif Régional*). Funds provided by the EU facilitated the reinforcement of MICOPAX staff and the one year extension of its mandate in RCA ensured the continuous monitoring of the peace process in the country.¹⁶ In September 2009, the EU signed the Central African Regional Strategy Paper (*Document de Stratégie Régionale/ Programme*) known by its French acronym DRS/PIR worth 165 Million Euros. About 9.9% (15 Million Euros) of the amount was dedicated to capacity building in the peace and security domains..

However, EU support is not exclusively limited to the financing of peace support operations in countries that have been affected by war. The EU has also been very active in promoting political dialogue amongst member states of ECCAs as a means of reinforcing the region's crisis prevention mechanism.

Security sector actors in the ECCAS region including the police, army, justice, customs and the various intelligence units have received active sensitization from the PAPS team with the main goal of enhancing Security Sector Reforms (SSR) throughout the region. Such efforts are geared towards promoting regional cooperation and enhancing professionalism. A seminar attended by security sector

¹⁶ In June 2009, an assessment mission on the impact of MICOPAX was conducted within the framework of the EU – Africa partnership and the support of the APF was extended in 2010 following a positive outcome of the mission.

actors from ECCAS member states was hosted in Kinshasa in 2009 and another with Parliamentarians in same year with the financial support from the EC.¹⁷

The EC deploys resources to help fortify the regional efforts to fight trans-border crimes. It supported the setting up of the ECCAS Border Programme (PF-CEEAC). It works to create feasible networks between ECCAS and non-state actors who can efficiently support peace and conflict prevention operations in the region.

The many conflicts that have taken place in most Central African countries over the past few years have led to a dramatic increase in the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the region. The EU is committed to the fight against the trafficking of conventional arms especially in the Central African region. It is committed to continuing its efforts to promote the establishment of a genuine peace and security architecture in Central Africa through the implementation of the joint EU – Africa Strategy. The EU has been supporting ECCAS in the fight against illegal proliferation of SALW and has supported many countries of the region in the implementation of the Brazzaville Programme for Priority Activities (*Programme d'Activités Prioritaires de Brazzaville*), which emanated from the United Nations Plan of Action.

4.3 Bilateral Cooperation

Some EU member states especially France have been playing a pivotal role in strengthening ECCAS security architecture on a bilateral basis. Since 2008, France has been providing logistical assistance to the MICOPAX military component. French support amounted to about 31% of the total MICOPAX budget for 2010. The French forces stationed in Gabon provide MICOPAX with military equipments, expert advice in administrative, financial and operational issues. In 2009, the French military donated new military vehicles to MICOPAX. It equally assumes the pre-deployment preparation of the different contingents and the development of military personnel during their deployment in the CAR. This support is provided by a logistics unit of the French Operation BOALI. France has supported many military interventions and peacekeeping operations in Central Africa. The French are providing training in peacekeeping and they have been very instrumental in the development of regional

¹⁷ PAPS-CEEAC (2009) Sub-regional Seminar on Security Sector Reform, Kinshasa, 13 -15 January, The Report

Centres of Excellence. A French military adviser has been deployed to help develop FOMAC's capacity.

In 1997, the French government initiated the Reinforcing of African Peacekeeping Capacities (RECAMP) initiative which is successfully providing training to troops of the Central African Standby brigade at the *Centre d'Aguerissement d'Outre-mer* in Gabon.¹⁸ The RECAMP initiative offers individual and operational trainings as well as providing the brigade with equipments. Generally, French support involves around constant military and defence cooperation coupled with the establishment of regionally oriented schools that provide tactical training such as the regional police training centre "EIFORCES" of Awae in Cameroon.

5 Impact

The financial and technical support provided by the EU has played a very vital role in the conceptual development of ECCAS. A lot of the conceptual development in ECCAS has come from outside and especially from the EU. The Central Africans have now begun to internalize these concepts such as peace and security and they no longer see the concepts as simply being western. There is an increasing africanisation of these concepts. There is now a department of human security within the ECCAS secretariat.

The EU has significantly helped it to anchor the Central African region and ECCAS to the continental to the African security architecture. The region was very isolated from the rest of the world and through its funding the EU has greatly helped to anchor ECCAs on both continental and international development. It has brought ECCAS in the mainstream of world politics. This is particularly true in the area of PSO, the development of capacity in the field of elections and in SSR.

The EU military mission in the CAR contributed in stabilizing the northwestern part of the country and the Artemis operation country played a major in creating space for the successful holding of elections in 2006. Their continued presence in the country enabled the elected government to overcome post elections violence.

¹⁸ Avoumou, Côme Damien Georges (2008) ECCAS or CEMAC, which Regional Economic Community for Central Africa? In Ayangafac Chrysantus (ed.) *Political Economy of Regionalisation in Central Africa*, Monograph No.155, Nov. 2008

6. Obstacles

Through the support provided by the EU and some individual EU member states on a bilateral basis ECCAS has made remarkable progress in developing policies and establishing a regional security architecture but still faces severe obstacles in its operationalisation. And like in most ECCAS regional programmes significant progress has been made in policy development but there remain visible pitfalls in the implementation of agreed policies. A number of factors explain the slow progress in the effective operation of the ECCAS security architecture.

6.1 National Interests. The effective operation of ECCAS security mechanism has always been jeopardized by selfish and sometimes parochial national interest of member states. Most national governments hold firmly to the idea of national sovereignty and often reluctant to implement policies that do not serve their national interests. It is common practice in ECCAS that member states show a willingness to apply treaties or agreements that serve their national interests and are always reluctant to apply those that do not cater for their national interests. This is especially so because the personal egos of heads of states have strongly anchored in the functioning of the institutions and the immediate consequence of this is the weak nature of regional institutions.

6.2 Weak Institutional Capacity. Most of ECCAS institutions suffer from acute shortages in qualified personal. The serious capacity constraints faced especially by ECCAS secretariat has made key support services such as the human resources and finance departments unable to meet up with their workloads. The secretariat of ECCAS has been without a head of administration and finance since 2008 and the post of human resources director has been durably vacant. The peace and security architecture cannot effectively go operational when other key and supporting departments remain visibly weak. An under-staffed finance department makes operations such as the timely payment of troops a near impossibility and this seriously impacts on the organisation's ability to deliver efficient peace and security programmes. The ECCAS secretariat lacks well trained and experienced analysts and its ability to provide useful advice in a timely manner is highly compromised by its acute staffing problems. This has always had negative structural effects of the organization. Productivity can only be increased if positions within the institutions are well occupied by the best candidates.

6.3 Fragile political environment. Most ECCAS member states were playgrounds of protracted and violent conflicts over the last decade and this has left serious scars on most of them. The DRC, Angola, Rwanda, Chad, Burundi and the CAR have just emerged from long years of brutal civil wars which have left the countries with serious hostile political environments and serious security challenges. The illicit proliferation of SALW weapons has given birth to the phenomenon of “*coupeurs de route*”¹⁹ and other trans-border crimes. Most national governments devote their resources for their political survival and to fight highway banditry which is mostly perpetrated by demobilized soldiers. Countries such as Chad, DRC, CAR and Angola are devoting most of their resources to deal with post war challenges in their respective countries.

6.4 Absence of political will. The strength of any institution depends on the will of its members and this has been lacking amongst ECCAS members. Local actors have a responsibility to ensure that their institutions function properly in order to attain agreed goals. For example, the inability for MARAC to take off can largely be attributed to internal factors. There has never been any genuine discussion within ECCAS to articulate the real role of MARAC. There is not an honest and frank position within ECCAS on the mission of MARAC. The serious and lasting financial problems faced by the institution is a product of the lack of political will as member states are often reluctant in meeting their financial obligations towards the organisation.

There is equally a lack of genuine political commitment from the EU which is the main financier of ECCAS. The EU is reluctant to exert any form of pressure or impose some conditionality on funding even when it is clear that targeted results have not been obtained. Such nonchalance from the EU is driven by the political and economic interests of key EU members especially France which enjoys traditional links with almost all ECCAS member states.

6.5 Overlapping membership. There is a cobweb of membership in regional groupings in Central Africa and this duplication of membership is a major impediment for advancing the regional security architecture. The DRC and Angola are both signatories of ECCAS and SADC and have made commitments to both regional

¹⁹ This refers to armed highway banditry which is common on the borders between Cameroon and CAR and between Cameroon and Chad. It is mainly carried out by former soldiers and some rebel groups who specialize in robbing vehicles and travelers along some major corridors.

standby forces. They are now faced with the difficult choice of which standby force they should contribute to and it makes it difficult to determine the exact composition of the brigades.²⁰ The plurality of systems and structures are producing incoherencies that are making the establishment of the Central African security architecture even more complicated. Overlap entails extra financial commitments for the already overstretched poor countries.

6.6 Poor Communication with the AU. ECCAS is designated as one of the five regions envisioned to be the extended hand of APSA. The AU feels that ECCAS is not fully committed to its leadership whereas ECCAS on its part often feels that AU is not that the AU is not providing the expected lead. Such differences are the products of failed communication and this is impacting negatively on the regional as well as on the continental security architecture.

7. The Way Forward

7.1 Genuine Political Will. The successful operationalisation of ECCAS security architecture requires a demonstrated political will from member states, as well as from the international cooperation partners especially the EU which enjoys a privileged relationship with ECCAS and is its main financier. ECCAS needs to take a number of urgent decisions with regards to the management of its institutions. All positions especially within the secretariat must be filled with well qualified staff in order to increase productivity. A director of human resources must be recruited so as to facilitate the recruitment of other necessary staff whereas the position of finance and administration officer must be filled to speed up the payment and other administrative procedure.

7.2 Improving communication with the AU. ECCAS is designated as one of the five regions envisioned to be the extended hand of the APSA but poor communication between the two organizations has often created a suspicious atmosphere. Both the AU and ECCAS need to improve on their lines of communication in order to facilitate the integration of both the Central African Brigade (FOMAC) and the MARAC into APSA and CEWS respectively. There is real need to reduce quite often unnecessary tensions between the two organizations and work on

²⁰ Sjørubø, Gunnar M. (2008) The African Union towards a new architecture for peace, democracy and development? In Political Partner and Global Actor – Opportunities and Challenges, Oslo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ways to improve their inter-institutional dialogue so as to achieve commonly agreed goals.

7.3 Involving Civil Society. Civil society in the ECCAS region has little or no knowledge about the organization and its activities despite the commitment of the EU-Africa Strategy to empower non-state actors. ECCAS must incorporate the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) into its security structure as they would serve to effectively communicate ECCAS security agenda to the local population. It has to work in close collaboration with indigenous think tanks and academia that will help form new ideas on the way forward for regional peace and security. Such cooperation should involve funding for research which will address local concerns. Advocacy and activism on key issue such as the proliferation of SALW and SSR require greater involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which often have more knowledge on these.

Conclusion

The EU remains a major partner of ECCAS in the conceptualization and construction of its peace and security structures and mechanisms. However, deficiencies and obstacles mostly from within ECCAS continue to impede the smooth operationalisation of the security architecture. ECCAS security architecture is still confronted with financial, logistics and human resources deficiencies. The absence of political will further compound the already existing difficulties. It is therefore imperative for the EU and ECCAS to engage on a long term partnership based on frank strategic priorities.

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