



ROLE OF MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

Background/Context

As we enter the fourth quarter of the 21st century, the African continent is still confronted by the exigencies of development, peace and security. Compared to other continents, Africa is the least developed and is host to most poor people. Africa has witnessed multiple challenges due, in part, to the deteriorating state of governance, democratic backsliding, spread of terrorism, protracted and emerging conflicts as well as from the rise of non-traditional security threats. Since 2020, there have been nine successful coups d'état on the continent, with Niger and Gabon being the latest countries to join the expanding list in 2023.

The continent's peace and security landscape are characterised by continuing, emerging and persistent conflicts making it a vortex of instability. Some of the triggers of conflicts include poverty, inequality, underdevelopment and poor economic growth, among others. Yet, Africa has operationalised the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) to level the playing field by fostering and propelling free trade within the continent. Such exigencies necessitate both transdisciplinary, transnational and multilateral approaches and interventions. Pursuant to this approach, it has been pointed out that a new mindset is urgently needed to implement humanitarian and development interventions and programmes in a post-2020 world. Such approach should be cognisant of the role of women in peace and security, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and African Knowledge Systems (AKS).

The post-2020 epoch saw a significant increase in pandemics, natural disasters, climate change and artificial intelligence (AI) with uncertain implications for Africa's development, peace and human security. Several studies conclude that peace, development and security should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Rather, they are unfettered, intertwined and inseparable. To this end, strong emphasis should constantly be placed on improving and promoting integration and coordination between humanitarian and development assistance and between development and



peace. Over the past few decades, it has become increasingly clear that because leaders fail to strike a delicate balance between development, peace and security, the unintended consequence being an upsurge of violent conflicts.

The African Union is not only a key part of the United Nations system, but it is also anchored in multilateralism and in the same values and principles enshrined in the UN Charter. Within the broader partnership, there needs to be a more systematic arrangement of support to AU PSOs, particularly now that peace and security landscape requires the role and responsibility not only of the UN but also of regional organisations.

The increasing conflicts occur despite the multitude of global and continental multilateral institutions that are charged with the responsibility of ensuring development, peace and security at a regional, continental and international level. As such, others have looked at the relationship between the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) to determine their compatibility in addressing African conflict situations.

In recent years sub-regional multilateral organisations, the African Union and the United Nations have come under scrutiny for their failure to maintain peace and security at sub-regional, continental and international, respectively. The conflict in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, North Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and the recent military take overs in the Sahel region give credence to the fragility and lack of wherewithal on the side of multilateral organisations. This is happening despite a multiplicity of peace and security frameworks including the African Union (AU) Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), and the African Governance Architecture (AGA), among others. Resolution 2719, adopted in December 2023, holds the potential to be a watershed in how the UN and the broader international community support African-led peace operations. However, its implementation is faltering amid political inertia, technical hurdles, and US hostility toward global institutions.

Against this background, the purpose of the Second Thabo Mbeki African School Biennial Conference 2026 is to critically interrogate the varying roles of global and



continental multilateral institutions considering persistent development, peace and security challenges on the African continent. Such an interrogation affords emerging and seasoned scholars, researchers and practitioners with the opportunity to reflect on the existing policies, strategies and practices that are aimed at ensuring peaceful and prosperous societies and continent.

The scientific interrogation can include, although is not limited to, the following thematic issues:

Theme 1: Continental collaborative efforts to ensure development, peace and security in Africa

- Prospects and problems of the African Peace and Security Architecture
- Can the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa be a credible partner in development, peace and security?
- Silencing the guns as antecedent of development, peace and security in Africa
- (Un)constitutional ways of forming governments in Africa and the impact on state, national and human security

Theme 2: Governance and leadership in Africa

- Underdevelopment and the quest for ethical and transformative leadership
- The need for capable states in operationalising, optimising and expediting the African Continental Free Trade Area
- The role of African Union in actualising the Agenda 2063
- The role of civil society in reversing the democratic backsliding
- Innovative ways to foster and strengthen accountability and the rule of law within private and public institutions
- Cultivating and instilling public-private partnerships within the civil society, NGOs, public and private sector



Theme 3: Contested roles of multilateral organisations

- Is the United Nations Security Council fit for purpose?
- Multilateralism in theory and practice in Africa
- Understanding the role of International Financial Institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation and others) in the context of rapidly shifting global (dis)order
- The need for institutional reforms in multilateral organisations
- The role of Regional Economic Communities in ensuring economic and social integration
- Regionalism, interconnectedness, interdependence

Abstract Guidelines

Abstract should have (1) a title of the proposed paper, (2) author's name and surname, and (3) affiliation on the cover page. The length of the abstract should be between 250 to 300 words, and it must highlight the aim and focus of the proposed paper.

Submission deadlines

Receive abstracts: 30 November 2025

Notification of acceptance or rejection: 15 December 2025

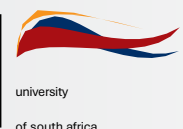
Submission of full paper: 28 February 2026

Conference dates: 28, 29, 30 April 2026

Abstracts should be forwarded to:

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